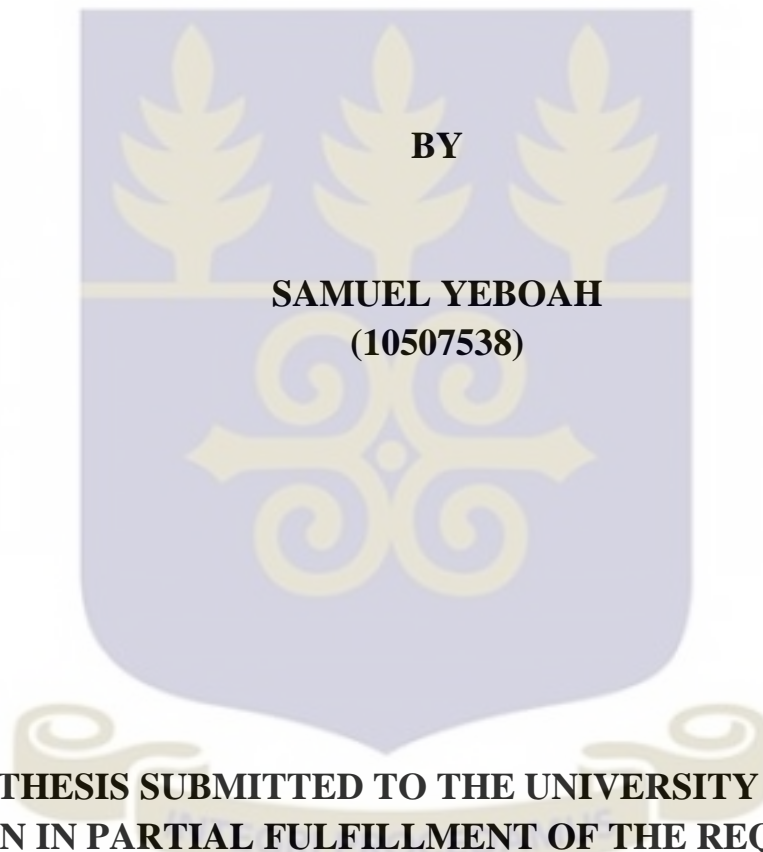


UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**CHRISTIAN CHIEFS AND AFRICAN INDIGENOUS RITUALS IN
GHANA**



**THIS THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF MPhil RELIGION DEGREE**

JULY 2016

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis with the exception of materials quoted from the other scholarly works which have been duly acknowledged, is the original production of research work by Samuel Yeboah under the supervision of Dr. Rose Mary Amenga-Etego and Prof. Elizabeth Amoah towards the award of MPhil Religion degree in the Department for the Study of Religions, University of Ghana.

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ABSTRACT

The debate as to whether indigenous Ghanaian communities could be efficiently and fully ruled by ‘Christian Chiefs’ remains topical in both popular and academic discourses. *Nananom ahenfo* (chiefs) go through the ritual process before they are enstooled as chiefs and derive their sacredness and authority from these rituals which enables them to sit on the ancestral stools. These rituals also makes them mediators between *Nananom nsamanfo* (ancestors) and the living, hence they are responsible for performing rituals to maintain the link between the living and the ancestors. With the advent of Christianity, however, some royals who became Christians have accepted to become chiefs despite their previous exclusive views on Christianity. This group call themselves Christian chiefs. It is this that has led to the debate as to whether or not indigenous communities can be efficiently and effectively ruled by such Christian chiefs.

The research utilized the phenomenological approach to provide a descriptive narrative on the subject and interviews and participants’ observations were employed to gather data from the field. The research findings indicated that Christian chiefs can efficiently and effectively rule indigenous communities in Anum because they maintained all the rituals associated with chieftaincy. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), which was the first church in Anum, however, does not recognise these Christian chiefs in their congregations. They are also not allowed to hold positions in the church. This study is relevant to researchers interested in contemporary developments in chieftaincy, rituals, and the resilience of the traditional religions as well as the Church and African Culture.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely wife Docia Afua Yeboah for her understanding, patience and immense support when I decided to go back to school. Also to my lovely daughters Maame Akua, Awurakua, Nana Adjowa and Afua Nhyira who were always interested in my thesis and the numerous questions they asked regarding my academic work. Finally, to Mr. Pobi Acheampong who supported me in diverse ways during my studies.



