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EDITORIAL NOTE

Following a recent fresh look at the Research Review by its Editorial Board, this issue of the Review concerns itself with social studies subjects. At our request, Emmanuel Terray, University of Paris, examines the political economy of the Gyaman (Abron) Kingdom which, before the colonial period, constited of territories situated in both the Gold and Ivory Coasts but was divided in 1889 between the two colonies. With the growing influence of the Marxist-oriented French anthropologists, the subject of the political economies of the historic West African Kingdoms is likely to become one of increasing interest.

We also publish an examination by Norman Klein (Concordia University) of Ivor Wilks' view of social stratification in nineteenth century Asante. Klein's attempt to reconcile Wilks' historical and Rattray's and Fortes' anthropological approaches to the study of Asante is refreshing and likely to provide an example of linkages between the anthropological and historical approaches in African Studies.

Finally, Elizabeth Ardayfio (University of Ghana) examines the potentials of rural markets for economic development in the rural areas.

Kwame Arhin.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE ABRON KINGDOM OF GYAMAN

Emmanuel Terray*

"Money is nothing, the name is what matters." - Prince Kwame Adingra to his secretary, Mr. A.K., c. 1960.

In the present article we propose to analyse the political economy of the Abron kingdom of Gyaman during the precolonial period. After briefly describing Gyaman's population, history, and political and economic organization, we will describe the various means by which the kingdom obtained its revenues, and the manner in which it spent them. We will then examine the administration of "public finances" and its principal agents. Finally, we will describe the changes which were imposed on the entire economy by the coming of colonial rule.[1]

I.

The territory occupied by the Abron kingdom of Gyaman lies in what is now the northeastern Ivory Coast and northwestern Ghana: it stretches between the Komoe and the Black Volta, on the border of the savannah and the forest.

Founded in about 1690 by the Gyamanhene Tan Date, the kingdom fell under Ashanti domination in 1740, and this was maintained for approximately 135 years, despite numerous revolts (1750, 1764, 1802-1804). Gyaman regained its independence only in 1875, after the Ashanti defeat by the English and the destruction of Kumasi by

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Sir Garnet Wolseley. Between 1875 and 1886, it underwent a period of serious internal troubles. Invaded by Samori's sofas in the spring of 1895, it was occupied by the end of 1897 by the French in the West and the British in the East.[2]

The first European travellers arrived in Gyaman during the 1880's. They attributed to it then a population of 80,000 inhabitants, an estimate that appears reasonable.[3] This population was ethnically heterogenous. Gyaman is a political entity which assembles peoples of very different origins, language, and culture, and among whom the Abron themselves form only a small minority: according to the census made by Captain Benquey between 1901 and 1904 in the "French" part of the kingdom, these numbered only 11,500 out of a total population of 49,000.[4]

A rapid review of the main peoples living in Gyaman includes:

- Gur-speakers: the Nafana (relatives of the Senufo), the Lorho, the Degha, and especially the Kulango peasants, who are spread throughout the kingdom and compose half of its population.

- Mande-speakers: the Goro and the Gbin; then the Ligbi, and the Numu blacksmiths, whose language has been adopted by the indigenous Hwela; and finally the Dyula, traders, artisans, and "marabouts," some settled in the town of Bonduku, others in the western march of Barabo.

- Finally Akan-speakers: the Anyi, in the south, and the Abron, themselves the descendants of numerous Akan migrants who gathered around a nucleus that came from Akwamu, north of Accra.[5]

These populations arrived in several waves, and the Abron, who entered the region from about 1680, belong to the last of these, except for the Dyula of Barabo, invited into Gyaman by the first Gyamanhene during the eighteenth century. Although the Kulango dominate to the north and Anyi to the south, the different groups are enormously interwoven; divisions are by village or even, in the main agglomerations, by neighbourhood.

The Abron, a minority that arrived after the groups, installed their domination gradually, by means of a policy that shrewdly combined force and diplomacy.[6] They monopolized political power. The institutions of their state developed in the course of the eighteenth century, and were basically similar to those of the other Akan states of the same period. Gyaman proper was divided into five provinces, of which the territories were intertwined. The most important of these was the royal domain (ahen efie, the "house" of the king), which the ruler governed directly; it accounted for 40 - 50% of the population. As regards daily administration, provincial autonomy was very great: the chiefs had a power similar to that of the king in his domain for all matters concerning internal politics, religion, the administration of justice, and the economy. It is true that the decisions of their courts could be appealed to the ruler, but he almost always confirmed them. However, as regards "foreign affairs," it was the council made up of the king and the chiefs that took the major decisions, such as a declaration of war or the formation of an alliance. At least formal unanimity was required in these cases. In short, the kingdom was a confederation, and this kind of structure strictly limited the king's power. This situation provoked severe conflict and at the end of the nineteenth century turmoil threatened the unity and indeed the very existence of the state.

Below the king and the chiefs were lesser dignitaries who took charge of the daily transactions of business. In the royal domain, one must distinguish between the office holders and the safohene (captains). Among the former, there were three adontenhene, who in wartime commanded the advance guard of the army, the kyeame (spokesman), the heads of the king's servants (Gyasehene), of the executioners (Brafohene), of the tambourine players, of the stool carriers, etc. Each of these officers belonged to a particular lineage - often a patrilineage - and was passed down within it: at least in theory, the king did not intervene in the choice of the

title-holder. As for the safohene, they were men to whom the king had granted, under his control, the "surveillance" of villages as a reward for their exploits in war or for a service rendered. The safohene presided over the lower courts, and led to war the men from those villages for which they were responsible. This position was hereditary, and was usually passed down through the father. In the provinces, organization was simpler: there were kyeame, a few court officials, and safohene. Finally, at the lowest rung of the hierarchy were village and neighbourhood chiefs: it was on this level only that the Kulango, Nafana, Anyi, etc. obtained any position of power.

Finally, in the course of the first decade of its existence, Gyaman established its hegemony over a number of neighbouring areas, and the kings of the period delegated the task of "supervising" them to various provincial chiefs: thus the three Anyi chieftaincies of Bona were under the Siengihene, Nasian, Bini, and Barabo under the Penangohene; only Asikasso was directly under the ruler. But these vassals also enjoyed great internal autonomy.

Such were the main characteristics of the political organization of the kingdom, briefly described.

II.

In Gyaman as elsewhere, the state drew the resources it needed to function from the economic activities of its people; so a few words must be said about them. Of course the most important was agriculture. The main crop was yam, to which was added maize in the north, plantains in the south. The area also produced tobacco, palm oil, and such "industrial" plants as cotton and indigo. However, little kola was grown, and none exported. In the savannah area, the raising of sheep, goats, and cattle increased somewhat until the epidemic of 1892 and the invasion of Samori in 1895 brought losses from which the area never fully recovered.

In addition, Gyaman soon became known for the importance of its gold mines: in 1817 and 1820, Bowdich and Dupuis heard of its fame through their Kumasi informants, and in the same period the information spread as far as Fezzan.[7] In Abron country, mining was done in two different ways. Gold dust was obtained from the sediment deposited by certain rivers, by a procedure analogous to the "lavage a là batée" used by gold seekers everywhere during the nineteenth century. Or gold was extracted by genuine mining. Here the method was to reach, follow, and exhaust the veins: hence pits were dug having roughly a yard in diameter, and a depth of as much as twenty five yards;[9] the miner reached the bottom by means of rough steps dug into the sides; the ore, piled into calabashes, was hauled to the surface with vines; there, a group of workers washed the soil or broke up the quartz. In both cases, gold-seeking was seasonal work: for the rains swelled the rivers and flooded the pits, making extraction impossible. On the other hand, however, gold washing requires a great deal of water, which becomes increasingly rare as the dry season advances. Thus the most favourable period is that which immediately follows the rains. Allowing for the intermittent nature of the work, extracting gold in Gyaman meant the mobilization of a very great number of people; Dupuis states that during a two-month period eight to ten thousand slaves washed gold on the banks of the Ba river, which waters the south Abron country before flowing into the Komoe.[10]

As for processing industries, one must distinguish between local crafts - woodworking, basket-making, spinning - practised in all rural communities - and more specialized work: the Numu villages and neighbourhoods did the iron-working, the Degha women of Motiamo made pottery, Hausa settled in Bunduku from the early nineteenth century were the dyers. As for weaving, it was done by Abron and especially by Dyula specialists. The former remained in their villages. The latter moved about with their looms or settled in Bonduku.[11]

Finally, an important trade route cut through Gyaman, that linking the Niger to the Gulf of Guinea, by passing through Bobo Dyulaso, Kong, and Kumasi. Along this route passed, from south to north, kola, gold - which, beginning in the early nineteenth century, was siphoned off to Hausaland - sea salt, European goods; and, from north to south, captives, Saharan salt, cattle, ivory. These long-distance exchanges also took two distince forms. Whereas the wealthiest Abron sent expeditions to Kong, Salaga, or the coast to acquire particular articles - captives, cloth, arms - the Dyula undertook genuine commerce, which was entirely subordinate to the search for profit: they bought or sold merchandise taking into account only the income that the transaction might bring.[12]

This traffic encouraged the development of the important market town of Bonduku, which lay in the centre of the kingdom. Bonduku began its expansion at the beginning of the eighteenth century, after the decline of Bigu; the European visitors who reached it after 1882 estimated its population at between three and eight thousand inhabitants, who were mainly Dyula.[13] It was a stopping point, a point where transport changed - animal porterage yielding to human porterage - a point of intersection between two trading networks - many Dyula did not wish to proceed farther south, and many Ashanti traders did not wish to go farther north - a currency frontier - between the cowrie zone and that of gold dust - an "industrial" centre - the Hausa dyers have already been mentioned - and finally a place of learning and religion, with its Muslim scholars and Koranic schools. On the political level, however, it was not the kingdom's capital: that was in whatever spot the ruler chose to reside, which varied over time.

These various activities were accomplished through a social organization that combined two different "modes of production." On the one hand was that based upon the "lineage" or household, which was that of the Kulango, Anyi, or Abron peasant communities. Here the

fundamental social entity was the compound (Abron efie, Kulango bin). If, among the Abron or among the Kulango, succession was matrilineal, residence was patrilocal, at least for men: thus the compound included a man, his younger brothers, his sons and theirs, as well as in some instances a few pawns or captives. As for the women, they lived apart, and when born in the same village as their husbands, they remained with their mothers. A residential unit, the court was also a unit of production and consumption. It possessed two kinds of fields, among which the members divided their time: the fields belonging to the compound headman, and the individual fields of the various families who made up the compound. The former were cultivated first, and all male members of the court were obliged to share in the work; the yield was consumed in meals for the collectivity, which the women prepared and which, every day, united the men of the compound around their headman; it was also the source of supplies in time of scarcity. Finally, the compound could sell a part of it to fill other needs of his dependants, to acquire cattle, arms, captives, or to increase the patrimony of the court in prestige goods, clothes, jewels, etc. In addition each family possessed its own fields, the produce of which was consumed by the wives and children of the head. The latter could also find additional food there, and sell part of it to acquire the goods which were his personal property. It was also within the framework of the compound that the crafts described above were organized: the rules followed were similar to those for agriculture. The compounds sometimes cooperated for activities requiring large-scale labour - house-building, maintaining paths, and especially community fishing and hunting - but this cooperation remained limited to particular cases, and was not regulated in a formal way.

It should be noted that women had no fields of their own: certain crops - okro, sorrel, pimento - were grown by them, but these were secondary crops which they cultivated on the land their husbands

had worked for yams. As for the captives, their fate depended on the amount of time they had spent within the court and the trust their master had in them. On his arrival, the captive had no plot of his own; he worked on the lands of the compound head from whom in exchange he received his food. But adolescents were treated in the same way. Later his master gave him a wife and, on condition of good behaviour, he was allocated a plot of land from which he drew food for himself and his family; the rest of the time he worked for his master. The latter might even permit him to do a bit of trading: one third of the profits then belonged to his. As we saw, the young men of the court were subject to similar rules. In fact the difference between the position of adolescents and that of captives was mainly that the latter were given the dirtiest and most disagreeable tasks, and that they had no matrilineage which could defend them and allow them to hope for a change in status. In this context, the captives may be seen as perpetual minors, and as the lowest among them: slavery was patriarchal and domestic, merely an extension of the lineage system.

The position of captives possessed by the king, the provincial chiefs, and the important dignitaries of the kingdom, and by the Dyula traders of Bonduku, was different: here we find a different mode of production, one that was actually based on slavery. It was not that the customs affecting slaves were fundamentally different: here too captives could, after a certain lapse of time, and if they had been docile, be granted a wife and a plot of land. But within the court they formed a much more numerous group: a single master could own several dozen, even, in the king's case, several hundred, entrusting their supervision to a son or to his free dependants. He did not work alongside them; moreover, few of them lived near him; they were installed in camps established near the fields they were to cultivate, or, if their master were Dyula, in the agricultural hamlets that encircled Bonduku. Hence that permanent cohabitation which, in

the peasant compound, created relatively strong bonds between masters and captives disappeared.

What role did these captives play in the Kingdom's economy? In the first place, it was they who cultivated the fields from which the Abron aristocracy drew its immediate livelihood: before the colonial era, the Abron chiefs and their relatives did no manual work and lived almost completely upon the agricultural labour of their captives; in the same way, it was the captives of the djongso - agricultural hamlets - who assured supplies for the inhabitants of Bonduku and for passing caravans. In the second place, the captives accomplished an important part of the work linked to the extraction of gold, insofar as that was undertaken largely on the initiative of the king, the chiefs, and the notables; and underground work in particular was reserved to the slaves, because of its danger and difficulty. Finally, the transport of merchandise was for the most part given over to captives; it is true that they had no monopoly of porterage; free men could do it for themselves or for others. But here too, it was essentially the king and the chiefs who organised commercial expeditions to Kong, Salaga, and the coast, and they gave their captives the task of carrying the goods they wished to sell or buy there; in the same way, most Dyula caravans were composed of slaves.[18]

III.

Such was the economic base upon which the Abron built their state. The state itself procured its revenues in various ways, which may be divided into three categories. First, the king and the provincial chiefs had the legal right to demand tribute from the populations they governed; second, by the very exercise of their power, especially their judicialy power, they were able to draw off a considerable part of the area's resources; finally, they enjoyed the

profits which their mining and commercial enterprises brought them. We will consider booty and duties separately.

Let us first describe direct taxes. These were levied in labour as well as in kind, and took different forms, which can be described briefly:

- The Kulango and Abron peasants furnished labour to the king and provincial chiefs at the time when agricultural activity was greatest, when yams (ignames) were planted: each year Kulango and Abron villages were convened one by one for a day. When the king ordered it, they also kept up the roads.

- The Kulango and Abron gave the king or Abron provincial chief one tusk, the tail, and the haunches of slaughtered elephants, as well as all lion and panther skins.

- All gold nuggets were given over to the king and the provincial chiefs, who could also order the search for gold over the whole extent of their respective domains without having to make the payment to the Kulango rulers of the soil, that would normally have been due. Moreover, when the lodes were exploited by prospectors who were strangers to the province - whether they came from another province or from neighbouring territories - they had to give over to the ruler or Abron chief concerned a set proportion - usually a third - of their findings, without this affecting the amount they also owed to the village chief.[21]

- During the Yam Festival, which only the Abron kept, Kulango villagers, and apparently only they, brought to the king and chiefs dues in kind (yams, sheep, chickens, game), though these were rather light: from six to one hundred yams, from one to twelve sheep per village.[22]

- The king and chiefs appropriated all twins born on their territory, as well as all albinos. They could also marry whatever girls they pleased in a certain number of specially designated Kulango villages.[23]

- Finally, when a region had special natural resources, its inhabitants had to allow king and chiefs to benefit from them: thus dwellers on the Komoe brought their fish, and the Anyi of Bona, snails.[24] However, the inhabitants of the border areas conquered by the Abron - Barabo, Nasian, Bini, Bona, Asikaso - were not subject as to any special tribute.[25]

All these dues were levied mainly upon the Abron and specially the Kulango peasant communities, but it is clear that they were not very high: a day of work a year, a few dozen yams, and a few sheep per average Kulango village; otherwise, except for the gold nuggets, Abron and Kulango could freely search for gold, at least in their native provinces; finally vassals were not forced to pay any particular dues. How can one explain such relative moderation? Certainly, for more than a century, the Abron, as will be mentioned again below, were forced to pay tribute to the Ashanti, and they could hardly add their own demands to this already considerable load. But otherwise, what the king and chiefs demanded from their subjects above all, was not material wealth, but military support: in wartime the Kulango and Abron peasants formed the majority of the kingdom's army. Thus the exploitation from which they suffered had to be limited: it ceased when its excess might compromise their loyalty, by provoking discontent, defections, or revolts. Thus the significance of the dues just enumerated was political rather than economic; certainly, the rights of the chiefs to ivory and gold nuggets helped enrich them; however, most of the other dues - and notably the giving over of lion and leopard skins and the contributions during the Yam Festival - had and clearly symbolic function: their purpose was to show in a public and tangible way the subjection of the peasant communities and the supremacy of the Abron aristocracy.[26]

Seen in this light, dues did not affect the populace only; the Abron notables were equally concerned, in two ways. First, Tauxier mentions the taxing by king and provincial chiefs of the legacies of the safohene and of deceased village chiefs, and seems to think this consisted of a regular tax;[27] actually, although the result was similar, the intention was different: if the king or the provincial chief honoured the funeral of a subordinate with an envoy and a gift, he had to be thanked by means of a counter-gift of greater value, which according to informants was usually triple. Also, when a chief of inferior rank was enstooled, his superior - the king or provincial chief - received before enthroning him a quantity of gold dust that could go, according to the newly-promoted man's position, as high as eight kponta (the kponta, the Kulango equivalent of Abron asia, is a weight of 8,8 grams: one kponta of gold dust was equal to £7). The provincial chiefs themselves could not escape this payment.[28] Here, too, the sum given was not very great, but in making the payment the notables publicly recognized the pre-eminence of the top office holders; for the same reason they brought them wood to burn at the time of the Yam Festival.

