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Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Ghana

Richard Asante & E.Gyimah-Boadi

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	-	Avoidance of Discrimination Act
AFRC	-	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AYO	-	Anglo Youth Association
CDD	-	Center for Democratic Development
CDR	-	Committees for the Defense of the Revolution
CDS	-	Chief of Defense Staff
CEPS	-	Customs Excise and Preventive Service
CPP	-	Convention People's Party
CSPIP	-	Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme
CSRP	-	Civil Service Reform Programme
CYO	-	Committee of Youth Organizations
DA	-	District Assembly
DACF	-	District Assembly Common Fund
DPP	-	Democratic People's Party
DCE	-	District Chief Executive
DCEP	-	District Capitals Electrification Project
EC	-	Electoral Commission
EGLE	-	Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere
ERP	-	Economic Recovery Programme
FCUBE	-	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GA	-	Great Alliance
GAF	-	Ghana Armed Forces

GPRSP	-	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
HIPC	-	Highly Indebted Poor Country
ICWU	-	Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union
IMF	-	International Monetary Fund
IPAC	-	Inter Party Advisory Council
JSS	-	Junior Secondary School
LI	-	Legislative Instrument
MP	-	Member of Parliament
MAP	-	Muslim Association Party
NAL	-	National Alliance of liberals
NCP	-	National Convention Party
NCBWA	-	National Congress of British West Africa
NCWD	-	National Council on Women and Development
NDC	-	National Democratic Congress
NIP	-	National Independence Party
NLC	-	National Liberation Council
NLM	-	National Liberation Movement
NPP	-	New Patriotic Party
OHCS	-	Office of the Head of Civil Service
PA	-	Progressive Alliance
PAMSCAD	-	Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment
PCP	-	People's Convention Party

PDC	-	People's Defence Committee
PFP	-	Popular Front Party
PIP	-	Public Investment Programme
PHP	-	People's Heritage Party
PM	-	Presiding Member
PNC	-	People's National Convention
PNDC	-	Provisional National Defense Council
PNP	-	Peoples National Party
PP	-	Progress Party
RCC	-	Regional Coordinating Councils
RESEC	-	Regional Security Council
SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Programme
SHEP	-	Self-Help Electrification Project
SSNIT	-	Social Security and National Insurance Trust
SSS	-	Senior Secondary School
TC	-	Togoland Congress
TOR	-	Tema Oil Refinery
UGCC	-	United Gold Coast Convention
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme.
UP	-	United Party
VORADEP	-	Volta Regional Development Corporation
WDC	-	Workers' Defence Committee
WEREMUD	-	Western Regional Movement for Unity and Development

D

ETHNIC STRUCTURE, INEQUALITY AND THE GOVERNANCE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN GHANA

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Introduction and argument

Ghana, like most countries in Africa is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society. Its current population, which is estimated at about twenty million, is a vast mosaic of large and small ethnic groups. The major groups are the Akan, the Mole Dagbani, the Ewe, the Ga Adangbe, the Guan, the Gurma, the Grusi and the Mande-Busanga (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000).

Despite its rich ethnic diversity, easy geographical and social mobility have scattered people from various ethnic groups throughout the country without destroying or weakening their ethnic bonds. Ethnic rivalries during the colonial era and the effect of colonialism on different groups and regions of the country, coupled with the uneven distribution of social and economic amenities in both the colonial and post independence Ghana have all contributed to the inequalities

and to some extent some of the present day ethnic tensions within and among the various ethnic groups and the country in general.[1]

Even though no part of Ghana is ethnically homogeneous, an overriding feature of the county's ethnic polarization is the north–south divide and the dominance of the southern half of Ghana in general, and in particular by the Akan group. This segment of Ghanaian society has enjoyed relative economic and political dominance in both the colonial and post-colonial times. In addition, there has been a divide in Ghanaian politics between the populist and the elite strands in society and between the rural and urban populations. The north–south flow of migration is emblematic of the ethno-regional inequalities that have developed in Ghana since colonial times when infrastructural development and productive projects had been concentrated in the south and left the north relatively underdeveloped.

It is therefore not surprising that post-independent regimes concerned about the cleavage of the inequality problems in Ghana have adopted various policies and programmes to level the field of opportunities and to address the imbalance in both the economic and political fields (Ghana Human Development Report 1997). The policies range from the distribution of government-controlled resources, staffing of the public bureaucracy, key appointive positions in government and

[1] See <www.ghanaweb.com/Ghana Home Page/history/pre-colonial.php> (accessed on 17 September 2003).

the public sector, distribution of symbolic goods, coupled with the centralization of political power (Gyimah-Boadi and Daddieh, 1999; Gyimah-Boadi, 2003).

Some of the programmes were captured in broad national policies and programmes such as the Seven and Five Year Development Programmes of the Kwame Nkrumah regime,[2] the One Year Development Plan of the Kofi Abrefa Busia administration,[3] Ghana Vision 2020 and currently the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP).[4] Specific programmes included rural development, decentralization and affirmative action. The problem of inequality has also been partially addressed through representation and the symbolism of appointments of individuals from a variety of ethno-regional and religious backgrounds to prominent positions in the government, the public and quasi state services. It appears that institutional structures as well as distribution of symbolic and bureaucratic resources that foster inclusion and participation have helped to check ethnic polarization in Ghanaian society.

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[2] Kwame Nkrumah was the leader of the Convention People's Party and the first President of Ghana. On assumption of office he drew up two development programmes. First was the Seven-year Development Plan of 1963. The program was aimed at restructuring the Ghanaian economy as well as tackling some of the major inequalities in Ghanaian society.

[3] Kofi Abrefa Busia was the leader of the Progress Party and Prime Minister of Ghana from 1969-72. The Busia led Progress Party had a one-year Development Plan July 1970 - June 1971. Similarly to Nkrumah's development programmes, provision was made for the supply of portable drinking water, health, sanitary facilities etc to the rural areas, and deprived communities.

[4] The Ghana Vision 2020 document was put together by the Jerry Rawlings led National Democratic Congress government that ruled Ghana from 1992-2000. The document is a blue-print for the country's human and socio-economic development. It highlights the need to bridge the country's inequality problems. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper document was put together by the John Kufuor led New Patriotic Party government. The Kufuor government opted for the Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC) in 2001. Like the previous documents, the GPRSP also highlights the need to tackle inequalities in the country.

Thus, four decades into independence, inequalities are still pervasive in Ghanaian society. For example, the Akan dominance of the political system has largely persisted from Nkrumah's time to the present, notwithstanding the perception that the Rawlings-PNDC regime had ushered in a new period of Ewe predominance, especially in politics and in the public sector. And even if the claims of an emergent Ewe dominance were valid for the 1980s and 1990s, the pattern appears to have been reversed with the coming into power of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government, which is largely perceived as a pro-Akan government. Relative economic buoyancy and to some extent, authoritarian modes of political management may account for the relative success post-colonial governments in managing conflicts in the first thirty years of independence. But it is noteworthy that Ghana has not experienced any major eruption of ethno-regional conflicts, and the relationships between the social classes, religious groups have remained relatively stable even under neo-liberal structural adjustment reforms in the 1980s. It is even more remarkable that the process of democratization in Ghana since the early 1990s has not been accompanied by or degenerated into violent conflict and instability, and widespread fears of an ethno-regionally-driven implosion in the aftermath of a return to multi-party constitutional rule after 11 years of authoritarian rule, under the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) have proved largely unfounded (Gyimah-Boadi, 2003).

There is a long tradition of studies on ethnicity in Ghana. Scholars have examined the ideological orientation and social bases of political parties. Studies

of these categories have emphasized the class and ethnic bases of support for parties.[5] Admittedly, few studies have also focused on ethnicity and inequalities in the Ghanaian public sector (Danso-Boafo 1996; Austin et al 1975; Jonah 1998; Gyimah–Boadi 1999; Gyimah-Boadi, 2003). The focus of these studies has also been too general. Little or no attention was directed to explaining the dynamic linkages of structures of ethnicity, inequalities and the governance of the public sector. Also, no attention was paid to the public perception, attitudes and behavior regarding recruitment and appointment into the Ghanaian public sector.

This study departs from recent studies on ethnicity and inequalities and investigates the dynamic interplay of structures of ethnicity and inequalities, and design of the institutions of democratic politics and inclusive political practices and conventions, with special reference to the Ghanaian public sector. In this way, the study shows special sensitivity to the complex way ethnic cleavages and inequalities influence the governance of the public sector.

Thus, the importance of this study lies not only in its investigation of ethnic cleavages and inequalities in general but also analyzing the effectiveness of the governance institutions/arrangements and public policies to regulate political competition and conflicts in the public sector in order to build a peaceful, stable and inclusive society.

[5] Examples of such studies are K Frimpong (2001) 'Ghana Election 2000: The Ethnic Undercurrents' in J Ayee (ed**)** ***Deepening Democracy in Ghana: Politics of the 2000 Elections*** 1 Accra: Freedom Publications; N Chazan (1983) ***An Anatomy of Ghanaian Politics: Managing Political Recession, 1969-1982*** Boulder CO: West view Press.

The study of 'Ethnic Structure, Inequality and the Governance of the Public Sector in Ghana' examines the nature and structure of cleavage and inequality in Ghanaian society; how successive governments have perceived and managed the main cleavages and inequalities in Ghana; and most importantly, what types of institutions and public policies have been adopted by post-independence governments to manage these cleavages and inequalities, particularly in the Ghanaian public sector; and the extent to which these institutions and policies have been effective in managing diversity, inequality and representation in government and in the public sector in Ghana.

The study uses both primary and secondary sources of data to examine these questions. Primary sources include interviews conducted with a cross-section of Ghanaians, most of whom are employed in the civil service, parastatals, the security sector, academia or civil society organizations. For the purposes of this study, some key public sector institutions were purposively selected. These include the Civil Service, Ministries of Education (MOE) and Health (MOH); The Judicial Service; Parliament; and parastatals include the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) and the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT). The security sector included the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) and the Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS). However due to paucity of data, this study also focuses on the ethno-regional background of the top hierarchy of these institutions.

The study has two main parts. Part one presents an overview of the ethnic structure of Ghana. It identifies and discusses the ethnic polarization and the internal rivalries within and among ethnic groups. It also highlights the socio-economic, cleavage and inequality problems within the Ghanaian public sector. It attributes the high levels of inequalities and some of the tensions particularly in the public sector to colonialism and inappropriate policies adopted by some post colonial governments. Furthermore, it examines the historical background of political parties, the politics of ethnicity, and the politics of recruitment into the Ghanaian public sector.

The second part of the study examines the main outlines of cleavage and inequality in Ghana focusing on the north-south divide, rural urban disparities, the Ashanti-Ewe divide and the dominance of the southern parts in particular by Akan groups in the political and economic fields. It then reviews the institutional arrangements and policies adopted by successive post-colonial governments to manage problems of cleavage and inequality. It also discusses the extent to which public policies, electoral rules, parliamentary and presidential systems of government, decentralization and affirmative action policies have tackled the cleavage and the inequality problems in Ghana.

A key hypothesis of the study is that despite the fact that the Akan group constitutes the largest ethnic group in Ghana it is fragmented and cannot win competitive elections without appealing to the major ethnic groups. A second hypothesis is that even though the Akan ethnic group dominates the Ghanaian

public sector, post colonial administrations have shown considerable sensitivity to the need for a measure of representation in politics and the public sector for the other four largest ethnic groups. A third hypothesis is that, governance reforms and public policies in Ghana have tried to foster political inclusiveness and civic participation as a way to promote national unity.

In short, we conclude that inequality and ethno-regional rivalry may cause tensions but they have not erupted in violent conflict largely because successive Ghanaian governments have adopted practices of symbolic distribution, representativeness and inclusion.

PART ONE

Introduction

This section presents an overview of the ethnic structure of Ghana according to the various censuses that have been conducted in the country since independence. Since 1957, four censuses have been conducted - in 1960, 1970, 1984 and 2000. Only the 1960 and 2000 censuses collected data on ethnicity.

Ghana's Ethnic Cleavage and Structure

It is estimated that there are about ninety-two separate ethnic groups in Ghana. These groups are often classified into a few large groups, namely, Akan, Mole Dagbani, Ewe, Ga Adangbe, Guan and Gume (Gurma). According to the 2000 census, the predominant group is the Akan with a population of 8, 562, 748 (49.1%), followed by the Mole Dagbani with 2, 883, 931 (16.5%), then the Ewe

with 2, 212, 113 (12.7%), the Ga Adangbe with 1, 387, 217 (8.0%), the Guan with 758, 779 (4.4%), the Gurma with 678, 681 (3.9%), the Grusi with 490, 379 (2.8%), the Mande–Busanga with 193, 443 (1.1%) and then others with accumatively 269.302 (1.5%) members of the population (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 2000). The 2000 Census data represents the Akan ethnicity as comprising of the following sub- groups: Akan - 49.1%; Agona, 1.4%; Ahafo, 1.1%; Ahanta 1.5%; Akwapim 2.9%; Akwamu 0.6%; Akyem, 3.4%; Aowin, 0.6%; Asante 14.8%; Asen (Assin) 0.8%; Boron/Bono/Brong, including Banda 4.6%; Chokosi 0.4%; Denkyira 0.5%; Evalue 0.1%; Fanti 9.9%; Kwahu 1.9%; Nzema 1.2%; Sefwi 1.2%; Wassa 1.4%; and Akan, not specified, 0.8% (Appendix 1).

The Ga-Adangbe, a small ethnic group in the southeastern parts of Ghana, consists of: Adangbe, 4.3%; Ga, 3.4%; Ga-Dangme, not specified, 0.3%. The Guan, who constitute 4.4% of the population, consist of: Akpafu, Lolobi, Likpe, 0.4%; Avatime, Nyingbo, Tafi, 0.2%; Awutu, Efutu, Senya, 0.6%; Cherepong, Larteh, Anum, 0.9%; Gonja, 1.2%; Nkonya, 0.1%; Yefi, Nchumuru, Krachi, 0.6%; Guan, not specified, 0.2%. The Gurma (3.9) is made up of: Bimoba, 0.6%; Kokomba, 2.7%; Kyamba (Tchamba), Baasari, 0.3%; Pilapila, 0.0%; Salfalba (sabulaba), 0.0%; Gurma, not specified, 0.2%; and Ewes form about 13%.

And the second largest ethnic group, the Mole-Dagbani (16.5) consists of: Builsa (Kagyaga or Kanja), 0.7%; Dagarte (Dagaba), 3.7%; Dagomba, 4.3%; Kusasi, 2.2%; Mamprusi, 1.1%; Namnam (Nandom), 2.4%; Nankansi and Gurense 0.5%; Walba (Wala), 1.0%; Nanumba, 0.5%; Mole – Dagbon, not specified, 0.1%; while

the Grusi who represent 2.8% of the total population consists of small groups such as: Kasena (Paga), 0.7%; Mo, 0.3%; Sisala, 0.9%; Vagala, 0.2%; Other Grusi, 0.2%; Grusi, not specified, 0.4%; and the Mande-Busanga, who are the smallest ethnic grouping, consists of: Busanga, 0.8%; Wangara (Bambara, Mandingo), 0.3%; Mande-Busanga, not specified, 0.1%; all other tribes, 1.5%.

Table 1 : Major Ethnic Groups in Ghana (percentages)

	%	NUMBER	WESTERN %	CENTRAL %	GREATER ACCRA %	VOLTA %	EASTERN %
Akan	49.1	8562748	16.2	14.1	12.44	1.5	12
Ga-Adangbe	8.0	1387217	4.5	2.4	57.3	2.1	26.9
Ewe	12.7	2212113	4.7	3.17	21.7	47.2	14.2
Guan	4.4	758779	3.4	11.8	10.2	18.5	18.9
Gurma	3.9	678681	1.7	0.8	3.09	14.5	1.8
Mole-Dagbani	16.5	2883931	4.69	0.8	4.7	0.71	2.1
Grusi	2.8	490379	4.85	2.9	11.0	2.06	4.2
Mande-Busanga	1.1	193443	7.2	2.97	10.57	1.37	3.10
Other Tribe	1.5	269302	2.5	8.2	10.3	17.6	5.61

	ASHANTI %	BRONG %	NORTHERN %	UPPER EAST %	UPPER WEST %
Akan	28.7	12.4	2.03	0.22	0.2
Ga-Adangbe	3.1	2.39	0.63	0.2	0.21
Ewe	4.5	2.6	1.5	0.09	0.058
Guan	7.1	8.69	19.8	0.81	0.63
Gurma	7	10.9	55.8	3.95	0.17
Mole-Dagbani	9.79	9.1	31.5	22	14.4
Grusi	15.2	14.4	9.89	14.7	20.5
Mande-Busanga	29.1	13.1	4.3	27.2	0.7
Other Tribe	14.3	16.8	10.3	12.8	1.3

Source: Calculated from the 2000 Population and Housing Census. Ghana Statistical Service, March 2000.

A review of the data shows that among the Akan, the Asante, (14.8%) and the Fante, (9.9%), stand out in size. In the case of the other groups, no clear numerically dominant groupings emerge at the national level. It is worthy to note that the national picture changes depending on the base region of the ethnic groups. For instance, the Sissala make up 86.9% of the Grusi in Upper West, while the Kasena constitute 77.1% of the Grusi and the Busanga (94.6%) of the Mande-Busanga in Upper East. Similarly, the Kokomba in Volta (91.2%), Northern (80.6%) and Brong Ahafo (70.2%) clearly stand out among the Gurme.

The classification of ethnic groups in Ghana, as used for the Census, is that officially provided by the Bureau of Ghana Languages, which has been in use since the 1960 Census. The classifications as presented above are only generic descriptions to cover a broader spectrum of ethnic groupings (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 2000).

The main language groups (often referred to as tribes) in the total Ghanaian population of 6, 727, 000 enumerated in March 1960 were Akan - 2, 965, 000 (44.1% of total population) mainly in the south of Ghana; Mole Dagbani – 1,072,000 (15.9%) in the North; Ewe – 876, 000 (13.0%) in the East; and Ga Adangbe – 560,000 (8.3%) around Accra and in the Eastern Region. Other groups larger than 100,000 (but less than 300,000) were Guan – 252,000 (3.7%), spread throughout the country; Gurma 238,000 (3.5%) mainly in the North, and Grusi 148, 000 (2.2%), mainly in the North (GSS 1960). The above language groups are usually divided into ‘languages’ based on tribal sub-groups or

individual tribes speaking the same language and, in one case, the language (Twi-Fante) is first sub divided into two ‘dialects’ (Twi and Fante) and thereafter into tribes.

In a later study, Dakubu (1988) estimated the native speakers of the various languages as Akan 52%, Mole-Dabani 15%, Ewe 12%, Ga Adangbe 8%, Gurma 3%, and others 9%. The broad ethnic groups, though useful catchalls, do not reveal the true extent of the complex nature of ethnicity in Ghana. The various subdivisions in the main ethnic groups as well as the geographic distribution of these populations make understanding the intricacies of ethnicity in Ghana a complex affair. For example the largest group, the Akans, consists of Asante, Fanti, Brono, Akyem, Akwapim, Kwahu, Denkyira, Wassa, Nzima, and Sefwi etc. and are spread over the Western, Central, Eastern, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions, with an enclave in the Volta region. Within these broader groups, jealousies and rivalries make distinctions between the subdivisions all the more important.

For example, since the passage of the Emergency Powers Act by the Convention People's Party's government led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in 1958, which separated the Brong-Ahafo area in the Ashanti region and created it as a separate region with its own House of Chiefs, Brong-Akans and Ashanti–Akans have feuded persistently over whether or not Brong-Ahafo is vassal state of the Ashanti kingdom.[6]

Furthermore, Akan settler farmers and their hosts in predominantly Akan cocoa growing areas in the Eastern Region, and Ashanti settler farmers and their hosts in the Western Region have clashed over settler rights versus landlord claims.

Ethnic rivalries of the colonial era and the effects of colonialism have also created tensions between Ashanti on the one hand, and Fantes on the other. At the end of the 17th century there were a number of small states on the Gold Coast; by 1750 these had merged, by conquest or diplomacy, into two: the Asante Empire, and the Fantes. By the 19th century, the Ashanti's were seeking mastery of the coast, especially access to the trading coast of Elmina. Thus, Ashanti's expansionist ambition of conquest and domination over the majority of their

[6] The Emergency Powers Act was introduced and applied in Kumasi in 1958 by the CPP government partly as a reward for the people of Bono-Ahafo who voted massively for the CPP in the 1956 elections. It was also meant to weaken ethnic sentiments and loyalties between Bono-Akans and Ashanti Akans. For details of the Brong succession in the 1950s, See F.K Drah, 1979, "The Brong Political Movement" in Kwame Arhin ed. A Profile of Brong Kyempim: Essays on the Archeology, History, Language and Politics of the Brong Peoples of Ghana (Legon, Institute of African Studies) pp.119-162

southern counterparts brought them into open confrontation with some of the states in the coast and the British colonial authorities.[7]

Moreover, the Northern region like its counterparts in the South is also far from being homogeneous. There are no less than fifteen different ethnic groups in the region with varied histories, customs and traditions. Besides the Konkomba-Bimoba clash, most conflicts have been between 'majority' and 'minority' ethnic groups.

