ABIBISEM

JOURNAL OF AFRICAN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

A Publication of the Department of History
University of Cape Coast, Ghana

VOLUME 7, 2018

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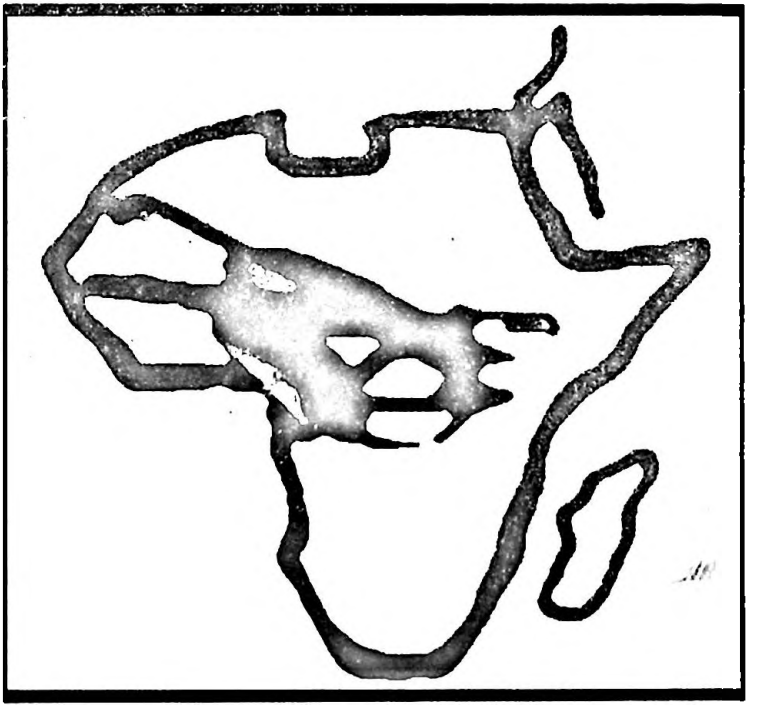

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S NOTE

ABIBISEM is a peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary academic journal based in the Department of History, Faculty of Arts, College of Humanity and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. *Abibisem* is dedicated to fostering critical, analytical and in-depth research in all fields relating to the study of African History, Philosophy, Culture and Civilization, as well as its relation to the wider global context. The journal is, therefore, unique in featuring articles from a wide range of subjects in various academic disciplines. Students, researchers and the general reading public will find the journal very useful.

Since its inception in 2008, the Editorial Board has successfully published 6 Volumes with this current one being Volume 7. It took the Editorial Board five years before coming out with this volume, mainly due to numerous circumstances beyond our control. Thankfully, adequate measures have been instituted to prevent their reoccurrence as well as ensure sustained, timely publications from 2019.

In this volume, nine interesting and stimulating articles have been selected for inclusion after a rigorous, painstaking editorial vetting and blind peer reviews. The collections have lived up to the billing of the journal as featuring original works that either look at old subjects in new ways or break entirely new grounds. It is, therefore, with great delight that I commend the journal to the intellectual world. On behalf of the editorial team I wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our numerous reviewers from far and near.

Kwame Osei Kwarteng, PhD

Associate Professor of History

(Vice-Dean of Faculty of Arts and Head of History Department – University of Cape Coast)

Editor-in-Chief

EDITOR'S NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS AND READERS

ABIBISEM: Journal of African Culture and Civilization is back after a brief hiatus during which we strategized about the way forward and developed some rather definite notions as to what the journal should be. We have published the current volume to underscore our commitment to intellectual engagement and academic discourse.

We very much intend to ensure and maintain continuity in our interrogation of issues relating to African Culture and Civilization as well as its re-formulated versions in the diaspora. While we might focus on certain themes in the future, we do encourage interdisciplinarity, albeit, mindful that most of our volumes may be dominated by papers from history. To cement this commitment, we will from 2019 publish two issues a year, with the goal of doing three volumes a year within half a decade.

The present volume of *Abibisem* covers a very broad range of topics, largely, on Ghana and Africa. We hope that the diversity of topics will make the journal very appealing to a wide base of readers across the world.

We wish to thank the members of the Editorial Board and the Editorial Advisory and Review Board for working assiduously to make this volume a reality. Above all, we thank all the contributors to this volume and those who are looking forward to making contributions in the future.

Edmund Abaka, PhD

Associate Professor of History & International Studies

(University of Miami, Florida)

Editor

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EDITORIAL POLICY AND AUTHOR GUIDELINES

ABIBISEM: Journal of African Culture & Civilization of the Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, is a peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journal committed to publishing well-researched academic, scholarly or technical articles in any of the fields pertaining to African History, African Philosophy, African Culture and Civilization, and Africa's relationship with the wider world.

The Editorial Board welcomes manuscripts, which should be in the English language, and must be typed, double-spaced (including footnotes, endnotes and references) using Times New Roman Font size 12. Manuscripts must not exceed 25 pages (or 6,250 words) and should be in Chicago Manual Style (16th Edition) or APA Referencing and Citation Styles (6th Edition). All submissions must be accompanied by a statement that the manuscript has not been previously published or submitted for publication elsewhere.

The Editorial Board also welcomes newly published books from authors and publishers for review. Electronic submissions are to be made in Microsoft Word format, with the file name clearly indicated.

Each manuscript should be accompanied by an abstract of not more than 150 words. All works consulted should be listed serially at the end of each article under the headline REFERENCES.

Manuscripts must also be accompanied by a separate (cover) sheet indicating the title of the paper, the author's name in the form it should appear in print, current academic or professional position, field of interest, institutional affiliation and address of the author(s). For the purposes of blind peer-review, the first page of the manuscript should not bear the name(s) of the author(s).

All manuscripts and enquiries should be sent to:

The Editor, *ABIBISEM: Journal of African Culture and Civilization*, Department of History, University of Cape Coast, PMB, Cape Coast – Ghana, or via email to: abibisemjournal@ucc.edu.gh, or e.abaka@miami.edu

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Education for Nation Building: The Vision of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah for University Education in the Early Stages of Self-Government and Independence in Ghana

Peter BOAKYE and Kwame Osei KWARTENG

Abstract

The Gold Coast was renamed Ghana by the political leadership on the attainment of Independence. But before 1957, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah had become Prime Minister of the Gold Coast in 1952, and by this arrangement ruled alongside the British Colonial Governor. Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah set out to rebuild the new nation, and by doing so, Education, especially University Education, became a significant tool for the realization of such an objective. He, and the Convention People's Party (CPP) Government saw education as "the keystone of people's life and happiness."[1] Thus, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah wanted the University Colleges in the Gold Coast to train intellectuals capable of combining both theory and practice as well as use their energies to assist in the task of national reconstruction.[2] This explains why Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah clearly spelt out the visions of University Education in Ghana. This paper, which is multi-sourced, uses archival documents, newspapers, interviews and scholarly secondary works such as articles, book chapters and books to examine the visions of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah for University Education in the early stages of self-government and independence in Ghana. The paper particularly focuses on measures adopted by the first Prime Minister of Ghana such as establishment of an International Commission on University Education (ICUE), making the existing University Colleges independent, the rationale for setting up the

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[1], H. O. A. McWilliam, & M. A. Kwamena-Poh, *The Development of Education in Ghana.* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1975), 83.

[2]Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*, Vol. 1 (Accra: Aframs Publication Ltd., 1997), 74.

University College of Cape Coast (UCCC), the Africanization of the University staff, establishment of the Institute of African Studies and the formation of the National Council for Higher Education to transform the University Colleges to reflect the needs and aspirations of Ghanaians.

Keywords: Higher Education, Africanization, Reconstruction, Modernization

Introduction

The outcome of the persistent demand for higher education by nationalists like John Mensah Sarbah, J. E. Casely Hayford, Kobina Sekyi, Dr. Nanka Bruce, Dr. T. Hutton Mills, Dr. J. B. Danquah, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, K. A. Korsah and Prof. C. G. Baeta was the setting up of the University College of the Gold Coast (UCGC) in 1948 by the Colonial Government. This Premier University of Ghana was, however, re-christened University College of Ghana when the country attained its Independence in 1957. In 1952, the year Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah assumed the position of Prime Minister, the Kumasi College of Technology was also set up. The focus of this paper is to critically examine firstly, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's vision for the University Colleges in the early stages of self-government and independence as he set out to rebuild the new nation from 1952 onwards, and secondly to find out why he established the International Commission for University Education, made the existing University Colleges independent, Africanized the University's staff, established the University College of Cape Coast, the Institute of African Studies and the National Council for Higher Education.

The analyses and interpretations of data of this work are based on primary and secondary sources. The primary data are largely derived from oral interviews and archival records obtained from the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) Accra. The secondary data, however, comprise history books and journal articles that deal with

educational and political history of Ghana during the administration of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah from 1951 to 1966.

Visions of University Education in Ghana, 1951 – 1966

This sub-title briefly explores Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's visions for the University Colleges of the Gold Coast in the early stages of self-government and independent Ghana. This is imperative as the Gold Coast from 1951 onwards, was on a smooth road to independence, and especially, as the Gold Coast intellectual nationalists, had, before and after World War II, linked University Education to liberation, empowerment, modernization and as a weapon for the eradication of ignorance, poverty and diseases. This is confirmed by E. A. Haizel, who notes that Kwame Nkrumah saw a significant "link between education and national development."[3] To this end, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah stated, "... education was uppermost in my mind and in the minds of my party when we had our first meeting after taking office under the colonial administration."[4] This is because he saw the worse legacies of colonialism to be "the absence of a trained body of African technicians and administrators."[5] Moreover, as he noted, "a few colonial students gained access to Metropolitan Universities almost as a right, on account of their social standing."[6] Hence, there was the need to rectify such defects and accelerate the training of the human resource in the country for socio-economic transformation.

As a Prime Minister and, later, President, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was thus better placed to ensure that the University Colleges in the country realize such objectives. This was not a difficult task for him to

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[3] E. A. Haizel, "The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah." In Kwame Arhin (ed.) *Papers of a Symposium Organised by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana* (Accra: Sedco Publishing Ltd., 1991), 55.

[4] Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite.* (London: Panaf Books, 1963), 44.

[5] Ibid. 43.

[6] Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization.* (London: Panaf Books, 1970), 4.

accomplish since he had been a member of the West African Students Union that had earlier fought for Universities to transform the country. This is corroborated by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah himself thus: "...spending a large part of my time at the West African National Secretariat and the West African Students Union (WASU), organizations dedicated to the achievement of West African unity and the liquidation of colonialism."[7] Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah thus set out to shape these University Colleges to reflect the visions of the indigenes in order to serve their needs and interests. He wanted, the University Colleges in particular, to produce intellectuals capable of combining both theory and practice and who would use their energies in the right direction to support in fulfilling the task of national reconstruction.[8]

Such Universities should also be:

> ... responsive to the sense of urgency that exists in a developing nation; to use their resources imaginatively and effectively to contribute to economic and social progress; to interpret their studies for the benefit of the people and to learn from their problems. At the same time, they must be free, within the limits of the funds available to them, to plan their own programmes of teaching and research, pursue their own methods of instruction, appoint their own teachers [and] maintain their own standards.[9]

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[7] Kwame Nkrumah, *Dark Days in Ghana.* (London: Panaf Books, 1968), 53. See also, Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 135.

[8] Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*, Vol. 1 (Accra: Aframs Publication Ltd., 1997), 74. Also, Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952-2008." Unpublished PhD thesis submitted to the Department of History, University of Cape Coast. 177.

[9] See Statement by the Government on the Report of the Commission on University Education: December, 1960 – January, 1961. (Accra: Government Printing Press, 1961), 3. Also, Speech by Mr. Kojo Botsio, MP and Chairman of the National Council for Higher Education in Ghana on Document on University College of Cape Coast: Official Opening, 1962, 15.

Again, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah wanted the University Colleges in Ghana to "become the academic focus of national life, reflecting the social, economic, cultural and political aspirations of the people."[10]

Such were the visions of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah for a University in Ghana. Not only did he talk about his visions for a University, but he also walked the talk as well. This largely reflected in educational interventions introduced in Ghana during his administration such as the Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) for Education in 1951, the Second Development Plan, 1959–1963, the Education Act of 1961 and the Seven Year Development Plan, 1963/64–1969/70. Through such interventions, the progress in education from 1951 to 1961 far surpassed the entire period of colonial rule in Ghana.[11] There was an overwhelming increase in the enrolment of pupils and students in Primary, Middle, Secondary, Teacher Training Colleges and Universities. The number of pupils in Primary and Middle Schools increased from 154,360 and 66,175 in 1951 to 481,500 and 160,000 in 1961 respectively. Both Secondary and Technical Schools increased from 3,599 to 19,143 whilst Teacher Training Colleges and Universities also increased from 1,916 and 208 to 4,522 and 1,204 respectively in the same period.[12] In fact, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah envisaged an intake of 9000 students in the Universities by 1968.[13]

Apart from these, in the course of the implementation of the ADP and the Second Development Plan, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah first of all, transformed and beautified the University Colleges, especially, the University College of the Gold Coast to reflect modern Universities. He also completed a larger part of the building programmes of the University which served as lecture theatres, departmental offices, faculties and halls of residence. Also, he set aside, the sum of £1, 800,000 for the construction of lecture theatres, roads, electricity, water and sewage systems and staff

[10] Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*, Vol. 2 (Accra: Aframs Publication Ltd., 1997), 145.
[11] Kwame Nkrumah, *Dark Days in Ghana*, 77.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid. See also, Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 48.

housing.[14] In particular, he was convinced that such facilities should be capable of admitting one thousand students even in the first phase of the development plan. Apart from these, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah allotted an amount of £749,140 and £910,000 in 1957–1958 and 1958–1959 respectively to the University College of the Gold Coast as subventions.[15] The Kumasi College of Technology also benefited from an amount of £1,800,000 for infrastructural facilities such as halls of residence, lecture theatres and senior staff bungalows.

The transformative idea of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah for the University Colleges in Ghana reached its ceiling in 1959, when he took charge of the responsibility of managing the affairs of the two University Colleges.[16] A direct effect of this arrangement was an increase in the subventions to such University Colleges. The University of Ghana, for example, received subventions amounting to £850,000 and £865,000 for the 1959–61 and 1960–61 academic years respectively.[17]

At this juncture, it is pertinent to take a cursory look at the faculties, departments, units and institutes at both the University College of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology as at 1960. The University College of Ghana had five faculties, twenty departments, a Civil Engineering Research Unit, an Institute of Education and an Institute of African Studies. The faculties were Social Studies, Arts, Agriculture, Biological Sciences and Physical Sciences. The departments were History, Classics, English, Economics, Geography, Phonetics, Sociology, French Studies, Law, Philosophy, Divinity, Education, Archaeology, Physics, Mathematics, Agriculture, Botany, Geology and Zoology.

The Kumasi College of Technology, which focused primarily on technologies and applied sciences, also had schools and departments such as: School of Agriculture; School of Architecture, Town Planning and

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[14] Ministry of Education Report for the Years 1958–1960, 49.
[15] Ibid. 50 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 178.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

Building; School of Engineering (Civil, Electrical and Mechanical); Department of Commerce (Accountancy, Estate Management, Secretaryship and Administration); Department of Fine Arts and Crafts; Department of Pharmacy; Department of Arts; and Department of Mathematics and Physics. These programmes and courses in the schools and departments were intended to produce heroes and heroines needed for socio-economic and industrial reconstruction of the country.[18] This made Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah describe Electricity and Agriculture, in particular, as the two cornerstones of industrialization in Ghana.[19]

By 1960, the total enrolment of the Kumasi College of Technology was 533 with staff strength of 146. Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah set out to expand access to University education in the country.[20] Up to 1st July 1960, when Ghana officially became a republic, the first two University Colleges in Ghana were still under special relationship with the University of London. Indeed, at this time, the University of London still supervised the examinations and awarded the Degrees to students of these University Colleges.

This issue of special relationship between the University Colleges of Ghana and the University of London came about when the former were affiliated to the latter at their establishment in 1948 and 1952. By implication, although Ghana was an independent country, its University Colleges were not independent. There was, therefore, the urgent need for such University Colleges to gain their independence and thus become autonomous institutions to portray the country as truly independent. These, among other issues, led to the establishment of the International Commission on University Education (ICUE) in December 1960, to provide expert advice on not only how the University Colleges could be independent, but also, the future of University Education in the country.

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[18] Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*, Vol. I, 74 and Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 48.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 48.

International Commission on University Education (1960 – 1961)

The Commission was set up by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah on 16th December, 1960. Its point of reference was "to enquire into and advise the Government on the future development of University Education in Ghana and in the light of such enquiry to make recommendations for the amendments of the University College of Ghana Ordinance, the College of Technology, Science and Arts Ordinance and of such other laws of Ghana as the Commissioners may consider necessary in regard to their conclusions concerning University Education."[21]

The CPP Government wanted the University Colleges of the country to largely serve the needs of the indigenes, especially, in the training of personnel required for socio-economic transformation. It also wished that such Universities should enhance the study of African culture and history.[22] With such convictions, more specifically, the issues the CPP Government tasked the Commission to undertake included finding out how the University College of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology could be made independent universities, the necessity of establishing a third public University College, the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana and to find out, how a healthy relationship could exist between the Colleges and Government.[23]

Such tasks, undoubtedly, mainly required experts and professionals both local and international in the field of higher and University Education. Membership of the Commission was thus made up of: Mr. Kojo Botsio, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of Agriculture, Chairman; Mr. Daniel Chapman, Headmaster of Achimota School, Vice-Chairman; Nana Kobina Nketsia IV, Ministry of

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[21] Education Report for the Years 1958–1960, 50. Also, Report of the Commission on University Education December 1960–January 1961. (Accra: Government Printing Department, 1961), 9 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952-2008." 180.

[22] *The Daily Graphic*, "Varsity Must Serve Our Needs" Saturday, December 17, 1960, 3. ılso, Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 119.

ncis Agbodeka, *A History of the University of Ghana: Half A Century of Higher tion (1948-1998).* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Service, 1998), 125–126.

Foreign Affairs; D. D. Carmichael, Assistant Registrar, Scholarships Secretariat and Administrative Secretary to the Commission; Thomas Hodgkin, Research Fellow, McGill University; Miss Laura A. Bornholdt, Dean of Women Affairs and Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania; Mr. Dunstan Skilbeck, Principal, Wye College, University of London; N. S. Torocheshnikov, Professor of Inorganic Chemical Technology, Mendeleyev Institute, Moscow; Dr. Horace Mann Bond, Dean of the School of Education, University of Atlanta, U.S.A.; Dr. Davidson S. H. W. Nicol, Principal of the University College of Sierra Leone; E. Evans-Pritchard, Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Oxford and Professor J. D. Bernal, Professor of Physics, Birkbeck College, University of London.[24]

Mention also has to be made that such were the caliber of personalities Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah appointed to delve into University Education and to come out with their recommendations as part of efforts to transform the two University Colleges. They were indeed high intellectuals with good academic standing as many of them were professors and senior faculty in famous Universities across the world. Their work lasted for three weeks starting from 17th December, 1960 to 11th January, 1961. The Commission visited the entire country, region by region, and engaged the public on numerous discussions which centred on the type of University structure and education suitable for Ghanaians as well as the nature of the relationship that ought to exist between the government and the University Colleges. Not only these, but also, it obtained various memoranda from members of the public, various societies and organizations in the country.

This was done to ensure that the nature and structure of University Education in the country reflected the views of Ghanaians. Put differently,

[24] Ibid. Also, Report of the Commission on University Education December 1960–January 1961, 6. and K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko, *A History of the University of Cape Coast: Fifty Years of Excellence in Tertiary Education (1962–2012)* (Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast Publishers, 2012), 7–8. *The Daily Graphic*, Saturday, December 17, 1960 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 181–182.

such an approach adopted by the Commission was intended to make the University Colleges and Ghanaian Universities to reflect their republican status. In fact, it was for the first time, since the establishment of the University Colleges in the country, that the views of the indigenes were sought concerning the nature and structure of University Education the people wished to have. Thanks to their commitment and dedication, on 11th January, 1961, the Commission ended its investigations and presented its report to Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. An attempt will therefore be made in this paper to give an overview of the Commission's report which it gave to the President.

The first of such recommendations was that the University College of Ghana and Kumasi College of Technology should be made independent Universities with each having its own University Council consisting of a Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Representatives of Government, Academic Staff and Independent Educational Bodies. The Chancellor's post was to remain symbolic and ceremonial. On the other hand, the Vice-Chancellor was to be directly involved in the administration of the University to which he or she was appointed and be responsible for the academic issues of the University. Such an arrangement, by implication, would entrust the complete management of such institutions into their own hands and, thus, terminate their special relationship with the University of London. More significantly, it would offer the University Colleges the opportunity to award their own Degrees, introduce their own programmes and courses and appoint their own academic and non-academic staff members.

The Commission also suggested the setting up of a third University in the country, the University College of Cape Coast, the establishment of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana and formation of the National Council for Higher Education and Research. The detail and rationale for the Commission's proposal for a third University, the establishment of the Institute of African Studies and the National Council for Higher Education will, however, be discussed later in other sub-topics.

One other significant recommendation was the appointment of University Staff. It noted that more Professors and Associate Professors had to be appointed by the University Council. As the Commission observed, such appointments would ensure rapid implementation of the Africanization policy as many Africans were to benefit from such intervention. This implied that a large proportion of Ghanaians would constitute the staff of the University College of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology. With more African lecturers, it was hoped that it would ensure quality of teaching and research. More specifically, the Commission suggested that there should be a substantial majority of Ghanaian lecturers in the Universities in the country between 1967–1970.

It is argued that the cessation of special relationships between the University Colleges in Ghana and the University of London was a very good intervention, as it gave the former much autonomy and the liberty for the University Colleges to have a more friendly relationship with outsiders. This is because, as a global village, the University Colleges in Ghana could not have stayed in an isolation. There was the need for them to have reciprocal relationships with other Universities in the world. Such bilateral and multilateral arrangements, if any, should be flexible to avoid loss of autonomy. It could be based on University to University, faculty to faculty, or department to department for effective teaching and research. This was intended to allow sharing of ideas, ensuring the equivalence of degrees, encouraging exchange of students and staff and coordinating University development. It was also to make way for the use of Visiting Professors and Lecturers, exchange of post-graduate students, acquisition of external examiners and centres for members of staff to spend their study leave.[25]

Apart from the above mentioned recommendations of the Commission, there were others such as: Equal salary for both Ghanaian lecturers and expatriate lecturers; liberalization of the social life of the halls of residence for peace and solidarity; establishment of the Ghana School of Law, the School of Librarianship, the Ghana Academy of Administration, Faculty of Medicine for the University College of Ghana

[25] Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 182.

and the School of Music and Drama at the University College of Ghana.[26] These proposals by the Commission, in the field of higher education, were geared towards socio-economic transformation of the country. To this end, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah set out to implement the recommendations of the Commission.

Granting Autonomy to the Existing Ghanaian University Colleges

As noted earlier, by 1st July, 1960, the newly independent country, Ghana, became a republic and this era saw a complete change in its political landscape. Political power passed into the hands of Ghanaian leaders and, hence, the country became a sovereign state. However, the University College of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology were still affiliated with the University of London which meant that they were not independent.

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, after receiving the report of the Commission for University Education, set out not only to superintend the autonomy of the two University Colleges, but also to implement the entire recommendations of the Commission. So, he appointed Nana Kobina Nketsia IV as interim Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana as soon as the Commission issued its report in 1961 to execute the recommendations. As Emeritus Professor J. H. Nketia points out, the appointment of Nana Kobina Nketsia IV as Vice-Chancellor was relevant because it placed him in a strategic position to implement not only the recommendations of the Commission, but also the promotion of Ghanaian culture.[27]

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[26]The Report of the Commission on University Education, December 1960-January 1961, 1-43. Francis Agbodeka, *A History of University of Ghana*, 126. Also, H. O. A. McWilliam, & M. A. Kwamena-Poh, *The Development of Education in Ghana*. (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1975), 105.

[27] Prof. J. H. Nketia, Aged 90, Emeritus Professor, University of Ghana, Legon, at his Office, Legon Campus, Accra, 29-12-09.

special relationship with the University of London. After these, the next significant issue which Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah tackled was the establishment of a third University in the country.

Rationale for Setting Up the University College of Cape Coast (UCCC)

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah established the UCCC[33] as part of efforts to accelerate the growth and progress of University Education in Ghana. More specifically, he set up the University College to strike a new path and build up a character peculiarly its own, while making sure that it attained and maintained standards that could compare favourably with the best Universities anywhere in the world.[34] As Kojo Botsio, who was one of the top functionaries of the CPP Government and the first Minister of Education in the country during Kwame Nkrumah's administration notes, the UCCC had "a vital and decisive role to play in the implementation of the Party's socialist programme for Work and Happiness, designed to bring abundant life to the people of this country."[35] Due to this conviction of the CPP Government, education occupied the top of the priorities of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's scheme for national development in the country.[36] Thus, he "developed a policy of education in terms of level,

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[33] This is not a detailed study of the University of Cape Coast itself. The paper only examines the rationale for its establishment as part of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's vision to transform University Education in the country. For detailed information on the University of Cape Coast see K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko, *A History of the University of Cape Coast: Fifty Years of Excellence in Tertiary Education: 1962–2012* (Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast Publishing Service).

[34] The Principal's Speech, Document on University College of Cape Coast: Official Opening, 8; Peter Boakye. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008" (PhD Dissertation, University of Cape Coast, 2017), 189.

[35]Speech by Mr. Kojo Botsio, MP and Chairman of the National Council for Higher Education in Ghana Document on University College of Cape Coast Official Opening, 13. Also, Kwame Nkrumah, *Dark Days in Ghana*, 78 and Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 123.

[36]K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko, *A History of the University of Cape Coast*, 3.

variety, quality and quantity together with an action plan that gave practical expression to the policy."[37]

Again, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's Second Development Plan which started in 1959 focused much on the expansion of Secondary School Education to absorb a total enrolment of about 6,000 students by 1964. This could not be realized without having enough Graduate Teachers. Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah thus established the UCCC to produce Professional Teachers for Secondary Schools.[38] This is confirmed by Kwarteng, Boadi-Siaw and Dwarko who write that the UCCC "will be required to produce the urgently needed mathematics and science teachers for our Secondary Schools, Teacher-Training Colleges and Technical Institutions."[39] It would offer courses such as Arts and Sciences Education for the Secondary Schools, Training Colleges, Polytechnics and the Technical Institutes to reflect the cultural awareness and identity of Ghanaians.[40]

Its establishment also reflected the Government's commitment to secure the highest standards of education for the nation. This idea of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was made known by Mr. Kojo Botsio during the official inauguration of the UCCC in 1962. It states, "the establishment of the University College is in consonance with the desires and aspirations of the Party and Government to develop education and learning in Ghana to the highest pitch possible."[41]

In the view of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the UCCC was expected to grow to "become an impregnable bastion of truth and a rich

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[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko, *A History of University of Cape Coast*, 6. Also, Speech by Mr. Kojo Botsio, 16.

[40] Public Records and Archives Administration Department, PRAAD, Accra, RG3/5/1944, National Council for Higher Education Agenda and Minutes, 24th May, 1962, 2. Also, K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko, *A History of University of Cape Coast*, 6 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 190.

[41] Ibid. 18. See also, Kwame Nkrumah, *Africa Must Unite*, 124.

fount of knowledge which it will continually spread in the fulfilment of its role of producing enlightened citizens for the service of our beloved country."[42] Hence, it was to "give the new nations of Africa [Ghana] the wherewithal for planning and achieving cultural, social and material development."[43]

The decision to establish the UCCC was an original idea of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. This explains why as K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko aptly state, "the Government's decision to establish the University College of Cape Coast was brought to the attention of the ICUE after it had started sitting."[44] This issue was carefully studied, interrogated and considered by the Commission and thus found to be significant. It, therefore, recommended the establishment of the UCCC in Ghana.[45]

At this point, it is expedient to briefly shed light on the choice of Cape Coast for the establishment of Ghana's third University. The choice of Cape Coast was based on its "Ancient and Historic" considerations. It was, indeed, the Ancient Capital of the country. Furthermore, it was the place where the foundation of education in Ghana was laid.[46] Cape Coast was well-known for its intellectual traditions and history. Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah rightly pointed out that "Education has been the keystone to all progress, and Cape Coast has been the schoolmaster of this nation."[47] To this end, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah observed that "there is no finer tribute to Cape Coast than the establishment here of a

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[42] The Principal's Speech, Document on University College of Cape Coast, Official Opening, 12.
[43] Ibid. Also, Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 191.
[44] K. O. Kwarteng, S. Y. Boadi-Siaw and D. A. Dwarko, *A History of the University of Cape Coast: Fifty Years of Excellence in Tertiary Education (1962–2012)* (Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast Publishers, 2012), 8.
[45] Ibid. Also, Speech by Mr. Kojo Botsio, 14.
[46] The Address of Welcome by Sir Arku Korsah, Chairman of Interim Council, Document on University College of Cape Coast: Official Opening, 1962, 4.
[47] Ibid. 9.

University College as a result of her contribution to the educational progress of this country."[48]

Africanization of the Staff of the Universities in Ghana

The next significant issue Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah dealt with was Africanization of the staff of the Universities in the country. As indicated earlier, the University of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology were made independent institutions in the late 1961. Indeed, such autonomy would have been a fiasco if the staff, especially, the academic staff members were still dominated by expatriates. After 1961, the academic staff of both Universities was still dominated by non-Ghanaians and this became a major challenge to the institutions and the country at large. This implied that the Universities were only independent in theory but not in practice.

This challenge was so profound to the extent that it impaired Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's vision of ensuring that African staff would dominate in the academic staff of the Universities. It is worthy of note that Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah anticipated this danger. This explains why he sent a Memorandum to ICUE on this issue which states, "to ensure that at an early stage of the development of the University it should have basically an African academic staff, capable and worthy of staffing a University of high standing."[49]

Before any discussion of the measures adopted by the CPP Government to Africanize the Universities' staff, let us look at the existing situation of the academic staff as at the end of 1961. Out of the total number of Two Hundred and One (201) University staff of both the University of Ghana and the Kumasi College of Technology, African Lecturers were made up of only Thirty-Five (35), representing about a fifth

[48] Ibid.
[49] Report of the Commission on University Education, December 1960–January 1961, 17.

of the total number of the academic staff.[50] At the University of Ghana, for example, out of the Twenty (20) Heads of Departments, there was not a single African. Also, African Senior Lecturers and Lecturers were made up of Five (5) and Twelve (12) out of Twenty (20) and Eighty-Five (85) respectively.[51] The situation was not different at the Kumasi College of Technology. Out of Nine (9) Heads of Departments, there was only One (1) African. There was also One (1) Senior Lecturer and Sixteen (16) Lecturers out of Nineteen (19) Senior Lecturers and Forty-Eight Lecturers respectively.[52]

With such background, the ICUE suggested the need to expedite the training of African teaching staff by the Government. It also called for the establishment of a scheme to Africanize the University teaching staff over approximately five years. This was to allow majority of the posts of heads of department, senior lecturers and lecturers to be filled by qualified Ghanaians as soon as possible. Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah took certain initiatives to tackle this issue. Firstly, many African lecturers were promoted at the University of Ghana. Three senior lecturers, namely, E. A. Boateng of the Department of Geography, Dr. F. G. T. O' B. Torto of the Department of Chemistry and Dr. A. A. Kwapong of the Department of Classics were promoted to the rank of Professors.[53] Additionally, Dr. C. G. Baeta was made Head of Department of the Study of Religions and the Chair of Indigenous and Comparative Religion.[54] L. H. Ofosu-Appiah of the Department of Classics and W. E. Abraham were also promoted to the

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[50]Francis Agbodeka, *A History of the University of Ghana*, 127. Also, University College of Ghana Annual Report by the Vice-Chancellor, 1961–1962, 16–46 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 196.

[51] Report of the Commission on University Education, December 1960-January 1961, 17. Also, Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 196.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid. Francis Agbodeka, *A History of University of Ghana*, 127–129, U.G. Annual Report, 6.

[54] Vice-Chancellor's Annual Report of the University of Ghana, 1961–1962, 6.

rank of Associate Professors in January 1962 and April 1962 respectively.[55]

Furthermore, J. H. Nketia of the Institute of African Studies, Dr. J. A. K. Quartey of the Department of Chemistry, Dr. J. C. de Graft-Johnson and K. A. B. Jones-Quartey, both of the Institute of Extra-Mural Studies were promoted to the rank of Associate Professors.[56] These appointments, which were made by ad hoc committees made up of the Vice-Chancellor, three members of the academic staff of the University and the respective Head of Department in areas where the vacancy existed, were part of efforts to realize the policy of progressive Africanization of the Universities' teaching staff and their services.[57]

Setting up of the Institute of African Studies

The study of African culture and history became a significant issue even before and immediately after independence. In fact, it became more intensive when the administration of the country passed into the hands of the indigenes. It was found to be an invaluable tool for the realization of the policy of Africanization. This explains why Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah started the African Studies programme in 1958, during the Consolidation era at the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, barely a year after independence, to inculcate a sense of patriotism and an understanding of African culture, history, language, art, customs, conventions and heritage in Ghanaian students.[58] This was intended to decolonize the minds of students from foreign culture and to shape them to largely develop love for national reconstruction and socio-economic transformation.

[55] Ibid. 15-17 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 198.
[56] Ibid. 6.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*, Vol. 2, 272.

The establishment of the Institute of African Studies, thus, reflected Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's urgent quest to enhance the study of African culture, values, history and institutions at the Universities in Ghana.[59] As J. H. Nketia notes, a major function of a University education in Africa is to direct Africans to have a better understanding and appreciation of the culture of their societies.[60] Colonial University education could not realize such an objective as it isolated products from their culture and heritage. It only produced individuals who became "unfit" in their societies. The result is the high rate of unemployment in the country which has lingered on to the contemporary times.

The ICUE suggested the setting up of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana so that all students, while at the University, irrespective of their degrees offered, would study it to acquire a general understanding of African history, institutions and cultures.[61] The study of African culture, as K. A. B. Jones-Quartey observes, would " do much to guard against a danger which we are fully conscious, that the University graduates might become a separate community... divorced from the concerns and aspirations of their fellow citizens.''[62]

Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah sought to have University Education Africanized in Ghana.[63] Africanization of University Education in the post-independence period meant that issues such as courses offered

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[59] J. H. Nketia, interview. Also, Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*, Vol. 2, 279.

[60]Ibid. Also, Samuel Evans Ekow Budu-Arthur, "The Effect of Missionary Activities on Some Akan Institutions from the Portuguese Settlements on the Mina Coast (1482–1916)," Unpublished PhD Thesis presented to the University of Oxford, 1959, 635–636 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 199.

[61]Report of the Commission on University Education, December 1960–January 1961, 34.

[62] K. A. B. Jones-Quartey, *Education and Revolution*: An Inaugural Lecture delivered on Thursday 22nd April, 1971 at the Auditorium, School of Administration University of Ghana, Legon. (Accra: Ghana Universities Press,. 1972), 22.

[63] Report of the Commission on University Education, December 1960–January 1961, 34. Also, J. V. L. Philips, aged 89, a former Member of the National Council for Higher Education in Ghana, East Cantonments, Accra, 03-10-11 and Asare, A. R. Aged 79, Education Specialist and Head teacher of Saviour Education Complex, Kumasi, 30-11-15.

and staffing which related to African cultural perspectives and background should be largely promoted at the Universities in Ghana.[64] Certain measures were therefore adopted by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.

Firstly, the Institute of African Studies was reconstituted in 1962 and all first year students were mandated to offer courses from it. Such courses were History, with particular emphasis on the geographical background to African History; Archaeology; Sociology and Social Anthropology, with related studies of African Government, Law, Economics, Religion and Philosophy; and African Languages, and Literature and Arts (including Music).[65] African Studies mainly covered the geographical range of Ghanaian studies, West African studies and general African studies. Furthermore, research and teaching in the field of African Studies were made more intensive to be undertaken by Research Fellows[66] and Associates.[67]

Establishment of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)

The interventions of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah that aimed at transforming University Education in the country were climaxed with the establishment of the National Council for Higher Education. Originally, it was known as National Committee for Higher Education. However, its members substituted "Council" for "Committee during their meeting held on 23rd May, 1962."[68] This Council was set up as a regulatory body for the

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid. p. 33. Also see Vice-Chancellor's Annual Report of the University of Ghana, 1961–1962, 6 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 200.

[66]Research Fellows were tasked to undertake research, teaching and supervision of post-graduate students.

[67] Research Associates were full-time members of the University teaching staff. They were closely associated with the work of the Institute and, as such, enjoyed its facilities and participated in seminars. They also worked on issues which related to African problems.

[68] Public Records and Archives Administration Department, PRAAD, Accra, RG3/5/1944, National Council for Higher Education Agenda and Minutes, 24th May,

Universities and the Ghana Academy of Sciences in the country. To this end, its major roles were: (i) to make policy; (ii) to approve Plans and programmes; (iii) to co-ordinate efforts; and (iv) to provide grants.[69]

Membership was made up of Mr. Kojo Botsio, Chairman; Nana Kobina Nketsia IV, Interim Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana; Professor C. Levine, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; Mr. J. V. L. Phillips, Executive Secretary, State Control Commission; Mr. G. K. Benson, Registrar of Scholarships; Professor R. W. H. Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana; Dr. R. D. Loken, Manpower Specialist, Office of the Planning Commission; Mr. E. A. Edzii, Registrar, University of Ghana; Mr. D. A. Brown, Deputy Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education; Mr. S. T. Quansah, Executive Secretary, National Research Council; Mr. E. C. Quist-Therson, Secretary; and Mr. G. N. Nutsugah, Acting Deputy Secretary, National Council for Higher Education.[70]

The Council met on many occasions and made decisions on issues referred to it by the Government. Such issues among others were: entrance requirements to the Universities of Ghana, accommodation, introduction of Four-Year Degree Programmes in Arts and Sciences, sources of funds for higher education, setting up of Workers' Colleges, appointment and formation of the interim Council for the UCCC.[71] The decisions made by the Council on such issues, among others, largely helped to put the Universities and higher education in the country in shape.

1962, 1; Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 202.

[69] Samuel Obeng, *Selected Speeches of Kwame Nkrumah*. Vol. 2. (Accra: Afram Publication Ltd., 1997), 79.

[70] PRAAD, RG3/5/1944, National Council for Higher Education Agenda and Minutes, 1 and Peter Boakye 2017. "A History of Politics in Education in Ghana: 1952–2008." 202–203.

[71] Ibid. 1–4.

Conclusion

This study, using primary and secondary data, has shown how University Education fared in the early stages of self-government and independence in Ghana. By the time Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966, not only could the country boast of having an additional University – the University College of Cape Coast – but all the Universities had been largely transformed into modern Universities in terms of autonomy, physical facilities and human resources. Globally, such Universities could match and contest effectively with their counterparts in world over. The autonomy of the premier Universities – the University of Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology – finalized the country's independence and Republican status. The intellectual liberation that the country enjoyed made it possible for the Universities to appoint their own human resource personnel like the Vice-Chancellor, Academic Staff and Non-Academic Staff. Furthermore, they could introduce new programmes of study and award their own degrees. It also paved the way for socio-economic transformation and national reconstruction to take place in the country. Indeed, such autonomy of the Ghanaian Universities made it possible for the establishment and introduction of African Studies programmes which did not only inculcate a sense of patriotism needed in students for nation building, but also fostered an understanding of African history and culture – which were essential for national development.

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Colonial Policy, Chieftaincy and Land Politics in Ghana: The Case Study of Gyaman

Kwame ADUM-KYEREMEH and Joseph Kwadwo AGYEMAN

Abstract

The partition of Africa in the late nineteenth century destabilized some societies in Africa. In West Africa, the imaginary territorial boundaries divided the Nzema between Ivory Coast and Ghana, the Dagaaba between Burkina Faso and Ghana, and the Ewe between Togo and Ghana. The partition exercise also caused protracted disputes and neglect of existing ethnic groupings. Using information from oral, archival and secondary sources, this article examines the impact of the partition of Africa on Gyaman, a traditional ethnic setting in modern Ghana in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The paper blames current Gyaman problems on the Partition exercise.

Keywords: Gyaman, Demarcation, Boundary, Chieftaincy, Privileges

Introduction

Drobo and Pruano (now Gyapekrom), are both traditional states located in the Gyaman District of the Brong-Ahafo Region of the Republic of Ghana.[1] They were placed in modern Ghana following the partition of the kingdom into British and French spheres in 1898. Traditionally, the Drobo

[1] Gyapekrom is Anglicized in some documents as Japekrom. Jaman is an Anglicized form of Gyaman. A section of the Drobo Traditional Area was located in the Jaman North District after the partition of the former Jaman District into Jaman North District and Jaman South District in 2005. The Jaman South District was elevated to municipality in 2018. The Gyaman kingdom appears in French colonial documents as *Royaume Abron du Gyaman.*

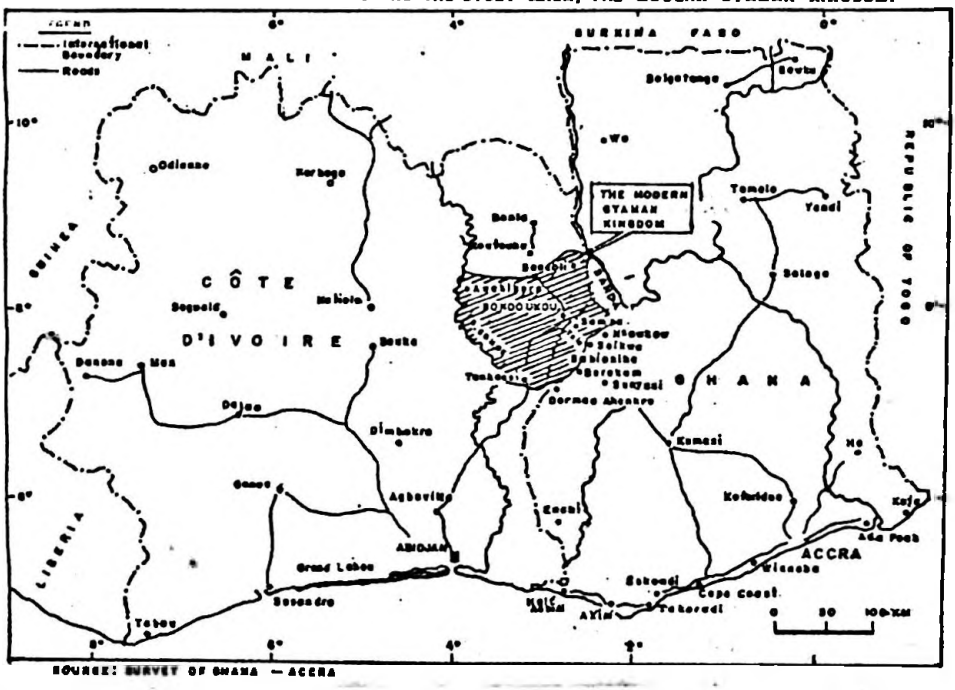
State occupied the Adonten (front ranks) division of the Gyaman Kingdom and ranked third on the military hierarchy after Songore and Gyeene.[2] Gyapekrom, on the other hand, occupied the Abakoma division.[3] A greater part of the former Gyaman kingdom was placed in Cote d'Ivoire. In contemporary Ghana, Drobo and Gyapekrom, together with traditional states of Suma, Dwenem and Kwatwoma are independent traditional areas recognized by law.[4] Despite its interesting history, very little documented information exists on studies of the Gyaman District and the history of the Drobo and Gyapekrom protracted dispute. This study seeks to add to the on-going research on inter-state disputes in Africa.

[2] Today, Songore and Gyeene are located in Cote d'Ivoire.

[3] The remaining three divisions were Suma which occupied the *Nifa* (right wing) division, Atuna and Kwatwoma jointly occupied the *Okyeame* (state linguist) division with the latter ranking first after the former on the state politico-military hierarchy. Nyame was the *Mponua* (military espionage) division. Bodaa was a section of the *Pinango* (formidable warriors) division that became part of Ghana following the partition of the kingdom. Today, Bodaa constitutes part of the Dwenem-Awasu Traditional Area. Amanfoso was part of the Pinango division that fell to Ghana and is an integral part of the Drobo Traditional Area.

[4] Atuna, the first on the rank of the *Okyeame* division as well as the *Mponoa* division have not attained paramount status. In Cote d'Ivoire, Gomere and Kwasindaa occupied the *Akyidom* (rear rank) division whereas Kyeedwo, Kwatutu, Kwasikuma, Pinango (Worokyei) traditional states occupied the Ankobea, Akwamu, Gyaase and Benkum (left wing) divisions respectively.

FIG. A MAP SHOWING THE STUDY AREA, THE MODERN GYAMAN KINGDOM.



The Rise of the Gyaman Kingdom

Etymologically, the term Gyaman was a derivative of the clause Gya-woman (abandon your country).[5] Siaw Owusu (1975) relates that Dormaa was a derivative of the phrase **Odo-man** (a nation of love). According to him, the people migrated from Akwamu, originally founded in the Nsawam region. Following persistent aggression by the Akyem, the Akwamu moved their capital from Asamankese to Nyanoase. Akolatse (1978)

[5] PRAAD, Sunyani, BRG 3/2/2, Jaman Division (History of Drobo and Suma 1932–1934). A version of Gyaman tradition relates that it was the Asante who used the term to describe the Akwamu emigrants for abandoning their Akwamu kingdom. *Diasempa* state traditions indicate that it was the Asante who gave the Dormaa people the nickname for abandoning their Suntreso settlement and fleeing from the victorious forces of the Asante. The fact that the Akwamu migrants lived in Asante territory as Dormaa people makes the Diasempa traditions more reasonable and authentic.

relates that King Ansa Sasraku IV ruled at Nyanoase from 1684 to 1692 and was succeeded by Akano Panyin (1692–1719).