The king and chiefs obtained much more substantial revenues from what we have called "indirect tribute", and particularly from their right to judge cases. Here, minor affairs - adultery, theft - were judged by village chiefs, but their decision could be appealed to the king and the chiefs; moreover the latter directly judged serious cases - homicides, adultery with the wife of an important official.[29] Therein lay a major source of wealth, of which certain aspects should be emphasized.

In the first place, certain crimes - witchcraft, acts of high treason and of lèse majesté - were punished by death, but the executions were usually followed by confiscation of goods. Had the guilty party been a sorcerer, at least one of his children would be given over to the king or to the chief who had rendered the verdict.[30] For other offences the usual sanction was a fine, which was added

to the reparations due to the persons hurt and went to enlarge the royal treasure. Should one of the parties pronounce the royal oath, which recalled either a past defeat or an ancestor of the sovereign who had disappeared, and which forced the latter to try the offence in his court, the fine was considerably increased, which was supposed to make up for the unpleasantness caused him: these were the notorious "customs", which also benefitted the provincial chiefs.[31] Finally, the winning party had to express its gratitude to the judges, by giving them presents, the importance of which varied according to what had been at stake in the trial and the rank of those involved.[32] And fines, customs, and presents were all to be paid in gold: in this way, the king and the chiefs could drain off a not unimportant part of the gold that ordinary citizens collected.[33]

The exercise of judicial power also permitted the chiefs to enlarge their reserves of captives: when an individual was constantly unruly and in debt, his relatives, tired of paying heavy fines for him, gave him over to the king or chief, who could either sell him out of the country, or retain him in his service.[34]

Such procedure strongly affected the division of wealth among the Abron. Take a fortunate gold-seeker: his success would soon make the king and chiefs envious, and they would use all pretexts to fine him so heavily that his rise would be slowed down or even halted. "In the old days, one could be rich in secret only." say informants.[35] Here too the threat of defection or revolt was the most effective limit to arbitrary use of power; however, it could happen that the limit was reached: for example, the exactions of the king Kwadwo Adingra (c. 1795-1818) help explain his subjects' lack of enthusiasm in the unfortunate war which he fought against Ashanti in 1818.[36]

In describing these practices Europeans spoke of systematic abuses, which they set down to the rapacity and unscruplousness of the Abron aristocracy. This explanation is superficial; actually, the nouveau riche was not forced to choose between cladestinity and

spoliation; a third possibility was open to him: he could put his fortune at the service of the established political powers. For example, he could directly come to the help of the King and Chiefs' Treasuries, for they had heavy expenses and were often in serious financial trouble; he could also recruit and equip a company of warriors at his expense, which, in wartime, he would place under the ruler's command. As a reward, the latter would appoint him safohene and would give him the supervision of several villages; our man would exercise judiciary power over these and would thus collect fines; he would participate in tax collection and receive his share; in short, the recognized mechanisms of the concentration of wealth would now play in his favour; but that would be due to his having become part of the established political hierarchy: his fortune from now on would serve its interests and goals.[37]

In other words, what the fining system prevented was the forming among the Abron of a class of "rich men", such as that which at the time existed in numerous coastal societies, that would have been independent of the aristocracy and that could challenge the latter's hegemony. The acquisition of wealth could be pursued as a "private" and autonomous activity within strict limits only: if the newly wealthy individual wished to avoid dispossession and to continue to enrich himself, he could do so only by offering his goods to the state. In any case the latter won out, since in one way or another the accumulation of wealth was carried on through its institutions.

V.

However, the king and the chiefs were obliged to share the income from fines and judicial charges with the dignitaries and elders who assisted them during the trials. Thus the only revenues which they could use exactly as they wished were those that came from what we have called their own "businesses." These were of various

kinds. As regards agriculture, the king and chiefs owned fields which their captives cultivated, but the harvest was used only to feed the court and its guests; it was not sold, and therefore brought no profit. In addition, the king maintained hunters, who pursued large game, particularly elephants; when one was killed, the king sent one of his dependants to Kumasi or the court to sell the tusks.[38] Third, as we saw, the king and the chiefs exploited the gold mines: early in the nineteenth century, Dupuis reported that the gold of Gyaman "is dug principally out of large pits, which belonged to the late king, in the neighbourhoods of Briuanti and Kontoosoo",[39] in 1893, Braulot met at Surmakuru, in Asikaso, "all the inhabitants of the village of Kandena, near Sapia," occupied in extracting gold;[40] now Kandena was then the residence of the Fumasehene Dua Yao: it was probably for his benefit that the work was done. Finally the king and chiefs organized commercial expeditions to Kong, to Salaga, or to the Gulf of Guinea: for example, at the end of 1888 the Siengihene Kwaku Diawusi sent his servants to buy a thousand guns in Krinjabo;[41] in 1896 Glozel at Manzanua passed a caravan of twelve captives led by Kosi Druo, sword-bearer for the Gyamanhene Kwaku Agyeman.[42] However, one must not misunderstand the object of these expeditions: for those who controlled them, the goal was not to obtain a commercial profit, but to realise on exterior markets the surplus product that had been extorted from their subjects and captives: in fact the merchandise brought back - slaves, arms, luxury goods - was not sold again and was added to the patrimony of the stool.

A separate description must be provided for the revenues obtained through war and foreign policy generally, because of their "extraordinary" character. In the first place, the rules concerning the sharing of booty, which was composed mainly of captives, were clearly to the advantage of the king and chiefs. Theoretically the booty belonged to them in its entirety, and after a battle all the enemies captured were handed over to them; but in practice, sharing was the rule, and this they immediately proceeded to do: had they

acted otherwise, they would have compromised the loyalty of their troops. But the original giving-over of the booty to the king and chiefs made its later distribution appear a gift due to generosity only. This distribution followed precise rules: the fate of prisoners taken in combat differed from that of captives - women, children, old people - who were taken after victory, during the invasion of enemy territory. The former were equally divided between the warriors responsible for their capture and the king or chief of their province. As for the latter, they belonged to whoever took them. Thus the king by no means appropriated all the captives taken in war, but the contingent attributed to him was the most important.[43] The size of that contingent varied according to circumstances: in 1805 the unfortunate Abu Bekr al-Siddiq, captured in Buna by the army of Gyamanhene Kwadwo Adingra, was immediately marched to the coast and sold to Europeans;[44] in 1825, on the contrary, the prisoners who were taken back from Buna by the Gyamanhene Kwasi Yeboa were settled, some in his capital of Tabagne, where they formed the Kilio quarter, others in Dadiase, where they were made to serve the spirit Tan Kwabena and his priests, to thank them for the "spiritual" support that the latter had given the Abron troops during the conflict.[45] In the same way, in 1882 the Kyidomhene Kwaku Kosonu Pape settled the captives he had taken in Benda in his village of origin, Gumere.[46]

To booty was added the indemnity demanded of the vanquished when peace was concluded, and the ransom which the Abron sometimes accepted when their prisoners were of Akan origin. For example, in 1877 Abron and Dormaa invaded Berekum, and the king and inhabitants took refuge in Nkwanta. Nine years later the victors agreed to negotiate, to allow their adversaries to return to their country, and to return the captives they held - the Gyamanhene alone owned one hundred - in exchange for a ransom of half a peredwan of gold dust, or a value of £4 1s. each.[47] In a more general way, foreign policy was also a source of occasional gains for the king: among

these were the gold given him by foreign rulers to obtain his alliance; in 1876-77, the Gyamanhene Kwaku Agyeman received important amounts of gold from the kings of Dormaa, Takyiman, and Seikwa, who solicited his support against the Ashanti.[48] However, the sums obtained in this way had to be divided between the ruler and the provincial chiefs.

On the other hand, as was said earlier, the king and the chiefs levied no taxes or tolls upon long-distance trade; in particular the trade and profits of the Dyula were not taxed. This restraint can be explained first by economic reasons: to travel from Bobo Dyulaso to Kumasi, or from Kong to Salaga, the Dyula caravans could go via Bonduku, but also via Buna. Under these circumstances, if the Abron attempted to establish tolls on their territory, their only effect would be to turn traffic through Buna. On several occasions, the Abron tried to obtain a monopoly by taking that town, but they were unable to hold it, and the permanent competition of Buna prevented them from levying on commerce any duties at all.[49] In a more general sense, the Abron governments were in a weak position as regards the Dyula; on the economic level, they needed them to "realize" the surplus acquired from the work of their subjects and especially from that of their slaves, and to acquire such valued goods as captives, cattle, Sudanic cloth, Saharan salt;[50] on the political level, the aristocracy constantly sought Dyula support, particularly that of the Watara of Kong, to resist Ashanti hegemony;[51] finally, on the religious level, in time of scarcity as in time of war, the Dyula brought the king and chiefs the assistance of their prayers and amulets, and this assistance was considered indispensable to the kingdom's prosperity and grandeur.[52] Given this situation, the Abron state could not allow itself to tap Dyula gains in any way; indeed the latter enjoyed almost complete judicial immunity through all Gyaman: in particular, no fines were levied upon them.[53] In short, for the king and chiefs the point was not to tax the Dyula, but to attract them and obtain their favour: this was the origin of the extraordinary privileges accorded them.

Up to a point, the Dyula, who controlled long-distance trade, were thus the equivalent of the "rich men" in the coastal societies. But the analogy is only partial: actually, in Gyaman, the Dyula were and remained strangers; if on occasion they exercised an important influence on state decisions, they were, on the other hand, excluded from all political office, since they could not accomplish the ritual tasks attached to these offices.[51] Thus their presence allowed the Abron aristocracy to resolve the difficult dilemma its ties with commerce presented: it needed the latter, but at the same time was afraid of the pernicious effects that could result. The aristocracy's power in fact rested on the one hand in its own cohesion, and on the other on the more or less voluntary support of the people for the military values it represented. Would not one and the other be undermined by the development of trade, which favoured individualism and presupposed the maintenance of peace? In giving the Dyula the status of privileged guests, the Abron leaders overcame the contradiction: they might benefit from the advantages of trade, without having to tolerate the formation, within Abron society, of a class of traders who might imperil their supremacy.

VI.

We have just described the resources of the Abron state; now we must examine its expenses. These, in our opinion, can be divided into six main categories. We will pass rapidly over the first two, which need no special commentary: expenses linked to the support of the court - the purchase of supplies (meat), of salt, of alcohol, and of cloth for the wives, dependants, and servants of the ruler - and expenses of redistribution, those for example that were accepted at festival times, particularly at the Yam Festival. The four other categories are more significant, and were undoubtedly more important quantitatively.

First about what one might call expenses of ostentation. Indeed, the grandeur of a sovereign was not measured only by his equity and by his victories, but also by his efforts to enrich the heritage of the royal stool. All the precious objects acquired during his reign were added to this heritage, which would be transmitted to his successor: the more numerous they were and the greater was their value, the greater was his glory. Thus each king did his best to contribute to this enrichment, either by purchasing valuable cloths from abroad, or by patronising the most respected local craftsmen, weavers, and, especially, goldsmiths.[55] The latter melted down gold furnished by the king, and made from it figurines that were placed at the top of parasols used for formal occasions, canes with gold heads, sandals decorated with gold, jewels and ornaments of all kinds. Eventually these treasures were displayed at the festivities that accompanied the Yam Festival or the receptions given ambassadors. The fame of some of these objects even came to European ears. "The king of Gaman," reported Bowdich, "had steps of solid gold to ascend to his bed."[56] And Ginger describes the state sword carried by the servants of the Gyamanhene Kwaku Agyeman as follows: "The sword or rather the sabre of Arjoumani is a long blade shaped like a Yatagan of one meter twenty centimeters, equipped with teeth like a saw; it is topped a handle of melted gold, hollow, which includes a double knob, which weighs about two pounds. It has no designs, but is decorated with a rather well-drawn pattern of squares."[57] Other objects of the same kind played major role in Abron history, such as the stool and ornament shaped liked an elephant, both in solid gold, which were produced at the command of the Gyamanhene Kwadwo Adingra: the Asantehene Osei Bonsu, feeling understably defied, demanded that it be given up to him, and Adingra's refusal became the immediate cause of the war of 1818 and the disaster of the Tain.[58]

Next came religious expenses. Some were renewed each year: thus cattle and sheep were sacrificed to the spirit Tano at every Yam Festival; others occurred only when circumstances required them, in time of war, scarcity, or epidemic, for example. The beneficiaries of these extraordinary expenses included the spirit Tano and his priests once again, who were consulted before every important enterprise and who were richly rewarded in case of success,[59] and also the Dyula marabouts of Bonduku, Barabo, and Kong. The latter helped the sovereign with their prayers and peered into the future for him; they also furnished him with protective amulettes; in particular, they produced those which were sewn on the soldiers' war-dress, and which protected them against bullets and wounds. They were rewarded with sumptious presents of gold dust and captives;[60] On the eve of Samori's invasion, the Gyamanhene Kwaku Agyeman thus sent al-hajj Bamoro Watara of Yerebodi seven guns with their barrels filled with gold dust, so that he would "prepare the battle;" but the messengers stole the gold, which was thought to have brought on the Abron defeat.[61] One should emphasize that there was no question here of a fixed or regulated retribution; the king himself decided the value of his gifts, which was proportional to what was at stake or to the services rendered. Yet these expenses were extremely heavy, and, by this means, considerable wealth was transferred from the Abron to the Dyula.

In the third place, there were military expenses: it was the duty of the ruler and the provincial chiefs to own and equip their troops, and in particular to furnish them with guns and powder;[62] it was for this reason, informants say, that they obtained the larger part of the booty: this advantage was supposed to defray the expenses they had had. But the result was that every defeat was followed among other things by a serious financial crisis: indeed, not only did the king and chiefs not recover the funds they had advanced, but in addition they had to pay to the victor enormous quantities of gold as an indemnity. Then they had to demand exceptional contributions

from their subjects and, if necessary, borrow from friendly rulers. All these means were used after the disaster of 1818: the Kulango of Sapia furnished fifty of the hundred hostages claimed by the Asantehene Osei Bonsu;[63] the Tufuhene Kwasi Sawiri paid from his own resources an important part of the fine inflicted by the Ashanti, for which in return he was given the command of the Sulemani region;[64] but all this was not enough, and the Gyamanhene Kofi Fofie, Adingra's successor, in addition was forced to request a loan from the King of Mango Dian Watara.[65] To this indemnity were added heavy ransoms: thus the queen Ama Tamia was taken in captivity to Kumasi, and the Abron obtained her liberation only at the price of four hundred ounces of gold.[66]

Finally, a last charge must be mentioned, that which was incurred, for 135 years of Abron history, from 1740 to 1875, by the tribute in gold the Ashanti levied. European sources and tradition give differing accounts of its size: early in the nineteenth century, according to Bowdich, Gyaman had paid (besides all large pieces of rock gold) 100 peregruins annually;"[67] but in 1882, the Gyamanhene Kwaku Agyeman told Captain Lonsdale that at the time of their domination the Ashanti took from him more than 18,000 ounces of gold dust annually.[68] According to our informants, the annual tribute was one hundred kponta during the reign of the Gyamanhene Kofi Sono (c.1750); but during that of Kwaku Agyeman, in the second half of the nineteenth century, it was raised to six hundred pefla (a Kulango weight equal to the Abron asuasa, corresponding to six kponta, or 52.8 grams; at that time a pefla was worth £6).[69] It appears that the amount demanded was not fixed; it could change as did the financial needs of the Asantehene; for example, in the first years of the nineteenth century it was greatly raised, which accounts partly for the revolt of 1818.[70] But the long-term trend appears to have been an increase in the sum demanded, these attaining their maximum in the time of the Asantehene Kwaku Dua I (1834-1867). In the same way, tribute was not always demanded at the

same times: in some periods, the Asantehene's collectors visited Gyaman only once in four or five years; in others, and notably throughout most of the nineteenth century, they came every year after the Yam Festival;[71] here too, it was in the reign of Kwaku Dua I that the levies were most frequent and most regular. In short, it would appear that between 1750 and 1850 tribute changed from being relatively light and serving mainly to "signify" the subordination of Gyaman to Ashanti, to a tribute that was much heavier, of which the economic and quantitative aspects had become of prime importance.