These conflicts have left in their wake destruction of life and property. Even more alarming is the atmosphere of insecurity and distrust that these conflicts have engendered which has affected all socio-economic activities in the region. Even though the immediate causes of these conflicts differ, the remote causes are similar if not the same. They arise from several years of renegation of certain ethnic groups, so-called 'minority' groups to 'second rate citizens' in the traditional and political administration of the region, or attempts to by-pass some of the 'gates' in the system of rotation to the chiefship.[8] The majority ethnic groups have cunningly taken the lands of these areas to themselves through sometimes false information and manipulation of colonial authority. The impression created is that these four groups – Mamprusi, Dagomba, Gonja and Nanumba - own all the lands in the Northern region. They are therefore the

[7] See <www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/history/pre-colonial.php> (accessed on 20 September 2003).

[8] The term 'minority ethnic' groups as used in the Northern Region has nothing to do with population; rather it connotes those ethnic groups that did not form kingdoms or empires in the past. Collectively, the 'minority ethnic' groups far out-number the 'majority ethnic' groups in terms of numbers.

'landlords', the 'ruling class'. In fact the relation between the 'ruling class' and their 'landless subjects' is at best an acceptance of a situation of mutual mistrust and at worst, open confrontation.[9]

Geographical Location of Ethnic Groups in Ghana: Ghana's main ethnic groups are clumped regionally across the country. The Ga-Adangbe is a small group in the South Eastern parts of Ghana, in particular the Eastern and the Greater Accra Regions. The Ewes predominate in the east, near Ghana's border with the Republic of Togo, a country where Ewes also constitute one of the major-ethnic groups. Despite the fact that Ewes are found largely in the Volta region, there are many minority ethnic groups – such as the Likpe, the Avetime, Krachie and Nchumaru - that also live there. Much further to the north, located in Ghana's Savannah zone, are two other major ethnic constellations, the Gurma in the North East and the Mole-Dagbani to the West.

This complex mix of ethnicity and regionalism has allowed political and cultural entrepreneurs to exploit divisions and sub classifications to suit their purposes. For instance, an individual may subjectively cast as Akan, even though the person considers himself as non-Akan on the basis of paternity or maternity. Moreover, in reality, Akyem or Brong affinity towards an Asante today may be less than towards a Ga, or Ewe, while an Asante's predilection towards a Dagomba may be stronger and more positive than towards say, a Fanti or a

[9] For further discussions on the ethnic groups and conflicts in the Northern Regions of Ghana see NJK Brukum (1995) 'Ethnic conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana: Case study of the Conflicts in the Gonja District 1980-1994' in M Oquaye (ed.) ***Conflict and Conflict Resolution in Ghana.***

Denkyira. Similarly, the expression 'Northerners' is often used as if the populace in Northern, Upper East and Upper west regions formed a single ethnic group even though most of the languages are not intelligible to one another.

Overall, the trajectory of census data in Ghana reveals that Ghana's ethnic groups are not confined to specific geographical areas. Internal migration and foreign immigration have rendered the various areas less and less homogeneous over time from the point of view of tribal distinction.

Surprisingly, despite this hodgepodge of ethnicities, Ghana's ethnic map is almost coterminous with its religious map. Christians who constitute about 69% of the population and are predominantly Akan are found largely in the southern sections while Muslims who constitute about 16% live mainly in the Northern section. Animists are evenly distributed among the various ethnic groups throughout the country (GSS, 2000). The spatial distribution of the two major foreign religions, Islam and Christianity, almost coincides with the division of the country into the northern half which is poor and disadvantaged, and the southern half which is wealthy and more developed.

Socio-Economic Inequalities in Ghana

Inequality in Ghana, as in most societies, has been determined by factors such as geography, (especially when examining the differences between the poor north and the prosperous south, and the rural-urban divide) gender, disability and class. More specifically, inequality of opportunities among the peoples of Ghana

is often the result of the combined effect of objective factors such as differential resource endowment, history and public policy, as well as subjective factors such as attitudes and prejudices (Ghana Human Development Report 1997). Cumulatively, these effects have cut across regions. There are wide disparities with respect to the distribution of medical and health facilities, access to telephones, consumption of electricity, small-scale industries, schools and other key social services, particularly between the north and the south, rural-and urban areas. For example, at independence, having been largely neglected and left relatively underdeveloped under colonial rule, the northern region declared a social and economic distance from the rest of the country and its political leaders argued that their people were not ready to be governed as part of independent Ghana without special protections.

In the southeast, having been colonized by Germany, and governed later as part of the UN Trusteeship Territories together with Togoland, the Ewe exerted irredentist pressures towards their cousins in Togoland. The Ashanti also demanded special protections for their cocoa and mineral wealth as well as their culture. (Austin, 1964; Adu-Boahen, 1996).

Taking account of the distribution of facilities in the country, some observers have ranked the regions in Ghana along a continuum of the most to the least developed. Dickson (1975) puts forward the following list in descending order of rank: (1) Greater Accra (2) Ashanti (3) Eastern (4) Central (5) Western (6) Volta (7) Brong-Ahafo (8) Northern (9) Upper East and West. Using a Quantitative

measure ranging from 1 to 0, and using Greater Accra as the base Ewusi (1976) ranked the regions as follows (1) Greater Accra 1.000 (2) Central Region 0.398 (3) Western Region 0.392 (4) Eastern Region 0.355 (5) Ashanti Region 0.340 (6) Volta Region 0.306 (7) Brong–Ahafo Region 0.365 (8) Northern Region 0.110 (9) Upper Region (East and West) 0.071.

In spite of the differences between the rank positions of the Eastern and Western, Central and Ashanti Regions, which vary in the two classifications presented by Dickson and Ewusi respectively, there is a great deal of consistency, given that these regions are predominantly ethnically and linguistically Akan. Apart from the Brong–Ahafo Region which was ranked seventh after the Volta Region in both classifications, much of the Akan areas are more developed than the Northern and Upper Regions which are ethnically non-Ewe and non-Akan. For example, data presented by Ewusi clearly shows that the index of development of the Northern and Upper Regions were 0.110 and 0.071 respectively. These are far below the indices of the others, which range from 0.265 and above.[10]

In addition, of the five regions classified as poor in Ghana in 1999, poverty levels are highest in the three Northern Regions, (the Upper East, Upper West and Northern Regions). To illustrate: Nine out of ten people in the Upper East, eight out of ten in Upper West, seven out of ten in the Northern Region are poor, as compared to five out of ten in Central and Eastern Regions. (GPRS, 2003:15).

[10] See DK Agyeman (1995) 'Democracy, Politics of Ethnicity and Conflict Resolution in Ghana' in M Oquaye (ed) ***Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Ghana.***

The 1992 Constitution has sought to redress the cultural and historical stereotypes that have generated the ethnic inequalities over the years by declaring a commitment to equal opportunities for all Ghanaians.

The Politics of Ethnicity and Political Developments in Ghana

Anti-colonial nationalism in Ghana began around the end of the 19th and early 20th century when the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) comprising chiefs and lawyers, and the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) were founded (Kimble, 1963). However, the united front adopted by the nationalist elites against colonialism in the pre-colonial period later turned antagonistic, especially with the emergence of ethno-regionally based political parties during the decolonization era. This development has impacted on the politics of the subsequent years.

By the 1930s, political organization took place under the aegis of the elite dominated Youth Associations whose members were youth in mind rather than in age (Apter 1963). The thrust of their activities was to keep the spirit of nationalism alive by discussing pragmatic measures by which to promote national development. One of the most prominent leaders of the Youth Associations was Dr. J. B. Danquah who was to become even more prominent in Ghana's post World War II politics.

As far back as 1850, Ghana, then the Gold Coast under British colonial rule, was given its own Legislative Council to advise the colonial Governor in enacting legislation mainly in the form of ordinances. The legislative council was purely

advisory as the Governor exercised all legislative powers. Prior to 1925, the Governor retained complete control of legislation. The issue that dominated the Nationalist Movements in the Gold Coast was the need for more representation into the Legislative Council.[11]

However, over time, and in particular due to the emergence of political parties after the Second World War, the focus of advocacy changed radically from representation in the legislative Council to full independence. For example, the 1951 Legislative Assembly elections were the first elections in Ghana to be conducted on the basis of political parties and universal adult suffrage. The two political parties that contested the elections were the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), led by Dr. J. B. Danquah and the Convention People's Party (CPP), led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. Along with other smaller parties, they sought to assume the mantle of political leadership in the event of the departure of the British.

Ghana became independent on 6th March 1957. This historic achievement was primarily the work of two political parties that emerged in Ghana in the post Second World War period. These were the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) and the Convention People's Party (CPP). They were formed in August 1947 and June 1949 respectively. The shortcomings of the colonial government precipitated the formation of the UGCC. Thus the end of World War II marked the beginning of an epoch when political activity and organization ceased to be the exclusive preserve of the elites.

[11] See Ghana Government Website, www.ec.gov.gh (accessed on 20 August 2003).

The interests of the wider section of the population especially urban workers, demobilized soldiers and cocoa farmers came into sharp conflict with the interests of the colonial power structure. Conditions in the social and economic field were exasperating. For example the unemployment situation grew worse after World War II with the return of the ex-servicemen. Even more exasperating to Ghanaians was that the economic field after the war was dominated by the colonial government and foreign firms.

While the economic and social policies of the colonial government after the war antagonized the commercial classes, their political stance also alienated the Ghanaian intelligential who as early as the 1920s and 1930s and especially during the war were agitating for full participation in the government of the country at both the central and local government levels as well as the Africanization of the Civil service.[12]

[12] See <www.ec.gov.gh/elections-in-ghana.htm> (accessed on 4 September 2003).

In the light of the post war frustration, it became obvious that a new political movement possessing the appropriate mass-oriented leadership was required to galvanize the masses into the correct political action. The first post World War II movement, the United Gold Coast Convention led by J B Danquah a lawyer, anthropologist, philosopher and politician sprang up in 1947 but apparently did not meet the above requirement because it remained largely an organization of elite businessmen, lawyers and other professionals.

The stated aim of the UGCC was to ensure 'that by all legitimate and constitutional means the direction and control of the government should pass into the hands of the people and their chiefs in the shortest possible time.' But unable to devote full time to party organization, the lawyers and businessmen invited Kwame Nkrumah to be the General Secretary of the UGCC.

The assumption of office as General Secretary of the UGCC by Nkrumah in 1947 was certainly an important turning point in the history of the UGCC and Ghana as a whole. His assumption of office not only boosted the party, but also provided a focal point for radical organization; this eventually led to his break with the UGCC and the formation of his own party, the CPP.

The outbreak of anti colonial riots in 1948 brought into sharp focus the ideological and political contradictions between Nkrumah and the rest of the conservative UGCC leadership. As a result, Nkrumah's supporters within the Committee of Youth Organizations (CYO), which he had established inside the UGCC,

compelled him to break away to form the first mass political organization in the country, the Convention People's Party (CPP) (Austin 1976).

The declared aim of the CPP was to achieve 'full self-government now for the chiefs and people of Ghana, to end all forms of oppression and establish a democratic government, to secure and maintain complete unity of the entire country, to promote a trade union movement and achieve better working conditions, to work for proper reconstruction of a better Ghana, and finally to achieve a united and self governing West Africa.' The transition from nationalist political activity, almost entirely dominated by the intelligential or educated elites, to one in which the mass dictated the pace and momentum of national politics is what produced an enduring polarization in the internal politics of the country.

The CPP won the general elections of 1952, 1954 and 1956. The elections of 1954 witnessed the formation of political parties along regional and ethnic lines. For example, the Northern People's Party (NPP) was formed out of the fear of the people of the Northern and Upper Regions, especially of the educated people and chiefs, becoming dominated by the people of the south after independence. Its aim among others was to win respect for the culture of the people of the Northern Territories to ensure their just treatment, their protection against abuses, and their political and social development.

Closely connected with the NPP was the Muslim Association Party (MAP). This party was formed in 1954 out of the Gold Coast Muslim Association established in the early 1930s. As the name indicates it was formed primarily to cater for the

interests of Muslims living in the Zongo (Muslim quarters) of the main towns in the country.

The last two parties, the Togoland Congress (TC) and the Anlo Youth Association were formed in the present Volta Region. The TC was formed in 1951 out of a number of political associations which were already in existence in the region. These included the Togoland Union founded as early as 1943, the Togoland Youth Conference and the United Nations Association of Togoland.

The principal aim of the Congress was to intensify the campaign which had been raging since the 1920s and 1930s for the unification of the British and French mandated territories of Togoland created out of the former single Germany colony of Togo. However, it was opposed in the region not only by the CPP but also by the Anlo Youth Organisation (AYO). Limited to the Ewe living in the southern part of the region in the states of Peki, Anlo, Some, Tongu and Klikor, the AYO was opposed to the unification of the two Togos on the grounds that it would permanently separate the Ewes living in the then trans-Volta district of the Gold Coast Colony from those living in the reunified Togo. On the contrary it advocated the unification of all the Ewes in French Togo, British Togoland and the trans-Volta Region.

It was with anxiety that all the parties entered the elections in June 1954 but the results were decisive. The CPP won 72 out of the 104 seats, NPP 12, GCP 1, MAP 1, AYO and the TC won 1 and 3 seats respectively. The CPP won by a

clear majority, and also won seats in all the regions of the country, 38 in the colony, 18 in Ashanti, 8 in trans-Volta and 8 in the North.

The first obvious reason behind the CPP's victory was its slogan ‘self government now’ and especially the way it fired the imagination of the public, the positive achievement of the CPP government in its first term of office (1951-54), better organization, and the popularity and charisma of Nkrumah.

However, three months after the 1954 elections, the National Liberation Movement (NLM) emerged which started, and essentially remained as, an Asante nationalist movement with its leadership concentrated in the hands of Ashanti people.

The NLM was largely an Ashanti–based movement which according to its founder, Baffour Osei Akoto (also a senior linguist of the Asante monarch), was an attempt by the Ashanti to safeguard its national identity and reverse the trend that threatened its traditional institutions with extinction. In its effort to capture political power at the national level the NLM struck an alliance with Akyem Abuakwa and sought alliances with other ethnic and regionalist parties like the Anlo Youth Organization in the Volta Region and the Northern People’s Party (NPP).

The aims of the NLM were however couched in general terms applicable to the whole of Ghana. The rise of the NLM affected the subsequent history of Ghana in two ways; it opened an era of violence, arson and anarchy which reigned in

Kumasi and its immediate environs for about three years, and it also raised problems as to what kind of constitution independent Ghana should have and whether there should be any fresh elections before independence or not. While the NLM insisted on a federal constitution, the CPP insisted that the constitution should be unitary. On the question of fresh elections, the former argued that since it had just emerged after the 1954 elections, there should be new general elections to determine the popularity of the two parties.

It is against this background that the final round in the battle for independence began with the general elections of July 1956. The election was to determine the preference of Ghanaians in terms of the timing of political independence from British colonial rule. While the CPP campaigned on 'self government now' and a unitary state, the other parties wanted 'self government in the shortest possible time' and federation. The CPP was opposed on the electoral battlefield by the NLM and its allies.

The CPP won all the 44 seats in the colony; 8 out of the 13 in trans-Volta Region; 11 out of the 26 seats in the Northern Territories; 8 out of the 21 seats in Ashanti, making a total of 71 seats, with a clear majority of thirty-eight. In the case of the opposition groups, the NLM won 12 seats all in Ashanti; the NPP got 15 seats all

in the North, TC 2, MAP 1 and the Federal Youth Organization (formerly the Anglo Youth Association), 1 seat.[13]

The first reason for the CPP's success in the 1956 elections was the weakness of the opposition parties. Secondly the battle cries for federation and 'mate' (secession) of the NLM and its allies scared large number of voters elsewhere, though anti–CPP, were nevertheless opposed to federalism and secession. The propaganda mounted by the CPP highlighting the threat of re-establishment of the Ashanti domination over the country in the event of an NLM victory also proved particularly effective in the southern Ghana. In addition, the NLM concentrated too much on Ashanti, Akim, and sections of the Northern Region. Though the CPP won the 1956 elections, the results show that the CPP was quite weak in Ashanti, the Volta and the Northern and Upper regions. On the basis of this, Busia and the opposition immediately after the release of the final results of the elections, announced that the election results justified NLM's call for a federal form of government, arguing that although the election had been fought over the issue, the CPP could not win the overall majority in both the Ashanti and Northern territories, consequently there was no alternative but federalism (Nkrumah 1972).

[13] For details on the aims and objectives of the United Gold Coast Convention, Convention People's Party, National Liberation Movement and the other smaller parties see Boahen-Adu (2000) ***Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*.** See also Danso-Boafo Kwaku (1996) ***The Political Biography of Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia*** Accra: Ghana Universities Press.

Antagonism was also developing in the various regions based on sectional interests. For example, in spite of the May 1956 plebiscite that was conducted by the UN to find out whether the then British Togoland (made up of the Trust Territories now Volta region and parts of the Northern region) wanted to join the Gold Coast, and the fact the CPP which campaigned for the area to join the Gold Coast won by 79 percent of the votes cast in favour of the union, the people of southern Togoland were still in open rebellion and even boycotted the independence celebrations. Similarly, in Accra, tensions between the CPP and the Ga people grew worse and led to the formation of the nativist Ga Shifimokpee, (the Ga Standfast Association) in 1957. This movement later joined forces with the opposition groups.

The antagonism was further worsened when after boycotting the Assembly the opposition sent a delegation to London to press the case for a federal form of government. The constitutional crises were later on diffused by the intervention of the British government who succeeded in persuading the parties to make a concession in their respective demands. Consequently, both parties agreed and regional safeguards were included in the Independence Constitution of 1957. Even though the Independence Constitution maintained the unitary state, it also conceded a greater measure of administrative power to the regions through the creation of the Regional Assemblies.[14]

[14] For details of ethnic animosities during the decolonization period in Ghana, See D-B Kweku (1996) ***The Political Biography of DR. Kofi Abrefa Busia*** Accra: Ghana Universities Press. See also Boahen Adu (2000) ***Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.***

It is against this backdrop that the Nkrumah-led CPP government introduced a number of harsh and radical political measures, in an attempt to deal with the mounting ethnic tensions, which threatened to disintegrate the country. The measures started innocuously with the passage of laws forbidding the formation of political parties along ethnic, religious and regional lines (Avoidance of Discrimination Act, December 1957), which served to suppress all existing parties that had raised the question of federalism such as the National Liberation Movement and the Togoland Congress Party. Indeed the dissolution in March 1959 of the quasi-federalist interim regional assemblies established under the 1957 Independence Constitution appears to have put a permanent lid on the issue of federalism and to some extent, decentralized local government.

Furthermore, the CPP suspended the NLM-dominated Kumasi City Council and ordered a probe into its activities, apparently to break the hold of the NLM in Kumasi. Nkrumah also appointed CPP politicians as Chief Regional Commissioners in place of civil servants who were all British. This was done to strengthen the CPP in the regions. Nkrumah also introduced the Emergency Powers Act in January 1958 and separated the Bono-Ahafo area in the Ashanti region and created it as a separate region with its own House of Chiefs, and also went on to recognize a host of chiefs who were pro-CPP in Ashanti as paramount chiefs. This explains some of the recurrent tensions between Ashantis and Bonos.

In short, Nkrumah and the CPP justified the use of totalitarian measures as necessary for containing the fissiparous tendencies that threatened national unity, integration and development. The political measures were in large part meant to strengthen the CPP, concentrating power at the centre and weakening regional and ethnic sentiments and loyalties. It is also true that the measures contributed to a remarkable degree of peace, order and stability in the country.

Ewe-Ashanti Rivalry in Ghanaian Politics: The Avoidance of Discrimination Act introduced by the Nkrumah government in 1957 banned all organizations, parties and societies, which were confined to only 'particular tribal, racial and religious groups, which were used for political purposes'. Under this law, almost all the existing opposition parties and associations became illegal. In response to this bill all the opposition parties - NPP, MAP, NLM, WAY, AYA, and the Ga Shifimokpee - united to form the United Party (UP) in 1957 under the leadership of Kofi Abrefa Busia.