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My greatest appreciation goes to my supervisors, Dr. Rose Mary Amenga-Etego and Prof. Elizabeth Amoah, for making time out of their busy academic schedules to give me all the necessary guidelines and encouragement required for this thesis. They supported me with some important literature for the work and devoted time to read through every chapter I sent them. The critique was very good as I took them in good faith. This enabled me complete the research on time. In fact words cannot explain how I appreciate your efforts. God richly bless you.

I am also indebted to the Department, faculty staff and members for giving me the opportunity to complete my academic studies. Thank you very much. To Agnes Quansah, Esther Asenso Agyemang, Mr. G.B.K. Owusu, Joseph Asenso Agyemang, Michael Obiri Yeboah and Prince Nkrumah, I wish to say a very big thank you for reading through my work and also for the pieces of advice you gave me.

To the divisional chiefs, queen mothers, and linguists of Anum traditional area, I am grateful for the in depth information and also for allowing my entry into the stool room. It was a wonderful experience. *Mmɛ gyi ɛ ni lɛ* (Thank you very much). Finally, I thank Pastor Cyril Tay and Nana Baffour Opoku Amofa-Aku II, the Gyasehene of Effiduase New Juaben, Koforidua, for the interview they granted me.

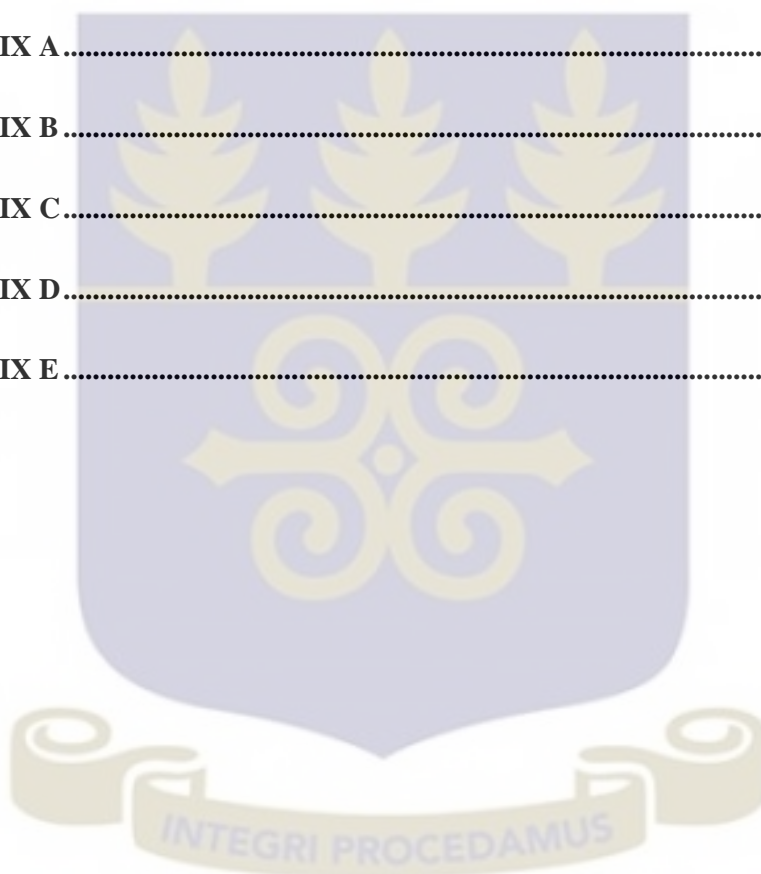
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