However, the way in which tribute was collected seems to have remained immutable. According to our informants, the Ashanti collectors - who were nhenkwa or servants of the Asantehene - came to the Gyamanhene and presented him with their master's demands. The ruler then assembled the provincial chiefs and together they paid the sum required, by dipping into their treasuries: then they recovered their funds by dividing the cost of the tribute among their villages, Abron as well as Kulango.[72] Robertson describing in 1819 the "vice-royalty" of Soko, "of which Bontookoo is the capital", wrote:"Adingra and Mansa, two relatives of the Ossey, receive the consular direction and transmit the revenues and tributes to Akoomassy, as they are received by them from these states which are under their control"[73]. The gold thus acquired was gathered together and sent to the Asantehene through the Bantamahene of Kumasi, who was charged with the surveillance of Gyaman affairs from within the Ashanti government.[74] In addition, our informants unanimously emphasized the exactions of the Asantehene's envoys: "After they had collected the king's gold, they demanded something for themselves, and one had to give them a child;"[75] these accusations are not unfounded, since during his stay in Kumasi in 1817 Bowdich witnessed the promulgation of an edict that severely regulated the behaviour of the collectors and penalized their abuses.[76]

Brief as it is, this picture of the expenses of the Abron state explains a great deal about its nature and the way it functioned. The importance of expenditures for ostentation reveals the Abron aristocracy's idea of wealth and of its role in society: it was not abstract and dis-embodied as it is under capitalism, but was rather a concrete assemblage of specific prestige goods of which the main function was to emphasize the social superiority of those who possessed them. In that sense, but only in that sense, the search for wealth was indeed one of the essential motors of the Abron leaders' behaviour and activities. But in the economic and social context of precolonial West Africa, force remained the main means of conducting this search: military force made it possible to hold down subjects and to accumulate slaves, and "spiritual" force, without which the former was powerless, was found through local divinities and Dyula marabouts. Finally the presence of the Ashanti tribute reminds us that for a very long period the Abron had found their masters in this game.

VII.

Finally, what can be said of Abron financial administration? To analyze it precisely we must recall three facts: first, the kingdom's population was relatively sparse; also, direct levies and dues account for only a minor part of the resources of the state treasure; finally the Abron levied neither duties nor tolls. Under these circumstances, the state did not acquire an elaborate financial apparatus; one does not find in Gyaman that complex machinery that the Asantehenes had to establish in order to govern their empire and pressure their vassals; in short, Gyaman never had a "Kwadoan revolution."

Thus the Abron political and administrative hierarchy included no branch specialized in the collection and management of public funds. There were only two "offices" whose function particularly

concerned that domain: that of the gyasehene, steward of the king's "house"[77] and especially that of the sannahene or treasurer. The latter seems already to have existed before the Abron left Akwamu in the beginning of the seventeenth century, but the seat of the present sannahene was created in the second half of the eighteenth century by the Gyamanhene Kofi Agyeman, who was perhaps inspired by the corresponding Ashanti institutions. The first incumbent of this stool was Ahi Kwabena, who was killed at the battle of the Tain; the office was passed down through the paternal line; from its origins until our times, a total of eight people appear to have held it. Today residing in the village of Ahi, the sannahene formerly lived at the king's court; his function was to weigh the gold that went in and out of the royal treasury, by the use of weights in the dia- weighing box - that belonged to the sovereign. In his absence no one, not even the king, could use this dia, or open the coffers in which the gold was kept: thus he had the power to control withdrawals as well as receipts. In addition, the sannahene ruled the village of Ahi, where his relatives lived, a ward of Tanda and a ward of Tangamuru; and finally, he played an important role in the ceremonies that took place at the Yam festival.[78]

Aside from these two personages, the tasks necessary to the smooth functioning of public finances - fine collecting, the pursuit of debtors - were undertaken by the safohene and the king's servants, messengers, sword-bearers, etc. Embezzlement was considered a crime of lèsé-majesté and as such was punishable by death. One should emphasize also that the king and the provincial chiefs had separate funds, which might raise difficult problems when common resources had to be shared; for example, in 1879, when Smith, at Bonduku, questioned the chiefs on the reason for their anger with the king: "They replied that they had a grievance, and that the king had received several chief into the Gaman alliance who were formerly allies of the king of

Ashantee without consulting them, that he had also received several sums of money from these chiefs as alliance money, without apportioning their share to them as is customary."[79]

VIII.

How did this system evolve in the colonial period? To answer this question, due to lack of space we will limit the discussion to the "French" part of the kingdom, where, as it happens, lived the king a and the four provincial chiefs. The economic organization that has just been described did not lend itself easily to the colonisers' projects: land and the instruments of production were abundant; wage-work was also unknown; the peasants devoted their energies to the continuation of their communities, and the aristocracy to the accumulation of prestige goods. Given this context, it is difficult to see what could persuade the population to offer French entrepreneurs their labour, or to produce for their firms commodities marketable in Europe. Thus the French did their best to shatter this system; in their view, the first obstacle to overcome was the aristocracy's hold on the peasant communities; to undermine this hold, they did their utmost to deprive the king and the chiefs of most of their traditional resources.

First of all the mere fact of the French occupation meant the end of wars, and, simultaneously, of booty; in particular it meant that no new slaves could be obtained. In addition, the trade in slaves could no longer be carried on openly; it is true that for a few years it was pursued secretly, but gradually it flickered out, due to, if one may put it thus, lack of "fresh" merchandise. In addition, the French administration soon decided to liberate the slaves; it is true that many captives, particularly the oldest ones, who had been separated from their native lands for a very long period, chose to remain with their masters, so that this measure had no immediate economic repercussions; but combined with the impossibility

for king and chiefs to renew their pool of servile labour, it eventually dealt their "enterprises" a fatal blow. In short, the end of the production and trade of slaves, then the end of captivity itself, considerably weakened the aristocracy's economic potential, while at the same time it deeply upset society as a whole.[80]

In the second place, the French authorities very quickly (1898) established a limit to the fines and "customs" inflicted by the ruler and the chiefs, then ordered their end (1904):[81] another pillar of the Abron state was shattered. The effect was not long in coming: in his monthly report of December 1907, the French administrator of the Bonduku area wrote: "In preventing the collection of funds which in former times composed the income of the kings and chiefs, we have so impoverished them that the people they administer no longer have the least respect for them. As for the parasites who surround them, they are leaving, for they are no longer able to commit their extortions."[82] Let us ignore the prejudices which such language reveals; it clearly shows that the king and chiefs had to let go their courts and their dependants, for they were unable to support them any longer.

Despite the rather hypocritical proclamations of its instigators, this abolition of fines and "customs" by no means lightened the burdens that weighed on the peasants, for it coincided with the French introduction of new levies: a head tax, instituted in 1901,[83] and a peddling license which affected internal trade, both payable in French currency; duties on the "frontiers," that is, in the heart of the kingdom, since as early as 1893, even before being effectively occupied, the latter was divided between France and England; and, finally forced labour, begun in 1898 for the construction of the French post at Bonduku,[84] and which became more general after 1904 when the construction of the Abidjan-Niger railway began. Of course, whereas the latter decisions aimed at creating the material infrastructure necessary to the occupation of the country and the exploitation

of its resources, the first had the object of forcing the population either to produce for the European market or to sell its labour to white entrepreneurs. But from the point of view presented here, two matters are important: first, these changes mark a complete rupture with the traditional system, since direct taxes had been kept to a minimum and commerce had been spared completely; also, only the colonial administration profited, since it was to it that the taxes went.

However, the French leaders soon discovered that their policy suffered from a serious contradiction, for it ruined and discredited the king and chiefs, whose help was essential for tax-collection and labour recruitment. To overcome this difficulty, a number of measures were taken; as early as 1901 the chiefs were given a refund of the taxes which they had helped collect; later this "bonus" was fixed at 5 per cent of the amount produced;[85] in the beginning of the 1930's, it was decided to give fixed salaries, which permitted them to regain a little of their lost lustre, but which made them deeply dependent upon the administration.[86]

Faced with this situation, the chiefs reacted in two different ways. Some tried to maintain their former prerogatives, for example, continuing to inflict fines, and were severely punished by the French authorities. Others, on the contrary, tried to adapt to transformations which they soon realized were irreversible. Using both the prestige due to their rank in the traditional social hierarchy and the fraction of power with which the colonial government invested them, they mobilized their subjects' labour for their own use, first for collecting rubber, then for the development of plantations. Thanks to the first revenue which these activities brought them, they hired wage-labourers who came to replace the captives who now disappeared. Thus the shrewdest and most enterprising chiefs managed to reconstruct - on a base which was entirely new - at least a part of their former wealth, and to regain a certain influence.

But the individual influence of this or that chief is one thing, and the domination of the aristocracy as a class, another. Under colonial rule that class saw the very foundation of its supremacy crumble: there is no reason to believe that it will ever be restored.

NOTES

1. The oral informations I make use of in this paper - quote FN (Fieldnotes) with place and date of collection - have been gathered in Gyaman while I was staying there during fieldwork in 1967-8, 1970 and 1976. I wish to thank the Institute d'Ethnosociologie of Abidjan University which made this fieldwork possible.

2. Tauxier 1921: 79-125; Terray - forthcoming.

3. Clozel 1906: 63.

4. Benquey to Governor, Ivory Coast, 19 Aug. 1904, Archives AOF, 22G12.

5. Tauxier 1921: 39-78, 363-415; Goody 1964: 193-216.

6. On what follows, see Terray - forthcoming.

7. Bowdich 1819: 169; Dupuis 1824, Part II: LVI; Lyon 1821: 148-9.

8. Terray 1975a : 423-7.

9. Clozel 1906: 53-4.

10. Dupuis 1824, part II: LVII.

11. Nebout in Clozel 1906: 180-7; Benquey in Clozel 1906: 196-7.

12. Terray 1974: 320. On the distinction between expeditions and genuine commerce (French: megoce), see Meillassoux 1971: 26-7.

13. Lonsdale to Derby, 12 May 1883, Parliamentary Papers 1883, XLVIII, n. 53 in C.3687.

14. On Bonduku, see inter alia Binger 1892, II: 161-170; Freeman 1892: 130-134; 1898: 212-294; Monnier 1894: 171-188; Benquey in Clozel 1906: 185-250; Delafosse 1908: 224-234; Joseph 1917: 204-220.

15. On what follows, see Terray 1975b: 85-135.

16. Benquey, Rapport sur la captivite dans le cercle de Bondoukou, 15 May 1904, Archives AOF, K.21.

17. Freeman 1898: 319-320; Holden 1969: 67, 70-7, 78.

18. On what precedes, see Terray 1975a : 422-437.

19. F.N. Herebo 28 February and March 1967, and c.

20. Tauxier 1921: 308, 342. F.N. Herebo 17 March 1967; 146-7, 306-7, 337-8. F.N. Herebo 17 March 1967; Welekei, 6 Sept., 1970.

22. F.N. Herebo 17 March 1967 and c.

23. Benquey, in Clozel and Villamur 1902: 195, 198-9; Nebout in Clozel 1906: 172-3; Tauscier 1921: 338-9 F.N. Herebo 7 July 1967: March 15 1968: Sapia, 11 Aug. 1970.

24. J.P. Eschlimann, personal communication.

25. Sie Kofi 1976: 53-5. F.N. Kun-Aunzi and Ndakro 19th Aug. 1970.

26. Terray 1975a: 446-8; 1975b: 119-20.

27. Benquey, in Clozel and Villamur 1902: 211; Tauscier 1921: 338.

28. F.N. Kikereni, 7 Sept. 1970.

29. Benquey, in Clozel and Villamur 1902: 200-203; Tauscier 1921: 340-352. F.N. Herebo 17 March 1967; Bonduku 6 May 1967: Welekei 10 May 1967; Gumere, 9 July 1967; Tiedio 18 Jan. 1968.

30. Benquey, in Clozel and Villamur 1902: 214-5; Tauscier 1921: 328 note F.N. see note 29.

31. Tauscier 1921: 351, F.N. see note 29, and Atuna 26 Aug. 1970; Kekereni 7 Sept. 1970; Tangamuru 31 July 1976; Amurufikro 10 Aug. 1976.

32. Benquey, in Clozel and Villamur 1902: 234.

33. F.N. Ahi 8 Aug 1970; Welekei 6 Sept. 1970; Kikereni 28 July, 1976.

34. Benquey, in Clozel and Villmur 1902: 224.

35. F.N. Kikereni 28 July 1976.

36. F.N. Bonduku 22 Aug. 1970; Welekei 6 Sept. 1970; Kikereni 27 July 1976;Tangamuru 1st August, 1976; Bonduku 9 Sept. 1976.

37. Terray 1975a: 415-6.

38. F.N. Herebo 2 March 1967; Kekereni 28 July 1976.

39. Dupuis 1824, Part II: LVI.

40. Braulot, Rapport de Mission, m.d. (1893), ANSOM Cote d'Ivoire III, 3.

41. Lethbridge to Governor Gold Coast, 4 March 1889, PRO. C.O. 879, Afr. W. 354.

42. Clozel to Governor Ivory Coast, 20 Sept., 1896, ANCI X, 10, 221.

43. F.N. Kikereni 24 March 1967; Bonduku 6 May 1967; Welekei 11 May 1967; Gumere 10 July 1967; Tiedio 19 Jan. 1968; Yerebodi 6 Aug. 1970; Lamoli 7 Aug. 1970; Teko 9 Aug. 1970.

44. Abu Bakr al-Siddig, quoted by Wilks in Curtin 1967: 162-3.

45. F.N. Kikereni 21 March 1967; Dadiase 5 Aug. 1976.

46. F.N. Kikereni 12 Sept. 1976.

47. Interview between Governor Hodgson and Kwaku Wusu, linguist of the King Pong Yaw of Wam, 8th June 1893, encl. 24 in Hodgson to Ripon 12 Oct. 1893 P.R.O.C.O. 96/237.

48. Smith to Private Secretary 25 Oct. 1879, P.R.O.C.O. 96/128.

49. Terray 1974: 321-2.

50. Ibid.: 335-6.

51.. See for instance Dupuis 1824: 98, 104, 165, 241, 245, Part II, CXXX, Reindorf 1895, 2nd ed. 1966: 164-5.

52. Martry 1922: 224. F.N. Bonduku 6 May 1967; Welekei 11 May 1967 and 11 Sept. 1976; Bandakani-Sokura, 5 Aug. 1970, Bondo, 20 and 21 Aug. 1976; Bandakani-Tomura 4 Sept. 1976; Kikereni 12 Sept., 1976; Tangamuru, 14 Sept. 1976.

53. F.N. Welekei 11 May 1967; Bondo 20 Aug., 1976.

54. Terray 1974: 322; 1975b: 132.

55. F.N. Amanvi 8 Sept., 1976; Welekei 11 Sept. 1976.

56. Bowdich 1819 : 307.

57. Binger 1892, II: 174.

58. Bowdich 1819: 244-5 F.N. Tabagne 14 May 1968; Kikereni 27 July 1976 Tangamuru 1st Aug., 1976.

59. See note 52.

60. F.N. Bandakani Sokura 5 Aug. 1970.

61. F.N. Bandakani Sokura 5 Aug. 1970.

62. F.N. Welekei 11 May 1967; Tiedio 19 Jan. 1968; Adania 16 February 1968; Ahi 8 Aug. 1970; Kanton 2 Aug. 1976; Kinkwa 11 Aug. 1976.

63. F.N. Sapia, 11 Aug. 1970.

64. F.N. Sulemani 18 Aug., 1970.

65. F.N. Tabagne 14 May 1968; Asuefri 21st Aug., 1970: Atuna 26 Aug. 1970; Kikereni 27 July 1976; Tangamuru 1st 1st Aug. 1976; Apimanim 12 Aug. 1976.

66. Fuller 1921, second ed. 1968: 85.

67. Bowdich 1819: 321.

68. Lonsdale to Derby, 12 May 1883, Parliamentary Papers 1833, XLVIII, n. 53 in c. 3687.

69. F.N. Songore 12 Aug. 1970; Kikereni 21 Aug. 1970 and 27 July 1976.

70. Royal Gold Coast Gazette, Vol. 1 No.30, 27 May 1823.

71. F.N. Bandakani-Sokura 4 Aug 1970; Songore 21 Aug. 1970; Asuefri 21 Aug. 1970; Kikereni 29 July 1976; Welekei 11 Sept. 1976; Bonduku 14 Sept., 1976.

72. F.N. Welekei 6 Sept. 1970 and 11 Sept., 1976; Kikereni 28 July 1976.

73. Robertson 1819: 182.

74. Arhin 1966: 30-31, F.N. Suma Ahenkro 23 Aug. 1970.

75. F.N. Kikereni, 21 Aug. 1972.

76. Bowdich, 1819: 255-6.

77. F.N. Kwasi Kuma 2 Aug. 1970.

78. F.N. Ahi 8 Aug. 1970; Turian 3 Aug. 1976.

79. Smith to Private Secretary 25 Oct. 1879, P.R.O.C.O. 96/128.

80. Benquey, Rapport sur la captivite dans le cercle de Bondoukou, 15 May 1904, Archives AOF, K21.

81. Tauscier 1921: 124-5, 351-2 and note.

82. Administrator Cercle de Bondoukou to Governor, Ivory Coast, monthly report, Dec. 1907, ANCI.

83. Arrete du 14 Mai 1901; see Michelet and Clement 1906:97.

84. Clozel 1906: 63.

85. Tauscier 1921: 125 and note.

86. Suret-Canale 1964: 409.

ABREVIATIONS

ANCI - Archives Nationale de la Cote d'Ivoire, Abidjan.

ARCHIVES AOF - Archives du Government General de l'AOF, Dakar.

ANSOM - Archives Nationales fransaises, Section Outre mer, Paris.

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1975b: Class Class-consciousness in the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman, in BLOCH M. (ed.) Marxist analysis and Social Anthropology, London. p. 85-135.

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ORAL SOURCES

VILLAGES:	INFORMANTS:
Adania	Nana Tan Kwadwo, Nana Yaa Menzan.
Amanri	Nana Kwasi Akora, Sannahene.
	Kwadwo Agyeman.
Apimanim	Nana Kwasi Bimi and elders
Asuefri	Nana Kwame Twea and elders
Atuna	Nana Kwaku Kereme, Safohene.
Bandakani-Sokwa	Fela Kamarate, Bandakari-masa,
	al Haj Ali Tidjane Kamarate, imam.
Bandakari-Tomwura	Asiekum Kamarate imam.
Bondo	Bamba, imam, Abu Bamba, al Haj.
	Ali Bamba.
Bondoukou	Nana Dua Kobena Fumasahene Al Haj
	Mahamma Timite, imam (22 Aug. 1970)
	Nana Kofi Yeboa, Gyamanhene
	14 Sept. 1976)
	Nana Kobena Prao, Okyeame of Tan
Gumere	Nana Kofi Kosonu, Kyidomhene.
Herebo	Nana Kofi Yeboa, Gyamanhene,
	Nana Afua Saye, ahemma, Nana Kofi Kosonu,
	Abakomahene.
Kanton	Nana Kobena Ba, Safohene.