However, the unity forged by two of the regional parties, the NLM in Ashanti and the AYO in Volta was short-lived. In the 1966 coup which preceded the 1969 election, the 'comrades in crime' were an Ashanti (Major Afrifa) and an Ewe (Colonel Kotoka), perhaps in pursuit of the promotion of the ethnic interests manifested in the formation of the UP. However, the death of Kotoka in 1967 during an attempted coup by Akan junior officers and the subsequent takeover of the military government and the National Liberation Council (NLC) leadership by Afrifa, marked the beginning of the parting of the ways between the Akans, in

particular the Ashanti and the Ewes (Hutchful 1979). By the time the NLC handed over power in October 1969, the military regime had split into factions with the Ashanti and Ewes poles apart.

Furthermore, the ethnic backgrounds of the two leading parties and the voting pattern in the 1969 Elections did not help matters. Significantly, the absence of Ewes in Busia's cabinet and the disqualification of KA Gbedemah (an Ewe) and leader of the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL), *the* removal of the most senior Ewe Officers in the Armed Forces and the dismissal of 568 Public Servants by the Busia administration ostensibly under the Transitional Provisions of the 1969 Constitution and the perception that Ewes were over represented among the senior public servants affected by the retrenchment exercise further deepened the Ashanti-Ewe rivalries.

Asante-Ewe rivalry in the NLC and Busia-Progress Party administrations appeared to have informed the politics of the next military administration – the Colonel Acheampong's National Redemption Council –NRC- (1972-75) and Supreme Military Council – SMC- (1975-78). Thus, in addition to trying to reflect ethnic and regional balance on the ruling Council, the Acheampong administrations attempted to foster de-politicization (Rothchild, 1978). The NRC/SMC sought to institutionalize no-party politics in Ghana through the promulgation of the "Redemption Charter", and more stridently, through the military and civilian power sharing no-party Union Government (Unigov) concept. The two projects that sought to position the NRC/SMC between Nkrumah and

Busia were presented as alternatives to authoritarian rule under the military and multi-party civilian rule (Chazan, 1983). In addition to the resurgence of Ewe irredentism in 1974 (Duodu, 1974), Acheampong's efforts to promote national unity and abate ethno-regional conflicts through no-party politics flopped miserably. Unigov and especially the referendum over it in 1977 proved exceptionally politically divisive, and paved the way for the palace coup of August 1979 and the ushering in of SMC 2 under the leadership of General F. W. K Akuffo (Chazan, 1983).

Asante-Ewe rivalry appeared to have surged in the multi-party contest that was staged in 1979, with Ewes voting decisively against the Popular Front Party (PFP) because of a perception that its leader, Victor Owusu was an "arch tribalist," and the Peoples National Party (PNP) proved popular in the northern regions at least in part because the Party's presidential candidate, Dr. Hilla Limann, was 'native son.' But Asante-Ewe rivalry had not featured much in the Third Republic and under Limann-PNP administration.

Ashanti-Ewe rivalry has persisted into Ghana's Fourth Republic, with Ashanti-Ewe exceptionalism in voting patterns. While other regions distribute their votes, Volta and Ashanti Regions concentrate their votes on their home-based parties in all the elections held in the 4th Republic. The NDC swept the votes in the Volta region by 94.5 percent, 93.2 percent and 88.47 percent respectively in the 1992, 1996, and 2000 presidential elections, while the New Patriotic Party (NPP) won

approximately 66 percent, 61 percent and 80 percent respectively in the Ashanti Region.

Indeed the two main parties, the NDC and NPP are largely perceived as Ewe and Ashanti/Akan based respectively. Therefore, even though the two leading candidates were Akan (NDC presidential candidate Mills is a Fante Akan and NPP candidate Kufuor is an Asante-Akan) in the 2000 presidential elections, the Volta region voted overwhelmingly for Mills while Ashanti voted massively for Kufuor. Indeed, even though the NDC presidential candidate in the 2000 election was not from the Volta region, most of the leading members of that party, including Rawlings who was also designated as the 'Founder of the NDC' and Obed Asamoa (the party treasurer) hail from the Volta region. Similarly, both the NDC and NPP enjoyed considerable support from the traditional rulers of Volta and Ashanti regions respectively.

To illustrate: a team of six chiefs from the Volta region reportedly were dispatched to meet their counterparts in the Central region (Mills' home region) to drum up ethnic support for the NDC presidential candidate during the 2000 Presidential election run-off.[15]

An attempt by the President of the Volta Region House of Chiefs Togbe Dagadu to dissociate the House from the clandestine visit tended to confirm the visit and also implicated the Volta Regional Minister and the Ho District Chief Executive

[15] For details of ethnic mobilization strategy adopted by the NDC and other parties see the Ghanaian Chronicle, p.24-25 January 2001 p.1-2. The Weekend Statesman, 22-28 December 2000 p.1, The Ghanaian Chronicle, 22-28 December 2000 p.6.

(DCE). Rawlings' declaration at a campaign rally in Ho (Volta's capital), that the region was his 'World Bank' of votes hence a 'no-go area' for the NPP only confirmed widespread Akan perception of a pronounced pro-NDC bias in the Volta Region. It was also widely read by Akans as underscoring the active presence of an hegemonic agenda that had been unfolding for some time and which was reflected in the (in)famous assertion by Awoonor (1984:57) - an Ewe and a leading member of the NDC - that "… no government can govern in Ghana without Ewe participation…," and that the Ewe, see themselves in opposition to all governments in Ghana which inevitably became Akan (Ashanti) dominated. This assertion reducing the contest for power in Ghana in simple terms to a fierce contest between the Akan (Ashanti) and the Ewe featured prominent in Akan reading of Ewe bloc voting in elections under the 4th Republic. Bloc voting by the Volta region was likely to be seen as part of a strategy of checkmating Ashanti efforts at hegemony complimenting what Awoonor contends to be the function of the relatively large Ewe presence in the civil service, military and institutions of learning (Awoonor 1984:57).

Nonetheless, deep-rooted Ashanti-Ewe cleavages have hardly presented a dire threat to the Ghanaian body politics. A key reason is found in the fact that the Akan group is hardly a monolith. In fact the Akans are highly fragmented, and Ashanti's have not been able to mobilize the rest of the Akan sub-groups. In other words, the Akan group may be one linguistic and cultural group but it does not behave as cohesive political unit. Partly for reasons of fear of Asante dominance and lingering memories of Asante pre-colonial imperialism, elements

of other Akan sub-groups such as Fantis, Akyems and Brongs do not always align themselves with Asante. Moreover, the Asante and the Ewe together constitute only about 28 percent of the entire Ghanaian population. They are therefore compelled to seek alliances with other ethnic groups and political forces.

The regional impact on electoral outcomes in Ghana is very difficult to gauge mainly because some regions are largely coterminous with ethnic groups or sub-groups of ethnic groups while others are not. For example different sections of the Akan sub-group tend to vote differently. Consequently, Akan voters often support and vote for individuals and candidates who are not Akans. Similarly, non-Akan voters also support and vote for parties and individuals who are Akans. Although, regional patterns of voting could therefore contain hidden ethnic dimensions, the trajectory of electoral politics in Ghana as depicted above shows that, even though ethnicity is important it is nevertheless not the sole variable that determines the outcome of elections in Ghana. The conscious efforts on the part of the political parties to present ethnically mixed presidential slates in elections (typical slates will combine an Ewe president with Akan vice president or Akan president with a northern vice) has contributed largely to the diffusion of ethnic imbalance in the voting pattern in presidential elections.

Ethnicity and Class Cleavages under Rawlings' PNDC Regime: Ethnic inequalities have long been a factor in Ghana, but with the emergence of Rawlings on the Ghanaian political scene, class rivalries became the overriding

feature of inequalities and the conflicts they drove. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, class conflicts emerged as the leading form of inter-group conflict with the popular class (urban workers, the lumpen-proletariat and to some extent, the rural poor). This cohered around the person of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings and a group of left wing intelligentsia who attacked the Ghanaian political, social and economic establishment (Hutchful 1986; Rothchild and Gyimah-Boadi 1989).

The attempted coup of May 15 1979, the successful coup of June 4, 1979, and the three-month populist interregnum as well as the December 31, 1981 coup and its aftermath represent the highest point reached in overt class conflict in postcolonial Ghana. During that period there was an attempt to pursue economic measures and to institute political arrangements more responsive to the needs of the subordinate classes and aimed to disadvantage the middle and professional classes as well as the traditional rulers.[16]

[16] For details see Rothchild and Gyimah-Boadi (1986) 'Populism in Ghana and Burkina Faso' in D Ray (ed.) ***Ghana: Politics, Economics and Society*.** Boulder, CoLynne Rienner.

Rawlings and his supporters highlighted the cleavages that existed between the various socio-economic classes of the society to the extent that class differentiation, which was particularly evident in the early 1970s, increasingly became salient during the early 1980s. For example in 1974, the gap between the top and the lowest salaries of workers for example was 11:1. By 1979, the salary ratio of top to bottom paid workers had reached 14:1. In Tanzania, the ratio was 12:1, in Nigeria 17:1, and Morocco 7:1, whilst in Kenya it was 18:1. Compared with these countries, Ghana's salary ratio of top to bottom was about half-away between that of Morocco on the moderate side and that of Kenya on the highest side. However, this was high enough to cause disquiet between the elite and the mass of the people whose cause Rawlings claimed to champion (Regia et al 1983).

The rise in class differentiation between the elite and the lower class workers was exacerbated by the structure of formal education, which favoured children of the elite. A computation of the selectivity indices of occupational categories for secondary school enrolment in Ghana had shown that the chance of the ward of a higher administrative officer attaining secondary school education was more than twenty-three times greater than that of a farmer; between the son of the same administrative officer and that of the semi-skilled/unskilled worker, the chances were 139 times higher.

The deliberate attempt to project class cleavages in order to eliminate the ethnic factor, or at least, relegate it to the background in national politics, only put a

temporary lid on ethnicity and ethnic conflict. The strategy of playing one section of the society against the other in the form of classes was successful largely because of the absence of freedom of association and press to expose the contradictions in Rawlings' politics.

Indeed, the Rawlings-PNDC administration was not devoid of ethnic cleavages, especially after the exit of the 'northern radicals.' The balance of ethnic representation on the ruling council was severely disturbed by the fleeing into exile of Chris Atim and Sgt Aloga Akata Pore from the PNDC by the end of 1983. From that time onwards, Alhaji Idrissu Mahama was the only northerner and Muslim on the council. The departures also appeared to have tilted that balance in favor of Akans (5) and Ewes (3) and set the stage for subsequent recriminations over alleged Ewe overwhelming influence in the PNDC administration.

Effects of PNDC Economic Policies on Ethno-Regional Politics in Ghana: The Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) led by Rawlings embarked on an Economic Recovery Program (ERP) sponsored by the World Bank and the IMF in 1983. The focus of this programme, at least initially, was on economic stabilization, rationalization, and the rehabilitation of infrastructure.

As a result of the ERP, the cocoa, timber and mineral producing areas of the Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, and Western Regions, the port cities of Tema and Takoradi, Accra (the national capital and home of most of the country's manufacturing establishments), and Kumasi (the Ashanti capital) have been

showered with attention in a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) reconstruction exercise. By contrast, the historically disadvantaged and economically depressed areas especially the Northern regions (Northern, Upper West, and Upper East regions) appear to have suffered benign neglect during most of the period.[17]

SAP-induced austerities affected all segments of the Ghanaian population and socio-economic groups, but partial evidence suggests that the urban low-wage earners and the unemployed, as well as the poor in the historically disadvantaged and the extant economically depressed areas/regions, were among the most negatively affected groups. The urban working class suffered job losses under the labour retrenchment exercise in which about forty thousand persons were laid off from the lower ranks of the Ghana Education and Civil Service between 1987 and 1990. In addition, real income stagnated as government imposed restraints on wages and allowed the cost of living to skyrocket through massive currency devaluations, price control, and the withdrawal of subsidies on health, education, and potable water.

Some analysts suggest a link between the outbreak of the guinea worm epidemic in Northern Ghana in the mid-1980s and the introduction of 'user fees' on potable water under SAP within the same period. Other studies document a drop-off in hospital attendance and enrollment in primary and middle schools in some of

[17] This is the thrust of the argument advanced by S Jacob (1989) 'The **Economic Recovery Program/Structural Adjustment and the Distant Rural Poor in the Northern Ghana'** Paper presented at the International Conference on Planning for Growth and Development in Africa, ISSER, University of Ghana, 13-17 March (Mimeo).

Ghana's historically disadvantaged (Northern) and economically depressed (Central and Volta) regions.[18]

As in many other African countries, Ghana's SAP generated widespread negative public reactions. While ethno-regional reactions to SAP were muted and largely indirect, class reactions were sharp and direct. The strongest opposition came from working-class elements, labour unions, (notably the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICWU)) students and radical intelligentsia. Workers and their unions protested wage restraints, removal of subsidies, adoption of cost recovery measures, the threatened cancellation of leave allowances and labour retrenchment.

Student agitation arose over services, while the radical intelligentsia charged that the PNDC had betrayed its anti-imperialist and populist ideology by consorting with World Bank/IMF neo-orthodoxy. The adjusting regime in Ghana appeared to recognize the uneven impact of the programmes across social and ethno-regional groups and attempted to compensate losers directly and indirectly.

The most direct attempt came under the Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD). Under the programme, an amount of 84 million dollars was earmarked for spending on community-initiated projects in health, education, housing, and sanitation. Impoverished farmers in the Northern and Upper Regions and those who lost their jobs in the labour retrenchment exercise were also targeted for assistance. Additionally, the infrastructure

[18] See UNICEF (1986) '**Ghana: Adjustment Policies and Programs to Protect Children and other Vulnerable Groups'** Accra: UNICEF.

rehabilitation activities undertaken by the Public Investment Programme (PIP) from 1986 to 1988 had been designed to give special attention to job creation.

Furthermore, the extension of the national electricity grid through Brong-Ahafo to the Northern Regions of Ghana, as well as the general spillover from SAP such as improvements in roads, railways, telecommunications and supplies could be regarded as indirect compensations to SAP losers.[19]

The adoption of neo-liberal economic reform was, at least in part, a causal factor in the isolation of Rawlings government into a narrow ethnic base. The reforms and their accompanying austerity and ideological implications caused a rift between the PNDC regime and its original support base of urban workers, students, and radical intelligentsia.[20] A major political outcome of this was the dislocation in the ruling coalition, and, at the level of the political leadership, it led to the ethno-regionally significant departure from the regime of the 'northern radicals' Chris Bukari Atim, Sergeant Aloga Akata Pore and Zaya Yeebo - all of whom had been big supporters of radical populist policies and a spate of attempted coups.[21]

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[19] Kwasi Anyemadu (1993) 'The Economic Policies of the PNDC' in Gyimah-Boadi (ed) ***Ghana Under the PNDC Rule*** Dakar: Codesria.

[20] See Gyimah-Boadi (1990) 'Economic Recovery and Politics in the PNDC's Ghana' ***Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*** 27(3) 328-43. Contemporary History of Ghana

[21] See Gyimah-Boadi *et al* (1999) 'Economic Reforms and Political Liberalization in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire: Preliminary Assessment of Implications for Nation Building' in Kidane *et al* (eds)_***State Building and Democratisation in Africa Faith, Hope and Realities*** London: Praeger.

But more significantly, it marked the beginning of the isolation of the Rawlings government and its inability to expand its social base beyond a narrow Ewe/Volta region core and a few old friends. From the mid-1980s to the end of the Rawlings – PNDC administration, the key power brokers in Ghanaian politics and arguably the controllers of the military and security sector were likely to be Ewes such as security coordinator Captain Kojo Tsikata. Heightened ethno-regionalism may also be seen in the increase in the number and activities of ethno regional and community-based voluntaristic culture and economic development organizations in the PNDC era. They ranged from the usual 'old boy/girl' and parent-teacher associations servicing schools at the elementary and secondary levels, to town and village development associations and ethnic-region solidarity groups.

The best examples of the kinds of associations in this period may be the Volta Region Social Development Association, whose activities were organized innocuously around a soccer team, the Volta Regional Development Corporation (VORADEP) and the Western Regional Movement for Unity and Development (WEREMUD).[22]

Political Parties in Ghana

A review of Ghana's development shows that political parties have had a checkered history.

[22] See Gyimah-Boadi *et al* (1999) 'Economic Reforms and Political Liberalization in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire: Preliminary Assessment of Implications for Nation Building' in Kidane *et al* (eds) ***State Building and Democratisation in Africa Faith, Hope and Realities*** London: Praeger.

Pre-independence Ghana witnessed vigorous, but sometimes violent, political party competition. But in the period immediately after independence the strength of the opposition parties gradually dwindled in parliament due mainly to repressive laws against political dissent and 'carpet–crossing' in parliament.

In 1964, Ghana's first President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, succeeded through constitutional amendments and other legislation, in making Ghana a one-party state, with his Convention People's Party (CPP) as the only legitimate political party in the country. The first military coup in Ghana, which occurred on 24 February 1966, ended the CPP, and the party was subsequently proscribed. Since then, political party activity has always been banned during periods in which the military have been in power (1966-69, 1972-1979, and 1982-1992). These periods add up to about half of Ghana's life as an independent country.

Thanks to military interventions, the political parties currently on the Ghanaian political scene are new. None has had the opportunity to develop and grow, in spite of the fact that modern mass political parties were in existence by the close of the 1940s.

However, in spite of intermittent military interventions, a particularly interesting aspect of contemporary Ghanaian politics is that most political parties emerging after the overthrow of the first republic have laid claim to the basic orientations of one or the other of the two major competing parties during the period before independence - the CPP and the United Party (UP).

Today, two main political traditions are recognized in Ghanaian politics - the Nkrumah tradition associated with the Convention Peoples Party (CPP), National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) and the People's National Party (PNP); and the Danquah-Busia tradition associated with such past political parties as the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), National Liberation Movement (NLM), United Party (UP), Northern People Party (NPP), Progress Party (PP) and People's Front Party (PFP). The National Independence Party (NIP), Peoples Heritage, Party (PHP), Peoples National Convention (PNC), Democratic Peoples Party (DPP), Great Consolidated Peoples Party (GCPP) and the 'rechristened' Convention Peoples Party (CPP) of the 4th Republic are descendants of the former tradition, while the New Patriotic Party (NPP) is the direct descendant of the latter tradition.

Among the well-known political ideas and principles associated with the Nkrumah-CPP tradition are socialism, Pan-Africanism, anti- imperialism and active state involvement in the economy. For the Danquah-Busia tradition, the core values are popular sovereignty and liberty of the individual, multi-party democracy, rule of law, free market and private enterprise and initiative.

The CPP or the Nkrumah tradition dominated the politics of Ghana from 1951 to 1966 while the Danquah-Busia tradition produced its first government from 1969 to 1972. Similarly, Dr. Limann's People's National Party (PNP) which won the 1979 general elections that ushered in the Third Republic was not only formed by

people who had worked very closely with Dr. Nkrumah, but the party campaigned on the theme of continuing with the 'good works' of Dr. Nkrumah.

While only one party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), claims succession to the Busia-Danquah tradition, the Nkrumahists front has been divided with as many as five registered political parties at the beginning of the Fourth Republic. These were the National Convention Party (NCP), the People's National Convention, the People's Heritage Party, the National Independence Party and the Democratic People's Party (DPP). The PHP, NIP and a section of the NCP were to merge later to form the People's Convention Party (PCP). Nkrumahist parties in the 2000 elections were the CPP (the name adopted by the PCP after the courts ruled against the PNDC law prohibiting the use of the name and symbol of the former CPP), PNC, GCPP, and the DPP.

It is widely believed that a Rawlings tradition has now been established in Ghanaian politics drawing its support from each of the older established parties and organized around vague principles of probity and accountability, and participatory democracy at the grassroots. The Rawlings/NDC describes itself as a third force on the Ghanaian political scene, even though it also claims some connection to the Nkrumahist tradition at times.

The legal framework: The main legal instruments regulating political parties in the 4th Republic are Article 55 and 56 of the 1992 Constitution together with the Political Parties Law PNDCL 281 which was enacted in May, 1992 well before the Constitution came into effect on 7 January 1993. The latter law tapped

heavily from the relevant provisions of the 1992 Constitution, which was still in a draft form even though it had already been approved per referendum of 28 April 1992.

In acknowledgement of the importance of political parties in a democratic system and culture, the Constitution grants every citizen of Ghana of voting age the right to form or join a political party. But to prevent the formation of sectarian political parties the Constitution and the Law stipulates conditions that must be fulfilled for an organization to operate as a political party. It must be registered with the Electoral Commission; at least one of the founding members should be ordinarily resident and registered as a voter in each of the 110 districts of Ghana; it must have branches in all the 10 regions of Ghana; and it should be organized in not less than two-thirds of the districts in each region. Furthermore, its name, emblem, colour, motto or any other symbol must not have any ethnic, regional or religious connotation nor give the appearance that its activities are confined only to a part of Ghana.

