

**CHRISTIANITY AS VERNACULAR RELIGION: A STUDY IN THE
THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MOTHER TONGUE APPREHENSION
OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN WEST AFRICA WITH REFERENCE TO
THE WORKS OF EPHRAIM AMU (1899-1995)**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis was composed by myself, and that it has not been previously accepted by any other institution for the award of a degree, and that all quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks, and all sources of information have been duly acknowledged.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Philip T. Larvea", is written over a horizontal dotted line.

PHILIP T. LARVEA

September 2006

DEDICATION

To Kotso, Selina, Afoley, Afotey and Laye for their love, encouragement and support.

ABSTRACT

Ephraim Amu is a distinguished musician. He is well known for his advocacy on African tradition and culture. Amu's pride in the African personality has earned him a place in Ghana's hall of fame. It was in recognition of these achievements that his portrait was embossed on Ghana's highest currency, the Twenty Thousand Cedi note. But there is more to the Amu story. In this thesis I have drawn substantially on Amu's own works to demonstrate how, in fact, he is an exemplar of mother tongue apprehension of the Christian faith in Africa. Amu showed in his songs, diaries, sermons, letters, addresses and private papers that the mother tongue, in this case, Ewe and Twi can be used to express not only Christian experience but also to formulate theological ideas in an innovative and creative ways. Amu's credentials as "African statesman" and "a self-conscious nationalist" owe not so much to Pan-African ideologies as his understanding of African culture and tradition from a biblical perspective. Amu believed that the entire universe, including the African cosmos, was created by God from the very beginning as *kronkronkron* (pure), *pepepepe* (exact), and *fitafitafita* (without blemish). He wrestled with the problem of (evil) and how this may have polluted an otherwise unblemished creation. Amu also wrestled with the issue of human participation in God's work of creation and the extent to which humankind may have contributed to the desecration of creation. In spite of the pollution, Amu believed that creation can be redeemed and restored to its original status by cleansing with the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. This belief led him to adopt a positive stance towards African culture and tradition. Amu demonstrated this particularly in the use of language. Most of his sermons and notable musical compositions are in Twi or Ewe. He kept a diary in his mother tongue, Ewe, for almost seventy years. Amu demonstrated that by using indigenous African languages it is possible to make a fresh contribution to theological issues and thereby present African Christianity as an authentic expression to God and capable of contributing to world Christianity. Apart from language, Amu believed that other elements in the African tradition could be employed to express the Christian faith. It is in this regard that his contribution to Christian worship, particularly the use of indigenous musical instruments, must be appreciated. Amu's realisation, that "There are deep truths underlying our indigenous religions, truths which are dim representations of the great Christian truths", led him to deal with the perception that

Africa has nothing to offer to world Christianity. Through Amu's work the Christian faith in Africa can be viewed as credible and self-authenticating, no longer to be judged by European and Western value setting.

ABSTRACT IN MOTHER TONGUE (GA)

Mei babao le Owula Ephraim Amu ake lalatse kpanaa. Elala ko ni gbei ji *Yen ara asase ni* le ehe shi jogbaŋŋ ye Ghana. Lala nee ye Ghana maji le wiemoi le ekomei amlɔ, ni beikomei tete le alaa *Yen ara asase ni* ake Ghana maŋ le jaku lala. Owula Amu flo lalai afee ohai enyo ke see. No kroko ni mei le ye Ephraim Amu he ji sane ni Presbiteria Asafo le keye le be mli ni etsoo nii ye Presbyterian Training College ni yoo Akropong, Akuapem le. Neke bei amlɔ ji beni eflo lalai ni gbei ehe shi ni mitsi ta momo le. Ye lalai nee amlɔ le etsoo wo boni sa ake woba wojeŋ woha ake Kristofoi, ni ana wo hu ake meidiji ni Nyongmo edro ke dromo keenii srotɔi. Neke susumo nee no edamo ni etswa akwajaŋ kesole ye Akropong Presbiteria solemotsu le mli le. Asafo le hienyeilɔi ni ji osofoi ke asafonukpai ni yoo Synod Committee le no le ke le kpaaa gbee ye nifeemoi nee ahewo. Amebo modeŋ ake amebo le koko, shi Owula Amu emiii no ake eeetsake ejweŋmo. Ye woji ni enmla Synod Committee le mli le ejie enaa ake esa ake meidiji aja Nyongmo ake meidiji. Owula Amu heo eyeo ake ake meidiji le esa ake woja Nyongmo ye wodientse wowiemoi amlɔ. Ene hewo le elalai le ni eflo le saŋŋ ye Eve ke Twi ke Ga mli. Eheo eyeo hu ake nibii kpakpai ke nikasemoi srotɔi ye meidiji akusumii ni wotseo ake “jennii” le amlɔ. Esusuo ake tsakpaa ye kusumii nee ekomei ke Kristojamo teŋ. Ewo ŋaa ake abaanye ajie nibii kpakpai ni yoo bikpojiemo mli ni akewo gbenaa ni akebaptisio abifaabii le obo. Hei krokomei ni esusuo ake abaanye awo Kristojamo le obo le ji gbejiano ni aketoo osofoi le. Wona susumoi nee saŋŋ ye elalai ke eshiemoi ke eniŋmai amlɔ. Ye gbefeegbe no le Owula Amu ji mo ko ni na ehe ake Kristofonyo, shi ena ehe hu ake modin. Eye dole ake mei pii enaaa Owula Amu ye gbe ni mitsoo nee no. Mei babao susuo ake meidiji kusumii ahe keke pe efa. Miheo miyeo ake neke susumo nee no amralofoi le nyie ni ameno eyitso eta Ghana shika ni da fe fee (¢20,000) le no le. Noni mei babao leee ye Owula Amu he ji ake e-Kristojamo le ji noni ha le hewale ke shifimo kefee nibii nee fee. Ye wolo nee mli le mitsoo gbei ano ni Owula Amu hi shi ake Kristofonyo shi moŋ ana le hu ake mo ko ni faa meidiji akusumii ahe.

Mija wolo nee mli ejwe. Klɛŋklɛŋ mlijaa le hie yitse enyo ni koo Ephraim Amu wala shihile he ake moni gbeo Nyongmo wiemo le keshwaa titri le ketso eshiemo nitsumo le no ake Catechist ke elalai hu ni eflo le amlɔ. Mlijaa ni ji enyo

le hie yitseĩ enyɔ. Ye yitseĩ nee amlĩ le miwie bɔni Owula Amu susuo Nyɔŋmɔ ke adebɔɔ nibii ke Yesu Kristo he ehaa ye elalai le amlĩ. Mlijaa ni ni etē le koo susumɔi ni Owula Amu yɔɔ ye maŋ ke ekuramɔ he.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ACW</i>	<i>Amu Choral Works</i>
<i>TAFS</i>	<i>Twenty Five African Songs</i>
<i>DAFL</i>	<i>Dictionary of Akan and Fante Language</i>
<i>EASA</i>	<i>Ephraim Amu's Sermons and Addresses</i>
<i>UMM</i>	<i>Ephraim Amu's Unpublished Music Manuscripts</i>
<i>TTJ</i>	<i>The Teacher's Journal</i>
<i>IRM</i>	<i>International Review of Missions</i>
<i>JACT</i>	<i>Journal of African Christian Thought</i>
<i>EPC</i>	<i>Ewe Presbyterian Church</i>
<i>PCGC</i>	<i>Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast</i>
<i>PCG</i>	<i>Presbyterian Church of Ghana</i>
<i>IBMR</i>	<i>International Bulletin of Missionary Research</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Religion in Africa</i>
<i>NIGTC</i>	<i>The New International Greek Testament Commentary</i>
<i>ICC</i>	<i>The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments</i>
<i>NID</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, Vol. 2, Gen. ed., Wiellem A. Van Gemeren</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. 1, ed. by Gerhard Kittel</i>
<i>ICAMD</i>	<i>International Centre for African Music and Dance, University of Ghana, Legon</i>
<i>GAAS</i>	<i>Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences</i>
<i>IAS</i>	<i>Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon</i>
<i>NBC</i>	<i>The New Bible Commentary</i>
<i>VE</i>	<i>Vox Evangelica</i>
<i>IDB</i>	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. by George Arthur Buttrick</i>
<i>CBC</i>	<i>Cambridge Bible Commentary</i>

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PART I

THE MAKING OF AMU, THE CHRISTIAN THINKER

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION TO STUDY

The title of this thesis is 'Christianity as vernacular religion: A study in the theological significance of mother tongue apprehension of the Christian faith in West Africa with reference to the works of Ephraim Amu (1899-1995)'. 'Vernacular' here refers not only to the linguistic medium through which the Christian faith is apprehended and expressed but more importantly to the thought forms that undergird the cultural, social, and religious institutions and worldviews of African societies.¹ To say, then, that Christianity is a vernacular religion is to affirm the undeniable fact that 'the Christian presence has been and remains, in the African scene, a massive and unavoidable fact and factor'.²

By drawing attention to the vernacular credentials of the Christian faith in Africa, the thesis seeks to question the widely held view that Christianity is a Western religion. This perception has gained currency over the years because of the historical link between Europe and the rest of the world particularly countries belonging to Latin America, Africa and Asia. This link has several strands; historical, political and missiological. The historical bond which began with the adventures of European explorers and merchants resulted in the building of empires and the creation of nation states. This period also witnessed considerable missionary activity, with some notably innovative approaches, especially by the Jesuits. However, it was the modern missionary movement of the nineteenth century that was chiefly responsible for the founding of churches in these regions of the world. Christianity, therefore, came set in forms and patterns that were alien to the recipient nations. Language was however to play a decisive role in the evangelisation of African countries particularly with the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. This event was to undermine European dominance and paternalism. Once vernacular literacy and Bible translation got underway they opened the floodgates into areas which were far beyond the reach and control of the missionaries.³ Subsequently, the apprehension and articulation of the Christian faith in thought forms that were akin to the cultural and religious worldviews of the people gave a lie to the perception that Christianity is a Western religion. My thesis is aimed at demonstrating this non-Western credential of the Christian faith by

examining the works of Ephraim Amu, a celebrated and distinguished Ghanaian ethnomusicologist who initially trained as a teacher and Christian lay worker. The study limits us to West Africa and particularly to Ghana from where Amu hails.

A study of this nature is important for a number of reasons. By focusing on the vernacular, especially the lesser known African languages like Twi which is spoken by the vast majority of Ghanaians, the thesis seeks to draw attention to Pentecost. In that event, God must have decided that the way for humankind to grasp the import of God's plan of salvation was not through Aramaic or Greek only, but through all the language groups gathered in Jerusalem on that day. The significance of Pentecost, therefore, lies in plurality rather than uniformity. The word of God is more than the so-called original tongues of Hebrew and Greek. These languages therefore, do not capture the whole mind of God. To establish the meaning of God's word, it is necessary to consult as many language groups as possible. It is in this vein that reading the Bible in mother tongue, particularly as amply demonstrated in Amu's songs and sermons, becomes significant.

If God's word can be expressed not only in Hebrew and Greek, but in other languages as well, and that meaning is enriched through plurality and not uniformity, then it becomes important how theological discourse is formulated and by whom. Theology in Africa's seminaries had largely been shaped and determined by Western and European value setting. But why should this be the case in a continent that has come to be acknowledged as one of the heartlands of Christianity in the twentieth century? The shift in the centre of gravity of Christianity from the Northern continents to the Southern continents is evidenced not only in the massive presence of Christians on these continents, but also by the contributions invariably made to Christian thinking. In choosing this topic, therefore, it is my aim to shift focus from a theology which has become the prerogative of those in academia, to a theology of the 'everyday' which arises from the concrete situations of life as people are confronted with the task of constructing a world view consistent with their experience.⁴ It is to the areas of Christian vitality that such theology belongs; songs, prayers, testimonies, art works and sermons. These are the roots of Christian theology proper, in that they provide the raw material and give nurture to what takes place in the lecture theatres. To the extent that

Ephraim Amu's repertoire of songs is an outcome of a search for meaning that is located in questions about the nature of God, the Christ event and the function of the Holy Spirit, he can be described as a 'theologian' in his own right. It is within this category that Amu and several ordinary unsung Christians especially from the African continent belong.

It is important therefore that in doing a work of this nature Amu is placed within the wider context of the development of indigenous Christian hymnody in Africa. James Krabill's seminal work on Harrist hymnody is a case in point.⁵ The 523 hymns of the Harrist Church, composed over a period of eighty years (1913-1990), are largely African in tune and lyrics. As noted by Krabill it was Harris himself who inspired the use of traditional praise songs, *nylikupalie*, in the composition of these hymns. Mention must also be made of the sacred songs of Lenshina Mulenga which draw inspiration from Christianity and Bemba religious experience.⁶ Similar studies done in this field include Gordon Molyneux's work on the Kimbanguist Church⁷ and others on Zionist congregations in South Africa.⁸

In these and several other undocumented hymns can be found responses to the Christian faith expressed in ways that are in keeping with African traditional usage and idiom. These are the 'birth pangs'⁹ that shape African theology and ultimately determine what the theology of the twenty first century will be like. It is preposterous to assume, however, that the theology engendered by these new areas in African Christianity is and will always be healthy. They come with their own problems and raise questions which push further the boundaries of our knowledge of God and his dealings with humankind. They thus provide new critical tools of investigation thereby offering alternatives for doing theology other than what is provided by the European Enlightenment.

Amu's work must also be examined within the intellectual framework of the vernacular principle and translatability of the Christian faith in Africa. Kwame Bediako has shown that language is not only a sociological or psychological phenomenon. It is also theological since the vernacular is the medium through which divine speech is communicated.¹⁰ Language, especially the mother tongue reading of the Bible, then becomes the key that unlocks the door to the traditional world. This according to

Andrew Walls makes the Christian faith ‘culturally infinitely translatable’¹¹ such that it is ‘possible to see Christianity’s various cycles of expansion into different cultural contexts in its history as so many cultural manifestations or incarnations of the faith.’¹² While affirming the role of Western missions in the historical transmission of the Christian faith, Lamin Sanneh was of the view that it was African converts who were the real agents in bringing about those ‘cultural manifestations’ in the indigenous assimilation of Christianity.¹³ I have sought to show in this thesis that Ephraim Amu’s life and work demonstrate a vernacular apprehension of the Christian faith in African terms.

REVIEW OF SOURCES AND APPROACH ADOPTED

The method of study in this dissertation involved an investigation of archival sources relating to the topic. The primary sources examined include songs, sermons, diaries, journals, private papers and personal and official letters of Ephraim Amu. My investigation began first with Amu’s songs (see chapter 2), but as I proceeded in my work I felt the need to use other sources to throw light on the ideas imbedded in the lyrics. Subsequently I used about 30 of Amu’s sermons¹⁴ in my analysis of the theological content of his songs. I also used the sermons, private papers and personal and official letters of Amu to discuss the theological landmarks in Amu’s life and thought (see chapter 1). The twelve entries that I selected from Amu’s 1933 diary (see Appendix Z/H) were invaluable to my research since they illuminated some of the ideas I had come across in Amu’s songs, sermons and correspondence. It must be noted that Amu meticulously kept diaries for a period of almost 70 years in Ewe,¹⁵ his mother tongue, from the late 1920s to the middle of December 1994, a few weeks before he died. I chose the 1933 diary because as shown in chapter 1 it was this period that climaxed the events that occurred in his teaching career in Akropong, which are fundamental to our understanding of what happened in his life subsequently. Newspaper articles in the *Gold Coast Independent* (Appendix Z/E), *The Times of West Africa* (Appendix Z/F) and *The West African Monitor* (Appendix Z/G) were helpful in my assessment of how the Ghanaian populace responded in the early 1930s to the reforms that Ephraim Amu sought to bring into the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast. I

included a few illustrations (fig. 1-6) that show the type of musical instruments that Ephraim Amu used, particularly those he suggested could be adapted to worship in the church. The illustrations in figures 5a, 5b and 5c and are my own creation. It is an attempt to put Amu's ideas in a diagrammatic form.

Also available to me were audio and videotapes of interviews granted by Amu to the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana, Legon (IAS) where he worked from 1962 until his retirement in 1971. The recording has been useful for this research because it spanned his entire life (Appendix A). I purposefully selected and interviewed five people who knew Ephraim Amu. The interview with A.L. Kwansa (Appendix B), a student of Amu, was revealing because it helped to explain what occurred in Amu's teaching career in the Presbyterian Training College in Akropong in the early 1930s and also gave leads to other sources such as church minutes and records. The information given to me by J.H.K. Nketia (Appendix C) and Gilbert Ansre (Appendix F) was instructive since they both knew Amu and served with him as colleagues at the IAS. Fred Agyemang's recollection (Appendix E) of Ephraim Amu based on the biography he wrote on Amu was helpful. Misonu Amu (Appendix D), a daughter of Amu and a Research Fellow at the IAS, complemented in a good measure what I obtained from my primary sources. The condolences (Appendix Z/I) paid to the family of Ephraim Amu after his death in 1995 were very useful in my analysis of the perceptions that people have about Amu, particularly in contemporary times.

The method of investigation in this thesis was shaped to a very large extent by materials generated by Amu himself. The categories of thought that emerged as a result of my analysis of songs in chapter 2 were informed, in my view, by Amu's understanding of the Reformed theology he was exposed to as a student in the Basel Mission Seminary in Abetifi. I have sought to work with these categories without bringing Amu into dialogue with academic theologians for a couple of reasons. First, the theological training Amu received did not engage with the social and religious institutions of his day (chapter 1), and yet his work as shown in this thesis bears an imprint of African life and thought. Furthermore, there was no indication that he pursued any theological course beyond the seminary training he received as a catechist. My aim in this thesis is, therefore, a preliminary theological appreciation of how Amu

understood the world of his day within the context of his upbringing and training as a Christian. That explains the limited use of secondary sources to which I now turn.

The only biography on Amu known to me was written by Fred Agyeman entitled *Amu the African: A study in vision and courage*.¹⁶ In this work Agyeman sketches the entire life of Amu from birth until the period of his retirement. The style of the book is journalistic rather than academic. It is helpful, however, in giving leads to some sources on Amu, such as correspondence pertaining to his relationship with the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and the Ewe Presbyterian Church (now Evangelical Presbyterian Church). This was the period (1926-1933) when he served as teacher-catechist at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong. Agyeman made use of sermons and songs of Amu, but these were few and his analysis lacked depth. Amu's sermon of July 18, 1937 on 'Vision and Courage' from which the subtitle of Agyeman's book is derived, is reproduced without any comments on the text itself. The sermon is remembered in the context of some events that occurred in 1937, namely the coronation of King George VI and Kwame Nkrumah's second year as a student in the United States of America.¹⁷ It is not clear whether Agyeman was trying to establish a link between these events and Amu's sermon. In discussing Amu's removal from the Presbyterian Training College, Agyeman rightly noted that 'it would be an oversimplification of the problem for one to assume that the church authorities were a group of irate and unreasonable zealots who were sworn to the extermination of everything that had a tinge of African cultural tradition and novelty', and yet his explanation of the 'problem' was itself an oversimplification.¹⁸ I have shown in chapter I that the fundamental issue in Amu's dismissal was not the wearing of African cloth. Nor was the 'problem' the use of African drums and music, since Amu rejected any form of dancing in church and would only accept a minimum use of the drum. To a large extent he was in agreement with the church authorities on these issues and was even part of a committee that was selected by the church to research into 'native songs' and see how these could be adapted to Christian worship. The 'problem' was therefore deeper than that. It was about the translation of the Christian faith into African terms.

Several other works have been published on Amu's career as a musician. In an introduction to *Amu Choral Works*,¹⁹ a book written by Amu himself,²⁰ J.H. Nketia

wrote on 'The Historical and Stylistic background of the Music of Ephraim Amu'.²¹ Apart from Nketia, Kofi Agawu,²² Misonu Amu²³ and Kofi Agordoh²⁴ have each assessed Amu's contribution to contemporary art music in Africa. These studies focused mainly on styles and techniques of musical composition. In my view Amu's lyrics have seldom been studied except in cases where they are used to illustrate his style of composition. None of the scholars analysed the linguistic and theological import of Amu's lyrics in the way I have mentioned it in this thesis (see chapter 2).

The *Ephraim Amu Memorial Lecture*, jointly organised by the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (GAAS) and the International Centre for African Music and Dance (ICAMD), University of Ghana, Legon, constitute yet another source to which we can trace writings on Amu. In the inaugural lecture, J.H. Nketia demonstrated how through his music Amu created an awareness of a new African consciousness.²⁵ Kofi Agawu's lecture focused on *The Musical Legacy of Amu*²⁶ while for Leticia Obeng, Amu was a 'cultured patriot' and a role model for the younger generation.²⁷ In the fifth lecture, R.F. Amonoo examined the moral and ethical dimensions of Amu's music²⁸ and L.A. Boadi dealt with the literary and poetic content of the lyrics of Amu in the sixth lecture.²⁹ None of these lectures dealt with the subject matter of my thesis which I now outline.³⁰

The thesis is divided into three parts. Chapters one and two constitute part one which deals primarily with Amu's biography as a theologian and explores his contribution as a poet. Parts two (chapters three and four) and three (chapters five, six and seven) derive from my preliminary analysis of Ephraim Amu's songs and relate to his ideas on aspects of Christian doctrine and social ethics.

In chapter one I introduce Ephraim Amu and examine the theological landmarks in his life and thought. The chapter explores his early life and formative years in the context of the traditional society in which he was brought up and the Bremen Missionary Society that founded the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to which he belonged. It will be shown how factors within this context, particularly language and culture, shaped his entire life. The Basel Mission Seminary in Abetifi is discussed because it was here that Amu was trained as teacher and catechist and received theological education. It was also in Abetifi that he first learned Twi, the language in which he was to compose most of his musical works. The central issue in this chapter is

the theological landmark of Amu's sojourn in the Presbyterian Training College in Akropong. It will be shown how events leading to Amu's suspension from preaching and his subsequent removal from the College changed his perceptions about the Christian faith in Africa and sent ripples that were to affect the cultural identity and patriotic feelings of the Ghanaian populace as a whole. An examination of Amu's middle years in Achimota College, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, and the University of Ghana, Legon will show how he manifested and exemplified his belief as an African Christian in his songs, sermons, lectures and correspondence.

In chapter two I attempt a linguistic analysis of forty two of Amu's Twi songs. I first set out the lyrics of the songs in poetic form, translate them into English and give the historical background to each song. This is followed by a study of selected words and a commentary which show Amu's understanding of the Akan language, culture and tradition and how these are interpreted in light of his knowledge of the Bible. This chapter enables us to appreciate Amu, not only as a musician but also as a poet. It is on the basis of my analysis of Amu's songs in this chapter that I select emerging theological themes for discussion in the remaining chapters.

The title of the third chapter is '*Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee*: God, creation, and human participation in God's work'. In this chapter I wrestle with some fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith as understood by Amu. To what extent did Amu see *Nyame* (God) as the ultimate source of human existence and how did his knowledge of Akan tradition and folklore aid him in formulating these ideas? What sense do we make of Amu's belief that '*Nyame ne ade nyinaa*' (All wisdom is from God or Everything has its foundation and end in God)? We will see in this chapter how Amu's understanding of God as 'being everything' may have contributed to the positive stance he took in matters concerning African culture and tradition.

Chapter four examines Amu's ideas about Jesus Christ. What contribution does Amu's reading of Luke 2: 8-20 and Phil. 2: 5-8 make to our understanding of the incarnation? What does Amu's assertion that, '*Yesu nni din ene abusua*' (Jesus has no name and family) mean for the ordinary reader of the Twi Bible? These issues engage my attention in this chapter. Other issues I have addressed include Amu's understanding

of the love of Jesus, the crucifixion (Matt. 27: 27-31), his death and resurrection and his defeat of *bɔne* (evil) and *asaman* (the grave). It will be seen how each of these issues is interpreted in the context of Akan traditional belief and religious apprehension.

Since scholarship is about the acquisition and use of knowledge, there is always the need to acknowledge the works of others, particularly those who contribute to the growth and progress of human society. In chapter five I examine Amu's work on four notable and distinguished personalities; A.G. Fraser, J.E.K. Aggrey, Johannes Christaller and C.A. Akrofi. Fraser and Aggrey are mentioned for the pioneering role they played in the establishment of education in Ghana, and Christaller and Akrofi for their monumental achievements in the promotion and development of the Twi language. This chapter is to enable us appreciate how these ideas by Amu are grounded in his understanding of the Christian faith.

In chapters six and seven I concern myself with patriotism, education in its holistic sense and values that engender the well being of the society. Attention will be focused on Amu's '*Yen ara asase ni*' (This nation is ours), a song widely acknowledged as Ghana's unofficial national anthem. I will endeavour to demonstrate how this song and others, used in these chapters, convey Christian notions in spite of their classification as 'patriotic'.

In the concluding chapter I highlight the major issues of the preceding chapters and assess the legacy and relevance of Ephraim Amu in three key areas namely, language and interpretation, cultural adaptation and liturgical renewal, and socio-political engagement. I have shown in my conclusion that by using African languages in Christian expression and in the formulation of theological ideas it is possible to arrive at a completely different understanding of transcendence and thereby contribute to world Christianity. In that sense Africa's response to the Christian faith as demonstrated in Amu's works has its own merits and may no longer be tied to the apron strings of Western Christianity.

I have also shown in this thesis that Amu's works have significance and implications for liturgical renewal and theological education. Although the drum and other traditional instruments are now part of Christian worship in most churches in Ghana, their potential has not fully been realised. The use of *atumpan* (the talking

drums)³¹ and the *bommaa* orchestra as advocated by Amu is largely peripheral.³² Western translated hymns and melody are still predominant in church worship, particularly in the historical churches. Vestments still bear semblance to their European origins because the church failed to appreciate the point about Amu's African attire. A renewal in the church's liturgical tradition must take cognisance not only of these outward forms of Christian expression but also the crises in life such as 'outdooring', puberty and mortuary rites that impact the life of ordinary people as they wrestle to make the Christian faith meaningful.

Another area of significance that this thesis draws attention to is Amu's social ethics and his theology of *oman* (the nation). On the basis of Amu's works I have shown that it is futile to disengage God from the social and political institutions that regulate human affairs and actions and that his works have implications for the prophetic function of the church in nation building. Amu's contribution in these key areas is theological, and portray him as such, a theologian in his own right.

I have sought to demonstrate in this thesis that Ephraim Amu's contribution to the Christian faith in Africa is based on his apprehension of transcendence as mediated through the mother tongue. His career and achievement show Christianity as vernacular religion.

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- ³⁰ I received an invitation from the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences in the latter part of 2004 to deliver the seventh Amu Memorial Lecture. The lecture was delivered on 26 April, 2005 and my topic was, 'Theological Landmarks in the Life and Thought of Ephraim Amu.'
- ³¹ At the Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon, the *atumpan* is used only to summon students to worship. It is hardly part of the service itself.
- ³² The E.P. Church of Ghana uses the state drums only on festive occasions like synods. (Casual conversation with Dr. A.A. Agordo in his office at the IAS, Legon in 2004).

CHAPTER 1
THEOLOGICAL LANDMARKS IN THE LIFE AND THOUGHT OF
EPHRAIM AMU

INTRODUCTION

In his article, 'The Horizontal and the Vertical in Mission: An African Perspective', Lamin Sanneh pointed out that 'African agency in the dissemination of Christianity is a major category in the transmission of the religion'.¹ Ephraim Amu was one such agent. Unfortunately, very little is known about Amu's career as a catechist and the efforts he made at spearheading the local assimilation and adaptation² of Christianity. He is famous for reasons other than I have stated. Ephraim Amu has been described as an ethnomusicologist.³ Others portray him as belonging to the 'Christian Humanist tradition',⁴ 'a self-conscious nationalist',⁵ an African statesman and a patriot who was concerned to redeem the image of Africa from the ravages of western domination and influence.⁶ These descriptions are only a partial assessment of the man.⁷ Not many people realise that Amu's 'cultural activism and creative patriotism'⁸ were deeply rooted in his convictions as a Christian.⁹ It is from this perspective, particularly as a Christian thinker and theologian, that I propose to look at Amu in this chapter. The chapter is organised around five key areas of his life. The first explores the early years of his childhood days in Peki Avetile in the Volta Region of Ghana where he was born and educated. I then discuss his training as a teacher-catechist at the Basel Mission Seminary in Abetifi. The central focus of this chapter investigates the period that Amu served in Akropong as a teacher in the Presbyterian Training College and as a catechist at the local Christ Presbyterian Church. It was here in Akropong that the influences that had gone to shape Amu's life and ideas were to become visibly manifest, and it is against this background that I examine his 'middle years' in Achimota School, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi and University of Ghana, Legon. I end with an exploration of 'the closing years' of his life. In all these landmarks, I shall demonstrate how Amu wrestled with what was his major preoccupation, namely, making the Christian faith intelligible and meaningful to the African. It can be shown that at the core of his passion and concern was the translation of the Christian faith in African terms.

THE EARLY YEARS (1899-1915)

FORMATIVE PERIOD- THE BREMEN MISSION FACTOR

Ephraim Amu was born on 13 September 1899¹⁰ at Peki Avetile in the Volta Region of the then Gold Coast (Ghana). His parents were Stephen Amu Yao, better known as Papa Stefano, and Sarah Akoram Amma. Amu's father was a celebrated drummer and wood-carver. When he converted to the Christian faith he abandoned everything he thought was pagan and gave up drumming.¹¹ Amu Yao could also sing very well. Amu recalled in an interview that it was his father's singing that led him (Amu) into his career as a composer and musician.

When he [Stephen Amu Yao] became a Christian, he learnt the hymns translated into our language, and he loved singing whilst at work. But he never sung a hymn really correctly; there was always something wrong somewhere. So I felt that something ought to be done about this. If the music was arranged in such a way that it was exactly like what they were used to singing, it wouldn't be difficult for them to sing. That's what caused me to begin to think of this. And so I collected indigenous songs from various places all over the country, studied their character, and established certain rules. So I started writing music.¹²

It is striking that very early in his life Amu had already begun to notice the different strands that were to be woven into the tapestry of his life. There was first the Bremen Mission factor that played no mean role in his early upbringing and Christian education. (Bremen shares the same outlook as Basel Mission that Amu would come to know in Abetifi and Akropong). The Evangelical Presbyterian Church to which Ephraim Amu belonged was founded by Lorenz Wolf on 14 November 1847.¹³ Wolf belonged to the *Norddeutsche Missionsgesellschaft* (the North German Missionary Society), otherwise known as the Bremen Missionary Society, founded in 1836. Its membership comprised Christians from both Lutheran and Reformed backgrounds.¹⁴ The inspector at the time the mission worked in West Africa was Michael Zahn. It was Zahn's ideas that greatly influenced and shaped the policies of the Bremen Society. He is mentioned, in particular, for the monumental role he played in the evangelization of the Ewe peoples.¹⁵ One of his major contributions lay in the development of the indigenous language. He stood against the Western European prejudice that saw the Ewe language as savage and primitive, and rather supported it as 'the language of school and instruction'.¹⁶ Zahn's central concern was 'identity', (*Personlichkeit*) which he believed 'found expression in the native language, both for

individuals and for a people'. He pointed out that the language and identity of the Ewe were therefore a valuable heritage that had to be protected.¹⁷ Zahn thus laid the foundation for the vernacularisation of the Christian faith among the Ewe peoples.

In his early attempts at evangelization of the Ewe, Lorenz Wolf wrote '*Vidziewo fe Agbalē Gbāto (le) Ewegbe Me*' (Children's First Reading in the Ewe Language), *Akontagbale* (Arithmetic Book), and the first hymn book of four short hymns titled '*Ele Ewe Hadzi(dzi) Fia(m)*' (Lit. It is Teaching Ewe Songs).¹⁸ Several other books in Ewe were to be produced later. They included school books, hymn-books, the Bible, the Catechism and liturgy.¹⁹

Amu was also aware of the traditional indigenous climate within which he was nurtured and in which the Christian mission functioned.²⁰ He must have appreciated the early attempts by the missionaries to make the gospel meaningful to his people, but he was nevertheless dissatisfied with the initial effort, particularly insofar as music and singing were concerned.²¹

It is in this context that we must appreciate Amu's predilection for his mother-tongue, Ewe and other indigenous languages (Twi and Ga) that he was to learn later.²² As a pupil of the Peki-Avetile Primary School (1906-1912) and the Peki-Blenko Middle Boarding School (1912-1915), Amu must have been exposed early to a study of the Ewe language. In a song he wrote in 1986 in honour of J.G. Christaller and C.A. Akrofi titled '*Kasakyerew ho nimdefo, mo*', Amu believed that language is a gift that God had given to humankind for the progress of civilization (chapter 5). He must have learnt in his 'early years' that African languages were capable of being used as vehicles for the propagation of knowledge and for the transmission of the Christian faith. Several of his musical compositions and quite a great deal of his sermons and Bible commentaries were in Twi and Ewe.

Ephraim Amu must have realised that the vernacularisation of the Christian faith was not only about language. For him, the 'vernacular principle' enunciated by the Bremen and Basel Missionaries had ramifications for African culture of which language was only a part. The notion held by some missionaries that African traditional customs were barbaric also created the impression that language was the safest medium through which education, civilisation and Christianity could thrive among African peoples. Such an idea was a contradiction in terms since it did not take cognisance of the broad spectrum of culture.²³ To sever language from culture and

treat language as if it were an independent entity would only result in a culture that is cast adrift without any support. The church authorities and the entire Christian community of Akropong in Amu's time had lived with this contradiction without question. In a petition addressed to the Synod Committee of the PCGC, Amu drew attention to this contradiction:

I am convinced that it is nothing either opposed to the Spirit of Christ or lowering the standard of Christianity for an African in African attire to preach the Gospel from the pulpit to his own people in like attire, anymore than it is opposed to the Spirit of Christ or lowering the standard of Christianity for an African to preach the same Gospel in an African tongue to his own people.²⁴

The church authorities judged that by wearing African attire in the pulpit, Amu 'was lowering the standard of Christianity' and drawing back the clock of civilisation since his action offended the sensibilities of the majority of educated and non-educated Christian community in Akropong.²⁵ They could excuse his use of the Twi language, but wearing a native cloth was completely unacceptable. In Amu's thinking, African attire and African language belong together. Both can be used to serve the gospel in Africa. Amu, therefore, understood vernacularisation of the Christian faith in a much broader sense. As shown in chapter 3, the idea involved, for Amu, a critical and creative adaptation and appropriation of the gifts that *Odomankama Obɔadeɛ* had bestowed on humankind.

The realisation that Africa had something unique to contribute to the rest of the world must have come to Amu very early in his life. The man who aroused this consciousness was Christian B. Gati, Amu's Middle School headmaster at Peki Blengo. This is what Amu said about Gati:

Well, I owe so much to all my teachers, but so much more to him [Gati] than to any other teacher. During the course of teaching, whether reading, or telling Bible stories, or teaching religious instructions or anything, he would refer to everyday life. He used to say how very backward the people of Africa were and that we were so backward, so we ought to strive and work hard for the African to take their place among the rest of the peoples of the world, and also to take their place as people who are advanced. And this came into my mind and my heart and I used to think about it.²⁶

Amu's song '*Yaanom Abibirimma*' (Children of Africa) (see chapters 2 & 6) was in fact inspired by Gati.²⁷

THE SEMINARY YEARS (1916-1919)

Ephraim Amu entered the Basel Mission Seminary, Abetifi Kwahu in January 1916 to train for four years as teacher and catechist.²⁸ Two categories of subjects were taught at the time; secular and pastoral. The latter included Bible Knowledge, Symbolism, Ethics, Dogmatics, Church History, New Testament Isagogics, Old Testament Isagogics, Pastoral Theology, Exegesis, Catechetics and Homiletics.²⁹ It was during his third and final years in Abetifi that Amu was taught to write Bible commentaries in Twi.³⁰ It was the best training one could ever receive at the time, but with hindsight Amu realised the inadequacies:

I was trained for four years in one of our colleges in the Gold Coast as a teacher and catechist. I started teaching with not the faintest knowledge of any of our social and religious institutions; in fact the tendency according to the prevailing Christian attitude was to keep as far away from them as possible.³¹

A study of Amu's writings during this period confirms the foregoing assertion. In spite of the fact that these works were done in Twi, one is not sure whether the ideas originated from Amu himself or they were translations from English sources. The following was Amu's commentary on Romans 1: 1:

*Paulo din ho no (hwe 1). Ofre neho se Yesu Kristo akoa. Ennye ase ne se oye Yesu de, ohye n'ase, Yesu di no so se Awura nko (1Kor.7, 22, 23), na mmom ete se Filipifo 1,1. Ekyere se oye n'adwumayefo, onnye adwuma wo n'ahenni mu. Nanso onnye akoa nko na mmom oye osomafo.*³²

Paul's name (see 1). He calls himself the slave of Jesus Christ. The interpretation is not that Paul is Jesus' property, he is under his authority, or that Jesus is the Lord or master of Paul (1 Cor.7, 22, 23), rather it is like the picture painted for us in Phil. 1, 1. It shows that Paul works for Jesus, not in his kingdom. Paul is not a slave only, rather he is an apostle, that is one being sent on a mission.³³ (my translation)

The word 'akoa' (slave) ought to strike anyone reading this passage in Twi, particularly at the time that this commentary was written. Amu's teachers at the Seminary must have known of the existence of domestic slavery in the Gold Coast,³⁴ and they must have read, from missionary reports and records, the church's policy on such a practice. It is surprising, therefore, that in preparing this commentary the context in which this institution functioned was not addressed.

It was in the Seminary that Amu learnt that the religions in the world could be divided into three; first, the distinctively monotheistic religions claiming special revelation such as Christianity, Judaism and Mohammedanism, second, Hinduism, Taoism, and Buddhism which are traditional in origin, and the Primitive religions to which belong Animism, Totemism, Idolatory, and Fetishism.³⁵ He must have got the impression that African religions were primitive and therefore had very little to contribute to our understanding of the Christian faith. He was to learn later that ‘There are deep truths underlying our [i.e Africa’s] indigenous religions, truths which may not be equal in weight to Christian truths, but which are dim representations of the great Christian truths.’³⁶ It was while he was teaching in Akropong that these truths began to dawn upon him. The sermons he delivered in Akropong showed clearly that Amu had indeed begun to appreciate the essence of African life and culture. The following is an introduction to a sermon he delivered in Akropong on 19 May 1929;

‘Nea mepɛ sɛ meka ho asem: Abibifo Kasa, a eda adi wɔ amanne: ntamafura, dwonto ne nkyia mu no yɛ Onyankopon adeye a eye, na nea ehia nko ne sɛ yede Onyankopon honhom no betew ho’

What I want to talk about: African language shown in culture: wearing of cloth, singing and greetings are things from God that are good. It is therefore necessary that we cleanse these with the Spirit of God. (my translation)

THE AKROPONG YEARS (1926-1933)

The Presbyterian Training College (PTC) in Akropong Akuapem was the teacher training institution of both the Bremen Church (Ewe Presbyterian Church) and the Basel Church (Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast). Before Amu set foot in Akropong to begin his career as a teacher in the training college and as a catechist in the local Christ Presbyterian Church, the issue regarding the relationship between the Christian faith and African tradition had long since engaged the attention of the people of Akropong. In order to better appreciate Amu’s ‘Akropong years’ there is need, therefore, to reconstruct the historical, political, cultural and ecclesiastical milieu at the time.

THE ERA OF THE TWO KINGS

Amu entered the Presbyterian Training College when Kwasi Akuffo was the *Omanhene* of Akuapem (1920-1927). Prior to this, the political situation in Akropong

had been anything but stable. Kwasi Akuffo had earlier ascended the stool in 1895 and had been destooled in 1907. He was succeeded by Owusu Ansah who ruled until his death in 1914. Bernhard Apea Ofori Koranteng became the next *Ɔmanhene* under the stool name Ofori Kuma II. He however abdicated in 1918 as a result of legal suits filed against him by two divisional chiefs, the *Nifahene* and the *Benkumhene*. It was not until 1932 that Ofori Kuma was reinstalled as *Ɔmanhene*, precisely the period when Amu's troubles with the church came to a climax.³⁷ The historical, political, and cultural events of Amu's 'Akropong years' can therefore be said to be woven around two prominent chiefs, Ofori Kuma II, a 'representative figure',³⁸ supposedly of the Christian ideal, and the man described as 'his main rival', Kwasi Akuffo (Frederick William Kwasi Akuffo), who represented the cultural ideal of the Akuapem kingdom.

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILISATION- THE INFLUENCE OF NANA OFORI KUMA II

The impact of Christian mission and civilization on culture and tradition in Akropong at the time Ofori Kuma became *Ɔmanhene* was expressed this way, in the words of a Basel Missionary:

How long yet will the pagan kingdom, this bulwark of paganism, hold out against the attack of Christianity and civilisation? When will Christ also rob these strong ones and permeate the old royal lineage of Asonafo with new vitality? Will Christianity be able to sanctify, refine, and where necessary abolish the pagan, barbarous customs onto which they cling so stubbornly?³⁹

From this mission rhetoric it is clear what Christianity was intended to do; 'sanctify, refine, and where necessary abolish the pagan, barbarous customs'. The responsibility to effect these changes fell on Ofori Kuma II. The reason the church had so much confidence in him is not too hard to find. As a son of a pastor⁴⁰, Ofori Kuma received Christian upbringing and studied in England where he trained as a lawyer. With his Christian background and exposure to Western civilization, it was the hope of the church that the new King would resolve the issues confronting the people as a result of the impact of the Christian faith and western ideas on Akuapem culture and religious tradition.

This much we can say today, that Ofori Kuma II will be useful to his country in every way. He is friendly disposed towards Christianity, there

can be no doubt about that. It will be our job therefore, to take an interest in him and through our prayers try to save him from rashness and wrong ways. Might God, (sic) that this preacher's son may become an example and the ideal of his people through piety and trust in God, that he may become a 'little Constantine' who makes room for Christianity and helps to remove the last bulwark of paganism- the pagan kingdom!⁴¹

The church's interest in Ofori Kuma was given concrete expression the Sunday following his enthronement as *Omanhene*. It is reported that 'he asked for the church's blessing which he was given by Brother Jehle assisted by the priests [Christian pastors] Ofosu and Hall'.⁴²

Ofori Kuma soon ran into difficulties as a result of his reforms. He rejected the *ntama*, the indigenous cloth that he was required to wear as a chief, and rather preferred the European suit. It is to be noted that one of the charges levelled against him by the *Nifahene* and the *Benkumhene* was that he 'used European dress (sic)'.⁴³ It is against this background that we can begin to see and appreciate how Ofori Kuma's reforms furnished the grounds for the action which the church was to take later against Ephraim Amu. Interestingly, Amu's removal from Akropong was due to his insistence on wearing the *ntama* in the pulpit, a practice considered by the church to be offensive to the 'majority of educated and non-educated [in the] community'.⁴⁴ Amu's action clearly contradicted what Ofori Kuma advocated and exemplified. The 1933 diary entries of Amu however indicate the mutual respect and friendship that existed between him and Ofori Kuma.⁴⁵ Amu's send-off party was chaired by Ofori Kuma and the transport cost of his departure from Akropong was borne by Ofori Kuma as well.⁴⁶ Ofori Kuma's respect for Amu is shown in a letter to Amu in which he addressed him as 'Professor Amu'.⁴⁷ The title was probably an acknowledgement of Amu's ingenuity and the intellectual contribution that he was already beginning to make to African renaissance. There is a sense in which Amu's title as 'Professor' should be seen as state honour of Okuapeman (the Akuapem State) over which Nana Ofori Kuma was *Omanhene* (Paramount King). Ofori Kuma anticipated what the University of Ghana, Legon was to do for Amu thirty years later when the University conferred on him a honorary doctorate degree.⁴⁸

CULTURAL AND TRADITIONAL IMPACT- THE ROLE OF OMANHENE KWASI AKUFFO

There is yet another factor of the 'Akropong years' which must now engage our attention, namely Amu's relationship with the family of the *Omanhene*, Kwasi Akuffo. It is not an exaggeration to say that Amu's cultural pre-disposition was greatly influenced by the Akuffo family. We have already noted that Amu entered Akropong at the time Kwasi Akuffo, described as 'a renowned classical scholar and great orator'⁴⁹ was *Omanhene* of Akuapem. He trained at the seminary and therefore had a Christian background. Unlike Ofori Kuma, however, he epitomised the cultural aspirations of the Akuapem people. As noted by Fred Agyemang, Kwasi Akuffo 'personally trained and supervised the training of his many sons⁵⁰ and daughters in all aspects of Akuapem culture and statecraft'.⁵¹ It was from the children of Kwasi Akuffo that Amu learnt Akuapem Twi as well as other aspects of Akan culture, such as drum language, indigenous folklore, war songs, funeral dirges and proverbs.⁵² This is acknowledged by Amu in his own words:

I learnt from various people. I was at Akropong when I began to think of these things. And so I looked for people who knew songs, indigenous music, and I happen to find two men who were Nana Akuffo, late Omanhene Akuffo's sons, who knew some of these songs at Akropong and so on, and they taught me some of these songs and they taught me drumming also. And two elderly women also taught me *Adenkum* songs. So these were the people who helped me.

J.E.K AGGREY AND THE GOLD COAST INTELLEGENSIA

Another person who greatly influenced the life of Ephraim Amu during this period was Dr. J.E.K. Aggrey. Amu's 1933 diary entries suggest that he was actively involved in the Aggrey Students' Union of the Presbyterian Training College.⁵³ Edwin Smith's book, *Aggrey of Africa*⁵⁴, was of immense inspiration to Amu. He had a habit of quoting from this book whenever he prepared his sermons. It was Aggrey's death in 1927 that brought Amu to the realisation that Africa indeed had a contribution to make to the world. What eventually led to Amu becoming a *changed man*⁵⁵ was the memorial service organised for Aggrey by the West African Students Union. The event was carried in the Journal of the West African Students Union which Amu read. He was particularly fascinated by Ladipo Solanke's Yoruba attire and his Yoruba dirge. There is evidence to show that other advocates of the 'African Renaissance' may have influenced Amu's life. This is contained in a sermon Amu

preached in 1951 with the title, 'These upsetters of the World'.⁵⁶ In this sermon Amu made reference to 'a teacher's refresher course held in Accra' in 1926 which he attended. The course was addressed by Dr. Aggrey and others including Rev. J.B. Anaman, Mr. Kobina Sekyi, and J.P. Brown, who for many years was one of the leading figures in the Aborigines Rights Protection Society. Rev. Anaman spoke on 'Fante language and literature' while Mr. Sekyi's topic was, 'How to reach the minds of African pupils'.⁵⁷ Fred Agyeman has noted that Kobina Sekyi 'was one of the first Gold Coast educated elite to espouse the public wearing of the rich African Kente cloth by setting an example himself'.⁵⁸ Kobina Sekyi and Ladipo Solanke may have influenced Amu's decision to wear African cloth although Amu claimed that he never knew anything about this cultural resurgence. It was perhaps the setting in which Amu chose to wear his cloth and the euphoria created by the media as a result of his sanction by the church that gave significance to the African cloth. Amu was to reflect on this experience several years later as one of his achievements that resulted in the progress of Ghana. These are his words:

Look at how many of our women go overseas now in their own African dress... Look at the ambassadors and all these people. When they are to appear in various lands, they wear our kente cloth, and that's their pride. And that's what we do here. Now who would have thought of an educated man wearing cloth for any important event in this country in those days.⁵⁹

AMU'S PREACHING, LIFESTYLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COLLEGE ORCHESTRA

Amu's reading of Aggrey and the activities of the West Africa Students Union were beginning to shape his orientation to life as a Christian. On 19 May 1929 he delivered a sermon in Akropong that clearly showed that he had indeed begun to appreciate the values of African life and culture. The following was his introduction to the sermon;

*Nea mepe se meka ho asem: Abibifo Kasa, a eda adi wo amanne: ntamafura, dwonto ne nkyia mu no ye Onyankopon adeye a eye, na nea ehia nko ne se yede Onyankopon honhom no betew ho.*⁶⁰

What I want to talk about: African language shown in culture: wearing of cloth, singing and greetings are things from God that are good. It is therefore necessary that we cleanse these with the Spirit of God. (my translation)

The sermon recalls ‘*Odomankama Ɔboades*’ (see chapter 2, *SONG 1*), which was composed in about the same period. Amu had come to the conclusion in his conviction as a Christian that African attire and songs could be used in our worship once they were cleansed by the Spirit of God. He had already started composing songs using indigenous rhythm and melody and teaching his students how to play the traditional drums. But these were limited to the confines of the College. He was to carry these ideas beyond the school compound. Then, in 1931, Amu, mounted the pulpit attired in his *ntama* (the native attire). He was banned from preaching but he held on tenaciously to these convictions in spite of the sanction. The Rev. Peter Hall, a former moderator, tried to convince him to change his mind since his rigid stance might undermine his chance of being ordained as a clergyman. He thought it was better to dispense with the long cherished desire of becoming a minister rather than compromise his stand.⁶¹ In April 1933 Amu performed in several places in Accra with the Akropong College Students’ Orchestra.⁶² The first musical concert was at the invitation of the Colonial Secretary, Geoffrey Stafford Northcote. A few weeks later another was held at the Palladium Hall in aid of Gold Coast branch of the British Red Cross Society. On all these occasions Amu had the permission of the College Principal, Rev. W. M. Ferguson.⁶³ The authorities of the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast were however not amused. They had had enough of Amu’s intransigence, and they finally decided it was time he left. The Synod Committee of the Ewe Presbyterian Church wondered how Amu was going to conduct himself among them if he was disengaged by the Gold Coast Presbyterian Church since in their opinion the matter was only about *avosasa* (cloth wearing).⁶⁴ They must have considered the issue as trivial and of no theological essence.

AMU’S REMOVAL AND AFTERMATH

On 20 October 1933, the Rev. D. E. Akwa, Synod Clerk of the Gold Coast Presbyterian Church wrote to the Synod Clerk of the Ewe Presbyterian Church, Rev. R. S. Kwami informing him of the removal of Ephraim Amu from the Presbyterian Training College. Records of the Synod Committee show that the decision to dispense with the services of Amu at the College was not unanimous. A couple of reasons may be advanced for this. In a report submitted to the Synod in 1934, the Principal of the College, Rev. W.M. Ferguson singled out the African Members on the Synod Committee as being responsible for Amu’s dismissal.⁶⁵ Ferguson’s report implied that

the European missionaries on the committee had nothing to do with the decision. This is interesting because what the principal sought to do was to present the minority view of his European colleagues and this clearly indicates the difficulty the Committee went through to arrive at this decision.

A further reason why the Synod Committee's decision on Mr. Amu's case could not have been unanimous can be inferred from the proceedings of another meeting of the Committee that had met to reconsider the suspension of Mr. Divine Puplambu who had supported Mr. Amu.⁶⁶ The plea which was submitted by a delegation of the Ga-Adangbe Presbyterian Teachers Union on his behalf was, however, rejected. Interestingly, two European members on the committee, 'The Secretary of S.M (Scottish Mission) and Revd. T.L. Beveridge requested that their protest against the decision of the Committee be minuted'.⁶⁷ The reason the European members dissented on the matter was because 'Mr. Amu and Mr. Puplambu were experienced teachers whose work was highly commented on from time to time by the Board of Examiners at the annual inspections of the College, and whose influence on the students was undeniably good'.⁶⁸ The other reason the Scottish Mission staff at the College disagreed with the Synod Committee was because they felt Amu was doing something that needed to be encouraged. Rev. T.L. Beveridge offered to support Amu's research work while the Rev. MacMillan took it upon himself to argue Amu's case at the Committee's sittings and also encouraged him to petition the Synod Committee's decision to ban him from preaching and their intention to dispense with his services.⁶⁹

It is important that these issues are brought to the fore to correct a perception which has long since been held by the Ghanaian public, that Amu's withdrawal from Akropong was caused by the European missionaries. This misconception is found in a journal that published an interview granted to Kofi Agawu by Ephraim Amu. In that interview, Amu noted that when he started his new African compositions he faced opposition from the authorities because they thought the songs were pagan. Agawu concluded that by 'authorities' Amu meant 'the Basel missionaries, who were active in Ghana beginning in the early nineteenth century'.⁷⁰ Amu could not have meant the Basel Missionaries because at the time the Synod Committee took the decision the Basel Mission was not in control of the church. They had been repatriated because of the World War I and had been replaced by missionaries of the Church of Scotland. The church became independent in 1926 and by 1933 leadership was in the hands of

the indigenous people. The other reason Amu could not have pointed an accusing finger against missionaries was because he had deep respect for them:

We are today far too ready to despise the work of the Christian missionaries. A type of African politicians would say: "The Europeans knew what they were doing when they sent the missionaries before them". By which they mean that the European missionaries were purposely sent out to come and tame us for the easy exploitation of the European governing powers and European merchants. Such a pronouncement can only come from the lips of him who has deliberately shut his mind and heart against simple truth and understanding, and it is a manifestation of ingratitude of the worst kind... If... we realise the great work the Christian missionaries have done for us, then we ought to show our gratitude by doing for our other less favoured brethren, that which the European Christian Missionaries have done for us.⁷¹

It would seem that the issue about Amu's removal is not about the Basel Missionaries at all, nor is it about the African leaders on the Synod Committee. Since this incident occurred, the debate then and even now, has been peripheral and has therefore failed to address the core issues. In an article published in *The Times of West Africa* entitled, 'Mr. Amu and His Church: Is the African cloth the Clergyman's uniform?', Kwesi Ansah saw the wearing of uniform strictly in terms of rules which must be followed. Ansah argued that Amu could not plead ignorance since he was aware of the church's regulations, practice and procedures.⁷² Another writer understood the debate in terms of a struggle between conservatism and reform,⁷³ while for yet another it was simply a case of a church that had lost its consciousness as African.⁷⁴ Apart from Ansah, quite a number of people who wrote to the local dailies after the vintage performance of Amu at the Palladium Hall, hailed the creative genius of the composer.⁷⁵ Many saw him as representing the hopes and aspirations of the new Africa. It is against this background that Amu would come to be seen today as one who spearheaded an African crusade against the onslaught of Western culture and civilisation. It is in apparent recognition of his 'cultural patriotism' that the government of Ghana decided to honour him by embossing his image on the Twenty Thousand Cedi note, the highest denomination in the country.⁷⁶ J.A. Kufour, President of the Republic of Ghana at the time the Cedi note was issued, paid a glowing tribute to Amu in the following words; 'He [Amu] single-handedly enriched the nation's cultural asset by such an immeasurable measure that there's no word adequate to describe it.'⁷⁷

Those who interpret the Amu saga solely in terms of culture and tradition fail to see the fundamental issue at stake, namely, the translation of the Christian faith in African terms and the challenges this posed for the infant church. As shown by the minutes of the Synod and Synod Committee at the time, leaders of the church were aware of such challenges and had indeed made attempts to address them. For instance, members of the Synod that met in Akropong in 1928 expressed concern about the teaching of native songs, such as *Apagya* and *Asafo* in the Seminary.⁷⁸ Five years later, the Synod Committee ‘expressed strong disapproval of ballroom and native dancing’ because of the dangers associated with dancing. They, however, agreed that school children could make dancing exercises with their drums.⁷⁹ To solve these problems, the Synod Committee set up a committee comprising musicians including Mr. Amu ‘to study native music and improve it for Church and School purposes’.⁸⁰

Interestingly, the members of the Synod Committee were not alone in their view and attitude towards dancing. This concern was equally shared by Ephraim Amu. Throughout his entire life, Amu was strongly opposed to any form of dancing in church. While he agreed that, ‘Dancing is one of the important gifts God has given to man’,⁸¹ he was of the view that ‘dance rhythm and actual dancing’, occasioned particularly by traditional music and drumming, excite the emotions and ‘over emotionalism is not conducive to [a] deep sense of worship’.⁸² He advocated, however, that at the call to worship, the *bommaa* orchestra⁸³ could ‘play a combination of rhythms which does not compel dancing... followed by the appellations of God played on the talking drums [*atumpan*]’.⁸⁴ He suggested that the musical pipe, *odurugya*,⁸⁵ with its soft, mellow and solemn tone, could deepen our sense of worship when played from a hiding place.⁸⁶ In this regard, Amu was concerned to draw the limits on how far traditional or African music could go in church worship since he was aware of the dangers inherent in this process of adaptation. Amu was therefore one with the Synod Committee. They were both working at the same problem.

It is in light of these concerns that the decision by the church authorities to remove Amu from the College should be seen. The reasons given by the Synod Committee for Amu’s removal were twofold. First, Amu’s insistence on ‘preaching in native garment or cloth in the pulpit which (practice) offended the majority of educated and non-educated [in the] community’.⁸⁷ Second, he had introduced drums and horns into the college and was teaching students how to drum and dance. The

Committee was worried that such a practice could be detrimental to the church, and they meant well.⁸⁸ Rather than see their decision as mischievous and misguided,⁸⁹ it is important that this should be placed in a historical perspective and seen as an attempt to deal with the thorny problem of the translation of the Christian faith into African terms.

As pointed out earlier, Amu must have been burdened with the challenges posed by the translation of the Christian faith. It can be argued, however, that he had better insight into the problems than the leaders of the church at the time. As shown in a letter Amu addressed to the Synod Committee,⁹⁰ the motivation to embark upon these reforms came from the Word of God. While affirming that the 'Church has a glorious and rich inheritance', he believed that this must be used as 'a true foundation on which the present may be built up into a greater and better inheritance'. The idea was based on his reading of Matthew 13: 52: 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old'. Amu must have drawn inspiration from David Smith's interpretation of the passage as quoted in his letter:

The true Christian teacher reverences the past and prizes the rich and ever-growing heritage of truth bequeathed from generation to generation, and at the same time according to the Lord's promise, ever guides the faithful into a larger and deeper understanding of His infinite revelation; he welcomes the fresh light which is continually breaking from the Eternal world.⁹¹

There is yet another source to which Amu traced his courage and boldness. This is found in a sermon he preached several years later:

*Bere a me ne yen Presbiteria asafo no mu mpanyinfo no reperee abibinwomto, ne abibinneema a esese yede ba Nyamsesom mu ho no ... anyamesem mu asem a ehyee me nkuran kese ne Israeldwom 75, 7 & 8 mu nsem a ese: 'Na emmfi apuei na emmfi atoe, nanso emmfi mepo sare so, na mmom Onyankopon na obu nten, obere oyi ase, na wama oyi so.'*⁹²

When I was wrestling with the authorities of the Presbyterian Church over African songs and aspects of African culture and tradition I considered necessary for the worship of God ... a passage from the Word of God that greatly strengthened me was Psalm 75: 7-8 (sic): 'For not from the east or from the west and not from the wilderness comes lifting up; but it is God who executes judgement, putting down one and lifting up another' (my translation).

It is difficult to see how Amu understood this passage particularly in relation to his experience in Akropong. The clue may lie in his interpretation of the phrase ‘*Onyankopon na obu nten*’ (it is God who executes judgement). Amu was perhaps of the conviction that it was God alone who could sit in judgement on his convictions since God was the ultimate source of everything. He must have judged his own actions as having come from God.

Amu also understood his desire to enhance the ‘church’s rich inheritance’ as influenced by the Spirit. In his letter to the Synod Committee, Amu noted that ‘the practice of preaching from the pulpit in African attire... is a genuine result of the influence of the Spirit of Christ in my heart’. The expression, ‘influence of the Spirit of Christ’ was understood by Amu in two ways. It relates, first, to what Amu called the ‘Liberty of Conscience’,⁹³ by which he meant the liberty the individual Christian receives from the Spirit of God as a result of fervent prayer and a constant reading of the scriptures. Reflecting on his experience several years later, Amu saw his action as a matter of conscience.⁹⁴ In this regard he saw himself as a reformer cast in a mould of a Martin Luther, a William Wilberforce and a Florence Nightingale.⁹⁵ Like Luther, he refused to relent in his position because ‘[his] conscience testified to the fact that [he] was doing the right thing before God’.⁹⁶

The ‘influence of the Spirit’ is explained also in terms of ‘belief’ and ‘reason’. This can be inferred from a sermon Amu delivered in 1956. In that sermon, Amu noted that whereas his belief that African culture had something to contribute to Christianity was based on rational grounds, that could not be said about those who opposed him. Theirs was based on prejudice. Reflecting on his experience, Amu reasoned that,

it was proper for a trained African preacher, that is, a catechist, to preach from a pulpit in African dress (sic), that it was proper for us as African Christian citizens to sing African songs for the purpose of worship, and that it was proper for us to teach drumming and dancing and the other forms of African music to our sons and daughters in our schools.⁹⁷

He was of the view, however, that ‘reasoning’ was only the beginning of ‘belief’, and that ‘to be established in it and be entirely led by it, we must willingly surrender ourselves to the *influence of the Spirit of God*’.⁹⁸ Amu believed that for Christianity to achieve its purpose in Africa it must be intelligible.⁹⁹ This, for Amu, meant that African Christians must have rational grounds for their belief and be ‘led by the Spirit

of God into deeper truths'.¹⁰⁰ It was his desire to make these truths known, and he was prepared to work this out with the church authorities. Following his removal from the College, Amu made an informal request to the Synod Clerk to meet with the Synod Committee at its next meeting.¹⁰¹ In May 1934 the request was granted and he appeared before the Committee to 'ask certain questions, and make some suggestions which have much to do with the improvement of the Church (both) socially, constitutionally, and nationally'.¹⁰² The fact that he was given audience indicated the preparedness on the part of the Committee also to deal with the issues raised by Amu. The Church authorities were to make a more positive response to Amu's overtures 16 years after his dismissal. He was officially invited by the Synod that met in Christiansborg and was requested to 'produce [African] compositions suitable for worship'.¹⁰³ It was at this point in his life that he felt the church was beginning to appreciate what he was doing. In his own words, 'they saw with me and accepted what I suffered for'.¹⁰⁴

THE MIDDLE YEARS (1934-1971)

The 'middle years' represent the period during which Ephraim Amu served in Achimota College (1934-1951), College of Technology, Kumasi (1952-1960) and Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon (1962-1971).

Achimota College, located on the northern outskirts of the capital Accra, started in 1924 but was formally opened on 27 January 1927. As pointed out by Kingsley Williams, the College 'came into being through the happy conjunction of three remarkable men, Guggisberg, Fraser and Aggrey'.¹⁰⁵ Sir Gordon Guggisberg, governor of the Gold Coast at the time, believed Africans were capable of manning positions hitherto occupied by Europeans provided the former were equally qualified in education. The idea then was to set up a school equally comparable to any European institution, independent of government control and free to develop its structures, curriculum and programmes.¹⁰⁶ It was to Achimota that A.G. Fraser, J.E.K. Aggrey, C.S. Deakin, F.R. Irvine, W.E.F. Ward and others were invited to serve and to translate this ideal into reality. Soon after the Presbyterian Church authorities dispensed with his services, Amu received an invitation¹⁰⁷ from A.G. Fraser to join the staff of Achimota College on the recommendation of Ward. He started teaching in Achimota from January 1934¹⁰⁸ until September 1951 when he relocated to Kumasi with a nucleus of staff and students of the old Achimota College to start the Gold

Coast College of Arts, Science and Technology (now the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology). The history of the founding of the College of Technology is narrated by Amu himself:

The decision to build it [the College] was taken by the Special Committee in London which advises on all matters relating to higher Education in British West Africa. The decision was taken but the moving force behind the decision which made it possible for this College to come into existence was constituted by Otumfoo the Asantehene, the governor Sir Charles Arden Clarke, Lord Hemingford then the Rector of the former Achimota Training College and late Tom Barton, one time the Director of Education and afterwards the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education...¹⁰⁹

Apart from his teaching responsibility, Amu preached regularly at the College of Technology and in some other institutions including Prempeh College and Trinity Theological College then in Kumasi. He was active in the Ramseyer Presbyterian Church and composed songs for the choir. With Alex Kyerematen and Bertie Opoku, they worked together at the cultural centre.¹¹⁰ He first retired from active service in 1960 and went back to Peki Avetile.¹¹¹ After staying for two years during which he undertook some researches, he was invited to join the staff of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon. It was here that he was awarded an honorary doctorate degree in 1965 by the University.¹¹² This was in recognition of his contribution to the development of art music.

It is against this background that we discuss Ephraim Amu's philosophy as a Christian thinker particularly as it applied to religious, social, cultural and national concerns. Achimota College presented a more congenial atmosphere for Amu to continue the work that he had began in Akropong. Long before his arrival in Achimota, there had already been in place a programme that sought to integrate African tradition with European training in education. The idea which initially took the form of 'tribal dancing and drumming' was first introduced by Robert Fisher of the Government Training College (Achimota School owes its genesis to this institution). This was however transformed by A.G. Fraser to include not only dancing and drumming but other aspects of African culture as well. It was a recognition of the epistemological and pedagogical values of Africa's intellectual tradition. C. Kingsley William's summary of Fraser's view is put this way:

Education means neither pumping information into a receptacle nor 'educing' latent abilities, but "leading forth" sheep to pasture. African arts, crafts, traditions, history are the proper subject matter of early education in Africa, and an African language its proper medium.¹¹³

As noted by Amu himself, an 'aspect of Achimota tradition is respect for all that is true and of lasting value in the old African culture, beliefs and ways of life'. This for Amu was necessary since 'it is a fact that where education is deeply rooted in a people's tradition it has power to vitalize and elevate the whole life of a people'.¹¹⁴ Amu believed that for education to be credible it must take cognisance of Africa's past and be rooted in the Christian faith since, as he pointed out, 'education without Christianity is no education at all'.¹¹⁵ Accordingly, he was of the view that the early period of socialisation during which children receive education, such as is found in the rites of passage must be adapted to Christian practice and made part of the church's liturgy. Amu expressed himself quite clearly on this subject:

If, for instance, infant baptism could find a place in the ceremony of naming a child on the eighth day of his birth, a custom which still exists in most parts of Africa; or if confirmation could find a place in the initiation ceremonies for boys and girls, would they not mean far more to us than they mean now?¹¹⁶

Amu's point is clear: infant baptism makes sense only in the context of the ceremony for naming a child, and the Christian rite of confirmation is helpful only insofar as it takes into account the traditional initiation ceremonies for boys and girls. It is instructive to note, however, that Amu's concern for education was not limited to the Christian appropriation of African traditions, rites and rituals only. Nor was it limited to the mere acquisition of knowledge (The subject of academic qualification or education for its own sake is taken up in detail in chapter 7). For Amu, the overarching idea in education is perfection. Education is about character formation and being made complete as a human being in the very image and likeness of God. He believed that when Jesus said that 'You, therefore, must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Matt. 5: 48), he (Jesus) meant that 'all God's children should in their conduct have only the highest ideal as their standard'. For Amu, perfection implied 'spiritual, moral and physical perfection, that is the highest possible standard spiritually, morally and physically'.¹¹⁷ And so when he later served on the Anin Commission on Bribery and Corruption, appointed by the Government of Ghana to investigate cases of corruption in public life, he and the other members on the

Commission concluded that 'the successful eradication of bribery and corruption can be achieved only when the individual man and woman is sufficiently educated'. The kind of education Amu had in mind was holistic and this he believed should come not only from 'teachers in the classrooms and preachers from the various pulpits'¹¹⁸ but also from 'daily personal fellowship with God through prayer, reading and meditation... [since that] is the one and only means whereby one achieves that excellence of character which makes one absolutely trustworthy'.¹¹⁹

Whereas Amu's 'Achimota years' witnessed the events of colonial and pre-independence Gold Coast, the 'Kumasi years' marked the dawn of independence and the birth of Ghana as a nation state. The political, social and civil unrest and the agitation for self-government during those periods found space in Amu's reflections. In order to better appreciate his concerns it is important that we reconstruct the major events of these periods.

Historians agree that the single most important factor that impacted the Gold Coast was the World War II. Major changes occurred on the Gold Coast political, economic and social scenes during and after the war. Long before the war, there had been agitation to include more indigenous people not only in the running of government but also in occupying the key areas of civil and public administration. There was clamour for European jobs and higher education. Most of the economic activities during this period were aimed at supporting the war effort, and the people complained about the high-handedness of the British colonial government in its trade policies, particularly as serving Lebanese and Syrian business interests. The migration from the north to the south by people seeking greener pastures worsened the unemployment problem. It was thought that after the war things were going to get better, but matters came to a head when a group of soldiers were fired upon while they were on their way to the Christiansborg castle to present a petition to the governor on 28 February 1948. The month of February also witnessed strikes, the boycott of imported goods, and the looting of European, Lebanese and Syrian shops. Here is Amu's recollection of the situation:

I remember...when one Nii Bonne, Osu Alata Mantse organised a boycott of European goods saying that nobody should buy from the shops and so on. But that was the beginning of our nationalistic movement to get rid of the colonial government. That was the beginning of it. And it resulted in looting of shops, burning down shops and so on.

which would make our country a paradise [in which] to live. Preparations for this new age consisted mainly in tracing all the evils in the country to the Europeans all of whom came to be labelled imperialists. A wave of bitterness against the whiteman (sic) consequently swept across the length and breadth of the country, and we considered no price too dear to pay for the achievement of independence.¹²⁴

Amu also conjectured that when people talk about independence they mean a period of ease and plenty during which all educated people will rid themselves of menial work, get better work with handsome salaries, and live in comfort and luxury. Amu's idea of a golden age was however different. A portrait of a true golden age, for Amu, is what Jesus paints for us in the beatitudes. It is a period during which fellowship with God issues forth in a harmonious and blissful life. Human beings are at peace with themselves, their neighbours and nature. According to Amu, 'a golden age anywhere in this world is possible only when the individual achieves the character of Jesus Christ'.¹²⁵ He was of the view that without this Christ-like character 'all the talk about a golden age is foolish and idle talk'¹²⁶ since what mattered to most people were external appearances rather than the character of the individual. He was particularly concerned about the need to tackle issues such as theft, bribery and corruption, rudeness, inefficiency, laziness and attitudes which were generally destructive of our efforts in nation building. (Amu had anticipated the situation long before independence in his song '*Yen ara asase ni*', originally composed in Ewe in 1929. See chapters 2 and 6). It is in this vein that Amu's idea of 'craving after the righteousness of God' should be understood, for without the righteousness of God it was impossible to fulfil the desires, hopes and aspirations associated with independence.

The history of Ghana was later to show that Amu had indeed judged the political events of 1948 and 1949 well. In 1949 there was a split within the ranks of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) culminating in the founding of the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) by Kwame Nkrumah. Differences arose over the composition of a thirty-nine all Gold Coast-member committee headed by Justice Henley Coussey. Nkrumah was excluded from this committee, apparently on grounds that he was a communist with an inordinate aversion towards colonial rule. The staging of 'Positive action' on the 9 January 1950¹²⁷ by sympathisers of Nkrumah following these developments resulted in the recommendation by the Coussey committee for a new constitution. It was the promulgation of this constitution in 1951

that eventually led to Nkrumah's election and the appointment of the Legislative Assembly. These arrangements enabled the Gold Coast to reach 'internal self-government'. Self-government was now at the doorstep of indigenous black people, but the problems of the Gold Coast were far from over. To fight the evils that had engulfed the nation was not the same thing as removing white people from the helm of affairs.¹²⁸ The struggle for political power, ethnic strife and civil unrest still persisted.¹²⁹ Amu did not believe that the solution to the political impasse lay in the use of 'physical and intellectual forces only'. For him the struggle was not only political, nor was it racial. It was essentially a spiritual struggle between right and wrong. In his view, the weapons needed to address the situation were a 'regular reading of the Bible with quiet meditation, constant earnest prayer for wisdom and courage as well as tenacity of purpose'. Amu called for prayer and reading of the Bible because these were part of his life as a Christian. He noted in a sermon that 'Daily personal fellowship with God through prayer, reading and meditation is the one and only means whereby one achieves that excellence of character which makes one absolutely trustworthy.'¹³⁰ Long before the era of the 'Bible Study and Prayer Movement' in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the E. P. Church, Ghana, Amu was organising a weekly dawn prayer meeting for staff and students of the Presbyterian Training College in Akropong.¹³¹ This practical demonstration of the Christian faith by Amu would in later years be recognised as a lifestyle that 'Africa needs and must have.'¹³² In a letter in which he is described as a 'mature senior Christian', Amu is urged to share his Christian experience through Christian literature in order to 'encourage African believers to begin to write about their faith'.¹³³

Following his concerns regarding the political upheavals and social unrest that marked the late 1940s and early 1950s, and in keeping with his Christian convictions, Amu called for repentance at the dawn of independence. The call was conveyed in a sermon he delivered at the then College of Technology, Kumasi.

Every essential thing is ready for declaring the Gold Coast an independent nation, and in 17 days time we shall enter the independence for which we have strained every nerve in the past nine years to achieve. And as a nation, a little examination will convince us of our close likeness to the Jewish nation in the matter of sin. From all we know it sounds as if the prophet Isaiah's words were originally meant for us in the Gold Coast today: "Justice has to turn away defeated. Right is forced to hold aloof, for truth in our assemblies have no footing. Honesty cannot

enter there. Truth is never to be seen and moral sense has left the town".¹³⁴

Amu argued that in her craving to be independent and be like the other nations, the Gold Coast trampled 'underfoot our indigenous institutions, replacing them with foreign institutions without first examining critically all that the adoption of these foreign institutions implied'. The first call to repentance therefore had to do with blind imitation of Western ways and forms of life and the wholesale adoption and reproduction of the ways of other nations. Amu acknowledged that there was indeed nothing wrong with independence *per se*, rather 'it is the desire to be like all the other nations, to be like America, Britain, France, Egypt, Russia, India and so on, that is our doom'.¹³⁵ He was convinced that the only way to make a meaningful contribution to the progress of humankind as an independent nation was to be African and original. Says Amu:

It is far easier in life to reproduce or copy a pattern than it is to produce an original one... The joy of reproducing an already existing pattern is nothing to be compared with that of producing an original one, and a man, to be worthy of his name and command the respect of others must learn to be original, because it is a fact in life that no one at bottom desires to be a mere copy of another; he wants to be himself. It is the wise parent that encourages originality in his child, and the wise teacher who encourages originality in his pupil.¹³⁶

Repentance for Amu therefore meant giving up 'the desire to be like the other man'. It is striking that Amu's first call for repentance was about maintaining an African identity. On the face of it, it would seem that this call had nothing to do with the prophet's message (Isaiah 59: 14-15) quoted in his sermon. But if the denigration of Africa's past and of African identity is a moral issue as Amu himself may have thought, then his call had everything to do with the passage. A loss of 'moral sense' necessarily leads to a loss of identity (the matter is discussed in detail in chapter 7) and this ultimately leads to the loss of the image of God given to humankind as a gift. Amu must have considered this a grievous sin.

Amu also called for repentance from the 'vice of vanity'. He wondered why 'the average Gold Coast citizen has a strong tendency to appear bigger, richer, wiser and more important than he actually is'. He had difficulty understanding the elaborate preparation that was being made to celebrate independence and questioned whether there was 'any justification for spending so much money on a special hotel, on a

special monument called the triumphal arch, [and] on a state house'.¹³⁷ He concluded that this was self-glorification and an obsession with our own self-importance. Amu believed that the aspiration to national greatness was misplaced from the very beginning. To 'seek first the political kingdom'¹³⁸ was definitely not the way forward. 'Our highest and greatest aspiration', observed Amu, 'should be the Kingship of God in individual hearts and throughout the nation and the whole continent'.¹³⁹

THE CLOSING YEARS (1971-1995)

Ephraim Amu finally retired from active service in 1971. The period from then until he died on 2 January 1995 was however not idle. He still took active part in local and national affairs and was concerned particularly with issues of social justice. He called for justice both in the home and in the work place.¹⁴⁰ He believed that a person's profession was primarily a calling from God and every worker should therefore have a sense of 'Devotion to duty'.¹⁴¹ There is however one idea in this 'closing years' of Amu's life which merits attention, namely the appropriation of the Christian faith in African terms. It was the issue that had engaged him during his 'Akropong years' and which also occupied him throughout his entire life. In a sermon he preached ten years before his death, he revisited this idea:

The Christian Church erred in adapting pagan practices and making them Christian practices without critically examining and pruning them, and by so doing the general intemperance and loose or immoral behaviour prevalent at Christmas as we see today and the great importance we attach to feasting and merry making during the season have become the more important aspect of Christmas than its spiritual aspect. The contribution of the Christian Church to the celebration of Christmas is, as I see it, a maimed or worthless sacrifice.' Let all those Christian leaders and the whole church in Ghana today who have whole-heartedly embraced drumming and dancing in secular public life and some other practices in our national life which they call indigenous culture as necessary aspects of Christian worship just because drumming and dancing and those other practices are popular with present generation without critically examining them and pruning them take note and ponder whether the contribution being made in this way constitutes a wholesome and worthy sacrifice or a maimed and worthless sacrifice?¹⁴²

The issue here is not that adaptation is wrong; rather it was the Church's failure to critically examine and prune the pagan practices associated with Christmas that was in question. It was daring on the part of Amu to have described 'the contribution of the Christian Church to the celebration of Christmas as a maimed and worthless sacrifice'

considering the fact that he had himself attempted and advocated a similar ‘method of adaptation’.¹⁴³ We know that this is what eventually led to his dismissal by the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast. Amu’s difficulty with the celebration of Christmas particularly hinged on what he described as a wholesale importation of pagan practices, such as ‘elaborate feasting, giving of gifts, burning of candles, many merry-making activities and general licentiousness or immoral behaviour’.¹⁴⁴ In his view, it is the ‘spiritual aspect’ of Christmas that should be paramount in the celebration, and this he believed can be known by subjecting ‘pagan practices’ to ‘critical examination’. He understood the expression ‘critical examination’ to mean the use of one’s judgement in determining what is good from what is evil. The idea is based on his reading of I Thessalonians 5: 21-22: ‘Use your judgement, hold on to whatever is really good; Steer clear of evil in any form’.

Amu’s ‘method of adaptation’ becomes clearer when it is viewed against the backdrop of his own understanding of how African tradition and culture, as in the areas of music, drumming and dancing can be incorporated into Christian worship. While he suggested, as we have already noted, that we could experiment with drumming in Christian worship, he greatly abhorred dancing in any form. In an address delivered at the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in Kumasi, Amu had this to say about dancing:

Those who are knowledgeable about dancing tell us that its first important aim is to attract the female sex to the male sex or vice versa. This truth is evident in the Asante-Adowa dance. Dancing, because of its extreme lustfulness and its connection with gladiatorial sports, namely, real executions and similar horrors which were portrayed on the Roman stage was, frowned upon by the early Church Fathers, and up to this day the older churches do not accept it as an aspect of worship.¹⁴⁵

Amu noted in this address that he was deeply disturbed at what he witnessed during the 50th anniversary celebration of the Akuapem Singing Band. He described the dancing on this occasion as lustful. ‘Dance music’, he contended, ‘can only content the body, it can never refresh the soul’.¹⁴⁶ The only aspect of African dance that was acceptable to him was the gesticulations that often accompany dancing. This he felt could ‘heighten the effect of the words we sing’.¹⁴⁷ We have already noted that for Amu, traditional music, dancing and drumming stir the emotions and as such they are not conducive to Christian worship since emotionalism is destructive of temperance, self-discipline, solemnity, quiet meditation and other values he considered necessary

for spiritual growth.¹⁴⁸ It must be pointed out that, apart from music and dance, Amu abhorred anything which in his view tended to evoke the emotions. Consequently he was concerned that converts to the Christian faith must be given sound teaching devoid of emotionalism.

People won into Christianity through their emotions are like those seeds in the parable of the sower that fell on stony soil where they had not much earth, and shot up at once because they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they got scorched and withered away because they had no root. Shallow rooted faith is as good as faithlessness. Steady useful life, and above all, consistent and effective Christian life is possible only where faith in Jesus Christ is deep[ly] rooted, and faith can be deep[ly] rooted only where men (sic) refuse to be governed by their emotions and rely on calm reasoning and the quiet but clear guidance of the Spirit of God.¹⁴⁹

It is clear that, for Amu, the litmus test for incorporating any traditional rituals and practices into Christian worship is whether such practices aid ‘calm reasoning’ or excite human emotions. He was of the view that the depth of one’s faith in God is dependent on the extent to which one allows ‘reason’ and not ‘emotions’, to govern one’s actions. It is revealing that this idea (the role that both reason and emotions play in worship) is central to Amu’s ‘theology of worship’. It recalls Rudolf Otto’s seminal work on the subject published in the early part of the twentieth century. As the subtitle of the book suggests, the aim of the author was to investigate ‘the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational’.¹⁵⁰ Otto argued that human reason alone is not capable of comprehending transcendence and that the non-rational element, or what he chose to call the ‘numinous’ or the ‘wholly other’, in religious experience must also be taken into account. He was of the view that the Church’s inability to recognise the value of the non-rational factor of the religious life led to ‘a one-sidedly intellectualistic and rationalistic interpretation’ of the idea of God.¹⁵¹

If we understand what Amu calls ‘emotional’ as what Otto called the ‘non-rational’, then Otto’s work provides the framework within which to assess Amu’s ideas on worship. In the first place it is difficult to see how we can get rid of human emotions in worship. The very expression of joy occasioned by music and song is emotional, and so is dancing. To argue therefore that emotions should be kept out of worship is to deny people the means of expressing their humanity. However, Amu’s

point about 'emotionalism', that is, being governed by one's emotions is valid. It is dangerous to allow emotions to control what people do and say. It is equally dangerous, however, to allow reason alone to govern human actions.¹⁵² Both are needed in worship, but they stand in danger of being corrupted without the Spirit of God. Unfortunately Amu was not clear on his views on the place and role of the Spirit in Christian worship. Whenever he quoted John 4: 24 one got the impression that it was in support of his stand against traditional drumming and dancing.¹⁵³

For Amu, music, drumming and dancing may be used as means of expressing joy anywhere except in the place of worship.¹⁵⁴ If by 'place of worship'¹⁵⁵ Amu meant the chapel, then this suggestion is equally tenuous. The context of John 4: 24 used by Amu in support of his arguments clearly suggests that it is not the place of worship that really matters, rather it is the inward disposition and preparedness of the worshipper that is important.

There is yet another difficulty with Amu's 'theology of worship' which merits attention. In adapting African music, dancing and drumming into Christian worship, Amu advocated clarity and straightforward simplicity or what he called 'Spartan simplicity'.¹⁵⁶ Yet he found ceremonies, such as the ordination of ministers and the consecration of office church holders too simple for his liking. The solution he proffered is noteworthy:

In all these ceremonies, the candidate to make his pledge simply stands, is asked [a] set [of] questions and made to answer the questions in exactly the words read to him by the officiating minister. I think it would be more meaningful, more impressive and more effective if the candidate is made to take hold of the state sword and make a pledge in his own words to cover answers to all the questions. This is Ghanaian tradition when a chief or a sub-chief or a linguist or a captain is being installed.¹⁵⁷

At this point we begin to see the ambiguities and inconsistencies in Amu's 'method of adaptation'. Whereas Amu stood for simplicity in Christian worship, what he advocated was far from simple. He must have been aware that installation ceremonies of traditional office bearers, though 'impressive', are sophisticated. Such occasions are often celebrated in pomp and pageantry, and one may wonder whether the frenzied and ecstatic mood unleashed by such glamorous celebrations can be contained in the style and mode of worship Amu advocated. The other more important factor that Amu may not have considered is the question of power. In the traditional setting, an office holder, such as a chief, holds the state sword and swears to his

subjects to serve them day and night. Often, people are denied this service and they in turn are rather made to serve. It will not be impossible, therefore, for ministers of the Church, particularly heads of churches, to behave like traditional rulers especially when their installation into ecclesiastical office is cast in a mode similar to what Amu suggested. The roots of ecclesiastical authoritarianism, like political dictatorship, may well lie in some aspects of chieftaincy and some of the forms of traditional political institutions.¹⁵⁸

Amu's 'theology of worship' however goes beyond the Christian appropriation of external modes of worship like drumming and dancing. He saw worship in the traditional setting at a much deeper level as shedding light on our understanding of what Christian worship should be about. In a sermon he preached in 1943¹⁵⁹ Amu drew parallels between what is done for the ancestors at the *nsɔrem* (place of the dead) and what Christians do in church. *Nsɔrem* and its cognates ('*sɔre*', '*asɔre*', '*asɔrefo*', '*asɔredan*') are important therefore for our understanding of transcendence. In this sermon we have a vivid and picturesque description of *nsɔrem*. Christaller defines this to mean 'the place outside the town, where corpses are cast or buried'. The offering of food and drinks seemed to have played a vital role particularly in honouring newly deceased relatives as witnessed among the Akyems: '*Akyemfo si wɔn awufo nsɔre, enese wɔnua aduan na wɔsaw nsu ne nsa na wɔde gya ka ho kɔsɔ wɔ kurotia ma nea wawu no, eda a owufo no wui dapen*' (The Akyems put up a place for a newly deceased relative, they cook food, fetch water and give drinks. In addition they take fire along with them to the outskirts of the town to offer these to the deceased a week after burial).¹⁶⁰

For Amu, the reason the place of the dead is called *nsɔrem* is because that is where the *nenanom nsamanfo* (the ancestors) are called upon to 'wake up' or to 'rise up'. The Twi word is '*sɔre*'. It is interesting how this word connects with the others- '*asɔre*', '*asɔrefo*', '*asɔredan*'. From its pre-Christian roots Amu believes *asɔre* comprises three ingredients; *ahofama* (voluntary offering of oneself), *aseda ne osebo* (thanks and praise), *adesre* (and supplication). According to Christaller *asɔre* is 'common prayer, devotional meeting; divine service; devotional exercise; family worship; public worship'.¹⁶¹ From its pre-Christian usage we know *asɔre* means simply more than 'prayer'. The other Twi word that 'prayer' translates is *mpaebɔ*. In the Ga language the verb '*sɔle*' (a corruption of *sɔre*) means 'to pray'. The pre-

Christian noun form ‘*sɔlemɔ*’ is close in meaning to what both Christaller and Amu describe particularly as used by A.W. Hanson in his translation of Mat. 2: 2: ‘*Negbe mɔni afo le, Yudafoi le amantse le yɔɔ? Shi wɔna eɣulami le ye boka le ni wɔba le sɔlemɔ nɛɛ*’ (Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him).¹⁶² There is, however, one dimension to the Ga usage that is absent in both Christaller and Amu. For Zimmerman, the range of meanings of *sɔlemɔ* include ‘copulation’ as well.¹⁶³ It is not too clear how ‘copulation’ is connected to ‘*sɔlemɔ*’ and invariably to ‘*asɔre*’. We may only speculate and say that perhaps Amu’s understanding of *asɔre* as ‘*ahofama*’ (voluntary offering of oneself) may have a bearing on what Zimmerman understood as ‘copulation’. In this regard it is plausible to conjecture that *asɔre* has a deeper meaning than Amu would have us believe.

Amu tells us how *nsɔrem* and cognate ideas passed on from traditional usage to Christian usage:

*Wɔn a wɔde Kristosom bree yen no hui se dwuma a yen nenanom di ma wɔn samanfo wɔ nsɔrem hɔ ne dwuma a Kristofo di wɔ wɔn hyiadan mu ma Nyankopɔn no se pepepe, nti se Kristofo kɔ wɔn ahyiaɛ kɔ ye nea yen nenanom ye ma wɔn nsamanfo ama Onyankopɔn a, wɔka no sa ara se wɔkɔ asɔre enese wɔkɔ sɔre Nyankopɔn.*¹⁶⁴

Those who transmitted the Christian faith to us noticed that the work that our forebears did for their ancestors in the *nsɔrem* is similar to what Christians do for God when they meet in the chapel. So when Christians meet to do for God what our forebears did for their ancestors, we say in much the same way that they [Christians] have gone to *asɔre* because they have gone to *sɔre* (worship) God.

Those with the ‘primal imagination’ may have noticed the close affinity between the Akan religious tradition and the Christian faith. The theological implications of *asɔre*, however, go beyond Bible translation. Zimmermann and Christaller take the issues further in their dictionaries and give indications on how the use of ‘*asɔre*’ may have impacted Ga and Akan thought.

Amu’s theological analysis goes beyond any of these. It examines the essence and significance of *asɔre*. It is only in his work that we have the three ingredients of *asɔre* listed and discussed in detail. An apprehension of this pre-Christian religious ceremony is necessary for our understanding of what Akan Christians mean when they say, ‘*ye kɔ asɔre*’ (we are going to church). In challenging his hearers on reasons

people give for their inability to participate in corporate worship, he had this to say: *'Se wote ade a wɔfre no asɔre ase a, anka woremfa nsem yi biara nnyi wanɔ'* (If only you understand what is meant by *'asɔre'*, you will not give any of these excuses).

Amu's analysis demonstrates how an apprehension of the Christian faith in vernacular terms enables a deeper understanding of the Good News. By articulating his thoughts in Twi Amu enabled us to appreciate the pre-Christian origins of words and phrases and how this contributes to our understanding of notions such as 'church', 'worship', 'veneration', 'prayer', 'offering' and other terms borrowed from the West. It throws light on the rather vexed question as to whether ancestors are 'venerated' or 'worshipped'. We seemed not to have got too far in this debate because the premise upon which we base our arguments emanate not from our pre-Christian past but rather from an outlook that many Africans do not, in fact, share. 'Veneration' and 'worship' are European words and therefore come loaded with presuppositions hammered out in the context in which they were coined. If our theological debate were to take place using insights drawn from African languages, and in this instance Twi, our conclusions could be different.

Amu has shown that already within the traditional setting there are elements that bear witness to the Christian faith. As culture is turned over to Christ these elements are transformed.

Ephraim Amu may not have shown consistency in his attempt to adapt African traditional practices and notions to Christian thought.¹⁶⁵ He should be given the credit, however, for being one of the first theologians to attempt such a feat when 'African Theology' as an academic discipline had not yet been born. The 'Position of Christianity in Modern Africa' was a matter that engaged him not only in his early and formative years but also throughout his entire life. During the closing stages of his life it was his habit to note down any thought that occurred to him.¹⁶⁶ The following is his comment on Mat. 26: 28:

Theological thought: Matthew 26, 28: "Shed for many for the remission of sins". A biblical commentator has this to say: "Here is a clear statement that the death of Jesus was necessary to enable God to forgive sins". This explanation is completely unacceptable to me.¹⁶⁷ (Amu's emphasis)

- ¹⁵ Werner Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries in Togo and Ghana: 1847-1900* (trans. James C.G. Greig), Accra: Legon Theological Series/Asempa, 2002, p. 2. Cf E. Grau, 'Missionary Policies as seen in the Work of Missions with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana', in C.G. Baäta (ed), *Christianity in Tropical Africa: Studies presented and discussed at the Seventh International African Seminar at the University of Ghana April 1965*, London: Oxford University Press, 1968, pp. 61-78.
- ¹⁶ Werner Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries in Togo and Ghana*, pp. 191-192.
- ¹⁷ Werner Ustorf, *Bremen Missionaries in Togo and Ghana*, p. 194.
- ¹⁸ Gilbert Ansre (ed), *Evangelical Presbyterian Church: 150 Years of Evangelization and Development, 1847-1997*, Ho: E.P. Church, Ghana, 1997, pp. 25, 33.
- ¹⁹ Hans Debrunner, *A Church between Colonial Powers: A Study of the Church in Togo*, pp. 164-165.
- ²⁰ See Appendix A: Interview granted to the IAS by E. Amu.
- ²¹ Debrunner noted that out of the 481 hymns revised in 1925, '305 are translations of German hymns, 88 are English translations and 90 are original hymns. The 388 different tunes are taken partly from the German, partly from the English stock of tunes'. See Hans Debrunner, *A Church between Colonial Powers*, p. 165.
- ²² Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", p. 60.
- ²³ Erwin Nothwang, "The new Christian King of Akwapim on the Gold Coast", *Der Evangelische Heindenbote*, Oct. 1915, No. 10, cited in David Brokensha (ed), *Akwapim Handbook*, p. 207.
- ²⁴ See Appendix H.
- ²⁵ See Appendix K.
- ²⁶ See Appendix A.
- ²⁷ See Appendix A.
- ²⁸ See Appendix A.
- ²⁹ See Amu's Seminary notebooks (1916-1919). Cf. Fred Agyeman, *Amu the African: A study in vision and courage*, p. 19.
- ³⁰ Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", p. 60.
- ³¹ Ephraim Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', *IRM*, Vol. XXIX, October, 1940, (477-485), p. 480. The situation had not changed much when he wrote this article.
- ³² Ephraim Amu's Bible Commentary (EABC): *The Book of Romans*, Abetifi, 12.3.1918.
- ³³ Unless otherwise stated, translations in this dissertation are mine.
- ³⁴ Akosua Perbi, *A History of Indigenous Slavery in Ghana from the 15th to the 19th Century*, Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2004.
- ³⁵ Ephraim Amu's Comparative Religion Notes, Abetifi, 1.12.1919.
- ³⁶ Ephraim Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 480.
- ³⁷ David Brokensha (ed), *Akwapim Handbook*, Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1972, pp. 206-212.
- ³⁸ David Brokensha (ed), *Akwapim Handbook*, p. 206. When Brokensha described Ofori Kuma as a 'representative figure' he probably meant one who stood for the wishes and aspirations of the church.
- ³⁹ Erwin Nothwang, "The new Christian King of Akwapim on the Gold Coast", *Der Evangelische Heindenbote*, Oct. 1915, No. 10, cited in David Brokensha (ed), *Akwapim Handbook*, p. 207.
- ⁴⁰ Ofori Kuma was the son of Rev. Koranteng.
- ⁴¹ Erwin Nothwang, "The new Christian King of Akwapim on the Gold Coast", p. 210.
- ⁴² Erwin Nothwang, "The new Christian King of Akwapim on the Gold Coast", p. 209.
- ⁴³ Erwin Nothwang, "The new Christian King of Akwapim on the Gold Coast", p. 211. I have seen a photograph of Ofori Kuma dressed as a Western monarch in a long flowing gown and surrounded by his *ankobeaf*o (advisors) all dressed in three-piece suits (see Fig. 6).
- ⁴⁴ Fred Agyeman, *Amu the African*, p. 90.
- ⁴⁵ See Appendix Z/H-4.
- ⁴⁶ See Appendix Z/H-11 & Z/H-12.
- ⁴⁷ See Appendix L/A. It is obvious that the date on the letter is wrong. The correct date should have read 3rd January 1934.
- ⁴⁸ See Appendix Z/J.
- ⁴⁹ Erwin Nothwang, "The new Christian King of Akwapim on the Gold Coast", p. 206.
- ⁵⁰ One of Kwasi Akuffo's sons was the well known and celebrated state linguist, *Okyeame* Boafo Akuffo. He was the state linguist during the regime of President Kwame Nkrumah. Another son of Kwasi Akuffo, Bennet S. Akuffo wrote two books on Akan customs and tradition. See *Ahenfie Adesua (Akanfo Amammere)*, Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1976 (revised edition); *Kontonkrowi (Ahenfi Adesua Vol. 2)*, Accra: Bureau of Ghana Languages, 1964.