Kikereni	Nana Kobena Gboko, okyeame.
Kikwa	Nana Dian Kofi, Safohene.
Kun Amzi	Nana Kwadwo Ngetia, Chief of Bona Asuadie.
Kwasi Kuma	Nana Kwabena Adom, Gyasehene.
Lamoli	Nana Kwasi Adingra Safohene
Ndakro	Nana Tan Kwame chief of Bona Abiade.
Sapia	Nana Kofi Foromo and elders.
Sangore	Nana Essin Kwam, Adontenhene.
Sulemani	Nana Kwasi Nketia, Tufuhene.
Suma Ahenkro	Nana Ohene Twene II, Sumahene.
S. Tabagne	Nana Atta Kwadwo, Cheneba, Nana Kobena Dongo, Safohene, Nana Adu Yao.
Tangamuru	Nana Kofi Kreme.
Teko	Nana Kwame Agyeman, Safohene.
Tiedio	Nana Yao Agyeman, Siengihene.
Twian	Nana Kwasi Akora, Sannahene. (same as Ahi)
Welekei	Nana Kobena Tah, Penangohene, Nana Papa Sian.
Yerebodi	Ali Watara, Yerebodi masa.

THE TWO ASANTES: COMPETING INTERPRETATIONS OF "SLAVERY" IN AKAN-ASANTE CULTURE AND SOCIETY[x]

A. NORMAN KLEIN[1]

In his Asante in the 19th Century (Cambridge, 1975)[2], the historian Ivor Wilks threw down the gauntlet to challenge the accepted anthropological picture of Asante society and culture inherited from Rattray[3] and Fortes. At the heart of Wilks' critique there are two kinds of question:

1. Empirical questions about the sources of permanence and change in Asante history. Here Wilks challenges the centrality of matrilineal kinship and of the lineage (abusua) to Akan-Asante society.

2. Ideological questions concerning different perspectives in social science which derive from and reflect different interests in the history of Ghanaian society.

Today I will deal with both types of question by focussing on the interpretation of slavery.

Briefly, the essential differences between Rattray[3] and Fortes[4] are kinship vrs class. I will first outline each of the contrastive approaches, and then attempt to construct a synthesis from the two competing interpretations.

Fortes, taking his lead from Rattray, is concerned primarily with the problem of order. He seeks to describe sources of stability anc continuity in Asante culture and society.

Wilks, on the other hand, focusses on the political and economic engines of change. He seeks to describe sources of discontinuity, especially political and historical transformations.

Fortes begins with Rattray's assertion that "Descent".. settled the status of an Ashanti for all time." Rattray, and Fortes after

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[x] This paper was delivered to the Department of Anthropology Seminar in Cambridge in May, 1979.

him, seek out the sources of structural coherence in Akan-Asante society in matrilineal kinship. Rattray's metaphor of "concentric circles of loyalty" envisages the minimal segment household as a structural paradigm for each succeeding level of Asante social and political organization.

Wilks denies the centrality of matrilineal kinship and the relevance of the lineage to 19th century Asante political organization. He even goes so far as to imply that the lineage was a transient feature in Asante history (p.106). Wilks substitutes the formation of social classes, for the matrilineage, at the center of Asante's political arena. To Wilks class structure, rather than kinship, is the fundamental, the critical mechanism in Asante political life during the 19th century.

In his interpretation of slavery, Fortes extends and refines Rattray's ascriptive criteria, when he describes how jural inferiority is handed down to descendants of Odonko men and women:

> "In Ashanti anyone who was enslaved was by definition kinless, that is, in the first instance, without recognized filiative ties in an Ashanti clan and therefore devoid of citizenship in the political community. He could be employed in responsible service by his owner and many slaves held positions of high trust and influence in the king's court. But he was not sui juris. It was only if he was granted quasinepotal status in his owner's lineage that he acquired the limited jural autonomy of a lifelong jural minor, ... the status — or at best the implicit stigma — of slavery was in theory never extinguishable. It clung to descendants through males of a male slave in theory forever, and put the matrilineal descendants of a female slave under perpetual quasi-service - tutelage."
>
> (Fortes: Kinship and the Social Order, London, 1969, p. 263).

In social practice this has meant that descendants of odonko (slave) women have been barred from lineage headships, however, even Fortes would admit that, with this exception, they have been able to achieve a kind of de facto equality. It is important to note that Fortes

concentrates on domestic slavery in the classless, matrilineal arena of traditional Akan society. Operating within this traditional arena, Fortes acknowledges two jural norms which allow these descendants of unfree women to achieve economic mobility and practical assimilation. These two norms are:

1. a customary law which protects the self-acquired property of an odonko, or her descendants - from alienation by her owner (or anyone else, for that matter). To the degree to which this customary law was upheld in practice, it blocked the separation of the product of slave labour from the product of free labour. This jural norm equating the rights to personal property of an odonko with those of an Asante freeman (A) blocked any tendencies toward the formation of a mode of production based on unfree labour in the traditional Akan society, and, therefore, (B) blocked the formation of a class structure based on differential access to the product of slave labour.

2. The second norm operating to assimilate descendants of odonko women into traditional Akan society was the Asante taboo against disclosing another's origins — obi nkyere obi ase — ('one doesn't disclose another's origin'). This taboo reflected a tendency toward realpolitik and expediency in Asante culture (Apter's "instrumental" ethic). It recognized the need to rewrite political histories as well as personal genealogies in order to bring them into line with traditional Akan values and folk ideology.

However, despite the de facto assimilation of large numbers of descendants of unfree women into Asante lineages, Fortes' whole analysis makes clear that the real price paid by these people was more private, personal and psychological. These were people who, in the inner sanctum of the lineage, were always threatened with being exposed for the inadequacy of their credentials, even though they could depend on lineage support in the outside world. I think that in the end, although their odonko origins may have blocked their

political mobility inside their lineages, the real "implicit stigma of slavery" which was "in theory never extinguishable" was an inner, psychological and symbolic stigma from which they could not escape so long as they remained in a traditional Akan, i.e. lineage setting. Equally important from a social perspective, however, was the fact that the operation of these jural norms reinforced the unity of the lineage in the face of any external threat. These jural norms operated to insure that, so long as they remained in traditional communities, and lived out their lives as lineage members, there would be no stronger supporters of the traditional order than descendants of unfree women.

Unfortunately I cannot be so tidy with Wilks as with Fortes. This is partly because of the extraordinary breadth and detail of his work, partly because of the nature of the historian's craft. Wilks' work is not characterized by a single, comprehensive analytical approach. However, it is possible to extract one of the main themes of his analysis by focussing on his interpretation of slavery. This theme is class.

While Fortes is concerned primarily with the traditional order, Wilks' main concern is the non-traditional elements which, in his view, characterize the Asante state. A crucial element which, according to Wilks, separates Asante state. society from traditional Akan society is its class structure. According to Wilks, slavery in Asante State society can only be understood in terms of this developing class structure. In this context, lineage membership diminished in importance, as from the early 18th century onwards it came to compete with class interests. These class interests were polarized in Kumase into the relation between its rich and its poor, including its slaves. Kumase's rich were its Asikafo class, and its poor were its Ahiafo class, into which slaves were assimilated. Summarizing Bowdich,[5] Wilks concludes that:

> "The distinction between rich and poor, between asikafo and ahiafo, was in fact one all too apparent to those who visited the capital. While, for example, polygamy was the rule among the former, the freemen among the ahiafo seldom had more than one wife and the slaves remained for the most part unmarried. While the 'higher orders' enjoyed a diet of dried fish, fowls, beef and mutton, the 'poorer classes' lived on stews made from dried deer, monkey, and animal pelts. Unlike their superiors who were 'nice and clean', the 'poorer sort of Ashantees and slaves' were neglectful of personal hygiene. Every town house, it was said, 'had its cloacae, besides the common ones for the lower orders without the town."
> (p. 143)

The role of slavery in this class society was, according to Wilks, to provide labour for state agriculture and industry:

> "Slaves were in fact of crucial importance to the Asante economy not so much for the export trade as for satisfying the labour requirements of agriculture and industry.... It seems clear, however, that while free Asante commoners were also heavily involved in food production, there were other spheres of enterprise which were abhorrent to them; in which, therefore, dependence upon unfree labour was all but total. Principal of these was gold mining, against which strong religious taboos operated."
> (pp. 176-177)

Wilks is here describing a mode of production based on slave labour.[x] This implies the suspension of the jural norm which protected the odonko's self-acquired property.

Wilks is aware of the assimilation of large numbers of descendants of slaves into the ranks of Asante freemen. As a matter of fact, he carefully documents a state policy which relocated entire villages of political hostages as late as the 1879's, for the purpose of repopulating areas devastated by war. For example, the second generation of some Ewe slave villages was already indistinguishable from its Asante neighbours. If, then, its slaves were assimilated in the next generation, where did the Asante State find replacements

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[x] I have since heard that Wilks has criticized the more far-reaching extensions of a slave mode of production to 19th century Asante by Terray, but I have not yet seen Wilks' criticisms of Terray.

to fulfil the demand for unfree labour? They could only have come from war and tribute, or from criminals and others disgraced in Asante society.

But does this ahiafo constitute a class? While on the one hand, Wilks has insisted that their primary value to their masters was as producers, (even more than as commodities - certainly after 1810), and even labels them a "proletariat", nevertheless he defines this proletariat as "the class of those having no abusua" (p. 706). This is ironic. The whole drift of Wilks' use of "class" has been to counterpose it to kinship as a force in Asante history, and yet he is compelled to define it in relation to the Akan matrilineage. Such a definition tends to deprive "class" of its usual meaning. If non-lineage members constitute the "proletariat" then do not all lineage members constitute the "bourgeoisie"? If "class" is to have any meaning so far as the history of slavery in the Asante state is concerned, it must refer to a counterposition between classes as well as the critical interests within each class. Classes compete with other classes, not with descent groups.

There was only one moment in Asante history when such conflict surfaced and threatened the stability of the Asante state. This was the decade 1810-1820 following the closure of the maritime slave trade. The growing numbers of unmarketable slaves in Kumase had become the unruly ahiafo crowd, described by Bowdich and Dupuis[7] in the late teens of the 19th century which strained the military-police resources available to Asante's rulers in the capital. Asante rulers responded to this threat by redistributing their surplus unfree population into the countryside where they became enclosed in domestic units and their utility was redefined by traditional values and norms. While I think it is possible to speak, of "class" and class interests in Kumase during this decade, 1810-1820, "class" becomes less relevant the further we move from that time and

that place. Social classes can not be abstracted from particular cultural and historical contexts: In the words of Edward Thompson:

> "Class is a social and cultural formation (often finding institutional expression) which cannot be defined abstractly, or in isolation, but only in terms of relationship with other classes; and, ultimately, the definition can only be made in the medium of time - that is, action and reaction, change and conflict. When we speak of a class we are thinking of a very loosely defined body of people who share the same categories of interests, social experiences, traditions and value-system, who have a disposition to behave as a class, to define themselves in their actions and in their consciousness in relation to other groups of people in class ways. But class itself is not a thing, it is a happening."
> (The Poverty of Theory, London, 1978, p.85

I think that any interpretation of "slavery" in Akan-Asante culture must be able to account for its function in maintaining the strength and unity of the lineage, and also to account for that moment in history when it generated class conflict. While it is true that large-scale assimilation of unfree people and their descendants took place within the traditional order, it is equally true that the presence of growing numbers of unfree people in Kumase during the decade 1810-1820 contributed to the formation of opposing class interests. Both processes, the assimilation and the differentiation of unfree 'outsiders', operated simultaneously, although the former was accelerated and intensified after 1810. The ambivalent feelings of Asante towards the descendants of those who had once been designated "captives" and chattel "slaves", and had often been segregated into separate slave villages, but who increasingly infiltrated the traditional networks of Akan kinship and marriage, is reflected in the semantic ambiguities which cloud references to Akan "slavery". Both processes - ethnic assimilation and class differentiation -- were fused in Akan thought and feeling and compressed into the term odonko.

The historical setting of Asante society tended to bring out the class character of the relation between an odonko and an Asante Owira, - superior. A traditional Akan context tended, on the other hand, to translate the odonko-owira relation into its predominantly classless idiom. In both cases an odonko began as captured or purchased property, who "belonged to" his master, and at the same time was identified as someone, already socially inferior, who originally "belonged to" one of the groups on the fringes of Asante. Both proprietory senses clung to an odonko. An odonko belonged to an individual Akan owner and also belonged to a non-Akan group. The Akan traditionally divided the world into those who "belonged to" Akan lineages and those who "stood outside" the abusua. In the different senses of "belonging to" which are encapsulated in the meanings of odonko are compressed both (1) the essentials of Akan ethnicity, of cultural Akanness (Fortes), and (2) the preconditions for social stratification and class formation in Asante history (Wilks). While, culturally, the folk images of a social inferior and an outsider were thus fused in the one word, the image which surfaced as dominant and characteristic was determined by its particular cultural and historical context.

"Belong to" in Akan society potentially has meaning in three spheres: the sphere of political-potestal authority; the sphere of economic exploitation; and the sphere of kinship. These three spheres of meaning when taken together, constitute a cultural, conceptual, symbological mechanism which enables men and women in Akan society to justify, rationalize and explain "slavery". I call this mechanism the property-authority-descent nexus. This nexus governs the interchangeability of symbols for property-authority and descent according to their matrix in different social and political contexts. This substitutability of the symbols of property-authority and descent, in turn, served to guide the descendants of odonko women as they constructed false credentials

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to free Akan ancestresses. This nexus of meaning which engineered tracing descent from a free woman by transposing a property and authority relation into a descent line was an invaluable conceptual tool in Ashanti culture. In a culture with so highly developed a sense of social form, the correct presentation of self, — having one's genealogical credentials in order, — can be terribly important. Given the psychological and jural primacy of descent in Ashanti culture, its isomorphism with meanings of property and authority allows individuals and even entire political groups to fabricate a past which is most appropriate to their present social-image. It was especially important to descendants of odonko women to be able, conceptually, to translate property rights and authority over people into descent lines which would then, a priori, connect the purchased or captured odonko ancestress to her owner's mother's lineage, (such a priori kinship, of course, creates a priori incest, providing another incentive for enforcing the tabu on revealing another's origins).

As an illustration of the way this property-authority-descent nexus worked we can observe an "old Ashanti of Mampong" explaining the relation between land tenure, military service and the dispensation of kinship by fiat, to Busia who went on to generalize about the historical movement of peoples from one division to another.

> "In the old days everyone who lived on your land was your subject, and so he accompanied you and fought in your wars. Because when he came to settle on your land, he became your kinsman." (K. Busia, The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti, Oxford, 1951, p.50)

In Busia's terms: since "his right to farm where he does is conferred by his kinship", it follows that an Asante farmer must descend matrilineally from an Asante "ancestor known to have farmed there before him." Reversing the order of premise and conclusion in Busia's formulation is to reason according to the property-authority-descent nexus. If

the jural condition confers the fact, then the existence of the fact, in itself, verifies the jural condition. So, Busia's old Ashanti concluded that,

> "Because . . . he came to settle on your land, he became your kinsman."
>
> (ibid.)

This is the sort of reasoning employed by an odonko's descendant ligitimizing his or her status as an authentic Asante to the outside world. It is also the sort of reasoning employed by household heads in Ghana during the closing years of the nineteenth century when access to capitalist markets for rubber and cocoa made it more advantageous for them to exploit their fie nipa, ('house people') economically, as producers, rather than non-economically as reproducers.

The fact that people falsified their genealogies, or even that political leaders re-wrote the histories of entire groups, is not, in itself important to me. I focus rather on the fact that these fabrications have a discernible pattern; on the fact that genealogical prevarication was structured, given shape by the very norms, values and meanings in Akan matriliny into which their users were trying to slip undetected. The spontaneity with which Asante employ their property-authority-descent nexus is a strong, albeit indirect reflex of the thoroughgoing historical assimilation of odonko outsiders into the social and cultural matrix of Akan matriliny.

An examination of the range of applications of the term odonko in each of its different contexts reveals both the unity and diversity of its meanings. This semantic unity and diversity reflects the overall historical unity of Akan culture as well as crucial differences between the nascent class mechanism of state slavery in Asante, and domestic servitude in the classless traditional Akan social order. However, locating its "slaves" in a separate social and symbolic space than that which was occupied by "authentic" Akan was fundamental to all Akan meanings of "slavery", regardless of their historical

location. There is something about one's identity as an Akan which is inherently non-odonko, just as there is something inherently non-Akan about an odonko. Since being an Akan meant descending from a free Akan ancestress, then, in order to understand the meanings of "slavery" in Akan culture, we must come to terms with the symbology and conceptualization at the root of Akan matriliny. Here we find evidence of that minimal, yet essential, template of meanings and values which has remained imprinted on what can be identified as a distinctly Akan culture through all the traumas of the 18th and 19th centuries in West Africa.