Other notable aspects of the law pertaining to political parties are that a political party cannot sponsor a candidate for election to a District Assembly or a lower local government unit; only a citizen of Ghana can contribute to the funds of a political party; all political parties are to be given fair opportunities to present their programs to the public through the state-owned radio, television, and newspaper;

and all presidential candidates are to be given the same amount of time and space on the state-owned radio and television and in the state owned press.

Clearly, these requirements are intended to ensure that the political parties are national in character and scope of operation and not factional or regional parties. They are meant to prevent a reoccurrence of developments in the 1950s when political parties are deemed to have undermined the cause of national integration because of their sectarian nature.

National Executives of Political Parties:

A review of the ethnic background of members of the National Executive of both the NPP and NDC by 2003 shows they are fairly representative of the major ethnic groups in the country. Four out of the seven elected National Executive Members of the NPP are Akans, one is from the Volta, two are Ga, and are two from the Northern Region. Similarly, fourteen (14) of the thirty-four National Executive members of the NDC are Akans, six (6) Ewes, five (5) Ga and nine (9) Northerners. Clearly the hierarchy of the two major political parties NPP and NDC show a high degree of ethnic mix. (Data on the other smaller political parties was not available at the time of writing this report, as they were yet to elect their national executives.)

Table 2: National Executives of Political Parties

Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Mills-NDC 2000	14	6	5	19	34

Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Kufuor-NPP 2000	5	1	2	2	10

NATIONAL EXECUTIVES OF POLITICAL PARTIES (NDC and NPP) **(percentages)**

Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Mills-NDC 2000	41	17.6	14.7	55.8	100
Kufuor-NPP 2000	50	10	20	20	100

(Source: National Secretariat of the NDC and NPP, Accra).

Representation and Ethno-Regional Composition of Parliament in Ghana

This section examines ethno-regional representation in the parliaments of Ghana emerging from parliamentary elections in Ghana. It presents an analysis of comparative regional performance of the political parties of Ghana's 1969, 1979, 1992, 1996 and 2000 elections which then determined their representation in parliament[23] The focus is on the two leading political parties.

The 1969 Parliamentary Elections and Parliament of the Second Republic: The ethnic background of the leaders of the two leading parties had a significant impact on the voting patterns in the 1969 elections. The National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) led by KA Gbedemah (an Ewe) won all the seats in the Volta region except Nkwanta and Kete Krachi (Akan-speaking enclaves in Volta), but

[23] Data on parliamentary Elections, 1969, 1979, 1992 and 1996 are based on data provided in Elections in Africa. A Data Handbook. Dieter Nohlen, Michael Krennerich, and Bernhard Thibaut, Oxford University Press 1999. P. 431-437.

did not win any seat in the mainly Akan regions of the Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Western and Central regions. In contrast, the Progress Party (PP) led by KA Busia (a Brong) won all the seats in Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo and Central regions, a majority of seats in the two other Akan (Western and Eastern) regions, and two seats in the Volta region. Thus, PP won 105 of the 140 seats in parliament, while NAL won 29 seats, and 6 went to three minor parties and one independent.

Table 3: **Regional Distribution of Seats 1969 Parliamentary Election.**

1969	**PP %**	**NAL %**	**UNP %**	**PAP %**	**APRP %**	**IND %**	**Total**
Western	10 (77)	0	0	2 (15)	1 (8)	0	**13**
Central	15 (100)	0	0	0	0	0	**15**
Gt.Accra	3 (33)	3 (33)	2 (22)	0	0	1 (11)	**9**
Volta	2 (12)	14 (88)	0	0	0	0	**16**
Eastern	18 (82)	4 (18)	0	0	0	0	**22**
Ashanti	22 (100)	0	0	0	0	0	**22**
Brong – Ahafo	13 (100)	0	0	0	0	0	**13**
Northern	9 (64)	5 (36)	0	0	0	0	**14**
Upper west	13 (81)	3 (19)	0	0	0	0	**16**
	105	**29**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**140**

(Source: Elections in Africa. A Datahand Book. Oxford University Press. 1999)

PP: Progress Party

NAL: National Alliance of Liberals

UNP: United Nationalist Party

PAP: People's Action Party

APRP: All People's Republican Party

IND: Independent Candidate

In 1969 Ghana had 9 administrative regions. Upper East was created in 1987

Table 4: **Regional Distribution of Seats 1979, Parliamentary Election.**

1979	**PNP %**	**PFP %**	**UNC %**	**ACP %**	**SDF %**	**IND %**	**Total**
Western	9 (69)	1 (8)	0	3 (23)	0	0	**13**
Central	8 (53)	0	0	7 (47)	0	0	**15**
Gt.Accra	6 (55)	1 (9)	3 (27)	0	1 (9)	0	**11**
Volta	11 (69)	5 (31)	0	0	0	0	**16**
Eastern	11 (53)	6 (28)	4 (19)	0	0	0	**21**
Ashanti	2 (9)	19 (86)	1 (5)	0	0	0	**22**
Brong - Ahafo	2 (17)	10 (83)	0	0	0	0	**12**
Northern	7 (50)	4 (29)	0	0	3 (21)	0	**14**
Upper west	15 (94)	1 (6)	0	0	0	0	**16**
Total	**71**	**47**	**8**	**10**	**4**	**0**	**140**

(Source: Elections in Africa. A Datahand Book. Oxford University Press. 1999)

PNP---People's National Party;

PFP----Popular Front Party

UNC: United National Convention

ACP: Action Congress Party

SDF: Social Democratic Front

IND: Independent Candidates

In 1979 Ghana had 9 Administrative Regions. Upper East was created in 1987.

The 1979 parliamentary elections yielded 71 seats out of 140 parliamentary seats at stake for the People's National Party (PNP), which also won the presidential elections. The Popular Front Party (PFP) won 47 seats and placed second in the presidential race. It is true that the victorious party, the PNP had a better national spread, winning a majority of seats in all regions except the two predominantly Akan regions of Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo, but ethno-regional factors were present in 1979 parliamentary and presidential elections. It is noteworthy that the PNP won 15 seats out of the 16 seats in the Upper West region that is also the home region of its leader and presidential candidate, while the PFP had only one seat. On the other hand, the PFP won 19 out of the 21 seats in Ashanti, the home region of its leader and presidential candidate, Victor Owusu, while the PNP won only 2 seats.

The First Parliament of the Fourth Republic[24]: With the main opposition parties boycotting the December 1992 parliamentary elections in protest over alleged rigging of the presidential elections by Rawlings and his supporters, the NDC swept the parliamentary elections. The Rawlings led-NDC and its allies Egle and National Convention Party (NCP) won 198 out of the 200 seats in parliament, thereby depriving the 1992 parliament of a viable opposition (Gyimah-Boadi 1994).

Table 5: Regional Distribution of Seats 1992, Parliamentary Election.

1992	**NDC %**	**NCP %**	**EGLE-**	**IND %**	**Total**
Western	16 (84)	3 (16)	0	0	**19**
Central	16 (94)	1 (6)	0	0	**17**
Gt.Accra	22 (100)	0	0	0	**22**
Volta	18 (95)	1 (5)	0	0	**19**

[24] In all, Ghana has had three parliaments since the Fourth Republic was inaugurated in 1993. The first parliament of the fourth republic was for the period 1992-1996, the second parliament was ushered in 1996 when the 1992 parliament was dissolved following the 1996 elections. Similarly, the parliament of 1996 was dissolved after the 2000 elections, when members of the third parliament were ushered into parliament.

Eastern	22 (85)	3 (11)	1 (4)	0	**26**
Ashanti	33 (100)	0	0	0	**33**
Brong – Ahafo	20 (95)	0	0	1 (5)	**21**
Northern	23 (100)	0	0	0	**23**
Upper West	8 (100)	0	0	0	**8**
Upper East	11 (92)	0	0	1 (8)	**12**
Total	**189**	**8**	**1**	**2**	**200**

(Source: Elections in Africa. A Datahand Book. Oxford University Press. 1999)

NDC: National Democratic Congress

NCP: National Convention Party

EAGLE: Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE) Party

IND: Independent Candidate

Table 6: **Regional Distribution of Seats 1996, Parliamentary Election.**

1996	**NDC %**	**NPP %**	**PCP**	**PNC %**	**Total**
Western	12 (63)	3 (16)	4 (21)	0	**19**
Central	14 (82)	3 (18)	0	0	**17**
Gt.Accra	13 (59)	9 (41)	0	0	**22**
Volta	19 (100)	0	0	0	**19**
Eastern	15 (58)	11 (42)	0	0	**26**
Ashanti	5 (15)	28 (85)	0	0	**33**
Brong -Ahafo	17 (81)	4 (19)	0	0	**21**
Northern	18 (78)	3 (14)	1 (4)	1 (4)	**23**
Upper west	8 (100)	0	0	0	**8**
Upper East	12 (100)	0	0	0	**12**
Total	**133**	**61**	**5**	**1**	**200**

(Source: Elections in Africa. A Datahand Book. Oxford University Press. 1999)

NDC: National Democratic Congress

NPP: New Patriotic Party

PCP: People's Convention Party

PNC: People' National Convention Party

The Second Parliament of the Fourth Republic: The 1996 elections were more competitive. The NDC won 133 seats out of the 200 seats at stake in the 1996 parliamentary elections. The NPP won 61 seats. As has become the norm, the NDC won all the parliamentary seats in the Volta region where Rawlings comes from and had only 5 seats in the Ashanti region. On the other hand, the NPP won 28 seats in the Ashanti Region, the home region of Rawlings' close rival, Kufuor. But the NPP did not win any seat in the Volta region. It is important to note that the NDC won all the seats in the Upper West and Upper East regions. It also won majority seats in the Akan dominated regions of Western, Brong-Ahafo, Central and Eastern as depicted in the table below.

Table7: Regional Distribution of Seats 2000, Parliamentary Election.

Region	NDC %	NPP %	CPP %	PNC %	IND %	Total
Western	10 (53)	8 (42)	1 (5)	0	0	**19**
Central	9 (53)	8 (47)	0	0	0	**17**
Gt.Accra	6 (27)	16 (73)	0	0	0	**22**
Volta	17 (89)	0	0	0	2 (11)	**19**
Eastern	8 (31)	18 (69)	0	0	0	**26**
Ashant	2 (6)	31 (94)	0	0	0	**33**
Brong – Ahafo	7 (33)	14 (77)	0	0	0	**21**
Northern	18 (79)	3 (13)	0	1(4)	1(4)	**23**
Upper west	7 (88)	0	0	0	1(12)	**8**
Upper East	8 (67)	2 (17)	0	1(8)	1(8)	**12**
Total	**92**	**100**	**1**	**2**	**5**	**200**

(Source: Calculated from the 2000 Parliamentary Election Results, Electoral Commission, Accra. January 5, 2001)

NDC: National Democratic Congress

NPP: New Patriotic Party

CPP: Convention People's Party

PNC: People' National Convention Party

IND: Independent Candidate

The patterns of voting in the Central, Volta and Ashanti regions in the 1996 and 2000 parliamentary elections are very instructive. Central region is the home region of John Atta Mills - the NDC vice presidential and presidential candidate in the 1996 and 2000 elections respectively. And the Volta is the home region of Rawlings, designated as the founder of the NDC and its presidential candidate in the 1996 elections. The Ashanti region is the home region of the NPP presidential candidate, Kufuor in both the 1996 and 2000 elections. In the 2000 elections, the NDC lost five of the fourteen seats (out of the seventeen seats) in the Central region to the NPP. The NPP thus increased its parliamentary seats from three in 1996 to eight in 2000.

This turnaround in the fortunes of the NPP in Central Region cannot be explained in ethnic terms given the fact that Mills comes from that region which has also historically harbored anti-Ashanti sentiments. But still ethno-regional sentiments played a huge role in the 2000 elections. Having served a maximum of two terms

of office and as prescribed by the 1992 Constitution, Rawlings did not contest in the 2000 presidential elections. Nevertheless, he was huge factor in that election. He reportedly single-handedly nominated his Vice-President, Mills, as the flag bearer of the NDC. He also played a prominent and somewhat flamboyant role in Mills' campaign in that election. So candidate Mills was regarded as a Volta region candidate just as the NDC, even if Rawlings was not the presidential candidate this time and even if Mills was Fanti. It was not surprising then that NDC won seventeen seats, out of the 19 at stake in that election. It is also instructive that the two remaining seats were won by independents, including the seat in the Anlo constituency won by Victor Gbeho who had been foreign minister in the NDC administration who was openly supported by Rawlings. Thus, the NPP has yet to win any seat in the Volta region in elections of the Fourth Republic in 1992. It is also revealing that NPP increased its parliamentary seats from twenty-eight in 1996 to thirty-one in 2000, with the NDC losing three of the five seats it held from 1996 to the NPP, confirming Ashanti bloc voting. It is also instructive that the two parliamentary seats retained by the NDC (in the New Edubiase and Ejura Sekyeredumasi constituencies) are in the two constituencies in Ashanti with large numbers of Ewe immigrants.

Ethnic Composition of Parliament: For the purposes of this study, and in particular to ensure comparability and systematic analyses of data, the term "North/Northerner" refers to geography and not ethnicity. Therefore, "Northerner" refers to people from the three Northern Regions of Ghana, (Northern, Upper East and Upper West). A note worthy feature of the public sector in Ghana is that

applicants to public sector jobs are not asked to state their ethnicity. They are only asked to state their hometown for purposes of working out their home leave claims. The basis of ethnic self-identification is not precise or fixed in Ghana because while Akans are matrilineal the other groups are patrilineal. Consequently, It is not always clear whether some one who bears Akan name is an Akan or vice versa. When people are asked directly about their ethnicity, and especially people whose parents belong to different groups, they tend to be imprecise about it. Also, Guans identified themselves as Akan. Therefore, figures provided here may be factually inaccurate in some cases. Gas include Krobos. The three (3) seats won by Gas in the Eastern Region were all won by Krobos. For example, there are a number of MPs with Akan names representing predominantly Akan constituencies who are non Akans. The current MP for Upper West Akim in the Eastern Region of Ghana is Ewe but bears an Akan last name – Mensah. Similarly, the current MP for Ayawaso West-Wuogo in the Greater Accra Region, George Isaac Amoo is half Ga and half Akan. Also, a person seeking to be a parliamentary candidate must be a registered voter resident in the constituency he/she wants to represent or hails from that constituency. This explains why Akans or non- Akans who do not hail from a particular constituency could win parliamentary election.

Table 8: **Ethnic Composition of Parliament by Regions, Year (2000)[25].**

[25] Parliamentary elections have been held on the basis of the plurality system in single-member counstituencies since 1956. President an parliament are elected on the same day, but with different votes and on different ballot papers. A candidate may stand for presidential and parliamentary elections either on the ticket of a political party or as an independent candidate.

Ethnic Group	Western	C.R	Gt.Accra	Volta	E.R	Ashanti	B. A	N.R	U.East	U.west	Total
Akan	18	17	5	0	21	33	19	0	0	0	**113**
Ewe	0	0	0	18	2	0	0	0	0	0	**20**
Ga	0	0	16	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	**19**
North	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	23	12	8	**48**
Total	**19**	**17**	**22**	**19**	**26**	**33**	**21**	**23**	**12**	**8**	**200**

(Source : Calculated from the 2000 Parliamentary Results. Electoral Commission, Accra, 2000)

Table 10: **Ethnic Composition of Parliament by Regions, Year (2000) in percentages**

Ethnic Group	Western	C.R	Gt.Accra	Volta	E.R	Ashanti	B. A	N.R	U.East	U.west	Total
Akan	16	15	4	0	19	29	17	0	0	0	**100**
Ewe	0	0	0	90	10	0	0	0	0	0	**100**
Ga	0	0	84	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	**100**
North	2	0	2	2	0	0	4	48	25	17	**100**
Total	**9**	**9**	**11**	**9**	**13**	**17**	**11**	**12**	**6**	**4**	**100**

Percentages were calculated from the above figures.

Note:

C.R-Central Region

E.R-Eastern Region

B.A-Brong Ahafo Region

N.R-Northern Region

U.E-Upper East Region

U.W-Upper West Region

Explaining Rawlings/NDC 1992-2000 Dominance in the Northern Regions and Other Rural Areas: In spite of the ethnic complexity of the northern regions, their modern politics has been historically dominated by the Nkrumah-CPP whose policies were deemed favourable by the people of the region. However, the traditional Nkrumah-CPP parties, or parties directly claiming that heritage have not necessarily fared well in those regions in elections of the 4th Republic. For example, Hilla Limann in 1992 and Edward Mahama in 1996 and 2000, the presidential candidates of the People's National Convention Party (PNC) which also styles itself as the keeper of the Nkrumahist mantle and a son of the soil did

not make serous gains in that region.[26] It may be argued that the NDC swept the north in 1992 due to the boycott of the parliamentary elections by the opposition parties in that year. But it is also the case that the party under Edward Mahama in 1996 and 2000 performed poorly in the northern regions, in spite of the regional affinity that many may have felt for him.

By contrast, the NDC has performed strongly in the northern regions. It seems to have managed to get many voters in the north to identify with it rather than PNC or even the Convention People's Party (CPP) which claim to be the direct descendants of the original Nkrumah-CPP, at least in part, by adopting the left of centre ideology of the Nkrumah-CPP and presenting the party as a more authentic Nkrumahist party than the other parties claiming the Nkrumah legacy.

Indeed, the populist strategies and the populist style of Jerry Rawlings together with the perception of personal commitment to the enhancement of popular political participation, representation and mobilization which attracted considerable support from the unemployed, illiterate and the deprived communities in Ghana has worked well for the Rawlings-NDC in the northern regions. But the NDC was also reaped electoral benefits from over-exploitation of incumbency and the absence of a level playing ground in especially the 1992 and 1996 elections. The NDC was vastly well resourced compared with all its competitors who had to operate with very limited funds.

[26] Four opposition parties, the NPP, PNC, the People's Heritage Party (PHP) and National Independence Party (NIP) boycotted the 1992 parliamentary elections, alleging serious irregularities in the presidential elections.

Poor infrastructure network particularly in the remote areas of the northern regions limited access to the other parties to constituencies there. The relatively disadvantaged northern regions would also have been more susceptible to the high-levels of vote buying that reportedly took place in the 1992, 1996 and 2000 election campaign. It was a common knowledge in those elections that voters had been influenced with cash payments and the provision of essential goods like fuel, blankets, and cutlasses to vote for certain candidates. As the best-funded party, the NDC was likely to have had an upper hand in this strategy of vote mobilization. Saaka claims the NDC was extravagant in vote buying 'even in constituencies like Bole where it did not face much competition' (Saaka 1996:393).

Future NDC election victory in the north is not guaranteed. In fact, NDC dominance in that part of Ghana has began to fade. Rawlings' charisma is becoming less and less salient as he is no more a direct contestant and the NDC cannot exploit incumbency after losing political power to the NPP in 2000. By initiating some development projects in the region, the NPP has made inroads in the north, reflected in its victory in five successive parliamentary by-elections since 2001 (including three in the Northern region, Bimbila, Wulensi and Navrongo Central, underscores this assertion). It is noteworthy that similar accusations have also been leveled against the Kufuor led NPP administration's

recent impressive parliamentary by-election electoral victories, especially the three seats it won in the Northern Region.[27]

However, recent events in the Dagbon, following the murder of a prominent Dagomba Chief, Ya- Na Yakubu Andani II, the Overlord of Dagbon Traditional Area of the Northern Region and about forty others, after renewed clashes between the two factions or "gates" in the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute, in March 2002[28], and the political slant or interpretation given to the murder by some of the opposition parties and sections of the public, alleging that some leading members of the NPP government were the brains behind the conflict and murder of the chief. Although, the two "gates" have been feuding since the late 1920s, the NPP government is perceived as pro-Abudu. This suspicion is largely reinforced by the presence of alleged partisans of the Abudu gate in the government at both the national security and the Northern Regional Administrative positions. They include: Alhaji Aliu Mahama, (vice-President of Ghana), Malik Al-Hassan Yakubu, (Member of Parliament for Yendi and Minister of Interior), Major-General (rtd.) Joshua Hamidu, (National Security Adviser) and Major Suleimana, (National Security Council). In addition, the fact that the perpetrators of this heinous crime

[27] The NPP has won five parliamentary by-elections since it assumed office in 2001. One seat each in Ashanti and Western regions, three in the Northern Regions, two of the seats in Bimbilla and Wulensi constituencies were previously held by the NDC.