- ⁸¹ EASA: *The part African Music and Dance can play in church growth*, Presbyterian Church of Ghana Synod, Kumase, 25.8.1980 (See Appendix Z/B).
- ⁸² EASA: Address, 2nd National Religious Music Festival, 30.12.1980. The theme for the festival was 'to bring revival in traditional church choir music and promote the use of traditional music and poetry in Christian worship'.
- ⁸³ See Fig. 1.
- ⁸⁴ EASA: Address, 2nd National Religious Music Festival, p. 5. See also EASA: *African Music in Liturgical Worship*, Radio Workshop, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Accra, 14.3.73, p.4.
- ⁸⁵ See Fig. 2.
- ⁸⁶ EASA: *The part African Music and Dance can play in church growth*, p. 3.
- ⁸⁷ See letter from Rev. D.E. Akwa, Synod Clerk of the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast to Rev. R.S. Kwami, Synod Clerk of the Ewe Presbyterian Church, 20 October, 1933 (Appendix K). It is not clear whether Amu received a copy of this letter. The copy in our possession is in Amu's handwriting with some portions underlined. The letter is cited in Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 90.
- ⁸⁸ Amu must have been sensitive to these good intentions as shown in his letter to the PCGC Synod Committee. He agreed with the Committee that the church had 'a glorious and rich inheritance' to protect and that in arriving at their decision they were indeed 'exercising their power for the safety and progress of the work of the church'. He was, however, of the opinion that 'whilst it is their duty to check as far as they can, anything that tends to destroy the smallest part of the glorious inheritance of the Church, they are equally ready to support anything which, prompted of the Spirit of Christ, comes to help to edify this glorious inheritance'. (The letter is found in Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 88-90, and reproduced in Appendix H)
- ⁸⁹ The tone of Divine Puplampu's letter to the editor of the *Times of West Africa* seemed to suggest this. See Divine Puplampu, 'Mr. Amu and His Church: An Unanswerable Case Against the Presbyterian Pharisees'.
- ⁹⁰ See Appendix H.
- ⁹¹ Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 88.
- ⁹² EASA: *Nea Awurade honhom wɔ no, ehɔ na ahofadi wɔ*, ('Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is there is open freedom') Kumase Presbiteria Asafo, 16.11.1952, p. 5.
- ⁹³ EASA: *Nea Awurade honhom wɔ no, ehɔ na ahofadi wɔ*, p. 3.
- ⁹⁴ EASA: *Nea Awurade honhom wɔ no, ehɔ na ahofadi wɔ*, pp. 3ff. This is confirmed by Rev. Ferguson who noted in his report to the Synod that Mr. Amu 'insisted on preaching the Gospel in African dress for conscientious reasons'. See PCGC Reports, Accounts and Statistics for 1934, p. 6.
- ⁹⁵ EASA: *Nea Awurade honhom wɔ no, ehɔ na ahofadi wɔ*, p. 2.
- ⁹⁶ EASA: *Nea Awurade honhom wɔ no, ehɔ na ahofadi wɔ*, p. 5.
- ⁹⁷ EASA: *Be not faithless but believing- Cease your unbelief and believe*, Agogo Presbyterian Training College, 8.4.1956, p. 5. (See Appendix X).
- ⁹⁸ EASA: *Be not faithless but believing- Cease your unbelief and believe*, p. 4.
- ⁹⁹ Ephraim Amu, "The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa", p. 479.
- ¹⁰⁰ EASA: *Be not faithless but believing- Cease your unbelief and believe*, p. 7.
- ¹⁰¹ See Appendix M: Letter of Ephraim Amu to Rev. D.E. Akwa, 27 March, 1934.
- ¹⁰² See PCGC, Synod Committee Minutes, Christiansborg, 2 May, 1934, p. 11. Unfortunately, the issues that Amu raised and the interaction that ensued were not recorded in the minutes.
- ¹⁰³ PCGC, Synod Minutes, Christiansborg, 1951, min. 16 (e), pp. 15-16. See also Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", p. 53.
- ¹⁰⁴ PCGC, Synod Minutes, Christiansborg, 1951, min. 16 (e), pp. 15-16.
- ¹⁰⁵ C. Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The Early Years*, London: Longmans, 1962, p. 4.
- ¹⁰⁶ Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The Early Years, 1924-1948*, p. 22-23. W.E.F. Ward, *Fraser of Trinity and Achimota*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1965, p. 167.
- ¹⁰⁷ See Appendices K/A & Z/H-9.
- ¹⁰⁸ See Appendix L: Letter from E. Amu to Ewe Presbyterian Church, 1.1.34.
- ¹⁰⁹ EASA: *A short history of the Kumasi College of Technology*, 13.11.1955.
- ¹¹⁰ See Appendix C.
- ¹¹¹ See Appendix D.
- ¹¹² See Appendix Z/J: Citation to E. Amu.
- ¹¹³ C. Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The Early Years*, p. 10-11.
- ¹¹⁴ EASA: *Changing from glory into glory*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 17.2.1952, p. 5.
- ¹¹⁵ Ephraim Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 479.

- ¹¹⁶ Ephraim Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 479. Cf EASA: *African Tradition in Christian worship*, Christian Council of Ghana 50th Anniversary, British Council Hall, Accra, 1979, p. 1.
- ¹¹⁷ EASA: *The Christian ideal*, Trinity College, Kumasi, 24.4.1960, p. 1-5.
- ¹¹⁸ EASA: *Personal example- The absolute need of personal example*, Peki Government Training College, 5.11.1972, p. 10-11.
- ¹¹⁹ EASA: *The task of the Church militant*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 30.11.1958, p. 7.
- ¹²⁰ See Appendix A.
- ¹²¹ For a detail discussion on these issues see David Apter, *The Gold Coast in Transition*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1955; Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers, 2000 (originally published in 1975 in London by Longman Group Ltd.); F.K. Buah, *A History of Ghana*, London: Macmillan, 1980.
- ¹²² EASA: *Something must be done*, Achimota College, 8.1.1950, p. 3-4. (See Appendix W).
- ¹²³ EASA: *Christ's Meaning of a Golden Age*, Prempeh College, Kumasi, 22.4.1956, p. 2. (See Appendix Y).
- ¹²⁴ EASA: *The New Age*, Prempeh College, Kumasi, 17.5.1959, p. 2.
- ¹²⁵ EASA: *Christ's Meaning of a Golden Age*, p. 6.
- ¹²⁶ EASA: *Christ's Meaning of a Golden Age*, p. 5.
- ¹²⁷ It is revealing that Amu preached his sermon titled, 'Something must be done' in Achimota a day before the 'Positive action' was staged by supporters of Nkrumah.
- ¹²⁸ EASA: *The path that leads to national greatness*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 22.5.1960, p. 6. (See Appendix Z/A).
- ¹²⁹ Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, pp. 166ff. See also Appendix N: Letter from E. Amu to Daniel Chapman Nyaho.
- ¹³⁰ EASA: *The Task of the Church Militant*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 30.11.1958.
- ¹³¹ See Appendices Z/H-2, Z/H-3, Z/H-6, Z/H-7, & B.
- ¹³² See Appendix O.
- ¹³³ See Appendix O.
- ¹³⁴ EASA: *Repent*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 17.2.1957, p. 4. (See Appendix Z).
- ¹³⁵ EASA: *The path that leads to national greatness*, p. 6.
- ¹³⁶ EASA, *Changing from Glory into Glory*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 17.2.1952, p. 1.
- ¹³⁷ EASA: *Repent*, pp. 6-7.
- ¹³⁸ This statement, an adaptation of Mat. 6: 33, was inscribed on the pedestal of the statue of Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of the Republic of Ghana. The statue was erected in 1958 in front of Parliament House, Accra. See J.S. Pobee, *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana, 1949-1966*, Accra: Asempe Publishers, 1988, p. 118.
- ¹³⁹ EASA: *The path that leads to national greatness*, p. 6.
- ¹⁴⁰ EASA: *The Book of the Prophet Amos*, Legon Hall Chapel, 7.2.1971.
- ¹⁴¹ EASA: *Devotion to duty*, Peki Secondary School, 4.5.1986.
- ¹⁴² EASA: *Peace on Earth*, E.P. Church, Peki Avetile, 18.12.1985, p. 3-4. (See Appendix Z/C).
- ¹⁴³ Ephraim Amu, "The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa", p. 480.
- ¹⁴⁴ EASA: *Peace on Earth*, p. 2.
- ¹⁴⁵ EASA: *Peace on Earth*, p. 1.
- ¹⁴⁶ EASA: Opening Address, 2nd National Religious Music Festival, p. 4.
- ¹⁴⁷ EASA: *The part African Music and Dance can play in Church Growth*, p. 2.
- ¹⁴⁸ EASA: *The part African Music and Dance can play in Church Growth*, p. 2.
- ¹⁴⁹ EASA: *Be not faithless but believing- Cease your unbelief and believe*, p. 7.
- ¹⁵⁰ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational* (trans. John Harvey), London: Oxford University Press, 1950 (2nd edn).
- ¹⁵¹ Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, pp. 1-4.
- ¹⁵² In the preface to Otto's book, John Harvey quoted a passage from Pascal's *Penses* which in his view expressed Otto's opinion: 'If one subjects everything to reason our religion will lose its mystery and its supernatural character. If one offends the principles of reason our religion will be absurd and ridiculous... There are two equally dangerous extremes, to shut reason out and let nothing else in'. See pp. xviii-xix.
- ¹⁵³ EASA: *The part African Music and Dance can play in Church Growth*, p. 3.
- ¹⁵⁴ EASA: *Be not faithless but believing- Cease your unbelief and believe*, p. 2.
- ¹⁵⁵ EASA: *African Tradition in Christian Worship*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Amu believed this practice is rooted in 'Presbyterianism'. See EASA: *The part African Music and Dance can play in Church Growth*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁷ EASA: *African Tradition in Christian Worship*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁸ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1995, p. 239.

¹⁵⁹ See Appendix V.

¹⁶⁰ *DAFL*, p. 472.

¹⁶¹ *DAFL*, p. 472.

¹⁶² A.W. Hanson, (tr.) *Saji Kpakpai- Bɔni Mateo ke Yohane ŋma hā*, London: British and Foreign Bible Society, 1843.

¹⁶³ Johannes Zimmerman, *A Grammatical Sketch of the Akra or Ga-Language and some Specimens of it from the mouth of the Natives*, Stuttgart: J.F. Steinkopf, 1858, p. 264.

¹⁶⁴ See Appendix V.

¹⁶⁵ Kofi Agawu has noted in his assessment of the Amu legacy that Amu attempted to bring together two irreconcilable ideas namely Christianity and African tradition.

¹⁶⁶ I was told by his son that Amu did this regularly, apparently, to relive his memories. This was confirmed by J.H. Nketia in the Inaugural Amu Lectures; 'In his last days... he used to reflect on some of the things he did'. See J.H. Nketia, 'Music, Culture, and National Development: The Legacy of Ephraim Amu', *Amu Memorial Lecture*, National Theatre, Accra, 1998, p. 27.

¹⁶⁷ See Appendix Z/DA. This piece of theological reflection was written on the back-cover of a writing pad.

¹⁶⁸ F. Davidson, A.M. Stibbs and E.F. Kevan (eds), *The New Bible Commentary*, London: The Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1953, p. 803. Amu has underlined this commentary in his own copy of the book in red and has put a question mark beside it.

¹⁶⁹ G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1974, pp. 185-186. The thought became more pronounced in the Latin Fathers.

¹⁷⁰ J.F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the time of the Council of Chalcedon*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1903, p. 337.

¹⁷¹ See Appendix Z/DA.

CHAPTER 2

THE LYRICS OF AMU'S MUSIC¹ WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION, LINGUISTIC NOTES AND COMMENTARY

INTRODUCTION

The songs which appear in this chapter form about a fifth of Ephraim Amu's compositions.² Each song can be traced to one of three sources; *Twenty-Five African Songs*³ (hereafter *TFAS*), the first songs to be written in African idiom in the Gold Coast (now Ghana),⁴ *Amu Choral Works*⁵ (hereafter *ACW*), and unpublished manuscripts.⁶ The *Choral Works*, published in 1993, is the first volume of a project aimed at putting together all the compositions of Amu.⁷ It includes some of the songs in the *TFAS* published sixty years earlier and others that were composed before he joined the staff at Akropong. Three categories of songs have been listed in the *TFAS*; Sacred Songs (*Asore Nnwom*), Patriotic Songs (*Amanyɔ Dwom*) and Miscellaneous Songs. These divisions into sacred and secular seemed to have served a purpose at the time the *TFAS* was published, but this was abandoned when the *ACW* was published. Whereas in earlier compositions like *Israel Hene*, Amu 'attempted a gradual or partial departure from Western or European form',⁸ the later songs were closer to indigenous compositions in terms of speech intonation and speech rhythm. The relationship between linguistic tone and musical melody⁹ was something Amu learned very early from the traditional society. The idea was to retain as much as possible the rhythm and intonation of the indigenous language¹⁰ such that when a song is sung or a poem is recited the words can be heard and understood. It also made it easier to learn traditional songs and poetry.¹¹ Amu obviously kept this rule because he wanted to communicate his ideas to his hearers.

Unfortunately several published articles and dissertations on Amu's works have tended to focus attention more on the style and the effect of his music and less on the message the songs communicate. To a great extent, Amu's compositions have been assessed mostly in terms of notions and concepts in music, such as 'harmonic structure', 'counterpoint', 'rhythmic and melodic tones'.¹² Any reference to his lyrics has been incidental and marginal. It is only in recent times that scholars other than musicians are beginning to pay attention to the less well-known areas of Amu's life and thought. Lawrence Boadi was the first to give a public lecture on 'The Poetry of Ephraim Amu'. This was the sixth in the series of the Ephraim Amu Memorial

Lecture at the National Theatre on 18 May, 2004. Only three of the poems were analysed on this occasion suggesting the detailed manner in which the subject was approached. Unlike Boadi, I do not intend to be thorough in my linguistic analysis of Amu's poetry since the focus of my thesis is theological rather than literary. Consequently I have selected song texts based on the Bible. There are a few others, however, that do not have any bearing on scripture but which, nevertheless, betray Amu's theological bias as a Christian and theologian. It is important to point out that all my selections are Twi songs, although I am aware that other compositions exist in Ewe and Ga. I have also found it necessary to set these songs to poetry¹³ and to prepare linguistic notes and a commentary on words and phrases, particularly those that encapsulate his ideas. In rare instances I have used idiomatic expression, otherwise the English translation is literal. In this way Amu will be heard speaking for himself as a Christian thinker and philosopher.

AKD¹⁴: 1.

ƆDOMANKAMA ƆBOADEE BOO ADE NO, ƆBOO NO KRONKRONKRON
 ("And behold, it was all very good")¹⁵

Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee boo ade no	When God the creator created all things
Ɔboo no kronkronkron, Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee boo ade no	God created them pure God the creator created all things
Ɔboo no fitafitafita,	God created them purely white
5 Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee boo ade no Ɔboo no pepepepe	When God created all things God created them perfect
Bɔne bae a, Ebae besɛe abode ma ho agu fi ara,	When evil came Evil destroyed God's creation Creation became defiled
10 Nipadua yi ho agu fi a, Onyame e! Tew ho ma me na memfa nsom wo ara. Nipa su yi ho agu fi a, Onyame e! Tew ho ma me	If the human body is defiled O God, cleanse it for me So I can use it to serve you If the human nature is defiled O God, cleanse it for me So I can use it to serve you
15 na memfa nsom wo ara, M'adwene yi ho agu fi a, Onyame e! Tew ho ma me na memfa nsom wo ara	If the mind is defiled O God, cleanse it for me So I can use it to serve you
20 Me koma yi ho agu fi a, Onyame e! Tew ho ma me na memfa nsom wo ara	If my heart is defiled O God, cleanse it for me So I can use it to serve you
Ɔdomankama Ɔkyɛadee kyɛɛ ade no	When God the Giver of all things gave out all things

Twi title is from Gen. 1: 31. The quotation captures the central theme of the poem which portrays the entire created order as perfect from the beginning until it was destroyed by *bone* (evil). In this poem Amu petitions *Ɔdomankama Ɔbadee* (God the creator) to restore creation to its pristine state for the sole purpose for which it was brought into being, namely, to serve God.

L.1 *Ɔdomankama Ɔbadee* is one of the several appellations of *Onyankopɔn* (God).¹⁷ *Ɔdomankama* is commonly rendered *Ɔdomankoma*. Amu prefers *Ɔdomankama* probably because it is used by the Peki people. It is instructive that both words appear in Christaller's Dictionary. Whereas '*Ɔdomankoma*' is known to most Akan speaking people, '*Ɔdomankama*' is virtually unknown. Otto Boateng, a musician and student of Amu used '*Ɔdomankoma*' in his compositions.¹⁸ '*Ɔdomankama*' derives from the adjective *domankoma*, and means 'many', 'manifold', 'abundant', 'copious' or 'plentiful'.¹⁹ *Ɔdomankama* 'as a name of God seems to mark him as the boundless, infinite, interminable, immensely rich Being, or as the author, owner and donor of an inexhaustible abundance of things'.²⁰ By preferring to use *Ɔdomankama*, Amu places emphasis on God's infinite grace. *Ɔdomankama* is understood to mean one who does not withhold or refuse his grace (*ɔdom/adom* means 'grace' and *ankama/ankame* means 'not withholding'). For J.B. Danquah, *Ɔdomankama* is he who is progressively and continuously involved in creation.²¹ *Ɔbadee* is a composite of a verb and a noun, *ɔbɔ* and *adee*, and literally means 'he who created the thing'. The word is used as a title and means 'the Creator'. L. A. Boadi translated *Ɔdomankama Ɔbadee* to mean 'the Unwithholding Bounteous Giver who created the world'.²² Perhaps it is for the sake of musical style that Amu talked about *Ɔdomankama* creating 'the thing' since *Ɔbadee* rhymes with the expression '*ɔbɔɔ ade no*' (created the thing). Whereas the noun *ade* refers to a 'thing, substance, especially inanimate object',²³ Amu had in mind creation in its entirety; *abɔde* (L.8). It is striking, however, that this poem is anthropocentric. It has *nipa* (human person) as its focus.

- L.12** *Nsom* derives from the verb *som* which means to serve, to be a servant or subject of a king or deity.³⁸ In this poem Amu is clear on what to offer in service to God; the entire human personality and the tangible and intangible network of human relationships and institutions, such as those listed in the discussion above (see notes on L.10).
- L.30** *Adurade* refers to an ‘upper-dress or upper-garment’.³⁹ The word derives from the verb *dura* (to cover or overlay). *Adurade/Aduru-ade* literally means ‘a-covering-thing’. In the context in which it has been used *adurade* could mean one of two things. First, *ntama* (a native African dress, wrapped around the body). Amu’s confrontation with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana came to a head when he mounted the pulpit in *ntama*, an action judged by the church to be inappropriate and offensive to the received Christian tradition (chap. 1). Second, the outer covering of the skin (the dark skin). Skin colour is used as a mark of identity.
- L.33** It is not clear what Amu had in mind by the use of *anɔnne*. Etymologically the word can be rendered as ‘*ade a wɔnom*’ (lit. the thing/something that is drunk). As suggested by Christaller *anɔnne* means ‘drink’, ‘beverage’ or ‘potion’.⁴⁰ If he meant ‘ordinary drink’, say ‘water’, then how was this affected by *bɔne*? If by *anɔnne* he meant ‘alcoholic beverage’ then he might be expressing concern about what he thought was destructive of the human person and character. If alcohol was what Amu had in mind then how could *Onyame* be implored to cleanse that? It is very likely Amu had in mind ‘potion’ or what Christaller referred to as *abibiduru* (native or herbal medicine).⁴¹ Writing at a time when medicinal herbs were prepared and administered mostly by traditional priests and religious functionaries, it is understandable why he expressed such concern. To the extent that traditional medicine was associated with pre-Christian worship it was seen to belong to the realms of ‘darkness’. Amu thought differently. He was of the view that this too came from God and needed to be cleansed and used in his service.

necessary for the making and well-being of a nation): social relation, demeanour, behaviour, good manners and morality.⁴⁷

L.53 By *amanne*, etymologically rendered as *oman ade* (things belonging to the nation),⁴⁸ Amu referred to the custom, fashion, habit, manner, ways or usages by which a people are identified or are known.

L.56 It is interesting that Amu listed 'nyamesom' (the service or worship of God) as part of human corruption. Amu's understanding of the word reverberates throughout the poem. The idea is encapsulated in '*Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen, [na] yemfa nsom wo ara*' (O God cleanse it that we may use it to serve you), an expression which appears no less than twelve times in the poem. Amu's understanding of *Nyamesom* is as follows: '*Yen honam yi na yedesom Nyame, na senea yen honamfam nsem te no sa na yen Nyamesom nso te nen. Esianese yen ade titiriw wo honamfam ne se "den na menya" nti no, yen Nyamesom nso taa ye mfasope....Se Nyamesom ye nokware Nyamesom a, erenye mfasope nti da.*'⁴⁹ (Our worship of God is dictated by our human nature or our nature, and as our human nature is, so is our worship of God. And because the main preoccupation of our earthly nature is, "what shall I benefit or gain", our worship of God too is shrouded in greedy gain... True worship of God is devoid of greed and selfish interest).

AKD: 2.

ODOMANKAMA OBOADEE BOO ADEE AYE N'ADWUMA (The Almighty created all things without man's help)

<p>Odomankama Oboadee aye n'adwuma Obi, hena po na sboaa no? Odomankama Oyeammre</p> <p>nko beye ara</p> <p>5 ma odesani bi remfra mpo</p> <p>Onipa e! wo anigye nti,</p> <p>Onipa e! wo ahotu nti So Nyame mu bi o! Onyame e! ma memfa ope</p> <p>10 Onyame e! ma memfa odo Onyame e! ma memfa hofama</p>	<p>God the Creator has done his work Who helped him? The Creator who works and is not tired He alone will do it so that even though no human being can claim any glory yet</p> <p>O humankind!, for the sake of your joy and your peace Hold on to God O God let me take good will Let me take love let me take sacrifice</p>
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L.9-11 It is striking that Amu should talk about doing God's work (*Memfa nye wo adwuma*) after admitting that God's work is done by God alone. He listed several things such as *ɔpe* (goodwill), *ɔdɔ* (love), and *ahofama* (self-sacrifice) needed to enable him do the work of God and yet he was silent on the nature of work itself. Amu seemed to be saying that whereas creation is the sole prerogative of God, humankind has been endowed with creativity. The emphasis in this poem is not on the work *per se* as what it takes to do it.

AKD: 3.
ENNYE YEN, NYAME
 ("Not unto us O Lord")

<p>Ennye yen, Nyame e! Tweduampon Nyame e! Ennye yen Ennye yen Nyame e! 5 Tweduampon Nyame e! Ennye yen Wo din kese na anuonyam no wo no Tweduampon Nyame! Yetweri wo ara 10 Ohweahiafo Nyame!</p> <p>Yehwe wo nko ara, Hwesie Wura Nyame!</p> <p>Wope nye ara</p> <p>Nea nne yete 15 ne nea nne yewo Wo nko ara na efi wo Yede ahobrease kese da wo so ase o. Yereda wo so ase o Yereda wo so ase Onyame e 20 Gye yen aseda Ohiadi anaa ahonya Wo nko ara na efi wo Yede ahobrease kese da wo so ase o Yereda wo so ase 25 Onyame e! Gye yen aseda</p> <p>Amanehu anaa anigye a Wo nko ara nefa wo Yede ahobrease kese da wo so ase o Yereda wo so ase 30 Onyame e! Gye yen aseda⁵²</p>	<p>It is not us, O! God The Almighty God It is not us It is not us O! God Almighty God! It is not us The glory belongs to your great name The Almighty God We lean on you O! God, the one who takes care of the poor and needy We look to you alone Lord God who takes care of us and protects us Let your will be done</p> <p>What we are today and what we have today all come from you alone With great humility we thank you We thank you We thank you God Receive our thanks Poverty or wealth all come from you alone With great humility we thank you We thank you God receive our thanks</p> <p>Trouble or joy they both come from you alone With great humility we thank you We thank you O! God receive our thanks</p>
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AKD: 4.
WOPE ONYAME ASE NO A
(If you wish to become like God)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Wope Onyame ase no a,
 ye nea etee pe,
 Ade a etee na ne ye ye na o,
 Onyame One yen Agya no tee pe,
 5 Emma e, monse mo agya o.
 Monhwe na okoto ankowo anomaa o</p> <p>Emma e, monse mo agya o,
 monhwe na okoto ankowo anomaa o</p> <p>Wope Onyame ase no a,
 10 ye nea etee pe,</p> <p>Wope Onyame ase no a,
 Ye nea eho tew,
 Ade a eho tew ne ye ye na o,</p> <p>Onyame One yen Agya no ho tew
 15 Emma e, monse mo agya o
 Monhwe na okoto ankowo anomaa o</p> <p>Emma e, monse mo agya o,
 monhwe na okoto ankowo anomaa o</p> <p>Wope Onyame ase no a,
 20 Ye nea eho tew,
 Wope Onyame ne ba aye a
 Pe nea ope
 Na kyi nea okyi
 Na Onyame de, okyi bone ye o,
 25 Onyame Agya na ope adepa nti,</p> <p>Emma e, monye adepa o
 Monhwe na okoto ankowo anomaa o,</p> <p>Emma e monye adepa o,
 monhwe na okoto ankowo anomaa o.</p> <p>30 Wope Onyame ne ba aye a
 Pe nea ope
 Na kyi nea okyi</p> <p>Da bi ewo ho reba
 se wose n'ebeba ampa ara,
 35 Onyame ne baye na mepa o,
 Onyame, One yen Agya no
 Hye ho ebaba ampa ara
 Eda na e erebaba o
 Nea yenhui ne nea yentee bi da o
 40 Eda n'e erebaba o,
 eebro yen anidaso so
 Da bi ewo ho reba
 se wose n'ebeba ampa ara,
 Emma e.</p> | <p>If you like to look like God
 do what is right and just
 What is right is rare to achieve
 God our Father is righteous
 O Children be like your Father
 Beware lest the crab gives birth to a
 bird
 O Children be like your Father
 Beware lest the crab gives birth to a
 bird</p> <p>If you like to look like God
 do what is right and just</p> <p>If you like to look like God
 do what is clean and without blemish
 What is without blemish is difficult to
 accomplish
 God our Father is holy
 O Children be like your Father
 Beware lest the crab gives birth to a
 bird
 O Children be like your Father
 Beware lest the crab gives birth to a
 bird</p> <p>If you like to look like God
 do what is clean and without blemish
 If you like to be like God's Son
 Desire what he desires
 and hate what he hates
 For God hates evil
 Since God the Father likes what is
 good
 You children must do what is good
 Beware that the crab does not give
 birth to a bird
 O children do what is good
 Beware that the crab does not give
 birth to a bird</p> <p>If you like to be like God's Son
 Desire what he desires
 and hate what he hates</p> <p>There is a day coming
 that day will surely come
 I desire to be like his son
 God who is our Father
 will fulfil his promise
 The day will surely come
 What we have never seen nor heard
 The day will surely come
 and it will overwhelm our expectation
 There is a day coming
 that day will surely come
 O children.</p> |
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<p>45 Wopɛ Onyame asɛ no a, ye nea etee pe Wopɛ Onyame asɛ no a, ye nea eho tew Wopɛ Onyame ne ba ye a 50 pe nea ɔpe na kyi nea okyi Da bi ewɔ hɔ reba sɛ wose nee ba ampara, Emma e.⁵⁵</p>	<p>If you like to be like God do what is right If you like to be like God do what is clean and without blemish If you like to be like God's Son Desire what he desires and hate what he hates When they say it actually came to pass, O children.</p>
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This song was composed in 1930 and arranged for mixed voices (SATB). In this poem Amu makes use of a proverb, ‘*Ɔkɔtɔ nwo anomaa*’ (the crab does not give birth to a bird), to admonish his hearers to aspire to be like God their Father.

L.1-6 In Amu’s understanding, *being* is not divorced from *doing*. They belong together. That is the sense conveyed in the first two lines of this poem. For Amu, to *be* like God one has to *do* what is right (*ye ne etee*). Fundamental to the concept of *etee* is the notion of the straight line as opposed to that which is crooked.⁵⁶ Line 6 sounds a note of caution, ‘*Monhwe na ɔkɔtɔ ankɔwo anomaa o*’ (Be careful, lest the crab give birth to a bird). The crab, a marine crustacean, is very much unlike the bird which has wings and can fly. There are no characteristic features about these animals of the remotest semblance. It is, therefore, unlikely that the crab will give birth to a bird. The saying ‘*Ɔkɔtɔ nwo anomaa*’ (The crab does not give birth to a bird) is applied to a child who does not behave like his/her parents. That is the interpretation we find in C.A. Akrofi’s *Twi Mmehusem*: ‘*Onipa su na ne ba fa*’ (As a person is, so is his/her offspring).⁵⁷ Amu drew on this popular saying to stress the central theme of his poem; ‘Children, be like your Father’.

L.33-44 It is not clear how Amu’s idea of ‘*Da bi ewɔ hɔ reba*’ (a day will come) fits in with the central theme of the poem. Lines 36-37 can be understood in two ways; the promise of God the Father will be fulfilled or God the Father has promised that the day will surely come. In my view, the second interpretation is more likely since line 34 rhymes with line 37 and both talk about ‘a day that will come’. L.39 says something in relation to the day in question; ‘*Nea yenhui ne nea yentee bi da o*’ (What we have never seen or heard). Clearly, Amu is alluding to 1Cor.2: 9: ‘... *nea aniwa nhui, na aso*

ntee, na emmaa onipa koma mu da ne nea Onyankopon asiesie ama won a wɔdɔ no. (What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him). Amu believed that the day will ‘overwhelm our expectation’ (*ebebro yen anidaso so*).

AKD: 5.
WO NSAM (NA) MEWɔ
(In thy hands I am)

<p>Wo nsam mewɔ, Agya e, fa me sie ara, Ewiase reye ayi me hu papa, Adee bekye me, adee besa me a</p>	<p>I am in your hands Father safely hide me The world is a frightful place If I shall rise with the morning or the night befalls me it depends on your grace O God Father God I am miserable O God I am miserable</p>
<p>5 Wo a w’adaworoma, Nyame Agya Nyame! Meyɛ mmɔbo po O! Nyame Meyɛ mmɔbo</p>	<p>What I am my going out and my coming in What I do whether small or great How it begins or ends You alone know Let it be well with me O God, have mercy on me.</p>
<p>10 Nea me mete ne me kɔre ne me bae, Nea me meye se esua ana eso, Sɛ eba beko se eba bewie wo nko ara wo na wunim Ma ensi me yiye pe, O! Nyame! Hu me mmɔbo</p>	<p>You alone In you alone I have hope Gracious One, tiredness cannot frighten me I am coming to behold your face to get rest So that I feel at ease, O Father Let me have that O God, console and comfort me</p>
<p>15 Wo nko ara Wo na m’ani da wo so Adeyefo, obre ntumi ntu me bo, Mereba abehu w’anim mahome ma me bo ato me yam Agya Nyame</p>	<p>20 Ma menya no saa, O! Nyame kyekye me were⁵⁸</p>

The song is part of Amu’s earlier compositions and can be dated in the period preceding the publication of the *TFAS*. It is a song that Amu and his wife like very much.⁵⁹ It is a prayer that pleads for God’s protection in a frightful world.

L.15-21 The Twi language here is concrete. ‘*Obre ntumi ntu me bo*’ literally translates ‘tiredness cannot uproot my heart’. ‘*Bo*’ has been used figuratively here as the seat of feelings, passions and affections.⁶⁰ To ‘uproot the heart’ would therefore mean to dislodge and unsettle the feelings so as to create a situation of disquiet. It is for this reason that the poet sought rest from God so that he may feel at ease (*ma me bo ato me yam*). Again the language used

here is graphic. The expression literally means, ‘let my heart sink or fall inside me’. It is in this vein that line 21 is understood. Idiomatically expressed, ‘*kyekye me were*’ simply means ‘console me’ or ‘comfort me’, but the concrete meaning, ‘tie/bind my heart’, conveys something deeper. ‘*Were*’ is synonymous to ‘*bo*’ and means ‘the seat of the affections and capacities of the soul’.⁶¹

AKD: 6.
OSEEBO
(A shout of triumph)

<p>Osee! Oseyee! Oseye! Aye! Awurade Yesu asore afi da mu o! Mommɔ ose, mommɔ ose Awurade Yesu adi nkonim 5 Mommɔ ose aye</p>	<p>Osee! Oseyee! Oseye! Aye! Lord Jesus has risen from the grave Shout the battle cry of victory Jesus the Lord is victorious Shout the battle cry of victory</p>
<p>Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye! Bone ebewie animguase Papa e! ebewie anuonyamhye To wo bo ase, na hwe Onyame 10 Onyame tumi gyina papa akyi na ebewie nkonim Mommɔ ose ayee Osee! Oseyee! Oseye! Aye! Awurade Yesu adi owu so nim o! 15 Mommɔ ose, mommɔ ose Awurade Yesu adi nkonim Mommɔ ose aye</p>	<p>Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye! Evil will end in disgrace Good will result in glory Be patient and wait upon God God's power supports what is good and it will result in victory Shout the battle cry of victory Osee! Oseyee! Oseye! Aye! The Lord Jesus has defeated death Shout the battle cry of victory Lord Jesus is victorious Shout the battle cry of victory</p>
<p>Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye! Owu e! Wo nwowoe no wo he? 20 Asaman e wo nkonim no wo he o?</p> <p>Anigyesem, anigyesem ben ara ni? Onyame tumi di owu ne asaman so nim ma yen</p>	<p>Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye! O death where is your sting? Place of the dead where is your victory? Joyful news, what joyful news is this? God's power has defeated death and the place of the dead for us Shout the battle cry of victory Osee! Oseyee! Oseye! Aye! Followers of the Lord Jesus are</p>
<p>Mommɔ ose ayee Osee! Oseyee! Oseye! Aye! 25 Awurade Yesu akyidifo pe me! looking for me Mommɔ ose, mommɔ ose Awurade Yesu adi nkonim Mommɔ ose aye</p>	<p>Shout the battle cry of victory Lord Jesus is victorious Shout the battle of victory</p>
<p>Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye! 30 Nyame nma e, momma mo bo nto mo yam Yeregu o, yegu no nusum de Da bi reba a, nusu bedan ahurusi dwom</p> <p>Onyame tumi rebeye ma aboro anidaso so</p> <p>Mommɔ ose ayee⁶²</p>	<p>Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye! O children of God be comforted Though we are sowing in tears A day is coming when tears shall turn into songs of jubilation God's power will overwhelm expectation Shout the battle cry of victory.</p>

The song was composed in 1931 and arranged for mixed voices (SATB). In this song Amu makes use of the traditional battle cry *oseyee* in welcoming the Lord Jesus Christ back from the grave after his victory over sin and death in the resurrection.

L.1-5 *Osee! Oseyee! Oseaye! Aye!* is a war cry. It is an expression of joy or triumph that greets a victorious warrior.⁶³ Interestingly, Amu used this expression to translate 'Hosiana'.⁶⁴ The reason is, perhaps, not far to seek. Both 'hosiana' and '*oseyee*' are battle cries used to spur warriors on to victory or to celebrate the triumph of an army. 'Hosiana' comes from the Hebrew 'Hosanna' as used by the crowd that greeted Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Mt. 21:9) It means 'save us now'. '*Oseyee*' is heard today on parade grounds, such as when troops respond to the cry made by their commander or when mass rallies of students or workers are addressed to whip up enthusiasm. In this poem, Amu celebrates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the grave. Just as a victorious warrior is greeted with a shout of victory, so is Jesus given the same greetings for his victory over death.

L.6-14 Line 7 can be interpreted in the context of Amu's understanding of *bone* as seen in *AKD: I*. In that poem, *bone* comes in only to destroy what God has created. Line 7 is emphatic that '*Bone ebewie animguase*' (Evil will end in disgrace). Here, as in *AKD: I*, *bone* is personified. It is presented as losing face, for that is what *animguase*, literally understood, means. J.B. Danquah was of the opinion that the word literally means, 'face descending to baseness'.⁶⁵ Whereas *bone* is portrayed in a negative light, Amu was hopeful that 'Good will result in glory': (*Papa e! ebewie anuonyamhye*). *Anuonyam* is the exact opposite of *animguase* and literally means, 'splendour of the face'.⁶⁶ Not only will *papa* (good) result in dignity and honour, it will result also in victory (L.11). Here in this poem, one cannot fail to notice the ethical dualism in Amu's thought on good and evil particularly as expressed in the context of Jesus' resurrection.

L.18-22 Lines 19 and 20 allude to 1Cor.15: 55: '*Owu wo nkonim wo he? Owu, wo nwowcee wo he?*' (O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy

sting?). Amu's reading of the text as shown in these lines is significant for the fact that *asaman* (the world of spirits or the place of the dead) is a vital part of Akan cosmology. The Akan attitude towards *asaman* is ambivalent because it is the dwelling place of both good and bad spirits and those referred to as *nananom nsamamfoɔ* (the revered ancestors). It appears Amu's understanding of *asaman*, as portrayed in the poem, is a dreadful place which must be conquered. What was Amu's attitude towards *nananom asamanfoɔ*? He condemned the rite of paying homage to the ancestors and thought that offering food to them was absurd.⁶⁷ A detailed discussion of the Akan concept of *owu* (death) and *asaman* and Jesus' handling of them is taken up in chapter 4.

L.25-34 It is difficult to see how the idea in L.25 fits in with the general tone of the poem. We notice that the exhortation in L.30 is a repetition of L.9. Here, Christians are called upon to celebrate Jesus' victory and yet they are to be patient and wait upon the Lord. The period of waiting is one of labour, tears and anxiety, but '*Da bi reba a, nusu bedan ahurusi dwom*' (A day is coming when tears shall turn into songs of jubilation). Here again, as in *AKD: 5*, we see Amu's idea about '*Da bi reba*' (a day will come). The notion is eschatological and explains the futuristic tone of the poem particularly as seen in lines 7 and 8 and in line 32.

AKD: 7.

YEN WURA YESU ANIM OBI NNI HO

(There is no one to compare with Jesus)

Yen Wura Yesu anim	Before our Lord Jesus
obi nni ho	There is none
Yen Wura Yesu akyi	Behind our Lord
obi nni ho	there is none
5 Ne din ye nwonwa se	His name is so wonderful
Ne tumi nso so se	His power is so great
Ehe, ehe ara, gye Yesu din.	Where, where, except in the name of Jesus
Ayeyi ne aseda nka wo din	Praise and thanks be to your name
Aseda nka wo din	Thanks to your name
10 Yen Wura Yesu nti owu nye hu	Because of our Lord Jesus death is not frightening
Ne mu na yene bone reko	In Him we fight evil
Okoko kese koro.	The only Great warrior

<p>Yen anidaso koro Yehwe wo ara 15 boa yen ara Gyina yen akyi Wo nkonimdifo pa.</p>	<p>Our only hope We look to you Help us Stand behind us You true victorious One</p>
<p>Yen Wura Yesu Agya Nyame ba Wo dima no so na m'ani da, 20 Me Yesu di ma me, Mmoboroni te se me, Wo do ne dom mekamfo daa, Mereba na mabeyi wo aye daa.</p>	<p>Our Lord Jesus, Son of God the Father It is in your mediatorial work that my hope lies My Jesus, intercede for me A miserable wretch that I am Your love and grace I shall praise always I am coming to praise your name always</p>
<p>Yen Wura Yesu na odi hene, 25 Asase ne soro so hene, Ese wo tumidi, ahonya ne nidi, Anuonyam ne nhyira daa. Yekoto soro wo yi woaye daa Yeyi wo aye dabaa⁶⁸</p>	<p>Our Lord Jesus reigns as King King of both Earth and Heaven Power and wealth belongs to You Glory and blessing always We kneel and worship and praise you always We praise you always.</p>

It is instructive that this song has been listed as the first in the *TFAS*. It is also found in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana new hymn book.⁶⁹ It was composed in 1930 to be used as a Sacred Song or *Asore Nwom* (Worship Song). It talks about the uniqueness of Jesus as Lord and King. The mediatorial work of Jesus is also acknowledged by the poet.

L.1-16 The idiomatic expression, '*Gyina yen akyi*' (lit. he stands behind us) as used in line 16 means, 'backs us, supports, assists, protects, or stands security for us'.⁷⁰ By virtue of his victory over *owu* (death) and *bone* (evil, sin), Jesus *Okofa Kese* (The Great warrior) becomes '*yen anidaso koro*' (our only hope) and the one we can look up to: '*yehwe wo ara*'. It is for this reason that Amu felt able to call upon Jesus to '*boa yen*' (help us) and '*Gyina yen akyi*' (stand behind us). Whereas we need Jesus' assistance and protection, he himself needs no such security and support. Indeed, that is the point Amu made in lines 3 and 4; '*Yen Wura Yesu akyi obi nni ho*' (Behind our Lord Jesus, there is no one).

L.19-21 There are two institutions within the Akan traditional system to which we can possibly trace the origins of *odima* (intercessor, mediator or

advocate),⁷¹ the noun form of the verb *di* ('to plead, to carry on a suit or plea').⁷² In the past, to seek audience with the king one needed to observe certain protocols since he may not be approached directly. One such protocol was the appointment of the *Adamfo* whose main function in the court was to act as an intermediary between the subject and the king.⁷³ The other deals with the functions of the *Oguantoahene* in the traditional court. The word 'oguntoa' from which this office derives its name means 'refuge'.⁷⁴ In the past, a person who had been condemned to death could obtain pardon from the *Oguantoahene* by touching his feet. The *Oguantoahene* (lit. king of refugees) was therefore seen as an intermediary or intercessor for fugitives and those seeking justice. Lines 19-21 become clearer when they are placed in the context of the above discussion. In that sense Jesus is seen as *Oguantoahene*, an intermediary or mediator for Amu who described himself as *mmoborɔni* (a miserable wretch). Today, (and probably in the time of Amu) *odimafoɔ* is used mostly in Christian songs and prayers to express the mediatorial functions of Jesus Christ.

**AKD: 8.
ANIMIA
(Pertinacity)**

<p>Nkwa yi Onyame de ma yen ye de o</p> <p>eye de o, eye de</p> <p>Asetra a ebae bebataa ho ye den</p> <p>eye nwene</p> <p>5 Yeye no den na ebeye yie?</p> <p>Yeye no den na ebeye de a?</p> <p>Animia na yede beye bribi</p> <p>Yede animia, animia, animia</p> <p>Yede animia beye bribi</p> <p>10 Yede animia beye bribi</p> <p>Asetra nyinaa ye animia, animia, animia</p> <p>Adwuma ye animia</p> <p>Onipa e hwe no yiye o!</p> <p>Adidi mpo ye animia.</p> <p>15 Yonkodo nso ye animia, animia, animia</p>	<p>This life that God has given to us is pleasant</p> <p>it is pleasant</p> <p>But social existence that attached itself to this life is difficult</p> <p>it is bitter</p> <p>What shall we do to make it work?</p> <p>What shall we do to make it pleasant?</p> <p>It is with perseverance that we shall do something.</p> <p>With perseverance, perseverance, perseverance</p> <p>With perseverance we shall accomplish something</p> <p>With perseverance we shall accomplish something</p> <p>Social or earthly existence is perseverance</p> <p>Work entails perseverance</p> <p>Humankind be careful</p> <p>Even eating demands perseverance</p> <p>Neighbourly love is perseverance, perseverance, perseverance</p>
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shall we do to it to make it pleasant?). The same meaning is intended in both cases with the lines reinforcing each other. The demonstrative pronoun, *no* (it), could refer to both '*nkwa*' and '*asetra*'. The concern here is with addressing the problem created by '*asetra*'. For Amu, '*animia*' is the solution. The words that define '*animia*' include 'exertion', 'discipline', 'endeavour' and 'perseverance'.⁷⁸ Amu defines '*animia*' as 'pertinacity', a state in which a person refuses to be defeated by difficulties. 'All of human existence is perseverance' (*asetra nyinaa ye animia*). Examples of '*animia*' include *adwuma* (work), *adidi* (eating), *yɔnkodɔ* (neighbourly love), *nokwardi* (faithfulness), *anigye* (joy), *aware* (marriage), *emmayen* (education), *abusuabɔ* (knitting the family together), *Nyamesom* (service to God), *gyidi* (faith), and *adepaye* (doing any good thing). The poem raises a theological problem; to what extent, if any, is human effort part of the solution in addressing the human predicament? Is there divine involvement? I take up these issues in chapter 3.

AKD: 9.
MONYI MO HO ADI MMANIN MMA
 (Reveal yourselves, ye heroes)

Monyi mo ho adi o Monyi mo ho adi o Monyi mo ho adi o mmanin mma	Declare yourselves Declare yourselves Declare yourselves and be brave like men
Asetra no ato ɔko dennen a	The fight against this earthly life is difficult
5 Yereko a, monyi mo ho adi o, mmanin mma	We are struggling, so declare yourselves brave men
Omansom no ato ɔko dennen a Yereko a, monyi mo ho adi o, mmanin mma	Service to the nation is a struggle When we struggle, declare yourselves as brave men
Wogyina a, dom refa wo so, wosan a, woye ohufo, 10 woko ko anim a, woye obanin brave man	If you stand, the foe will overtake you If you retreat, you are a coward, If you advance and struggle you are a
Monko o, monko no dennen Yereko a, monyi mo ho adi o mmanin mma	You struggle, struggle it hard We are struggling, brave men declare yourselves
Monyi mo ho adi o Monyi mo ho adi o 15 Monyi mo ho adi o mmanin mma	Declare yourselves Declare yourselves Declare yourselves brave men
Nyamesom no ato ɔko dennen a, yereko a, monyi moho adi o mmanin mma	The worship of God is a struggle when we are struggling declare yourselves brave men
Nyame 'dwuma no ato ɔko dennen a	The work of God is a struggle

<p>yereko a, monyi mo ho adi o mmanin mma</p> <p>20 Wogyina a, dɔm refa wo so, wosan a, woye ohufo, woko kɔ anim a, woye ɔbanin</p> <p>Monko o, monko no dennen yereko a, monyi mo ho adi o mmanin mma⁷⁹</p>	<p>When we struggle declare yourselves as brave men If you stand, the foe will overtake you If you retreat, you are a coward, If you advance and struggle you are a brave man You struggle, struggle it hard We are struggling, declare yourselves brave men</p>
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The song was composed in 1931 and arranged for mixed voices. As in *AKD: 8*, the worship of God and his work are also portrayed as struggles. The poet therefore exhorts his hearers to struggle hard like heroes and not to retreat.

Amu defines bravery here solely in terms of masculinity; '*Monyi mo ho adi o mmanin mma*'. The expression literally means, 'declare yourselves children/sons of men'. Christaller put it this way; 'behave (*'quit yourselves'*) like men'. The idea is buttressed in lines 9 and 10; '*wosan a, woye ohufo,*' (if you retreat then you are a coward) but '*woko kɔ anim a, woye ɔbanin*' (if you fight as you advance, then you are a man). It is possible to conjecture that as a product of his age, Amu was influenced by the sexist language of his day. Although he did not use inclusive language, he probably had females too in mind. Here, as in the previous poem, the concerns and issues are the same but the language takes a different medium; warfare. Amu's reason; '*Asetra no ato ɔko dennen*' (lit. life in this earthly existence has been met with a hard struggle). Idiomatically, the expression means 'life has become difficult and unbearable'. Since life itself has become 'war' it is expedient to fight it, else '*wogyina a, dɔm refa wo so*' (if you stand, you will be overrun by the foe). As in the previous poem, Amu mentioned specific areas of life (*Nyamesom* (service of God), *ɔmansom* (Public service), *Nyame adwuma* (God's work) which, in his view, are bedevilled with difficulties and needed to be rescued.

AKD: 10.
METO M'ANI MEHWE NNIPA ASETRAM'
(When I look round at human life)

<p>Meto m'ani mehwe nnipa asetra mu existence Nido a nnipa wo no sua koraa, small Nyame, wo ne nido nyinaa 'bura ma emfi wo mmegu nnipa komam.</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The love that humankind have is so O God, you are the spring of love Let love flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Love that is not selfish Love that is pure Love that abides This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of</p>
<p>5 Odo a enni ahope Odo a eho tew Odo a stra ho daa Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne</p>	<p>That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us your children's request</p>
<p>10 Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma God full Na wope no aye wo mmaa nyinaa Nyame pa dom tie yen Wo mma 'desre</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The faithfulness of humankind is so God is the spring of all truth let faithfulness flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Faithfulness in joy Faithfulness in suffering Faithfulness in death This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us your children's request</p>
<p>15 Meto m'ani mehwe nnipa asetra mu existence Nnipa mma nokwaredi sua koraa, small Nyame ne nokware nyinaa 'bura ma emfi wo mmegu nnipa komam</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The faithfulness of humankind is so God is the spring of all truth let faithfulness flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Faithfulness in joy Faithfulness in suffering Faithfulness in death This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us your children's request</p>
<p>20 Nokwaredi anigye mu Nokwaredi amanem Nokwaredi ko wum Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The understanding that humankind have is so small God is the spring of all understanding let understanding flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Let us be watchful Let our minds be clean An obedient heart This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us</p>
<p>25 Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma Na wope no aye wo mma nyinaa Nyame pa dom tie yen wo mma 'desre</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The understanding that humankind have is so small God is the spring of all understanding let understanding flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Let us be watchful Let our minds be clean An obedient heart This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us</p>
<p>30 Meto m'ani mehwe nnipa asetra mu existence Nhumu a nnipa wo no sua koraa, Nyame wo ne nhumu nyinaa 'bura ma emfi wo mmegu nnipa komam. fill the</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The understanding that humankind have is so small God is the spring of all understanding let understanding flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Let us be watchful Let our minds be clean An obedient heart This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us</p>
<p>Ma yen ani nna ho Na adwene tew, Ne asetieye koma Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The understanding that humankind have is so small God is the spring of all understanding let understanding flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Let us be watchful Let our minds be clean An obedient heart This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us</p>
<p>35 Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma Na wope no aye wo mma nyinaa Nyame pa dom tie yen</p>	<p>When I take a look at human The understanding that humankind have is so small God is the spring of all understanding let understanding flow from you and fill the hearts of humankind Let us be watchful Let our minds be clean An obedient heart This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us</p>

<p>wo mma 'desre 40 Meto mani mehwe Kristo asafo mu Kristofo namye ano redwo koraa, Nyame, wo ne namye nyinaa 'bura</p> <p>ma emfi wo mmehye gyidifo den</p> <p>Namye a enhwe anim</p> <p>45 Namye abotbase wom Namye a etra ho daa Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne</p> <p>Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma</p> <p>50 Na wope no aye wo mma nyinaa Nyame pa dom tie yen wo mma 'desre.⁸⁰</p>	<p>your children's request When I take a look at Christ's church The courage of Christians is dying out O God, you are the spring of all courage let courage flow from you and strengthen the faithful A courage that is no respecter of persons A courage that involves patience A courage that abides This especially we request from you today That all families of humankind shall turn and make the kingdom of God full That your will may fill everywhere Good and gracious God listen to us your children's request</p>
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The song was composed as a sacred song in 1930. In this poem Amu takes a look at human experience and reflects particularly on the lack of love and faithfulness exhibited by humankind. He also takes issue with Christians for their lack of courage.

L.1-13 '*Nidɔ*', etymologically expressed, means, '*onipa dɔ*' (human love). Christaller expanded the meaning to include 'humanity, gentleness, affability, kindness, amiableness'.⁸¹ We cannot fail to notice the end rhyme in lines 2 and 3. '*Koraa*' is an adverb which means, 'entirely', 'wholly' or 'completely'⁸² and describes how inadequate human love is. '*Abura*' (pl. *mmura*) on the other hand means 'well', 'spring' or 'cistern'.⁸³ The contrast between the two lines is clear. Whereas in humankind '*nidɔ*' (human love) is completely inadequate (*esua koraa*), *Nyame* is the spring from which *nidɔ* flows and fills the heart of humankind. The desired effect of such love is remarkable; '*nnipa mmusua nyinaa bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma*' (lit. all human families shall turn and make the kingdom of God full). The phrase is fully loaded. *Mmusua* (sing. *abusua*) refers to the network of kindred and family relations. The term is understood also to mean 'lineage' or 'clan', the institution that provides the basis for descent to be reckoned.⁸⁴ The use of the verb '*dan*' is significant. The word means more than 'turning'. It also means 'transformation' or 'a change in direction'.⁸⁵ Judging from the context in which it has been used here (of the kingdom of God), '*dan*' is synonymous to '*sakra*' as occurs in '*adwensakra*'

(repentance). Amu's concept of the kingdom, therefore, as one in which can be found all the families of humankind is significant particularly when this is viewed against the interpretation of the gospel mandate (Mat.28:18-20) as conversion of the 'nations' and not just individuals.

L.14-52 In each of the remaining three verses a theme is discussed following the style in the first verse; *nokwaredi* (faithfulness), *nhumu* (understanding), *namye* (courage). Whereas in *AKD: 8* human effort is employed as the solution to the human dilemma, in this poem the solution is located in God who is the spring and source of all life. Line 40 suggests that the issues of life are not divorced from those confronting the church of Christ here earth.

AKD: 11.
ODO YE WU
(Love is death)

<p>ODO e ODO e, ODO ye wuo ODO mu wo nsonoe, odo bi boro odo bi so 5 Wontee da a, ebi ni o</p> <p>bra betie, Wonhui da a, ebi ni o, bra behwe. Yesu ne do di adansese odo ye wuo</p> <p>10 Ne hiaa odii Eye ne do a ode do me nti na odii</p> <p>N'amane ohui Eye ne do a ode do me nti na ohui.</p> <p>Ne wu a owui, 15 Eye ne do a ode do me nti na owui he</p> <p>ODO a eboro odo bi so ni! Me wura e, me Wura Me wura Yesu wodo me se Me de me ho nyinaa ma wo 20 mede si anan mu o</p> <p>ODO e, ODO ye ahofama ODO e ODO, ODO mu wo nsonoe, ODO bi boro odo bi so, 25 Wontee daa ebi ni o, bra betie.</p> <p>Wonhui da a, ebi ni o,</p>	<p>Love, O love Love is death there are different kinds of love one is greater than the other If you have not heard it before this is example come and listen If you have seen it before this is it come and see That Jesus is Love is testified by the fact that love is death The poverty that he suffered was because of His love for me that he became poor The suffering that he went through Was because of His love for me that he suffered The death that he suffered it was because of his love for me that suffered death This is love that surpasses all love O, my Lord, my Lord My Lord Jesus you love me so much I surrender myself to you in response to your love</p> <p>Love, love is a voluntary self-sacrifice Love, love, There are different types of love There is love that surpasses others If you have not heard of it before, this is one, come and listen If you have not seen one, here is one,</p>
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bra behwe. Yesu ne dɔ di adanse sɛ ɔdɔ yɛ ahofama o	come and see The love of Jesus bears witness that love is self-sacrifice
Ohia di me a, Yesu me dɔfo no ara ne m'adenya.	If I become poor, Jesus my beloved is my wealth
30 Amane to me a, Yesu me dɔfo no ara ne m'awɛrɛkyekye Owu reyi me hu mpo a, Yesu me dɔfo ne wu na ɛhye me den	If suffering becomes my lot, Jesus my beloved is my comfort Even if death frightens me The death of Jesus my beloved strengthens me
35 ɔdɔ a ɛboro ɔdɔ bi so ni Me wura e, me Wura Me Wura Yesu wo dɔ me sɛ Me de me ho nyinaa ma wo Mede si anan mu o ⁸⁶	This is the love that surpasses all love O, My Lord, my Lord, My Lord Jesus you love me so much I surrender myself to you in response to your love

In this song, composed in 1931, Amu uses the Twi proverb 'ɔdɔ yɛ wu' (Love is death) to reflect on the love of Jesus. Amu's inspiration to write this song may also have come from his meditation on what can be described as Paul's poem in I Cor. 13: 4-13 in which the apostle contrasts love with other Christian virtues like faith and hope.

L.1-16 ‘*Ɔdɔ yɛ wuo*’ (Love is death) is an Akan proverb. According to Asare Opoku it is ‘cited when lovers, such as a man and his wife, are completely devoted to each other’.⁸⁷ Amu used this proverb to express the love that Jesus had for him. When he used the expression ‘*Ɔdɔ mu wɔ nsonoe*’ (there are different types of love), he probably had in mind ‘*nidɔ*’ or ‘*nipa dɔ*’ (human love), as mentioned in *AKD: 10*. According to Amu, such love is inadequate. The love of Jesus, however, surpasses human love (*eboro ɔdɔ bi so*). Line 9 is ambiguous. If ‘*ne*’ is taken as a possessive pronoun then the sentence can be interpreted thus; ‘Jesus and his love testify that love is death’. However, ‘*ne*’, used in a different sense, means ‘to be, to be identical with, [or] to consist in’. In this case ‘the subject coincides with the predicate, or entirely absorbs the characteristics of the predicate’. Going by this second understanding of ‘*ne*’ the expression can mean, ‘Jesus is Love bears witness that love is death’. In the latter interpretation, emphasis is placed on love as personified in Jesus. It appears, however, that the former interpretation is consistent with the thought expressed in lines 11, 13, and 15; “*Eye ne dɔ a ɔde dɔ me nti...*” (It is because of his love for me...) For Amu, the love of Jesus is shown in his willingness to suffer poverty, suffering and death.

L.17-20 In this quatrain Amu responds to the love of Jesus; ‘*Me de me ho nyinaa ma wo, mede si anan mu*’. The first part of the sentence means, ‘I surrender myself completely to you’. The second part is more difficult to translate. Its interpretation hinges on our understanding of the idiomatic expression ‘*si anan mu*’. According to Christaller the expression means ‘to put instead of, to repair, retribute, restore, compensate’.⁸⁸ However, the expression as used in this context is more of a response than a restoration or compensation, since Amu could not see himself offering anything in exchange for what Jesus had done for him. By this phrase, therefore, Amu must be understood to be saying that he was surrendering himself to Jesus in response to Jesus’ love for him.⁸⁹

AKD: 12.
AHOBREASE
(Humility)

<p>Ade ketekete a esom bo kokroo ne ahobrease</p> <p>Ahobrease ne yiyedi nyinaa mfiase</p> <p>wo nsa nya ka a, ade kese biara ye wo de o</p> <p>Asetra yi besi wo yiye a, na efi ahobrease</p> <p>5 Adwuma yi besi wo yiye a, na efi ahobrease</p> <p>Ahobrease ye odasani fe</p> <p>Onyame de eye no fe mmroso</p> <p>Bre wo ho ase onipa e,</p> <p>Bre wo ho ase ara</p> <p>10 Onyame asem a emu do.</p> <p>Ahobrease a, na yede du ase</p> <p>Onyame nyansa emu do</p> <p>Ahobrease ara na yede hu ase o</p> <p>Nyame akwan a ehinta,</p> <p>15 Ahobrease ara na yede hu mu fann</p> <p>Onyame ahonya etra so</p> <p>Ahobrease ara na yede nya mu bi</p> <p>Onipa adwene ne nyansa na ahode ne tumi mpo</p> <p>ye Onyame ani so nkwaseade</p> <p>20 Onipa e, bre wo ho ase ma Nyame</p> <p>Bre wo ho ase ara⁹⁰</p>	<p>One little thing that is very precious is humility</p> <p>Humility is the beginning of wellbeing</p> <p>If you obtain it, any great thing becomes yours</p> <p>If you should prosper in your earthly life then this comes from humility</p> <p>If your work should prosper then it Comes from humility.</p> <p>Humility is beautiful to humankind</p> <p>God's humility is more beautiful</p> <p>Humble yourself humankind</p> <p>Humble yourself still</p> <p>God's word which is deep</p> <p>It is humility that enables us see the depths of</p> <p>God's wisdom which is deep</p> <p>It is humility that enables us see its depth</p> <p>God's ways are hidden from us</p> <p>It is humility that enables us to see through clearly</p> <p>God's wealth which has no limits</p> <p>It is humility that enables us obtain some of it</p> <p>Even human mind, and wisdom and power</p> <p>is foolishness before God</p> <p>O humankind, humble yourself before God</p> <p>Humble yourself</p>
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'Ahobrease' was composed in 1931 as one of Amu's sacred songs. In this poem he reflects on one of the virtues of the Christian life. For Amu, humility is the beginning of well being, and through it we are enabled to fathom the depths of God's wisdom.

Two adjectives, '*ketekete*' (very small) and '*kokroo*' (large, big) are used here to describe '*ahobrease*'. '*Ketekete*' in terms of its size, and '*kokroo*' for its worth (*esom bo*). This is the imagery of a precious gem. The description is concrete and so is the word itself. Unlike the English word, 'humility', '*ahobrease*' carries vivid imagery in its literal expression; *ho-bre-ase* or as rendered in lines 8 and 9, '*bre wo ho ase*' (lit. bring your self under), which means 'humble yourself'. In this poem, as in the previous ones, Amu is again preoccupied with '*asetra*'. This time '*ahobrease*' is the key to understanding

this phenomenon: *'Asetra yi besi wo yiye a, na efi ahobrease'* (If it should be well with you in your earthly life, then you need to be humble). As indicated in lines 10-21, *ahobrease* is needed in *Onyamesom* (the worship of God); in understanding the word, the wisdom and hidden ways of God.

AKD: 13.
ONYAME NE SAHENE
(God is the captain of our host)

Onyame ne Sahene Na yerebeko sa yi yeresua akyere no o Yeresua akyere Nyame o Onyame ne Sahene a tumi wo no	God is the warrior King Before we go to war we vow to Him We vow to God God is the warrior King who has power
5 Tumi a wodeko ko efi Nyame Tumi a wodedi nim efi Nyame Tumi a egyina nne efi Nyame Tumi a egyina daa efi Nyame	Power to fight comes from God Power to lead comes from God Power that stands today comes from God Power that abides comes from God
10 Onyame tumi yi mu na mommaye nyina Yebe gyina mu o aye Onyame wo adawroma nkonim n'ye bedi Nyame wode ne nkonim	In this power of God let us take a firm stand We shall stand very well O God because of your favourable kindness victory shall be ours O God, your's is victory
15 Onyame ne nyansa hene Na yerebeko sa yi yeresua akyere no o Yeresua akyere Nyame o Onyame ne Sahene a nyansa wo no Nyansa a wodehu papa efi Nyame Nyansa a wodeye papa fi Nyame	God is the King of wisdom Before we go to war we vow to Him We vow to God God is the warrior King who has wisdom Wisdom to see clearly comes from God
20 Nyansa a egyina nne efi Nyame Nyansa a egyina daa efi Nyame Onyame tumi yi mu na mommaye nyina Yebe gyina muo a ye	The wisdom that it takes to do good comes from God Wisdom that stands today comes from God Wisdom that abides comes from God
25 Onyame wo adawroma nkonim n'ye bedi Nyame wode ne nkonim	In this power of God let us take a firm stand We shall stand very well O God because of your favourable kindness victory shall be ours O God, your's is victory
30 Onyame ne ahotew hene Na yerebeko sa yi yeresua akyere no o Yeresua akyere Nyame o Onyame ne Sahene ahotew wo no Ahotew a wodeko ko efi Nyame Ahotew a wodedi nim efi Nyame	God is the King of righteousness Before we go to war we vow to Him We cry vow to God God is the warrior King who has righteousness Righteousness to fight comes from God Righteousness to lead comes from God

Ahotew a egyina nne efi Nyame	Righteousness that abides comes from God
Hotew a egyina daa efi Nyame	Righteousness that stands always comes from God
35 Onyame ahotew yi mu na	In this righteousness of God
na mommaye nyina	Let us take a firm stand
Yebe gyina mu o aye	We shall stand very well
Onyame wo adawroma nkonim n'ye bedi	O God because of your favourable kindness victory shall be ours
Nyame wode ne nkonim ⁹¹	O God, your's is victory

The song is part of the *TFAS* and so its composition can be dated to the period before 1933. It was purposely written as a worship song.⁹² In this poem Amu sees God as the king of warriors.

L.1-3 'Sa' translates warrior. 'Sahene' can therefore be interpreted literally to mean 'warrior king' or as Christaller put it 'chief commander in a war, captain-general...field marshal'.⁹³ In the context in which it has been used, 'sa' can be rendered 'the struggle of existence' (*asetra*). 'Nsua', the verb component of the expression 'yeresua' as used in line 2 means 'the act of swearing oath of allegiance or making a solemn promise'.⁹⁴ In these lines Amu paints a vivid picture of warriors going before their commander to take the oath of allegiance just before they embark upon war. Amu must have known that such a practice existed in the past as indeed noted by Rattray: 'On the eve of departure to a campaign, the *Nsafohene* took an oath before the chief'.⁹⁵ The poem is a celebration of *Onyame* as *Sahene*, the one who has all it takes to be victorious in war: *tumi* (power), *nyansa* (wisdom) and *ahotew* (righteousness).

L.27-39 Line 27 introduces *Onyame* this time not as 'sahene' (a warrior king) but as 'ahotew hene' (king of righteousness). Amu takes the view that life's battles is fought not only with 'tumi' (power), 'ahotew' (righteousness) is also needed. As L. 30 suggests both 'tumi' and 'ahotew' belong together. In this poem Amu teaches us that true power cannot be exercised apart from 'Onyame ahotew' (the righteousness of God).

AKD: 14.
ABIBIRIMMA
(Sons of Africa)

<p>Yaanom Abibirimma e, Yee! Monye aso... Asem ben? Montee nea aba yi ara?</p> <p>Yen aso rete o, aye 5 Monhuu nea aba yi ara? Yen ani rehu o, aye Yete o, yehu o, yefa ho adwene o.</p> <p>Aman nyinaa reko agya yen oo, Aman nyinaa rehu agya yen oo, 10 Yetu yen nan a, yebeko bi o. Yesua ho nyansa a, yebehu bi o. Yaanom, Abibirimma e, Yee! Monyere mo ho o, yereyere no biara.</p> <p>Monyere mo ho o, yereyere no pa'ra.</p> <p>15 Aninguase! Aninguase mfata Abibirimma o...</p> <p>Yereyere yen ho dennen na aman reko a, Yea fra mu bi o. Abibirimma e, Abibirimma e⁹⁶</p>	<p>Fellow Africans! Attention! What is the matter? Have you not heard what is happening? We are listening Have you not seen what is happening? We are looking We hear, we see, we are pondering over it All nations are leaving us behind All nations are seeing ahead of us When we move we also shall advance If we learn we shall also know Fellow Africans Make the effort! We are making the effort Make the effort! We are indeed making the effort Disgrace, disgrace does not befit Africans We are struggling hard to move along with other nations Children of Africa, Children of Africa</p>
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The song was inspired by Rev. Christian B. Gati, Amu's teacher and headmaster of the Peki-Blengo Presbyterian Middle Boarding School. According to Amu, Rev. Gati had the opinion that Africans were backward in their development and as such they needed to do something for themselves so they could catch up with other countries. He said the song could be remembered as the 'Gati song'.⁹⁷ Amu's English title, 'Sons of Africa', is misleading since the noun '*mma*' is neuter gender and refers to both male and female.

L.1 The poem begins with a call (*Yaanom Abibirimma e*) followed by a response (*Yee!*). '*Yaanom*' is 'used in addressing a company or number of trustworthy or associate persons, followers or attendants'.⁹⁸ Those addressed could be friends or equals. When *yaanom* is followed by the interjection '*ee!*' then the caller is expressing disgust.⁹⁹ Christaller translated *abibirimma* as 'negro country' or 'Africa'.¹⁰⁰ The term probably derives from *bibiri*, a dark-blue cotton-yarn or cloth, and may give indication of how the Akan and other ethnic groups described themselves as against Europeans in terms of colour perception. If *abibirimma*, indeed, means 'black people', then I suspect the origins of the word go back probably to the first European contact with Akan

peoples. It is very difficult to imagine that prior to this encounter people would have referred to each other as (black people) since they were people of one colour anyway. The idea must have cropped up, it seems to me, when people of a different skin colour came on the scene. An indication that this must have been the case is evidenced in Christaller's definition of *abibirimma* in which we find the word contrasted with *aburo-kyiri*, a word he defines as the white man's country. The etymology of "*aburo-kyiri*" is lost to us, but if we are to make any meaning of it and other cognates or configurations of "*aburo*", such as *aburo-bua* (clay pipe made in Europe), *aburo-gua* (European chair), *buro-kuruwa* (European jar), then we can begin to see what must have occurred. *Oburoni* therefore came to be applied to the 'white' person and *abibini* to the 'black' person. '*Yaanom Abibirimma e*' is an anguished intense call. The response, *yee*, shows that the call has been heard.¹⁰¹

L.2-18 Up to line 7 the caller is engaged in a dialogue with his addressees. The rest of the lines focus on the message to the hearers. Chapter 6 takes up the discussion of these lines in detail. Line 15 alludes to the proverb '*Aninguase mfata Okanni-ba*'. This is translated by J.B. Danquah to mean 'A thing of dishonour befits not the Akan'.¹⁰² It has been used here to refer not only to the Akan people but to the entire people of Africa. In chapter 3, I discuss a song in which Amu stated his belief regarding the end of *bɔne* (evil) as resulting in *aninguase*.

AKD: 15.
YEN ARA ASASE NI
(This land is our own)

<p>Yen ara asase ni, Eye aboɔdenne ma yen Mogya na nananom hwie gui nya de too ho maa yen.</p> <p>5 Adu me ne wo nso so se yebe ye bi atoa so</p> <p>Nimdee 'traso nkokranne ne apesemenkomenya</p> <p>Adi yen bra mu dem ma yen asase ho do atom se ɔman no se ebeye yie oo,</p> <p>10 ɔman no se erennye yie oo,</p>	<p>This is our own land, it is precious to us Blood did our forefathers shed to obtain it for us. It is the turn of me and you to continue Too much knowledge, cunning and selfishness have destroyed our life and has affected our love for our land Whether a nation will prosper or whether a nation will not prosper</p>
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<p>Ɛye sennahɔ se ɔmanfo bra na ɛkyere</p> <p>Nhoma nimdee huhu gyan ana adenya ara kwa ne ɔbrakyew de ɛsee ɔman 15 na ebo n'ahohora Asoomɔre ne obu pa, yɔnko yiyedi pɛ daa, Ahofama ntetekwaam' ma onipa biara yiyedi, Enonom na ɛde asomdwoe ne nkɔso pa brɛ ɔman. Ɔman no se ebeye yie oo, 20 Ɔman no se 'renye yieoo, Ɛye sennahɔ se ɔmanfo bra na ɛkyere¹⁰³</p>	<p>It is an established fact that this depends on the conduct of its people</p> <p>Book knowledge that is vain or property acquired without toil, and dishonesty, destroy a nation and defame it Obedience and respect, wishing your fellow man well always, Unqualified dedication to everyone's needs These bring peace and advancement to a nation Whether a nation will prosper or whether a nation will not prosper It is an established fact that this depends on the conduct of its people people show it.</p>
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This song was originally composed in Ewe (the Peki dialect) in 1929. It was in response to a request from one of the pupils of Amu who was then teaching in a primary school. According to Amu, the teacher wanted something African to celebrate Empire Day. It was later translated into Twi. It probably became popular when the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation decided to use it as the last item for their programmes. It is recognised by many as the “unofficial national anthem” of Ghana and has been translated into other Ghanaian languages.¹⁰⁴ Apart from the Ewe and Twi versions that he himself wrote, Amu is not comfortable with the other translations.¹⁰⁵ In a letter to Amu in January 1988, J.E. Adjepong described this song as ‘The Ghana National Song’. A letter from the Literature Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to Amu suggested that Amu increase the number of stanzas ‘in which mention is made of God as our help’. The idea of the Committee was to give the song a ‘hymn touch’ so as to include it in the new Hymn Book.¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, an English translation of the song appears in the Asempra Hymns under the subject titled ‘Nation and Society’.¹⁰⁷ I notice that in this translation, line 16 has been varied and ‘God’ mentioned, when in fact neither the Twi version nor the original Peki version does that. Perhaps, in the thinking of the compilers this had to be done so as to give a Christian flavour to a song cherished by many Ghanaians. According to the designer of Ghana’s Flag, Theodeosia Okoh, it was line 3 of Amu’s song, ‘Mogya na nananom hwie gui’ (Blood did our forefathers shed), that inspired her to select the colour red. The other colours in the Flag are yellow with a black star in the middle and green.¹⁰⁸

L.1-5 The possessive pronoun ‘*yen*’ (ours) is striking. It has been used here three times as an appeal for a collective sense of ownership of *asase* (land). Anytime the song is sung one could almost feel the impact of the words, particularly when those who sing it draw attention to their marginalisation in national affairs or when it is used as a polemic against all forms of foreign influence, domination and oppression. In the original Peki dialect, line 2, ‘*Enu nu foasie ye kpā*’ is a question and translates, ‘Is it [i.e the land] something one should handle flimsily?’ The answer to the question is implied in the Twi translation: ‘*Eye aboɔdenne ma yen*’ (The land is precious). The reason the land may not be handled flimsily or idly is because ‘*eye aboɔdenne*’ (it is precious). The expression is literally rendered as ‘*ne bo ye den*’ with the noun ‘*bo*’ probably deriving from ‘*ɔbo*’, a word which means ‘stone’. In the past, roundly-shaped quartz stones were used as medium of exchange for goods and services.¹⁰⁹ The reason Amu gave for the preciousness of the land is because *nananom* (forebears) shed their blood for it. The quintet ends with a call on the present generation to continue the good work of the forebears.

L.6-14 Here, the poet mentioned negative attitudes (these are discussed in chapter 6) which had affected the growth and development of the *ɔman*. Notice the development in thought from *asase* to *ɔman*. (See chapter 6). It is possible that lyrics are determined by the music particularly when the latter is written first. In that case we may not see *ɔman* as a progression of thought but rather a synonym for *asase*. It is, however, not likely that Amu would have used *ɔman* as synonym for *asase* since conceptually the words have different meanings.

**AKD: 16.
SAN BEFA**

(The thing you are striving for, you have left behind; “Turn back and take it”)

<p>Okofu Kwasi Barima a ɔpe biribi aye wabre abre yia, watwa ho o wagyaa no akyiri, San wakyi a, san befa.</p> <p>5 Sika a wani abre ahye no, enni wanin Sika a wo ani abre ahye no</p>	<p>The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer He is wearied and tired He has left behind what he is looking for Go back and fetch it The <i>money</i> that you are seriously looking for is not ahead of you The <i>money</i> that you are seriously looking for</p>
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- ewo wo akyi o, watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befa
- 10 Okofo Kwasi Barima a ope biribi aye
wabre abre yia,
watwa ho o wagyaa no akyiri,
San wakyi a, san befa.
Adenya a wani abre ahye no,
15 enni wanim
Adenya wo ani abre ahye no
ewo wo akyi o, watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befa
- 20 Okofo Kwasi Barima a ope biribi aye
wabre abre yia,
watwa ho o wagyaa no akyiri,
San wakyi a, san befa.
Nimdee a wani abre ahye no
enni wanim
25 Nimdee wo ani abre ahye no
ewo wo akyi o, watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befa
- 30 Okofo Kwasi Barima a ope biribi aye
wabre abre yia,
watwa ho o wagyaa no akyiri,
San wakyi a, san befa.
Din a wani abre ahye no,
enni wanim o
Din a wo ani abre ahye no
35 ewo wo akyi o, watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befa
- 40 Okofo Kwasi Barima a ope biribi aye
wabre abre yia,
watwa ho o wagyaa no akyiri,
San wakyi a, san befa.
Asomdwoe a wani abre ahye no,
enni wanim
Asomdwoe a wo ani abre ahye no
ewo wo akyi o, watwa ho o
45 San wakyi a, san befa
- 50 Okofo Kwasi Barima a ope biribi aye
wabre abre yia,
watwa ho o wagyaa no akyiri,
San wakyi a, san befa.
Ahot a wani abre ahye no,
enni wanim
Ahot a wani abre ahye no,
ewo wo akyi o, watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befa¹¹⁰
- is behind you, you have left it behind
Go back and fetch it
- The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer
He is wearied and tired
He has left behind what he is looking for
Go back and fetch it
The *wealth* that you are seriously looking for
is not ahead of you,
The *wealth* that you are seriously looking for
is behind you, you have left it behind
Go back and fetch it
- The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer
He is wearied and tired
He has left behind what he is looking for
Go back and fetch it
The *knowledge* that you are seriously looking
for
is not ahead of you,
The *knowledge* that you are seriously looking
for
is behind you, you have left it behind
Go back and fetch it
- The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer
He is wearied and tired
He has left behind what he is looking for
Go back and fetch it
The *name* that you are seriously looking for
is not ahead of you,
The *name* that you are seriously looking for
is behind you, you have left it behind
Go back and fetch it
- The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer
He is wearied and tired
He has left behind what he is looking for
Go back and fetch it
The *peace* that you are earnestly looking for
is not ahead of you,
The *peace* that you are earnestly looking for
is behind you, you have left it behind
Go back and fetch it
- The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer
He is wearied and tired
He has left behind what he is looking for
Go back and fetch it
The *comfort* that you are earnestly looking for
is not ahead of you,
The *comfort* that you are earnestly looking for
is behind you, you have left it behind
Go back and fetch it

'*San Befā*' is listed as one of the *TFAS*. Its composition can therefore be dated within the period preceding 1933. It was composed to be sung by male voices and falls under the category of Patriotic Songs (*Amanyɔ Dwom*).

It is likely the composition of this song may have been inspired by the Twi saying "*Sankɔfa*". This is evidenced in Amu's English translation of the title. It is puzzling however, that instead of this popular saying, he creates his own, '*San Befā*'. In this poem he reflects on a fictitious character, Okofo Kwasi Barima, who goes in search of things that can be found in his original location. His search is fruitless. The poet draws his attention to the fact that the things he is looking for (money, wealth, name, peace, knowledge and comfort) are behind him. '*San Befā*', according to L. A. Boadi, is a combination of allegory and satire and illustrates a different aspect of Amu's creative and poetic imagination. Boadi explains the title of the poem literally to mean 'come back to the point where I am standing at present and collect those things which are the objects of your frantic and conspicuous search'.¹¹¹ The 'I' obviously refers to the narrator of the poem. The narrator stands at the point from which Kwasi left and calls him to come back. He is still in touch with the values that Kwasi has left behind. It is precisely because the narrator himself has experienced this that he feels able to call Kwasi to come back. This explanation by Boadi may probably explain why Amu chose the less known expression '*san befā*' in preference to the popularly known '*sankɔfa*'. Whereas in the former expression stress is placed on the point of departure from where the narrator stands, this is not the case with the latter expression. The difference lies in the use of the verbs '*befā*' and '*kɔfa*'. '*Befā*' implies a movement towards the position of the narrator,¹¹² while '*kɔfa*' implies a position away from the speaker or narrator.¹¹³ The poem, in that sense, is a critique of the '*sankɔfa*' concept which has become an empty slogan.

The title given to Kwasi, a Sunday-born male, is significant. He is called *Okofɔ*, literally, a fighting person or warrior. '*Barima*' means 'a man' or 'male person'. The word is also understood to mean 'valiant man' or 'hero'.¹¹⁴ Boadi thinks there is something comical and tragic about the name. He suggests that 'the surname *Barima* is normally conferred on a male child

born on a Thursday, not on a Sunday or any other day'. Although the title *Okofò* means 'hero', Boadi is of the view that that was not Amu's intention. *Osabarima* is the word that Amu would have used if he really meant to confer honour on the character in his poem. *Okofò* in Boadi's understanding is simply a plodder, one who has no strategy. For Boadi, Amu's intention in creating the name was to make the main character in the poem appear foolish. The title *Okofò* was therefore fake and the name Kwasi Barima a mistake, since no such name exists in Akan culture.¹¹⁵ Allegorically, *Okofò* Kwasi Barima represents a mistaken and confused identity (see chapter 7). I have translated the phrase '*ɔpe biribi aye*' as 'seeking adventure'. '*ɔpe biribi aye*' means 'wishing or looking for something to do'. Amu made a list of what Kwasi is looking for: *sika* (money), *din* (name), *adenya* (wealth), *nimdee* (knowledge), *asomdwoe* (peace) and *ahoto* (joy).

AKD: 17.
YEN AWURADE OTUMFO KESE
(Our Great and mighty Lord)

<p>Yen Awurade Otumfo Kесе sɔre. Bra begyina w'asempaka no akyi</p> <p>na wo nhyira ahenni no ntrew</p> <p>mma nyinaa ara nkodu babiara owia hy'ren ho.</p> <p>5 Adasamma, monsɔre bi anuonyam ne ayeyi momfa mma Atififo, Anafofo ne benkumfo ne nifafo nkamfo Nyankopɔn</p> <p>Yen Awurade Asomdwoe Hene sɔre. 10 Hye wo ho anuonyam enne ne daa na ma ɔdom ahenni no ntrew ntem ara</p> <p>na w'asomdwoe aye asaase so ma ma.</p> <p>Adasamma, monsɔre bi anuonyam ne ayeyi momfa mma 15 Atififo, Anafofo ne benkumfo ne nifafo nkamfo Nyankopɔn</p> <p>Na wo Honhom Kronkron Nyankopɔn sɔre terew wo ntaban a ema nkwa</p> <p>wo wiase a bone 20 ne esum refa kora so ma ade trenee ye hann nhyeren so Adasamma, monsɔre bi anuonyam ne ayeyi momfa mma</p>	<p>Our Great and mighty Lord arise Come and support the preaching of your good news so that your blessed Kingdom may grow Let your word get to wherever the Sun shines Children of humankind, you too arise and give glory and praise to God North, South, West and East give praise to God</p> <p>Our Lord and King of peace arise Glorify your name today and forever And let your gracious Kingdom grow quickly now And let your peace cover the earth in abundance Children of humankind, you too arise and give glory and praise to God North, South, West and East give praise to God</p> <p>And you God, the Holy Spirit arise and spread your wings that give life over this world where evil and darkness are taking over let righteousness shine on it Children of humankind, you too arise and give glory and praise to God</p>
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There is no indication when this song was composed and for what purpose. As pointed by J.H. Nketia, for several of his songs, Amu did not ‘mention the specific persons or the incidents that inspired these compositions’.¹¹⁷ What mattered to him was the meaning and significance of the event rather than the event itself. In this instance it is the abiding message that ‘*Yen Awurade Otumfo Kese*’ (Our great and mighty Lord) communicates, that is of interest to him. The concern here in this poem is the growth of the Kingdom of God. The poet appeals to the great and mighty Lord to support the preaching of his word, the means by which his Kingdom spreads.

L.7-18 The symbol of the Holy Spirit as dove is what is portrayed here. Amu must have been familiar with this imagery as used of the Spirit in Jesus’ baptism.¹¹⁸ The invocation of the Spirit to arise and ‘*terew wo ntaban a ema nkwa*’ (spread your wings that give life) is because the world is engulfed in sin and darkness. The mention of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the third and final stanzas suggests that Amu probably had in mind the other persons in the Holy Trinity. Line 9 alludes to the Son, Jesus, who is known by the title ‘Prince or King of Peace’. The Spirit is also referred to as *Nyankopon* (God).

AKD: 18.
ODWUMAYEFO
(Worker)

<p>Odwumayefo obrefo se ne home Oda ho asomdwoe mu Obre bebre no akyi na oregye n’ahome</p> <p>Ne nnae so odamoa mu</p> <p>5 Odwumayefo nsiyefo se n’ayeyi</p> <p>Na mmoden taa ye bona</p> <p>Nyame ne nnipa de nkonim abotiri bo ne ti, se anoma</p> <p>Odwumayefo nokwafu se n’akatua</p> <p>10 Na nkonim no wanya di</p>	<p>The tired worker deserves his rest He lies there in peace After the hard work he receives his rest His sleep in death is complete rest</p> <p>The industrious worker is worthy of his praise because industriousness is not easy to achieve God and man crown him with victory as a sign of his zeal</p> <p>The faithful worker is worthy of his wages and the victory he has already achieved</p>
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Soro ahotefo mu tra ne n'akatua	To dwell with the righteous ones in heaven is his reward
Eno ne n'agyapade	That is his inheritance
Nhyira ne won a wowui wo Awurade mu	Blessed are those who died in the Lord
Efi nne de kosi daa	From now on till ever
15 Nokwafo ne Nyankopon wo ne bohye mu	God is faithful to his promises
Na obema won ahome daa ¹¹⁹	He will give them everlasting rest

The date of composition this song is uncertain. It was one of the two songs of Amu selected during the compilation of the new hymn of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.¹²⁰ '*Odwumayefo*' celebrates the industrious worker. There are three essential things that the poet believes the dutiful worker is worthy of; rest from his labours, praise for his untiring efforts and wages for his hard work. It is the poet's conviction that all these come from God.

L.1, 5, 9 Three adjectival nouns describe *odwumayefo* (worker) in this poem; *obrefo* (wearyed or tired person), *nsiyefo* (industrious person), and *nokwafo* (faithful person). Notice how each word rhymes with *odwumayefo*.

L.10-12 The concern of Amu here is to show that work is not only about labour and industry. 'Work' has an ethical dimension (faithfulness) that is rooted in Amu's understanding of God as revealed in the scriptures. The reward of the faithful worker is discussed in eschatological terms: '*Soro ahotefo mu tra ne n'akatua*' (To dwell with the righteous ones in heaven is his reward). The faithful worker's lot is among the righteous ones. The use of *agyapade* in line 12 reinforces this conviction in traditional terms. The word means 'heritage' or 'inheritance'. In societies in which kinship is traced through matrilineal descent, a person receives his *agyapade* (inheritance) from a brother of the same mother or his mother's brother. In traditional society this included slaves, wealth and succession to the royal stool. The poet sees the faithful worker's reward as a great and precious inheritance.

L.13-16 These lines allude to Rev. 14: 13 and II Pet. 3: 8-13. Because God himself is faithful he will keep his promise.

AKD: 19.
BIAKOYE
(Unity)

Yede yen adwene ne nneyee, yen nantew ne yen ahokeka kyere se yonkodo 'se.	With our minds and deeds, our way of life and zeal show that oneness is proper and worthy.
5 Yesu hyee, yebetram 'nne ne da nyinaa Yonkodo ye, biakoye ye,	It is a command of Jesus, we shall live by it today and forever Neighbourly love is good, oneness is good
na egye yen ani, ehye yen den, ema yenyin, ko yen anim sakra yen koraa Enti momma yenkura mu daa ¹²¹	It refreshes us, it encourages us It makes us mature and progressive It transforms us through and through and so let us hold on to it forever.

'*Biakoye*' was composed for the first union convention of the Akuapem Singing Bands held in Akropong in August 1933. It is now used as the union song for all Singing Bands in the Presbyterian Church of Ghana.¹²² The concern of the poet here is love and unity.

L.1-5 '*Yonkodo*' (neighbourly love) for Amu, is not only an idea which occurs in *yen adwene* (our minds). It expresses itself in *nneyee* (our deeds), *nantew* (way of life) and *ahokeka* (zeal). '*Nantew*' means 'to walk' or 'to travel on foot'.¹²³ It has been used here figuratively to refer to the style and conduct of life. It is by our deeds, way of life and zeal that we show that *yonkodo* (love for one's neighbour) is a virtue worth possessing. But even more, it is a command from Jesus. It is likely Amu had in mind here Jesus' words in Mt. 22: 39.

L.6-10 Although Amu gives the title as '*Biakoye*' (Unity), it is at this point that the word is introduced and only once in the poem. This shows that in the poet's mind, neighbourly love is basic to achieving oneness. But both ideas belong together, as it is through these that transformation, maturity and progress occur.

**AKD: 20.
NKRADI
(Farewell)**

<p>Obosomaketere nam brebre Ode brebre beko nea ofiri</p> <p>Makra wo, Nante yiye o, makra wo</p> <p>5 Oyonko dofo bi nam brebre ode brebre beko nea ofiri</p> <p>Makra wo o Nante yiye o, Nante yiye o Okwan a woreko brebre, medofo e brebrebre</p> <p>10 Okwan so brebre Woko wanim a, kosekosekose</p> <p>Me dofo e, kosekosekose</p> <p>Okwan so kosekosekose Wofa wo benkum a, brebrebre</p> <p>15 Me dofoe brebre, okwan so brebre</p> <p>Wofa wo nifa a kosekosekose, medofo e kosekose</p> <p>Okwan so kosekosekose Odo mmw w'anin kwan tetree, okwan so tetree Anigye nkura wo mu dwoodwoodwo</p> <p>20 nkogya wo Yiye nni waki daa daa ma ensi wo yiye Merepe wo biribi a, na yiye nko ara na merepe wo,</p> <p>25 me dofo e, makra woo Nante yiye o, makra wo o¹²⁴</p>	<p>Chameleon walks gently It shall walk gently back to where it came from I bid you goodbye Farewell, I bid you goodbye A beloved friend walk gently he shall walk gently back to where it came from I bid you goodbye Farewell, farewell. May gentleness mark the path you tread, my beloved friend. May gentleness mark your path As you go forward we wish you blessing My beloved friend we wish you blessing May blessing mark your way May gentleness mark your path when you turn to the left. My beloved, may gentleness mark the path you travel May gentleness mark your path when you turn to the right May gentleness mark your path May love widen the path before you May joy take you safely to see you off May goodness follow you always let it be well with you If I desire something for you It is only goodness My beloved friend, I bid you goodbye Farewell, I bid you goodbye</p>
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Amu composed this song in November 1933 for his farewell concert at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong. 'The text', according to Amu, 'is based on the words of traditional *atumpan* (talking drum) expression'.¹²⁵ In this poem *obosomaketere* (the chameleon) bids farewell to friends. They in turn wish it well as

it undertakes its journey. Amu uses this imagery to describe his departure from Akropong.

L.1 The name '*ɔbosomaketers*' (chameleon) is a composite of two words; '*ɔbosom*' and '*ɔketerɛ*' (lizard) and literally translates 'fetish lizard'.¹²⁶ '*ɔbosom*' is defined as a 'tetular or guardian spirit of a town or family; imaginary spirit, subordinate to God, worshipped or consulted by the natives'.¹²⁷ It is believed that the '*abosom*' (pl.) are the children of God. It is not unlikely that in the past '*ɔbosomaketerɛ*' was regarded as a tetular spirit, probably due to the manner it changes its colour. One would have expected Amu to use the Akuapem (*ɔbosomakɛtew*) with which he was probably familiar, but he chose the Akyem (*ɔbosomaketerɛ*) instead. The reason may be due to the style of his music in which emphasis is placed on rhythm or the time beat as related to a syllable. The other reason is that '*ɔbosomaketerɛ*' rhymes with '*brebre*', an expression that describes the gentle and graceful steps of the chameleon.

AKD: 21.
ADIKANFO, MO!
(Pioneers, congratulations)

Adikanfo, ɔsammarima ako adi nim,	Pioneers and men of valour, you have fought
Moako adi nim ama yen;	and won victory
Mo adaeso anya aba mu nne, mo anidaso anya aka nsa,	You have fought and won victory for us
5 Gyidi nso anya aye ohu; Adikanfo e mo moaye bi ama yen;	Your dreams have come true today Your hopes have materialised Faith also has become sight
Yebo mo osee, yema mo amo, mo, mo Adinkafo mo, ɔsammarima mo, ɔko pa no moawie ko, mo,	Pioneers, you have done your part for us
10 mmirika no, moawie tu, mo Gyidi no nso moaso mu awie, mo! Mo nsa anya aka nkonim; Adinkafo e mo! Moaye bi ama yen,	We salute and hail your efforts Well done pioneers and men of valour You have fought the good fight You have run the good race You have held unto the faith You have wrought victory
Yebo mo osee, Yema mo amo. ¹²⁸	Well done! Pioneers you have done your part for us We sing your praise and say well done

Adikanfo (Pioneers) was composed in memory of Rev. A.G. Fraser, first principal of Achimota College and was first sung during his memorial service at Achimota in

March, 1962.¹²⁹ In this poem Amu borrows the words of Paul (2 Tim. 4: 7-8) to celebrate the exploits of pioneers who struggled and fought for us (See chapter 5).