At Nyanoase, succession disputes that occurred around 1600 disturbed the peace for more than a century. In 1733, a combined force of Akyem, Agona, Ga, Kwahu, Obutu, Gomoa, Fante and the Dutch in Fort Crevecoeur defeated the Akwamu who then fled to take refuge beyond the Volta River. The Akwamu eventually built a new state called Akwamufie or Anwaweneso. Another oral tradition relates that to avoid dispute, the Akwamu queen and one Obiri Yeboah, a heir apparent emigrated to settle first at Kentenkyerease, near Nsawam, moved further to Obomen in the Kwawu territory and eventually settled in Asante where they founded Dormaa with its first capital at Asantemanso and later at Suntreso, now a suburb of the city of Kumasi.[6]

When King Osei Tutu I embarked on wars of expansion, he avenged Obiri Yeboah, his predecessor's death by inflicting a decisive defeat on the Dormaa people who emigrated north-westwards to carve the Gyaman Kingdom.[6] Remnants of the Dormaa emigrants journeyed further north and carved the Abesim state near Tanoso.[7] Abesim became a place of mass dispersal of the Dormaa emigrants. Oral tradition reveals that one group migrated further in the north-western direction to carve the Wam Pamu state under the leadership of Boadu Agyeman. Drobo tradition relates that Sakyiako, a leader of the Dormaa emigrants, and his people, later carved a new settlement which was named Drobo. The Drobo were absorbed into the then emerging Gyaman kingdom, placed in the Adonten division of the Gyaman army, and ranked third after the Songore and Gyeene divisions. The pact that granted Sakyiako a stay in Gyaman deprived him of war booty, chanted in the horn language of Drobo as:

> *Sakyiako ee, Sakyiako ee, Koto no ne no ngo e, Bengye benni Membe bi;* which is translated, Sakyiako ee! Sakyiako ee! I am

[6] They were called Dormaa in appreciation for the love they expressed for their original traditional state, Akwamu before migrating to avoid civil strife which could have annihilated the Akwamu state as a result of the succession dispute.

advancing forward to fight the enemy, let them share (the booty) and eat it for I am not part of it.[7]

The Gyaman kingdom was eventually established in the last quarter of the seventeenth century with a centralized political structure and a chain of command in a military fashion. But for effective political organization, power was later decentralized from national to provincial level. At the peak of its might, the Gyaman government had geo-political provinces.[8] The kingdom was bounded to the north-east by Banda, to the north by the Kong Empire and to the west by the Comoe River. To its north-west were the Sehwi people. The Tano River in the territory of Bomaa marked its frontier with Asante to the south.

Gyaman Relations with Asante

The rapid expansion of Gyaman alarmed powerful neighbouring states, such as Asante in the eighteenth century, Asante engaged in gunboat diplomatic relations with Gyaman in 1720 when Opoku Ware I was enstooled. This sour relation between the Asante and Gyaman kingdoms increased when Asante attacked Takyiman and forced the people to seek refuge in Gyaman. When Takyiman, Gyaman and Banda entered into a diplomatic relation, Asante was quick to discover that if these relations metamorphosed into an alliance, it would pose a serious threat to Asante expansionist policy. Asante also meddled in Gyaman affairs because it was jealous of Gyaman's gold, ivory, kola and slaves. However, the immediate factor that triggered the bitter rivalry between Asante and Gyaman was

[7] Interview with Yaw Ankama Donkor at Amanfoso, 20 August 2007. The ruler of Amanfoso was the landlord of Sakyiako, and his entourage who founded the Drobo state. The Drobo paid tribute to Amanfoso with game to express their servitude.

[8] The Ahenfie province comprised Yakase, Zanzan, Dwenem, Wam Pamu states; Mponua province comprised Nyamefie; Abakoma province was Gyapekrom; Okyeame province comprised Atuna and Kwatoma; Adonten province was composed of Songore, Gyeene and Drobo states; Nifa province was the Suma state; Akyidom province were Gomere and Kwasindaa; Ankobea province was made up of Kyeedwo; Akwamu province was the Kwatutu state; Gyaase province was made up of Kwasikuma; The Benkum province was also called the Pinango.

Asante's attitude of ethnic prejudice towards the Gyaman people. Abo Kofi, the king of Gyaman manufactured a golden stool, a replica of the symbol of power of the Asante king. Asante considered the king of Gyaman's possession of a golden stool un-deserving because only Asante had the right to possess a golden stool. When Abo Kofi rejected Asante's request to surrender the golden stool, this started a war which became known in Gyaman history as the Abo Kofi War in which Asante inflicted a decisive defeat on Gyaman and seized the golden stool. Gyaman forces, seeking refuge in Kong in modern Cote d'Ivoire, was mistaken for enemies by the Kong leading to the near annihilation of the Gyaman army. The Abo Kofi war thus resulted in the '*Meka Kong*' (I swear by Kong) oath in remembrance of the bitter experience of the Gyaman people in the Abo Kofi War.

From the 1820s, Asante chiefs demanded war booty in gold and annual tribute from Gyaman and built Bekyem and other camps where their chiefs assembled to share war booty extorted from Gyaman after each attack.[9] Though the Abo Kofi War annexed Gyaman to Asante, what the Asante needed was annual tribute from Gyaman and so did not change the Gyaman internal political structure. Asante appointed the Bantamahene to supervise Gyaman affairs. He collected tribute for the Asante king and suppressed uprisings.

Osei Kwadwo (1764–77) demanded arrears of tribute from Agyeman, which Kofi Sono Ampem, had failed to pay resulting in Asante attacks. In alliance with Wasa, Gyaman on two occasions defeated a section of the Asante army. Reinforcement from Kumasi however inflicted a terrible defeat on Gyaman. When Bene Kombi Kwadwo II, also called Adu Bene II (1760–1800) became king, he believed that the persistent tension between the two kingdoms was a hindrance to development and so renewed friendly relations with Asante. King Kwadwo Adinkra II (1801–1818), Adu Bene II's successor helped Asante to campaign against Gonja and Bouna. Adinkra's alliance with Kong to secure the Gyaman-Kong

[9] In the Twi language, ***bekye*** means come-to-share and Bekyem derives its name from sharing of booty.

border however threatened Asante. Suspicious of Gyaman-Kong alliance, Asante mustered forces and again defeated Gyaman along the bank of the Tain River where Kwadwo Adinkra, committed suicide to avoid being captured by the Asante. His body was buried together with those of the Gyaman soldiers. A number of Gyaman soldiers fleeing from the victorious forces of Asante drowned in the Tain River.[10] The Gyaman oath, "*Meka Tain*" took its origin from this event.[11]

The Adinkra War (1818) enabled Asante to control Kong and to establish military outposts at Berekum, Seketia and Amanaha to spy on Gyaman military strategy. Asante also appointed *caboceers* (state representatives) in Gyaman. Gyaman only managed to rebel against Asante after the Sagrenti war of 1874 in which the British decisively defeated Asante. She assumed full independence when the British declared it a protectorate in 1882. Following the partition of Africa, part of Gyaman became French territory, whilst British Gyaman was incorporated into the British colony of Asante after the Yaa Asantewaa war of 1901.

Gyaman-British Relations

The British encounter with Gyaman began in 1878 when the former declared the latter a protectorate. King Mensa Bonsu of Asante (1874–1883), wanting to restore Asante to its former glory, cunningly dispatched an emissary to Gyaman to say that the Queen of England had given Gyaman back to Asante. Astonished, King Kwaku Agyeman of Gyaman, sent to the governor of Cape Coast to find out the truth or the otherwise of Nana Bonsu's claim. The British sent an emissary to deny Mensa Bonsu's claim and proposed protection for Gyaman. Although King Kwaku Agyeman was inclined to accept British protection, pressure from his court compelled him to denounce it. In January, 1881, Owusu Tasiamandi, a

[10] PRAAD, Sunyani, BRG 3/2/2 1932–1934. Data from Jaman Division, (History of Drobo and Suma).

[11] This was in reference to the bitter encounter Gyaman suffered in the hands of the Asante army that led to the drowning of several Gyaman soldiers.

royal and potential heir to the Gyaman throne, posing as a messenger of Agyeman went to Cape Coast to demand British protection for Gyaman. A day after his arrival in Cape Coast, the Asante sent an emissary to arrest him fearing that he would oppose Kokobo, an Asante ally, if he went back to Gyaman. Asante's request that the British should prevent Owusu from going back to Gyaman was turned down. W. Brandford Griffith, the British governor replied that since Owusu was under British protection, he could go wherever he liked.[12]

Sir Samuel Rowe and other governors also showed readiness to protect Gyaman. For example, when there was trouble between Gyaman and Asante in 1882, Major Lonsdale was sent to mediate. Also, Kofi Dabbie, a royal of Gyaman, envisaging Asante invasion in the same year went to Cape Coast, posed as a messenger of the Gyaman king, and requested British protection. The colonial governor at Cape Coast dispatched an emissary led by Major Lonsdale to Gyaman. The expedition under the escort of Kofi Dabbie reached Bonduku in January 1882 and according to Freeman, held a meeting with Nana Kwaku Agyeman and his Council. When the Gyaman King heard the news, he was astonished and requested the British expedition to give up Kofi Dabbie to be assassinated for his seemingly treacherous and treasonable conduct.[13] The Gyaman kings were later convinced that alliance with Britain would secure them from Asante attacks. They sealed the pact for alliance with the British who presented a Union Jack to the King and hoisted the British flag at Bonduku to signify that Gyaman had fallen under British protection. In 1896, the British stationed a colonial officer at Gyapekrom, the station was later relocated at Sikassoko, now Sampa and after the European partition of Africa in 1898, the British Gyaman district was created. The defeat of Asante in the Yaa Asantewaa War (1901), which strengthened British dominance over Asante released Gyaman totally from the Asante yoke.

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[12] PRAAD, Sunyani, BRG 3/2/2 1932–1934, Jaman Division Annual Report, (History of Drobo and Suma).

[13] See Freeman Austin, 1967. *Travel and Life in Ashanti and Gyaman* Frank Cass. London: 36.

Gyaman and the Colonial Experience

The British colonial administration practiced the indirect rule system in Ghana in which paramount chiefs and their sub-chiefs were constituted into a Native Authority presided over by the paramount chief. Oral traditions of Katakyiekrom relate that Captain Leland asked Kyere Kwame, the chief of Katakyiekrom to summon all the chiefs of British Gyaman to a meeting. They conferred seniority on Kwadwo Bosea, the chief of Drobo and appointed him the head chief of British Gyaman.[14] Thus, Bosea became the legitimate overlord of the traditional states of the British Gyaman kingdom and assumed the status of colonial administrative overlord at Native Authority meetings. The British resorted to this policy because they lacked funds and personnel to administer their colonies. They sought to preserve the traditional and cultural heritage of Africans as a way of tribalizing them.[15] In the exercise of judicial and administrative powers in the new order of colonial administrative convenience, the *Abakoma* (Gyapekrom), *Okyeame* (Atuna and Kwatwoma), *Mponoa* (Nyame) and Dwenem became subservient to the Drobohene.[16] This meant that whenever the Gyamanhene sat in court, the Drobo and Gyapekrom chiefs, together with other divisional chiefs, interacted as 'peers.'

The British Colonial authority supported the Gyaman Native Authority with ordinances including the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (1878) which prescribed the administrative powers of the chief. The Authority was charged to maintain law and order in its area of jurisdiction and to direct the "subject" of the paramount chief and all persons living in the traditional territory of the chief to appear before the European officials of government. The Native Authority was empowered to improve sanitation and preserve health. It could establish Native Treasury in its area

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[14] The meeting was held at Gyapekrom at a place where the Gyapekrom Area Council office is located today. According to Nana Gyan Katakyie, Kyere Kwame was a nephew of Kwame Abina and Kwame Kwarfo. The two had fled from Abanpredease to settle along the banks of the Pru River to prospect gold. What cause their flight has been discussed thoroughly.

[15] See F. K. Buah, 1980. *A history of Ghana*: 106–107.

[16] The suffix *hene* means chief hence Drobohene means a chief of Drobo.

of control with the approval of the Governor using monies derived from rent from stool lands, court fines, market rent, and interest on money invested or lent by the Native Authority. Other sources of income were fees and taxation. In addition, the Native Court Ordinance was promulgated to establish Native Courts within the area of Native Authority. The courts were expected to administer native law and customs in line with British sense of morality and natural justice.[17]

As a native authority, Drobo housed the seat of the District Commissioner in British Gyaman, and its chief was vested with the powers and functions as specified in the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (NJO). Available evidence reveals that other chiefs later raised persistent objection to his elevation to the position of head chief since he was not their constitutional overlord. However, the objection was overruled by a simple explanation that the arrangement was made for administrative purposes only so that information from the colonial government would reach them through the chief of Drobo.

But this principle of "imposed dual allegiance," was a source of persistent protests against the overlordship of the Drobohene. A series of protests were addressed to the colonial government through the resident District Commissioner but in most cases, he stopped the submission of protests to the Governor and explained that the Drobohene's position was 'a mere transmitter of information from the colonial government to the chiefs.'[18]

But the first attempt to openly protest against British occupation in Gyaman took place at Gyapekrom in 1898; in a violent encounter which

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[17] K. A. Busia, *The position of the chief in modern Political System of Ashanti*, Franck Cass and Co., London: 144

[18] In his capacity as the head chief of the British Gyaman Native Authority, the Drobohene had both executive and judicial powers and so the District Commissioner's reference to his position as just a transmitter of information emanating from colonial government to the people of British Gyaman was meant to cajole the conscience of the malcontents to succumb to colonial order. The states were Nifa (Suma), Abakoma (Gyapekrom). Akyeame (Seketia and Atuna), Dwenem (Ahenfie), Adontenwa (Drobo).

involved a band of young men led by Kwame Mensa, a royal of the Krontire lineage of Gyapekrom. This occurred when the British governor in Cape Coast sent a detachment to the British Gyaman territory led by Captain Leland and Sir Steward to appoint a head chief in Gyaman in the Indirect Rule era. This was necessary since the partition of Gyaman had located the Gyaman paramount chief's palace in the French Gyaman territory of Cote d'Ivoire. For the British, the divisional chiefs of Gyapekrom could no longer be subservient to the king in the French territory. Traditions relate that the chiefs of Gyapekrom organized a durbar to receive the British expedition, but Kwame Mensa, a royal of Gyapekrom assembled some young men and in the pretext of playing traditional *Asafo* songs to entertain the visitors, suddenly pounced on them, seized their arms, and mercilessly beat them up.

Kwame Ansu and Kwabena Faka, both chiefs of Gyapekrom were asked to produce Kwame Mensa who had sought asylum in the French Gyaman territory after the incident. Failure to do so landed them in military custody at Sampa until September, 1906 when Captain Adec Enny, the DC of Gyaman, visited Gyapekrom and Kwadwo Aforo, the chief of Gyapekrom petitioned the Chief Commisioner of Asante (CCA) through him for the return of Kwame Mensa.[19] Though the CCA agreed to the request and released him on a fine of £800 which was settled through family contributions, Mensa was to be put under surveillance and be arrested on the slightest sign of disloyalty. On his return, Mensa founded a quarters which he named Sokura, a Dzula word for New Town.

Collapse of the British Gyaman Division

In 1935, Nana Sir Agyeman Prempe II (1935–1970), the Asantehene, teamed up with the British colonial authority to restore the Asante confederacy. As a prelude to the restoration of the confederacy, the

[19] In October 1906, the District Commissioner wrote to the Chief Commissioner of Asante (CCA) asking permission to consent to Mensa's return.

colonial government set up the Committee of Privileges under the Chief Commissioner of Asante to determine the constitutional relationship between traditional states. It was to reorganize towns and villages into the pre-colonial political order to avoid land and chieftaincy disputes. The colonial arrangement which subordinated some traditional states in Asante to others between 1900 and 1935 had been a source of persistent land and chieftaincy squabbles. On 18 June 1935, the Committee of Privileges paneled by Major F. W. K. Jackson, the Chief Commissioner of Asante; Otumfuor Sir Agyeman Prempe II, the Asantehene; Nana Yaw Sarpong, Asante Dwabenhene, and the Agonahene, heard a case in which Nana Kwadwo Konadu, the Sumahene and Nana Yaw Twingyan, Seketiahene, moved to sever relationship with the Drobohene and revert to their original status. They contended that the existing arrangement benefited the colonial administration only. Earlier attempts to throw off the yoke of the Drobohene had failed because the DC at Wankyi foiled the objection with an explanation that the arrangement was to facilitate correspondence between the colonial government and Gyaman chiefs through the Drobohene. The aggrieved chiefs were assured that they would revert to their former sovereign statuses at the appropriate time. It was against this background that they sought justice from the Committee of Privileges. The Drobohene's persistent claim of dominion over the Suma and Kwatwoma states compelled the Committee to invite evidence from Gyamanhene who testified in writing stating that before the French and the English occupation, Drobo was placed directly under the authority of the king of Gyaman. The inhabitants of Suma who were placed at the right wing of the Gyaman army communicated with the Gyaman king through the Songorehene. Drobo occupied the center, ensured the vanguard of the army and as *Adontenhene* held some military supremacy.[20] Based on this written evidence, the Committee determined the case in favour of the Suma and Seketia states. The Dwenemhene, represented by Kwame Mensa, a sub-chief told the Committee that the Dwenem state originally owed allegiance to the Gyamanhene and so the arrangement that made Dwenem

[20] 'Proceedings of the Meetings of the Committee of Privileges 1935': 213–214.

subservient to Drobo was invented for colonial administrative convenience following the location of the Gyamanhene in the Cote d'Ivoire after 1898.

Having investigated the constitutional relationship between Dwenem and Drobo and on the basis of Gyamanhene's evidence, the Committee ruled for Dwenem on the reason that the Drobohene kept changing his narratives about the ownership of the Gyaman land. For example, the chief once said that the Gyaman land was a common property for all Gyamans. The judgment continued; "...now you say that the land belongs to you. It may or may not be true, but I say there should be no land dispute. You may be sorry (unhappy) that your people have gone away from you but throw all ill-will away and think of the good of the whole country for it is for the good of the whole country that this decision has been taken.[21] Thus from Drobo's own evidence and information, the Committee took the decision to pluck from the Drobohene some of its subordinate states. The affected traditional divisions therefore threw off the Drobo yoke and supremacy.[22]

The secession of Dwenem, Suma, Kwatwoma and others thus collapsed the British Gyaman Division. In its place, two divisions; namely, the Drobo Division and the Suma-Kwatwoma Division were established. The former was the amalgam of Drobo, Gyapekrom and Nyame traditional divisions whereas the later constituted the coalition of Suma, Kwatwoma, Dwenem, and Atuna, traditional divisions. The presidency of the Suma-Kwatwoma Divisional Council was to be observed in a two-year rotation between the Sumahene and the Kwatwomahene, whereas on the Drobo Division Council, the presidency was dominated by the Drobohene. From this period onwards, Gyapekrom became subservient to Drobo in various capacities such as *Odikro* (village chief), *Adontenhene* (Vanguard chief) and later *Akwamuhene* (head of the royal family). However, this did not affect Gyapekromhene's title to lands as the Gyapekrom chief continued to grant parcels of land to the Drobohene and others for specific purposes. It was an attempt of the Drobohene to subvert this pre-colonial political

[21] 'Proceedings of the Meeting of the Committee of Privileges.': 214–215.
[22] ibid

status of the Gyapekromhene's relations with his subjects that the protracted chieftaincy and land dispute between the two traditional states emerged.

The Dispute

In 1942, a dispute of constitutional nature between Gyapekrom and Drobo emerged in the British Gyaman area. It involved Nana Kofi Bosea III, the Drobohene and Nana Kwasi Donkor, the Gyapekromhene. The latter conspired with Nana Kwaku Nketia, a deposed chief of the Abrikasu village to break away from the Drobo Division. They petitioned the colonial government to recognize them as politically independent and distinct from Drobo complaining that the Drobo Divisional Council took so much money from them; Nana Kofi Bosea, the Drobohene treated them with contempt through insults; and that they were tired of walking to attend the State Council's meetings at Drobo, a distance of over twenty-six miles.

Based on these complaints, Colonel Jackson, Chief Commissioner of Asante, and Prempe II, the Asantehene set up a Committee of Enquiry comprising Neil Ross, the District Commissioner at Wankyi as chairman; Nana Fosu Gyeabour, the Bekyemhene and Okyeame Boaben, Asantehene's linguist. The Committee was charged to investigate Gyapekrom's agitation for secession and make appropriate recommendations. After its investigations, the Committee did not endorse Gyapekrom's secession bid but recommended that the district headquarters and Native Court of the Drobo Division be relocated at Gyapekrom. In his letter of 20 October, 1942, addressed to the Chief Commissioner of Asante, Neil Ross, the District Commissioner, tried to justify the decision; including that the Drobo division should have a more convenient center as its headquarters because Drobo was a small area in Gyaman; and that this move had been supported for some years. Sadly, vain attempts had been made over the years to transfer the Drobohene's court to Gyapekrom.

Whilst these changes were taking place, the building of the new court house commenced although fears existed that this would stir up trouble with Nana Kwaku Nketia, upset the whole apple-cart and would provide an excuse for the dispute to be revived and drag on as before. The Nana Nketia, who had always been problematic in such cases was described as not only uncompromising but also a stubborn old man who would not welcome any issues associated with Nana Kwaku Nketia, the Drobo chief.[23]

The colonial government did not endorse Gyapekrom people's agitation to secede for it feared that this would break up the Drobo Division and create avenues for similar calls by other native authorities. In a dispatch of 24 March, 1942 to Neil Ross, the Chief Commissioner, the District Commissioner again explained to the Akwamuhene and his followers that the step they proposed to take was a serious matter and they would do well to consider carefully the consequences before taking any further action. He advised Gyapekrom to bring their grievances before the Drobo divisional council if they had any and not to break away suddenly from the Drobo division. The issue was further complicated because Gyapekrom had served the Drobohene without question during the forty years of British administration of Asante. Accordingly, the DC pointed out to the Gyapekrom people that it was extremely unlikely that their desertion from the Drobo division would be rewarded by granting them a native court.[24]

Neil Ross' decision paid worthily because Nana Nketia began working in conjunction with Gyapekromhene and thus prevented the break-up of Drobo division.[25] Gyapekrom traditions relate that to cement the good relations Nana Kofi Bosea III, the Drobohene, paid tribute with three bottles of *Schnapps* (a sort of alcoholic drink) to Nana Kwadwo

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[23] PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO, 2/14, 1942–1946, Drobo Native Affairs.

[24] PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO 2/14/1942–1946, Drobo Native Affairs, District Commissioner's report.

[25] PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO 2/14 1942–1946, Drobo Native Affairs, District Commissioner's report. This information was contained in another dispatch dated 20 October, 1942.

Donkor, the Gyapekromhene and was granted five acres piece of land to build a new town to house the headquarters of the Drobo Division. This town became known as New Drobo, whiles the original Drobo was renamed Old Drobo. By the close of 1942, construction of the new court house had started in earnest as the Committee had recommended. The colonial government paid two third (2/3) of the total cost of the project, whiles Gyapekrom, the wealthiest of all the states in the Drobo Division paid a third (1/3) of the cost.[26]

Gyapekrom's Desertion from the Drobo Division

In March 1951, a Brong political movement called the Brong Kyempem Federation (BKF) was inaugurated by seven traditional states in north-western and north-eastern Asante. These were Suma, Drobo, Dormaa, Odomase, Abease and Bekyem.[27] They demanded a Brong traditional council separate from and independent of the Asanteman (Asante Confederacy) Council. Drah identifies the common experience of wrongs suffered in the hands of Asante in its historical relationship with the Brong states and the strong expression of Brong sense of identity that took place in Takyiman as reasons for the formation of the BKF. In June, 1951, the CPP government appointed a committee of inquiry, chaired by Nene Azu Mate Korle, a popular Ghanaian chief to investigate the intended secession of these traditional states from Asante and recommend steps to be taken to restore unity. The Mate Korle committee resolved that the cause of the rift between certain Brong and Asante chiefs was of customary and constitutional nature. Paramount chiefs of Brong swore Asantehene's oath of allegiance that consisted of placing Asantehene's foot on the head of the chief who takes the Asantehene's oath; a ritual that they deeply felt struck

[26] It is clear from the above quotations that the decision to relocate the headquarters of the Drobo Division to the Gyapekrom land was more of colonial interest than the interest of Gyapekrom people.

[27] The Suma traditional area comprised her allies, the Kwatwoma, Atuna, Dwenem and Bodaa in the Suma-Kwatwoma division. Drobo included Gyapekrom and other allies in the Drobo division.

at the dignity of the Brong chiefs. In the Dormaa-Ahenkro state, this practice was a source of instability in the institution of chieftaincy. The Dormaa people eventually despised chiefs who swore the Asante oath. Another source of discontent was the limited numbers, or in some cases the complete absence of Brong representation on the various committees of the Asante confederacy council, such as the Scholarship Selection Board and the Executive Committee. The Brong chiefs also opposed the change of the name of the confederacy from the Asante confederacy to Asanteman Council. Also, the Asantehene court 'A' cheated the Brong chiefs compared with other divisions of the confederacy. The Brong separatist group therefore demanded a new geo-political region independent from Asante culturally and historically. The CPP government acceded to the demand of the Brong chiefs and in 1959 a new geo-political region comprising the Brong and Ahafo geographical areas was carved out of Asante. The new region assumed the name Brong-Ahafo Region and the Brong-Ahafo House of chiefs was created with Nana Kofi Bosea III, chief of the Drobo division becoming its first president.[28]

The creation of the Brong-Ahafo Regional House of Chiefs was a windfall for Gyapekrom. It now turned its demand to secede from Drobo to the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs. On the 15 September, 1959, Nana Kofi Takyi, Gyapekromhene, petitioned the newly constituted house to consider elevating the Gyapekrom state to paramount status distinct from and independent of Drobo. He referred to the ill-treatment he had suffered under Nana Bosea of Drobo. A special committee comprising Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III, the Takyimanhene, Nana Kofi Boama, the Yamfohene, Mr. Jacob Baah (Member) and Mr. P.K. Yeboah (Secretary) was set up and charged to investigate the historical and constitutional relationship between the two states.

In his submission to the committee, Nana Kofi Takyi, the Gyapekromhene explained to the Committee that his state was historically

[28] PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO 2/16, Vol. 4 1967. Drobo Traditional Council Affairs. The Brong Kyempem Federation collapsed right after the creation of the region and in its place the House of Chiefs became more powerful.

and constitutionally independent and separate from Drobo. His ancestor, Nana Kofi Sono Ampem of the Abakoma division of the original Gyaman Kingdom was the first chief and the cordial relationship between his state and the Drobo state was occasioned by a marriage between Takyiwaa Bansua, an ancestress of the Gyapekrom people and Nana Kwadwo Bosea I (Bosea Gyinantwi I), a chief of Drobo. Earlier in April, 1959, the CPP government had accorded it an independent Committee of Management status and separated it from that of Drobo under Ghana gazette notice 865 No. 2 of 1935. The Committee was furnished with Kwame Adinkra, the Gyamanhene's written evidence which attested that the Gyapekromhene and his elders in the state of Mpuasu are direct royal descendants of Gyamanhene Agyeman Panin. He stated that the Drobo people met them when they migrated from Droboso in the Wankyi area. The Drobohene with his elders and subjects later settled at old Drobo when the Gyapekromhene and his subjects had already settled under the mountains now known as Mpuasu. Accordingly, he stated that to his knowledge and belief, the Gyapekromhene and his subjects were royals and had never served the Drobo stool.[29]

The Committee noted from the argument advanced by Gyapekrom that she never in history surrendered ownership of her lands to the Drobo stool. Gyapekrom reiterated that its relationship with Drobo in the colonial administrative order was that of an alliance for colonial administrative purpose only. Its membership of the Drobo Divisional Council was done for colonial administrative convenience dictated by the British. Its service to the Drobo stool in various capacities as Odikro, Kyidom and Akwamuhene were political offices she occupied by virtue of her membership of the Drobo Divisional Council. The committee's position was that these arrangements did not surrender Gyapekrom's title to lands of her pre-colonial traditional territory to Drobo. The Committee again noted that apart from licensing a parcel of land to build the New Drobo

[29] AAD, Sunyani, RAO 2/6, Vol. 4 1967: 636–639, Drobo Traditional Council Affairs, ekrom is spelt in this quotation as Japekrom.

township, the Gyapekrom state also gave land for public projects and for private use.

Based on this evidence, the Committee of Enquiry recommended that the Gyapekrom state be declared independent and distinct from Drobo. Accordingly, the government of the CPP and the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs recognized Gyapekrom as an independent state. By the Executive Instrument (EI) No. 98, Nana Kofi Takyi was declared the Omanhene of Gyapekrom Traditional Area in 1959.

Gyapekrom's desire to break away from Drobo and its strong expression of a sense of identity was triggered off by two factors. First, it suffered wrongs and arbitrariness at the hands of Nana Kofi Bosea of Drobo. Secondly, despite the immense financial support Gyapekrom provided for the Drobo stool, it had played a very little role in the latter's native affairs. Commissioner Neil Ross himself expressed his knowledge of this fact when he said:

> It is probable that one of the reasons for Japekrom people attempting to gain independence was that they enjoy superior economic position to the rest of Drobo and feel annoyed at having to provide financial support to a stool in whose affairs they had minor influence by native custom.[30]

It appears from these testimonies and reports that Gyapekrom's loyalty would have been sustained had the state been compensated with a higher stool than that of Akwamu or if it had been incorporated into the ruling class of the Sakyiako stool of Drobo.[31] In any case, the outcome of Gyapekrom's secession bid from the Drobo division was a protracted land dispute and the mass influx of the Drobo, particularly from Old Drobo, Amanfoso, Pongo and Dawri to resettle at New Drobo in the 1960s.[32]

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[30] PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO/2/14, 1942–1946, Drobo Native Affairs: 32.
[31] PRAAD, Sunyani, RAO 2/14, 1942–1946, Drobo Native Affairs: 32.
[32] New Drobo started to expand beyond the borders of the five-acre piece of land when these migrants acquire land from the Gyapekromhene by legitimate means. It was in the

The final showdown for power and authority happened in the 1970s when the Drobo Traditional Council approached Kofi Takyi, Gyapekromhene, for a piece of land to build a market between New Drobo and Gyapekrom. Consultations were not finalized when some people of Drobo commenced clearing a site of their choice for the project allegedly with permission of the national government of Ghana. In the process, the Drobo people destroyed the sacred groves and shrines of Gyapekrom. The Gyapekromhene filed a suit at the Sunyani High Court against Drobo for unlawful encroachment. In addition, the state sought an injunction from the High Court to prevent Drobo from further encroachment and development of the parcel of land already cleared.

The turmoil and the state of insecurity that accompanied the legal battle attracted the intervention of the office of the Brong-Ahafo Regional Commissioner and the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs which caused withdrawal of the suit for out-of-court settlement. On Wednesday, 31 January 1973, a committee was set up which comprised Commander J. A. Kyeremeh, Regional Commissioner for Brong-Ahafo, Nana Boakye Tromu III, Omanhene of Duayaw Nkwanta, and representative of the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs; Rev. Major James Kwadwo Owusu, Army Chaplain, Burma Camp, Accra; C. A. Atiemo, District Administrative Officer, Dormaa Ahenkro; and S. C. Crentsil, Senior Executive Officer, Regional Administration, Sunyani. Nana Kofi Takyi and his retinue represented Gyapekrom, whereas Adinkra Kosopre III, the Drobohene and his retinue represented the Drobo Traditional Council.

The case was left to rest when the Drobohene acknowledged Gyapekrom's ownership of the present Gyaman South land and promised to observe the established order of land acquisition between the two traditional states. The Committee slapped Drobo with the cost of a sheep, a goat, one guinea fowl, one duck, and one bottle of *schnapps* drink to be used to sanctify the defiled sacred groves. The Regional Commissioner presented drinks to seal the settlement and the linguists of the two

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nineteenth seventies that forceful and illegitimate scramble for and occupation of Gyapekrom's land by the Drobo took place.

traditional authorities namely, Kwadwo Krah of Gyapekrom and Kwame Antwi of Drobo swore oaths to accept the terms of settlement.[33] Subsequent moves of the Drobo Traditional Council to acquire land from Gyapekrom were made in accordance with established constitutional custom until 1983 when hostilities once again reawakened during the reign of Nana Bosea Gyinantwi IV of Drobo.[34]

The zeal of Gyinantwi IV to subjugate the Gyapekrom state was the result of national government's collaboration with Asante to restore Gyapekrom's paramount status in 1981 which the National Liberation Council (NLC) government had withdrawn in 1969. Gyapekrom's alliance with Asante infuriated the anti-Asante caucus of the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs who supported Drobo to subjugate the Gyapekrom state through unlawful and forceful occupation of Gyapekrom lands by the Drobo. Any attempt by the Gyapekrom to resist forceful seizure of their land by the Drobo was quelled by military confrontation engineered by the anti-Asante chiefs and politicians who controlled the Brong-Ahafo Region. For example, in 1983, the Drobohene and his armed tugs used bulldozers to clear a wide stretch of land for a market and a lorry park without seeking permission from Gyapekrom. Attempts by the Gyapekrom people to resist the forceful seizure of their land was quelled by government military confrontation under the auspices of the anti-Asante (Brong segment) of the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs and Mr. Sarah Mensa, an anti-Asante politician and the Provisional National Defence Council's (PNDC) Secretary of State in charge of the Brong-Ahafo Region. Despite the eventual legal resolution of the dispute, tension and flare ups between the two traditional divisions have persisted in the twenty-first century with the latest on happening in October, 2018.

[33] See notes of meeting held at the conference room of the Regional Commissioner's office on Wednesday 31st January, 1973 to settle the land dispute between Gyapekrom and New Drobo.

[34] Interview with Mr. J. S. Gyan, Gyapekrom 12 September, 2014.

Conclusion

We have attempted to identify the causes of the protracted chieftaincy and land dispute between the Drobo and Gyapekrom traditional states in the Gyaman district in Ghana. It has been revealed that the chief of Drobo became the head of the British section of Gyaman to facilitate colonial administration. The other chiefs of British Gyaman did not surrender ownership of their land to the chief of Drobo in the new constitutional order. Failure of Gyapekrom to present her petition to the Committee of Privileges for consideration to gain independence contributed to delaying her quest for independence. Another finding was that the British colonial administration opposed Gyapekrom's secession from Drobo, believing that allowing secession would require creation of additional Native Authority and allied institutions and cause extra administrative cost to the British. Granting independence to Gyapekrom would also influence its neighbours to follow suit. The research also revealed that colonial decision to transfer the traditional court of the chief of Drobo to the Gyapekrom territory and the quest of the Drobohene to arbitrary expand the New Drobo settlement beyond the confines of the five-acre parcel of land licensed to him caused the land squabble between the two traditional states. The relocation of the Drobo Divisional Headquarters close to Gyapekrom caused the influx of people from Old Drobo and its surrounding villages to New Drobo. Though their arrival caused the expansion of New Drobo's borders, it did not initially result in land dispute as the individual settlers acquired land from the Gyapekromhene by means of established custom. The land dispute started when the rulers of Drobo secured false title to Gyapekrom's land on the grounds that the latter had served the Drobo stool before. The reign of Bosea Gyinantwi IV strengthened the land dispute to an unprecedented degree when he allocated Gyapekrom land to his subjects for residential and commercial purposes without due consultations.

One can say emphatically therefore that colonialism contributed significantly to the chieftaincy and land disputes between the two traditional states in the Gyaman district. The British invention of an

arrangement that made Gyapekrom subservient to Drobo, and the relocation of the traditional capital of the Drobo state on Gyapekrom's land for colonial administrative convenience engendered chieftaincy and land dispute which has protracted to date.

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List of Interviewees

NAME	AGE	DATE	TOWN	OCCUPATION	STATUS
Nana Akua Anane	63	20/08/07	Diasempa	Farming	Queen
Yaw Ankamah Donkor	100	20/06/07	Amanfoso	Farming	Royal
Nana Yaw Takyi	65	27/08/07	Asuofri	Farming	Chief
Kofi Sadia Ponkofo	98	27/08/07	Amanfoso	Farming	Royal
Nana Usman Afful	76	30/08/07	Japekrom	Farming	Royal
Thomas Kwame Manu	80	31/08/07	Amanfoso	Farming	Royal
John Kwaku Takyi	71	08/09/07	Old Drobo	Farming	Family Head
Kwaku Kuma Simon	75	08/09/07	Old Drobo	Farming	Royal
Thomas Kwame Manu	80	08/09/07	Old Drobo	Farming	Royal
Kwame Daniel	46	08/09/07	Old Drobo	Farming	Royal
Nana Gyan Katakyie	68	01/01/17	Katakyiekrom	Retired Educationist	Chief
Mr. J.S. Gyan	81	21/10/14	Gyapekrom	Farming	Royal
Obeng Takyi Charles	67	17/08/18	Gyapekrom	Farming	Royal

Question Design and the Rules of Questioning in UK Prime Ministers Questions and Ghanaian Ministers Questions

Kwabena Sarfo SARFO-KANTANKAH

Abstract

This paper examines how parliamentarians design their questions and flout parliamentary rules of questioning, leading to confrontations between parliamentarians (MPs) and (Prime) Ministers. A comparative corpus-assisted discourse analysis of UK Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) and Ghanaian Minister's Questions (GMQs) indicates that GMQs are less confrontational than PMQs since Ghanaian Parliamentary Speakers prevent MPs from asking, for example, questions of opinion and argumentation, which contain strong emotions, generate attacks, accusations and counter-accusations. The paper argues that the confrontations and (counter-)attacks result from the way MPs design their questions. The paper suggests that "yobbery and public school twittishness" in PMQs could be curtailed if the Speaker would disallow questions that flout parliamentary rules of questioning as it is done in GMQs. The paper has implications for parliamentary interactions generally.

Keywords: Parliamentary Questions, Question Design, Prime Minister's Questions, Ghanaian Minister's Questions, Adversarial Discourse

Introduction

In recent times, the behaviour of UK MPs during Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) has come under serious scrutiny and criticism. The BBC (2014a) quotes Dr. Ruth Fox of the Hansard Society thus: "[t]he public think the conduct of MPs is childish and wouldn't be tolerated in

other work places. They think politicians are simply not taking the issues that affect their lives seriously enough". The House of Commons Speaker John Bercow has described MPs' behaviour during PMQs as "yobbery and public school twittishness", and the public think of PMQs as "noisy", "childish", "over-the-top" and "pointless" (Parkinson 2014, see also BBC 2014b). Other MPs think that PMQs has become an opportunity to trade insults and a "depressing experience" (Parkinson 2014).

Similarly, during a BBC One's *Question Time* (2014) programme, the panellists unanimously agreed that PMQs lacked "sense of decency"; MPs shouted "across to each other", were "rude", used "ridiculous and stupid words". They said PMQs had become a "blame game", where "everyone tries to blame everyone else", and that "the idea of the general good had been forgotten". According to a BBC Newsbeat (2015) report, six young voters who were asked to watch the last PMQs before the May 2015 UK general elections, among others described PMQs as "disrespectful", a "football match", "childish", "pathetic", "old-fashioned", a "pantomime", "one-upmanship", "chaotic", "contrived", and "point-scoring". However, some MPs think that "a little bit of heckling is a good thing", and would be concerned if they "didn't get a bit of genuine hectoring and disagreement. We need a clash of subjective views. There should be nothing neat about it" (Parkinson 2014).

The above-stated condemnation of MPs' behaviour suggests a lack of compatibility between the MPs' mandate "to serve the people" and their practice (Moshe 2010: 179), which "in recent decades" has led to "a trend decline in levels of trust and confidence in politicians" (Hay 2007: 28). Similarly, about 62% of the Ghanaian public see the Ghanaian MPs as people in pursuit of personal interest rather than the general good of the people (Leonard 2015). Notwithstanding such decline in trust, UK general election turnout, for example, has increased steadily from 2001 (59.4%) through 2005 (61.4%), 2010 (65.1%) to 2015 (66.1%) (UK Parliament 2015), suggesting some difference between people's attitudes towards politicians and voting patterns. Perhaps, MPs have knowledge about politics in general, the workings of the parliamentary system and

procedures, with enough knowledge about their constituents (van Dijk 2003: 100) such that they know that the complaints would not affect their electoral fortunes. Consequently, the so-called yobbish behaviour of MPs may well be a necessary evil in parliamentary debates. Nonetheless, it is my view that if such behaviour could be curtailed, it would help restore public trust in parliament as an institution. This is necessary because "the discourse of parliament results in ... concrete action in the outside world, establishing regulations as to what must, may and may not be done in a given society" (Bayley 2004: 12). I suggest that the conduct of PMQs can be improved if parliamentary rules of questioning are applied during the session. I compare practices in the UK PMQs and GMQs in an attempt to illuminate questioning practices in the two related but different situations.

Parliamentary Discourse as Adversarial Discourse

Being deliberative, parliamentary discourse mainly involves "a theatre-like dialogic game between adversarial positions in a spirit of competitiveness and agonistic behaviour" (Ilie 2010: 337–338) and "a competition for power and leadership roles" (Ilie 2003: 30). It is no wonder, therefore, that parliamentary discourse such as the UK PMQs has been investigated from pragmatic perspectives through speech act and politeness theories. By adversarial discourse I mean when "speakers and writers deliberately oppose one another's claims through assertion and refutation, counterexamples and disputation" in order "to establish moral or political conclusions" (Smith 1994: 59).

Using the concept of face and face-threatening acts (FTA), "acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants [i.e. the need to be approved of and unimpeded] of the addressee and/or of the speaker" (Brown and Levinson 1987: 65), Bull and Wells (2012) have identified various ways the leader of the opposition performs FTAs in PMQs. These include: preface (a statement or proposition made before asking a question; detailed question for highly specific information; contentious presupposition; conflictual questions, questions whose all possible replies

are negative; invitation to perform a face-damaging response, e.g. asking the PM to admit a wrongdoing. They further identify five ways in which the Prime Minister also counters FTAs: talk up positive face, rebut, attack, ignore and self-justify. Ilie (2010) has found that PMQs perform multiple functions such as accusation and counter-accusation, defence and irony. Harris (2001: 451) examines the relevance of politeness theory for the study of "adversarial political discourse", with specific reference to PMQs. She finds that intentional and explicit face-threatening and face-preserving acts, negative politeness strategies and systematic impoliteness are strategies intentionally employed by MPs for political purposes, and MPs who use them get rewarded by their faithful party members. Similarly, Murphy (2015) explores "apologies" in PMQs, stating that MPs' strategies for apologising include expression of regret and request for forgiveness, and says that MPs' apologies are "more fulsome" than everyday apologies. Murphy (2012), also, studies (im)politeness in PMQs, observing that MPs use various mitigating strategies to minimise face threats, such as praising an aspect of government policy, making a supportive comment and an MP stating his/her respect for the PM. The focus, findings and suggestions of the above-mentioned studies point to the very nature of parliamentary discourse as an adversarial one. The lack of studies in Ghanaian parliamentary discourse makes the current study significant, especially when it does a comparative study of two different parliaments.

The two studies that I have found that look at Ghanaian parliamentary discourse have done so from the perspective of "nativisation", which sees English in second language situations like Ghana as "norm-developing" with "a status and dynamics of its own" (Crystal 2003: 359). Appartaim (2009) studies "prominence" and "rhythm", from which she argues that Ghanaian MPs' ways of achieving prominence, through pitch and intensity, is peculiarly Ghanaian. Imbea (2010) also studies the emergence of a Ghanaian parliamentary English register and describes the innovative ways in which Ghanaian MPs use English language, including lexical hybridity. Even though we have not found any specific works on parliamentary discourse that employ speech acts, FTAs and politeness, some research has been done on the pragmatics

of political discourse in Ghana generally, with some passing references to parliamentary discourse. These include: Ofori's (2016, 2015) critical discourse analysis of representations of insults in some pro-political party newspapers, and the use of insults in Ghanaian political discourse; Agyekum's (2004, 2015) invective language in contemporary Ghanaian politics, and the pragmatics of political apology in contemporary Ghanaian politics; Obeng's (1997) indirectness in political discourse.

The nature of parliaments as constituted of members of different political parties sharing different ideologies and interests, and who deliberate matters in the spirit of competitiveness and adversary, naturally implies power and ideological struggle. Consequently, MPs are likely to heckle and disconcert their opponents (or praise their party members) and to be aggressive during parliamentary questions and debates, since the questions serve "institutional" and "partisan ends" (Fenton-Smith 2008: 115).

Commons and Ghanaian Parliamentary Rules of Questioning

Parliamentary questions have rules that regulate their form and manner of asking. Both the Ghanaian and UK parliaments disapprove of questions that, among others, seek opinions and provoke argumentation. Such questions are considered to be 'not in order' (Jack 2011: 359). In *Erskine May's treatise on the law, privileges, proceedings and usage of parliament*, Jack (2011: 358–359; see also Campion and Cocks 1950: 342–343) provides 'the rules of order regarding form and content of questions' in the UK parliament as:

> The purpose of a question is to obtain information or press for action; it should not be framed primarily so as to convey information, or so as to suggest its own answer or convey a particular point of view...

> Questions which seek an expression of opinion, or which contain arguments, expressions of opinion, inferences or imputations, unnecessary epithets, or rhetorical, controversial, ironical or offensive expressions, are not in order.

Similarly, Rogers and Walters (2006: 312; see also Harris 2001: 456–457) state that parliamentary questions in the Commons "must not offer information ('Is she aware that ...?') or be argumentative ('Does he agree that it is unacceptable that ...?')". The Ghanaian Parliamentary Standing Orders also state in Order 67 (1) (b) that "a Question shall not contain any arguments, expression of opinion, inferences, imputations, epithets or controversial, ironical or offensive expressions or hypothetical cases". Subsection (e) states that "a Question shall not solicit the expression of an opinion..."

It is assumed that MPs have enough "knowledge about parliamentary procedures" (van Dijk 2003: 100) and, therefore, are able to observe these rules. The rules indicate that the Speakers of both the House of Commons and the Ghanaian parliament have substantial powers to allow or disallow a question that flouts the rules. My argument is that if these rules are strictly applied in the UK PMQs, as our analysis shows it is done in the Ghanaian parliament, it will help reduce confrontation among MPs and maintain order during proceedings.