([28]) The two factions or gates in the Dagbon chieftacy dispute are the Abudu and Andani. They are both Dagombas. The late Ya-Naa was an Andani.

have not been prosecuted may affect the chances of the NPP in future elections in the Northern Region[29].

The conflict appears to have created tension between the two gates, the Abudus' and the Andanis'. Politically, the Nkrumahist tradition had identified with the Andani gate, while the Danquah/Busia tradition of which the NPP is a product identifies with the Abudu gate. Currently, while the NPP continues to be identified with the Abudus', the Andanis' are largely perceived as pro- NDC. (Fayemi et al, 2003:68)

The outcome of elections from 2000 to date debunks any claim that ethnicity is the sole or most important determinant of the electoral outcomes in Ghana's Fourth Republic. Some of the important factors that contributed to the success of the NPP in the 2000 polls were its capacity to repackage and market itself as a national party, a popular national desire for change, complacency and arrogance on the part of the NDC, a general perception that the NDC was corrupt, persistent popular perception that the NDC's presidential candidate Mills was not 'his own man,' the deteriorating state of the economy under the NDC administration by 2000, and the support given by the other opposition parties to the NPP. It also confirms the probability that Rawlings' electoral success in 1992 and 1996 is substantially accounted for by the fact factors other than ethnicity. While some earlier governments favoured urban towns and the south, the NDC

(29) Following the Yendi crisis, Alhaji AL-Hassan Yakubu, Prince Imoro Andani, the Northern Regional Minister, Major Joshua Amidu resined their post The President, acting in consultation with the council of State, appointed a three-member Commission of Enquiry to probe the events that led to the crisis.

(led by Rawlings) pumped more resources into the north and other rural areas neglected by his predecessors.

As part of the World Bank and IMF guided policies, resources were shifted from state enterprises and urban areas to rural areas and sectors and the private sector as a result the PNDC and the NDC succeeded in forging a power base among the beneficiaries of those policies.[30] Thus, Rawlings and the NDC enjoyment of the support of Ghana's rural dwellers and deprived communities, particularly peasant farmers in the northern regions represented something of a political dividend arising from Rawlings' success in bringing electricity, potable water and roads to many deprived communities over the years. Rawlings' electoral victory in the 1992 election was also attributed in part to his 'capacity to inspire a non-elite audience' and the fact that the PNDC had improved living standards of the rural population in so many parts of the country (Jonah 1996).

Representation and Ethno-Regional Composition of Government in Ghana

Ethnic and regional origins of leadership, especially as reflected on the presidential tickets of parties contesting in the various elections have tended to influence the pattern of voting in elections since the 1950s. This in turn has tended to influence the regional performance of the parties in those elections, and to a degree, the ethno-regional representation in the ensuing government under both parliamentary and presidential systems.

[30] For exhaustive discussions on Rawlings' popularity in the rural areas and other deprived communities in Ghana see EIU Country Report 1999 Ghana 1st Quarter

For example, the two leading candidates in the 1979 presidential elections were Hilla Limann of the People's National Party (PNP) from the Upper West region and Victor Owusu of the Popular Front Party (PFP) from Ashanti. In that election, the PNP, which styled itself as a left of center Nkrumahist party, won a majority of the votes in regions - Western, Central, Greater Accra, Volta, Northern and Limann's home region, and Upper Region. Victor Owusu, of the PFP, which claimed the right of center Danquah-Busia tradition, won Ashanti, Owusu's home region and Brong-Ahafo, another Akan region. In the first-round of presidential elections, Limann won 35.51% of the vote compared to 29.66 % for Owusu. In the second round, Limann gained a substantial majority of 61.98% of votes to Owusu's 38.01%.

The electoral appeal of the PNP in the 1979 Presidential and parliamentary elections was partly due to the party's ability to project itself as national party. It was able to re-activate the old CPP networks. The PNP activists also inherited from the CPP a sense and image of being in touch with ordinary people and their everyday problems. The interrelationship between national image and local efficacy was perhaps most clearly and most critically exemplified in the north, where as Imoru Egala (the moving force behind the PNP and a minister under Nkrumah) had anticipated, the elections were effectively won.

Moreover, although Limann was hardly a household name in Ghanaian politics, it was generally known that he was a self-made man who had risen from humble

beginnings and a particularly disadvantaged area, which had considerable appeal for the many young northerners whose horizon had been widened by some Western education and the recent expansion of rice farming and associated economic opportunities in the north. It was such people whose enthusiasm as PNP activists arguably swung the balance in favor of their party in most northern constituencies. In this sense, the CPP of the south in 1951-54, the party of mobility opportunities for the young commoners eventually arrived in the north in 1979.[31]

Thus, the edge that the PNP gained over the PFP in most constituencies was not attributable simply to its presentation of a northerner (any northerner) as presidential candidate.

After all, the Popular Front Party (PFP) had the widely respected Tolon Na as it's vice Presidential candidate.[32] Furthermore, the other political parties, United National Convention (UNC) and the Action Congress Party (ACP) did not have the resources and the organizational network to be able to make much of an impact beyond the home areas of their leaderships.

Nonetheless, the factor of ethnicity was at play in the presidential elections of 1979. The vast majority of supporters of United National Convention (UNC) - whose presidential candidate in the first round election, Paa Willie, was an

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(31) For further discussions on the 1979 elections in Ghana see Richard Jeffires (1991) in 'The political Economy of Personal Rule' in D Cruise *et al* (eds) ***Contemporary West African States African*** *Studies Series* 65 Cambridge University Press.

[32] The Tolon Na is one of the prominent Chiefs in Ghana's Northern Region.

Akyem stalwart of the Danquah-Busia tradition which drew its leadership and following mainly from the non-Asante elements of that tradition and from leading Ewe politicians previously associated with NAL - and the Action Congress Party (ACP) led by Col. George Bernasko (a Fanti) and popular in the Central Region turned to vote for Limann in the run off elections. It is particularly instructive that although Volta was not the home region of any of the two leading presidential candidates, Limann won impressively with 85.57% leaving Victor Owusu with 14.43% of the Volta votes. Ethnic undercurrents featured prominently in the poor performance of the PFP in the Volta region in this election. The party's presidential candidate, Victor Owusu, was widely perceived as an archetypal 'tribalist politician following remarks he made in a heated debate in parliament in 1970''[33].

The 2000 Presidential Elections: The presidential candidates of the two leading political parties during the 2000 elections were John Evans Atta Mills of the NDC and John Agyekum Kufuor of the NPP, Fanti and Ashanti respectively. In the first round, Mills won only 43.73% of the votes cast in the Central Region his home region, and 22.49% in the Ashanti region, while Kufuor obtained 49.68% in the Central region and 74.73% in Ashanti, his home region. Noteworthy is the fact that Mills won 86.18% of the votes cast in the Volta region, while Kufuor had a mere 8.48%. Like the 1979 elections, the 2000 presidential elections failed to produce a clear winner in the first round. A presidential run-off between the two

[33] The alleged reference by Victor Owusu that Ewes were 'inward looking people' in the early 1970 was used as propaganda by his opponents during the 1979 elections. He was portrayed as a' tribal politician'. The propaganda seriously undermined his popularity.

strongest parties, the NPP and the NDC was therefore held to determine the winner.

In the ensuing run-off, Mills' share of the vote in the Central region dropped from 43.73% to 39.69%, while that of Kufuor rose from 49.68 to 60.31%,. But Mills' share of the vote cast in the Volta region increased from 86.18% to 88.47% while that of Kufuor increased from 8.48% to 11.53%. And in the Ashanti region, Mills' share of the votes decreased from 22.49% to 20.11% while that of Kufuor increased from 74.73% to 79.89%. It is again Interesting that Mills had his highest percentage vote in the Volta region, Kufuor obtained his highest percentage vote from Ashanti, his home region, while the Volta region gave him almost nothing.

However, ethno-regional factors alone would not sufficiently explain the patterns of voting in the 2000 presidential elections. For example, the voting pattern in the three Northern regions closely followed that of 1996, in spite of a dearth of candidates from that area.[34] The NDC retained its dominance by winning the majority of the vote cast in both presidential ballots in 2000, but the NPP managed to increase its share of vote from about 30% in the first round to about 49% in the run-off, partly because the People's National Convention (PNC) gave its support to the NPP.

[34] There was one presidential candidate, Edward Mahama of the PNC who hailed from the northern region and a galaxy of running mates from the northern regions in the December 2000 elections. They include Aliu Malama running mate of Kufuor, the presidential candidate of NPP, Ibrahim Mahama, running mate of George Hagan, the presidential candidate (CPP), Cletus Kosiba, running mate of Goosie Tanor the presidential candidate of the National Reform Party (NRP), Martin Amidu, running mate of Evans Mills, the presidential candidate of the NDC.

Similarly, in spite of the historical anti-Ashanti sentiment in the region, NPP share of the presidential vote in Brong-Ahafo region rose from 36% in 1996 to 58% in the 2000 second ballot, while the NDC lost 20%[35]. Like the north, the turnaround in the presidential elections in the Brong-Ahafo region can hardly be explained in merely ethnic terms given the anti- Ashanti sentiments in that region. It appears as if pledges of support from the other five opposition parties had been crucial in getting Kufuor the largest share of the presidential vote in the run-off.

Also, if the electorate had voted in purely ethnic terms in the 1996 presidential elections, the NDC would have won only in the Volta (Rawlings' home region) and Central (Mill's home region) given the tribal connection between the Presidential candidate Rawlings and his running mate Mills to these regions, but would probably not have won in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West, the Eastern, Greater Accra, Western and the Brong-Ahafo Regions.

Composition of Government in Ghana (1952-2001): Ethno-regional factors may be influential but not decisive in determining election outcomes. But to what extent do they influence the ethno-regional composition of government in Ghana. This section examines the ethnic/regional representation of post-colonial regimes in Ghana.

First we discuss the ethnic/regional representation of the Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) administration which governed Ghana from 1957-65, second, ethnic/regional composition of the Kofi Abrefa Busia's Progress

[35] Figures used were drawn from the electoral results from the Ghana Electoral Commission for the 1969,1979,1992,1996 and the 2000.

Party (PP) administration that ruled Ghana from 1969-71, third the ethnic/regional representation of the Hilla Limann's People's National Party (PNP) that governed the country from 1979-81, and fourth, the ethnic composition of Jerry Rawlings' PNDC administration that governed the country from 1981-92. We also examine the ethnic/regional composition of the Jerry John Rawlings' National Democratic Congress (NDC) administration that ruled Ghana from 1993-2000, and finally the ethnic/regional representation of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) administration led by John Agyekum Kufuor.

Kwame Nkrumah did not follow any fixed mathematical formula in allocating cabinet posts among the various ethnic groups.[36] All major ethnic groups were represented in Nkrumah's cabinets from 1952. However, by 1965, Akans were clearly over-represented. Thus, 13 out of a total of 18 cabinet members in 1965 were Akan, with 3 from his own Nzimah ethnic sub-group/community, a number quite out of proportion to the number of Nzimahs in Ghana (Austin and Luckham 1975; Danso-Boafo 1996). Even with these figures Nkrumah was largely considered to be ethnically blind, while Busia and his party were considered to be ethnocentric.

Table Ten: Ethnic/Regional Representation (Nkrumah-CPP) Government.

Ethnic/Regional Representation (Nkrumah-CPP) Government (1952-1965)

[36] Nkrumah was the first president of Ghana. In 1952 he was elected as the leader of government business and later became Prime Minister. He was an Akan, Nzimah.

Year	Akan	Ewe	Ga	Guan	Northern	Total
1952	3	1	2	1	1	8
1954	6	1	1	1	2	11
1956	8	1	1	1	2	13
1965	13	0	1	2	3	19

(*Source: Danso-Boafo Kwaku 1996. The Political Biography of DR. Kofi Abrefa Busia. Ghana Universities Press, Accra)*

Table 11 : **Ethnic/Regional Representation (Nkrumah-CPP) Government (Percentages)**

Ethnic/Regional Representation (Nkrumah-CPP) Government (1952-1965) (Percentages)						
Year	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	Guan	Northern	Total
1952	37.5	12.5	25	12.5	12.5	100
1954	54.5	9	9	9	18	100
1956	61.5	7.6	7.6	7.6	15.3	100
1965	68.4	0	5	10.5	15.7	100

Percentages are calculated from the figures above.

The Second Republic was patterned after the British parliamentary system.[37] The constitution required the Prime Minister to select his cabinet from among members of

[37] Ghana has four Republics. Ghana first attained republican status in 1960 under the leadership of Nkrumah. However, the coup of 1966 ended the first republic. The Second republic was ushered in after the passage of the 1969 Constitution with Busia as the Prime Minister for the period 1969-1972. However, the second republic ended abruptly with the coup of 1972. The Third republic was ushered in by the Constitution of 1979, Limann won the elections of 1979 and became President from 1979-81. Again, the coup of 1981 ended the third republic. The fourth republic was ushered in after the passage of the 1992 Constitution followed by the election in 1992, which was won by Jerry Rawlings.

parliament. In all, Busia assembled a government of 18 ministers, twenty-nine Ministerial Secretaries and nine Regional Chief Executives (Danso- Boafo 1996). But Busia's cabinet had a major flaw, in terms of ethnic and regional balance.

Table 12 : Ethnic/Regional Representation (Busia-Progress Party) Government

Ethnic/Regional Representation (Busia-Progress Party) Government (1969)						
Year 1969	Akan	Ewe	Ga Adangbe	Guan	Northern	Total
	14	0	1	1	3	19
Ethnic/Regional Representation (Busia-Progress Party) Government (1969)(Percentages)						
Year 1969	Akan	Ewe	Ga Adangbe	Guan	Northern	Total
	73.6	0	5	5	15.7	100

(Source: Danso-Boafo Kwaku 1996. The Political Biography of Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia. Ghana Universities Press, Accra)

The party's failure to win any seat in the Volta region left out the Ewes completely, thereby seriously constraining Busia's ability to put together a geographically balanced cabinet. This imbalance became even more glaring as Komla Gbedema (the Ewe leader of the National Alliance of Liberals and winner of the party's Volta Keta seat) could not be sworn in as the leader of the opposition and member of the council of state by the Presidential Commission as a result of a court suit brought against him by EB Awoonor Williams, (the defeated PP parliamentary candidate for Keta).As depicted in the table below, the cabinet reshuffled in 1971 did nothing to change the strong Akan presence in the cabinet and or absence of Ewe.

Ethnic composition of the 1971 cabinet: The ethnic pattern of voting in the 1969 elections, the expulsion of Gbedemah from the National Assembly and the absence of Ewes in Busia's cabinet led to charges of ethnic Akan bias against Busia. Thus, even the PPs rural development programme could not escape charges of discrimination against the Volta Region and the Ewe (Smock *et al* 1975:248)

Table 13: Ethnic/Regional Representation (Busia-Progress Party) Government

Ethnic/Regional Representation (Busia-Progress Party) Government (1971)						
Year 1971	Akan	Ewe	Ga Adangbe	Guan	Northern	Total
	13	0	1	0	3	17
Ethnic/Regional Representation (Busia-Progress Party) Government (1971)(Percentages)						
Year 1969	Akan	Ewe	Ga Adangbe	Guan	Northern	Total
	76.4	0	5.8	0	17.6	100

The Busia government's cool relationship with the Ewes turned even cooler when the most senior Ewe officers in the armed forces were removed for a variety of reasons. For example the following Ewe officers, Brigadier Ashley-Lassen, Commander of the Air Forces was posted as a military Attaché to India; Brigadier DCK Amenu was appointed Director of the National Service Corps; and Lt. Col. Kattah was recalled from New Delhi where he served as an attaché to face charges of theft arising after the 1966 coup. As a result, only one Ewe officer, Colonel Tevie, remained in a senior position by the end of the PP government.

Similarly, the perceived over-representation of Ewes among the senior public servants affected by the retrenchment of 568 public servants by the Busia administration ostensibly under the Transitional Provisions of the 1969 Constitution was interpreted by NAL and Ewes as a reprisal against NAL or its Ewes sympathizers (Austin 1975).

Furthermore, the Busia government's reaction to the Court ruling in favor of Mr. Sallah, an Ewe public servant affected by the retrenchment exercise, as well as the recriminations arising from the debate in Parliament, highlighted intensified Akan-Ewe conflict in the Busia-PP administration. On June 16, 1970, Dr. GK Agama, the Opposition Leader, described the Prime Minister in a motion in the House as a 'tribal Prime Minister', and his Government, a 'tribal Government', and elicited a sharp retort from Busia's foreign minister Victor Owusu (an Asante) accusing Dr. Agama of being a member of a group (tribe) well known for being 'inward-looking' (Ghana Parliament Debate 1970).

Composition of Limann Government (1979): The cabinet of Dr. Hilla Limann, the winner of the 1979 elections was reasonably balanced in ethno-regional terms, possibly because of the lessons learnt from the Busia-PP experience. All the major ethnic groups represented as depicted in the table below:

Table 14: **Ethnic/Regional Representation under Limann-PNP Government**

Ethnic/Regional Representation under Limann-PNP Government (1979)					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Limann-PNP	**8**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**14**

(1979)					
Ethnic/Regional Representation under Limann-PNP Government (1979) Percentages					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Limann-PNP (1979)	**57**	**14**	**14**	**14**	**100**

Ethnic/Regional Representation in the Jerry Rawlings Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) Administration (1981-92): To place ethnic and regional representation in the Rawlings-PNDC administration in perspective, it is necessary to review the same situation under previous Ghanaian military and quasi military regimes. The ruling council of the first military government – the NLC – was a careful balance of the military and police as well as ethnic and regional representation. The Chairman (until his resignation in 1969) was General Ankrah (Ga), Deputy Chairman was the Inspector General of Police JWK Harlley (Ewe); and Colonel Kotoka (Ewe), CID Commissioner AK Deku (Ewe), Major Akwasi Afrifa (Akan), Major Albert Ocran (Akan), JEO Nunoo (Ga) as the other members, together with Victor Owusu (Akan) as Attorney General. B. A Yakubu, a northerner was brought in later. The second military administration, the National Redemption Council (NRC) also aimed at an ethno-regional balance on its ruling council. The Council in early 1972 comprised 7 Akan (including the Inspector General of Police – IGP – J. H. Cobbina and the Attorney General E. N Moore); 4 Ewe; 2 northerners; and 1 Ga. The Supreme Military Council (SMC) comprised 4 Akan, 3 Ewe, and 1 Ga.

On the face of it, the PNDC maintained a balance on its ruling council. The early PNDC comprised 3 Akan, 2 northerners, 1 Ga, and 1 Ewe (Chaiman J J Rawlings). Alhaji Iddrisu Mahama who became a member after the departure of the northern radicals (Chris Atim and Sergeant Aloga Akata) remained the only northerner on the Council.

Nonetheless, a strong perception of over-representation of Ewes in the PNDC government had built up by the late 1980s. Alleged tribalism under the Rawlings-PNDC administration was forcefully brought out into the public sphere in 1988 in a public lecture given by a distinguished professor of History and occasional politician, Albert Adu Boahen on the platform of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences in which he controversially said:

Is it not strange and rather unfortunate that the Head of State, the head of National security, the head of the police service, the head of the army, the acting Governor of the Bank of Ghana and the head of the National Investment Bank, and I am sure there are others all happen to belong to a single ethnic group, or at least come from a single region of the country? Please note that I am not attacking the personalities themselves. I have nothing against them as persons some of whom I know personally and some of who are friends of mine. But whether Rawlings is aware of this or not, this situation is giving the unfortunate impression that the country is being dominated and ruled by that single ethnic group, and this impression is causing such anger and irritation that in the interest of national reconciliation and peace, measures should be taking to rectify the

situation. What is happening at the Bank of Ghana is particularly provoking and should be corrected as soon as possible (Boahen, 1989: 53).[38]

To be sure, credible counter-arguments have been made against the claim of Ewe over-representation. As Cape Coast University academic and PNDC ideologue K. Ansa Asamoa argued in reaction to Adu Boahen's criticism of Rawlings' government, over-representation of one ethnic group or region is not unique. Producing figures, Ansa showed that from 1965 (i.e. the latter part of Nkrumah's rule) and the late seventies when successive regimes were dominated by Akan military governors and civilian politicians, all the politically and economically important positions were occupied by Akan officials; and that Governors and Managing Directors of the Central Bank of Ghana and the National Investment Bank from 1965 to 1973 were Akans; the Vice Chancellors of the three Universities from 1966 to 1973 were all Akans; successive Chiefs of Defense Staff and/or General Officers Commanding the Ghana Armed Forces from 1969 to 1979 were Akans; and the head of National Security from 1975 to 1979 was also Akan.[39]

Indeed, it is difficult to sustain a claim of Ewe over-dominance in Ghana under PNDC administration, although the perception remained strongly held to the end,

[38] Adu–Boahen is a distinguished professor of history. He was a keen critic of both the Acheampong and Rawlings military regimes. He was the Presidential candidate of the NPP in the 1992 Presidential elections, but was defeated by Jerry Rawlings.