From the Biblical perspective, monarchy existed since ancient times. The Jews who saw God as their ruler were surrounded by nations who were ruled by men as kings. This influenced the Jews and they also demanded for a king to rule them. The request for a king occurred during the days of the Prophet Samuel. Because the Jews were ruled by God, the prophet was reluctant in granting them their request. The rule of God over the Jews was known as Theocracy. God told Samuel to listen to the Jews and grant them their request. God told the prophet to warn them of the consequences of their request. The Jews were happy to have a king because he would lead them to battles as their neighbouring nations. Thus, kingship among the Jews was instituted by God, in response to their cravings (1Sam.8:1-9).¹ However, this is not so in the Ghanaian context.

In Ghana, kinship or chieftaincy as a form of traditional leadership was in existence before the arrival of the western missionaries. Chiefs were enstooled through ritual process by kingmakers. Chris Abotchie has observed that in Ghana chieftaincy came into existence through military conquest or as a reward for exceptional capabilities, such as military prowess. Thereafter, the line of succession became established. The chief performed social, economic, political and religious roles for the people. As a religious leader he was responsible for performing rituals of

¹ All Biblical References taken from the Revised Standard Version (RSV).

sacrifice as required on festive occasions. The chieftaincy institution is the embodiment of the cultural, customs, traditions, and religious beliefs of the people.²

E. Kofi Agorsah agrees with the assertion that the chieftaincy institution in itself constitutes a religious institution. The institution of festivals and rituals were attempts to maintain a continuous linkage between the material and spiritual worlds of the daily activities and survival of the people. The worldview of the people was in agreement with the chieftaincy institution till the coming of the European missionaries to the Gold Coast, now Ghana.³ This indicates that to understand a people, their worldview should be taken into consideration.

Kwesi Dickson has observed that some European missionaries failed to understand the cosmology of the people. They rather presented the Christian gospel from an exclusivist view of Christianity. Exclusivist ideology, according to Dickson, is the claim that Christianity is the only true religion and all others are false. He added that despite the fact that Western Churches were dissatisfied with exclusivist policies of missionary activities in Ghana, the missionaries and the church have not been able to do away with mission enterprise of exclusivist tendencies. The most visible of these is the doctrine of *tabula rasa*. The doctrine, according to Dickson, maintains that “the culture of those being evangelized cannot be looked upon in a way as a basis upon which to build; for Christianity to establish roots among the people, their culture, according to this doctrine, must give way altogether.”⁴

The standpoint of the doctrine of *tabula rasa* of some European missionaries meant that the culture and the authority of the chieftaincy institutions were

² Chris Abotchie, “Has the Position of the Chief become Anachronistic in Contemporary Ghanaian Politics?” in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Legon: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 169.

³ E. Kofi Agorsah, *Religion, Ritual, and African Tradition: African Foundations* (Authorhouse: Bloomington Indiana, 2010), 2.

⁴ Kwesi Dickson, *Uncompleted Mission: Christianity and Exclusivism* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 124.

questioned. The reason is that the chieftaincy institution, as we had stated earlier, is the embodiment of the religio-cultural practices of the people. It is in this regard that Abotchie rightly observed that Christianity together with modern institutional mechanisms has taken over most of the authority of the chiefs. This has caused the position of the chief to become ceremonial in the opinion of many people.⁵ Irrespective of the fact that Christianity and modern forms of governance have taken over the power of chiefs, it still remains relevant in our society today.

Chiefs have contributed immensely towards the establishment and growth of Christianity in Ghana. Church historians, including Richard Foli, have stated that Christianity was introduced to Ghana on January 20, 1482 by a Portuguese expedition of about six hundred men. They were under the command of Don Diego d'Azambuja. The Portuguese commander sought audience with the chief of Elmina and told him about the Christian faith.⁶ After the interaction, the chief of Elmina gave the Portuguese a place and they built a fort and a chapel and dedicated it to St. George.⁷ Thus, the first person the Portuguese encountered was a chief. Also, when the chief accepted the new faith it served as a motivation for his people to accept it. From that time there was a cordial relationship between the two institutions.