L.1-2 ‘*Adikanfo*’ literally means ‘those who have gone before’, ‘beginners’ or ‘pioneers’.¹³⁰ As in several of his poems, ‘*Adikanfo*’ is cast in military terms. *Adikanfo* are described as ‘*ɔsammari*’ (sing. *ɔsabarima*). *ɔsabarima* derives from ‘*ɔsa*’ (war) and ‘*barima*’ (man of valour), and means ‘hero’ or ‘powerful warrior’.¹³¹ It is also used as a title for military commanders. With the cessation of warfare among former traditional state, the title is now used of Kings. Like warriors, the ‘*adikanfo*’ have fought and won victory for us.

L.3-11 With victory comes the realization of dreams (*adaeso*), hopes (*anidaso*), and faith (*agyidi nso*). Notice how the three expressions rhyme together. Lines 9-11 recall 2 Tim. 4: 7. In this poem we see how Amu’s reading of the passage in traditional terms, strengthens our understanding of the Pauline imagery of the Greek Olympics and Roman military warfare.

AKD: 22.
AFE ATO YEN
(The year is here with us)

<p>Afe ato yen, ato yen Afe Wura, Nana Nyame amen</p> <p>Tetekwaforamoa, ogye afe adee</p> <p>Ogye dee ben?</p> <p>5 Ogye aseda o, aseda Afe Wura, Nana Nyame, amen Tetekwaforamoa, ogye afe adee</p> <p>Ogye aseda o, aseda Yeda wo ase, ɔdomankama</p> <p>10 Bone edi aduasa, aduasa wode afiri yen, Eso aseda o, aseda yeda wo ase ɔdomankama</p> <p>ɔdo mmoroso, mmoroso a wode adom yen</p> <p>Eso aseda o aseda yeda wo ase ɔdomankama, Yiye beberebe, berebe a wode aye yen</p> <p>15 eso aseda o aseda yeda wo ase ɔdomankama Afe ato yen Afe Wura Nana Nyame amen</p>	<p>The year is here with us again The Lord of the year, Grand Father God Eternal God, he demands the things of the year He demands what? He demands thanks Lord of the year, Grand Father God, Eternal God, he demands the things of the year He demands thanks, We thank you, Great God You have forgiven us all kinds of sins we give you thanks Great God for this love For the abundant love you have showered on us we give you thanks Great God You have given us goodness in abundance we give you thanks Great God The year is here with us again The Lord of the year, Grand Father God</p>
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	Tetekwaforamoa Ope esi yiye na yeresre wo,	Eternal God He who wishes us well, we implore you
20	Yeresere wo a m'yeresre wo o ope esi yiye m' ensi yiye Odomankama, Yonkodo ho adwuma biara a yereye Yeresere wo a, Ope esi yiye ma ensi yiye Odomankama	We plead that it may be well with us Great God, one who does not withhold his grace from us whatever work we do for our neighbour, We implore you, He who wishes us well may it be well with us, Great God Strength dedicated to true worship of God
25	Nyamesom pa ho mmoden biara a yerebo mu Yeresere wo a, yeresre wo o, Ope esi yiye ma ensi yiye Odomankama Biakoye hama a stew biara a yeretoa mu Yeresere wo a, yeresre wo, o Ope esi yiye	We implore you, He who wishes us well may it be well with us, Great God Broken bonds of unity which we try to join We implore you, He who wishes us well may it be well with us, Great God The Lord of the year, Ancestor God The eternal God, He who sees all things, knows how they will all end You know it all
30	ma ensi yiye Odomankama Afe Wura Nana Nyame, amen Tetekwaforamoa, Ohu adee nyinaa, na onim se ebewie, Wunim, wunim,	He who sees all things, Let your will be done, Great God when trouble comes you know how it will end Let your will be done Great God When temptation comes you know how it will end let your will be done Great God When joy comes you know how it will end let your will be done The Lord of the year who sees all things, knows it all
35	Ohu adee nyinaa nea wo pe nye, Odomankama Amane reba a se ebewie, wunim, wunim Nea wope nye Odomankama Sohwe reba a se ebewie wunim, nea wo pe nye Odomankama,	Thy will be done Great God
40	Anigye reba a, se ebewie, wunim, nea wope nye, Odomankama Afe Wura ohu adee nyinaa wunim, wunim Nea wope nye Odomankama ¹³²	

The words and music of '*Afe ato yen*' were written by Amu on a train while returning from one of his research trips to Kumasi in the Ashanti Region.¹³³ This was in August 1934. It was first sung by the Akropong Singing Band on August 28, 1934. In this poem no less than seven appellations have been used in praise of God for enabling humankind to be ushered into a New Year. (See chapter 7)

L.1-9 The opening line, '*Afe ato yen*' (The year is here with us), from which the title of the song derives, captures the essence of the poem. It is repeated in lines 16 and 29. In the line that follows (L. 2), Amu introduces us to the '*Afe Wura*' (Lord of the year) who makes it possible for us to go through the year. Three

other titles are used in this section; '*Nana Nyame amen*', '*Tetekwaforamoa*', and '*Ɔdomankama*'. '*Amen*' should not be confused with the Hebrew word '*amen*' (may it be so). In Akan tradition the seven days of the week are named after seven personal beings. Saturday is named after '*Amen*'.¹³⁴ It is also used in response to a salutation addressed to a Saturday-born (*yaa amen*).¹³⁵ Akan believe that the day associated with the Supreme Being is Saturday, and hence the appellation '*Onyankopɔn Kwame*'. It is interesting Amu did not use this well known appellation here but rather chose to use '*Nyame amen*'. It is likely he may have been constrained by the melodic line. '*Nana*' primarily belongs to '*Nananom Nsamanfo*' (the ancestors) who superintend over the life of the living. In using this title for '*Nyame*', Amu seeks to reinterpret the Akan religious tradition in Christian terms. As shown in a sermon he preached in 1943 (see Appendix V), Amu must have known that homage is paid to the '*Nananom Nsamanfo*' once a year for their protection and provision of the necessities of their dependants. Food, drinks and other gifts are offered to them in appreciation. This must have informed the thought in line 3; '*ogye afe adee*' (he demands the offering of the year). The question that follows reinforces the idea; '*ogye dee ben?*' (he demands what?). '*Ogye aseda*' (he receives thanks) is the response. According to Amu, '*aseda ne ose*' (thanksgiving and praise) comprise one of the three ingredients of '*asɔre*' (traditional worship), the others being '*ahofama*' (voluntary offering of oneself) and '*adesre*' (supplication) (See Appendix V).

L.10-15 In this section Amu mentions the things for which he seeks to give praise and thanks to '*Nana Nyame*'; forgiveness of sins and the love and goodness of God. In articulating his thoughts on forgiveness Amu uses the beautiful Twi expression '*bɔne edi aduasa*'. '*Aduasa*' literally means 'thirty', but it has been used here figuratively to mean 'all kinds of'.¹³⁶ The expression therefore refers to all kinds of sins or sin in its varied forms. The adverbs '*mmoroso*' and '*beberebe*' show God's abundant love and goodness.¹³⁷ It is for all these that Amu gives praise and thanks to God; '*aseda o, aseda yeda wo ase Ɔdomankama*'.

L.19-30 These lines comprise the petitions that Amu makes to ‘*Nana Nyame*’. The summary of the petitions is wellbeing; ‘*Yeresere wo a ma ɔpe ensi yiye*’ (We plead that it may be well with us). Three specific requests are however made; ‘*Yɔnkodɔ ho adwuma*’ (to make all efforts directed at strengthening neighbourly love), ‘*Nyamesom pa ho mmɔden biara a yerebɔ*’ (to give strength dedicated to true worship of God) and ‘*Biakoye hama etew biara a yeretɔa mu*’ (to grant that we join the broken bond of unity).

L.33-44 These lines talk about the surrender of the human will. What is sought for instead is the will of God. The thought is summed up in the expression ‘*Nea wope nye ɔdomankama*’ (Let your will be done, Great God). It is significant to note that this has been repeated five times. It recalls Jesus’ words in Mat. 26: 39: ‘*M’agya, se ebetumi a, ma kuruwa yi ntwa me ho nkɔ! Nanso enye senea mepe, na senea wope*’ (My father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will). The reason the poet calls for surrender of the human will is the fact that ‘*ɔdomankama*’ is Omniscient, he alone knows what the ensuing year holds in store for humankind. Whether it is ‘*amane*’ (trouble) ‘*sɔhwe*’ (temptation) or ‘*anigye*’ (joy), *ɔdomankama* alone sees all things and knows how the year will end; ‘*Ohu adee nyinaa, na onim se ebewie*’. This reality compels the poet to voluntarily surrender himself into God’s hands.

AKD: 23.

ASEM YI DI KA

(This word has to be said)

<p>Asem yi di ka, edi ka, Hena beka? Me ara o, me ara ennyɛ obiara o, me ara! 5 Adwuma yi di ye, edi ye Hena beye? Me ara o, me ara, ennyɛ obiara o, me ara ɔbra yi di bɔ, edi bɔ 10 Hena bebo? Me ara, o me ara, ennyɛ obiara o me ara. Asem yi, ne adwuma yi, ne ɔbra yi</p>	<p>This word has to be said, it has to be said Who will say it? I will have to say it, not someone else! This work has to be done, it has to be done Who will do it? I will have to do it, not someone else. This life has to be lived, it has to be lived Who will live that life? I will have to live it, not someone else. This word, this work, this life,</p>
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Hena beka? Hena beye? Hena bebo?	Who will say it? Who will do it? Who will live it?
15 Me ara, o me ara, ennye obiara o me ara ¹³⁸	I will have to say it, do it, and live it not someone else.

The song was ‘composed in November 1944 as an answer to the anxiety felt by the composer about the prevailing conditions of the time’.¹³⁹ Here in this poem, Amu focuses on the need for every Ghanaian to have a sense of responsibility; to say something for the sake of the common good, to do some work that needs to be done, and to lead a life conducive to the well being of the society. Passing the responsibility to someone else will not solve the problem (See chapter 1).

AKD: 24.
YESU NE NHWESO A ESO NNI
(Jesus is the perfect example)

Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni Yebesua no ne ne nipa do	Jesus is the perfect example We shall learn from Him his love for humankind
Yebesua no ne n’ahobrease, ne ne setieye kese de ko wum 5 Enye ano do kwa, enye asede kwa	We shall learn from His humility And of His great obedience till his death It is not vain love from the mouth nor vain duty
Ne do no fi komam, nti ne tumi so, Na odo a efi komam ne ne susukora	His love is from the heart and so His power is great Love from his heart is his measuring gauge
Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni Yebesua no ne ne nipa do	It is a good thing to follow the example of Jesus We shall learn from Him his love for humankind
10 Yebesua no ne n’ahobrease, ne ne setieye kese de ko wum Wammu ne tumi po, Wammu n’anuonyam po Oyi n’ani fi ne Nyame dibe so, 15 onni din, nni abusua onni ahode po	We shall learn from His humility And of His great obedience till his death He did not pride himself in his power He did not pride himself in his glory He stripped himself of his Godliness He has no name, no family he has no wealth
Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni Yebesua no ne ne nipa do	It is a good thing to follow the example of Jesus We shall learn from Him his love for humankind
Yebesua no ne n’ahobrease, 20 ne ne setieye kese de ko wum Nea Nyame pe na ope Nea Nyame ka na oye Wamfa n’adehyedipe antew atua Na owu ne asaman anim po otei	We shall learn from His humility Of His great obedience till his death God’s desires were His desires too He does what God says He did not stand on his nobility to disobey or to rebel He was obedient even in the face of death and the grave

25	Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni Yebeſua no ne ne nipa dɔ Yebeſua no ne n'ahobrease, ne ne setieye keſe de kɔ wum Me de, me dɔ mu afra	It is a good thing to follow the example of Jesus We shall learn from Him his love for humankind We shall learn from His humility Of His great obedience till his death As for me, my love has been contaminated I have no humility Obedience has deserted me God forgive me From today I shall look to Jesus and learn from him
30	Menni ahobrease Na osetieye abɔ me Nyame fa fri me, Na mefi nne mahwe Yesu asua no. ¹⁴⁰	

Here in this poem, Amu tells us why it is a good thing to follow the example of Jesus; his love for humankind, his humility and his obedience in the face of death. He contrasts this with his own love which has been contaminated, his lack of humility and obedience (See chapter 4). The song is based on Phil. 2: 5-8.

AKD: 25.

KASAKYEREW HO NIMDEFO MO!

(Those gifted with the knowledge of writing of language, Congratulations)

Tweaduampon Nyame de akyede bi adom me, de bi adom wo, de bi adom obiara, Wo dom akyede no fa som nnipa mma; Na adasamma nkɔso pa bi nam so beba.	Almighty God has endowed me with a gift He has endowed you and everyone else Use your gift to serve humankind It is through your service that the advancement of humankind will come God, Gracious Giver, we thank you Great God we thank you
5 Nyame Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase Tweaduampon Daasebre, yeda wo ase.	
Tweaduampon Nyame bɔɔ kasa, bɔɔ nimdee, De kasakerew ho nimdee pa, ne nsiye keſe adom binom	Almighty God created language and knowledge and has given to some, gifts of great ability in the writing of language and industry Gracious Giver, we thank you Almighty God we give thanks You who have knowledge in the teaching of language, congratulations We congratulate you God, Gracious giver, we thank you Almighty God, we thank you
10 Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase, Tweaduampon aseda Kasakerew ho, nimdefo mo!	
Yema mo abasa so, ma mo mo mo! Nyame Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase	
15 Tweaduampon Daasebere, yeda wo ase! ¹⁴¹	

'Kasakerew ho, nimdefo mo!' was in response to an invitation to Amu to compose a song for Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology.¹⁴² It was first sung by the Dwenesie Singers during the inauguration of the Centre at the British Council Hall in Accra on 1 November 1986.¹⁴³ In this poem Amu

celebrates those who are knowledgeable in the writing and teaching of language. He gives praise to God who enables men and women to exercise such gifts (See chapter 5).

AKD: 26.
YEBEKO ADI NKONIM
(We shall fight to victory)

Yetu osa, Yesu na ohye yen,	We rise to do battle, it is Jesus who calls us
Oka yen ho reko ama yen, Yekuram yi, gye se yeabo atamfo na agu koraa	He is with us to fight for us We hold on till the enemy is finally destroyed
Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu? 5 Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	Who will not fight for Jesus? We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life
Nokware no bo yen asen daa Trennee nkata bo hye yen daa,	Truth is always around our waist We wear the breastplate of righteousness
Asempa ho ahosesew hyehye yen anan daa	Our feet are always shod with the Good News
10 Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu? Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	Who will not fight for Jesus? We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life
Obone no kura ne benma, gyidi ne yen kyem a yekura, 15 se eredew se den po a, yebetumi na adom	The wicked one is carrying his arrow Faith is the shield we hold Even if it is blazing fire we will be able to put it out
Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu? Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	Who will not fight for Jesus? We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life
Nyame asem yen honhom nkrante.	The word of God is our sword of the Spirit
20 Mpaebo yen poma a yede nante, Anim ara na yereko, akyi de, yerennsan da.	Prayer is the staff of our pilgrimage Forward we shall ever go and never retreat
Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu? Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew. ¹⁴⁴	Who will not fight for Jesus? We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life

The song is based on Eph. 6: 10-18. Amu sees the contention against 'the principalities and powers' as a battle for Jesus. He calls upon Christians to fight for Jesus in order that they may receive the crown of life. In other words, the thought here, as in songs 8 and 9, is that it is human existence itself, that is the battleground for the battle of life for which discipleship to Jesus provides the means to victory.

L.20 The reference to *'poma'* is interesting because we notice that in Paul's letter (Eph. 6: 10-18) prayer is the only weapon mentioned without any illustration. What Amu does in his interpretation of this passage is to continue where Paul left off by illustrating prayer as 'the staff of our pilgrimage'. *Poma* is a 'stick', 'walking-stick', 'cane', 'staff of the speaker, of a jury, [or] of a messenger or ambassador'.¹⁴⁵ (See chapter 4).

AKD: 27.
AGYA FAFIRI WŌN
 (Father forgive them)

<p>Agya e, fa firi wŋn, Na wonnim nea wŋye Abrafo no a wobuu Nyameba no mmusubŋfo no, So wonim po ni?</p> <p>5 Agya e, fafiri wŋn, Na wonnim nea wŋye Abrafo no a wobuu Nyameba no mumŋyefo no, Agya e fafiri wŋn, fafiri a. So wonim po ni?</p> <p>10 Agya e fafiri wŋn, fafiri a. Abrafo no a wobŋŋ Nyameba no asendum, So wonim po ni?</p> <p>Agya e, fafiri wŋn, Na wonnim nea wŋye</p> <p>15 Abrafo no a wodji Nyameba no ho feŋ no, So wonim po ni?</p> <p>Agya e, fafiri wŋn, Na wonnim nea wŋye.¹⁴⁶</p>	<p>Father, forgive them For they know not what they do The Executioners who condemned the Son of God as a curse Were they aware of what they were doing?</p> <p>Father, forgive them For they know not what they do The executioners who condemned the Son of God as mischievous Father, forgive them, forgive Were they aware of what they were doing?</p> <p>Father, forgive them The executioners who nailed the Son of God on the cross Were they aware of what they were doing?</p> <p>Father, forgive them For they know not what they do The executioners who derided the Son of God Were they aware of what they were doing?</p> <p>Father, forgive them For they know not what they do</p>
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'Agya e, fafiri wŋn' was composed in March 1945. The theme of the poem is 'forgiveness' and derives from Jesus' words on the cross, 'Father, forgive them for they know not what they do' (Lk. 23: 34).

AKD: 28.
ASOMDWOEM' NA MEKO MAKŌDA
 (In Peace will I lie down and sleep)

<p>Asomdwoe mu na meko makŋda na mada preko komm</p>	<p>In peace I go and sleep I will sleep soundly</p>
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<p>Owia no anya ato, esum aduru, Adwuma asi, mereko makoda. 5 Asomdwoe mu na meko makoda na mada preko komm. Me dadwene sum no hyeren mu ma me</p> <p>Na manya ahosan, hyeren sum no mu ma me</p> <p>M'ahohia sum no hyeren mu ma me</p> <p>10 Ma manya ahosan hyeren sum no mu ma me.</p> <p>Na wo Nyame nkutoo wo na wotumi ma metena ho dwoodwo Asomdwoe mu na meko makoda na mada preko komm.¹⁴⁷</p>	<p>The sun is set, darkness befalls work is done I shall go to sleep. In peace I go and sleep I will sleep soundly Let your light shine through my troubled mind to make me free, shine through the darkness Let your light shine through my distress to make me free, shine through the darkness For God you alone are able to let me stay in peace In peace will I go and sleep quietly I will sleep soundly</p>
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The lyrics of this song, based on Ps. 4:8, were written in 1958 as an evening song for the Presbyterian Church of Ghana Synod then meeting at Kyebi in the Eastern Region.¹⁴⁸ The poet imagines a scene at the end of the day when work has been brought to a close. He implores the Lord to take care of his troubled mind and to enable him sleep in peace and safety.

AKD: 29.
TETE WO BI KA
(The past has a lot to say)

<p>Tete wo bi ka, tete wo bi kyere Yereto yen tete akyene Agyina deeben so abu oman senea efata?</p> <p>Omanfo e. 5 Adwene ne yebea tete wo bi. Tete adwene ne tete yebea, Dua kontonkye a eno so na nea etee gyina.</p> <p>Tete wo bi ka, tete wo bi kyere. Hwe na sua; hwe na dwene, 10 Hwe na gyina so ye nea eye boro tete de no so. Yehwe, yesua, yedwene tete adwene ne yebea, De reye bi de agya nkyirimma.¹⁴⁹</p>	<p>The past has a lot to say and to teach If we lose sight of the past, On what basis do we build a good nation? Countrymen. Thoughts and ideas are from the past. Thoughts and ideas of the past, It is the crooked stem that bears a straight branch The past has a lot to say and to teach, Look and learn; look and think. Look and use that as basis to do more We look, we learn, we think of the ideas of the past To lay a foundation for later generations.</p>
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Amu's concern here in this poem is the need to take the past seriously. It is on the basis of the past that we plan the future and lay the foundation on which we build a nation. If we 'look and learn' and 'look and think' we shall see that the past, although it may be crooked, has thoughts and ideas that can shape the present. As with several of his songs we are not certain when this one was composed.

AKD: 30.
MOMMA'YENKO SO MFORO
(Let us go on climbing)

<p>Momma yenko so mforo, yereforo, yereforo</p> <p>Momma yenko so mforo, Adesua ye koko a yereforo, 'reforo</p> <p>apere aben atifi.</p> <p>5 Momma yenko so mforo, Yereforo, yereforo, Momma yenko so mforo, mpere mmen atifi, Koko no atifi da so wo akyirikyirikyiri.</p> <p>10 Yegu so reforo nso yennya mmen atifi ara e, Momma yenko so mforo abotase ne ahoyere mu, adwene-mu-da-ho</p> <p>15 ne owen dennen mu, Momma yenko so mforo, mpere mmen atifi Adesua koko no atifi na yerepere ara ako akodu ho.¹⁵⁰</p>	<p>Let us keep on climbing, we are climbing, we are climbing, Let us keep on climbing, Acquisition of knowledge is a mountain we are climbing, struggling to get to the top. Let us keep on climbing We are climbing, Let us keep on climbing and struggle to get close to the top The top of the hill still lies far in the distance</p> <p>We are still climbing but we are not close to the top yet Let us keep climbing with patience and utmost exertion, a steady and focused mind, and strong vigilance Let us keep climbing and struggle to get to the top The top of the hill of learning is where we are struggling to reach.</p>
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The song was composed in March 1947 in response to a request made for the celebration of the Anum Presbyterian Middle School. In this poem knowledge is likened to the summit of a hill and the acquisition of knowledge to the struggle that we go through in getting to the top of a hill. It is likely Amu may have in mind the difficulty he went through as he climbed the Kwahu mountains on his way to Abetifi, the highest habitable place in Ghana¹⁵¹, to be trained as a teacher and catechist. He may also have drawn inspiration from two other institutions with which he was associated and which incidentally were on hilltops; Presbyterian Training College, Akropong-Akuapem and University of Ghana, Legon. These are citadels of learning from where Amu must have acquired knowledge.

AKD: 31.
SEANTIE YE MMUSU
(It is an abomination to disobey)

<p>Seantie ye mmusu, yekyi, Seantie ye amane, yekyi. Seantie, yekyi kɔkɔkɔ. Seantie kwan so mmusu.</p> <p>5 Seantie kwan so amane. Oserantefo e wo gyegyiregye.</p>	<p>It is an abomination to disobey; we hate it Disobedience is misfortune; it is detestable. We have a passionate hatred for disobedience Disobedience leads to calamity Disobedience leads to trouble. The disobedient person will suffer.</p>
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<p>Opányin fotufo se wo a, tie no, onim.</p> <p>Tie no; onim; wahunu bi pen.</p> <p>Tie no, onim.</p> <p>10 N'aso ate bi pen. Tie no, onim. M'ahunu bi pen se yekyi o. Oserantefo e ye aso na gyae seantie.¹⁵²</p>	<p>When an elder advises you, listen to him, he knows</p> <p>Listen to the adult, for he knows, he is experienced.</p> <p>Listen to him, he knows.</p> <p>He has heard before. Listen to him, he knows.</p> <p>The experienced person says it is detestable.</p> <p>Disobedient person; listen and stop disobeying.</p>
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Here in this poem Amu uses traditional notions to describe disobedience and its consequences. It is seen as both an abomination and a misfortune. The way to avoid being disobedient, according to the poet, is to listen to the advice of elders who have tasted of life and experienced it.

AKD: 32.
ONIPA RETU NAN YI NA N'ANIM ARA NA OKO NO
(Man must be advancing, for look, his legs are moving)

<p>Onipa retu nan yi na nanim ara na oko no, nanim ara na oko no, nanim ara na oko no.</p> <p>5 Onipa retu nan yi na nanim ara na oko no, nanim ara na oko no, nanim ara na oko no. Wo de wote ho ye die ben ni?</p> <p>10 Anantufu te ko o. Onantufu biara ntu ne nan yie, na obeko dwodwo, Okwan so bre bre. Anantufue! Okwan so bre bre.</p> <p>15 Anantufue, bre breo o. Okwan so bre bre Anantufue!</p> <p>Okwanso bre bre Anantufue Bre bre o.¹⁵³</p>	<p>A person takes a step and moves forward and advances moves forward and advances moves forward and advances</p> <p>A person takes a step and moves forward and advances moves forward and advances moves forward and advances</p> <p>As for you, what are you sitting there doing?</p> <p>The travellers are on their way. Each traveller takes his step carefully, and goes softly, The path is gentle and soft. You travellers! Take it gently and softly</p> <p>You travellers, take it gently. Take it gently and softly, you travellers!</p> <p>Take it gently and softly You travellers, take it gently and softly.</p>
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The song is part of Amu's earlier compositions. It falls under the category of miscellaneous songs and has been arranged to be sung in unison. The song is about making progress in life which only occurs when a person 'takes a step and moves forward', gently, with no undue hurry, making haste slowly!

Spoken Narrative:

Mese, nnipa a wɔboaa hɔ, ofi biara mu, anka ɔtwe anka adowa. Enna mehwee komm na mese, ei! Nnipa dodow yi amanee ben po na wobɔ won a, ebesɔ won ani? Ende, ɛdi me me Bonwre Kentenwene dwom yi ara. Na mede mahyehye so, na ɔkyeame no asom, na ɔmanfo no agye so. Na efi hɔ, wɔfa kurow no mu benkum ana nifa, apuei ana atɔe a, wo bete: “kro, kro, kro”

Those who gathered came from every household, not one was left out. I observed the scene quietly and said to myself, what message do I have to give to this gathering to make them happy? The only message I could give from my journey was my Bonwrá song. I then started to sing, it caught the ears of the chief’s spokesman, and the crowd also responded. From there it spread to every part of the town, from the left to the right, and from the west to the east, the people were singing the song: “kro, kro, kro”.

Refrain

Kro kro, kro, kro,	Kro kro, kro, kro,
Hi, hi, hi, hi,	Hi, hi, hi, hi,
Kroehi, kroehi, krokrokro	Kroehi, kroehi, krokrokro
40 Hi, hi, kroehi, kroehi kro	Hi, hi, kroehi, kroehi kro
Na aye me de o, aye me de o	has made me happy, very happy
Bonwre kentenwene ne!	Kente weaving at Bonwre
Aye me de o, abɔ me gye. ¹⁵⁵	Has made me happy and has excited me.

In this poem Amu narrates the experience of a student from the Presbyterian Training College who goes to Bonwre, a place in Ashanti noted for weaving Kente cloth. The student is fascinated by the manner in which the weaver coordinates his hands and feet as he makes music with the shuttle and loom.

AKD: 35.

OWU NAM KWAN SO REBA

(Death is approaching)

Owu nam kwan so reba o, ɛda a ɔde beba de,	Death is approaching. The day it will arrive,
Obiara nnim ara. ɔdasani, da wo ho so	nobody ever knows. Humankind, be ready
Na owu amnefi wo aworaw.	So that death may not take you unawares.
Owu nam kwan so reba o. ɛda a ɔde beba de,	Death is approaching. The day it will arrive,
5 obiara nnim ara. ɔdasani, buba pa	nobody ever knows. Humankind lead a good life

Na owu amfi wo aworaw.

So that death may not take you
unawares.

Owu nam kwan so reba o. Eɔda a ɔde beba de,

Death is approaching. The day it will
arrive,

Obiara nnim ara. Ɔdasani, kura gyidi m'

nobody ever knows. Humankind be of
good faith

Na owu ammeɔfi wo aworaw.¹⁵⁶

So that death may not take your
unawares.

The song was composed in July, 1953 for the memorial service of Rev. Theophilus Opoku (1842 -1913) at Akropong, Akuapem. It was sung by the Choir of the Ramseyer Presbyterian Church, Kumasi on this occasion.¹⁵⁷

AKD: 36.
ƆKWANTENNI
(Traveller)

Ɔkwantenni, ɔkwantenni, ɔkwantenni, Mo ne nantew, due ne ɔbre.	Traveller, traveller, traveller Congratulations for the journey, consolation for your tiredness.
Ɔkwantenni, Mo, mo, ɔkwantenni,	Traveller, Congratulations, congratulations, traveller
5 mo ne nantew Ɔkwantenni, Ɔnam ne kwan, akwaaba oo, akwaaba, akwaaba Yema wo akwaaba oo	well done for the journey Traveller, He is on his way, you are welcome, We say, welcome
10 Akwaaba, akwaaba, Yema wo akwaaba, Ehanom bɔkɔɔ, ehanom bɔkɔɔ, Akwansosem sen? Ehanom bɔkɔɔ, hanom bɔkɔɔ.	Welcome, welcome, We say welcome, we say welcome, This place is quiet and fine. Any news from your journey? This place is quiet and fine
15 Ɔkwantenni e, akwaaba oo. ¹⁵⁸	Traveller, this place is quiet and fine,

'Ɔkwantenni' was composed on 18 September 1843. The poem is about the greetings and hospitality accorded a person when the person arrives from a journey.

AKD: 37.
TIRI NE NSA NE KOMA
(Head, hand and heart)

Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua, nsua no pepepe nsua no pepepe	Let head, hand and heart all learn let them learn equally let them learn completely, thoroughly and perfectly
nsua no pepepe	let them learn completely, thoroughly and perfectly
5 Koma nsua no pepepe	Let heart learn completely, thoroughly and perfectly

Adesua pa ne adesua mu, adesua trodoo	Learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect
Eyi ne adesua pa ne adesua mu ne adesua trodoo	This is good, whole, complete, sincere, true, and perfect learning,
Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua no pe, nsua no pe	Let head, hand and heart, all learn thoroughly and completely
10 Tiri nsua nimdee nsa nsua adwumaye mma koma nsua amanbu	Let the head learn knowledge the the hand learn work and let the heart learn conduct and comporment
Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua no pe	Let head, hand and heart all learn thoroughly and completely
Eyi de ne de pa a eyinom de so ebiara	This is the type of learning that everybody needs
15 nsua no pepepe, nsua no pepepe Adesua pa ne adesua mu adesua trodoo	learn it completely and perfectly Learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect
Eyi ne adesua pa adesua mu adesua trodoo. ¹⁵⁹	This is learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect

The song was composed on the 20 January 1974. The poet's concern here is on the use of not only the head but also the hand and heart in learning. The lesson it seeks to impart is about the holistic nature of learning.

AKD: 38.
NE NYINAA NYAME N'ARA
(All things come from God alone)

Nipa bi benya bribi a, ne nyinaa Nyame no ara, Nipa bi benya ne ho a ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,	For a person to get something It all depends on God For a person to gain wealth It all depends on God
5 Nipa bi ho beto no a ne nyinaa Nyame no ara Kae saa daa, Nyame na ose aseda Nea obeye nyinaa	For a person to have peace It all depends on God Do always remember that it is God who deserves thanks Whatever He does
10 Nea obekyere nyinaa papa	and whatever he produces, is good
Nipa bi benya ahoofe a, ne nyinaa Nyame no ara, Nipa bi benya hooden a, ne nyinaa Nyame no ara	For a person to be beautiful It all depends on God For a person to be strong It all depends on God
15 Nipa bi benya nna pa a ne nyinaa Nyame no ara Kae saa daa, Nyame na ose aseda Nea obeye nyinaa	For a person to sleep well It all depends on God Do always remember It is God who deserves thanks Whatever he does
20 Nea obekyere nyinaa papa	and whatever He produces, is good
Woyi no fi wo kwan mu ko a, wokɔ no den? Woyi no fi wo abrabo mu a, wubu no den?	If you drive Him out of your way How do survive? If you drive Him out of your life How do you live it?

25 Woyi no fi wo nuado mu a,
 wodo no den?
 Ne nko ara
 Nyame ne ade nyinaa
 Nea obeye nyinaa
 30 Nea obekyere nyinaa, papa¹⁶⁰

If you drive Him out of your love for
 neighbours,
 What does your love amount to?
 He alone
 God alone is everything
 Whatever He does
 and whatever he produces, is good.

The text of this song must have been written before 1933 as part of Amu's earlier compositions. It was composed to be sung by mixed voices. In this poem Amu presents Nyame (God) as the source of human existence. Wealth, peace, beauty, and strength all come from God expressing the indigenous insight conveyed by the proverb 'Nsem nyinaa ne Nyame'.

AKD: 39.
TWI DWOM 100
 (Psalm 100)

<p>Asaase nyinaa mommo ose mma Tweaduampon, Momfa anigye mmesom Tweaduampon, Mommo ose mma no, momfa anigye mmesom no na momfa ahurusi dwom mmera n'anin. 5 Asaase nyinaa munhu se Tweduampon ne Onyame, Ono na oye yen, na ono na yewo no, Yeye ne man ne n'adidibea nguan. Asaase nyinaa momfa aseda nhyen n'apon kese mu, na momfa ayeyi mmera n'abangua so. 10 Asaase nyinaa, monna n' ase munhyira ne din Na Tweduampon ye, oye, na n'adbe tra ho daa, Na ne nokwaredi kodu awo ntoatoaso nyinaa so. Asaase nyinaa, mommesom Tweduampon.</p>	<p>All the earth shout for joy to the Almighty, Come with joy and worship the Almighty Shout for joy, worship him with gladness, and with joyful songs come before him. All the earth know that the Almighty is God, he made us and we are his. We are his people and the sheep of his pasture. All the earth, with thanksgiving, enter his temple gates, and with praise come into his courts. All the earth give him thanks, bless his name. The Almighty is good, he is good and his mercy endures forever and his faithfulness continues through all generations. All the earth come and worship the Almighty.</p>
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The song clearly shows that Amu used the Twi text of the Akuapem Bible for this composition. It is instructive he uses *Tweduampon* instead of *Awurade*. Two factors may be responsible for this. The first is the musical style of Amu's composition in which melody closely follows speech intonation or vice versa. This is confirmed in an interview he granted to the Media Research Unit

of the Institute of African Studies in which he stated that he made slight changes to Psalm 100 to suit his voice (see Appendix A). Amu's choice for 'Tweduampon' is probably because it fits the syllabic arrangement of the melody better than 'Awurade'. The other factor may be theological. In the Old Testament 'Adonai' (the Lord), which translates *Awurade*, is used instead of the personal name of God, *YHWH*. Amu may have felt that if *YHWH* cannot be used then an equally great name like *Tweduampon* could be used instead. In *AKD: 3* Amu tells us what *Tweduampon* means to him. In line 5, *Onyame* replaces *Nyankopon* apparently because of the musical style. Whereas the phrase 'Asaase nyinaa' (all the earth) has been used only once in this psalm Amu uses it four times, apparently for emphasis. Line 13 is Amu's own creation.

AKD: 40.
TWI DWOM 121
(Psalm 121)

Mema m'ani so makyere mepow no Ehe na me boa fi beba? Me boa fi Tweduampon Nyame	I lift my eyes unto the mountains From where comes my help? My help comes from the Almighty God
Osoro ne asaase yefo no. 5 Nyame behwe, oremma wo nan nwatri	Maker of heaven and earth. God will see to it, he will not let your foot slip
Nea ohwe wo no rento nko ara da	He who watches over you will not slumber
Israel hene rento nko, ne onna ara da	The king of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep
Tweadumapon ne wo hwefo,	The Almighty watches over you. The Almighty is
Tweadumapon ne wo nwini wo nsa nifa so. 10 Owia rensi wo so awia na osram rensi wo so anadwo ara da. Tweadumapon behwe wo so bone nyinaa ho	your shade at your right hand side. The sun will not harm you by day nor the moon by night. The Almighty will protect you from all danger
obehwe wo kra so. Tweadumapon behwe w'adifi ne wo fie ba so,	he will protect your soul The Almighty will watch over your going out and coming in
15 Afi sese de akosi daa.	From now and forever.

The style in this composition is not different from *AKD: 41*. The slight variation here is in line 3 where Amu uses *Tweduampon Nyame* instead of *Awurade*. Again, this may be due to his musical style.

AKD: 41.
TWI DWOM 103
(Psalm 103)

<p>Me kara hyira Tweaduampon Nyame, na me mu ade nyinaa twem nhyira ne din kronkron Me kara hyira Tweaduampon Nyame, 5 Mma wo werɛ mfi ne nneyee pa nyinaa ara da. Asempa no ho adansefo no ako ara adi nkonim</p> <p>Wɔde gyidi ko dii ahenni ahorow so nkonim, gyidi nkutoo. Wɔn ahofama ne ahopakyi, ɔtwen ne boaseto</p> <p>10 ama hann abedi esum so, nkwa nso adi owu so. Ahosan nso adi 'pokyere so Anigye ahenni ase atim</p> <p>ama mmɔb'roye atu ako. 15 Me kara hyira Tweaduampon Nyame.</p>	<p>My soul bless the Almighty God And all that is within me bless his holy name. My soul bless the Almighty God, Do not forget all His benefits. Witnesses of the Gospel have fought and won the battle By faith they conquered various kingdoms, By faith alone. By dedication and renunciation, vigilance and patience has made light overcome darkness; life also has overcome death. Freedom has overcome restraint The kingdom of joy is firmly established; and there is no more sadness My soul bless the Almighty God.</p>
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L.1-5 Psalm 103 has 22 verses. Lines 1-5 indicate that it is only verses 1 and 2 that Amu used in this song. The rest of the lyrics are his own composition with the exception of line 15 which is a repetition of line 1. Again in this song 'Tweaduampon Nyame' replaces 'Awurade' probably for the same reasons given in *AKD: 40* and *41*. Amu uses this part of the psalm to praise God for reasons given in lines 6-14.

L.6-9 In these lines Amu celebrates *Asempa* (the Good News) and its witnesses. The reason for the celebration is because they have fought the battle and won victory over many kingdoms. The only weapon at their disposal was *gyidi* (faith). Amu shows in this song that the values needed in the proclamation of the Good News are *ahofama* (dedication), *ahopakyi* (renunciation), *ɔtwen* (vigilance) and *boaseto* (patience).

L.10-14 Here we find a demonstration of poetic skills. Amu reinforces the ideas he wishes to put across by contrasting these with their antonyms. Not only has the Good News brought light; it has overcome darkness as well. In the same vein life is portrayed in the context of death and freedom is understood in terms of restraint. The kingdom that is established as a result of the conquest of the Good News is called 'The kingdom of joy'. Clearly Amu had in mind

‘The Kingdom of God’ and he may in fact be alluding to Rom. 14: 17: ‘For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit’. Lines 10-14 also recall the vision in Rev. 21: 1- 4 of a new heaven and a new earth when ‘...[God] will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more’.

AKD: 42.
MOMMA YENKO BETLEHEM
(Let us go to Bethlehem)

<p>Momma yenko o! Momma yenko o! Momma yenko Betlehem na yenkohwe Asem a aba na Awurade ayi akyere yen yie! 5 Betlehem ho nnuan dan mu, Yosef ne Maria ahoho asoe ne ho.</p> <p>Betlehem ho mmoa adididem. Oheneba Kristo Awurade dabere ne ho.</p> <p>Wiase ntee o, abrempon ntee o.</p> <p>10 Osoro abofo ate dedaw.</p> <p>Na osoro abo bum. Na nnuanhwefo no ate dedaw. Na sareso abo bum. Onyame akyede a ekyen so yi</p> <p>15 ne nwonwa a eye won nti o. Ahobrease a ekyen so yi</p> <p>ne nwonwa a eye won nti o Anuonyam wo osorosoro ma Onyankopon! Anuonyam wo osorosoro ma Onyankopon!</p> <p>20 Asomdwoe wo asase so. Aniso wo nipam. Asomdwoe wo asase so. Aniso wo nipam.</p>	<p>Let us go! Let us go! Let us go to Bethlehem and see and see what has happened that the Lord has revealed to us well! In Bethlehem in the sheep’s pen This was the resting place of Joseph and Mary. In Bethlehem in a manger. This is the sleeping place of the King’s son, Christ the Lord. Neither the world nor the wealthy and powerful in the land had heard it. The angels in heaven had already heard it. And there was excitement in heaven. The shepherds had heard already it. And there was excitement on earth. God’s gift that is greater than all others it was marvelous in their sight. Such humility that was greater than all humility was marvelous in their sight Glory to God in the highest! Glory to God in the highest! Peace upon earth. Contentment to humankind. Peace upon earth. Contentment to humankind</p>
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CONCLUDING REMARKS

In Amu’s reflections it is only in one of his addresses that he made direct reference to poetry,¹⁶¹ and even in this his concern had to with adapting traditional forms to musical composition, particularly, with regard to tone and rhythm in the spoken language. In this respect, therefore, he did not set out to write poetry since his

main concern was music. In this chapter we have nonetheless shown that Amu was not only a musician, but also a poet. I have therefore found it convenient to provide the setting that helps us to assess him as such. As already pointed out in the introduction, the arrangement of the text in poetic form (lines and verses) is not found in any book that I know of, and I must say that if Amu had had the opportunity he probably would have arranged it differently.

Since Amu's music follows the linguistic and syllabic tone of the spoken language, it is possible to talk about the rhythm of his poetry although, it must be admitted, that, this is more pronounced in music than in poetry. Amu's rhythm 'consists of duple and triple time mixed'¹⁶², by which is meant two beat time followed by three in alternating fashion.¹⁶³ This, according to Amu, is fundamental to traditional musical forms found in Ghana, particularly drum music, and it was precisely because of this that learning to play the drum was compulsory for all his students.¹⁶⁴ Amu's adaptation initially did not go down well with those who had been brought up in the indigenous tradition, particularly his friend William Ofori-Atta, a royal from Kyebi. His misgivings in what he called the '*Firamaŋ-firamaŋ* ideal'¹⁶⁵ is carried in a letter to Amu, part of which reads:

I was thoroughly disgusted with the Bomma Dance Display. A minor defect was that there was European beating of time element in it, which spoilt our traditional heritage of Rhythm. It was Bad, very Bad. But the other thing was Sacrilege. Women beating any of the drums of the Bomma Set is Taboo, one of the greatest Taboos.¹⁶⁶

Ofori-Atta would not admit anything European into what he considered a treasured heritage, and even worse it was inappropriate for women to experiment on the sacred drums. He wanted the purity of the traditional performance to be preserved. Little did Amu realise that by embarking on such an adventure he was exposing sacred drums like the *bomma* and *mpintim* to 'common' usage. Indeed, it has been suggested that the use of the drums in state institutions, particularly in schools, is owed to this experiment by Amu.¹⁶⁷ In this regard, as in others, Amu was a radical thinker.

Whereas Amu's innovation in rhythm relates more to his music, we find adaptations that relate closely to the text of his songs. His profound use of the Bible in conveying traditional thought forms is a case in point. He finds similarity, for instance, between the Hebrew '*hosanna*' and the battle cry '*oseyee*' (Mat.21: 9). He reads I Cor. 15: 55 to include '*asaman*', a word not found in the passage, and gives a

concrete and symbolic expression (*poma*) to prayer where Eph. 6: 18 gives none. His commentary on Gen. 1: 31 as found in *AKD: 1* is picturesque and vivid, replete with imagery. It is in this poem that Amu utilises to the fullest ideas he borrows from ‘*Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee*’, a well-known poem of different variations drawn from drum language.¹⁶⁸

Amu shows in his poetry that apart from ‘*Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee*’, he is aware of other appellations and titles that exist in the Akan folk-loric tradition. However, the possibility that he must have created some of these titles himself cannot be ruled out. This is particularly evidenced in *AKD: 34* where we come across appellations, such as ‘*Kwame Onimadeeyɔ*’ (Kwame Who-knows-how-to-do-things), and ‘*Eno Ɔhuonimmɔbɔ*’ (Mother-who-shows-mercy-and-compassion).

It is difficult to read Amu’s poetry and fail to notice the characterisation of his ideas and thought. ‘*Bɔne*’ (evil) and ‘*asetra*’ (social existence) are personified as ‘coming into’, (apparently from nowhere), and polluting God’s creation. Rhymes feature prominently in Amu’s poetry. An example is found in *AKD: 20* where words like *abosomaketerɛ*, *brebre*, *kosekose*, and *tetree* rhyme together beautifully. Amu uses parallelism to either reinforce an idea or to contrast it. An example in which an idea is reinforced is found in *AKD: 8*:

Yeyɛ no den na ebeyɛ yie?	What shall we do to make it work?
Yeyɛ no den na ebeyɛ de a?	What shall we do to make it pleasant?

In *AKD: 10* the ideas are contrasted:

Nidɔ a nnipa wɔ no sua koraa,	The love that humankind have is so small
Nyame, wo ne nidɔ nyinaa ’bura	O God, you are the spring of love

It is important to mention Amu’s use of proverbs in his poetry; ‘*Ɔdo ye wuo*’ (Love is death), ‘*Dua kontɔnkye a eno so na nea etee gyina*’ (It is the crooked stem that bears a straight branch), ‘*Ɔkɔtɔ nwo anomaa*’ (the crab does not give birth to a bird). There are times when he has adapted a proverb from its particular and local setting and given it a wider usage and significance. Thus, ‘*Aninguase mfata Okanni-ba*’ (A thing of dishonour does not befit the Akan) becomes ‘*Aninguase mfata Abibirimma*’ (A thing of dishonour does not befit the African). Amu’s inclination to adaptation is also shown in the use of idiomatic phrases, such as ‘*ɔtwe anaa adowa*’, (literally ‘the

duyker or the antelope') meaning 'everyone'. In *AKD: 16*, Amu chose to use 'san bɛfa' (lit. come back and take it) rather than the popular saying 'sankɔfa' (lit. go back and take it) that has come to be associated with African cultural emancipation and renewal.

The scope of this thesis does not allow a detailed appreciation of each poem. What I have attempted to do in this chapter is simply to draw attention to Amu's potential as a poet. The preliminary investigation of these songs has, however, enabled me to identify two broad categories into which to place Amu's thoughts, namely, aspects of Christian doctrine and social ethics. In the remaining chapters I address specific theological themes that emerge from the categories I have selected.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ Apart from a few songs in which the lyrics had already been set and translated into English, I prepared the rest of the lyrics that appear in this thesis myself. I am grateful to two persons from the University of Ghana, Legon for their assistance; Dr. S.D. Asiama of the International Centre for African Music and Dance, and Ms. Misonu Amu of the Institute of African Studies. Again, I owe Ms. Misonu Amu a debt of gratitude for making available to me her M.Phil. dissertation and music manuscripts of Ephraim Amu. A few of the manuscripts were given to me by Dr. Asiama.

² It is not certain how many songs Amu composed. Those that are extant are estimated to be over two hundred.

³ Ephraim Amu, *Twenty-Five African Songs*, (hereafter *T.F.A.S*) London: Sheldon Press, 1933.

⁴ See Appendix A.

⁵ E. Amu, *Amu Choral Works* Vol. 1 (hereafter *A.C.W*), Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1993.

⁶ A number of these have been kept in a file by Misonu Amu, but others can be found with his students.

⁷ See Appendices C & F.

⁸ According to Kofi Agawu, 'Many of his [Amu's] early works were in fact conceived as alternatives to the hymn, to be used in worship'. See Agawu, "The impact of language on musical composition in Ghana: An introduction to the musical style of Ephraim Amu", *Ethnomusicology* 28: 1, 1984, (37-73), p. 51.

⁹ J.H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Historical and Stylistic background of the Music of Ephraim Amu," in Ephraim Amu, *A.C.W.*, p. 7; Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", *The Black Perspective in Music*, 15: 2, 1987, (51-63), pp. 57, 63.

¹⁰ See Appendix A.

¹¹ Ephraim Amu's unpublished sermons and addresses (hereafter *EASA*): Opening Address, 2nd National Religious Music Festival, Accra, 30.12.1980, pp. 4-5.

¹² Kofi Agawu, 'The Legacy of Ephraim Amu', The 2nd in the series of the Ephraim Amu Memorial Lectures, National Theatre, Accra, 18 January, 2000.

¹³ It was quite a herculean task doing this since I had to determine the number of lines in the stanzas of each poem.

¹⁴ *AKD*: Abibifo Kristofu Nnwom (African Christian Hymns). Throughout this work I have used the abbreviation *AKD* to document Amu's songs. A detail classification of Amu's compositions is beyond the scope of this work.

¹⁵ Unless otherwise stated, the English titles used in this thesis are Amu's own.

¹⁶ *TFAS*, pp. 49-51, *ACW*, pp. 111-113.

¹⁷ Amu intended that these appellations or titles of God should be played on the talking drums while the congregation worships God in silence. See his address delivered at the 'African music in liturgical Worship' Radio workshop, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Accra: 14.3.73.

¹⁸ See Otto Boateng, 'Odomankoma Bɔɔ Deeben?', *The Christian Way*, March-April, 1947, (17-32), p. 20).

- ¹⁹ Johannes Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Tshi (Twi)* (2 vols) [Hereafter *DAFL*], Basel: Evangelical Missionary Society, 1881, p. 90.
- ²⁰ Johannes Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Tshi*, p. 90.
- ²¹ J.B. Danquah, *Akan Doctrine of God*, London: Frank Cass, 1944, p. 58. Cf Eva Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan*, London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1949, pp. 82-83.
- ²² L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*. 6th Ephraim Amu Memorial Lectures at the National Theatre, Accra; Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences/ International Centre for African Music and Dance, 18 May, 2004.
- ²³ *DAFL*, p. 69.
- ²⁴ *DAFL*, p. 266.
- ²⁵ *DAFL*, p. 266.
- ²⁶ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.
- ²⁷ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.
- ²⁸ *DAFL*, p. 266.
- ²⁹ *DAFL*, p. 129.
- ³⁰ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.
- ³¹ *DAFL*, p. 382.
- ³² L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.
- ³³ *DAFL*, p. 1.
- ³⁴ *DAFL*, p. 413.
- ³⁵ *DAFL*, p. 344.
- ³⁶ *DAFL*, p. 356.
- ³⁷ *DAFL*, p.112.
- ³⁸ *DAFL*, p.468.
- ³⁹ *DAFL*, p. 100.
- ⁴⁰ *DAFL*, p. 351.
- ⁴¹ *DAFL*, p. 20.
- ⁴² *DAFL*, p. 228.
- ⁴³ I am informed by the Director of the Akrofi-Christaller Centre that Amu's reply to a letter inviting him to do a composition for the formal inauguration of the Centre was in Twi.
- ⁴⁴ See Appendices D & F.
- ⁴⁵ *DAFL*, p. 108.
- ⁴⁶ See Appendix A.
- ⁴⁷ *DAFL*, p. 309.
- ⁴⁸ *DAFL*, p. 306.
- ⁴⁹ EASA: *Ennye "Nea menya?" Na mmon "Den na mede bema?"*, Achimota College, Accra, 10.2.1935.
- ⁵⁰ *TFAS*, pp. 56-57, *ACW*, pp. 117-118.
- ⁵¹ See Appendix A., *ACW*, p. 10.
- ⁵² *TFAS*, pp. 60-61, *ACW*, pp. 121-124.
- ⁵³ Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu", p. 60.
- ⁵⁴ *DAFL*, p. 551.
- ⁵⁵ *TFAS*, pp. 25-26, *ACW*, pp. 88-89.
- ⁵⁶ *DAFL*, p. 499.
- ⁵⁷ C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmesesem* (Twi Proverbs with English translations and comments), Accra: Waterville Publishing House, p. 100.
- ⁵⁸ *TFAS*, pp. 54-55, *ACW*, pp. 115-117.
- ⁵⁹ See Appendix A.
- ⁶⁰ *DAFL*, p. 29.
- ⁶¹ *DAFL*, p. 571.
- ⁶² *TFAS*, p. 35-37, *ACW*, p. 97-100.
- ⁶³ *DAFL*, p. 434.
- ⁶⁴ EASA: "Hosana, ma wɔmmɔ no asendua mu", Kumase Presbiteria Asafo, 29.3.1953, p. 1.
- ⁶⁵ J.B. Danquah, *Akan Doctrine of God*, p.200.
- ⁶⁶ J.B. Danquah, *Akan Doctrine of God*, p. 36.
- ⁶⁷ See Appendix A.
- ⁶⁸ *TFAS*, p. 22, *ACW*, pp. 85.
- ⁶⁹ Presbyterian Church of Ghana: *Twifo Asafo Asɔre Dwom Nhoma*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 2000, No. 496, pp. 250-251.

- ⁷⁰ DAFL, p. 298.
- ⁷¹ DAFL, p. 84.
- ⁷² DAFL, p. 80.
- ⁷³ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929, p. 95.
- ⁷⁴ DAFL, p. 150.
- ⁷⁵ TFAS, p. 27, ACW, pp. 90-93
- ⁷⁶ DAFL, p. 277.
- ⁷⁷ DAFL, p. 448.
- ⁷⁸ DAFL, p. 342.
- ⁷⁹ TFAS, pp. 45-46, ACW, pp. 85.
- ⁸⁰ TFAS, p. 24, ACW, pp. 86-87.
- ⁸¹ DAFL, p. 339.
- ⁸² DAFL, p. 255.
- ⁸³ DAFL, p. 53.
- ⁸⁴ DAFL, p. 54. "According to tradition 'abu-sua' signifies 'imitating Abu', a king of Adanse (or, an *okyeame* of this king), who is said to have instituted the order of family among the Tshis." See Kwesi Yankah, *Speaking for the Chief- Okyeame and the Politics of Akan Royal Oratory*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 1995, p. 2ff.
- ⁸⁵ DAFL, p. 63.
- ⁸⁶ TFAS, pp. 31-34, ACW, pp. 93-97.
- ⁸⁷ Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping: Akan Proverbs*, Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1997, p. 77.
- ⁸⁸ DAFL, p. 451.
- ⁸⁹ It is not unlikely that this idea was motivated by Amu's reading of Rom.12:1; "*Enti, amuanom, migyina Onyankopen mmɔborohunu so mitu mo fɔ se momfa mo nipadua nsi hɔ se afɔre a ete ase a eye kronkron a esɔ Onyankopɔn ani a ene mo nyamesom a adwene wɔ mu no.*" (I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship).
- ⁹⁰ TFAS, pp. 40-44, ACW, pp. 102-106.
- ⁹¹ TFAS, pp. 62-64, ACW, pp. 124-128.
- ⁹² EASA: 'African music in liturgical worship', Radio workshop, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, Accra: 14.3.73.
- ⁹³ DAFL, p. 421.
- ⁹⁴ DAFL, 479.
- ⁹⁵ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929, p. 123. Rattray tells us that the oath which the *Nsafohene* takes goes like thus: "I speak the forbidden name of --- I speak the great name that, if I do not go to this war in which you have sent me forth, or if I go and show my back to the enemy, if I send a bullet and it falls short, and I do not follow it, and if I run away, then have I violated the great forbidden work, then have I violated the great forbidden name of ---.
- ⁹⁶ TFAS, pp. 65-67, ACW, pp. 143-137.
- ⁹⁷ See Appendix A.
- ⁹⁸ DAFL, p. 579.
- ⁹⁹ DAFL, p. 579
- ¹⁰⁰ DAFL, p. 21.
- ¹⁰¹ DAFL, p. 586.
- ¹⁰² J.B. Daquah, *Akan Doctrine of God*, p. 25.
- ¹⁰³ TFAS, pp. 68-69, ACW, pp. 132-133. The original Peki version of the song is given below:

Amewo dzife nyigbā
 Enu nu foasie ye kpā
 Ametsitsi woe kɔ wo bo gbe gble dɛ ta xɔe na mi
 Eɔo nye kple wo tsie nu
 Be miawo miato sinu
 Nuvevenyanya dɔdodo kpl' amedokoetɔdidi
 Blu mia zɔli gblɛ mia dzi fe yigbā lɔlɔ le gbegbe

Chorus

Anyiegbā wo nyonyo
 Anyiegbā wo gbegblɛ
 Eleke mieleeko

Sigbe ke woano tsie.

Agbale nunya fuflu
Loo hotsui kpokpo gudu
Kpl' agbeyaka nono meyiie kpl' ayigba lili o.
Tabobo kpl' amedoame
Nyuedidi n' amesiame
Kple la dodoamedokoe ne xilivi wononyo ko
Yowo me tofefafa kple dziyi nyuie wo dzo tso.

¹⁰⁴ Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", *The Black Perspective in Music*, 15: 2, (51-63), p. 53-53.

¹⁰⁵ See Appendix A.

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix S: Letter from PCG Literature Committee to E. Amu.

¹⁰⁷ Asempa Hymns (with orders for Holy Communion and Mass), Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1980, No. 394.

¹⁰⁸ G. Blay Gibbah, 'The woman who designed the National Flag', *The Ghanaian Times*, 8 Jan., 2005, p. 10.

¹⁰⁹ *DAFL*, p. 30.

¹¹⁰ *TFAS*, pp. 90-91, *ACW*, pp. 79-81.

¹¹¹ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.

¹¹² *DAFL*, p. 1.

¹¹³ *DAFL*, p. 238.

¹¹⁴ *DAFL*, p. 8.

¹¹⁵ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.

¹¹⁶ *ACW*, pp. 72-73.

¹¹⁷ J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Historical and Stylistic background of the Music of Ephraim Amu," p. 19.

¹¹⁸ See Matt. 4:16.

¹¹⁹ *ACW*, pp. 70-71.

¹²⁰ Presbyterian Church of Ghana: *Twifo Asafo Asore Dwom Nhoma*, No. 816, p. 423.

¹²¹ *ACW*, pp. 68-70.

¹²² Agyemang, Fred, *Amu the African: A study in vision and courage*, Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1988, p. 78.

¹²³ *DAFL*, p. 330.

¹²⁴ Ephraim Amu's unpublished music manuscript, hereafter *UMM*.

¹²⁵ Source: Copy of a programme on a concert of African songs by Amu and sung by the Menyo Hadziha of Peki Avetile at the Commonwealth Hall Theatre, University of Ghana, Legon on January 29, 1965 and the Ghana Drama Studio, Accra on January 30, 1965.

¹²⁶ *DAFL*, p. 43.

¹²⁷ *DAFL*, p. 43.

¹²⁸ *UMM*.

¹²⁹ Source: See programme (Amu's musical concert, January 29, 1965).

¹³⁰ *DAFL*, p. 84.

¹³¹ *DAFL*, p. 418.

¹³² *UMM*.

¹³³ Source: See programme (A concert of African songs by Ephraim Amu at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong-Akuapem, 19 November, 1966).

¹³⁴ *DAFL*, p. 599

¹³⁵ *DAFL*, p. 312.

¹³⁶ *DAFL*, p. 96.

¹³⁷ *DAFL*, p. 12, 320.

¹³⁸ *UMM*.

¹³⁹ Amu's musical concert, January 29, 1965.

¹⁴⁰ *UMM*.

¹⁴¹ *UMM*.

¹⁴² See Appendix P.

¹⁴³ See programme brochure (Inauguration of the Akrofi-Christaller Centre).

¹⁴⁴ *UMM*.

- ¹⁴⁵ *DAFL*, p. 398.
- ¹⁴⁶ *UMM*.
- ¹⁴⁷ *UMM*.
- ¹⁴⁸ See Appendix A.
- ¹⁴⁹ *UMM*.
- ¹⁵⁰ *UMM*.
- ¹⁵¹ Abetifi is 2080 feet above sea level.
- ¹⁵² Misonu Amu, *Stylistic and Textual Sources of contemporary Ghanaian Art music composer. A case study: Dr. Ephraim Amu*. (Unpublished M.Phil. thesis presented to the Institute of African Studies, Univ. of Ghana, Legon), 1988, 152-154.
- ¹⁵³ *TFAS*, p. 81; *ACW*, pp. 143-144.
- ¹⁵⁴ *TFAS*, p. 79; *ACW*, pp. 147-149.
- ¹⁵⁵ *TFAS*, pp. 84-87.
- ¹⁵⁶ Misonu Amu, *Stylistic and Textual Sources of contemporary Ghanaian Art music composer. A case study: Dr. Ephraim Amu*, pp. 151-152.
- ¹⁵⁷ Source: See programme (A concert of African songs by Ephraim Amu at the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong-Akuapem, 19 November, 1966).
- ¹⁵⁸ *UMM*.
- ¹⁵⁹ *UMM*.
- ¹⁶⁰ *TFAS*, pp.53-54, *ACW*, pp. 119-121.
- ¹⁶¹ EASA: 2nd National Religious Music Festival, 30.12.1980.
- ¹⁶² *TFAS*, p. 1.
- ¹⁶³ See E. Amu, "How to study African rhythm", *The Teacher's Journal*, No. 3, Vol. V, 1933, pp. 154-157; also *The Teacher's Journal*, No. 2, Vol. VI, 1934, pp. 121-124.
- ¹⁶⁴ See Appendix A.
- ¹⁶⁵ Christaller defines the expression to mean 'persons from different towns, countries or tribes'. See *DAFL*, p. 129. Fred Agyemang has explained this to mean 'hotch-potch experiment'. See *Amu the African*, p. 160. 'Firamay-firamay' as used by Ofori-Atta, in my view, means "mixing different ideas together."
- ¹⁶⁶ See Appendix T.
- ¹⁶⁷ The suggestion was made by Prof. J.H. Nketia in a private discussion. There are sources that indicate that Amu was perhaps not the only person who advocated the use of traditional drums in schools. In one of a series of articles entitled 'Native Drumming', E.R. Addow argued that the drum will serve a better purpose as means of communication in schools than the bell. See E.R. Addow, 'Native Drumming', *The Teacher's Journal*, No. 2, Vol. IV, 1932, pp. 99-102.
- ¹⁶⁸ Eva Meyerowitz, *The Sacred State of the Akan*, London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1949.

PART II

AMU THE THEOLOGIAN- ASPECTS OF DOCTRINE

CHAPTER 3

“*Ɔdomankuma Ɔboadee*”

GOD, CREATION, AND HUMAN PARTICIPATION IN GOD’S WORK.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I did a linguistic commentary on some of the lyrics of Amu’s music and commented on his poetry. In the chapters that follow, I examine in detail the ideas employed in the texts and attempt a theological interpretation of his thought. The present chapter in particular focuses on selected themes, such as Amu’s understanding of *Ɖweduoampɔn Nyame* (God), *abɔde* (creation), the advent of *bɔne* (evil), and the role that human beings play as partners in God’s work. It will be noticed in this chapter that, whereas Amu was clear in his understanding of the relationship between God and creation, particularly human beings, he was silent on the origins of *bɔne*. His belief, for instance, that *abɔde nyinaa ye* (all creation is good) will be discussed using Akan notions, such as *krɔnkrɔnkrɔn*, *fitafitafita*, and *pepepepe*. I shall further demonstrate how these concepts may deepen our understanding of the Hebrew word *tob* (good). We shall examine his concept of God, particularly as this occurs in two of his songs, ‘*Ne nyinaa Nyame n’ara*’ (It all depends on God) and ‘*Wo nsam (na) mewɔ*’ (I am in your hands). It is hoped that this chapter will enable us appreciate Amu’s positive attitude towards African culture and some elements belonging to the pre-Christian past.

TWEDUAMPɔN NYAME: ‘GOD’ IN AMU’S THINKING

Nyame ne ade nyinaa: ‘God’, the ground of human existence.

Amu’s understanding of God as the source of human existence is seen in his composition ‘*Ne nyinaa Nyame n’ara*’ (It all depends on God) (see chapter 2 *AKD*: 38):

Nipa bi benya bribi a,
ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,
Nipa bi benya ne ho a
ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,
Nipa bi ho betɔ no a
ne nyinaa Nyame no ara
Kae saa daa,
Nyame na ɔse aseda
Nea ɔbeyɛ nyinaa
Nea ɔbekyerɛ nyinaa papa

For a person to get something
It all depends on God
For a person to become rich
It all depends on God
For a person to get peace
It all depends on God
Do always remember that
It is God who deserves thanks
Whatever He does
and whatever He produces, is good

Nipa bi benya ahoofe a,
 ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,
 Nipa bi benya hooden a,
 ne nyinaa Nyame no ara
 Nipa bi benya nna pa a
 ne nyinaa Nyame no ara
 Kae saa daa,
 Nyame na ose aseda
 Nea obeye nyinaa
 Nea obekyerɛ nyinaa papa

For a person to be beautiful
 It all depends on God
 For a person to be strong
 It all depends on God
 For a person to sleep well
 It all depends on God
 Do always remember
 God deserves thanks
 Whatever he does
 and whatever He produces is good

Woyi no fi wo kwan mu ko a,
 wokɔ no den?
 Woyi no fi wo abrabɔ mu a,
 wubu no den?
 Woyi no fi wo nuado mu a,
 wodɔ no den?
 Ne nko ara
 Nyame ne ade nyinaa
 Nea obeye nyinaa
 Nea obekyerɛ nyinaa, papa

If you drive Him out of your way
 How do you make it?
 If you drive Him out of your life
 How do you live it?
 If you drive Him out of your love for
 neighbours,
 What is your love?
 He alone
 God alone is everything
 Whatever He does
 and whatever he produces, is good.

In this song Amu draws attention to *Nyame* (God) as the ultimate source of human existence. *Nyame* is the embodiment of everything that *nipa* (person) desires and longs for: *ahonya* (riches), *ahotɔ* (peace), *ahoofe* (beauty), *ahooden* (strength), and *nna pa* (good sleep). But these are not the only things by which *Nyame* can be identified. The list is inexhaustible. *Nyame* is all of this and more; ‘*Nyame ne ade nyinaa*’ (God is everything). ‘*Ade nyinaa*’ must therefore include all things, even those that are considered undesirable, such as those listed in another song entitled, ‘*Enye yen Nyame*’ (‘Not unto us O Lord’) (chapter 2 *AKD*: 3 lines 21-30):

Ohiadi anaa ahonya
 Wo nko ara na efi wo
 Yede ahobrease reda wo so ase o
 Yereda wo so ase o
 Onyame e! Gye yen aseda

Poverty or wealth
 all come from you alone
 With great humility we thank you
 We thank you
 God, receive our thanks

Amanehu anaa anigye a
 Wo nko ara nefi wo
 Yede ahobrease reda wo so ase o
 Yereda wo so ase o.
 Nyame e! Gye yen aseda.

Trouble or joy
 they both come from you alone
 With great humility we thank you
 We thank you
 God, receive our thanks.

Amu took the view that it is not only *ahonya* (riches) and *anigye* (joy) that we receive from *Nyame*. Misfortunes such as *ohiadi* (poverty) and *amanehu* (trouble) also come from *Nyame* alone: ‘*Wo nko ara nefi wo*’. Amu’s use of the expression ‘*Wo nko ara*’ may derive from his understanding of ‘*Gye Nyame*’, an Akan maxim which has been translated as ‘unless God or except God’.

What do we make of the statement, ‘*Nyame ne ade nyinaa*’? The thought may be grounded in a pre-Christian notion encapsulated in the Akan proverb, ‘*Nsem nyinaa ne Nyame*’ which C.A. Akrofi translates as ‘All wisdom is from God’.¹ J.B. Danquah translates the expression to mean ‘God is the justification (End-Cause) of all things’.² Kwame Bediako has argued that the underlying insight of Danquah’s use of the expression is the centrality of Transcendence.³ Kwame Gyekye interpretes the proverb to mean ‘All things are dependent upon Onyame’⁴ as the ultimate or absolute reality. Amu used this idea⁵ to articulate his faith in *Nyame* as the fact and factor of human existence, the ground and only reason for our being.⁶ The idea is again expressed in the opening lines of “*Enye yen Nyame*” (chapter 2 *AKD*: 3):

Enye yen Nyame!	It is not us O! God
Tweduampon Nyame!	Almighty God
Enye yen Nyame!	It is not us O! God
Tweduampon Nyame! Enye yen	Almighty God! It is not us
Wo din kese na anuonyam no wo no.	The glory belongs to your great name.
Tweduampon Nyame!	The Almighty God
Yetweri wo ara	We lean on you

This reading is based on Ps. 115.1: “*Enye yen, Awurade, enye yen, na wo din mmom na fa anuonyam ma no, w’adɔe nti, wo nokware nti*” (Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory, for the sake of thy steadfast love and thy faithfulness!). It is clear what Amu was trying to do here. In his interpretation of the psalm, *Awurade* is replaced by another title, *Tweduampon* and the personal name *Nyame*. Amu must have reckoned that *Tweduampon Nyame* is a more concrete expression of the name of the deity than *Awurade*, and yet it is safe to assume that by virtue of his training as a catechist, he must have been aware that *Adonai*, which translates ‘*Awurade*’ (Lord), is the title used in addressing the God of Israel, since in the Jewish context his real name YHWH (the Tetragrammaton) cannot be uttered. ‘*Awurade*’ must have appeared to Amu to be a common title, used not only in respect of *Nyame*, but others as well including human rulers⁷ and ordinary people. As shown

in other works, Amu was consistent in his translation and interpretation of the name of God (see his readings of Psalms 100, 121, and 103 in *AKD: 39, 40, 41* respectively in chapter 2). He must also have understood the appellation, ‘*Tweduampɔn*’, as the dependable one; the one on whom we lean. (See chapter 2 *AKD: 3*).

There is an ethical and moral dimension to Amu’s understanding of *Nyame*: ‘*Nea ɔbeyɛ nyinaa, ne nea ɔbekyere nyinaa papa*’ (Everything *Nyame* does and manifests are good). It is significant that Amu placed value not only on who *Nyame* is, but also on what *Nyame* does. Amu believed that God’s being is manifest in God’s actions and therefore saw God as one who heals the brokenhearted (*Awerekyekye Nyame*) and gives peace (*Asomdwoe Nyame*).

Awerekyekye Nyame: The God of all comfort

The omnipotence of *Nyame* is noted in humankind’s dependence on *Nyame*’s protection and provision. The idea is encapsulated in the first stanza of the song, ‘*Wo nsam (na) mewɔ*’ (I am in your hands) (chapter 2 *AKD: 5*). The song runs thus:

Wo nsam na me wɔ,
Agya e, fa me sie ara,
Ewiase reye ayi me hu papa,
Adee bekye me, adee besa me a

Wo a w’adaworoma, Nyame
Agya Nyame! Meye mmɔbɔ po
O! Nyame Meye mmɔbɔ

Nea me mete
ne me kɔre ne me bae,
Nea me meye se esua ana eso,
Se eba bekɔ se eba bewie
wo nko ara wo na wunim
Ma ensi me yiye pe,
O! Nyame! Hu me mmɔbɔ

Wo nko ara
Wo na m’ani da wo so
Adeyefo, ɔbre ntumi ntu me bo,

Mereba abehu w’anim mahome
get rest
na me bo ato me yam Agya Nyame
Ma menya no saa,
O! Nyame kyekye me were.

I am in your hands
Father safely hide me
The world is a frightful place
Whether I rise in the morning or the
night befalls me
depends on your grace, O God
Father God I am miserable
O God have mercy upon me

What I am
my going out and my coming in
What I do whether small or great
Whether it begins or ends
You alone know
Let it be well with me
O God, have mercy upon me

You alone
In you alone I place my hope
Gracious One, tiredness cannot
frighten
I am coming to behold your face to
So that I may be at ease O Father
Let me have that
O God, console and comfort me.

According to Christaller, the idiomatic expression ‘*ɔwɔ me nsam*’ means ‘he is in my power; he is in my charge (given in my charge), I take care of, [or] look after him’.⁸ By saying that “*wo nsam na me wɔ*”, Amu meant more than the expression literally

connotes: it is an articulation of faith in *Nyame*'s power to keep and to protect those in his charge. This is echoed in the Twi Bible reading of John 10: 27-29:

Me nguan tie me nne, na me nso minim wɔn, na wodi m'akyi; na mema wɔn daa nkwa, na wɔrenyera, na **obi renhuam wɔn mfi me nsam da**. M'agya a ɔde wɔn maa me no so sen nneema nyinaa; na **obi rentumi nhuam wɔn m'agya nsam**.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and **no one shall snatch them out of my hand**. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand**.

'*Nyame nsam*' or '*m'agya nsam*' is where Amu found safety and protection, for the world of human existence was a place plagued with fear and uncertainty (chapter 2 *AKD*: 5, lines 3-5):

Ewiase reye ayi me hu papa,
Adee bekye me, adee besa me a

Wo a w'adaworoma, Nyame.

The world is a frightful place
Whether I rise in the morning or the
night befalls me
depends on your grace, O God.

The only assurance against fear (rising up in the morning after sleep or going through the tasks of the day before night falls) is '*Nyame adaworoma*', an expression which means God's 'favour, kindness, grace, [and] mercy'.⁹ The uncertainty that clouds the daily routine of work and one's very existence is captured by Amu in the following (chapter 2 *AKD*: 5, lines 8-14):

Nea me mete
ne me kɔre ne me bae,
Nea me meye se esua ana eso,
Se eba beko se eba bewie
wo nko ara wo na wunim
Ma ensi me yiye pe,
O! Nyame! Hu me mmɔbo.

What I am
my going out and my coming in
What I do whether small or great
Whether it begins or ends
You alone know
Let it be well with me
O God, have mercy upon me.

The verbs '*te*' and '*ye*' are significant for our understanding of Amu. '*Te*' means 'to be with respect to quality, [or] to be in a certain state'.¹⁰ '*Te*', therefore, gives indication of what constitutes, in essence, the quality of life of humankind. '*Ye*' on the other hand is a doing verb and means, 'to effect, produce an effect or result, bring about, work out, carry through; to accomplish, fulfill, achieve, effectuate'.¹¹ The essence of the human person is known to *Nyame* only, and it is *Nyame* alone who knows the value of what human beings produce, '*se esua ana, eso*' (whether small,

or great). It is only in *Nyame* that the uncertainty that attends the human situation, whether in being or in doing, is resolved.

The last stanza of the lyrics of *AKD: 5* is interesting:

Wo nko ara
 Wo na m'ani da wo so
 Adɔeyefo, ɔbre ntumi ntu me bo,
 Mereba abehu w'anim mahome
 na me bo ato me yam, Agya Nyame
 Ma menya no saa,
 O! Nyame kyekye me were.

You alone
 In you alone I place my hope
 Gracious One, tiredness cannot
 frighten me
 I am coming to behold your face to
 get rest
 so that I may be at ease O God our
 Father
 Let me have it like that,
 O! God, console and comfort me.

If in the previous stanza, Amu had depicted the uncertain circumstances that human beings face; in this one, it is human anxiety that was his preoccupation. The word on which Amu's idea hinged is 'bo'. The word is used twice in this stanza and in the third instance it appears as 'were'. In a literal sense 'bo' can be translated as 'the heart, chest, breast or bosom'.¹² The word, however, means more than the physical organ. It has been used here by Amu to refer to the 'seat of feelings, affections and passions'.¹³ 'Were' is synonymous with 'bo' and means the 'heart or breast as the seat of the affections and capacities of the soul'.¹⁴ Christaller's note that precedes this definition is important: '[were] seems to have originally signified the part of the body enclosed by the ribs and breastbone, the chest, thorax, and its contents and is no more used in bodily sense'. This is relevant for our understanding of the literal sense in which both 'were' and 'bo' appear in the text. When Amu said that '*Adɔeyefo, ɔbre ntumi ntu me bo*', he should be understood literally to mean that, 'Gracious one, tiredness cannot uproot my heart'. Idiomatically, the expression means, 'tiredness cannot frighten me'. Subsequently, '*na me bo ato me yam, Agya Nyame*' literally means, 'so that my heart may fall inside me, Father God'. 'Yam' means, 'the inner cavity of the human or animal body, the chest as well as the abdomen, belly, womb, and its contents, viz. the heart, lungs and other intestines'.¹⁵

The two expressions we have considered so far make sense in the context of the third: '*O! Nyame kyekye me were*'. Literally, the expression means, 'O God, tie up together my heart!', and idiomatically it means, 'O God, console or comfort me!'. Both the literal and the idiomatic meanings conveyed by the lyrics must be established to enable us appreciate the depth of Amu's thought at this point. In Amu,

we see a man weighed down first by thoughts and anxieties of the state of his being as a human person, and second by the uncertainties of daily routine. As a result, he is both physically and spiritually exhausted. His emotions, feelings, passions and the entire ‘capacities of the soul’ are affected too. The word that translates anxiety, ‘*awerehow*’ (literally, the heart is light or weak), is a picturesque illustration of an ailing human heart. In his prayer to the ‘*Adɔeyefo*’ (Gracious One), he assures himself that ‘tiredness cannot uproot my heart’, but he also petitions God to ‘bind up together’ his heart and comfort him so that he may be at rest.

The metaphorical sense in which the heart is used as the seat of human emotions and anxieties is well known. Proverbs 12: 25 says that ‘*onipa komam awerehow botow no, na asempa ma koma tɔ yam*’ (Anxiety weighs down the human heart, but a good word cheers it up). The psalmist says of the Lord that, ‘*Ɔsa won a won koma abubu yare, na ɔkyekyere won akuru*’ (He heals the broken-hearted, and binds up their wounds) Ps.147: 3.

Asomdwoe Nyame (lit. God of Peace): On the Peace of God

In a song entitled ‘*Asomdwoe*’ (Peace), Ephraim Amu acknowledged God as the one who has power to give rest to the labourer (see chapter 2 *AKD: 28*):

<p>Asomdwoe mu na meko makoda na mada preko komm Owia no anya ato, esum aduru, Adwuma asi, mereko makoda. Asomdwoe mu na meko makoda na mada preko komm. Me dadwene sum no hyeren mu ma me Na manya ahosan, hyeren sum no mu ma me M’ahohia sum no hyeren mu ma me Ma manya ahosan hyeren sum no mu ma me. Na wo Nyame nkutoo wo na wotumi ma metena ho dwoodwoo Asomdwoe mu na meko makoda na mada preko komm</p>	<p>In peace I go and sleep I will sleep soundly The sun is set, darkness befalls work is done I shall go to sleep. In peace I go and sleep I will sleep soundly Let your light shine through my troubled mind to make me free, shine through the darkness Let your light shine through my distress to make me free, shine through the darkness For God you alone are able to let me stay in peace In peace will I go and sleep quietly I will sleep soundly</p>
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This composition is based on Psalm 4: 8; ‘*Asomdwoe mu na meko makoda, na meda preko; na wo, Awurade, nko na woma metra ho dwoodwoo*’ (‘In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety’). In this song, Amu situated the words of the psalmist in an evening scene. The sun has set and the skies are already draped in darkness. We meet a pensive worker who is troubled and distressed, struggling to come to terms with his fears and anxieties. The psalmist

begins by acknowledging the God of justice who offers relief in times of distress. He then goes on to contend with men whom he accuses of dishonouring him through vain words and lies. The psalmist then assures himself with the knowledge that ‘the Lord has set apart the godly for himself’. The psalm closes with an expression of hope and confidence in a God who guarantees safety.

The entire psalm provides the context for our understanding of Amu’s thought. In order to appreciate Amu’s portrait and understand the condition of the worker, there is need to explore Amu’s use of words. ‘*Asomdwoe*’, ‘*komm*’, and ‘*dwoodwoo*’ have been used as metaphors. Each of them has a meaning that is concrete, vivid, and graphic, and relates to the existential realities of life. The words incorporate visual symbols that aid understanding. *Asomdwoe*, which derives from two words *asom* (ears) and *dwo* (calm), literally means ‘calm or cool ears’. Christaller defines *dwo* as ‘to be calm’ or ‘to relax from a state of excitement’.¹⁶ Since the ears act as one of the main organs by which communication is effected, or by which contact is made with the external world, the word is understandable when used in this figurative sense. The ears literally bear the weight and pressure of the external world.

Although *komm* is defined as ‘quiet, silent, or still’,¹⁷ the word has a certain ring about it in the way it can be expressed in Akan: ‘*mo ma eha ye tinn komm*’.¹⁸ The closest English translation to this beautiful expression may be: ‘Let there be absolute quiet so we can hear a pin drop’. What makes the Akan expression distinctive is the fact that *komm* (quiet, silence) is qualified by *tinn*, a word which Christaller defined as ‘sound produced by a piece of iron falling to the ground’.¹⁹ ‘*Tinn komm*’ is therefore about sound that emanates from silence, and should subsequently be understood to mean ‘the audible expression of the inaudible; the deafening sound that comes from absolute silence’. *Dwoodwoo* is defined as ‘softly’ or ‘safely’.

Asomdwoe is the state in which one longs to be in sleep. It is characterised not only by calmness but also by a silence that is almost deafening. Amu’s use of the word *preko*, which literally means ‘at once’, suggests that it is not possible for a man with a down cast soul and a troubled mind to go to bed and sleep immediately. As noted earlier in “*Ne nyinaa Nyame no ara*”, Amu believed that *nna pa* (good sleep) comes from God. He therefore implores God to enable him sleep *preko* (immediately), so his mind can be at rest. The Akan have a beautiful expression which

encapsulates this idea of the restless mind, *ɔdadwene*. The word can be rendered literally ‘sleep-thoughts’. Christaller defined it as ‘mental anxiety, worry, or care’.²⁰ To a mind that is troubled and anxious, sleep does not come easily. For Amu, the *ɔdadwene* is full of ‘*esum*’ (darkness) and therefore needed the light of God to shine into it. Darkness in this context is used as a metaphor depicting the human condition, and light is used to indicate God’s divine intervention in such a condition.

It is not clear in this song what was responsible for the state of unease in which Amu found himself, except to guess that this has something to do with his work. When the sun has set and darkness approaches, then ‘*adwuma asi*’ (work has come to a close). If God ordained work for his service and glory, why should it cause distress? Why does the worker need to be set free, apparently not from work itself, but from work-related anxieties? To what extent have these questions got to do with the Biblical view of work as recorded in the Genesis account? Is work part of the curse? The setting of the sun and the approach of darkness are metaphors which Amu borrowed to portray death.²¹ It is important to note the use of sleep as a metaphor for death. It is death that brings every human activity to a close. Amu’s use of this metaphor in this sense becomes meaningful. This is a fact underscored by the use of the song as a funeral dirge for the departed. Kofi Agawu has, however, noted that this song is not only about death, but also about rest and sleep.²² The concept of rest in God as employed in Amu’s song should be understood to be both an existential as well as an eschatological reality.

***ABODE* (CREATION)**

Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee: On the goodness of God’s creation and the advent and nature of evil

Amu held the view that *abode* (creation) is God’s gift to humankind. The thought is captured in the following lines (see chapter 2 *AKD: 1* lines 1-6, 22-27):

Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee boɔ ade no

ɔboɔ no Kronkronkron,

Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee boɔ ade no

Ɔboɔ no fitafitafita,

Ɔbo adee no

Ɔboɔ no peɛɛpe

Ɔdomankama Ɔkysadee kyee ade no

When God the creator created all things

God created them pure

When the creator created all things

God created them purely white

When God created all things

God created them perfect

When God the Giver gave out all things

Ɔkyɛɛ no Kronkronkron
Ɔdomankama Ɔkyɛadeɛ kyɛɛ ade no

God gave them out pure
When God the Giver gave out all
things
God provided them purely white
When God gave out all things
God gave them out perfect

In this song, Amu used three adjectives to describe God's creation; *Kronkronkron*, *fitafitafita*, and *pepepepe*.²³ In order to grasp fully the thought conveyed by Amu in this song there is need to examine each of the words he used and the extent to which they contribute to our understanding of creation.

The following text from J.H. Nketia's collections describes a man, *Ɔsee* (Osei) as *kronkron*:

Osebenso Adwera,
Ɔsee Kum-anini Berempon
Ɔsee *Kronkron*,
Go mu brebre, go mu brebre²⁴

The watery shrub that thrives on hard ground,
Noble Ɔsee, that lays men low,
true and of pure blood,
Take it easy, take it easy.

Nketia translated *kronkron* in this drum language as "true and of pure blood." Christaller defined it as 'pure', 'clear', 'unmingled', and 'unadulterated'.²⁵ The sense in which the word is used in Akan finds expression also in Ga. Marion Kilson provides us with the evidence:

In modern Accra, Ga distinguish between "true Ga" (Ganyo krong) and other Ga. The former are descendants of the Ga who in the mid-seventeenth century lived either on the coast or in the inland town of Ayawaso, which is known in European sources as Great Accra; the latter are descendants of later immigrant non-Ga settlers.²⁶

Kilson has further noted that the differentiation among Ga is even more relevant to cultic practice than in other areas of life, especially where the purity of the cult is predicated on the ethnic purity of the worshippers.²⁷ Christaller used the popular expression "*Otwini kron*" which he translated as "a genuine Tshi (sic)-man" (see chapter 2 *AKD: 1*). One Akan proverb says that "*ɔmamfrani nnyin kron*" (lit. a foreign settler does not become pure), and another says that "*esono akura, ena esono abotokura, ena esono akura krom*" (Although there are different categories of mice, one can identify the pure mouse).

The foregoing sources indicate that *kronkron* may be used of human beings to make distinction between persons on the grounds of their ethnic affiliation. The word also means 'fair', 'fine' or 'beautiful', and may be used to describe the physical

features of a person or animal. C.A. Akrofi used *kron* in respect of language that is classic.²⁸ According to Christaller the word is used for things other than human beings such as water or palm wine.²⁹ Another adjective used to describe liquids is *kronyee*. The word is related to the root *kron* and means pure. *Kronyee* has an additional meaning; ‘being without sediment’.³⁰

Fitaa or *fitafita* is defined as ‘clean’, ‘clear’, ‘pure’, and ‘white’.³¹ Before “white” became part of the vocabulary of racist ideology it was in use in several parts of Ghana as a symbol of purity. *Fitafita* emphasises purity in terms of colour perception. Priests of the traditional religion wear white cloth whenever they are officiating. In Ga religion, it is customary to drape the whale (*Bonsu*) in white calico when it is washed ashore, because of the special place accorded to *Bonsu* in Ga religious thought. ‘White’ is also used as a symbol of victory.³² It is very common to see victors, especially those who win cases at the law courts, sprinkled with perfumed talc and draped in white cloth. Carl Reindorf is clearer on the issue:

White clay, “ayilo”, is a token of justification or innocence, whilst charcoal represents guilt or wrong. Formerly our kings in passing sentence of right or wrong, used such symbols, instead of sentencing in words. Sometimes the sentence is passed in words, after which the symbol is used on head and right arm.³³

Words like exactly, accurately, precisely, just, even, completely, thoroughly, and perfectly define *pepepepe*.³⁴ The word invokes the idea of a standard or measure. In this sense, Amu reckoned creation, God’s product, as precise and exact according to God’s own specifications. God himself is the standard by which his products are measured and judged. *Pepepepe* also implies justice or fairness (chapter 2 *AKD: I*).

Amu’s thought on creation is likely to have been informed by two sources. The first is the Genesis account of creation recorded in the Scriptures. In that account, the word ‘eye’ (good) is used by God to describe creation. “*Na Onyankopɔn hunuu dee ɔyɔɛ nyinaa, na hwe, eye papa.*” (“God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.”) (Gen.1: 31). One can trace the second source to an Akan proverb: *Osasa se: ade a Onyame aye nyinaa ye*³⁵ (The hawk in flight high above land and water says: “All that God has created is good.”) Both the Genesis account in the Akan Bible and the Akan proverb quoted above affirm the goodness of creation, and this affirmation is evidenced in the usage of the word ‘eye’, which is common to both texts. Christaller defined *ye* as ‘good state’.³⁶

What contribution does a reading of Amu's *Ɔdomankuma ɔboadee* make to our understanding of the biblical concept of 'good' in general, and the goodness of God's creation in particular? The Hebrew word *tob* has a broad meaning and indicates in a general sense 'a state or function appropriate to genre, purpose, or situation'.³⁷ In this regard, a thing or person is held to be good when such person or thing 'is in accordance with the acknowledged practical, moral or religious standards'.³⁸ The word used by the LXX, *agathos*, has a meaning that is not far from the way in which it was understood in the OT and in Judaism. In Greek philosophy, the good was determined from within the human sphere, so that there was a tendency to equate the good with the pleasant.³⁹

'Eye' does not fully express what is intended by God in Genesis concerning God's creation, but neither do the words 'tob' and 'agathos'. However, by using the words *kronkronkron*, *fitafitafita* and *pepepepe*, Amu has deepened our understanding of 'good'. To ensure that his message on the goodness of God's creation was well communicated, Amu drew on the method employed in traditional poetry by using the triplicative in order to give the words extra force and effect. Thus, *kron* became 'kronkronkron', *fitaa* became 'fitafitafita' and *pe* became 'pepepepe'.

Amu's '*Ɔdomankuma ɔboadee*' however, is not only about creation that is *kronkron*, *fitafitafita*, and *pepepepe*. It is also about creation that has been corrupted by evil (see chap. 2 *AKD: I* L. 7-12):

Bone bae a,	When evil came
Ebae bessee abode	Evil destroyed God's creation
ma ho agu fi ara,	Creation became defiled
Nipadua yi ho agu fi a,	If the human body is defiled
Onyame e! Tew ho ma me	O God, cleanse it for me
na memfa nsom wo ara.	So I may use it to serve you

'*Bone bae a, ebae bessee akyede*' (lit: When evil came, it destroyed God's gift). The song raises a number of questions: What is *bone* and what is its origin, nature and form? Should we perceive evil as an embodied personality or as disembodied entity? To what extent does the Genesis account of evil shed light on the Akan concept of evil? My reading of Amu suggests that the source of evil lies outside of God's creation and is external to humankind created perfect from the very beginning. How then do we account for evil in a creation that was good? In responding to these questions raised by Amu's song, it is helpful to place the entire discussion within the broad framework of the Akan concept of evil.

The Akan believe that God did not create evil. This notion is expressed in a couple of proverbs such as ‘*Nyame ambɔ bɔne*’ (God did not create evil) or ‘*Nyame mpe bɔne*’⁴⁰ (God does not like evil). According to Kwame Gyekye, the Akan trace evil to two sources. First, there are spirit-beings such as the *abosom*, including all supernatural forces (*sasabonsam*, *mmoatia*) and magical forces (withcraft). The other source of evil is human will or character (“*bɔne fi onipa suban*”).⁴¹ An Asante priest was of the view that in creating human beings, God endowed them with the capacity to do good or evil.⁴²

But if God is associated with good and detests evil, how does one account for the human inclination to do evil? According to Gyekye, since *Onyame* is the ultimate Supreme Being, we need to locate the origin of evil in sources other than the lesser deities. Thus, in Akan thought the problem of evil arises just as it does in Western philosophy. Whereas in the latter, evil is seen as problematic because of the ‘contradiction between God’s attributes of omnipotence and goodness (benevolence) on the one hand and the existence of evil on the other hand’, Akan philosophy resolves the dilemma by locating the source of evil in the exercise of human freedom. Kwame Gyekye’s point is worth noting:

The Akan thinkers, although recognizing the existence of moral evil in the world, generally do not believe that this fact is inconsistent with assertion that God is omnipotent and wholly good. Evil, according to them is ultimately the result of the exercise by humans of their freedom of the will with which they were endowed by the Creator, *Ɔbodɛɛ*.⁴³

It is revealing, however, that Amu did not give any suggestion as to the source of evil, nor did he attempt to trace its origins. In this song it is *nipa* (humankind), rather than *bɔne* (evil), that is Amu’s concern.

Amu’s notion of evil resonates with the parable of Jesus on the wheat and the weeds. In that story, we are told that a householder planted good seed in his fields and while he slept an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. Although the master had an idea who the enemy was, the workers had no clue. They sought to know where the ‘*wura bɔne*’ (evil seed) had come from:

Na ofiwura no nkoa baa ne nkyen beka kyereɛ no sɛ: Owura, ɛnye aba pa na wugui w’afuw no mu? Na *wura bɔne yi de, efi he?* Na ɔka kyereɛ won sɛ: Ɔtamfo bi na ɔbeyɛ saa. Na nkoa no ka kyereɛ no sɛ: Ende wope sɛ yɛkɔ koboaboa ano anaa? Ɛna ose: Dabi, anye a, moreboaboa wura bɔne no ano no, na moatu awi no bi afra mu.

Momma n'abien no nyinaa nnyin nkosi twa bere, na twa bere no mu na meka makyere twafo no se: Mommoaboa wura bone no ano kan, na monkyekyere no afiafi mma wonkɔhyew na awi no de, mommoaboa ano nkogu me san so!

And the servants of the householder came and said to him, "Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? *How then has it weeds?*" He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Then do you want us to go and gather them?" But he said, "No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."⁴⁴

The workers thought that the solution to the problem should be immediate, and that invariably would have meant uprooting the evil shoots at once. The master, however, knew better. Both were to grow together until harvest time since any attempt to uproot the weeds would affect the good plants as well. The parable teaches that the problem of evil would be dealt with in the *eschaton*. What we can do as human beings in our limitation is to deal not with evil but its manifestations. The idea that we may have to live with evil till the end of the age is implied in the story, hence the need to pray constantly for deliverance from the evil one (Mat.6:9).