Theoretical Approach: Interrogatives

This paper is informed by the assumption that interrogatives do not always ask questions (i.e. seek information or confirmation), as there is no one-to-one correspondence between the structure of clauses and their pragmatic functions (Biber et al 2002). It can, therefore, be misleading to simply classify interrogatives as *yes/no*, *wh-*, alternative, tag- and declarative questions (Biber, Conrad and Leech 2002; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik 1985, 1972). Interrogatives can contextually function as

directives/commands, statements and exclamations (Downing and Locke 2006: 211; Biber et al. 2002: 249). Downing and Locke give the functions of interrogatives as: question, rhetorical question, rebuke, exclamation, directive (order, request, suggestion/advice, offer/invitation). In a study that seeks to investigate the role questions play in decision-making processes, Hobbs (2012: 49–56) finds six pragmatic functions of questions. He observes that wh-questions, yes/no questions, and alternative questions can function as requests (including request for confirmation and checks (a request to delay an agreement)) and suggestions. Hobbs recognises instances of ambiguity in classifying questions pragmatically, similar to the multiple functions of MPs' questions (Ilie 2010).

Sidnell (2010: 21, 26) has found that not all lawyers' questions (another adversarial context) do questioning during an inquiry testimony, but rather they do asserting; stating that questions may prefer a particular answer when they "verge on assertions". PMQs and GMQs are often biased since they are mostly designed as: preface-question-postscript, where "preface" and "postscript" are statements made before and after the question, respectively. It is these statements that determine the pragmatic function(s) of the question(s). Determination of such functions of questions is supported with the assumption that questions have different sets of orientation, that is, presupposition or preference and can be "biased according to the kind of answer the speaker expects, and are based on neutral, positive or negative assumptions" (Downing and Locke 2006: 202; see also Quirk et al 1972, 1985). This study thus contributes to how question design affects meaning and the response such design invokes.

Methodology

This section describes the context or setting of the study, the data used and methods of analysis.

Research Context/Setting: UK House of Commons and Parliament of Ghana

UK PMQs is a 30-minute session of the Commons when the Prime Minister answers questions from MPs, every sitting Wednesday (House of Commons 2013), while the GMQs is a one-hour session when Government Ministers, in their capacity as representatives of the Government, are questioned by MPs about their political intentions, statements and actions. It is the Hansards (almost verbatim records of parliamentary proceedings) of these questions that form the data for this study.

Formed around the 13th century (Ilie 2006: 189), the UK parliament (the Westminster parliamentary system) is often regarded as the oldest parliamentary system in the world. The publication of parliamentary debates dates back to the 18th century. There are records of debates from July, 1802 (see UK Parliament website: www.parliment.uk), "though Prime Minister's Question Time in its present form is a fairly recent innovation dating from the time of Harold Macmillan in 1961" (Harris 2001: 454). Questions to PMs are spontaneous (questions are without advance notice), as against debates such as Backbench and Adjournment debates.

The Ghanaian parliamentary system is modelled largely on the Westminster system, even though Ghana practices a hybrid democratic system, that is, a combined presidential and parliamentary system. After gaining independence from Britain in 1957 and republican status in 1960, Ghana is now practising her fourth republican parliamentary system after three such systems failed amidst military takeovers in 1960–1966, 1969-1972 and 1979–1981 (Parliament of Ghana 2015). The fourth republican parliament has been the most stable and successful of all the parliamentary democracies in Ghana's history. It was established on 7th January, 1993. It is a 'unicameral legislature' composed of MPs elected from single-member constituencies (Parliament of Ghana 2015: no pagination). While the UK has a Prime Ministerial system, Ghana elects a president and MPs in presidential and parliamentary polls simultaneously. Thus, comparing

the practices of the two parliaments has implications for the practice and performance of the two parliaments.

I consider both the Commons and the Ghanaian Parliament as a "community of practice" (CofP), defined by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992: 464), as: "an aggregate of people who come together around a mutual engagement in some common endeavor. Ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavor". This allows us to see the practices of both parliaments as having evolved and developed over time to "give rise to a repertoire of shared practices" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1999: 185). The PMQs and GMQs are a parliamentary discourse genre (Myers 2008: 141; Ilie 2006) or an "activity type" (Levinson 1979) comprising an interconnected series of events and practices both in and outside the House, current and old, in the larger political context. For example, responding to a question from Labour MP Huw Irranca-Davies about the National Health Service, the Labour Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said:

> No wonder Conservative Members are shouting, because on 19 March 1946, the NHS Bill was presented to Parliament to create the NHS, but what did the Conservative Party do? It voted against it ... (22 Mar 2006/Col. 282/283)

For Blair to refer to a 30-year old event to argue indicates that discourse in PMQs has wider political contexts and events. Considering both parliaments as a CofP helps us to regard the participants (MPs) as engaged in political, ideological struggle, in a context of shared norms and practices, making both parliaments a well-constructed CofP in line with Wenger's (1998: 73) three-feature paradigm of CofP: "mutual engagement", "a joint enterprise", and "a shared repertoire" of communal resources developed over time.

Data and Methods of Analysis

Data for the study were already orthographically-transcribed Hansards of UK PMQs (www.parliament.uk) sessions between 2005 and 2014, comprising about 177,000 words from 33 sessions, 11 each from Prime Ministers Tony Blair (Labour, 2005–2007), Gordon Brown (Labour, 2007–2009) and David Cameron (Conservative, 2011–2014). The Ghanaian data from the Hansard department of the Media and Public Relations of the Ghanaian Parliament, involved 29 GMQs sessions, including 14 from the J. A. Kufuor (NPP, 2005–2008) and 15 from the J. E. A. Mills/J. D. Mahama (NDC, 2009–2013) administrations, comprising about 147,000 words. The periods of 2005–2013/14 were chosen to have a wider and broad range of corpus data that represented different governments' administrations, which could "be considered to 'average out' and provide a reasonably accurate picture" (McEnery and Wilson 2001: 30) of PMQs and GMQs. The data sample for this study meets the requirements for the creation of a small corpus dataset (Meyer 2002; Greenbaum 1996) and could be considered as representative of a specialised discourse type.

This study is limited, to some extent, by the fact that the data are orthographically-transcribed Hansards, which takes away the nuanced paralinguistic modes of expression such as tone of voice, gestures, facial expression and other forms of body language. Also, Mollin (2007: 207) has identified a number of words/features that are often either omitted or changed by Hansard transcribers in the UK parliament, including: the generic *you*, *make sure*, *give way*, contractions, *going-to* future, *absolutely*, *actually*, *clearly*, *really* and first person singular pronouns. In order that the analysis was not affected negatively by such omissions and changes, I relied heavily on pragmatic and contextual analysis through a multilayered approach, including the overall question design. Concordance lines involving lexical items were mostly used as supporting evidence. The analysis was supported with supplementary data, such as interview data, a documentary, videos and televised sessions of parliamentary proceedings to understand and validate some of the observations I made. Again, the

omissions and changes do not take away the crucial evidence that the rules of parliamentary questions are often flouted by MPs and that there is enough discursive evidence in the data to show that Ghanaian Parliamentary Speakers police and control questions more than their UK counterparts.

The paper employs a corpus-assisted approach to discourse analysis through concordances and keywords (MacEnery and Wilson 2001: 1, 18, 19; Adolphs 2008: 4), using *Wordsmith Tools* (Scott 2012). This allows me to examine words in context and interpret them qualitatively as well as "calculate the number of occurrences of the word so that information on the frequency of the word may be gathered" (McEnery and Wilson 2001: 18). This approach helps me to draw on the concept of situational context to identify the pragmatic functions of MPs questions (Adolphs 2008: 4), allowing an objective in-depth description, inductive analysis and interpretation of the verbal behaviour and attitudes of MPs (Frankel, Wallen and Hyun 2012: 426-7). Keyword analysis helps to identify words which occur with unusual frequency (showing the Keyness/significance of such words) in a given text when compared with a reference corpus. In this study, I compare the PMQs data with the British National Corpus (BNC), and the GMQs data with the International Corpus of English (ICE)-Ghana.

Analysis and Discussion

The analysis and discussion focus on two areas. First, I look at how MPs design their questions and how the design allows them to make contextualising propositions that affect the interpretations of the questions, some of which flout the parliamentary rules of questioning. Second, I examine what happens when MPs violate the rules.

How MPs Design their Questions

Parliamentarians often design their questions in a biased manner that allows them to make assertions rather than seek information, confirmation or push for action: while government MPs habitually ask (Prime) Ministers to admit to positive things about their government and negative ones about the opposition, opposition MPs do the reverse. As a result of this study, I can say that the structure of MPs' questions can be generally represented as:

(Preface/pre-question statement) + Question + (postscript/post-question statement)

where "preface/pre-question" and "postscript/post-question" statements, which are optional, respectively refer to statements made before and after asking a question. They usually form the basis and/or inform the interpretation of the question. In Example 1, which is a government MP's question, [#i] is the preface and the basis of [Qii], the main question.

> Example 1: UK 20 Jun 07/Col 1375
> **Ms Gisela Stuart (Birmingham, Edgbaston) (Lab)**: [Qi] Over the years, my Right Hon. Friend has visited my constituency on a number of occasions–[Interruption.] Some visits have been more memorable than others, but on his most recent visit he came to the £2 million local improvement finance trust scheme at Woodgate Valley primary care centre, one of 200 LIFT schemes across the country. [Qii] Does he agree such schemes demonstrate real investment in the NHS and real commitment to our patients, compared with the half-baked ideas that we get from the Opposition?
>
> **The Prime Minister [Lab]**: I recall the LIFT scheme in my Hon. Friend's constituency, and it is one of the many around the country that have led to some 2,500 GP premises being renovated. In 1997, 50 per cent. of the NHS estate was older than the NHS itself, but today that figure is 20 per cent. ... I deprecate the Opposition's

policy to scrap the target of an 18-week maximum wait for NHS treatment, with an average of seven or eight weeks. That policy would be a disastrous and retrograde step, whereas we intend to keep to the targets and make sure that we deliver on them.

Example 1 seeks confirmation of Ms Stuart's assertion and opinion of a supposed appreciable improvement in National Health Service (NHS) performance and delivery. Ms Stuart positively touches on the emotions of the PM, Tony Blair, by touting the PM's achievements: "real investment in the NHS and real commitment to our patients". Because the question promotes the credibility of Blair, he responds by recalling and praising some of his government's initiatives such as the "LIFT scheme". In her question, Ms Stuart does not only praise Blair, she launches an attack on the opposition, calling their ideas half-baked. As Ilie (2006: 191) puts it: "[a]sking a question is usually a pretext to attack or praise the government and involves information that is already known". Ms Stuart's question seeks two responses from the PM: to commend his own Government's investments in the NHS and attack the opposition. Tony Blair does just that, stating, "I deprecate the Opposition's policy to scrap the target of an 18-week maximum wait for NHS treatment, with an average of seven or eight weeks". Thus, while the question glorifies the PM, it vilifies the opposition. It is not a genuine question. This exemplifies the politico-ideological and partisan nature of parliamentary questions: the MPs seek to legitimise themselves, while they delegitimize their opponents (van Dijk 2011: 397), in this case in a spectacularly evaluative way: "that policy would be a disastrous and retrograde step". Example 2, an opposition MP's question, exhibits a similar feature.

Example 2: UK 3 Jun 09/Col 270:

Mr. Nick Clegg (Sheffield, Hallam) (LD): [#i] ... We can now see that the Government are in total meltdown. The Prime Minister is thrashing around, fighting for his own political survival, but [Q] *does* he *not understand* the extreme danger to our democracy when people start feeling that there is simply no one in charge?

The Prime Minister [Lab]: The dangers are when one does not deal with the problems that are before us. One of the problems is to deal with the expenses system in the House of Commons, and the second is to deal with the problems and challenges of the economy. I thought that the Liberal party would support us in the action that we are taking to help the unemployed, to help home owners, and to help small businesses, and I hope that the Right Hon. Gentleman will not join the other party in talking only about things other than policy. The country wants us to talk about what we are doing to help it.

Mr Clegg's question presupposes that there is an "extreme danger to our democracy" because people have started "feeling that there is simply no one in charge". Mr Clegg requests the PM to believe and affirm this presupposition/proposition. The question is, thus, biased with a negative orientation. It suggests its own answer, which flouts the rule that a question should not be "framed so as to suggest its own answer or convey a particular point of view" (Campion and Cocks 1950: 342–343; Jack 2011: 359). Clegg's bias becomes clearer when we examine the question in relation to the preface [#i] where he alleges that the "Government are in total meltdown". This is an attack on the Government and the PM. Clegg, indirectly, makes an assertion that relates to the PM's cognition, that is, his knowledge, consciousness and acquaintance with governance. Clegg reproachfully doubts the PM's ability to lead his government. Having sensed the challenge to his mandate as a PM, Godwin Brown launches a rebuttal by averring that there is no such danger as he and his Government are dealing with all problems at hand. Brown counter-accuses Clegg and his Liberal Democrat party of not supporting measures being taken "to help the unemployed, to help home owners, and to help small businesses", stating that "[t]he country wants us to talk about what we are doing to help it". Brown portrays himself as a socially-committed PM; he attempts to ideologically control the discourse (van Dijk 2011: 389) to his advantage. Thus, Brown counters and neutralises Clegg's claim, by invoking his (Brown's) desire for the wellbeing of the people. Clegg's reference to "people" in "people start feeling that ..." is an appeal to "popular opinion",

"the people" or "popular passion" (Walton 1999: 69, 71). In parliamentary discourse, such as parliamentary questions, MPs know that what they do and say has significant implications for their political chances in the "next" election. Thus, appealing to the conscience of the populace by way of "positive self-representation and negative other-presentation" (van Dijk 2011: 397) is an important element of the discourse. This means that the "inference that a question is biased towards a particular answer may be based simply on the context, together with assumptions about the speaker's intentions" (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 881).

Mr Clegg attacks Brown's positive "face" and his "social identity" (Culpeper 2011: 20; Holmes, Marra and Schnurr's (2008: 196): that Brown's "Government are in total meltdown"; he is "thrashing around, fighting his own political survival"; "he does not understand the extreme danger to our democracy". He negatively evaluates Brown's political behaviour and performance, which involves some level of "[i]mpoliteness": "(a) a mental attitude held by a participant and comprised of negative evaluative beliefs about particular behaviours in particular social contexts, and (b) the activation of that attitude by those particular in-context behaviours" (Culpeper 2011: 22). Nevertheless, the extent of impoliteness exhibited by Clegg is difficult to determine, as there can be intentional and explicit impolite behaviour for parliamentary effect (Harris 2001: 451). Of course, we can see the "emotional consequences" (Culpeper 2011: 21) of the question for Brown as a PM. If the attack and accusation of failure goes un-refuted, it has negative consequences for Brown's electoral fortunes. Thus, Brown's counter-attack is a deflective strategy. The question flouts the rule that questions should not ask for opinions, which is why it generates the attack and counter-attack.

As in Example 3, a question may also contain both a preface [#i] and a postscript [#ii].

Example 3: UK 7 Apr 2010/Col 969

Dr. Doug Naysmith (Bristol, North-West) (Lab/Co-op): [#i] As I know my Right Hon. Friend is aware, the past 10 years have seen

an unprecedented increase in support for science and technology in this country, but [Q] will he agree that now is not the time to cut investment in science, research and education? [#ii] For it is in these areas that we will ensure our future economic success and economic growth.

The Prime Minister [Lab]: Record investment in education, record investment in Universities, record investment in science in our country, record investment in new innovation in our country: that is the record of our Labour Government, and I am proud to tell people that we are the party that supports industry in this country.

The preface [#i] offers, contextualises and prepares the ground for the question, while the postscript [#ii] reinforces the question by predicting what the preferred response (affirmation) will achieve. The question presupposes that someone (presumably the opposition) has proposed cuts in "investments in science, research and education". Predicting an affirmative response, the question is designed to praise the PM and allow him to praise his Government's record, which he does.

Sometimes, the statement occurs between sub-questions in a multipart question, as in:

Example 4: GH 9 Jun 06/Col. 765

Mr. J. K. Gidisu: Mr. Speaker, [Qi] I want to find out from the Hon. Minister whether his Ministry seriously tracks these references to road contracts. [#i] For example, these roads that I have mentioned above, which are in the same district, are being programmed for routine and recurrent maintenance, but by next year the same road will come up again for the same routine and recurrent maintenance which he has talked about this year. [Qii] How seriously does his Ministry monitor these constructional works he comes to talk about on the floor of the House?

The underlined [#i] is a midscript, which occurs between sub-questions [Qi] and [Qii]. The statement accuses the Minister of insincerity, for regularly reporting to Parliament about work on the same roads. Mr. Gidisu doubts that the Minister (and the Ministry) has done any work as reported, making the question whether they "seriously monitor these constructional works" biased.

Prefaces, postscripts and midscripts offer grounds for interpretations, meanings and functions of MPs questions as a result of their contextualizing propositions, which seek either to undermine or enhance the (Prime) Ministers' credibility. The following statistical figures (based on analysis of 438 Ghanaian and 412 UK questions) indicate the various forms of question design and their frequencies.

Table 1: Types of MPs' question design

Design	UK	%	GH	%
i. Preface/pre-question statement:	316	76.70	317	72.37
ii. Post-script/post-question statement:	7	1.70	11	2.51
iii. Preface and post-script:	19	4.61	3	0.68
iv. Midscript:	24	5.82	3	0.68
Sub-Total	**366**	**88.83**	**334**	**76.24**
v. No accompanying statement:	46	11.17	104	23.74

Table 1 shows that about 89% of the UK and 76% of the Ghanaian questions are designed with accompanying statements as prefaces, post-scripts or midscripts. Even in questions which have no accompanying statements, the assumptions are usually contained in the contents of the

question in the form of presuppositions or propositions as the question draws on events that are well known, as in:

Example 5: UK 14 Nov 2007/Col. 663:

Peter Luff's (Mid-Worcestershire) (Con): What, precisely, has Lord Malloch-Brown done to deserve his grace-and-favour apartment?

Prime Ministers [Lab]: Lord Malloch-Brown is a Minister of the Government, representing our country.

The question presupposes that Lord Malloch-Brown has been given a "grace-and-favour apartment" and PM Gordon Brown answers in the form of rebuttal, which indicates that both the MP and the PM had prior knowledge of the events that informed the question. However, questions without accompanying statements are often less biased, as in:

Example 6: GH 7 Jul 10/Col. 1961:

Mr Koffie (NDC): Mr Speaker, may I know when these buses would arrive and when they will be distributed?

Mr Tettey-Enyo (NDC): .... The buses and pickups have arrived. I am seeking funds to clear them from the port.

Example 6 does not give any indication of preferring a particular answer.

This section has observed that before and/or after asking questions, MPs habitually make statements which briefly set out the 'facts' on which the questions are based. These statements often contain assumptions and 'a series of contextualizing propositions' (Harris 2001: 458) either accusing, criticising or praising the (Prime) Ministers and/or their governments, which form the basis of and inform the interpretation of the questions. In other words, the questions are largely designed in ways that allow MPs to make propositions, give information, imputations, insinuations, suggest their own answers or convey particular points of

view, which flout the rules of parliamentary questions and lead to attacks and counter-attacks.

Parliamentary Rules of Questioning and the Maintenance of Order

We have seen in the previous section how MPs design their questions. The question is: to what extent do MPs adhere to the rules of questioning and how practical is the application of the rules by the Speakers of Parliament? It appears that in the UK parliament these rules are not enforced as there was no instance in the PMQs where the Speaker disallowed a question for offering information, being argumentative, insinuative or imputative. We observed from the previous section that most of the parliamentary questions are, in fact, 'framed so as to suggest [their] own answer or convey a particular point of view', in direct contravention of the rules.

One area where the Ghanaian parliamentary questions differ from the UK ones is in the use of opinionated and argumentative questions that involve mental verbs and adjectives such as 'agree', 'accept' and 'aware'. For example, a keyword analysis of 'agree' as in 'Does X agree that...?' indicates a positive keyness value (+1,044.15) in the PMQs, but a zero keyness value in the GMQs (Table 2). The Table indicates that 'agree' and 'accept' did not appear in the first 500 (i.e. first 5%) of keywords in the GMQs when compared with the ICE-Ghana. However, 'agree' is highly frequent (0.15/1000 words) and significant (keyness value of +1,044.15) in the PMQs as against 0.02% in the BNC. 'Accept' and 'aware' are also Key in the PMQs. 'Aware' is more key in the GMQs (637.96) than the PMQs. This indicates that, even as Ghanaian Speakers of Parliament try to disallow opinion, argumentative and information-offering questions (as I show in the subsequent paragraphs), MPs do sometimes succeed in asking them. Mental verbs/adjectives such as 'agree', 'accept' and 'aware' promote argumentation by asking (Prime) Ministers for their opinions about situations and propositions raised by MPs in their questions. To ask (Prime) Ministers whether they agree to or accept a situation is to ask their opinions.

Table 2: Frequencies and keyness of 'agree', 'accept' and 'aware' in PMQs and GMQs

UK Keyword	PMQs Freq.	/1000	BNC Freq.	/1000	Keyness	P-value
Agree	267	0.15	8,060	-	1,044.15	0.00000
Accept	53	0.03	9,629	-	47.20	0.00000
Aware	60	0.03	10,478	0.01	56.65	0.00000
GH	**GMQs Freq.**	**/1000**	**ICE-GH Freq.**	**/1000**	**Keyness**	**P-value**
Agree	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accept	-	-	-	-	-	-
Aware	151	0.10	69	-	637.96	0.00000

There were instances in the Ghanaian Minister's questions where the Speakers disallowed questions that flouted the rules. Consider the following exchange between the Speaker of the Ghanaian parliament and Mr Felix-Twumasi-Appiah:

Example 7: GH 3 Jun 09/Col. 164:

Mr. Felix Twumasi-Appiah [NDC]: [#i] Madam Speaker, the question to the Minister – the main Question was to ask of him what measures were being taken to curb the current spate of road accidents. Madam Speaker, my question to the Minister is, [Qi]

would he agree with me that these road accidents issue did not start today and [Qii] will he further agree with me that if there were any practical measures that were put in place by the previous Administration, we will not have been where we are today? I — [Interruptions.] [Qiii] Would he further agree with me that since the assumption of power, his Ministry has done enough to curb the spate of accidents on our roads? [Interruptions.]

Madam Speaker: Hon. Member, since your question should not provoke a debate, can you re-frame it?

Mr. Twumasi-Appiah: Madam Speaker, for the benefit of those who did not hear, I will repeat the question. [Interruption.]

Madam Speaker: Do not repeat it, re-frame it so that it does not cause a debate. What do you want to know?

Mr. Twumasi-Appiah: Madam Speaker, my question is that, if the Hon. Minister would agree with me that the spate of the accidents, did not begin today and that – [Interruption.]

Madam Speaker: You cannot ask him for his opinion. [Interruptions.] So please, come to the question and not an opinion.

Mr. Twumasi-Appiah: Madam Speaker, my question is, if the Hon. Minister would agree with me that a lot more had been done under his administration to curb the spate of road accidents and if these things were done in the past, these current road accidents would not have happened. [Interruptions.]

Madam Speaker: I will not allow that question, it does not arise from the main Question. Unless you want to frame it in another way, I will disallow it. Let us have two more questions.

Mr Twumasi-Appiah's question is a multipart question with three sub-questions, each of which contains 'agree' – [Qi] 'would he agree with me that ...', [Qii] 'will he further agree with me that' and [Qiii] 'Would he

further agree with me that ...'. Since these are opinion and argumentativ questions, the Speaker requests Mr Twumasi-Appiah to rephrase th question. The exchange goes on until the Speaker says, 'I will not allo that question', since it asks the Ministers' opinion and has the potential t generate debate, which is against the rules of parliamentary questions.

Sometimes, it is the MPs themselves who draw the Speakers attention to the contraventions of the rules, as exemplified in the exchange between Mr Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu and Mr Bagbin below:

Example 8: GH Col. 452, 10 Jun 09:

Mr. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu [NPP, Minority Leader]: [#i].. Madam Speaker, when the exercise started from Greater Accra, which was the first region, the letter from the General Headquarters, PA/GAF/Burma Camp, dated 15th February, 2008 commenced the process on 4th March, 2008. [Qi] Is he aware? [Qii] Is he aware of it that this letter from the Ghana Armed Forces indicated that the process was starting on 4th March, 2008? [#ii] And if he is aware, [Qiii] would he admit that the Answer he has provided here to the people of Ghana is wrong, would he agree?

Mr. Bagbin [NDC, Majority Leader] – rose –

Madam Speaker: Hon Majority Leader, is it a point of order?

Mr Bagbin: Madam Speaker, *we are guided by our rules*. And Standing Order 67 is very clear as to what this question should comply with. And clearly, my Hon. Colleague is using a document and trying to say that once the document has stated 4th March, the exercise necessarily started on the 4th March and that the Hon. Minister stating 10th March, he has deceived the good people of Ghana. [Interruption.] Madam Speaker, this, definitely is caught by 67 (1) (b): "... a Question shall not contain any arguments, ..." He is already arguing with the Hon. Minister as to the date – [Uproar] – "...any arguments". That is one – arguing. Two:

"...expression of opinion, inferences, imputations, epithets or controversial, ironical or offensive expressions or hypothetical cases"...The second thing is that he is reading some imputations into the Answer. So, if he has to rephrase his question, I think he should better do that, if not, Madam Speaker, you should not allow this question. [Hear! Hear!]

...

Madam Speaker: Hon. Member, re-phrase your question?

On realising that Mr Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu is offering information and asking the Minister's opinion on that information, Mr Bagbin intervenes to challenge him. Mr Bagbin quotes from Standing Order 67 (1) (b) and asks the Speaker to rule out the question. After quite a long debate between the two as well as the Speaker, the Speaker asks Mr Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu to rephrase the question. The concordance lines of 'rule' (17 times), 'not allow' (8 times), 'rephrase' (9 times) and 're-frame' (3) in Figure 1 below reinforce the practice of disallowing questions which contravene the rules of questioning in the Ghanaian parliament. In the UK data, there was only one (1) instance of 'rule' that showed the Speaker disallowing a question and one (1) instance of a 'point of order' (Figure 2) to challenge a question for being *sub judice*. The control and policing of the GMQs considerably reduces argumentative and opinion questions, thereby lessening confrontations. This is probably why GMQs appear to be less confrontational than the UK PMQs.

It must be acknowledged that arguments between MPs about whether or not one should apologise for the use of such opinionated and argumentative expressions have the potential to limit productive discussions on the substantive issues. Perhaps, that is the reason why the UK Speakers do not usually intervene to ask MPs to withdraw their questions or why MPs themselves do not intervene, as the rules allow the Speakers some flexibility in their own judgement as to whether an intervention is necessary (Jack 2011: 455). Of course, there have been times when the UK Speakers of Parliament have asked MPs to withdraw

inappropriate language use in parliament. For example, when Labour MP Dennis Skinner called Prime Minister David Cameron "dodgy Dave", he was asked by the Speaker to withdraw the word 'dodgy' (BBC News 2016). Skinner was suspended from the remainder of the day's proceedings for refusing to withdraw the word. The Speaker relied on the powers conferred on him by Standing Order 43 ("disorderly conduct") to suspend Skinner. The Standing Orders of the House (from 1998 through 2016) (UK Parliament 2016), which are the written rules that regulate proceedings in the House, do not specifically mention the expressions such as noted by Rogers and Walters (2006: 312, see also Jack 2011: 358–359): "must not offer information ('Is she aware that ...?') or be argumentative ('Does he agree that it is unacceptable that ...?')". However, cconsidering that the UK Parliament (2016) accepts that Erskine May's treatise "is considered the authoritative source on parliamentary procedure", the above-mentioned rules, I believe, can be enforced in the House.

1	that, that is unacceptable in this House. It offends against our rules. Would he consider amending the statement to be fair to
2	judgement in this matter. [Laughter.] Madam Speaker: Before I rule, can I have the question again? What was the question? Mr.
3	, I have not argued, I have not imputed anything, but you may rule and I believe Madam Speaker, I can trust your judgement in
4	and therefore, what was I supposed to withdraw? Mr Speaker had ruled; so it is a ruling. Mr First Deputy Speaker: In fact, I have
5	. "In case" — No, he cannot answer the question. It is against the rules. Mr Kwabena Appiah-Pinkrah — rose — Madam Speaker:
6	. 11.15 a.m. Mr. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu: Madam Speaker, before you rule, the Majority Leader refers to Order 67 (1) (b) and with your
7	in this context is totally wrong and I would plead with you to rule him out of order and allow the Minister to answer the
8	had ruled; so it is a ruling. Mr First Deputy Speaker: In fact, I have ruled him out. Mr Owusu-Agyemang: Exactly. I would now ask the
9	question is completely out of order. My hon. Colleague knows the rules, that questions which are asked of Ministers should not be
10	trying to argue his case. Mr. Speaker, that is not permitted by our rules. Mr. Speaker: Hon. Member for Upper Manya, could you ask
11	point of order? Mr. Bagbin: Madam Speaker, we are guided by our rules. And Standing Order 67 is very clear as to what this
12	are the President of this House and you, in your wisdom, have ruled that that was out of order and therefore, what was I

N	Concordance
1	Speaker: Your question was a hypothetical one. So, I did not allow it. Mr Appiah-Pinkrah: And also the valuation of
2	to tell us what he wants to do with us. So thank you. I will not allow the question. [Pause] I want everybody to make a
3	he should better do that, if not, Madam Speaker, you should not allow this question. [Hear! Hear!] Madam Speaker: Hon
4	which is contrary to the court's decision — So I would not allow the question. Q338. Mr Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu:
5	. [Interruptions.] Col. 165, 3 Jun 09 Madam Speaker: I will not allow that question, it does not arise from the main

N	Concordance
1	. Col. 1823, 5 Jul 10 Mr Owusu-Bio: Madam Speaker, I will rephrase it. Madam Speaker, I will put the question again
2	the Order Paper and the Answers he has given but let me rephrase it now. Since the Hon Minister is saying that the
3	Speaker: Hon Member, can you ask the question again? Rephrase the question. Mr Nayan: Mr Speaker, my
4	as a basis of your foundation — [Interruptions] — So, rephrase your question. Mr Owusu-Agyemang: Mr Speaker,
5	the Question? Mr First Deputy Speaker: Hon Member, rephrase your question because there is no evidence on

N	Concordance
1	your question should not provoke a debate, can you reframe it? Mr. Twumasi-Appiah: Madam Speaker, for
2	, then the question you are asking would be admitted. Reframe. Mr Nayan: Mr Speaker, the Hon Minister's
3	Speaker, I am actually asking — Madam Speaker: Can you reframe your question? Dr. Dakura: Madam Speaker, I

Figure 1: Concordance lines indicating questions being disallowed in the GH MQs

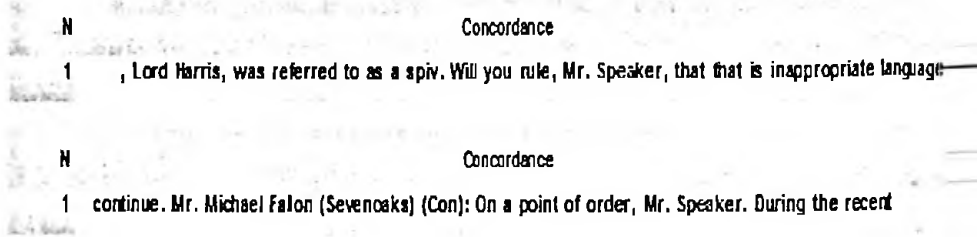

Figure 2: Concordance lines of two occasions when questions were disallowed in UK PMQs

The power of the Speaker in Ghana's parliament can be observed in the frequent references to the Speaker during the Minister's Questions, as shown in Table 3. Jack (2011: 356) states that the Speaker of the UK parliament "is the final authority as to the admissibility of questions" and his "responsibility is limited to their compliance with the rules of the House". While the UK data show much less reference to the speaker, it seems that the UK Speaker's power is less frequently called upon.

Table 3: References to Speakers in Ghanaian MQs and UK PMQs

Parliament	Address	%	Intervention	%	Total	%/1000 words
Ghana	1,959	*80*	474	*20*	**2,433**	16.59
UK	30	*21*	111	*79*	**141**	0.80

The title "Mr (Deputy)/Madam Speaker" occurred 2,433 times (16.59/1000 words) in the Ghanaian data, with 1,959 (80%) occurring as address terms, 474 (20%) being the Speakers' intervention. Sixteen (16, i.e. 3%) of the 474 appeared in the context of the Speakers calling MPs to "Order". However, in the UK PMQs, Mr (Deputy) Speaker appeared 141 times (0.80/1000 words), with 30 (21%) being address terms and 111

(79%) as interventions. Thirty-one (31, i.e. 30%) of the 111 occurred when the Speakers called MPs to "Order". Research has shown that in the UK parliament, Hansard transcribers eliminate instances of addresses to the Speaker (Mollin 2007). However, Mollin (2007: 196) further indicates that, generally, addresses to the Speaker occur about 3.2/1000 words, which is still far below the Ghanaian instances of 16.59/1000 words. In both parliaments, MPs address (Prime) Ministers through the Speakers of Parliament (SoP). It shows that Speakers have the power to either allow or disallow a question if it violates any rules of engagement. The higher frequency of address and intervention by SoP in the GMQs signifies that Speakers controlled questions more than in the UK PMQs. While the control is an attempt to make MPs ask issue-based questions, it also demonstrates how the Speakers exert their authority as controllers of proper parliamentary behaviour and admissibility of questions.

Considering that "the MPs of a country share a set of cultural expectations, which are closely related to social and communicative activities" (Săftoiu 2013: 47), the MPs parliamentary behaviour and the Speakers' desire to control (or not to control) the questions may have cultural underpinnings. The ability of the Speakers to control questions somehow reflects the Ghanaian and "African value of respect for authority" (Banda 2009: 231), with the notion that those in power and authority are hardly questioned (Tomaselli 2003: 428). That kind of respect makes it imperative for MPs to obey the authority of the Speaker, as we saw in Example 8, where the Majority and Minority leaders invite the Speaker to 'rule' in their favour as well as the willingness by the MPs to 'rephrase' their questions (see Figure 1).

Further, the higher percentage (79%) of interventions (with 30% being calls to "Order", as in Figure 3) in the UK PMQs may point to the rowdiness (Bates et al 2012: 20) and "yobbery and public school twittishness" (Parkinson 2014) at the PMQs, as the House of Commons Speaker, John Bercow, is quoted to have said. The sample concordance lines in Figure 3 show that the Speaker calling MPs to "order" occurred in the context of "interruptions", which reflects the rule-breaking by the MPs.

N	Concordance
1	that the Prime Minister—[Hon. Members: "Answer."] Mr. Speaker: Order. Let the Leader of the Opposition speak. He does not need to
2	on small businesses, let us— Hon. Members: Answer. Mr. Speaker: Order. The Prime Minister is answering. I can hear him answering. [
3	booms that we had under the Labour Government. Mr Speaker: Order. Before the right hon. Member for Rotherham (Mr MacShane)
4	new chairman is being announced today. [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. Hon. Members should listen to what the Prime Minister has
5	, Derek Scott. He was asked— [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Cameron: He was asked
6	(Devizes) (Con): Today, a group of MPs—[Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. Hon. Members should not be yelling at the hon. Lady. It is
7	David Lammy (Tottenham) (Lab): The—[Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. The House must calm down. I want to hear Mr David Lammy.
8	Prime Minister does not have to listen— [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. I call the Leader of the— [Interruption.] Order. I call the
9	been released early— [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. Member for Wirral, West (Stephen Hesford) must
10	and fiscal policy. He has forgotten— [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Cameron: He loves to
11	shut up and listen to the answer. [Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. Other Members can now follow the Prime Minister's advice
12	, but I think that it is profoundly wrong. [Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. I want to accommodate Back Benchers. Andrew Percy (Brigg
13	any changes in the health service at all— [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. Let the Prime Minister speak. The Prime Minister: As for
14	, and we should continue with that. [Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. [Interruption.] The House must come to order. I want to
15	this question, because the shadow— [Interruption.] Mr. Speaker: Order. The Prime Minister is in order. The Prime Minister: As far as
16	, one of the best ways of helping—[Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. Mr Hughes must be heard. Simon Hughes: Does the Prime
17	Carswell (Clacton) (Con): A few weeks—[Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. Let us have some order in the House. I want to hear Mr
18	schools, he will learn a few manners. [Interruption.] Mr Speaker: Order. Some people are going to burst they are getting so excited,
19	difficult downturn that they face. Hon. Members: More! Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Cameron: The Prime
20	absenteeism from school, and perhaps look to— Mr. Speaker: Order. The Prime Minister: My hon. Friend raises the important

Figure 3: Sample concordance lines showing Speakers calling MPs to order in UK PMQs

The rule-breaking and the subsequent confrontations it causes between MPs and PMs in the UK parliament has been recognised by previous research. Bates, Kerr, Byrne and Stanley (2012: 22) have said that the Westminster system has been historically criticised for encouraging "aggressive, bullish, adversarial and 'macho' style of politics", a claim which they say has been confirmed recently in interviews by David Cameron (the then PM) and Ed Miliband (the then Leader of Opposition). Again, Bates et al. (2012: 20) quote Bercow (2010) as saying:

> A Procedure Committee report in 1995 noted that PMQs no longer served its original purpose and had instead 'developed from being a procedure for the legislature to hold the executive to account into a partisan joust between the noisier supporters of the main political parties'.

Bates et al. seem to affirm this view as they claim that PMQs appear to have become "both rowdier and increasingly dominated by the main party leaders". I argue that the rowdiness results from the way MPs design their questions, which allows for imputations and opinion seeking, among others, as noted already. Consider Example 9 (which is represented in Figure 3, line 11):

> Example 9: UK 30 Mar 2011/Col. 342:
>
> **The Prime Minister [Cameron]**: I completely understand the point that the Hon. Lady makes, particularly in relation to Stoke, where the Potteries – [*Interruption.*] *I wish that the shadow Chancellor would occasionally shut up and listen to the answer.* [*Interruption.*]
>
> **Mr Speaker**: *Order.* Other Members can now follow the Prime Minister's advice to the shadow Chancellor. We need a bit of *order.*

Example 9 seems to support Bates et al.'s claim of rowdiness, as David Cameron is interrupted twice here by MPs, forcing the Speaker to rebuke and call them to *Order*, saying "We need a bit of *order*". The interruption is usually in the form of jeering from opposition MPs to the PM in the course of answering a question, or government MPs to opposition MPs drawing their attention to a perceived "good" response from the PM. The PM's statement, *I wish that the shadow Chancellor would occasionally shut up and listen to the answer*, also points to the rowdiness that characterises the session. The use of *occasionally* implies that the shadow Chancellor interrupts quite often.

It must be acknowledged that the UK Speakers' inability to disallow questions that contravene the rules may result from practical constraints. In fact, Jack (2011: 455) states that the Speaker, 'may refrain from intervening if he thinks it unnecessary to do so'. An attempt not to allow questions could generate discord between the Speakers and the MPs, which in turn could create some challenges for backbenchers to hold the executive to account. Perhaps, that is the reason the parliamentary rules allow the Speakers some flexibility of judgement in terms of making interventions when MPs flout the rules of questioning. In fact, whereas Erskine May's treatise mentions rules of questions in terms of language and offering opinions and argumentations, the UK Standing Orders do not mention them, which adds to the issue of Speakers' flexibility of judgment. On the other hand, the Ghanaian Speakers disallowing questions could be a means of protecting the image of the government and the Ministers from questions that are critical and damaging. Since the Ghanaian Speakers of parliament are normally appointed by the government either from among the Majority MPs or someone from outside parliament (and approved by parliament), they owe allegiance to the government and are more likely to protect the image of the government. However, Example 7, which was disallowed was a government MP's question that sought to project the image of the government by urging the Minister to express a positive opinion about the government. Unlike the Ghanaian Speakers, the UK Speakers are MPs. The Speakers and the MPs are, therefore, likely to see each other as peers, which could account for the more liberal approach adopted by the Speakers. These practical issues present a conflict for the parliamentary rules of questions as to whether they are realistic or idealistic.

Conclusion

The UK and Ghanaian parliaments are two related but different institutions: the oldest parliament in the world and a young parliament modelled on and to some extent "continuing" the traditions of the former.

Learning from each other's practices can, therefore, be an important means of improving their conventions. While the design of questions in both parliaments is similar, there are differences in how they are moderated by the Speakers of Parliament. In both parliaments, questions are regularly framed so as to suggest their own answer or convey particular points of view, raise argumentation and offer opinions, flouting the parliamentary questioning rules. In the Ghanaian Minister's Questions (GMQs), Speakers disallow questions that flout those rules. Often the Ghanaian Speakers ask MPs to re-frame such questions, which prevents confrontational exchanges between MPs and Ministers who answer the questions. This paper has, thus, found that GMQs are less confrontational than UK Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs). This is not to suggest that Ghanaian MPs (and parliament) are more civilised or refined than UK MPs (and parliament). As indicated in Table 2, Ghanaian MPs use "aware" as an argumentative word quite frequently. It is the speakers who control MPs' behaviour during question time. Since UK Speakers allow all questions that contravene the rules to be answered/responded to, it leads to personal (counter)-attacks, (counter)-accusations, (counter)-criticisms and (counter)-imputations, making the questions less genuine. When this happens, MPs and Prime Ministers are seen as not engaging with the fundamental issues that affect the interests and concerns of the people. Given the criticism of PMQs, and learning from the GMQs, the paper suggests that, if the Commons Speaker could apply the rules of parliamentary questioning and disallow questions that flout the rules regarding form and content of questions, PMQs could be improved. The paper shows that reactions to questions depend on the form, content and implications of the question to the addressee.

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Chieftaincy, Development and the Ghanaian State: A Historical Overview of the 19th and 20th Centuries

James Kojo KUTIN and Kwame Osei KWARTENG

Abstract

This multi-sourced paper explores the relationship between the chieftaincy institution and the Ghanaian state in the 19th and 20th centuries. It specifically looks at how the relationship between the two has evolved in the overlapping political and economic spheres and how the metamorphosing conceptualization of development on both sides fits into it. Using mainly Asante references,[1] this paper argues that the relationship between the state (colonial and post-colonial) and chieftaincy in both spheres has been determined by the policies of the former to either court or curtail the power of the latter when it suits its politics. Chiefs on the other hand, recognizing the nature of this relationship, have skilfully played a "survival politics" strategy in order to remain relevant in the economic and political spheres. This strategy in recent years includes (re)identifying itself with prevailing concepts such as development and either utilising, or readjusting local ideologies where necessary, in order to ensure their own institutional survival.

Keywords: Chieftaincy, Colonialism, Development, Politics, Asante, Asantehene, Nkosuo

[1] The examples utilised in this paper focus on the experience of chieftaincy in southern Ghana, particularly Asante and Akan in general. This is not because happenings in chieftaincy in northern Ghana are not significant. Rather it is because the study is based on the southern experience, particularly, that of the Asante. While the Asante chieftaincy institution does not always mirror the nature of chieftaincy in the entire southern Ghana, its scope and reach presents an important case study to measure the extent of changes that occurred during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Introduction

The literature on the continued importance of the chieftaincy institution in the affairs of post-colonial African states, especially, in the second half of the 20th century, has sought to explain the phenomenon as being due to the duality of political power in Africa, decentralised despotism, chiefly syncretism or varied aspects of traditional resurgence.[2] To Richard Sklar, the main proponent of the mixed government thesis, chiefs are important and necessary because power is dual in Africa.[3] Mahmood Mamdani, however, argues that this "bifurcation" of Africa into "urban citizens" and "rural subjects" is a colonial legacy of divide and rule, which has created a system of decentralised despotism.[4] Therefore, the continued existence and importance of chiefs is because post-colonial African states have successfully deracialized power but failed at detribalising and completely democratizing it.[5] Similarly, Emile A. B. van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal's chiefly syncretism thesis maintains that chiefs are a necessary "hinge-point" and a source of contact between the two worlds.[6] Chiefs are therefore important, depending on their syncretism, adaptability and ability to negotiate legitimacy in a constant zero-sum engagement with the

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[2] These four are also known as the mixed government, decentralised despotism, chiefly syncretism and traditional resurgence theses. See James Kojo Kutin, "Constructing the Royal Version of Development in Asanteman" (MPhil Dissertation, University of Ghana, 2012), 19.

[3] See Richard L. Sklar, "The African Frontier for Political Science," in *Africa and the Disciplines*, eds. Robert H. Bates et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 83–109; Ricahrd L. Sklar, "The Premise of Mixed Government in African Political Studies," in *Indigenous Political Structures and Governance in Africa*, ed. Olufemi Vaughan (Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd, 2003), 3–25; and Richard L. Sklar, "The Significance of Mixed Government in Southern African Studies: A Preliminary Assessment" (paper presented to the History Workshop Conference on "Popular Precedents, Popular Practice and Popular Culture, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 13–15 July, 1994).

[4] Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Power Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 16–18.

[5] Mamdani, *Citizen's and Subjects*, 18–32.

[6] Emile Adriaan Benvenuto van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal and Rijk A. van Dijk, *African Chieftaincy in a New Socio-Economic and Political Landscape* (Leiden: African Studies Center, 1999), 21–46; and Emile Adriaan Benvenuto van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, "States and Chiefs: Are Chiefs Mere Puppets?" *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law, Special Double Issue on the New Relevance of Traditional Authorities to Africa's Future*, 37/38 (1996): 40–78.