This friendly relationship that existed between the chieftaincy institution and Christianity however did not last long. The reason was that the rise of Christianity undermined the spiritual position of the chief.⁸ Again, some Christians accused the chieftaincy institution of idol worship because in their view some aspects of cultural beliefs and practices were not in conformity with Christianity.⁹

⁵ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 109.

⁶ Richard Foli, *Christianity in Ghana: A Comparative Church Growth Study* (Accra: Trust Publications), 13.

⁷ Foli, *Christianity in Ghana*, 3.

⁸ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 177.

⁹ R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti* (London: Oxford University Press, 1923), 86.

The undermining nature of some Christians concerning certain aspects of traditional practices marked the beginning of religious conflict between some Christians and chiefs. One reason for the conflict was that although Ghanaians had adopted the Christian faith into their culture, they still conformed to some indigenous traditions and practices. The church on the other hand did not want their converts to conform to some of the indigenous traditions and practices. This certainly brought about conflict situations between the two institutions. Noel Smith has rightly observed that the advent and the adoption of the Christian faith by many Ghanaians did not significantly overrule their indigenous worldview, and it is this reality that has given rise to many of the challenge and conflict which confront the Christian church today.¹⁰

The conflict and the challenges confronting the Christian church today have given rise to the phenomenon of Christian chiefs in Ghana. These are indigenous royals who are Christians and have become chiefs in indigenous communities. They have formed the ‘Association of Christian Chiefs and Queen Mothers’ (ACCQM). As Christians they want to rule their people and still maintain their Christian identity. The conflicting situation has brought about diverse views from both popular and academic discourse.

According to Emmanuel Asante, the reason behind the formation of ACCQM is to promote dialogue between Christianity and chieftaincy.¹¹ On the contrary, Samuel Awuah-Nyameke also describes the ACCQM as chiefs and queen mothers

¹⁰ Noel Smith, *The PCG 1835-1960* (Accra: University Press, 1966), 65.

¹¹ Emmanuel Asante, “The Relationship between Chieftaincy and Christianity,” in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert. K. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 238.

who profess the Christian faith and in their view see some traditional aspects associated with chieftaincy as demonic.¹²

Osei Safo-Kantanka addressed a cultural evangelism programme organised by the Methodist Church Ghana (MCG) in Kumasi. He was reported as saying that, the majority of Christians in Ghana is suffering from identity crisis within the context of Biblical doctrines and principles. This makes it very difficult for some clergy to come to terms with some aspects of African traditional beliefs and practices, a situation which has generated religious conflicts in some communities. He added that:

The palace is important in the African setting because it is the wheel around which our cultural identity and heritage revolve. For that matter, any attempt to sustain the growth of Christianity which in itself is culture specific without the involvement of chiefs and queen mothers would not achieve the desired results.¹³

He concluded by stating that the MCG has laid a strong foundation on the holistic development of human beings, and as such the church has one of the largest societies of Christian chiefs and queen mothers in West Africa.¹⁴

Also, Rev. Oscar Pida, the parish pastor of Evangelical Presbyterian Church (E.P.C.) of Ho *Bankoe* is reported as saying that, Christians should tolerate fellow Christians who become chiefs and queen mothers. He said that “It is better to have Christians rather than non-believers ruling over us, but we shall not compromise with traditional practices.”¹⁵ After making that comment, Mamaga Toto II of the same church also said that, she had observed that some members of the clergy had shown so much aversion to anything to do with traditional rule to the extent that they would

¹² Samuel Awuah-Nyamekye, “The Role of Religion in the Institution of Chieftaincy: The Case of the Akan of Ghana,” accessed September 21, 2015, <http://LUMINA, Vol.20, No.2, ISSN 2094-1188.Academia.edu files>.