[39] The figures given in reaction to Adu-Boahen's claims by K. Ansa Asamoa, a radical academic and PNDC operative are quoted in D K Agyeman 1995 "Democracy and Politics of Ethnicity in Contemporary Ghana" in Mike Oquaye ed. **Democracy and Conflict Resolution in Ghana.** The ruling council of the PNDC by 1988 comprised 3 Ewes, 5 Akans (4 Fante, I Asante) 1 Ga, 1 northerner.

especially among Akans. Interpreting 'ethnic' data to make a claim of over-representation against Ewe (or any other ethno-regional group) in Ghana requires considerable caution, but it did not prevent opponents of the PNDC from seeing at least superficial credibility in the perception of Ewe over-representation in the fact that the Volta region constituted about 10 percent of the population (according to 1984 census), but Ewes formed 23.1 percent, 28.6 percent, 21.4 percent, 20.7 percent and 18.5 percent respectively of the PNDC membership in 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1990 respectively (Nugent 1993) gave at least superficial credibility to such claims of Ewe overrepresentation in the PNDC.

Composition of the democratically elected Rawlings Government (1992-2000): Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) emerged winner of the 1992 and 1996 presidential elections, giving him yet another chance to form a government. The cabinets of the two administrations had all Ghana's major ethnic groups represented as shown in the tables below:

Table 15: **Ethnic/Regional Representation under Rawlings-NDC Government**

Ethnic/Regional Representation under Rawlings-NDC Government (1993)					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Rawlings-NDC (1993)	**15**	**3**	**2**	**7**	**27**
Ethnic/Regional Representation under Rawlings-NDC Government (1993) (percentages)					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Rawlings-NDC (1993)	**55.5**	**11**	**7.4**	**25.9**	**100**

Table 16: **Ethnic/Regional Representation under Rawlings-NDC Government**

Ethnic/Regional Representation under Rawlings-NDC Government (1996)					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Rawlings-NDC (1996)	**12**	**2**	**3**	**6**	**23**
Ethnic/Regional Representation under Rawlings-NDC government 1996) percentages					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Rawlings-NDC (1996)	**52**	**8.6**	**13**	**26**	**100**

(Source: Ministry of Information, Accra, 2002).

Composition of Kufuor Government: John Agyekum Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party won the 2000 presidential elections. He formed his government as follows.

Table 17: **Ethnic/Regional Representation under Kufuor-NPP Government**

Ethnic/Regional Representation under Kufuor-NPP Government (2001)					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Kufuor-NPP (2000)	**22**	**2**	**3**	**5**	**32**
Ethnic/Regional Representation under Kufuor-NPP Government (2001) Percentages					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Kufuor-NPP (2001)	**69**	**6**	**9**	**16**	**100**

Akans who constitute about 49.1 percent of the Ghanaian population (2000

census) formed about 69 percent of Kufuor's government. Clearly, Akans are over-represented. It is also true that all the major ethnic groups are represented in cabinet. In contrast to the Busia government where Ewes were completely left out in cabinet in 1969 and 1971 respectively, Ewes are represented in the Kufuor's cabinet even though the NPP did not win any parliamentary seat in the Volta region in the 2000 elections. Kufuor reshuffled his cabinet in 2003, though the new cabinet reflects a strong Akan presence. The Ewe and Gas in the cabinet were Major Courage Quarshiga (rtd.) and Elizabeth Ohene as well as Jake Obetsebi-Lamptey and Cecilia Bannerman, Ishmael Ashitey respectively.

Table 18 : **Ethnic/Regional Representation under Kufuor-NPP Government**

Ethnic/Regional Representation under Kufuor-NPP Government (2003)					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Kufuor-NPP (2003)	**22**	**2**	**5**	**4**	**33**
Ethnic/Regional Representation under Kufuor-NPP Government (2003) Percentages					
Administration	**Akan**	**Ewe**	**Ga-Adangbe**	**North**	**Total**
Kufuor-NPP	**67**	**6**	**15**	**12**	**100**

(Source :Compiled by the Ministry of information, Accra) .See also Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs News Bulletin, Vol.1 No.2 April-June 200).

Public Service

The public services of Ghana include amongst others: the civil service, the judicial service, the education service, customs, and excise and preventive services.

The politics of recruitment into the public sector: In Ghana, appointment to the public sector and in particular the civil service is officially based on merit and non-discrimination. Appointment and recruitment to the Ghanaian public service is conducted by the Public Services Commission. Civil servants, irrespective of their political affiliation, ethnic, religious backgrounds are required by law to remain neutral of partisan politics. They are required to serve the government of the day. For example, Article 26 (1) of the Political parties Act, prohibits public officers from canvassing in support of or against a political party or a candidate standing for an election.

The Public services Commission (PSC) established in 1994 by an Act of Parliament, (Act 482) in pursuance to chapter 14 of the Fourth Republican Constitution comprises a chairman and a vice-chairman; three full-time members; and chairman of the National Council for Tertiary Education; and three persons with extensive experience in the operation of the public services.

The duties of the Commission according to the law establishing it include among others: to advise the Government on the criteria for appointment to public offices as well as persons to hold or act in public offices; promote efficiency, accountability and integrity in the public services; prescribe appropriate systems and procedures for the management of personnel records within the public services; identify, explore and promote recruitment of suitable personnel into the public services acting in collaboration with educational authorities; provide a standard framework for evaluating and classifying jobs in the public services; and

to oversee the human resources development activities of the public services organization to ensure planning and career development in the public services. The President acting in consultation with the Council of State appoints the Chairman and other Members of the Commission.

The Civil Service. In Ghana, the civil service is an integral part of the public services. Among others, the functions of the civil service as detailed in the legislation (PNDCL. 327) is to assist the government in formulating and implementing policies and programmes for the development of the country. The service is one of the public service establishments and functions at the levels of 22 sector ministries, 61 departments and agencies, 10 offices of the regional Co-ordinating Councils and 110 district assemblies and their departments. The service derives its existence from the 1992 Constitution of the Fourth Republic and is established by the Civil Service Law or PNDCL 327.

The Head of the Civil Service, Chief Director, Directors of the Service.

In Ghana various attempts have been made to reform the Civil Service with the aim of making it more efficient and effective in carrying out its role. Among these are: The Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) (1987-93). This reform was undertaken as a component of the World Bank-led Ghana's economic reforms. The objective of the programme was to contribute to improving the management of resource in the public sector. The CSRP made some significant attempts at reforming the civil service. Among these were: The introduction of a new performance appraisal system based on the setting of objectives and targets;

using merit rather than length of service as the basis for promotion; revision of the Civil Service Law. The new civil Service Law was enacted by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) and became operational in 1993. However, the CSRP had its shortcomings. For instance, the focus of the reform activities concentrated almost solely on one organization, Office of the Head of the Civil Service. The shortcomings and the gaps in the implementation of the CSRP led to additional reform measures.

The New Civil Service Law (1993) provided the legislative framework for the new reform programme. The Law provided for some fundamental reforms in the structure of the service. These include: The institution of the post of the Head of Civil Service with Ministerial rank as distinct from the post of the Secretary to the Cabinet; the creation and appointment of Chief Directors as public officers to take charge of sector ministries and the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS).

The Government also established the National Institutional Renewal Programme (NIRP) to undertake thorough deep-seated institutional renewal and capacity building throughout the entire public sector. The Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP) also known as the new approach was introduced in response to the weaknesses and gaps identified in the CSRP and new challenges of achieving and sustaining economic growth. Thus, the CSPIP aimed at strengthening institutional capacity, developing a culture of good governance, of efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery and assistance to the private sector to ensure the success of Vision 2020.

The civil service has come under frequent attacks from government circles, the private sector, stakeholders and the public in general. The criticisms leveled against the performance of the civil service include the following: -excessive bureaucracy and delays; indiscipline and shortage of skilled manpower; ineffective leadership and weak management practices; lack of appropriate vision, mission and a clear sense of direction; low morale and negative corporate image; low capacity for planning and implementation of policies, programmes and projects. Furthermore, the pervasive leakage of government official information to unauthorized sources, have cast a slur on service delivery in the public sector.

Under the Civil Service Law, 1993, The Head of the Civil Service is appointed by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Council of State. In the past the Secretary to the cabinet has doubled as the Head/Supervisor of the Civil Service. Over time, the responsibilities of the secretary were split, and the new position of the Head of the Civil Service was created. The first person to head the civil service was the late G.K Sackey (Fante). After his retirement, he was replaced by E.A Sai (Ga). Both were carrier civil servants.

However, the norm of appointing carrier civil servants to head the civil service was broken by the NDC Administration in 1994 following the appointment of Dr. Robert Dodoo (Ga), as the Head Of the Civil Service. Prior to his appointment, Dr. Dodoo was working as an Executive of the Prices and Incomes Board, a Subverted Organization in Accra. His appointment initially generated a lot of

controversy and protest by sections of the civil servants and the public at large because he was not a carrier civil servant. Thus, since 1994 the position of Head of Civil Service has become a political one.

It is not surprising that on assumption of office in 2001, the NPP administration asked Dr. Dodoo to proceed on leave, and hand over to K. Obeng Adofo (Akan), Chief Director of the Office of the Head of Civil Service. K. Obeng Adofo served as the Acting Head of the Civil Service from March 2001 until January 2003, when the NPP administration appointed Dr. Alex Glover- Quartey a (Ga), as the substantive Head Of the Civil Service. Until his elevation to the post, Dr. Glover-Quartey, was formerly a teacher, civil servant, a lecturer in the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and a Consultant. (The Civil Service Journal, Vol. 1 No.1 July 2003:3).

The NPP administration re-appointed him initially as Chief Director of the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment. Perhaps the NPP administration found it fit to appoint Dr. Glover-Quartey initially into the service before being confirmed as the head, to forestall public outcry, as in the case of his predecessor, who was seen by some civil servants as an outsider and therefore not likely to represent their interests.

Chief Directors.

The positions of Chief Director and Director of the ministry are equivalent to the post of Senior Principal Secretaries and Principal Secretaries respectively. In the

past only carrier civil servants were appointed as Senior Principal Secretaries and Principal Secretaries, however, since the introduction of the Civil Service Law in 1993, and the creation of the two positions, the Head of Civil Service and Chief Director, both positions has become a political one. While the positions of Senior Principal and Principal secretaries were a permanent one, both the positions of Head of the civil service and chief directors do not appear be a permanent one. Further more, people from outside the civil service may be recruited.

The appointment of Chief Directors, Directors and other staff of the civil service are contained in the Civil Service Law, 1993 or P.N.D.C.L. 327. The President in consultation with the Civil Service Council and the Public Services Commission appoints the Chief Directors of the service, including the various Ministries, Regional Coordinating Councils, and other establishments. In Ghana, the signing of Performance Agreements and Contract with the respective ministries, is also an essential conditionality in the appointment of chief directors. These are important tools not only for effective performance, management and measurement but also to redirect the chief directors to achieve the goals of their respective sectors. However, the Performance Agreements/Contracts have not fully served their intended purposes largely because of a lack of enforcement of sanctions for non-compliance.

In the Ghanaian Civil service, a high premium is placed on the concept of the Chief Director post. As spelt out in the Civil Service Law of 1993, Chief Director

occupies a strategic position in the service, by occupying an interface position between the political leadership and the administrative staff. They are expected to be loyal to the state and the government of the day.

As chief advisers to the sector minister and the bureaucratic head of the ministry, Chief Directors are expected to perform the following functions: provide leadership and guidance for determining policies and objectives within the sector and the implementation of the policies and objectives; co-ordinate work programmes and provide rules, guideline and procedures to facilitate the achievement of targets set by the ministry; ensure the effective organization and development of training programmes consistent with sectoral policies and programmes; establish systems for effective inter-ministerial and sectoral collaboration and co-operation to avoid duplication and to achieve harmonization of programmes; develop systems of effective work-flow and feed back on the activities within the sector; and initiate plans and programmes to activate and accelerate the decentralization of his sector, where necessary. Below is the ethnic background of chief directors appointed by both the NDC and the NPP administrations.

Table 19: Ethnicity of the Chief Directors of the various Ministries and other Establishments

Ethnicity of the Chief Directors of the various Ministries and other Establishments (NDC and NPP) Administrations					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga	North	Total
Rawlings NDC-1993	11	3	2	1	17
Kufuor NPP-2003	9	2	4	2	17

(Source: Compiled at the Office of Head of the Civil Service, Accra. April 2004. See also the Civil Service Journal January 2004 Vol.1 No.2: 5)

Table 20: Ethnicity of Chief Directors of the Various Ministries and other Establishments

Ethnicity of Chief Directors of the Various Ministries and other Establishments (NDC and NPP) Administrations (percentages)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga	North	Total
Rawlings NDC-1993	64	18	12	6	100
Kufuor NPP-2003	53	12	23	12	100

For the purposes of this study, the first appointments made by both administrations were adopted. In September 1993, the NDC government announced the first batch of Chief Directors for the various ministries and other establishments, with an initial probationary period of one year. Out of the total of seventeen (17), people appointed, 11 were Akans, 3 Ewes, 2 Gas and a Northerner. When the NNP administration assumed office in January 2001, many of the sector ministries were being headed by Directors in acting capacities. The position of Chief Director was declared vacant and advertised. Applications were invited from Ghanaians both within and outside the civil service.

Out of the total of 17 Chief Directors appointed by the NPP administration in 2003, 9 were Akans, 2 Ewes, 4 Gas and 2 Northerners. Initially 14 were appointed and sworn into office on August 29 2003, after undergoing a ten-day special orientation course (The Civil Service Journal, January 2004 Vol.1 No.2:5) The appointees included Bridget Katsriku and Edwin Barnes, former Chief Directors of the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare and Ministry of Science and Technology respectively. The two were re-appointed and re-

assigned to the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City, formerly Ministry of Tourism. In the case of the Newly created Ministry of Ports, Harbour and Railways, Alhaji M.D. Jawura, formerly a director of the Ministry of Finance, who was transferred to the Ministry of Ports, Harbour and Railways is Acting as the Chief Director in the absence of the a substantive Chief Director in that Ministry. It is instructive to note that, although chief directors are public officers who are required by law to retire at the age of 60, the appointing authority (President on the advice of the Public Service Commission) could dismiss them.

Ministerial postings and membership of ruling councils do not give a full picture of ethnic and regional representation of government broadly defined. The study attempts to round off the picture by comparing the ethnic background of the top hierarchy of some key public sector institutions, including the security sector, and parastatals under the Rawlings-NDC and Kufuor-NPP administrations. The institutions reviewed are the security sector including the Ghana Armed Forces and Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS); the public and civil services including the Judiciary, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health; and key parastatals such as the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) and Tema Oil Refinery (TOR).

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF): The Ghana Armed Force has had a checkered history, partly because of the intermittent military interventions in Ghanaian politics. Significantly, the inability of successive governments, whether

civilian or military, to count on the loyalty of their armed forces, and hence stabilize their own political existence, coupled with the breakdown of the command structure and control in the military establishment, has fatally reduced the ability of the Ghana Armed Forces to act as a professional disciplined body and to carry out its basic society functions (Luckham 1998).

The reasons for this breakdown include the inheritance of rigid colonial military structure; the accelerated promotions of the post-independence era; the subsequent dislocation of military careers and lines of command; increasing antagonism between officers and different rank levels, and between officers and subaltern groups at the bottom of the hierarchy (i.e. NCOs and men in the ranks) and ethnic and regional antagonism (Hutchful 1979; 1997).

At independence, the Nkrumah government inherited a military establishment that was not ethnically balanced. For example, while the Officer Corps was dominated by people from the south, the junior ranks were made up of people largely from the northern half of Ghana. The ethnic imbalance led to ethno-regional tensions within the Military. Consequently, Nkrumah's control of the military was one of divide and rule, and reliance on parallel security structures.[40]

Similar allegations were leveled against the PP government. Even though Busia reiterated that his government was committed to professionalism in the Ghana Armed Forces, he was also accused of ethnically manipulating the Military. A

[40] On how post independence governments controlled the military see Luckham (1998) "Transition to Democracy and control over Ghana's Military and Security Establishments" in Ninsin (ed) ***Ghana: Transition to Democracy*.**

case in point is the removal of most senior Ewe officers in the Armed Forces. As a result, by 1972 there was only one Ewe officer, in a senior position. Under the PNP regime headed by Hilla Limann, an effort at reprofessionalism was thwarted by continued politicization and dissent in ranks.

In normal times, Ghana's Armed forces are expected to remain neutral of partisan politics. Individual military personnel may have political views and party affiliation but they are not permitted to join party groups or show open party affiliation as long as they are in uniform. This tradition was broken on June 4 1979, when the junior ranks mutinied, overthrew the government and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The attempt by the short lived government of the People's National party (PNP) 1979-81 to restore the tradition of military neutrality in politics was again aborted by the coup d'etat that brought the PNDC to power on 31 December 1981. Throughout the eleven years of PNDC rule, the military, particularly the other ranks, got too closely identified with the incumbent government. Military personnel held ministerial posts, and served in the diplomatic corps.

To illustrate: key financial institutions like the Customs, Excise and Preventive Services, the Ghana Ports and Harbors Authority and the Ghana Airways Corporation were headed by men seconded from the military. In addition to that, there were formations of Armed Forces Defense Committee (AFDCs) in ranks within the security sector in 1981-83.

But in the Fourth Republic, the NDC government appeared to have begun to emphasize professionalism again, though in practice it retained *de facto* parallel security structures (Bluwey 1998). For example, the 64 Infantry Battalion was not fully integrated into the regular army until the political change over in 2001. The new Kufuor administration on the other hand, has stressed the need for the Ghana Armed Forces to be professional on assuming office in January 2001. It proceeded to disband and integrate into the regular army all parallel military structures, including the 'fearsome' 64 Battalion. The government has also introduced a policy of regional balance in recruitment into the Ghana Armed Forces.

A comparative analysis of the ethnic background of the top hierarchy of the Ghana (GAF) between the NPP and the NDC administrations confirms a fair balance of representation for the country's major ethnic groupings (Akan, Ewe, Ga and Mole Dagbon). There have been seven Service Commanders of the Ghana Armed Forces in the NPP and NDC administrations. Under each administration, three have been three Akans, two Ewes, one Ga and one Northerner. It is significant that the NPP appointed Major-General Seth Obeng, who is part Ewe and part Akan to replace the Ewe Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) in the NDC administration, Major-General B. K. Akafia. The new Kufuor government may have also found it necessary to appoint the latter as Ghana's Ambassador to Egypt to assuage Ewe ethnic sensibilities.

Table 21: Service commanders Ghana Armed Forces

Service commanders Ghana Armed Forces (NDC and NPP)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC (2000)	3	2	1	1	7
Kufuor-NPP-2001	3	2	1	1	7

Service Commanders Ghana Armed Forces (percentages)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC-2000	42.8	28.5	14.2	14.2	100
Kufuor-NPP (2001)	42.8	28.5	14.2	14.2	100

The Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS): Ethnic composition of the top hierarchy of the Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) has not changed much under the NPP from what it was under the NDC administration. The NPP administration asked Nii Okine, a Ga CEPS Commissioner in the NDC administration to proceed on leave and initially brought back Isaac Opoku Ntiamoah, an Akan, from retirement to replace him. Opoku Ntiamoah was replaced by Brigadier Richard Baiden (an Akan). The new administration has also appointed two ex-service men, Lt. (rtd) Benjamin Appiah Asante and Lt. Colonel (rtd) S. T. Ashiagbor (Akan and Ewe respectively) as Deputy Commissioners with Special Duties. Otherwise, other members of the top management team of CEPS remain the same. But it may be argued that under both the NPP and NDC administrations, Ga-Adangbe who form about 8 percent of the Ghanaian population in 2000 census are over-represented in CEPS.

Table 22: **The Customs Excise and Preventive Service**

The Customs Excise and Preventive Service (NDC and NPP)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	2	0	4	0	6
Kufuor	4	1	3	0	8
THE CUSTOMS EXCISE AND PREVENTIVE SERVICE **(percentages)**					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	33	0	66.6	0	100
Kufuor	50	12.5	37.5	0	100

Compiled by the Human Resource Department CEPS, Accra

Ministry of Education: The top hierarchy includes the Political Heads, comprising the substantive Minister and the two deputies, Chief Director, Director General of Ghana Education Service and top bureaucrats within the Ministry of Education. There has been a degree of ethnic mix in the Ministry of Education under both administrations.