African state.[7] Reflecting from a traditional resurgence angle, Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz see it as a sign of Africa moving backwards or "retraditionalization", while Barbara Oomen situates the phenomenon as part of the post Cold War cultural rights legislation wave or "mctradition".[8] Pierre Englebert's extensive study, much of which agrees with Barbara Oomen's position, concludes that the phenomenon is the result of post Cold War constitutional reviews, grassroot organization along traditional lines, the fissures of the democratization process in Africa, and the effects of the economic restructuring of African states.[9]

Using mainly Asante examples from the 19th and 20th centuries, this paper posits that the continued importance of chiefs, especially in southern Ghana, has manifested itself profoundly in the political and economic spheres. Although this reflects a duality of power in the state, the phenomenon predates independence, whereas the presence and importance of chiefly power has not necessarily resulted in a strict citizen-subject nor urban-rural dichotomy. Again, the paper argues that although there exists continued negotiation by chiefs for space and power in both spheres, the extent of these negotiations is largely determined by the policies of the state to either court or curtail it, when it suits the latter's politics. The paper is in three parts. The first part explores the centrality of the chieftaincy institution as the driving force in the economic and political

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[7] van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal and Dijk, *African Chieftaincy*, 22–24; and van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, *States and Chiefs*, 40–44.

[8] Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as a Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey for the International African Institute, London, 1999), 45–47; Barbara Oomen, "'We Must Now Go Back to Our History': Retraditionalisation in a Northern Province Chieftaincy," *African Studies*, 59(1) (2000): 71–95; Barbara Oomen, *Chiefs in South Africa: Law, Power and Culture in Post-Apartheid Era* (Oxford: James Currey, 2005), 11–13; and Barbara Oomen, "McTradition in the New South Africa: Commodified Custom and Rights Talk with the Bafokeng and the Bapedi," in *Mobile People, Mobile Law. Expanding Legal Relations in a Contracting World*, eds Franz von Benda-Beckmann et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 91–109.

[9] Pierre Englebert, *State Legitimacy and Development in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienneer Publishers, 2000), 5–11; Pierre Englebert, "Patterns and Theories of Traditional Resurgence in Tropical Africa," *Mondes en Développement*, 30(118) (2002): 51–64; and Pierre Englebert, "Back to the Future? Resurgent Structures and the Reconfiguration of Power in Africa," in *Indigenous Political Structures and Governance in Africa*, ed. Olufemi Vaughan (Ibadan: Sefer Books Ltd, 2003), 26–59.

spheres during the precolonial era of the 19th century. The second par examines the changing roles of chiefs in both spheres in the first half o the 20th century, wrought by colonial rule. The last part interrogates the extent of negotiation for power and relevance between chiefs and the state in the second half of the 20th century.

Pre-Colonial Chieftaincy in the Political and Economic Sphere

The scholars who researched into the pre-colonial states of what became the independent state of Ghana have often gone to great lengths to show not only the political organisation and viability of these states, but also the economic activities they thrived on. For instance, writing mainly about the Fante, John M. Sarbah and Joseph E. Casely Hayford show the political depth of the Fante by espousing various aspects of their political culture and statehood.[10] Similarly, the copious literature on Asante political history, like the seminal 1975 work by Ivor Wilks, has brought to the fore essential details of the political culture, state craft and traditional bureaucracy that evolved and made the kingdom a powerhouse in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[11] These include the structure of the ruling dynasty, state machinery, policy formulation and implementation, the conduct of its provincial and foreign affairs and the legislative council politics between the imperial/war and mercantilist/peace parties.

In the economic sphere, writers such as David Kimble, Geoffrey B. Kay, Ivor Wilks, Francis Agbodeka, and Dan-Bright S. Dzorbo have strongly posited that the traditional states that existed before the advent of colonialism in Ghana were economically viable and self-sustaining.[12] The

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[10] John M. Sarbah, *Fanti Customary Laws* (London: William Clowes and Sons Ltd, 1897); John M. Sarbah, *Fanti National Constitution* (London: William Clowes and Sons Ltd, 1906); Joseph E. Casely Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions* (London: Sweet and Maxwell Limited, 1903).

[11] Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the 19th Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975).

[12] David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana, 1850–1928* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963); Geoffrey B. Kay, *The Political Economy of Colonialism in Ghana* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Francis Agbodeka, *An Economic History of Ghana*

structure of the pre-colonial economy was mainly agricultural based. As Agbodeka amply shows, this was supplemented by the traditional crafts, the extractive sector, manu acturing industries, and intra and inter-state commerce.[13] The success ar d alacrity with which commerce was carried out during this period has led some writers, such as Dzorbo, to suggest that one cannot write a good pre-colonial history of Ghana (and West Africa in general) without highlighting these traits.[14] Others, such as Kay, further argue that pre-colonial Ghana exhibited a socio-economic complexity whose salient feature is the emergence of an authentic Ghanaian capitalist class.[15] The point, therefore, is that the pre-colonial economic sphere was a vibrant and prosperous one.

At the heart of the economic and political sphere of pre-colonial states was the chieftaincy institution. In the political sphere, the chief acted in a military, legislative, judicial and executive capacity. Thus, in pre-colonial Asante, the *Asantehene* led the people to war, while in times of peace it was his duty to maintain the unity and sanctity of the union. Again, with the help of other chiefs, councillors of the Asanteman Council (*Asantemanhyiamu*) or occasionally young men (*nkwankwaa*), he was expected to enact laws, review custom and related legislative functions, and adjudicate cases brought before him.[16] The chief was, therefore, at the centre of all political activity as primus inter pares.

In the economic sphere, the chief served as the custodian of lands, and other natural resources, was concerned with the material wellbeing of his people, and was generally responsible for promoting the growth and

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from Earliest Times. (Accra: Ghana University Press, 1992); Dan-Bright S. Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search of Development* (Uppsula: Uppsula University Press, 1998); and Wilks, *19th Century Asante*.

[13] Agbodeka, *Ghana Economic History*, 9–21, 37–54.

[14] Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 86–92.

[15] Kay, *Colonialism Political Economy*, 8. Dzorbo asserts that Kay's argument may be a little exaggerated. He maintains that there wasn't necessarily a capitalist class but rather that "market and exchange institutions, as well as the 'spirit of capitalism' were integral parts of pre-colonial societies" as a whole. See Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 92.

[16] See Kofi A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of the Ashanti* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 9–37; and Wilks, *19th Century Asante*, 11, 14.

advancement of the society. The *Asantehene* and his sub-chiefs, for instance, had the responsibility of opening up (old and new) markets, as well as maintaining or opening up trade routes within Asante and beyond. Also, under the system of state-sanctioned traders (*Batafo*), the *Asantehene* through the Exchequer (*Gyaasewaahene*) controlled the trade conditions and, where possible, they manipulated market forces to the advantage of Asante traders.[17] In effect, the roles of chiefs in the economic sphere generally placed them at the centre of determining the economic direction of the polities they headed.

Summing up these two roles, therefore, it can be posited that the very nature of the obligations expected of chiefs in the pre-colonial era made them natural agents of what will, in present times, be described as development. But how did pre-colonial chiefs conceptualize development and how has this conceptualization evolved over time? Here again, an example from Asante chieftaincy proves useful. Wilks pin-points two words in Asante political thought — *Atetekwaa* and *Nkosuo* — as being very important in relation to the above. *Atetekwaa* means preserving the old times while *Nkosuo* means "going on" or "progress". Wilks expatiates that *Atetekwaa* is seen as a principle of stasis while *Nkosuo* is the principle of change. It is, thus, the interplay of the two principles that serve to configure the actual course of events, direct the speed of change, and ensure a role for the past in the present.[18] In pre-colonial Asante thought, therefore, development represented any activity that brought societal advancement or *Nkosuo*. However, this *Nkosuo* or societal advancement, in whatever form it took, had to necessarily incorporate *Atetekwaa*, or a sense of the historical embodiment of the people.

[17] See Wilks, *19th Century Asante*, 197, 268–269.
[18] Ivor Wilks, "'Unity and Progress': Asante Politics Revisited," in *Akan Worlds*, eds. Pierluigi Valsecchi and Fabio Viti (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), 43–68.

Colonial Era Chieftaincy in the Political and Economic Sphere (1896 – 1951)

Wilks notes that before the reign of Kweku Dua III (Prempeh I, 1888–1931), the principle of *Nkosuo* was still being used in its original political sense as the unity (*Nkabomu*) and stability of the Asante Kingdom.[19] In other words, the societal advancement (*Nkosuo*) of Asante was directly translated in the political unity and stability (*Nkabomu*) of the polity. However, the imperial expansion of the European powers in the last quarter of the 19th century rendered the core of the traditional political and economic practices in Asante obsolete, and in need of urgent change. The response of Prempeh I was to look more towards the economic meaning of *Nkosuo* in order to achieve his political ends. Wilks asserts that, "development became the overwhelming imperative of the times and the necessity of involving European capital and skills was realistically acknowledged."[20] Steps were then taken to secure European capital and skills when an Asante embassy was established in London in 1895, headed by John Owusu Ansah, with the objective of engaging a Chartered Company to open up development in Asante. Aside from the large mining rights being offered to British firms, the following was also expected:

> ...railway construction and other public works, to employ skilled and other labour, to build manufactories, lay out townships, construct waterworks, and waterways, [...] to organise a constabulary, to erect a mint and issue coinage, establish factories for trading and other purposes, to establish banks, to grant licenses for trading, mining and other purposes, to impose duties as may be deemed expedient on goods imported into the country, to lay out and cultivate plantation for all kinds of vegetable and other products, to establish schools for elementary, technical, and scientific education, to publish newspapers...[21]

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[19] Wilks, *Unity and Progress*, 53.
[20] Ivor Wilks, *One Nation, Many Histories: Ghana Past and Present* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1996), 50.
[21] Wilks, *One Nation*, 51.

Even though its political conceptualisation and connotation was still dominant at this juncture, the economic sense of *Nkosuo*, to all intents and purposes, had arrived. At this stage, the *Asantehene's* economic conceptualisation of *Nkosuo* recognised the unavoidable need to marry western practices, institutions, planning, technology and other ideas of socio-economic growth with traditional ideas of societal advancement. To Wilks, this was a "master plan for bringing Asante into the world of industrial capitalism."[22] This plan, however, did not see the light of day, at least as envisaged by the *Asantehene*. The British occupied Kumasi in 1896 and exiled the *Asantehene* and several chiefs, first to Cape Coast, then to Sierra Leone and eventually to Seychelles. Asante was finally annexed as a British territory in 1901.

This marked not only the final subjugation of chiefly role in the Ghanaian political and economic sphere to colonial dictates, but also the passing of ultimate direction and character of *Nkosuo* (development or societal advancement) to the colonial authority as well. From then on till the reforms under Guggisberg, much of the political and economic power the chiefs held passed on to the colonial authorities, and in the process commenced a long, unw ding, and delicate era in the relationship between the two over the co ntrol of the economic and political sphere. This era also marked the begi ngs of "survival politics" strategies of the chieftaincy institution, as the chiefs sought to survive while serving the colonial government on one hand and satisfying their subjects on the other hand.

The colonial government enacted various laws to control the powers of chiefs. These ordinances, with some dating as far back as 1874, had by 1918, placed the chiefs firmly under the colonial administration, represented by the district, provincial and chief commissioners, with the Governor at the apex of the political authority.[23] The ordinances also

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[22] Wilks, *One Nation*, 51.

[23] See Mary A. S. Owusu, *Prempeh II and the Making of Modern Asante* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2009), 66–67; Nana Arhin Brempong, *Transformation in Traditional Rule in Ghana, 1951–1996* (Legon: Institute of African Studies, 2007), 3–4; and Busia, *Position*, 139–140.

redefined the functions of the councils of native authorities whose activities were supervised by the hierarchy of political administrators of the colonial state.[24] Suffice it to say that this created some considerable amount of confusion, erosion of traditional boundaries in some cases, reconfiguration of traditional power in others and a general weakening of chiefly power. It also contributed in no small way to the 109 destoolments of Head Chiefs between 1904 and 1924.[25]

On the economic front, Dzorbo posits that the colonial government was guided by two cardinal points that dominated the world of imperialism. The first was to enable western (but mainly British) capital to gain access to uninhibited resources and markets. The second was the prevailing economic thinking of the time, which was, laissez-faireism or unregulated interplay of private enterprise and market forces.[26] The colonial government's role was then to provide a political framework for private economic actors and these they did, often skewing it to benefit foreign interest and capital. Thus, colonial rule in the initial stages did not significantly alter the structure of the pre-colonial economy. Rather, aspects of the economy were accentuated as and when it fitted the colonial agenda of maximizing imperial profits. Development essentially was not a main feature on the agenda of the colonial authorities in the early years. If ever there was any concerted effort on the part of the British at developing the territories that amalgamated to form Ghana, therefore, it was mainly to serve the ends of imperial profit maximisation and not necessarily to bring socio-economic advancement.

With commerce, for instance, the colonial government accentuated the post slave trade policy of encouraging the cultivation and trade in cash crops to feed the growing raw material needs of the industries in Britain.

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[24] See Owusu, *Prempeh*, 66–67; Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 3–4; and Busia, *Position*, 140–155.

[25] See Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Chiefs and Socio-Political Change in the Gold Coast: Insights from Reports on Liquor Consumption, 1919–1934," in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, eds. Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba, (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 309; Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 13; and Kimble, *A Political History*, 490.

[26] Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 97.

The colony also served as a ready market for finished European products. Although several Africans were engaged in the trade of finished products, the ventures were mainly controlled by the European monopoly companies and with Ghanaians serving as their local agents.[27] In the extractive sector, gold, diamonds, manganese, and bauxite were mined mainly by foreign companies for export.[28] The posturing was no different in the infrastructure and social services sector. For example, railways were built by the colonial government to transport heavy machinery and bulky consumer goods to the interior, and bring back timber, cash crops and minerals to the coast for shipment overseas.[29] Thus, rail lines and motor roads were concentrated in the south where the majority of the commodities and minerals were, and never extended to the North.

By the second decade of the 20th century, things had begun to change in the political and economic sphere. From 1919, there was a reversal in colonial political policy as the government moved to bolster the strength and power of chiefs. The Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (1924), Guggisberg Constitution (1925), three Provincial Councils of Chiefs (1925), and Native Administration Ordinance (1927) collectively granted more powers to chiefs to control their local tribunals, adjudicate more independently customary issues, social based matters, to make by-laws (so long as they did not go counter to the British concept of law) and to get chiefs generally and directly involved in local governance. It also institutionalised the position of chiefs in the affairs of the state as indispensable partners in the exercise of the policy of indirect rule and secured it from the upheavals caused by mass moves by commoners towards destoolment.[30] The Native Administration Ordinance (1927) made provision for the creation of a Joint Provincial Council (and Asanteman Council in Asante from 1935), which served as a sort of

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[27] Albert A. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (London: Longman Group, 1975), 96–97.

[28] See Agbodeka, *Ghana Economic History*, 105–116; and Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 93–96.

[29] See Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 99–100.

[30] See Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 11–13; and Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 115–116.

"super-traditional authorities," whose platform served as a sounding board for people's views on the policies of the colonial government.[31] Chieftaincy, thus, became not only part and parcel of the governance structure of the state, but also an important player, as well as what Boahen describes as a "decisive voice" in the political fabric.[32]

In the economic sphere, the hitherto uncoordinated efforts at social progress whereby mainly chiefs, especially in the rural areas, led their people to construct roads, schools, hospitals and other social amenities[33] was superimposed with the idea of state centralised economic planning. Under Governor Guggisberg (1919–1927), the maiden "Ten Year Plan of Development and Welfare for the Gold Coast (1920–1930)" was introduced. The plan proposed a total expenditure of £25 million to develop mainly the infrastructure of the country. This included the construction of a harbour, expansion of railways, roads, water supply, town improvements and drainage, hydraulic and electrical works, public buildings, posts and telegraphs, as well as maps and surveys.[34] The successful implementation of Guggisberg's plan significantly integrated the three territories that then formed the Gold Coast as one economic unit.[35] It also made a profound statement on the centrality of the (colonial) government in ensuring development or the social advancement of the

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[31] Francis K. Buah, *A History of Ghana* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 107.

[32] Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 115.

[33] Chiefs were not the only ones leading this endeavour. Indeed, several religious organizations and private citizens were also involved throughout the best part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See for instance: H. O. A. McWilliam and M. A. Kwamena-Poh, *The Development of Education in Ghana* (London: Longman, 1975), 67; Charles K. Graham, *The History of Education in Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1976), 49; and Owusu, *Prempeh*, 143–144.

[34] Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 110. Two decades later, under Governor Burns, another Ten-Year Plan of Development and Welfare for the Gold Coast (1946–1956) was launched in 1946, seeking to inject about £11.5 million into the economy. This plan was however less enthusiastically received and was abandoned a year later. Irrespective of this, the policy of central economic planning remained. See Kodwo Ewusi, *Economic Development Planning in Ghana* (New York: Exposition Press, 1973), 1–5; and Kay, *Colonialism Political Economy*, 322–323.

[35] These were the Colony, Ashanti, and the Northern Territories. British Togoland became part of the Gold Coast administratively after its seizure from the Germans during the First World War. In the Plebiscite of 1956, they chose to become part of Ghana territorially.

people. It is a role that the people, particularly, the chiefs, came to expect the government to play with much seriousness as one of its profound functions. For instance, commenting in 1924 on the issue of the government ensuring the modernization of Kumasi and Asante, *Asantehene* Prempeh I stated that "from the point of view of civilization, Kumasi is very backward in comparison with places elsewhere in the world. On my journey to and from the Seychelles I saw many places superior to Kumasi, e.g. Bombay and Cape Town. The latter looks just like a European city and Government helped to make it so..."[36] In other words, he expected the colonial government to do more towards the socio-economic development of the people, as it was already doing in other parts of the world.

The implementation of the plan also validated the prevalence of the Western conceptualisation of development in Ghana. More importantly, the general acceptance by the vast majority of the people and chiefs of this conceptualisation revealed how far local notions of development had shifted. Wilks pinpoints a meeting in April 1925 in Kumasi between the recently returned Prempeh I (then seen by the British as a private citizen and thus referred to as "Mr Prempeh") and the visiting Prince of Wales. Ward Price, the Prince's official diarist, captured Prempeh I repeatedly saying "much progress, much progress" and remarked that "progress is now a magic word for Prempeh".[37] The encapsulation of this progress (or *Nkosuo*), as Price rightly assumed, was the changes in Kumasi wrought by the British and the general economic development that was on-going. Suffice it to say *Nkosuo* (or progress) in Asante thought was now firmly conceptualised and rendered as western socio-economic development, while the political connotation had been pushed to the background.

The inter war years saw the growth of the political and economic power of chiefs in Ghana. In 1939, the Native Administration Treasuries Ordinance was enacted. This created a system of locally funded State Treasuries across the country with the central aim of mobilizing revenue

[36] Akyeampong, *Liquor Consumption Insights*, 318.
[37] Wilks, *Unity and Progress*, 58.

for local developmental projects such as building of roads, water works, schools and health centres.[38] In the process, chiefs came to be at the centre of development in their localities, and important political players who could not always be controlled by the colonial authorities or their subjects. Reflecting on this era, Rathbone notes that chiefs had "struggled for and had achieved a degree of control over the lives of large numbers of men and women," by skilfully harnessing new opportunities and "ring-fencing its activities with a culturally and hence politically sensitive ideology [...built on] chiefly readings of 'custom', the outcomes of succession disputes, wrangles over jurisdiction and legal processes..."[39]

The greatly enhanced power of the chiefs in the inter-war years became both a tool for playing survival politics or a subject of intense contention by their dissatisfied subjects. On the one hand, they used the power to support or resist colonial policies, depending on how beneficial it would be to further enhancing their power. This can be seen in the mass support of chiefs for the colonial government's relaxation of liquor laws in 1934, much to the chagrin of their subjects;[40] and their turn around support for the cocoa hold ups of the inter war years, especially, 1937–8.[41] On the other hand, however, the verdict was the overwhelming misuse of the power by the chiefs. This included arbitrary rule, passing oppressive by-laws, partisanship, exploitation of community resources and properties for personal gain, unfair judgments, bribery, and financial malfeasance.[42] Therefore, by the end of the Second World War, the country was yearning for reforms in the political and economic role of chiefs in the affairs of the state. The chiefs tried to pre-empt the reforms by initiating internal changes. In Asante, for instance, the issue of chiefs using the stool resources to acquire private property and hiding it was addressed. Chiefs

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[38] See Busia, *Position of Chiefs*, 141; and Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 13, 17.
[39] Richard Rathbone, "Kwame Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Fate of 'Natural Rulers' under Nationalist Governments," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 10 (2000): 50.
[40] Akyeampong, *Liquor Consumption Insights*, 314–315.
[41] See Richard C. Crook, "Decolonization, the Colonial State, and Chieftaincy in the Gold Coast," *African Affairs*, 85(338) (Jan 1986): 94; and Austin, *Ghana Politics*, 25.
[42] See Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 15; and Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 5–6.

were from then on permitted to acquire private property and this was to be treated separately from stool property.[43] Chiefs also elected to make personal contributions to the National Development Fund and supported new by-laws to curb bribery and corruption in local administration.[44] These actions could, however, not curtail the incoming sweeping change, that would push chiefs away from the centre of the political and economic sphere.

In 1944, the first round of sweeping reforms began with the promulgation of the Native Authority Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance. The first ordinance created "State Councils," run by Chiefs and restricted to issues of ritual and tradition. This was to be separated from "Native Authorities," which was to be managed by educated persons, tasked with the issues of local governance.[45] At the same time, the Native Court Ordinance sought to deal with the judicial excesses of chiefs and the jurisdiction of customary law. Further reforms took place with the coming into force of the Burns Constitution of 1946. The creation of the Legislative Assembly of mainly elected Ghanaians shifted the power of representation from the chiefs to the educated elite. The events following the riots of February and March 1948 provided yet another opportunity for the colonial government to push further reforms. The resultant Watson Commission report of June 1948, among other things,[46] found "an intense suspicion that the chiefs are being used by the government as an instrument for the delay if not for the suppression of the political aspirations of the people."[47] The Watson Commission recommended further democratization and the reorganization of local governance – much to the disadvantage of chiefly power. This was generally accepted by the colonial government, following which it appointed the all-Ghanaian Coussey

[43] Busia, Po*sition of Chiefs*, 204–205; and Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 5.
[44] Busia, *Position of Chiefs*, 129; and Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 5.
[45] See Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 17.
[46] For a discussion of the report, see Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 163–164; and Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana, 1946–1960* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 74–81.
[47] Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 19; Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 13–15; and Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 158.

Committee in January 1949 to act upon the recommendations of the Watson Committee.

The Coussey Report was submitted in October 1949. It proposed a more representative government with a nationally elected assembly and a total overhaul of the local governance system, with a new Local Council replacing Native Authorities. Although chiefs were allotted one-third of the Local Council membership, the Chief Councils or State Councils were to remain separate and distinct from the Local Councils and they were limited to "declaring native customary laws and settling constitutional disputes connected with stools".[48] The colonial government generally accepted the recommendations of the Coussey Committee. These informed the new constitution that came into effect in January 1951. It can therefore be said that by 1951, the pivotal position the chiefs enjoyed in the governance structure had begun to diminish in many respects. It was within this context of reforms, that the first African government, constituted by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) came to power after a landslide victory in the 1951 general elections.

Nkrumah Era Chieftaincy in the Political and Economic Sphere (1951 – 1966)

The CPP under Nkrumah stayed in power till February 1966 when it was toppled by a military coup d'état. The Nkrumah government was extremely opposed to a strong chiefly role in the affairs of the state and, therefore, took several steps to greatly curtail their power. The nature and character of chieftaincy in the political sphere in present times can be mainly attributed to the enormous transformation it underwent during that period. An analysis of the Nkrumah government reveals that they pursued three main goals. First, the chiefs who had hitherto been frontline personalities with a "decisive voice" in the politics of the state were systematically reduced to mere footnotes whose very existence on the stool

[48] Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 21. Also see Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 16–17; Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 165; and Austin, *Ghana Politics*, 85–86.

or skin was subject to government's recognition and approval. The government, using its two-thirds majority in parliament, dismantled the safe guards for chieftaincy in the independence Constitution. For instance, the Constitution had, amongst other things, guaranteed a decisive political voice for chiefs at the regional level (within the framework of the Regional Assemblies) and national level (within the framework of the National House of Chiefs).[49] The government, however, enacted several Acts and constitutional amendments which cumulatively eroded the political voice of chiefs. These included the Constitution (repeal of restrictions) Act of 1958, the Constitution (Amendment) Act of 1959, the Chiefs (Recognition) Act of 1959, and the Chieftaincy Act of 1961; the resort to universal adult suffrage and partisan elections for political expression; and the appointment of regional and district commissioners as the legitimate political representatives of the government.

Secondly, the CPP government ensured that chiefs were effectively removed from the governance and judicial structure of the state. For instance, Section 64(2) of the independence Constitution, provided for the establishment of Regional Assemblies with representation from the traditional authorities.[50] The government, after independence, repealed this provision. It further went on to enact the Local Council Act (1958) which abolished the Native Authorities and established Local and District Councils as the official governance structures at the local and district levels.[51] With respect to the judiciary, the government enacted the Local Courts Act (1958) that abolished the Native Authority Tribunals, thereby giving the state courts a monopoly over all judicial matters in Ghana. Chiefs were thus confined to judicial matters affecting chieftaincy itself. Even regarding that, Part V of the Chieftaincy Act of 1961 (with amendments in 1963 and 1965) provided that the President, through the Minister of Local Government, shall appoint a Judicial Commissioner to

[49] Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 33–35; and Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 118.
[50] Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 34.
[51] Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 36.

oversee their judicial disputes, after which a report shall be submitted to the President for a final and binding decision on the matter.[52]

Thirdly, the government worked to weaken the political front of the chiefs and silence any remaining anti-government (or anti-CPP) sentiments. The government did this by overtly and covertly dabbling in local chieftaincy politics in order to get its sympathizers into chiefly positions. The CPP party agents in the localities sponsored several successful destoolment drives across the country, particularly, in Asante, Akyem Abuakwa, Brong Ahafo and other areas perceived to be strongholds of the opposition political party. In 1959, the regime passed the Chiefs (Recognition) Act, which gave the Local Government Minister the power to recognize or de-recognize a chief through the process of gazette.[53] With this tool, chiefs considered as enemies had their recognition gladly withdrawn by the state and were effectively destooled. A famous example occurred in October, 1957, when the government issued a formal gazette notice of the destoolment of the *Okyenhene* Ofori Atta II. In Asante, a similar fate befell the anti-CPP *Offinsohene*, Nana Wiafe Akenten II, who was also replaced by a pro-CPP chief through a gazette notice.[54] To further weaken the anti CPP *Asantehene*, the government sided with the pro-CPP Brong and Ahafo chiefs and created the Brong Ahafo Region out of the Ashanti Region.[55] Therefore by 1966, chiefs had been reduced to title holders with ineffective power in the political sphere. The only chiefs who remained with any form of power were those who sided with the CPP and were thus showered with the spoils of power such as elevation to paramountcy status, headship of cultural

[52] Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 37–39.
[53] Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 142–143.
[54] Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 113, 127.
[55] See Kwame O. Kwarteng, "Ahafo: Big Men, Small Boys and the Politics of Regionalism in Ghana from 1896–1986," *Journal of History and Cultures* 1 (2012): 37–50; Jean M. Allman, *The Quills of the Porcupine: Asante Nationalism in an Emergent Ghana* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 187; and Austin, *Ghana Politics*, 380.

centres, membership of boards, ambassadorial positions, district capitals and development projects.[56]

In the economic sphere, the CPP government made the rapid socio-economic development of the country its topmost priority. According to Killick, the conceptualisation of this development was in two ways. Firstly, development was conceived in tangible terms such as the creation of jobs, the building of roads, schools, water supplies and other manifestations of social change. Secondly, this conceptualisation made room for the pursuit of development in conventional economist thought of economic growth.[57] The CPP, therefore, did not shift from conceiving development in Western terms. Rather, it deepened its acceptance of this paradigm. In doing so, Dzorbo argues that Nkrumah's views on Ghana's development path were congruent with three development ideas that were hegemonic in the post Second World War period. These were: mainstream development economics which posited a "big push" strategy to be adopted by the state to attain development; socialist ideology which conceived the state as the main vehicle for development; and Keynesianism which also advocated a strong role for the state in the market economy.[58]

The implementation of this philosophy had ramifications for the chiefs in the economic sphere. Firstly, the CPP intensified the practice of central economic planning. Between 1951 and 1966 it initiated four different economic plans, which served as the guiding principles and policies for activities in the economic sphere of the state. They include the Five-Year Development Plan (1951–1956), the Consolidated Plan (1958–1959), the Second Five Year Development Plan (1959–1964) and the

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[56] For instance, the pro-CPP Bechemhene and Effiduasehene were elevated to paramountcy status while a strong CPP supporter, Essikadohen, Nana Kobina Nketsiah, was made the Interim Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, from 1961–1962. Also, the Adontenhene of Akyem Abuakwa was appointed as Ghana's High Commissioner to India. See Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 41; Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 132, 145, 148; Austin, *Ghana Politics*, 377; and Francis Agbodeka, *A History of the University of Ghana: Half a Century of Higher Education (1948–1998)* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 1998), 137.

[57] Tony Killick, *Development Economics in Action* (London: Heinemann, 1970), 50–52.

[58] Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 121. Also see Killick, *Development Economics*, 54–55.

Seven Year Development Plan (1964–1970).[59] The first plan sought to invest about £120 million in the socio-economic infrastructure. Emphasis was placed on agriculture, secondary industries, transport and communication, and key social services.[60] The other two development plans followed a generally similar pattern. The Seven Year Development Plan was modelled on the socialist economic ideology that made the state the sole player in the economic sphere. For chiefs, Nkrumah's models of central economic planning cut them out from playing any major roles in rural development, as was the case during the colonial era.

This was further exacerbated by how these development plans were executed. Aside the various ministries that were traditionally mandated to undertake projects, the CPP government established a framework of development agencies and state corporations to execute its economic programmes. Thus, the Industrial Development Corporation which was originally set up by the colonial authorities in 1947 to facilitate the growth of local manufacturing interest was retooled and expanded by the CPP government into a major vehicle for industrial development. Similarly, the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) was tasked to develop not only alternative exports to cocoa but also food production and marketing facilities. Again, government appointees at the Local and District Council levels were mandated as the sole agents of development in the locality, thereby leaving virtually no room for the involvement of chiefs in that enterprise.

The most crucial of all the actions of the CPP regime in the economic sphere was its resolve to attack the land ownership, revenue base, and other related financial dealings of the major anti-CPP chiefs,

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[59] Apart from the Consolidated Plan of 1958 whose completion was as scheduled, all the other plans were either truncated or had their completion periods extended. For instance, the first Five Year Plan was completed in 1957 instead of 1956. The Second Five Year Development plan was abruptly stopped by the CPP government in 1961 and replaced with the Seven Year Development Plan in 1964. The latter plan was also truncated by the 1966 coup. See Ewusi, *Economic Development*, 8–10; and Kay, *Colonialism Political Economy*, 322.

[60] See Buah, *Ghana History*, 167. Also see Agbodeka, *Ghana Economic History*, 141–149; Boahen, *Evolution and Change*, 173; and Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 120–129.

especially, the *Okyenhene* and the *Asantehene*. The government instituted a politically-motivated commission of enquiry into the financial management and exercise of customary jurisdiction by the Akyem-Abuakwa, Asanteman, and Kumasi State Traditional Councils respectively. The predictable findings indicted these chiefs for gross financial mismanagement. Armed with this, the government passed the Akim Abuakwa (Stool Revenue) Act in 1958, which gave it the power to control the revenues and property of the Akyem Abuakwa state and for the application of these revenues by a Receiver appointed by the Minister of Local Government and acting under his instructions.[61] Also passed was the Ashanti (Stool Lands) Act in 1958, which transferred the trusteeship and management of all lands vested in the Golden Stool and the office of the *Asantehene* to the President (or the "Governor-General").[62] Other laws towards this direction include the Stool Lands Control Act (1960), the Administration of Lands Act (1962), and the Concessions Act (1962). The Native Authority Tribunals became proscribed in 1958, and thus blocked a significant source of revenue to chiefs and effectively weakened them economically.

Effectively, by the time the CPP government left office in 1966, the state had established an overwhelming presence in the economic and political spheres of the country. In doing this, it left no doubt in anybody's mind as to which authority reigned supreme and had to be obeyed. All resistance to its power had been crushed and chiefs lost significant power and influence in the political and economic spheres of the state. The chiefs, having seen the fate that befell the perceived opposition chiefs, were left with no other choice but to once again turn to their "survival politics" strategy of supporting the government of the day and abiding by dictates in order to remain on their stools and skins in peace. It is this background that ushered in the post Nkrumah years.

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[61] Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 36; and Austin, *Ghana Politics*, 377.
[62] Arhin Brempong, *Transformation*, 36; Allman, *Quills*, 187; and Rathbone, *Nkrumah and Chiefs*, 128.

Post Nkrumah Era Chieftaincy in the Political and Economic Sphere (1966 – 2000)

Ghana experienced its most politically turbulent years between 1966 and 1992. The country witnessed six different governments, with three of them being military dictatorships.[63] In January 1993, the Fourth Republican Constitution came into being and ushered in a stable multi party democratic rule. Since then, political power has alternated between the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party. For the chieftaincy institution, however, the turbulence in the political sphere rather marked a period of revival, following the high handedness of the state during the Nkrumah years. Constitutional safeguards for the chieftaincy institution to insulate it from government interference and high handedness for parochial political interests have been reintroduced. Article 176(2) of the 1979 Constitution, for instance, prohibited Parliament from enacting any legislation to give the state the right to accord or withdraw recognition to or from a chief. Also significant is the cautious but steady reintroduction of chiefs into a position of importance in the political sphere of the country. Chiefs have been prominent and mandatory members of the Council of State, the highest constitutionally-mandated advisory body to the President. The 1992 Constitution further provides for mandatory appointments of chiefs onto important state bodies such as the Prison Council, Regional Coordinating Councils, Land Commission, among others. Despite these inroads, Nkrumah era proscriptions which bar reigning chiefs from active politics and having statutory powers in local governance and the judicial structure are still in place.

In the economic sphere, the various governments after Nkrumah experimented with different development paradigms. The staunchly anti-socialist National Liberation Council (NLC) military government of 1966 – 69 and the civilian Progress Party (PP) government pursued a liberal,

[63] These were National Liberation Council (NLC, 1966–1969), the National Redemption Council/Supreme Military Councils I & II (NRC/SMC, 1972–June 1979), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC, June–August 1979), and the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC, 1981–1992). The civilian governments were the Progress Party (PP, 1969–1972) and the Peoples National Party (PNP, 1979–1981).

market focused development paradigm while the National Redemption Council (NLC) and Supreme Military Council (SMC) military governments of 1972 – 79 swung the development paradigm again towards a strong state presence in the economic sphere. The latter's period however witnessed a dramatic and calamitous economic decline, resulting in political unrests and two successful coups. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) junta that overthrew the SMC government in June 1979 stayed in power for three months and concerned itself mostly with tackling perceived corruption in officialdom and amongst citizens such as market women. The duty of rescuing the economy thus fell on the People's National Party (PNP) government which, upon coming to power in September 1979, swung the pendulum again towards a liberal development path. This could, however, not significantly turn back the socio-economic decay in which the country found itself. On December 31st, 1981, the PNP government was toppled in a coup d'état led by Jerry John Rawlings, who replaced it with the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) military government.

The PNDC initially set out on a Marxist-Socialist development path, as the solution to Ghana's economic problems. This policy rather exacerbated the already worsening socio-economic situation in the country, with the World Bank declaring that the average Ghanaian was at this time poorer than he or she had been at the time of independence.[64] With the anticipated financial help from the Soviet Bloc not forthcoming, the regime was left with no choice but to renounce the Marxist-Socialist path and subscribe to the World Bank and International Monetary Bank's (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in early 1983. Between the PNDC regime (1981–1992) and its successor NDC government (1993–2000), Ghana underwent five different SAPs. These included the Economic Reform Programmes (ERP I & II), Programme of Actions to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD), and the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (GPRS I & II). The key policies during this period include: stabilization of the economy, privatization of

[64] Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 230.

state industries, removal of government subsidies, downsizing of public sector employment, improvement of the state's administrative capacity, institutional and legal reforms, and the encouragement of private sector activity.[65]

The SAPs produced a number of results. Firstly, the policies effectively anchored Ghana firmly on the path of neo-liberal development. From this period, the state's presence and rigid political control of the economic sphere was significantly scaled back, while economic activities were increasingly subjected to the logic of the markets. Secondly, policies led to the emergence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and other vibrant non-state actors in the economic space. These groups mainly focused on filling the socio-economic gap created by the state's welfare policy withdrawals, removal of subsidies, public sector retrenchments and lack of adequate social safety net for the poor and vulnerable. Their activities were further boosted in the last decade of the 20th century with the increased emphasis of the neo-liberal discourse, donor agencies and influential institutions, such as the United Nations (UN) and World Bank, on social and human development parameters, and community or bottom – up development approach as opposed to the traditional top – down approach.

The prevailing conditions provided a perfect covering for chiefs to re-emerge as active non-state actors in the economic sphere, in what the then *Asantehene* Opoku Ware II termed as agents of "self-development". Using the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the Ashanti Confederacy in 1985, the *Asantehene* skilfully played on the inadequacy of government resources in ensuring development and the potential of harnessing citizens contributions towards achieving it through chiefly-led development initiatives at the community level. In the process the *Asantehene* revived and redefined the old concept of *Nkosuo* from the 1925 Prempeh era, meaning, general government-led tangible manifestations of socio-economic development. Thus, within the context it was used, the "self" in the term rendered *Nkosuo* to mean the non-governmental

[65] Dzorbo, *Ghana in Search*, 237.

development initiatives towards the provision of community-level jobs, roads, schools, water supply, and socio-economic safety nets.

The importance chiefs attached to this agenda was symbolised by the *Asantehene* Opoku Ware's creation of the *Nkosuohene* stool in 1985, to spearhead chiefly-led development projects.[66] All the other paramountcies in Asanteman were also instructed to do the same.[67] The *Asantehene* went further ten years later, on the occasion of his Silver Jubilee Celebration in 1995, to launch the Otumfuo Opoku Ware Jubilee Foundation. The Foundation, operating under four thematic areas of education, health, cultural preservation and environmental preservation, became another vehicle to carry out his self-development agenda.[68] By the end of *Asantehene* Opoku Ware II's reign in 1999, the Foundation was engaged in awarding bursaries and educational paraphernalia to needy students in basic and second cycle institutions; running preventive programmes to improve healthcare delivery to needy children; working to preserve Asante cultural practices, norms and traditions through the Manhyia Palace Museum project; and teaming up with relevant bodies to stem the tide of environmental degradation in Asanteman, particularly, deforestation.[69] Writing against this backdrop in 1999, Wilks' rightly asserts that the redefinition of *Nkosuo* by Opoku Ware II (1970 – 1999)

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[66] Field interview with current Asanteman *Nkosuohene*, Nana Osei Owusu Banahene, 29th April, 2010. The Kumasi Paramountcy is composed of eleven divisions, with the *Nkosuo* stool being the last to be created in 1985. The importance attached to the stool can be seen in the nature of its incorporation into the council of chiefs. Under the traditional administrative setup, the *Nkosuo* stool is classified as a divisional stool under the Kumasi paramountcy (Kumasi Traditional Council). The stool is also the only patrilineal stool under the Kumasi division and the only *Nkosuo* stool designated as a division within Asanteman and the whole country. See Kutin, *Constructing*, 100, 101, 124.

[67] Wilks, *Unity and Progress*, 67.

[68] Field interview with Mr. Justice Brobbey, Administrator, Opoku Ware Jubilee Foundation; 22nd April, 2010. Much of what Justice Brobbey discussed was corroborated by Mr. Osei Kwadwo, who is the immediate past curator of the Manhyia Palace Museum. His interview was conducted on 27th April, 2010. It appears a large portion of the information given to the researchers can also be found in the commemorative pamphlet that was published in 2005 to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Foundation.

[69] Interview with Mr. Justice Brobbey, 22nd April, 2010. Corroborated by Mr. Osei Kwadwo, 27th April, 2010. Also see Otumfuo Opoku Ware Jubilee Foundation 10th Anniversary Celebration Pamphlet, 12–18.

was one of the important achievements of his reign.[70] Wilks assertion holds strength, as by the end of the 20th century, the *Nkosuo* stool and the *Asantehene's* initiatives had become blueprints for chiefs across Ghana. Thus, irrespective of the challenges and abuse of the *Nkosuo* title in several instances as shown by George Bob-Milliar and Marijke Steegstra, the stool and the development initiatives have been extensively replicated by chiefs across Ghana to reassert themselves in the economic and political sphere.[71]

Conclusion

It is evident that by the end of the 20th century, the prominence of chiefs in the political and economic spheres had seen a significant improvement in its position, a far cry from the low it sunk to under the Nkrumah regime in the middle of the 20th century. It can be seen that the scope of their significance or otherwise was a direct result of policies implemented by both the colonial and post-colonial state in those spheres. Again, it is worth noting that chiefs have not been passive actors during these periods. Rather, they have used varied survival strategies to navigate the conflicting demands of the state and the communities they lead. In the process, chiefs like the *Asantehene* have played on and redefined cultural ideologies like progress (*Nkosuo*), Asante corporate identity, self-help, and the centrality of chiefs in development or societal progress at the community level. In a sense, the example of the *Asantehene* shows that while the mixed government and traditional resurgence theses adequately explain the

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[70] Wilks, *Unity and Progress*, p. 67.

[71] As George Bob-Milliar and Marijke Steegstra respectively show, the criteria for choosing the occupants of this stool has seen some controversy in recent times as it has been opened to several foreigners, mostly African-Americans, Europeans and Asians. This has however not changed the core mandate of this office, which is to spearhead the socio-economic advancement of the occupant's jurisdiction through tangible developmental projects and initiatives. See George M. Bob-Milliar, "Chieftaincy, Diaspora, and Development: The Institution of *Nkosuohene* in Ghana," *African Affairs*, 108 (433) (2009): 541–558, and Marijke Steegstra, "'White' Chiefs and Queens in Ghana: Personification of 'Development,' in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, eds. Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba, (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 603–620.

current state of shared power in Ghana's political and economic spheres, it falls short on historicity, which the decentralised despotism thesis explores. However, part of Mamdani's approach which stresses the urban-citizen/rural subject divide does not apply, as the reach of the *Asantehene's* power in both spheres transcends those strict dichotomies. Finally, it can be seen that van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal's chiefly syncretism thesis provides a framework to explore the continued changing face of chieftaincy in Ghana, although further research is needed to explore the perception of citizens in the localities on these changes.

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Transgressive Rupture or Subversive Culture: A Semiotic Deconstruction of Staetopygia in West African Cinema

Wincharles COKER

Abstract

Based on a critical visual analysis of the scopophilia, body fetishism, and commodity culture, I attempt to deconstruct representations of the huge derrières of two actresses in Ghallywood and Nollywood. The analysis pays attention to how cinematographic elements of composition, color, and lighting in selected films the two actresses have starred reinforce the myth of the butt as a signifier of economic and socio/cultural capital. The article raises concerns over whether the hyper-sexualization of West African films points to a transgressive rupture of the industry or a subversive culture of the African ethos of decency.

Keywords: Fetishism, Scopophilia, Staetopygia, Semiotics, West Africa, Cinema

Introduction

A little over a decade ago when I was a freshman in a University in Ghana, I engaged in a social practice I would today term *tù hwɛ*. This Twi[1] phrase translates "butt gazing", and is qualitatively voyeuristic. In those years my mates and I would hide – and I suspect most young men still do – in our halls of residence, and chant utterances of admiration (and sometimes disdain too!) in praise of the attractive backsides, impressive curves, and large breasts of female passers-by. Elsewhere I have labeled this social act *browsing* due to its almost totalizing, aggressive scan over the female body (Coker, 2013). In the context of the University I attended and where I am

now faculty, we exclaimed in heightened phantasmagoria, "Hwɛ, ɛtu nie!" to wit "Goodness! What sort of buttocks are these!" The boldest of us would go as far as chanting, "Tù pɔn wɔ skuul pɔn!" to wit "the hugest butt in the entire University". Utterances of the sort were intriguing as they represented attempts by gazers to create a rhythmic pun "tù pɔn wɔ skuul pɔn". The pun is expressed by the superlative *pɔn*. My colleagues and I thought we were simply responding to the external stimuli our eyes were being fed with. Mainstream cinema was yet another source of the stimuli. Today with the advantage of intellectual insight, I believe that this practice leads to far more intricate questions. For example, if Ghanaians believe in the decency of sexuality, why then do the media "brandish" salacious images in film? Or more narrowly, how is the butt of Ghanaian and Nigerian female actresses culturally encoded, and why is staetopygia currently fetishized, commodified, and even celebrated in West African cinema?

Certainly, this is not the first time answers to these questions have been sought. In *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault (1976) spoke of the repressive hypothesis that regulated the conduct of sexuality in eighteenth century Victorian England in ways that mirror the African ontology of sex. Sex was and still is a private matter, an act to be practiced only by a man and his wife. For Foucault, as for many African cultures, any expenditure of energy on purely libidinal activities—as in butt gazing—is frowned upon, and that sex outside the marriage contract is not simply prohibited, but punished. That is, there is in many African cultures an effort to promote what Gayle Rubin (1984) has termed the "charmed circle" or Barbara Creed (1995) calls a "one sex model". Foucault, however, adds that the discourse of sexuality began to change in the nineteenth century as people began opposing societal norms in order to talk freely about sex and enjoy it. Current trends in Ghana, for example, show that sex talk is gaining roots in the nation not to talk of commercial sex workers' incessant knocks at the door of the presidency to legalize prostitution[1]. So are Ghanaians and their neighbors Nigerians becoming tolerant of sex appeals in the media? To what extent is the

(*mis)*representation of female buttocks looked upon in Ghanaian and Nigerian films?

In the wake of scary media reports of a big butt fetish, obsession, and addiction among some daring women in differing cultures, it is important that we critique the many ways women with this "asset" are being fetishized and commodified in popular culture. Black or white, rich or poor, royal or ordinary, it is difficult to determine where to draw the lines. The story of Vanity Wonder (picture below), a 30 year old Jamaican American who spent $ 15,000 for 1000 black market butt injections, is a stark allegory of the down sides of this practice for women in the entertainment industry[2]. Having escaped death by the teeth, Vanity confesses in her book *Shot Girls* (2012) that butt surgery is stubbornly popular first among Black women, and then Caucasians, Asians and other races.