Amu's treatment of the origin of evil recalls the approach of Origen in the third century of the Christian era. In the *Contra Celsum*, Origen disagreed with Celsus, the anti-Christian polemicist that the origin of evil is a subject matter which could be ascertained only by philosophers. According to Origen,

Celsus maintains that *it is not easy for one who has not read philosophy to know the origins of evil*, as though anyone who is a philosopher is easily able to know their origin, while for anyone who is not a philosopher it is not easy to perceive the origin of evils although it is possible for him to know it, even if only after much hard work. We reply to this that it is not easy even for one who has read philosophy to know the origin of evils, and probably it is impossible even for these men to know it absolutely, unless by inspiration of God it is made clear what are evils, and shown how they came to exist, and understood how they will be removed.⁴⁵

By his argument, Origen sought to deflate the notion that the sophisticated mind of the philosopher can locate the source of evil. For Origen, the origin and nature of evil and how evil can be dealt with, were issues that could be unraveled only by divine intuition and direction. He was emphatic that "if there be any topic of human investigation which is difficult for our nature to grasp, certainly the origin of evils may be considered to be such".⁴⁶ Like Origen, Amu did not claim to know the source

of evil, but he had clear ideas as to how evil would end, as shown in a song on the resurrection of Jesus entitled ‘*Osebɔ*’ (chapter 2 *AKD*: 6). The song runs:

Osee! Oseyee! Oseyee! Aye!
 Awurade Yesu asore afi da mu o!
 Mommɔ ose, mommɔ ose
 Awurade Yesu adi nkonim
 Mommɔ ose aye
 Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye!

Awurade Yesu adi owu so nim o!
 Mommɔ ose, mommɔ ose
 Awurade Yesu adi nkonim
 Mommɔ ose aye
 Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye!

Awurade Yesu akyidifo pame!
 Mommɔ ose, mommɔ ose
 Awurade Yesu adi nkonim
 Mommɔ ose aye
 Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye!

Bone ebewie animguase
Papa e! ebewie anuonyamhye
 Owu e! Wo nwowɔe no wɔ he?
 Nyame mma e, momma mo bo nto mo yam

Asaman e wo nkonim no wɔ he o?
 Yeregu o, yegu no nusum de
 Tɔ wo bo ase, na hwe Onyame
 Onyame tumi gyina papa akyi
 na ebewie nkonim
 Mommɔ ose ayee

Anigyesem, ben ara ni
 Onyame tumi di owu ne asaman so nim ma yen
 Mommɔ ose ayee

Da bi reba a, nusu bedan ahurusidwom
 Onyame tumi rebeye ma aboro anidaso so
 Mommɔ ose ayee

Osee! Oseyee! Oseyee! Aye!
 Jesus has risen from the grave
 Shout the battle cry of victory
 Jesus our Lord is victorious
 Shout the battle cry of victory
 Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye!

The Lord Jesus has defeated death
 Shout the battle cry of victory
 The Lord Jesus is victorious
 Shout the battle cry of victory
 Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye!

Followers of Lord Jesus are looking
 for me
 Shout the battle cry of victory
 The Lord Jesus is victorious
 Shout the battle of victory
 Oseyee! Oseyee! Ose aye!

Evil has ended in disgrace
Good has resulted in glory
 O death where is thy sting
 O children of God be comforted

Place of the dead where is your
 victory
 Though we are sowing in tears
 Be patient and wait upon the Lord
 The Lord’s power supports what is
 good
 and it will result in victory
 Shout the battle cry of victory

What joyful news is this
 The Lord’s power has defeated death
 and the place of the dead for us
 Shout the battle cry of victory

A day is coming when tears shall turn
 into songs of jubilation
 The Lord’s power will overwhelm
 hope
 Shout the battle cry of victory.
 (my emphasis)

In this song, the resurrected Jesus is greeted with a cry of victory, *Osee! Oseyee! Oseyee! Aye!* From the song three enemies are mentioned; *bone* (evil), *owu* (death) and *asaman* (the living dead). To be sure, this song is a re-reading of I Cor. 15: 55-57:

Owuo, wo nkonim wo he? Owuo, wo nwowoe wo he? Owuo nwowoe wo he? Owuo nwowoe ne bone; na bone tumi ne mmara. Aseda nka Onyankopon a onam yen Awurade Yesu Kristo so de nkonim ama yen.

“O death, where is thy victory: O death, where is thy sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is important to wrestle with the Akan translation of the Greek text, since that will enable us to ascertain the type of *bone* mentioned in the passage. Presently, we shall see that *bone* can be divided into three categories; *bone* as original evil that polluted God’s creation, *bone* as *mmuso* and *bone* as a lesser evil compared with *mmusu*. The Greek word that translates *bone* is *harmatia* which can be interpreted to mean ‘missing a definite goal’.⁴⁷ *Bone*, as used in this song, means evil. Two reasons can be advanced to support the point. First, *bone* is mentioned in contradistinction to *papa* (good), and second, Paul was drawing attention to a final battle in which death would be swallowed up in victory. What makes Amu’s reading of the passage interesting is the way *bone* is dealt with. In his own words ‘*Bone ebewie animguase*’ (evil has ended in disgrace). ‘*Animguase*’ (lit. ‘fall of face’) is the word that opens the window into Amu’s mind. *Animguase* is shame, loss of face, dignity, reverence, respect and what J. B. Danquah calls “divine pride.”⁴⁸ An Akan proverb says that *Animguase mfata Okanni-ba* (dishonour does not befit an Akan).⁴⁹ The Akan believe that it is better to suffer death than dishonour. By saying that ‘*Bone ebewie animguase*’, Amu meant that evil will be subjected to shame and dishonour in the eschaton. In the chapter that follows we shall look at *owu* (death) and *asaman* (the dead) in the context of Amu’s Christology.

On the effect of evil on humankind and the restoration of abode (creation)

The effect of *bone* (evil) on *abode* (creation), particularly humankind, is noted by Amu in his song ‘*Ɔdomankama Ɔbodee*’ (‘And behold it was all very good’) as shown in the following lines (chapter 2 *AKD: 1*):

Bone bae a, ebae besee akyede
 Ma ho agu fi ara
 Adurade yi ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yenifa nsom wo ara

When evil came it destroyed God’s
 gift
 God’s gift became defiled
 My **garment** is defiled
 O God, cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you

Anonne yi ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho mayen
 yemfa nsom wo ara,
 Yen kasa yi ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yemfa nsom wo ara
 Yen dwonto ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yemfa nsom wo ara

Amanyɔ ho agu fi a,

Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yemfa nsom wo ara
 Amanne ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yemfa nsom wo ara,
 Nyamesom no ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yemfa nsom wo ara
 Adepa bi no ho agu fi a,
 Onyame e! Tew ho ma yen
 yemfa nsom wo ara.
 Onyame e! Bribiara nso wo ye o!⁵⁰

Our **drink** is defiled
 O God, cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you
 Our **speech** is defiled
 O God cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you
 Our **song** is defiled
 O God cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you

That which makes for good
 governance is defiled
 O God cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you
 Our **civic responsibility** is defiled
 O God cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you
 Our **worship of God** is defiled
 O God cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you
Any good thing is defiled
 O God cleanse it for us
 So we can use it to serve you
 O God you can do all things

As already noted, *bɔne*⁵¹ (evil) is perceived by Amu as that extraneous element that came along and contaminated the purity of God's gifts, thus defiling them. But central to his thought on creation is humankind. Amu's discussion of the restoration of creation, as evidenced in the second part of 'Ɔdomankama Ɔbɔadeɛ' is subsequently focused on the human person. If humankind has become tainted with evil, then it is obvious that anything that emanates from, or is closely associated with, human beings is also rendered unclean. Human language or speech loses its exactness and perfection, so that the song that human beings sing, according to Amu, is defiled. The garment worn by human beings is soiled and what they drink is even polluted. *Amanyɔ* or those elements that make for a good society and civic responsibility (*Amanne*) are destroyed. For Amu, any good thing (*adepa bi*) was rendered unwholesome as a result of the advent of evil. All the items he mentions as having been defiled by *bɔne* relate to human activity or inventions. No creation of God is necessarily evil in itself except as it relates to humankind. Once the purity of humankind was contaminated everything else followed in that trail of desecration.

Amu, however, held the conviction that creation could be returned by God to its original "good state", and throughout the song he makes request to God for its cleansing (*ho tew*) and restoration. Following that conviction, Amu set out to request that God enable him to "cleanse" and put to use some elements in the Akan culture

which had been branded as unworthy and unsafe for Christian use. One of the first things he did was to take the popular tunes used in the palm wine taverns and entertainment spots and put them to Christian use. In his *Twenty-five African Songs*⁵² he listed songs including *Yaapɔnsa*, which formed the basis for the development of his own style of music. For his lyrics, he turned to the Akan Bible and the rich Akan tradition of proverbs, stories, drum language, and the palace praise poetry. For Amu, *adepa nyinaa* (all good things) certainly included the African garment and the style of dressing. He had no inhibition, therefore, mounting the pulpit and preaching in the Ghanaian *ntama* (cloth), even though he had been cautioned previously against doing so by church authorities who felt they had to preserve Western norms.⁵³ Amu also believed that *Nyamesom* (traditional religion) could be used as a vehicle in expounding the verities of the Christian faith:

There are deep truths underlying our indigenous religions, truths which may not be equal in weight to Christian truths, but which are dim representations of the great Christian truths. Let these truths be made use of in teaching the greater truths to the Africans.⁵⁴

Amu took the view that the purpose of God in creation was to enable humankind serve God, for that was the intention of God from the very beginning. But service to God is not a servitude wherein the servants become dehumanised as they labour to please their master. Rather, for Amu, such service in which the servant is exhorted to hold on to God leads to the well-being of the servant. The thought is expressed in a song he entitled, '*ɔdomankama ɔboadee boadee aye n'adwuma*' (chapter 2 *AKD*: 2):

ɔdomankama ɔboadee aye n'adwuma
Obi, hena po na ɔboaa no?
ɔdomankama ɔyeammre
nko beye ara ma
ɔdesani bi remfra mpo

God the Creator has done his work
Who helped him?
The Creator who works and is not tired
He alone will do it
so that even though no human being can claim
any glory yet

Onipa e! wo anigye nti,
Onipa e! wo ahoto nti
So Nyame mu bi o!
Onyame e! ma memfa ɔpe
Onyame e! ma memfa ɔdo
Onyame e! ma memfa hofama
Memfa nye wo adwuma

O humankind!, for the sake of your joy
and your peace
Hold on to God
O God let me take good will
Let me take love
let me take sacrifice
To do your work

Onipa e!, wo ahonya nti,
redemption
Onipa e!, wo nkwanya nti

O humankind!, for the sake of your
and your salvation

So Nyame mu bi o!
 Onyame e! Ma memfa odwo
 Onyame e! Ma memfa osetie
 Onyame e! Ma memfa ahotoso
 Memfa nye wo adwuma

Hold on to God
 O God let me take meekness
 Let me take obedience
 let me take trust
 To do your work

Onipa e! wo ahofadi nti,

O humankind!, for the sake of your
 independence

Onipa e! wo peye nti,
 So Nyame mu bi o!
 Onyame e! Ma memfa anigye
 Onyame e! Ma memfa ayeyi
 Onyame e! Ma memfa aseda
 Memfa nye wo adwuma.

and for your own perfection
 So hold on to God
 O God let me take joy
 let me take praise
 let me take thanksgiving
 to do your work

Onipa e! wo mfefo nti,
 Onipa e! mmobrɔfo nti,
 So Nyame mu bio.
 Onyame e! mede me kakra
 Onyame e! mede me bebre,
 Onyame e! mede me nyina ara
 De beye wo adwuma

O humankind!, for the sake of your fellowmen
 and the miserable state in which you are
 Hold on to God
 O God I bring the little I have
 O God I bring what I have in abundance
 O God I submit everything I have
 to do your work

'Anigye' (joy), 'ahotɔ' (peace), 'peye' (wellbeing), 'ahonya' (wealth), 'nkwanya' (salvation), 'mfefo' (friends or comrades) and 'ahofadi' (independence) are the reasons for Amu's exhortation to humankind to hold on to God. The last stanza could be understood in two ways. First, 'onipa' (humankind) is defined not so much in terms of an atomized individual, but rather in terms of a network of relationships with friends and associates. It is as if Amu was saying that our humanity is expressed in terms of relationships. But it is precisely within the context of such relationships too, that human beings become most vulnerable, and hence, the admonition to 'So Nyame mu bi o!' (hold on to God again).

MMUSU AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY.

In which sense are human beings responsible for their own deeds, and to what extent can we blame the human predicament on evil? These questions were never directly addressed by Amu. However, in one song, 'Seantie' (disobedience) is classified as 'mmusu', an abominable and detestable act (chapter 2 *AKD: 31*).

Seantie ye mmusu, yekyi,
 Seantie ye amane, yekyi.
 Seantie, yekyi kɔkɔkɔ.
 Seantie kwan so mmusu.
 Seantie kwan so amane.
 ɔserantefo e wo gyegyiregye.
 Tie no; onim; wahunu bi pen.

It is an abomination to disobey; we hate it
 Disobedience is misfortune; it is detestable.
 We have a passionate hatred for disobedience
 Disobedience leads to abomination
 Disobedience leads to trouble.
 The disobedient person will suffer.
 Listen to the adult, for he knows, he is
 experienced.
 Listen to him, he knows.

Tie no, onim.

Ɔpanyin fotufo se wo a, tie no, onim.

N'aso ate bi pen. Tie no, onim.

M'ahunu bi pen se yekyi o.

Ɔserantefo e ye aso na gyae seantie.⁵⁵

When an elder advises you, listen to him, he knows

He has heard before. Listen to him, he knows.

The experienced person says it is detestable.

Disobedient person; listen and stop disobeying.

Seantie, is a combination of two verbs, *se* (utterance or saying) and *tie* (listen or hear). The negation of *tie* is *ɔnte* (does not listen or hear). *Seantie* literally means 'say-do-not-listen' or as Christaller puts it '*nea wose no asem bi a ɔnte*' (a disobedient child or person).⁵⁶ Communication takes place when what is said is listened to or heeded. The proof, therefore, that communication has been effected is when what is heard is acted upon. Hence action is implied in *seantie*, since failure to act upon what is heard is an indication that one did not listen to what was said.

For Amu, it is '*mmusu*' not to listen to the advice of the elderly. The poem may have been inspired by the Akan proverb: '*Abofra nte ne na ne n'agya asem a, eye mmusu*'. (If a child does not obey its mother and father, it brings misfortune).⁵⁷ Words that define *mmusu* include 'mischief', 'misfortune', 'disaster', 'misery', 'calamity' and 'adversity'. Each of these words, however, can be associated with evil, but what is common to the several nuances that the word evokes, according to Abamfo Atiemo, 'is that the particular evil is considered grievous by the society, portends a danger and usually carries a disgrace because of its religious and social implications'. What Atiemo says about the word itself is important:

Mmusu is different from ordinary evil. The word for ordinary evil is **bɔne**. **Bɔne** is lighter than **mmusu**, in terms of its nature and consequences. Every **mmusu** is **bɔne** but it is not every **bɔne** that is **mmusu**. **Mmusu** always has something to do with the supernatural, and may be responded to only by resorting to rituals.⁵⁸ (emphasis in the original)

By designating *seantie* as '*mmusu*', Amu clearly sought to place the discussion of disobedience within the context of Akan religious thought. In this regard, *seantie* can be listed among socio-religious and moral evils, such as having sexual intercourse in the bush, visiting the river or farm on sacred or forbidden days, neglecting to go through puberty rites, stealing, adultery and incest.⁵⁹ The only way *mmusu* such as *seantie* can be handled and effectively dealt with, is by performing the prescribed rituals so as to avert the harm and suffering that *seantie* (disobedience) unleashes on the *ɔserantefo* (disobedient person). We note the seriousness with which Amu views

seantie in this song. In his own words, 'we have a passionate hatred for disobedience'. By 'we' he was perhaps referring to the society, especially the elderly (probably including himself), who, by virtue of their experience, can give guidance and counsel to the younger generation. Here again, as in other songs, Amu shows that appropriate sense of the past is key to proper conduct in the present.

It is important that we place this discussion in the broader context of the advent of evil. We need to make a distinction between *bone*, whose origin seems to remain a mystery, and *mmusu*, whose source can be traced to human activity or inactivity. There is yet another *bone* for which human beings are blameworthy and which, according to Atiemo, is a lesser evil compared with *mmusu*. We need to establish if there is any link between *bone* as portrayed in Amu's '*Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee*', and what Atiemo calls the 'lesser *bone*'. We have learnt from Amu that human speech and song became polluted as a result of the original *bone*, but we need to know which aspect of the pollution in speech or song is attributable to the human being.

The clue to this puzzle perhaps lies in Amu's thought on *seantie* (disobedience). There is a sense in which *seantie* as *mmusu* resonates with the primeval story of the fall of humankind in the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen.3). In that account, human disobedience is inextricably linked to the origin of evil. If the human being had not become the conduit through which evil manifested itself we would not have known of the existence of evil. But human culpability in this instance is not passive. It is interesting that it is *seantie*, an action Amu judges to be '*mmusu*', which resulted in humankind losing favour with God. It is possible that in '*Seantie*' Amu had in mind Paul's recall and application of the fifth commandment (Ex. 20: 12), 'the first commandment with a promise' (Eph. 6: 1-3).

HUMAN PARTICIPATION IN GOD'S WORK

If human beings are responsible for the dilemma in which they find themselves as a result of wilful acts of omission or commission, to what extent can they be said to be responsible for their salvation? If human beings have the potential to do evil, do they have the capacity to address such evils by themselves? These are issues Amu raised in a song he entitled '*Animia*' (perseverance, hard work, discipline) (chapter 2 *AKD: 8*):

Nkwa yi Onyame de ma yen ye de o
eye de o, eye de
Asetra a ebae bebataa ho ye den

eye nwene
Yeye no den na ebeye yie?
Yeye no den na ebeye de a?
Animia na yede beye bribi

Yede animia, animia, animia
Yede animia beye bribi
Yede animia beye bribi

Asetra nyinaa ye animia, animia, animia
Adwuma ye animia
Onipa e hwe no yiye o!
Adidi mpo ye animia.
Yonkodo nso ye animia, animia, animia
Nokwaredi ye animia
Yede animia beye bribi
Onipa e! hwe no yiye o
Anigye nso ye animia.

Aware nso ye animia, animia, animia
Emmayen nso ye animia
Yede animia beye bribi
Onipa e! hwe no yiye o
Abusuabo ye animia

Nyamesom nso ye animia, animia, animia
Adepaye ye animia
Yede animia beye bribi
Onipa e! hwe no yiye o
Gyidi nso ye animia.

This life that God has given to us is pleasant
it is pleasant
But social existence that attached itself to this
life is difficult
it is bitter
What shall we do to make it work?
What shall we do to make it pleasant?
It is with perseverance that we shall do
something.
With perseverance
With perseverance we shall do something
With perseverance we shall do something

Social or earthly existence is perseverance
Work entails perseverance
Humankind becareful
Even eating demands perseverance
Neighbourly love is perseverance
Faithfulness demands perseverance
With perseverance we shall do something
Humankind becareful
Even joy demands perseverance

Marriage is perseverance
Education is perseverance
With perseverance we shall do something
Humankind becareful
Knitting the family together is perseverance

It takes perseverance to serve God
Doing any good thing demands perseverance
With perseverance we shall do something
Humankind becareful
Even faith demands perseverance

Amu acknowledges at the beginning of this song that the '*nkwa*' (life) that comes from God is pleasant, or to put it literally, 'it tastes good'. To emphasise the pleasantness of *nkwa*, the Akan expression '*eye de*' (it is pleasant) is repeated three times. It must be appreciated that repetition, as noted earlier, is a stylistic feature in traditional poetry that creates special effect and intensity in meaning. When the profundity of thought conveyed in a word transcends the word itself, the word is repeated several times to communicate the intended meaning. Such was the style adopted by Amu in expressing the meaning that '*nkwa*' was intended to convey.

The lines that follow narrate how '*asetra*' (social existence) brought '*nwene*' (bitterness) into what God had given to humankind. *Asetra* is not only *nwene* (bitter), it is also difficult and responsible for the unpleasant situation in which human beings find themselves. The repetition in the structure of the questions that follow indicates his distress. "What shall we do to make it work?" and "What shall we do to make it pleasant?" are questions that express the same thought but with some emphasis, so as

to draw attention to the seriousness of the situation that confronts humankind. Amu's solution to the human dilemma is interesting: '*animia*' (discipline, perseverance, hard work).⁶⁰

To understand this poem, there is need for a linguistic analysis of the words employed by Amu. *Nkwa* and *asetra* both mean life, but there is a qualitative difference between the two words. *Nkwa* refers to 'life that results from vitality or vigour'⁶¹, whereas *asetra* is about the 'condition or circumstances of life'.⁶² It has further been suggested that *asetra* (literally, down-sitting) is the 'time of life', existence, a 'life that is a result of conduct, manner of living or deportment'.⁶³ *Asetra* is, therefore, determined not only by a person's behaviour, but also by the person's conditions or circumstances.

Amu listed some elements which, for him, constituted 'time of life': '*ʔonkodo*' (neighbourly love), '*aware*' (marriage), '*nyamesom*' (worship of God), '*adwumaye*' (doing work), '*nokwardi*' (being truthful), '*emmayen*' (education), '*adepaye*' (doing good), '*abusuabɔ*' (participation in family), '*anigye*' (joy), and '*gyidi*' (faith). As can be seen, *asetra* encapsulates life in its totality. It is the expression of concrete situations, such as the delicate intricacies of marriage, the toils of human labour, the acquisition of skills and tools for the purposes of education, the building of a cohesive network of the kinship group, and fulfilling one's religious duties and obligations. It also involves what one might even consider as insignificant, such as *adidi* (eating). But *asetra* is also about the experience of *nkwa* (life) in love, faith and joy.

The song nonetheless poses some difficulties. It is not clear how *nkwa* relates to *asetra*. *Nkwa* is mentioned at the beginning with the observation as to how pleasant this gift of God is, but it is left there, and the rest of the song concentrates on addressing questions and issues on *asetra*. It does not even tell us under what situations or conditions *nkwa* can be enjoyed, nor are we told why and how *asetra* came to be involved in what was otherwise a pleasant life. As with *bɔne* in '*Ɔdomankama Ɔbɔadee*', *asetra* is treated as not originally belonging to humankind. Like *bɔne*, 'it comes along' ('*ebae*') to make unpleasant the life that God gave to humankind.

It is interesting to note, however, that whereas in '*Ɔdomankama Ɔbɔadee*' Amu called upon God to cleanse creation from the defilement of evil, in this song, it is *animia* (discipline, perseverance, hard work) that Amu recommended as a

corrective measure to make *asetra* work. According to Amu, *animia* (a word which also means to ‘exert oneself’) builds character.⁶⁴ However, what he had in mind is *animia* (self-discipline) that is self-imposed rather than forced on a person:

In every day life, discipline has got to be imposed upon us at first, but discipline imposed upon us from outside has no value at all unless it leads up to self-discipline, that is discipline imposed by oneself; and the only means whereby self-discipline is achieved is by being subjected to hard life.⁶⁵

But for *animia* (self-discipline) to accomplish its intended purpose it must be ‘subjected to *asetra*’ (conditions of life), for after all, ‘*asetra nyinaa ye animia*’. We see in Amu’s mind how active human participation is inextricably linked to the development of human character and working out one’s own salvation.

Yet, even in situations where human beings can be credited with an earnest desire to work things out for themselves, this in itself is not good enough. Amu made this clear in ‘*Meto mani mehwe nnipa asetram*’ (When I observe human existence) (chapter 2 *AKD: 10*):

Meto m’ani mehwe nnipa asetra mu
Nido a nnipa wo no sua koraa,
Nyame, wo ne nido nyinaa ’bura
ma emfi wo mmegu nnipa komam.

Odo a enni ahope
Odo a eho tew
Odo a etra ho daa
Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne

Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa
bedan aye Nyame aheman no nma
Na woƆe no aye wo nma nyinaa
Nyame pa dom tie yen
womma ’desre

Meto m’ani mehwe nnipa asetra mu
Nnipa nma nokwaredi sua koraa,
Nyame ne nokware nyinaa ’bura
ma emfi wo mmegu nnipa komam

Nokwaredi anigye mu
Nokwaredi amanem
Nokwaredi ko wum
Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne

Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa
bedan aye Nyame aheman no nma
Na woƆe no aye wo nma nyinaa
Nyame pa dom tie yen

When I take a look at human existence
The love that humankind have is so small
O God, you are the spring of love
Let love flow from you and fill the hearts of
humankind
Love that is not selfish
Love that is clean
Love that is always there
This is the important thing we request from
you today
That all families of humankind
shall turn and make the kingdom of God full
That your will may fill everywhere
Good and gracious God listen to us
your children beseech you

When I take a look at human existence
The faithfulness of humankind is so small
God is the spring of all truth
let faithfulness flow from you and fill the
hearts of humankind
Faithfulness in joy
Faithfulness in suffering
Faithfulness in death
This is the important thing we request from
you today
That all families of humankind
shall turn and make the kingdom of God full
That your will may fill everywhere
Good and gracious God listen to us

womma 'desre
Meto m'ani mehwe nnipa asetra mu
Nhumu a nnipa wo no sua koraa,

Nyame wo ne nhumu nyinaa 'bura
ma emfi wo mmegu nnipa komam.

Ma yen ani nna ho
Na adwene tew,
Ne asetieye koma
Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne

Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa
bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma
Na wope no aye wo mma nyinaa
Nyame pa dom tie yen
womma 'desre

Meto mani mehwe Kristo asafo mu
Kristofo nanye ano redwo koraa,

Nyame, wo ne nanye nyinaa 'bura
ma emfi wo mmehye gyidifo den

Nanye a enhwe anim
Nanye abotoase wom
Nanye a etra ho daa
Ne ade titriw yesre wo nne

Se ebeye na nnipa mmusua nyinaa
bedan aye Nyame aheman no mma
Na wope no aye wo mma nyinaa
Nyame pa dom tie yen
womma 'desre

your children beseech you
When I take a look at human existence
The understanding that humankind have is so
small

God is the spring of all understanding
let understanding flow from you and fill the
hearts of humankind

Let us be watchful
Let our minds be clean
An obedient heart
This is the important thing we request from
you today

That all families of humankind
shall turn and make the kingdom of God full
That your will may fill everywhere
Good and gracious God listen to us
your children beseech you

When I take a look at Christ's church
The braveness and courage of Christians is
dying out

O God, you are the spring of all courage
let courage flow from you and strengthen the
faithful

A courage that is no respecter of persons
A courage that involves patience
A courage that exists always
This is the important thing we request from
you today

That all families of humankind
shall turn and make the kingdom of God full
That your will may fill everywhere
Good and gracious God listen to us
your children beseech you

While acknowledging that the love, truthfulness, understanding, and courage that human beings have is insignificant, Amu pleaded that God may replenish these qualities by filling human hearts with a good measure of God's own love, truthfulness, understanding and courage. If, indeed, human beings can be credited with some virtue, no matter how insignificant, then what sense do we make of Amu's statement that, '*Ne nyinaa Nyame no ara*' (Everything depends upon God)? (chapter 2 *AKD: 38*):

Nipa bi benya bribi a,
ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,
Nipa bi benya ne ho a
ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,
Nipa bi ho beto no a
ne nyinaa Nyame no ara
Kae saa daa,
Nyame na ose aseda
Nea obeye nyinaa
Nea obekyere nyinaa papa

For a person to get something
It all depends on God
For a person to become rich
It all depends on God
For a person to have peace
It all depends on God
Do always remember that
God deserves thanks
For all He does
and all He shows are good

Nipa bi benya ahoofe a,
 ne nyinaa Nyame no ara,
 Nipa bi benya hooden a,
 ne nyinaa Nyame no ara
 Nipa bi benya nna pa a
 ne nyinaa Nyame no ara
 Kae saa daa,
 Nyame na ɔsɛ aseda
 Nea ɔbeyɛ nyinaa
 Nea ɔbekyere nyinaa papa

For a person to get beauty
 It all depends on God
 For a person to get strength
 It all depends on God
 For a person to get good sleep
 It all depends on God
 Do always remember
 God deserves thanks
 For all he does
 and all He shows are good

Woyi no fi wo kwan mu ko a,
 wokɔ no den?
 Woyi no fi wo abrafo mu a,
 wubu no den?
 Woyi no fi wo nuado mu a,

If you take Him out of your way
 How do you make it?
 If you take Him out of your life
 How do you live it?
 If you take Him out of your love for
 neighbours
 What is your love?
 He alone
 God alone is everything
 Whatever He does
 and whatever he shows, is good.

wodo no den?
 Ne nko ara
 Nyame ne ade nyinaa
 Nea ɔbeyɛ nyinaa
 Nea ɔbekyere nyinaa, papa

In spite of attempts by human beings to scale the heights of *asetra* (human existence), Amu believed that everything really depends upon God; possessions, peace, beauty, and strength. ‘If you drive him out of your life, how do you live it’? Or, what type of neighbourly love is that which does not derive from God? Alongside his view that ‘God alone is everything’, and that there is need to always remember and give God the thanks that he deserves, Amu reckoned with the fact that God alone cannot do everything without the active participation of humankind. He says this in his own words:

By God’s revelation of himself to man (sic), we have come to know further that in this great adventure, God needs man as his helper. God will not and now cannot achieve his great task without man’s help. Man has therefore become fellow worker with God in his great adventure of love.⁶⁶

This seems to contradict what Amu said about God being everything and capable of doing everything without assistance. This paradox is echoed in the words of the apostle in which Amu would have read in Twi as:

Na mene asomafoɔ no mu akumaa a mense se wɔfrɛ me ɔsomafoɔ,
 ɛfiri se metaa Nyankopɔn asafa no; na Nyankopɔn adom nti na mete
 sɛdeɛ metɛɛ yi; na n’adom a ɔde dom me no anye kwa, *na mmom
 meɔɔ adwuma bebreɛ mesene wɔn nyinaa, nanso enye me a, na
 mmom Nyankopɔn adom a eka me ho no a.*⁶⁷ (my emphasis)

For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me. (my emphasis)

The paradox is more pronounced when we read in his letter to the Philippians:

Enti, m'dɔfo, sedee moye setie daa no, ɛnye sɛ bere a mewɔ mo nkyen nko mu, na mmom afei a menni mo nkyen yi titire no, *momfa suro ne ahopopɔɔ nye mo ara mo nkwagyee ho adwuma nwie*; na eye Onyankopɔn na ɔye adwuma mo mu wɔ dee mope na moyɔ nyinaa mu sedee ebese n'ani.⁶⁸ (my emphasis)

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Akan word that translates 'salvation', *nkwagyee*, is interesting because it incorporates two words, *nkwa* and *gye*. If *gye* means to 'appropriate, redeem, or take possession of',⁶⁹ then *nkwagyee* literally means 'to take possession of or to appropriate the life that God gives'. And this, for Paul, involves 'adwuma' (work), precisely the point made by Amu in his song 'Animia'. However, as Paul contended, 'God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure'.

The Akan reading is not as open as in English and Ga. Whereas in English and Ga it is difficult to tell precisely who wills and works, the Akan makes it emphatic that it is the members of the church at Phillipi: '*na eye Onyankopɔn na ɔye adwuma mo mu wɔ dee mope na moyɔ nyinaa mu sedee ebese n'ani*'. This can be translated literally to mean, 'It is God that works in you in all the things you desire and do so that those things are pleasing to him'. The Akan reading thus suggests human involvement in God's divine work; and yet we are reminded by Amu's song that '*Ne nyinaa Nyame no ara*' (everything comes from God). This paradox was not only an idea in Amu's mind, it was an experience as well. He shares this in his own words:

I wonder myself how I was able to get through those difficulties. I gave a number of lectures, and today I read some of those lectures over, and see the ideals that I cherish in those lectures. And I am astonished that all those ideals came to me and how I was able to stand up to the opposition against me in various ways. So I couldn't say that I had any particular gift for this sort of thing, but I think it's God's own way of doing things. He always provides some means of doing some important work anywhere in the world, and I just happened to be that tool. And that's

why I was able to do this, not because of any particular credit of my own.
I don't think so.⁷⁰

It is difficult to miss the elements of wonder and surprise in Amu's assessment of his life and work. He must have come to this profound sense of awareness because of what he perceived God to be doing in his life. Amu saw himself as an instrument being used by God and would therefore not take any credit for any achievement that came his way. He had been a partner with God in God's work, but he believed the glory ultimately belongs to God.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have examined Amu's understanding of God in relation with His dealings with humankind. We have been taught to see God as "Omnipotent" (All powerful), Omniscient" (All knowing), and "Omnipresent" (All present). These are however, ideas formulated in a Eurocentric context we hardly share a part. I have demonstrated in this chapter how it is possible to conceive of God in a completely different setting by using categories that are unknown to Europe and the West. I have shown how Amu used "*Nyame ne ade nyinaa*" (lit. God is everything) and "*Ne nyinaa Nyame no ara*" (It all depends on God) to express his understanding of God. I have also shown how Amu may have drawn from indigenous Akan wise sayings like "*Nsem nyinaa ne Nyame*" (All wisdom is from God/God is the justification of all things) and "*Gye Nyame*" (Unless God/Except God) in the formulation of his ideas. These ideas are not cerebral. They are a response to God's transcendence and his dealings with humankind. Thus, the expression "*Nyame ne ade nyinaa*" portrays God as the ultimate source of all that human beings desire such as *ahonya* (riches), *ahoto* (peace), *ahooden* (strength) and *nna pa* (good sleep). God is further seen by Amu as God of all comfort, *Awerekyekye Nyame*, as well as God of peace, *Asomdwoe Nyame*.

Amu's concept of God's creation is picturesque. *Ɔdomankama Ɔboadee* (God the creator) is solely responsible for creation. By employing concepts in the indigenous African languages, Gen. 1: 31 is given a fuller meaning. As shown in this work, the Hebrew ('*tob*') and Greek ('*agathos*') assume wider significance when they are understood in terms of '*kronkronkron*', '*fitafitafita*', and '*pepepepe*', Akan words used by Ephraim Amu to describe God's creation. We have seen how Amu's mother

tongue understanding of creation enabled him to adopt a positive stance towards African culture and portrayed the Christian faith in Africa as a truly vernacular religion. With other examples from Amu's lyrics, I have sought to demonstrate how African indigenous languages can bring a contribution to a fruitful engagement with the meaning of the Scriptures, and thereby contribute to an enlarged appreciation of some dimensions of the Christian faith.

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¹ J.G. Christaller (compiled), *Three Thousand Ghanaian Proverbs (From the Asante and Fante Language)*, (tr. by Kofi Ron Lange, in *Studies in African Literature* Vol. 2, Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000. (first published in 1879), No.581, p. 306. Cf. C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmeseusem*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, p. 169. The fact that both Christaller and Akrofi ended their collections with this proverb underscores the point.

² J.B. Danquah, *Akan Doctrine of God- A Fragment of Gold Coast Ethics and Religion*, London: Lutterworth Press, 1944, (1968 edition), p. 63.

³ Kwame Bediako, *Religion, Culture and Language: An Appreciation of the Intellectual Legacy of Dr. J.B. Danquah* (J.B. Danquah Memorial Lectures, Series 37) Accra: Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2004.

⁴ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (Revised Edition), Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987, p. 71.

⁵ Margaret Field, writing about the same time that Amu composed this song, made this observation about the Ga among whom she worked. See her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People*, London: Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 62.

⁶ In the vocabulary of Paul Tillich, *Nyame* would be the "ground of being." See Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1951, p. 156.

⁷ The first king of Adansi, the earliest Akan state, was known as Awurade Basa. See Kwesi Yankah, *Speaking for the Chief- Okyeame and the Politics of Akan Royal Oratory*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995, p. 28.

⁸ *DAFL*, p. 417.

⁹ *DAFL*, p. 67.

¹⁰ *DAFL*, p. 497.

¹¹ *DAFL*, p. 584.

¹² *DAFL*, p. 29.

¹³ *DAFL*, p. 29.

¹⁴ *DAFL*, p. 571.

¹⁵ *DAFL*, p. 579.

¹⁶ *DAFL*, p. 107.

¹⁷ *DAFL*, p. 247.

¹⁸ Mark 4:35-41 illustrates the use of the word *komm*. In this account Jesus commands the sea and says, "Peace! Be still!" The Akan translation is revealing; "*Mua w'ano, ye komm!*" This literally means, "Shut your mouth, be calm." We notice that the Akan word *Asomdwoe*, which translates Peace is never used. Instead, it is the word *komm* that is used apparently to emphasise the nature of the crisis in which Jesus and the disciples found themselves. There was need to deal with the storm that had caused turbulence at sea, and that was precisely what Jesus did.

I presume that *komm* is the deafening sound usually associated with quiet places like the deep virgin forest. It is the word that is uttered to express this absolute silence. In a sense it is the sound that one hears when there is dead silence. Ga has a similar idiomatic expression which is almost untranslatable: "*Nye haa ni bie nee ajɔa tɔɔ kɔɔ*" (Let absolute quiet prevail in this place).

¹⁹ *DAFL*, p. 514.

²⁰ *DAFL*, p. 60.

- ²¹ This echoes Jesus' own saying in John 9:4. The Greek word that translates day, *ἡμέρα*, could be used figuratively to mean time for work or labour.
- ²² K. Agawu, *The Legacy of Ephraim Amu*, 2nd Ephraim Amu Memorial Lecture, Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences/International Centre for African Music and Dance, Accra, 18 January, 2000.
- ²³ I should note that all three words are used in Ga with the same meaning. *Fitafita* is *futafuta* in Ga.
- ²⁴ J.H. Nketia, *Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana*, London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1963, pp. 159 & 192.
- ²⁵ DAFL, p. 258. Cf Dennis M. Warren, *Bibliography and Vocabulary of the Akan (Twi-Fante) language of Ghana*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ. Publication, 1976, p.166.
- ²⁶ Marion Kilson, *Kplele Lala: Ga Religious songs and symbols*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 13. Cf. M. Kilson, "Taxonomy and Form in Ga Ritual" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. III fasc. 1, 1970, p. 48.
- ²⁷ Marion Kilson, *Kplele Lala: Ga Religious songs and symbols*, p. 14.
- ²⁸ C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Kasa Mmara: Twi Grammar*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1965, p. 1.
- ²⁹ DAFL, p. 258.
- ³⁰ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*, 6th Ephraim Amu Memorial Lecture, Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences/International Centre for African Music and Dance, Accra; 18 May, 2004.
- ³¹ The word *fitaa* appears in Mt. 17:2 as an adjective to describe Jesus' cloth after he had been transfigured on the mountain. In Ga tradition it is customary to drape the whale (*Bonsu*) in white calico when it is washed ashore.
- ³² See M. J. Field, *Social Organization of the Ga People*, London: Crown Agents, 1940, p.22, 69-70, and Joe Panford, "Sack Cloth And Ashes Over A Dead Whale" in *The Ghanaian*, May 1959, pp. 5-6.
- ³³ C.C. Reindorf, *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966, p.118.
- ³⁴ DAFL, p. 382.
- ³⁵ Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Knowing: Akan Proverbs*, Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1997, p. 2. My attention has been drawn to the fact that *Osasa* is also used for anyone who walks aimlessly in life. I am also reminded that there is a folksong on that proverbial bird. If indeed it is true that the term is used for persons who hardly make it in life, why then did the elders chose to put this wise saying in the mouth of this bird?
- ³⁶ DAFL, p. 586.
- ³⁷ Wiellem A. Van Gemeren (Gen. Editor), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, Vol. 2, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997, p. 353.
- ³⁸ George Arthur Buttrick (ed), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, New York: Abingdon Press, 1962, p. 440.
- ³⁹ Gerhard Kittel (ed), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 1, Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964, pp. 10-11.
- ⁴⁰ Opoku, *Hearing and Knowing*, p. 2.
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- ⁴² R.A. Lystad, *The Ashanti: A Proud People*, New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1958, p.163f.
- ⁴³ Kwame Gyekye, *An essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, p.128.
- ⁴⁴ Mat.13:24-30.
- ⁴⁵ Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1953, p. 236.
- ⁴⁶ Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, p. 237.
- ⁴⁷ Gerhard Kittel (ed), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, p. 297.
- ⁴⁸ J. B. Danquah, *The Akan Doctrine of God*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1968, p. 25.
- ⁴⁹ Proverb cited in Danquah, *Akan Doctrine*, p. 25.
- ⁵⁰ *TFAS*, p. 43.
- ⁵¹ I am cautious not to translate *Bone* as sin. I am aware of the debate on whether the African has a sense of shame or a sense of guilt. While shame is conceived of as community-based, guilt is viewed as pertaining to the individual and not to the group.
- ⁵² *TFAS*.
- ⁵³ Fred Agyeman, *Amu the African: A study in vision and courage*, Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1988, p. 88.
- ⁵⁴ Ephraim Amu, "The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa", *International Review of Missions*, Vol. XXIX, Oct., 1940, (477-485): 480.

⁵⁵ Misonu Amu, *Stylistic and Textual Sources of contemporary Ghanaian Art music composer. A case study: Dr. Ephraim Amu*. (Unpublished MPhil. thesis, Institute of African Studies, Univ. of Ghana, Legon), 1988, pp. 152-153.

⁵⁶ *DAFL*, p. 435.

⁵⁷ J.G. Christaller (compiled), *Three Thousand Ghanaian Proverbs*, p. 49.

⁵⁸ Abamfo Atiemo, *Mmusuyi and Deliverance: A study of conflict and consensus in the encounter between African Traditional Religion and Christianity*, unpublished MPhil. dissertation, University of Ghana, Legon, 1995, p.18.

⁵⁹ Abamfo Atiemo, *Mmusuyi and Deliverance*, p. 19.

⁶⁰ *DAFL*, p. 342.

⁶¹ *DAFL*, p. 277.

⁶² *DAFL*, p.448.

⁶³ *DAFL*, p. 448.

⁶⁴ EASA, *The discipline of a hard life*, Achimota School, 25.6.1950.

⁶⁵ EASA, *The discipline of a hard life*.

⁶⁶ EASA, *What it means to be a Christian Missionary*, 10.3.1941, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Clearly, Paul is caught in a paradox. A situation of “I, and yet not I”. In one sense we understand the apostle to mean that it is the grace of God that is solely responsible for who he is. And yet in another sense we see Paul struggling to come to terms with the question of human involvement in God’s work. See 1Cor. 15:10.

⁶⁸ See Phil. 2: 12-13. The Greek reading is revealing:

Ωστε, αγατοί μου, καθώς πάντοτε υπηκούσατε, μή ως έν τή παρουσία μου μόνον άλλα νυν πολλω μαλλον έν τη άπουσία μου, μετα φόβου και τρόμου τήν έαυτων σωτηριαν κατεργάζεσθε• θεος γαρ έστιν ό ένεργων έν ύμιν και το θέλειν και το ένεργειν ύπερ της εύδοκίας.

κατεργάζεσθε and ένεργων have both been translated as “work out” and “work in” respectively. Whereas κατεργάζεσθε is work in relation to production or accomplishment, ένεργων relates to work as supernatural power or activity. It is significant, therefore, that Paul uses κατεργάζεσθε in reference to the members of the church at Philippi, thus indicating the place of human activity in the divine work of grace which is made explicit in the use of ένεργων. The difficulty with the passage however lies with the last sentence. The Akan is emphatic in its translation of θέλειν as human will or desire (*dee mope*) and ένεργειν as human activity (*moyɔ*).

⁶⁹ *DAFL*, p. 156.

⁷⁰ See Appendix A.

CHAPTER 4

“Yen wura Yesu anim obi nni ho”

(“Our incomparable Lord Jesus”)

PERSPECTIVES ON THE PERSON OF JESUS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines Ephraim Amu’s perspectives on Jesus Christ. It focuses on Amu’s understanding of Jesus’ birth, his exemplary lifestyle, his persecution at the hands of the Roman soldiers, his death and descent into the ‘lower parts of the earth’, and his triumph over death. It will be demonstrated that in forming his perspectives on Jesus, Amu operated within a framework set in the Akan world. It will be shown, for instance, how Amu understood the trial of Jesus, not in Roman political or judicial terms, but rather in terms of Akan tradition and religion. Amu’s understanding of Jesus’ lifestyle as an example *par excellence* will be discussed using categories and notions akin to Akan self-understanding. We shall see, for example, how Amu tried to express the love of Jesus using an Akan proverb. The Akan concepts of *owu* (death) and *asaman* (realm of the departed/dead) and how Amu used these in his reading of the apostle Paul will also be examined.

ON THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Our discussion of Amu’s ‘christology’ begins with his interpretation of Luke 2: 8-20 in a composition entitled ‘*Momma yenko Betlehem*’ (Let us go to Bethlehem) (chapter 2 *AKD: 42*):

Momma yenko o! Momma yenko o!
Momma yenko Betlehem na yenkohwe
Asem a aba
na Awurade ayi akyere yen yie!
Betlehem ho nnuan dan mu,
Yosef ne Maria ahoho asoe ne ho.
Betlehem ho mmoa adididem.
Oheneba Kristo Awurade dabere ne ho.

Wiase ntee o, abrempon ntee o.

Osoro abofo ate dedaw.
Na osoro abo bum.
Na nnuanhwefo no ate dedaw.
Na sareso abo bum.
Onyame akyede a ekyen so yi
ne nwonwa a eye won nti o.

Let us go! Let us go!
Let us go to Betlehem and see
and see what has happened
that the Lord has revealed to us well!
In Betlehem in the sheep’s pen
This was the guest room of Joseph and Mary.
In Betlehem in a manger.
This is the sleeping place of the King’s Son,
Christ the Lord.
The world had not heard; neither had the
powerful in the land heard it.
The angels in heaven had already heard it.
And there was excitement in heaven.
The shepherds had heard already it.
And there was excitement on earth.
God’s gift that is greater than all others
it was marvelous in their sight.

Ahobrease a ekyen so yi	Such humility that was greater than all humility
ne nwonwa a eye won nti o	was marvelous in their sight
Anuonyam wo osorosoro ma Onyankopon!	Glory to God in the highest!
Anuonyam wo osorosoro ma Onyankopon!	Glory to God in the highest!
Asomdwoe wo asase so.	Peace upon earth.
Aniso wo nipam.	Contentment to humankind.
Asomdwoe wo asase so.	Peace upon earth.
Aniso wo nipam.	Contentment to humankind

The first four lines allude to Luke 2:15: ‘*Momma yenko Bethlehem, na yenkohwe asem a aba, a Awurade ayi akyere yen yi e!*’ (Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us). The use of *asem* merits attention. The Greek word *rhema*, that ‘*asem*’ translates, has a range of meanings which includes ‘word’, ‘what is said’, ‘saying’, ‘thing’, ‘matter’, ‘event’, or ‘happening’. Christaller defines *asem* primarily as ‘word, talk, speech, saying, tale, story, history’.¹ The word also means ‘matter for talking about, object of deliberation or discussion, occurrence, incidence, cause, concern’.² The Akan rendering is more graphic and concrete than the English expression. What had happened in Bethlehem needed to be expressed in a weightier manner than by simply referring to it in abstract terms as a ‘thing’ (RSV). By making use of the upper case for the letter ‘a’ in ‘*Asem*’, therefore, Amu was probably drawing attention to one of the most significant tenets of the Christian faith, the Incarnation. ‘*Asem*’ in the Twi version in Jn. 1: 1 has upper case; Amu is linking the Lukan story with the Johannine prologue:

Mfitiase no, na Asem no wo ho, na Asem no ne Onyakopon na ewo ho, na Asem no ye Onyankopon. Ono ara na mfitiasee no na one Onyakopon wo ho. .. Na Asem no beyee honam, na obetenaa yen mu, na yehunu n’ animuonyam, na adom ne nokore aye no ma.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God;... And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father (John 1: 1-2, 14)

We have already noted that for Christaller, *asem* is a ‘matter for talking about’ or the ‘object of deliberation or discussion.’ If that, indeed, is the case then it is simply more than a story, tale or an event:

Na wohuu no no, wokaa abofraa no ho asem a woka kyeree won no. na nea nguanhwefo no kae no yee won a wotee nyinaa nwonwa. Na Maria de, ode nsem yi nyinaa siei na odwenee ho ne koma mu.

And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child: and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart (Lk. 2: 17-19).

Those who heard the message of the shepherds marvelled but Mary took it more seriously: *‘ɔde nsem yi nyinaa siei na ɔdwenee ho ne koma mu’* (She kept all these things, pondering them in her heart). We see in this passage another word, *nsem*, that is closely linked to *asem*. *Nsem* is the plural of *asem*, that is, all the things that had happened in connection with the birth of Jesus. But *nsem* also means ‘wisdom’. There is thus a close connection between *asem* and *nsem*. The Akan say that *‘Nsem nyinaa ne Nyame’* (All wisdom is from God). C.A. Akrofi interpretes this proverb to mean that *‘nyansa nyinaa fi Nyame’* (God is the source of all wisdom).³ According to Akrofi, Akan believe that the wisdom in all *mmebusem* (proverbs or wise sayings), including his own collection, is from God. *Mmebusem* are primarily about the *nsem* (events) that happen in life, the totality of which is grounded in God, and hence the proverb: *‘Nsem nyinaa ne Nyame’*. The proverb draws attention to the fact that God is the ultimate explanation of reality, God is the primary reality. Indeed, one can draw parallels between the Akan proverb, *‘Nsem nyinaa ne Nyame’* and John’s statement, *‘Asem no ye Onyankopɔn’* (the word was God). But the *asem* recorded in Luke 2: 15 is about the *Asem* (Jesus) of John 1: 1. It is possible, therefore, to distil from Luke’s narrative of Jesus’ birth a *mmebusem* that fits into Akan Christian consciousness.

The Akan notion of *asem* enables us to see beyond Lk. 2: 15 as a mere event or occurrence, to one that merits serious deliberation and discussion that John 1: 14 provides: *‘Na Asem no beyee honam, na ɔbetenaa yen mu, na yehunu n’ animuonyam, na adom ne nokore aye no ma.’* (And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father). Amu’s understanding of ‘*asem*’ in Luke 2: 15 goes beyond the event itself, and that the reason he chose to use the upper case, *Asem*, instead of the lower case, *asem*, was to stress the significance of the event by linking it to ‘*Asem*’ as used in the Johannine prologue. Such correlation allows us to make a link between *rhema* (Lk. 2: 15) and *logos* (Jn. 1: 14). The Evangelist’s assertion, therefore, that ‘the word became flesh’ (Jn. 1: 14) should be viewed as a theological commentary on the concrete event that occurred in Bethlehem we find recorded in Lk. 2: 15. Amu’s call

to ‘*yenkohwe Asem a aba*’ (lit. let us go and see this thing that has come), must be understood to mean an invitation to witness to the ‘*Asem*’, Jesus, in person.

Clearly, the ‘object of deliberation’ as seen in the nativity story, and as interpreted to us by Amu, is a person (*AKD: 42*, L.5-8):

Betlehem ho nnuan dan mu,
Yosef ne Maria akoho asoe ne ho.

In Bethlehem in the sheep’s pen
This was the guest room of Joseph
and Mary.

Betlehem ho mmoa adididem.
Oheneba Kristo Awurade dabere ne ho.

In Bethlehem in a manger.
This is the sleeping place of the
King’s Son, Christ the Lord

The description of the manger is sharply contrasted with the person of Jesus who is introduced as ‘*Oheneba Kristo Awurade*’ (lit. The King’s Son, Christ the Lord). This interpretation is not clearly evident in the account in Luke 2:16: ‘*Na wokoo no ntem so, na wokohunuu Maria ne Yosef ne akokoa no se oda mmoa adididaka no mu*’ (And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger). By using the titles ‘*Oheneba Kristo Awurade*’, Amu strengthened the image of the infant Jesus as portrayed by the evangelist. Why should anybody take notice of a suckling baby lying in a manger? And how can *Oheneba* (a king’s son) share accommodation with animals? Those questions are answered in a song Amu entitled, ‘*Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni*’ (Jesus, a worthy example) (chapter 2 *AKD: 24*), a section of which reads:

Wammu ne tumi po, wammu n’anuonyam po
Oyi n’ani fi ne Nyame dibea so,
onni din, nni abusua
onni ahode po.

He did not regard his power and glory
He did not take account of his Godliness
He had no name, no family
he had no wealth.

It is Paul’s letter to the Philippians that Amu had in mind:

Momma adwene a ewo Kristo Yesu mu no ara ntena mo mu bi. Ono na owo Nyankopon tebeam dee, nanso wammu no mfasodee se one Nyankopon se, na mmom otoo ne ho mpan faa akoo tebea too ne ho so danee nnipa nseso, na se oyoo n’adee faee no, wohunuu no se onipa, obree ne ho ase yee setie de kosii owuo mu, asennua ho wuo mu mpo.

Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. (Phil. 2:5-8)

The notions expressed about death in both the Pauline exhortation to the Corinthians and Amu's reading of it, appear to be contrary to Akan traditional thought and belief. Akan have powerful convictions about *owu* and *asaman* which appear in their proverbs, stories, and myths. There is a saying that, '*Owu nye pia na woadi mu ahemfiri*' (literally, death is no private chamber in which one can go to and fro).¹² The power of death over humankind is so irresistible that the Akan thought that after creating death, God the creator must have succumbed to it himself: '*Ɔdomankama bɔɔ owuo na owuo kum no*'.¹³ The notion expressed about *asaman* is equally striking: '*Asaman, wɔnkɔ nsan mma*' (*asaman* is a land of no return).¹⁴

[Wose]: Asaman wɔ hɔ yi, ahene wɔ hɔ, nkoa wɔ hɔ; woyare wɔ wiase hayi kye kye a, mfrihyia 3 ansa na wo ho aye wo den wɔ hɔ; na wotɔ de a, en'de ebeye se ɔsram bi (nnansa bi) na wo ho aye wo den. [Wose]: Asaman wɔ fam'; ebinom se: ewɔ soro; en'de, wounim n'iyɛ. Nea wuwu a wɔde wo kɔ hɔ no, ehɔ na wo saman wɔ; se wuwu na wɔde wo kɔ pɔwm' a, na wo saman wɔ pɔwm'. Nsamanfo no kurom' nni pɔwm', na ewɔ fam'; eye kurow kakraa, ɔkwan nso ware se, nso wobekɔ hɔ a woforo bepɔw ansa na wokɔ hɔ. Nea owu wu-pa de, ɔnam a, ne kwan so ye tumm wɔ soro; ne nea ɔtɔe de, ɔnam a, ne ho hyirew bi gugu fam', na enti wobehu se ne kwan da hɔ fitaa.

In the realm of the dead there are kings as well as subjects (slaves). If you were sick in this world for a long time, you will be restored to health there after three years; but one who died in battle or by accident will be well again in a short time, perhaps in a month or so. It is said: the realm of the dead is below (in the earth); some say: it is above (in heaven); about this, there is no surety. Where one is taken to, when he dies, there his spirit is; when you die and they take you to the spirits' grove, then your spirit is in the grove. The town (or country) of the departed spirits is not in the grove, but in the earth; it is a large town (city), a long way off, and in going there a mountain has to be ascended. The way of one who died a common death is dark in heaven; but if one who died in battle or by accident takes that way, some of the white clay, with which he is rubbed, drops down, therefore his way (the milky way) appears white. (Christaller's translation)¹⁵

The foregoing is a vivid description of what *asaman* looks like. Its location is uncertain. Opinion is divided as to whether it is on earth below or in the heavens above.¹⁶ Even when *ɔsaman* (a departed spirit)¹⁷ knows the precise location of *asaman*, the journey is very long and the spirit has to traverse the difficult and rugged mountain terrain in order to get to its destination. Unless one dies in battle, one has to face the unsavoury situation of travelling in darkness. It would appear that social distinctions in *asaman* are patterned on what exist on earth. In *asaman*, social status

remains unchanged. Slaves continue to serve in bondage, and chiefs continue to exercise authority over their subjects. Another factor that makes *asaman* an undesirable place is the period it takes to get over one's infirmities. If it is the case that it takes three years in *asaman* to get relief from illhealth, then *ɔsaman* (the departed spirit) is still exposed to the vagaries and dangers that mark life here on earth. We have already indicated that in I Corinthians Paul did not mention *asaman*. I suspect that Amu's use of the word was informed not only by the Akan tradition but also by the scriptures. The closest New Testament reference to the word is contained in the epistle to the Ephesians:

Na wɔde ɔkom adom yɛ nyinaa mmiako mmiako, senea Kristo asusuw n'akyede ama no. Enti ose: Ɔforo kɔɔ ɔsoro no, ɔde nnommum a ɔfae no kɔe, na ɔde akyede maa nnipa. Na nea ose: Ɔforoe, no ne den, gye se osianee kan kɔɔ **asase ase** honom ansa? Nea osianee no ara ne nea ɔforoe nso traa ɔsorosoro nyinaa so na wahye nneema nyinaa ma no. (Eph. 4:7-10)

But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.' In saying, 'He ascended,' what does it mean but that he had also descended into the **lower parts of the earth**? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.

The expression, '*asase ase*' (the lower parts of the earth), is the closest that relates to the Akan notion of *asaman*. The link between '*asase ase*' and '*asaman*' is established by Christaller, who wondered whether *asaman* was not to be understood as *ase man*, a term he variously defined as 'the world of spirits, the nether world, the lower regions, the place of the dead'.¹⁸ '*Asase ase*', properly understood, and in the context in which it has been used by Paul, means the 'lower parts of the earth', the place to which Christ descended. For any person whose thoughts are embedded in Akan cosmology, '*asase ase*' implies *asaman*. We can begin to see how the Akan notion of *asaman* contributes to Amu's understanding of the Pauline phrase, 'the lower parts of the earth'. Our reading of Paul is further enhanced when we consider the context. In Eph. 4:7-10, we see Ps. 68:18 being used in a slightly modified form to show how Christ fulfilled the role expected of a Jewish king. G.H.P. Thompson's commentary is helpful:

Originally the Psalm described the Jewish king's triumphal procession to the newly conquered hill of Jerusalem; he is accompanied by his spoil

and receives gifts as tribute. The ascent into the high mount now refers to Jesus' triumphal return to his heavenly glory when his work is completed. The captives are now the powers and forces opposed to God, which Jesus has defeated. Instead of receiving gifts as tribute from men, the conqueror distributes gifts among men.¹⁹

For Paul, Jesus could not have ascended 'into the high mount' without first descending into the 'lower parts of the earth'. The Hebrew phrase that translates the apostle's *τὰ κατώτερα μέρη της γης* (the lower parts of the earth) is used for the earth in opposition to heaven (Isa. 44:23), for the grave (Ps. 63:9), and for Hades or the invisible world (Ez. 32:24). Those who set Eph. 4:7-10 alongside I Pet. 3:19 and I Pet. 4:6 understand Paul as 'referring to a descent of Christ after His crucifixion to preach the gospel to those who had died before His coming'.

Amu's reference to Jesus' victory over *owu* and *asaman* makes sense when it is placed in both the Akan and Hebraic contexts. The notion of *asaman* and Jesus' dealings with the world of spirits ground our understanding in the spiritual and theological significance of the crucifixion. By drawing attention to *asaman* and what that implied in the Akan world-view, Amu took us beyond the physical drama of Calvary, with its Jewish and Roman spectators, into the spirit realm where Jesus battled with the evil forces that were opposed to God, and emerged victorious.

Aware of the destructive nature of *owu* and *asaman*, the Akan must have nursed the desire to get rid of these enemies of humankind. The person who epitomised this desire was Okomfo Anokye, the most celebrated priest of the Asante nation, who went in search of a medicine against death.²⁰ Anokye is alleged to have told his nephew, Kwame Siaw and the elders of Agona Akyempim at a meeting in Kumasi that the expedition to the land of the dead would take him seventy years and seventy-seven days and nights. Although the attempt failed, many educated Asante, according to R.S. Rattray, spoke of Anokye as 'the Ashanti Christ'.²¹ To say, therefore, that '*Awurade Yesu asore afi da mu o!*' (Jesus has risen from the grave), is to make a claim that is unparalleled in the history of the Akan. It is this good news that Amu celebrated in the last section of *AKD: 6*:

Anigyesem, ben ara ni
Onyame tumi di owu ne asaman so nim ma yen

Mommɔ ose ayee
Da bi reba a, nusu bedan ahurusidwom

What joyful news is this
The Lord's power has defeated death
and the place of the dead for us
Shout the battle cry of victory
A day is coming when tears shall turn
into songs of jubilation

Onyame tumi rebeye ma aboro anidaso so
Mommɔ ose ayee

The Lord's power will overwhelm
hope
Shout the battle cry of victory.

The Intercessory Work of Jesus

Jesus' work as intercessor is captured in the following lines (chapter 2 *AKD*: 7 Lines 18-23):

Yen Wura Yesu Agya Nyame ba
Wo dima no so na m'ani da,
Me Yesu di ma me,
Mmaborɔni te se me,
Wo dɔ ne dom mekamfo daa,
Mereba na mabeyi wo aye daa.

Our Lord Jesus, Son of God the father
My hope lies in your intercession.
My Jesus, intercede for me
A miserable wretch that I am
Your love and grace I shall praise
always
I am going to praise your name
always.

'*Odimafo*'²² translates intercessor. The key to understanding the word, however, is *di*, a 'verb of manifold meanings'.²³ In a literal sense *di* means 'to take (in the hands) and to handle'²⁴ (see chap. 2). When Amu wrote, '*Me Yesu di ma me*', he meant that Jesus should take up his case and plead in his favour.²⁵ The reason Amu made this request was because he was a *mmaborɔni*, one described as being 'in a miserable state or condition'.²⁶ For one to perform the work of an *odimafo* (intercessor) creditably, one must be in a relatively stronger position than the one seeking help (the helpless and disadvantaged). In Amu's understanding Jesus is *odimafo*. This discussion recalls Jesus' uniqueness as *odimafo* in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

Na won [asɔfo] de, esiane se owu amma wɔantra hɔ nti, wɔyɛ asɔfo a wɔdɔɔso, nanso oyi [Yesu] de, se ɔte hɔ daa nti, odi agye won a wɔnam no so ba Onyankopɔn nkyen no koraa, efise ɔte ase daa se obedi ama won.

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he [Jesus] holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:23-25)

The reason the *asɔfo* (priests) are helpless is because they are mortal beings subject to the power of *owu* (death). Not so Jesus. As already indicated by Amu, '*Awurade Yesu adi owu so nim*' (The Lord Jesus has defeated death), therefore, '*ɔte hɔ daa*' (he abides forever) 'to save those who draw near to God through him'. And this he does through constant intercession.

'AGYA FAFIRI WƆN' : A COMMENTARY ON JESUS' CRUCIFIXION

Amu's reflections on the crucifixion of Jesus at the hands of the Roman soldiers are contained in a song entitled 'Agya Fafiri WƆn' (Father forgive them) (chapter 2 AKD: 27):

Agya e, fa firi wƆn, Na wonnim nea woye Abrafo no a wobuu Nyameba no mmusubɔfo no,	Father forgive them For they know not what they do The Executioners who condemned the Son of God as a curse Were they aware of what they were doing?
So wonim po ni?	
Agya e, fafiri wƆn, Na wonnim nea woye Abrafo no a wobuu Nyameba no mumoyefo no,	Father forgive them For they know not what they do The executioners who condemned the Son of God as mischievous Father forgive them, forgive Were they aware of what they were doing?
Agya e fafiri wƆn, fafiri a. So wonim po ni?	Father forgive them The executioners who nailed the Son of God on the cross Were they aware of what they were doing?
Agya e fafiri wƆn, fafiri a. Abrafo no a wobɔɔ Nyameba no asendum,	Father forgive them The executioners who nailed the Son of God on the cross Were they aware of what they were doing?
So wonim po ni?	
Agya e, fafiri wƆn, Na wonnim nea woye Abrafo no a wodii Nyameba no ho few no,	Father forgive them For they know not what they do The executioners who derided the Son of God Were they aware of what they were doing?
So wonim po ni?	
Agya e, fafiri wƆn, Na wonnim nea woye	Father forgive them For they know not what they do

The song is most probably based on the gospel reading in Matthew 27: 27-31:

Enna amrado no asraafo faa Yesu kɔɔ amrado aban mu ho, na womaa asraafokuw no nyinaa behyiae n'anim, Na woyii n'atade, na wode nkatakonmu kokɔɔ bi guu no so, na wonwenee nsɔe abotiri de bɔɔ ne ti, na wode demmire hyee ne nsa nifa mu, na wobuu nkotodwe n'anim goruu ne ho se: Yudafo hene, mmo oo! Na wohinam ntasu guu no so gyee demmire no, na wode paa n'atifi. Na wowiee ne ho fewdi no, woyii nkatakonmu no fii ne ho, na wode n'ankasa atade hyee no, na wode no kɔe se wɔkɔbɔ no asendua mu.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

It is interesting to note that whereas the Akan Bible translates ‘soldiers’ as ‘*asraafo*’, Amu used a different word, ‘*abrafo*’ (state executioners). ‘*Asraafo*’ in the Akan text conveys the idea of a standing army, but such an idea could only have been a result of the social and political change that has followed the colonial experience, since in pre-colonial Akan society there was no such thing as a standing army. In pre-colonial times, all able-bodied men of war-going age were called to arms when the occasion arose. The word that translates army was *edom*.²⁷ The word *asraafo* probably owes its origins to *asrafo*²⁸ or to the *akwansrafo* described by Rattray.²⁹ The *akwansrafo* were part of the Akan war machine and their duty was to scout the path to be taken by the army and also to spy on enemy territory.

Whereas in the past it was the duty of all able-bodied men to protect the community, the responsibility in carrying out the death sentence was entrusted into the hands of the *ɔbrafo* (plural, *abrafo*). In Akan society, a misdeed is judged to have religious consequences if it disturbs the social and cosmic order. Amu’s usage of *abrafo*, therefore, conveys the sense that Jesus had become a curse and a ‘*mmusubɔfo*’ (blasphemer) in the eyes of the Jewish leaders, an idea which is probably based on his interpretation of the events leading to the crucifixion as recorded in both *Matthew* and *Mark*.

In these accounts of Jesus’ trial before the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes, when the testimonies of the witnesses against Jesus failed to agree, the high priest made an intervention which clearly sought to incriminate Jesus at all cost:

Na ɔsofo panin no ka kyereɛ no se: Meka Onyankopɔn teasefoɔ no se, se wone Kristo no, Nyankopɔn ba no a, ka kyere yen! Yesu see no se: Woaka; nanso mese mo se, efiri nne mobehunu onipa ba no se ɔte tumi no nifa, na ɔreba mununkum soɔ. Enna ɔsofo panin no sunsuanee n’atadeɛ mu se: Waka abususem! Edeen hia na ehia yen adansefoɔ bio? Hwe, afei dee moate n’abususem no! Modwene ho sen? Na wobuaa se: Ɔse wuo.³⁰

And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his robes, and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.”

In the opinion of the Jewish religious authorities, it was blasphemy for Jesus to lay claim to being the Son of God. Such an offence carried the death penalty. If Jesus' claim to Messiahship was judged by the Jews to be *abususem* (blasphemy), then for someone like Amu, whose categories of thought were shaped by the Akan world-view, it would be the duty of the *abrafo* to carry out the death sentence and not *asraafo* (soldiers).

Amu's reading of the text takes the trial and suffering of Jesus beyond the political and legal institutions into the religious realm where it properly belongs. The picture that unfolds as we reflect on Jesus' death as portrayed by Amu, is one who is judged by his actions to have brought social disequilibrium into the society, and is therefore condemned to die at the hands of the *abrafo*.

AMU'S INTERPRETATION OF EPHESIANS 6: 10-20

The following song entitled '*Yebeko adi nkonim*' (We shall fight to victory) conveys Amu's understanding of Eph. 6: 10-20 (chapter 2 *AKD*: 26):

Yetu osa, Yesu na ohye yen, Oka yen ho reko ama yen, Yekuram yi, gye se yeabo atamfo na agu koraa	We declare war, Jesus commands us He is with us to fight for us We hold on till the enemy is finally destroyed
Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu, Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	Who will not even fight for Jesus We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life
Nokware no bo yen asen daa Trenee nkata bo hye yen daa,	Truth is always around our waist We wear the breastplate of righteousness
Asempa ho ahosepew hyehye yen anan daa	We always have on our feet prepared with the gospel
Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu, Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	Who will not even fight for Jesus We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life
Obone no kura ne bemma, gyidi ne yen kyem a yekura, se ereden se den po a, yebetumi ha adom Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu, Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	The wicked one is carrying his arrow Faith is the shield we possess Who will not even fight for Jesus We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life
Nyame asem yen honhom nkrante.	The word of God is our sword of the Spirit
Mpaebo yen poma yede nante, Anim ara na yereko, akyi de, yerennsan da.	Prayer is the staff of our pilgrimage Forward we shall ever go and never retreat
Ehena po na orenko remma Yesu, Yebeko adi nkonim na yeanya daa henkyew	Who will not even fight for Jesus We shall fight to victory to receive the crown of life

The remarkable thing about Amu's interpretation of this passage is the place he assigns to Jesus in spiritual warfare. In this song, Jesus is portrayed as the one on whose side Christians fight, although, in fact, he is the one who really fights on behalf of Christians. The other thing to note in this song is Amu's contribution to our understanding of the Pauline illustration of the weapons of Christian warfare. It is the whole armour of God that the Christian is being called upon to put on so as 'to stand against the wiles of the devil'. Paul exhorts the Ephesian church to *gird their loins* with truth, put on the *breastplate* of righteousness, *prepare their feet* with the gospel of peace, take on the *shield* of faith, put on the *helmet* of salvation, and carry the *sword* of the Spirit which is the word of God. The use of the imagery ends with v.17. In v. 18 Paul calls on the Ephesians to 'Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication' (*na momfa mpaebɔ ne ɔsre nyinaa mmɔ mpaɛ daa honhom mu*). With the exception of 'prayer', each of the weapons is metaphorically and concretely illustrated in terms of the Roman military gear, an outfit with which the members of the church at Ephesus were most probably familiar.

What Paul failed to do in his letter with regard to prayer, Amu did in his song. '*Mpaebɔ yen poma yede nante*' (prayer is the staff of our pilgrimage). According to Christaller, *poma* could mean 'stick', 'walking-stick', 'cane', 'staff of the speaker, of a jury, [or] of a messenger or ambassador'.³¹ In its simplest sense, *poma* means a walking stick. *Poma* is also used as a symbol of authority by the chief's spokesman (*ɔkyeamepoma*).³² Royal spokespersons carried emblems and ensigns or such imagery by which the sending chief can be identified.³³ Thus, the *ɔkyeamepoma* (linguist staff) is more than a walking stick or staff (see chap. 2). It is the diplomatic credentials of the chief's spokesperson. It is possible to read all these meanings of *poma* into Amu's usage of the word. For Amu, therefore, a staff as a symbol for prayer could mean a guide in our religious pilgrimage in much the same way as the shepherd's staff is a guide to the sheep (Ps.23: 4). It could also represent the means or the credentials by which we enter God's presence. Whatever meaning we assign to Amu's use of *poma*, one thing stands out clear; like the other weapons of spiritual warfare, prayer too needs concrete expression, and Amu's expression conveys understanding of the faith shaped by vernacular categories.

ODO YE WU: IN CELEBRATION OF THE LOVE OF JESUS

Amu's understanding of the love of Jesus is captured in 'Odo ye wu' (Love is death) (chapter 2 *AKD: II*):

Odo e Odo e,
Odo ye wuo
Odo mu wo nsonoe,
odo bi boro odo bi so
Wontee da a, ebi ni o
bra betie,
Wonhui da a, ebi ni o,
bra behwe.
Yesu ne do di adanse se odo ye wuo

Ne hiaa odii
Eye ne do a ode do me nti na odii

N'amane ohui
Eye ne do a ode do me nti na ohui.

Ne wu a owui,
Eye ne do a ode do me nti na owui

Odo a eboro odo bi so ni!
Me wura e, me Wura
Me wura Yesu wodo me se
Me de me ho nyinaa ma wo
mede si anan mu o

Odo e, Odo ye ahofama
Odo e Odo,
Odo mu wo nsonoe,
Odo bi boro odo bi so,
Wontee daa ebi ni o, bra betie.

Wonhui da a, ebi ni o,
bra behwe.
Yesu ne do di adanse se odo ye ahofama o

Ohia di me a, Yesu me dofo no ara ne m'adenya.

Amane to me a,
Yesu me dofo no ara ne m'awerekyekye
Owu reyi me hu mpo a,
Yesu me dofo ne wu na ehye me den

Odo a eboro odo bi so ni
Me wura e, me Wura
Me Wura Yesu wo do me se
Me de me ho nyinaa ma wo
Mede si anan mu o

Love, O love
Love is death
there are different kinds of love
one is greater than the other
If you have not heard it before this is example
come and listen
If you have seen it before this is it
come and see
That Jesus is Love is testified by the fact that
love is death
The poverty that he suffered
was because of His love for me that he became
poor
The suffering that he went through
Was because of His love for me that he
suffered
The death that he suffered
it was because of his love for me that he
suffered death
This is love that surpasses all love
O, my Lord, my Lord
My Lord Jesus you love me so much
I surrender myself to you
in response to your love

Love, love is a voluntary self-sacrifice
Love, love,
There are different types of love
Some love surpasses others
If you have not heard of it before, this is one,
come and listen
If you have not seen one, here is one,
come and see
The love of Jesus bears witness that love is
self-sacrifice
If I become poor, Jesus my beloved is my
wealth
If suffering becomes my lot,
Jesus my beloved is my comforted
Even if death frightens me
The death of Jesus my beloved friend
strengthens me
This is the love that surpasses all love
O, My Lord, my Lord,
My Lord Jesus you love me so much
I surrender myself to you
in response to your love

In order to understand this song we need to consider the expression 'Odo ye wu'. There are several Akan *mmebusem* (proverbs) that express the Akan idea of *odo* (love).³⁴ The one that is most generally known, however, is 'Odo ye owuo',³⁵ the

central theme of Amu's song. '*Ɔdo ye owuo*' literally means 'love is death', or as Kwa Mensah puts it, 'love-unto-death'.³⁶ Asare Opoku explains it this way: 'Love is a powerful emotion and it is only death which can separate those who love each other'.³⁷ According to Opoku, the 'proverb is cited when lovers, such as a man and his wife, are completely devoted to each other'.³⁸ In a story entitled, '*Ɔdo ye owu*',³⁹ H.J. Keteku tells the extent to which a man and a woman can be devoted to each other in love:

'Ewom se ababaa no wo din de, nanso obarima no de, ode din too no free no: "Semanhyia". Ofre no Semanhyia a, na ogye so "Ɔdo ye owu". Abrante yi nko baabi nnyaw obea yi. Se onya ade a eye fe se eye de biara a, na ode abre no. Se otu kwan na onya biribi de mena ofie anaase okyekye ade bi a, ne yere de ye kese, na ena de ye ketewaa. Ɔdo ne yere no: odo no kosi ase'.

'It is true that the wife had a name, but the man gave her a special name, "*Semanhyia*" (lit. If I had not met you). Whenever he called her "*Semanhyia*" she responded by saying "*Ɔdo ye owu*". Wherever the young man went he took his wife along with him. If he got something that was beautiful and of good taste, he brought it to her. Whenever he travelled and sent something home or shared something, his wife got the lion's share while his own mother got just a little. The man loved his wife: he loved her till the end' (my translation).⁴⁰

In this story the woman is exalted by her husband who gives her a special name indicative of his love for her. "*Semanhyia*", "is a title of honour for kings" and the full expression "*se manhyia wo a, anka m'ade ye mmobɔ*" literally means, 'had I not met you, I would be pitied'. The man's mother in the story is competing with her daughter-in-law for a place in her son's heart. In the mind of Keteku the man could not share his love between his wife and his mother in equal proportions. And he says the man loved his wife "till the end", that is until death.

We turn now to investigate how '*Ɔdo ye wu*' has been employed by Ephraim Amu. The main character in Amu's celebration of love is Jesus: '*Me wura Yesu wo do me se*' (Jesus, my Lord you love me so much). In this song, Amu showed that he was not unaware of the different types of love: '*Ɔdo mu wo nsonoe*' (literally, there are different types of love). He had himself experienced the love of his parents and siblings as a child and so he knew what it meant to be loved. He testifies in his own words:

My father was a strict disciplinarian. He disciplined us, but he loved me, I think more than the rest of the members of the family. I was the last

born, and I served him. He loved me. So in spite of his being a strict disciplinarian I was not afraid of him. I could chat with him and ask him any question and express my opinion about anything to him.⁴¹

Amu was of the view, however, that ‘*ɔɔ bi boro ɔɔ bi so*’ (literally, there is a love that surpasses all love). He assumed that his hearers had no idea of this love (*AKD: II* lines 5-8):

Wontee da a, ebi ni o
bra betie.
Wonhui da a, ebi ni o,
bra behwe.

If you have not heard of it, this is it,
come and listen.
If you have not seen it, this is it
come and see.

Amu confidently invites his audience to ‘*bra betie*’ (come and listen to), and ‘*bra behwe*’ (to come and see) this love. At this point, he introduced Jesus as bearing testimony to the fact that ‘*ɔɔ ye wuo*’: ‘*Yesu ne ɔɔ de adanse se ɔɔ ye wuo*’ (literally, Jesus is love bears testimony that love is death). For Amu, the maxim ‘*ɔɔ ye wuo*’ finds its fullest expression in Jesus because he truly manifests what love is (*AKD: II* lines 10-16):

Ne hia odii
Eye ne ɔɔ a ɔde ɔɔ me nti
Na odii amane ohui
Eye ne ɔɔ a ɔde ɔɔ me nti ni ohui.
Ne wu a owui,
Eye ne ɔɔ a ɔde ɔɔ me nti ni owui
ɔɔ a eboro ɔɔ bi so ni!

The poverty that he suffered was
because of His love for me
He went through suffering
Because of His love for me
The death that he suffered
was because of his love for me
This is love that surpasses all love

According to Amu, *ohia* (poverty), *amane* (suffering), and *owu* (death) were the experiences that Jesus endured in order to show his love for him (Amu). But these are things that couples in marriage or friends in relationships may be willing to do for each other so as to stoke love and keep its embers aglow. What then makes the love of Jesus different from any other that we already know? The only way Amu could differentiate between ‘*ɔɔ*’ (the love of Jesus) and ‘*ɔɔ bi*’ (literally, “some love”) is to use the expression ‘*ɔɔ a eboro ɔɔ bi so*’. ‘*Boro so*’ means to surpass or ‘be more than’.⁴² For Amu, ‘Jesus was determined to win the world by means of love and sacrifice, suffering and death’.⁴³ He was of the conviction that the only way to reciprocate this love is to surrender completely to Jesus (*AKD: II* lines 36-38):

Me Wura Yesu wo ɔɔ me se
Me de me ho nyina ma wo
Mede si anan mu o.

My Lord Jesus you love me so much
I surrender myself to you
to reciprocate your love for me.

YESU NE NHWESO A ESO NNI: JESUS, AN EXAMPLE PAR EXECELENCE.

Ephraim Amu saw in the life of Jesus an example worth following. The idea is expressed in a song entitled, ‘*Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni*’ (Jesus is the perfect example) (chapter 2 *AKD: 24*).

Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni
Yebeſua no ne nipa dɔ

Yebeſua no ne n’ahobrease,
ne ne setieye keſe de kɔ wum
Sua Yesu bi ne nipadɔ
Ne ahobrease
ne setieye keſe de kɔ owum
Enye ano dɔ kwa, enye asede kwa

Ne dɔ no fi komam, nti ne tumi so,

Na ɔdɔ a efi komam ne ne susukora

Wammu ne tumi po, wammu n’anuonyam po
Oyi n’ani fi ne Nyame dibeſa so,
onni din nni abusua
onni ahode po

Nea Nyame pɛ na ɔpɛ
Nea Nyame ka na ɔye
Wamfa n’adehyedipe antew atua
Na owu ne asaman anim po otiei.

Me de, me dɔ mu afra
Me nni ahobrease
Na osetie ye abɔ me
Nyame fa fri me,
Na mefi nne mahwe Yesu asua no.

Jesus is an example worth emulating
We shall learn from Him his love for
humankind
We shall learn from His humility
Of His great obedience till his death
Learn of Jesus and his love for humankind
and his humility
of His great obedience till his death
It is not vain love from the mouth nor vain
duty
His love is from the heart and so His power is
great
Love from his heart is his measuring gauge

His power and glory were not respected
If we strip Him of his “Godness”
He has no name, no family
he has no wealth

God’s desires were His desires too
He does what God says
He did not take his nobility to disobey
He was obedient even in the face of death and
departed spirits.
As for me, my love has been contaminated
I have no humility
Obedience has deserted me
God forgive me,
From today I shall look to Jesus and learn
from him.

Amu started the song with a statement of faith about Jesus: ‘*Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni*’ (Jesus is the perfect example). The lines that follow this affirmation list three qualities of Jesus worthy of imitation: love, humility and obedience (*AKD: 24* lines 2-4):

Yebeſua no ne nipa dɔ

Yebeſua no ne n’ahobrease,
ne ne setieye keſe de kɔ wum

We shall learn from Him his love to
humankind
We shall learn from His humility
Of His great obedience till his death

The use of ‘*ne*’ in these lines is significant for our understanding of what Amu sought to portray about Jesus (see chap. 2). The word means ‘to be’, ‘to be identical with’, or ‘to consist in’.⁴⁴ “When ‘*ne*’ is used, the subject coincides with the predicate, or

entirely absorbs the characteristics of the predicate".⁴⁵ 'Yesu ne *nhweso a*', should, therefore, be understood literally to mean that 'Yesu' (Jesus), the subject, is identical with or consists in the predicate, '*nhweso*' (example). Jesus' identification with *nhweso* means that Jesus has absorbed in himself those elements that constitute the *nhweso*. Up to now we have translated '*nhweso*' as example, but the word literally means 'to look upon', or 'to imitate'.⁴⁶ What is there, however, in Jesus 'to look upon' or to imitate? These are '*ne nipa do*' (his love for humankind), '*ne n'ahobrease*' (his humility), and '*ne setieye*' (his obedience). These are examples worthy of emulation: '*nhweso a eso nni*'. The expression '*eso nni*' gives a deeper insight into our understanding of the worthiness of each of these qualities of Jesus, because according to Christaller the phrase means that 'there is nothing above it, it is incomparable, unparalleled, [and] excellent'.⁴⁷ Indeed, as noted by Amu in a sermon, 'Of all personal examples none is superior to the personal example of Jesus Christ'.⁴⁸

Enye ano do kwa, enye asede kwa duty	It is not vain love by word of mouth nor vain duty
Ne do no fi komam, nti ne tumi so, great	His love is from the heart and so His power is great
Na odo a efi komam ne ne susukora	Love from his heart is his measuring gauge

From the foregoing (*AKD: 24* lines 5-7), Amu teaches us that love that only comes from the lips is vain and does not serve any purpose. This, in fact, is the admonition we find in 1 Jn. 3: 18: '*Me mma nkumaa, mommma yemmfa asem anaa tekrema nnnɔ, na mmom momma yennɔ nneyee ne nokware mu*' (Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth). Whereas Jesus' love springs from the depths of his heart, Amu's love is '*afra*' (contaminated). This is why, according to Amu, Jesus' love is immeasurably greater and more powerful.

Elsewhere in this work, in chapter 3, we have explored in detail Amu's ideas on *setieye* (obedience) and *odo* (love). Another virtue of the Christian life, *ahobrease* (humility), mentioned in '*Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni*', must have meant a lot to Amu, since he dedicated an entire composition to celebrate it. He called this '*Ahobrease*' (Humility) (chapter 2 *AKD: 12*):

Ade ketekete a esom bo kokroo ne ahobrease	One little thing that is very precious is humility
Ahobrease ne yiyedi nyinaa mfiase	Humility is the beginning of wellbeing
wo nsa nya ka a, ade kese biara wo de o	If you obtain it, anything great thing becomes yours

Asetra yi besi wo yiye a, na efi ahobrease
Adwuma yi besi wo yiye a, na efi ahobrease

Ahobrease ye odasani fe
Onyame de eye no fe mmroso
Bre wo ho ase onipa e,
Bre wo ho ase ara
Onyame asem a emu do.
Ahobrease a, na yede du ase

Onyame nyansa emu do
Ahobrease ara na yede hu ase o

Nyame akwan a ehinta,
Ahobrease ara na yede hu mu fann

Onyame ahonya etra so
Ahobrease ara na yede nya mu bi

Onipa adwene ne nyansa na ahode ne tumi mpo

ye Onyame ani so nkwasade
Onipa e, bre wo ho ase ma Nyame

Bre wo ho ase ara

If you should prosper in your earthly
life then this comes from humility
If your work should prosper then it
comes
from humility.
Humility is beautiful to humankind
God's humility is more beautiful
Humble yourself humankind
Humble yourself still
God's word which is deep
It is humility that enables us see the
depths
God's wisdom which is deep
It is humility that enables us see its
depth
God's ways are hidden from us
It is humility that enables us to see
through clearly
God's wealth which has no limits
It is humility that enables us obtain
some of it
Even human mind, and wisdom and
power
is foolishness before God
O humankind, humble yourself before
God
Humble yourself

Amu understood 'ahobrease' (literally, to bring low one's body) as '*ade ketekete a esom bo kokukroo*'. It is important that we first appreciate what he meant by '*ade ketekete a esom bo kokukroo*', and then address his use of metaphors and imagery in this song. In composing this song Amu must have conceived in his mind an image he called '*ade*' (a substance, or a thing)⁴⁹ whose size is '*ketekete*' (so small) and yet '*esom bo kokukroo*' (it is of great value). The phrase '*ade ketekete a esom bo kokukroo*', therefore, means 'a thing whose size is so small, and yet is of great value'. '*Ahobrease*' is better understood when examined in its component parts: '*Bre wo ho ase*'. This alternative rendering of the word appears no fewer than five times in the song under discussion, and indicates Amu's eagerness to convey to his audience in concrete terms an abstract idea. According to Christaller, '*bere ase*' means 'to lay or put down, bring low, humble, degrade, abase, abate, lessen'.⁵⁰ '*Ho*' is used in the sense of the body and 'occurs in a number of expressions which denote conditions and qualities of the bodily constitution of man'.⁵¹ It can, however, be used to express mental conditions and affections.⁵² We understand '*bre wo ho ase*' to mean 'the act of bringing down or lowering oneself'. *Ahobrease* should, therefore, be understood to mean the lessening or abasement of the qualities that project a person as an individual especially as he/she relates with others in the community. We find this idea captured

ahobrease is the key that unlocks God's treasury: his word, his wisdom, his ways, and his wealth (*AKD: 12* lines 10-21):

Onyame asem a emu dɔ. Ahobrease a, na yede du ase	God's word which is deep It is humility that enables us see the depths
Onyame nyansa emu dɔ Ahobrease ara na yede hu ase o	God's wisdom which is deep It is humility that enables us see its depth
Nyame akwan a ehinta, Ahobrease ara na yede hu mu fann	God's ways are hidden from us It is humility that enables us to see through clearly
Onyame ahonya etra so Ahobrease ara na yede nya mu bi	God's wealth which has no limits It is humility that enables us obtain some of it
Onipa adwene ne nyansa na ahode ne tumi mpo ye Onyame ani so nkwaseade Onipa e, bre wo ho ase ma Nyame	Even human mind, and wisdom and power is foolishness before God O humankind, humble yourself before God
Bre wo ho ase ara	Humble yourself

A section of Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* must have informed the foregoing lines:

O Onyankopon ahonya ne nyansa ne nimdee bun a emu dɔ! Worenhu n'atammu mu pɛpɛɛ, na worenhu n'akwan akyi hwe hwe nwie da. Na hena na ohuu Awurade adwene, anaase hena na ɔye ne fotufo? Anaase hena na ɔmaa no biribi kan, na watua no so ka?

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" (Rom.11: 33-35)

Ahobrease is what is needed to fathom the depths of God's treasury. We have already noted that, for Amu, Jesus is the only one whose being is synonymous with *ahobrease*; he is, therefore, the only one who can unlock God's treasury and enable us gain access into God's presence.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have been analysing Ephraim Amu's perspectives on the person of Jesus. The issues that emerged, indicate how new light can be shed on Jesus, so that we gain a fresh understanding of him. Amu's reading of Lk. 2: 8-15 gave a profound insight into how the narrative of Jesus' birth can be linked to the Johannine prologue. The chapter shows how the prologue of John is not just a theological treatise but rather a reflection on an event that occurred in human history. The nativity story then becomes not just an episode but a moment of *kairos*, a threshold in human history

when God made human habitation his dwelling place. I have sought to show how the “*Asem*” of the Lukan event is analogous to the “*Asem*” that the Evangelist talked about in his gospel. “*Asem*” of Lk. 2: 15 is about Jesus, the “*Asem*” (Word) that became flesh (Jn. 1: 1). Thus, a mother tongue reading of the Lukan and the Johannine texts give indication that it is possible to formulate an “*Asem*” Christology using categories from Akan sources.

If the birth of Jesus is not just an event but a threshold in human history, then his crucifixion, death and resurrection may equally be viewed as a climax of that history. I have shown how the use of “*asraafo*” (soldiers) in Mat. 27: 27-31 gave the impression that the trial and crucifixion of Jesus by the Roman government were for political reasons. By using “*abrafo*” (state executioners) Amu showed that behind the veneer of the Roman judicial process was a more serious matter. Jesus was judged by the Sanhedrin to have committed a religious offence and for which reason, according to Amu, he must die at the hands of the “*abrafo*.”

I sought to show that by using Akan religious terminology such as these, it is possible to reconceptualise the Christian faith in new ways. It is in this connection that we can begin to appreciate contributions made by a theologian, such as Ephraim Amu.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ DAFL, p. 437.

² DAFL, p. 437.

³ C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmeseusem: Twi Proverbs with English translations and comments*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, p. 169.

⁴ EASA, *The Trustworthy Shepherds*, Peki: Peki Goucor Pesco Carol Service, 8 December, 1974, p. 1.

⁵ EASA, *The Trustworthy Shepherds*, p. 2.

⁶ DAFL, p. 52.

⁷ The Akan notion of *asem* enables us to see beyond Luke 2:15 as a mere event or occurrence, to one that merits serious deliberation and discussion. As stated by John (1:14): “*Na Asem no beyee honam, na obetenaa yen mu, na yehunu n’animuonyam, na adom ne nokore aye no ma*” (And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father). There is a correlation between εἷμα (Lk.2:15) and 8 λόγος (Jn.1:14).

⁸ DAFL, p. 341.

⁹ DAFL, p. 364.

¹⁰ The clue to this observation lies in our understanding of the Hebrew word *pele* that *nwonwa* translates. It is a word that refers to God’s words or acts of salvation, such as the Exodus events, the wonders he worked during the crossing of the Red Sea and the wilderness, and the crossing of the Jordan. It is in this regard that the redemptive acts of Jesus such as his healing and miraculous deeds must be reckoned, and it is precisely for this reason too that *nwonwa* (wonderful) is his name.

¹¹ DAFL, p. 434.

¹² C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmeseusem*, p. 162.

¹³ C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmeseusem*, p. 80

¹⁴ Christaller, *Three Thousand Six Hundred Ghanaian Proverbs*, p. 232.

¹⁵ DAFL, p. 423.

¹⁶ DAFL, p. 423. Christaller wonders whether 'asaman' is not a corruption of 'ase man' (the land below or the lower regions).

¹⁷ DAFL, p. 423.

¹⁸ DAFL, p. 423.

¹⁹ G.H.P. Thompson, *The Letters of Paul to the Ephesians to the Colossians and to Philemon*, (Cambridge Bible Commentary), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 67.

²⁰ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929, p. 279.

²¹ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, p. 270.

²² DAFL, p. 84.

²³ DAFL, p. 77.

²⁴ DAFL, p. 77.

²⁵ DAFL, p. 80.

²⁶ DAFL, p. 317.

²⁷ DAFL, p. 89.

²⁸ DAFL, p.475.

²⁹ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, pp. 121 ff.

³⁰ Matt. 26: 63-66.

³¹ DAFL, p. 398.

³² See Fig. 3.

³³ Kwesi Yankah, *Speaking for the chief: Okyeame and the politics of Akan royal oratory*, Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 33ff.

³⁴ Other Akan proverbs on *ɔɔ* (love) are as follows: *ɔɔ senee, bribiara ansen bio* (When love passed by, nothing else passed), *Obi ɔɔ wo a wo nso ɔɔ no bi* (If someone loves you, love him in return), *ɔɔ biara a wode sika ɛ no sike tumi see no* (Love that can be bought with money can also be destroyed by money), *ɔɔ wonni no sika* (True love is not based on riches /wealth), *ɔɔ nti na Esiamma kaw nam mono mu* (It is out of love that the tightfisted Esi [Sunday-born female] bit a raw fish into two). See Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping: Akan Proverbs*, p. 77.

³⁵ Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping: Akan Proverbs*, p. 77.