What we recognize from outside Akan culture, looking in, as continuous meanings, values and affects, are seen from inside, by an Akan looking out, as crucial elements in the formula for his or her personal and social identity, for his or her credentials as an Akan. This cultural template of Akanness provided the descendants of "slave" women in a domestic context with the key for encoding a uterine connection to free Akan ancestresses, and from there to the elaboration of public credentials as full memebers of traditional society. The same template which provided the jural, symbolic and conceptual tool employed by "slaves" in their passage to freedom — or at least to "freedom" as it was understood in traditional Akan culture — also reinforced the segregation of state slaves, by their Asante owners, from its population of freemen and freewomen. Fastening on the non-Akanness of the odonko as a foreigner or stranger facilitated the final depersonalization of state slaves as commodities for export. In other words, in the domestic-lineage context where the "slave" was more likely to be protected from outsiders when applying the criteria of Akan identity to writing his or her own public credentials, these key meanings, values and conceptualizations at the root of Akanness were used by descendants of "slaves" to achieve their more effective assimilation into the traditional social order. In the

context of independent Asante state however, their owners, rather than the slaves themselves applied the criteria of Akan identity at crucial moments to preserve their class interests by separating and isolating Asante's unfree population from its free citizens. The same cultural criteria of Akan identity tended to be applied to achieve opposite results for the "slaves" in traditional households, and for their masters in 18-19th century Asante state society.

It is from Rattray and Fortes the anthropologists, that we learn to appreciate the symbolic forms, values and folk ideology at the root of Asante cultural continuity. It is from Wilks, the historian, that we learn about its political and economic discontinuities and changes in historical direction. If we are to come to terms with the unity and comprehensiveness of Asante culture, then it is necessary to incorporate elements from both approaches into our understanding. Or else, we may one day discover two Asantes separated by the walls of academic departments.

Moreover, to depict Asante without its historical flexibility, as Fortes tends to do or without serious recongnition of the ingredients of its cultural continuity, as Wilks tends to do, is to add an ideological coloration which, while it may reflect an important outlook in precolonial Asante or in Nkrumah's Ghana, must nevertheless remain incomplete. So, as we fault Fortes for a too static and rigid a concentration on the lineage and for reifying the jural norms of Akan matriliny, we can almost hear his old traditionalist informants making their case in the thirties and forties. Fortes sometimes appears to have assimilated the ideological rationale for conservative, traditionalist values into his descriptions of Asante society. Jural norms, like the invisible blueprints of ancestral will, seem to underlie the form and meaning of social and political life. It is almost as though Fortes has employed his considerable craft, to underwrite, in the language of social anthropology, the formal ascriptive goals and values of traditional Akan-Asante society.

Wilks, on the other hand, gives us an Asante history resonant with the needs and hopes of the early days of an independent Ghana. His Asante do not represent a primitive, pauperized people, plundered and disoriented by the slave trade and world capitalism. Rather, Wilks presents us with an Asante which is a real 19th century African nation state. It comes complete with social classes and political parties, and the golden age of its achievements paves the way and sets an example for the optimistic future of a new Ghanaian nation. If Fortes, like Asante's chiefs, is sometimes too narrowly traditionalist, then Wilks, like Asante's slaves, has invented glorious ancestors to redeem a new Ghana's past and insure its future.

EDITOR'S NOTE

1. Professor A. Norman Klein Professor of Social Anthropology and Sociology at Concordia University, Canada, visited Legon briefly in May-June, 1977.

2. I. Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century: the evolution and structure of a political order. Cambridge, 1975, a full list of Wilks' works on Asante can be detained in the bibliography on Asante in the nineteenth century

3. R.S. Rattray's main works on Asante are:

   Ashanti Proverbs, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1916

   Ashanti " " " 1923

   Religion and Art in Ashanti " " 1927

   Ashanti Law and Constitution " " 1929

4. Meyer Fortes' main writings on Asante are:

   The Ashanti Survey: a preliminary report
   RHODES-LIVINGSTONE JOURNAL, 6, 1948

   Time and Social Structure: an Ashanti case study in M. Fortes ed.
   SOCIAL STRUCTURE: STUDIES PRESENTED TO A.A. RADCLIFFE-BROWN, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1948.

   The "submerged descent line" in Ashanti in I. Schapera ed.
   STUDIES IN KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE, occasional papers of the Royal Anthropological Institute, No.16, London, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1963.

   The Ashanti State and Citizenship,
   The lineage in Ashanti,
   Ashanti patrilateral kinship and its values, Chs. IX - XI, in
   KINSHIP AND THE SOCIAL ORDER
   The Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures, 1963 Adline Publishing Company, Chicago, 1969.

5. T.E. Bowdich, Mission From Cape Coast to Ashantee: London, 1819.

6. See E. Terray, La Captivité dans le royaume abron du Gyaman in Lesclavage en Afrique François Maspera, 1975.

7. J. Dupuis, Journal of a Residence in Ashantee, London, 1824.

SPATIAL INTERACTION OF MARKETS IN THE SHAI AREA

by

Elizabeth A. Ardayfio*

Introduction

The increasing awareness of the role of markets in development has currently generated considerable interest in empirical studies on trade and markets in Ghana and other developing countries in Africa. In this connection the works of Berry[1], McKin[2] and Bromley[3] could be cited, but of special significance to this study are those of Scott,[4] McKin,[5] Hill and Smith[6] which concern interaction of markets in rural areas. Scott[7], for example, analyses the spatial structure of rural markets, and evaluates market periodicity in the context of the exchange system in which all market users participate. He uses farmer and trader visitation patterns to bring out the differential attractiveness of rural markets. McKin[8] also demonstrates the spatial and temporal distribution of markets including the identification of a hierarchy of markets and a discussion of movements of goods and services which link these markets into a system. Hill and Smith[9] have also shown that there is a uniform spacing between markets meeting on the same day, but the distance between markets on the same day is greater than adjacent markets with different periodic market days. This paper attempts to demonstrate the extent to which the findings of these authors are applicable to the exchange system in the Shai Area.

Objectives of the Study:

Three main objectives of the study can be distinguished. The first is to analyse both inter- and intra-regional trade patterns. The second is to determine the movements of traders, and their wares, and even more significantly the spatial and temporal arrangements of the markets. The final objective is to ascertain the periodicity of markets, and to investigate how such factors as improved transportation, increased

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urbanisation and higher purchasing power have led to the transformation of the system since the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Research Methodology:

Two major sources - secondary and primary sources - were utilised for the acquisition of data. The former consisted of both unpublished and published books, articles and governmental reports on trade and markets. Cartographic evidence from Ordnance Survey maps, and chieftaincy lands were used where available. Finally, manuscripts such as Colonial quarterly reports on the Prampram and Akwapim Districts were also utilised. The sources just mentioned were particularly useful for the determination of the nature of local, inter- and intra-regional trade in the Shai area.

The primary source - involved the administration of interview schedules, and constituted the main source of data for the study. The field interviews were carried out in the five Shai villages of Dodowa, Ayikuma, Agoneda, Doryumu and Kodiabe during the summer of 1975. The first part of the field data collection was an intensive reconnaissance survey in the areas where the interviews were to take place. This preliminary survey promoted the establishment of contacts with chiefs, family heads, administrators, traders, individual consumers and producers in the project area. Two different schedules were developed for the survey. The first was designed to cover past economic activities of the people, and was therefore administered to traders who are above fifty years old. The second and the more important covered the present economic activities and were administered in both the markets and individual households. The purpose of the market survey was to reach the traders who visited the Shai area from the regions, while the household one was to obtain information from people who traded in their homes or along the road as well as those who were involved in other means of livelihood apart from trading. In all 302 people were interviewed. This number excluded long unstructured interviews with some of the old and more articulate men and women in the Shai area who are no longer in

any active economic employment but who, as it were, had some knowledge of both past and current patterns of trade in the area.

Inter- and Intra-Regional Trade

Local trade was as old as the Shai towns themselves,[10] but of more importance was the inter-regional trade in the Shai-Akwapim regions which was carried out through a regular market complex centred on Dodowa between 1790 and 1920.

The Shai areas produced mostly agricultural products which can be seen in the farms and plantations located all around the settlements. The slopes of the ridge were clothed with palm, while the food crops were cultivated on a more level land along the Accra-Dodowa Road. Most of the oil palm (Elaeis Guineansis) grew wild and were tended by the farmers. The food crops grown included types of yam (the Dioscorea species), corn (Zea Mays), ocro (Hibiscus osculentis), groundnuts (Arachis hypogia), cassava (Manihot utilissima) and plantain (Musa sapientum var paradisiasos). Though some of these food crops were for domestic consumption, the greater part entered into the local trade. Retailing of oil palm was done mostly by the Shai, but a few Krobo, Ada, Akwapim and Ewe were also involved. Pottery[11] was a speciality of the Shai and was produced at Agoneda, Doryumu, Kodiabe and Ayikuma. Fish, salt, shallots (a speciality of the Keta District) moved in from the southern coast to the interior, and products like plantain, rubber, yam, kola-nuts and monkey skins came in from the interior through Dodowa to the south, particularly to Accra and Prampram.

Investigations show that at least three categories of people were involved in the horizontal exchange mechanism. These were the farmer, local traders and itinerant traders. The local traders were mainly involved in the movement of locally grown foodstuffs from rural to nearby urban areas or from one rural area to another. Most of these traders operate near their home areas as arbitragers. Their strategy is to visit bulking markets, but cheaply and retail their purchases to small holders in other sections of the same market. In this system

profit margins are low, and commodities are seldom transported from one retail market to the other. The main objective of this practice is to sell quickly commodities that have been bought. The farmers are involved in the local trade by selling their own farm produce and in buying in return other commodities for resale in other villages. The local traders, on the other hand, are interested in trading directly with the intention of buying and reselling. In this trade mechanism, selling may take place daily or until such a time that the commodity is exhausted. This mechanism can be contrasted with the vertical trade system where people converge to buy at regular intervals. Both retailing and bulking are carried on as well, but bulking plays a major central function in the integrated regional market system.

Periodicity of Markets (1920-1948)

The settlements studied in the Shai areas have specific market days, where the dominant economic function is bulking and distribution of farm produce and local food processing products.[12] Thus from the point of view of functional organization, periodic markets are one of the most significant features of the operation of the market place sub-systems.[13] An economic theory on periodic markets was elaborated by Stine.[14] Stine's theory relied heavily on Christaller's[15] Central Place Theory's concepts of minimum and maximum range of a good service: the minimum range is defined as the "minimum amount of consumption of the central good needed to pay for the production or offering of the central good", while the maximum range refers to the "farthest distance the dispersed population is willing to go in order to buy a good offered at a place". Usually the maximum range is larger than the minimum range (thus enabling retail establishment to be locationally fixed), but where the minimum range exceeds the maximum, the establishment must become mobile (that is, the market must occur periodically) in order to survive. This theory was tested, basing the analysis on field work, interviews and documentary evidence. Figure 1 shows Dodowa as a market centre with its trade linkages in the Shai-Akwapim area around 1920. The market areas were delimited on the basis of the nearby settlements which depended on Dodowa for trade. The pattern follows Christaller's theory of central

places. The idea of market rings suggests that sellers and buyers move between markets on a weekly basis and usually might visit markets five days in seven, often walking up to fifty miles to exchange extremely low profit commodities. It has been suggested that these movements are more often the result of a social need of sellers, rather than a desire for profit. However, the behaviour patterns of buyers and sellers in the Shai-Akwapim markets show a remarkable departure from this view as is demonstrated in the rest of this section.

All the markets were founded either on palm-oil or cocoa trade in the Shai-Akwapim area.[16] These markets were favoured by their accessibility to other settlements in the region which promoted them as trade centres providing goods and services to other neighbouring settlements. The number of markets visited was small and they were usually bulking markets, though some retailing was carried on as well. The market days were arranged in such a way that the trader could visit other markets during the week; and the distance travelled by a given trader represents the degree to which he and the markets in which he participated were integrated into a regional or national economic system. The market days of Dodowa were Mondays and Thursdays, those of Agomeda were Tuesdays and Fridays and of Ayikuma Wednesdays and Saturdays. Figure 1 shows the market days of other regional market areas. The major markets in the Akwapim areas meet on different days so that a trader can visit as many as three markets in a week. The market days at Adawso were Tuesdays and Fridays, whilst those at Mangoase were Wednesdays and Saturdays. Bulky goods like cocoa and palm products were the most important commodities, and were sent to the nearest markets for bulking. Less bulky commodities like textiles and perishable items like fish were taken from one market to another. Similar products were retailed and bulked in most of the markets. Foodstuffs like yam, plantain, cocoyam, cassava and vegetables were sold in all the markets, while salt and fish were bulked by traders from Ada, Tema, Kpone, Ningo and Labadi. Dodowa and Ayikuma in particular specialised in palm products. Adawso, Awukugua, Mangoase and Tinkong, on the other hand, specialised in cocoa, though Adawso was the most out-

standing cocoa market in the Akwapim area during the early years of cocoa cultivation in the country. The cocoa and palm products were purchased in these markets by Akwapim and Fante middlemen, who transported them to the ports of Accra, Prampram or Kpong for shipment to Europe.

It is clear from the above discussion that the markets originated as commercial centres, though they undoubtedly had social functions as well. These markets did not offer services to only the inhabitants of the particular markets in which they were located, but to those of the surrounding villages and towns as well. The purchasing power of these settlements was such that there was no need for markets to meet daily. Where a trader had surplus commodities after the market day she walked to the next nearest market in the region the following day in order to dispose of those items. Though Christaller theorized that people had to walk up to eighty kilometres to the market or service centres in order to satisfy their requirements, in the study area people walked shorter distances. The study shows that traders walked up to sixteen kilometres within the market ring to sell, transporting their commodities mainly by head-poterage. Thus, a trader from Dodowa could easily trade between Dodowa, Ayikuma and Larteh, whilst a trader from Larteh could also trade at Dodowa and Awukugua.

The Spatial Organization of the Market System Today

The markets that have just been discussed were soon to experience profound changes in structure and organization due to economic upheavals that took place in the southern part of the country during the latter part of the twentieth century. In Figure 1 the foot-paths linking the various markets are demonstrated. These foot-paths played a significant role in the development of the various markets in the Shai-Akwapim area by linking all the market centres. However, when means of communication were improved and transportation became cheaper the markets at Dodowa and Ayikuma gradually lost a greater part of their tributary areas to centres which were better supplied with transportation lines. The cocoa

station at Mampong, in the Dodowa tributary area, was moved to Adawso from where the cocoa was transported to Mangoase and then sent by rail to Accra. Mangoase grew as a temporary terminus of the Accra-Kumasi railway which came to a standstill during the First World War in 1914. This gave Mangoase significance as the main outlet of cocoa in the Akwapim Region till after 1918 when the line was continued to Koforidua, which was also a major cocoa producing area. Dodowa and Ayikuma markets were the first to diminish in importance. When decline set in, many traders turned their attention to Mangoase, Adawso and Awukugua. These markets continued to flourish until about 1929 when the unfortunate capsid menace devastated the cocoa farms in Akwapim. This marked the end of the cocoa trade, and the importance of the markets in the Akwapim Region.

The inter-regional market system, as it exists today, has been shown in Figure 2. The market areas have shrunk considerably in size due to the collapse of the palm oil and cocoa industries. The markets are still in function; some have retained their functions as periodic markets, though on a less important scale, whilst others have ceased to function as markets. An example of such a market is that at Awukugua, which has collapsed almost entirely. The little that remained of it has been moved to Abiriw, as shown on the map.

Periodicity of the Market System Today

The periodic markets in the Shai area are much firmly localised and smaller in extent than they used to be during the second decade of the twentieth century. The periodic market days are still maintained and the Shai as well as the Akwapim regions experience a three-day market week. Figure 2 based on field work conducted during the summer of 1975 illustrates the periodic markets in the Shai area and their relationships to other markets in the Akwapim area. The evidence reveals the existence of market places rotating market meetings among a group of markets in such a way that one can attract a sufficient number of people to justify holding a market. The emergent pattern further shows that many

people from distant villages have the opportunity to attend markets in the bigger villages. The markets are spatially arranged in such a way that markets meeting on the same day are normally not less than 16 km. apart. This is true of Dodowa and Abiriw, on the one hand, and Agomeda and Larteh on the other hand (Figure 2). Thus, there is a uniform spacing between markets meeting on same days in the Shai and Akwapim Ridge towns. On the other hand, the distance between markets meeting on the same day is greater than adjacent markets with different periodic market days. Ayikuma, whose market day is Wednesday is only 8 km. away from Dodowa whose market day is Monday. There are no markets in the Shai area which hold markets on the same day except Doryumu and Agomeda whose market days fall on Tuesday and Friday. It must, however, be pointed out that, according to the residents of Doryumu, the settlement has no market day. There is a daily market though there is greater attendance on Tuesday and Friday. Secondly, the markets in the Akwapim area meet on days equivalent to the Shai market days. Thus, the market days of Dodowa - Monday and Thursday - coincide with those of Abiriw; Agomeda and Larteh meet on Tuesday and Friday whilst Ayikuma and Mangoase hold markets on Wednesday and Saturday. It is, therefore, clear that two distinct market cycles or rings exist - one in the Shai area and the other in the Akwapim area, and they are so arranged that the local trader can visit both Shai and Akwapim markets during the same market cycle period. The popular Akwapim markets visited by the Shai are Larteh and Mangoase. The choice of Larteh is obvious. It is nearer to the Shai area - being only 11.5 kilometres from Ayikuma, and 18 kilometres from Dodowa. Normally traders from Dodowa, who sell perishable commodities such as smoked fish and fresh vegetables, sell at Dodowa on Monday, visit Larteh on Tuesday, and trade on Wednesday. They go back to the Dodowa market with a second market day on Thursday. Those who tend to visit Mangoase are the foodstuff (cassava, plantain) dealers who are attracted by the greater economic opportunities of a bigger market.