In this article, I examine the representational politics of staetopygia in the mainstream cinema of Nigeria's Nollywood and Ghana's Ghallywood, focusing on Mercy Johnson's and Veeda Darko's exclusive backsides respectively. The analysis draws from the scholarship in critical visual analysis notions of the gaze/scopophilia, fetishism, and the body in commodity culture. The critique also pays attention to how cinematographic elements of composition, design, color, and lighting afforded in some selected films these actresses have starred reinforce the myth surrounding Hottentotness in West African cinema. The significance of this work lies in its contribution to work in African cinema that has so far paid less attention to the problem (Gray, 1990; Okome, 2007; Haynes, 2010). Or as Garritano (2013) argues, "The booming commercial video industries in Ghana and Nigeria, which produce movies meant first and foremost to entertain, have brought *pleasure into visibility as a crucial dimension of analysis*" (emphasis mine, p. 11). But what is the nature of this pleasure? Henderson (2013) argues that such a question has not yet been answered empirically. In the next section I offer a svelte review of scholarly interest in staetopygia.

Big Butts, Big Discourses

Discussions of female sexuality in general, and the booty, in particular, can be traced to nineteenth-century art, medicine, and literature. This was the epoch in which the thought of a woman having "big booties" was theorized as an abnormality. In "Black Bodies, White Bodies", Gilman (1985) draws on the story of 25 year old Khoisan woman Saartje Baartman of South Africa, commonly referred to as Hottentot Venus, to unmask the racial stereotypes associated with the Black female body (*See also* Scully & Crais, 2012; Chaveau, 2012 for a comprehensive discussion on her exploitation in both Paris and London). Gilman argues that the Black woman's body was written away as one whose physiognomy, and the form of her genitalia underscore her difference. What is most remarkable is that the essay exposes the way Black women were thought to be abnormal, diseased, and prostitutes whose concupiscence knew no bounds.

He cites Buffon to have said that Blacks had an animal-like sexual appetite that went so far as to lead Black women to copulate with apes. According to Gilman, the body of a Black woman with huge buttocks and labia was perceived as "the embodiment of sexuality and of all that is associated with sexuality – disease as well as passion" (cited in Jones, 2003: 175). Today such a conception has been scientifically challenged. In a recent article published in the *International Journal of Obesity,* Manopoulos, Karpe and Frayn (2010) of the University of Oxford have shown that huge buttocks are rather resistant to chronic illnesses, and are less likely to develop cholesterol, heart disease, and diabetes.

Guzmán and Valdiva (2004) have revisited the subject of the Hottentot in popular culture. Their work critiques how the commodification of the butt has become an almost inescapable affirmation of the increasing centrality of Latinadad to US popular culture. Focusing on the hypercommodified bodies of Salma Hayek, Jennifer Lopez, and Frida Kahlo, the authors maintain that popular culture makes capital from the sexualization and fetishization of the breasts and butts of these icons. For example, they note that Jennifer Lopez's butts have been insured up to

the tune of $1 billion. Like Gilman, Guzmán and Valdiva add that for centuries the bodies of women of color, specifically their genitals and buttocks, have been sexualized in popular culture. They further intimate that dominant representations of Latinas and African-American women are "predominantly characterized by an emphasis on the breasts, hips, and buttocks", and that these body parts "function as mixed signifiers of sexual desire and fertility as well as bodily waste and racial contamination" (Guzmán and Valdiva, 2004: 212). For example, in the case of Lopez, the authors observe that she is both celebrated and denigrated for her physical, bodily, and financial excess. They observe that whenever Jennifer Lopez appears in the popular press, her butt is glamorized and fetishized, unusually large, abnormal, irregular and by implication not Anglo-Saxon.

These arguments are also contained in the anthology of *Sexualities in History*. Barrera's "Hottentot 2000", for example, focuses exclusively on the attention grabbing butt of Jennifer Lopez. For Barrera (2002), Lopez is a modern-day Hottentot who "shares with Baartman the fact that no one needs to mention race, precisely because their butts are shorthand for 'otherness'" (p. 408). She adds that a woman's butt retains its sexual luster only when it is brought under control and discipline. Echoing Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, Barrera explains that some women perform butt surgery because they equate happiness to sexual attractiveness, a fact Wonder (2012) testifies to. Barrera writes, "The butt is the one body part everyone focuses on 'sculpting', in part because the buttocks have ever-changing symbolic value... When aesthetic surgery is performed upon the buttocks, it is to enhance their attraction" (p. 408). She says that women desire staetopygia for psyche and self-esteem. Thus this grotesque body, which once signified Otherness, is today fetishized and has gained the status of acceptabilty in the media. Big culos not only upsets hegemonic contemplations of beauty and good taste, but more importantly, it is rewriting the racialized scripts of sexuality and womanness especially for African, African American, and Latina women, I would argue. Nonetheless, we should not be quick to essentialize the argument on the representational politics of the butt. The discourse, instead, is one of ambivalence as it straddles the continuum of personal pride and looks

versus ethnicity and culture (For a comprehensive discussion on images of Latinas and Latinos in the U.S. media, see the edited collection by Rodrìguez, 1997.)

Psychoanalytic accounts of the gaze are also useful to our apprehension of the butt. Jacqueline Rose's (1986) *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* offers very rich layered descriptions of the subject pivoted on the *école freudienne*, and the writings of Lacan and Kristeva in relation to the cinematic apparatus (See also the edited volume by Erens, 1990 and Fausto-Sterling's 2000 *Sexing the Body*). Although Mulvey's (1975/2003) thesis is situated within the Hollywood machinery, her work offers insight into how the fascination of film is reinforced by pre-existing patterns of visual pleasure within human agents. According to Mulvey, society is so patriarchal that its everyday unconscious practices are structured by male-centric discourses. She intimates that the cinema is a medium of reproducing the pleasures and desires repressed in men as they gaze at the woman object. This act of visual pleasure, according to her, is structured in particularly meaningful ways. She argues that however unconscious the artisanal dimensions of cinematography is, still it cannot be denied that it has a political tilt. Mulvey insists that men experience visual pleasure mainly by scopophilia. This occurs when viewers engage in voyeurism on the woman-object. Here the sexual body of a woman becomes an exhibition. A woman, in film, simply connotes a sense of *to-be-looked-at-ness*, Mulvey says. However, in the context of West African cinema, we need to be careful in our theorization of Hottentotness. For if gender, or being a woman, like Butler (1988) contends, is a performative act, then we may argue that so too is "big butting". It is yet another way of existing in the world, albeit with its attendant consequences that ought to be examined as the act, I suspect, carries a cornucopia of significations in mainstream West African cinema. This industry is the subject of my next move.

The West African Film Industry

Nigeria's Nollywood and Ghana's Ghallywood are the mainstream film industries in West Africa. Arguably they are Africa's finest. According to Garritano (2013), the African cinema project was a commitment to represent Africa from an African perspective even though the industries struggle from the influence of Hollywood and Bollywood.

Thriving in Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, Nollywood is the most successful film industry on the continent. The industry produces a staggering 1,500 films each year compared to Ghana's Ghallywood which manages about two hundred (Okome, 2000; Garritano, 2013). The success of the industry dates back to the colonial era in which cinema complexes functioned in Nigeria's big cities. Although this epoch did not produce unique home-grown Nigerian films, beginning from the 1970s Nigerian components in the films were shown at cinemas especially in the south[3]. Nigeria's political economy also shaped the destiny of the industry. The oil booms of 1973 and 1978 impacted seriously on the cinema culture in Nigeria. Foreign capital flew into the industry as foreign businessmen invested in the erection of cinema complexes and through increased social spending by the Nigerian state, many citizens had extra cash to spend on cinema houses and on home television sets. The industry thus boomed. As a result, the first Nigerian film ever to be seen was Wole Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest*, directed by the African American film director Ossie Davies, and was produced by Ola Bolagun[3].

As cinema culture fizzled out, television watching blossomed. Nigerian film makers of the 1970s became television film producers in the 1980s, and produced films *en masse* for public consumption. The establishment of Nollywood goes back to Jimi Odumosu's film *Evil Encounter* (1980). Following the privatization of television stations in the country since the 1990s, Nigeria has seen unprecedented growth in the film industry comparable to India's Bollywood, and is partnering its Hollywood colleagues to improve upon sound and video effect quality

(Haynes, 2007). It goes without saying that Nollywood has captured the Ghanaian market in ways never imagined.

Ghana's film industry took off around 1948 when the Gold Coast Film Unit was set up in the Information Services Department[4]. In 1971, the Ghana Film Industry Corporation was created as a corporate body but ceased to exist as far back as 1996 when it was divested and a greater percentage of its equity holding were sold to Malaysian interests. Long before the divestiture, the Corporation had stopped the production of black and white films as from 1990. Ghana's best-known filmmaker, Kwaw Ansah of Film Africa fame, produced two films *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980) and *Heritage Africa* (1988) that won more than 12 awards[5]. Within ten years of the first local video production in 1987, as many as four videos in English were being released in Ghana each month, and over twenty years later. In 2009, Ghanaian films appeared at the rate of approximately six per week, one in English and five in Akan, the local lingua franca (Nyarko, 2008; Garritano, 2013). In 1999 the Ghana Film Awards were instituted to acknowledge the efforts of distinguished crew and cast. Notable among the entries that were nominated and which won awards were *A Stab in the Dark* (1 & 2) and *Ripples* (1 & 2) both directed by Veronica Quarshie, a graduate of the National Film and Television Institute (NAFTI). In recent times there have been some collaborations between Ghanaian and Nigerian crew and cast with a number of productions being turned out. Among these co-productions were *Web* and *Lost Hope*, which received nominations at the Ghana Film Awards[6]. The next section takes a cursory look at the profile of the two actresses whose representation I studied.

A Look at Mercy Johnson and Veeda Darko

Nigerian ace actress Mercy Johnson Okojie, was born on August 28 1984. She made her acting debut in the movie, *The Maid* in which she played the role of a possessed house help. Her performance in the movie shot her into the limelight leading her to win the 2009 African Film Award for best

supporting actress, and the 2013 Africa Magic Viewers Choice Awards She also won the Best Actress Award with a movie titled *Dumebi: The Dirty Girl.* She is a philanthropist, but has recently run into some trouble with the Directors Guild of Nigeria over alleged misconduct.[7]

Figure 1: Ace actress Mercy Johnson posing for the cameras (Google Images, 2017)

Unlike Mercy Johnson, Vida Darko, professionally known as Veeda, is a Ghanaian singer-songwriter and an actress. She broke into the film industry with a string of hit movies including "Crossing Paths" starring alongside star actors Jim Iyke and Van Vicker[7]. Veeda was born in Ghana, but migrated to the US, where she graduated from the University of Maryland with a bachelor degree in information systems. Veeda made her acting debut in 2004. The former Miss Ghana USA 2002 also played a role in *My American Nurse* 2[8], a film produced in the Diaspora.

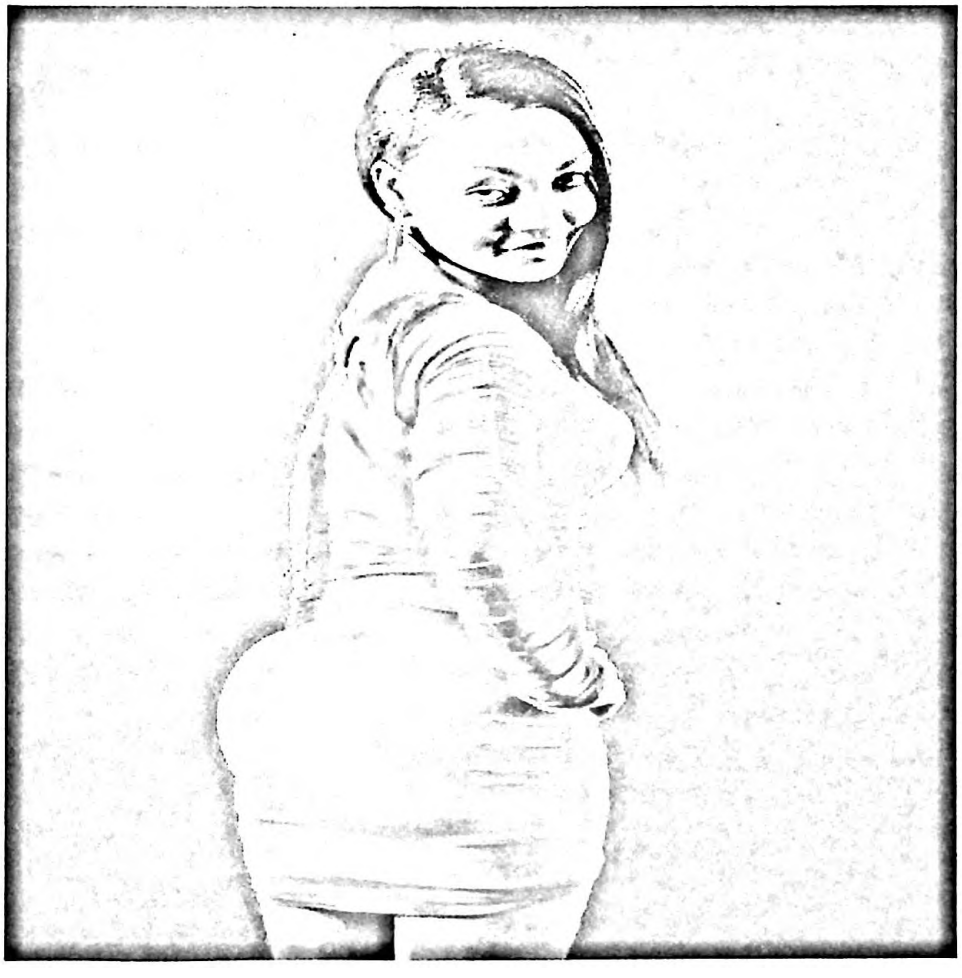

Figure 2: Actress Veeda Darko (Google Images, 2017)

In the remainder of this article, I now turn my attention to an analysis of the significations and representational politics of the butt in some films these ladies have starred. Emphasis is also placed on the effect of cinematographic elements of composition, color, and lighting.

Theorizing the Butt in West African Films: A Semiotic Deconstruction

The rhetoric of the butt in contemporary West African films is hyper-sensual and essentially fetishistic. It thrives on what Comella (2013) calls a sex economy. In *Sexy Girls*, Zita (Mercy Johnson) comes from a humble Christian family, and is about beginning College life. On campus, her roommate leads a highly immoral life, and gradually exposes Zita to the world of drinking, smoking and prostituting. What is more, she convinces Zita that in order to be protected from malicious men and be powerful, Zita needs to join the occult – the Yellow Babes – to which she eventually agrees. Throughout the film, her breasts and buttocks are graphically exposed to the camera in a way that makes it conspicuous for viewers to realize her sudden transition from a good girl to a degenerate. Right from the thirteenth minute, she makes a turn-over from a lowly girl who was mindful of her Christian upbringing and mode of dressing to one who emphasizes her backside. In the picture below (Part 2), the Yellow Babes have congregated at Zita's house.

Figure 3: Zita dancing to the amusement of her friends (*Sexy Girls*, YouTube)

It's her birthday party, and the floor is open for her. As she dances, the camera zooms on her gluteus maximus in such a very significant way. She winds and twists her back displaying impressively Samba-like dexterity. At this moment, the director, Caz Chidiebere, fixes our gaze on Mercy Johnson's backsides. We see her, but more importantly, we see her butts as she shakes them in ecstasy and to the admiration of all her occult mates. It is also interesting to note that the yellow T-shirt she dons is tussled up above her waistline such that her curvaceous body and navel line are feasted upon by the viewer. Whether or not scenes of the sort add to the development of the plot is yet another question. For now, it is not quite clear how the title *Sexy Girls* plays out in the viewer's appreciation of the film. Except for the reason that Zita's confidantes display lesbian tendencies, the title does not appear to be communicatively relevant.

But critics believe that it is *Shakira* (2009), directed by Ghallywood based director Pascal Amanfo, that brought Mercy Johnson fortune. In this trilogy starring Kofi Adjorlolo, Gavivina Tamakloe, and Eddie Nartey, we are exposed to the life of Richie (Majid Michel) who finds love again in Shakira (Mercy Johnson). He is deeply impassioned with her before he realizes that she's married. He also does not know that Shakira is a femme fatale who exploits men to achieve her diabolic ends: She wants him to murder her multimillionaire husband so she could inherit his possessions. Though Richie succeeds in the act, the scales eventually fall off his eyes as he realizes that Shakira had contracted an assassin to eliminate him. The film is replete with graphic sexualization of her body, and most especially her butt.

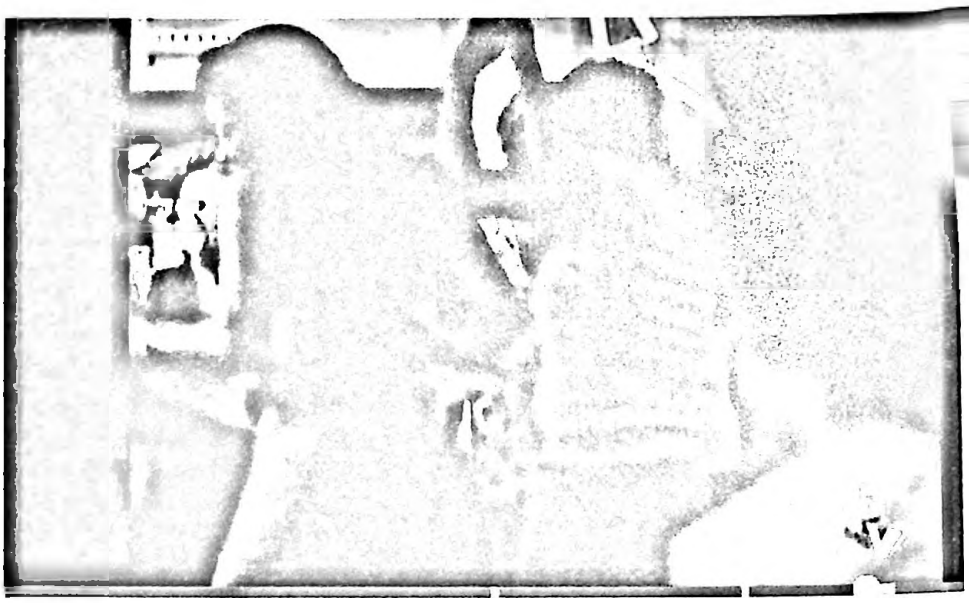

Figure 4: Shakira partying at the night club (*Shakira*, YouTube)

What we see, in the picture above, is a double articulation of intent. While Shakira is encoded for the voyeuristic pleasure of Richie, she also is represented as the fetishized other. The scene is reminiscent of Mulvey's (1975) argument that women are gazed at for men's sexual gratification. The male society is represented by Richie's lust-devouring eyes as he sits and places a perpendicular gaze at Shakira's butt. It is not the case that the scene is dark nor Shakira is dark-skinned dancing in a dark casino, for the director dons her in a red curve seeing attire just so both Richie and the viewer could behold her at all cost. One of the main reasons this scopophilia may be pleasurable to the voyeur is because the darkness allows Richie, and by extension the viewer, to look at Shakira without inhibition. In our case this is made manifest from the way the lights diminish in their brilliance. One realizes that the lights are 'thicker' on her body than in the regions of the parlor where the other men and women are dancing. This cinematographic rendition is purposeful; it emphasizes the significance of the gaze on Shakira's butts.

In the second part of the film, Richie runs into Shakira at a shopping mall, and once again he is enticed by her. It should be recalled that she once did this in Part 1 when she was dancing seductively at the night club in order to draw his attention to her with her Jezebel-like attractions, and then left him wallowing in the pool of lasciviousness.

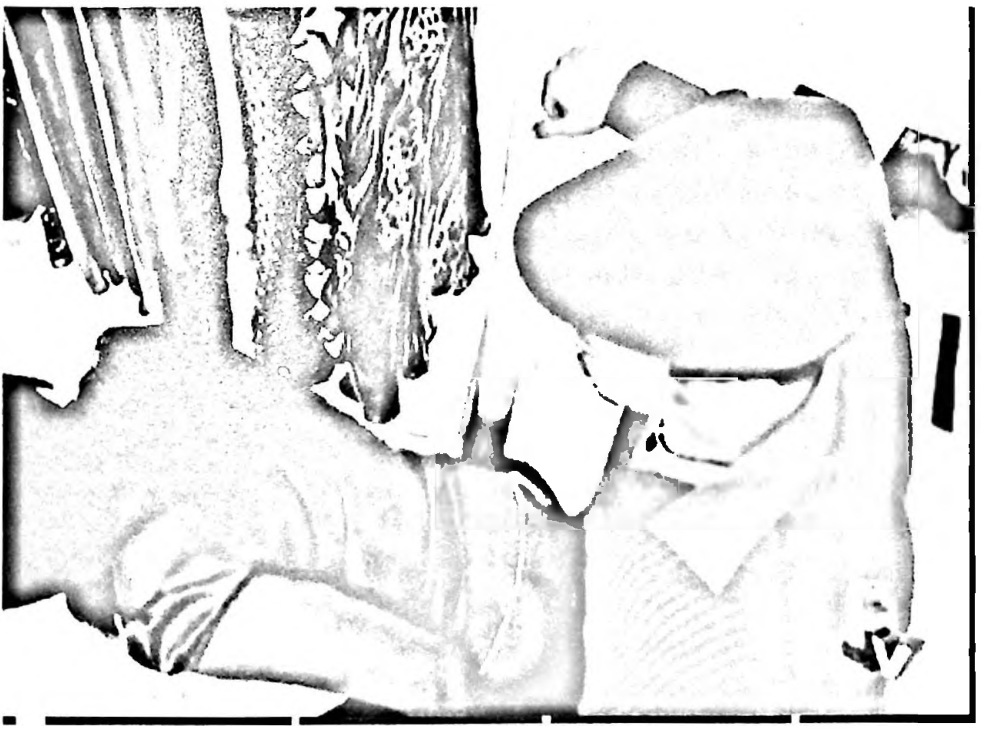

Figure 5: Shakira planting her butt on Richie's member (*Shakira*, YouTube)

But here inside this shop, the viewer reckons with the "mystery" of Shakira's butts as she firmly plants them on Richie's member. The Hottentot-like, voluptuous aura of Shakira's derrière and her sunlit rare back are accentuated by the beadlike chain she wears round her waist. Her curvaceous contour forms a confluence that neither Richie nor the viewer can fail to see. It's an almost undeniable reconnaissance. The huge well roundedness of her buttocks trapped in not-so-huge a body is almost shocking as the camera takes an arial view; Shakira is at the epicenter of

As Samantha is cheered on by hungry butt gazing men, she mounts the podium and shakes her buttocks to their admiration. There's merrymaking, and then she descends and heads towards one of the men in the audience as if to say, "There we go! You can feel the real me right in front of you." Notice how the camera captures the moves she makes, emphasizing both breasts and backsides, as she strides up and down her waist to the helpless man who can only look but cannot touch. Sturken & Cartwirhght, (2009) have remarked that commodity fetishism works best in consumer societies, and is the inevitable outcome of mass production, the practices of advertising and marketing, and the distribution of goods to many different consumers.

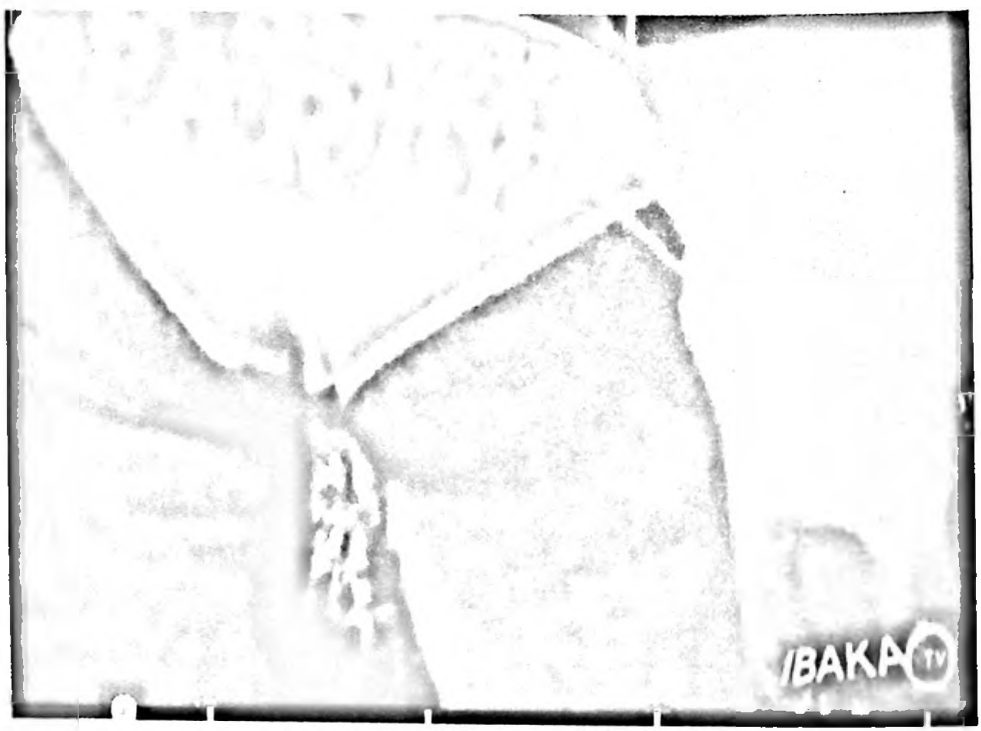

Figure 7: A close shot of Samantha's butt on display (*Pole Dancers*, YouTube)

We also need to say that Samantha is advertising her butt as a site of pleasure worth buying. Few years ago, Baudrillard (1998) intimated that

the human corporeal body was once constructed as an object of salvation. For Baudrillard, the shift in value ought to be traced to the doorstep of advertising because it presents itself as a therapeutic cult (*cf.* Sturken & Cartwright, 2009 "therapeutic ethos"). He writes, "For centuries, there was a relentless effort to convince people they had no bodies. Today, there is a relentless effort *to convince them of their bodies"* (italics in original, Baudrillard, 1998: 277). He notes that the body has cultural capital, and is a fetish. Had Baudrillard seen *Pole Dancers*, he may perhaps have described it as a false sexual pathos. By this, he would mean that a hedonistic emphasis has been placed on this woman's butt to grant her social status. Its use value has been traded for an exchange value of satisfying the erogenous gratification of viewers, he might add. Samantha's butt, Baudrillard would argue, is desacralized for *fouissance* (visual pleasure). Meanwhile, using a number of cinematographic techniques ranging from close shots, areal body viewing, and slow motion, the director makes us see Samantha's body and especially her bums in no small measure. As in *Shakira*, both bright lights and colors are employed so that we could easily fix our gaze on our 'discoveries'.

Conclusion

While it is certainly the case that the analysis is anecdotal, only few would deny its theoretical resonance. I have sought to uncover the myth that the butt is an indispensable signifier of economic and socio/cultural capital (*See* Bourdieu, 1986; Barthes, 1999; Guzmán and Valdiva, 2004). A shorthand for "marketing curves", this myth is the theme in *Wa Tricky Wu* [She Has Tricked You] (2013), a newly released song by the Ghanaian hiplife artiste Stranjah[9, 10]. The effect this myth has on the psyche of young adults is that staetopygia is celebratory, and is the marker of allure and capital. Although we cannot associate the production of the films analyzed in this article to the rise of sexualization of West African actresses, it cannot be denied that the portrayal of wide curves, butts, and breasts are now commonplace in Ghanaian and Nigerian films. Such a representation,

we may speculate, has now become a code such that its absence in a new film stands the risk of low patronage. It is not the case that all things staetopygia have no value. As I have once argued, such representations are key in the unfolding of the plots of some films, examples of which are Rukky Sanda's *Keeping My Man* (2013)[11] and Prince Iyke Olisa's *Sexy Criminals*[12] (Coker, 2013). Nonetheless, if we believe in the mosaic model that repeated messages in the media create a lasting impression on viewers, then it is possible to say that the more adolescents and adults alike are shown images of hyper-commodified and sexualized women, the more they may consider this myth a norm and an element of an African ethos.

The critique also adds to and extends the argument on the ideology and hegemony at work in cinema. In the case of Nollywood and Ghallywood, the work exposes the internalized unwritten laws that producers, directors and film managers have canonized for the job market. To be a film star as an actress, one has to be "naturally endowed", they may stress. Whether this form of representation is reflective, intentional, or constructionist (Hall, 1997), it undeniably reveals the workings of ideology within the apparatus of West African cinema. From a psychoanalytic perspective, this ideology places women at the center of men's voyeuristic and sexual gratifications (Mulvey, 1975). To put it differently, the representation of actresses with huge buttocks in West African cinema reinforces the belief that the essence of a woman is to meet the erogenous needs of men. A continuous portrayal of women in these terms perpetuates the hegemony that everything revolves around the phallocentric order. What is more, given that the media is a powerful tool of ideology, young African men and women, for example, could be acculturated into these modes of being in the world. We know from Beauvoir's (1949) oft-cited quote that "One is not born a woman. One becomes one," and that her circumstantial existence is but a historical idea (Butler, 1988). My concerns have to do with the perils in socializing the younger generations into accepting this ideology and hegemony, and its implications for the superstructure of West African cinema: It may as well add the presence of staetopygia as one of its definitional criteria. But need we throw our hands in despair?

At the very least, what we can do is offer the audience a grammar of negotiated viewing. In her erudite essay "The Oppositional Gaze," bell hooks (1992) reminds Black people that they do not lack agency, and that they have the capacity to resist the ways they are encoded and negatively represented, or rather misrepresented in visual media. For hooks, it is not just the question of putting up resistance against preferred, dominant ways of encoding Black women, and, for that matter, West African actresses. This grammar needs to produce the knowledge to understand the laws, apparatuses, strategies, and mechanisms of control privileged in Ghallywood and Nollywood (*cf.* Comella, 2013; Henderson, 2013). Here are some suggestions. Switch off the television set at the site of such depictions: Openly dialogue about it: Tell the young ones about the ravaging effects of this representation. Given that the representation of women's butt in West African cinema is an ambiguous cultural construct, only an informed viewer can negotiate this plane of representational ambiguity.

It must, however, be noted that the analysis of the films in this paper could have been enhanced by personal interviews with the producers and/or directors of the films. This limitation can be avoided in further research. Mention must also be made of the ambiguity of interpretation especially with regard to my discussions of staetopygia in the films I have analyzed. My analysis of the dance moves of the female actresses, for instance, is certainly a product of my own subjectivities and locations, given that dance is a symbolic gesture with a possibility of being understood in polysemous ways. As Pušnik (2010) notes, "[I]n a certain segment of Western society women's powerful and enthusiastic movements of hips and buttocks is labelled as obscene, excessive and signifying vulgarity and immorality, but this same movement in some other segments of the same society indicates female confidence and self-esteem and serves as a sign of female emancipation and gender equality" (p. 5). At best, what Pušnik's (2010) edict teaches us is that signs and their significations are nuanced, and that, to echo Hall (2008), there is no necessary correspondence between what a sign encodes and how it should be decoded. In the context of West African cinema, the overt

manifestations of the signifiers of staetopygia are thus ambiguous. The question thus remains: does staetopygia transgress or subvert West African cultures?

Notes

1. http://www.africanspotlight.com/2013/10/18/legalise-sex-trade-ghanaian-prostitutes-tell-president-mahama/
2. Twi is a variant of Akan, and is the most widely spoken Ghanaian language with over 60% of both native and non-native speakers (Obeng, 1997; Nyarko, 2008).
3. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2n3OCUST1Y
4. ngrguardiannews.com
5. http://www.filmbirth.com/ghana.html
6. http://www.filmbirth.com/ghana.html
7. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mercy_Johnson
8. https://www.google.com/#q=who%27s+veeda+darko
9. http://www.reportghananews.com/watch-official-music-video-stranjah-wa-tricky-wu/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ReportGhanaNews+%28Report+Ghana+News%29
10. Hiplife is genre that blends the richness of Ghanaian local hi-life with foreign elements of hip-pop. See Oduro-Frimpong, J. (2009). Glocalization trends: The case of hiplife music in contemporary Ghana. *International Journal of Communication*, 3: 1085–1106.

11. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6kwoPGAgPs

12. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hADZV65m8DM

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Stripping the Soul of Asante Naked: A History of Opanin Saniagya in Asante Chronicle

Bruno OSAFO

Abstract

The paper examines a critical theme in Asante History at a crucial time of the life of the once powerful nation. It discusses the origins and significance of the Golden Stool (Sika dwa Kofi) to the existence and survival of the Asante nation. The paper further shows instances in Asante history where the Asante nation went to war rather than allow anyone to capture or defile the sacred Golden Stool. The piece then provides detailed information on how the venerated Sika dwa Kofi was defiled by one Saniagya, and also gives an account of Asanteman's response to what could, arguably, pass for the highest act of sacrilege in Asante history yet.

Keywords: Golden Stool, Sika dwa Kofi, Saniagya, Asantehene

Introduction

The histories of the Asante Empire have several examples of high-profiled thievery, or accusations of it. Some of those misconducts were committed, or were alleged to have been committed, by people in high standing in society, including some chiefs and kings. One notable example resulted in the dethronement of Nana Kofi Kakari (1867–1874), the twelfth king of the Asante Kingdom, in August 1874.[1] Although he was one of the rulers who were described as "weak leaders who retarded the progress of Asante,"[2] he was dethroned in 1874, not only because of his weakness, incompetence, and bad management but also for treason and sacrilege.[3]

[1] A. A. Boahen, E. Akyeampong, N. Lawler, et.al (eds), *The History of Ashanti Kings and the Whole Country Itself*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 128.
[2] M.A.S. Owusu, *Prempeh II and the Making of Modern Asante*, (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2009), 3.
[3] A.A. Anti, *The Ancient Asante King* (Accra: Liberty Press Ltd, 1974), 65.

The last two charges were because he was accused of collecting gold dust and jewelleries which had been used to bury his ancestors.[4]

Kofi Kakari was accused of being a spendthrift who depleted the treasury of the Asante Empire and resorted to rifling the tombs of royals who had been buried in the royal mausoleum.[5] Although ancient laws of the Asante actually gave the occupant of the Golden Stool the power to "discuss the situation [of low funds in the national treasury] with his elders, who would permit him to enter the royal mauseleum (sic) and take some gold dusts, trinklets (sic), rings, and chains that had been used to decorate some of the deceased royals for use [to replenish the treasury]", Kakari did not seek permission before entering the mausoleum.[6] His mother, Afua Kobi, found some of the treasures and hence denounced him before the Kumase Council of Chiefs. He was, consequently, destooled.[7]

The action of Nana Kofi Kakari was considered sacrilegious and an abomination hence it cost him the throne. Others, in high and low positions of society, who also engaged in similar acts of sacrilege were dealt with in accordance with the laws and customs of the land. Some even lost their lives as a result. Despite the fact that such conduct was abhorred by the laws and people of Asante, none of them, in themselves, was more sacrilegious than one that threatened the very soul and existence of the empire – stealing national treasure. In other words, none of the high-profile thefts was as serious as stealing from the Golden Stool, the symbol of Asante existence and unity. It is in this regard that this paper evaluates the place of Opanin Saniagya, who desecrated the Golden Stool, in the history of Asante.

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[4] Kwadwo Osei, *An Outline of Asante History*, Part I, 2nd Ed (Kumasi: O. Kwadwo Enterprise, 1994), 146.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

The Golden Stool

The Golden Stool of the Asante Empire, which is also known as *Sika dwa Kofi*,[8] has been likened to the Ark of the Covenant of the people of ancient Israel.[9] The stool which, according to oral tradition, descended from the skies, is believed to contain the spirit and soul of the Asante people.[10] There was no Asante nation before the coming into existence of the Golden Stool. It was when Osei Tutu called a meeting of rulers of states within the immediate surroundings of Kumasi and discussed the idea of coming together to form a confederacy of states that Okomfo Anokye then prayed for the Golden Stool which, according to tradition, descended from the skies and landed on the lap of Osei Tutu. The stool did not touch the earth and, since its legendry arrival, has not touched the earth.[11] After its arrival, Okomfo Anokye, reportedly, prepared a concoction made of a mixture of some herbs, the finger nails and hair of the chiefs present and he made all the chiefs drink the concoction to signify the unity of all the states into one confederacy under the leadership of Osei Tutu.[12] Okomfo Anokye also told the gathering that their spirits and souls were embodied in the stool[13] and warned that the destruction of the Golden Stool would bring the union to an end. He further cautioned that the stool was more important than any individual because it contained the soul of the nation.[14] The union was thus consolidated in the creation of the stool which served as the symbol of national unity of the Asante people.[15] The stool has accordingly been revered from that moment onwards to this day; it was and is protected at

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[8] The stool is also known as *Sika dwa Kofi*, an Asante expression which literally means the Friday born golden stool. This expression was descriptive of the stool in the sense that it is made of gold and was conjured (birthed) on Friday.

[9] Asirifi-Danquah, *The Struggle Between Two Great Queens: 1900–1901*(GertMash Desktop Services, 2007), 1.

[10]T. C. McCaskie, "Komfo Anokye of Asante: Meaning, History and Philosophy in an African Society," in *Journal of African History, Vol. 27, 2* (1986), 319.

[11] Sonia Bleeker, *The Ashanti of Ghana* (London: Dobson Books Ltd, 1966), 53.

[12] Ibid, 2.

[13] Nana Otamakuro Adubofuor, *Asante: The Making of a Nation*, 2nd Ed, 2000, 14–15.

[14]Asirifi-Danquah, *The Struggle*.

[15] K. A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti: A Study of the Influence of Contemporary Social Changes on Ashanti Political Institution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 114.

all cost.[16] In fact *Sika dwa Kofi* was of such tremendous traditional importance that it became an idol of the Asante people.[17]

The Golden Stool was sometimes likened by some to the Ark of the Covenant of the Israelites because the Asante never embarked on any major war without carrying the stool along to battle,[18] just as the Israelites always moved with the Ark ahead of them. Both the Israelites[19] and the Asante believed that the presence of the ark or the stool, as the case may be, ensured victory in their wars. The Ark of the Covenant contained the Ten Commandments and its presence was a sign that God was with the Israelites and was fighting on their side. Consequently, the ark was jealously protected from being captured by the enemies of the Israelites, just as the Asante protected the Golden stool.

The Battle for *Sika dwa Kofi*: 1900 – 1901

The whereabouts of the Golden Stool remained a heavily guarded secret because of the value the Asante placed on it.[20] It was only the king and a few senior members of the court who knew where the stool was kept at any point in time. The hiding place of the stool was also changed from time to time for security reasons.[21] The sacred stool was so jealously guarded that on some occasions the guards who hid it were paid off so that they would not disclose its location to anyone. Hence the stool was sometimes hidden in caves in isolated areas or in the bedrooms of unknown

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[16] A. A. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Accra: Sankofa Educational Publishers Ltd., 2000), 16.
[17] Anti.
[18] Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 118, 359,
[19] *Life Application Study Bible*, 1 Samuel 4:3, "When the soldiers retuned to camp, the elders of Israel asked, "Why did the Lord bring defeat upon us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh, so that it may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies." (Michigan: Zondervan Grand Rapids, 1991), 399.
[20] Adubofuor, *Asante*, 66.
[21] Asirifi-Danquah, *The Struggle*, 3.

people or even in a casket and buried beneath the bed of a running stream.[22] The sacred stool was normally hidden when the Asante state felt it was at the risk of being captured by either foreign or local enemies. The Asante moved the stool from one location to another, depending on rumours and intelligence information on how fast enemies were closing in on the location of the stool. On one occasion the stool was hidden in the bed of the Barikese river. It was moved from place to place so often so that its hiding place was sometimes forgotten by the people in charge. In such circumstances, it took them a long period of search before it was found again.[23] It was once taken into hiding in 1818, when the Asante were to fight the Gyaaman and they (the Asante) were doubtful about the outcome of the war.[24] Another instance was in 1896 when the then Asantehene[25] (Prempe I) and some royals were taken away into exile in Seychelles.[26] The British colonial authorities took the sixteenth king of Asante, into exile without any opposition from the Asante. This was unusual because the Asante were known to be brave warriors who would have fought to redeem their king. But the decision of Prempe and Asante at the time was tactful and in the greater interest of Asanteman because such a major war against the British would have required the Asante to go to war with the Golden stool. The Asante anticipated, however, a possible defeat at the hands of the British and that could have resulted in the capture of the stool by the British colonial authorities.[27] Consequently, the stool was taken and kept in hiding until 1924 when the exiled Asantehene returned to Kumase.[28]

In 1900 – 1901, the Asante and British colonial authorities in the Gold Coast engaged in what can be described as one of the fiercest wars between them since 1824. The war, dubbed the Yaa Asantewaa War, also happened to be the only such unfriendly and hostile encounter between

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[22] Ibid., 4-5.
[23] Interview with Nana Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, Asantehene Otumfuo Nsumankwahehe, Aged 64 years, at his palace in Ashanti New Town (Ashtown) - Kumase, 5th March, 2016.
[24] Adubofuor, *Asante*.
[25] Asantehene refers to the King of the Asante.
[26] Adubofuor, *Asante*.
[27] Bleeker, *The Ashanti*.
[28] Adubofuor, *Asante*.

them in the twentieth century. The matter of contention which resulted in the war was the question of who could sit or not sit on the Golden Stool. After the arrest and exile of Prempe I and other members of the royal house Governor Frederick Mitchell Hodgson arrived in Kumase and presided over a durbar of chiefs and people of Kumase. Although he was accorded all the respect he deserved, he accused the chiefs and people of disrespecting him. According to Governor Hodgson, the chiefs and people had shown disregard to him because they did not give him the Golden Stool to sit on.[29] He believed that since the Asantehene was in exile, he (the governor) held a position equivalent, if not superior, to that of the Asantehene and hence should be offered the sacred stool to sit on. The chiefs and people of Kumase regarded Hodgson's demand as blasphemous because the stool embodied the soul of the Asante nation. No Asantehene ever actually sat on the stool. Even when a ceremony required the king's taking possession of it, he bent his knees and pretended that he was sitting down on the stool while, in actual fact, his attendants held him up.[30] The stool was considered to be too sacred for any human to sit on it.

It is evident then that the Asante were, thus, prepared to fight and defend the *Sika dwa Kofi*, at any cost, rather than surrender it to Governor Hodgson for him to sit on. Consequently, the Asante, under the leadership of Yaa Asantewaa, went to war against the British in 1900/1901. Yaa Asantewaa who was the Queen Mother of Edweso, was also acting as the Chief of Edweso (Edwesohene) at the time because the sitting Edwesohene was amongst the royal contingent which was exiled together with Prempe I.[31] Although she was advanced in age, Yaa Asantewaa could not come to terms with what she considered outrageous demands by the governor and hence mustered courage to oppose any possibility of Hodgson sitting on the sacred stool. She articulated the resentment of the Asante nation to the demand and retorted that if the Governor wanted to sit on the stool then he would have to bring Prempe back from exile since he (Prempeh) alone

[29] Osei, *Asante History*, 60.
[30] Bleeker, *The Ashanti*.
[31] Owusu, *Prempeh II*, 22.

knew where the stool had been hidden.[32] It is worth remembering that the Golden Stool had been taken into hiding after the exile of Prempe in 1896.

The altercations between the Governor and queen ended in the Yaa Asantewaa War of 1900/1901. There was heavy fighting and many casualties. The British were able to bring the war to a swift end when they called for reinforcement from the coast.[33] Yaa Asantewaa and other leading Asante chiefs were arrested and deported to the Seychelles island, while the Bantamahene was hanged for war crimes.[34] Although the Asante lost the war, the Yaa Asantewaa War afforded the Asante another opportunity to challenge what they considered to be an illegal imposition of British colonial rule on them; and that they were able to achieve regardless of their defeat. For the next twenty-one years, nothing was heard of the Golden Stool.

Saniagya Stole from the Sacred Stool

Long after the defeat of Asante and the official extension of British authority over the entire Gold Coast, the chiefs and people of the once great Asante Empire focused their efforts on working to ensure the return of Prempe and the others from exile. The return of the exiled was not the wish of only people within the Asante nation as other prominent people in the colony added their voice to the call for the return of the royals.[35] Consequently, negotiations were commenced between the leadership of Asanteman and other leading Gold Coasters, on the one hand, and the colonial authorities, on the other, to secure their return. Thus in 1924, Prempe I and his entourage returned to the Gold Coast, although he

[32] Ibid.
[33] See Asirifi-Danquah, and Owusu, *Prempeh II*, 82–86.
[34] Ibid.,103.
[35] Kwadwo Osei, *An Outline of Asante History*, Part I, 3rd Ed (Kumasi: O. Kwadwo Enterprise, 2004), 76.

returned not as an Asantehene but as a private citizen.[36] However, in 1926 he was enstooled Kumasehene.[37]

Even before Prempe's return, there was an important matter which demanded national attention. That was the matter of the stealing of some ornaments of the revered Golden Stool. As has been indicated above, the capture and exile of Prempe by the colonial authorities raised alarm in Asante. Consequently, the Gyasewahene, who was the custodian of the stool, did the usual in such critical times: hid the stool. The *Sika dwa Kofi* thus remained in hiding somewhere in Wawase, but was later removed and reburied at Abuabugya, for over twenty years.[38] In 1921, a government road was being constructed between Abuabugya and a neighbouring village.[39] At a point in the course of the construction work, the overseer of the project suggested a diversion of the road in order to avoid a difficult patch. As the diversion was being done, one of the workers, Kwadwo Boa, apparently struck the two brass pans in which the stool had been hidden and buried and this attracted other workers to gather to see what it was.[40] The chief of Abuabugya, Nana Kwadwo Danso, who knew what was hidden in the two brass pans appeared soon afterwards and persuaded the workers not to dig out the box. He explained that it contained a fetish against smallpox and that the spirit of small pox would seize anyone who further disturbed the soil.[41] His advice was heeded by the workers, probably out of fear of being struck by the dreaded disease, and so the Golden Stool was dug up in the dead of the night by Nana Danso and five other men (Kofi Buo, Kwame Nyame, Mosi, Kwame Brahia and Badu) who went to hide it in the house of one Kwasi Yenkyira in Abuabugya.