Table 23: **Ministry of Education**

Ministry of Education, (NDC and NPP)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	7	4	5	3	19
Kufuor-NPP 2001	6	4	6	3	19
Ministry of Education, (NDC and NPP) **(Percentages)**					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total

Rawlings-NDC 2000	36.8	21.05	26.3	15.7	100
Kufuor-NPP 2001	31.5	21.05	31.5	15.7	100

Ministry of Health: The top hierarchy includes the substantive Minister, two deputies, Chief Director and other bureaucrats within the Ministry.

Table 24: **Ministry of Health**

Ministry of Health, (NDC and NPP)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	5	4	6	3	18
Kufuor-NPP 2001	6	3	4	5	18
Ministry of Health, (NDC and NPP) **(Percentages)**					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	27.7	22.2	33.3	16.6	100
Kufuor-NPP 2001	33.3	16.6	22.2	27.7	100

Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT): The NPP has brought in Kwasi Osei and Ras Boateng, all (Akan), as Director General and Deputy Director General, respectively to replace those in the NDC administration, Charles Asare, (Akan) and his Deputy Eric Nii Adjei (a Ga). In addition, the NPP administration appointed S. A. Twum also (an Akan) as the Special Assistant to the Director General. However, the composition of the top management of SSNIT remains the same. Currently, eight top officials who constitute the Executive, three are Akans, three Ewes, two Gas, while during the NDC administration two were Akans, three ewes and three Gas. Three ethnic groups dominate namely Akan, Ewe and Ga. Overall, out of the thirty-six Executives and Departmental Heads of (SSNIT), the NPP administration has twenty-one Akans, five Ewes, and ten Gas while the NDC administration had twenty Akans, five Ewes and eleven Gas. Ethnic representation in the top hierarchy of Social Security and National

Insurance Trust (SSNIT) has remained almost the same under the NPP as the NDC administration, though.

Table 25: Social Security and National Trust (SSNIT)

Social Security and National *Trust (SSNIT) (NDC and NPP)*					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	20	5	11	0	36
Kufuor-NPP 20001	21	5	10	0	36
SOCIAL SECURITY AND NATIONAL *TRUST (SSNIT)* (Percentages)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	30.3	7.5	16.6	0	100
Kufuor-NPP 20001	31.8	7.5	15.1	0	100

Compiled by the Human Resource Department SSNIT, Accra 2003

Tema Oil Refinery (TOR): There had been three Akans and one Ewe in the top hierarchy of TOR under the NDC administration. Current Interim Management Committee is made up of two Akans and a Northerner.

Table 26: **Tema Oil Refinery**

Tema Oil Refinery, (NDC and NPP) (TOR)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	3	1	0	0	4
Kufuor-NPP	2	0	0	1	3

2001					
***Tema Oil Refinery, (NDC and NPP) (TOR)* (Percentages)**					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga-Adangbe	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC 2000	75	25	0	0	100
Kufuor-NPP 2001	67	0	0	33	100

Compiled by Tema Oil Refinery, Accra 2003

The Judicial Service: A review of the ethnic background of the top hierarchy of the Judicial Service shows that during the NDC administration there were five Akans, including the Chief Justice, His Lordship Justice I. K Abban, three Gas, and an Ewe. There was none from the North. The NPP administration, appointed His Lordship Justice E. K Wiredu (Akan), as Chief Justice, after the death of his predecessor. However, Justice Wiredu was also replaced by His Lordship Justice George Acquah (Akan) when the former resigned his position due to illness. Currently, seven out of the ten Top Management Team of the Judicial Service, are Akans, an Ewe, a Ga and a Northerner respectively. Justice George Aryeetey (GA), and Judicial Secretary during the NDC administration was replaced by Justice E. A. Owusu- Ansah (Akan), when the former was appointed High Court Judge in 2002.

Table 27: Judicial Service (Top Management Team)

Judicial Service (Top Management Team) (NDC and NPP) Administration.					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga	North	Total
Rawlings-	5	1	3	0	9

NDC-2000					
Kufuor-NPP-2001	5	1	3	0	9
Kufuor-NPP-2002-2004	7	1	1	1	10

Table 28: Judicial service (Top Management Team), (percentages)

Judicial service (Top Management Team) (NDC and NPP) Administration (percentages)					
Administration	Akan	Ewe	Ga	North	Total
Rawlings-NDC-2000	56	11	33	0	100
Kufuor-NPP-2001	56	11	33	0	100
Kufuor-NPP-2002-2004	70	10	10	10	100

Source : Compiled by the Personnel Department, Judicial Service, Ghana, 2003.

The preceding review suggests that successive Ghanaian governments, with few exceptions, have made conscious efforts to be sensitive to ethno-regional factors

in the composition of their governments and in making appointment to the public sector, parastatals, and other key institutions.

Public perceptions of the ethnic and regional factors in public service appointments: The normative position on public service appointments may hold that public service appointments in Ghana are principally merit-based. But there is a strong belief that party affiliation, ethnicity and region of origin are highly influential and possibly the most influential factors in public service appointments, though Ghanaians evince a strong sense of nationhood at the same time. These perceptions were strongly confirmed by interviews with about 60 elite Ghanaians in the civil services, security sector, academia, and NGOs.[41] Most respondents appear to strongly believe that meritocratic principles such as experience and technical capacity should be the most important factors to apply to the appointment of people to the public sector. Only a small minority would put a premium ethno-regional balance or party affiliation.

However, there is a wide divergence between the ideal and perceptions of how public appointments are made. Many respondents, especially Akans, Ewes, Ga-Adangbes in a descending order do not seem to find appointments meritocratic.

Most respondents appeared to share a belief that party affiliations and ethnicity have a major influence on appointments to the Ghanaian public sector; and many

[41] The study measured public opinion and attitudes toward appointment to the Ghanaian public sector. The target population for the survey was citizens of Ghana who are 25 years and above and eligible to vote. The survey targeted the elite, most of who were employed in the civil service, parastatals, the security sector, academia and civil society organizations. The survey period was September 4-20, 2002, and 60 people were interviewed.

agreed but only very few disagreed, especially among Akans and Ewes with the proposition that sectarian factors are key considerations political leaders use in making appointments. Experience and technical capacity was placed a distance second in terms of importance (about a third of respondents).

At the same time, a majority of Ghanaians do not appear to see public service appointments as sufficiently reflective of regional balance, suggesting a sense of relative deprivation among the nation's ethnic and regional groups. The northern group (Mole, Dagbani) is more inclined to feel this way than the three southern groups - Ewe, Akan and Ga-Adangbe. It is instructive to note that the northern group has consistently complained of marginalization.

On the other hand, most respondents do not think that their ethnic backgrounds pose problems for them or made it difficult for them hold their current positions, though it was a problem for a significant minority, especially Ga, Ewe and sometimes Mole Dagbani felt otherwise.

The forgone suggests that even though politicians have been quite sensitive to ethno-regional issues and tried to achieve balance in representation in government and the public service, ethno-regionalism operates largely at the latent level in Ghanaian politics, competing political parties will find themselves unable to resist playing the 'sectarian card' This, in turn, fosters ethno-regional voting patterns and drives political appointments to follow ethno-regional lines. It also raises the possibility that ethnicity could be used as an instrument of

mobilization and for competition particularly in the public service and in politics both at the national and local levels.

PART TWO

Institutional Reforms

An abiding desire to contain fissiparous tendencies and foster national unity in a multi-ethnic and socio-economically unequal nation is strongly reflected in the constitutional designs as well as legal and administrative frameworks regulating political parties, elections, and local administration in post-colonial Ghana. It is also been strongly reflected in economic and social policies, especially those that address distribution. This section, divided into four parts - electoral rules, public policies for the management of ethnic/regional balance, presidential versus parliamentary systems of government, decentralization in Ghana, and affirmative action – reviews these regulatory frameworks and social polices.

Electoral rules for the management of cleavages and inequalities in the Public Sector

The 1957 Constitution established a Westminster parliamentary system with multi parties. It also provided unfettered associational and other civil rights. But subsequent legislation and constitutions have introduced restrictions on freedom of association, party formation and elections. A few years after independence, the CPP government passed the *Avoidance of Discrimination Act* to prohibit the formation of political parties on ethnic, regional or religious lines. This was

apparently aimed at addressing the ethnic tensions and conflicts that had emerged in the period immediately before and after independence.

While restoring associational and other political rights, Articles 35 (1) and 42 (5) respectively of the liberal democratic constitutions of 1969 and 1979 found it necessary to include provisions aimed at curbing ethnic-based electoral politics, checking ethnic polarization and promoting national integration. Similarly, the 1992 Constitution and other legislation governing the operation of political parties contain far-reaching provisions for checking ethnic and regional polarization and sectarianism. Article 55 (4) of the 1992 Constitution is fairly typical in prohibiting ethnically-based parties, by providing that the leadership and membership of political parties are not to be restricted to any particular ethnic group; names, symbols, color, or motto should not have exclusive or particular sectional significance or connotation; and parties must be formed for the sole purpose of seeking the welfare, advancement or interests of members of any particular group.

The 1992 Constitution, together with the Political Parties Law (PNDC Law 281), 1992, the Representation of the People Law (PNDC Law 284), 1992 and the Representation of the People (Parliamentary Constituencies) Legislative Instrument (LI 1538), gives Ghana's electoral system the following basic features aimed at facilitating the expression of the will of the people of Ghana through periodic and genuine elections, conducted on the basis of equal suffrage and secret ballot. They provide universal adult suffrage for citizens who are 18 years

and above (it used to be 21 years up to the advent of the Second Republic, 1969 – 1972); secret ballot; official but non-compulsory registration of voters by an independent and permanent Electoral Commission; non-compulsory voting; registration of political parties; presidential and parliamentary and local government elections on the basis of first-past-the-post; presidential election where the winner requires more that 50% of the valid votes cast and which requires (in the event no winner emerges on the first ballot) a run-off election within 21 days after the election featuring the two candidates who scored the highest number votes in the first ballot within 21 days, with the candidate obtaining the higher votes becoming the president; no minimum voter turn-out is required for presidential, parliamentary and other elections; political parties are debarred from sponsoring candidates for elections to local government bodies; and a permanent electoral commission has statutory responsibility for setting election dates; but the fixing of an election date is, however, done within the framework of specific provisions; the president serves for two terms of four years (altogether 8 years) and is not eligible for re-election thereafter; presidential and parliamentary elections are to be held every four years; and there are 200 constituencies for purposes of election to the legislature; with the Electoral Commission in charge of demarcation of the constituencies, using the population and landmass of each of the 10 regions and 110 districts as the basis.

The Political Parties Act of 2000 takes further the desire to ensure that the structures and mode of operations of political parties are national in character. For instance, Article 3(1), (a) (b) of the Act states that no political party shall be

formed on ‘ethnic, gender, religious, regional, professional or other sectional divisions’; or ‘which uses words, slogans or symbols, which could arouse ethnic, gender, religious, regional, professional, or other sectional divisions.’ Article 3 (2) of the Act further provides that ‘a political party is formed on ethnic, gender, religious regional, professional or other sectional divisions if its membership or leadership is restricted to members of any particular community, regional, ethnic group, gender, religious faith or profession, or if its structure and mode of operation are not national in character.’ Article 15 (3C) of the same Act enjoins political parties to establish or maintain a national office or a regional office in every region in the country, failure of which may lead to the cancellation of the registration of that party by the Electoral Commission. These provisions are apparently meant to ensure that political parties are national in character and also the internal organization of parties conforms to democratic principles.

The provisions contained in the 1992 Constitution under the ‘Directive Principles of State Policy’ provide additional instruments for managing political competition and inequalities. For instance, Article 34 (5) obligates the state to actively promote national integration by prohibiting discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of place of origin, circumstances of birth, ethnic origin, gender or religion, creed or other beliefs. In this regard, the state is required to take appropriate measures to ‘foster a spirit of loyalty to Ghana that overrides sectional, ethnic and other loyalties;’ and achieve reasonable regional and gender balance in recruitment and appointment to public office.’ The significance of all these constitutional provisions is that they seek to regulate political

competition and to manage ethnic diversity, by setting out the rules for all Ghanaians, irrespective of one's background and ethnic affiliation. They lay emphasis on national integration.

The 1992 Constitution also contains notable proclamations and extensive provisions on good governance and participation. It also contains certain innovations such as the explicit recognition of economic, educational and cultural rights, covering women, children, the disabled, and the sick, along with the traditional constitutional concern with civil, political and private property rights. It is doubtful whether they are truly justiceable, but they indicate a clear intention on the part of the state of Ghana under the 4th Republic to promote policies and programs that override sectional, ethnic and other loyalties and foster gender balance in recruitment and appointment to public office. They also seek to foster the inclusion of groups and regions who do not support or vote for the government of the day to be represented in government.

The study interviewed sixty public servants, NGO and civic leaders as well as academics to ascertain their opinions on the electoral process and its outcomes, especially in respect of ethnic, regional and gender inclusion and balance.[42]

A simple majority of respondents (52 percent) rated the system as fair while a significant minority of 43 percent rated it as 'not fair' when asked whether Ghana's current 'winner takes all' electoral system in which only one-person wins

[42] The study interrogated respondent's knowledge and understanding of electoral rules of Ghana. It also questioned respondents' perception as to whether electoral rules have a fair impact on the various groups and regions in Ghana or not.

and every other candidate loses even if they happen to have a substantial number of votes is fair. Akans and Ewes were predominant among respondents who saw the system as 'not fair.' Similarly, a simple majority (50%) of our interviewees would disagree with the proposition that our electoral system where only person wins favors some ethnic groups, but a sizeable minority (20 percent) held the view that sometimes the system favors some ethnic groups.

Again, a majority (less than half) of respondents disagreed with the proposition that our electoral arrangement of winner takes all favors some regions in the country; but a large minority (nearly one third) takes the view that it favors some regions. Nearly three quarters of respondents agreed with the proposition that effective participation in the political process for all groups requires an electoral arrangement in which all ethnic groups gain fair representation in parliament/government, though a minority (22 percent) dissented.

Thus, on the whole many of respondents appear to be comfortable with the degree of ethnic and regional representativeness produced by Ghana's electoral rules based on the majoritarian winner-takes-all election formula. This may reflect the fact that it has not discouraged parties vying for political power to adopt vote mobilization strategies that cut across party, ethnic and regional lines in order to maximize votes. As noted, in the 2000 presidential run-off, individuals and opposition parties particularly, those from the Northern and Volta Regions, who supported Kufuor during the run-off have been rewarded with ministerial and other key appointments, thereby, fostering political inclusiveness.

Presidential Versus Parliamentary Systems of Government

Under the 1960 Republican Constitution, Ghana adopted a presidential system of government. However, the elimination of constitutional checks on the executive, the expansion of presidential powers and the formalization of the one party system in the republican era between 1960-1964, gave the president enormous powers, and helped to create the political conditions for the coup that overthrew the Nkrumah regime in 1966.

The 1969 Constitution sought to place the exercise of power under restraint. It adopted the parliamentary system of government based on the Westminster model, with two Akans, Kofi Busia and Edward Akuffo Addo as the Prime Minister and the President, respectively. As a parliamentary system, the Prime Minister was required to select his cabinet from among members of parliament of his party. In the event, the Volta Region was excluded from his cabinet since the PP did not win any seats in that region and the Constitution did not impose a specific obligation to include all groups, particularly regions and groups where the government did not win parliamentary seats in his cabinet. This development helped to produce the Ewe/Volta-Akan-Ashanti Region tensions and conflicts that pervaded the 2nd Republic and helped prepare the grounds for the 1972 coup.

While the electoral system prescribed under 1979 and 1992 Constitutions have maintained the winner-take-all arrangement in which only one candidate (and one party) wins while every other candidate loses even if they happen to have a substantial number of votes, they have sought to address the problem of

exclusion by adopting variations of the presidential system of government. The 1992 Constitution attempts to combine both the presidential and parliamentary systems of government by requiring the president to appoint the majority of his ministers from among members of parliament. This allows the president to choose ministers from within and outside parliament even regardless of whether or not they are from the majority party. The Constitution also requires a vote of more than 50 percent in order for a candidate to become a president, thereby encouraging political parties and elite to forge alliances and also to broaden their support by seeking votes outside their traditional ethnic strongholds. For instance, the NPP could win the 2000 elections only after repackaging and marketing itself as a national party, in contradistinction with the NDC which remained largely an alliance of highly fractious groups.

The constitutional and statutory instruments governing elections and representation in the hybrid presidential system under Ghana's 4th Republic forced the NPP to transform itself from being perceived the party of **the** educated middle class and urban dwellers in 1992 and 1996 into one that also appealed to rural dwellers in 2000. Kufuor's choice of Alhaji Aliu Mahama, a Dagomba (northerner) and also a Muslim as his running mate for the 2000 presidential elections, appears to have further boosted and improved the image of the NPP as a trans-ethnic and regional party. It certainly helped to produce a historical record of a northern Muslim vice-president of Ghana.

To be sure, ethnic and regional mobilization of votes and other sectarian practices have persisted in elections under the presidential system of government. The 2000 presidential elections and in particular the run-off witnessed intense appeal and mobilization of votes along ethnic and regional lines. The NDC campaign strategy in the second round appeared to rest strongly on ethnic mobilization. Rawlings reportedly reprimanded voters in the Western and Central regions for giving their votes to Kufuor (Akan Asante) instead of their native son Professor Mills (Akan Fante) and exhorted the chiefs and peoples of that area to 'wizen up' and vote for their own in the round two polls. In Accra, NDC vans reportedly roamed neighborhoods dominated by indigenes of Accra warning that a vote for Kufuor would open the floodgates for Ashanti's and other non-indigenes to take over Accra lands; president Rawlings was reported to have held meetings with chiefs and fetish priests from the Volta and Greater Accra regions imploring them to use their influence to swing the elections in the favor of the NDC presidential candidate;[43] and as noted earlier, a delegation of chiefs from the Volta region reportedly visited their counterparts in the central region (home region of the NDC presidential candidate Mills) to plan a vote mobilization strategy for their 'native son' Mills.

[43] See Gyimah-Boadi (2001 "The December 2000 Elections and Prospects for Democratic Consolidation" in Ayee (ed) ***Deepening Democracy in Ghana. Politics of the 2000 Elections"*** *(Accra:* Freedom Publications LTD; Kaakyire (2001) "Ghana's Election 2000: The Ethnic Undercurrents" in Ayee as above.

The NPP for its part criticized the NDC for resorting to ethnic politics and sought to counter the NDC ethnic propaganda message by asking voters in the Volta region (which recorded votes of 92 percent in the presidential elections of 1992, 97 percent in 1996 and 88 percent in 2000 in favor of NDC) to come out of their isolation from the rest of the country and vote for the NPP in the 28 December run-off election. It also exhorted the three northern regions of Ghana to join the rest of the country in voting for J. A. Kufuor and 'Positive Change.'

However, elections under the presidential systems, especially in the 4th have fostered the building of coalitions across Ghana's main ethnic and regional lines. It appears that becoming electorally viable requires political parties vying for political power in Ghana to strike alliances with other parties and ethnic groups, thereby fostering inclusion in government of smaller parties and ethnic groups. In particular, victory in presidential elections appears to require alliance with other parties and presentation ethnically balanced tickets at least for the presidential elections. For example, Rawlings who stood on the ticket of the NDC in the 1992 presidential elections garnered 58.8 percent of the 3,989,020 votes cast to beat to second place his closest rival Adu-Boahen (representing the NPP) who polled 30.4 percent. The formation of an alliance between the Ewe-Volta Region-strong NDC and three other minor parties – the Akan-Fante strong NCP and the eclectic Egle helped Rawlings to win. In the 1996 presidential elections, the Progressive Alliance made up of the NDC and the Eagle Party and again led by Rawlings defeated the Great Alliance, consisting of the Akan dominated NPP and PCP.

The trend of cross ethno-regional and party alliances was even more prominent in the 2000 presidential election campaign. Each of the parties made sure that its presidential ticket reflected an ethno-regional balance, so that if the presidential candidate was from the southern part of Ghana, the running mate should be from the northern part and vice-versa as in Akan-Fante John Atta Mills of the NDC with northerner Martin Amidu; Akan-Asante Kufuor of the NPP with northern Muslim Aliu Mahama.

In the second presidential race, the alliance among the opposition parties was consolidated. The NPP built a broad opposition coalition, and to a degree, political and ideological consensus. All five opposition parties and elected independent parliamentary candidates came together to support and campaign for the NPP and its presidential candidate in the run-off election. As Gyimah-Boadi (2001: 71) aptly notes, 'for once, the left-of–centre Nkrumahist parties and the right-of–centre NPP who have been feuding since the early 1950s seemed to have found a common ground.'