An important aspect of trading in these periodic markets is the presence of farmer-sellers and farmer-traders who participate primarily in a horizontal system. The farmer-seller, especially foodcrop farmers, usually sell wholesale to either local or long-distance traders who, in turn, retail their purchases in a regional market like Accra. The farmer-traders, on the other hand, bring their vegetables or foodcrops to the market to retail and in return buy other goods to be resold in other villages like Doryumu or Kodiabe on daily basis.

The periodic market most visited by Dodowa traders is Dodowa. All the 103 traders interviewed in the town visit the Dodowa market as well as other Shai markets except 1% who claim that they do not visit any other markets besides Dodowa. The most important market visited by traders from Dodowa is Ayikuma which is visited by 33.4%. The next in order of importance is Larteh 22.4%, Somanya 19.8%. Agomenya 12.3%, Mangoase 9.1% and Frankadua 2%. The most popular markets visited by traders from Kodiabe and Doryumu are Ayikuma and Agomeda. The reason for the choice can be partly attributed to the proximity of Ayikuma and partly to its accessibility from these two settlements. The field survey, indeed, supports this view. According to the survey, 76% of the traders prefer to visit nearby markets in the Shai area owing to transportation problems; 54% of them get to the market by foot, whilst 10% prefer to visit markets with more participants. The rest tend to visit markets where they have regular customers, and also bigger service centres like Accra and Koforidua.

Commodity Flow

The commodities for trade offer an interesting topic for discussion since limited farming is done in the Shai area itself. Thus, the movement of local farm produce in the Shai area into the markets is not a simple movement of men and women from their farms.

The majority of the Shai people are traders (68%), and only 14.96% earn their living by farming (Table 1). The usual practice, therefore, is for the women traders to act as a first-level intermediary - they buy goods from a number of farmers in order to sell at the markets, and in some cases they even buy from other women who have purchased the commodities from farmers.

Table 1

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AMONG THE SHAI

Settlement	Sample Size	Trade %	Farm %	Pottery %	Others %	Unemployed %
Dodowa	155	66.45	10.96	1.93	22.59	3.22
Agomeda	34	79.41	8.82	0.00	11.77	0.00
Ayikuma	35	65.71	11.41	0.00	22.88	5.71
Kodiabe	42	64.28	21.42	2.38	11.92	2.38
Doryumu	36	63.88	22.22	2.77	11.13	0.00

Most of the farmers prefer selling to non-relatives in order to get better selling prices for their goods; in actual fact, most of the farmers interviewed sell their farm produce to the local traders and visiting traders on periodic market days.

Although the various types of the marketable products from the neighbouring settlements move to the Dodowa market without any definite pattern, there is however, a certain degree of specialisation from the feeder areas as Table 2 shows.

The most outstanding specialization is shallots from the Keta district, whilst smoked fish enters the market from the coastal setttlements of Ada, Prampram, Tema and Akuse along the Volta River. Unlike other periodic markets where distant traders arrive on the eve of market day, the traders to the Shai area, especially those from Keta and

Table 2

FLOW OF COMMODITIES TO THE DODOWA MARKET

Commodity	Feeder Settlement	Distance from Dodowa (in km.)
Corn	Asesewa	83
	Frankadua	68
Cassava, Plantain	Asesewa	83
	Odumase	37
Shallots	Ada	97
	Keta	163
Fish	Akuse	49
	Ada	97
	Accra	40
	Prampram	31
	Tema	43
Pepper, Tomatoes	Somanya	32
	Akuse	49

Ada, leave at dawn to get to the market by 8.00 a.m. These are the traders who sell their commodity in bulk to local traders in order to return to their base the same day. The present movement of traders shows clearly that now agricultural products move for far greater distances than they used to during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century. This change is attributed to considerable improvement in vehicular and rail transportation which makes for greater mobility so that people can take their products over longer distances, instead of transporting their commodities by head-porterage for about 16 kilometres to get to the market. The improvement in transportation and the growing importance of foodcrop markets mainly account for the shrinkage of the market cycles (compare Figures 1 and 2). Whereas formerly traders were compelled to visit the nearest market because of the transport situation, now traders have a wider choice of markets.

The local products assembled in the markets in the area of study move in various directions, but three directions are outstanding. The first movement identified in the area is the flow of goods to the surrounding settlements in the ring. Women, who visit the market with the intention to sell, hardly leave the market without buying something, for the market serves as their local shop where they can buy their food and some imported material. Secondly, there is the movement of goods from one market ring to the other. Thirdly, there is a movement of goods, especially vegetables like tomatoes, pepper and garden eggs out of the markets to the nearby towns and other urban areas.

The other movement of goods is that of imported goods, which are not available in the immediate locality of the market, but come in from Accra. The scale of trading in this particular type of commodity is very small, but it serves a very important function by bringing within reach of the rural population such imported goods as textile, aluminium ware, milk, soap and sugar. As has already been pointed out, traders who sell such items usually visit several markets within the ring before returning to their base to replenish their stock.

In discussing commodity flow, one must not overlook the middlemen whose activities considerably aid the movement of goods to the Shai markets. In the Dodowa market, the middlemen who are mainly Ga-Dangbe and Akwapim, operate in seven centres, which form the source of the products they assemble on periodic market days. Foodstuffs like palm-nuts, cassava, garden eggs and pineapples are brought from Ashiaman and Kurabor, fish from Ada, Tema, Ningo and Accra, and vegetables from Larteh. In the other Shai markets, it seems middlemen from the same centres operate, though in Kodiabe additional centres are involved. Middlemen purchase foodstuffs and vegetables from Suhum, Adawso and Mangoase as well. These middlemen are mainly interested in bulking and may not buy anything from the market for re-sale. On the other hand, there are some middlemen who specialize in earthenware, and, therefore, purchase pottery in bulk, especially at Agoneda, Kodiabe and Doryumu for bulk reselling in other markets like Tema and Ashiaman

Generation of economic activity

It is obvious that the Shai area is largely inhabited by the Shai people. The sample population of 302 interviewed in the Shai settlements shows that apart from Kodiabe where the greater proportion (42%) are Ningo, the other four settlements have a predominant Shai population. In Dodowa, 55% of the inhabitants are Shai, 9% Ningo, 6% Ada, 6% Krobo while other tribes including Ga and Akwapim comprise 24% of the population. Doryumu has a Shai population of 75%, Agomeda has 79% Shai, and Ayikuma has by far the largest Shai population of 97%. The majority of these people are traders as indicated in Table 1. In spite of the large percentage of traders there are inadequate incentives for the encouragement and expansion of trade in the area, hence the income of the Shai trader is prohibitively low (see Table 3). The average foodstuff trader in Dodowa earns about ¢36.00 per month; the average for the traders in the other periodic markets are lower still. Agomeda traders make on the average ¢25.60 per month whilst those in Ayikuma make ¢23.00 per month. Some traders earn as low as ¢8.00 per month. Compared with the income of ¢60.00 per month for the lowest paid labourer in the country, the Shai foodcrop trader is apparently very poor. Among the food-crop traders the palm-nut sellers could be singled out as high income earners. Most of them make about ¢100.00 per month in the Agomeda market. Perhaps the most profitable item of trade is earthenware,[16] which is locally manufactured and can be regarded as a speciality of the area, particularly in Kodiabe and Doryumu. Most of the pots are sold in bulk to middlemen from Tema, Somanya and Ashiaman. The average earning of the earthenware manufacturer in the two towns is ¢120.00 per month, though most of them earn up to ¢200.00 per month. In Kodiabe there are a few cattle dealers who make about ¢300.00 on a cow.

A picture, thus, emerges of the Shai trader with a low income and poor profit margin. This can be attributed to several factors, one of which is the organization of trade itself (see Table 4). Though the majority of traders do not employ any assistants, about one-third of the

Table 3

ECONOMIC PATTERNS AND PRODUCTIVITY IN THE SHAI AREA

Occupation	Number of Traders Employed					Average Net Return (Cedi/Month)				
	Dodowa	Agomeda	Ayikuma	Kodiabe	Doryumu	Dodowa	Agomeda	Ayikuma	Kodiabe	Doryumu
Wholesale Trader	7	1	3	1	0	60.21	53.61	4.11	23.45	0
Foodstuff Retailer										
Cassava Plantain	35	11	12	13	7	36.00	25.6	23.00	21.50	16.00
Vegetable Retailer										
Palmnuts Garden Eggs Tomatoes Pepper	32	8	9	16	8	28.50	62.00	23.20	8.00	12.00
Fish	16	6	3	4	1	20.00	90.00	32.40	12.65	12.00
Pottery	7	3	4	1	2	85.60	74.00	70.00	120.00	120.00
Food Sellers*	6	2	2	1	3	35.00	40.00	33.00	33.40	36.00
Wine and Spirit	9	-	-	2	-	56.00	-	-	25.40	-
Cattle	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	300.00	-

*Food-sellers comprise those engaged in selling food items like bread, beans and gari, fried plantain and kenkey.

Table 4

ORGANIZATION OF TRADE BY HOUSEHOLDS

No. of workers in trade	Dodowa		Agomeda		Ayikuma		Kodiabe		Doryumu	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No. of workers	82	52.90	28	82.35	24	68.57	22	52.38	26	72.22
1-2	44	28.38	3	8.82	8	22.85	11	26.19	5	13.88
3-4	14	9.03	3	8.82	1	2.85	4	9.52	1	2.77
5-6	2	1.29	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	2.38	0	0.00
No response	13	8.38	0	0.00	2	5.71	4	9.52	4.	11.11
Household help in trade	55	35.48	6	17.64	9	25.7	13	30.95	5	13.55
No. of workers paid	55	35.48	6	17.64	9	25.7	13	30.95	5	13.50

Table 5

SPECIALITY OF MIDDLEMEN IN TRADE

Trade Item	Dodowa		Agomeda		Ayikuma		Kodiabe		Doryumu	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Foodstuffs	22	14.19	3	8.82	2	5.71	0	0.00	1	2.77
Pottery	1	0.64	4	11.76	2	5.71	0	0.00	1	2.77
Fish	6	3.87	2	5.88	1	2.85	1	2.38	0	0.00
No specialization	126	70.30	25	73.54	30	85.73	41	97.62	34	94.00
Total	155	100.00	34	100.00	35	100.00	42	100.00	36	100.00

traders in Dodowa and Kodiabe get assistance from some members of their households, usually daughters or nieces. In most areas in Ghana, such household assistants do not receive any regular remuneration, but our research findings clearly reveal that all such assistants in Shai are paid as Table 4 shows. This practice reduces the already low profit margin of the trader. Another factor which further cuts down the profit of the trader is the operations of middlemen who specialise in food-stuffs, pottery and fish. The middlemen usually offer low prices for these commodities because they buy in bulk in order to resell in other markets and must be certain of a reasonable profit margin after reselling. Indeed, the middlemen usually make more profits than the farmer traders and seller traders. Yes, the traders do not strongly object to the activities of the middlemen. The latter assure the trader of her income and quick return especially where commodities with high perishability rate like tomatoes and fish are concerned. They also give the distant trader enough time to return to her destination by the afternoon. As Table 5 shows, most of the middlemen do not specialise in particular commodities, except a few who operate mostly in Dodowa, Agomeda and Ayikuma. In Dodowa, most of the middlemen are dealers in foodstuff and fish, whilst those in Agomeda handle more of pottery.

The low income of the Shai trader thus results in low savings and low capital formation, and because there is very little capital for investment in the expansion of agriculture or for increasing and extending her trading activities, the Shai remain poor. Those interviewed isolated four major problems which they think may have contributed to the plight of the traders. Availability of capital was identified as the major obstacle in their economic pursuits. Those who suffer most in this case are the farmer traders involved in oil-palm and cassava production who need to expand their farms or plantations. This is so because the farmer trader divides his capital so he operates at low levels in either way. Added to the financial problem is the difficulty of acquiring land for farming purposes. A third problem of the trader is transportation difficulties. Traders complain of high costs of transport which, in turn, reduces their profit margin. There is also

the problem of low purchasing power among the local population. Indeed, the last problem is a contributory factor in encouraging the periodic market cycle in the area. Owing to low sales in the study area, most of the traders prefer visiting other bigger and competing market centres like Accra, Tema and Ashiaman where purchasing power is much higher. Most of the Shai towns have thus been losing both traders and buyers to these bigger trading centres.

Conclusion

The study has examined spatial interaction of markets, which can significantly be traced back to the beginning of the oil palm industry centres on Dodowa during the nineteenth century.[16] Both horizontal and vertical exchange systems were consequently developed with increasing emphasis on vertical trade, which, indeed, became the economic basis of the Shai area. The periodic market cycle is maintained, but improved transportation, increased urbanization and its associated higher purchasing power, have led to the transformation of the system since the second decade of the twentieth century. The trade system, as it survives today, exhibits a periodic market system with a three-day market cycle. Markets meeting on the same day are uniformly distributed spatially. The average separately distance markets meeting on the same day is 16 km., though the distance between adjacent markets meetion on different days is shorter. The Monday Market of Dodowa is 8 km. away from the Wednesday Ayikuma market, whilst the Tuesday Larteh market is only 4.8 kilometres from the Ayikuma market. The present periodic market system is not enough in achieving effective economic goals among the rural folks, who suffer poverty owing to low productivity and incomes and lack of adequate incentives for diversification in their rural economies. The consequence is out-migration of the able-bodied men in search of better jobs elsewhere - in the cities and in the farming regions. Perhaps with further research into availability and utilization of local resources, the economic base of the area will not only be broadened, but will be strengthened to meet the increasing needs of the exchange system, which involves 60 per cent of the Shai population and is the basic means of livelihood.

Policy Recommendations

In the light of the above discussions, it has been necessary to make some policy recommendations.

The findings clearly reveal that there is need to improve and broaden the economic base of the Shai area. The improvements should be based on existing economic activities, which comprise trading, farming and the manufacture of earthenware. Trading is concentrated on food-crops such as cassava, garden eggs, pepper and tomatoes, most of which come from the outlying regions to the Shai area for marketing. The quantity originating from the Shai area itself accounts for not more than 2% of the foodstuffs marketed in the area. It is believed that if cultivation of these foodcrops were improved and expanded, settlements like Dodowa and Ayikuma could produce enough cassava and vegetables for their respective markets and even have a surplus for the urban markets, for example, Accra, which is just over thirty kilometres from Dodowa. In this connection the Food Distribution Corporation could perform an essential role by establishing collecting centres in the area, and helping with the marketing of the foodcrops. With the expansion of agriculture, particularly, the production of cassava, a gari processing plant could be established for the large-scale production of this food item which is a staple throughout the country. Starch and glucose could also be produced from the cassava. These developments would not only lead to increased productivity and supply, but also open up more job opportunities for the men who have been migrating to urban centres owing to the lack of employment opportunities in the area. The manufacture of earthenware at the moment is manual, but if this could be semi-mechanized to increase production and introduce more varieties of earthenware such as glazed mugs, plates, soup bowls and flower vases

the earthenware industry would be revolutionised and at the same time attract markets throughout the country and even abroad, thus helping to raise the low incomes of the majority of the people in the Shai area. Though it would seem over-ambitious to anticipate the development of the potteries in Staffordshire of England, developments along such lines would go a long way to transform the economy of the area.

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"SOME REFLECTIONS ON RESTUDYING THE NCHUMURU OF KRACHI DISTRICT"

By

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After a ten years' absence from their area, I have just completed a follow-up study of Stress and Social Change amongst the Nchumuru people of Krachi District, in the Volta Region - a study with a special focus on assessing the long-term consequences of the Volta River Project in that area. In this brief article, I should like to share with the reader some comments and reflections on the personal impact I experienced from engaging in such a restudy, and from doing so after such a long period of time. The restudy was carried out from the beginning of February to the middle of July, 1979, and, since most of the following was written before I left Ghana, obviously there has not yet been time for the analysis and proper digestion of the mass of data which has been collected. Thus, I am concerned here with reporting on some personal reflections and feelings, not with presenting a detailed, professional, less-subjective and structural analysis - the latter, book-length presentation will follow in due course. The following is intended as a small contribution to the welcome, recent trend within Social Anthropology, whereby fieldworkers now do publish revelations about the art and artfulness by which their "hard" data and analyses have been generated; appropriate discretion prevails on a few points, for now.

For many years, I have been concerned with that sub-field of Social Anthropology known as "Psychiatric Anthropology", with research and theory about Psycho-Social Stress in particular: i.e., with how individuals and groups perceive, define, and cope with endogenous and exogenous stressors - "demands for adaptation" which tax the coping resources of physiological, psychological and social systems. I have argued that it is necessary for social scientists to understand "Stress" in order to

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better understand processes and outcomes of systematic change, and in order to develop an adequate theory of social change; a detailed presentation of my own Stress model is given elsewhere (Lumsden, 1975A). The empirical case-study of stress and change that I have been connected with since 1967 is that provided by Ghana's Volta Resettlement Project; in order to properly assess the complex impact and reverberations of this Project, my longitudinal study has been focussed on the history, ethnography and coping responses of one particular ethnic group, the Nchumuru or N'Ch mb l . Part of this ethnic group has been faced with the necessity to cope, both in the short- and in the long-term, with such Volta Project "demands for adaptation" as: (a) forced- or self-resettlement; (b) the formation of a large lake nearby; (c) new types of housing; (d) new neighbours, and an "increase in social scale"; (e) loss of farmland, as well as other economic and administrative constraints, and (f) a poorly conceived and executed compensation programme.