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[36] Boahen, *Ghana,* 114.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Christianity, Modernity and Weight of Tradition in the Life of 'Asantehene' Agyeman Prempeh I, c. 1888–1931", in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 69 No.2, (http://www.jstor.org/stable/1161026), 24, Accessed 13/06/2010, 05:19.
[39] Busia, *Position of the Chief.*
[40] R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti* (London: University of Oxford Press, 1923), 9
[41] Ibid.

Although the six men swore an oath never to reveal the secret, the hiding place of the stool became known to several individuals. It turned out that Chief Banor, who was also known as Opanin Saniagya, heard from his nephew Kwame Brahia, where the Golden Stool had been kept and so the former made a few visits to his hometown, Abuabugya. Upon visiting the house of Kwasi Yenkyira, Saniagya was convinced that the stool was, indeed, being kept there and so he hatched a plan to desecrate it. He convinced Nana Danso and Yenkyira to remove and share the ornaments adorning the stool with him.[42]

Opanin Saniagya, coincidentally, hailed from Abuabugya in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Although he was not literate, he was quite influential and popular in his community because he was outgoing and affable and hence had many friends and admirers.[43] His popularity and influence could also have been because he belonged to the royal Nsenie family house of Abuabugya. The Nsenie was one of the many functionaries in a chief's palace and the head of the Nsenie office was known as the Nseniehene (Head of the Heralds).[44] The Nseniehene was responsible for calming tensions in the palace. He also called on the audience to pay attention when the chief was ready to address his people during state functions.[45] Even before August 1921, Saniagya had gained notoriety for conniving with the British colonial powers to capture the stool. Although the reason(s) for his attempts to betray his kin and nation is not known, it could have been because of some personal gratification that he stood to enjoy.[46] According to the Asantehene's medicine man, "...Asanteman[47] knew that he [Saniagya] together with others were bent on betraying the nation. This began somewhere in 1900.... Kwame Tua also conspired, just as Saniagya, also conspired with the British and sought to help them

[42] Public Records Achieves and Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra, ADM. 11/1903, "Desecration of Golden Stool", Case No. Secret No. 9, 4.
[43] Nana Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, interviewed on 5th March, 2016.
[44] Nana Kofi Antwi II, *Asante-Akyem Odumase: A Historical Perspective*, (Kumasi: Advent Press, 2015), 104.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Nana Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, interviewed on 5th March, 2016.
[47] Asanteman means the Asante nation.

capture the stool."[48] It appeared Saniagya had for some reasons harboured the desire to pilfer from the stool and the opportunity came in 1921 when the Golden Stool found itself in his backyard in Abuabugya. He thus seized the opportunity to execute what he had long yearned to do.

Saniagya convinced the accomplices that the Golden stool was sacred but the adornments were not.[49] The six men thus progressively stripped the Golden Stool of its ornaments and took them to the market to sell. Fortunately, an old woman recognized the ornaments as belonging to the stool and sounded the alarm.[50] News of the actions of the three men and their accomplices got to Asanteman in September, 1921.[51] The act was deemed profane and a shame on the Asante nation. In fact, it was an act of treason against the soul and existence of the Asante nation. The theft sparked anger amongst the chiefs and people of Asante who sought vengeance on the perpetrators of the crime.[52]

Trial and Judgment

Asanteman was outraged by the desecration of the Golden Stool. This dastardly act plunged the nation into a state of mourning. Mourning "greater than the loss of any king."[53] The people "demonstrated their anguish by smearing their heads and bodies with red clay."[54] Investigations into the matter revealed that a certain goldsmith, Kwadwo Poku, had received one of the gold bells of the stool to melt.[55] The intention was ostensibly to remould it into another form so as to disguise it from being recognised. It was also discovered that the gold fetters that bound the bells to the stool had been pawned for 30 shillings.[56] The matter was

[48] Nana Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, interviewed on 5th March, 2016.
[49] Busia, *Position of the Chief.*
[50] Owusu, *Prempeh II,* 34.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Osei, *Asante History*, 3rd Ed.
[53] Rattray, *Ashanti.*
[54] Owusu, *Prempeh II*
[55] Busia, *Position of the Chief.*
[56] Ibid.

consequently reported to the Chief Commissioner, Charles Harper and Governor Guggisberg. The British colonial government, based on some insight they had from R. S. Rattray,[57] permitted Asanteman to deal with the matter along traditional lines.[58]

A court consisting of all the chiefs of Asante was thus constituted to hear the case. It was chaired by the Mamponhene, Osei Bonsu, the occupant of the Silver Stool and Second in Command to the Asantehene. The fact that the Mamponhene chaired the trial is understandable since his 'boss,' the Asantehene, was in exile and thus could not be present to hear the case. Saniagya and thirteen others were arraigned before the court and charged with the desecration of the Golden Stool.[59] Hearing began on 23rd September, in the full glare of hundreds of people including some Ministers of the Gospel. The court, on some days, sat from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock the next day.[60] The council of chiefs were relentless in their desire to unravel the truth behind the incident. Consequently, every member of the council worked tirelessly to achieve the desired result. In the words of the Chief Commissioner of Ashanti, "... but I think all the chiefs were on their mettle and rose to the occasion to show to the world that they could conduct an enquiry of this magnitude in orderly and peaceable manner."[61] The court sat for four days and gave all the accused the opportunity to defend themselves. The Chief Commissioner noted that "There was no intimidation of accused or

[57] He was a British Anthropologist commissioned to investigate Asante in order to give the colonial administration a better understanding of the people they were ruling.
[58] Owusu, *Prempeh II.*
[59] Busia, *Position of the Chief,* 115.
[60] "Desecration of Golden Stool," 9.
[61] Ibid.

witnesses. A Fanti[62] was employed to record the notes of evidence, so that there should be no suspicion of bias on the part of the clerk."[63]

Opanin Saniagya in his testimony before the court admitted sharing the loot and noted that his share was "one [gold] bell and a quantity of nuggets."[64] Some of the culprits also gave their fraction of the gold nuggets from the stool to family relations of theirs.[65] It is worth noting that Saniagya's testimony before the court was replete with inconsistencies and some untruth hence casting doubt on his credibility. He, for instance, implicated three young men in his narration of the circumstances surrounding the heinous act but later retracted them for fear of the dreaded consequences of his false accusation. On 26 September, two days after he had appeared before the court, Saniagya voluntarily retracted a portion of his earlier claims. He noted that:

> I am glad that all the Ministers of the Gospel are present at the Tribunal. I beg to state that the charge I put on the three young men namely Dwantua, Buakyi, Abamu and Entwiegyei were false and therefore beg to withdraw same. I can forsee (sic) the great trouble that will befall me in the Great day if I falsely accuse them and they suffer with me. I mean to say I shall be held responsible for having caused innocent men to be punished.[66]

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[62] It is imperative to note that the choice of a Fanti to serve as secretary to the special court is quite significant and a show of transparency in the entire process. This is because the Fanti were and still are a section of the Akan ethnic group, just as the Asante. However, the Fanti and Asante had been bitter rivals. Their enmity could be traced as far back to the fifteenth century when the Europeans reached the Gold Coast (now Ghana). It was not until the beginnings of the twentieth century that the two parties stopped resolving their differences on the battle field. With this historical background, the choice of a Fanti to serve as a clerk in such an important matter was indeed to ensure that both the accused and Asanteman (the Asante nation) would be clear of the impartiality and neutrality of the record of the proceedings because a Fanti was likely not to have sides in a purely Asante matter.

[63] "Desecration of Golden Stool," 12.

[64] "Desecration of Golden Stool," 15.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid, 16.

Consequently, after four days of listening to the accounts of the of the accused and subsequent cross-examination of the accused and their witnesses, the court found Kwesi Saniagya, Kwabena Asubonten, Nana Danso, Kwesi Yenkyira, Kwame Yoguo and Kwadwo Poku guilty and there was no doubt in the minds of anyone with regard to their guilt. The court arrived at the verdict based on the fact that:

> ...being natives of Ashanti and subjects of the Golden Stool of the Ashanti Nation, did expose, steal, destroy, sell and otherwise unlawfully deal with and use the said Golden Stool, thereby betraying the said Ashanti Nation and laying it open to disgrace and ridicule, and debasing the name and fame of Ashanti, much to the annoyance and provocation of all, young and old, thereby giving occasion for disturbance and bloodshed but for the intervention of Government.[67]

The traditional court, therefore, ruled that, in accordance with Asante laws and traditions, six of the conspirators must be executed for their heinous crime against Asanteman. The punishment for their offence, according to Asante law, was death because their crime was more serious than murder.[68] Another reason that informed the handing down of the capital punishment was that their death was the only way by which the nation would be appeased. Seven other accused people were sentenced to life imprisonment and one other was discharged.[69] The court also recommended confiscation of the property of the convicts.[70] Because Asante had, by then, been defeated and brought under British rule, the decision of the court was subject to the approval of the Chief Commissioner and the colonial authorities in Accra. To the British colonial authorities the crime committed by Saniagya and others amounted to

[67] Ibid, 2.
[68] David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850–1928* (Oxford: Claridon Press, 1962), 483.
[69] Owusu, *Prempeh II*, 35.
[70] "Desecration of Golden Stool," 3.

stealing and hence the death sentence was too severe.[71] Although the Chie Commissioner agreed with the ruling that the six had been duly found guilty he commuted the death sentence to banishment overseas.[72] The culprits were thus deported for life to the British colony of Nigeria.[73] Even though the culprits were six in number, Saniagya's name was the most mentioned before and during the trial and even afterwards. He thus gained infamy for the desecration of the Golden Stool. His notoriety in this saga could be because he appeared to be the ringleader of the gang that committed that act of abomination.

A number of reasons can be cited to explain why Nigeria was chosen as the destination of exile for the wrongdoers by the colonial authorities. One was the fact that the colonial government wanted them as far away from the Asante people as possible so as to ensure that they (the offenders) were not harmed in any way by embittered Asantes. Obviously aware of how exasperated some people in Asanteman were because of the act, the colonial authorities may have been of the view that the "infamous six" could not be safe anywhere within the Gold Coast colony. It is worth mentioning that parts of the present-day Northern and Volta Regions, as well as parts of Ivory Coast, were formerly under the Asante Empire and hence could have had people who were still loyal to Asanteman and, therefore, avenge on behalf of the Asante. As a result, the farther away the six were, the better for them. Another reason for the choice of Nigeria could be that the colonialists were assured of adequate protection for the lawbreakers there. Nigeria, for a long time, was the storehouse of British Colonial military might in West Africa. The British relied on Nigeria for military backup whenever there were disturbances in any of the colonies in West Africa. They were assured of a formidable military contingent made up of Hausa men from Nigeria. Consequently, Nigeria appeared to be the choicest destination to send the exiles if their (the deportees') security was to be considered.

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[71] Kimble, *A Political History.*

[72] Busia, *Position of the Chief,* 117.

[73] Interview with Justice Brobbey, Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum, Kumase, Aged 46 years, Manhyia Palace – Kumase, 25th January, 2016.

Opanin Kwesi Saniagya returned to Ghana in 1958, after spending 36 years in exile.[74] This was barely a year after the former Gold Coast gained independence from the British. The return of Saniagya, the only surviving member of those who were deported, was made possible after the Parliament of Ghana passed the "Golden Stool of Ashanti (Detention and Deportation of Desecrators) Repeal Act, 1957.[75] He was accompanied on his return by his daughter, Madam M. A. Olorunkoya, and two of his grand-daughters.[76] Although the transgression for which he was punished occurred over three decades ago, it was possible that there were some people who still held on the offence hence who would not want to have him back in the country. Saniagya himself might have been aware of this and so he is said to have expressed anxiety about obtaining a place where he would live with his family.[77] Consequently, the government of the day took steps to ensure that he returned to the country peacefully. In this light, there were correspondences between the Office of the Regional Commissioner, the Ministry of the Interior, the Kumasi State Council and the Commissioner of Police to ensure his return, transportation from the harbor to Ashanti and an undisturbed resettlement.[78] Relatives of the ex-chief expressed difficulty in finding an accommodation for him in Kumase and, therefore, decided to take him to his hometown, Aboabogya, to live there.[79]

Contrary to his anxiety, Saniagya's return did not pose much threat to him or his family. This could be because the long period of his absence from Kumase and its immediate environs may have healed the wound and

[74] Ordinances and Acts of Ghana, "Golden Stool of Ashanti (Detention and Deportation of Desecrators) Repeal Act, 1957, (Accra: Government of Ghana printer, 1958).
[75] Ibid.
[76] Manhyia Archives Ghana (MAG), Kumasi, MAG 1/1/259, "Ex-Chief Saniagya (1957–1967)," A Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Regional Commissioner in Kumasi, 10th February, 1958." See also MAG 1/1/259, "Return of Ex-Chief Saniagya", a Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Regional Commissioner. 21st July, 1958.
[77] MAG 1/1/259, "Ex-Chief Saniagya," A Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Regional Commissioner in Kumasi. 10th February, 1958.
[78] MAG 1/1/259, "Return of Ex-Chief Saniagya," A Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Regional Commissioner. 21st July, 1958.
[79] MAG 1/1/259, "Ex-Chief Saniagya," A Letter from the Assistant State Secretary, Kumasi State Council. 2nd April, 1958.

anger that some Asante harboured against him and his collaborators in 1921. Subsequently, he was able to settle into the society although he lived a lowlife after his return.

Another factor that could have made him safe upon his return was that he returned at a time when the Gold Coast had gained Independence and the new nation, Ghana, had put in adequate measures to ensure the safety and security of lives and property of all its citizens. This included the introduction of laws and the setting up of institutions such as the police and court systems to guarantee and protect the rights of every citizen, including the right to life and to live freely. Consequently, all beliefs, practices and laws which contravened the constitutional provisions were considered illegal and punishable by law. These developments thus might have made it difficult, if not impossible, for some Asante who might still have nurtured antipathy against Saniagya, and would have wanted to vent out such fury against him in a way that was proscribed by the supreme laws of the land, to do so.

The conduct of Saniagya had some negative repercussions on his immediate and distant families. One was that the Nsenie stool was taken from his family because of the shame his conduct had brought on Asanteman. Consequently, no one from that family could occupy that stool and that caused the family great embarrassment.[80] It was only during the reign of Asantehene Otumfuo Opoku Ware II that the Nsenie stool was given back to the family of Saniagya. This was after the family had pleaded with the Asantehene and the Asante nation for forgiveness and the restoration of their former responsibility.

Apart from losing the Nsenie stool, the name Saniagya became synonymous with dishonour and deviant behaviour. And so, when a person was referred to as a descendant of Saniagya it meant he/she had a bad character. People thus distanced themselves from family and friends of Saniagya.[81]

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[80] Nana Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, interviewed on 5th March, 2016.
[81] Ibid.

Safeguarding the Golden Stool in the Post- Saniagya Episode

The events of 1921 awakened the Asante Empire and the ruling house at Manhyia to the fact that the issue of the security of the Golden Stool was more important than ever before. It brought to the fore the unpleasant fact that the stool would have to be protected from some dishonest Asantes as from the "enemies"[82] of the Asante state from without. As a result, more stringent measures were taken to ensure that no unscrupulous member of Asante or external to the state could lay hands on it again. This started from the moment when the stool was brought out from its hiding place again upon Prempe I's return from exile. Moreover, the period of wars between Asante and other ethnic groups had ended and so the stool was no more the trophy of envy by the enemies of the Asante state. This meant there was no need to protect the stool from enemies from without but rather it was imperative to secure it from enemies from within.[83] The British had assured the Asante of the former's decision not to pursue capture of the stool anymore. In a report by the Chief Commissioner to the Governor, he noted "...that the [colonial] Government do not wish to take possession of the Golden Stool...."[84]

From 1922, the Asante put in place new measures to protect the Golden Stool. What was done, therefore, was to make sure that the number of people who came into physical contact with the stool was, subsequently, reduced to the barest minimum. This was to avoid the situation where any of the functionaries in Manhyia would connive with others to repeat the abominations of 1921. Consequently, it was only the Asantehene who knew the location of the stool at any material moment and he alone was the custodian of the keys to the place where the stool was kept. In fact, although it was generally known that the Golden Stool and other Black

[82] Traditionally, other powerful states in the then Gold Coast including Akwamu, Akyem, Fante, Ga, Gonja, as well as the British, were considered the enemies of Asante at different times in the history of the Gold Coast. Consequently, those states aimed at capturing the Stool, at one point of the other, in their attempt to break the front of the Asante. The Asante, as a matter of course, naturally jealously guarded the stool from falling into the hands of any of her adversaries.

[83] Brobbey, interviewed on 25th January, 2016.

[84] "Desecration of Golden Stool", 16.

Stools in Manhyia were kept under lock and key in a room known as *Sakorase,*[85] one could not be certain if the Golden Stool was there at all times since, for security reasons, it could be moved from place to place whenever necessary. Again, the fact that the stool was only brought out once every four years even made it easier for those who kept it to keep its hiding place a top secret. One can safely conclude that the palace officials who carried the *Sika dwa Kofi* for public viewing and brought it back to the palace for safe keeping may not have known where it was kept finally since they may have picked it up at a point and returned it to another point quite different from where the stool was actually kept. And it seems the secrecy attached to the whereabouts of the stool, after 1921, helped protect the importance and sacredness of the stool to the Asante State.

The *Sika dwa Kofi* continued to enjoy prominence and reverence after the Saniagya saga. Its importance was unparalleled and it was ensured that nothing and no one was placed above it; not even an Asantehene. Hence when the issue of the return of Prempe I from exile was hinged on the condition that the Asante nation relinquished the stool to the British the Asante nation vehemently challenged the proposal.[86] The Gordon Guggisberg administration, subsequently, had no choice but to ensure the return of Prempe. Hence, Asanteman had both their king and the sacred stool intact.

Did Saniagya Found the Town Saniagya?

It is a widely held view that Opanin Saniagya founded the town Saniagya which is located in present-day Ashanti Region of Ghana. Although there is no definite reason for this view, it is important to state that this view is erroneous. Even though the name of the town, Saniagya, and the name of the leader in the defilement of the Golden Stool in 1921 are the same, there is no link between Chief Banor (Opanin Saniagya) and the town. Oral traditions of the people of the town Saniagya recount that the people of the

[85] *Sakorase* was a place in the Manhyia palace where the Golden Stool and other black stool were kept.
[86] Kimble, *A Political History,* 482.

town first lived in Effiduase, also in the Ashanti Region, and referred to themselves as Mponua.[87]

The Mponua people belonged to the Bretuo clan of the Akan and had Nana Kwaku Asare as their first ruler.[88] As a result of internal political strife in 1874/1875, between the then Asantehene, Nana Mensah Bonsu (1874–1883) and Dwabenhene, Asafo Agyei, the latter and his supporters migrated to Akyemland in the Eastern Region because Mensah Bonsu had defeated them in a war. The breakaway Asante founded settlements such as New Dwaben, Asokore, and Effiduase near Koforidua.[89] The events made the Mponua who lived on Effiduase land to also flee to Koforidua. The traditions also hold that later, when the crises had been settled, one Kwaku Frimpong who was a nephew of the first king of Mponua (Kwaku Asare) established a village on Mponua lands with his servant called Saniagya. As a result of the hardworking nature of Saniagya, Frimpong decided to name the settlement after Saniagya, hence, the name.[90] It was after the creation of the town of Saniagya that Kwaku Asare and those who fled to Koforidua returned to the town. It is evident that the third ruler of the town of Saniagya was Kwame Agyekum who ascended to the throne on 20th June, 1899, over two decades before Chief Banor, also known as Saniagya, engaged in his act.[91] Hence Chief Banor could not have founded Saniagya.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that the reverence and unquestioned loyalty expected of every Asante towards preserving the sanctity of what the Golden Stool stood for is not in doubt. However, from accounts so far, it

[87] Emmanuel Kwasi Boateng, "A History of Saniagya", (Undergraduate Dissertation, Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast–Ghana, 2011), 3
[88] Ibid.
[89] Kofi Affrifah, *The Akyem Factor in Ghana's History: 1871–1875* (Accra: Ghana University Press, 2000), 233.
[90] Boateng, "A History."

[91] Ibid. 5.

appears what may be in doubt rather is the issue of dedication to ensuring that achievement of the above explained national goal by every Asante. The pains the Asante had gone through in the past, in preserving the Golden Stool, as indicated by the Saniagya example, are in themselves commendable and indicative of a nation that had reached the very apex of its national consciousness and was well alive to its responsibilities even at the height of the imperial ambition of the British. Thus, unpatriotic acts such as the one displayed by Opanin Saniagya and his cohorts were always sure to gain the sort of infamy that has, understandably, surrounded the name Saniagya to this day. However, it is instructive to note that while the lessons presented by Saniagya's act should not be down played, the naming of a town "Saniagya" and whatever subsequent fame it has garnered for itself, may have, after all, been accidental and due, possibly, to the exploits of the town on its own or that of its indigenes and not because it was founded by Asante's most infamous criminal in its history, Opanin Saniagya.

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DENKYEMMIREKU

A USABLE PAST FOR A NEW AFRICAN STATE[1]

Kwasi BOADI

Abstract

In Ghana – The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah (1971), Nkrumah recounts the deliberations within the United Gold Coast Convention on J. B. Danquah's proposal for adopting the Akan art motif Funtummireku Denkyemmireku (Denkyemmireku, for short), the proverbial two-headed crocodile, as emblem for the emerging nation of Ghana. Dismissing it as a "hideous monstrosity" that symbolizes selfishness, it was never adopted. Yet, the art motif, a kind of jeremiad that says pity that poor crocodile, whose two heads cannot stop fighting over food, even though they share one stomach, is a recognition of the dialectic of nature as one of unity in diversity, the very essence of the hallowed African monistic thesis of matter. This paper posits that Denkyemmireku embodies a potent philosophical and ideological symbol capable of serving as a usable past for a much-needed reconstruction of a more legitimate African state.

Keywords: Non-Partisan Legislature, Non-Partisan Executive, Usable Past, Afrocentric Paradigm, Consensual Democracy, Sankofa Denkyemmireku

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[1]Some aspects of this article have been previously published in the *Journal of Black Studies* by the author. See, Kwasi Boadi, "The Ontology of Kwame Nkrumah's Consciencism and the Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa – A Diopian Perspective." *Journal of Black Studies*, Volume 30, Number 4 / March 2000, 475–501.

In *Ghana – The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (1971), Nkrumah had the following to say about the deliberations on the choice of an emblem for Ghana that took place within the leadership of the United Gold Coast Convention, of which he was a member at the time:

> I...suggested that the emblem might be a soaring eagle representing the emergent Ghana. As this was not acceptable to Danquah and his two relatives, William Ofori Atta and Akuffo Addo, I asked them to suggest an alternative. At the following meeting Danquah produced his design for an emblem for the new state of Ghana. I was completely taken aback when I saw it, for he had depicted an animal with two heads and one stomach which, according to the African, symbolises selfishness, lack of interest in others and, in short, was hardly in keeping with what I imagined the UGCC had been formed for. Fortunately, there was a division of opinion and they failed to come to an agreement, so the hideous monstrosity was never adopted.[2]

The "hideous monstrosity" Nkrumah was referring to is none other than the Akan art motif *Funtummireku Denkyemmireku*.[3] Simply referred to in this discourse as Denkyemmireku, it is the proverbial two-headed crocodile, whose two heads fight over food even though they share one stomach. It is a kind of jeremiad that says *pity that poor crocodile, whose two heads cannot stop fighting over food, even though they share one stomach.*[4] It is a recognition of the dialectic of nature as one of unity in diversity. It is the essence of the monistic thesis of matter.

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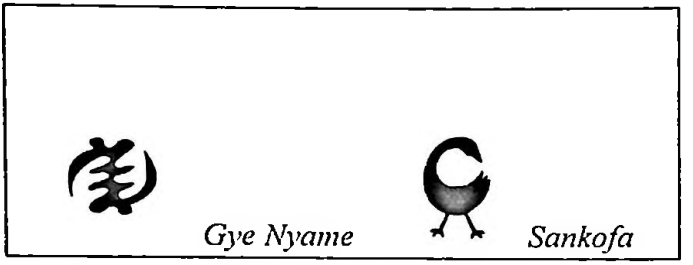
[2]Kwame Nkrumah, *Ghana – The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah* (International Publishers, 1971), p. 73. The book was first published on Ghana's Independence. Day, March 6, 1957.

[3]Another terminology used to denote the same art motif is *Funtufunefu Denkyemfunefu*. For consistency, *Funtummireku Denkyemmireku*, is the terminology of choice for this discourse.

[4] W. Bruce Willis, *The Adinkra Dictionary* (Washington, D. C.: The Pyramid Complex, 1998), p. 110–111.

Denkyemmireku is one of the numerous Akan art motifs that are collectively called *adinkra* symbols. In *Twi*, the Akan language, adi kra literally means parting conversation. The symbols are usually embroidered on cloths, jewelry, and wood carvings.[5] By far, the two most popular *adinkra* art motifs in Ghana and the Diaspora are *Gye Nyame* and *Sankofa*, respectively:



Gye Nyame ("Except God") acknowledges the omnipotence of the Supreme Being as the only power to be feared by man. Due to its religious connotation, it commands mass appeal in Ghana's culture. *Sankofa*, on the other hand, is more of a proverb that says that it is no taboo if you return to fetch what you forgot. (*Se wo werefi na wo san kofa a, yenkyi*). It is the essence of the concept of a usable past. It should come as no surprise then that *Sankofa* has a more Diasporan appeal, given the centuries-long yearning for a return of a sort to Africa, literally, spiritually, intellectually, or culturally. Denkyemmireku, unfortunately, does not enjoy the mass appeal of *Gye Nyame* and *Sankofa*. Unfortunate, because, its moral philosophy of unity in diversity has the potential to serve as a powerful ideological organizing principle for a new African state, one that is built on consensual, non-partisan legislative institutions at all levels of socio-political organization, while still acknowledging the partisan nature of executive institutions. In philosophy and ideology, Denkyemmireku is a potent symbol as a usable past in the political arena.

[5] For a complete exposition on Adinkra symbols, see W. Bruce Willis, *The Adinkra Dictionary* (Washington, D.C.: The Pyramid Complex, 1998).

We may never know exactly why J. B. Danquah suggested Denkyemmireku as the emblem for the new state of Ghana, but it should not be difficult to figure it out. In dismissing it, Nkrumah obviously acknowledged only the selfishness aspect of the symbol and ignored, as if by omission or commission, its unifying characteristic. It is difficult to imagine that Danquah, or any political leader for that matter, would exhort selfishness as a virtue for the new nation. It is not far-fetched, however, to suppose that Danquah might have seen the art motif as a kind of jeremiad cautioning the people of the emerging nation of Ghana to be mindful that they are one united people, sharing one stomach, as it were, notwithstanding the political partisanship (symbolized, philosophically, by the two heads) that was bound to happen.

At first glance, Danquah's interest in Denkyemmireku may come across as a manifestation of cultural nationalism. After all, he was a strong advocate of a role for chieftaincy in the new nation. Thus, to historian F.K. Drah, Danquah and his colleagues were cultural nationalists.[6] But, as Drah himself reports, these Western educated nationalists by and large agreed with the views of the British historian Martin Wight, subsequently endorsed by the Coussey Committee (1949), that "there was no intrinsic disharmony between the indigenous political institutions of the Gold Coast and the imported Western representative system," since "the purposes and methods of the indigenous and imported institutions were the same: both embodied the representative principle, and both were government by discussion."[7] Really? Of course, there was a difference, and it was a fundamental difference. The imported Western nation-state model is based on the individual as the unit of socio-political organization, whereas the African model was based on the family and lineage as the unit of organization. Individualism is inherently partisan, hence the imported model is partisan. On the contrary, the essence of the African model was

[6] F. K. Drah, "Aspects of the Akan State System: Pre-Colonial and Colonial," in K. A. Ninsin and F. K. Drah (Eds.) *The Search for Democracy in Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1987), pp. 34–35. Danquah's contemporaries included John Mensah Sarbah, J.E. Casely Hayford, J.W. de Graft-Johnson, and Aku Korsah.

[7] *Ibid* p. 34.

consensual and non-partisan. In any case, if there was no difference, then why import the Western model?

All appearances to the contrary, therefore, Danquah and his colleagues could not have been authentic cultural nationalists. They were still grounded in the liberal variant of the Western nation-state ideology, which mandates multi-party political system. Their respect for African cultural traditions notwithstanding, they were liberal nationalists through and through, who believed in a ruling party and an opposition party. If Danquah was a "cultural nationalist," he had to be of the plaintive, romantic type, who was still grounded in the Western nation-state ideology. In fact, this predisposition was borne out during the proceedings of the 1948 Watson Commission of Inquiry, which revealed that, behind closed doors, the contempt of the "Africans with a modern political outlook," to wit, Danquah and his colleagues, towards the chiefs knew no bounds.[8] If there was in deed a cultural nationalist at the time, that distinction belongs to Kobina Sekyi, who reportedly remained a steadfast critic of the adoption of the Western nation-state model in any form, advocating instead for a return to the past African political system.[9] If only Danquah had managed to persuade his contemporaries on the import of Denkyemmireku, Nkrumah's aversion, notwithstanding.

Nkrumah, on the other hand, was cut from the radical or socialist variant of the same Western nation-state ideology. What set him apart from his leftist contemporaries was his Pan-Africanism. Grounded as he was in a socialist and Pan-Africanist ideology, Nkrumah had no patience for either the liberal model, or plaintive cultural nationalism and its exhortations of a romantic past. And yet, the constitution drawn by Nkrumah's Ghana Representative Assembly in late 1949 duly recognized the significance of the chiefs and proposed a Senate for chiefs and elders.[10] Contrary to the myth of Nkrumah's animosity towards the traditions and

[8] See C.L.R. James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*, (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill and Co. 1977), pp. 97–99.
[9] Drah, p.35.
[10] James, pp. 95–96.

institutions of the past, he was all for the restitution of African cultural heritage, but one that found expression in the modern political endeavors at hand. One only needs to reflect on his conception of "African Personality" and the establishment of the African Studies Institute as an integral part of the University of Ghana to appreciate Nkrumah's views on the role of culture.[11] The problem, therefore, with Nkrumah's dismissal of Denkyemmireku was that, in perceiving and believing in just unity (symbolized by the stomach, as it were) as the only reality, he dismissed the reality, and power, of diversity symbolized by the two heads, so to speak. In that sense, Denkyemmireku constitutes a usable past that clearly points the way forward.

The concept of usable past itself is embodied in the *Sankofa* art motif. Even though the concept gained currency in post-World War II Africa, its origins can be traced to the latter half of the nineteenth century, on the eve of colonialism. Pioneered largely by the Western-educated elite concentrated mainly in the coastal towns of West Africa, namely Monrovia, Freetown, Cape Coast, and Lagos, they included an eclectic mix of scholars, such as Edward Blyden, Africanus Horton, Bishop Crowder, A. B. C. Sibthorpe, C. C. Reindorf, and Samuel Johnson.[12] By and large, they reached back into Africa's history seeking what could be appropriated for some kind of accommodation with what Africa had gained through the centuries of contact with Europe, notwithstanding the destructive Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Thus, in a push that could be summed up as "Africa for Africans," Edward Blyden and Africanus Horton advocated a European-style University and the Western nation-state model, respectively.[13] Horton insisted, however, that the political leaders ought to be the acknowledged educated chiefs and elders of the

[11] See June Milne, *Kwame Nkrumah – A Biography* (London: Panaf Books, 2006), pp. 127–131.

[12] See Robert July, *An African Voice* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), pp. 131–133.

[13] William Worger et. al., *Africa and the West – A Documentary History* Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 199–216.

African people themselves, rather than Europeans.[14] Unfortunately, their plea fell on deaf ears in the capitals of Europe, as Western imperialism prepared for the final conquest of Africa. The ensuing African resistance, expectedly, was cultural and political, both of which awakened a strong pan-African consciousness.

It was in the cultural realm that the search for a usable past took the form of a pitched battle for the soul of Africa. Two variants of this resistance eventually emerged in the Diaspora: the American version that became known as the Harlem Renaissance, and its Francophone version of *Negritude*, centered in Paris, France. Whereas Harlem Renaissance was home-grown by the largely African-American community as an all-encompassing cultural movement in the performing and literary arts, with strong political overtones, such as Garveyism, *Negritude* became primarily an intellectual movement. Pioneered by Francophone Diaspora intellectuals from the Caribbean and Africa resident in Paris, it advocated cultural independence as a prerequisite for political independence. Although *Negritude* has been largely associated with its male founders, notably Aime Cesaire, Leon Damas, and Leopold Senghor, it was born out of the writings of Suzanne Cesaire and the Nardal sisters, Jane and Paulette.[15] *Negritude* had a painful birth, though, on the global stage.

Negritude's global debut occurred at the First International Conference of Black Writers and Artists held in Paris, 1956. Sponsored by Alioune Diop's *Presence Africaine*, the conference brought together leading exponents of *Negritude* and their Harlem Renaissance counterparts from the United States and the Caribbean. A classic battle is said to have erupted at the Paris conference pitting Aime Cesaire against the African American writer Richard Wright. In a scathing criticism of *Negritude*, and in defense of Western culture, Wright is reported to have proclaimed in

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[14] Basil Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State* (London: James Curry Ltd., 1992), pp. 36–39.

[15] For a comprehensive account of the central and pioneering role played by these female intellectuals in the creation and evolution of the *Negritude* movement, see T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, *Negritude Women* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

exasperation: "Thank you, Mr. White Man, for freeing me from the rot of my [African ancestors'] irrational traditions and customs....[16] That was only the beginning, as Leopold Senghor would take the push for *Negritude* to the continent itself ten years later, at the First World Festival of Negro Arts held in Dakar Senegal in 1966.[17] By then, Senghor had joined the ranks of Africa's "philosopher-kings," nationalist leaders who also happened to be scholars and intellectuals.[18] Prominent amongst them were Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, and Senghor himself.

These leading African "philosopher-kings" had their say in the "usable past" discourse. Backed by their political power, they played key roles in advancing doctrines that purported to embody the concept of African socialism as a usable past. Senghor exhorted an "African socialism" grounded in cultural independence – whatever that meant. He delved into ontology and asserted the primacy of spirit over matter whilst proposing a hereditary difference of a sort between Caucasians and Black Africans ("Negro-Berbers," to be exact) that, supposedly, enabled the former acquire knowledge by reason, and the latter, knowledge through emotion. He went further, becoming apologetic for colonialism as a necessary evil.[19] As expected, the fierce critique that *Negritude* engendered has been legendary.[20] In any case, no semblance of socialism did appear in Senegal.

Meanwhile, from Tanzania on the east coast came *Ujamaa*. Propounded by Julius Nyerere. *Ujamaa*, which means family in KiSwahili, eschews ontology altogether and is instead anchored in purely historical grounds. Claiming that there was no private ownership of property in Africa before colonialism, and no conflict, as a result, Nyerere proposed

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[16] Robert July, *An African Voice* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), p. 28.
[17] See David Murphy, "Introduction," in David Murphy (Ed.) *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press,2016), pp. 1–42.
[18] The list also included Gamal Abdel Nasser, Kenneth Kaunda, and Amilcar Cabral.
[19] Leopold Senghor, *Nationhood and the African Road to Socialism* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1962), pp. 89–128.
[20] See Samuel Anderson, "Negritude is Dead..." in David Murphy (Ed.) *The First World Festival of Negro Arts, Dakar 1966* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), pp. 133–150.

Ujamaa as the basis of African socialism, an agrarian one-party socialist state that did not have to evolve through Karl Marx's conflict-laden proletarian phase.[21] Although Nyerere managed to implement *Ujamaa* through collectivization, the national project failed in the end, victim of forces beyond his control at home and abroad.

Finally, there was Kwame Nkrumah, arguably the most prominent philosopher-king of them all, in theory and practice. Nkrumah moved beyond the African socialism constructs of *Negritude* and *Ujamaa* and embraced Marxian scientific socialism's one-party statism ideology. It was an unfortunate move, because he was the one who provided perhaps the most profound Afrocentric political philosophy in the form of "non-atheistic materialism." As outlined in *Consciencism*, the ontology draws on the twentieth-century scientific revolutions in relativity and quantum mechanics to affirm the monistic thesis of matter, which holds that matter is one and the same, notwithstanding its different manifestations, spirits included.[22] Its Afrocentricity lies in the fact that African cosmologies share this unifying theme that is traceable to the Nile Valley Civilizations of antiquity.[23] The ontology thus aligns closely with the "diversities in unity" essence of *Denkyemmireku*. That Nkrumah chose to couple such a profound Afrocentric philosophy to the Eurocentric ideology of one-party nation-statism was unfortunate indeed. It would take Cheikh Anta Diop to provide the necessary Afrocentric paradigm in the quest for a usable past.

Cheikh Anta Diop, the Senegalese physicist-turned historian, remains one of the greatest African intellectuals, if not the greatest. An initial adherent of *Negritude*, Diop came of age with the post-World War II Pan-African nationalist leaders, but took the intellectual path as a physicist. Armed with knowledge in radio-carbon dating technology, Diop almost single-handedly managed to reconstruct the grand narrative of

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[21] Julius Nyerere, *Ujamaa – Essays on African Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 1–12.

[22] Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), pp. 79–90.

[23] See Cheikh Anta Diop, *The African origin of civilization – Myth or reality* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 1974), pp 77, 108–109.

African history stretching back in time and space to the Nile Valley civilizations of antiquity. Ancient Egypt, whose roots lay deep in the upper highlands of the Nile Valley, was a black civilization, he intoned. Not only that, Africa, he proclaimed, shared a unifying grand culture that is rooted in the Nile Valley civilizations, and that Ancient Egypt itself was a core benefactor of the Greco-Roman Civilization that gave birth to Western Civilization. Diop subsequently exhorted students of African history to recognize that,

> ...The history of Black Africa will remain suspended in air and cannot be written correctly until African historians dare to connect it with the history of Egypt. In particular, the study of languages, institutions, and so forth, cannot be treated properly; in a word, it will be impossible to build African humanities, a body of African sciences, so long as that relationship does not appear legitimate...Imagine, if you can, the uncomfortable position of a Western historian who was to write the history of Europe without referring to Greco-Latin Antiquity and try to pass that off as scientific approach[24]

The Afrocentric paradigm of African history was born. It was an epistemological revolution that shattered the long-held Western notion of "a-historic Africa" as nothing but a "Negro Myth."[25] Even so, it took a while for the Afrocentric paradigm to gain traction in academia.

Discourse on consensual democracy as a usable past attests to this shortcoming. Proponents of a return of a sort to African consensual democracy face a daunting challenge. Routinely dismissed by liberal and Marxist critics alike as anachronistic, utopian, and romantic, a persistent challenge for this group is the lack of ideological clarity as to what form,

[24] *Ibid*, p.xiv.

[25] *Ibid*, pp. 10–28.

exactly, this democracy should take, beyond just being consensual.[26] This problem is due, no less in part, to the absence of an Afrocentric paradigm as a frame of reference. Simply put, where is the Afrocentric ideological framework – one that is clearly defined and crystallized as an African model for all to see?

Fundi wa Afrika is a case in point. Advanced by Mueni wa Muiu and Guy Martin as a new paradigm of the African state, *Fundi wa Afrika* proposes a bold new African state that almost defies imagination. It is a gem – almost![27] Called the *Federation of African States* (FAS), it is based on five sub-regional states: Kimit, Mali, Kongo, Kush, and Zimbabwe.[28] Gone are the colonial partitions that masquerade as national boundaries in Africa. The model of governance is a bottom-up pyramid rising from "village councils" through "council of elders" to "house of vice-presidents" and, finally, to the "president" at the top of the hierarchy.[29] For this new African state, *Fundi* draws on what is generally perceived to be a unifying cultural theme in African socio-political organization. *Fundi* lists six basic features of this unifying cultural mosaic as follows:

> First, they were based on kinship and ancestry. Second, custom and tradition – rather than written constitutions – established the rules and procedures of governance. Third, power was both secular and sacred. Fourth, women played a key role in indigenous African political systems and institutions. Thus in antiquity (Egypt and Kush) women were active in political and economic affairs, either as queen mothers, princesses in charge of temples, or as co-regents

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[26] See, for instance, Kumi Ansah-Koi, "A Historical Outline of Democracy in Ghana," in K. A. Ninsin and F. K. Drah (Eds.) *The Search for Democracy in Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1987), pp. 55–68.; V. G. Simiyu, "The Democratic Myth in African Traditional Societies," in W. O. Oyugi & A. Gitonga (Eds.), *The Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa.* (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya, 1987), pp. 49–70; J. M. Nzouankeu, "The African Attitude to Democracy." *International Social Science Journal*, 1991, No. 43 (129), 372–385.

[27] Mueni wa Muiu and Guy Martin, *A New Paradigm of the African State – Fundi wa Africa* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

[28] *Ibid*, pp. 207–210.

[29] *Ibid*, p. 209.

with their younger sons. Fifth, indigenous African political systems were inherently democratic. Political succession was strictly regulated according to descent (patrilineal or matrilineal) and lineage. Finally, rural communities constituted the basic level of indigenous African political systems. The village assembly was convened when the council of elders could not reach unanimity on a contested issue.[30]

There seems to be unanimity among scholars on all the basic features but the fifth characteristic.

The assertion that indigenous African political systems were inherently democratic remains a point of heated debate. What exactly does being "democratic" mean? Was it because of the consensual nature of decision-making, hence the term "consensual democracy?"

And yet, a close look at African political systems reveals clearly the essence of African consensual democracy: the principle of consensual legislative power as institutionally independent of executive power at all levels of the polity, be it a village or an empire. The principle served as an eternal guarantor of the fundamental human right of representation in decision-making. To salvage this principle as a usable past, however, requires an analytical distinction between executive power and legislative power. To the extent that executive power is, in theory and practice, almost always vested in one individual, it is inherently partisan. As such, executive power is the most powerful and, potentially, the most dangerous – one that must, of necessity, be held in check and rendered accountable to tl e people. The problem is, the inherent partisanship of executive power cannot be wished away, neither can it be abolished – not peacefully, at least. One can only regulate and control it. And that is exactly how Africanist Basil Davidson defines African democratic ethos.

[30] *Ibid*, p. 47.

In his classic, *The Black Man's Burden – Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State Ideology*, (1992), Davidson laments the legacy of cultural alienation bequeathed by the Western nation-state ideology during the colonial dispossession. He writes:

> What [the colonial powers] had done, much more often, was to destroy or downgrade Africa's own institutions and cultures which, through an immensely long history, had taught how to provide forms of public control over executives, forms of public comment against executives, forms of public distrust of executives – in short forms of democratic behavior – and which had given Africa's peoples, or many of them, a confident sense of possessing and *exercising* a real control over their own lives. The institutions of that past sovereignty could not be restored. The cultures which had produced them, though often still alive after the battering of colonial dispossession, were in any case sorely lacking in self-belief. What remained possible now could only be difficult experiment or renewed subjection.[31]

Notice Davidson's definition of democracy: "public control over executives...public comment against executives...public distrust of executives." He couldn't have phrased it any better. It is almost as saying, "it's the executive power – stupid!" In other words, it was the control of executive power that was perceived as the primary problem in African political systems.

Africans resolved the executive power problematic by making the exercise of legislative power institutionally independent of the exercise of executive power. That was why, traditionally, the assembly of the representatives of the people at all levels of the polity was the supreme authority that subordinated all other organs or institutions of government.[32]

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[31] Basil Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden – Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State Ideology*, (New York: Time Books, 1992), p. 223.

[32] See A. K. Gitonga, "The Meaning and Foundations of Democracy," in A. K. Gitonga & W. O. Oyugi (Eds.), *The Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa* (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya, 1987), pp. 4–23.

Any deviation – and there must have been plenty – was an anomaly. The consensual nature of the democracy added to the effectiveness of the people's control of executive power through their elected representatives, since the primary allegiance of the representatives was to the lineage (the traditional constituency), and not the royal family (faction-ridden that it usually was) that held executive power. In African socio-political organization, the respective lineages were the constituencies whose legislative representatives – the elders – constituted the state councils. The independence of the legislative representatives constituted a fundamental human right of self-determination in decision-making enjoyed by all members of the polity. This recognition is the basis of philosopher Kwasi Wiredu's plea for a non-party polity.

Kwasi Wiredu grounds his plea for a non-party polity in the philosophy embedded in Denkyemmireku. He cites the case of the Akan, whose consensual democracy was based on "the belief that *ultimately* the interests of all members of a society are the same, although their immediate perceptions of those interests may be different."[33] Linking this recognition to the moral embodied in Denkyemmireku, he writes:

> This thought is given expression in an art motif depicting a crocodile with one stomach and two heads locked in a struggle over food. If they could but see that the food was, in any case, destined for the same stomach, the irrationality of the conflict would be manifest to them.[34]

To Wiredu, the principle of consensus ensures representation, not just in council (the formal) but, perhaps more important, in counsel (the substantive). It is necessary to quote him at length here:

> ...the pursuit of consensus was a deliberate effort to go beyond decision by majority opinion. It is easier to secure majority agreement than to achieve consensus. To [the Ashanti] majority

[33] Kwasi Wiredu, *Cultural Particulars and Universals – An African Perspective* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 185.
[34] *Ibid.*

> opinion in itself is not a good enough basis for decision-making, for it deprives the minority of the right of representation in the decision in question. Two concepts of representation are involved in these considerations. There is the representation of a given constituency in council, and there is the representation of the will of a representative in the making of a given decision. Let us call the first formal and the second substantive representation. It is obvious, then, that you can have formal representation without its substantive correlate. Yet the formal is desired for the sake of the latter. On the Ashanti view, substantive representation is a matter of fundamental human right. Each human being has a right to be represented not only in council but also in counsel on any matter relevant to his or her interests or those of her groups. That is why consensus is so important.[35]

The foregoing analysis pertains to the legislative aspect of the socio-political organization of nearly all African societies. But, the question still remains as to exactly what form such a democracy should take in contemporary Africa, given the strong hold of the Western nation-state ideology.