³⁶ Kwa Mensah, 'ɔɔ-ye-wu', in *Okyeame: Ghana's Literary Magazine*, (tr. by Efua T. Sutherland) Vol. 4, No. 2, June 1969, p. 38. Kwa Mensah's idea is carried in the following poem in Mfantse:

ɔɔ-ye-wu ekegyina nkwanta
Orotweon me
ɔɔ-ye-wu do me
Moso modo no bi
ɔɔ-ye-wu ekegyina nkwanta
'Rotweon me

Love-unto-death stands at the cross-roads
Awaiting me
Love-unto-death loves me
And I love her
Love-unto-death stands at the cross-roads
Awaiting me

Ahomatsea!
Nsu eyir me
Maye ohoho
Aya e!

Slender beauty!
Water has flooded me
And estranged me
Alas!

In this poem 'ɔɔ-ye-wu' is used as a proper name. Subsequently, it is identified as a character and given an attribute, 'Ahomatsea' (lit. thin rope) which is translated by Efua Sutherland as 'Slender beauty'. What is being celebrated here is love that has a strong emotional and sensual appeal and which can make one lose oneself: 'Nsu eyir me. Maye ohoho' (Water has flooded me and estranged me). Kwa Mensah's poem is quintessentially sensual love, based on body shapes and forms.

³⁷ Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping: Akan Proverbs*, p. 77.

³⁸ Kofi Asare Opoku, *Hearing and Keeping*, p. 77.

³⁹ H. J. Keteku, 'ɔɔ ye owu' in *ɔdawuru*, Nea eto so anan (Vol. 4), ɔbenem/Dwannan, 1971, pp. 7-8.

⁴⁰ H. J. Keteku, 'ɔɔ ye owu' in *ɔdawuru*, pp. 7-8.

⁴¹ See Appendix A.

⁴² DAFL, p. 40.

⁴³ EASA: College Morning Prayers, Achimota College, 9.2.1948.

⁴⁴ DAFL, p. 332.

⁴⁵ DAFL, p. 332.

⁴⁶ *DAFL*, p. 199.

⁴⁷ *DAFL*, p. 463.

⁴⁸ EASA: *Personal example- the absolute need of personal example*, Peki Government Training College, 5.11.1972.

⁴⁹ *DAFL*, p. 69.

⁵⁰ *DAFL*, p. 16.

⁵¹ *DAFL*, p. 177.

⁵² *DAFL*, p. 178.

⁵³ See John 3:30.

⁵⁴ The reference to the Kingdom of heaven is in itself significant because like *ahobrease*, it too has humble beginnings as shown in Mark 4: 30-32.

⁵⁵ See Appendix B.

PART III

AMU THE THEOLOGIAN - AMU'S SOCIAL ETHICS

CHAPTER 5

“Adikanfo, Mo!”

PRAISE SONGS IN CELEBRATION OF PERSONS OF RENOWN.

INTRODUCTION

As a researcher Ephraim Amu must have known that one basic tenet of scholarship is the recognition and acknowledgement of contributions made by others in various fields of human endeavour. In this chapter I examine his assessment of these contributions particularly with respect to A.G. Fraser, J.E.K. Aggrey, Johannes Christaller and C.A. Akrofi. As *adikanfo* it was Fraser and Aggrey who laid the foundations for what would become Achimota School, one of the leading schools in Ghana. In ‘*Kasakyerew ho nimdefo*’, Christaller and Akrofi are acknowledged for their role in the development and promotion of the Twi language and the cultural relevance and significance of the Christian faith. In this chapter, as in others, I have sought to understand Amu’s expression of the Christian faith in African language and idiom.

Adikanfo, mo: A.G. Fraser (1873-1962), J.E.K. Aggrey (1875-1927)

Adikanfo, mo! (Pioneers, congratulations) was composed to celebrate men of valour (chapter 2 *AKD: 21*). It runs thus:

Adikanfo, osammarimma ako adi nim,

Moako adi nim ama yen;

Mo adaeso anya aba mu nne,
mo anidaso anya aka nsa,
Gyidi nso anya aye ohu;
Adikanfo e mo mo; aye bi amayen;
Yebo mo osee, yeema mo amo, mo, mo
Adinkafo mo, Osammarimma mo,

Oko pa no mo awie ko, mo,
mmirika no, mo awie tu, mo
Gyidi no nso mo aso mu awie, mo!
Mo nsa anya aka nkonim;
Adinkafo e mo! Moaye bi amayen,

Yebo mo osee, Yema mo a mo.

Men of valour and pioneers of our
struggle
You have fought and won victory for
us
Your dreams have come true
Your hopes have materialised
Faith also has become sight
Pioneers, you have done your part
We salute and hail your efforts
Well done pioneers and men of
valour
You have fought the good fight
You have run the good race
You have held unto the faith
Your hands have wrought victory
Well done! Pioneers you have done
your part
We sing your praise and say well
done

The first line of the poem suggests that although the song was written in memory of Rev. A.G. Fraser he was not the only person Amu had in mind. ‘*Adikanfo*’ and ‘*osammarimma*’, both in the plural, describe those who in Amu’s opinion ‘[ɔ]mo ako adi nim ama yen’ (had fought and won victory for us). *Adikanfo* means those who have ‘gone before, the foremost, first; [in terms of a] beginner, [or] pioneer’.¹ *Osabarima* (singular) is a hero or a powerful warrior,² and Amu spelt out the distinctive qualities of *adikanfo* and *osammarimma* (*AKD: 21* lines 3-8):

Mo adaeso anya aba mu nne,
mo anidaso anya aka nsa,
Gyidi nso anya aye ohu;
Adikanfo e mo mo; aye bi amayen;
Yebo mo osee, yeema mo amo, mo, mo
Adinkafo mo, Osammarimma mo,

Your dreams have come true
Your hopes have materialised
Faith also has become sight
Pioneers, you have done your part
We salute and hail your efforts
Well done pioneers and men of
valour

Odae (pl: *adae*) means ‘dream’.³ The word also means ‘vision’ in the context in which it has been used by Amu. ‘Hope’ is the word that ‘*anidaso*’ translates. ‘*Anidaso*’ can, however, be rendered literally as ‘*n’ani da so*’⁴ (that upon which one’s eyes are fixed). *Gyidi* means ‘faith’. The literal rendering of *gyidi*, as *gye di*⁵ (take and eat) is helpful because like ‘*n’ani da so*’, it gives concrete expression to what the word connotes. To accomplish a feat and to be seen to be victorious, the pace-setter or pioneer must possess vision, hope, faith, and courage. In Amu’s mind, all pioneers like Fraser are men of valour who fight to bring to fruition their cherished dreams, hopes and ambitions.

Oko pa no mo awie ko, mo,
mmirika no, mo awie tu, mo
Gyidi no nso mo aso mu awie, mo!
Mo nsa anya aka nkonim;
Adinkafo e mo! Moaye bi amayen,

Yebo mo osee, Yema mo a mo.

You have fought the good fight
You have run the good race
You have held unto the faith
Your hands have wrought victory
Well done! Pioneers you have done
your bit for us
We sing your praise and say well
done

The foregoing (*AKD: 21* lines 9-14) allude to Paul’s letter to Timothy:

Oko pa no, mako; mmirika no, mawie tu; gyidie no, maso mu masie.
Nea aka a eda me ho ne trenee abotiri a Awurade, otemmufo trenee
no, de bema me eda no, na enye me nko, na mmom won a wodo
n’ahoyi no nyinaa nso bi.⁶

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the
faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,

which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. (2 Tim.4: 7-8).

Whereas in the epistle Paul gives a description of his own life and ministry in terms of a contest or a struggle, Amu used it in the context of a struggle for emancipation and selfhood. Three times in this song he used the expression 'mo', a word which means 'well done', and which can be understood as 'a form of congratulation, thankful acknowledgment, and of wishing success'.⁷ Amu was of the view that the pioneers deserved to be celebrated because '[ɔ]mo aye bi amayen' (lit. they have done their part). They have bequeathed a legacy.

It is important that we place the role that both Fraser and Aggrey played as pioneers in the founding of Achimota School in a broader context in order to appreciate fully their contribution.

Alexander Garden Fraser was born in Scotland. His father was an Indian government officer. Fraser's strong evangelical background prepared him to serve as a missionary educator with the Church Missionary Society. He was appointed principal of Trinity College, Kandy in Sri Lanka for 19 years having previously worked in Uganda. His approach to education was radical, marked by high academic standards. Fraser believed that education should be culturally relevant and based on a broad curriculum and sound Christian principles. At Trinity College he encouraged community participation in education and introduced Sinhala and Tamil into the curriculum to strengthen the links with Sri Lankan culture.⁸

Fraser was of the view that the African, like any European, had the intellectual ability to excel. For him, there are no grounds to suggest that Africans are inferior to any people in the world. At Achimota School, he fought the British colonial policy on racial segregation in order to have Africans included on the staff. E.W. Smith narrates an incident which occurred on the arrival of Mr. Fraser and his team to begin their work at Achimota:

The European masters were directed to proceed to Liver House, in the quarter of the town reserved for Europeans and their servants. The Governor intended that Aggrey should lodge with his colleagues, but a minor official quartered him elsewhere. The African clerks in the office knew that this discrimination was being made - and they watched to see what would happen. Mr. Fraser was the last man in the world to suffer any indignity offered to a colleague. Putting a blind eye to the signal, he

carried Aggrey off with him to Liver House, and for some time they shared a room together. This action saved the situation.⁹

By his actions Fraser showed that humanity is one and that any separation based on the colour of the skin must be resisted. It was in pursuit of this struggle that Fraser enlisted the services of Dr. Kwegir Aggrey and subsequently got the approval of the colonial authorities. Further, he worked together with Aggrey and Sir Gordon Guggisberg, governor of the Gold Coast (Ghana) to lay the foundation for Achimota College.

Fraser held the view that given the same conditions under which European schools operate, and with the right calibre of staff, a school in Africa can be as good as any school in Europe. He was of the opinion that “African arts, crafts, traditions, history are the proper subject matter of early education in Africa, and an African language its proper medium.”¹⁰ Following his desire to see African culture as integral to education, Fraser invited Ephraim Amu to join the staff of Achimota College when the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast dispensed with the services of Amu.¹¹ Fraser must have followed with keen interest the innovative and creative exploits of Amu, and he probably felt that Achimota could offer a more congenial environment for Amu to continue with his research into African music. Fraser’s friendship with Amu was to continue long after Fraser had retired as principal of Achimota College.¹²

James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey was born in Anomabu in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). His parents’ conversion enabled him to be baptised at the age of eight. Aggrey received missionary education at Cape Coast at a very early age and at the invitation of Rev. Dennis Kemp he became part of a large missionary family in Cape Coast. In 1898 he was appointed headmaster of a Wesleyan school at Cape Coast. In 1902 he received a B.A degree from Livingstone College, North Carolina and became an elder the following year in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1920 the Phelps-Stoke Foundation set up a Commission to visit schools in West and South Africa and find out the level of education. The Commission discovered that the kind of education being offered in these regions was narrow and scholastic and failed to address African needs.¹³ Being a strong advocate of the vernacular, Aggrey would have found it disheartening to see education detached from African languages. In reforming the educational system on the Gold Coast, Aggrey suggested that vernacular should be the medium of instruction during the early and formative years of a child’s education. Although he was of the opinion that Africa could learn from

the West, Aggrey believed that African communities should remain essentially African.¹⁴ He believed Africans should be proud of their race and colour because they have a distinctive contribution to make in harmonising the whole of humankind. Aggrey's respect for peoples of all shades and backgrounds and his desire to foster harmony among all races led him to pursue a policy of cooperation rather than conflict. This idea is clearly enunciated by Aggrey in his parable of the black and white keys of the piano and illustrated on the Achimota School logo.¹⁵ Harmony is achieved only when there is combination of the black and white keys. For Aggrey, cooperation among different races was not just an idea, it was a lifestyle that he demonstrated although he faced discrimination as the only black member on the Phelps-Stoke Commission. As noted in chapter one Aggrey influenced not only the positive stance that Amu took in his interpretation of African culture and tradition, but also his attitude towards missionaries and particularly Europeans during the pre-independence era on the Gold Coast.

As *adikanfo*, Fraser and Aggrey were Amu's mentors. From these pioneers Amu learnt to appropriate and adapt the best in Western culture to enhance his own tradition. He was a cultural avant-garde but he was not an iconoclast as most people perceived him to be. J.H. K. Nketia's assessment of Amu is relevant here:

When I see him in the morning he had his own kind of night gown, pyjamas, not the traditional. It is more like a Western, a northern gown or something. We go down to eat and then we have our calabashes for water. And things like that, earthen dishes and so forth. But you know, coming back from Europe, he is a British tea drinker and so forth, he doesn't miss. And we drink tea in a tea cup, not in a calabash. You see, he loves jam and so forth. So again the lesson I learn from that was that, he was not shutting the world around him, excluding himself, but taking whatever he thought was good or best for the kind of life that he lives. And so this kind of selective use of things from outside, was also very important. And it goes through his music. He was not ignoring traditional things but at the same time not ignoring some of the things coming from outside that could also be useful.¹⁶

By choosing 2 Tim.4: 7 as basis of his reflections, Amu cast the *adikanfo* in a Pauline mould so they could be seen as servants in the service of the gospel. Like Paul, both Fraser and Aggrey were missionaries who blazed the trail by appreciating and making use of the redemptive features in African culture and tradition.

“Kasakyerew ho nimdefo, mo!”: J.G. Christaller (1827-1895) and C.A. Akrofi (1901-1967)

‘Kasakyerew ho nimdefo, mo!’ (Those gifted in the knowledge of writing of language, congratulations!) was composed for the inauguration of the Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre and as such it celebrates the personalities, Christaller and Akrofi,¹⁷ after whom the institution was named (chapter 2 *AKD*: 25):

<p>Tweaduampon Nyame de akyede bi adom me, de bi adom wo, de bi adom obiara, Wo dom akyede no fa som nnipa mma; Na adasamma nkoso pa bi nam so beba.</p> <p>Nyame Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase Tweaduampon Daasebre, yeda wo ase.</p> <p>Tweaduampon Nyame boɔ kasa, boɔ nimdee, knowledge De kasakyerew ho nimdee pa, ne nsiye kese adom binom Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase, Kasakyerew ho, nimdefo mo!</p> <p>Yema mo abasa so, ma mo mo mo! Nyame Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase Tweaduampon Daasebere, yeda wo ase!</p>	<p>Almighty God has endowed me with a gift He has endowed you and everyone else Use your gift to serve humankind For your gift will be of benefit to the advancement of human society God, Gracious Giver, we thank you Great God we thank you</p> <p>Almighty God created language and Good knowledge of the teaching of language and industry are the gifts of some Gracious Giver, we thank you You who have knowledge in the teaching of language, congratulations We congratulate you God, Gracious Giver we thank you Almighty God, we thank you</p>
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In the first six lines of the song Amu first acknowledges and gives praise to *Nyame* (God) who gifted Christaller and Akrofi in the study and teaching of language:

<p>Tweaduampon Nyame de akyede bi adom me, de bi adom wo, de bi adom obiara, Wo dom akyede no fa som nnipa mma; Na adasa mma nkoso pa bi nam so beba.</p> <p>Nyame Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase Tweaduampon Daasebre, yeda wo ase.</p>	<p>The almighty God has endowed me with a gift He has endowed you and everyone else Use your gift to serve humankind For your gift will be of benefit to the progress of human society God the gracious giver we thank you Great God we thank you</p>
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The first two lines indicate that every human being has ‘*akyede bi*’ (a gift) which has graciously been given to him/her by God. Amu was of the view that God’s gift is meant to ‘*som nnipa mma*’ (serve humankind), for ‘*adasa mma nkoso pa bi nam so beba*’ (lit. the advancement of the children of humankind will come through this gift). Amu’s assertion that the source of the gifts can be traced to God, is affirmed by scripture.¹⁸ A commentary on Rom.12: 6 throws light on what Amu meant by ‘*Tweaduampon Nyame de akyede bi adom me*’. The phrase ‘*odom akyede*’ as used in the Akuapem Bible translates ‘*charismata*’, and encapsulates the same thought as

expressed by Amu. The Greek word ‘is used of the gifts or endowments which God bestows on believers to be used in His service and in the service of men’ (sic).¹⁹ ‘*Akyede*’ is mediated by the Holy Spirit and is given on the basis of God’s *charis* (*adom*: grace).²⁰ When Amu spoke about ‘*Nyame de akyede bi adom me...adom obiara*’ he meant that God has given to each individual human being, gifts according to God’s grace, and that these gifts can be used only through the enabling power of the Spirit of God.

We turn now to the second stanza (*AKD*: 25 lines 7-14):

<p>Tweaduampon Nyame boɔ kasa, boɔ nimdee, De kasakerew ho nimdee pa, ne nsiye kese adom binom Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase, Kasakerew ho, nimdefo mo! Yema mo abasa so, ma mo mo mo! Nyame Odomakyedekyefo yeda wo ase Tweaduampon Daasebere, yeda wo ase!</p>	<p>Almighty God created language and knowledge Excellence knowledge in the teaching of language and industry are the gifts of some Gracious Giver, we thank you You who have knowledge in the teaching of language, congratulations! We congratulate you! God, Gracious Giver, we thank you Almighty God, we thank you!</p>
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Amu was emphatic in the foregoing that ‘*kasa*’ and ‘*nimdee*’ are both created by *Tweaduampon Nyame*. As a verb, *kasa* means ‘to speak’ or ‘to talk’.²¹ In the infinitive verbal form the word appears as ‘*ɔkasa*’ and means ‘language’ or ‘dialect’ in ‘the peculiar manner of speaking, [and] the particular sound uttered’.²² Amu understood language in two ways. First, it is ‘the means whereby ideas are communicated or expressed either consciously or unconsciously’.²³ In this regard, Amu was of the conviction that all living creatures including animals have ways of communicating with each other. Amu extended this definition to include inanimate things, such as lakes, rivers, mountains, the moon and stars. ‘But in its restricted sense’, noted Amu, ‘[language] denotes the faculty of speech, in which case human beings are the only class of God’s creatures that can be said to be capable of using language’.²⁴

‘*Nimdee*’ (lit. to know something) on the other hand means ‘knowledge, understanding, intelligence, [and] wisdom’.²⁵ There is, however, a link between ‘*kasa*’ and ‘*nimdee*’ as the following Twi proverb seems to suggest; ‘*Nimdee firi obi ano*’ (It is from a person’s mouth that wisdom comes).²⁶ However, it is not everything that is uttered that can be described as wisdom. The Akan must have been aware of

Johannes Gottlieb Christaller was born in Winnenden, southwest Germany. He was brought up as a pietist in the Lutheran Church. Christaller trained for four years at the Mission House in Basel and was sent to the Gold Coast in 1853 as a Mission linguist and Bible translator. His primary task was Scripture translation and production of Christian literature for the fledgling Christian communities. Christaller mastered the Twi language and was instrumental in producing a Twi Bible which was printed in 1871. He collected 3,600 Twi proverbs and published a Twi grammar in 1875. Six years later he produced his monumental *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language- called Twi*. Until his death in 1895 Christaller was editor of Ghana's oldest Christian newspaper, *The Christian Messenger*.

Clement Anderson Akrofi was a Ghanaian linguist and Bible translator, born in Apirede in the Akuapem Traditional Area of southeastern Ghana. He received early education from the Basel Mission but soon came under the influence of the Scottish Mission during World War I. Akrofi took seriously the study of the Twi language and produced in 1937 his *Twi Kasa Mmara: A Twi Grammar in Twi*.³² Other works that he produced include *Twi Mmese*³³ an annotated collection of 1018 Twi proverbs and a *Twi Spelling Book* he jointly produced with E.L. Rapp. In 1968 together with G.L. Botchey and B.K. Takyi they produced an *English-Twi-Eve-Ga Dictionary*.³⁴ Akrofi was awarded a ThD from the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Germany upon completion of the revision of the Twi Bible in 1960. In accepting the award he said:

I do not forget that I am receiving this honour primarily as a servant of the gospel... In view of the general tendency to regard Christianity as a foreign religion, I will remind my fellow Africans that although Christianity is Europe's greatest gift to Africa, it is not exclusively the white man's religion; it is not the religion of the imperialist. Christianity is a world religion because Jesus Christ is the Lord and King of the universe.³⁵

Akrofi came to this realisation as a result of his own work in the Twi language. He must have noticed the close affinity between Akan culture and the Christian faith having worked on Twi proverbs and wise sayings and the Twi Bible. It is striking how Akrofi's thoughts resonate with Amu's own ideas about the place of Africa in World Christianity.

“*NKRADI*”: A FAREWELL SONG

‘*Nkradi*’ (Farewell) was one of Amu’s special songs composed ‘for occasions of farewell or when friends have to go their different ways’.⁴¹ It is possible, given the period that this song was written, that Amu had in mind his own departure from Akropong.⁴² It runs as follows (chapter 2 *AKD: 20*):

Obosomaketere nam brebre
Ode brebre beko nea ofiri

Makra wo,
Nante yiye o, makra wo
Oyonko dofo bi nam brebre
ode brebre beko nea ofiri

Makra wo o
Nante yiye o, Nante yiye o
Okwan a woreko brebre, medofo e brebrebre

Okwan so brebre
Woko wanim a, kosekosekose
Me dofo e, kosekosekose
Okwan so kosekosekose
Wofa wo benkum a, brebrebre

Me dofo e brebre, okwan so brebre
Wofa wo nifa a kosekosekose, medofo e kosekose

Okwan so kosekosekose
Odo mmo w’anini kwan tetree, okwan so tetree
Anigye nkura wo mu dwoodwoodwo
nkogyaa wo
Yiye nni wakyi daa daa
ma ensi wo yiye
Merepe wo biribi a,
na yiye nko ara na merepe wo,
me dofo e, makra woo
Nante yiye o, makra wo o

Chameleon, walk gently
It shall walk gently back to where it came
from
I bid you goodbye
Farewell, I bid you goodbye
My beloved friend walk gently
It shall walk gently back to where it came
from
bid you goodbye
Farewell, farewell.
May gentleness mark the path you tread, my
beloved friend.
May gentleness mark your path
As you go forward we wish you blessing
My beloved friend we wish you blessing
May blessing mark your way
May gentleness mark your path when you turn
to the left.
My beloved, may gentleness mark your path
Gentleness, my beloved when you turn to the
right
May gentleness mark your path
Let love widen the path before you
Joy takes you safely
to see you off
Goodness follow you always
let it be well with you
If I desire something for you
It is only goodness
My beloved friend, I bid you goodbye
Farewell, I bid you goodbye

For a proper understanding of Amu, the song must be placed against the background of the drum language that inspired this composition. The text of ‘*Nkradi*’ was based on *atumpan* (talking drum) language: ‘*Abosom aketere nam brebre, ode brebre beko de’ofiri*’ (The chameleon walks slowly or patiently, he will arrive safely at his destination).⁴³ The picturesque posture of this colour-changing, gentle-walking reptile portrays the departure of a chief at the end of a durbar. It is possible Amu had in mind a chief beautifully clad in a multi-coloured *kente*, leaving the durbar grounds amidst the sound of *atumpan*. The graceful steps of the chief and his majestic movements are typical of *obosomaketew* (the chameleon). We are told by Christaller that

CONCLUSION

Although no specific names are mentioned in any of the songs that I have analysed, there is no doubt that Amu had in mind Fraser, Aggrey, Christaller and Akrofi when he made these compositions. This chapter has shown that Amu was keenly aware of contributions made by such people of renown and distinction. Most commemorative plaques that Amu knew that celebrated men and women of distinction were in European languages. It is significant that Amu chose to honour these men differently. In this instance the Twi language as a conveyor of the ideals of the Akan tradition had its own unique style. It is only in Twi that Amu could have conveyed his deep sense of gratitude to these noble men of excellence. Amu's sensitivity to the value and significance of the achievements of others bears witness to an important element in indigenous wisdom which consists in recognising, acknowledging and building upon the work of predecessors; '*Onipa beye bi, na wamma ye ne nyinaa*' (A person's contribution is significant, no matter how little). Such a spirit of humility, generosity and courtesy is a mark of true scholarship. This may well be Amu's intellectual legacy.

Amu's readiness to recognise and celebrate the achievements of Fraser and Christaller, both Europeans, shows how his African patriotism is devoid of racial sentiment. Indeed, it can be shown that Amu's sense of African patriotism is a mark of his deep humanity which derives from his Christian and religious self-understanding and his deeply religious view of life generally. Hence the centrality of *Tweduampon* in his thought finds concrete expression in his feeling for a common humanity with other persons who also exhibit similar virtues.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ *DAFL*, p. 84.

² *DAFL*, p. 418.

³ *DAFL*, p. 60.

⁴ *DAFL*, p. 339.

⁵ It is possible to locate the roots of the word *gyidi* in the pre-Christian religious tradition. In the past, to ensure that loyalty to the shrine was kept, the adherent was required to take in a concoction prepared by the priest. It was by means of such rituals that agreements were effected. The expression, "he has eaten medicine" (*odi aduro*) therefore referred to agreements between parties. It commonly referred to contracts, deeds, or agreements signed between chiefs and the colonial authorities. We find the expression used in Johannes Zimmermann's account of the bombardment of the Ga coastal towns by the British in 1854. In one of the addresses to the Ga contending parties, *Otsaame Alimo* of Osu argued that once Ga had "eaten medicine" they were bound to serve the British and therefore could not go back on their word. See Johannes Zimmermann, *A Grammatical Sketch of the Akra or Ga-Language and some Specimens of it from the mouth of the Natives*. Stuttgart: J.F. Steinkopf, 1858, p.

192. A similar expression is used in an account regarding the visit of a British governor to Kumasi: "The Ashantis thought he [governor] was coming to look for the Golden Stool, and many of the chiefs drank fetish (sic) and agreed that they would never let him find it." See W.E. Ward, *A Short History of the Gold Coast*, Longmans: Longmans Green and Co. 1935, p. 209; Philip Laryea, "Reading Acts 14 (8-17) & 17 (22-31) in Ga: A critical examination of the issues, meanings and interpretations arising from exegesis in the mother tongue", *JACT*, Vol. 6.1, June 2003, pp. 35-43.

⁶ Since it is this passage that informed Amu's ideas it is important that we examine what Paul meant when he wrote to Timothy. Three words are of particular importance in this discussion: *oko* (fight), *mmirika* (race), and *pa* (good). The Greek words, *agon* and *agonizomai* which *oko* and *mmirika* translate respectively, "were used in both the athletic and the military realms." George Knight took the view that Paul's figurative use of the terms derived from the idea of "struggle" basic to both the athletic and military worlds rather than on any particular image.⁶ According to Knight, "Paul adds *kalon* [*pa*: good] to make clear the validity and appropriateness of this struggle." The struggle was legitimate because it was effected in the name of the gospel and in a world that was infested with evil.

⁷ *DAFL*, p. 315.

⁸ C. Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The Early Years*, London: Longmans, 1962, pp. 8- 11; Gerald H. Anderson (ed), *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, N.Y., Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1998, pp. 223-224.

⁹ E.W. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa: A Study in Black and White*, London: SCM Press, 1929, p. 233. That Amu must have read Smith's book several times, is a fact which has been made known to us by his biographer. It is not unlikely that it was from Aggrey's biography that Amu drew inspiration to write 'Adikanfo'.

¹⁰ C. Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The Early Years*, p. 10-11.

¹¹ See Appendix K/A.

¹² Personal conversation with Nuigbedzi Amu, son of Ephraim Amu.

¹³ C. Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The Early Years*, pp. 11- 14; Gerald H. Anderson (ed), *BDCM*, N.Y., Simon & Schuster Macmillan, 1998, p. 7.

¹⁴ E.W. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa*, pp. 139- 140.

¹⁵ E.W. Smith, *Aggrey of Africa*, pp. 121-124, 228.

¹⁶ See Appendix C.

¹⁷ Although Christaller and Akrofi are not specifically mentioned in the song it can be suggested that Amu had them in mind. It is important to recall what the German ambassador to Ghana, Wolfdietrich Vogel, said about both Christaller and Akrofi:

Many of them [missionaries] considered the local languages and local culture to be basic elements of the Church of the Gold Coast and Ghana and by their research and field work made decisive contributions in upholding and strengthening both. Among those missionaries was Johannes Gottlieb Christaller who compiled the first dictionary of the Twi language. The *Dictionary of the Asante and Fanti language called Twi*, published in Basel in 1881, continues to enjoy great respect in the scientific world. Christaller was also the first editor of the *Christian Messenger* which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1983. He lived and worked in Akropong-Akuapem. Together with Christaller the new Centre honours Dr. C. A. Akrofi, a Ghanaian Twi language researcher who wrote, among other things, the important book, *Twi Kasa Mmara- a Twi Grammar in Twi*, published in Accra in 1937.

(See brochure for the launching of the Centre, *The Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology: Mission in Context*, 1 November, 1986, pp. 12-13).

J.H. Nketia has noted that Amu had the habit of not mentioning the specific person(s) for whom a composition was being made, or what motivated the composition in the first place. Amu's reason for doing this, according to Nketia, was that, 'He [Amu] preferred to highlight the abiding message and experience of each occasion'. See Nketia, J.H. "The Historical and stylistic background of the music of Ephraim Amu", in E. Amu, *Amu Choral Works*, Vol. I, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1993, p. 19.

¹⁸ See Eph. 4:8. It must be noted that Paul's idea is based on Ps. 68:18. Whereas in the Psalm men give gifts to the Lord on their return after conquest, in *Ephesians* this has been rendered differently. In this case it is the Lord, according to Paul, who gives gifts to men. In his *Epistle to the Romans* Paul indicates the purpose for which the gifts are intended:

Na yewowɔ ɔdom akyede a ɛsonsonoe, senea ɔdom a wɔde adom yen no te. Se eye nkɔmhye a, ma emfata gyidi nsusuwii. Se eye ɔsom a, ma ɔntra ɔsom no mu. Se ɔkyerekyerefo a, ma ɔntra kyerekyere no mu. Se ɔfotufɔ a, ma ɔntra n'afotu mu. Se ade mu kyefo a, ma onyi ne yam nye. Se mmɔborohunufɔ a, ma ɔmfa animtew nye.

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Rom. 12:6-8)

¹⁹ C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans* (The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments), Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., 1979, p. 619.

²⁰ Gerhard Kittel & Gerhard Friedrich (eds), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol., IX, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974, p. 405.

²¹ *DAFL*, p. 228.

²² *DAFL*, p. 228.

²³ EASA: *The World's Common Language*, St. Andrews Training College, Asante Mampong, 29.5.1955, p.1.

²⁴ EASA: *The World's Common Language*, p.1.

²⁵ *DAFL*, p. 342.

²⁶ Christaller, *Three Thousand six hundred Proverbs*, p. 198.

²⁷ Lamin Sanneh, "The horizontal and the vertical in mission: an African perspective", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, vol. 7, no. 4, October 1983, p. 166. Sanneh argues in this article that one of the premises on which Bible translation was based was the fact that language could serve as "adequate bearers of divine revelation". This is a recognition of the salvific value of language as potentially capable of conveying divine realities even before it is used in the translation of the Bible.

²⁸ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1995, p. 60.

²⁹ *DAFL*, p. 461.

³⁰ It is in light of this that we must appreciate Paul's admonition to Timothy: "*Eno nti merekae wo se: Nyan Onyankopɔn dom akyede a enam me nsa a mede miguu wo so no so wo wo mu no mu ka so ano bio*" (Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands). See 2 Tim. 1:6.

³¹ George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, (NIGTC), Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992, p. 370.

³² C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Kasa Mmara: A Twi Grammar in Twi*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1965.

³³ C.A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmɛbusem*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, (n.d).

³⁴ C.A. Akrofi, G.L. Botchey, B.K. Takyi, *An English-Akan-Ewe-Ga Dictionary*, Accra: Waterville, 1968.

³⁵ Cited in Gerald H. Anderson (ed), *BDCM*, p. 9.

³⁶ J.B. Danquah, *The Akan Doctrine of God*, London: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1968, (1st edn. 1944), p. 185-186.

Danquah made two important points that are worth noting. First, the Akan language (and this applies to any language) is capable of conceptualising and expressing Akan thought in a manner that is coherent and intellectually stimulating, and in a form that is classic and of permanent value. Second, it is to a people's language that we must turn in order to discover the source of 'their indigenous contribution to the spiritual achievements of mankind'. By 'spiritual achievements', Danquah meant the intangible realities that enable people to achieve a sense of wholeness so that they are able to live in harmony with themselves, with others and the divine.

³⁷ Noel Smith, *The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1966, p. 55

³⁸ Dietrich Westermann, 'Foreword' to C. A. Akrofi, *Twi Kasa Mmara*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1965, pp. vii-ix.

³⁹ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa*, p. 53.

⁴⁰ See, J.H. Nketia, "African Perspectives in Ethnomusicology" cited in Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", *The Black Perspective in Music*, 15: 2, 51-63, p. 60.

⁴¹ Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 98. The first time 'Nkradi' was sung was in December 1933 at the annual concert of the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong.

⁴² Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 100-101.

⁴³ The background to this song was given by Ephraim Amu during a concert he organised at the Commonwealth Hall Theatre on Friday, January 29, 1965 and at the Ghana Drama Studio, Saturday 30th January, 1965.

⁴⁴ *DAFL*, p. 43.

⁴⁵ Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 100-101.

⁴⁶ *DAFL*, p. 17.

⁴⁷ Christaller, *Proverbs*, No. 734, p. 61.

⁴⁸ *DAFL*, p. 331. I have noticed that some fuel stations have replaced the 'in' and 'out' signs with 'akwaaba' and 'nante yiye' respectively.

⁴⁹ See Appendix Z/H-12.

CHAPTER 6

“*Yen ara asase ni*”

(This is our land)

AMU’S PHILOSOPHY ON NATION BUILDING, HUMAN GROWTH AND ADVANCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the song that is widely celebrated as Ghana’s unofficial National Anthem. Written in the late 1920s, ‘*Yen Ara Asase Ni*’ raises issues that are still relevant to the social and political wellbeing of the country. On what foundations do we build a nation and what are the values that engender true patriotism? One of such values I shall be looking at is ‘*Biakoye*’ (Unity), a song that goes by that name. Nor was Amu’s concern limited to Ghana alone. In ‘*Yaanom Abibirimma*’ Amu calls on Africans to arise and be counted as people who have a contribution to make. In this song and a couple of others I examine his metaphor for human progress. In the concluding songs, ‘*Okwantenni*’ (Traveller) and ‘*Bonwre Kentenwene*’ (*Bonwre Kente Weaving*), we discuss other African values, as demonstrated in traditional greetings and in the hospitality accorded to travellers. ‘*Bonwre Kentenwene*’ is particularly interesting for what it teaches on indigenous knowledge and how such knowledge can motivate and inspire growth in all sectors of human life and endeavour.

‘*YEN ARA ASASE NI*’: APPRECIATING THE TRUE VALUES OF NATIONHOOD

Amu’s concern for values that make a nation is conveyed in ‘*Yen ara asase ni*’ (This land is our own) (chapter 2 *AKD: 15*). The song, though previously noted and discussed for its literary qualities, is considered here for the deeper ideas on human values that Amu also held. It goes thus:

Yen ara asase ni, eye aboodenne ma yen

Mogya na nananom hwie gui

nya de too ho maa yen.

Adu me ne wo nso so se yebeye bi atoa so

Nimdee ‘traso nkotokranne ne apesemenkomenya

Adi yen bra mu dem

ma yen asase ho do atom se

This is our own land, it is precious to us

Blood did our forefathers shed to obtain it for us.

It is the turn of me and you to continue

Mere knowledge, cunning and selfishness

have destroyed our life

and has affected our love for our land

Oman no se ebeye yie oo,
 Oman no se erennye yie oo,
 Eye sennaho se omanfo bra na ekyere

Whether our nation will prosper
 or whether it will not prosper
 It is an established fact that this
 depends on the conduct of her people

Nhoma nimdee huhu gyan
 anaa adenya ara kwa
 ne obrakyew de esee oman
 na ebo n'ahohora
 Asoommre ne obu pa, yonko yiyedi pe daa,

Book knowledge that is vain
 or property acquired without toil,
 and dishonesty, destroy a nation
 and defame it
 Obedience and respect, wishing your
 fellows well always,
 Unqualified dedication to everyone's
 needs
 These bring peace and progress to a
 nation.

Ahofama ntetekwaam' ma onipa biara yiyedi,
 Enonom na ede asomdwoe ne nkoso pa bre oman.

Whether a nation prospers
 or whether it does not prosper
 It is an established fact that it is the
 conduct of her people will determine.

Oman no se ebeye yie oo,
 Oman no se 'renye yieoo,
 Eye sennaho se omanfo bra na ekyere

The opening line stresses communal ownership of land: '*Yen ara asase ni*'. By using the word '*yen*' (the word also means "we" or "us"), Amu had in mind all Ghanaians (the living, the living-dead, and yet-to-be born). Yet it is to the living that he made his appeal for a communal sense of ownership and responsibility towards what he considered to be dear to us: '*eye aboodenne ma yen*'. The living hold the land in trust for and on behalf of the living-dead and the yet-to-be-born. In the second and third lines Amu explains how we came to inherit this possession: '*Mogya na nananom hwie gui nya de too ho maa yen*' (It was acquired or obtained through the blood that our ancestors or forefathers shed for us). It was this idea that inspired the selection of 'red' as part of the colours of the national flag of Ghana, meant to symbolise the 'blood' of our fathers (see notes on *AKD: 15*). Land, then, is the connecting bond between the ancestors and the living, held in sacred trust for future generations. That is the reason why in Akan society, as in others in Ghana, land cannot be sold or disposed of without the consent of the ancestors. Its name, *Asase Yaa*, invoked in prayer, suggests that it is part of the Akan spiritual universe and may therefore not be approached irreverently and without the necessary courtesies.

Amu is of the opinion that if our forebears have done their part by obtaining the land for us through their blood and toil, it is now our turn to 'build upon their achievements'¹: '*Adu me ne wo nso so se yebeye bi atoa so*'. He is concerned that instead of adding value to what has already been achieved we are rather destroying it. Amu identifies, in particular, three of such negative attitudes: '*Nimdee 'traso nkotokranne ne apesemenkomenya*'. The phrase '*Nimdee ntraso*' literally means

'knowledge that has gone beyond limits, to the extremes or is in excess'.² L.A. Boadi thinks Amu's words should not be taken literally. He is of the view that by '*Nimdee ntraso*' Amu meant extraordinary claims to knowledge; claims to knowledge that go beyond natural bounds'. 'Such claims', he believes, 'are always accompanied by arrogance and petty haughtiness'.³ In the first line of the second stanza, Amu uses another phrase '*Nhoma nimdee huhu gyan*'. The explanation to this phrase underscores Boadi's point about *Nimdee ntraso* as a claim to knowledge not backed by experience, that is empty knowledge so-called. This is knowledge derived from studying books or what is commonly referred to as book-knowledge or head-knowledge. In his philosophy of education elucidated in his song, '*Tiri ne nsa ne koma*' (The head the hand and the heart) (chapter 2 *AKD: 37*), Amu indicates that the use of the head is only one of the means by which knowledge is acquired (see chapter 7). He therefore had no difficulty with such knowledge. He was, however, concerned about a kind of '*nhoma nimdee*' (book-knowledge) he described as '*huhu gyan*'. Christaller defined '*huhu*' as 'vain, worthless, useless, [and] good for nothing'.⁴ The word '*gyan*' is synonymous with '*huhu*' and means 'empty' or 'without meaning'.⁵

'*Nimdee ntraso*' means therefore 'cerebral knowledge acquired only for its sake'. Such knowledge does not translate into industry (the use of the hand), nor does it result in the transformation of character (affect the heart). Rather, it leads to two negative attitudes Amu calls '*nkotokranne ne apesemenkomenya*'. '*Nkotokranne*' is cunning or clever deception. Boadi translates *nkotokranne* as 'sophistry, [or] the employment of deliberately specious and invalid argument in discussions of serious matters affecting the state'.⁶ The literal meaning of *apesemenkomenya* is graphically captured in its linguistic composition: 'a liking [*apese*] that one [*me*] alone [*nko*] gets [*nya*] a thing'.⁷ Idiomatically, *apesemenkomenya* means 'self-interest' or 'selfishness'. It is these negative attitudes that, according to Amu, '*Adi yen bra mu dem ma yen asase ho do atom se*' (have damaged our lives and have resulted in the loss of love for our land). Forty five years after composing '*Yen ara asase ni*', Amu expressed similar concerns in a sermon he delivered at the Peki Training College. Amu:

It is clear enough that we are being inspired by a vision of our own selfish ends; a vision of getting rich quickly... the popularity of the lotto, the increasing practice of misappropriation of money, straight forward stealing and robbery; a vision of quick promotion to high positions,

which has brought about undue importance we attach to paper qualification, a vision of easy life and riotous enjoyments leading to our clamour for vanities of life, with their consequent drunkenness and debauchery'.⁸

It is clear that it was this 'paper qualification' that Amu meant by the expression '*Nhoma nimdee huhu gyan*'.⁹ Ephraim Amu concluded the first stanza of '*Yen ara asase ni*' thus:

Ɔman no se ebeye yie oo,
Ɔman no se erennye yie oo,
Eye sennahɔ se ɔmanfo bra na ekyere

If our nation will prosper
or if it will not prosper
It is an established fact that it is the
conduct of her people that will
determine.

It is important to observe the progression of thought. The song began with *asase* but in the concluding section, another word, *ɔman*, was introduced. '*Asase*' means 'a portion or tract of land belonging to an individual or community'.¹⁰ '*Ɔman*' on the other hand refers to 'the body of inhabitants of a country [nation or state] united under the same government'.¹¹ '*Ɔman*' therefore connotes not only land but also the people that inherit the land. The idea also involves intangible realities such as the socio-cultural ties, the religious norms, and the laws and values that unite people and foster a sense of community and belonging (see chap. 8). Whether *ɔman* (a nation) will prosper or not, '*ɔmanfo bra na ekyere*' (is shown by the conduct of the people). It is the manner of life, behaviour or conduct of a people that guarantees the welfare of the nation. This, for Amu, is '*asem a eda ho*' (literally, a fact/matter that is evident). The contracted form of the expression is '*sennahɔ*', a word which means 'precedence' or 'that which has been preserved'. '*Sennahɔ*', therefore, means 'an established or self evident truth'. Amu's statement, '*se ɔman beye yie a eye sennahɔ se ɔmanfo bra na ekyere*' (whether a nation progresses or not depends on the conduct of its citizens), is, thus axiomatic.¹²

In the opening lines of the last stanza Amu mentions attitudes and behaviour that destroy a nation; '*adenya ara kwa*' (acquiring property without toil) and '*ɔbrakyew*' (a life that is crooked, perverse and dishonest). In contrast, lifestyles considered necessary for the peace and progress of a nation are also mentioned: '*Asoɔmmre*' (literally, soft ears), '*obu pa*' (good respect), '*yɔnko yiyedi pe daa*' (wishing prosperity always to one's neighbour or friend), '*ahofama ntetekwaam*' ma

onipa biara yiyedi (an unqualified self-sacrifice in order to serve the needs of everyone).

These ideas are further developed in a song he called '*Biakoye*' (Unity) (chapter 2 *AKD: 19*), in which two virtues that enhance social progress, '*yɔnkodɔ*' (neighbourly love) and '*biakoye*' (unity) are discussed:

Yede yen adwene ne nneyee,
yen nantew ne yen ahokeka
kyere se yɔnkodɔ 'se.
Yesu hyee,
yebetram 'nne ne da nyinaa
Yɔnkodɔ ye, biakoye ye,
na egye yen ani, ehye yen den,
ema yenyin, kɔ yen anim
sakra yen koraa
Enti momma yenkura mu daa

With our minds and deeds,
our way of life and zeal
we show that oneness is proper and worthy.
It is a command of Jesus,
we shall live by it today and forever
Neighbourly love is good, unity is good
It refreshes us, it encourages us
It makes us mature and progressive
It transforms us through and through
and so let us hold on to it at all times

As shown in the first three lines, love for one's neighbour must be clearly manifested in our mind, intentions or opinion (*yen adwene*), our deeds and actions (*nneyee*), the way we conduct ourselves and in our way of life (*yen nantew*), the way we stir ourselves or our zeal (*yen ahokeka*). The reason Amu gave for thinking this way was because '*Yesu hyee*' (Jesus commanded it), an apparent reference to Jesus' teaching in Luke 10: 25-27, a passage Amu must have read in Twi:

Na hwe, mmarakyerefo bi sore gyinaa ho sɔɔ no hwee se:
Kyerekyererefo, menyɛ den na manya daa nkwa? Na oka kyereɛ no se:
Den na woakyerew mmara no mu? Wokan no den? Na obuae se: Fa
wo koma nyinaa ne w'adwene nyinaa dɔ Awurade wo Nyankopon;
na dɔ wo yonko se wo ho.

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself."

In a culturally pluralistic country like Ghana, Amu's call for neighbourly love and unity is important. To emphasise the significance of these virtues Amu employed the biblical mandate of Jesus; 'love your neighbour as yourself.' Jesus' answer to the question posed to him by the lawyer indicated that Jesus was aware of the enmity between the Jews and their neighbours, particularly the Samaritans. He must have known that the Jewish definition of 'neighbour' did not include Samaritans and non-Jews generally. Jesus' 'Parable of the Good Samaritan' (Lk. 10: 29-37) was therefore meant to

challenge Jewish presuppositions on neighbourliness and how Jews ought to live with their neighbours. The Samaritan showed love and compassion by attending to the Jew and thereby giving him something that Jews denied Samaritans. The parable teaches that a person's life is enriched only insofar as it is shared with others, particularly those she/he considers as strangers.

It was while Amu was training in Abetifi that the significance of *yɔnkodɔ* (neighbourly love) dawned upon him. It was here that he learnt how to live with neighbours who did not belong to his ethnic group. This experience greatly influenced Amu and shaped his outlook on life. He testifies in his own words:

When after 1915 we had to go to the other side of the Volta, that is Abetifi to train, and then we mixed with people who were not Ewes at all, that began to give me some ideas about other people in this same country. And therefore mixing with other tribes made us real citizens of the Gold Coast, and we felt that we were members of the Gold Coast.¹³

Becoming a 'real citizen of the Gold Coast' for Amu meant transcending the world that he had known and in which he had been nurtured in, to a larger world. He kept his mother tongue Ewe, but in addition learnt Twi, the language that would give him access to the rich traditions and culture of the Akan people and enable him to communicate to a large majority of Ghanaians. By loving his Akan, Ga and other neighbours and thereby sharing in their worlds, Amu's horizon was broadened. As a result he became richer and his humanity was enlarged to the extent that he could be described as a 'National Institution'¹⁴, an accolade which suggests that Amu was a composite of disciplines; music, language, poetry, politics, theology and agriculture. When therefore he testified that '*yɔnkodɔ ye*' (neighbourly love is good) he was only sharing what he himself had experienced.

It is *yɔnkodɔ* (neighbourly love), however that fosters *biakoye* (unity). The two belong together. Amu detested anything that had the tendency of compromising the unity and cohesion of a community whether it was for political reasons or ecclesiastical convenience. A greater part of his life was spent in uniting the Ewe people who had been divided as a result of the creation in 1921 of the British and French mandated territories, thus splitting Ewes between the nation states of Ghana and Togo.¹⁵ It was in pursuance of Ewe reunification that Amu named her second daughter Misonu, meaning "be united."¹⁶ Amu's concern for unity was again shown when he intervened as head of family of the Saga Community of Peki Avetile to avert

what he thought would disturb the peace of the community. Amu thought that the Methodist Church and the Church of Pentecost were enough for the community, and so when ‘a self styled pastor’ attempted to plant another church he felt this was not necessary since ‘the Saga Community is far too small to admit of the establishment of several christian denominations.’¹⁷ Amu had judged right; denominationalism could lead to the fragmentation of the community and this could undermine a fundamental precept of the Christian faith, ‘that they all may be one’ (Jn. 17: 21). Uniting the community may well serve the purpose of the church, and for Amu this was important. Unity should be the hallmark of every society. As noted by J.J. Adaye, ‘*Ɔman biara a wɔda nsow wɔ biribi pa biara mu no, biakoye di wɔn mu hene*’ (Every nation whose trademark is found on anything that is good has unity as their king).¹⁸

In lines 6-10 Amu focuses on the benefits of *yɔnkodɔ* (neighbourly love) and *biakoye* (unity):

Yɔnkodɔ ye, biakoye ye,
na egye yen ani, ehye yen den,
ema yenyin, kɔ yen anim
sakra yen koraa
Enti momma yenkura mu daa

Neighbourly love is good, oneness is good
It refreshes us, it encourages us
It makes us mature and progressive
It transforms us through and through
and so let us hold on to it at all times

Neighbourly love and unity bring gladness and cheerfulness which lead to the strengthening of the bond of fellowship. Above all, neighbourly love and unity lead to maturity, progress and transformation; *ma yenyiy, kɔ yen anim*. Here, Amu may be alluding to the letter to the Ephesians in which Paul teaches that unity in the Christian faith is fostered when the gifts of the individual members are recognised and put to use ‘for building up the body of Christ’. The fruit that this bears is Christian maturity. But even this is not complete until we attain ‘the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ’ (see Eph. 4: 1-14).

‘YAANOM ABIBIRIMMA’: A WAKEUP CALL TO AFRICA

Amu held these ideas on the values that enhance community and nationhood to be valid not only for his native Ghana, but also for all African nations. Amu’s concern for the welfare and progress of *aman* (pl. of *ɔman*)(the nations of Africa) is expressed in ‘*Abibirimma*’ (People of Africa) (chapter 2 *AKD: 14*):

Yaanom Abibirimma e, Yee!
Monye aso... Asem ben?
Montee nea aba yi ara?

Yen aso rete o, aye
Monhuu nea aba yi ara?
Yen ani rehu o, aye
Yete o, yehu o, yefa ho adwene o.

Aman nyinaa reko agya yen oo,
Aman nyinaa rehu agya yen oo,
Yetu yen nan a, yebeko bi o
Yesua ho nyansa a, yebehu bi o.
Yaanom, Abibirimma e, Yee!
Monyere mo ho o, yereyere no biara.

Monyere mo ho o, yereyere no pa'ra.

Aninguase! Aninguase mfata Abibirimma o...

Yereyere yen ho dennen na aman reko a,
Yeafra mu bi o.
Abibirimma e, Abibirimma e

Fellow Africans
Attention! What is the matter?
Have you not heard what is
happening?
We are listening
Have you not seen what is happening?
We are looking
We hear, we see, we are pondering
over it
All nations are leaving us behind
All nations are seeing ahead of us
If we move we shall advance
If we learn we shall also know
Fellow Africans
Make the effort! We are making the
effort
Make the effort! We are indeed
making the effort
Disgrace, disgrace does not befit
Africans
We are struggling hard to move along
with other nations
People of Africa, Sons of Africa

The first section of the song (lines 1-7) is a dialogue. '*Yaanom Abibirimma e!*' is a yell. It is a call (with a tone of urgency) to *yaanom*. According to Christaller '*yaanom* is used in addressing one's own people',¹⁹ and it is obvious those Amu had in mind were the *abibirimma* (African peoples). The response, '*yee*', (the context in which it has been used suggests it is a 'shout of determination') shows that the call has been heard.²⁰ Then follows a question: '*Asem ben?*' (What is the matter?) Amu draws attention to what is happening and asks his audience whether they have not seen or heard it. In each case the response is positive: '*Yen aso rete o*' (We are listening) and '*Yen ani rehu o*' (We are looking). But beyond this they are pondering what they have seen and heard: '*yefa ho adwene*'.

In the next section of the song (lines 8-14) Amu gives indication of the event he is referring to and calls on his hearers to respond appropriately:

Aman nyinaa reko agya yen oo,
Aman nyinaa rehu agya yen oo,
Yetu yen nan a, yebeko bi o
Yesua ho nyansa a, yebehu bi o.
Yaanom, Abibirimma e, Yee!
Monyere mo ho o, yereyere no biara.

Monyere mo ho o, yereyere no pa'ra.

All nations are leaving us behind
All nations are seeing ahead of us
If we move we shall advance
If we learn we shall also know
Fellow Africans
Make the effort! We are making the
effort
Make the effort! We are indeed
making the effort

The concern expressed here is that '*aman nyinaa rekɔ agya yen*' (all nations are advancing beyond us) and are seeing things we do not see: '*aman nyinaa rehu agya yen*'. The only way to advance is to learn the art of advancement itself. This is what Amu meant by the phrase '*Yesua ho nyansa*' or '*yefa ho adwene*' (If we learn its art, craft or skill). Learning here is not about being like the advanced countries as it is about how they became advanced. As we have already noted in chapter 1 Amu was convinced that seeking to be like other countries was the bane of Africa. In our quest to become like Europeans we have been reduced to mere consumers and have no confidence in ourselves and what we produce. Amu expressed his concern quite forcefully:

An African looks at a well finished article made by the European as compared with the same kind of article of his own crude make. He looks at the working of a machine constructed by the European and he is baffled; he sighs, and nods, or does both and says: "Ei, ei, ei, these white men (sic), they have the whole world under their feet; serve, we must serve them." We are lost in amazement, forgetting that we too are made in the likeness of God and that if only we would wake up from our sleep of inferiority and pull ourselves together and resist the disturbance caused by outside pressure, we could do equally wonderful things, perhaps not in making machines or guns, but something far more wonderful than these, something inspired by God to take us nearer perfect freedom.²¹

Amu's argument is clear; the source of our growth and development is not the *Imago Europae* (the Image of Europe), rather it lies in the image and likeness of God, the *Imago Dei* in which Africans also share. To be made in the image of *Odomankama Obɔadee* (the creator God) means that we have been endowed with the creativity that *Odomankama* possesses. Our ability and inspiration to create therefore stem from the divine plane where the entire cosmic universe is created and sustained. The fundamental issues of growth and human advancement are therefore not about science and technology transfer, important though these may be; they are theological since they deal with how human beings relate to the transcendent God. Since human growth and advancement are dependent on God, it is necessary to study the mental processes, the thought forms and the intellectual framework within which such relationship is nurtured. It is instructive that Amu links advancement to the development of language (chapter 5). Amu believed that it is through the use of Africa's indigenous languages, especially the reading of the vernacular Bibles, that advancement truly occurs. He is clear on the issue:

The kind of Africa we expect to emerge tomorrow depends entirely on the kind of foundation we are laying today... Let as many of us as are aware of the great responsibility of laying the foundation for future Africa and for the future world, let us form or renew the habit of reading the Bible in our own language, praying and meditating daily, so as to be able to build a Christian Africa, and by so doing contribute our worthy share in building a Christian world.²²

Amu's vision of Africa is one built on Christian values. He believed that the only way to tackle Africa's underdevelopment was for the continent to repent (chapter 1). And repentance for Amu meant nurturing a new attitude and self-image and an orientation that is deeply rooted in a positive application of past and from which identity is derived. Amu's view implied turning from the fruitless search for solutions in cultures other than one's own and turning to one's treasured heritage as a guide to the way forward (chapter 7).

In another song, '*Momma yenko so mforo*' (Let us keep on climbing) (chapter 2 *AKD: 30*) Amu further develops his idea on nurturing such an attitude, and illustrates it with a metaphor of climbing a hill:

Momma yenko so mforo, yereforo, yereforo

Momma yenko so mforo,
Adesua ye koko yereforo

apere aben atifi.
Momma yenko so mforo,
Yereforo, yereforo,
Momma yenko so mforo,
mpere mmen atifi,
Koko no atifi da so wo akyirikyirikyiri.

Yegu so reforo
nso yennya mmen atifi ara e,
Momma yenko so mforo
abotase ne ahoyere mu,
adwene-mu-da-ho
ne owen dennen mu,
Momma yenko so mforo,
mpere mmen atifi
Adesua koko no atifi
na yerepere ara ako akodu ho.

Let us keep on climbing, we are
climbing, we are climbing,
Let us keep on climbing,
Acquisition of knowledge is the
mountain we are climbing

struggling to get to the top.
Let us keep on climbing
We are climbing,
Let us keep on climbing
and struggle to get close to the top
The top of the hill still lies far in the
distance

We are still climbing
but we are not close to the top yet
Let us keep climbing
with patience and utmost exertion,
a steady and focused mind,
and a strong vigilance
Let us keep climbing
and struggle to get to the top
The top of the hill of learning
is where we are struggling to reach.

Adesua (learning) is the hill that Amu calls upon his audience to climb. The task is demanding and his hearers struggle to get close to the top even when it is far out of sight: '*Koko no atifi da so wo akyirikyirikyiri*' (The top of the hill lies far in the

distance). To get to the top they need ‘*abotɔase ne ahoyere*’ (patience and utmost exertion), ‘*adwene-mu-da-hɔ*’ (a steady and focused mind), and ‘*ɔwen dennen mu*’ (persistent vigilance). A basic principle is established here; learning involves the heart and the mind. But it also requires diligence and persistent vigilance as well. In view of this fundamental Christian outlook, even when Amu does not mention God, the centrality of God is not absent from his mind. The ideas in ‘*Mommyenkɔ so mforo*’ are consistent with those expressed in ‘*Tiri ne nsa ne koma*’ (AKD 37 & Ch.7) in which Amu makes a case for holistic learning in which the heart, head and hands are all used. Learning, then, is about total commitment to a cause. It must not be rushed, rather it must be loved passionately as one would love the Lord. Learning is not for the double-minded person since it demands ‘*adwene-mu-da-hɔ*’ (a steady and focused mind).

This idea of human advancement is captured in another song Amu called ‘*Onipa retu nan yi na nanim ara na ɔkɔ no*’ (Genuine advance always involves moving forward) (chapter 2 AKD: 32):

Onipa retu nan yi
na nanim ara na ɔkɔ no,
nanim ara na ɔkɔ no,
nanim ara na ɔkɔ no.
Onipa retu nan yi
na nanim ara na ɔkɔ no,
nanim ara na ɔkɔ no,
nanim ara na ɔkɔ no.
Wo de wote hɔ ye die ben ni?

Anantufɔ te kɔ o.
ɔnantufɔ biara ntu ne nan yie,
na ɔbekɔ dwodwo,
ɔkwan so brɛ brɛ.
Anantufɔe! ɔkwan so brɛ brɛ.
Anantufɔe, brɛ o.
ɔkwan so brɛ brɛ Anantufɔe!
ɔkwanso brɛ brɛ
Anantufɔe Brɛ brɛ o.

A person takes a step
and moves forward and progresses
moves forward and progresses
moves forward and progresses
A person takes a step
and moves forward and progresses
moves forward and progresses
moves forward and progresses
As for you what are you sitting there
doing?
The travellers are on their way.
Each traveller takes his step carefully,
and goes softly,
Advance gently.
You travellers! Advance gently
You travellers, advance gently.
Advance gently, you travellers!
Advance gently.
You travellers, advance gently.

The statement ‘*Onipa retu nan yi, na nanim ara na ɔkɔ no*’ (A person takes a step, and forward he goes), has been used figuratively to express the idea of advancement. See how this is contrasted with a state of inactivity: ‘*Wo de wote hɔ ye die ben ni?*’ (As for you, what are you sitting there doing?). Practical action is implied here. Amu may be saying that ideas that bring growth are beneficial only insofar as they are put to use. In this regard every single step towards achieving desired goals and aspirations

he had experienced and to which he was committed. In a sermon he preached in Achimota College in 1942 Amu noted how important the celebration of hospitality is for him:

You will soon be leaving here for your homes when homely words of welcome from all the members of your houses are awaiting you--- “Kwesi Asare o-poo”. A-tuu-. They may be expressed in Ewe, Ga or Hausa or some other language. But in all truly African homes one always expects these homely words of welcome and in my own experience, this kind of welcome is one of the thrilling things the members of your houses have in store for you when you arrive home. Words beautifully expressed in highly polished language may fail to mean anything to us, but the homely speech cannot fail to reach our hearts.²⁵

Amu’s description of greetings as “homely words of welcome” is important. Greetings in African languages have a home as well as a community touch because they come from “all the members of your houses”, that is, houses belonging to the community in which one lives. Because they possess a home and a community touch, “homely words of welcome” in African languages stir the heart. For Amu, this is one of the most thrilling things that can ever happen to any individual. This in effect goes to buttress the point that felicitations in African languages convey ideas that the so-called “highly polished language[s]” of European origin fail to express. It is clear that for Amu language is not about techniques in communication, nor is it about linguistic niceties in highly refined language. Such use of language may only appeal to the mind. The cognitive function of language, however, is necessary and may indeed be desirable, but the ultimate goal of language is the human heart. It is in this connection that we appreciate Amu’s point about the “homely words of welcome.” They are intended to assure the individual(s) of the love and commitment of the kinship group and to foster a sense of security conducive for the unity and wellbeing of the community. J.H. Nketia sums up the value that Amu placed on hospitality:

[Amu] had just come back from his trip to Britain. He had just come back, you know. And on his return he came to Akropong to greet us. And he came to a morning service in his usual *Batakari*, wearing *fugu*. He had a white handkerchief tied to his wrist. And when he had the opportunity of talking to us, he talked about what he had on his wrist. And then he opened that up and showed us beads. He talked about the beads and said he treasured the beads because they were put on his wrist when he came back, and that was how his people welcomed him. The symbolism of the beads, you know, something they treasure, and Amu, somebody coming back being looked at in this way as a kind of precious bead that has returned and so forth. That was the thing he talked about, not about his

music. So that made a big impression on me. Why was he talking about this? We know him to be a musician. But it also told us something about the values that motivated him and so forth.²⁶

Whereas in ‘*Okwantenni*’, Amu discusses Akan traditional greetings and homage that is accorded a traveller, in ‘*Bonwre Kentenwene*’ (*Bonwre* Kente Weaving) he focuses on the experience of a traveller (chapter 2 *AKD*: 34):

Akyinkyin akyinkyin ama mahu nneema,
 Akyinkyin akyinkyin ama mate nsem a.
 Asante Bonwre Kentenwene menhuu bi da o.
 Asante Bonwre Kentenwene mentee bi da o.
 Kwame Onimadeeyo,
 ne kentewene na abo me gye.
 Ne nsa ne nan ne nsɛdua se wogyigye ni:

Refrain

Kro kro, kro, kro,
 Hi, hi, hi, hi,
 Kroehi, kroehi, krokrokro
 Hi, hi, kroehi, kroehi kro
 Na aye me de o, aye me de o
 Bonwre kentenwene ne!
 Aye me de o, abo me gye.

Kentenwene dwom yi afa madwene dennen

Babiara a meko me reto no dennen
 Na nnipa a wohuu me nyina
 hui se asem da me so
 Na me ho yee won nwonwa
 ma wo be kyeree me
 “Eno Ohuonimmobo”

be faa me koe ko soee ne fi.

na opataa me ara bisaa me ma anante se:

Ohuonimmobo ante ma ase ara de

nanso oboo mmoden yee ho bi ara maa me.

Omaa me nkatekwan pa bi di mee pa ara.

Walking about has enabled me see things.
 Walking about has enabled me hear stories.
 But I have never seen how kente is woven at Asante Bonwre.
 neither have I heard how kente is woven at Asante Bonwre.
 Kwame Who-knows-how-to-do-things,
 has frenzied me with the way he weaves his kente.
 His hands, his feet, and the weaver’s shuttle create music which goes like this:

Kro kro, kro, kro,
 Hi, hi, hi, hi,
 Kroehi, kroehi, krokrokro
 Hi, hi, kroehi, kroehi kro
 has made me happy, very happy
 Kente weaving at Bonwre
 Has made me happy and has frenzied me.

This song on kente weaving has occupied my thoughts deeply
 Everywhere I go I sing it passionately
 Everyone who met me saw I was carrying a burden.
 I amazed them
 such that they crowded around me.
 “Mother Who-shows-mercy-and-compassion”
 took me into her house to lodge with her,
 comforted me and asked of my mission:

The one-who-shows-mercy-and-compassion did not understand me and yet she tried to do something for me.
 She gave me groundnut soup which I ate to my satisfaction.

Na ne dew maa me werefi me dwom no kakra.

Ōmaa me babi pa da e
ɔdasum' pe mabo dagye,

Kente nwene dwom kro yi ara
na mereto:

Mankye Bonwre ho,
na mesan me baa fie.
Medwom no ye nnipa pii de na wope atie,

Emaa mani gyee pii se manya bribi pa reko.

Na meduu fie pe
meko ahemfi anante-se bo.

Mmrante ne mmaba
ne nkwakorammrewa ne mmofra,
Wobaε, beboε,
Won nyina ara bekyeree me so:

Its deliciousness made me forget
about my song for a moment.
She gave me a good place to sleep in,
and in the middle of the night I had a
nightmare
about this kente weaving song,
I was singing it:

I did not stay long at Bonwre,
and returned home.
Many people liked my song and
wanted to hear it.
I was happy that I had gone to a place
of importance.
As soon as I got home
I went to the palace to give reasons
for my journey.
Young men and young women
old men and old women and children
all came and stood there,
The crowd pressed on me:

Although the traveller has seen and heard much in course of his travels, what he encounters at Bonwre is a completely new experience. He is overwhelmed and enthralled by music from an orchestra comprising the hands, the feet, the shuttle and loom of a weaver, Kwame *Onimadeeyo*. He is preoccupied with the music to the extent that he sings it passionately wherever he goes. The song drives him into ecstasy. This is manifested in his actions and those who meet him feel he is carrying a burden. He is besieged by a crowd that has been mesmerized by his music, until he is rescued by *Eno Ohuonimmobo* (Mother who-shows-mercy-and-compassion) who takes him into her dwellings. This is the traveller's response when *Eno* asks of his mission:

Awo, Hm! Meye osuani a mefi suku kunini a ewo Akropon no mu, na metee senea Bonwre kurow yi agye din wo kentenwene mu, na wagyaw yen kwan yi, maba se mehwe nea metee wo ho no. Menya meduu kurow no mu pe, ofia edi kan a meduu ho mu no, metee, na mehui se opanyin Kwame Onimadeeyo renwene kente".²⁷

She said, "My son, what is the matter"? I replied: "Old lady, Hm! I am a student from the renowned school at Akropong, and I have heard about how this town of Bonwere has received fame and honour because of its kente weaving industry, and now that we are on vacation I have come to see for myself what I heard. As soon as I got to the town, in the very first house, I met, I heard, and saw old Kwame Who-knows-how-to-do-things at the loom weaving kente".

As the traveller narrates his mission he mentions Kwame *Onimadeeyo*'s name and that drives him into yet another frenzy. He begins to sing:

Kro kro, kro, kro,
 Hi, hi, hi, hi,
 Kroehi, kroehi, krokrokro
 Hi, hi, kroehi, kroehi kro
 Na aye me de o, aye me de o
 Bonwre kentenwene ne!
 Aye me de o, abo me gye.

Kro kro, kro, kro,
 Hi, hi, hi, hi,
 Kroehi, kroehi, krokrokro
 Hi, hi, kroehi, kroehi kro
 has made me happy, very happy
 Kente weaving at Bonwre
 Has made me happy and has frenzied
 me.

Ohuonimmobo cannot comprehend what is happening, but she proceeds to accord her guest the courtesies that one would normally offer any stranger; food to eat and a place to sleep. No sooner has the traveller fallen asleep than he begins to sing in his sleep. He is having a dream. His host and her neighbours are aroused from their sleep. The incident is narrated by the traveller himself:

Eno *Ohuonimmobo* ne ne fipamfo nyina nyan baε, begyinaa me dan a meda mu no ano, retie me dwom no. Na mo ara monim anadwo dwom ne ne de. Ekoo won so ara yiye, maa me gye a mabo no sann wonbi, na se mefre dwom no a, na won nyina gye so: “kro, kro, kro”.²⁸

Mother-who-shows-mercy-and-compassion and all her neighbours woke up and came and stood at my door, listening to my song. And you all know how pleasant songs sound during the night. It sunk deep into them, such that the ecstasy in which I found myself made them merry. And anytime I called the song they all respond: “kro, kro, kro”.

The traveller does not stay long at Bonwre. He is happy to have undertaken a journey to such a place of importance. As soon as he gets home he goes to the chief's palace to give a report and to explain why he undertook the journey. At the gathering are ‘*mmrante ne mmaba, ne nkwakoramrewa ne mmofra*’ (young men, young women, old women, old men and children), each pressing to hear what the traveller has to say. The following is a description of what took place:

Mese, nnipa a woboaa ho, ofi biara mu, anka otwe anka adowa. Enna mehwee komm na mese, ei! Nnipa dodow yi amaneε ben po na wobo won a, ebe so won ani? Ende, edi me me Bonwre Kentenwene dwom yi ara. Na mede mahyehye so, na okyeame no asom, na omanfo no agye so. Na efi ho, wofa kurow no mu benkum ana nifa, apuei ana atoe a, wo bete: “kro, kro, kro”²⁹

Those who gathered came from every household, not one was left out. I observed the scene quietly and said to myself, what message do I have to give to this gathering to make them happy? The only message I could give from my journey was my Bonwre song. I then started to sing, it caught the ears of the chief's spokesman, and the crowd also responded.

From there it spread to every part of the town, from the left to the right, and from the west to the east, the people were singing the song: “kro, kro, kro”.

‘*Bonwre Kentenwene*’ is more than a traveller’s tale. It is about one in search of knowledge. The characters in the plot and the setting in which they are placed are therefore carefully chosen to convey this idea. There is first, *okwantenni*, (the traveller) who is described as *osuani* (a learner, scholar or student) from the distinguished school at Akropong (an obvious reference to the Presbyterian Training College where Amu was teaching when he wrote this song). Apart from being a student, the traveller is portrayed as a person of experience who has learnt much through exposure to other worlds than his own. And yet what he saw at *Bonwre* amazed him. It is most probable that Amu was recounting his own experience.

Akropong and *Bonwre* are significant in this story. Whereas Akropong is a renowned teacher training institution in Ghana, *Bonwre* ‘is a town in Asante famous for weaving high class native cloth’.³⁰ Akropong incorporates aspects of indigenous education in its curriculum and represents to a large extent western style education. *Bonwre* on the other hand represents oral, indigenous and non-formal education. From the narrative it is revealing that Amu did not set Akropong against *Bonwre*, as if one was to be preferred to the other. Akropong is noted for its excellence in formal education and so is *Bonwre* for its fame and honour in weaving kente. The two traditions can borrow from each other. In this instance the narrator’s preoccupation is on what Akropong can learn from *Bonwre*. It is here that the other character in the story Kwame *Onimadeeyɔ* becomes important. It is intriguing that Amu chose to call the weaver *Onimadeeyɔ*, an appellation or a praise name which literally translates, ‘He-knows-how-to-do-things’. It is significant to note that the appellation connotes ‘*nimdee*’, a word that Amu wrote about in two of his songs, ‘*Tiri ne nsa ne koma*’ (Head, hand and heart) (*AKD: 37*) and ‘*Yen ara asase ni*’ (This land is our own) (*AKD: 15*). Perhaps it is in this character, Kwame *Onimadeeyɔ*, that we see clearly illustrated Amu’s philosophy of *nimdee trodoo*, (true and perfect learning). A learning that involves not only the head, but also the hands and the feet as evidenced in the weaving of Kente. It is instructive that in this story we have *osuani* (a student) being introduced to another sphere of learning. The scenario created by the weaver as he worked on the loom with both hands and feet, against a varied display of threads of

all shades and colours, must have been a great delight to watch. Besides the music, (this became the preoccupation of the traveller) Kente³¹ is also created.

Although it is noted for its rich display of colour, the value of Kente goes beyond aesthetics. Kwaku Ofori Ansah has this to say about Kente:

In its cultural context of use, Kente is more than just a cloth. Like most of Africa's visual art forms, Kente is a visual presentation of history, philosophy, ethics, oral literature, religious belief, social values and political thought...Kente is used not only for its beauty but also for its symbolic significance. Each cloth has a name and a meaning and each of the numerous patterns and motifs has a name and a meaning. Names and meanings are derived from historical events, individual achievements, proverbs, philosophical concepts, oral literature, moral values, social code of conduct, human behaviour and certain attributes of plant and animal life.³²

Kente has over 12 different colours each with a symbolic meaning. Yellow is associated with the yoke of the egg and symbolises sanctity, preciousness, spiritual vitality and fertility; pink signifies the female essence of life; red is linked with blood and sacrificial rites; and blue is associated with the sky symbolising the abode of the Supreme Being. Kente has over 54 different names each with its own design depicting a social, political or historical event.³³

Amu must have known what he was doing when he mounted the pulpit in Kente cloth. He must have known that Kente is not simply about *awosasa* (the wearing of cloth), a matter considered by his church as trivial and of no theological significance (chapter 1). A friend even tried to persuade him to drop the idea and put on European attire instead.³⁴ By appearing in Kente cloth Amu made a fundamental statement about his African Christian identity and also drew attention to the contribution that Africa can make in furtherance of human advancement on the world scene. To acknowledge therefore the fame and honour of *Bonwre* as Amu did is to affirm the importance of indigenous knowledge and indigenous wisdom. In this regard educational institutions like Akropong can learn from indigenous and oral communities like *Bonwre*. It is possible to see how all this fit in with Amu's philosophy of growth and advancement. There is a lot already in our traditional institutions that can motivate and inspire growth in all sectors of African life and thought. 'Kente' is the evidence that this is possible.

CONCLUSION

The point has already been made that at the core of Amu's 'Cultural Activism' was his Christian conviction. Although these songs we have examined are classified as "patriotic" and were composed to draw attention to African indigenous values, wisdom and knowledge, it can be argued that their tenor and general import articulate Christian views and concerns. This confirms Amu's stand that there is much in African culture and tradition that mirror Christian truth and ideals. We have been looking at values that are foundational in nation building. Neighbourly love and unity were two of such values that were studied in detail. We noted that for Amu growth and advancement did not lie in copying or imitating other cultures and civilizations, but rather in nurturing and building upon the thought forms that shape these cultures. We observed that such indigenous knowledge within our own cultures can be used to enrich the system of education that we have inherited from our colonial past. An example to demonstrate that this is possible was given using Amu's experience of the Kente weaving industry in *Bonwre*.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ Amu's translation. See Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", *The Black Perspective in Music*, 15: 2, (51-63), p. 54.

² An expression similar to "Nnimdee ntraso" is used by Festus during the trial of Paul (Acts 26:24): "Paulo, woabo dam, nhomanim bebrebe abo wo dam." (Paul, you are mad; your great learning is turning you mad).

³ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*, Amu Memorial Lectures (Series 6), The National Theatre, Accra, 18 May, 2004.

⁴ *DAFL*, p. 193.

⁵ *DAFL*, p. 154.

⁶ L. A. Boadi, *The Poetry of Ephraim Amu*.

⁷ *DAFL*, p. 391.

⁸ EASA, *Vision*, Peki Training College, 3.3.1974, p. 3.

⁹ At the time of writing this dissertation the local media carried a news item to the effect that 41 second year students had been dismissed from the Kumasi Nurses Training School for possessing fake certificates. Prior to this, several students in Ghanaian universities had been withdrawn for similar offences. It would appear that students are beginning to exploit the deficiencies in the use of 'paper qualification' as the sole criteria for admission into the various institutions of learning. This situation has arisen probably because of what Amu referred to as the 'undue importance we attach to paper qualification'. (See Daily Graphic, 2004)

¹⁰ *DAFL*, p. 430.

¹¹ *DAFL*, p. 305.

¹² Sixteen years before Amu wrote "*Yen ara asase ni*", concern had been expressed regarding destructive elements and lifestyles in the society. In his book entitled, "*Bere Adu*" (The time is at hand), J.J. Adaye identified "*obra pa*" as the first medicine for correcting deviant social behaviours. He writes:

Mise aduru a edi kan a esen atwahwe ne obra pa. Obra pa a meka ho asem na mehwehwe se me nkurofo pe akyi kwan ne obra a esee ti bone, anihaw, apesemenkominya. . . Eyinom mu biara mma oman nkoso pa, na esiw ade pa biara kwan. Minim se saa bone ahorow yi na emma yentumi nko yen anim no.

I am of the opinion that the first medicine, which is to be preferred to a quick working medicine, is good conduct. The good conduct I refer to, and wish my people to desire and long for, is good conduct that destroys evil intentions, laziness...selfishness. These negative lifestyles undermine the progress of a nation and obstruct the path of anything that is good. I know that these are the evil things that prevent us from making progress. (my translation)

See, J.J. Adaye, *Bere Adu* (The time is at hand), Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1969, p. 53. (First published by the Basel Mission Press, Salem, Akropong, 1913).

¹³ See Appendix A.

¹⁴ See Appendix Z/I.

¹⁵ Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers, 2000, p. 181. See also Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African: A Study in Vision and Courage*, Accra: Asempa, 1988, pp. 143-144. Agyemang noted that the desire to see the Ewes reunite was so dear to Amu that he named his third child and second daughter Misonu, meaning 'be united.' This was confirmed in my interview with Prof. Gilbert Ansre (see Appendix F).

¹⁶ See Appendix F.

¹⁷ See Appendices Q & R.

¹⁸ J.J. Adaye, *Bere Adu*, p. 54.

¹⁹ *DAFL*, p. 578-589.

²⁰ *DAFL*, p. 586-587.

²¹ EASA, *Vision and Courage*, Achimota College, 18.7.1937, p. 6.

²² EASA, *The Bible in the Homely Speech*, Achimota College, 22.11.1942. (See Appendix U).

²³ *DAFL*, p. 277.

²⁴ Christaller, p. 36.

²⁵ EASA, *The Bible in the Homely Speech*.

²⁶ See Appendix C.

²⁷ These words, spoken rather than sung, come at the end of the second stanza of the song.

²⁸ This is spoken at the end of the third stanza.

²⁹ The words are spoken at the end of the fourth stanza.

³⁰ *TFAS*, p. 84.

³¹ *Kente*, a beautifully woven cloth of varied colours, is a great source of cultural pride. Besides the national flag, *kente* gives a sense of identity to the Ghanaian.

³² Kwaku Ofori Ansah, *History and Significance of Ghana's Kente Cloth*, Maryland: Sankofa Publications, 1993.

³³ Kwaku Ofori Ansah, *History and Significance of Ghana's Kente Cloth*.

³⁴ See Appendix Z/H-6.

CHAPTER 7

“*Tete, Adesua, ene Adwumayɔ*”

AMU ON THE PAST, EDUCATION AND THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN LABOUR

INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the discussion on the theological content of Amu’s lyrics. ‘*Tete*’ (the past), ‘*Adesua*’ (learning) and ‘*Adwumayɔ*’ (lit. doing work) are the concepts that shall engage our attention. For a person like Amu who was born in the late nineteenth century and was active for most part of the twentieth century, the past must have meant a lot to him particularly as he witnessed Ghana’s transition into nationhood from colonial status as the Gold Coast. ‘*Tete*’ (the past), for Amu, is the key element in determining identity and the basis upon which any meaningful progress can be made. In this chapter we see his ideas on what constitutes the past and how these determine and shape character. We also see how these ideas are rooted in his understanding of God and how in fact God becomes ‘*Afe Wura Nana Nyame*’, the Lord of the year and for that matter of all human history. We shall also examine Amu’s philosophy of learning. It will be shown that for Amu learning is holistic and comprises the head, hand and heart. In spite of the drudgery, fatigue and boredom often associated with work, Amu believed it can be enjoyed.

‘*TETE Wɔ BI KA, TETE Wɔ BI KYERɛ*’: THE PAST AS KEY TO CONVERSION AND HUMAN CONDUCT.

Amu’s ideas on the past and its importance for the present are evidenced in several of his works. His song ‘*Tete wɔ bi ka, tete wɔ bi kyere*’ (The past has a lot to say) is a notable instance (chapter 2 *AKD: 29*):

Tete wɔ bi ka, tete wɔ bi kyere
Yereto yen tete akyene
Agyina deeben so abu ɔman sɛnea efata?

ɔmanfo e.
Adwene ne yebea tete wɔ bi.
Tete adwene ne tete yebea,
Dua kontɔnkye a eno so na nea etee gyina.

Tete wɔ bi ka, tete wɔ bi kyere.

Hwe na sua; hwe na dwene,

The past has much to say and to teach
If we lose sight of the past,
On what basis do we build a good
nation?

Countrymen.
Thoughts and ideas are from the past.
Thoughts and ideas of the past,
It is the crooked stem that bears a
straight branch

The past has much to say and to
teach,
Look and learn; look and think.

Hwe na gyina so ye nea eye boro tete de no so.
Yehwe, yesua, yedwene tete adwene ne yebea,
De reye bi de agya nkyirimma.

Look and use that as basis to do more
We look, we learn, we think of the
ideas of the past
To lay a foundation for succeeding
generations.

For Amu, the only way by which a nation can gain dignity and respect, is to take her past seriously. He associates the past with two words; ‘*adwene*’ and ‘*yebea*’. Christaller’s definitions of the words are revealing, for they enable us to discern what, in Amu’s mind, constitutes the past. The words that define *adwene* include ‘thought’, ‘conception’, ‘idea’, ‘mind’, ‘sentiment’, ‘intention’, ‘opinion’, and ‘character’.¹ *Yebea* is defined as the ‘manner of doing or making’, and includes fashion or lifestyle.²

It is obvious that in using a word like *adwene*, Amu was referring to collective wisdom preserved in the oral tradition, such as proverbs, songs and stories. *Adinkra* symbols, sculpture and works of art constitute another medium. These are the repositories of wisdom; the ideas and philosophy that shape what we become, *yebea*. It is interesting to note that *adwene* and *yebea* are not mutually exclusive. Christaller’s definitions suggest that they are linked by the word ‘character’. Human thought, conceptions, intentions and ideas manifest themselves in character or the manner in which things are done. A nation is judged by the character of its people, which, in turn, is shaped by its philosophy.

Amu was convinced that the past makes it possible to lay a solid foundation for posterity. He reinforced this idea by making use of a proverb, ‘*Dua kontonkye a eno so na nea etee gyina*’ (It is the crooked stem that bears straight branches). The past may seem imperfect, but it directs and shapes the future. Reflecting on this proverb in the context of Amu’s song, J.H. Nketia had this to say:

Tradition may appear to one generation like a crooked tree or as something defective or outmoded. But we must remember when the materials we build on appear crooked or defective from our perspective that in cultural development it is the crooked tree that bears straight or not so crooked branches. Our option is not to abandon our music and culture because the alluring presence of other cultures makes them seem crooked but master them properly, work on them, add to them or modify them in the light of new ideas.³

Amu outlined his method of learning from the past by using three key words: ‘*hwe*’ (observe), ‘*dwene*’ (reflect), and ‘*sua*’ (learn). Effective learning takes place within the context of careful observation and reflective thought. This, for Amu, ensures that

the past is always linked to the present, and these linkages furnish the grounds for nation-building. In this regard, the past is to be reckoned as a rich storehouse, a veritable treasury for posterity. In that sense, all human efforts at advancement must necessarily take their source from *tete* (the past).

It is significant that Amu's ideas on *tete*, however, go beyond mere philosophical concepts, thoughts and ideas. For Amu, *tete* is anchored in God, *Tetekwaforamoa*. The idea is vividly portrayed in the song 'Afe Ato Yen' (The year is here with us) (chapter 2 *AKD: 22*):

Afe ato yen, ato yen
Afe Wura, Nana Nyame amen
Tetekwaforamoa, ogye afe adee

Ogye dee ben?
Ogye aseda o, aseda
Afe Wura, Nana Nyame, amen
Tetekwaforamoa, ogye afe adee

Ogye aseda o, aseda
Yeda wo ase, Odomankama
Bone edi aduasa, aduasa wode afiri yen,
Eso aseda o, aseda yeda wo ase Odomankama

Odo mmoroso, mmoroso a wode adom yen

Eso aseda o aseda yeda wo ase Odomankama,
Yiye beberebe, berebe a wode aye yen

eso aseda o aseda yeda wo ase Odomankama
Afe ato yen
Afe Wura Nana Nyame amen
Tetekwaforamoa
Ope esi yiye na yeresre wo,

Yeresere wo a m'yeresre wo o
ope esi yiye m' ensi yiye Odomankama,

Yonkodo ho adwuma biara a yereye

Yeresere wo a, Ope esi yiye

ma ensi yiye Odomankama
Nyamesom pa ho mmoden biara a yerebo mu

Yeresere wo a, yeresre wo o, Ope esi yiye

ma ensi yiye Odomankama
Biakoye hama a stew biara a yeretoa mu

Yeresere wo a, yeresre wo, o Ope esi yiye

ma ensi yiye Odomankama
Afe Wura Nana Nyame, amen

The year is here with us again
The Lord of the year, Ancestor God
Eternal God, he is worthy to receive
the things of the year
He demands what?
He demands thanks
Lord of the year, Ancestor God,
Eternal God, he is worthy to receive
the things of the year
He demands thanks,
We thank you, Great God
You have forgiven us all kinds of sins
we give you thanks Great God for this
love
For the abundant love you have
showered on us
we give you thanks Great God
You have given us goodness in
abundance
we give you thanks Great God
The year is here with us again
The Lord of the year, Ancestor God
Eternal God
He who wishes us well, we implore
you
We plead that it may be well with us
Great God, one who does not withhold
his grace from us
whatever work we do for our
neighbour,
We implore you, He who wishes us
well
may it be well with us, Great God
Strength dedicated to true worship of
God
We implore you, He who wishes us
well
may it be well with us, Great God
Broken bonds of unity which we try
to join
We implore you, He who wishes us
well
may it be well with us, Great God
The Lord of the year, Ancestor God

Tetekwaforamoa, Ohu adee nyinaa, na onim se ebewie,	The eternal God, He who sees all things, knows how they will all end
Wunim, wunim, Ohu adee nyinaa nea wo pe nye, Odomankama	You know it all He who sees all things, Let your will be done, Great God
Amane reba a se ebewie, wunim, wunim	when trouble comes you know how it will end
Nea wope nye Odomankama Sohwe reba a se ebewie wunim,	Let your will be done Great God When temptation comes you know how it will end
nea wo pe nye Odomankama, Anigye reba a, se ebewie, wunim,	let your will be done Great God When joy comes you know how it will end
nea wope nye, Odomankama Afe Wura ohu adee nyinaa wunim, wunim	let your will be done The Lord of the year who sees all things, knows it all
Nea wope nye Odomankama	Your will be done, Great God

In Akan religion, one of the appellations of *Nana Nyame* (Ancestor God) is *Tetekwaforamoa*. John Beecham, a nineteenth-century Secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in London, who came across the term, learnt that the word meant ‘one who “endures for ever”’.⁴ J. Yeboa-Dankwa’s Twi rendering of *Tetekwaforamoa* is revealing: ‘*Ekyere se onipa biara nnim Onyankopɔn ahyease, na obi nhu n’awiei. Wanyin, anyin, anyin. Owɔ ho daa*’.⁵ This can be translated as, ‘No human being knows God’s origins nor his end. God is so ancient and yet remains for ever’. The triple expression of ‘*anyin*’ (old) in Yeboa-Dankwa’s definition stresses God’s age and God’s continued existence. Kwame Gyekye has noted that ‘as *tetekwaforamua* and *ɔdomankoma*, Onyame transcends time and is thus free from the limitations of time, an eternity without beginning, without an end.’⁶ For Amu, *Tetekwaforamoa* is the one who sees all things, knows all things and knows how they will end. *Tetekwaforamoa* is the ‘*Afe Wura*’ (Lord of the year) to whom praise and thanks are given for the benefits of each past year, and from whom guidance and direction are sought for each succeeding year.

This song, ‘*Afe Wura*’, seems to contend that ‘*adwene*’ and ‘*yebea*’ by themselves alone do not define human existence. Amu must have come to the realisation that the mere knowledge of the past is not enough, for instance, in forestalling unforeseen circumstances such as ‘*amane*’ (trouble) and ‘*sohwe*’ (temptation). For unless such knowledge is rooted in the divine will and providence, it is bound to fail. ‘*Nea wo pe nye, Odomankama*’ (may your will be done, great God) is the way Amu expressed the thought. Knowledge of *tete* (the past) is, therefore, useful only insofar as it is grounded in the *Tetekwaforamoa*.

It is within this context that we must assess all human pursuits and endeavours, and this Amu did in the song, ‘*San Befā*’ (Go back and fetch it) (chapter 2 *AKD: 16*):

Okofō Kwasi Barima a ɔpɛ biribi aye
wabrɛ abrɛ yia,
watwaho o wagyaa no akyiri,
San wakyi a, san befā.
Sika a wani abrɛ ahyɛ no,
enni wanim o
ɛwɔ wakyi o watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befā
Adenya a wani abrɛ ahyɛ no,
enni wanim o watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befā
Nimdee a wani abrɛ ahyɛ no

enni wanim o watwa ho o

San wakyi a, san befā
Din a wani abrɛ ahyɛ no,
enni wanim o watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befā
Asomdwoe a wani abrɛ ahyɛ no,
enni wanim o watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befā
Ahotɔ a wani abrɛ ahyɛ no,
enni wanim o watwa ho o
San wakyi a, san befā.⁷

The warrior Kwasi Barima, the adventurer
He is wearied and tired
He has left behind what he is looking for
Come back, come back here and fetch it
The *money* that you are seriously looking for
is not ahead of you
you have left it behind you
Come back, come back here and fetch it
The *wealth* that you are seriously looking for
is not ahead of you, you have left it behind
Come back, come back here and fetch it
The *knowledge* that you are seriously looking for
for
is not ahead of you, you have left it behind

Come back, come back here and fetch it
The *name* that you are seriously looking for
is not ahead of you, you have left it behind
Come back, come back here and fetch it
The *peace* that you are earnestly looking for
is not ahead of you, you have left it behind
Come back, come back here and fetch it
The *joy* that you are earnestly looking for
is not ahead of you, you have left it behind
Come back, come back here and fetch it

This song tells the story of an adventurer, Kwasi Barima the warrior, who goes in search of ‘*din*’ (name), ‘*adenya*’ (wealth), ‘*nimdee*’ (knowledge), ‘*asomdwoe*’ (peace) and ‘*ahotɔ*’ (joy). For Amu, the treasures that Barima was looking for were ‘behind him’ (‘*ɛwɔ wakyi*’) and not ‘in front’ of him (‘*enni wanim*’). ‘*Akyi*’ (behind) and ‘*anim*’ (in front) have been used figuratively, and should not be understood to mean literal space and time. The idiomatic meaning of the words, however, evokes thoughts that are central to this discussion and which cannot easily be ignored. *Akyi* or *akyiri* are words sometimes associated with backwardness, whereas *anim* connotes progress and advancement. *Akyi* and *anim* therefore come to be translated as ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ respectively. In a sermon delivered at the Achimota School in 1950, and which recalls ‘*San Befā*’, Amu said:

We have come to look upon the bulk of our indigenous life as primitive and unattractive [*akyi*], condemn and abandon it, and in wild pursuit of what is described as “a higher standard of living” (a catch (sic) expression no one has yet been able to explain to me satisfactorily) we gladly welcome all the available modern developments [*anim*] and the numerous facilities they provide, irrespective of their effect on us as boys

and girls and men and women who possess a worthy heritage and whose duty it is to uphold this worthy heritage.... What is the main object of all the modern developments we find so attractive? Is it not to make it easier for us to live our everyday life? There is, of course, nothing wrong in finding ways and means of living our lives in an easier way, but the deplorable fact about it is that in accepting these ways and means of living we have allowed ourselves to become easy boys and girls, and easy men and women, resenting any form of hard life [*asetra*], lacking the capacity for self discipline [*animia*], endurance and unyielding perseverance and possessing very little or no sense of devotion to duty. Besides, the tempo of modern life is fast, and an indiscriminate acceptance of modern forms of living tends to destroy in us the ability to wait patiently and confidently. In other words, the acceptance of easier ways and means of living has caused us to degenerate.⁸

It is within these terms (*akyi* and *anim*) that we must understand and appreciate Amu's song about Kwasi Barima. Amu took sides with the past⁹ and reckoned it as the key to resolving the human dilemma. Such a past is not divorced, however, from God. The only way for Kwasi Barima to get the things he was looking for was to '*san wakyi*' (come back) and '*san befa*' (fetch it). It is interesting that Amu did not use the more popular expression '*Sankɔfa*'. Whereas in '*Sankɔfa*' the caller is distanced from the object of reference, hence literally, "Go and seek", in '*Sanbefa*' the caller is at the point where the object is located. '*Sanbefa*', as used by Amu in this song, connotes the idea that the narrator is in touch with and has experienced the things to which he is drawing Kwasi Barima's attention (see chapter 2).

Jesus' parable of the prodigal son¹⁰ serves as a parallel to Amu's '*San befa*'. In that story, a son, cast in the mould of a Kwasi Barima, leaves behind him the repository of collective wisdom and goes in search of a life independent of the father. The journey back to his father is not so much a change in geographical direction and location as a change in perception and attitude:

Na n'ani baa ne ho so no, ɔkae se: Apaafɔ ahe na m'agya nni a wonya aduan ma eboro so; na me de, ɔkom rekum me yi. Mesɔre makɔ m'agya nkyen, na mase no se: Agya, maye ɔsoro ne w'ananim bɔne. Na mense se wɔfre me wo ba bio, na ye me se w'apaafɔ no mu biako!