The historical background and the "base-line" ethnographic data for this study are presented in my 1974 Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (Lumsden, 1974; see also 1973, 1975B) - a thesis which must be revised and expanded in the light of later information; clearly, such a study has a built-in need for the carrying-out of several restudies, at set intervals (say, every 5 or 10 years) over time - as Colson and Scudder have done for the Kariba Dam Project in Zambia. Before outlining the personal impact of the 1979 restudy, it is necessary first to provide the reader with a sketch - a very incomplete one - of Nchumuru history and social organization.

I - Comments on Nchumuru History and Ethnicity:

The Nchumuru are a small, Guan-speaking ethnic group whose members today are largely located on their lands in neighbouring parts of three of Ghana's Regions: i.e., in Krachi District in the Volta Region, in Eastern Gonja District of the Northern Region, and in the Yeji-Atebubu-Kwame Danso-Bassa triangle of the Brong-Ahafo Region; in addition, small but organized clusters of migrant Nchumuru work in such urban centres as Accra and Tamale. Most Nchumuru are yam farmers and petty-traders, with

resource for the achievement of situational, tactical or strategical advantage or adaptation. The Nchumuru of today "know" who they are and who they are not, know which villages are theirs and which (e.g., Prang, Nkonya-Ntshumuru) are not - there is an ethnic boundary, a semi-permeable one and one with its own history.

Along with their "Guan" past, Nchumuru history and social organization reflect close ties with the history of such peoples as the Gonja, the Bassa, and, not least, the Dwaben Asante (see Lumsden, 1974; chapter 3). In addition to local migrations, conflicts (e.g., Asante conquest, Gonja attack) and other inter-ethnic "bargaining" situations, present-day Nchumuru social organization also reflects the Colonial period's impact; after all, a significant part of Nchumuru territory is located between what became two market-places of major concern to rival Colonial powers, the famous markets of Salaga and Kete. British and German administrative decisions, the post-Colonial State's retention and modification of District boundaries, and, of course, the creative coping responses of the Nchumuru membership to a host of such historical stresses, are among the factors which have produced present-day Nchumuru "ethnicity", and their fascinating social organization - which I will now outline.

II - How the Nchumuru are Organized:

(1) Political Hierarchy, and Patrilineal Descent: This matter is dealt with from the top on down.

(1a) As a result of historical and administrative vicissitudes, there are three separate Paramount Chiefs who are recognized and functioning for the present-day Nchumuru ethnic group - one in each of the three Regions mentioned. These Chiefs are:

(i) the NangyuroWura, located at the small and undistinguished village of Nangyuro in the Northern Region; an important symbol and a court-of-appeal for Krachi District (V.R.) Nchumuru, he has the fullest legal rights with respect to the Eastern Gonja District (N.R.) ones;

(ii) the BegyansoWura, associated with the town of Begyanso but now often residing at the more accessible market town of Chinderi, is Paramount for the Krachi District.Nchumuru. His "Divisional Chiefs" are located at the towns of Banda-Bunwueso, Papatia, Borae No.2, and Akaniem - that Begyanso's head was a "Chief" (as compared to Akaniem's being but a "village headman") was noted by Captain Lonsdale in his well-known 1882 report. A legal, traditional "State Council" does not yet exist for these Nchumuru.

(iii) the CherepoHene or CherepoWura, the Paramount for the Cherepo people in Brong-Ahafo Region, who claim themselves to be, and are recognized by the others as being, Nchumuru. I was not sufficiently aware of their existence when I came to write my Thesis. This chief now is located in a fine "palace" in the Yeji Resettlement town.

(1b) The whole ethnic group is structured into seven Nsur (Kasur, sing.) or phratries; in alphabetical order these are: Banda, Begyanso, Chachiae, Ch nki, Kp nt nae, Su wae, and Cherepo's Aduana. Each phratry has its own special name, a male Chief (Su wae currently has two, one in both the V.R. and N.R.), and named Stool (whose name most members do not know); each consists not of clans, but of a number of related or allegedly-related villages, each of these having its own male head and protective deity. Of course, villages are important units of political and social action; but, they are not monolithic units.

(1c) The "essential core" of each village consists of one or more patri-clans (Mbuno), each with its special name, its male head, its own residential area, its "secrets" and properties (land, streams, etc.). Inheritance, by homogeneous transmission (male to next oldest male, female to female), occurs within the Kabuno, and can over-ride (and so helps to obviate) any patrilineal sub-unit or lineage that may form or may begin to become salient within the Kabuno. It is important to note that the Kabuno is not an exogamous unit. Along with one's village identification, one's Kabuno is the single most salient, talked about and omnipresent social unit. By a series of structural mechanisms (such as: the use of a Hawaiian type "kinship" terminology, in most cases, each Kabuno's possession of but one Ancestors' Shrine, etc.), the

fishing, condiment-growing, beer-making, goat-, sheep- and pig-rearing, etc., as other sources of income; they too suffer from Ghana's poor econonic condition.

The available archaeological evidence shows that a group of the Nchumuru have lived in the Begyamso area of Krachi District for some 300 or 400 years (thus being there before the "Krachi Lartehs" arrived); before that time, this group's ancestors (and perhaps at the same time, or somewhat later, the ancestors of the Cherepo-Nchumuru, and others) lived in the Brong-Ahafo "triangle" noted above, an area still in use today as part of the Nchumuru "heartland". Of course, the "ultimate" origins of the Nchumuru are tied up with the origins of the Guan-speaking peoples as a whole - a matter of some controversy. The Nchumuru themselves exhibit a diversity of opinion on their "ultimate" origins: the Cherepo and some of the other Nchumuru speak of the Larteh area as being their source; others point to "Banda Wala" in western Ghana, or to Ancient Ghana; still others have created a migration story to reconcile all the preceding versions in one convenient account; some elders just do not know of an "ultimate" origin, or espouse an auto-ochthonous, "out-of-the-ground" origin near where they now live.

Such responses to scholarly concern about "migrations" must not be allowed to obscure a very important point, and that is the fact that some evidence exists to prove that the Nchumuru have spent an impressively long time period in Krachi District and the Brong-Ahafo "triangle" - there have been several centuries of <u>in situ</u> development. Another group left this "triangle' and spent over 150 years in Dahomey, before returning. Furthermore, it must be clearly understood that "ethnic identity" is itself a historical and changing phenomenon; for no ethnic group anywhere should we expect to find all its present members stemming from only one (biological, geographical, cultural) origin in actuality; in addition, we already understand that "oral traditions" are not "objective" records of movements, chronologies or land claims, but rather are political documents for use in contemporary disputes. "Ethnicity" (like "kinship" is a bargaining chip, one coping

K busi or Kokob relationships; i.e., one's "relatives", one's cognatic "family". These are ties clearly and regularly expressed by the circulation of Nchumuru between different villages in order to attend appropriate funerals; the common saying, "we perform funerals together", articulates one of the dominant sentiments and structural ties binding particular individuals, Mbuno, and villages together. But the claim that two or more actors (individuals or groups) belong to the same, or are of, "one family" ("K busi k nko") can be used even more encompassingly, when "actual" cognatic ties are forgotten, not known, or perhaps never "really" existed, in order to embrace any useful or potentially useful Nchumuru: this resourceful usage is assisted by the presence of the folk belief that all Nchumuru are "related" together somehow. The Cherepo elders, for example, speak of their whole group as being K busi k nko with respect to all the other Nchumuru. The use of a Hawaiian "kinship" terminology further allows Nchumuru to over-ride, ignore or create useful "actual" ties; e.g., a man may call even a non-Nchumuru man, of appropriate age level, his "senior" or "junior"brother". And, with some circumspection, one can also embark upon a "friendship" relationship. Thus, there are a number of options, tactics, and human resources available for one's coping with everyday life; "kinship" imputation is one resource and technique.

III - How the Nchumuru were Studied:

A few background remarks on the research design of both the 1968-69 and the 1979 studies are in order; both form part of an exercise in experimental anthropology.

In 1968-69, eighteen months' research was spent on examining Nchumuru social organization in all of Krachi District, and on intensively researching life in one Volta Resettlement (VRA) town (New Grube, containing members of five formerly separate villages), together with a comparative analysis of life in three other, nearby villages (Akaniem, Papatia, Kradente). These four main research sites at that time analytically could be arranged along a "continuum of disruption", from those most affected by the Volta Project (New Grube) to

Nchumuru have devalued and de-emphasized the formation, existence and utility of patrilineages within the patriclan: the clan is more salient than the linage. The Kabuno is buttressed by virilocal residence: "residence" and "descent" principles must go together in discussing and understanding the nature of the Nchumuru clan. The (male) ancestry of some present-day Kabuno members, and even of some Mbuno themselves, is not "pure" in its "ethnicity" or "entitlement" - and a similar sort of permeability and "impurity" probably is true of all the "clan" systems in the anthropological record. Nor should it be assumed that Kabuno-mates are immune to jealousy, envy, spite, laziness, disrespect, or lack of willing co-operation, in their dealings with members of their descent group.

However, for lack of space, I cannot discuss the complexities of the Kabuno further, nor can I devote attention to the "household" (see Lunsden, 1975B). Other, "political" matters must be dealt with elsewhere too: e.g., the nature, role, and large number of Nchumuru "Queenmothers"; the role and influence of the Nchumuru Youth Association (the Cherepo Youth have a separate T-shirt/singlet slogan!); the process of and necessity for Government recognition of Kasur , "Divisional" and Paramount Chiefs (see Ghana Law Reports, 1975, Vol.I, concerning the present BegyamsoWura), and so on.

(2) Complementary and Cognatic Emphases:

A description of Nchumuru social organization would be both inadequate and inaccurate if it simply emphasized the "descent" principle, and so ignored or downplayed the important roles played by affinity and consanguinity. A cognatic emphasis is also a key feature of Nchumuru social organization, and the imputation of "kinship" ties is a major bargaining or coping capability of their system.

Here, we are in the realm of that important social category of persons termed Nd puanae ("Mother's Brothers", in a classificatory sense), which link or imputation helps tie together (both internally and externally) the various Mbuno, villages, and Nsur . In addition, there is the even wider but equally useful category or imputation of

to those least affected (Kradente). Comparative analysis of these four sites allowed one to check hypotheses about the manifest and latent consequences of this Project's "demands for adaptation". These main sites are or contain villages affiliated with four of the phratries noted earlier (Banda, B gyamso, Chachiae, Su wae), including what now is Chachiae Kasur in its entirety. Altogether, these four sites provided a study population of 1,457, perhaps ten per cent of the total Nchumuru population in Ghana at that time - though under what heading the Cherepo were enumerated is not clear from the 1960 Census volume on "Tribes".

Though my major focus was (and is) on only one of the 52 VRA towns in Ghana, it is worth noting that a total of 6 of these 52 sites (i.e., New Grube, Dambai and Tokoroano in the V.R.; Yeji/Cherepo in Brong-Ahafo; Makongo and Bachin Gulubi in N.R.) have dominant or significant populations of Nchumuru - thus some generalizations can be made about the resettlement experience, and even more so since other Nchumuru villages have resettled themselves. It also might be noted that I have not used pseudonyms in my publications on the groups studied, in view of their members' own expressed desire that I make their "name" known to the wider world.

The methods used during the first 12 months of the 1968-69 study period were participant observation and the interviewing of key informants; the remaining months were spent in my training and directing a highly-motivated team of six local Nchumuru youngmen (all had only their Middle School Form 4 Certificate) in the administration of 10 different Social Surveys, these being carried out in the Nchumuru language. The Surveys were designed by myself while in Accra, were mimeographed at a Girls' Secondary School, and each form was read and checked by myself shortly after its completion; the topics covered included census matters, economics, religion, housing quality, inter-group relations, etc. This research was a success; co-operation in answering the Survey questions was almost 100%, a remarkable level of involvement considering the length of some of the Surveys (one was 13, another 16 pages per form), the fact that male household heads were the

targets of more than one Survey, and given the other demands on their time (such as necessary farmwork). This degree of co-operation and success could not have been accomplished without the prior establishment of trust and rapport between the local Nchumuru and myself.

On my muddy arrival at New Grube - after my first attempt at a major motorcycle trip, and on such roads! - I told the assembled elders that I was there in order to study Nchumuru "history, language and customs": few could have believed or understood this occupation at first. However, rapport was established quickly, I believe largely because of my active participation - through my dancing, "wake-keeping" and financial contributions - in the many funerals that happened to occur during this first study period: thus, "we performed funerals together". Other ways by which we came to "move" together included: my provision of free bandages and minor medicines on request; my ongoing attempt to learn and use their own language, rather than the Twi lingua franca; my distribution of my "wealth" (a student grant!) by the hiring of local helpers; frequent respectful greeting rites with, and drinks presentations to elders and to the priests or shamans of local deities; the embarrassing value the elders placed on having a "European" live in their midst - hoping that Government thereby would then become more aware of their needs and aspirations; their desire that their way of life be recorded and made known; my value as a convenient, bearded, white bogey-man for mothers to invoke when wanting to chasten their small children - I "weaned" a lot of babies! Later, a special drinks presentation, with libation-prayers, introduced each set of elders to the nature and purposes (though not to the specific hypotheses) of the Survey programme; co-operation was forthcoming also because in most cases the interviewer was "related" to the respondent - a fact that enhanced the reliability of the data collected too. It was also necessary to use a helper from that particular group, in most cases, simply because of the high degree of conflict that then existed within New Grube and between Akaniem, New Grube and Papatia - for a discussion of Stress and "social pathology" at New Grube as it then was, see Lunsden (1975A). Much data from this 1968-69 fieldwork, especially that on Nchumuru religion (though see Lunsden, 1977) and on funeral customs, has not yet been made public.

Research did not stop with the ending of fieldwork in December, 1969; nor did contact cease, for photographs were sent back and a few letters were exchanged with some literates. That contact was not completely broken-off assisted in the success of the 1979 restudy. In 1970-71 and 1973 extensive archival research was carried out on British and German colonial records; in addition, I was able to interview or communicate with a number of colonial officials (former District Commissioners of Salaga or Kete-Krachi, etc.), then living in retirement in Britain or Rhodesia, or working elsewhere (U.S.A., the Solomon Islands), or with their next of kin (West Germany, South Africa) - for "doing" History is part of the Social Anthropologist's technique, duty, and domain. Some of the data so gathered are not otherwise available in Ghana; thus, during my 1979 trip, I was delighted to find that Nchumuru themselves were beginning to use my Thesis in pursuit of their own interests, as I had hoped. For example, one of the three Nchumuru students currently attending the University of Ghana has just recently submitted his B.A., thesis to the History Department, relying in part on my work (Brukum, 1979). As never before, the writings of today's Social Anthropologists are (as they ought to be) subject to the critical scrutiny and public response of members of the ethnic group concerned; such writings also may become part of such a group's perception of its history, and affect members' understanding and assessment of their selves - there are obvious benefits, dangers, and responsibilities entailed in such a feedback situation.

For the number of Nchumuru who so far have heard of, or have read, my writings on their people, the mere existence of such works seems to be a matter for a modicum of ethnic pride: the existence of oral tradition, one may speculate, can not slake the thirst of today's ethnic amour-propre as convincingly as can written testimonials to one's heritage and aspirations. Moreover, the fact that I had published a number of such papers since my first sojourn in their midst could be seen as a modest repayment for their earlier help, as a tangible sign of my continuing commitment, and as a further reason for Nchumuru to co-operate with the 1979 restudy - which I will now discuss.

Some five years after the completion of my Thesis, I was able to return during a Sabbatical Leave to conduct 5½ months of further participant observation and survey research among some of the Eastern Gonja, Krachi District, and Yeji Nchumuru, Once more the main focus was on life in the VRA town of New Grube and in the self-resettled towns of Akanion and Papatia; again the research endeavour was a success. I myself wrote 1,051 pages of fieldnotes on topics such as clanship, social change, land tenure, the cost of living, ritual sacrifices, Chiefship, schooling, alcohol use, local involvement in national politics, and the soccer craze. Moreover, more Mbuno genealogies were collected, and dozens of Government reports and other documents were obtained - though this trip, unlike the last, did not provide the time for perusing District Administrative Office files. In addition, a 14-page questionnaire was administered (again in the Nchumuru language) to each of almost 300 household heads in the three main sites, and a 4-page one was used for data collection on a few dozen "Strangers" households; the major questionnaire dealt with demographic matters, economics, marital history, subjective reports on health, "happiness" and "worries", funeral attendance, compensation payments, and so on. A short survey was administered to the wife or senior wife of all the male household heads at New Grube, while a very brief Market survey, and a sample survey of 50 of the unmarried young people (25 boys, 25 girls, all between the ages of 17 and 26) at that same site, also were carried out. These Survey forms had been prepared in advance, in Canada, and were designed in part with the testing of more than 20 hypotheses in mind; it will take several years to fully digest and make use of this mass of data. And, yes, my medical, child-christening,and dancing activities were resumed; the survey programme was introduced by my hosting of a large dance at each of the three main sites, while my dance with a "possessed" shaman during a moon-lit rite honouring the god Tigare was a hit of the 1979 religious season.

IV - Some Reflections on the Restudy:

I now wish to outline some "impressions" or "reflections" relating to the impact on myself of the 1979 restudy; it is likely that all of the lessons and implications of this recent immersion have not yet been fully appreciated.