Not even Wiredu escapes this ideological conundrum. He suggests a scenario in which representatives, that is, legislators elected on non-party basis, in turn elect a leader charged with the responsibility of forming an administration.[36] In other words, legislators should be the ones choosing an individual (on non-partisan basis) to be vested with executive power. That would be akin to wishing away partisanship, or the two heads of Denkyemmireku, as if they did not exist. Not only is it impossible, especially given the dynamics and complexities of modern societies, it is also unnatural.

Fortunately, Denkyemmireku points the way forward, ideologically. It is the idea of maintaining the election of the president or

[35] *Ibid* p. 186.
[36] *Ibid* p.179.

prime minister on modern partisan basis, but electing members of parliament, who are vested with consensual legislative power, on non-party basis. Such ideological construct calls for revisiting the concept of ideology itself. For that, one needs go no farther than the works of philosopher Kwame Gyekye.

Kwame Gyekye provides invaluable analytical tools for understanding the concept of ideology as an expression of a society's values. He first dismisses the idea of African traditional societies being socialist in the sense of having no private ownership of property, insisting, instead, that the societies were rather humanistic.[37] Neither were they akin to one-party states. The idea of a party system, be it one-party or multi-parties, is strictly a Western construct, born out of modern European historical experience, grounded as it is in ethical individualism. On the connection between values and ideologies, and ideologies and political parties, Gyekye writes:

> In a democracy, political parties are established to pursue and bring the values of the society to realization. The political parties may be several, reflecting the fact either that different segments of the population hold different ideologies or that different ways are evolved in the process of trying to realize the dominant set of values of the society...But the question is, will there really be great and irreconcilable differences between the various ideologies (to be) espoused by different political parties? This question...can be answered most often in the negative.... Thus, two senses of ideologies may be distinguished: ideology as a framework of ideas used to define the values of a society; and ideology as a program for giving concrete expression to those ideas in the real world of politics and social action.[38]

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[37] See Kwame Gyekye, *Tradition and Modernity – Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 146–147.
[38] *Ibid* pp. 166–167.

The two senses of ideology is a valuable conceptual framework for understanding the nature of ideology in the modern African socio-political context, one that aligns with what Denkyemmireku represents.

Denkyemmireku embodies Gyekye's two senses of ideology. The first sense of ideology is at the macro level, the supra-structure, as it were, which is represented by the unity embodied in consensual, non-partisan exercise of legislative power. It is the recognition of the one stomach of shared values, where decisions on the production and distribution of national resources are made in an equitable way – in the same way that the stomach digests food brought in by whichever of the two heads, and distributes it to the rest of the body, the two heads included. The second sense of ideology is at the micro level, represented by the diversity of political programs.

On that, there is hardly an iota of substantive difference in ideology between political parties in Africa today. Any difference in ideologies with respect to the programs of African political parties would certainly not be the capital-labor schism of the Western historical experience, but rather that between the center and localities. It would be between the so-called modern urban and the so-called traditional countryside, the latter being, by far, the teeming majority of almost every African nation. As aptly summed up by the social critic Ikem Osodi in Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), an account of the crisis of state and development in the fictional post-colonial African state of Kangan,

> The prime failure of this government...can't be the massive corruption though its scale and pervasiveness are truly intolerable; it isn't the subservience to foreign manipulation, degrading as it is; it isn't even this second-class hand-me-down capitalism, ludicrous and doomed; nor is it the damnable shooting of striking railway workers and demonstrating students and the destruction and banning thereafter of independent unions and co-operatives. It is the failure of our rulers to establish vital inner links with the poor

> and dispossessed of this country, with the bruised heart that throbs painfully at the core of this nation's being.[39]

Modern African democratic political experience shows that the only time this vital link is brought to life is during elections when political parties seek votes from the people. In between elections, and in a clear parroting directed by their neo-colonial masters at home and abroad, the talk from the ruling party is not about the people, but about the so-called "stakeholders," whoever and wherever they might be. Just listen to Ghana's current political elite.

It is the same critique implicit in Frantz Fanon's long-ago admonition on what he saw as pitfalls of national consciousness. In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), Fanon shares his frustration with the role of the political party in post-colonial Africa. He laments that:

> The party is not an instrument in the hands of the government...but an instrument in the hands of the people... The party is not and never should be merely a political bureau where all the members of government and political dignitaries of the regime feel free to congregate. Alas all too often it is the party which makes up the political bureau and its members reside permanently in the capital. In an underdeveloped country the leading members should flee the capital like the plague.[40]

Unfortunately, that is what the party still is in contemporary Africa: call it government of the party, by the party, and for the party. Fanon's critique on the hollowness of national consciousness in post-colonial Africa is on point – almost. Unfortunately, his analysis is still grounded in Eurocentric paradigm. Remove the word party from his references to the districts, and what he is saying lies in plain sight.

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[39] Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (New York: Anchor Books, 1987), pp. 130–131.

[40] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), p. 127.

The authentic African political leaders are in the districts, except that they are not grouped along party lines. This is all the more so in countries like Ghana and Nigeria, where the traditional political systems are still alive, vibrant, and certainly perceived to be more legitimate than the imported Western nation-state model. The problem is that, the Western nation-state ideology, in the form of the almighty phantom called "political party," has modern African political systems totally in its grips, wherever they may be. The primary allegiance of the so-called people's representatives at the national assembly lies first and foremost with their political parties – whether ruling or in opposition. Sadly, the people's subservience to the institution of political party knows no bounds, as they clamor to invest the political party with even more power.

Take the case of Ghana, one country that has attempted one of what Davidson calls "difficult experiments" in the form non-partisan District Assemblies. Established in 1987 by the erstwhile People's National Democratic Congress (PNDC) regime, and enshrined in the 1992 Constitution, the concept of non-partisan District Assemblies has definitely seeped into the collective consciousness of Ghanaians.[41] All that is left to do is to take it national to the center, but it faces a huge obstacle.

Just look at the absurdity of the 1992 constitutional provisions on the executive power-legislative power dynamics. The partisan president gets to appoint the partisan Members of Parliament as Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers of State, with their legislative positions still intact.[42] What kind of presidential democracy does that – investing an individual with both legislative and executive powers? It is a sure way for the partisan president to control legislative power, instead of the latter controlling the former, as it pertained in the African past. Meanwhile, the partisan president also gets to appoint the District Chief Executives for running the statutory local governments, as well as thirty percent of the membership of the District Assemblies.[43] So, where does power really lie in this

[41] The *1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana,* Article 248.
[42] *Ibid,* Articles 78 and 79.
[43] *Ibid,* Articles 242 and 243.

configuration, one may ask? Certainly not with the people, but with the party.

All of which makes any advocacy in Ghana for electing District Chief Executives on partisan basis a misplaced emphasis and an unfortunate one indeed. That would be investing political parties with too much power. Political agitation should be rather focused on electing all Members of Parliament on non-partisan basis. Come election time, the campaign posters of those running for parliament ought to be independent of those of the partisan presidential candidates. Any face next to a presidential candidate on a campaign poster ought to be the person the presidential candidate has in mind as the potential district chief executive. Ghana is capable of such revolutionary transformation of the African state. Its history of strong localism makes that amply clear.[44] The nation would have shown the way, once again, as a pathfinder towards African emancipation from the cultural alienation of the Western nation-state ideology.

Even though Danquah suggested Denkyemmireku as emblem for Ghana, he was still standing on Western ground, and so was Nkrumah in dismissing it. Whereas Danquah was for the liberal multi-party state version of this ideology, Nkrumah was for the Marxian one-party-state alternative. As for Nkrumah, the greatest pan-Africanist theorist and practitioner of all time, he was right on point in presenting philosophical consciencism, grounded as it is in the ontology of non-atheistic materialism, as the philosophy that must stand behind the African revolution If only he had coupled this profound Afrocentric philosophy to the Afrocentric ideology of consensual, non-partisan legislatures, as the hall mark of a modern African democracy, instead of coupling it to the culturally alienating Western nation-state ideology.

It may not be too late to retrieve Denkyemmireku as a usable past. It provides a much-needed Afrocentric philosophy and ideology for a

[44] For the central-local dynamic of the Akan state system, see Thomas Lewin, *Asante Before the British* (Lawrence: The Regent Press of Kansas, 1978), pp. 85–109.

revolutionary transformation of the African state, one that upholds the independence of consensual non-partisan legislative power as a bulwark against the all too common abuse in the exercise of executive power. It would have constituted an African renaissance. As Nkrumah himself notes in *Consciencism*, rules do change, but principles are eternal and non-negotiable.[45] Denkyemmireku is food for thought – and action!

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What Color is Black: Epistemic Disobedience in Jean Genet's *The Blacks*

Hicham MAZOUZ

Abstract

Jean Genet's writing has generated controversies over the years, particularly his advocacy for demoting whiteness and its means of domination. He is primarily regarded as an angry homosexual white French male who portrays grotesque shadows of humanity in his work. In his 1959 Play The Blacks, Genet describes the way Blacks are categorized in France through the mediation of abjecting politics of disgust, which cast black bodies as repulsive and outside the pole. At the same time, The Blacks considers the strategies of resistance and critique that are available to these bodies and those working alongside with them. Characters in The Blacks conform to the roles that they are given, therefore creating a visual mask over their identity. For Genet acting becomes a (positively) perverse and subversive mean for gaining power over oppression by taking an art from something that is traditionally based in strict role playing and turning it into a form of individual and collective expression necessary to "negatively" creating what can then be conceived as an assertively "positive" socio-political identity.

Keywords: Race, Gender and Epistemology, Black Rebellion, Racial Abjection.

When in 1970 Angela Davis, then a member of the Black Panthers and a prominent figure in the fight against racial injustice was arrested in California, Jean Genet and a group of French intellectuals joined forces to condemn her arrest, giving it an international dimension by linking her cause to the decolonization movements in Algeria, and particularly to the global outrage over the arrest of an Algerian militant, Djamila Boupacha

eight years earlier and her torture at the hands of the French military. In this sense, an African-American woman fighting the State for her freedom in the USA became for Genet a significant and meaningful mediation in the fight of North-Africans in France. Moreover, Genet's engagement with the Black Panthers along with the Algerian cause requires a closer reading of the role played by French intellectuals in giving these two causes a global dimension. Genet later wrote about the Black Panthers in *The Declared Enemy*, stating that:

> Informed by the idea of DuBois, Richard Wright, Fanon, Malcolm X, Cleaver, Newton and Seale, they have understood that a people long cut off from its true tradition risks losing itself in the one it has tried to retrieve, but which presents itself, in fact, as a form of folklore that is very reassuring to the dominant nation. (59)

Genet's reference to prominent black scholars in this passage not only highlights his awareness of the similarities between these two causes, but also confirms his engagement with the subject of racial oppression that defines the two groups. Genet's activism for the African-American cause was first noticed in the USA during the American premiere of his play *Les Nègres* [*The Blacks*] in 1961, a work in which black performers wearing white masks are engaged in a violent revolt against whites in front of what Genet wanted to be an all-white audience. The show caused a scandal in New York and dramatized the widespread racial tensions that were already at their peak during the civil rights era. It was in the same year that Genet addressed yet another sensitive issue after publishing *The Screens*, depicting in an ironic, paradoxical and poetically complex way France's brutal colonial system in Algeria.

In a 1972 interview with Pierre Démerron, Jean Genet revealed the origin of his connection to the issue of blackness and the black cause in general, "What makes me feel so very close to them [blacks] is the hatred they bear for the white world; a hatred comparable to my own for the world that scorned me because I was a bastard, with no father and no mother" (63). But while hatred remains apparent in the performance of black actors,

it is not what Genet presented in this play. More precisely, black performance in the play importantly emphasizes that blackness is dialectically impossible to separate from whiteness. Furthermore, in his introduction to *The Blacks*, Genet writes: "One evening an actor asked me to write a play for an all-black cast. But what exactly is a black? First of all, what's his color?" (Genet, *The Blacks* 3)[1]. By refusing to acknowledge the existence of the color of blackness, Genet aims to subvert whiteness and challenge its normativity. If "black" can escape a specific color, then it becomes standard, and it will in turn require the reconstruction of whiteness. In other words, if blackness gains currency by being unnoticed, then what does it mean to notice blackness? Assuming blackness while denying black as a color discloses the construction of whiteness as an ontological act, since blackness in the play is more about how the players exist in a white world in which they perform.

The staging of *The Blacks* was designed by André Aquart, one of the most established scenographers in the Paris scene at the time. Ironically, Aquart, who was asked to stage one of the most controversial plays of the twentieth-century French theater, had just arrived from Algeria. He studied in l'École des Beaux Arts of Algiers and had been living in the then French *département* for many years. Known for being a strong believer that scenography should be the most constitutive element of the stage, his obsession with amplifying the scenic spaces attracted Genet's attention as he was searching for a very symbolic setting. In *The Blacks*, the audience is forced to witness the re-enactment of the murder of a white woman, while a voice reminds the viewer that it will be carried out by blacks. The opening scene of *The Blacks* reveals a background of black velvet curtains and numerous rows, the highest of which, all the way in the back, comprises the "white court." The members of this court are blacks with white masks, and they watch the action from the opposite side of the stage. The spectators can see, located between them and the "white court," four black men and four black women dancing around a catafalque (in

[1] « *Un soir un comédien me demanda d'écrire une pièce qui serait jouée par des noirs. Mais, qu'est-ce que c'est donc un noir? Et d'abord, c'est de quelle couleur?* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 474.

which it is assumed that there is the body of a white woman killed by blacks). But the catafalque is discovered to be empty; in fact, there is no catafalque.[2] The murder of a white woman that is supposed to be enacted before the audience is in reality nothing but a ploy to prevent the audience from discovering the truth about the black man's "real crime": his rebellion against white domination. The drama begins when Archibald emerges from the black group to address both the audience and the court about a play within a play consisting of killing a white woman, and which will be performed in front of them every night. He introduces Village, who plays the rapist and the assassin, then Vertu, the black prostitute to whom Village will confess his crime, and Diouf who will be assigned the role of the white woman. This is how Genet structured the so-called crime that will quickly be discovered to be a cover used to judge and execute black resistance. The audience is only told that there is going to be a crime every evening, but never witnesses the act itself.

My attempt to summarize the plot and its setting aims to aid the reader to capture the irrelevance of the plot to the play's imposing stage design. *The Blacks* resists a particular order in which events and movement follow each other chronologically; instead, the play structures itself with repeated acts. For Genet, the trope of the play represents the confusions that may be experienced by a white audience forced to watch the lie and the manipulation to which blacks are subjected, but also, and most importantly, the representation of its whiteness through the eyes of blacks. During the introduction of the play Genet ordered that "This play, written, I repeat, by a white man, is intended for a white audience, but if it is ever performed before a black audience, which is unlikely, then a white person, male or female, should be invited every evening" (Genet *The Blacks* 4)[3]. While Genet insists on the anti-white character of his play, it does not, however, glorify blacks. For Genet, power is an ontological and epistemic manifestation of "whiteness," but he is under no illusion that another

[2] The setting had four chairs covered with a white cloth. See Knapp 1989, 129.

[3] « *Cette pièce, je le répète, écrite par un Blanc, est destinée à un public de Blancs. Mais si, par improbable, elle était jouée un soir devant un public de Noirs, il faudrait qu'à chaque représentation un Blanc fût invité—mâle ou femelle* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 474.

source of power will be better than whiteness. Genet also believes that blackness is an epistemic construction by whites, and only poetry and art can help debunk its power. One way to achieve this is to adopt the dominant narrative used by Whites to dehumanize Blacks: the narrative of blackness. In other words, subaltern people become aware that they are seen as abject and can then use that abjection to fight back at the source of their abjection. Genet's method of critiquing this power encourages the audience to adopt a similar approach to the scene as it keeps waiting for the "big" crime to happen, while in reality, all it sees is a deconstructed white vision of blackness, which I suggest is an epistemic form of abjection.

The term "epistemology" derives from the Greek word "episteme," which means "knowledge" obtained by means of the logic of "logos." According to the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* "epistemologists typically do not focus on procedural or acquaintance knowledge, however, instead preferring to focus on propositional knowledge." However, here we understand "propositional" as a proposition expressed through declarative sentences describing facts and states of affairs. In other words, propositional knowledge is taken as the foundation for what is known, i.e., knowledge and the general idea of truth, whether scientific, social, historical, etc. What I am referring to as an epistemic form of abjection is an intellectual offshoot of what Sarah Ahmed terms the "phenomenology of Whiteness" (Ahmed 48). In exploring this concept of an epistemic form of abjection, however, I am proposing to take Ahmed's concept a step further by foregrounding the work that normative whiteness "does without assuming whiteness as an ontological given" (Ahmed 48). My interest is in examining what whiteness cannot do when its epistemic voice/image is revealed. In other words, my concept of an epistemic form of abjection seeks to build on and around Ahmed's "phenomenology of whiteness" by showing that when this whiteness is played from within, as it is by Genet's claim to be a white man, it is disturbed, threatened, and destabilized.

Phenomenology examines structures of consciousness and experience rather than knowledge. In "Phenomenology of Whiteness,"

Sarah Ahmed examines how the reification of power allows whiteness to become a normative "'real' material" "lived" through the effect of the racialization of others. Ahmed discusses the importance of approaching whiteness through phenomenology first by looking at how some other scholars such as Richard Dyer, Linda Powell and Michelle Fine have grappled with theories of whiteness. She questions the usefulness of taking whiteness as an object, and prefers to examine "what whiteness is doing" with regard to the social objectification of others, rather than "what we are doing to whiteness" (Ahmed 45). Ahmed then looks at the body image of whiteness and proposes phenomenology as a tool that can reveal how whiteness "takes up" space by making some bodies become more apparent than others. Ahmed is mainly addressing scholars such as Alcoff, who believes that it is pointless to engage in race debate using arguments based on the scientific non-existence of race. She states, "race may not correlate with clinical variations, but persistently correlates with a statistically overwhelming significance of wage level, employment level, poverty levels, and the likelihood of incarceration" (Ahmed 48).

An epistemic form of abjection defines precisely the epistemic division of racialized groups and other categories as a non-coherent subjecthood. I am thinking here of forms of abjection linking homosexuality with pederasty or AIDS and incarceration, for instance. Those stereotypes are not connected to the idea of race, but rather to normative societal values and a presumed failure of the subject to make rational choices. In other words, whiteness never entails debating race when in conversation with non-normative societal groups. In fact, the only instance when it does lead to debating race is when non- normative subjects are victims of racialized groups. Here whiteness feels comfortable highlighting its construction of homophobia in other groups in order to build separate normative spaces for its "non-normative" groups. But if such an epistemic form of abjection is linked to other forms of abjection that accord lower degrees of credibility to oppressed minorities by linking their demands regarding familiar forms of social injustice (gays should be fighting for gay rights and blacks for black rights), what happens when a non-normative abjected individual transcends his/her space to denounce a

different racialized abject space? How can whiteness face treason from someone who is believed to be one of its own? In this chapter, such abjection is allied to Ahmed's critique in being distanced from scholars who engage in dialogue based on the non-existence of race. On the contrary, such abjection enables subjects to recognize and denounce the identity spaces assigned to each group since the discourse used to construct them is built, albeit unconsciously, by whiteness.

In *Disturbing Attachments: Genet, Modern Pederasty, and Queer History* (2017), Kaji Amin argues that abject subjects often uncover impure, perverse and contingent forms of agency from within the very institution and discourse that might deny them subjecthood. I examine Jean Genet's writings on penal colonies, Algeria, and the Black Panthers, to trace the historical forces that have produced abjection from the perspective of a "white" and "French," yet "abjected," European.

This space illuminates subaltern genealogies of thought on the problem of abjection of Arabness and blackness which are so central to Genet's writing about subjection and subaltern agencies within dominant white societies. It is through this white space from which the abject derives that I propose Jean Genet's two plays, *The Blacks*. My own reading of this play, along with a range of his other writings about the Black Panthers and the Algerian revolution is that they form part of an anti-colonial genealogy of the Black Atlantic discourse on racial abjection and the discursive modalities used to face an oppressive, white system. The epistemic form of abjection I am describing does not assume passive victims in need of a cosmopolitan movement. Fanon and Genet's readings of black and Arab images allow me to envision this abjection not as a permanent psychic structure of oppression as a collective experience that finds its space in and around Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic discourse.

In *The Blacks*, Genet joins Fanon on addressing the colonial dichotomization of blacks and whites. Both authors describe the mindset of decolonization as something incommensurate with the idea of liberation, because the process of decolonization itself cannot sustain the

structure that has created colonialism and slavery to begin with. It is thus important to locate Genet and Fanon within the historical period in which they both write: the 1950s. During this period, a variety of black political, cultural and literary movements traversed the Atlantic space along with Pan-African, decolonization, Civil Rights, Negritude and Black Nationalist movements. This shift in collective black consciousness from traditionally limited spaces to a global movement ignited new Atlantic political "structures of feeling" among racialized groups. This chapter will argue that such structures among collectivities have opened up conduits of affect of racial identification to other abjected groups. The connection between Genet's involvement with French colonization in North Africa and the racial oppression of African Americans has seldom received the critical attention it deserves. I venture to suggest that this lack of attention has to do with a certain discomfort with the post-colonial discourse of a white Frenchman who speaks from a "white" abjected perspective, as well as lack of curiosity about what such abjection might mean.

Bettina L. Knapp explains in a revised edition of her 1989 book *Genet* how *The Blacks* was perceived by white audiences during the first 1961 presentation in Paris: "When Eugene Ionesco went to see *The Blacks* he took Genet's hatred, disguised as the hatred of blacks for whites, so personally, that he felt he was being attacked. He left the theater before the end of the performance" (131). One might imagine that Eugene Ionesco, the renowned French Romanian playwright considered to be the most prominent figure of French avant-garde theater, would have been the last person to be offended by such a setting. It is important to pause for a moment here and remember that Ionesco's notoriety came from his revolutionized theater that depicts the insignificance of human existence in a palpable way. Ionesco downgraded black anger as a mere projection of Genet's hatred. Ionesco, who was a strong advocate for minority people and a personal friend of Genet, is only able to locate him in his non-normative phenomenology. In other words, it is not that Ionesco is unable to picture blacks as an angry group who decided to rebel violently for their rights; rather, it is the idea that he sees Genet as a white man giving voice to the blacks. Ionesco, I argue, is unable to picture a genealogy of abjection

that links some whites who have been traditionally discriminated against, whether for their sexual orientation or social status, and blacks who are subordinated in white society because he cannot recognize the nature of the abjection that connects them. On the contrary, he is able to picture whites speaking for/about blacks, but not the other way around.

To begin with, it seems necessary to pause for a moment and take a look at the racial aspect of color that Genet seeks to interrogate. Indeed, throughout the play he destabilizes this notion of color and its relationship to the dominated/dominant on one hand and to the inner/outer on the other, by presenting a group of blacks wearing white masks. This strategy is very similar to Ross Chambers' concept of the "oppositional" through which he distinguishes between opposition and resistance, aligning the force of the latter concept with revolutionary violence. Marion May Campbell explains that Chambers makes a distinction between opposition and resistance since the latter is often linked to violence due to its revolutionary aspects. Accordingly, the oppositional "is achieved through the complex work of irony, in the fold, as it were, of reading, whereby the subject is always already the other, and the reader in turn is othered through the *mise en abyme* which the textual play offers of implicit power relations in the staged narrative" (Campbel 32). One of the most critical characteristics of oppositional culture theory is to argue how blacks and abjected groups, in general, contribute to their disadvantage. The oppositional culture in this passage appears throughout Genet's play. It is about the movement of protest expressed through the black man's revolt.

At first, I choose to focus on the role played by symbolic white images to demonstrate the importance of whiteness's social discourse. Indeed, the metaphorical element of this discourse concerns the black body, because theater is a place of reflection and offers the possibility of questioning dominant ideologies. As a result, the white masks worn by blacks allow for the recovery of the white discourse used to mark boundaries. Genet's question of what is the color of a black repositions the stereotype of the "black," which is marked by important historical facts for the "black" subject, namely slavery, colonization, and decolonization. In

short, Genet's portrayal of the image of a "black" wearing a white mask provides the elements that underlie his archetype, which are reflected precisely in these clichés that reduce blacks to lascivious and simple-minded individuals.

The play opens with a group of black actors led by Archibald in a dance ritual around the catafalque, while at the same time the white court watches from the second stage far behind. When the blacks conclude their dance, Archibald goes on to explain the enactment of the crime that will be performed every night. As the play progresses, we discover that the performance is inspired by more than a simple entertainment. A white judge steps in from the court and reminds the blacks that they have promised to "Act out the crime in order to merit" (Genet 21) the condemnation. This setting of the plot suggests that their promise will not be judged under the presumption of innocence, but rather that they are being asked to prove that they merit their condemnation. Amin Kadji explains that "If the purpose of the play were either to facilitate the judgement and condemnation of 'the blacks' for a specific crime they had committed or to distract the audience from the offstage action, there would be no need to repeat its performance, with a fresh cadaver every night" (198). Amin's comment suggests that the irrationality of the plot is to show how the white court manipulates black resistance in order to subvert the events that lead to the supposed murder of a white woman (which has never happened) and, most importantly, to justify the movement from murder to trial. In other words, this ritual seems to erode and dispel a certain idea that whites want the blacks to have about them, and also stigmatizes the system that has blacks living in fear of being endlessly on trial. This black performance of racial culpability originates from a deeply historical screenplay of black guilt and white judgment that torments Fanon in *BSWM*: "I am guilty. I do not know what of" (22).[4] Genet, for his part, stages a denunciation of the quest for humanity as a trope that will keep

[4] « *Je suis coupable. Je ne sais pas de quoi* » (Fanon, *PNMB* 112).

the blacks performing absurd plots installed by white hegemony in order to [re]construct[5] an entire system that will represent normalcy.

By [re]constructing the setting, Genet also brings the source of this particular structure of feeling back to the origin of its construction. Archibald's performance as a leader appears to intricately map out the aesthetic ground on which black resistance is staged in Genet's mind. First, he expresses a desire for other performers to be irrevocably black. His own radicality needs to exist not only as a way of being, but most importantly as a way of being a "black" that cannot be refuted. In order to liberate the self, Archibald requests his followers to embrace their visible color: "The tragedy will lie in the color black! It's *that* that you'll cherish, that *that* you'll attain, and deserve. It's *that* that must be earned" (Genet 17)[6]. What Archibald wants is to engage this quest for humanity in the face of a system that keeps denying it to his black audience. Archibald's identification of "black" as a color suggests that it is a white construction attached to a condition. *This* black is told that if he really wants to reach humanity he needs to go beyond race. But borrowing from Fanon, the black will soon discover that this humanity is only attainable through whiteness. For Archibald, it is a tragedy because epidermal blackness is a construction by a white man. Archibald proposes an unnamed sacred space called simply *"that"* as a strategy to gradually shift a dominant narrative ingrained by white oppression to control the blacks. Archibald's new space deprives white hegemony of the color marker it has created to monitor black rebellion. Here, the angry black man is calling for some sort of a sacred new blackness to be in concert with the constructed color, and which will create a new and different concept of the self. In order to achieve "*that,* "

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[5] I am borrowing the term reconstruct from Toni Morison's 1993 interview with Paul Gilroy: "Slavery broke the world in half, it broke it in every way. It broke Europe. It made them into something else, it made them slave masters, and it made them crazy. You can't do that for hundreds of years and not take a toll. They had to dehumanize, not just the slaves but themselves. They have had to reconstruct everything in order to make that system appear true" (178). See Gilroy, *Small Acts: Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures* (1994). [6] « *Le tragique sera dans la couleur noire! C'est elle que vous chérirez, rejoindrez, mériterez. C'est elle qu'il faudra gagner* » Genet, *Les Nègres,* 484.

Archibald insists on decolonizing the mind. The condition of the black man must be considered a compelling performance, as the black leader calls for an investment in what Monica Joy Cross refers to as a "new transformation narrative" (21). Archibald's goal here is to represent an unreadable mystifying color that can escape the white gaze. This visual strategy which deploys invisibility takes its origin from the theoretical foundation of Fanon's analysis of visual agitation that structures his analysis of colonialism and revolutionary strategies of transformation.

In my interpretation of the play, Genet's replacement of color with a "veiled" space in which color is unreadable resonates with veiling as a tactical response to the colonial gaze that one finds in figures of the black Atlantic, such as W. E. B. DuBois' reflection on the veil of race and Frantz Fanon's masking in the colonial setting. In fact, the racialization of the viewer during the setting of the play is in itself suggestive of DuBois's double consciousness and Fanon's exploration of the white masking of blacks. Furthermore, In *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon observes the effort of the colonized to escape from the "colonial world" through avoiding exposing themselves to the colonial authorities. The visual strategy noted by Fanon in his analysis of the veil looks into Algerian women and their ability to bypass military surveillance by disappearing under the veil. In Fanon's narrative, the colonizer's racist construction of the other is so confident in its own validity that he sees "veiled Algerian women" as disempowered, submissive and incapable of carrying a political struggle for freedom (by sneaking out weapons right in front of them without being suspected).

For Genet, the structure of the setting must be the most important part of the show. On the one hand, we have the audience faced by the blacks, who are judged by the white court, and on the other hand, we have a staged killing of a white woman that never happens. In both settings, race is the only visible marker that divides what is truly happening, that is to say, the court's action towards innocent blacks and the narrative that produces false accusations. Archibald continues: "I repeat once again – you're wasting your time. We know your argument. You are going to urge

us to be conciliatory. But we're bent on being unreasonable, on being hostile. You'll speak of love. Go ahead, since our speeches are set down in the script" (29)[6]. Accusing the blacks of being violent and hostile while it is the court who is staging the fake crime is what Claudia Berger has identified as a "mimetic non-narrative" which she explains as the process through which race is conceptualized through narrative. Berger argues that when narrative is used as a discursive tool with non-fictional ramification, it leaves the diegetic and enters what she terms as "the mimetic real." For Berger:

> Narrative is only narrative when it acknowledges its narrativity (when it occupies the diegetic, fictional realm); when it becomes mimetic and rejects its narrativity by falsely claiming reality (when it occupies the mimetic, non-fictional realm), narrative is better termed non-narrative, because it is a narrative that does not admit narrativity. (Berger 34).

Accordingly, a narrative of race in its attempt to create a non-fictional correlation to the fictional idea of race can only operate in the mimetic realm. Following Berger, I am reminded of bell hook's concept of "re-presentation" of reality. In "Representation of Whiteness in the Black Imagination," hooks writes that "Like fictions, [stercotypes as representations] are created to serve as substitution, standing in for what is real. They – stereotypes – are not to tell it like it is but to invite and encourage pretense" (44). The term "pretense" in hook's passage highlights the forged nature of the narrated alternate reality, which is only real in the sense that it may exist, but which does not echo the nature of true reality. Archibald's answer shows that the encounter in the court dramatically confirms the dominant narrative that aims to maintain the blacks under domination. By staging an impression of dialogue, in which it is suggested that the white court should be based on reason and "love"

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[6] : « *Une fois de plus je voudrais que vous sachiez que vous perdez votre temps. Vos arguments sont connus. Vous allez nous parler raison, conciliation: nous nous obstinerons dans la déraison, dans le refus. Vous parlerez d'amour. Faites-le, puisque nos répliques sont prévues par le texte* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 490.

rather than hostility and violence, while at the same time denying the blacks their narrative voice, Archibald is provocative. He suggests that the narrative of race constructs and sustains false realities in order to establish and embed the idea of race and racial difference. In other words, there is a narrative hiding under another non-narrative of race and racial inequality that has been accepted as a tool to turn oppressed subjects away from reality and to compel them to subscribe to false reality.

Archibald identifies the different narratives advanced in the white court's previous discourse: the narrative of conciliation, reason and peace. Indeed, the white court's narrative is predicated on the misguided vengefulness of blacks using violence and irrationality, suggesting that access to equal rights and freedom will result in rising hostility toward whites. Though he does not explicitly state it, Archibald's conclusive language of a previous call for peace and love by whites reveals the unnamed stereotypes that define blacks as naturally violent and irrational. The implication of the narrative alienates blacks in their "unreasoning" and "inhumanity" and suggests that the blacks yearn for revenge. This "re-presentation" of reality also predicts the misconceived origin of violence that defines the two groups, blacks and whites. By claiming the fear of black hostility, this "non-narrative" corrupts the narration that depicts the origin of violence, suggesting that it has always been practiced by blacks rather than whites. This presence of two believable realities, one true and one false, leads to a questioning of which is the true reality. The white court's narrative is thus a "non-narrative" that deliberately asserts a false reality, not only to affirm the idea of racial difference, but also to presume a form of hostility that originates from blacks.

Here, the encounter with the white court's discourse dialectically confirms the dominant narrative that aims to maintain the blacks under domination in the play, by staging a supposed dialogue in which whites suggest a debate while at the same time denying black voices. Amongst other things, Archibald's account of the white narrative points to the idea that he understands his being as a part of a larger narrative. It is important to note how Archibald is "re-constituting" his identity by reminding his

oppressors of their established narrative of promises, and sets it in conversation with their present narrative. As Archibald observes, if the oppressor keeps defining his out-group's identity as something negative, and "unreasonable," how can whites then treat them equally? And most importantly, as he reminds his fellow blacks, how can they keep listening and engaging in such a false dialogue disguised in the form of exchange and debate?

While the setting of the play gives the impression that Archibald is addressing Diouf violently, under the gaze of the white court's judge, I argue that his counter-narrative is directed at the court. Archibald's double discourse highlights a creative strategy of resistance that makes the prime function of narrative consist of its ability to expose the court's hypocrisy to the dominated blacks who keep holding onto their dreams.

As the nightly performance prepares to start, "Each Negro takes a cigarette from his pocket. They light matches for each other, bowing ceremoniously as they do, then arrange themselves in a circle and puff smoke around the catafalque. They sing the first line of 'Mary had a lamb' and hum the rest" (Genet 23)[7]. Genet introduces a children's song representing the white lamb supposedly symbolizing innocence and purity. The Christian symbol of the lamb, however, subverts religion, since it was first used to justify the enslavement of African people, but then continued to spread the idea that slavery would liberate Africans from their "savage" condition. White slave owners often taught religion to their enslaved as a mean of keeping them obedient to their masters. It is thus important to consider how both the blacks and the whites are invoking religion to justify violence and resistance. As the performance starts turning more into a form of rebellion, the white court constantly interrupts the performance as it grows worried about black revolts. This time it is the missionary who has to intervene to calm the panicking court: "Have confidence, majesty, God

[7] « *Tous les Nègres sortent une cigarette de leur poche, se donnent du feu en se saluant, cérémonieusement, puis se mettent en cercle en envoyant la fumée autour du catafalque. Ils bourdonnent, bouche fermée autour du catafalque. Ils bourdonnent bouche fermée, une mélopée qui a commencé par ceci: ... Je les aimais mes blancs moutons* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 486.

is white" (Genet 23)[8]. This dominant religious narrative reminds both the queen and the [white] audience that whiteness is embedded in religious power. God's whiteness here functions as an invisible hand that inflicts undisputable power: "for two thousand years God has been white. He eats on white table clothes. He wipes his white mouth with white napkins. He picks at white meat with white fork. (A pause). He watches the snow fall" (Genet 24)[9]. The notion of subalternity, to invoke Spivak, systematically delegitimizes and excludes the voice of the social representation of colonized categories within dominant discourse.

Accordingly, Genet links epistemic violence and abjection to the dominant construction of European ways of seeing the world, which devalue and displace non-western ways of perceiving the world, or suppress them when the non-western tries to adopt Western norms. Westerners have assumed that God is white, a perception evident in myriad artistic representations of him. They have depicted him in their own image. This fact has social consequences, such as the devaluing of the representation of non-white people, since they are presumed to be further removed from God. Genet's vision of the blacks rebelling against their religious mentors parallels the historic revolt of African-Americans slaves, when religious subtexts were used as divinely sanctioned models for insurgency. In my view, Archibald can be regarded as a twentieth Century version of Nat Turner[10]. Like Turner, Archibald represents the image of a modern black rebel who is ready to subvert the white master's religious belief into a justification for a revolt for freedom. Nat Turner is one of the most complex and heroic figures in American history as his rebellion represents different meanings for whites and African-Americans. Whether Genet is aware of Turner's story or not is not relevant in my analysis. What is important, however, is Genet's ability to construct a narrative that

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[8] « *Confiance, Majesté. Dieu est blanc.* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 487.

[9] « *Depuis deux mille and Dieu est blanc, il mange sur une nappe blanche, il essuie sa bouche blanche avec une serviette blanche, il pique la viande blanche avec une fourchette blanche. (Un temps.) Il regarde tomber la neige.* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 487.

[10] Nat Turner was an enslaved American who led a rebellion in Virginia August 21–23, 1831. He was captured on October 30 and executed on November 11, 1831. Turner used the claim that he had visions from God to begin a rebellion against slave-owners.

represents whiteness as an oppressive global phenomenon structured similarly in different western societies. In doing so, he is able to create characters and structures of feeling that have verisimilitude across the black Atlantic.

This strategy liberates other black characters to challenge whites' construction of the happy "Negro." For example, Village states: "I was not singing, I was not dancing. Standing insolently – in short, royally – with hand on hip, I was pissing. Oh! Oh! Oh! I crawled through the cotton plants. The dogs sniffed me out. I bit my chain and wrists. Slavery taught me dancing and singing" (Genet 46)[11].Village's narrative tells of the devastation of black lives and psyches since the white man intervened in their history. Here, Genet sought to utilize and reconstitute the slave narrative genre found in many African-American texts, which also appears in accounts of colonial trauma in Maghrebian texts. Though the contexts of slavery and colonialism have dissimilarities that should be acknowledged, it is instructive to consider the ways Genet is able to reconstitute the identities of oppressed peoples by applying the narratives of oppression and liberation to the processes of decolonization in relation to which he writes. In the passage above, Village reminds the court that "slavery taught" him "dancing and singing," suggesting that he was not programmed biologically. This difference demonstrates a fundamental asymmetry between how whites construct blackness and how blacks perceive whites. In other words, for Village the image of the joyful black who sings and dances is not natural or inherent to blacks, but rather to whites who, in the process of oppressing and subordinating blacks, produced misrepresentations of the enslaved class. Village's memories of the atrocities committed against slaves are an ongoing source of injury that engraves itself in his traumatized consciousness. The memory of slavery is metonymic insofar as the history of the black man becomes both the theme in the court and the narrative process. At this point Village seems to be

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[11] « *Je ne chantais pas, je ne dansais pas. Debout, royal, pour tout dire, une main sur la hanche, insolent, je pisait. Aïe! Aïe! Aïe! J'ai rampé dans les cotonniers. Les chiens ont reniflé ma trace. J'ai mordu ma trace. J'ai mordu mes chaines et mes poignets. L'esclavage m'a enseigné la danse et le chant,* » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 499.

ready to perform blackness by standing up to his oppressors and narrating his version of history.

As the rebellion reaches its highest level of vengeful rage, there is a certain affective justice to the play's dramatic reversal toward the end. Archibald is able to make his ultimate call for a revolution in his own words:

> I order you to be black to your very veins. Pump black blood through them. Let Africa circulate in them. Let Negroes negrify themselves. Let them persist to the point of madness in what they are condemned to be, in their ebony, in their odors, in their yellow eyes, in their cannibal tastes. (52)[12]

In Archibald's statement, the "I" enacts a collective autobiography since it does not refer to a personal past but to a group defined by those characteristics which whites find abject in them. This passage from the individual "I" to the collective "us" brings visibility to what has been expressed by slavery and colonial history: that blacks have agency and a sense that there will be historical justice even if they have to take it into their own hands. Archibald's historical and political actions jump from the position of an alleged "savage" to the previously invisible "Negro" whose blackness subverts the history written by *the whites*. Archibald's call for "Negros" to "negrify" subverts the coloniality paradigm, which establishes hierarchies, spaces and processes of racialization, so central to western epistemic perspectives. Accordingly, as a liberated "black," Archibald brings a conception of "authenticity" to his new understanding of blackness.

Jean Genet, as a white Frenchman who has served in a colonial army in Morocco, has become aware that authenticity emerges from an

[12] « Je vous ordonne d'être noir jusque dans vos veines et d'y charrier du sang noir. Que l'Afrique y circule. Que les Nègres se nègrent. Qu'ils s'obstinent jusqu'à la folie dans ce qu'on condamne à être, dans leur ébène, dans l'œil jaune, dans leurs goûts cannibales, » Genet, *Les Nègres*, 503.

ontologically lived experience grounded in decolonial and anti-colonial epistemology. Themes of authenticity and illusion inform all his writings, and although he knows that there is no partial authenticity, Genet judiciously implies through this play that there might exist a strategic deployment of the "authentic" as a challenge to the modern Eurocentric prism that produces, interrogates and validates knowledge.

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Change and Continuity in Konkomba Medical Culture: A Historical Perspective of an Indigenous People in Northern Ghana

Oliver Kofi TASIN

Abstract

Medicine (n-nyork) has been one of meaning laden words faced by scholars. This subject has attracted much attention from scholars, but the social aspect of health tied to people's medical culture has been neglected. The paper examines the reasons and the context within which the medical culture of the Konkomba ensured social equilibrium and well-being. It further examines key medicines and healers that constituted the corpus of the Konkomba health system. Information was sourced from oral interviews, archival and secondary sources. The work focuses on the historiography of indigenous medicine in Ghana, in particular, and Africa in general. In conclusion, it analyses the impact of the Western understanding of medicine indicating that n-nyork (medicine) and ngbanpuan (health) were more holistic within the Konkomba conceptualisation. In that sense, the adoption and non-adaptation of the western view of health has led to more undesirable health situation in the twentieth century. That notwithstanding, the medical culture of the Konkomba still constitute an integral aspect of their medication.

Keywords: Ethnomedicine, Allopathic, Konkomba, Indigenous, Culture

Introduction

The study of the concept of health-related practices is a complex one. This is so among the Konkomba whose culture was interlocked with their epidemiological worldview. The Konkomba developed their cultural interactive processes such as kinship systems, marriage patterns, economic and political systems towards the quest for, and realisation of, holistic

health for individuals and the community as a whole. Thus, the Konkomba, like any ethnic group in Ghana and Togo, established their own unique cultural systems that served as efficacious medicine not only for their bodily health challenges but also for their social, religious, political and economic institutions in the community. The organisation, functions and significance of these institutions reinforced the health of the Konkomba. From historical and ethnographic viewpoints, this study examines the medical and health seeking behaviour of the Konkomba.

This paper is a contribution to the broader studies of the history of medicine, especially those of Northern Ghana and Africa as a whole. By reviewing the Konkomba medical ways and its historical and contemporary union with Western allopathic medical ways, this study provides a window of understanding about the nature, continuity and change of the Konkomba medical culture.

It focuses on information drawn from oral information obtained from fieldwork, archives and existing data including primary and secondary sources. As a result, the study serves as an overview that establishes the foundation for later researches into the medical culture of the Konkomba. More specifically, this paper seeks to weave various ongoing studies and extant literature about indigenous medicine within the contexts of medical and cultural history.[1]

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[1] See for example, De-Valera N. Y. M. Botchwey, "A Note on the Ethnomedical Universe of the Asante, an Indigenous People in Ghana," in *Healing and Performance*, edited by Effie Gemi-Iordanou, Stephen Gordon, Robert Matthew, Ellen McInnes and Rhiannon Pettitt, 166–175 (Oxford: Oxbow Books), 2014; P. A. Twumasi, *Medical Systems in Ghana: A Study in Medical Sociology* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1975); Samuel Adu-Gyamfi, "Spiritual and Indigenous Healing Practices among the Asante People of Ghana: A Testimonial from Twenty-First Century Practitioners and Recipients in Kumasi," *Journal of Basic and Applied Research International*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2015): 55–61; Etkin, Nina L., "Ethnopharmacology: Biobehavioral Approaches in the Anthropological Study of Indigenous Medicines," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 17 (1988): 23–42; James Anchirinah, "African Ethnomedicine: An Anthropological and Ethno-Pharmacological Case Study in Ghana," *Africa: Rivista trimestrale di studi e documentazione dell'Istituto italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*, Anno 52, No. 2 (1997): 289–298.

Konkombaland: The Genesis of a People

The Konkomba form part of the ethnic groups in the savanna zone divided between Ghana and Togo. They occupy the region of savanna belt that spans through the mouth of the Oti River to the North-Western part of Togo.[2] Some of the towns of the Konkomba in the North-Western part of Togo include Sarakawa, Dapaong, Nbuendo and Yawkugmado. Linguistically, they formed part of the Gur languages[3] of the Niger-Congo family in West Africa.[4] The Konkomba people are called *Bekpokpam*, their language is *Lekpokaln*[5] and their society is *Kekpakank*.[6] The area was originally part of the Guinea Savanna Zone which consisted of fire

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[2] R. B. Bening, *Ghana Regional Boundaries and National Integration* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1999), 17; "Description of the Franco-British Frontier Marked on Sprigade's Map of Togoland, Scale 1: 200, 000," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1923): 187, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2212966, accessed September 24, 2016.

[3] It must be noted that the Konkomba have a high affinity with the Bassari more than with any other ethnic group in Northern Ghana. For further information, See Limpu Isaac Digbun, " A History of the Bassari of Northern Ghana: From the Pre-European Period up to the 1930s" (MPhil Thesis, Department of History, University of Cape Coast, 2015), 19; Allan Charles Dawson, "Becoming Konkomba: Recent Transformation in a Gur Society of Northern Ghana" (MA Thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Calgary, 2000), 7; E. Hall, *Ghanaian Languages* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1983), 18; Joseph H. Greenberg, *The Languages of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1966), 8.