But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' (Luke 15:17-19)

The parable makes it clear that the sudden realisation to ‘go to my father’ must have come when ‘he [the son] came to himself’. To come to oneself indicates a prior state of alienation. ‘*Na n’ani baa ne ho so no*’ (literally, ‘and when his eyes fell upon himself’) is the expression that the Akan use for one who has gained consciousness. To lose consciousness is to lose one’s memory. The view expressed by Andrew Walls in this connection is apposite:

We cannot ignore our past; we are made by our past and our past gives us our identity. To lose our past is to lose our memory; and to lose our memory means to be unable to recognise things and people for what they are; it permanently inhibits confident, assured relationships. The past that gives us identity cannot be abandoned, neither can it be suppressed. Nor can it be left as it is, untouched by Christ’s hand, any more than our present can be left without his touch. The past has to be converted, turned to face Christ, opened up to him.¹¹

A state of amnesia or a temporal loss of consciousness, which is often occasioned by one’s inability to ‘recognise things and people for what they are’ may lead to a crisis of identity and a loss of confidence in one’s potentials and the indigenous institutions within which those capabilities are nurtured. It is a fruitless venture to attempt to make a contribution to human advancement devoid of one’s past. The credibility of a person’s contribution is determined to a large extent by how such contribution is linked to the person’s past. As Amu rightly observed, “How can we know whether we are building up something worthier or less worthy without any knowledge of the past?”¹² Amu however warned about the indiscriminate adoption of the past without a critical examination as to whether the “contribution being made ... constitutes a wholesome and worthy sacrifice or a maimed and worthless sacrifice.”¹³ And for Amu, a past that can generate a worthy and credible sacrifice is one that is cleansed by the Spirit of God and his Word (See Appendix H & Fig. 5c). In the words of Andrew Walls, a wholesome past is one that is “converted, turned to face Christ, opened up to him.”

The parable of the prodigal son is not only about the loss of a dear son. It also demonstrates the fact that the past is the *sine qua non* for the preservation of a true sense of identity. If, indeed, the son had a sense of identity and a consciousness of his own past, he would have had nothing to do with pigs, let alone share in their meal. Obviously he had lost the cultural sensitivity that saw pigs as unclean animals that the

law of ritual uncleanness forbids a Jew to touch or to eat. He could not have recovered from this state all by himself without divine intervention.

It is within the context of this parable that we must place the story of Kwasi Barima. Barima's adventure, as in the case of the prodigal son, had been a wasted effort and had ended in futility ('*wabre abre yia*'). And as in the case of the prodigal son, the only way Barima could recover consciousness and his authentic sense of identity, was for him (Kwasi Barima) to '*san wakyi*' (go back) and get reconciled with his past.

But it is Christ's intervention in this process of reconciling with the past that makes the reading of Amu's song significant. In that sense, it is possible to draw a correlation between Amu's understanding of '*san wakyi*' and the biblical idea of conversion,¹⁴ a word which denotes a change of place or condition and which involves the exercise of the mind or intellect. Although Amu did not use *adwensakra* (lit. 'change of mind'), the Akan word that translates *metanoia*, he must have meant the same thing in his expression of '*san wakyi*'. Andrew Walls' understanding of conversion sheds light on Amu's thinking:

Conversion is not about adopting someone else's pattern of life and thought, however ancient and however excellent, that is not conversion but proselytisation... Conversion involves the turning towards Christ of everything that is there already so that Christ comes into places, thoughts, relationships and world views in which He has never lived before.¹⁵

Amu was certainly concerned about the wilful neglect of what is authentically African and the indiscriminate adoption of Western and European patterns of life and thought. On the threshold of Ghana's independence Amu said:

We shall soon be called by a new name; our parliament, and in fact, the whole of our system of government, our social institutions and our educational system are all being fashioned after the British pattern. Our own languages may soon be completely superseded by the English language particularly in the schools.¹⁶

So long as African countries operate systems other than their own, they will continue to be alienated from their past. The only way forward, argued Amu, is to avoid the wholesale adoption and imitation of foreign ideas and lifestyles and to endeavour to be original and African.¹⁷ But it is Christ who cleanses and authenticates what is truly

African, for unless the African past is confronted and redeemed by the gospel, conversion to faith in Christ is shallow and remains ineffectual.

“TIRI NE NSA NE KOMA NYINAA ARA NSUA”: A CASE FOR HOLISTIC LEARNING

Ephraim Amu believed that learning is holistic. The idea is expressed in the song entitled ‘*Tiri ne nsa ne koma*’ (Head, hand and heart) (chapter 2 *AKD*: 37). The song runs thus:

Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua,	The head, the hand and the heart all learn
nsua no pepepepe	they learn equally
nsua no pepepepe	learns completely, thoroughly and perfectly
nsua no pepepepe	learns completely, thoroughly and perfectly
Koma nsua no pepepepe	The heart learns completely, thoroughly and perfectly
Adesua pa ne adesua mu, adesua trodoo	Learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect
Eyi ne adesua pa ne adesua mu ne adesua trodoo	This is good, whole, complete, sincere, true, and perfect learning,
Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara	The head, the hand and the heart,
nsua no pe, nsua no pe	all learn thoroughly and completely
Tiri nsua nimdee	The head learns knowledge
nsa nsua adwumaye	the hand learns work
mma koma nsua amanbu	and enable the heart to learn conduct and comportment
Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua no pe	The head, the hand and the heart all learn thoroughly and completely
Eyi de ne de pa a eyinom de so ebiara	This is the type of learning that everybody needs
nsua no pepepepe, nsua no pepepepe	learn it completely and perfectly
Adesua pa ne adesua mu adesua trodoo	Learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect
Eyi ne adesua pa adesua mu adesua trodoo.	This is learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect

As indicated in the first line of the song, learning involves the head, the hand, and the heart: ‘*Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua*’ (The head, the hand, and the heart all learn). To stress the point, Amu placed emphasis on the pronoun *nyinaa* (all) by adding the particle *ara*, which according to Christaller is a ‘particularising or generalising power’.¹⁸ The point he makes in line two is interesting: “[*Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara*] *nsua no pepepepe*”. This can be interpreted in two ways depending on the meaning we assign to the adjective *pepepepe*. In everyday speech the word means ‘exactly’ or ‘equally’ (see notes on *AKD*: 1).¹⁹ By this phrase Amu should, therefore, be understood to be saying that the head, the hand and the heart all learn

equally with none having any advantage over the other. At another level of meaning, *pepepepe* means “completely, thoroughly, [and] perfectly”. The head, the hand and the heart learn equally, completely, thoroughly and perfectly. It is important to note that each of the three components in the learning process is given equal attention in Amu’s thought (*AKD: 37* lines 1-4):

Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua,	The head, the hand and the heart all learn
nsua no pepepepe	they learn equally
nsua no pepepepe	learns completely, thoroughly and perfectly
nsua no pepepepe	learns completely, thoroughly and perfectly

The head uniquely performs its functions just as much as the other components. This is captured in the opening line: “*Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua*” (The head, the hand and the heart all learn). This, for Amu, is true learning (*AKD: 37* lines 13-17):

Tiri ne nsa ne koma nyinaa ara nsua no pe	The head, the hand and the heart all learn thoroughly and completely
Eyi de ne de pa a eyinom de so ebiara	This is the type of learning that everybody needs
nsua no pepepepe, nsua no pepepepe	learn it completely and perfectly
Adesua pa ne adesua mu adesua trodoo	Learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect
Eyi ne adesua pa adesua mu adesua trodoo.	This is learning that is good, whole, complete, sincere, true and perfect

Three adjectives describe Amu’s notion of *adesua* (learning): *pa*, *mu*, and *trodoo*. *Pa* is variously understood as ‘good’, ‘proper’, ‘true’, ‘real’ or ‘genuine’.²⁰ ‘Whole’, ‘entire’, ‘complete’, ‘true’, ‘sincere’, ‘deep’, ‘perfect’, ‘excellent’, and ‘accomplished’ are the words that define ‘*mu*’.²¹ *Trodoo* means ‘straight’, ‘erect’, ‘smooth’, ‘precise’, ‘just’, ‘true’, ‘perfect’, ‘clear’ and ‘precise’.²² As can be seen, each word is fully loaded. It can be said that for Amu, *adesua* incorporates wholeness in contradistinction to learning which is partial and casual. Learning must also have depth and substance; ‘*adesua mu*’.²³ Amu’s *adesua* has moral value too. It is true, genuine, proper, and sincere.

It can be shown that Amu owed his ideas on learning to Dr. Kwegir Aggrey. It is possible to trace, in particular, his ideas on the “three H’s: the head, the hand and the heart” to Edwin Smith’s *Aggrey of Africa*,²⁴ a book he says he read several times over.²⁵ This is how Amu understood Aggrey:

When Dr. Aggrey stressed the need of the h's: head, hand and heart what he implied was that learning and knowledge alone do not make a man, what is more important is character training which the discipline of hard manual labour affords... What I should like to see in this country is that all its educated men and women besides their learning and knowledge are able gladly and willingly to do whatever kind of manual work that lies to their hand.²⁶

Like Aggrey he was not content with the three R's: reading, arithmetic and writing. Amu believed this was only part of the learning process that involved the head and did not by itself constitute *adesua*. In the following, (*AKD*: 37 lines 10-12) he goes beyond Aggrey and indicates in detail what he perceives to be the functions of the head, the hand and the heart.

Tiri nsua nimdee
nsa nsua adwumaye
mma koma nsua amanbu

The head learns knowledge
the hand learns work
and enable the heart to learn conduct
and comportment.

'*Tiri nsua nimdee*' (Let the head learn knowledge). *Nimdee* is made up of two words, the verb '*nim*' (to know) and the noun '*ades*' (thing), and means 'knowledge, understanding, intelligence, wisdom'.²⁷ However, the word as used in this context relates to the use of the head and means 'to have book-knowledge, to be instructed, educated, learned'.²⁸ *Nimdee* is important, but this alone does not constitute *adesua* (learning). The hand can be used in *adesua* (learning): '*nsa nsua adwumaye*' (let the hand learn work). *Adwumaye* as understood by Amu is work or manual labour, especially agricultural work.²⁹ For Amu, it is *nimdee* and *adwumaye* that enable the heart to learn *amanbu*, a word defined by Christaller as 'deportment, comportment, demeanour, behaviour, conduct, [or] manner of living together in a community'.³⁰ *Amanbu* is further understood as observing or paying attention to social or civil duties.³¹ It is revealing, therefore, that Amu linked book-knowledge, work and behaviour.³² In his mind, *nimdee* and *adwumaye* are necessary ingredients in ensuring behaviour patterns that are conducive for nation building.

Thus, it is *nimdee* (the use of the head), *adwumaye* (the use of the hand), and *amanbu* (the use of the heart) that constitute '*adesua pa, adesua mu, adesua trodoo*' ('good', 'whole', 'complete', 'sincere', 'true' and 'perfect learning').

'ENNE YE ANIGYE DA': ON THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE JOY OF HUMAN LABOUR

Ma w'ani so hwe wo ho hyia,

wa ani begye mmoroso.
Nifa ne benkum baabiara,
wo ho bedwiri wo po,
den na a wote ho ye komkom,
wo ama yen anigye atom'
sore gye wa ani bi.

Adwuma bo adwuma so,
Ma nipa bre ara
Anigye bo anigye so,
de nkwa fofro aba,
ma nipa were fi ne bre,

de aniwa fofro
rehwe nea eda na anim no.

Adwuma ma anigye so,
ma eye de bebre,
Anigye ma adwuma ho ye akonno yiye,

wokyi mu biako a kyi n'abien,
yen de yeye n'abien no bom
saa na yen nyinaa se nen.

Refrain

Enne ye anigye da,
enne ye ahrusi da,
panyin ana abofra,
okyerefo ana suani,
yen nyinaa di ahurusi.
Otwe ana adowa,
yen nyina di ahurusi.
Adwuma bo adwuma so,
ma nipa bre ara.

Lift up your eyes and take a look
around you,
Your joy shall know no bounds
whether to your right or to your left
you will be shocked
why are you sitted there quiet,
you have made our joy to be low
Rise and rejoice too.

A heap/pile of work,
Makes a person tired and exhausted
A heap/pile of joy,
brings freshness and new life,
and enables a person to forget his
toils,
so he may get fresh pair of eyes
to look closely at what lies ahead of
him.

Work lifts joy up,
and makes it pleasant
Joy makes work to be desirable
indeed,
If you hate one, then hate both,
as for us we like both together
That is what all of us say

Today is a day of joy,
today is a day to rejoice exceedingly,
the elderly or the child,
the teacher or the learner,
All of us rejoice exceedingly.
The duyker and the antelope
All of us rejoice exceedingly.
A heap/pile of work,
Makes a person tired and exhausted.

In the foregoing song entitled '*Enne ye anigye da*' (This is a joyful day) (chapter 2 *AKD: 33*), Ephraim Amu expresses his thoughts on human labour. The first stanza (lines 1-7) is an exhortation to a worker who looks dejected and bereft of joy:

Ma wa ani so hwe wo ho hyia,

wa ani begye mmoroso.
Nifa ne benkum babiara,
wo ho bedwiri wo po,
Den na a wote ho ye komkom,
wa ma yen anigye atom'
Sore gye wa ani bi.

Lift up your eyes and take a look
around you,
your joy shall know no bounds
whether to your right or to your left
you will be amazed and confounded.
Why do you sit there quiet,
you have made our joy to be low
Rise and rejoice too.

Amu draws attention to something in the immediate environment of this dejected person: ‘*Ma wa ani so hwe wo ho hyia*’ (Lift up your eyes and take a look around you), and ‘*wa ani begye mmoroso*’ (your joy shall know no bounds). The clue to what he might be referring to is evident in the last line of the stanza: ‘*sore gye wa ani bi*’. Christaller has defined the phrase ‘*n’ani gye*’ to literally mean ‘his eyes catches’ or ‘his eye glitters, [or] sparkles’. As an idiom, the phrase means ‘to rejoice’, ‘to be joyful’, ‘cheerful’, ‘glad’ or ‘delightful’.³³ When Amu exhorts this character in his song to ‘*sore gye wa ani bi*’ he implies that around him/her others are rejoicing so he/she should stand up and rejoice too. Amu is concerned that the morose posture of his addressee might affect the joy of those around him/her. In the refrain (*AKD: 33* lines 21-28) he calls upon his hearers to be joyful and be glad:

Enne ye anigye da,
enne ye ahurusi da,
ɔpanyin ana abɔfra,
yen nyina di ahurusi.
ɔkyerefo ana asuani,
yen nyina di ahurusi
ɔtwe ana adowa,
yen nyina di ahurusi.

Today is a day of joy,
today is a day to rejoice exceedingly,
the elderly or the child,
all of us rejoice exceedingly.
the teacher or the learner,
all of us rejoice exceedingly
the duyker and the antelope,
all of us rejoice exceedingly.

Amu’s emphasis on ‘*enne*’ (today) indicates the tone of urgency that marks his call on his audience to rejoice exceedingly. The invitation is addressed to all. It goes to ‘*ɔpanyin ana abɔfra*’ (the elderly or the child), ‘*ɔkyerefo ana asuani*’ (the teacher or the learner) and to ‘*ɔtwe ana adowa*’ (lit. the duyker and the antelope), an expression Amu understood to be equivalent to the English expression ‘Every Tom, Dick, and Harry’.³⁴ Amu expects everyone to be delightful and rejoice exceedingly, because it is joy that brings relief to the drudgery, fatigue and boredom often associated with work (*AKD: 33* stanza 2 lines 8-14):

Adwuma bɔ adwuma so,
ma nnipa bre ara.
Anigye bɔ anigye so,
de nkwafofro aba,
ma nipa were fi ne bre,

de aniwa fofro
rehwe nea eda na anim no.

A heap pile of work,
Makes a person tired and exhausted.
A heap pile of joy,
brings freshness and new life,
and enables a person to forget his
toils,
so he may get a fresh pair of eyes
to look closely at what lies ahead of
him.

Amu is of the view that a ‘pile of work’ brings tiredness and exhaustion, but this is effectively negated by ‘a pile of joy’ that brings ‘*nkwafofro*’ (new life). It is this

CONCLUSION

We have been examining Amu's ideas on history, education and work. For Amu, *tete* (the past) is simply not about 'remote antiquity' or ancient ideas.⁴¹ Nor is *tete* an abstraction of chronological time and space set apart from the concrete realities of current human experience. Although human thoughts, conceptions and opinions, which are the main determinants of *tete* can be located within specific periods in time, their import and relevance transcend the time frame within which they occur. In that sense our understanding of history as *abakɔsem*, [literally, 'nsem a aba kɔ'] (events that have come and gone) is not helpful.⁴² It is significant that in discussing the past, Amu never used the term '*abakɔsem*', since that would have negated his view on the continued relevance of history; '*Tete wɔ bi ka, tete wɔ bi kyere*' (The past has much to say and to teach). For Amu, the only reason history is an important aspect of human existence is because it is anchored in the divine being, *Tetekwaforamoa* (the eternal one), who orders, shapes and directs all human endeavours, goals and aspirations. By making use of '*Tetekwaforamoa*', a word which etymologically encapsulates and expresses the idea of the past, Amu sheds light on our understanding of God and his involvement in human history. It is important therefore to learn from *tete* (the past). The kind of learning Amu advocates, however, is not cerebral, limited to the study of books only. If indeed, human experience is diverse and massive then we must be open to other sources of knowledge, and not be confined to information derived from books; written sources are only a fragment of human history. Learning must therefore involve the head, the hand as well as the heart. Learning for Amu, was holistic and integral.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ *DAFL*, p. 104.

² *DAFL*, p. 586.

³ J.H. Nketia, 'Music, Culture and National Development', *The Ephraim Amu Memorial Lectures*, Series One, National Theatre, Accra, 1998, p. 28.

⁴ John Beecham, *Ashantee and the Gold Coast, Being a Sketch of the History, Social State and Superstition of the Inhabitants of These Countries With a Notice of the State and Prospects of Christianity Among Them* (with introduction and notes by G.E. Metcalfe), London: Dawson's of Pall Mall, 1968, p. 172.

⁵ J. Yeboa-Dankwa, *Onyankopɔn Mmran ne Akyeampoma*, Accra: Eurrekka Publishers, 1996, p. 5.

⁶ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (Revised Edition), Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987, p. 70.

⁷ *TFAS*, pp. 90-91.

⁸ EASA, "The discipline of a hard life", *Achimota School*, 25.6.1950.

⁹ In another sermon, Amu states his position on tradition in reference to Achimota School: "Another aspect of Achimota tradition is respect for all that is true and of lasting value in the old African culture, beliefs and ways of life. It was the firm conviction of Rev. Fraser, the first principal of Achimota that: when respect for tradition is allowed to disappear, the bond between the generations is broken, and in his own words: "The young are homeless in mind and spirit and the old die. And it is death to the tribe. Continuity, aim, force are lost to a people when the old and young are thus separated". See *Changing from glory into glory*, College of Technology, Kumasi, 17.2.1952.

¹⁰ See Luke 15: 11-32.

¹¹ A. F. Walls, 'Christian Scholarship in Africa in the Twenty-first Century', in *JACT*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2001, (44-52), p. 47.

¹² EASA, *The History of the Kumasi College of Technology*, Kumasi, 13.11.1955, p. 2.

¹³ EASA: *Peace on Earth*, E.P. Church, Peki Avetile, 18.12.1985, p. 3-4. (See Appendix Z/C).

¹⁴ The Greek word ἐλθων (Lk. 15:17) is the aorist informal of ἐρχομαι and means 'to make an appearance', 'to go to', or 'to return'.

¹⁵ A. F. Walls, *The Significance of Christianity in Africa*, Edinburgh: Church of Scotland/St Colm's Education Centre and College, 1989, p. 20.

¹⁶ EASA, *Christ's Meaning of a Golden Age*, Prempeh College, Kumasi, 22.4.1956. See Appendix Y.

¹⁷ See Appendix Z.

¹⁸ *DAFL*, p. 413.

¹⁹ *DAFL*, p. 382.

²⁰ *DAFL*, p. 367.

²¹ *DAFL*, p. 321.

²² *DAFL*, p. 529.

²³ Amu must have been aware of Alexander Pope's saying that "a little learning is dangerous, drink deep or taste not..."

²⁴ Edwin Smith, *Aggrey of Africa: A study in black and white*, London: Student Christian Movement, 1929. This is Aggrey's philosophy of education: "By education I do not mean simply learning. I mean the training in mind, in morals and in hand that helps to make one socially efficient. Not simply the three R's, but the three H's: the head, the hand and the heart".

²⁵ Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, p. 7. Fred Agyemang gives us insight into how Aggrey influenced Amu, particularly the latter's reason for allowing his biography to be written:

He [Amu] was inclined to co-operate [after initially resisting] because of an excellent book of biography on Dr. J.E.K. Aggrey he had in his library written by the Rev. Edwin W. Smith to which he very often resorted. He had decided that as he found so much inspiration and guidance from Dr. Aggrey's biography, it is possible that perhaps someone too, in this and later generations may find some use and help from the story of his life.

²⁶ EASA, "The discipline of a hard life", *Achimota School*, 25.6.1950, p. 6.

²⁷ *DAFL*, p. 342.

²⁸ *DAFL*, p. 340.

²⁹ *DAFL*, p. 110.

³⁰ *DAFL*, p. 304.

³¹ *DAFL*, p. 50.

³² The same idea must have inspired the inscription on the crest of Prempeh College, Kumasi: "*Suban ne nimdee*" (Character and knowledge).

³³ *DAFL*, p. 158.

³⁴ Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African: A study in vision and courage*, Accra: Asempra Publishers, 1988, p. 48. Fred Agyemang, Amu's biographer tells the story of how instead of using an English phrase in composing his song, Amu deliberately sought an Akan equivalent:

One night as Amu was trying to weave and match the words and music of a new song in Twi which he was composing on his mental music loom, he rushed out from his room to his old Abetifi college mate, Kwame Martinson, and a fellow tutor on the college staff, living in another house on the college campus and knocked on his door: "Kwame, Kwame, are you in? What do you think will be the Twi equivalent of the English phrase: 'Every Tom, Dick and Harry'?" After a moment's thought Kwame supplied the answer "Otwe ana Adowa" and Kwaku Amu rushed back to his quarters to fill in the missing link in his new composition.

CONCLUSION
THE LEGACY AND RELEVANCE OF EPHRAIM AMU AS A
THEOLOGIAN.

INTRODUCTION

An assessment of Amu's contribution as a theologian must begin first with the formative years of his training as a catechist and lay Christian worker. In spite of his assertion that the theological education he received was without reference to any of the indigenous social institutions of his native Ghana,¹ it can be shown, in fact, that the roots of Amu's ideas that stirred both church and state in the early 1930s can be traced to his training at the Basel Mission Seminary in Abetifi. Although the medium of instruction at the time was Twi, a great deal of what was taught may have been translated from European sources. It is important to acknowledge, however, that the attempt to find local equivalents for theological terms and the preparation of Bible commentaries, sermons and notes in the vernacular provided a unique orientation for seminarians at the time. It was a training aimed at equipping students with skills to enable them conceptualise existential realities in local and indigenous terms and, by extension, to presenting Christianity as a truly vernacular religion. It is orientation of this sort that furnished the grounds for what Amu was to do later. In this concluding section I highlight the key features of the preceding chapters with a view to assessing his contribution as a theologian notably, in three key areas, namely, language and interpretation, cultural adaptation and liturgical renewal, and socio-political engagement.

LANGUAGE AND INTERPRETATION

Each of the songs composed by Amu is an interpretation of his perception of reality. In the preceding chapters I examined the theological import of a selection of these songs. What I attempt to do here is to give a summary of his ideas and examine the method and style of approach in his use of language in exegesis and the sources that informed his interpretation.

The key that unlocks Amu's thought and his entire apprehension of transcendence, in my view, is his interpretation of Gen. 1:31 as shown in '*Ɔdomankama Ɔbɔadeɛ*' (*AKD: I*). The sources of this composition are the doctrine

of creation, the fall, human depravity and the redemption and restoration of creation. A study of the lyrics reveals Amu's profound knowledge of the Ghanaian historical, social, cultural and religious context he was addressing. But above all, it is the vernacular medium in which he chose to articulate and communicate these ideas that is most striking. Four ingredients can be discerned as basic to Amu's hermeneutics; the Bible, knowledge of Christian experience in other contexts, the local context and language.

Amu's interpretation of Gen.1: 31 as diagrammatically shown in figures 5a, 5b and 5c provides a framework within which the rest of his interpretations can be placed. Figure 5a is his concept of creation. This can be summarised under four broad categories; the pristine state, the depraved state, the cleansing state and finally the redeemed state. Figure 5b shows the constituents of creation, and the method by which these can be cleansed and restored is illustrated in figure 5c. His understanding of creation is profoundly holistic covering three main areas. There is first *nipa* (human personality) and its constituents; '*nipadua*' (body), '*su*' (nature), '*adwene*' (mind), and '*koma*' (heart). There is also what one may term the 'cultural tangibles' comprising elements such as '*adurade*' (covering), '*anonne*' (drink), '*kasa*' (speech/language), and '*dwonto*' (song). The religious, social, cultural and political institutions constitute yet another component. These include, '*amanyɔ*' (governance), '*amanne*' (culture), and '*nyamesom*' (religion). Amu believed that these were all created '*kronkronkron*', '*fitafitafita*', and '*pepeepe*' (good) from the beginning (Gen.1: 31). The contamination by '*bɔne*' (sin and evil), however, necessitates the purification of these elements of creation. As shown in figure 12, divine intervention by the word of God and the Spirit is needed in this process of cleansing, and so is human participation. These overarching ideas provided the rationale and the motivation for all that Amu did subsequently.

For Amu, language, cleansed and redeemed, could be used as a vehicle in apprehending and conveying the will and mind of God. In a postscript to his reprinted book, *The Primal Vision: Christian Presence amid African Religion*, J.V. Taylor had this to say:

For our own mother tongue, whatever it is, uniquely enshrines and symbolizes our inherited way of interpreting existence and seeing ourselves within it, and there is no other language in which we can fully take in and make our own the profoundly personal meanings and values

and challenges of the gospel. A lingua franca will not do since, by definition, it is bound to be the language of some dominant culture, the language of conformity, of 'elsewhere'.²

By using '*kronkronkron*', '*fitafitafita*', and '*pepepepe*', Amu demonstrated that it is possible for Akan Christians to own 'the profoundly personal meanings and values' of what God intended creation to be; *tov* (Hebrew), *agathon* (Greek), *good* (English), *eye* (Twi) (Gen.1:31).

Amu's apprehension of the crucifixion of Jesus in terms of Akan traditional thought is yet another example of how language can serve as the medium for discerning the will and purposes of God (chapter 4). If, indeed, the charge against Jesus was religious blasphemy, then the use of '*ɔbrafo*' (the state executioner) (Matt. 27:27-31), instead of '*asraafo*', (soldiers) confirms Amu's intuition and insight. In a similar vein '*oseye*' is better understood as a shout of triumph than '*hosanna*' (chapter 2). Kwame Bediako's point is relevant: '...perhaps the exegesis of biblical words and texts is not to be taken as completed when one has established meanings in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek; instead, the process needs to continue into all possible languages in which biblical faith is received, mediated, and expressed.'³

The Akan language, used in this way, truly mirrors the Akan worldview and encapsulates elements within that cosmology capable of being used not only in interpreting existence but also as a response to the challenges of the Christian faith. The use of the mother tongue in apprehending and articulating the verities of the gospel message was something that Amu discovered very early in his career as catechist and musician. Although he was aware of the limitations in the use of the indigenous languages - their varied nature and complexities, and the ethnic feelings they engender- yet he stood against the odds. It is significant that most of his treasured works, particularly songs and sermons, are in Twi or Ewe. And wherever he has used the English language, it is an insight into the vernacular that helps to better understand Amu's thought. Amu's relevance as a proponent and advocate of the mother tongue calls into question the continued use of European languages as means of doing theology in Africa.⁴ Indeed, as noted by J.S. Pobee,

Ideally, African theologies should be in the vernacular. Language is more than syntax and morphology; it is a vehicle for assuming the weight of a culture. Therefore, this attempt to construct an African theology in the English language is the second best, even if it is convenient [and] if it should secure as wide a circulation as possible.⁵

By 'convenient' I understand Pobee to mean that 'not only does the use of these European languages immediately establish a place for African countries in global interrelationships, but also it puts at the disposal of Africa a considerable store of literature and knowledge'.⁶ To all intents and purposes, these reasons constitute legitimate grounds for African theologians to continue to publish in foreign languages.

Ngugi wa Thiongo takes the discussion beyond theology and draws attention to the global implications for the continued dominance of European languages in Africa in the production and dissemination of knowledge. African intellectuals who write in European languages, he argues, are to a large extent disconnected from the continent and from the people for whom they purport to write.⁷ Unless the knowledge generated in African institutions meet the aspirations and needs of people, it will have very little relevance for Africa.⁸

If, as pointed out by Pobee, "language is more than syntax and morphology" and that it conveys the cultural expression of a people, then African theologians who use foreign languages may be responding to and dealing with a context that Africa hardly shares a part. I have drawn attention in chapter 1 to the problem as to whether our ancestors are worshipped or venerated, and yet words such as 'worship' and 'veneration' convey notions that are alien to our experience of transcendence and give the impression that Christianity is a western religion. By using Amu's works I have demonstrated that it is possible for Africans to apprehend transcendence differently using categories like language. My thesis sought to show that an experience of such nature makes African Christianity unique, self-authenticating and capable of standing on its own. Further, the African experience of the Christian faith, with its own credentials, has the potential of contributing to world Christianity and thereby giving a lie to the assumption that Christianity is a Western religion.

CULTURAL ADAPTATION, LITURGICAL RENEWAL AND HYMNODY

In spite of his 'cultural patriotism' and his very positive estimation of the past, Amu's hermeneutics is tempered by an awareness that in adapting the cultural and religious past to the Christian faith of the present, there is need to exercise sound and critical judgement. Amu believed, however, that such critical judgement should itself be guided by God's Spirit and God's Word as we have shown in chapter 1. For Amu,

God's Spirit and God's Word serve to filter and purify the elements of creation polluted by sin and evil. This, in my view, is his method of adaptation and the criteria by which any response to the Christian faith may be assessed. It was on this basis that he rejected Christmas as a 'maimed or worthless sacrifice' and also drew the church's attention to the dangers inherent in adapting drumming and dancing as cultural aspects of Christian worship 'without critically examining them and pruning them'. At the time Amu gave this caution, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) to which he belonged, was undergoing what A.A. Agordoh has described as a 'cultural re-awakening'. This renaissance, according to Agordoh, started in the 1970s when C.K. Dovlo (a student of Amu) was moderator of the EPC. This "awakening" however, gained ascendancy in the 1980s during N.K Dzobo's term as moderator. As part of the reforms, Dzobo set up a Church Music Education Board and a department of African Church Music at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Seminary at Peki. The Board comprised two committees, namely, 'The Liturgical Committee' and 'The Committee for Research into our Traditional Music and Literature'. Interestingly, a proposed order of Sunday morning service submitted to the EPC at its Synod in 1982 by the Liturgical Committee contained ideas that Amu had suggested in a sermon relating to the use of *atumpan* (the talking drums) in Christian worship.⁹ The Committee also recommended that during offering there should be singing, drumming and dancing. As already noted in chapter 1, Amu was totally opposed to dancing in church. It is difficult to ascertain, therefore, the extent to which he influenced this 'cultural re-awakening', especially when the reforms included ideas he disliked.

The situation is different when it comes to assessing Amu's contribution to hymnody in the EPC and the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG). In August 1988 the EPC appointed a committee to revise the existing hymnbook. The members included N.Z Nayo, a student of Amu who was the chairman; Amu was made patron-consultant.¹⁰ The project was completed in the year 2000 and the new hymnbook was launched on 3 April, 2004.¹¹ Several of the hymns in the repertoire of the revised hymnbook were composed by indigenous musicians. They show the influence of Amu both directly and indirectly.¹²

The PCG started work on the compilation of a new hymnbook thirty years earlier (the first committee selected in 1951 included Amu) than the EPC, and yet only 15 out of the 850 hymns were local compositions.¹³ Eleven of the local compositions belong to indigenous composers like Amu¹⁴ and Otto Boateng, (another

student of Amu) while 4 were from the 'North' of Ghana.¹⁵ With the exception of a few songs composed in the nineteenth century by indigenous authors such as Carl Reindorf, Theophilus Opoku and T.B. Kwatei, the remaining 835 songs are mainly translations from Basel, Scottish and Wesleyan hymnals. It is unlikely that the compilation of the new hymnbook took into account the history of the development of hymnody in the PCG since the early 1930s. This is where Amu's contribution must be acknowledged and appreciated. As a member of the Native Music Committee set up in 1932, Amu was involved in research into African songs and adapting them for use in church and school.¹⁶ And even when the work of the committee was ended, he continued with his research and eventually established himself as the doyen of contemporary African art music. It was in recognition of this effort that the 1949 Synod of the PCG asked him to compile an alternative hymnbook suitable for worship in the church.¹⁷ Whereas Amu's contribution to hymnody in the EPC has been documented and acknowledged,¹⁸ his heritage in the PCG is yet to be appreciated.

Amu's contribution to hymnody must be assessed not so much in terms of his musical style as in the depth and subtlety of his theological thought. Hymnody is essentially a response to faith in Christ and the Good News of Christ. What makes Amu's response unique is the fact that his perspectives on the doctrines of the Christian faith (see Part II) were conceptualised in languages that were once thought incapable of articulating the verities of the gospel. Amu's relevance here too brings into question the continued dominance of western hymnody in our churches even if they are translations. While J.H. Nketia agrees that 'western hymns as texts have made very valuable additions to Christian literature in our languages',¹⁹ he is quick to point out the weakness. He writes:

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of these translations is that they have to fit into a metrical form, which is invariably foreign to the African language. I do not yet know of African traditional poetry that is based on a number of syllables per line as one finds in the western hymn. Moreover, attempts to find the required number of syllables always pose problems for the translator: this may determine the choice of words and it often leads to padding. The lines do not always read well, and one has to accept the peculiarity of the language of the hymns of the church as a special ritual language of that church... the other problem which the western hymn creates is not only that of language. The musical idiom is the most crucial problem as far as meaning is concerned. A hymn which reads well does not always 'sing' well. The verbal appeal which it has when read may be lost when it is set to the western tune which ignores two principal features of the African song: first, the close imitation of the

natural rhythm of speech in song, and second, the close imitation of the intonation of the words in the melodic line of the song.²⁰

Nketia's observations point to the fact that translation of western hymns has led to a 'problem of meaning' and the way forward is for African musicians who are Christians to be creative and use African musical idioms for African hymns. There is need, therefore, to take seriously the faith response of ordinary Christians witnessed in the numerous choruses sung regularly in churches but which are not yet part of any official hymnbook.²¹ This is a task for theological institutions in Africa, and it is necessary for this to be undertaken with all the urgency it deserves in order to show that Africa has a contribution to make to world Christianity.

SOCIO-POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Central to Amu's conception of society was '*amanyɔ*' (lit. good governance). '*Amanyɔ*', for Amu, is less about the provision of physical and technical infrastructure as the building of the intangible network of human relations that ensures proper social conduct and behaviour. Its opposite, '*adwaman*' (lit. destroying the nations)(immorality) is used to describe acts which are deemed to destroy the moral fabric of society. Both words are concrete in their expression. Amu believed that '*amanyɔ*', like any good thing (*adepa bi*), is a gift of *Ɔdomankama Ɔboades* (God) and was therefore hallowed from creation (fig. 5b). His understanding of the various institutions that constitute the nation, such as those of education and politics may have been informed by this notion. He must have understood education more in terms of 'the making or building of the individual', which, in fact, is what the Twi translation, *emmayen*, implies. This is why Amu placed premium on the training of not only the head and the hand, but the heart as well. This may also explain why he placed less emphasis on the acquisition of paper qualification as the sole criterion for determining a person's level of education as we have discussed in chapter 7. He was of the view that values that enhance national well-being such as honesty, sincerity and good character must also be taken into consideration when assessing how well educated a person is. Amu's concern for politics and governance similarly derive from his notion of *amanyɔ*. It is from this perspective that his call to subject every political action to God's guidance and direction, particularly during the pre-

independence era and the period immediately after independence, must be appreciated.

For Amu, *oman* (the nation) and its institutions are not mere physical structures. Since they emanate from God and are imbued with moral character, the problems they generate may not be approached irreverently, that is, without a 'regular reading of the Bible with quiet meditation, [and] constant earnest prayer for wisdom'.²² Unless God is located within the epicentre of human actions that determine social and political institutions, the effect of those actions will be destructive rather than constructive. Amu held this idea deeply and hence his incessant public appeals, particularly to those who occupy positions of trust and authority, to turn to God. He never ceased, therefore, to address as a prophet, the socio-political issues of his time (*AKD: 23*).²³ He was, indeed a prophet of his time as shown in his songs and in the numerous sermons he preached. Amu's work affords us the opportunity to assess the prophetic role of the church in nation building.

AMU AS THEOLOGIAN

In what sense is Amu a theologian and by what criteria do we assess his contribution as such? Questions of this nature are not unprecedented, and attempts to answer them are varied. In addressing the question there is need, therefore, to explore the field and examine literature that deals with the subject.

In his analysis of hymns and songs in the South African context, Steve de Gruchy sought to make a distinction between singing as praxis and theology:

There is a use of the word 'theology' in vogue in progressive circles that equates it with what I have called 'church activity' or 'praxis'. In this regard people talk about doing theology. Yet it seems to me to serve no purpose to equate praxis with theology, because we then lose the critical function of theology: the disciplined evaluation of where the Church is, and where it could be.²⁴

In this observation, de Gruchy defined theology as a critical reflection on praxis.²⁵ He noted that whereas the singing of hymns cannot be categorised as theology, their composition is a product of social analysis of the context in which one is engaged and the theological reflection brought to bear on such analysis. And although he admits there is a certain level of reflection when people sing, he is of the view that one needs

to draw a distinction between that kind of reflection and a sustained and 'disciplined evaluation of where the Church is', which is the function of theology.

Kathryn Tanner sees the distinction between 'theory' and 'practice', 'academy' and 'church', 'intellectual' and 'non-intellectual', 'oral theology' and 'academic theology'²⁶ as rigid and less helpful in understanding the rather complex and wide spectrum of Christian experience. She argues that although academic theology places premium on clarity, specificity and consistency of expression, theological investigation is better understood if it is placed in a continuum with theological activity and seen as 'something that arises in an "organic" way out of Christian practice'.²⁷ As noted by Kwame Bediako, 'the two are complementary aspects of one reality'.²⁸ In that sense 'academic theology' and 'Christian praxis' are not hermetically sealed compartments, since a certain level of practice can be discerned in intellectual activity and practice too has its theoretical dimension.²⁹

Robert Schreiter, for his part, recognises that there has been a shift in perspective in theology in regions where Christianity was relatively new, particularly in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The term he uses to describe this shift is 'local theology'. The focus of this shift finds expression in terms like 'localisation', 'contextualisation', 'indigenisation', 'inculturation', and 'adaptation' that reflect the circumstances that shape a people's response to the Christian faith.³⁰ Schreiter defines theology in this context as 'emancipatory praxis'; one that is owned and shared by the community of faith. He identifies within this community those he refers to as 'local theologians', that is, prophets and poets, whose role it is to 'capture the rhythm and contours of the community's experience'. He, however, makes a distinction between the 'professional theologian' who gives voice to the theology of the community and the 'local theologian'.³¹

Where do we place Amu in all this? Was he merely a poet-prophet of his time, or did his work go beyond church activity? An analysis of Amu's songs as given in Chapter 2 shows the extent to which he was engaged in the social and cultural contexts he was addressing and testifies to the depth of theological reflection he brought to bear on the issues (chapters 3-7). We noted the dexterity and the sophistication with which he articulated his views. It is hard to read his poems and sermons and fail to see the flow of thought and the clarity and consistency of expression. Long before the university departments of divinity and religions in Africa started discussing theological issues confronting the continent, Amu's views on the

question had already been published in serious academic circles. In 1940, the *International Review of Missions* carried an article Amu wrote entitled, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa' in which he argued that for Christianity to survive and achieve its purposes in Africa it must be 'intelligible and full of life'.³² Amu, was already drawing attention to the link between the intellectual dimension of the Christian faith and its praxis. For him, faith and reflection were not mutually exclusive. Both belong together as integral to the Christian faith. In this regard Amu can be considered as one of the forerunners in this debate since he anticipated the issue that was to engage the attention of 'academic theologians'. Amu contended that for Christianity to give life and meaning to the African there was need to reconsider the channels through which it was presented. Following from this, he advocated a 'method of adaptation' that will make 'a careful study of our social and religious institutions'.³³ It is instructive to note the distinction he makes in this article between 'Christianity' and the 'channels' through which it came to Africa. Those 'channels', in his view, were alien and were therefore not likely to support the growth of the Church in Africa. He was clear on the issue:

As things are now, we are like a seedling taken out of its bed, its root cut off and then planted in another bed; it stood all right in the cool weather of the morning but withered with the hot sun. We have no root to support us, how can we stand, how can we grow?³⁴

Certainly, Amu must have known that Christianity came into Africa clothed in Western garb with all its trappings, thought-forms and presuppositions. His concern to peel off these accretions and adapt Christianity to a more congenial environment in Africa recalls a theory (the kernel-and-husk) that postulates the idea that the gospel³⁵ does not translate into a cultural vacuum.³⁶ If the gospel is represented by a seed, to what extent can we strip it of its husk, the cultural non-essentials, to get to its core, the divine essentials? The question echoes the one Amu raised in this article, which is fundamentally about the translation of the gospel. Did the gospel translate into a cultural vacuum in its European setting? If this was not the case, then how could anyone imagine that it was translated into a cultural vacuum in Africa? These questions were later to engage the attention of African theologians. Kwesi Dickson's observation is a case in point:

The basic assumption underlying the concept of indigenisation is that there is a distinction between the 'core of the Gospel' and Christianity, the latter subsuming the former but including cultural elements which came with the Gospel through the missionaries. In other words, around the Gospel had been woven cultural vestments which the missionaries considered to be a piece with the Gospel message. The argument, then is that the Western cultural elements should give way to elements of African culture, thereby placing the gospel message in a relevant setting.³⁷

Before leading African theologians like John Mbiti started writing about the compatibility between African traditional religions and the Christian faith,³⁸ Amu had already noticed this affinity:

There are deep truths underlying our indigenous religions, truths which are dim representations of the great Christian truths. Let these truths be made use of in teaching the greater truths to the Africans.³⁹

It is one thing discovering these truths and it is a different thing altogether trying to adapt them to the Christian faith. Again in this article Amu gives an example of how we can adapt rites of passage, such as child naming ceremonies and puberty rites to Christian practice.⁴⁰ This is the only way, he argues, we can make infant baptism and confirmation meaningful to the African. We find several other examples of adaptations in his sermons, such as the removal of footwear and the lowering of cloth (men only) by worshippers as a sign of reverence as they approach the communion table.⁴¹ We have already drawn attention to his suggestion (chapter 1) that symbols of power and authority like the state sword should be used when church office holders are being consecrated and inducted into office. He was similarly predisposed towards libation, but this was an issue on which he was never clear. It is not clear whether it is the prayer text, the act of pouring the drink itself or the entire ceremony that he advocated. As already noted, there were inconsistencies, contradictions and ambiguities in his 'method of adaptation'.

Amu did not always go the full length on some of the issues that confronted him as he sought to adapt traditional thought forms and practices to the Christian faith. He taught us to see the 'deep truths underlying our indigenous religions' and use them as tools in teaching the 'greater truths' of the Christian faith, and yet he seemed to have had reservations about incorporating some traditional religious rites into church practice even when he knew the 'truth' about them. A classic example is to be seen in a sermon he preached in 1943 in which he used '*nsore*', (worship in the

traditional setting) to illustrate the truth about Christian worship (chapter 1). It comes therefore as a surprise when several years later in an interview, Amu dismissed as ridiculous the very ceremony that had given him leverage in his understanding of Christian worship. In response to a question on what he thought was objectionable about this traditional religious ceremony, he said:

.. I don't believe that my father needs my food and so it would be funny for me to prepare food and place it somewhere in the bush for my father to go and eat. It's absurd, isn't it?⁴²

If indeed our pre-Christian religious rites and ceremonies are absurd then why should they be used to validate our understanding of the Christian faith? Here again we see the ambiguities that cloud Amu's theological ideas. Was Amu late in realising that some of the traditional practices he had advocated and practised throughout his entire life could not be reconciled with Christian practice after all? Were there dilemmas that Amu could not resolve? Kofi Agawu's point is apposite:

Amu will ...be remembered as an individual who embodied what now seems a hopelessly irreconcilable pair of impulses, one epitomised in the version of the Christian religion that the Bremen missionaries disseminated, the other in the complex practices gathered together under the term 'traditional African religion'. The seemingly sensible compromise of choosing the best from both traditions and merging them into a third culture is also the least satisfactory solution to the post-colonial dilemma. For it seems odd to embrace the songs that hunters sing after a successful hunt without taking on board the libations they pour, or the particular gods and ancestors they call upon, or the dance steps that they negotiate. To appropriate the mould of traditional culture while throwing out its content is to fail to recognise the extent to which the mould itself is content-based.⁴³

Agawu's comment points to the fundamentally theological character of Amu's treatment of the problem. It must be admitted that neither Amu nor African theologians subsequently have been able to reconcile *in toto* 'traditional African religion' with the Christian faith. There are continuities just as much as there are discontinuities in the relationship between Africa's primal religions and the gospel. To determine these points of convergence and divergence is the task of theology. Amu may not have fulfilled this task in its entirety, (and of course no one has) but he should be credited for being among the foremost in Africa to lay the foundations for an intellectual and practical discourse between the primal religious traditions in Africa and the Christian faith. This was the agenda Amu set for himself and this is why he

can be considered as a theologian in his own right. He has been a worthy pacesetter and a pioneer. He has blazed a trail, and bequeathed a legacy on which succeeding generations of theologians can build.

NOTES

¹ Ephraim Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', *IRM*, Vol. XXIX, October, 1940, (477-485), p. 480.

² J.V. Taylor, *The Primal Vision: Christian Presence amid African Religion*, London: SCM Press, 2001, (1st edn. 1963), p.144.

³ Kwame Bediako, 'The Doctrine of Christ and the Significance of Vernacular Terminology', in *IBMR*, July 1998, p. 110.

⁴ The Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology is one institution in Africa that is promoting the use of African languages in scholarship. As part of the assessment for the award of a degree, a student is required to give a summary of his/her thesis or dissertation in his/her mother tongue. On March 30, 2005 it launched the 'Nyamedua Series in African Mother Tongue Theology' and the first book in the series written in Ga. See Philip Laryea, *Yesu Hɔmɔwɔ Nuytsɔ: Nikasemɔ ni kɔw bɔni Kristofoi naa Yesu ye Gamei Akusumfeemɔ ke Blema Saji amlɔ (Jesus, Lord of Hɔmɔwɔ: A Reinterpretation of the History and Religion of the Ga from the standpoint of Jesus as Lord)*, Akropong: Regnum Africa, 2005.

⁵ J.S. Pobee, *Toward an African Theology*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1979, p. 23

⁶ Kwesi Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1984, p. 214.

⁷ Ngugi wa Thiongo, 'Europhone or African Memory: The Challenge of the Pan-Africanist Intellectual in the Era of Globalization', *Wajibu*, Vol., 19, No. 3, 2004, (4-9), pp. 4-6.

⁸ A workshop was organised from 25-27 July, 2005 at the Balme Library of the University of Ghana, Legon by the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) to find ways in which students and researchers can make effective use of electronic databases, a large proportion being journals. It is very likely that the reason these databases are not being used is because most of the journals are produced from Europe and North America, generally, namely the North Atlantic, or simply the West.

⁹ See Appendix Z/D.

¹⁰ A.A. Agordoh, *Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana and her Musical Tradition*, Accra: Royal Gold Publishers Ltd., 2004.

¹¹ Nyanyui Hame, Hadzigbalē Sue, Ho: Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana & Eglise Evangélique Presbytérienne du Togo, 2002.

¹² A.A. Agordoh who has the single largest collection of songs was a student of S.D. Asiama who himself was a student of Amu.

¹³ Presbyterian Church of Ghana: Twifo Asafo Asɔre Dwom Nhoma, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 2000.

¹⁴ The songs are 'Yen Wura Yesu anim obi nni hɔ' (*AKD 7*) and 'Odwumayefo' (*AKD 18*).

¹⁵ It is not clear which part of the north these songs come from and why they have been translated into Twi and Ga.

¹⁶ See Appendix G: Letter from S.S. Odonkor to E. Amu.

¹⁷ See Synod Minutes, Christiansborg, 1949, min. 16 (e), pp. 15-16. Cf Fred Agyemang, *Amu the African*, pp. 175-176; Kofi Agawu, "Conversation with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer", p. 53. From Agyemang and Agawu's interviews with Amu we can conclude that the songs were meant to be African songs. Agyemang called this 'Abibifo Kristofo Nnwom (African Christian hymnbook)'.
¹⁸ See A.A. Agordoh's two books, *Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana and her Musical Tradition*, and *The Music of Amu and Nayo*.

¹⁹ J.H. Nketia, 'The contribution of African Culture to Christian Worship', *IRM*, Vol., XLVII, No. 187, July 1958, (265-278), p. 272.

²⁰ J.H. Nketia, 'The contribution of African Culture to Christian Worship', p. 273.

²¹ The subject of my MTh dissertation was the traditional Akan poetry (*apae*) in praise of Jesus composed by a member of the Church of Pentecost. See Philip Laryea, *St. Ignatius of Antioch and Afua Kuma of Kwahu: A study in the images of Jesus in the second century and modern Africa*, unpublished thesis presented to the School of Theology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 2000.

- ²² EASA: *Something must be done*, Achimota College, 8.1.1950, p. 3-4. (See Appendix W).
- ²³ Cf. Appendix A: Interview with E. Amu.
- ²⁴ Steve de Gruchy, 'Singing The Kairos' in Michael Worsnip and Desmond van der Water (eds), *We Shall Overcome: Spirituality for Liberation*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1991, (5-27): 8.
- ²⁵ Steve de Gruchy, 'Singing The Kairos', p. 8.
- ²⁶ John Mbiti makes a distinction between oral theology and written theology or Academic theology. Oral theology is a term he uses to designate theological activity done in Christian Africa mainly 'from the pulpit, in the market place, in the home as people pray or read and discuss the Scriptures'. See J. Mbiti, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 229.
- ²⁷ Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997, p. 71.
- ²⁸ Kwame Bediako, 'Cry Jesus! Christian theology and presence in modern Africa', in *Vox Evangelica* 23, 1993, (7-25): 23.
- ²⁹ Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture*, p. 72.
- ³⁰ Robert Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1997, pp. 1,
- ³¹ Robert Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, pp. 16-20.
- ³² E. Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 479. It is significant that this article was published fifteen years before the first ever international academic seminar on Christianity in Tropical Africa was held in Ghana. See C.G. Baëta (ed), *Christianity in Tropical Africa: Studies presented and discussed at the Seventh International African Seminar at the University of Ghana April 1965*, London: Oxford University Press, 1968.
- ³³ E. Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 480.
- ³⁴ E. Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 480.
- ³⁵ Throughout this article Amu never used the word 'gospel'. The context suggests, however, that it was the 'gospel' rather than 'Christianity' he presumably had in mind.
- ³⁶ Robert Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, p. 8.
- ³⁷ Kwesi Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1984, pp. 116-117.
- ³⁸ John Mbiti, 'Christianity and Traditional Religions in Africa', in *IRM*, p. 435.
- ³⁹ E. Amu, 'The Position of Christianity in Modern Africa', p. 480.
- ⁴⁰ See also EASA: Symposium: *African Tradition in Christian Worship*, British Council, Accra, 2.10.1979.
- ⁴¹ EASA: Symposium: *African Tradition in Christian Worship*, British Council, Accra, 2.10.1979.
- ⁴² See Appendix A.
- ⁴³ Kofi Agawu, *The Amu Legacy*, p. 278.

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I.2 *WORKS BY EPHRAIM AMU*

I.2.1 SONGS AS LISTED IN CHAPTER 2

- *Ɔdomankama ɔɔadeɛ ɔɔ ade no, ɔɔɔ no kronkronkron* (“And behold, it was all very good”)
- *Ɔdomankama ɔɔadeɛ ɔɔ adeɛ aye n'adwuma* (The almighty created all things without man's help)
- *Ennye yen nyame* (“Not unto us o lord”)
- *Wope onyame ase no a* (If you wish to become like god)
- *Wo nsam (na) mewɔ* (In thy hands am I)
- *Oseeɔ* (A shout of triumph)
- *Yen wura yesu anim obi nni ho* (There is no one to compare with Jesus)
- *Animia* (Pertinacity)
- *Monyi mo ho adi mmanin mma* (Reveal yourselves ye heroes)
- *Meto m'ani mehwe nnipa asetram'* (When I look round at human life)
- *Ɔɔɔ ye wu* (Love strong as death)
- *Ahobrease* (Humility)
- *Onyame ne Sahene* (God is the captain of our host)
- *Abibirimma* (Children of Africa)
- *Yen ara asase ni* (This land is our own)
- *San befa* (The thing you are striving for, you have left behind; “turn back and take it”)
- *Yen awurade otumfo kese* (Our great and mighty lord)
- *Odwumayefo* (Worker)

- *Biakoye* (Unity)
- *Nkradi* (Farewell)
- *Adikanfo, mo!* (Pioneers, congratulations)
- *Afe ato yen* (The year is here with us)
- *Asem yi di ka* (This word has to be said)
- *Yesu ne nhweso a eso nni* (Jesus is the perfect example)
- *Kasakyerew ho nimdefo mo!* (You who are gifted with the knowledge of writing of language, congratulations)
- *Yebeko adi nkonim* (We shall fight to victory)
- *Agya fafiri won* (Father forgive them)
- *Asomdwoem' na meko makoda* (In peace will I lie down and sleep)
- *Tete wo bi ka* (The past has a lot to say)
- *Momm'yenko so mforo* (Let us go on climbing)
- *Seantie ye mmusu* (It is an abomination to disobey)
- *Onipa retu nan yi na n'anim ara na oko no* (Man must be advancing, for look, his legs are moving)
- *Enne ye anigye da* (This is a joyful day)
- *Bonwre Kentenwene* (Bonwre weaving)
- *Owu nam kwan so reba* (Death is approaching)
- *Okwantenni* (Traveller)
- *Tiri ne nsa ne koma* (Head, hand and heart)
- *Ne nyinaa Nyame n'ara* (All things come from God alone)
- *Twi dwom 100* (Psalm 100)
- *Twi dwom 121* (Psalm 121)
- *Twi dwom 103* (Psalm 103)
- *Momma yenko Betlehem* (Let us go to Bethlehem)

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- WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 1933
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- MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 1933
- TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER 1933
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- D.E. AKWA TO R.S. KWAMI, 20.10.1933
- E. AMU TO EUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1.1.34
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- JOYCE CHAPLIN TO E. AMU, 23.11.1965
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APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW GRANTED TO THE MEDIA RESEARCH UNIT,
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AND MUSIC SECTION OF THE INSTITUTE OF
AFRICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON, BY EPHRAIM AMU.

Q: *You were born in this house...*

Amu: Yes, I was born here... Well, you asked me of the house, let me tell you about it. This was not the house itself in which I was born. It was a grass thatched house, and the kitchen was on the western side and the main building on the eastern side, two rooms, and here a kitchen and a store room attached to it. That was the house in which I was born. Then later the grass or thatch was removed from the roof and it was covered with corrugated iron sheet, not actual roofing, but covered with it. After my parents death, no one was living in the house, I was then teaching, not living at home, so I thought of rebuilding this place. So the lower apartment was built when I wasn't married and it had only three bedrooms. And I didn't roof because I didn't want to roof it with corrugated iron sheets. I wanted roofing tiles. I was dead against corrugated iron sheets. So it was completed during World War II. I was then away in Britain and I was informed of loss of things. I did not want it to be roofed with corrugated iron sheets, but with roofing tiles. The roofing tiles were not available at that time, but was then made or manufactured in Accra. The army took over. And when I came back from Britain in 1942 there was none available, and I still did not want to roof it with corrugated iron sheets, and I waited and waited until I was informed that my pension was getting near, so I thought of what to do. Then I felt, well, I was then married so I had children, boys and girls, and I had a lot of friends. There were only three bedrooms and I felt if I had visitors we will be in difficulty, so I thought of what to do and said, well, I had to ... So that's how this house had come to be a two-storey house.

Q: *So this is where you were born? What do you remember of your childhood as somebody who was born in this house?*

Amu: Well, I was a child in this house. I remember my parents, and my sisters and brothers. My father was a stool carver, and therefore every member of the house had a stool to himself or herself. So then during those days as a little child, I would not go and sleep in the room at night. I was afraid to go into the room at night. So what I would do would be to lie on some of the stools and lie on and sleep. And when my brother was going to bed he would take me to the room. I remember this clearly.

Q: *What kind of work did your mother do?*

Amu: She was just a house-keeper and a farmer. That's all, nothing else. You know, those days every housewife had to learn how to spin. And so every housewife would plant cotton seeds on the farm and then we collect the cotton and then spin thread out of it. The husband will then weave cloth out of it.

Q: *And was your father a weaver as well?*

Amu: Yes.

Q: *But both of them were Christians?*

Amu: Yes, both of them... they were both Christians before I was born. Both of them were pagans, but they became Christians before I was born.

Q: *What do you remember of your father most?*

Amu: My father was a strict disciplinarian. He disciplined us, but he loved me, I think more than the rest of the members of the family. I was the last born, and I served him. He loved me. So in spite of his being a strict disciplinarian I was not afraid of him. I could chat with him and ask him any question and express my opinion about anything to him.

Q: *How many of you were there in all?*

Amu: When I grew up there were two brothers and three sisters. One full sister, two half sisters. One of the two half sisters lived with us as a member of the family, but the other one was reasonably old before my father married my mother. So she didn't stay with us. So there were two sisters and two brothers and myself, making five in all.

Q: *You said your father loved you very much. Did this generate any kind of childhood rivalry?*

Amu: Oh, no, never, never. You, see, I was the youngest, and there was no question of rivalry between me and my elders. Nothing like that. They all loved me of course...

Q: *Your father was strict on you and there was an occasion when he praised somebody. You did something and you were expecting him to praise you and he didn't praise you.*

Amu: Aha, you remember that story. You see we had our farm far away from home in the thick forest. And there were leopards around at that time, and at times I moved alone from here to the cottage, and my father didn't say anything. But once upon a time, a

younger cousin of mine... he started on his own from home and went to the cottage to his parents and my father congratulated him as a brave boy. I resented it, because I did exactly the same, even more than that. My father sent me alone from here when no one was in the cottage. And I went there to do some work and came back. I left very early in the morning and by one o'clock before I returned. My father never said any word of praise. I didn't like it.

Q: *Was there anything that you learnt out of his reaction?*

Amu: Later, I found out that he didn't want to do anything to me to make me feel big in myself as somebody more important than somebody else. That's why he refused to congratulate me or to praise me.

Q: *How about your other brothers and sisters, did they also go to school?*

Amu: Oh, they all went to school. My eldest brother became a teacher and taught only one year, and after that one year he died. My next brother got married and had one child, and after that he too died leaving me alone. So that's that. And then my three sisters lived quite long, and they died one by one. The last one, the youngest of the three sisters, was the last to die about six or seven years ago.

Q: *So now you are the only person left?*

Amu: I am the only member of the family.

Q: *This town Peki has been an area where there has been.. Anglo, Ashanti, Akwamu too. Then the German, then the English colonialist extended colonial rule. How did all these various cultural influences influence your life?*

Amu: Well, I think the one I speak about quite clearly is Christian influence. You see, my father was a pagan. He became a Christian. He was, when he was pagan, a drummer. But when I grew up he never said anything about drumming, because according to his Christian views, a Christian ought not to drum. So he didn't think it necessary to tell me anything about drumming. Then also, you know there are so many false beliefs in our lives, and he would not talk to me about anything like that. If it's a question of what you call juju, or witchcraft he would never talk about anything like that to me. And so he didn't make any reference to these things. The result was that I grew up completely ignorant of these things and therefore up to now I am not afraid of these things. I don't believe in these things, and I am not afraid of them. I am most thankful for that, because it made me what I am.

Q: *How about the other African influences? There has been several wars with Anglo and Ashanti, several wars against Peki... As a result several names have Ashante or Anglo origins.. when you were growing up?*

Amu: I would think so. You see, when I grew up I began to think of culture as something quite distinct. I mean we have something quite different from what the white man had. And so I had begun to think about these things. Then at that time I asked my father a few questions about this or about that. And I remember that when I started collecting folk songs and learning them, he objected because he thought these things were not Christian. And I told him the purpose of my learning these songs. I said it was for the sake of promoting Christianity that I was learning these songs. So before he died I started composing hymns in our own style, and he then kept quiet and he was happy about it. As a matter of fact he commissioned me to compose a song in remembrance of the Peki's defeat of the Ashantis on the Amedzofe mountain. Because he told me the story that when they got there, the Ashantis were going up the hill. The Peki's were on top of the hill and.. just rolled stones to run over the Ashantis. And he said therefore it was God who fought that battle for them and not themselves. And he wanted me to compose something in memory of that. I have not yet composed it. Whether I will compose it before I die, I have no idea.

Q: *When did your father die?*

Amu: It was in 1930. At that time I was teaching at the Training College at Akropong.

Q: *And your mother?*

Amu: My mother in 1935. I was then at Achimota.

Q: *It is very instructive what you said about your father's initial reaction when you started collecting folk songs. Now how did you get him.. and at the time what was the attitude of the German missionaries? And did he have to go to great lengths...?*

Amu: Even at that time the German Missionaries had left here and it was the African pastors who were in charge of the whole church and my father was a presbyter. And he objected to my singing of these ordinary folk songs. But when I explained to him the purpose of it, I said, look, there are so many of them, and you yourself you've learnt to sing hymns, but you never sang one correctly, and that was because the goal of singing these hymns was different from the way we sing in this country, and therefore I was trying to find a means whereby everybody could sing our church hymns naturally and happily. And therefore it was for that purpose that I was learning

these folks songs, and when I actually composed something and he listened to it, he was happy.

Q: *So which was the first song that you composed that made your father think that...?*

Amu: The very first song that I composed was not sung here, but it was sung at Akropong. But in company with those songs I composed some of them in the Ewe language, one of which is 'Yen ara asase ni'. However, leaving that aside, my cousin was going to be ordained and I composed something. I can't sing the whole thing now, but... and then there was also my teacher who taught me, and afterwards I became a member of his staff and we worked here. [As] you might have heard of his name, Christian Gati. He was my headmaster. He served about some 23 years here in Peki and when he was being transferred, I wrote something in his memory So all these my father heard and he was happy about them.

Q: *What do you remember of your early school days?*

Amu: You, see, I didn't start school at the beginning of the year. I used to go to farm with my father and I started school quite young but it happened that one day we didn't go to farm and I wanted to go to school. So I went to the school and started sometime in the middle of the year. So I was in a class all by myself, and the teacher will appoint someone to come and teach me how to read... because I didn't enter the school at the beginning of the year. And I went and I had to be started on my own. So I was alone and someone will come to teach me how to read. And then I worked arithmetic and so on. And then one day one of the girls came to teach me and I was reading. I think I was reading a certain page and the girl who was teaching me found that those who were really before me, the class which was before me, went back to read something from the page which I was reading, and since I could read like the other members of the class, so he said, 'go and tell the teacher that you will be able to read with them...' So I went and told the teacher that I could read what others were reading. And he opened the page and asked me to read, and I read it fluently. So he said, 'go in and join the class...'

Q: *So when you joined the rest of the class how did you fare?*

Amu: Oh, I didn't do badly at all... I wasn't a backward child. I did quite well.

Q: *And when did you finish ... at the time they called it junior school?*

Amu: Well, we had at that time what we call Infant school and that Infant School, I think there was one year which was preliminary. Then one entered what we called sub-standard one, and then sub-standard 2, then standard one, standard two and so on. We spent all these years in all these various classes. Anyway I joined those others and together with them, we entered sub-standard one, standard 2 and so on. And I finished my standard 2, which today I think is primary class 5. I finished standard 2 here, and I went to Blengo to attend standard 3, and then entered the middle school. I finished standard 3 in 1911. 1912, 1913, 1914, and 1915 I was in the middle school. I finished the Middle School at the end of 1915. But the World War I started in 1914.

Q: *Who was in charge of the school?*

Amu: I mentioned Christian Gati. He was the headmaster then.

Q: *You have mentioned teacher Gati. When you finished school and started teaching you served under him. What type of teacher was teacher Gati?*

Amu: Well, I owe so much to all my teachers, but so much more to him than to any other teacher. During the course of teaching, whether reading, or telling Bible stories, or teaching religious instructions or anything, he would refer to everyday life. He used to say how very backward the people of Africa were and that we were so backward, so we ought to strive and work hard for the African to take their place among the rest of the peoples of the world, and also to take their place as people who are advanced. And this came into my mind and my heart and I used to think about it. I mean he ordered a paper that was then called *African World*. He subscribed to that paper. And I used to read articles from the *African World* regularly. But I read one article which said something I disliked completely about European Missionaries who came here in the olden days. And he said something about them as if they came...to tame the African and make them ready for exploitation by the European governments. I very strongly disagreed with that. And ever since I never read that paper again. Anyway, talking about Africa and its place in the rest of the world... You will remember that I composed a song called, 'Abibirimma' (Sons of Africa). Actually I always say that I should entitle that song 'Gati', because I feel that all the ideas in that song were exactly what I got from Gati...

Q: *Teacher Gati, was he a native of Peki?*

Amu: He was a native of Anfoega, in the Volta Region. He attended the Middle School at Anum, and then he attended the Basel Mission Seminary at Akropong, and afterwards

attended the Government Training College in Accra, and he taught in Peki for about some 23 years.

Q: *When did he die?*

Amu: I forgot the year. But he was afterwards transferred to Worawora where he served for some years and then he retired and lived at his own home Anfoega and died. I have forgotten the year. I can't remember the year.

Q: *This article that you said you read in the 'African World', why did you...*

Amu: I knew the history of the missionaries, how they started their work here, how they arrived here, and how some of them, barely a fortnight or a month after their arrival, died and others were sent. And I couldn't believe that these missionaries had done that just because of their personal gain or some other worldly gain. I thought that this was something that they thought had a spiritual reform and therefore they were able to sacrifice their lives. And even above all that they suffered, what they did... I said that it was wrong for anybody to discredit them in this way.

Q: *Well, the way I understand it, its not so much one of discrediting them, but a description of what they achieved led to ... I did not think that the Missionaries made it their intention that they were coming to tame the Africans... but I mean lots of the activities, so many things that they had to say about ourselves, so many things they had to say about our culture, so many ways in which they taught us that the only way that you can gain salvation is through Jesus Christ. These to some extent affected our people's attitude towards their own culture, and they look down upon their own culture. And it is on record that when the colonial administration began to paint ideas about African culture it was with a purpose of making the administration easier, and therefore they had all these research...*

Amu: You can't blame these missionaries. Look, they were not born here. They knew nothing of our culture. They came and met us here as pagans, and as you know, even up to now every day affair is closely interwoven with our religion and our religion not being Christian religion, everything appeared to the European missionary as pagan and therefore not worthy of Christian religion. And so .. even our names, they didn't think that our names were worth keeping and therefore they think everything should be done their way. If we were in their place I think we will do exactly the same thing. But as time continued they began to study more and more and to know more about these things and then they began to make the difference between what is actual culture and what is paganism. And it is here when we came upon the situation

ourselves it was our duty to draw a line between these two things and what to take and what to drop. But this is what we didn't do in time. Now we are trying to do it and it appears we are making a mess of things. This is bound to happen until someday we get exactly what is Christianity.

Q: *What do you mean by paganism?*

Amu: Oh, what I mean is the kind of religion that we had before the whiteman came. That is, we pray, we have images and so on, and bow to them and pray to them and then offer food to our deceased relatives and so on. All these things constitute what we call paganism.

Q: *What do you find objectionable about that?*

Amu: Now, you ask me.. I don't believe that my father needs my food and so it would be funny for me to prepare food and place it somewhere in the bush for my father to go and eat. It's absurd, isn't it?

Q: *You also mentioned that you were in school during the World War I. How did that affect your education?*

Amu: You see, before the World War I, there were two missionary bodies in the Gold Coast, the Basel Mission and the Bremen Mission. The Bremen Mission was not only in this part of the Gold Coast, but also in Togoland. So Bremen Mission took this side that today we call the Volta Region and the Basel Mission the other side. The missionaries were trained in about the same institution in Germany or in Switzerland. And then they came here, and during World War I, all those missionaries who were Germans were removed leaving the Swiss missionaries only. Later, the Swiss missionaries were also removed. But as I said earlier, before 1914 we had two Seminaries in the Bremen Mission to which I belonged, one at Keta and the other at Amedzofe. It's just because Amedzofe was in Togoland where German language was taught, Keta in the Gold Coast where English was taught. And people who were to teach in the Gold Coast, couldn't study German in Amedzofe and come back to teach English here. So those who were to teach in the Gold Coast attended the Seminary at Keta, and those who were to teach German, attended the Seminary at Amedzofe. But during World War I those Seminaries closed down, because the white men who run them were all removed. So when we finished our seventh standard those of us who wanted to teach had nowhere to go. And this man Gati suggested that we should go and train at the Basel Mission at Akropong or at Abetifi. So some of us were picked. I was one of the first batch, three of us. It was only I who finished the

whole course. So we went to Abetifi for four years. We had two years training as teachers, and two years training as catechists. So we were consecrated as teacher-catechists at the end of 1919 and we came back to this place. So it was because of World War I, that we had to go to the Seminary there. And since then we've been working together with the Ghana Presbyterian Church.

Q: *But in what other way did World War I affect you...?*

Amu: You see, the German Missionaries were removed because they were enemies of the British people. The British people and the Germans were at war so the Germans were enemies. So they had to be removed. They were taken away as war prisoners. The result of WWI was that it removed all the Europeans and the Africans had to learn to manage their own affair. They had to learn to manage their own affairs. And so they took over from that time up to now. So we are still struggling to learn how to conduct our own affairs.

Q: *How about the general populace...? How did the war affect the daily life there?*

Amu: I don't think it affected them much. But you see when at that time we used to get the things that we needed all from overseas, the war had something to do with us. Things we obtained, we didn't obtain them the way we used to obtain them. We were in that difficulty. That was the result of the war. But it cleared afterwards, so that, it was only a stage, and then after that we were making good progress.

Q: *But there was some fighting in Togoland during WWI. Did people have to move from Peki to go and fight there?*

Amu: People enrolled and they were taken to different parts of the world; to Egypt, and the Far East and so on. People enrolled as soldiers and they fought in various places. I don't think there was much fighting in Togoland itself.

Q: *And you didn't go?*

Amu: No, I was just a young lad, a young boy, and I didn't think I was ready at that time for that sort of thing.

Q: *There is this story too that when the German missionaries were here there was a time that there was a bit of tension between them and the students...*

Amu: Oh, that was in what we used to call the Blengo Senior School which is now the Middle School. When we were in Standard 5, the missionary who was then the manager of schools, we disagreed with his management, and so we all left the school,

and then other missionaries were sent to come and investigate. And then they came and made their investigations, and they said those people who were in standard 6 and 7 should not be taken back again. They should go away. But those in 4 and 5 should return and they would be caned. They'll have to be caned, I think 6 strokes or 12. I can't remember that again. And then they would continue the school. I didn't want to go, but my father compelled me to go. So I went and had some beatings at my back, and so I attended the school. Anyway, I don't know whether it was unfortunate or fortunate, I don't know, but it was only by that way that I became a pupil of the Gati I have mentioned so much.

Q: *You also said that your arithmetic teacher...*

Amu: Well, you see, unfortunately I was taught by the same teacher in standard 3, in standard 4 and then in 5. Honestly that teacher was bad at teaching arithmetic. And the result was that I think I had no knowledge of arithmetic. But when this teacher Gati took us over, he taught us arithmetic, and his method made me to understand arithmetic, and I felt that it was one of my strong point at school.

Q: *So when you were taken back to the school, the teacher who was teaching you previously had been dropped.*

Amu: Oh, yes, he had to teach some other class. He moved to another section altogether, and because Gati was teaching standard 6 and 7, and those 2 classes were no longer there, we became the topmost class. So he took us.

Q: *So by 1916 you had finished your elementary education and you were ready to go to Training College.*

Amu: I finished at the end of 1915.

Q: *Now with hindsight what assessment would you make of that period in your life? What were the major influences of that period of your life?*

Amu: You see, when after 1915 we had to go to the other side of the Volta, that is Abetifi to train, and then we mixed with people who were not Ewes at all, that began to give me some ideas about other people in this same country. And therefore mixing with other tribes made us real citizens of the Gold Coast, and we felt that we were members of the Gold Coast... So that what happened and moved us to that place, I think, resulted in our feeling that we were members of the Gold Coast.

Q: *But before then you had irrevocably become a Christian.*

Amu: Oh, yes, I was baptised as a Christian when I was a child, and so I grew up in that Christian idea, or Christian world.

Qu: *But I think that you had also began to discard some of the ideas about our tradition...*

Amu: Well, not at that age. At that age I just listened to things... . All the music around me influenced me in a way. For instance, when I began to think about my own music, I remember that when I was a child, there was a bamboo flute player, or *atetenben* player in this town, who used to play at the dead of night. And it made a lasting impression on me. So that when I began to think of our own music, I asked the question, 'where was this man'? And then people said that man died, then I had to find somebody else who did exactly what he did. And that took me to the other side of the Volta, so that I began to go round for people who knew how to play the *atetenben* and the *odurogya* and so on. You see it was that influence, which that *atetenben* player here gave us that made me feel that it was very important.

[The following interview took place at a site Amu had earmarked for a music concert]

Amu: One day if my children have money, I will like them to build a concert hall here in my memory.

Q: *That will be very, very... and it should be surrounded by a farm.*

Amu: If it should be a concert hall then this whole farm has to go.

Q: *But that would be a pity.*

Amu: Well, it's a pity, but you want a concert hall.

Q: *But around the concert hall you can have...*

Amu: Well if you are thinking of a concert hall then you are thinking of the main hall and then the annexes. So that there wouldn't be room for a farm any longer.

Q: *Maybe for flowers and things like that...*

Amu: Oh, that is true.

Q: *Can you give a brief account of the Peki/Tsito conflict...*

Amu: (Response in Ewe)

Amu: I took keen interest in music taught at the Training College.. And after that when I started teaching I became what you call in those days Singing Master. Then of course I included teaching of music itself in the school that I taught... At that time we called it Senior School, now we call it Middle School. I taught there for six years. My first six years in Peki were spent there in that school. So it just developed. It was at that time that a Methodist minister by name Rev. Allotey Pappoe was transferred to Peki. He was a musician, and so when I heard of it, I went to him to teach me and he very happily agreed to teach me, and he gave me lessons, and I took some overseas examinations in music. That's how it all developed.

Q: *Which overseas examination?*

Amu: In those days it was Victoria College of Music... In those days nobody knew of associated courses.

Q: *How did he help you with your studies?*

Amu: Well, he helped me to learn something on harmony and a little bit of counterpoint. So I began writing music of my own. You see I loved music, I was Singing teacher, and there were songs that I liked... And I used to order plenty of music because I had to choose from them. I spent so much money on it. Then I said if I could write music as I wanted it myself it will be good. Therefore I continued learning to write music. So when I got knowledge of writing music I began to write. You ask how we write music in western style. For instance if you should listen to this song...

Q: *Now talking about nationalism, I think I started by asking something on nationalism. The song that comes to mind, straightway is 'Yen ara asase ni'...*

Amu: When I learnt to write in Western style at a stage in my development, you see we were trained as catechists so we used to preach from the pulpit, and I noticed every now and again, when I preach that in course of singing some of the members of the congregation didn't sing anything. And I asked myself, why was this? And the answer I got was that we were singing in a certain idiom, which wasn't natural to most of the members of the congregation. And therefore I thought of the idiom that would enable them also to sing happily. So that made me feel that I should study our own folk songs, and find out the difference between our music and western music and to get our own idiom. So that I tried religious music in the idiom. That was how I started to study indigenous Ghanaian songs, the folk songs, and so on. And when I studied it sufficiently and got the various things and made our music different from western music, I started to write music. One of the earliest hymns that I wrote... You

see, I taught in PTC, Men's College. So I wrote for male voices, and so the song I love very much, 'Wo nsam me wɔ'... One of the earliest ones that I wrote. So I found this.. and it was first sung at Sunday Morning Service. People enjoyed it tremendously. After that the principal, Rev. W. Ferguson under whom I began to develop these things, gave me a free hand.

Q: *From whom did you learn these songs?*

Amu: I learnt from various people. I was at Akropong when I began to think of these things. And so I looked for people who knew songs, indigenous music, and I happen to find two men who were Nana Akuffo, late Omanhene Akuffo's sons, who knew some of these songs at Akropong and so on, and they taught me some of these songs and they taught me drumming also. And two elderly women also taught me *Adenkum* songs. So these were the people who helped me. And of course, afterwards, I travelled round the whole country from place to place collecting music, folk songs. That's how I collected these songs.

Q: *When in particular...? Because there is a story told...*

Amu: I said I went over the whole country. I visited Keta and Lome and then of course Akuapem and also in Accra and in Ashanti, everywhere.. Later, when I took up music research as my field work, I went as far north to Navrongo to collect music.

Q: *Is there any particular composition that came up directly after these?*

Amu: No, no... You see I began to write and I played something that I wrote in the earlier days.. Then later on the thing developed, then I wrote some of these songs that became popular. I think you know the 'Weaving Song'.¹ People like the chorus very much. So every time that I collected, certain ideas came and I wrote something. Most of my songs of course I can't play on the piano. The reason being that each part, for instance if I write in four parts, the four parts don't do the same rhythm all the time. For instance 2, 3, 4 different rhythms at the same time. But let me add this, each rhythm and each intonation must be revealed in the song. And if you are going to do this, then you are going to write a lot of consecutive things, for instance... So you must find a way out, and the way out is to apply what you call Contrapuntal Technique, and in that I see that in Africa we are very rich in rhythm, and therefore you have to make yourself all sorts of rhythmic devices. And that is what I introduced into our music.

¹ See *SONG 34*, 'Bonwre Kentenwene'.

Q: *And I guess you got this technique also from drumming?*

Amu: Oh yes of course, that's why I make drumming compulsory for my students and everybody has to learn drumming.²

Q: *I could see that in 'Wo nsam me wo' the key is in E flat, but it was arranged in TTBB and then you put the whole thing in SATB.*

Amu: Wait a minute, I don't think I have written this for mixed voices. .. For instance, 'Ennye yen Nyame', I wrote it for TTBB but I translated it and wrote it for SATB...TTBB is first tenor, second tenor, first bass, second bass. SATB is soprano, alto, tenor, bass.

Q: *How do you set about composing, do you write the text first, then the music comes or...*

Amu: You see, for instance, when I was asked to write something for the purpose of collecting money from people... 'Yi bi ma'... I began to think of the words. I thought of the words and the music at the same time. It is very difficult for me to explain to you how I do it but that's what I do up to this time. I think of the words and then the rhythm and then the theories. All these must come together.

Q: *But there are times that you take the text...*

Amu: For instance some of the psalms. Recently I wrote Ps. 100. I had to make slight changes in the text to suit my voice.

Q: *What about 'Asomdwoe'?*

Amu. It is from one of the Psalms. I took the text and I thought of it. I wrote this at a time the Presbyterians were having Synod at Kyebi. And I thought of an evening song. So I wrote this to teach the Church Choir. But when I got to Kyebi I found old women and old people who .. So we started and I never finished it. Afterwards I taught it to some other choir.

Q: *Every good musician in our country knows about or has heard about the TFAS. Why did you choose to call it TFAS? Is it because you the composer...*

² It is in respect to this that Amu allowed girls to play the *bɔmmaa*. William Ofori-Atta pointed it out in a letter to Amu that it was an abomination to allow girls to beat that drum. (See Appendix T)

Amu: Well, you see, it is clear, you can understand why. When I started to write, there was nothing in existence written in African idiom. And that being the first in African idiom I chose to call it Twenty Five African Songs (*TFAS*).

Q: *What are some of the distinctive features?*

Amu: I think I mentioned this .. the music must agree with the rhythm and intonation.. As I began to sing you have no difficulty in forming the words, because it is exactly as I speak. The rhythm and the intonation of the music is exactly the same as the rhythm and intonation of the spoken word... When I started to teach it I thought people were having difficulty in singing it, so I gave up and said, 'you stop. ... I want you to repeat the words'. And they started repeating the words and clapping to it. If you take for instance, 'Yen ara asase ni'... I knew what I wanted to write, but it was difficult. After some years of having acquired western style, to depart entirely from their style... It's not exactly what it should be and so I ought to give them something to be thinking of which will make them good citizens. That's how I came to write this song.

Q: *Not quite close with the rhythm of the language. So can we say the musical problem in 'Yen ara asase ni' as we know it today are also problems of translation?*

Amu: Yes, you see, I translated it into Twi, and I knew that these rules must be observed so I tried to make the Twi version also agree with the Ewe one...

Q: *But the Twi version doesn't fit as tightly to the music.*

Amu: No, not as tightly.. but very nearly.

Q: *I'm sure you have had occasion to talk about this sometimes. There are different translations of 'Yen ara asase ni'. I know of a translation in Ga,.. in Dagarti. But you don't seem to be happy with the translations...*

Amu: No, I don't like the translations. In Ghana we cannot cope with the small, small little languages. We must think of a few. I think at the moment the two outstanding languages spoken by the majority of the people in Ghana. First is Twi, and by Twi I mean Akyem, Akuapem, Kwahu, Asante, and even Fante. All these I call Twi. And then there is Ewe. We have to encourage the study of some of these so that we can use these. I think with regard to music I must resort to the original languages in which they are written. Very few will like to sing in English. Some may like to sing in Latin sometimes, and some will like to sing in French while some will like to sing in Ghanaian languages.

Q: *Well you know that the question of triplets in your music, that is the duple effect and triple effect has been a controversy all along. Now can you outline your ideas on the question, because there are some composers who think...*

Amu: Well, when I tried first to write down Ghanaian folk songs in musical notation, I was confronted with some difficulty in the rhythm. And then gradually when I learnt to play drums and so on I found common sounds in Ghanaian music, and that is *tatata...tata, 1.2.3...1.2*. Having done this, I don't see how I should begin to write in 6/6 time. I have no quarrel with this. But if you study western music there are issues of rhythm in 6/6 time.

Q: *I see that you are very careful in putting down your triplets sign in all that you write...*

Q: *Now could you say a little bit about how you came to choose music as the medium for expressing your spirit of nationalism?*

Amu: Well, I love music during my childhood days and I loved singing. I was fond of singing and I studied music at the Training College. I also took great interest in music, and there my love for music increased, that is, it developed... When I started teaching I became what you call in those days Singing Master. I taught singing. Then of course I included teaching of music itself in the schools that I taught. That was Peki. At that time we called it Senior School. We now call it Middle School. I taught there for six years.

Q: *Between 1937 and 1941 you were studying in England. How did the idea of studying in England come about?*

Amu: Oh you see when I started my work in African music, that was when schools paid attention to it...a suggestion came from the then colonial Secretary when the Governor was away, and he was acting as Governor, Sir Northcote. He organised the first musical concert at his bungalow in Accra Ridge. And we did the concert there. And immediately after the concert he offered me a four year course in music overseas. But I didn't accept it. I said what I had in mind was ministry, and that even if I accepted the offer to study music I will come back and continue my service in the church before becoming a minister, and that music will be a secondary affair and not my primary choice. The idea was there. But when I was driven away from Akropong and I went to Achimota, the principal, Mr. Fraser said that I ought to go out and take a course in music, so he first suggested that I should go to India because he felt there

was some similarity in our music and Indian music. However, others suggested that... That's how it all came about.

Q: *He apparently had to prevail on you.*

Amu: Oh no, the second time it was suggested I felt I ought to accept it and move, because I needed it, the technique for completing my work.

Q: *Now when you came back you started teaching in Achimota.. When you returned to Achimota it was during a rather turbulent period in the history of this country... what do you recall of those days?*

Amu: I remember.. when one Nii Bonne, Osu Alata Mantse organised a boycott of European goods saying that nobody should buy from the shops and so on. But that was the beginning of our nationalistic movement to get rid of the colonial government. That was the beginning of it. And it resulted in looting of shops, burning down shops and so on. All those were not happy days. And the way we started, some of us didn't like and we spoke out against the way we started. But people would not listen. I am sure that our present troubles could be traced to the way we started to ask for our independence.

Q: *What specifically did you object to?*

Amu: It was a matter of compelling the people to let us be independent, when at that time we were not prepared for independence. What I mean is, we hadn't the people to handle our affairs. We ought to understudy people who will lead the part of government and so on. We were not prepared because we had no people who will do these things. And the result was when we took over, we made so many blunders we ought not to have made. And I feel that a good deal of our present troubles could be traced to the way we forced independence.

Q: *Yes, but the argument of the leaders of the nationalist movement was that, once the British Colonialist were not interested in the ... and therefore even though we did not have the requisite training, if they waited and waited for them to train them, that time will never arrive. Therefore it was better to get them out and in the process of getting them out also learn the job of managing the country by themselves in the process.*

Amu: But if you were in the affairs of the Colonial government you would have done either exactly the same thing or even worse. But I also want you to remember that in every group of people there are some who have very good ideas, and are determined to do the right thing. And there were people who really fought for our independence...

Q: *But they were in the minority?*

Amu: Of course, that is how the world is. They would always remain in the minority. And people who will bring about what you call revolution are always in the minority.

Q: *Then you went to Kumasi in 1951. That was also another turbulent period.*

Amu: Yes... the CPP had their action troopers and the opposition too had their action troopers and they committed blunders. There were some atrocities... We should forget all about that.

Q: *On the balance what was your assessment of that period?*

Amu: All I'll like to say is that at that time I was bitterly opposed to the method we were adopting. This method of force which we used. And I said, force was not the right thing to use at that time.

Q: *A great deal of your early work... what was the kind of relationship between you and the CPP government?*

Amu: Members of the CPP government knew that I resented them, because I didn't agree with their methods, their ways.³ And I didn't keep silent but I spoke freely, which was very dangerous those days. But according to people who were in opposition, they felt I wasn't a dangerous man to organise anything bad against anybody. All that mattered to me was to express my views freely. So nobody put me into trouble.

Q: *Did the government ever seek your advice on anything?*

Amu: Advice? There was only one stage at which my advice was sought, and that was with regard to music. Actually Dr. Nkrumah invited me and asked me to write a memorandum on music education in Ghana, so I wrote a memorandum and he appointed a small committee and they studied the memorandum and made suggestions. But right at that time we began to run into trouble with regard to our finance. And so the recommendations couldn't be put into effect.

Q: *In what year was that?*

Amu: That was in 1961/62.

³ In a letter to Daniel Chapman, Amu was critical of the CPP, particularly about a statement that the Pioneer newspaper alleged Mr. Gbedemah to have made. (See Appendix N)

Q: *Your work has also attracted international attention. I understand that you used to attend choral festivals in England, and also you attended the Smithsonian folk. Could you tell us a bit about those festivals?*

Amu: We only attended the University Choral festival at Lincoln Centre in New York. That was in 1969, and I took my students from Legon to that festival and it was a successful journey, and we were very, very well received everywhere. And I remember that we gave concert to various places and in two places we were given a standing ovation. The first was at Stoughton Institute, where we gave a concert, and towards the end of the concert suddenly the whole audience rose. That showed how very well they received our performance. And at Lincoln Centre in New York, where we had thousands of people at the concert. We were just near the end of the concert, I think we were singing the 'Weaving Song', and suddenly the whole audience rose and stood up. And when we finished the applause was tremendous. We felt very happy. That's one of the best moments of my musical life.

Q: *How would you summarise your experience that you've gone through in life?*

Amu: I really wonder myself how I was able to get through those difficulties. I gave a number of lectures, and today I read some of those lectures over, and see the ideals that I cherish in those lectures. And I am astonished that all those ideas came to me and how I was able to stand up to the opposition against me in various ways. So I thought I couldn't say that I had any particular gift for this sort of thing, but I think it's God's own way of doing things. He always provides some means of doing some important work anywhere in the world, and I just happened to be that tool. And that's why I was able to do this, not because of any particular credit of my own. I don't think so.

Q: *But with hindsight, some of the ideas that you were preaching, what progress do you think this country has made in the realisation of these ideas?*

Amu: Oh, I think we have made a very big progress. Look at how many of our women go overseas now in their own African dress... Look at the ambassadors and all these people. When they are to appear in various lands, they wear our kente cloth, and that's their pride. And that's what we do here. Now who would have thought of an educated man wearing cloth for any important event in this country in those days.

Q: *It seems to me that the agitation for this kind of thing started in the 1860s in the very early nationalism. So would you say that it is also a result of some of the things that they were able to achieve?*

Amu: I think I didn't know anything about these previous doings of people of this country. I knew nothing about it. When I started there was so much opposition to the ideas that I started to preach, and so at that time I didn't know that some people before me had the nerve to do exactly what I did in my time. So that's that.

Q: *So what are you now doing with yourself?*

Amu: I think... if I have time I compose new songs. I rewrite the old ones. That is the most important thing I do, to rewrite my songs for publication. And that's what I am doing. And the little time I have for outside activities.

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH REV. A. L. KWANSA

[Rev. Kwansa was a former Synod Clerk of the PCG and student of Ephraim Amu. He granted me this interview at his residence in Aburi on 25 August, 2004 between the hours of 9 and 11 in the morning]

Q: *What do you remember of Ephraim Amu?*

Kwansa: I entered the PTC in 1931 and I met him there as the music master, and again as agriculture master in charge of the College farm. As music master he taught us music and was playing the organ or piano at College services and in the Presby Church in the town, assisted by one Mr. Mante from Larteh. He organised a band called African Instrumentalists Band and I was a member of the band. And he started with Atumpan, Mpintin, and Bommaa and other things. As a member of the band I was playing Paso and Mmerema. Paso keeps the music in time and in tune, and this gained recognition of even the government. Once we were invited by the Colonial Secretary to play one evening at his bungalow in Accra and he [Colonial Secretary] was very much fascinated.... Yes, I was a member. I can show you a picture of the band, you see, that is the picture and I am sitting down there. That is the band you see, this is Mpintim, Atumpan and other things.

He [Amu] had trouble with his feet. He was having foot sores between the fingers of the feet. The toes of the feet. And he was always in sandals instead of shoes. And when he was free he will use his shoes. Then he will be using cotton wool and cream here and there. And one occasion, he had to preach but the foot sore was so bad. So he decided to preach in his native cloth, Kente. Secondly, because of the research he was doing into African music and culture, he was prompted to appear as an African in his African dress anywhere he went. So one day he preached in his cloth and sandals, and that stirred up big trouble at Akropong. And then he was reported to the Synod Committee. He was called and reprimanded. But he said he had done no wrong and he was an African and could appear as an African. But the result was that he was terminated from the Training College, and removed from the staff. And we were all very, very sorry. But while we were thinking of his future, Achimota School invited him to Achimota. So very promptly from Akropong, he went to Achimota as music master there.

Now, when he was at Akropong he was Agriculture master, in charge of the College farm and to reduce cost of maintenance of the students, he put his soul into the agriculture work. Planting yam seedlings, cassava, maize, vegetables and so on. But the soil was very, very poor. Now he arranged for us the students to collect water from the old toilet, between Akropong and Abiriw, in the neighbourhood of the present Post Office. We went there with our buckets, and he was leading with spade, collecting the contents and putting it in the buckets for us, which we carried to the College farm to fertilise the soil there for successful planting of yams and other things.

Q: *I was told that this was part of the reason for his removal from Akropong. How far is this true?*

Kwansa: Well, this raised a big trouble at the College because some of the students did not like this at all. And they reported to the Principal, and some said they were allergic to such things, and will not like to be involved. And that also was one of the causes. It's true.

Now, his interest in agriculture helped the College very much. It reduced the cost of maintenance, and the Principal liked it very much, Mr. Ferguson, and many of the staff members. And it is not only collection of refuse from the area of Abiriw, but the septic tank of the College. Sometimes they put plenty of water into the septic tank and pump it. We collect this liquid to manure, to fertilise the College farm. And many people also did not like it at all, but he took keen interest in that. He will be holding the sticks to pump and while we collected the water and so on. So Amu was very very social and took part in all the activities of the College, and it seems sometimes as if he was a student, or even a College labourer, because he worked in every sector of the environment.

Now he was also very religious. During his time there was a prayer group of the College. And we met at the African staff mess hall, Wednesday about 4 a.m. in the morning. We spend about one hour there and then we go back, praying. We prayed for people who were in disaster, particularly we prayed for Rev. A.J. Badu's wife who was mentally deranged. We were praying for him, and among the staff members were Mr. Pupilampu, Mr. Boateng, Mr. Martinson, and many others.

Q: *Did he start the prayer group?*

Kwansa: He started the prayer group. Every Wednesday 4 a.m. we met to pray. And we prayed also for work at the College, for the sick people, the poor people, people in disaster, and people who had to be helped. We prayed for them.