It is also instructive that the unofficial pact appears to have been carried over to the post-election period – with the President giving key ministerial appointments to individuals from outside his own party thereby making a break with the past and charting a new path of political inclusiveness.[44]

[44] Independent Parliamentary candidates and individuals who supported Kufuor during the run-off and have been given ministerial appointments include among others, Rashid Bawa, Member of Parliament Akan constituency (Volta Region), Minister of State, Youth and Sports; Dr. Kwasi Ndoum, Minister of Energy, Abubarka Sadik, Deputy Minister, Trade and Industry, Moses Dani Baah of the PNC, Deputy Minister of Health etc

Decentralization

A major problem facing post-colonial Ghana has been how to allow for a measure of local autonomy and self-government and promote effective local administration and efficient service delivery while keeping in check fissiparous tendencies at the local level and promoting national unity. The 1957 Constitution prescribed a unitary system of government for Ghana. But it also established the quasi federal Regional Assemblies to cater for the strong demand for federalism or some form of local autonomy. But a centralizing trend set in shortly after independence reflected in the scrapping of the Assemblies in less than two years and culminating in the 1960 Constitution and other amendments which centralized power in the hands of Kwame Nkrumah and the CPP.

This trend largely continued, notwithstanding episodic efforts to rekindle decentralization under post-Nkrumah governments. But the program launched by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) in the late 1980s represents the most comprehensive effort at decentralization in post-colonial Ghana. Proposals launched in 1987 culminated in the introduction of the District Assemblies (DAs) Law (PNDC Law 207) in 1988. Its provisions for structure and functions around the District Assembles (DA) were incorporated in the 1992 Republican Constitution.

The main objective of decentralization in Ghana is the transfer of power, authority and responsibility from the central government to sub-national levels of government. The implicit objectives include popular participation, or ‘power to the

people' empowerment, equity, transparency, responsiveness, accountability, stability, efficiency, effectiveness, decongestion of the national capital and checking rural-urban drift and north–south divide in Ghana (Ayee 1999). It sought to empower communities to be able to effectively participate in the making of decisions affecting the overall management and development of the rural areas. In furtherance of the objective, the 110 District Assemblies were created in 1988/89 as the main units of local government and given an unprecedented 86 functions that include planning, finance, budgeting, infrastructural development and security by their legislative instrument. Three of the 110 District Assemblies (DAs) are Metropolitan Assemblies with a five-tier structure, and four are Municipal Assemblies, which, like the remaining 103 DAs, have a four-tier structure. There are also 13 sub-metropolitan district councils, 34 Urban Councils, 108 Zonal Councils and 250 Town Councils and 828 Area Councils and 16000 Unit Committees.

The District Assemblies are a hybrid form of decentralized authority, combining elected and appointed members. Seventy percent of the members of the DAs are elected from electoral units within the districts and 30 percent are appointed by President, in consultation with traditional authorities and interest groups. The District Chief Executive (DCE), the chief representative of the central government in the district; Members of Parliament (MPs) whose constituencies fall within the area of authority of the DAs are also members. While the DCE votes at DA meetings, the Constitution and Act 462 debars the MP from doing so.

In theory, the strength of the DA lies in the fact that the majority of the membership is elected by the local communities that they serve, and their membership can be terminated only by that electorate. In addition, it is only the electorate that can recall a member with whom they are displeased. Another important feature of the present system of decentralized local government is the establishment of the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) into which not less than 5 percent of total government revenues are paid and whose proceeds are shared according to a revenue sharing formula approved by parliament. This in addition to the 10 sources of revenue specified for the DAs represents a significant expansion of the financial base of the Assemblies.

Ghana's system of decentralized local government is aimed at promoting participatory democracy and development at the local level. The prohibition of partisan politics in the DAs and in DA elections is apparently aimed at ensuring consensus building and promoting national unity as well as development.[45]

Formal conflict management structures at the district level comprise the Public Relations and Complaints Committee (chaired by the Presiding Member) which receives complaints made against the conduct of members and staff of the DA; the Rate Assessment Committee to look into the grievances of persons affected by valuation policies of the DAs; the revocation of mandate of DA members by the electorate at referendum organized in the district by the Electoral

[45] See the District Assemblies Law PNDC Law 207.

Commission to decide whether he/she should be recalled or not;[46] and the Regional and District Security Council (RESEC/DISEC) in each region and district, respectively (and made up largely of members of the Regional/District Coordination Council and Regional/District Security Agencies and headed by the Regional Minister/DCE) which are largely responsible for security issues within the region and districts.

The obvious aim was to create for the assemblies a local political structure that does not directly depend on central government. However, the translation of this apparatus into autonomous local decision-making, accountability, and popular local politics is constrained in a number of other ways by the design and actual operation of the assemblies. First, the power of the members elected by the community is counterbalanced by the sizable proportion – 30 percent appointed, by the President, by whose consent alone they can be removed.

Their primary allegiance is to the central government. Underpinning this bias is the power of the centrally appointed District Chief Executive (DCE) and the relationship of the DA to the next structure of sub-national government, the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC). An un-elected body, the RCC is composed of the Regional Minister, the Presiding member and the DCE of each district assembly in the region, the regional head of the ministries in the regions and two chiefs appointed by the Regional House of Chiefs. One of the RCC's roles is to monitor, coordinate and evaluate the performance of DAs in the region.

[46] See Ayee (1999) '**Decentralization and Conflicts' The Case of the District Chief Executives and Members of Parliament in Ghana**, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

There is also conflict between Members of Parliament and DCEs in the constituency, in particular when they belong to different political parties (Ghana Human Development Report 1997).

However, the attempt to insulate the DAs from partisan politics has not worked effectively, especially following the resumption of partisan politics at the national level. Conflicts have pervaded the Assemblies, especially over roles and functions and over the establishment of districts and sitting of their capitals. Confusion of roles and authority are manifested in recurrent power struggles between District Coordinating Secretaries (DS) who are the heads of government agencies in the district and Presiding Members who are elected by the DA; between appointed and elected members of the DAs; between the DAs and chiefs; and between DAs and the 22 decentralized departments. The creation of new districts and the sitting of their capitals in the PNDC period generated conflicts among towns' factions in towns such as Bechem, and Duayaw Nkwanta, Kade and Akwatia, Akosombo and Atimpoku and Tolon and Kumbungu.[47]

Additional conflicts in the DAs in the 4th Republic have arisen between MPs who are popularly elected and the government appointed DCE, especially where MP and the DCE belong to different political parties and their personalities are different.

[47] JRA Ayee (1999) '**Decentralization and Conflicts: The Case of the District Chief Executives and Members of Parliament in Ghana' See** FE Stiftung for discussions on conflicts at the district levels.

Local conflicts also reflect keen competition over scarce resources, especially land and electricity. Since these resources are finite, conflict arises with respect to how personnel, money, land, power and amenities are shared. For example, land has been at the heart of the ethnic conflicts between the Konkombas on the one hand and the Nanumbas, Gonjas, Bimobas and Dagombas on the other, Nkonyas and Alavanyos, Pekis and Tsitos, the people of Akropong and Abiriw and the Kwahu Traditional Council and the Afram Plains. They underscore a central fact (not normally openly acknowledged by government officials and pundits) of the post-colonial Ghanaian political economy – the unproven fear that ceding too much political, administrative and financial control to the local communities and districts would encourage centrifugal forces of separatistism, successionism, and irridentism, and impede the project of national integration or at least undermine the ability of central government to protect the interests of minorities in the districts and local communities and or impart national values to the grassroots.

The strictures imposed on decentralization, especially central government control of the executive branch in the districts, local government funding (either through grants in aid or the current district assembly common fund) and the prohibitions against party politics are aimed at ensuring central government control over the districts and local communities. It may have been helpful to the protection of minorities and communal conflicts, but like all paternalistic controls, it also undermines local autonomy. Thus, recurrent tensions between central government control and effective decentralization highlight the unresolved

dilemmas in Ghana of how to combine local autonomy with the prevention of secession, irredentism, and other centrifugal pressures that impede national unity.

Affirmative Action

While the term has not been officially used, affirmative action has featured in the social and economic policies of successive Ghanaian administrations in order to address the problem of inequality, especially among the regions. For example, special attention has been paid to the historically disadvantaged Northern regions, especially in the field of education. Thus, in addition to the system of fee-free primary and middle school for all Ghanaians, special facilities were given to students from the North to avail themselves of secondary and university education under the 1961 Education Act introduced by the Nkrumah-CPP government. It was an important step in reducing the gap between the social classes, between the north and the south of the country and town and country, in terms of access to education (Ghana Human Development Report 1997). Even in the choice of sites for state-owned enterprises, ethno-regional considerations were tolerated, sometimes in violation of economic rationality; a tomato factory was located in Tamale in the North even though it was far away from the main tomato producing and consuming markets in the southern parts of Ghana (Huq 1989).

The rural and agricultural development programs pursued by the Busia-PP government under its “social Justice” program targeted the bridging of the rural-

urban imbalance. The program featuring an expanded program of feeder road construction and maintenance, enlarged program for rural water supplies operated by the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation with an increased subsidy from government, and extensive preventive medical care to the rural areas was intended to deal with the problems of employment and inequality. These efforts helped to bring hope to Ghana's impoverished hinterlands. Some impoverished rural masses saw new health centres, decent water, electricity and feeder roads springing up at places previously considered too remote for such projects. The communities in which these projects were located therefore developed a strong sense of identification with Busia and his party.[48]

The Acheampong-NRC/SMC regime set up the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) in 1975 following the international Women's Conference held in Mexico, to empower Ghanaian women. In regards to education, the government pursued a two-fold policy of highlighting primary, middle and technical training at the expense of higher education, and of increasing per capita outlays in poorer areas.

The radical-populist military AFRC and PNDC governments of Flight Lieutenant JJ Rawlings focused initially on addressing non-elite workers/lower middle class grievances.

Under the banner of 'giving power to the people' economically and politically, the PNDC government established institutions which would allow public participation

[48] See One-Year Development Plan, July 1970 - June 1971, 1970. Accra-Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

in decision-making, especially in respect of distribution. The Workers' Defense Committee (WDC) was established to be involved in the day-to-day decision-making process of district councils, banks, company boards, various agencies and organizations. In the townships of cities and in the villages of the rural areas, the People's Defence Committee (PDC), with their locally elected executive committee was to safeguard the day-to-day interests of the local people, protect tenants from unjust landlords and see that local government services were provided as required (Shillington 1992).

From the mid 1980s and especially under the neo-liberal economic reform program, the PNDC and later the NDC administrations also shifted to a rural development strategy, whose objectives were eventually captured in the Vision 2020 development plan document. Under the Self-Help Electrification Projects (SHEP) and the District Capitals Electrification Project (DCEP) under this program, all the 110 district capitals in the county were connected to national electricity by the national grid.[49] The NDC government also improved the infrastructural facilities in the Northern Regions.

The NDC also initiated 'free, compulsory and universal basic education' (FCUBE), in keeping with the state's obligation under the Constitution of 1992, and in Ghana's Vision 2020 agenda. FCUBE was directed towards making schooling from basic stage one to stage nine (i.e. from primary 1 to Junior Secondary School Form 3) free and compulsory for all school-age children by the

[49] See Presidential Sectional Address, Parliamentary Debates, COL, 194 January 1998 p.212

year 2005. The program provided a framework for focusing on equity, access to learning achievement and quality, gender issues and poverty reduction strategies within the education sector. At the same time, it created capacity-building opportunities through decentralization of education and the transfer of ownership and school management to the community and district assemblies. FCUBE covered targeted poverty-reduction activities and poverty focused activities. For instance though the FCUBE is nation-wide, the northern regions were particularly targeted with the view to increasing female participation in basic education.[50]

Similar policies are being pursued under the NPP administration, albeit under the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRSP) whose main goal is stated as ensuring sustainable equitable growth, accelerated poverty reduction and the protection of the vulnerable and excluded within a decentralized democratic government. For example, under the 'Direct Support for Human Development and the Provision of Basic Services' the government promises to ensure equity in gross primary school enrolment across regions and gender, ensuring equity in share of school infrastructure across regions and reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates with greater emphasis on those in the most deprived regions; increase the ratio of population per doctor in the Northern region; and increase the percentage of recurrent expenditure on health in the three northern regions and the central region by 7 percent points, reflecting 40 percent of total expenditure by 2004.

[50] See Ghana Human Development Report 1997.

The NPP also promises that the implementation of the 'medium term priority programs and projects' under the PRSP would reflect the geographical location. The projects being rolled out include providing one model Senior Secondary School (SSS) in every district; rehabilitating major highways in the country; establishing a 'model health centre' in every district of the country; and constructing and improving irrigation facilities in the three northern regions.[51]

Successive civilian and military, or authoritarian and democratic regimes in Ghana have attempted to address the high levels of inequality by spreading the coverage of economic infrastructure (especially roads, bridges and post offices) and social services (clinics and health posts, schools, public measures, etc) in all regions. Thus, post–colonial governments have recognized the need to initiate affirmative action programs as a means of addressing inequalities in the Ghanaian public sector in particular, and society in general. Such policies have been more general and have not directly targeted specific ethnic groups in Ghana but rather focused on disadvantaged and vulnerable communities and groups in the various regions.

However, success in equalizing opportunities has been patchy and uneven. High levels of deprivation persist in many rural parts of Ghana and generally in the three northern regions. Part of the blame must go to policy inconsistencies, gaps

[51] The GPRS was prepared by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), which is empowered by the 1992 Constitution to advise the President on planning, development and socio-economic related issues.

and continuities, poor design, inadequacy of resources, and the lack of commitment on the part of officials entrusted with policy. But at least in equal measure, outcomes have been highly uneven and poorly sustained on account of generally weak economic growth rate and frequent interruptions by military coups.

Summary and conclusion

Ghana is made up of diverse socio-cultural groups. Different socio-economic conditions and inter-group relations in the pre-colonial era combined with differential exposure to and incorporation into the colonial order set the stage for ethno-regional inequalities and rivalries after independence.

The north-south divide, rural-urban disparities, Ashanti–Ewe divide, overall dominance of the Akan group in economic and social life and in the public sector represent the main features of ethnic and regional polarization in Ghana. This appears to reflect largely, the relatively strong factor endowment, greater exposure to western/colonial era commerce, education, and other social influences in the southern part of Ghana. But there are also social class divisions, characterized by a vast rural and agrarian rural population and small urban elite.

Akans (who comprise about twenty sub-groups) constitute about half of the Ghanaian population. But like the other ethnic groups, they are very fragmented and have their own internal rivalries. Consequently, the Akan group hardly behaves as a coherent political unit. Different sections of the Akan group such as

Fantes and Asantes tend to vote differently during elections. This has contributed to the formation of cross-ethnic coalitions in which Akans vote for individuals and parties of non-Akan origin, and non-Akans support and vote for individual Akans candidates and Akan-dominated parties. Thus, even though the Akan group constitutes the largest ethnic group in the country, it is too fragmented to win competitive national elections without appealing to the other major ethnic groups in Ghana.

Fragmentation among the Akan group also implies that Akan-based parties can only be electorally competitive if they are able to broaden their support base by bringing on board non-Akans. Similarly, the other major ethnic groups who cumulatively constitute about 50 percent of the population are equally fragmented and have their own inter and intra rivalries, which prevents them from behaving as coherent group to counter Akans. Altogether, fragmentation among the various ethnic groups has encouraged cross-ethnic coalitions and thereby helped to foster crude but stable inter-ethnic relations in Ghana.

To be sure, the Ashanti-Ewe divide remains potent. The two groups have displayed the least flexibility in their voting behavior. The pattern of voting among Asante's and Ewes broadly suggests that the country is polarized along ethnic and political party lines. Indeed, just as in the 1969, 1992 and 1996 elections, the 2000 elections recorded partial bloc voting for the NPP in the Ashanti region and full bloc voting for the NDC in the Volta region. However, at least for now, the Ashanti–Ewe divide does not pose a major threat to the Ghanaian body politics -

largely because Ashantis constitute only about 15 percent of the Ghanaian population and have not been all that successful in mobilizing the other Akan sub-groups to vote along with them in elections. Similarly, the Ewe ethnic group which constitutes only about 13 percent of the entire population is not large enough to win competitive national elections in Ghana, even with the full bloc voting in the Volta region. Thus, the two groups have always been motivated to seek alliances with other major groups and regions of the country.

It is instructive that the NDC's efforts to build a strategic alliance between the Ewe/Volta Region and southern Ghana Akan groups which have historically had problems with Ashanti such as the Bono (Brong) and Fante as well as the northern regions seems to have backfired in the 2000 elections. Thus, the NPP gained 14 of the 21 parliamentary seats in the Brong Ahafo region, (in sharp contrast with the 1996 parliamentary elections, where the NDC gained 17 seats out of the 21 available seats); and in the Central region (home region of the NDC Presidential candidate) the NPP gained 8 of the total of 17 seats, while the NDC won 9, compared with the 1996 parliamentary elections where NPP won only 3 and NDC gained 14 seats. Similarly, Kufuor performed impressively in both the Brong-Ahafo and Central Regions during the 2000 presidential elections including the run-off, despite NDC's determined efforts to whip up anti-Asante sentiments in those regions.

But perhaps, institutional arrangements and public policies under successive governments are the main factors accounting for the relative success with which

Ghana has been able to contain ethno-regional inequalities and rivalries. Ghana's governance institutions and public policies have been generally sensitive to the complex challenges presented by the heterogeneous nature of the society. Electoral rules, decentralization programs, affirmative action and other social policies, and public service recruitment and political appointments under parliamentary and presidential constitutions and under military and civilian administrations have sought to address or at least have been sensitive to the problems of inequality and cleavage in Ghanaian society.

Thus, Ghana's electoral rules are based on the majoritarian winner-takes–all formula (which has serious drawbacks for effective representation). But it is also provides safeguards for groups who do not vote for the winning candidate or party. Not getting many votes in the Volta region has not discouraged President Kufuor from appointing Ewes to his cabinet. He seems to have done so partly to overcome negative perceptions of an NPP anti-Ewe bias and enhance his and the NPP's electability in the next elections. Indeed, the electoral rules of the 4th Republic appear to promote pluralism within the party system because political parties are motivated to seek alliances across ethno-regional lines in order to be competitive, thereby fostering consensus building and political inclusiveness. Outright prohibitions against the formation of ethno-regionally based parties, together with the cross ethnic coalition arithmetic of vote getting in Ghanaian elections, have helped to inhibit the formation of ethno-regional parties and encouraged previously ethnically/regionally-based parties to repackage their programs and transform themselves into national parties.

The pattern of appointments into the public service and to political positions, fostered by constitutional provisions, notably those contained in the 1992 Constitution also help to promote political inclusiveness and national unity. While there is no formal requirement to factor ethno-regionalism into public sector recruitment, successive governments have been sensitive to ethno-regional imbalance and in practice adopted something of an ethnic mixing formulae, giving representation to all the major ethnic groups in cabinet and to some extent other key public sector institutions. This has helped to make governance institutions and public policies supportive of political inclusiveness, civic participation and national unity. It has also helped to mute Akan dominance of the Ghanaian public sector.

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Appendix

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS IN GHANA

	%	NUMBER	WESTERN	CENTRAL	GREATER ACCRA	VOLTA	EASTERN
Akan	49.1	8562748	1388738	1208608	1065509	129384	1031498
Ga-Adangbe	8	1387217	62743	33815	794881	30446	374271
Ewe	12.7	2212113	104997	70211	481583	1045715	315555
Guan	4.4	758779	25868	89737	77459	140799	143415
Gurma	3.9	678681	11778	5615	21000	98489	12543
Mole-Dagbani	16.5	2883931	135332	24326	136848	20664	61611
Grusi	2.8	490379	23814	14277	54345	10149	20712
Mande-Busanga	1.1	193443	14033	5754	20450	2667	5999
Other Tribe	1.5	269302	6734	22241	27916	47429	15115

	ASHANTI	BRONG	NORTHERN	UPPER EAST	UPPER WEST
Akan	2458088	1069744	174469	19186	17524
Ga	43226	33213	8859	2823	2940
Ewe	99658	57723	33288	2094	1287
Guan	53878	66010	150605	6219	4789
Gurma	47947	74133	379173	26830	1173
Mole-Dagbani	282420	263163	909510	634646	415411
Grusi	74568	70906	48539	72270	100797
Mande-Busanga	56460	25452	8467	52788	1373
Others	38617	45268	27790	34681	3511

(Source: Republic of Ghana, 2000 Population and Housing Census, Ghana Statistical Service, March 2000).