[4] D. E. K. Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History from Pre-Colonial Times to the 20th Century* (Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2011), 5; Cliff Sabiano Richard Maasole, *The Konkomba and their Neighbours from the Pre-Colonial Period to 1914: A Study in Inter-ethnic Relations in Northern Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2006), 18; C. S. Maasole, "The Konkomba and the Ethnic Conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana: A Study in Inter-ethnic Relations from the Earliest Times to 1930," (MPhil Thesis, University of Cape Coast, 1997), 17.

[5] One of the most revered cultural elements among the Konkomba was their language. As opined by Amos Wilson every culture is bound up with its language that expresses, communicates, sustains and preserves it in being from generation to generation. It constitutes one of the primary means of exporting that culture. Language, therefore, becomes the heart and soul of a culture. For further information, see Amos N. Wilson, *The Falsification of African Consciousness: Eurocentric History, Psychology and the Politics of White Supremacy* (New York: Afrikan World Infosystems, 1993), 22.

[6] M. Manoukian, *Tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast* (London: International African Institute, 1951), 5. See also David Tait, "Konkomba Nominal Classes," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (1954): 130-148, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1156136, accessed May 22, 2016.

resistant deciduous trees of open canopy with shrub grass undergrowth.[7] This vegetation has been replaced by continuous stretches of farmlands with scattered trees and widely spaced houses. Some of the useful common trees found there are *litul* (baobab tree, *Andasonia digitata*), *nyikse* (neem tree, *Azadiracta indica*), *bikpasumb* (sheanut tree, *Butyrospermum parkii*), *bidub* (dawadawa tree, *Parkia clappertonniana*) and *mongor* (mango, *Mangifera indica*).[8] It is noted that the vegetation in the Guinea Savanna Zone is not uniform.[9] Despite the difference in the vegetation pattern, all the plants within the Guinea Savanna Zone constituted the Konkomba pharmacopoeia.

The Conception of the Human Being within Konkomba Worldview

The Konkomba developed a complex epidemiological worldview, a worldview made up of practices and beliefs that ensured their health. Their worldview generally identified the human being (*uniborn)* as a composite of body (*tiwonand*), the soul (*kinan*), spirit (*mfutam*) and personal spirit (*nwin*).[10] In this sense, the exterior and inside elements of a human being shared the same principles and good health required evenness of all aspects of a human being. As a result, the concept of a perfect health was a harmonised combination of bio-physiological principles, body channels, digestive and excretory processes, mental faculties, senses and the spiritual

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[7] C. Vigne, "Forests of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast," *Empire Forestry Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1936): 210–213, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42595348, accessed April 24, 2017; R. Rose Innes, *A Manual of Ghana Grasses* (Surbiton: Ministry of Overseas Development, 1977), 14–24.

[8] N. C. Mcleod, *Report by the Conservator of Forests on Plantations in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast,* (Accra: Government Press, 1922), 1-17; N. C. Mcleod, *Report by the Conservator of Forests on the Shea-Butter Areas in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast* (Accra: Government Press, 1922), 1–10; *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/11/19 Shea Butter Industry and Industrial Products; PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/11/15 Dagomba District Forest Reserve; PRAAD (Tamale) NGR8/11/48 Kulukpene Forest Reserve.* See also Cuthbert Christy, "African Bush and Forest," *Journal of the Royal African Society,* Vol. 19, No. 74 (1920): 85–91, http://www.jstor.org/stable/716026, accessed March 13, 2017.

[9] G. W. Lawson, *Plant life in West Africa* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1985), 34.

[10] An interview with Lenyan Katawol, 60 year healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Bingnul Malibi on 24th December, 2016, at Azua in the Volta Region of Ghana.

self.[11] Consequently, the attitude of the Konkomba towards health and conception of illness were grounded in the endogenous cosmos that the human being (*uniborn*) was an intimate combination of material and immaterial forces.

The material aspect of the human being (*uniborn*) was the perceptible aspect and represented the biological figure (*tewonand*). Blood (*farr*)[12] constituted one of the physical elements within the Konkomba cosmology and was held sacred.[13] The physical and perishable biological figure (*tewonand*) included anatomical components such as the body organs.

The immaterial and immortal part comprised the soul (*kinan)*. The soul was given by the Supreme Being (*Uwumbor*), the creator of the universe. The soul was divine but could be polluted by the individual who possessed it. Thus, the soul which served as the guardian spirit, director and advisor of the body could become a corrupted soul or a clean soul.[14] The soul, therefore, served as the embodiment of the Konkomba existence without which the material elements could not survive. The soul continued to live after the material elements experienced cessation. It transited from the universe of the physically living into the ancestral world (*yaajatib*).[15] It is within this worldview that "dis-ease" and treatment were carried out by the health practitioners.

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[11] Effie Gemi-Iordanou et al., *Medicine, Healing and Performance* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 166.

[12] It was on the basis of the sacredness attached to blood that a menstruated woman was made to rest from her daily routine responsibilities. This was particularly so since menstruation was an indication of potential human being that could have been added to the family. An interview with Lakorbor Ugan, 96 year healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Bingnul Malibi on 24th December, 2016, at Azua in the Volta Region of Ghana.

[13] An interview with Lakorbor Ugan.

[14] An interview with Chamula Bipombimaa, 77 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Bingnul Malibi on 24th December, 2016, at Azua in the Volta Region of Ghana.

[15] In the Konkomba belief system, the deceased members of a family, clan or community had their own ancestral family. As a result, some sacrifices had to be offered, in some cases, to pave way for a newly departed soul to be welcomed by the ancestors of such family, clan or community.

Diseases and the Method of Treatment

The Konkomba medical culture, as in the case of some African societies, was devoid of any awareness of small, invisible germs or viruses as the transporter of diseases.[16] Konkomba medicine also did not consider that the lack of the nutrients such as vitamins, proteins and relevant minerals in humans, which allopathic medicine has identified and named, caused certain diseases. Diseases were attributed to the Supreme Being, or witches (*besunb*). The Konkomba explained that disease was also a natural consequence for individuals who broke any prescribed code of cleanliness (*tinyankand*) or accepted way of social behaviour (*enanpal aakal*) of the community.[17]

The violation of the code of cleanliness which was responsible for the cause of disease included outside filth (*tigeond*) which was attributed to the patients' environment and the type of food eaten. This was common in the diagnosis of healers with statements such as "*aa jin ba*" (what have you eaten?).[18] Violation of societal behaviour included a violation of the harmonious relationship between the patient and the spirit world (*mfutam aatink*) which brought ill-health to the patient. In the case of such societal violation, the patient made a confession to the healer such as priest of a deity.[19] The confession by the patient led to the performance of sacrifices to pacify the spirit world. In some cases, the initial healer could prescribe other ritual acts (*mbawol*) to be supervised by another healer. The carrying-out of all the ritual prescriptions by the initial healer brought harmony between the patient and the spirit world and hence led to good health.[20]

Konkomba understanding of the natural cause of diseases made them develop the use of plants and other medicinal materials to provide

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[16] De-Valera N. Y. M. Botchway, "A Note on the Ethnomedical Universe of Asante," in Effie Gemi-Iordanou et al., *Medicine*, 69.

[17] An Interview with Kechee Kornab, 70 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Manee Masund on 3rd January, 2017, at Nbuendo in the Savanes Region of Togo.

[18] An Interview with Kechee Kornab. For further information see J. O. M. Pobee, *The Journey from the Womb to the Tomb, the Second, Third and Fourth Quarters* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1989), 36.

[19] An Interview with Kechee Kornab.

[20] An Interview with Kechee Kornab.

treatment (*ntem*).[21] In this sense, cold (*nsusuom*) and heat (*ntetum*) were part of the causes of illness. Natural causes of diseases were treated by healers with elements which pre-dated British occupation of the Northern Territories. For instance, in the search for food, the roots, seeds and other parts of various plants were consumed. In the case of some of these plants, definite effects were observed after consumption. These observations constituted the knowledge base of using these plants to heal.[22] Such therapy continued in the colonial period despite various attempts by the colonial government that sought to suppress indigenous medicine in Northern Territories.[23] The treatments that were discovered or invented in most cases were those that could cure diseases common to the Konkomba in particular and the people of the savanna zone in general.

Ethnomedical concepts in Konkomba medical culture were transmitted orally through time.[24] They were not written down in medical treatises. It seems that this was so among many of the ethnic groups in the Gold Coast because they were primarily groups that transmitted different types of knowledge mainly through oral traditions. For example, this was true in the case of the Asante, whose medical culture, according to De-Valera N. Y. M. Botchway, "was not characterised by a corpus of ancient literary text and preserved manuscripts, containing codified systems and theories that encompassed knowledge of life, health, disease of humans, animals and plants, which were used by institutionally trained practitioners."[25] Knowledge about the treatment of diseases was, as a result, acquired through daily observation and teaching or through special training that was organised and executed by a practised healer. This is how

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[21] See also Kofi Busia, *Fundamentals of Herbal Medicine: History, Phytopharmacology, Phytotherapeutics*, Vol. 1 (Xlibris: Xlibris Publishing Ltd, 2016), 7.

[22] An Interview with Kechee Kornab.

[23] An Interview with Kechee Kornab. It appears this was characteristics of the British colonial policy towards indigenous medicine in her colonies. For further information, see Keto E. Mshiegeni et al., *Proceedings of an International Conference of Experts from Developing Countries on Traditional Medicinal Plants* (Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 1991), 209.

[24] Botchway, "A Note on the Ethnomedical Universe of the Asante," 170.

[25] Botchway, "A Note on the Ethnomedical Universe of the Asante," 170.

herbalism, an important part of Konkomba indigenous knowledge, developed and was sustained.

The Konkomba and their neighbours in the savanna ecological zone, according to colonial historical records, treated many diseases using herbal and plant-based remedies. E. Lewis, the government agent in Yendi in 1955 indicated that, "the plants regarded as curative among the Konkomba and the Dagomba included *Ocimum Americanum*, *acacia*, *rehmennica* and other unidentified plants."[26] Herbal concoctions and decoctions were added for use in treating fever, stomach pains, and gonorrhoea, eye disorders, toothache, anaemia, convulsions, waist pains, boil, worm infections, snake bites, fractures and even combating maladies caused by the bad medicine of sorcerers.

Earlier medical reports such as the annual report by the Medical Department at Gambaga for 1904 chiefly included diseases such as guinea worm, fever, injuries, constipation, gonorrhoea, syphilis and rheumatism as diseases in the savanna zone and the use of herbs to treat such diseases in the Northern Territories.[27] The same medical problems were captured in the medical report for the Northern Territories for the year 1908 which buttresses indigenous medical knowledge in the Northern Territories. In that instance, British officials were reported to have been attacked by sixty-six (66) types of diseases including diarrhoea, dysentery, jaundice and fever.[28] The local people, therefore, treated themselves by using indigenous therapy then referred to as "native" medicine while the British officials were treated in the few outstations in Gambaga and Tamale.[29]

One of the diseases that bedeviled the Konkomba in the twentieth century was fever, particularly yellow fever.[30] Theophilus Opoku, a Basel

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[26] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/19/18 Fetish in the Northern Region.*

[27] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/419 Annual Report on Medical Department, Gambaga, Northern Territories for 1904.*

[28] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/81 Medical Report Northern Territories for 1908.*

[29] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/19/18 Fetish in the Northern Region.*

[30] Yellow fever is an acute infectious disease caused by a filterable virus transmitted by mosquitoes. Severe cases exhibit slow pulse, vomiting, jaundice and varying degrees of

missionary contracted severe bouts of fever, during his three week stay in Salaga in 1877.[31] As in the late nineteenth century (1878), Buss, a German visitor to Salaga suffered fever for a very long time and was cared for by his landlord and other Muslims.[32] Cases of yellow fever were reported in the colony in the first decade of the twentieth century. The first report of yellow fever in the Northern Territories, particularly among the Konkomba in the twentieth century, was in 1913.[33] Until this period, reported cases were confined to coastal towns. This does not suggest a non-occurrence of the disease till 1913 but emphasises the poor nature of British medical facilities and reports in the savanna zone at the time. In the 1930s and 1940s, there were many reports of yellow fever in different parts of the Gold Coast.[34] Local people relied on the drugs from the colonial clinics and local therapies. The Konkomba mainly responded to the disease with indigenous therapy.

In the treatment of fever, different plants were used. Some of these remedies are still alive in the Konkomba society. These included the bark of the mango tree (*Magnifera indica L, mongo* in Konkomba),[35] the leaves of pawpaw tree (*Carica papaya L, gbandor K*), lemon tree (*Citrus limon L, linyol aasub K*) and the leaves of the neem tree (*Azadirachta indica L,*

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liver, kidney or vascular failure. See David Scott, *Epidemic Disease in Ghana, 1901–1960* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 26.

[31] 'Annual Report of the Northern Territories (ARNT), 1899' in Sylvester Gundona, "A Study of Health Conditions and Disease Control in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, 1897-1956" (MPhil Thesis, University of Ghana, 1999), 6.

[32] Marion Johnson, *Salaga Papers*, Vol. 1, No. SAL/9/2 (Legon: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana).

[33] *Gold Coast Annual Report (GCAR), 1913*, 25. http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1913/5530214, accessed March 10, 2017; *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1926-1927*, http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1926_1927/5, accessed March 10, 2017.

[34] "Prevalence of Disease: Foreign Reports (1896–1970)," *Health Reports*, Vol. 59, No. 43, (1944):1422. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4585075, accessed April 4, 2017; "Health in Ghana," *The British Medical Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 5295 (1962): 1818–1819. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20373882, accessed April 4, 2017.

[35] Hereafter, names of plants in the Konkomba language will be represented by 'K')

nyimse K).[36] About one pint of water was poured over the bark and leaves of these medicinal plants and the plants were boiled for about thirty minutes to an hour. The liquid was strained and allowed to cool. A patient drank portions of the decoction intermittently for the fever to be expelled through urination.[37] Indigenous treatment had served as the answer to cases of fever in the pre-colonial period.

Apart from herbal therapy, medicine was also obtained from the animal kingdom to augment the herbal methods. For example, in the case of stomach pains, a patient could also be given a decoction of a cow's bile (*nnakam*) in water.[38] As a result, the rearing of cattle among the Konkomba was not just for economic purposes but the bile also served as an important medicine in their medical culture.[39] Treatment for gastro-intestinal disorders included the administration of plant medicine which induced purgation, emesis and other tangible signs of disease egress. Regarding wounds, one of the proximate effects that healers expected in the process of treating infected wounds was the expulsion of 'dirt' (in the general sense of something unclean causing illness).[40] In the initial stages of wound treatment, certain herbs that could irritate wounds were deliberately chosen and applied to the wound to induce bleeding and discharge of pus.[41] Treatment for disorders of the eyes by the healer among the Konkomba

[36] Fever, particularly yellow fever, is a viral hemorrhagic fever with high mortality that is transmitted by mosquitoes. The disease occurred in the Konkomba-inhabited savanna ecological zone. Mosquitoes capable of transmitting fever existed in the region which facilitated the spread of the disease. See Elizabeth D. Barnett, "Yellow Fever: Epidemiology and Prevention," *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, Vol. 44, No. 6 (2007): 850.
[37] An Interview with Kechee Kornab. For further information on the treatment of fever and other diseases, particularly in children see J. P. Stanfield, "Medicine in the Tropics: Fever in Children in The Tropics," *The British Medical Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 5646 (1969): 761–765. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20396381, accessed March 12, 2017.
[38] An interview with Nlakpind Mabee, 97 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Manee Masund on 4th January, 2017 at Nbuendo in the Savanes Region of Togo; Tasin, "A History of Herbal Medicine," 28.
[39] An interview with Nlakpind Mabee.
[40] Sjaak Van der Geest et al., *The Context of Medicine in Developing Countries Studies in Pharmaceutical Anthropology* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis Publishers, 1991), 307.
[41] An interview with Neyir Beniyam, 60 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Malibi Bingnuel on 27th December, 2017 at Abunyanya in the Volta Region of Ghana.

included an infusion of the leaves of plants that served as eyes drop.[42] Such usage of the leaves of medicinal plants in the treatment of the eyes was similar to the one given in situations of earache. In the situation of earache, *limuil*[43] was diluted with water and a few drops of the extract dropped into the ear.[44] Although epilepsy (*dare*) could not be cured totally, patients with the disease were treated by using Emelia sonchifolia plant (*Emilia, ufadak K*), roots of cotton and other herbs.[45] The prescribed parts of the plants were used in preparing *n-nyorborn*.[46] The patient bathed with the medicinal water (*kignamuuk*). Incisions were also made on the body of the patient and the medicine applied on them to reduce the occurrence of seizures.[47] A person suffering from epilepsy was prohibited from certain types of food or diet, particularly, those that contain fat. It was believed that such foods had the potential to worsen the patient's health.[48]

Boils, (*nnal*) characterised by a painful swollen area on the skin caused by an accumulation of pus and dead tissues, was also one ailment that plant medicine was used against.[49] In severe infections, a patient experienced fever, swollen lymph and fatigue. A colonial report in the twentieth century shows how British officials also suffered from boils in the Eastern Dagomba District of the Northern Territories. For example, in 1931, the Acting District Commissioner of the Eastern Dagomba, in a letter to the Commissioner of Southern Province of the Northern Territories touring Konkomba communities reported that, "I regret to

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[42] An interview with Timulji Nina, 75 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Eric Timulji on 5th January, 2017, at Salaga in the Northern Region of Ghana.

[43] As preserved medicine, *limuil* was made from different herbs. As a result, its use for treatment depended on the type of herbs used in preparing it.

[44] An interview with Timulji Nina.

[45] An interview with Ubonkpok Kuwane, 70 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Eric Timulji on 5th January, 2017, at Salaga in the Northern Region of Ghana; Tasin, "A History of Herbal Medicine," 29.

[46] *N-nyorborn* was prepared from herbs that had been fried resulting in an almost charcoal-like product. This was used in treating a specific ailment based on the herbal efficacy of the herbs used in its preparation.

[47] An interview with Ubonkpok Kuwane.

[48] An interview with Ubonkpok Kuwane.

[49] N. L. Hoerr, *Blackiston's New Gouled Medical Dictionary* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1956), 354. See also M. Murray, *Encyclopaedia of Natural Medicine* (New York: Macdonald and Co Publishers Ltd, 1990), 172.

inform you that I am spending an enforced few days in Yendi, owing to a bad boil on my face, which kept me on the sick list for the early part of this week."[50]

As in the case of other diseases, a poultice of combretum leaf (*Combretum quadrangulare, gbalsor K*) was applied to the boil that brought it to a head.[51] In some cases, a poultice of the piperaceae plant mixed with lime juice was drunk by the patient who had boil. The leaves of the plant were ground and the moistened ground leaves applied to the surface area of the boil.[52] Similar treatment was used in extracting guinea worm from a patient.

As a predominantly farming community snake bite was common. For snake bite, a common item from the vegetable world that health practitioners used was heart seed (*Cardiospermum grandifolia, lignal K).*[53] The victim chewed the leaves of the herb and onion together. Some of the leaves were infused in water and the coloured water and the leaves used to wash the bitten spot.[54] If snake teeth were lodged in the skin of the victim, they would be retrieved by the health practitioner. The leaves of *Cardiospermum grandifolia* were then ground and applied to the affected part. This was repeated consecutively till the patient who was isolated from the public and family by the healer was healed.[55]

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[50] *PRAAD NRG8/2/33 Konkomba Language, Customs and Constitution (inquiry into, 1931).*

[51] An interview with Bawa Ewando, 63 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Eric Timulji on 5th January, 2017, at Salaga in the Northern Region of Ghana.

[52] Oliver Kof Tasin, "A History of Herbal Medicine among the Konkomba," (B. A diss., Department of History, University of Cape Coast, 2014), 31.

[53] An interview with Belin Bekue, 61 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Eric Timulji on 5th January, 2017, at Salaga in the Northern Region of Ghana. See also Kassahum Checole, "Man Cures, God Heals (...)," *presence Africaine*, Nouvelle serie, No. 129 (1984): 124.

[54] An interview with Belin Bekue.

[55] An interview with Jagri Jeijah, 80 year healer through *grumade and kunde* deities, by Oliver Kofi Tasin on 27th December, 2017 at Abunyanya in the Volta Region of Ghana. See also Pinak Tarafdar, "Right to Health: The Tribal Situation," *Indian Anthropologist,* Vol. 38, No. 1 (2008):81, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41920058, accessed February 20, 2017.

Konkomba society also had bone setters who healed broken bones, sprains, dislocations and fractures. The healer used his hands to feel and assess the type and extent of damage to a broken bone.[56] In the case of a broken leg, the patient lay or sat with the fractured leg stretched out straight. Medicinal dressings were placed on the fractured leg with planks or wood tied round the leg with strings or climbing plant to hold the leg in place.[57] The patient was required to keep the fractured leg as stationary as possible throughout the treatment. By the next day, the leg would have been swollen, bulging out in the regions where there were no splints. These swellings were treated with warm fomentations of parts of plants like bridelia (*Bridelia L, lisalasil K*), shea butter tree (*Butyrospermum parkii L, bikpasornb K*) and *liwanporbil* plant.[58] The splints were replaced around the fracture with a new dose of the medicinal dressing as before and the treatment repeated until the fracture was healed.[59]

A broken bone was also treated with palm oil (*nkpaman*), cotton wool (*Gossypium L, tekukond K*) and raffia mat (*chacha*). The affected part was tied up with cotton wool soaked in palm oil and supported with a small raffia mat for the first three days to push out the small particles of the broken bones in the body.[60] This was changed consistently, at least, after every three days, until the bones were completely healed. At times some of the bone problems were attributed to supernatural forces and hence spiritual remedies were used to complement the physical plant-based remedies. According to Janedo Ugan:

> *Many of the bone-injuries were as a result of offences committed against the deities and other spirits so the deities had to be pacified through certain rituals in order to treat the patient. In some cases, the bone setters sought permission of*

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[56] A. Agarwal and R. Agarwal, "The Practice and Tradition of Bone Setting," *Education for Health*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2010): 225–233.

[57] An interview with Nmuangna Takal, 69 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Manee Masund on 4th January, 2017, at Waaman in the Savanes Region of Togo.

[58] An interview with Nmuangna Takal.

[59] An interview with Nmuangna Takal. See also Checole, "Man Cures, God Heals (...)," 133.

[60] An interview with Nmuangna Takal.

some spirits in order to carry out healing especially when it came to the herbs to be used. Some of the herbs, barks and roots had to be collected in the evening so that no human being saw them. If this was not done, the healers could find the herbs in the day time but the herbs may become ineffective. While in some injuries, animals had to be used.[61]

In some cases, the healing of fractures was done through what I refer to as healing by proxy.[62] The fowl had to be of the same gender as the patient. Its leg or hand was broken during the treatment of the patient. When the fowl was able to walk again, then the patient's fracture would have been healed sufficiently for him to try walking on the fractured leg.[63] Before collecting the herbs for treatment, the health practitioner was to stay away from having an affair with any woman and no menstruating woman was to touch the medicinal herbs. It must be noted that cotton was a key ingredient in medicinal treatment among the Konkomba. Its economic importance was at par with its health relevance.[64] The wool and the roots of the cotton plant were used in Konkomba medical therapy.

Yaws (*enagbangbare*) also known as framboesia was another disease that afflicted the Konkomba, particularly, in the twentieth century. This skin disease could attack people of all ages, but was most prevalent in children. A patient of yaws suffered from malaise, and the joints, especially the elbows and knees became swollen and painful. In the case of yaws, medical officers were reported to have worked zealously to

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[61] An interview with Janedo Ugan, 80 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Eric Timulji on 5th January, 2017, at Salaga in the Northern Region of Ghana.

[61] R. Adamtey et al, "The Importance of Traditional Healers in the Planning of Rural Healthcare Delivery in Ghana: The Case of Bone-Setting Services in Loagri and Wungu," *Journal of Science and Technology*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (2014): 62.

[62] An interview with Janedo Ugan.

[63] An interview with Janedo Ugan.

[64] In the colonial period, cotton became one of the key export commodities in the Northern Territories. See *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/78 Cotton Growing in the Northern Territories; ADM 56/1/250 Cotton Growing; ADM 56/1/404 Cotton Growing Scheme, 1925.* See also Marion Johnson, "Cotton Imperialism in West Africa," *African Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 291 (1974): 178–187, http://www.jstor.org/stable/720736, accessed March 16, 2017.

reduce its devastative effects in the Northern Territories. For instance, Dr. Helen Hendrie, British Medical Officer who worked in the Konkomba area around Yendi in the early 1920s, was reported to have worked zealously in the treatment of patients with yaws.[65] Yaws was common in the rural areas in the north of the then Gold Coast (Ghana). In 1929, it was said to be the chief disease in the north, for it constituted 42% of all diseases treated.[66] The situation of yaws was rife, particularly among the Konkomba.[67]

Yaws was treated with a mixture of iron chips and refuse from a blacksmith's anvil and lime juice that has been boiled in an earthware pot to boiling point.[68] The paste obtained from the preparation was applied to the affected areas of the skin. In addition, the whole body was rubbed daily with a paste composed of ashes from fire (*mfatam*), and the lime juice of *Citrus aurantiifolia*.[69] Alternatively, the healer ground the leaves of water yam (*lininbual*) together with ironstone dust and a little lime juice was added to the mixture. The mixture was boiled and when cool, it was applied to the affected area.[70] In the colonial period, there were many reports of the outbreak of yaws in the Northern Territories of the Gold

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[65] "Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1923," in Stephen Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine in a Developing Country: Ghana, 1880-1960* (Durham: Durham Academic Press, 1996) 364; *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1934-1935,* http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1934_1935/55, *accessed March 10, 2017.*

[66] "Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1929-1930," in Stephen Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine in a Developing Country: Ghana, 1880-1960* (Durham: Durham Academic Press, 1996), 364. See also *Colonial Annual Report, 1929-1930,* http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1929_1930/55, *accessed March 10, 2017.*

[67] Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine*, 367. See also David K. Patterson, *Health in Colonial Ghana: Disease, Medicine and Socio-Economic Change, 1900-1955* (Massachusetts: Crossroads Press, 1981), 77.

[68] An interview with Bawa Ewando.

[69] An interview with Bawa Ewando.

[70] J. Graham Forbes, "Native Methods of Treatment in West Africa: With Notes on the Tropical Diseases Most Prevalent among the Inhabitants of the Gold Coast Colony," *Journal of the Royal African Society*, Vol. 3, No. 12 (1904): 361–380, http://www.jstor.org/stable/715219, accessed February 29, 2017.

Coast. In 1954, the Colonial Medical Officer for Yendi District, in a letter to the Principal Medical Officer in Tamale stated:

> *I think it is true to say that the Yendi District has the highest incidence of yaws in the Gold Coast, and this disease is certainly a major public health problem in the area. Rough figures for the number of cases treated annually at various stations in recent years included 4, 500 in Yendi, 1, 700 in Bimbilla, 2, 000 in Zabzugu and 1, 000 in Chereponi.*[71]

As a result, the Colonial Government carried out a yaws control campaign in a quest to eradicate yaws infections. By 1956 the prevalence of infectious yaws in the Northern Territories gradually decreased.[72] In all cases, the efforts of the colonial government were complemented by indigenous means of treatment.

The Konkomba treated smallpox (*tenanbind*), an infection which is spread by secretions and discharge from skin lesions, in a similar pattern as in the case of other diseases. Smallpox infection caused by a virus could be transmitted through infected clothing, paper and dust.[73] In 1888 when Von Francois visited Salaga, he noted that:

> *Among the infectious diseases, smallpox must be mentioned especially, which predominates for long periods. Several of the inhabitants have the reputations of being able to cure the sickness successfully.*[74]

The major outbreak in the Northern Territories in the twentieth century was in 1908. This was followed by consistent cases of smallpox till the late

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[71] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/27 Yaws Treatment.*

[72] V. K. Agadzi et al., "Yaws in Ghana," *Reviews of Infectious Diseases*, Vol. 7, Supplement 2. (1985):233, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4453645, accessed April 12, 2017.

[73] Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine,* 323. See also William H. Schneider, "Smallpox in Africa during Colonial Rule," Vol. 53 (2009): 193–227, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c473/86846d7a37aa7b18e80d6833a1c9a8cf54f2.pdf, accessed March 13, 2017.

[74] Johnson, *Salaga Papers*, Vol. 1, No. SAL/18/3.

1950s.[75] In the treatment of smallpox, the indigenous method used by the Konkomba could not heal the sickness completely. In Curt Von Francois' 1888 report, smallpox was indigenously treated with the use of shrubs. He recounts:

> *a brew of the leaves of a shrub is placed on the scabs. This reduces the suppuration. If they remain, the pocks are treated with an extract of the cooked root of the Gimon tree. Then the pocks dry up and are rubbed with shea butter. Healing follows after six weeks.*[76]

The infection was again partly treated with dust from a kind of metamorphic rock known as *lafakumaln.* Ground dust from the rock was used to smear the body of the patient to temporarily alleviate pain. In the colonial period, these treatments were referred to as 'native' treatment and the practitioners as 'native' doctors. The activities of these healers in carrying out their healing duties were outlawed by the Colonial Government in the Vaccination Ordinance of 1920.[77] By this ordinance, indigenous healers and mallams were prevented from using indigenous methods to heal. Vaccination and other Western allopathic treatment were to be the only legal means in treating all cases of smallpox. By the 1940s and 1950s, cases of smallpox had been virtually wiped out in Konkomba-dominated areas, in particular, and Northern Ghana in general.[78]

Venereal diseases such as gonorrhoea (*kpapereko*), syphilis, and other urinary and urethral troubles were other common health challenges

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[75] Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitation Department, 1925," in Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine,* 332; Gold Coast Annual Report, 1927–1928, http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1927_1928/5, *accessed March 10, 2017;* G. A. Ashitey, *Disease Control in Ghana: An Epidemiology of Disease Control in Ghana 1901-1990* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1994), 6.

[76] Johnson, *Salaga Papers*, Vol. 1, No. SAL/18/3.

[77] "Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1924–1925," in Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine,* 331.

[78] Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine,* 331; *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1929–1930,* http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1929_1930/55, *accessed March 10, 2017.*

of the Konkomba. Colonial reports however indicated the north as being largely free from venereal diseases particularly, syphilis, until the late 1920s.[79] The rise in these diseases was possibly through labour returnees who had emigrated in search of work. Some towns such as Zuarungu referred to gonorrhoea as "Kumasi disease," which suggested its alien origin.[80] In 1926, about forty-eight (48) cases of gonorrhoea were reported to have been treated at Kete Krachi and twelve (12) in Eastern Dagomba in the north.[81] Most of these diseases were treated by the use of herbs. As indicated by Stephen Addae, the increasing introduction and use of the sulphanilamide group of drugs from the late 1930s complemented indigenous treatment.[82] This was further enhanced by the increasing availability of penicillin in the Gold Coast from the late 1940s.[83]

Colonial Impact on Konkomba Medical Treatment (1900 – 1956)

The effectiveness of Western medical activity which was carried on the wings of the colonial regime certainly varied from place to place and over time. Thus, evaluation of its overall impact is broadly divergent depending upon the health needs of colonial officials. In this vein, the colonial impact on the medical culture of the Konkomba in the Northern Territories varied and, developed, over time distinct from the colony and Asante. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the British extension into the Konkomba-dominated areas in the Northern Territories was not related to any health challenges in the area but due to the effects of the Yaa Asantewaa War of

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[79] "Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1938," in Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine*, 358. See also *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1938, http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_38–39*, accessed March 10, 2017. See also S. K. Owusu, *Questions and Answers on Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1997), 67.

[80] "Gold Coast Medical and Sanitary Department Report, 1928-1929," in Gundona, "A Study of Health Conditions," 5.

[81] 'Togoland Report, 1923 and 1933' in Gundona, "A Study of Health Conditions," 5.

[82] "Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1945," in Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine*, 359.

[83] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/23 Quinine and Mecapacrine Distribution in the Northern Region.*

1900–1901. The British, in this period, principally focused on the containment and stabilisation of Asante. This was appropriately captured by Governor Matthew Nathan as he interpreted his role as the stabiliser and not the stimulator of health or economic development.[84] There was also the absence of 'miracle'[85] healing in the Northern Territories as compared to the case of the colony and Asante in the southern sector of the Gold Coast.[86] Dr. Garland, a Senior Medical Officer on duty in the north in the 1900s, described service there as 'tedious, exhausting and dangerous.'[87] Indigenous therapy, therefore, served as an indispensable means of treatment to the Konkomba in the early colonial phase of the Northern Territories.

The initial policy of the colonial government from 1910s was to concentrate the available medical resources on the European population. As indicated from the many colonial dispatches to the Governor, there was the fear for European lives in many of the towns that did not have a medical officer, and all efforts were made to provide medical help wherever the size of the European population merited it.[88] By 1905 there was a hospital in Salaga and by 1910, the Northern Territories had one dispensary which was increased to nine in 1914.[89]

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[84] Anthony P. Haydon, "The Good Public Servant of the State – Sir Matthew Nathan as Governor of the Gold Coast 1900–1904," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. 11 (1970): 105–121, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41406359, accessed October 22, 2016.

[85] A kind of healing by the Christians through prophetic prayer.

[86] Adam Mohr, "Missionary Medicine and Akan Therapeutics: Illness, Health and Healing in Southern Ghana's Basel Mission, 1828–1918," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 39, Fasc. 4 (2009): 429–461, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20696831, accessed February 13, 2017.

[87] "Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1902; Gold Coast Government Report of Medical and Sanitary Department, 1904," in Stephen Addae, *The Evolution of Modern Medicine*, 99. See also *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1902*, http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1902/5530214, *accessed June 4, 2017.*

[88] *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1902.*

[89] N. J. K. Brukum. "Sir Gordon Guggisberg and Socio-Economic Development of Northern Ghana, 1919–1927," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 9 (2005): 14.

Apart from the European population dictating the building of health facilities, the opening of health facilities was also linked to the commercial importance of towns. The establishment of hospitals slowly followed in outstations. The first town to have a health facility in the Northern Territories was Gambaga, the first capital of the Northern Territories.[90] An outstation fenced enclosure consisted of one ward of ten beds and two large verandas. As a result of frequent epidemic outbreaks, especially of smallpox, cerebrospinal meningitis and trypanosomiasis in the Northern Territories in the 1900s, Gambaga acquired a small isolation hospital.[91] In 1912, there was little usage of these medical facilities by the indigenous population in the Northern Territories.

The plans of the British Governor, Hugh Charles Clifford, to gradually extend the operations of the Medical Department beyond the colony to the indigenes of the Northern Territories proved futile. This was principally due to the fact that European medical staff was small. He, therefore, proposed dispensary schemes in 1917 which was cheap and efficient. As a result, the health achievements of Clifford, before his departure as the Governor of the Gold Coast, were concentrated in the Colony (the Gold Coast Colony and Asante). For example, in 1919, there were, at least, 28 dispensers and 64 nurses in the major hospitals of the colony while no estimate was given of the Northern Territories.[92] However, there were only eight medical officers in the entire Northern Territories, three of whom were stationed at Tamale, Gambaga and Wa. The remaining five served the rest of the territories.[93]

In the 1920s when Sir Gordon Guggisberg was the Governor of the Gold Coast, few outstations came to possess health facilities. The outstations dealt with out-patients only. The outstations were unfinished and temporary health facilities which made them liable to closure, to be

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[90] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/419 Annual Report of the Medical Department, Gambaga.*
[91] S. Addae, *History of Western Medicine in Ghana,* 1880–1960 (Edinburgh: Durham Academic Press, 1996), 51.
[92] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 27.
[93] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 51.

replaced or not, by a proper and permanent health facility.[94] Nonetheless, apart from the Tamale and Salaga hospitals, which were permanent structures, all the others were temporary 'bush' hospitals as they were known.[95] These hospitals were built of 'swish' or sun-baked bricks and thatched-roofed, because of the policy of spending minimal funds in the area of medicine and medical facilities.[96] These medical facilities were primarily for the use of the British officials and non-officials, African government officials, troops, police and the Hausa constabulary.[97]

Comparatively, the Gold Coast Colony encompassing coastal towns and Asante Protectorate possessed good health facilities by 1926. As early as the late nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, heath facilities had been built in the coastal areas.[98] The drilling of bore-holes and the use of pipe-borne water helped to reduce the incidence of many water-borne diseases such as guinea worm, typhoid fever, and dysentery in the coastal areas. The British focus on public health in the Gold Coast was further quickened after the publication of the Simpson Report.[99]

Policies of mass disease eradication campaigns were implemented by the Colonial Government in the 1920s. Prominent among the

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[94] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 27; P. A. Twumasi, *Social Foundations of the Interplay between Traditional and Modern Medical Systems* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1988), 17.

[95] N.J.K. Brukum, "Sir Gordon Guggisberg and Socio-Economic Development of Northern Ghana, 1919–1927," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 9 (2005): 12.

[96] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/419 Annual Report of the Medical Department, Gambaga.*

[97] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,*26.

[98] Samuel Agyei-Mensah and Ama de-Graft Aikin, "Epidemiological Transition and the Double Burden of Disease in Accra, Ghana," *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, Vol. 87, No. 5 (2010): 879–897.

[99] An independent inquiry led by W. J. R. Simpson which investigated the conditions that had given rise to an outbreak of the bubonic plague in the Gold Coast in 1908. The inquiry also reported on the general sanitary condition in the Gold Coast. The measures taken after its publication led to the first serious efforts to improve health conditions for all inhabitants. See W.J.R. Simpson, *Report on Plague in the Gold Coast, 1908* (London: J &A Churchill; 1909). It must be noted that health facilities in Asante were also far advanced than those in the Northern Territories. See S. K. Addae, *History of Western Medicine in Ghana* (Edinburgh: Durham Academic Press, 1996), 61.

campaigns was the Yaws Eradication Campaign which started in the mid-1920s.[100] By 1927, although Zuarungu had a hospital with rooms for six beds for treating yaws and other diseases, there were no beds in the wards.[101] The roofed hospital buildings in Salaga were infested with bats.[102] Other district stations either had no hospital facilities at all or had them for brief periods. Governor Gordon Guggisberg's administration did not achieve much in the provision of health facilities in the Northern Territories due to the fact that the northern sector of the Gold Coast was not his priority.[103] The building of hospitals during this period depended largely on the availability of staff, density of the population and the building cost.[104] As a result, most of the earlier hospitals could not operate effectively due to inadequate staff.

It must be noted that the north, generally, did not appeal to medical officers. Health officials were, as a result, given some special financial compensation for service in the area.[105] From the fourth decade of the twentieth century, the Colonial Government implemented some sanitation and vaccination policies on other causes of disease in the Northern Territories.[106] For example, an anti-trypanosomiasis campaign

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[100] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 29.

[101] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/405 Acting Director of Medical Services (ADMS) to Director of Medical and Sanitary Service (DMSS).*

[102] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/405 Acting Director of Medical Services (ADMS) to Director of Medical and Sanitary Service (DMSS).*

[103] N. J. K. Brukum. "Sir Gordon Guggisberg and Socio-Economic Development of Northern Ghana, 1919–1927," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 9 (2005): 14.

[104] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/8 Hospitals-General.* See also E.K. Ackon, *The Management of Health Services in Developing Country* (Accra: Bel-Team Publications Ltd, 1994), 3.

[105] The medical officers were given a special allowance known as 'bush allowance.' As a rule, medical officers were not kept long in the north. *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 1/2/113 Slater to Long.*

[106] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/4 Sanitation, Northern Territories Policy*; *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/5 Vaccination Campaign in the Northern Territories.* The vaccination policy by this period had been extended from the colony which had earlier received vaccinations against small-pox and other infectious diseases. See *PRAAD (Cape Coast) ADM 23/1/176 Small-pox Infectious Diseases.* For further information on early sanitary reforms in the Gold Coast, see Thomas S. Gale, "The Struggle against Disease in the Gold Coast: Early attempts at Urban Sanitary Reform," *Transactions of the Historical Society*

commenced in the mid-1930s along with the anti-yaws campaign and led to the reduction of such health threats in the Konkomba community. Such policies included a yaws campaign which was carried out in the Konkomba areas, principally in the Yendi district in the 1940s under Governor Alan Burns.[107] The campaign teams were merged in 1948 and subsequently became the Medical Field Units (MFU) in the 1950s.[108] Other medicines such as quinine and mepacrine were distributed against malaria and other infectious diseases.[109] In an attempt to extend medical facilities to all areas in the north, travelling dispensaries were brought into service. This method, which commenced in the late 1920s, though useful in the early 1930s, was delayed until 1935 due to shortage of medical staff.[110] This compelled Dr. Seth Smith to organise a travelling dispensary from the Gold Coast Colony to Northern Territories to treat diseases.[111] The colonial government also implemented Disease Control Acts earlier passed in the colony. Through some of these acts such as the Infectious

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of Ghana, Vol. 16, No. 2 (1995): 185–203, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41406617, accessed March 10, 2017.

[107]Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 29.

[108] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 30; "The Campaign against Malaria and the Expansion of Scientific Medical and Sanitary Services in British West Africa, 1898–1910," http://www.jstor.org/stable/216391, accessed March 11, 2017.

[109] *PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/23 Quinine and Mepacrine Distribution in the Northern Region; PRAAD (Tamale) NRG8/13/32 Infectious Diseases outbreak; Gold Coast Annual Report, 1934–1935,* http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1934_1935/55, *accessed March 10, 2017.* See also Felix Ankomah Asante et al., *The Economic Impact of the Burden of Malaria in Ghana* (Accra: Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), 2005), 15; Edward Ayitey-Smith, *Drugs and the Fate of Humanity* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1988), 7.

[110] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 57.

[111] *Gold Coast Annual Report, 1930–1931,* http://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/africana/books2011-05/5530214/5530214_1930_1931/5530214_1930_1931_opt.pdf, *accessed March 10, 2017. See also* Samuel Ofosu-Amaah, *Health and Disease in Ghana: The Origins of Disease and the Future of Our Health* (Accra: Pagelinks, 2005), 191.

Diseases Act of 1908,[112] "colonies"[113] were created for patients with infectious diseases.[114] These included diseases such as leprosy, yaws, and smallpox.[115] In the case of Konkomba medical culture, a patient of such diseases resided in the house of a healer in the community and was frequently attended to by the family members.

When the first African government of the Gold Coast took power in 1951, it inherited a relatively young colonial government controlled medical service which had formally been in existence for about four decades. A few hospitals were scattered all over the Northern Territories with a total of 139 beds and with the population-bed ratio being 1/4300.[116] Despite the fact that these colonial policies, undoubtedly, influenced the health conditions in the Northern Territories, indigenous treatment remained vital.

Conclusion

The medical culture of the Konkomba combined scientific, naturalist and spiritual practices which produced an all-embracing healing balm to patients. The veritable institutionally trained healers possessed an assortment of resources in their curative practices.[117] These included the

[112] The section eleven (11) of the act provided, "A medical officer may order a person living in the same house or compound as, or otherwise brought into contact with, a person suffering or suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease, whether in an infected area or not, to be isolated in a place that the Government may provide, until that person is safely discharged." See *Infectious Diseases Act, 1908 (section 11),* http://www.vertic.org/media/National%20Legislation/Ghana/GH_Infectious_Disease_Act_1908.pdf, accessed March 12, 2017.

[113] An isolated place reserved for patients of infectious diseases.

[114] *Infectious Diseases Act, 1908. This act was enforced throughout the period that Gold Coast experienced epidemics. See* K. David Patterson, "The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-19 in the Gold Coast," *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (1983): 485–502, http://www.jstor.org/stable/181255, accessed February 24, 2017.

[115] *PRAAD (Accra) ADM 56/1/405 Tour of Inspection-Assistant Director of Medical Services.*

[116] Addae, *History of Western Medicine,* 66.

[117] An interview with Salmo Bitekpe Konja, 81 year old healer, by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Bingnul Malibi on 26th December, 2016, at Sibi in the Volta Region of Ghana.

use of medicinal plants, and the trust placed in all healing materials.[118] The fundamental cause of ailment in human beings was due to one's failure to adhere to the laws of hygiene and those of the spirit world. Dis-ease (*tebubund*) was seen as a continuous struggle between "health-giving forces" and "health-negating forces."[119] As a result, diseases and their treatment were seen as a collective process that included cosmic, social and physical functioning of a patient.[120]

The gradual decline of the Konkomba medical culture was due in part to the introduction of Eurocentric Christianity, which sought to purge the Konkomba of a belief system that served as an embodiment of health among the Konkomba.[121] This religion led to the abandoning of ancestral veneration and turned sacred groves into profane places. Indigenous measures that were previously the implicit and explicit means of conservation lost their meaning and value and were no longer preserved.[122] Some missionaries constantly denigrated and castigated Konkomba cultural and religious beliefs as "pagan," "demonic" and "evil."[123] However, all social practices of the Konkomba maintained their social health.[124] This contributed to the general improvement in the quality of life and promoted sustainable health and well-being.

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[118] An interview with Salmo Bitekpe Konja.

[119] An interview with Lakorbor Ugan.

[120] An interview with Toborchand Tinanla, 81 year old soothsayer, interviewed by Oliver Kofi Tasin and Manee Masund on 3rd January, 2017, at Nbuendo in the Savanes Region of Togo.

[121] An interview with Toborchand Tinanla.

[122] An interview with Toborchand Tinanla.

[123] An interview with Jagri Jeijah.

[124] The research has been explored from the emic perspective. The emic (local) perspective is a culture-specific one that is consistent with the ideology of the society under study and that presents health-related (and other) phenomena through reference to indigenous understanding of the universe and the intended outcomes of plant use and related practices. The opposite is etic (outside) which uses concepts and theories that are grounded in some ideology in order to create a framework on which to project and interpret medical beliefs and behaviours. See Sjaak Van der Geest and Susan Reynolds Whyte, eds., *The Context of Medicine in Developing Countries, Studies in Pharmaceutical Anthropology* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis Publishers, 1991), 300–3017; Dennis M. Warren, "The Role of Emic Analyses in Medical Anthropology: The Case of

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