And as I said, he was a composer, and composed the first 25 African songs, and later on he composed many, many other songs. Very inspiring, and very encouraging. During all this period he was a bachelor, and he devoted his time to his teaching, to his composition and to his agricultural work. And we actually liked his examples and life very, very much indeed.

Q: *There was this Aggrey Memorial Club.*

Kwansa: Aggrey Memorial was founded in Achimota, and I think he was instrumental in this exercise.

Q: *What else can you remember?*

Kwansa He was very jovial, and he thought of the well-being of other people, and even during the social activities of the College students, he will join us even in physical work. At one time we were asked to convey benches from the church for a ceremony at the College, and he joined us, carrying the heavy seats on his shoulders to the College. On one occasion he was confronted by the Principal of the College, Mr. Ferguson. 'This is work for the students, not for you, so stop.' Anyway he laughed but continued to take part in this physical labour. These are some of the things. He was part of the College life and he worked for the welfare and success of the College and was very much appreciated by the Europeans, particularly the European members on staff.

Q: *They liked him?*

Kwansa Oh! Very, very much. Well these are some of the things that I can remember about him.

Q: *Can you tell me a little bit about the choir, the dance ensemble. The first performance, I hear was at the Colonial Secretary's residence at Ridge. And then there was another one at Palladium Hall.*

Kwansa: Yes we were invited by many other groups and organisations to play. It's not only Atumpan, but Odurogya. And he himself will prepare the Odurogya. And he brought them in tune. You see that was a very wonderful thing. The heavy male voice and the female voice, and the intermediary ones. All these

things worked together. And it was through his instrumentality that we have Odurogya being played at funerals and so on today. All these came from him.

Q: *What was your experience of the performance at Ridge and at Palladium?*

Kwansa: Yes, we were also on one occasion invited to the Ridge Church and it was a memorable thing. People were so much enchanted, and people both Africans and Europeans, and that raised the reputation of Akropong Training College.

Q: *Can you say a little bit about the College Prayer group and the attitude of the College authorities towards it.*

Kwansa: Well, it was not a public, but a private organisation consisting of people who were Christians and naturally believed in prayers. It consisted of selected people and if you are not devoted, you could not be a member of this prayer group. Because 4 a.m. they don't go out to call us, but you know Wednesday 4 a.m. you have to get up and go to the African Mess Hall for the prayer. And we used candles and lanterns and so on. And some members of staff when they realised this, joined gradually, except the Europeans. But it was an asset to the College.

Q: *And were you also reading the Bible apart from praying?*

Kwansa: Oh, yes, yes, we based everything upon prayer. The first thing is scripture lesson, then exposition and explanation. And then we based our prayer upon scripture.

Q: *Who was doing the exhortations? Were you doing it in turns or...?*

Kwansa: Well, the College pastors who were members participated in this in turns. Sometimes Amu himself frequently. Then Mr. Asiedu, Martinson, Boateng, Puplampu and so on.

Q: *And this is long before you even had the general devotion for the whole student body?*

Kwansa: Oh! Yes. As I said this was a private thing. We met early on Wednesday Morning and then we had College service, general service Sunday evening. And that actually molded my life and strengthened me in my work as a Christian.

Q: *And so this is one impact that this early prayer and morning devotion had on your life.*

Kwansa: Yes, it had great impression upon my life. And I am really very, very grateful to God for meeting these exercises at the College. The College evening services were very, very solemn, very impressive. That actually helped the students to build up their Christian lives.

Q: *And this idea of the prayer and the exhortation, the Wednesday morning ... Did it have a name, what name did you call it?*

Kwansa: Well, we called it College Prayer Group.

Q: *Where do you think Mr. Amu got this idea from? Because this was long before the PCG will think about the BSPG.*

Kwansa: That is quite correct. But you see those days the African lecturers or teachers at the College were living together, sharing life together, experiences together, meeting together. It is from these associations that they had the knowledge to form the prayer group. Then again there were some wayward students and they felt that they must help them by praying for them. Sometimes they will invite them specifically to the prayer group and pray for them. That actually helped the social life and Christian life of the College.

Q: *Did you say Mr. Amu took the initiative?*

Kwansa: Well, I can't say that he took the initiative, but he was instrumental and very prominent in the running of the prayer group.

Q: *Back to his influence on you. Sometime ago you told me that you were planning to go and work with him in Achimota. Can you share that experience?*

Kwansa: Well, he had interest in me when I was a student and I was a member of his Instrumental Band. And then on one occasion he visited Abetifi Middle School where I was teaching. And I had taught his song 'Afe Ato Yen'. And he stood quietly listening. And after the singing of this he congratulated me, and took more interest in me. Because he found that I had actually taught the music to his liking. And then later on he recommended me to the Achimota College staff, that I could be a help to him in the research for African Music and Culture. And then he mentioned that he had a student who could be helpful to him. So the Principal wrote to Mr. Macmillan and Rev. SS

Odonkor, the Synod Committee executive. And they invited me from Abetifi to Accra and mentioned this to me, showed me the letter of invitation and asked whether I was interested, and I said yes, I was a member of the Instrumental Band at the College. And so they allowed me, and even said I could start with the research while I was teaching at Abetifi.

And so from there I got a carver, a specialist who could make African drums and so on from Ashanti, and he came down to Bukruwa near Abetifi, and got Twenedru and cut it and shaped it and gave me a set of seven drums for the Bommaa. And then again I got a chief drummer from Abetifi called Yaw Obiri, a very good drummer. And he also came to help me. Actually he was my instructor. And then I heard of one from Nkonya, who was a good Odurogya specialist. And I invited him and engaged him, and he also taught me the music and how to play. And I organised some of the students to join us. So in the picture you will see some of these Odurogya, people, yes big things, small and big and so on.

And I had also this at Abetifi, and it was wonderful. Sometimes the Adontenhene will come to see us and congratulate us, and got himself involved. So it was a very pleasant and very successful enterprise. Now, this I did for about eight months in 1942 and then towards the end of the year I was invited to Accra to see the Moderator and Mr. Macmillan. They said they wanted me to go to ministerial training. I said, Ah. You have allowed me to do research into African culture, I have got my drums, Odurogya and other things. I have started, I am doing well. Ah! They said, that is quite correct. But we want you to go into the ministry. Anyway I had to listen to the voice of God. I abandoned all this and went to Kumasi, the Joint Theological College to start the training there.

Q: *The time that Mr. Macmillan and Rev. S.S. Odonkor gave the permission that you could do the research thing, they already know that the Church had had problems with Amu over the use of these drums. Why did they go back to it, why did they recommend you to go into it as a staff of the Church?*

Kwansa: Well, they felt that it was an honour for the Church to get somebody from the Presbyterian Church to help Amu in doing this research. And as I said, the Europeans were very very much fascinated and interested in the work of Amu. The Moderator, Rev. SS Odonkor too was interested. You see the main decision that terminated Amu, was a Synod Committee decision and there were people who actually appreciated the work that Amu was doing. But that

was a corporate decision, But Macmillan was very much interested in Amu's work, together with S.S. Odonkor.

Q: *Who was Macmillan?*

Kwansa: He was secretary to the Scottish Mission. He was teaching at the Training College. He was a lawyer, he was well educated, and wonderful scholar. And he was the housefather of house two and a very very good and impressive teacher at the Training College. Now afterwards, the Secretary to the Scottish Mission left. The Scottish Mission promoted him [Macmillan] and sent him to Christiansborg to be secretary to the Scottish Mission and also to help in the administration of the PCG, particularly on the Education and financial side.

Q: *What about your interest in the drums? Did you leave it completely?*

Kwansa: When I went to the theological College at Kumasi, the drums were left at Abetifi. I had wanted to give them to Patience Asante, who was a musician and was teaching at the Krobo Girls School. She was much interested, but later on I realised that my mother in law had disposed of them to somebody else.

Now, I will tell you something. When I was invited from Abetifi to Christiansborg to meet Odonkor and Macmillan, I had my own reservation. But he said don't mention what he had discussed with you to anybody. Don't take advice from anybody. But I didn't like it very much... removing me from the research I was doing and from going to Achimota and so on. And I confronted them and said you had already released me to do the research work and to prepare for Achimota. They said, yes, that is true. But we want you to go into the ministry. So from there I went straight to my grandfather who was chief of Sekyikrom. He was one of the chiefs of Akwamu. And I asked him whether I should leave the research I was doing to go to train for the ministry or I should... what should I do? Now my father was there as a minister. He was at Dormaa Ahenkro, and I did not consult my father at all. I didn't mention this to my father. Because he will say, come on, go to the ministry. So I abandoned my father completely and went to see my grandfather, a chief, whom I thought would support me. Now I went there one evening and he called my uncle. My grandfather was Anna Sekyi Agyakwa, Krontihene of Akwamu. But he was chief of Sekyikrom and my uncle was Kwasi Manu. And so they consulted together and asked me to

come very early in the morning. The following day at 4 o'clock my uncle woke me up and took me to my grandfather and he said, Kwansa, you brought a problem to us. I said yes. Let us ask you a question before we reply. I said, okay. So he said, well, if Mr. Adisi, that rich man wanted to send you to Accra by his car, but then at the same time I will also like to send you to Aburi to see your grandmother. And in those days you had to walk. So which errand will you take? I said, grandpapa, if you ask me to walk to Aburi, I will go to Aburi because you are my grandfather, and here is my uncle. I will do your wishes. He said, okay, you know the Presbyterian Church of Ghana trained you, you attended Presbyterian Schools, you went to Akropong. You trained as a catechist and they want you to train as a minister. Why should you abandon that and go into African study and drumming? So if the church want you to train as a minister, you must go to Kumasi to train.

Aha! I had a bad shock. So how I left Nsawam to go to Abetifi, I couldn't tell. And within two weeks I had to prepare to go to Kumasi. And for the first few months I was not myself there. But later on I forgot about it all. I prayed about it, and I agreed that I had been called by God. So I accepted the call. And today I am very very pleased that I humbled myself to accept the call from God.

Q: *What other influences did Dr. Amu have on you? I realised that the last sermon that you preached in Kaneshie, you were in cloth.*

Kwansa: Yes, yes, he did that and he said we shouldn't be afraid of our African practices and culture and so on. And that influenced me a great deal. And so from that moment I thought of myself not as a Westerner, but as a Ghanaian and studied African culture and customs and traditions and so on. And that has also helped me a great deal in my ministry today.

As a Synod Clerk, we went to Dormaa Ahenkro to get the Dormaaahene to register as a communicant, to be a communicant paramount chief. That was extremely unheard of thing, and a great impossibility. But because of my background I advised Synod Committee to allow that and to meet the traditional Council at Dormaa and to put before them certain things that should not be imposed on a Christian paramount chief. And so they agreed and deputised myself, Mr. Sam Prempeh, the Prince Sam Prempeh, Sam Prempeh's father, the Moderator's father. Then Mr. Peyer, Basel Mission Secretary, Mr. Agyeman, one of the senior presbyters at Kumasi, and some other people. And we met the Council at Dormaa Ahenkro, and we put

this before them. Even the session, Presby session at Dormaa did not like the idea. They spoke against it. They said the Omanhene should play his role as Omanhene. He couldn't do certain things, and leave certain things. So he couldn't come in. Secondly if he came in as a Christian Omanhene, he might be influencing them to take certain decisions from him and so on. So thinking of his greatness they didn't think it will be proper for the church to take him as a communicant. Anyway, we met the Traditional Council, and we told them what we had come to do whether they will allow the Omanhene to be a full communicant member of the Church, or what? And they said, Tell us what you will like us to accept, to do? So we said he should not be performing heathenish things, praying to the ancestors, asking help from them, pouring libation and feeding the stool, and feeding the ancestors on Odwira or Ohumi day, and so on. And he will be entitled to one wife. At that time he had not married. And other things. And they thought of all this and said, what about, dancing. And we said, Oh he could dance. What about celebration of traditional days. Well, they are traditional days, they are social occasions he should attend. He should be in council. And what about palanquin? I said, yes, you must carry him as a paramount chief and so on. All right, then on such occasions we give food to the ancestors, we go to their houses and so on. What about that? He has to give the food. Then I said, have you not got Okra, the paramount chief Okra. They said he has got one. I said all right, the Okra should do that. He shouldn't do it, as a great man he shouldn't do it. They said okay. Then the performance in the stool room. But I said you have got stool chief, Gyaasehene. And you want to do all this, and the Akyeame. They have to do all this, and not the Omanhene. They said okay. And then there were some other things he shouldn't do. But then eventually the Council decided that they shouldn't be a stumbling block between their chief and God. Nobody should restrain a person from serving God. So if you want to be a full member of the Church, we agree. With other things, customary things, we have sub-chiefs who will be doing all this on his behalf. But then again he also said, before he will agree to be Omanhene, if he was being installed they shouldn't kill a sheep and splash the blood on his feet, because Jesus Christ has redeemed him, had cleansed him already with his blood. And no blood is superior than Jesus Christ blood. He will not like a sheep blood. When he was installed as a chief, they slaughtered a sheep, but they didn't pour the blood on his feet. They splashed the blood on the ground in front of him and he was relieved of these things.

Q: *And you were the chief negotiator in all this? (Negotiating the terms on which an Omanhene can become a full member of the church).*

Kwansa: Yes, I was the spokesman and the chief negotiator because of my background with Amu, with the traditional research I did and so forth and so on. In one of my research I went to a stool room and nobody will be allowed to go there with his shoes and other things. So I agreed, I wanted to go. So I went there in my cloth, in my sandals. At the entrance, I put off the sandals, and there was water, and some leaves, *edwere*, you have to sanctify yourself. I did that, and sprinkled the water on my forehead and on my chest and then I entered the stool house.

Q: *As the Synod Clerk?*

Kwansa: Yes, this is our tradition, and we must know our tradition. We must not condemn things we don't know. So I wanted to see what it was in order to speak against or for it. So I went in there, I saw the stools, and I stood there and the Nkokosuafohene, was there. The chief Kyeame was there, and they poured libation and gave *oto* to the stool and they did all other things. And I looked at all these things. What I realised was that, they accepted the stools as shrines, particularly for the past chiefs. And that was their customary belief, you see. So I was standing there. I was looking at all these things. I came out with a different mind. So we have to investigate, we have to look at these things, we have to examine them scrupulously before you speak against or speak for that. So at the moment I agree to many of these traditional things. As a result of this, I prepared a report for Synod at Kumasi, that was 1953 or so, 'Christianity and African Beliefs'. It is in one of the reports of Synod. And that has been a guide. Even in our new Constitution, they have mentioned certain things that a Christian could practice on traditional occasions.

Q: *So your association with Amu helped you very much in all the years that you served as Synod Clerk and Administrator to resolve some of these knotty gospel/traditional problems.*

Kwansa: Yes. In my association with Dr. Amu, I got into all these things. And also I was allowed to do the research. So I did the research and I came out with a conviction. For example when I had my drums made, the person said I should perform some rites. Give the drums eggs and chicken, and rum and so on. I said I couldn't do that, but if you want to do that, you can do that. So he did

all this before he brought the drums to me. I saw the eggs, and the blood, and all the other things and I washed all this away. Now they told me that I had to be very particular about the rooms, especially on festive days, Odwira, Akwasidae and so on, because if the drums are there and they are not played, *nsamanfo* will come and play. So I must be very careful. So I wanted to find out whether this was true or not. Now one day, it was drizzling, and the drums were out on the veranda at Abetifi where I was teaching. And then I heard ko, koko, koko... drumming. What is that? Is it so? So I opened my door slowly and looked out. It was the moon waxing so you could see something. So I stood there looking at it. And boys put buckets, and kerosene things along the eaves of the building to collect water if it will rain at all in the night. And the drops from the eaves, dropping in the big drum, make bum, bum. And the buckets kom, kom, according to the size of the drums. So it looked as if they were playing drums. And I could see my drums in the veranda covered with cocoa sacks, you see. And there was nobody there. And so with determination I went to the drums. Nobody was playing the drums, but the buckets and kerosene things were playing. So I laughed. The following day I reported this to my staff and went to tell the ...my instructor in drumming, and even the Adontehene. He warned me, the Omanhene also warned me, that I will experience these things on special festive days. But I told them that I heard something, I came out and it was no *nsamanfo* playing. And that was also an experience.

Q: *This, Nana Agyemang Badu you were talking about. Nana Agyemang Badu, the Dormaahene.*

Kwansa: Yes, that's Nana Agyemang Badu. Later on he continued and took his doctorate degree and came back with something. And he is also related to the Akwamu stool. At one time, I think 1650 or 1660 the queen mother had twins, two boys. And when it came to selecting a chief, they were grown up. Then some of the people supported Obuom, that is the second child. And other people supported Atta, the first child. So the Dormaa people, there was no Dormaa people. But some of the Akwamu people who supported the Obuom, took him as their chief and left Akwamu and went up to Asantemanso in Kumasi, and then to Dormaa and settled there. Dormaa, *ɔdo ni mma*. So he went there. Even the queen mother joined them, and called them Dormaa, *hwa ɔdo ni mma*. So they went there to Dormaa Ahenkro and stayed there. So Dormaa people and Akwamu people are the same people. At

the moment they have a constitution, regarding them as a body corporate. They work together and decide on....

Q: *So for all those years that you served as Synod Clerk, were you in contact with Amu?*

Kwansa: He was very pleased with me. Even when he retired and went to Peki I visited him. When he was sick... He was attending Synod at Akropong when he had the accident. I visited him and we shared things together.

Q: *Apart from this photograph, do you have any other College documents regarding the period that you stayed there?*

Kwansa: Yes, this I could have told you, but many people come here for research work and so on. But when I show them my documents, they collect them promising to bring them back but they don't do that. There was a particular research student pastor from Wuttemberg. She introduced herself to me as Osofo Yaa. She went to Head office, went to the University for her research work, then heard of me, came here, and collected many, many things from me here, and promised to bring them back, to give them to the Registrar of the University of Ghana, to put all in an envelope, leave them with the Registrar from whom I could collect them. So later on I went to the Registrar and he said nobody left anything with him, but I should try the Department of Religions, University of Ghana. But I have not been able to see the person in charge. And they said, possibly if I could see the head of the Department of Religions, I might possibly get this from there. All my valuable documents and photographs. So until I get them, I will not be of any help to people who come here for research work.

Q: *When Amu was at Akropong as a tutor, what was his relationship with the Omanhene. Nana Akuffo and Ofori Kuma?*

Kwansa: Yes, Ofori Kuma came although he was a lawyer before he was enstooled. But he took the traditional side of the paramountcy. He was a regular church goer. He attended the service every Sunday if he was at Akropong. They will be playing the Kyeresie and so on and blow the horns, that he was coming, and will come. After the service he will go back. And Amu took great opportunity of this. He often went to Ahenfie, particularly on traditional days, and stayed with the drummers. And when they were performing their rites, and so on. He will go just to stand by and to look at all these things, and to

learn something from them. So he got much of his experience from visits to Ahenfie, especially during traditional performances and so on. Not only at Akropong. He went to Kwahu and to Ashanti and to other places.

APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH PROF. J.H.K. NKETIA

[Prof. Nketia was the first African Director of the *Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon*. He was also the founding Director of the *International Centre for African Music and Dance*, of the same University. This interview took place in his office at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon on the 19th of August, 2004.]

Q: *For how long have you known Ephraim Amu, and how has he impacted your life?*

Nketia: Well, my first encounter with Dr. Amu, was at the Presbyterian Training College, 1941 or so. Of course I knew about him. That is the important thing. I knew about him when I was in Middle School, even Junior School, because there were students of his who came down to my hometown in Mampong and we all knew a few of his songs and so forth. So the name was familiar. And when I went to the Training College in 1937 he had left and Danso was there carrying on with his work. And so we knew, everybody knew about Amu. And my first real encounter with him was in 1941. I think it was, or the 40s and that time..., I am forgetting now. But he had just come back from his trip to Britain. He had just come back, you know. And on his return he came to Akropong to greet us. And he came to a morning service in his usual *Batakari*, wearing *fugu*. He had a white handkerchief tied to his wrist. And when he had the opportunity of talking to us, he talked about what he had on his wrist. And then he opened that up and showed us beads. He talked about the beads and said he treasured the beads because they were put on his wrist when he came back, and that was how his people welcomed him. The symbolism of the beads, you know, something they treasure, and Amu, somebody coming back being looked at in this way as a kind of precious bead that has returned and so forth. That was the thing he talked about, not about his music. So that made a big impression on me. Why was he talking about this? We know him to be a musician. But it also told us something about the values that motivated him and so forth.

Then after that, because I was playing the Harmonium for the morning service, he came to me and that is what is reported in Eric Akrofi's book.¹ He asked, 'young man, I gather you are interested in composition', just like that. And I said yes. And then his first words to me were, 'Don't copy my music'. You see, that was very blunt. I wasn't quite shocked, but later he gave a couple of examples and said when he hears the music of Danso and Otto Boateng he could hear strains of his music. So, that was the reason for, 'don't copy my music'. But then he added, saying that I should go back to the traditional people and learn from them, because that is the way

he did it. That was really what put me on to research and the serious study of traditional music and so forth. And the explanation that he heard strains of his music in Danso and Otto Boateng came after he had told me to go to the traditional people. And he wasn't saying to me directly that I will learn from the traditional people how to compose traditional music. He just put it like that.

A few months passed, and Rev. Ampofo who happened to be his nephew, was also on the staff of the college, and he came to me and said that he thinks I should go to his uncle and stay with him for a few days, and talk to him and so forth. And I suspected later that in fact Amu had made that suggestion, but he put it that way. And I said 'yes', I will be glad to do that. Later on, this was arranged and I went to visit Amu for the first time. He was in Achimota. And I stayed in the house. Yawa² was there and I was there for a week or so. And again that was a very important encounter, because then we were at home, we will eat together, and he will go and teach and come back and so on. And he wasn't actually instructing me, but he was making statements now and then, all which were relevant to the kind of thing he had in mind. One of the things he did that was quite striking was the fact that he played the piano every morning, a Beethoven piece that he liked and which he seemed to have mastered. And that was the person interested in Traditional African music. Then he asked me to play something by Bach, and then because I was interested in the keyboard too, he gave me a piece. A book of Bach's two part inventions that he wanted me to play. This thing is also revealing. And the piece he played that he had learnt from Bach's album was quite interesting. So this became my exercise. Every day he goes to work, I will be there learning to play the piano, to play Bach's two part inventions. But again, he did not really tell me why he wanted me to do that. I discovered that it was because he was very interested in counterpoint, something that he tried to master when he was in Royal College, and thought that I also should be sensitive to that way of organising music. Anyway, that was his kind of strange thing, but I liked music and I did this.

Then the other thing was composition. He showed me some of his manuscripts of work, of his field work actually, of songs, traditional songs that he had written down. And the thing that impressed me was that he did not point it out but he showed it to me. I saw that he had the words and then he had solfa. This was the way he did it. Because if you know the text and you know the solfa, you can read it and you can sing it. So that the solfa was sort of reminder. And this was also an indication of his understanding of the relationship between the music and the language. Because language follows the intonation. I mean the music follows the intonation of the language and the rhythm and so forth. So you don't have to write it down elaborately

and start. If you put the solfa down you can memorise what the traditional people are teaching you. And in addition to showing me his exercise books he also quoted a few examples of the phraseology that they liked. One was '*Akyem ne hwan a ne nam tere nkwan. Anomaa pa bi aka nsuogya*'. (What good is the weaver bird to be boiled in the soup. A better bird has been left on the other side of the river). That was something very poetic. And he appreciated the way it was constructed, and talked about it and thought that if I was a composer I should be interested in that way of making statements and so on. Then on another occasion he told me, well, when he wants to compose, sometimes he goes to the park, and goes around with a note book and ideas that occurred to him, he writes them down. And sometimes out of this will emerge themes that he wants to use for writing. And so he was suggesting that I do the same. Well, I tried it, it didn't work with me, because I am a rural person, and when I went to the park all the squirrels and so on were more interesting for me. I couldn't concentrate. But I came back from the park and in the room sitting down, I wrote something else, my own. And then I read it to him when he came. He was fascinated by the way I also got some imagery and so forth. But those were like conversations and so forth, not instructions. And yet they were very illuminating. So that was the way he did this thing, through examples and so on. He will take me to a rehearsal with a choir he had formed at Anuqmla, or I will go and listen to something that he had taught the students and so forth. Everyday he will play something on the Atumpan and rehearse this before he will go to school. And it could mean that this was something he was going to play or to remind himself of what he was going to play. Before worship on Sundays, he plays the hymns that he is going to play in Church. He rehearses them in his house on the piano. Again that impressed me. So, little things like that, watching the life of a musician, and also his work with his bamboo flutes and so forth. So, that was the kind of exposure I had. I was even interested in the comments sometimes he makes about the food. 'When you get married and your wife brings the food first time and so forth be bold and make some comments. If it is not quite what you want, be bold because you are beginning your life together and she should know your tastes'. So again he is like that. He finds a subtle way of saying, 'perhaps the salt was a little too much'. So Yawa was going through that, finding his taste and so forth. And then of course the irony or paradox in his life became clear. When I see him in the morning he had his own kind of night gown, pyjamas, not the traditional. It is more like a Western, a northern gown or something. We go down to eat and then we have our calabashes for water. And things like that, earthen dishes and so forth. But you know, coming back from Europe, he is a British tea drinker and so forth, he doesn't miss. And we drink tea in a tea cup, not

in a calabash. You see, he loves jam and so forth. So again the lesson I learn from that was that, he was not shutting the world around him, excluding himself, but taking whatever he thought was good or best for the kind of life that he lives. And so this kind of selective use of things from outside, was also very important. And it goes through his music. He was not ignoring traditional things but at the same time not ignoring some of the things coming from outside that could also be useful. So these were the important lessons I learnt.

After he had told me to go back to my activity, to old people and learn from them, I did that, and that was when I produced my '*Akanfo Nnwom bi*' manuscript. And he knew I had compiled it. But when I was offered scholarship to go abroad, again I went to him and told him that I had been offered scholarship and I was going abroad to study linguistics. I spent the night with him. He woke up early in the morning and came to me and told me he had a sleepless night because I was going to do linguistics. 'Anybody could go and do linguistics but music requires somebody with another traditional kind of thing'. And he was sorry that it had turned out that way. And I said, 'well', this is the scholarship they had given to me and I am ready to go. Then he advised me what to do. 'Don't abandon your music.' 'Find some money to buy a piano when you are coming back'. So of course when I got to England, I was studying music in addition to my linguistics and so forth. He was very helpful in that kind of way.

Yes, linguistics was good. I went to do linguistics because I was appointed as soon as I finished my fifth year to the staff of the college. In fact, I started even teaching when I was in the fifth year. Benzies was the principal, and somehow he recruited me, and I was teaching music and Twi before the end of my year. And so as soon as I finished I went back to Akropong to teach. I was teaching Twi and I was the assistant to Akrofi, which was also a great, great training for me. Because Akrofi had been disciplined by his work with Stamm and other people and his linguistics seemed to have derived from Westermann and so forth. But what is more, Akrofi was in charge of reviewing manuscripts for the Ministry of Education, and if the manuscripts needed to be revised for publication we would go through it, and of course I was the person who made all the corrections as he suggested them. And then he would dictate the report that he wanted us to send. And I would write. And so I was a kind of amanuensis. And looking at the process, even little things like if you are compiling a manuscript, you write on one side of the page, I mean little things. And all the little marks you use for editorials to show that an 's' is missing. I mean all those little things, I was learning from him, while I also taught Twi, and because we had all learnt this grammar and things like that. But my literary interest developed first

because Amu had asked me to study traditional things. I transcribed all the songs. And second, because I was working with Twi manuscripts with Akrofi. And so both combinations were extremely important. And of course working with Akrofi, I became interested in what I call Twi classics, works by Keteku and all those people who were real masters of the language. So the style of Twi writing that had developed was something I was familiar with. And I myself when it came to writing Asante Twi and so forth, I wrote quite a few books because I had that kind of thing. So I connect that to Amu and Danso. Danso also worked with Akrofi for a while before I took over. So this interesting Twi writing, poetry and so forth, they are all connected. And I came back from my training in Britain. I went back to Akropong and again I met Amu. I went to greet him. That was when he was starting his new Specialist Training College course for music people. He told me exactly how he was going to do it and so forth. And then I had a visit from his students while I was at Akropong. They all came over and they listened to some of my compositions and so on. And then from Akropong I went to the new University College as a Research Fellow in the Sociology department. So that was where he became interested in what I was doing at that point. It was beyond what he had been doing. And I remember when I did a programme for the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation on religious music in contemporary Ghana, I came to a section where I dealt with what he had done, and mentioned some of the early observers, Bowdich and others, and what they had said and so forth. He was so impressed. As soon as the programme finished he called me and told me he had learnt a lot from that thing. Again, that was very important for me. Because here was the great man showing his appreciation of this research thing. And from then onwards he became very close, always talking about issues and so forth. And our friendship then grew from that point on, a little different than when I went to visit him and so forth. Because now I was on the faculty and so forth. And everything just went on like that.

When the Specialist Training College was moved to UST, he went there, and was quite active with the Presbyterian Church choir and so forth. And anytime I went to Kumasi I would go to him of course. And anytime he came to Accra, he would also look for me. So it became like that, like father and son, kind of relationship.

You know, when we started the Institute of African Studies he was very interested in what was happening in Accra. He had been active in Kumasi with Alex Kyerematen and Bertie Opoku, doing something at the Cultural Centre. And so when we started our programme here he was watching our progress. I was offered a fellowship by Rockefeller Foundation to go to America and do some advanced studies. And the person who came here to look at our progress and the things that we

favour of a person like Sarpong who could be a good president, God-fearing, everything and so forth seemed important to him. And so he went around talking to people and campaigning. I have forgotten the year, but he was really campaigning for this kind of thing. Well he wanted this man to be President. Well, I can't remember at what point this became the urgent thing for him. I am not sure. Certainly not when Nkrumah was there. Perhaps in the interim. But he spent his time going to people and talking to them and trying to influence their opinion. But again it tells us something about his values, thinking that Bishop will be a good statesman because of his way of looking at tradition and so on and so forth. And so it was a kind of projection of what his ideals were.

Q: *Can you tell me something about the Amu Choral Society?*

Nketia: Well, this was the enthusiasm of some of the boys from the area who got this choral society together. But like all things we start in Ghana, continuity became a problem. The idea was good but those who initiated it were not able to continue. There was the Amu Choral Festival too. There was the Society and Choral Festival which was supposed to be a national thing and again that started and it hasn't continued. It is like the Kpakpo Thompson Festival. That has been sustained, but that was the initiative of some people, and it is linked with the Accra Cultural Centre that has enabled it to live on. But Amu's was a national festival, and yet nobody is taking responsibility for organising it.

Q: *What was your role in instituting the Amu Memorial Lecture*

Nketia: That again was my idea of finding something for Amu that would be national, and also to bring Amu's academic interest and contribution to the foreground. This contribution wasn't very big, so internationally Amu wasn't known. But when you look back and think of the ideas that he had and the fact that he was starting from African music that had no written theory, and that he had been able to formulate some theory about rhythm and so forth, that to me was an intellectual breakthrough that I wanted to have recognised. He is not known outside Ghana as a musicologist, because he didn't write academic research papers. But it seemed to me that the thinking that went into the formulation of some basic theory, some basic understanding of traditional music, was very important for the work that followed. When I made the proposal to the Academy where everybody knew him, we thought we could have something similar to the Danquah Memorial Lectures which were already well established. We thought it would be easy for the Academy to do it

APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH MISONU AMU

[Misonu Amu is the second daughter and third child of Dr. Ephraim Amu. She is a musician and Research Fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. Her MPhil thesis is titled, 'Stylistic and Textual Sources of contemporary Ghanaian Art music composer. A case study: Dr. Ephraim Amu'. This interview was recorded on 19 August, 2004 at her office].

Q: *What do you recall of your father?*

Misonu: Perhaps I have to start with the fact that, even though we did not stay in Peki, in childhood we are able to speak the language fluently, and it is so because our parents spoke Ewe with us at home, and because we did not school there, he taught us to read Ewe, and I remember there were books in those days, Ewe reading books. Apart from that we learnt the language through reading the Bible. We used to have early morning devotion at home, and we would take turns in reading. The old man will choose a text, we read, and he will explain things to us. So that is how we learnt Ewe, and I am proud to say that I read the Bible in Church. At the Police Church, I am one of the Ewe readers, and I must say that all my siblings are able to read Ewe. We speak Ewe fluently. Apart from Ewe we speak Ga and Twi, and sometimes we would speak Ga or Twi at home and he will frown at us. When we want to tease him actually, that is what we do. We switch on to something else and we enjoy it. He himself speaks Twi very fluently. And I know that when he was in Akropong he had a book. He actually learnt proverbs from the elders and the right way of saying things and so on. So, but Ga, he doesn't speak too fluently. And I remember that each time he spoke Ga, he would end up with English with the late Mojaben Dowuona, and we were very good family friends. We started from Achimota. Each time they met, they start with Ga, and half way through, they continue with English, because he wasn't too fluent in Ga. I don't know why, perhaps, well I really do not know, but he wasn't fluent in Ga. So that's it.

And I think that speaking your own dialect at home is something we must encourage. Because the generation or youth of today are not able to speak their own mother tongue, and I think it's a shame. I think it's a big shame, and parents should be advised to speak their own mother tongue with them so they do not lose their identity. And they should also try and take them home, because a lot of these people do not visit home, let alone their

pick out of the lot. So these are some of the things. And I remember when he composed Adikanfo Mo! This was after Fraser's death. Achimota School had a day set aside for something towards the founders day. They hold a service for the departed in the year, and this was when they were going to hold one such, when Fraser died and he composed Adikanfo. And I remember he taught us this song at home, even before he came to teach it in Achimota School. So sometimes just the family will sit and sing. He used to teach us in parts and somehow we had all the four parts. I used to sing alto with my mother, my elder sister and nephew who was living with us sing the soprano. My father himself will sing the tenor, and the two boys will sing the bass. And then there is this song that he taught us, 'Agbexoxomo', when the Amu Choral Festival was inaugurated. I think it was in the early 1970s. We learnt this song and sung it there, just the family, as a family. So we termed that one the family anthem.

Q: *Can you tell me something about the Amu Choral Festival?*

Misonu: Oh. That Amu Choral Festival died. Who was it that tried to resuscitate it, and it still couldn't work? I think it was during Abdalla's time or Nana Brefuo's time. But somewhere along the line they tried to revive it, but it still wouldn't work. They tried to revive it by organising this kind of choral festival. But in those days the Amu Choral Festival used to be celebrated every year, here in Accra, at the Arts Centre. And various choirs will perform Amu songs. A similar one was started for Kpakpo Thompson as well, and it is followed way after years after the Amu Choral Festival. I do not know who instituted that, but I think that it is still held every year. And I think something similar was started for J.M.T. Dosoo. I am not sure whether that one is also held every year. I don't know how active that one is. The Otto Boateng family also used to organise a choral festival in his honour yearly. I think it was the first one which was held at the Police Church. Myself and Dr. Asiana were invited to join the family to sing one of his songs. We joined Otto Boateng's wife and daughter to sing, '*De enti na wonnye endi, na wodaso gye ekyi nye*'. So we sang that song. It is a beautiful song and its one of my favourite songs of Otto Boateng.

So there are these yearly things for some of them. And what else do I remember? Oh, yes he used to teach us to play the piano. And I remember when you got back from school, in those days we were running two sessions, and we would close at four. So when we got back home, we were given some

snacks to eat and then we will go for our piano lessons and after that, when we had any home work, he will help you to do these things. Then we have our evening meal. And we used to eat together at table as a family, ever since we were together as a family.

I remember this nephew of ours who lived with us. I remember this was at Peki, and we were going for a meal, and the old man kept talking, and talking, he was saying something and we were waiting for him to pray, he always prayed when we were going to eat. And we were waiting for him to pray, and this little boy was hungry. All we heard was, he rattled the words, and we all said amen amidst laughter. And so we started eating and the old man himself had a good laugh...

And then when we came back home to Peki from Kumasi. That was after his first retirement in 1960. We came back to Peki and he formed a choir in 1961 and named it 'Nenyo Hadziha'. He held two practices every week, Tuesday and Friday, and he had a set of Fontronfrom drums and talking drums. They were upstairs in the porch. So every evening when it was time for rehearsals, he will go and play the drums to assemble the members. And then they will start their rehearsals. When we were home on vacation with our friends, we all used to enjoy learning the songs. So we looked forward to it each time we were going home on vacation. So that is why we got to know most of the songs.

Our father came back to Legon in 1962. My mother didn't come immediately. At least myself and my two young siblings. So the three of us were there with my mother in Peki. The other two were in secondary school. We joined him in Legon late 1962. So he was here till he finally left in 1971. That was the final retirement. But then he was a member of the Board of Trustees of Valco. And I think they used to hold meetings every week or so. We used to travel down when it was time for the meeting. His service came to an end with Valco. So he would only come to Accra when he needed to see some people to do something, or perhaps bring his vehicle for servicing or so.

But he kept himself very busy. When he retired, he had a farm at Sanga, a village on the Ho main road. There is this village there where he had a farm, a very big farm. Actually it was his grandfather or so who set up that area. And somehow we used to go to the farm with him on vacation, and we all looked forward to going to the farm. Because when we went, we left very early in the morning at dawn, and my mother will just prepare some breakfast, tea and some sandwiches we took along, and then in the afternoon

we break for launch. But then we normally prepare the food on the farm. So just like anybody will do on the farm. We used firewood, set up stone, and whatever we wanted to cook we will just do it. Sometimes we ate it, and the leftover, just before we left the farm whoever was interested will eat it. Sometimes he will eat the food and tell us that when we get home and my mother cooks the food, he will just tell her he is not feeling too well, his tummy is not treating him too well, so he will not be able to eat just because he's already had enough, and he wouldn't eat at home. So just a way of teasing our mother. Sometimes he will tell her, 'Your food is not nice, I don't think I will like to taste your food today. Anytime he does that then we know he has had enough on the farm already and just teasing. And he doesn't eat fufu, but you know, our Yam festival is in September, and on that day when the new yam is outdoored, every household will prepare 'Oto' in the morning, and later in the day we will pound fufu with yam and prepare soup. And some people will just go dishing out to relatives and on. And even though he didn't eat fufu he will insist that we should pound fufu and so he will be in the kitchen when we are preparing the soup and make sure that everything is going on well. And when the food is ready he will come and actually pound the fufu for us. At some point we shall ask him to go and leave us in peace to do our own thing. Even though he will not eat fufu he likes soup. And that is one thing. At every meal, at least either launch or supper, he must take soup before his food. That was something he did regularly. Everyday he will take some soup before he eats. And he tried to pass this to us. But as for me it wasn't my favourite... That reminds me. He loved his turkey, every Christmas day. Right from when we grew up we noticed this. In Kumasi, in Achimota we were very young we went to Kumasi when I was two years or so. Every Christmas time he made sure my mother roasted turkey, and he will invite friends to a party. And there was this white Irish friend of his, we used to call him uncle Ike. He will come, dressed himself like a chef, and slice up the turkey.. Oh in those days we used to have fun. Friends will come and we will all have fun. Those who had children come with their children and we also did our own thing. But turkey, even until his last days. Every Christmas we made sure we found him a turkey. And we will all go home at least for Christmas, But the last Christmas he wasn't able to enjoy that turkey.

Back home at Peki, Easter time, the Asafo gathered and paraded through the town amidst firing of musketry. And that was something he was

APPENDIX E

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH FRED AGYEMANG

[Mr. Agyemang was a former Director of the Ghana Institute of Journalism and biographer of Ephraim Amu. The interview took place at his residence in Dansoman, Accra on 8 July, 2002]

Q: *Who was this gentleman you were talking about who had his early childhood training... an Ewe young man?*

Agyemang: He was an Ewe young man who had contact with the Basel Mission in Osu. You know that the Basel Mission was only in Osu in those years before 1847. And when he saw the work of the Basel Mission, Wolf was sent by the Bremen Mission.

Q: *What was the name of this young man?*

Agyemang: That wasn't part of my relevant research, but his name can easily be found. He was the one who introduced Rev. Wolf who was staying with the Basel Missionaries at Osu to his father. He told the Basel Mission that if Mr. Wolf can go and see my father, the paramount chief of Peki Blengo, Mr. Wolf can open his church there in my father's town which is the capital of Peki traditional area. You see, Wolf was one of four Bremen missionaries sent not to the Gold Coast, but I think Dahomey or so. And their mission then died, leaving only Wolf, so frustrated, despondent and he lodged with the Basel Mission at Osu. And I think this boy must have been a servant to one of the Basel Mission. So he said 'if Mr. Wolf can go with me to see my father at Peki Blengo, who is the paramount chief'. So they walked five days or so to Peki Blengo. And Wolf was able to start the E.P. Church of which Amu's father, became later, a member of the EPC. And so formative years of Amu had some Christian input from his father. Now his father was very musical. He sang a lot when he farmed, or when he did his carving. And so the whole family was a musical family. When they went to farm they sang, when they were returning from farm with the loads on their head, they sang. There was plenty of music in the family.

Q: *There is one thing that I want to ...*

Agyemang: When Aggrey died I was in standard one in 1927 at Nsawam, and I remember, an ecumenical service was held at the Nsawam Methodist Church, where the life of Aggrey was preached and discussed at that service. And

Aggrey was the first Ghanaian to go seriously to study in the USA. All along our lawyers and doctors had rushed to Britain. Aggrey himself wanted to study theology at Colwin Bay in Wales, but a former sergeant in the West Indian Regiment stationed in Sierra Leone and Cape Coast, called B.J. Small, later on retired from the British West Indian Regiment which was stationed in Sierra Leone and Cape Coast and went to study theology in America. It was he who wanted to establish the AME Zion Church in the Gold Coast. He took Aggrey, gave him a scholarship in 1898 or so to America and before Aggrey went he had been to what was to become later Mfantsipim School under Rev. Dennis Kemp. He was a Methodist minister and missionary. His name is closely connected with the Methodist Kemp at Aburi near the Aburi Girls Secondary School. He taught Aggrey and others at Mfantsipim.

That influence of Rev. Dennis Kemp went on to Aggrey. Kemp's philosophy was that, learning should be hand, head and heart. No use learning by head alone. And that was also the philosophy of Guggisberg. So Amu, although he cultivated his head, he also cultivated his hands. Amu was a farmer. Look at how he carved his flutes. He cut and carved his own flutes, taking after his father. So these are some of the things that influenced Amu during his childhood.

Q: *There is one important thing that you mentioned about a magazine of WASU which Amu read often after which he became a changed man. Did he himself say he became a changed man...?*

Agyemang: He said he changed his...It was there that he became interested in African culture as a thing of pride. And according to him the article was written by Danquah in WASU. The title of the article was, 'West Africa at the bar of the family of nations.' Danquah, you know, was a traditionalist. He came from a Christian home. His father was a Basel Mission evangelist before he became a Christian...Danquah's father came from Dwabeng to Akyem Abuakwa, Kyebi. And he was warmly accepted at the Kyebi court, because he was an ace drummer of all the state drums...

Q: *So Danquah's article was the one that triggered off Amu's 'revolution'. Did he show you a copy of that magazine?*

Agyemang: No...

Q: *You made a point about Kobina Sekyi. This is in connection with Amu's changed attitude... Now the reference to the Blinkard...*

Agyemang: One thing about Kobina Sekyi... He went to court because of the court procedure, but when he came home he was always in native dress.

Q: *So was it Amu who mentioned Kobina Sekyi or it was your own interpolation...?*

Agyemang: I knew about Kobina Sekyi that he was a seeker of African culture.

Q: *Was it Amu who was making this point about Kobina Sekyi and the Blinkard, or it was your point?*

Agyemang: No, I knew from my research reading that Kobina Sekyi was an advocate of African culture, even though he came from Cape Coast and Cape Coast people live 'Abrofosem'. Because he's been to England should he forget his cultural background. So you see, that's why he wrote the Blinkard. And he lived it by wearing Kente Cloth. Now you may read this book, 'Gold Coast and Ashanti Readers' parts I & II. It was written by, is it EJP Brown, Cape Coast. He wanted to introduce Ghanaian cultural books in the Colonial days, but you see the Colonials didn't take it up. So it became something like a library book. But if you can get it...

You will see something about this cultural renaissance. That was the aim, cultural Renaissance. All these too must have impacted Amu.¹ And you know Amu was born in 1899, and Kobina Sekyi in the 1880s.

Also Amu said, ah, when they went to church he saw people like his father and some of the older people who didn't go to school unable to sing. But when they are at home and singing African hymns they had good voices and sung well. So he said no. These people are Christians, they have got good voices. We must make something for them, even though they cannot read. Songs such as 'Onipa da wo ho so..' Simple memorable words... you can't forget it. That's how he started at Akropong. Unless I forget, there are very few of Amu's students now alive, especially those who were members of the ensemble. Rev. Okae-Anti, Rev. Kwansa and Nii Odoi-Atsem. These are people who knew Amu well. I think Okae-Anti used to help him in cutting the bamboo. These are people who can tell you something about him.

Q: *Did this letter that he wrote to the Synod Committee asking for his re-instatement... You reproduced it in the book.*

Agyemang: He gave me. All those letters.

¹ There is evidence to show that Kobina Sekyi may have influenced Amu's life. This is contained in a sermon Amu preached in 1951 titled, 'These upsetters of the World'. In this sermon, reference is made to 'a teacher's refresher course held in Accra' in 1926 addressed by Dr. Aggrey and others including Rev. J.B. Anaman, J.P. Brown and Mr. Kobina Sekyi. Mr. Sekyi's topic was, 'How to reach the minds of African pupils'. (see C. Kingsley Williams, *Achimota: The early years (1924-1948)*, London: Longmans, 1962, p. 21). It is likely Amu read the 'Gold Coast and Ashanti Readers' mentioned here by Mr. Agyemang.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW WITH PROF. GILBERT ANSRE

[Gilbert Ansre is a retired professor of Linguistics and United Bible Societies Translation Consultant. He is a nephew of Ephraim Amu and worked with him on the staff of the Institute of African Studies when it was established in 1962. Prof. Ansre granted me this interview at his residence in Adenta, Accra on 6 September, 2004]

Q: *What do you recall of your experience of Ephraim Amu?*

Ansre: My first experience of him was his marriage in 1941/2. I was not present but my parents went to Accra for the wedding because his wife was my cousin, and my uncle, Mr. Yao was living in Accra, and Mrs Amu's sister was staying with us and was going to school with my parents in Amedzofe and Aflao.

Also, later, Kofi the youngest member of the family, came to live with us in Worawora in Peki. And so we have been closely related together before the marriage. Now, the first personal contact I had with him was in 1943 when they had lost their first child. Their first child did not live. Also my father and I took the Adra Bus and went to Achimota to be with them. We went to visit and to greet them, and my father and he chatted. You see, they were fairly close in school, my father was a year behind him and they taught together in Peki. He was teaching in Blengo and my father was teaching in Avetile. So over the long period from 1920s apart from school time till they died, they were closely related. So we went to see them in Achimota as a result of the loss of the first baby. It was later that Amewo was born. Then another time, this is when I was in secondary school, whenever we came on vacation, if I came to Accra we would go and visit them and they will come and visit. I lived with my uncle, Mrs. Amu's father. So coming into town meant their coming and we going to visit and so on. Throughout the war years, yes. And then when I began to go to secondary school I did a lot of sports and whenever we came to do sports with Achimota, I will go home. His house was my house and we will talk and chat and so on. Occasionally I thought it was very important to go and visit them because I was in the school team and I was going to play football and my cousin, Mrs. Amu was very anxious to go to watch the football match. Mr. Amu was not interested at all, and he said, 'oh Kwame, how are you, you have come to play, you must enjoy yourself. You must play very hard and take care of yourself'. And he coiled in the sofa. And I was surprised he wasn't interested. But later on I got to know that that was his pattern of life. Some things will interest him, some things don't.

We came back. A European had come. I don't know exactly who. It could have been Herskovits or somebody had come, and they were talking about music. And one thing I knew about Amu, and I presumed that you have noticed it. He detested playing highlife on the piano. It was completely against his character. So the Highlife, that was popular Highlife, played on piano sometimes he did not like. I think you have to find out from Mr. Nketia whether or not this is actually so. And so sometimes when he was composing he would take off time to talk with me, ask about life and so on. He would also say a few things about how to live, how to work hard and so on. Later on he left Achimota, and when he was in Kumasi I had joined the Institute of African Studies. And he was very happy that I had done linguistics and I had gone to the IAS in 1961 October. And soon the IAS was inaugurated. It had been running unofficially for a year. A speech of Nkrumah contained authorisation that we should start an MA course in African Studies. He said that and left what to do with us. And at that time Peter Schille was the Director. Prof. Nketia was his associate. Ivor Wilks was the historian and I was the linguist. And two others had arrived just before them. I think it was in December. I had come in October. John Stewart and Andrew Wilson, linguists had come. John had started becoming a specialist in Akan and the Volta-Como languages. So it was clear that he would cover those. Andrew Wilson's interest was in Dagbani, and I had specialised in Ewe, but I was also conversant with others so that we shared the work in linguistic terms. There was also the grammar, the cultural, the oral literature aspect and so on. And it was in that area that Amu was keenly interested. In the beauty of the language, the use of the language for music and so on. And sometimes I will be interested more in the grammar. And I will say, you know, this one doesn't go like that. He says, 'why is it so'. And I say that grammar does not take it. And we will chat a lot about it.

Q: *What about rhythm in music and language?*

Ansre: You see, all our languages have their own rhythmic patterns. And you find it in normal speech as well as in musical forms. A little more exaggerated in the musical form than in oral literature. But Amu captured that very early so that he ... You know one of his earliest ... which was called Yaa Amponsa, which he converted into a school play song very, very early 1920s. He did it first in Ewe, and the Ewe is 'Gana kpo...'. which also is of course, 'Yaa Amponsa, gyae aware' ... That rhythm, Amu captured very very early. How to symbolise it in music, that is for Nketia and for others... But his capturing of the rhythm was already there. So that by the time he did 'Yen ara asase ni', in the Peki dialect first of all ... There are several dialects of that. I suspect even the Twi one may have some others before it. So he kept refining it and

refining it. And the rhythm was there. So much later, ‘Odomankoma..’ all those have the rhythm in it, which the linguist is not interested in to begin with. He is interested in the grammar and morphology and how it fits. However, while we were doing this and developing how the IAS would be, the idea of music, dance, rhythm and so on came to the fore. I think we have to honour Prof. Nketia for having the insight to go and request Mr. Amu back to be part of this period. It was at the same time also that he invited Opoku Mawere, an artist turned choreographer. I don’t know if people knew about the art work of Opoku Mawere, very very good artist. Then he got into choreography and then our local dance types so that the School of Performing Arts had its beginnings in the Ensemble and in Amu’s work and Nketia’s own. So the three formed a very formidable section of the music performing arts section, which was jeeringly called ‘Dondology’. But the character/personalities involved... yes this is Dondology, but it means it is an extremely profound subject. And it was also at this time that we began to think that if we were going to do graduate work in linguists, it was necessary to start undergraduate work in Legon. So that postgraduate preceded undergraduate work. We had to start linguistics department in order to be able to have students enough and so on.

However, the period that Mr. Amu was in Legon was very very useful for me. And also because we got to know each other more. We lived two doors away from each other at Little Legon and did a lot together, including family relationships. We did farming a lot, and did a lot of farming in Legon.

So far as his being a Christian was concerned, Amu in my opinion should have been a moderator of the EPC long before his time. However, his departure from Akropong to Achimota diverted him from the centre of church administration. But he was regularly at Synod and had a word to give- exhortation, advice, current affairs, Christian morals and so on. Each time he came to Synod, he had a point to make. As a thorough EPC person in his beliefs, his practices and what he did, there was no doubt about it.

Q: *It is difficult to know where he exactly belonged, EPC or PCG.*

Ansre: Well, that is the point. Well, I think it is a point that we have missed completely in our Presbyterian fellowship these days. You see in the period of the World War I about 1915/16, the Bremen Mission was taken away, and later on in the early 1920s, the Scottish Presbyterians came to assist. And people at that time always viewed the two churches as one general unit and it was at that time that we both got the term Presbyterian. We were not Presbyterians before. But the strong effort to let us be part of the Presbyterian tradition was expressed by our churchmen as well as by the

Scottish people. We wanted, especially the Ewe section of this mission movement... It was suggested that the Methodist Church from Dahomey should become responsible for the work in Togo. Oh no, no no. They wanted people with the same reformed and evangelical tradition. This is how the Scottish Presbyterians became responsible for the present day PCG and the EPC. I notice that you had Beveridge having a say in Amu's thing. Yes, you see World War I, the uncle of this Beveridge was posted to Amedzofe. His wife was a medical doctor. And he was the Scottish Presbyterian representative in Amedzofe. Later on, this Beveridge left Akropong, and became the first principal of Amedzofe Training College. And so many of us don't see these distinctions at all. And it was so for Amu, it was so for Christian Baeta. In fact when I was ordained to be chaplain in Legon, I was ordained to be Presbyterian chaplain, and for all my years at Legon, 19 of them, I was responsible for both the Ghana Presbyterian and the EPC. There was only one Presbyterian Chaplain. So I will attend Synod here and I will go there. And we saw our work as expanding across both Bremen and Basel. Whenever I went to visit Bremen, when I had the chance, I will visit Basel as well at their request. And so there is something heavily lacking in the present situation. And I do not regard myself as being EP. I am a Presbyterian and a Ghanaian. Maybe that is why I have to be related to... So this is true in Amu as well. Now, remember that it was the same teachers that taught the missionaries. The Basel Missionaries and Bremen Missionaries studied together in Basel. They conferred a lot here. It was on the advice and encouragement of the Basel Missionaries that Wolf went to Eweland. Their contacts were here all the time. I suspect that two of them died in Accra. I had not gone to the Mission cemetery to find out. But I suspect that they are buried in the Osu Mission cemetery. And throughout until the 60s and 70s this was the way that things looked. And it is not surprising at all that Amu does not...

The third factor which I think is very important is that in our denominations we are not required to write credals for your Christian position. It is taken that they come from a background that has a wide spectrum. Some of us more conservative, some are liberal. That was not a muscle of the Presbyterian tradition. And so some of his writings were quite liberal. Some of the things he will write and preach, certainly his theology, his theological background was very wide and very liberal in many, many senses. His conservatism is not a practice. Africanisation is different from being a conservative. You see he is a thorough African, but he is a liberated African. He is not a conservative African. As far as he was able to see... The things that he knew about, he did not like to change. He did not like us to change the Ewe or Twi language, and have borrowings in them. He was completely averse to them. We used

to tease him... the Ewe word for bicycle is 'Gasó' . 'Gasó' means metal horse. He will use 'Gasó'. He will not use 'bicycle'. We tease him. If he is speaking Twi, he will say 'Dadeponko', and so on. Those things he did not know about which had cropped into the culture and the language before his sensitiveness were aroused he would assume, he will accept. He will not say, 'give me bread' na bread. He will not say 'na brodo'. He will say, 'na aboloo'. Not knowing that 'aboloo' is an old Dutch word ... He will not like you to say, oh 'na armchair', or take a chair, or allow his children to say 'miko chair ve nam'... He will prefer people to say 'ko blego ve nam', forgetting that 'ablego' came from 'ablogwa' from the Twi, and so on. And so he was a very interesting personality.

And he was much, much older than me but willing to condescend to be my friend. And he had this journal going for many years before I met him. But whenever he made an important journal entry he will tell me, 'you know this is what I wrote today, what do you think of it?' and so on. And some of the older ones, he will show me. Things he wrote in 1948/49 about Nkrumah and his predictions, as well as things, all kinds of things about... I don't know if you remember the Legon Observer, ... became libellous and was sued. Amu was among them... He was on the editorial board which was sued. Our people were not sophisticated to realise that they should plead guilty quickly. So one evening in Legon, Ofori Atta, Paa Willie, came to visit him. They were very good friends. It was in my house. And then as soon as he got out of his car he said, 'Kwaku, menua Kwaku, munko nko paakyɔ oh.. munko nko paakyɔ o'. To go and purge themselves at court. And Amu did not like it to begin with. But after he [Ofori-Atta] had explained the legal implications of what the Observer had done.. they seemed to be defying the court. They changed their views. Christian Baeta was on it. Amu was on it. And so they changed their opinion. You know these are people who when they understood what was wrong, they genuinely went and apologised.

Q: *Why did he write his memoirs in Ewe?*

Ansre: I think that Amu's writing in Akan was based on his convictions that he would have larger audience and larger readership. It was not that he knew Twi more than Ewe. Not at all. And whenever he crossed the Volta, he did everything in Ewe. When he came this side, his audience was here, and he believed that he had a much larger audience. He also believed that people did not know enough English. And so it was important to utilise the language that the great majority of the people spoke. Thirdly, he believed that Akan should become the lingua franca of ... He was promoting that very much. I am sure that, that was his position. That's for him. That's for himself. It

was not for readership. He wrote for himself and he lived... He did not live Akan at home. It was in thorough Ewe. And so his journal was his personal life. One concern that is very prominent. Here in this chapter, he said that his father did not have the right notes when he sung. How can we make it so that the people will sing to their own liking. He even talked about correctness and incorrectness. They sung a song incorrectly. He always had a very clear mind what the European position is. That was the correct thing here. But he wanted people to sing freely. So that it was a question of the largest participation, the best audience and so on. And so why would Amu choose Twi? For him, that was the most popularly spoken language and the readership. But his journals, that is just to keep himself. With himself. It was not even meant for Beatrice Amu. It was not meant for his wife. It wasn't meant for me. So the vast entry, most of the interviews were in Ewe, occasionally English.

He never gave a Twi name to any of his children. The names were relevant... 'Amewo' means human person... 'Onipa na edikan'. You see it's a way of naming. But I don't know of any person called 'Amewo', before his daughter. But Ewe naming is extremely productive. Yao.. my student wrote on proper names in Ewe and they are very productive. So Misonu means 'be united'. But it has to do with the Ewe reunification. During the time that they were pursuing the Ewe unification matter very seriously, and there was a division between the Ewe who had been to Togo, and Ewe who had been in the Gold Coast, where Nyaho Chapman and Ephraim Amu were cut off, because they were Gold Coasters, and the other people who were mainly Togolese, were... So that the whole Ewe unification plus the refusal to be slashed off precipitated Misonu. Nuigbedzi is Kwesi's name... So when it got very personal his Ewe showed through, but he was always willing to be available at a larger audience when it was necessary.

Ga songs he composed were mainly aimed at Ga listeners. You see, he mainly composed for occasions. When he and Opoku Mawere came, a lot of things went on. One of the things I knew actually because Nketia and I talked about it a lot, the hope that we will get Dr. Amu, and all his works, and we will have a complete... when he was going we will present him and the whole world with ... we did not succeed. This is why he was followed to Peki. And since they were musicians, they knew each other and did more in the IAS, but as far as language and linguistics were concerned we were doing as much together. Thinking through what the IAS, should be doing, teaching, researching, new directions, it was a great deal of fun.

Q: *Can you comment on Amu's interpretation of Acts 2?*

Ansre: ... Liberal in the sense that he was willing to see theology more from a scientific and scholarly position than the hemmed down, and it has to be a miracle... and so on... No. So that, what I mean by that... I am sure Amu knew that the visitors in Jerusalem had come from the Roman World. I am sure by that time Amu knew that Koine Greek was the language that was spoken all over. I am sure if you look at Barth and all the theologians whom he may have read or whom his teachers may have read, and interpreted to him. They will not be surprised at all.

So I am not surprised at all that Amu would interpret as I am sure his theological teachers and many normal Presbyterian teachers at the time will see that this was not so much a miracle as the personality change that took place in the people as the miracle. And not that they could hear, although Luke probably wanted it to look like, 'How come we all understand this in our own languages?' The theological training that we had, that I had as well, was a clear knowledge that it was a Graeco-Roman world, and anybody worth his salt travelling to Jerusalem at that time, should be able to speak some Koine Greek. So there was no need for a miracle to happen for them to understand what the message of God was... What was their mother tongue? That is the question. It did not say these were Medians and so on. There were people from Media, from so and so, and you see, I think that they were challenged afresh. They spoke a common language, they were not going to speak their language at the festival. In fact... it was possible they may have Aramaic, and some Koine Greek and some Hebrew if at all... In order to arrive in Jerusalem, Jews coming to the Passover festival. The miracle was in their seeing the incarnated Christ talk to them about what matters. Not to have heard it in the X language of the Median, and the X language of the Cappadocians, and so on. We know that the Koine Greek had spread to all these places. And so it was not the finesse of their language that I think was being spoken about. The fact that Yahweh was showing them a different dimension.

Q: *The reason I am saying this is because elsewhere in his sermons, and that happens to be one of his earliest sermons in 1929, preaching on Acts 2, he talks about diversities in cultures. So you are wondering what is happening. With the same passage that he used to support the diversities that we have in God's divine economy, here in this sermon which comes much, much later in Kumasi or so, he talks about Koine Greek, back to, if you like, that use of a global language, you're wondering what has actually happened?*

Ansre: That is what I mean by when we look at a person's life, sometimes he uses an instance or a story to emphasise an aspect that he thinks strongly about at a given

time. And later on the same story can be looked at slightly differently. So I think he has grown. He has grown. First of all when it is necessary and convenient, he sees that universality. When it is necessary and convenient he sees the goodness in the diversity. But you see Amu did not use food types as an exemplification- music, yes, clothing, yes, language, yes, but not food. Not facial marks. There are some things that are very obvious which he would have used. Facial marks. We would have all these tribal marks. He did not use them. Why? Because they were not relevant in Akuapem at the time. Do you see my point? I think the cloth matter was very much part and parcel of the socio-cultural upheavals that were going on there. So that the Akuffo tradition and the Ofori Kuma tradition which were in conflict, I think he got caught up at the middle of it at a point. I think he was caught up and that became very important for him. But it should not have been... the case. Both could have disengaged very easily and be alone the wiser.

The things he wanted and the things he didn't want, ask Kwesi. But the things he didn't want... He did not want a state burial. He didn't want an elaborate coffin. Not at all. He and I talked about it. And I said if anything, *Wawa*... He said *Wawa*, and I said personally, really personally, if there was a really large enough paper carton... I will prefer that. He laughed, and he said why. I said then I will rot quickly. And he laughed. And he didn't want... of course he never liked wake-keeping. Whether he did earlier and changed, but by the time I knew him wake-keeping was something he did not like at all. To sing, to be solemn and so on, but not the elaborate thing.. Somebody died and he was present, he would go quickly and console with them, give a gift and leave...

...Actually you dealt with his church behaviour before you dealt with his traditional behaviour. I think the other way round. He came from a kingly family. The kingly family... although his father had become Christian, his father had a lot to do with who is to rule whom and so on. So his father was a very important elder and kingmaker before he became a Christian and continued to be thereafter. So Kwesi is a kingmaker. Kwesi is a cousin of the present chief who is dead and he's not been buried yet. And as to who is to rule and so on, Amu's father had a lot to say about it. So he was an elder ... I think he was a presbyter. But he was also a councillor in the court and a kingmaker. So the two were not in as much contradistinction as people thought.

I am glad you mentioned...Have you seen Meyer Burgit's book. It's very important because it zooms on Peki Christianity. It has to do with the variety of Christianity in Peki, beginning to end, all the way to recent days. There are flaws in it. I find for example the presupposed BM policy the same as the actions of the

missionaries at post. What we know very clearly was that the mission boards had different views sometimes from what actually took place. And frequently the missionaries were reprimanded for behaviours which was not ... and not only...

I am sure that one that influenced them very very severely, certainly my father, and I am sure Amu too.. the reader, the Ewe reader series that they had....

APPENDIX G

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE GOLD COAST.

Labadi,

P.O.Box 115, Accra.

23d June, 1932.

To the Members of
The Native Music Committee.

Dear Sirs,

The Synod Clerk has intimated that, because of our present financial difficulties, meetings are to be avoided, and consequently the Native Music Committee may not meet in a body for some time.

You are, therefore, at liberty to continue your research in Native Music, and are to study carefully both language and music of such native songs as, in your opinion, could be adapted for use either in the Church or in Schools. You may also collect as many songs as you can, and forward them to me at your earliest convenience.

Any expenses in connection with the sending of these collections should be submitted to me.

A. S. Odonkor

CONVENER OF THE NATIVE MUSIC COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX G

LETTER FROM REV. S.S. ODONKOR TO E. AMU

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE GOLD COAST

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P. O. Box 115,
Accra.
23rd June, 1932

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S. S. Odonkor
CONVENOR OF THE NATIVE MUSIC COMMITTEE.

APPENDIX H

PETITION BY E. AMU TO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE GOLD COAST, SYNOD COMMITTEE

Presbyterian Training College,
Akropong,
18th July, 1933

Reverend Gentlemen,

I humbly beg to approach you, the Synod Committee of the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast, in the humility and trust with which a loving child approaches his loving father to open his heart to him with a matter which is of no small importance to me.

For almost two years I have been prohibited from preaching in cloth because of the belief that this practice might destroy part of the glorious inheritance of the church. Indeed, this Church has a glorious and rich inheritance, and it is the duty of all her children to value this inheritance, not merely by holding to it and passing it on as they received it, but using the past as a true foundation on which the present may be built up into a greater and better inheritance. This I believe, is how "A scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an house holder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." The late Professor David Smith's explanation of this passage is worth quoting at this juncture: "The true Christian teacher reverences the past and prizes the rich and ever-growing heritage of truth bequeathed from generation to generation, and at the same time according to the Lord's promise, ever guides the faithful into a larger and deeper understanding of His infinite revelation; he welcomes the fresh light which is continually breaking from the Eternal world."

Reverend Gentlemen, I can assure you that it is not presumption on my part when I say that the practice of preaching from the pulpit in African attire which I have adopted recently is a genuine result of the influence of the Spirit of Christ in my heart. Hence the resolution you passed against this practice directly affected me, in that for almost two years now, I have been denied the privilege of preaching to my own people, notwithstanding the willingness and burning desire in me for preaching the Gospel of Christ. This is really a very heavy burden for my heart to bear, and a sharp thorn piercing my Christian heart. I am convinced that it is nothing either opposed to the Spirit of Christ or lowering the standard of Christianity for an African in African attire to preach the Gospel from the pulpit to his own people in like attire, anymore than it is opposed to the Spirit of Christ or lowering the standard of Christianity for an African to preach the same Gospel in an African tongue to his own people.

Furthermore, I shall refer you to an extract from one of the numbers of "Review of the Churches" as below:

"How to bring Africa into a realisation of God in Christ is the task of evangelism, and it is a task which we do not approach with the meagre knowledge of our fathers. For the result of years of investigation and closer knowledge of the people have revealed much. We know in a fashion which was not possible years ago what Africa believes, and where is the meeting place between our Christian faith and the faith of the animist. What once was condemned as evil may today be recognised as rational, and not necessarily opposed to the Spirit of Christ. So the tendency is to preserve more than we destroy, yet not to lower the Christian standard of conduct but enrich the world with a purified variety." This expresses what I have long felt and which I believe is being increasingly recognised by a large number of our countrymen and which may briefly be put thus: There were many things in the Africa of the past which were either evil of themselves or were associated with evil. Many of these things are capable of being purified and made sublime by the purifying Spirit of Christ and made worth preserving and being brought into a civilization which is not an imitation of another civilization, but one which has grown out of Africa-containing the best that Africa has to contribute and taking into itself the best and most desirable things of other civilizations. Who can say that thus we will not build something new, something which will bring blessing not only to Africa but to mankind?

Reverend Gentlemen, I acknowledge both the authority of the Synod Committee of the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast of which I am a member, and the necessity of that authority. I am aware also that the Committee is exercising their power for the safety and progress of the work of the church, and that whilst it is their duty to check as far as they can, anything that tends to destroy the smallest part of the glorious inheritance of the Church, they are equally ready to support anything which, prompted of the Spirit of Christ, comes to help to edify this glorious inheritance.

Reverend Gentlemen, I therefore earnestly appeal to your Christian sympathy and ask you to withdraw the resolution which forbids preaching from the pulpit in African attire.

I beg to remain,

Reverend Sirs,

Your humble petitioner,

E. Amu.

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM REV. D.E. AKWA TO E. AMU

No. 8/S.C./1933

The Gold Coast Presby
Church,

Mamfe,

6th September 1933

AFRICAN SONGS.

Dear Sirs,

I am directed by the members of the Synod Committee to inform you that you are requested to meet at Aburi and discuss all matters in connection with African Songs. Rev. D. R. Asong has been authorised to be the convenor. The expenses-fares and subsistence- in connection with this meeting will be defrayed by the Synod fund.

The members of the meeting are: Rev. D. R. Asong Messrs A. Holm, J.Y. Donko, and E. Amu.

Please, acknowledge receipt.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

D.E. Akwa.

Synod Clerk.

To Mr. E. Amu,

Akropong.

APPENDIX J

THE SYNOD COMMITTEE
THE EYE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AMÉDZOTE. 11. 10. 1953

Mr Annu tsloa,

Weyo wò agbatà m̀tsoa d̀edie, eye meda
fpe na wò le ete. Bwama n̄m̄ngac be, mielè mia-
fe k̄ap̄k̄ap̄e wo ge le ho le nov. 9. + 10. dei, eyate ete
wu awa fpe mi le afimã le 9. dei.

Mestlo agbatè na Rev Okwa n̄, abe alesi
nedo adawu nam. la, ene, le mase nya me
ken.

M̄iãfè Syn. Committee be, matia wò be, esi
wòunḡe awokata fe nya la koe zu nya fe mia
k̄p̄le afi m̄iẽtsawo d̄on̄e iguti ka, abeke m̄elè d̄ok̄ni
wò le ge le go sia me le mia gbo?

M̄elè k̄ink̄u dem be ḡl̄s na w̄ia w̄i, s̄im̄o
le fe ylia me be, eye miãfè f̄ap̄s be, am̄siãm̄e
made seminary k̄afi miãf̄e abe miãf̄ala
ene. Me am̄af̄e m̄el̄s be, yeadee o la, mate
wu awo do na mi o. k̄uf̄alawo fe apt̄m̄eso-
m̄awo ta miẽp̄o am̄af̄awo m̄erumã, ḡake miẽḡe
le ewo ge aso o.

Abia wò u mia viawo fã,

wò

R. S. Kwami,
Syn. Clerk.

APPENDIX J

TRANSLATION OF LETTER FROM EPC TO E. AMU

THE SYNOD COMMITTEE
THE EWE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

AMEDZOFE,
11.10.1933

Dear Mr. Amu,

I got your last letter safely, and I thank you for it. I'd like you to know that we are holding our meeting in Ho on 9 and 10, therefore you can come and see us there on the 9th. I wrote to Rev. Akwa as you advised me so that I understand it [the matter] fully.

Our Synod Committee says I should ask you that since it is only cloth wearing that is the only matter between you and the people over there, how are you going to hold yourself on that account when you come to us?

I am begging you to tell our children who are in the 4th year that it is our rule that everyone should go to Seminary before we appoint him as a teacher. If someone does not agree to go, he will not be able to work for us. Because teachers were few, we received some people like that, but we shall no longer do it anymore.

I greet you and our children well,
Yours, R. S. Kwami
Synod Clerk

(translation from Ewe by Prof. Gilbert Ansre)

APPENDIX K

The Wald. P. Ch. Church

Synod Clerk, P.F.

Minneapolis

25th October 1932

Dear Sir,

Accept my sincere thanks for your kind and helpful reply to your question about Mr. Tom, I had to say that Mr. Tom cannot continue in our Training College in the next year because of the following reasons:

(1) Mr. Tom attempted to introduce the fashion of preaching with a heavy garnish of discrimination that such practice offend the feelings of educated and non-educated community. He was approached politely by the church through the ex. Synod Clerk the present Moderator and also by two eminent persons that practice but he could not hear them. Several other people spoke with him but it was of no avail. He was then forbidden to preach if he would not preach in European dress which he wears when attending school. He agreed to do as he was told.

(2) Mr. Tom has brought into the College different sorts of drums, horns etc. beating the drums and traveling

- (2) pupils not to read the scriptures
- The Synod Committee finding the result determined that the Church ordered him to remove the drums from the college
- (3) but he defied the authority of the Synod Committee and continued the practice almost a year. He was informed

if he will not obey the orders of the Synod Committee will be transferred at the end of this year, but he has

④ disregarded the warning and has made our Synod held on 13th October 1933 understood that he would not give up his duties and will continue till the end of the year and leave the Training College. The Synod Committee considers this behaviour as actual stubbornness and will decide on his transfer to the Ewe Presbyterian Mission at its next meeting in November.

⑤ We regret the necessity of his removal, because of the good work he has done, but this behaviour is unbearable. We have been very patient with him.

With kindest regards,

Your brother in Christ,
D. C. [Name] and
S. [Name] Clerk

Rev. P. S. [Name]
Quod [Name]
Am. [Name]

APPENDIX K

TRANSCRIPT OF LETTER FROM REV. D.E. AKWA TO REV. R.S. KWAMI

The Gold Coast Presbyterian
Church,
Synod Clerk's Office,
Mamfe,
20th October, 1933.

Dear Sir,

Accept my sincere thanks for your kind letter of the 11th instant.

In reply to your question about Mr. Amu, I beg to say that Mr. Amu cannot continue in our Training College in the next year because of the following reasons:

- a.) Mr. Amu attempted to introduce the fashion of preaching in the native garment or cloth in the pulpit which practice offended the majority of educated and non-educated community. He was approached politely by the church through the ex-Synod Clerk, the present Moderator and one or two eminent persons to stop that practice; but he would not hear them. Several other people spoke with him but it was of no avail. He was therefore forbidden to preach if he would not preach in European dress which he uses when attending school. He agreed not to preach.
- b.) Mr. Amu has brought into the College different sorts of drums, horns etc, beating the drums and teaching some pupils how to beat the drums and how to dance. The Synod Committee finding the result detrimental to the Church, ordered him to remove the drums from the College, but he defied the authority of the Synod Committee, and continued the practice almost a year. He was informed if he will not obey the orders of the Synod Committee, he will be transferred at the end of this year, but he disregarded the warning and has made our Synod held on the 13th October 1933 understood that he would not give up beating the drums, and will continue till the end of the year and leave the Training College. The Synod Committee considers this behaviour as actual stubbornness and will decide on his transfer to the Eve Presbyterian Mission its next meeting in November.

We regret the necessity of his removal, because of the good work he has done; but this behaviour is unbearable. We have been very patient with him but he is self willed and obdurate.

With kindest regards,

APPENDIX L

Ewe Presbiteri Hame,
Peki-Avetile.
1. 1. 34.

Osofo kple Afetsi Lɔlɔtɔwo,

Medi be mana mianya be woyom
le Achimota nusrɔfe ga la na dom abe nufiala ene tso fe
sia fe gomedzedzea. Nye ha melɔ xɔ do la, eyata
mele afimã yi ge adze do gome le fleti sia me.

Meda akpe na mi le miafe sese de ametiwo kata ta.

Nye miavi

E. Amu

To

of R. S. Kwami
Synod-Clerk
dzi

Na

Synod-Committee,
Ewe Presbiteri Hame.

APPENDIX L

TRANSLATION OF LETTER FROM EPHRAIM AMU TO THE EUE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Eue Presbiteri
Hame,
Peki-Avetile.
1.1.34

Pastor and Beloved Masters,

I wish to let you know that they have called me to the big school in Achimota, and I have been given work as a teacher from the beginning of this year. I also agreed to receive the work, and therefore I am going there to start work this month.

I thank you all for your sympathies.

Your son,

E. Amu

Through
Osofo R.S. Kwami
Synod-Clerk

To
Synod Committee
Eue Presbiteri Hame.

(translated from Eue by Prof. Gilbert Ansre)

APPENDIX L / A

OFORI KUMA II
Overseer of Ashwapim

Ref. No. _____

Ahenfe,
Akropong-Akwapim
Gold Coast,
West Africa.
3rd January 1933.

Dear Mr. Anon,

I was delighted to receive your telegram "safe into safe hands" and answer. But "Trade" not required.

I return the blessing of the Omnipotent to you.

I wish you health and greater Success for 1934.

"Au Revoir" for the moment

Yours most sincerely,
Ofori Kuma II
Akropong-Akwapim.

Professor Anon,
Paris.

APPENDIX L/A

TRANSCRIPT OF LETTER FROM NANA OFORI KUMA TO E. AMU

*Ahenfi,
Akropong-Akuapem,
Gold Coast,
West Africa.*

3rd January 1933?

OFORI KUMA II
Omanhene of Akuapim

Ref. No.....

Dear Mr. Amu,

I was delighted to receive your telegram “afe nto mfe so” and aseda, but “Aseda” not required. I return the blessing of the Omnipotent to you. I wish you health and greater success for 1934. “Au Revoir” for the moment.

Yours ever Sincerely,

Signed

Okuapimhene

Professor Amu

Peki.

APPENDIX M

Copy.

Prince of Wales College,
Achimota, Accra.
27th March, 1934.

Dear Rev. Sir,

Some time last year just before I left Akropong I saw you at your house and asked if I could be permitted to speak at the Synod Committee meeting to take place at Accra sometime in April next. You replied in the affirmative.

I am writing to remind you of it so that you might not forget me when preparing the agenda for the meeting.

Could you please inform me of the date of meeting?

With kindest regards

Yours sincerely,

E. Amu

Rev. D. E. Akwa,
Synod Clerk,
Mamfe.

APPENDIX M

LETTER FROM EPHRAIM AMU TO REV. D.E. AKWA
(TRANSCRIPT)

Prince of Wales
College,
Achimota, Accra,
27th March, 1934.

Dear Rev. Sir,

Some time last year just before I left Akropong, I saw you at your house and asked if I could be permitted to speak at the Synod Committee meeting to take place at Accra sometime in April next. You replied in the affirmative.

I am writing to remind you of it so that you might not forget me when preparing the agenda for the meeting. Could you please inform me of the date of meeting?

With kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,

E. Amu.

Rev. D.E. Akwa,
Synod Clerk,
Mamfe.

bring them down by one."

In this same issue of the Ashanti Pioneer, Kooko Edusei was reported to have said at Tawale: "He then asked how a Dagbani man like the S.D. Dondo could bring the government to the Gold Coast."

As a citizen of the Gold Coast I am deeply concerned about the path we take in our development. I consider these sayings as inflammatory and most irresponsible. I can understand when Kooko Edusei speaks in this way because one cannot expect anything higher from the sort of thing from him. But when a member of the cabinet of the Gold Coast Government makes such inflammatory speeches as to thus cast doubt on the honesty and sincerity of purpose of those in whose hands the governing power has been placed.

This is how I see affairs in the Gold Coast. We began in 1948 with bloodshed and forced the hands of the Government of that time to give us what we wanted. Having started with bloodshed we are bound to continue in bloodshed and end in bloodshed. Okomfo Anokye himself referred to the situation in these words: "We began this struggle with bloodshed, sacrifices and sufferings, and any body who would try to oppose the work of the party would have to resist it. I am not prophesying, I am

APPENDIX N

TRANSCRIPT OF LETTER FROM E. AMU TO DANIEL CHAPMAN

Kumase College of Technology,
Private Post Bag,
Kumase.
10.6.55

My Dear Daniel,

In the "Ashanti Pioneer" of today's date, Mr. Gbedema the Minister of Finance was reported to have said in his speech at Tamale a number of things. Among these I quote the following: 1. "If the constituencies in the North voted only NPP [Northern Peoples Party] members to the Assembly the party in power could, as it was humanly possible, and if they wanted to show "where power lies", deny the North of any development. Then there would be no development in the North" etc. 2. "Who was Kobina Sekyi at all? Which local Council or district Council did he represent? What authority had Kobina Sekyi to say that the Governor of the Gold Coast should not return to the Gold Coast? Only the elected representatives of the people in the Assembly could break the Government, and not the people without any political significance." 3. He declared that so far as they were in power they would use their power. They had not yet started to show 'where power lies', he said. But if the Ashantis would continue to throw soda bottles and behave lawlessly, then of course, Nkrumah would tell them, 'you all bring your guns,' and quickly they would bring their guns one by one'.

In this same issue of the Ashanti Pioneer, Krobo Edusei was reported to have said at Tamale: "He then asked how a Dagarti man like Mr. S.D. Dombo could bring self government to the Gold Coast."

As a citizen of the Gold Coast I am deeply concerned about the path we take in our development. I consider these sayings as inflammatory and most irresponsible. I can understand when Krobo Edusei speaks in this vein, because one cannot expect anything higher than this sort of thing from him. But when a member of the Cabinet of the Gold Coast Government makes such inflammatory speeches as this, one doubts the honesty and sincerity of purpose of those in whose hands the governing power has been placed.

This is how I see affairs in the Gold Coast. We began in 1948 with bloodshed and forced the hands of the government of that time to give us what we wanted. Having started with bloodshed, we are bound to continue in bloodshed and end in bloodshed. Nkrumah himself referred to the situation in these words: 'We began this struggle with bloodshed, privations and imprisonments, and anybody who would try to oppose the work of the party would live to regret it.'

APPENDIX O

Council of Reference

Dr. J. S. Ayida (Nigeria)
The Rev. F. C. Grant (Ghana)
Hoji, Jaob (Eritrea/Ethiopia)
The Rev. J. Alpaeyi (Kenya)
Bishop F. J. Ngalsam (Sudan)
The Rev. G. I. Olojede (Nigeria)
Bishop E. Sabiti (Uganda)
Bishop A. Stanway (Tanzania)
The Rev. S. M. M. Mbekeke (Nigeria)

AFRICA CHRISTIAN PRESS



c/o Faculty of
Science,
University College
P.O. Box 9184,
Dar-es-Salaam,
Tanzania,
East Africa.

Dear Mr. Amu,

23-11-65

My husband, Basil Chaplin, and I and our small son have just moved over here from Ghana. He has a UNESCO job based at the University. I think when you came to lecture at that Church Music Seminar at Kumasi early this year, he and Denys Morgan will have told you they were having to leave.

I hear that you too have made a move, and I do hope you will receive an abundance of blessing in this new work. It will not be easy to settle in, but the witness of someone like yourself in Liberia will be of great value, I am certain.

I was sorry not ever to have a chance of telling you of the new work I have been doing for the past couple of years, concerned with the Africa Christian Press. I have several times wanted to discuss it all with you, for I think you would be interested. It is a Christian literature venture with a difference, in that our main aim is to encourage African believers to begin to write about their faith. The thousands in the towns today, who have rejected Christianity, will not be drawn back to the Saviour by missionary writing - but they might well be helped by dynamic writing by their own people who know Christ.

In a nutshell that is the kind of challenge we are putting out, and Mr. Perry Draper and Mrs. Blaine Wilson of Monrovia have discussed it with me and know a lot about our plans. Here in Tanzania there is much Lutheran work, and I hope to have much fellowship in this literature work with them as well as others.

Now all this leads up to the query whether you would like to be kept in touch with Africa Christian Press, receive our newsletter, and feel free to send us advice, warnings and such like. One very big problem is that in every country the mature senior Christian like yourself is already far too busy to write anything. It is the under-25's who hold their pens with confidence and ask me, 'What shall I write about?' They have more time, and yet it is the maturer man's message that Africa needs and must have.

I won't go into much more detail now, but if you were interested in actually sharing in this work in any way, we would be delighted to hear from you and then I would write at greater length about all the various possibilities. Most of our books and small booklets are not going to be of the academic Christian type, but of a lighter nature so that they really and truly 'stab' the reader who may be a church member but not a very serious believer. It might be

APPENDIX O

TRANSCRIPT OF LETTER FROM JOYCE CHAPLIN TO E. AMU

AFRICA CHRISTIAN
PRESS
c/o Faculty of Science,
University College
P.O. Box 9184,
Dar-es-Salaam,
Tanzania,
East Africa.
23.11.65

Dear Mr. Amu,

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now, but if you were interested in actually sharing in this work in any way, we would be delighted to hear from you and then I would write at greater length about all the various possibilities. Most of our books and small booklets are not going to be of the academic Christian type, but of a lighter nature so that they really and truly 'stab' the reader who may be a church member but not a very serious believer. It might be that you had some particular theme in mind for some years, which would not take too much time to jot down in a chatty way. Or it might be that in Liberia you and a friend or two could share in some literature we are planning to show the possibility of 'a mind at ease' knowing the 'peace of God' even in the town situations of Africa today- the victory of a life lived with Christ. I leave these vague suggestions with you, and will be praying that perhaps the Lord may enable you to write even a small 'something', which will bring blessing to thousands on this continent. I will be looking out for a letter, but please don't let this idea of mine be a burden to you, and if you are not able to do anything at present, I do hope you will like to receive news and sometimes include the Africa Christian Press in your prayers.

By the way your Legon neighbours are here with us, Mr. And Mrs. Brian Harris. And we were talking with them about you the other day we would all like to know just what sort of work you are doing, but will understand if you are too busy to write! (Most people are, but we are grateful for the exceptions, and I know you will see what you can do.)

Yours very sincerely, and with prayerful best wishes from Basil and myself,

Mrs. Joyce Chaplin.

APPENDIX P

Presbyterian Training College

(FOUNDED 1835)

From the Principal
Telephone No. 3
Our Ref: AMC/86
Your Ref:



P. O. Box 27
AKROPONG, AKWAPIM
GHANA
21st July, 1986

Dear Sir,

LAUNCHING OF AKROFI-CHRISTALLER CENTRE
FOR MISSION RESEARCH AND APPLIED THEOLOGY IN
ACCRA AND AKROPONG-AKWAPIM

Peace be with you and the family.

I am happy to be able to write to you today and to inform you that the Chairman, Dr. Evans Asfom, and members of the Board of Trustees of the above centre humbly invite you to compose an appropriate song to suit the launching of the 'Akrofi-Christaller Centre for Mission Research and Applied Theology'. This centre has been set up by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in commemoration of the good works performed by these illustrious sons of the church; and also to carry out mission research and applied theology for Ghana and the outside world.

The dates for the formal launching of the centre are scheduled for 1st November and 14th December, 1986, in Accra and Akropong-Akwapim respectively.


Furthermore, the launching committee chaired by Dr. E. Bediako of Ridge Church will be meeting at the Presbyterian Church Office, Accra, on 12th August, 1986; and members should be extremely grateful if you would kindly join them there to finalise all arrangements on the composition of the song.

It is our fervent hope that despite your numerous engagements you would make time to undertake this all important assignment for the propagation of His word.

May the Lord keep you and the family as apple of His eye to enable you enjoy long life and prosperity.

I am most obliged.

Yours sincerely,


(S.A. OFOCHERE) REV.
PRINCIPAL

DR. E. AMU,
PKKI,
VOLTA REGION.

cc: The Chairman,
Board of Trustees,
Akrofi-Christaller Centre
for Mission Research and
Applied Theology,
c/o Presbyterian Church,
Post Office Box 1800,
Accra

APPENDIX P

LETTER FROM AKROFI-CHRISTALLER CENTRE TO E. AMU

Presbyterian Training College
P.O. Box 27
Akropong-Akuapem
Ghana
31.6.1986.

Dear Sir,

**LAUNCHING OF AKROFI-CHRISTALLER CENTRE FOR MISSION RESEARCH AND
APPLIED THEOLOGY IN ACCRA AND AKROPONG-AKWAPIM**

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May the Lord keep you and the family as apple of His eye to enable you enjoy long life and prosperity.

I am most obliged.

Yours sincerely,

(S.A. OFOSUHENE) REV.

PRINCIPAL

APPENDIX Q

Peki-Avtilo,

11th February, 1987.

To whomever it may concern.

I Ephraim Amu, the head of the Avadifo Family of Peki-Avtilo and the head of the Sāgā Community whose right it is to have final say in all matters affecting the welfare of the Sāgā Community hereby wish to make it known to whomever it may concern that I do not permit any body of Christians of any other ^{Christian} denomination than the Methodist Church and the Church of Pentecost to establish itself at the Sāgā village. The Sāgā Community is far too small to admit of the establishment of several Christian denominations. Any attempt to disregard this ruling will be considered a deliberate action aimed at directly disturbing the peace of the Community, and in that event it will be my binding duty to take every necessary step to force that body out of the village.

Ephraim Amu

E. Amu.

11/2/1987.

APPENDIX R

11
P.O. Box 57,
Peki, Udon Region,
7.7.1987.

To whomsoever it may concern.
Sagā Village,
T.S.V.C.

Dear Sir,

According to an information which has reached me, a self styled pastor has come to the Sagā Village to establish a church. As far back as February 11, this year, I wrote to the said pastor to stop any attempt to establish his so-called church at the village. In spite of my warning, he stubbornly persists in his efforts to establish the church. This is a complete disregard of my warning and I am compelled to write again and forbid this action. I hereto attach a copy of my warning letter of February 11, 1987.

For peace to prevail in the Sagā village I forbid the establishment of any other Christian church than the Methodist Church and the church of Pentecost both of which had already been established there for years. In the event of a deliberate defiance of this warning I shall be compelled to take every necessary step to effect compliance.

Faithfully yours,

E. Amu
Ephraem Amu.

APPENDIX S

LITERATURE COMMITTEE (PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA)

Bankers: Barclays Makota Square
Tel. No. 662415/663124/662511

Our Ref. No. LC/215

Your Ref. No.



P.O. Box 1809
Accra, Ghana

30 March, 1992.

Dr. Kwame Agyemang,
c/o Dr. Agyemang,
Institute of African Studies,
Accra.

Dear Sir,

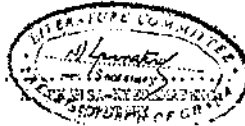
WELFARE BOOKS FOR MEMBERS OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In the Church's desire to have a year book with educational, indigenous and patriotic lyrics included, the sub-committee charged with the responsibility of its production, the Literature Committee, at its meeting on March 20, 1992 decided to include your song "For our nation".

In order to give it a legal touch I have been directed to invite you to express an additional verse, or two in which mention is made of God as our help in the solution of the problems referred to in the earlier verses.

We anticipate a favourable and expeditious response since the book is expected to come out in August 1992.

Thanking you in anticipation.



cc: The Synod Clerk

Chairman: F. M. Agyemang

Secretary: K. Nana Kyemanteng

APPENDIX S

LETTER FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA LITERATURE
COMMITTEE TO E. AMU

Literature Committee,
Presbyterian Church of Ghana,
P.O. Box 1800,
Accra, Ghana.
30.3.1992.

Dr. Ephraim Amu,
c/o Ms Misonu Amu,
Institute of African Studies,
Legon.

Dear Sir,

'YEN ARA ASASE NI' FOR INCLUSION IN NEW PRESBYTERIAN HYMN BOOK

In the Church's desire to have a Hymn Book with ecumenical, indigenous and patriotic hymns included, the sub-committee charged with the responsibility of its production, the Literature Committee, at its meeting on March 20, 1992 decided to include your song "Yen ara Asase ni".

In order to give it a hymn touch I have been directed to invite you to compose an additional verse, or two in which mention is made of God as our help in the solution of the problems reference is made to in the earlier verses.

We anticipate a favourable and expeditious response since the book is expected to come out in August 1992.

Thanking you in anticipation.

K. Nkansa-Kyeremateng
Secretary

cc: The Synod Clerk

APPENDIX T

1960
Sept. 1960
Senchi Fong

My dear Kwaku

Please allow me to express myself frankly on a subject which has been worrying me immensely.

It is about yesterday's Tribal Drumming Display. I enjoyed it immensely from a many aspects. There was some attempt at getting distinctive dances. Our imperfections are also significant. They warn us that we have a long way to go.

But there was one faux pas which is ~~see~~ inexcusable. The Boman Dance is a traditional dance. It is a State Dance. Our first duty is to learn it in its purest form. Any reforms can come when we have mastered it thoroughly and know when we know its full value. But it is dangerous, it is criminal, it is

Sacrilege to introduce at this stage something which
is not a fundamental part of it.

I was thoroughly disgusted with the Bosoma
Dance Display. A minor defect was that
there was European beating of time element
in it, which spoilt our traditional heritage
of Rhythm. It was Bad & Very Bad

But the other thing was Sacrilege.
Women beating ~~of~~ ^{the} drums of the
Bosoma Set is Taboo, one of the greatest
Taboos.

Then why introduce it?

Especially in a display. A display
to foreigners who have never seen a real
traditional ~~display~~ dance who perhaps will
never see one. Bad, Oh Amu. Very bad indeed.
My support for this Firamag - firamag ideal is
alienated.

Your obedient servant
William

APPENDIX T

TRANSCRIPT OF LETTER FROM WILLIAM OFORI-ATTA TO E. AMU

My dear Kwaku,

Please allow me to express myself frankly on a subject which has been worrying me immensely. It is about yesterday's Tribal Drumming Display. I enjoyed it immensely from many aspects. There was some attempt at getting distinctive dances. Our imperfections are also significant. They warn us that we have a long way to go. But there was one faux pas which is inexcusable. The Dance is a traditional dance. It is a state Dance. Our first duty [is] to learn it in its purest form. Any reforms can come when we have mastered it thoroughly and when we know its full values. But it is dangerous, it is criminal, it is sacrilege to introduce at this stage something which is not a fundamental part of it.