(1) One experienced a real sense of the passage of the years, both in my life and in theirs, and a keen sense of the progression of the developmental cycle of domestic groups. Each town has grown in size; one (Akanien) has completely abandoned its old dwelling area since 1969, while New Grube has more of a community "feeling" to it than it had before. Now New Grube has mature shade trees and is home to numerous dogs, goats, sheep and pigs (the in-site presence of the last three was against VRA "model town" policy in 1968) - one must be careful where you step! Inter-group conflict within New Grube seems much less overt than before: "new towns" too go through a developmental cycle; and the VRA town has been lived in and lived through by its domestic units. Children I knew last when they were but 9 or 10 years of age now have children of their own; other friends had produced 4, 5 or more children in the intervening years; one man who had been an unmarried youth in 1968-69 now has three wives, and the inevitable children; other friends and elders had died. As another indicator of the passage of time, and of the impingement of the wider world, it may be noted that only one satellite passed over New Grube on 1968-69 evenings, but now at least seven trace the heavens.

(2) Like most Ghanaians, the Nchumuru too are suffering from the effects of the past years of inflation, economic mismanagement, and many devaluations; changes in the prices of certain items, or their present-day unavailability, and in general the heightened cost of living and dying, are striking features. For example; in 1968-69, a new bicycle, needed by the men for travelling to and from their farms, cost 68 "new" cedis at Kete-Krachi, this being regarded as a high price; in 1979, when a new bicycle was available for sale, its cost was 1,400 or 1,600 cedis - until after the June Coup,* when a "control price" of some 315 cedis was reported. Ten years ago, the "funeral" for a child might cost about 50 "new" cedis, and about 230 such cedis would satisfactorily fund the celebrations on the passing of a Kabuno-head; today such "funerals" cost 2,000-3,000 cedis and more. And the difference in the cost and availability of foodstuffs is a story in its own right, as is the matter of "income".

*June 4th, 1979 led by Flt. Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings

(3) There also was a real sense of "homecoming" attached to the restudy, especially with respect to my residing once more in New Grube. By which, too, I mean that both I and the local people appreciated the fact that my voluntary return after so many years did entail a greater commitment to them and their fortunes in life, did mean and facilitate tighter bonds of friendship, did create a greater sense of obligation to help them in future - e.g., to help young people advance to higher education. My arrival in New Grube - with my ability to recognize the faces and call out the names of many former acquaintances, and my eventual departure - waving goodbye from a tractor as it sped twice through the town, were emotional affairs. In all this, there is the extra, special pressure one feels as to how and whether one can ever adequately live up to all the revived and new expectations (for financial aid, for producing the sort of book they await, etc.) - afterall, I largely owe my career to the Nchumuru.

There is yet another aspect to this keenly felt sense of "homecoming"; this time it was very hard to completely maintain a "professional" aloofness, to keep my opinions on local issues to myself. Furthermore, thanks to the combative tendencies of a valued assistant, I found myself playing a direct and assertive role in dispute settlement processes on two occasions, one of these involving none other than the "Wife" of the important god Nana Kosoe. In other words, the role of "citizen" beckoned, at times most temptingly, like the Sirens' call.

In his justly famous lecture on "The Scope of Anthropology", Levi-Strauss ably sums up the issue and the dilemma my experience reflects. In accurately describing the discipline as being "a restless and fervent study which plagues the investigator with moral as well as scientific questions" (1967: 51), he further speaks of the "distinctive character" of Social Anthropology: "of all the sciences, it is without a doubt unique in making the most intimate subjectivity into a means of objective demonstration" (ibid: 26-27). But, as he warns (ibid: 26), the successful fieldworker's challenging immersion in "total observation" does run a real "risk" - "the complete absorption of the observer by the object of his observations". To use the ringing words with which Levi-Strauss concludes his address (ibid: 53), such an "absorption" into local citizenship may

preclude one's fulfilling the anthropologist's twin duties with respect to the ethnic group concerned: one is always "their pupil", but must also be "their witness". This does not exhaust the matter.

(4) A possible experience in all synchronic fieldwork, but one even more likely (and forcefully) to occur in diachronic or longitudinal research, is the investigator's feeling of regret, disillusionment or despair over certain persons and situations; the more one is "attached" to the people, the stronger will be this experience. The economic situation has been noted; two other areas may be mentioned. First, after so many years, not all of one's former friends and acquaintances have the same (or remembered) character as before - some have changed for the worse; several have drinking problems; another is a convicted thief; another is not well treated by her husband, and so on. The prevalence of the over-use of, or over-reliance on alcohol (rather than of alcoholism per se) among the men is a matter for concern - but then, the rewards for a hard life are few.

Secondly, unlike the 1968-69 case, now most of the District's Nchumuru Chiefs are literate, a fact which certainly ought to enhance their effectiveness as leaders - indeed, the Ch nki Kasur Chief, an abstemious and articulate man, is the current Chairman of the Krachi "District Council". However, one such Chief is not trusted by a significant number of "his" people; one (and perhaps a second) seems to have received a large amount of compensation money which ought to have gone to other people; to my (largely private) dismay, another is an obvious alcoholic - a disaster for his people.

(5) Given the short and crowded research time available, I did not intend to give high priority this time to language (re-)learning; however, I was amazed and delighted to find that even after these many years I did not have to go back to square one in using their tonal and hitherto unwritten language - some of the phrases came flooding to mind even before I moved back into New Grube. I have not yet achieved sufficient fluency; however, I consider my skill in speaking and "hearing" Nchumuru to have been much better this time than it was in 1968-69, when I placed too much reliance on workin' through a few interpreters (highly-

motivated though they were). During this restudy, I felt much freer to move around on my own, assisted in this too by the fact that now a few more Nchumuru adults know some English - and, of course, the earlier pressure of "doing The Thesis" no longer existed. It should also be noted that, in the intervening years, a few, brief studies by professional linguists, have come into existence as aids to future research, notably the work of a Missionary group based at Ekumdipe (N.R.) and currently working on a New Testament in their Twi-like written script of the Nchumuru tongue.

(6) In method and achievement, the restudy benefitted enormously from my prior research; this time the main features of Nchumuru life and social organization were known in advance, and so the restudy could be more focussed and assured. Moreover, thanks to their previous research exposure, the Nchumuru themselves were more experienced: they knew me and my character; more importantly, they now knew what a social survey is, how to handle it, what its time demands are, etc. All of this allowed for more rapid and richer data gathering.

(7) Four of the ten survey assistants used this time were also assistants in 1969; thus their experience helped not only themselves, but also helped show the others what to do. Again the calibre of the assistants varied, as did their salaries: from 8 to 13 cedis per day - a good salary by local standards; hiring still was partly a political matter, and called for careful diplomacy with the various sets of elders. The survey interviewers were an ecumenical crew: one was the local Catholic Catechist; another was the Tigare Priest for his group. Three turned out to be overly fond of drink - but fortunately, only so in their off-hours! Furthermore, and unlike the 1969 case, this time I was able to locate and hire a literate female assistant, which certainly enhanced the quality of the data gathered from the women and girls. The fact that so many assistants were involved with the survey forms did mean that extra care had to be taken to ensure comparability of questioning - to make sure that each used the same translation for each question, and to ensure the lack of interviewer bias. But, their number did allow much work to be done in the short time available, and their familiarity with the respondents enhanced the reliability of the data. I rechecked all

the forms shortly after their completion, and was also able to keep an eye on the interviewers at work in New Grube and Papatia, though less so on those at Akanieм - for this last involved me in a 10-11 mile walk on each visit. Moreover, the necessary rechecking of the forms was itself a very time-consuming business, one which often inhibited my performing other tasks, seeking other pleasures. But this research was a success.

(8) The obvious also needs to be stated: the restudy provided data which shed new light on data gathered and analyses made before, which revise that earlier data, and which cover new ground - more about Nchumuru society now is known. For example, the nature of their "kinship" system, the role of "Queenmother", and the prevalence of female shamans, are much better known topics now; Nchumuru women's views on their husbands are better expressed - and many are not flattering!

The restudy also provided the chance to visit some places not examined before: e.g., Yeji, where I first came to appreciate the significance and organization of the Cherepo, and Nangyuro, where a 17-mile walk allowed me to greet the NanyuroWura and to get a sense of what the Daka River was like before the Volta Project. It might be added that the restudy has fed some jealousy in certain Nchumuru towns that I have not yet been able to visit or reside at; this, of course, can be corrected.

There are a number of other involving items that could be treated herein - such as: the horrors of the March, 1979, currency changeover and devaluation; the excitement of the National election campaign, which saw 4 of the 140 Parliamentary seats won by Nchumuru; and the "Rawlings Effect" of the June Coup on local social and economic life - but space forbids. One is left with a deep sense of gratitude for all the help so willingly given, a sense of curiosity as to what eventual local impact one's financial help to a handful of advanced students and to an assistant wanting Bible School training will have, and a sense of loss, arising from the present separation from friends there and from the realization that a number of these hospitable people will not be alive when and if another restudy takes place.

In conclusion, this brief consideration of the Nchumuru life-way and of some reflections arising from a restudy thereon, itself reflects the operation of the intellectual process Levi-Strauss (ibid: 43) aptly refers to as "anthropological doubt". Thus, this paper itself encapsulates an endeavour to be "their pupil, their witness".

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A Note to the Ghanaian Reader: copies of my writings are available in the Institute of African Studies Library, Legon.

KOFI ASARE OPOKU, WEST AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION, 1978
SINGAPORE: FEP INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE LIMITED, pp.vii - 182

GEROGE P. HAGAN

West African Traditional Religion is a brief introduction to the student of African religion. As .. books on African religions go, it does not break new ground. Beginning by clearing up certain misconceptions and fallacies about African religion, the book goes on to identify and explain certain African well known beliefs and practices about the relationship between man and the supernatural which are common, if not to all ethnic cultures in the sub-region, at least, to many of the major ones. Of particular interest are the following fiduciary tenets and key concepts which the writer touches upon in the seven chapters of the book:

(a) The existence of a Supreme Being, the source of creation, who is credited in various epithets with being the all-knowing, all-powerful master, father and friend, with reference to whom everything finds justification.

(b) The existence of a plethora of spirit beings or 'divinities' with specialized moral and practical functions satisfying man's natural needs.

(c) The idea that human beings in their individuality possess identifiable qualities of 'divinity' and realize on earth pre-ordained roles in fulfilment of divine mission.

(d) The notion that society, seen in flux, derives its internal strength through maintaining its links with the dead, enhances its collective spirituality through the moral lives of its living members, and preserves its internal bonds through social rules and norms for and in the yet-unborn.

(e) And supporting these beliefs, "religious praxis" that places great emphasis on collective and participatory rituals as the source of succour to the individual.

African religion, as the writer points out, has an internal vitality, continuity, and resillence; and ethnic cultures, as well as many modern social practices are shot through and through with the religious beliefs of the people. In the transitional rites, which the book treats at length, the community expresses its spiritual obligation to each person as it assists each individual, already

sacred at birth, to pass through life as a being becoming more sacred, at each critical phase of his or her physical and moral development, till death comes as a culminating point bringing the "apotheosis" of each person as an ancestor. The living see the dead as achieving the status worthy of reverential regard, and this is what man in Africa lives for. West Africans have subsumed many of these observances in both Islamic and Christian practices.

Yet, while going to great lengths to demonstrate the practicality of West African religions in the daily and secular or non-religious concerns of everyday life (for, indeed, the differences between the religious and the secular obtains in West African as in other cultures), the book nevertheless fails to point out or lay emphasis on the social and psychological mood or attitude which belief in West African religion evokes towards the vicissitudes of life. I refer here to that mood or attitude of "joy in living" so characteristic of the West African and which in the condition of slavery fortified the African with the will to survive, and created the Negro-Spirituals. It is this mood of joy, provident in times of dire need and suffering and pain, which attracts the African to the bosom of his culture and to his traditional religion whenever dark clouds gather. This mood of joy removes the sting of death: the dead are mourned with sorrow not unmixed with joy, and their exit from human life is accepted with an attitude of hope and fortitude. The spirits of the dead come back and continually feed the springs of life ensuring that life is worth living in spite of its pains.

It is this mood of joy which constitutes the creative fount in African culture, enriching society with song, dance and new ritual drama and urging the intellectual search for meaning, philosophical insight, and the discovery of practical solutions to man's anxious queries about the human condition. African religion is an important source of traditional knowledge especially on the human physical and mental condition, and traditional medicine and therapeutics are practised under its umbrella.

An aspect of this religious mood of joy is that West African religion is typically not ASCETIC. Self-denial, sexual abstinence, and abstinence from certain foods are occasionally practised as part of funeral or puberty rites; but they are scarcely seen as a mode of gaining greater spiritual gifts or qualities, except, as the book points out, as part of the regimen for the training of traditional priests in certain cultures. In fact in many West African societies religious abstinence or asceticism might be considered no more a virtue than voluptuousness in expression of religious fervour vice.

Another aspect of traditional religion which calls for some analysis in an introduction on West African religions is the pattern of ritual action of the devotional and supplicatory type. There are fascinating dramatic elements in such ritual enactments which have, in recent times, attracted some attention from some students of African drama. But the distinctly religious elements in the drama of African worship calls for cross-cultural comparison and analysis if we are to capture in practical forms of expression the common elements in the African's relation to the divine. Some brief descriptions of a few forms of worship should have found some place in the book.

In this connection the trance possession phenomenon should have received more than passing references in the book; for the wide distribution of the phenomenon in the sub-region, as a religious phenomenon and also as an accepted channel of spontaneous and induced communication between spirit beings and man (as a means of knowing what is hidden and giving divinity a practical presence which enhances the bond between men and the supernatural) should excite in-depth comparative studies.

In contrast to trans-substantiation which is the core of Catholic devotion, and trans-figuration which is typical of some other religions, one might describe the trance, with apology, as a 'trans-personification' of deities, in the sense that it is a condition in

which deities reveal their powers, personality traits and social significance (through 'capturing' a human person and altering some of his personal characteristics - voice, looks, and manner of walking etc.) for society to receive them and pay them homage as perceptible persons. In the book the trance is mentioned only as a means of receiving a call to the priesthood; it is not treated as a union between divinity and humanity, nor as an important element in ritual worship.

The writer clearly points out that, in terms of religion, West African cultures had an open system. New gods were often added and old ones often 'de-ritualized' as they lost their creative and functional energy, which was often apparent in the failure of a deity to select a priest for his rituals or to manifest itself through the trance phenomenon.

When a new god entered a society, new cultural and social practices made their appearance with the establishment of new cult groups. The impact of Tigari and Koofiri cults in parts of the Akan areas of Ghana is the most recent example of this phenomenon. Such new cults could cause considerable changes in social mobility patterns. And this is why traditional cults are important to the understanding of the social impact of the gods. Failure to elaborate on cult organization is obviously one of the major gaps in the book.

Almost invariably, every new god while modifying its host society also often adapts to the host. One sees one example of this phenomenon in the origins of Shango, the Yoruba deity of thunder. Though Shango was originally evil it took on the attributes of another deity to become one of the greatest deities of Yorubaland:

> "the high moral attributes given to Shango originally belonged to an ancient Yoruba solar divinity, Jakuta (which means 'One who fights with stones' or 'One who hurls stones'), to whom thunder and lightning were attributed, and from whom the prohibitions against stealing, falsehood and poisoning originated. Jakuta's attributes were, in the course of time, taken over by Shango, who now represents, to the Yoruba, the wrath of Olorun (God) ---

a role which was played by Jakuta in the past.....

"The "Take over", however, has not been complete, for the priests of Shango still observe the sacred day of Jakuta in Oyo, although the rituals are performed as part of the worship of Shang." pp. 69, 70.

This process of the enculturation of a new god is not unique to African religions. The enculturation of the revealed God of the Jews in Europe followed broadly the same pattern.

As a book for beginners, West African Traditional Religion will find a place on the shelves of many scholars of religion, for a synoptic view of African religions and on the correct attitude to adopt towards the study of African religion. For that reason alone care should have been taken to avoid certain exaggerations bordering on very serious errors. Thus the writer goes too far to the other end when he says:

"There is thus a continent - wide uniformity of ideas in traditional religion in Africa, but this must not be seen in terms of uniformity imposed through proselytizing, force or crusades; it must be seen in terms of common ideas and practices pursued by many African peoples." (pp. 69, 70)

I think any attempt to submerge the striking differences in religious practices on the continent robs Africa of the richness of her culture.

Elsewhere also the writer says of Akan society:

"There are, however, patrilineal clans in which membership is derived from the male line.". (p. 99)

The statement per se is tautological; but correctly understood to mean Akans have patrilineal clans, it is incorrect or at least debatable.

I N S T I T U T E N E W S

Staff-Graduate Seminars.

The following seminars were held at the Institute under the auspices of the Societies and Cultures Section during the 1978-79 academic year.

Kwame Arhin: Economic and Social Significance of Rubber Production and Exchange in the Gold and Ivory Coasts 1880-1900 March 7th.

Larry Yarak (Research Student) Northwestern University.

The Development of Asante Administration in Elmina 1776-1872. 30th May.

Kojo Bentsi-Enchill (Research Student, University of Cambridge.)

Aspects of Colonial Land Policy in Relation to the Agricultural Sector. 13th June.

Prof. D. Paul Lumsden (York University)

Reflections on Restudying the Nchumuru. 11th July.

The following books are due out soon (August November, 1979.)

Kwame Arhin: The Minutes of the Ashanti Farmers Association Limited, 1934-1936, with introduction and notes.

Institute Boskstore,
Institute of African Studies, Legon. Price: ₵12 net.

Kwame Arhin (ed.) Brong-Kyempim: Essays on the Society, History, Language and Politics of the Brong People.

Institute of African Studies in collaboration with Afram Publications.

Price: ₵21 net.

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