I was thoroughly disgusted with the Bomma Dance Display. A minor defect was that there was European beating of time element in it, which spoilt our traditional heritage of Rhythm. It was Bad, Very Bad. But the other thing was Sacrilege. Women beating the drums of the Bomma Set is Taboo, one of the greatest Taboos. Then why introduce it? Especially in a display. A display to foreigners who have never seen a real traditional dance who perhaps will never see one. Bad, Mr. Amu. Very bad indeed. My support for this Firaman-firaman ideal is alienated.

Your obedient Servant

William.

APPENDIX U

ACHIMOTA COLLEGE

THEME: THE BIBLE IN THE HOMELY SPEECH

LESSON: Acts 2, 1-13; II Tim. 3.

November 22, 1942.

You will soon be leaving here for your homes when homely words of welcome from all the members of your houses are awaiting you--- “Kwesi Asare o-poo”. A-tuu-. They may be expressed in Ewe, Ga or Hausa or some other language. But in all truly African homes one always expects these homely words of welcome and in my own experience, this kind of welcome is one of the thrilling things the members of your houses have in store for you when you arrive home. Words beautifully expressed in highly polished language may fail to mean anything to us, but the homely speech cannot fail to reach our hearts.

The enthusiastic missionary today, who is travelling to a foreign land for the first time, will learn to say at least a few words of welcome in which to greet the people of his church on his arrival, so that he might be able to win the love [15] of the people from the very first day of his arrival. Such an effort seldom fails to achieve its purpose. Our Lord used the homely language on three different occasions: (a) The Aramaic, “Talitha Cum” and (b) the Syriac, “Ephphata” he used to reach the hearts of those he was restoring to health, and (c) the Syro-Chaldaic, “Eli, Eli, lama Sabach tani” which he used on the cross in pouring out the excessive distress of his heart. Our Lord came into the world to win men’s hearts, and to do this successfully, he spoke to them and taught them in their own language. To his apostles he entrusted the work of winning men’s hearts and the apostles went about preaching the good news of salvation to men in the language their hearers understand easily.

How very different is this method from the method adopted by the Church at Rome! When the Roman missionaries [took] the gospel to the people of France, Germany [and] England, they taught the priests in those countries to read the Bible in Latin, [16] and to conduct their services in Latin. The ordinary Christians could not read the Bible in Latin, and those whose education enabled them to read Latin were forbidden to read the Bible. No wonder therefore that in time, the spiritual life of the Church grew cold and formal, and in some respects degenerated. This continued until sometime in the 14th century when an English Priest called John Wyclif faced the situation very seriously. He asked himself: “What is religion?” He pondered over the question for some time and concluded that : “God like a great king had entrusted to each man a sphere of duty for which he was responsible; that sphere of duty was his own moral and spiritual life”. “But how” he continued to ask himself, “how shall a man learn his responsibility? How better than from the Scriptures which are the property of

the people? And how shall they know the Scriptures unless they are written in their own language?" For the instruction and enlightenment of man's conscience, Wyclif translated the Bible into English. Copies were needed, [17] but as printing was not invented then, every copy of it was written by hand. 150 copies are said to be still in existence. Some years later, Martin Luther did the same for the German Christians, and the Bible was translated into the German language- The Bible in the homely speech.

Many years after Wyclif, came William Tyndale who also translated the whole Bible into English, and upon whose translation the authorised version of the Bible was based. Tyndale died the death of a martyr because of having translated the Bible into English, his and all English speaking peoples' homely speech. The history of the translation of the Bible into English homely speech is a long one which still continues. There are so many versions: The authorised version, revised version, the 1937 version by his majesty's special command, Weymouth's translation, Moffatt's translation and the latest translation based on "basic English". Through it all, there is one thing and one thing only which is the main purpose: To present the Bible to the English speaking people in their homely speech. "The strength of Methodism" we are told "lay, in old [d..] in the fact that it used thousands of local [18] preachers who could speak and did speak to folk in their homely speech. Wyclif and William Tyndale were dead many years ago, but their work lives on from triumph to triumph.

We must be thankful to God not only because almost every one of us here has a language he calls his homely speech but more especially should we be thankful to him because he gave us the men through whose toil and so much devotion, the Bible has been translated and printed in quite a number of these homely speeches and are being sold at reasonably low prices to enable us to buy and read for ourselves.

How has this been achieved? The painstaking industry of those devoted men, and in Africa, of devoted missionaries, has made this possible. The number of African languages into which the Bible has been translated is said to be over 250. The desire to enable the African to read the Bible in his homely speech urged the European missionaries to risk their lives in the attempt to master not merely the language but also the life of the people. Because, "To write books [19] in African languages" says Dr. Westermann, "requires a mastery which goes far beyond a 'working knowledge' not only of the language, but of the life of the people in its every branch of its folk-lore, its ways of reasoning and of expressing ideas". No wonder that some of these translations took as many as 20, 25, 30 or more years' painstaking industry to complete.

What do you think about the Bible in your homely speech? Have you got a copy which you read regularly? Maybe you prefer to read it in English, because you think you understand the Bible in English. That may be true, but for the Bible to reach and arrest your heart, you have to read it in your own languages- your homely speech. The ideal thing should

be for us to teach you students scriptures in your homely speech. But if because of some difficulty we teach you scriptures in English, you should by yourselves read the Bible in your own tongue- your homely speech. It is sin to underrate the Bible in your vernacular, because if you [do that] it means that you trifle with “the blood [of] men who toiled at the risk of their lives”. [20] God forbid that we should do it.

Read the Bible in your homely-speech. We in this country and our European educators talk of a great Africa in the future. Do you know that the foundation of that great Africa tomorrow is being laid today? The kind of Africa we expect to emerge tomorrow depends entirely on the kind of foundation we are laying today. The quality of the foundation is my chief concern. “What the English Bible has meant for the English speaking world” says a writer, “cannot be told in a few words. It has interwoven itself so thoroughly into their national life that neither English literature nor British history are fully intelligible without a fairly good knowledge of the English Bible. It is undoubtedly the greatest legacy left to the English speaking world by the English Reformation”.

Not one of those who laid the foundation of the English speaking world lived without the Bible. Each of them valued the Bible most highly, and formed the habit of reading it regularly, praying and meditating. It was the Bible that made them great, the Bible in their homely speech. [21] Let as many of us as are aware of the great responsibility of laying the foundation for future Africa and for the future world, let us form or renew the habit of reading the Bible in our own language, praying and meditating daily, so as to be able to build a Christian Africa, and by so doing contribute our worthy share in building a Christian world. What a blessing will it be to Africa and the whole world if we should have ministers, teachers, politicians, merchants and men of all ranks whose every part is filled with the knowledge of God. In this lies our greatest and only hope of a future usefulness and greatness.

“The foreign mission”, says Edwin Smith, “is not a permanent institution; it will pass away, but the Church remains”. So some time sooner or later there will come into existence the Church of Africa, or perhaps the Church of West Africa, a church growing in the knowledge of the Bible, [22] a church producing African Wyclifs, Tyndales and Luthers to make perfect versions of the Bible, a church producing devout men and women bringing their minds to bear upon the great truths of the Bible, thereby making it a richer book.

Learn from childhood, learn the sacred writings that can impart saving wisdom by faith in Christ Jesus.” Reading the Bible in your homely speech, praying, meditating and discovering new truths for oneself. This is how the man of God is made proficient and equipped for good work of every kind in God’s Kingdom!

APPENDIX V

Anyamesem: Israeldwom 148

Asentitriw: Kwasafɔ asɔreko ho hia a ahia ma nokware Kristofo nyinaa.

June 20, 1943

Se edu kwasida anadwofa na yereba ha abeye nea yereye anadwofa yi, efi nnon 7.15 kosi beye nnon 8 ne akyiri kakra a, yeka se: yereko asore. So wunim, na wobetumi akyere asem asore ase ana? Mepɛ se mekyere ase: Amantow bi mu no, se woben kurow na aka kakra na wadu kurotia no, wobehu se woabo okwan tiatia tetree bi a epae fi otempon no ho ko wuram, na woasisi nnua abien wo sa okwan no afanu no, a wode mmerenkensono abo nnua no bako atifi, de akobo nea eto so mienu no nso atifi, na okwan no awiei no, wobehu se dua tenten kakraka bi si ho a woabo nko wo ase, na asanka bi si nko no so. Wobehu sa ade yi ara bi wo nsamanpow mu na eto dabi nso, wobehu bi wo kwae ase wo okwan nkyen. Eto dabi a wodua somme wo nko no ara a asanka no si so no so. Wofre fako ho se “nsorem”. Somme no adwuma ne se ebepam ahonhommone fi ho, na mmrenkensono no kyere se, nnipa nni ho kwan se wowora ho basabasa. Nsorem ho na esese oyaako a nsorem no ye ne dea no, se oye ohene ana odikro ana abusuapanyin o, odi ne manfo ana abusuafɔ anim na woko afe biara afe pen koro na oko ma won nenanom nsamanfo aduan ne nsa, na wabobo won din, abo won mmeran, ada won ase ohwe pa a wode hwɛɛ won afe mu no nti, na wasre won ho mmoa ama afe a woasi mu bio no. Eyi nti na wofre fako ho se nsorem. Enese, fako a wosore nsamanfo, na asore a wosore nsamanfo ne se: asorefo no de won bribi koma nsamanfo no, da won ase, yi won aye anase bo won ose, na wode won ho hye won nsamanfo no nsa sre won ho mmoa. Enti ade a wofre no asore, mu wo nneyee titiriw ahorow abiesa a ene: ahofama, aseda ne osebo, ne adesre.

Won a wode Kristosom bree yen no hui se dwuma a yen nenanom di ma won samanfo wo nsorem ho ne dwuma a Kristofo di wo won hyiadan mu ma Nyankopon no se pepepepe, nti se Kristofo ko won ahyaie ko ye nea yen nenanom ye ma won nsamanfo ama Onyankopon a, woka no sa ara se woko asore enese woko sore Nyankopon. Yen nenanom de, wosore won samanfo afe biara pen koro, nanso yen Kristofo de yesore anase yenim se, esese yesore Nyankopon da biara yen afi mu ne babiara a yete nka se eho hia se yesore Nyankopon...

(ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY)

TEXT: PSALM 148

THEME: THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP FOR THE FAITHFUL

20 JUNE, 1943

When it is Sunday evening and we come here to do what we are doing now, from 7.15 to a little after 8 o'clock we say we have gone to church. Do you know, and can you explain the word 'asore'? I want to explain what it means: Just before you get to the outskirts of some our towns or communities, you will observe that a short and narrow path branches off from the main road into the bush. Two wooden poles have been planted on both sides of the path. The two poles are connected by palm fronds tied to the top of both poles. At the end of the path you will see a tall and big wooden pole with a hole dug under it. In the hole rests a black earthen pot. You will see such things in the cemetery, and sometimes they can be seen under a thicket by the side of a path. At times a purification plant can be found in the hole in which the earthen pot has been placed. The place is referred to as "nsorem". The function of the purification plant is to drive away evil spirits, and the palm fronds indicate that the place is hallowed and may not be entered upon indiscreetly. It is to the "nsorem" that the one who owns the "nsorem"- whether the one is a chief, a divisional chief or a family head- leads his people or his family every year. At the "nsorem" he offers food and drink to the ancestors, mentions their names, uses appellations to praise them, gives thanks to them for taking care of his people or family for the year, and requests their blessing and protection for the coming year. The reason it is called "nsorem" is because it a place where the dead are revered. Revering (worshipping?) is thus: the "asorefo" (those who are involved in the activity revering the dead) bring something of their substance to the ancestors, thank them, praise them and commit themselves into the hands of the ancestors and implore their assistance. And so what is referred to as "asore" involves three elements: commitment, thanksgiving and praise and supplication.

Those to who transmitted the Christian faith to us noticed that the work that our forebears did for their ancestors in the "nsorem" is similar to what Christians do for God when they meet in the chapel. So when Christians meet to do for God what our forebears did for their ancestors, we say in much the same way that they [Christians] have gone to "asore" because they have gone to "sore" (worship) God. As for our forebears, they "sore" (worship) the ancestors once in a year, but as for us Christians we "sore" (worship) God everyday of the year and in every place we feel necessary to do so...

APPENDIX W

ACHIMOTA COLLEGE,

LESSON: I SAMUEL 8

JANUARY 8, 1950

THEME: SOMETHING MUST BE DONE

I have chosen as the motto of my address tonight these words of our Lord Jesus: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled".

1. Whenever there is a feeling in a community that things are not going well, there is bound to be talks of "Something must be done". It is significant that we never say some things must be done, but we always say: Something must be done. What do we mean when we say that things are not going well? What we mean is that men have turned away from the right and in everything are doing what is wrong. If nothing is done and things continue to go wrong, a state of unrest is created and confusion results. Every state of unrest is therefore fundamentally a revolt against evil or unrighteousness. To put right all the things that are going wrong, one thing only need be done, namely, to desire earnestly in everything we do to do the right: in other words: "to hunger and thirst after righteousness". This is the something which must be done.

2. In the lesson read a few minutes ago, we find that there was a state of unrest in Israel- a revolt against unrighteousness in the form of bribery and corruption. Samuel's sons whom their father made judges over Israel, "turned aside for money, took bribes and tampered with justice. [2] It was against this that the children of Israel revolted . They urged that something should be done. But in the heat of their revolt the children of Israel lost balanced judgement and consequently lost sight of the true nature of the situation and therefore thought that by having a king to rule them like all other nations, the evil would be removed and the situation bettered. Since a king does not claim immunity from bribery and corruption, Israel's desire for a king had nothing whatever to do with the evil they sought to remove from their midst. It is quite clear from the words in which they made their request that they were prompted by nothing other than sheer desire to be like the other nations irrespective of the character of those nations. What was needed to better the situation was reformation, a complete change of every individual heart. But this was exactly what the children of Israel lost sight of.

3. Our situation in this country today is to my mind the very same as this particular situation of the children of Israel. There is unrest everywhere around us. We are involved in a hard struggle. It is surely not a struggle between Africans and Europeans or the ruling people and the subject people as most of us regard it, nor is it essentially a desire for self government as it appears on the surface, it is fundamentally a revolt against unrighteousness: excessive self-

interest, fraudulent dealings, deliberate lying, bribery, making promises without any intention of ever fulfilling them, oppression and slavery and similar evils as we find them in most of those placed in responsible positions. It will pay [3] us all richly to realise this fact. The various revolutions at different times in the history of Europe abundantly confirm this fact. Self government or no self government, under European or African leadership, if those who are placed in authority first, and the average ordinary citizen second, would desire earnestly in everything to do what is right, there will be peace, happiness, co-operation, full-satisfaction and smooth progress. Day by day everywhere in the world the need for co-operation between all the peoples of the world and for world peace are being brought nearer home to us, but co-operation and world peace are impossible without righteousness: The hymn we have just sung says:

1. Thy kingdom come! On bended knee,
The passing ages pray;
And faithful souls have yearned to see
On earth that Kingdom's day.

4. The day in whose clear-shining light
All wrong shall stand revealed,
When justice shall be throned in might,
and every hurt be healed.

5. When knowledge, hand in hand with peace,
Shall walk the earth abroad;
The day of perfect righteousness,
The promised day of God."

Both ourselves and our educators would be sadly disappointed if we consider the provision of full university and technical education and the granting of self government as the primary needs of this country. These are desirable and necessary, but the fundamental need for us and in fact for the whole world is earnest craving after the righteousness of God. The year 1950 has found us in a hard struggle. [4] It is foolish to think that this struggle will gradually die its natural death; it is a mistake to regard it as a purely political struggle; it is dangerous, most dangerous to regard it a racial struggle; it cannot possibly be brought to a successful end by the employment of physical and intellectual forces only. It is essentially a spiritual struggle, a struggle between right and wrong, and it is only by employing spiritual forces first and foremost that we can end it successfully. If in 1948 and 1949 we employed physical and intellectual forces only without spiritual forces, this year let us employ first and foremost all the spiritual forces at our disposal: regular reading of the Bible with quiet meditation, constant earnest prayer for wisdom and courage as well as tenacity of purpose to enable us to do the right at all costs and at all times, and in addition let us be willing and ever

ready to do whatever hard work lies to our hand for the happiness and comfort of the other person.

It is very difficult to live a peaceful and ordered life when we are surrounded on all sides by unrest. Surely, something must be done: it is to hunger and thirst after righteousness: "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you".

APPENDIX X

AGOGO PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S TRAINING COLLEGE

APRIL 8, 1956,

TEXT: JOHN 20: 24-31

THEME: BE NOT FAITHLESS BUT BELIEVING- CEASE YOUR UNBELIEF AND BELIEVE.

[1] Introduction: I should like us to recall the story of the fall of man in which we find the serpent approaching the woman and asking her: And so God has said you are not to eat fruit from any tree in the park, but as for the tree in the centre of the park, God has said: 'You must not eat from it, you must not touch it, lest you die.' And the serpent again saying: "No, you shall not die, God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods knowing good and evil." This statement of the serpent's the woman too readily believed without any attempt to find grounds for her belief, and acting upon this ready belief brought about the fall of man.

In the story of Thomas just read, we find the other ten disciples telling Thomas: "We have seen the Lord" and Thomas replying: "I refuse to believe it", unless I see his hands with the mark of the nails, and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side. In this we find determined unwillingness to believe.

At one extreme we find a natural tendency to believe too readily without grounds, and at the other extreme we find the tendency to refuse to believe. The tendency to refuse to believe is faithlessness, that is, having no belief at all, [2] whilst the tendency to believe too readily does not make for a deep rooted, firm and active and lasting belief, and it is as good as faithlessness. To faithless Thomas Jesus says by way of command: Cease your unbelief and believe- Be not faithless but believing.

I. Give up your unbelief. What was it that made it difficult for Thomas to believe that their Lord had risen from the dead?

1. It was his complete loss of hope. He was always looking on the dark side of things and expecting the worst. He was given to uncontrolled feeling, and uncontrolled feeling always leads to unbalanced mind and action; it makes one to become unreasonable. It is unchristian, wherefore St. Paul warns against it by telling his Philippians Christians: "Let your moderation or sweet reasonableness be known to every one".
2. From all that we know about the disciples in the three years that they followed Jesus, there is nothing that leaves us in doubt about their absolute honesty. Thomas, by refusing to believe their word made them appear as liars and deceivers. If he had not

lost the proper balance of his mind, he would have reasoned with himself and recall to mind his past knowledge of his neighbours as absolutely honest men and would have accepted their witness as true.

3. He would have remembered that the Lord had told them on three different occasions of his death and rising from the dead on the third day; memories of his life and work would have made him to feel how easily possible it was for the Lord to rise from the dead. [3] But because of the unbalanced state of his mind, he could not look at the life of Jesus as a whole; the one and only thing that his thoughts centred round was the death of Jesus.
4. It was impossible for him under that uncontrolled feeling to yield willingly and calmly to the influence of the Spirit of God whereby he alone could be led into the truth of his Lord's resurrection. All these became impossible because of his uncontrolled feeling. Jesus therefore commands Thomas: Cease your unbelief: give up your uncontrolled feeling and believe.

II. It is quite clear from what we have already said that what Jesus means by commanding him to believe is:-

1. To use his powers of reasoning. We are told that one respect in which man stands clearly above other animals is his ability to think, reason and choose; he is not at the mercy of his instincts. The power of reasoning is a gift to man by God, and God will not deal with man without it. No man therefore believes without intelligent grounds for his belief. We do not mean by this that reasoning alone can take us through the whole length of belief, but it is the only foundation on which belief can be built. The Samaritan woman in her conversation with Jesus reasoned in her mind and felt convinced that the man she was conversing with was Jesus the Son of God. The other Samaritans after listening to the testimony of the woman, saw Jesus, conversed with him, and reasoned in their minds and discovered for themselves that Jesus was the Son of God. [4] "We no longer believe on account of what you said; we have heard for ourselves, we know that he is really the saviour of the world." No man believes without intelligent grounds for his belief. Wherefore the Lord tells Thomas: "Believe" meaning make use of your powers of reasoning.
2. But reasoning is only the beginning of our belief; to be established in it, and be entirely led by it. We must willingly surrender ourselves to the influence of the Spirit of God: "Speak, thy servant is listening." "Master, speak: and make me ready, When Thy voice is truly heard with obedience glad and steady. Still follow every word, I am listening, Lord, for Thee, master, speak! O speak to me! "O fill me with thy fullness, Lord, Until my very heart overflow, In kindling thought and glowing work, Thy love

to tell, Thy praise to show.’ Thus the Lord tells Thomas: “Believe”, that is, be calm and surrender yourself to the influence of the Spirit of God and be led into the truth and firmly established in it.

4. Thomas was prompt in responding to the Lord’s command. He immediately gave up his unbelief, surrendered to the influence of the Spirit of God, and instantly the scales fell off his heart’s eyes and he recovered from his despondency, he recovered the proper balance of his mind, saw reason in his neighbour’s testimony and was satisfied in his heart that the crucified Jesus certainly rose from the dead and [5] he made this remarkable confession of Jesus: “My Lord and my God.”

II. Led by our discussion tonight, let us turn to two very serious problems facing the Christian Church in the Gold Coast today;

1. The problem of African Culture in relation to Christianity. There are some who cannot see anything that is proper and invaluable in African Culture worth retaining in Christianity. It is dead, there is no life in it, it cannot rise. Not that those people can give any reasons for the attitude they take; they do so from sheer prejudice. Some of you must have known that I was at one time in trouble with the Presbyterian Church because I maintained that it was proper for a trained African preacher, that is, a catechist, to preach from the pulpit in African dress, that it was proper for us as African Christian citizens to sing African songs for the purpose of worship, and that it was proper for us to teach drumming and dancing and the other forms of African music to our sons and daughters in our Schools, whilst the Church maintained that it was not only improper but sacrilegious. After several meetings at which we argued our viewpoints, the Synod Clerk at that time said something like this to me: “*Hwe, Amu, mereka akyere wo se, bribiara nni anyamesem mu a ekasa tia nea woreye yi biara, nanso yen wuranom ammfã ammfï yen ase saa, enti yeremma nneema yi ho kwan*”. In other words, the ground of their opposition was prejudice, pure and simple. Prejudice in any form stands condemned outright in the light of the life and teaching of our Lord. To be prejudiced [6] is to be narrow minded, deliberately shutting our minds against the truth, and a Christian must avoid it all costs. Were not the first apostles themselves prejudiced in the matter of circumcision? And how did they overcome it? They met in Jerusalem discussed and reasoned and yielded to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and were led into the truth.

Although we have since made some progress in these matters a good deal of prejudice still remains to be cleared only if we would use our powers of reasoning, and only if we would yield to the guidance of the Spirit of God. The subject of African Culture is now being studied seriously by the church as a result of which the

small book entitled "Christianity and African culture" has been published under the auspices of the Christian Council of the Gold Coast.

2. A far more serious problem facing Christians everywhere in the world today is the multiplicity of the form of Christianity. It is surprising to see how members of our old Churches suddenly turn round to condemn and denounce their former beliefs and embrace new teachings with open arms; not that they have any intelligent grounds for their new beliefs, or that they feel sincerely led by the Spirit of God into deeper truths, but they act purely emotionally. Let us be quite clear about this that every form of Christian teaching which makes its appeal to men principally through their emotions is debasing, stands condemned and should be avoided at all costs. [7] People won into Christianity through their emotions are like those seeds in the parable of the sower that fell on stony soil where they had not much earth, and shot up at once because they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they got scorched and withered away because they had not root. Shallow rooted faith is as good as faithlessness. Steady useful life, and above all, consistent and effective Christian life is possible only where faith in Jesus Christ is deep rooted, and faith can be deep rooted only where men refuse to be governed by their emotions and rely on calm reasoning and the quiet but clear guidance of the Spirit of God.

Conclusion: Every believer in Jesus Christ must confess him as his Lord and God not so much in words as in deeds. Every one of us in his particular station and work in life and in his peculiar way has to show in everything he thinks, says and does that he owns Jesus as his Lord and God. That is to say that everything we think, say and do should be such as is acceptable to Jesus our Lord and Master, for only thus shall our lives be of the utmost use to our fellow men and we ourselves fully enjoy the life God has given to us, and so shall the inspiration of Christ dwell in our midst with all its wealth of wisdom. Amen

APPENDIX Y

PREMPEH COLLEGE, KUMASI

JOHN VI, 14.15, 22-35

SUBJECT: CHRIST'S MEANING OF A GOLDEN AGE

APRIL 22, 1956

[1] Introduction: The age in which we live today is known as the iron age, that is, the age in which weapons and many implements are made of iron; it is also known as the age of cruelty and oppression. According to the imagination of the Greeks the ages were divided into four: the first of which was the golden age, conceived as the best when man lived in perfect happiness and innocence, and the earth yielded fruits without human toil, and all creatures lived in peace. The term has come to mean the most illustrious or prosperous period of a nation's condition. Today it is used mainly to mean a time of ease and plenty: A time in which men do not need to toil but would get freely all that they need for the full enjoyment of life. The people of Israel from the days of Moses up to the days of Samuel the prophet and judge, were ruled directly by God, but during the time of Samuel they thought of a golden age when they, like the other nations around them would have a King to rule them and lead them in war against their enemies and gain victory over them and cause them to fear to be organised in the fashion and methods of the other nations around them was the great time they looked forward to.

During the time of Jesus, this same people then called the Jews looked forward to a golden age when they would, under a warrior King, march victoriously against the pagan Roman, [2] subdue them and become a ruling nation when every Jewish citizen would cease from toil and yet have all he needed for the enjoyment of life-they looked forward to a time of ease and plenty.

In August 1939, I travelled through Germany. It was just a few weeks before the outbreak of the last world war, and it was the time that every young German was looking forward to a golden time when the whole world would be ruled by Germany and her sons would become overlords everywhere, a fact which was easily evident in the whole attitude of every young German of those days. In a small village where I spent one night in my journey, a youngman gave me a German primer and told me to learn it hard so as to master the German language in time as in at least a year from that time the Germans would be in power all over West Africa.

We shall not tire ourselves out with the golden age to which various peoples at different times of their history looked forward, but let us come straight home to our own country, the Gold Coast. The clamour for a golden age – the independence of the Gold Coast

became the popular and most important affair since 1948; a golden age in which we would rid ourselves of the rule of the British people, drive out all the Europeans and replace them in every walk of life with the sons of the Gold Coast. It would be a time when no educated African would have to do menial work or toil [3] but would have an easy job and easy time and would receive a handsome salary to enable him to live luxuriously.

I. Golden age in general terms means better times, and it is a perfectly natural and legitimate thing to desire better times. In tonight's lesson we find the mind of the Jews turned towards a kind of better times whilst Jesus turned their mind to another kind of better times.

1. Jesus had on the previous day, worked a miracle by feeding a crowd of 5,000 men with 5 loaves and a couple of fish. Jews found in this miracle a sure sign of Jesus being the prophet that should come into the world, and decided to take him to Jerusalem and proclaim him King there, in the firm hope that with his leadership they would be freed from the political rule of the Romans, and then live in perfect peace and happiness whilst Jesus would provide them always with all that they needed for their material comfort. The Jews thought of their material well-being to the entire exclusion of their moral and spiritual well-being. Jesus turned their minds to their moral and spiritual well being as the one and only condition on which their true material well being depended. A truly material well-being not based upon moral and spiritual well-being is impossible.
2. Golden age means a blessed or happy state of affairs, and in the beatitudes, Jesus gives us the picture of the true [4] blessedness: It is a life of perfect fellowship with God out of which springs a life of perfect relationship with man and nature. To this truth all the prophets testified as summed up in the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The wolf shall lie down together with the lamb; the leopard's resting place shall be the kid's; the lion shall eat straw like an ox; wolf and lion shall graze side by side and a little child shall lead them; the cow and the bear shall be friends and their young lie down together; the infant shall play at the hole of an asp, and the baby's feet at the nest of a viper. None shall injure, none shall kill anywhere on my sacred hill". All this is possible under one condition only: "When the earth is full of the knowledge of God as the ocean bed is full of water". In this lies the difference between what we mean by golden age and what Jesus means by golden age. We base our standard of judgement on the external appearance of things, Jesus bases his standard of judgement on the character of the individual man and woman.
3. And so in the God Coast today our golden age is in every aspect a matter of external appearance for the masses the more popular he becomes and the more ready we are to find in him a leader: We shall soon be called by [5] a new name; our parliament, and in fact, the whole of our system of government, our social institutions and our

educational system are all being fashioned after the British pattern. Our own languages may soon be completely superseded by the English language particularly in the schools. On the other side of the picture we find theft, fraud, lying and bribery freely indulged in; straight-forward rudeness, an attitude of irresponsibility, lack of personal sympathy, a good deal of inefficiency and deliberate laziness in so many of our public services. It is so often bewildering and makes one wonder what all the talk about this golden age,- the age of self government means. In other words, appearance of things matters to us far more than the character of the individual. Christ never thinks of nor deals with men in masses, he thinks of them and deals with each person as an individual, and without the godly character of the individual all the talk about a golden age is foolish and idle talk.

How can an educational system which demands that a teacher shall take charge of 45 or 46 pupils; a system which provides for the building of schools and Colleges to hold 300-600-1000 and possibly 2000 pupils or students make the coming of a golden age possible? How many of these are intimately known by those [6] who teach them? Why so much emphases now on some of the subjects such as English and science: Is it because better knowledge of them results in better character of the individual? We are doing it here because it is done in the so called civilized countries; but have the results so far justified the practice? Is every teacher fully conscious of the fact that character is taught not so much by words as by personal example? Are we teachers in our different schools and Colleges working together as a team in this matter? A golden age anywhere in this world is possible only when the individual achieves the character of Jesus Christ.

II. A golden age according to popular conception is a time of ease and plenty- Ease and plenty. Nothing can be farther from the truth than this. Ease and plenty are incompatible. How can the people of a country expect to live an easy life and yet have plenty to eat and plenty of money to spend? Labour, toil, work hard, says Jesus: "Labour for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life". Man's first responsibility in the Garden of Eden was to till the garden.

1. Let me take you back for a few minutes to the Old Testament story of the life of that great reformer Nehemiah. As leader in the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem he did not stand aside but worked with his hands as every other workman. Says he: "Also, I kept at my work on this wall and my retinue were all there at work." Our Lord himself did not only talk about a better time but [7] laboured for it. Says he: "As my father has continued working to this hour, so I work too", and again: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work". Above all he was

willing to suffer and to die to make possible the coming of the better time for which he laboured.

What is the purpose of all education: It is to enable a man to think critically and independently. And what is the main object of manual labour and, in some measure, games? It is to teach pupils the dignity of labour and to train and shape the character of the individual. These two aspects of education are required to produce the perfect man.

It is not the aim of education to draw the educated away from manual labour. Somehow most of our educated men and women look down on manual labour, and yet think and talk a lot about the coming of better times. Hard work is a habit to be cultivated and carried through the whole of one's life. It is therefore difficult to understand those who say that because they are not adequately paid for the particular work they do, they do not feel like putting in all the labour required to make their work worth while. In most cases an argument like this is a clear indication that such a person does not know what dignity of labour is. He has not formed the habit of hard work, and such a people is not going to help in [8] bringing about the better time we so much desire. What place has manual labour in the curriculum of our Schools and Colleges? And what is the attitude of our pupils and students, and in some case, the attitude of some teachers to manual labour? Let us not forget that all the disciples of Jesus were labourers, hard manual workers. Every country owes its progress and better condition to those of its citizens who are not afraid of hard work and who do not look on any kind of work which needs to be done as mean and unworthy.

What briefly I want to say is this: The kind of Gold Coast, and for that matter the kind of world we desire to live in depends entirely upon the character of its individual citizens, Christlike character; and if we have the character of Christ then we shall be prepared to for any kind of hard work that may be required of us. I think you all know the song: "Yen ara asase ni", the chorus of which says: "Oman..." "To duty firm, to conscience true, However tried and pressed, In God's clear sight high work we do, If we but do our best. Come labour on, The toil is pleasant and the harvest sure; Blessed are those who to the end endure, How full their joy, how deep their rest shall be, O Lord, with thee".

APPENDIX Z

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI

Lesson: Isaiah 59: 1-15

Motto: "Repent"

February 17, 1957

[1] Introduction: The O.T. prophet was a messenger to his own generation, a preacher of righteousness, a missionary of repentance and an advocate of reform. Each prophet lived at a certain time and had to deal with problems peculiar to the people of his time. But however varied the problems were in form they were in substance identical. Each problem involved a sin or group of sins committed by the people against God and consequent national disaster it brought upon them. The task of the prophet was therefore that of placing before people their sin, and showing them the way of repentance and promising them God's blessing as a result of their repentance. Like John the Baptist the message of each prophet was simply this: "Repent". All the wonderful progress that man has achieved from age to age has not made any difference whatever to the problem of sin. We find ourselves today to be facing and battling with exactly the same old sins, and the prophets' warning: "Repent" is as fitting now as it ever has been.

I (1) The sins of the Jewish nation

In the first fifteen verses of the 59th chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah read to us this evening, we find [2] the prophet describing vividly the prevalence of iniquity in the Jewish nation. All the evils enumerated in the passage may be summed up as follows: "The hands, the tongue, the eyes, the fingers and the very heart of man were all polluted. All that savours of righteousness and holiness was completely destroyed. The whole nation was sunk in moral corruption. According to James Moffatt's translation:- "Justice has to turn away defeated, For truth in our assemblies have no footing, Honesty cannot enter there, Truth is never to be seen and moral sense has left the town."

The people of Israel had one national vice which made them susceptible to all the evils mentioned in the passage: it is the vice of a strong desire to be like all other nations without knowing all that this implied. In Samuel's old age, the Israelites saw that the affairs of the nation were going wrong and felt that this would be remedied if they had a King to rule them like all other nations. Samuel told them to study the issue critically to discover all the evils that would accompany their request, but they would not listen to him. So all along in the long history of the Israelites they were constantly led astray from God by the evil influence of other nations. The desire [3] to be like the other nations is, in fact, a universal vice which must be guarded against at all costs.

2. The prophet's unpleasant task.

The prophet, to be worthy of his name, cannot but be bluntly outspoken. He calls things by their proper names, politely. It is not of fashion in our time to be bluntly outspoken; we choose to sound learned, tactful and polite and so much mince our words that our true denunciation of what is wrong may often sound like singing the praises of the very evils we seek to condemn.

3. The prophet's unpleasant lot

To be bluntly outspoken does not make the life of a true prophet a bit enviable, for he must not only be bluntly outspoken, but must take the unpleasant consequences of being bluntly outspoken. Do you remember the story of the prophet Micaiah? (I Kings 22). This prophet was summoned before King Ahab of Israel, to prophesy to the King regarding the attack he was about to lead against Ramoth-gilead. Micaiah told the King bluntly that he would fall in the battle, whereupon Zedekiah smote him on the cheek, and the King ordered him to be put into prison and fed on bread and water to keep him miserable. What a price to pay for being bluntly outspoken! Does it pay to be bluntly outspoken? Of course not. [4] It often results in, at least, losing some good friends. But it does give one the inward satisfaction of having done as commanded by God.

II The Gold Coast nation's likeness to the Jewish nation.

Every essential thing is ready for declaring the Gold Coast an independent nation, and in 17 days time we shall enter the independence for which we have strained every nerve in the past nine years to achieve. And as a nation, a little examination will convince us of our close likeness to the Jewish nation in the matter of sin. From all we know it sounds as if the prophet Isaiah's words were originally meant for us in the Gold Coast today: "Justice has to turn away defeated, Right is forced to hold aloof, For truth in our assemblies have no footing, Honesty cannot enter there, Truth is never to be seen and moral sense has left the town."

(1) To begin with, we too like the Jewish nation desire very strongly to be like the other nations. We are in the firm grip of this universal evil. This has resulted in these few years in the trampling under foot our indigenous institutions, replacing them with foreign institutions without first examining critically all that the adoption of these foreign institutions implied. A wise man once said: "If people adopt the external manners [5] and ways of living of civilized nations without accepting the fundamental principles through which they make progress the outcome will become destructive". This I feel is exactly what has taken place in the Gold Coast today. Wholesale adoption, blind imitation and in their train has come a great number of evils. To us the prophet says: "Repent". Repent of the evil of wholesale adoption and blind imitation. If as an independent nation we can make any worthy contribution to the progress of mankind, then let us be original. Africans we are, and Africans we shall always be. It was Dr. Aggrey who said that if God should ask him after death to return into the world, he would ask

him to send him back very black, because he had a contribution to make which only a blackman could make. "Justice has to turn away defeated, Right is forced to hold aloof, For truth in our assemblies have no footing, Honesty cannot enter there, Truth is never to be seen and moral sense has left the town."

(2) Who is responsible for this state of affairs? The easiest thing is to blame our leaders, as most of us do. But let us remember that the life of our leaders is a serious reflection of the life of the people of the Gold Coast. We talk of bribery and corruption in the Government, but who [6] offered the bribes? It is we the ordinary citizens of the country in various ways who offered the bribes, and all they did was to accept what we offered. Who then is to blame? Ourselves.

As I see it there is in addition to the universal vice already referred to, a peculiar national vice that has made us susceptible to the evils we now find among us; It is the vice of vanity. The average Gold Coast citizen has a strong tendency to appear bigger, richer, wiser and more important than he actually is. Take the matter of wedding for example. Wedding must be a big affair. Public opinion finds no fault in borrowing money and spending it liberally on a wedding. In other words ours is the vice of living above what we can afford. The individual is after the finest possible car, because it makes one appear big and important. A recent visitor in this country expressed his utter surprise at the way he saw some of our ministers of the Government descend the steps of their ministries and moved towards their cars with a messenger carrying their *attache* case and some one else in uniform opening the door of the car standing to attention and so on and so forth. We find this tendency crystalized in a popular dance song: "Jaguar, been-to, fridge-ful, nomei wosumoo"

Tell me what justification there is for all the elaborate preparation being made to celebrate our starting of life as a young independent nation on such a grand scale [7] as we have planned? Any justification for spending so much money on a special hotel, on a special monument called the triumphal arch, on a state house on the grandest possible scale, on one or two most expensive cars the world has known, on special cars for conveying our guests? And we do not hesitate to claim that we are at the forefront of all the peoples of Africa. We are unduly conscious of our importance.

Sir Arnold Hodgson one time the governor of the Gold Coast wrote an article towards the time of his retirement that, according to his experience of the people in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and the Gold Coast, he found the people in Sierra Leone to be given to hard learning, the people of Nigeria given to hard learning, the people of Nigeria given to hard work. In the Gold Coast he was invited for 66 dances, he attended 55 of them and found the people of the Gold Coast to be given to enjoyment of life.

We are told that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. It is therefore necessary for us to take heed that our life has headed for utter moral corruption and unless we changed first as

individuals and then as a nation, the consequences would be disastrous. “Repent,” means I must give up the desire to be like the other man-wholesale adoption and blind imitation. I must give up vanity and be lowly in mind. You must [8] give up the desire to be like the other person-wholesale adoption and blind imitation, you must give up vanity and be lowly in mind. Everybody must do likewise. It is a fight against our own flesh and the world and the devil, against popular opinion and popular behaviour, and it is only in the strength of God that we can win victory: Philippians 2: 2: 1-8. “Courage brother, do not stumble, though the path be dark as night, There’s a star to guide the humble, Trust in God and do the right.” Amen.

APPENDIX Z/A

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI

SUBJECT: THE PATH THAT LEADS TO NATIONAL GREATNESS

22 MAY, 1960

[1] Introduction: 1). I still remember the words of some of the songs we learned when I was a school boy, such as, "Rule Britannia, Britannia rule the waves, Britons never never never shall be slaves"; or the 2nd verse of the British national Anthem. "O Lord our God arise, scatter our enemies, and make them fall. Confound their politics, frustrate their knavish tricks, On Thee our hopes we fix, God save us all". Maybe you were fortunate not to have been taught these words. These give us some insight into British aspiration in those days to national greatness.

2). In the heart of Accra, the capital of Ghana, and the seat of the Government, we see an inscription below a bronze statue which reads: "Seek ye first the political Kingdom and all other things shall be added unto it." You and I may disagree with this aspiration, but there it is, indelibly engraved and it stands as Ghana's aspiration to national greatness.

3). In recent years for over a period of ten years Germany made herself really formidable by piling up arms because she believed that that would make her great. The aspiration of the Germans was world domination which found expression in the words "Living space"- Germany wanted living space all over the world. We know where it all ended. And today [2] Russia is doing exactly what Germany did ten or fifteen years ago in order to achieve her national greatness.

4). The one aspiration of every nation is to achieve greatness. The difference between the aspiration of one nation and that of the other however, lies in how to achieve this greatness. 1. From the elders of Israel came the emphatic request: We must have a King over us, to be like all other nations, that our King may rule us and march in front of us and fight our battles. A little peep into the early history of Israel will help us to understand the situation. 1. From the very beginning of their history Israel aspired after greatness. When Moses in about the year 1230 BC., gathered and welded together a number of tribes under a powerful religious impulse and they set about to press into the west Jordan region to find a permanent home, he felt that their greatness lay in God's kingship over them. Listen to a conversation that took place between him and God: "Then the Lord said to Moses, march away up from this spot, you and the people you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that I would give it to their descendants; I will not go with you myself (for you are obstinate race), lest I destroy you on the road." To this Moses replied: "If Thy presence is not with us, move us not from where we are. (Exod. 33: 3.15). Moses united

in himself some of the simpler functions of priest and prophet as well as those of military ruler and [3] guide, made laws for them which contained eternal principles of holiness, justice and truth to make it possible for God to be amongst them and be king over them.

After the Israelites entered the land, and after the death of Joshua, a period of confusion, struggle and assimilation followed the noble effort of the great founder Moses and the process of assimilation i.e learning to fit into the life of the people appeared to have failed. This was the situation of Israel when Samuel took over the leadership which ultimately created a growing need of central government. Wherefore all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel and requested him to appoint a king for them to rule them like all the other nations. "We must have a king over us, to be like all the other nations that our king may rule us and march in front of us and fight our battles." What a complete reversal of the state of affairs! Moses found the greatness of the nation in God's kingship over them, Israel of Samuel's day found it in man's kingship over them. "We must have a king over us, to be like all the other nations. Oh this obsession of becoming exactly like the other nations!

1.The request is unreasonable, it is illogical and irrelevant. The complaint of the elders was that Samuel was old- unable to discharge his duties satisfactorily, and his own sons who deputised for him were taking bribes and perverting justice. To rectify this they asked to have a king so that they might be like all the other nations. Logically it was a reform that [4] they needed, not an earthly king. It ought surely to have been known to them that all those evils and many more were freely indulged in by the kings of those other nations around them: bribery and corruption, perversion of justice, tyranny, confiscation of the best lands for themselves, favouritism, conscription, forced labour and heavy taxation. There was therefore nothing attractive about these other nations.

2.Samuel pointed out all these to them and warned them against their request, but the people in their obsession refused to open their eyes and see, refused to think and understand, refused to yield to advice and pressed their demand. What was the root cause of their demand? The feeling of inferiority and the desire for superiority in the eyes of the other nations. Samuel in agreeing to grant their request warned them that the very granting of their request was a punishment as stated in v. 18: "Then you will cry out on account of the king whom you have chosen for yourselves but the Lord will not hear you then".

It is astonishing how national pride can blind peoples' eyes to things that are obvious and shut out all understanding from their hearts. There was much in their history to make them see the superiority of God's kingship over man's kingship. Israel had chosen Saul as their first king who was not a great success, then followed David who proved himself a murderer and after him followed Solomon, all three kings ruled over a period of approximately one hundred years. In Solomon all of Samuel's prophesies came true: Solomon

was a tyrant and a man of iron, who made political treaties by marrying a large number of foreign wives, made trade alliances and collected money by heavy [5] taxation and made wealth to pour into the land. In the company of great wealth is always found all kinds of evil. He was according to the standards of the nations of the world of his time a man of great wisdom, and people came from every nation, deputed by all the kings in the world, in order to listen to his wisdom. He was a man of practical common sense and he made full use of it to his own advantage. Of him a commentator says: "He was able to attain to his truly oriental ideal of barbaric magnificence."

3. It was all this that laid the foundation for the disruption of the kingdom which took place during the reign of his successor and the ultimate fall of the kingdom and destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity in the year 586 BC., a period covering approximately 400 years from the days of Samuel.

4. There is nothing wrong in having an earthly king if both the king and people would submit to God's supremacy. But when those things which make man's kingship attractive to the people are the very things that rule out God, then man's kingship must be abandoned. Israel's mistake was that there was much in the nations around them to make it perfectly clear to them that without the kingship of God, no rulers are ever good. But the fact that they found the state of those other nations attractive was proof that their own moral and spiritual standards were no better than those of the other nations. Further more the obsession of becoming like all the other nations blinded them to the truth, so that Israel was after false national greatness far removed from true national greatness which only God's kingship can impart.

5. a). The cry all over Africa today is for independence for us so that we may be like all the other nations. Almost [6] everything is to be moulded after the pattern of all the nations in other parts of the world. Africa is doomed to blind imitation and wholesale reproduction of the other nations. There is nothing wrong with independence, but it is the desire to be like all the other nations, to be like America, Britain, France, Egypt, Russia, India, Ghana and so on. That is our doom. Wholesale reproduction with a sprinkling here and there with things local and calling it African personality. It looks as if we do not see anything evil in the set up of the other nations. When the struggle for independence reached its climax in this country in 1948, it was a common thing to hear people remark: these white people, they are cheating us too much, we must remove them from office and take their places ourselves, and all the evil will stop. Some of our own people who studied the situation more patiently and carefully pointed out that fighting against the evils in the country was not the same thing as fighting against the whiteman. The whiteman may go, but the evils may still remain; and affairs in the country today have proved those people right. All the power and key positions have been surrendered to us but have we got rid of those evils we severely criticised in the whiteman? Answer the question in all honesty. With lightning haste our form of government will be changed in a few

days time. Next Sunday will be our first Sunday of the Republic of Ghana. The form of government is no magic wand to work miraculous changes; it may change but the fundamental issues may remain the same. Our highest and greatest aspiration should be the kingship of God in individual hearts and throughout the nation and the whole continent.

APPENDIX Z/AA
SYMPOSIUM ORGANISED FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA, BRITISH
COUNCIL HALL.

THEME: AFRICAN TRADITION IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

DATE: 12.10.1979.

I should first of all like to thank the office holders of the Ghana Christian Council for inviting me to take part in this symposium. The subject is: 'African Tradition in Christian Worship'. It is a subject which is dear to my heart.

I. I shall begin with the question: What is the purpose of introducing African tradition, and to be specific, Ghanaian tradition into Christian Worship? I am a composer of music. Every combination of notes which I write is meant for a definite effect, and this applies to every arrangement of words. As far as I am concerned, any change in the combination of notes or arrangement of words would destroy the effect I intended. Similarly, the purpose of introducing Ghanaian tradition into Christian worship is to make every act of worship truly meaningful to the Ghanaian Christian worshipper so as to make our worship more impressive and more effective.

1. Circumcision which God made [as] the covenant between himself and his servant Abraham was 'a primitive rite among many nations of that time and not a new discovery of Abraham or Moses or the monopoly of the Israelites. In the early days, it was no doubt a rite of initiation into full membership in the tribe, when the young man was considered qualified to assume the duties of [2] husband and soldier. It was practised by the Egyptians, the Moabites and Arab tribes. Indeed, 'uncircumcision' was quite exceptional and became a term of reproach addressed to the Philistines who were non-Semitic people'.
2. On mount Horeb, God asked Moses to take off his sandals, because the place where he was standing was holy ground. The removal of the sandals was a traditional ancient mark of reverence, and a sign of respect before entering a holy place or a palace used in the East from before the time of Moses to the present day.
3. Baptism is an institution which existed among the Jews whereby one was received into the community of the Jews. Our Lord Jesus submitted himself to this institution and accepted it was a necessary condition for his followers, and commanded his disciples to go forth and make all nations his disciples and to baptise men everywhere in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

4. In setting before his disciples an example of lowly service to others he, following the traditional Jewish practice, rose from table, laid aside his garment, took a towel and tied it round him, poured water into a basin, washed his disciples' feet and wiped them with the towel. In all these instances just given we see God himself and his Son Jesus Christ adopting traditional practices for a higher purpose in order to make their service truly meaningful to their people.

II. Let us now examine some of our Ghanaian traditions worth introducing into Christian worship in order to make worship more meaningful to the Ghanaian and to make worship more [3] impressive and more effective:

Let us consider first

1. Infant baptism. A child, on the 8th day of his birth is outdoored whereby he or she is admitted into the community into which he or she was born. (Explain) why don't we combine baptism of the child with the ceremony of outdooring? Some individuals among us had done and are doing this, but it has yet to become the rule.
2. Take adult baptism, marriage ceremony, ordination of ministers, consecration of church office holders. In all these ceremonies, the candidate to make his pledge, simply stands, is asked set questions and made to answer the questions in exactly the words read to him by the officiating minister. I think it would be more meaningful, more impressive and more effective if the candidate is made to take hold of the state sword and make a pledge in his own words to cover answers to all the questions. This is Ghanaian tradition when a chief or a subchief or a linguist or a captain is being installed.
3. As far back as 1928, when spent a few months in Kumase studying agriculture at the Cadbury Hall, I used to attend Holy Communion service at the Presbyterian Church. I found that all the men wearing cloth in approaching the communion table removed their cloth from their shoulders exactly as one does before a chief or a high ranking person. I was deeply impressed and have since adopted the tradition not only at the communion table, but when preaching to a congregation. This is in keeping with Ghanaian tradition. In addition I now cannot enter any place of worship with my sandals. [4]
4. We refer to certain names as baptismal or Christian names, such as : John, Moses, Jeremiah, Henry, Edward, Napoleon, Nelson, Ruth, Mary, Beatrice, Rosebud, Catharine, Regina and so on. I cannot understand why Ghanaians still stick to these names instead of such Ghanaian names as: Dankwa, Amoako, Asare, Agyeman, Obuabasa, Alomatu, Agbemafle, Setsoafia, Lamkwei, Ayite, Amoakoa, Okyerebea, Ofebea, Ayikale, Ayikako and so on. Eves have an inexhaustible store of them. Some of us have our children baptized with purely Ghanaian names but the practice has yet to become the rule rather than exception.

5. We have just started to make use of Ghanaian song forms in writing church music, but we have yet to evolve a clear church music form void of strong emotionalism or strongly dance elements.
6. We have to experiment with such instruments as the atenteben, odorugya, impintin and Atumpan and the Bommaa orchestra. But in introducing Ghanaian traditions, we have to be extremely cautious and highly selective. Nothing cheap or commonplace is suitable or acceptable for worship. Our guide in deciding the suitability of a tradition should be: Does it elevate or does it debase? Only that which elevates is acceptable for worship. I say, we have to be extremely cautious. You see, a great many of our traditions are closely linked with some disgusting pagan practice or superstitious beliefs, so that in introducing them into our worship we would be at the same time perpetuating such superstitious [5] beliefs. Let us make sure that in introducing Ghanaian traditions into Christian worship, we do not introduce anything which will lead to lowering of Christian standards. Only those things which prompt us to the heightening of Christian standards should be introduced.

APPENDIX Z/B

Ghana Presbyterian Church Synod: Asante-Kumase

THEME: "The part African Music and dance can play in Church Growth."

DATE: 25.8.1980

[1] The two important things before us to consider are: "African Music" and "Dancing"
[Dancing]

I. Dance. I shall first deal with dance.

Dancing is one of the important gifts God has given to man; we therefore find dancing in every society of men everywhere in the world. It cannot be extirpated from man's nature. Dancing is a God-given gift not to the black race alone but to the white, the yellow and the red race as well, and it is no sin for anybody to dance. What we are to consider is whether it is proper to dance during worship, where we believe to be in God's presence?

2.(a) Those who are knowledgeable about dancing tell us that its first important aim is to attract the female sex to the male sex or vice versa. This truth is evident in the Asante-Adowa dance. [Illustrate] Dancing, because of its extreme lustfulness and its connection with gladiatorial sports, namely, real executions and similar horrors which were portrayed on the Roman stage was frowned upon by the early Church Fathers, and up to this day the older churches do not accept it as an aspect of worship.

(b). Those who accept dancing as a necessary aspect of worship often quote psalm 149: 3 to support their view: The verse reads: "Let them praise his name in the dance". A commentator says the exact nature of the dance cannot now be determined, but it is believed that it could not [2] have been a vigorous movement. However there is no point in thinking that what was proper at that time should necessarily be proper today in our Christian society. There was much in the Hebrew mode of worship which cannot be transferred to the forms of Christian worship without an obvious incongruity and disadvantage. [I was at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Akwapem-Akropong Singing band and I was seriously disturbed at what happened at the place of worship. Relate [dancing lustily]. Let us ask ourselves in what way does dancing help to deepen our thoughts about God and draw us nearer to him? After all, it is the purpose of music to inspire all the excellent sentiments in man towards God. Can we candidly say that the kind of dance we indulge in in our places of worship can inspire us in this way? It appears to me that our love for dancing has become an opportunity for Satan to draw us away from temperance and self discipline so important for our spiritual growth. In the form of worship and general Christian deportment let us remember that Presbyterianism stands for straight forward simplicity [Spartan simplicity, if you like] and clarity. Let us not lose sight of this fact. We may use music, drumming and dancing to express our joy, but this

II THE PART THESE INSTRUMENTS CAN PLAY IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

I now proceed to state my ideas of how these instruments can be used for Christian worship.

1. It is a practice in Ghana that when there is to be an official gathering at the chief's court, the [5] "atwenesin" is played three times with sufficient interval intervening one and the other to enable people to prepare to go to the chief's court. After this manner also I think the atumpan and the atwenesin can be used to summon people to worship in place of bells.
2. The atwenesin should first play a fixed expression which is yet to be composed, and this should be immediately followed by the Atumpan or talking drums summoning people to worship. The following expressions are suggested: "Tweadumpon Boa Nyame, Toturobonsu, Ɔboɔ sum Boɔhyen, Munimuni Sakyi, Okukurako, Okukuraba, Tweadumpon da kronkron ne nne, mommra m' yensom o, mommra m' yensom no; mommra mprenmpren, mommra biribiriri". These should be played the first and second time, and immediately following the third time, the atwenesin and the full Bommaa orchestra should be played with a definite rhythm such as the type called Bommaa prelude. This should play for about two to three minutes immediately after which the Atumpan should play the same expressions as before. Immediately following this, the minister shall enter the church or chapel to the soft tune of the odurugya. The worship shall then start with the singing of hymns to the rhythm of a small drum and a gong just to keep time for the singers to keep together as is done effectively in some of our Training Colleges and Secondary Schools today. [6] Immediately preceding the sermon, the atumpan should play expressions demanding quiet and wishing the preacher a successful preaching: "Yentie (muntie), okasa kyere. Tweadumpon bofo kronkron, wo kasa a, kasa kronkron, wo kasa a kasa brebrebre". Then shall follow the preaching at the end of which the atumpan should play an expression congratulating the preacher and asking God's blessing on what has been preached. At the close of the worship, the minister as well as the participants should retire in silence whilst the odurugya plays a tune.

I attach great importance to the quiet to be observed by the participants when they are walking out of the place of worship; because I am convinced that any great noise such as the full Bommaa orchestra has the tendency of driving out of one's heart all the beautiful impressions which the preaching and the whole service must have made on the hearer.

It is absolutely necessary to remember that all this will have to be put into experiment and will have to pass through several stages before taking a definitely established shape. One thing however is possible of immediate change if any church cares to adopt it. It is the use of atumpan in place of bells. The atumpan is artistic, has a definite meaning for us in Ghana and

it is culturally desirable; whereas the bell has nothing artistic or cultural about it nor does it express anything with meaning.

[7] CONCLUSION

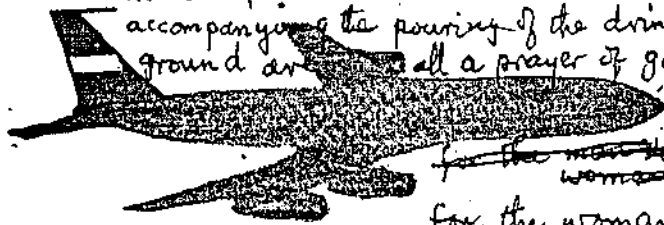
I WISH TO MAKE TWO POINTS IN CONCLUSION. The first is that, I have suggested that the expressions would be played in Twi language, because this is in keeping with what is already in practice all over Ghana, namely that the atumpan everywhere is played in the Twi language. The second is that inside the church or chapel, both the atumpan player and the odurugya player should play from a niche in the wall near the pulpit side of the church, so that they are not visible to the main body of the congregation. As a result of this our churches or chapels will then have to be built in such a way that provision is made for two recesses each spacious enough to hold the player to occupy it and his instrument or instruments. I fervently hope that this Africanisation of our Christian worship will be pursued persistently to its logical conclusion, for the purpose of a better and deeper understanding of our Christian worship in Africa.

APPENDIX Z / DA

Names

1. Compassionate person: Amnuever.
2. Pacifier _____ Vule.
3. Grace _____ Adom [Twi]
4. Peace _____ Emefa.

Customs: Libation: On the occasion of the engagement of a woman to a man: The words accompanying the pouring of the drink on the ground are all a prayer of good wishes



~~for the man and his fiancée~~
for the woman and her fiancé. It is our duty to study and make efforts to understand this custom.

Theological thought:

St Mathew 26²⁸: "Shed for many for the remission of sins" ~~Accountant~~ A biblical commentator has this to say: "Here is a clear statement that the death of Jesus was necessary to enable God to forgive sins"

WRITING PAD

This explanation is completely unacceptable to me.

The Gold Coast Independent.

TROTH FIAKZIN HOY.

SATURDAY, 18th MARCH, 1933.

Remarkable African Efforts and Achievements.

NO two events within recent years have been of greater significance in bearing witness to the awakening and purposeful stirring of the African, and his response to the urge to progressive achievement, as those that took place at the Colonial Secretary's House on Saturday and at the grounds of the Government Technical and Senior Boys' School on Friday and Saturday, respectively. The first has reference to the concert of African music staged by that promising musician, Mr. Amu of the Presbyterian Teachers' Training Seminary, Akropong, and his troupe under the auspicious patronage of the Honble. C. A. Stafford Northcote, C.M.G., and the second, to the Poultry Exhibition organised by Mr. F. R. H. Phillips of Fern Lodge, Bekwai. It was and is still, to a regrettably great extent, the fashion to look to the European for initiative in almost every worthy enterprise and no movement was deemed worthy, if it did not carry the distinctive hall mark of a Nordic origin. The African has in a general way been content with the role of a mere passive spectator, or at best, that bearing a close analogy to the mute parts of a theatrical caste. He has indeed rarely aspired to anything approaching the star turn. These are considerations which give accentuation to the significance of the events we are noticing.

By the Colonial Secretary's House function, in fact by his compositions, Mr. Amu has effected a revolution in more ways than one. Firstly, he has introduced something that must contribute to a complete recasting of the prevailing notion that only European music is fit and proper for the ears of the educated African; secondly, he has at one stroke silenced the voice of bigoted priests and sanctimonious ministers who in holy horror have condemned and still think that purely African music and the instruments from which they are produced including the drums, as integral parts of the racial structure of pagan Africa, are unfit attachments to the sublimated yearnings and aspirations of the converted. It may be true, ignorant ignorance on the part of these well-meaning people but it is none the less true that such sweeping condemnation of everything African which was considered synonymous with paganism, and therefore barbarous, has created more dangers than they set out to eradicate. Hand in hand with the direction of his outlook on life to higher things, the African's music and his culture for that matter, can be raised to sublimer heights so that he may have preserved unto him for his further development and progress on right lines the familiar land marks of his peculiar racial beginnings. Otherwise he is but an exotic growth having no connection with the things that make for the root source of his very being. Mr. Amu has given us music with a perfectly fitting background of racial hopes and aspirations instead of the comparatively meaningless and unsatisfying products of other people. His soul-stirring rhythm has its roots deep down in the traditional fibre of a race noted for its musical endowments, and finds a responsive echo in the hearts of every African. It thrills and will go on developing in majestic cadence until its living message of the awakening of a people reaches and enthralls to the uttermost corners of the earth, even as its offspring "The Negro Spirituals" nurtured and brought to perfection in foreign climes have gripped the hearts and imagination of mankind. Mr. Amu has shown the way and if our faith in our people and their strong leanings towards music is not misplaced there will soon be others eager to answer the irresistible call to express in greater measure that rhythm which is the soul of Africa. For the nonce the pioneer's crown is to Mr. Amu who really deserves well of his country.

APPENDIX Z / G

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FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 1949.

YEN ARA ASASE NI (THIS IS OUR OWN, OUR NATIVE LAND) WITH APOLOGIES TO SCOTT.

We were absorbed in rapt attention listening to a scholarly discourse at the Palladium, Accra, by one of our men of action, Ako Adjei as he, cool and composed, unravelled the love of centuries to prove that our ancestors from very ancient times, and intermittently throughout the ages, had acted on, and reacted to, one objective, viz: a unification of the free states which, under British trusteeship, have been administered together under the name of the Gold Coast.

Towards the ending of that memorable talk, we were agreeably startled by the dropping on our listening ears of some Akan words: "Yen ara asase ni!" The lecturer's English had been delightful, and yet these four Akan words fell "as the gentle rain from heaven upon the English beneath" (*with apologies to Shakespeare*).

These words form the first line of a song written and its music composed by that Pa-lestrina of African music, our E. Amu of Achimota College. Even though we have known this song since its birth, its poetic beauty, its power, its reality, its art never dawned on our slowly working brain as they did when we caught them at the mouth of Ako Adjei.

Were the author an Englishman as he is an African, the words and music of this song would have placed him in a class with the author of

"Breathe there the man, with soul
no dead,
who never to himself hath said,
"This is my own, my native land,"

and with the author of

"Ye moths of England"

End of

"Rule, Britannia"

This our song, "Yen ara asase ni!" aptly fits in our transitional period of today. We lust it not because it is as patriotically pompous and vaunting as its English counterparts, but because it stresses the reality instead of chams; eternal universal truths instead of passing personal glories and confits.

We take the liberty to change it into a rough and ready English for the benefit of our readers:

"This is our own land:
It is precious unto us.

It was with (their) blood our grandfathers
Went it for us for a legacy.
It is now our turn, you and I,
To continue the sacrifice.
Coward, deceitfulness and selfishness
Have made their marks on our lives,
Making our love for our land go vain.
Whether the nation will prosper
or whether it will decay,
will depend--it is astonishingly true--
On the moral stamina of its people."

One should know Twi to be able to discover the hidden pearls in the original.

Our author thinks, as we do, that it is doing good that exalts a nation. Our author has, as we do, a deep contempt for force and show of power. He does not think it worthwhile to mention these even for condemnation. He rather turns coolly to his people asking them to continue the sacrifice of their ancestors, which can only be maintained by discarding conceit (the original word is "over knowledge"), deceitfulness, all sorts of base, underhand dealings, and selfishness. Likened these, says some, and you gain strength that nothing could best.

When the author produced this gem, he did not feel like having produced anything great. So are they all, the noble ones. We know, however, that this is sublime work, and unless a better is forth coming from the same author or from another one, "Yen ara asase ni" in its present musical setting should be sung in all our schools, and a ben as vivacious, sprightly and springy rhythm will have been changed into a more serious and solemn one, there is no reason why it should not be adopted as the National Anthem of the free Gold Coast that is to be.

"On the pedestal of justice,
Kneel sledge and slater, we
wave the torch of Africa's
emancipation." S.B.K.

Z/H - 2
11th APRIL 1933

11 TUESDAY (101-264)

Mifo nyuis de dawsh la abo ma. Megbo vidara to do vli
solome do go yayi nye durugya to de atance a kikiyo
dai. Meno edzi sodo ga 170. Mede ankuziro gbo
yayi edzi su ga 530. Mr MacMillan va piam bi jedi bi
yeaoli nya de nunya le Spred Committee kappo am e nye
aro tata opie Committee la ee didi bi yeoabi sai bi gnyis bi
sia se ununon ta. ka pes bi nye vati mudi bi maqo vati
do me a fra se ununon. Medo nya bi ano lome bi mede asi aro
mayi edzi nyemunya. Uto mo nyata nyi gyo no. Eto. Me fia
ha nye kpiculawo eye mede medafi gbo vapi-ete. ha le
20523 + 210100 dai eye me ure spte. Medafin ha nye hadzina
la fra ga 8+ - 9+ eye meva afa me. Meva de gbanda lafi us
sa to odurugya daku zo to ghoms ire gbo vando anyi la
ga 11³⁰.

TUESDAY 11 APRIL 1933

I woke up in good health and went and worked in the garden. I came back, prepared and attended morning service. I came back and continued work on my "durogya". I worked on it till 11.40. I went to school late in the afternoon, came back and continued it till 5.30. Mr. MacMillan came and asked that he wanted to defend me at the Synod Committee meeting, concerning my wearing of cloth and the wish of the Committee was to release me by the end of this year. But he heard I had intended to leave the work at the end of the year. I answered that I might leave or continue with the work, but could not predict the future so he should continue with his plans. He agreed. I taught a song to my flute blowers and had my meals, came back and continued with the song learning and composition to the end. I went and taught my choir a song from 8.00 to 9.00 in the evening and I came home. I went for prayers, after that I took Odurugya and blew it as I walked through the town and returned home to sleep at 11.30.

Z/H - 3
12th MAY 1933

(2 FRIDAY (1932-1933))

Mifo ydi ga 4³⁰ nye kpi to nyere miadi jbededafe gbo
va dzra do na dzrofi. Memã do na efe voroooroawo eye
ny: kpiE amedawo miela Rose si foforo ta hena doho.
Miedo go meva dzra do de ydi soime, dakpo Martinson da
eye metro va afe me. Meva dzra tamabubu ke nye
Maurunya ga gome, gake zli tamale be nasdo dlo sse
ga 11³⁰ hafi fo. Mede midufe ga 12 me gbo nyi edzi
sidi ga 2. Biede sutu gfi do go dakpo Principal eye
nye kpii mifeo nu li nu gedawo ga verieto tso nye
avotata si hadzidi si nye nye Synod Committee le hchem
de yunye gbo. Mido kpe edzi nae be nu womas nye mawo
gome nam o la, nu nyieto nam koe nye mede aile do
me ne niatia do bubu ade si ana monum masabo Mauru
kpo. Mena dawado de T's Association meeting do go va
yi nye Maurunya dzi. de midufe gbo va wo do sidi ga 8³⁰ mto
anyi do alo.

FRIDAY 12 MAY 1933

I woke up at 4.30 and went for prayers with my group after which I got ready for work. I shared the work among the various houses. Some people and I cut some Rose flowers for planting. We came out, I prepared and attended morning church service. I visited Martinson and returned to the house. I started thinking about my sermon but I became sleepy, so I slept till 11.30 before I woke up. I went for lunch at 12 noon. When I came back I continued the work on the sermon till 2.00. After classes I went to the Principal and we discussed many issues including my wearing of cloth and singing which the Synod Committee was accusing me of. I emphasised to him that if they could not understand my ways then the best thing for me was to resign and choose another job which would allow me to worship God quietly. I went, prepared and attended T's Association meeting. I came and continued preparing my sermon, went for supper, and worked till 8.30 when I finally went to bed.

Z/H - 4
28th MAY 1933

28 SUNDAY (148-217)
Sunday after Ascension

Mifo ga 4³⁰ days mpa wo me adz gbedodafe. Migbo
va dera do. Nye m'egh de Oligolime ga 7 me to le
College. Medava do na kwasaifa ydi solime
out. Abit. Ferguson gbi. Mawunya. Miedogo nede
hafiafi. gbo va du m. Lafie "Mahu de o" Asante-Kwawu
Vivo eye migbo va yi gbedodafe out. ga 9³⁰ vade
g'eg'eg' solime le College. Ahulu gbi Mawunya.
Miedogo de gbone da do gbi na' fia, Oforikuma,
datsa ane labadokanro dai gbo vade fi m le
ga 7 me. Nye m'ede fi solime de kamet so to.
Mide hafiafi ibo ga 8-9 de. bi gbedodafe
ga 9³⁰ eye m'ava dera do m'ava fi ga 11 me.

SUNDAY 28 MAY 1933

I got up at 4.30 and went to call my people to go for prayers. I returned prepared. I could not attend the 7.00am service at the College. I prepared for the Sunday morning service proper. Mr. Ferguson preached. When we closed I went to teach (song), returned to eat and went to teach "Mahu de o" to Asante and Kwawu's children and I returned went to teach music till 4.00pm. I returned to attend afternoon service. Ahulu preached. We went to the town to greet the Chief, Ofori Kuma and also visited some other people. I came back to eat supper at 7.00. I went to teach singing from 8.00-9.00pm (then) I went to prayers at 9.20. I came to prepare, (and) went to bed at 11.00pm.

Z/H - 5
27th JUNE 1933

27 TUESDAY (178-187)

Mefo nguis, nye mēlōu dē gdi sōlēmō. Mēdze xpīwōwō
gome nye mēwō enu hafi gari fo o. Mēdze asi le wēdē
dōdōkō dzikpōfi tō gā 11-12. Mēgbo vadum, eye mēyī
edzi wōdēwō gā qthafi mēdē asi le enu. Mēwa yī edēi fīi
gā? mē eye nēwōwō la gūyā bī mēgblīē kūrāa, elabi
mēls gīyīm dē nys dīdī nē o. Mēgēle vādā sūsi adēwō
dē gēlūyē mē siwō vā nys hā nys sūsi mē kōkō p?

Egbo nys dzidzo gā gūts ykiki adē nām, elabi oōfo Mactilan
magblō nām bē Synod Committee la, xaxē le edokwē mē lē dīdīm
bē yēagbūgbo tō gā nys si tsi tsi dē gūyē lē avōtā mē la
dzi kē sē sē nāmō bē wōagbūgbo dē dēwō. Gātā mēdē kūrā-
dēdē gbalī dē wō eye yēwō sē bē wōaxō. Enūmā kē ntrō lē
wōfī nys dzi ana mōm magblō nys kplē dē. Gīrō nām
eye mēlō bē mawō hā. Mēdē gblōr nā Principal eye rīrō
nā gā hā. Mēnys sīdzēdē wōfī dūsi yē nys nūsi mēgblē
o, gātā mēdē kūrā dē gbalī nāmō bē wōagbūgbo kē
wōfī nys dzi eye nē wōnyē lē nā mōm kō rō. Mēnys
nys dēdōzō lē afī hā yē nys veyē nām tā
mēlē agbūdā gōgē o. Mēnū nys adē wōnyē sīdē nūsi
mēlē mōkōm nā xōxōxō lē ato uva rīm. Nē uva gūm
kō wōdā abpē nā Māmē. Mēnū aungī gā 11³⁰ mē
lō fo.

TUESDAY 27 JUNE 1933

I woke up in good health. I could not attend morning church service. I started making flutes (atenteben) and could not finish before it was time. I left it and went to invigilate examinations from 11.00 and 12.00. I came back to eat and continued making the flute till 4.00 when I stopped. I continued again up to 7.00 but in the end it did not turn out the way I expected it because I nearly spoilt it. Angela came and put some issues before me. I had been thinking of them already. Today is a very special happy day for me because Rev. MacMillan told me that the Synod Committee was confused and disturbed. It wished to withdraw its accusation of my wearing cloth. However, it would be in vain. He said I should therefore send to the Committee a petition letter which he believed would be considered immediately in my favour. I agreed to write it. I mentioned it to the Principal and he also agreed to it. I respected their authority, so I wrote the petition letter to them to reverse their stand and that would be alright if they agreed. It wasn't because it was painful for me to leave here that I wrote the petition letter. It was a very good opportunity I had been expecting which had now come. If it came true then thanks to God. I went to bed at about 11.30.

Z/H - 7
3rd NOVEMBER 1933

3 FRIDAY (307-38)

Mifungusi nye kpis Onyeforo miedi gbidofe. Mieds dowa-je
gbo vadara de dendi solims eye mevawo dote aje
ms. Mieds agbagba de hakpakpa ni vuu yeto, me
bfo hafi makipli gogoni de sme. (Dkradi) Miedi
Ts Association takpapa is yeto me. Megbo rafia ka
Asantewa to ga 6³⁰ - 7³⁰. Mieds Engman gbo gbowi
wado vie eye minto awgi ga so ms.

FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER 1933

I woke up in good health and went to prayer with members of my prayer group. I went to workplace, came back and prepared for church service. Then I came and worked in the house. I made a lot of effort on the composition of the song "Dkradi" until late in the afternoon that I could understand it. We went to the Teacher's Association meeting in the evening. I came to teach Asantewa a song from 6.30 to 7.30. I visited Engmann, came back, worked for sometime and I went to bed at about 10 o'clock.

Z/H - 8
8th NOVEMBER 1933

8 WEDNESDAY (312-53)

Mede dawafo ydi dabo mi na Principal si rosewo.
Onfo Beveridge va me bu akonta fiae bi nshin fio si deka na
Research work la. Edoyugbe bi yeana makpa wo fi eve awodo
sia eye yeana ame (Sir John Reith) nana fiwo na ewowo.
Eyata magabutanu le dwozo bi do sia me yu o. E do adanya
nam bi mado uye hadzibali deka de Sir John Reith. Meye de
adiala: "To Sir John Reith: In loving memory of the late Rev. George
Douglas Reith who was my teacher in the Theological Seminary at
Abetifi (Gold Coast) and whose personal friend I was privileged
to be in my student days."
E. Amu. Akropong. 8/11/33.

Mutise to onfo T.L. Beveridge dze dadea. Mede sukun ydi fphi
fite, doge va wo hakpakpa vudo sede ga 5. Koko, Asantewa
C. + Aforo Newman wova me fia gbe wo sede ga 7 eye
wodzo. Tai do lilili ale bi anawo meteyu va Biblia
xlefi o, ame use siwo va la miedo gbi da ko eye miedzo.
Nye meteyu wo do fi siwo. memo anyi hafi ga 9. So:

WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 1933

I went to work at the Principal's house in the morning to put manure around the rose flowers. Rev. Beveridge came and I gave him an estimate of £60.00 a year for the Research Work. He promised that he would allow me to do this work for two years and would let Sir John Reith donate £120.00 for the Research Work so I should not think of leaving the work. He advised me to send a copy of my singing book to Sir John Reith. I wrote on the book as follows: "To Sir John Reith: in loving memory of the late Rev. George Douglas Reith who was my teacher in the Theological Seminary at Abetifi (Gold Coast) and whose personal friend I was privileged to be in my student days. E. Amu. Akropong. 8/11/33." I sent it to him through Rev. T.L. Beveridge. I went to school in the morning and late afternoon. I came back to compose a song until 5.00. Koko, Asantewa and Aforo Newman came and I taught them musical tunes till 7.00 when they left. Due to formation of rain clouds people did not come for Bible reading. We those few people who came just prayed and left. I could not work that evening. I went to bed before 9.00.

Z/H - 9
10th NOVEMBER 1933

10 FRIDAY [314-51] Wodzi Martin Luther
Last Quarter, 12.18 p.m. 1933.

Mefo nyuis, fadde ndi solome na devi suo siso le sukufe
me. Hedo go va dzra do du um eye le ga 8 me la, sukufe
sweno dzika na atkwola si too Germania va + soria + nge
ha. Mefo nu na deviano eye le ga 8³⁰ nu la, meyi Synod
Committee Takpikpila me. Hida nye nyawo do wofe nyame
wals bi yewoaxom, galle womels nye avstata ga o. Mefo nya
me nawo eye wobi yewoabu tami le egi ana yudofom ame
gbe. Mefo abisi Afis Beveridge do fuyunge la nawo wals edzi
bi mawo tuisado la fa wesi umigbi yewoaxom mufiaae.
Hida abpi nawo eye mawo kila Seminarians eye medzemo
ga 12 me. Mefo lala Post Office la eye wova medo is
ga 2 me. Mefo adsi on le Senche vado Adukrom, gudo
dika vado Akropong fa'i ga 7 me. Mefo mbaanyi ga 11³⁰

FRIDAY 10 NOVEMBER 1933

I woke up in good health and organised morning worship for the pupils in the school boarding house. I came back, got prepared and ate. At 8.00 the pupils sang to the visiting German Doctor, his wife and me. I talked to the children and left for the Synod Committee meeting at 8.30. I put my petition before them and they agreed to accept me but would not allow me to wear cloth. I explained my issue to them and they said they would think about it and reply later. I made them aware of Mr. Beveridge's plans for me which they accepted. They agreed that I do missionary work for two years and then they could appoint me as a teacher. I thanked them and informed the Seminarians and left at 12.00. I waited for the Mail Van till it arrived and we left at 2.00. I joined another car at Senche and arrived at Adukrom where I changed lorry to Akropong. We reached at 7.00 and I slept at 11.30.

Z/H - 10
4th DECEMBER 1933

1140.

4 MONDAY [338-27]

Fo William va gbonye ga 4 ms miedodze sika
ga 5. Nye mede ydidowofi o. eye mekpoye
amedzoro gbo. Dzakpuiawo zo afo yi. E nye
to wo dzo ga 12 ms. Mex telegram to Principai
Fraser gbo be ^{ta naye kpo ye} nofo ti nam. Meke fia to nyewo
kafi wo dzo, ah be dzi dzo mi kata. Meva afo
me vade sika to ga 2-3. Medo go vadera
do na Achimotayiji. Fifi zido Akropong me be
magbe nofo la xoxo. Megbo be maxo nofo la kokoro.
Heto Nsawam vado Achimota ga 8³⁰. Afo
Letitia ha va dze Opare kafi meva. Me du
nu vo miedodze wu eye mimbis anyi
ga 11⁴⁰.

MONDAY 4 DECEMBER 1933

Fo William came to me at 4.00 and we chatted until 5.00. I did not go to work in the morning. I attended to my visitors. The young men left on foot. My people left at 12.00. I received a telegram from the Principal, Mr. Fraser that there was a vacancy for me so I should come to see him. I showed it to my people before they left. So we were all happy. I came home to attend classes from 2.00 to 3.00. I came back and got prepared for a journey to Achimota. Then there arose tumult among the people of Akropong that I had refused the offer. I said I would surely accept the offer. I passed through Nsawam and arrived at Achimota at 8.30. Madam Letitia was also a guest to Opare before I arrived. I finished eating. We conversed for a long time and went to bed at 11.40.

Z/H - 11
26th DECEMBER 1933

26 TUESDAY [360-5]
S. Stephen. Bank Holiday

15th Mifo nyuie, dzi nye markdowo goms. Miam am, dafle
~~teple~~ vopamu adakagowo vatekpls nye mawo blam.
Meno edzi sidi ga 2³⁰ letsi dvrado na kakla takps.
Kpe- Mielzi zgoni ga 3⁵⁰. Fia Oforikuma no kpls ta,
amwo va, y-n-ams tany Gbagba (The College Dining Hall)
Ams vovovowo fo nu: Asante Afari, Amega Bampo, Bismark,
E. Amu, Fia, Date, Mr. Beveridge. kowo numama
nawis avo tata daka kple kyawokyawoe dodo doka.
Nyɔnuawo metega fu wodakuiwo dzi o, ke boy wofa avi
kakaaka. Miekaka ga yms, eye hadzihe la yi efe ha-
dzixo me afisi miefo nu vovovowo ke hafi kaka.
Meva foru nuziwo sidi ga 1⁵⁰ hafi mlo anyi.

TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER 1933

I woke up in good health and started marking. When I completed I went to buy some cartons and began packing my things. I was on it till 2.30. I bathed and prepared for farewell meeting. We started it at 3.50. Chief Ofori Kuma was the Chairman. A lot of people came and the room (The College Dining Hall) was filled to capacity. Different people spoke including, Asante Afari, Mr. Bampo, Bismark, E. Amu. The Chief, Date, Mr. Beveridge. Gifts were also presented to me: one cloth, and one "kyawokyawoe". The women could not control themselves and they cried a lot. We closed at 7 o'clock and the choir went to their room and there were lots of speeches. I came and continued to pack my things till 1.50 when I went to bed.

APPENDIX Z/I

CONDOLENCES PAID TO THE FAMILY OF EPHRAIM AMU

Dinah Reindorf (founder and director, Dwenesie Singers), January 19, 1995.

We in the field of Art and Culture in Ghana honour a great man in the person of Dr. Ephraim Amu- Teacher, Africanist, Innovator, Composer, Lyricist, Doyen of authentic Ghanaian Music exponents; and Devout Christian. No matter what discipline of the arts and culture we happened to be in, Owura Amu influenced us in many ways. He was, indeed, a man of vision whose ideas we could translate into our respective idioms and disciplines. We are all the richer for his having turned his attention to African Music and Ghanaian Culture in general, and for his having refused to abandon indigenous traditions of value in favour of the foreign cultural norms that the Establishment at the time tried to impose on him. Owura Amu was a prolific composer who wrote the lyrics of all his songs. These lyrics portrayed his philosophy on life and inspired much patriotism in Ghanaians. An uncomplicated man, he lent a positive attitude to every activity he engaged in. He was proud to be an African, and was projecting the 'African Personality' long before the expression itself came into being. We are privileged to have lived in his time and learnt so much from him. Moreover, we are grateful to God that, Owura Amu's works will remain to be a testimony of the kind person that he was.

To Awura Amu, the children and extended family we say "Monhye den, ma yen nso nhye den". Owura Amu, okwan so brebre. Onyame mfa wo nsie. Damirifa, due! Damirifa, due!! Damirifa, due!!! Kasakerew ho nimdefo, Owura Amu, mo! Ndwomkyerew ho nimdefo, Owura Amu, mo! Yema wo abasa so, ma wo mo, mo!

J.J. Rawlings (former President, Republic of Ghana), January 19, 1995

Dr. E. Amu was indeed the true African – Let us hope he is not the last of those who've lived and dedicated their lives to reflecting the pride, beauty and spiritual essence of the black man. May he rest in peace.

Lt. Gen. Arnold Quainoo, January 19, 1995

Tata Amu taught us, through the sheer force of his personality and example, to believe in ourselves, to believe in our native values and to have faith in our black race. We, his students will carry on the struggle for African development in the same spirit and devotion.

Efo Kodjo Mawugbe (National Commission on Culture), January 19, 1995

Your life was one beautiful poetry. May we live to sing it in songs with our lives. Rest in Peace.

Mawutodzi Abissath (*National Commission on Culture*), January 19, 1995

May you reincarnate back soon in the Ghanaian society. Rest in peace.

Felicia Gyamfi (*National Commission on Culture*), January 19, 1995

A great beauty has been lost. A mighty oak has fallen. We shall emulate your life style. Rest in peace.

Alhaji Mumuni Bawumia (*Chairman, Council of State*), January 19, 1995

He was a true Nationalist and pan Africanist. May his soul rest in peace.

Michael Crabbe (*Graphic Corporation*), January 19, 1995

He was a genius. The elements in him are so mixed that heaven will say, here was a man.

Andre K. Badohu, January 20, 1995

Papa Amu! You fought a good fight. You won the race. Now you can depart in peace but we will miss you. Africa will remember you. Rest in peace!!

Helen Lokko, January 20, 1995

To have sat at your feet is a rare opportunity. Our prayer is to be a bit like you. May the good Lord grant you eternal and perfect rest.

Kofi Adjei Sowa, January 20, 1995

As we mourn your transition into the higher realms; we are at the same time celebrating your Christian life lived to full. The richness of which touched our lives and made an indelible mark on the history of the African personality.

Peter Kodjo (*Minister in charge, Presbyterian Church of the Resurrection, Accra*), January 20, 1995

Ephraim Amu was a SAINT.

Nkrabea Effah-Dartey (*President, Ghana Union of Theatre Societies*), January 19, 1995

If every African will follow your example, if humanity will follow your example, the world will surely become a better place. Amu, you belong to the sages. Rest in perfect peace, Tata Amu.

Amakye Robert (*Ghana Education Service*), January 20, 1995

A devoted Christian.

Nicholas Quacooe Agbokah (*Ghana Education Service*), January 20, 1995

Father of Ghanaian Culture.

Mensa Nunyuie (*Resource Planning Association*), January 20, 1995

A true Patriot.

P.V. Obeng (*Presidential adviser on Governmental affairs, The Castle, Osu*), July 1, 1995

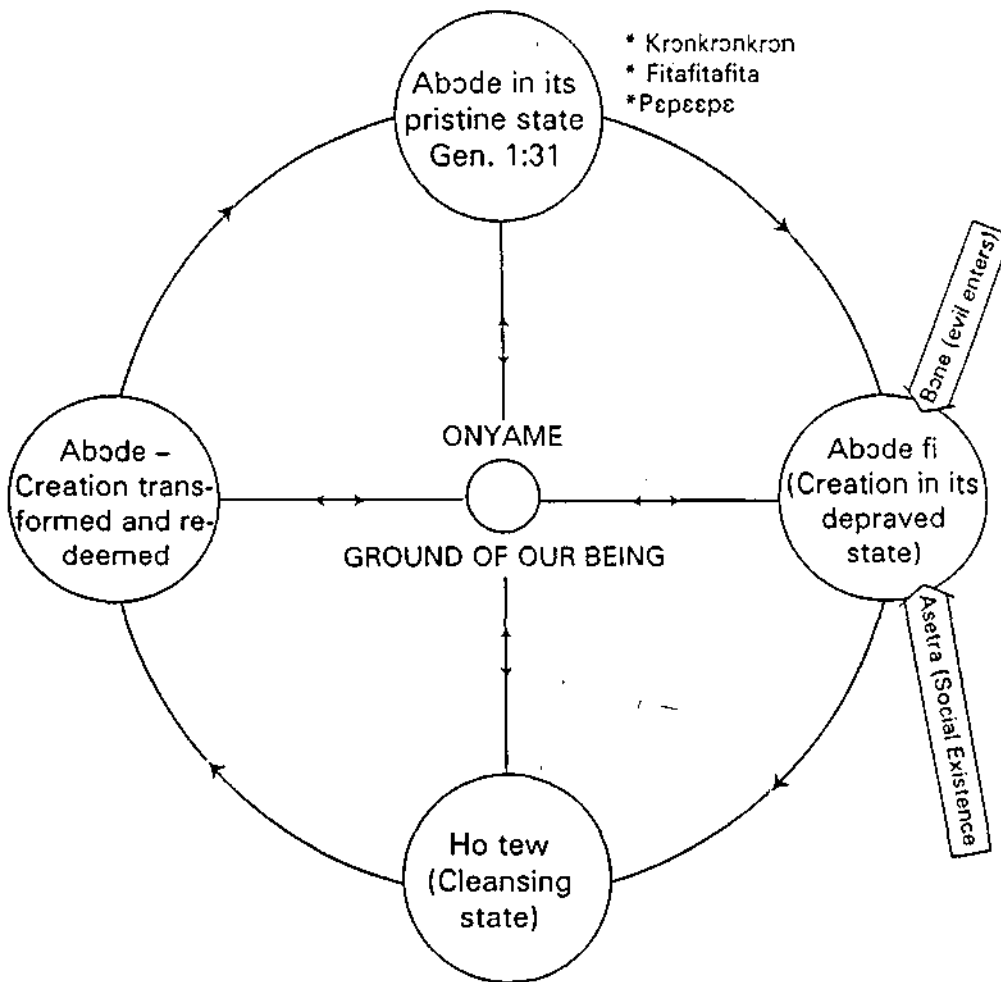
I have come to the home of the National Institution- Dr. Amu.

Kwame Abrokwa Yankyera (*Military Hospital, Volta Barracks, Ho*), July 1, 1995

May he rest in the arms of Abraham.

John Agyekum Kufour (*President, Republic of Ghana*), January 4, 2002.

I am honoured to pay this tribute. May the great man rest in peace. He single-handedly enriched the nation's cultural asset by such an immeasurable measure that there's no word adequate to describe it.



Method / Process of Adaptation

FIG 5a AMU'S CONCEPT OF CREATION AND REDEMPTION (SONG 1)

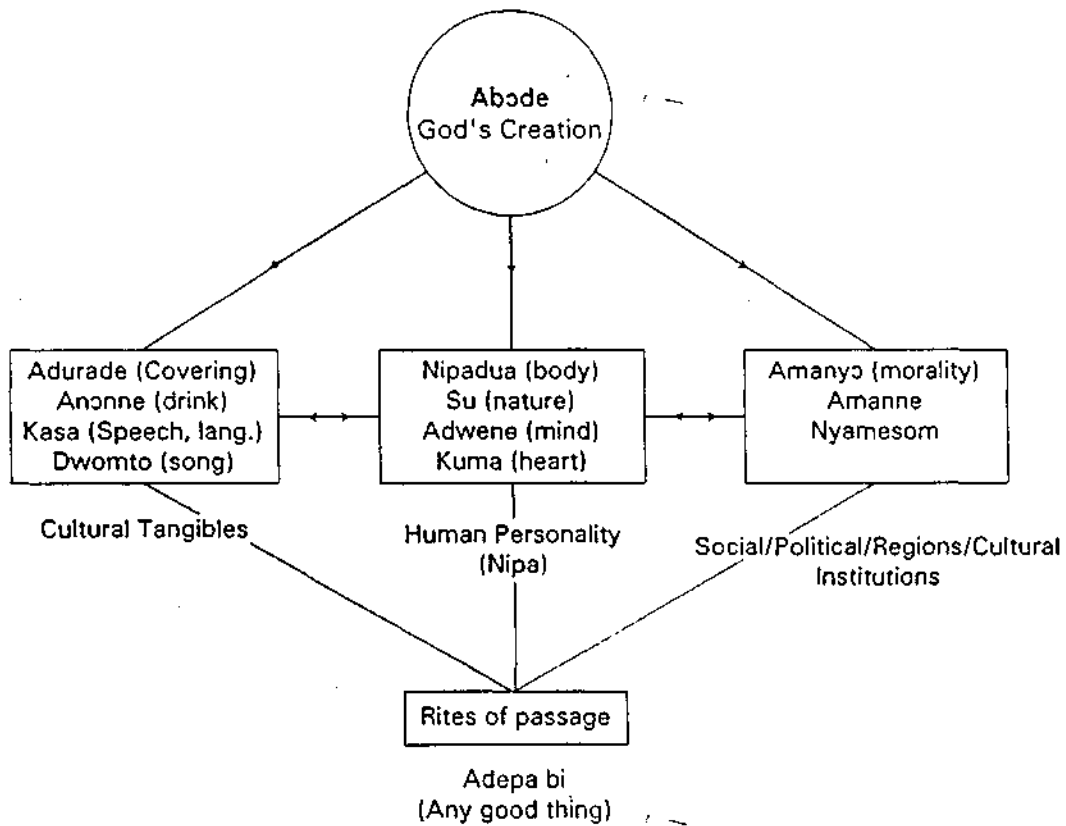


FIG. 5b THE CONSTITUENTS OF CREATION AS UNDERSTOOD BY AMU (SONG 1)

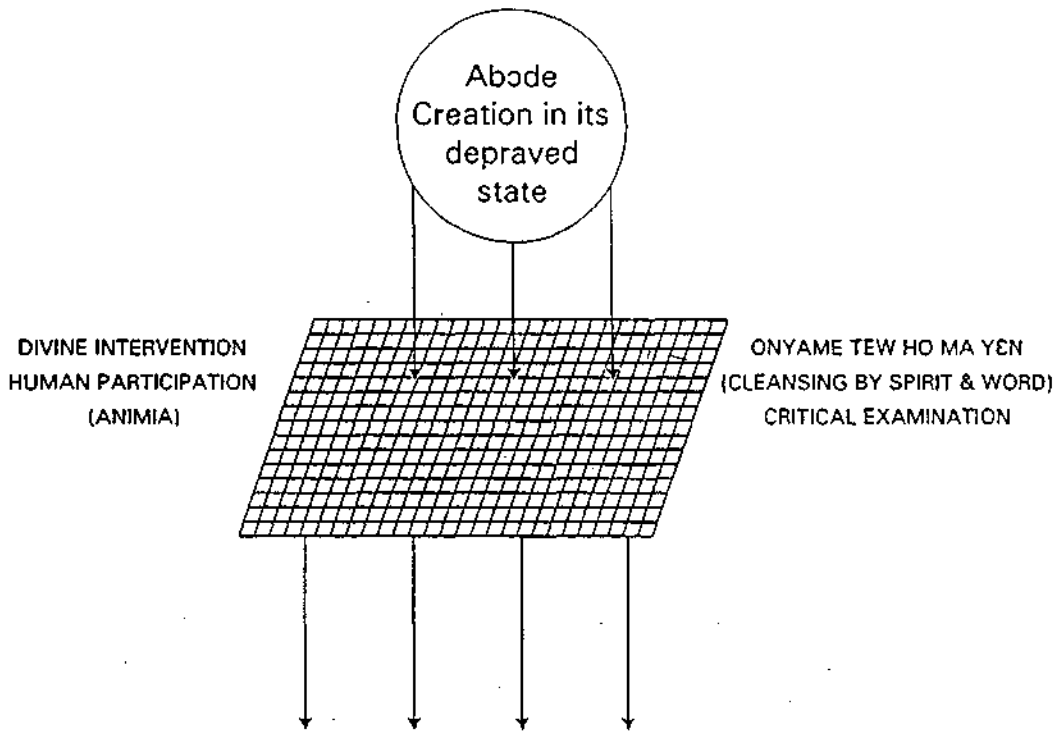


FIG. 5c AMU'S FILTER / METHOD OF ADAPTATION



FIG. 6 NANA OFORI KUMA II AND HIS ANKOBEAFO