¹³ “Christianity must not deny Africans of Cultural Identity, accessed January 24, 2015, <http://www.ghananewsagency.org>.

¹⁴ “Christianity must not deny Africans of Cultural Identity, accessed January 24, 2015, <http://www.ghananewsagency.org>.

¹⁵ “Communities better off with Christian Chiefs,” accessed May 18, 2015, <http://www.Ghanaweb.com>.

have nothing to do with Christians who have been made chiefs and queen mothers. “Sometimes some of our own family members, brothers and sisters who are Christians would have nothing to do with us.”¹⁶ These are some of the diverse views from scholars and the general public. The church is sometimes caught in a dilemma when her members are nominated for chieftaincy positions.

For instance, Michelle Gilbert in her work “The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?” reported that before Nana Agyemang Badu I became the *Dormaaahene*, he went to the Synod Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and informed them that he had been nominated to be *Omanhene*. Nana Agyemang Badu I wanted to accept the position of a chief and still maintain his African identity. After discussing the Regulations, Practices and Procedures (R.P.P.) of the PCG with the church, he informed the kingmakers his condition for accepting the position of a chief. That, he would accept to be a chief but would not perform the rituals associated with chieftaincy. The people accepted it and the PCG Synod committee also accepted the conditions and so the *Dormaaahene* became a full member of the PCG and a Communicant.”¹⁷

These diverse views on the phenomenon of Christian chiefs have led to a debate in both popular and academic discourses. Therefore, the study, ‘Christian Chiefs and African Indigenous Rituals in Ghana’ is situated in this debate.

¹⁶ “Communities better off with Christian Chiefs,” accessed May 18, 2015, <http://www.Ghanaweb.com>.

¹⁷Michelle Gilbert, “The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?” accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It has been observed that the adoption of Christianity by many Ghanaians did not significantly overrule their indigenous worldview.¹⁸ This has disrupted an existing equilibrium due to Christians' initial alienation of other religions. That notwithstanding, some Christians have accepted to become chiefs in indigenous communities, and sometimes with the church's permission. For instance, Nana Agyemang Badu I the *Dormaahene* wrote to the PCG synod committee to be granted permission to become a chief and still remain a communicant¹⁹ In such instances, he may be required to relinquish his ritual duties, thus, undermining his role and function as a chief. This, however, goes contrary to the traditions of the indigenous people.

Some scholars have opined that although some Ghanaian communities have the phenomenon known as Christian chiefs, a view is given of the fact that they do not maintain all the rituals pertaining to their religious role as chiefs.²⁰ If it is true that they do not perform these rituals, to what extent can they fully rule indigenous communities? There is the need to investigate this case.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims at finding out whether or not Christian chiefs perform the indigenous rituals associated with chieftaincy and subsequently to engage in the discussion as to whether indigenous communities can be efficiently and fully ruled by Christian chiefs. In order to achieve this aim the following objectives have been set to investigate whether Anum traditional area can be efficiently and fully ruled by Christian chiefs.

¹⁸ Smith, *PCG*, 65.

¹⁹ Gilbert, "The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?" accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

²⁰ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 176.

- a. To investigate whether the Anum traditional area can be efficiently and fully ruled by Christian chiefs.
- b. To find out whether Christian chiefs go through the rituals associated with chieftaincy and also if they sustain all the ritual practices associated with chieftaincy.
- c. To find out from the PCG their position on the presence of Christian chiefs in their congregations.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a. Can the Anum traditional area be efficiently and fully ruled by Christian chiefs?
- b. Do Christian chiefs go through all the rituals associated with chieftaincy? And if they go through, how do they see themselves as Christians?
- c. What is the position of the PCG concerning the presence of Christian chiefs in their congregation?

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research is conducted among the traditional people of Anum. We have restricted ourselves to the Anum traditional area because it has a long history of tradition and customs. Also, because of the significant encounter chieftaincy in Anum had had with the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society (BEMS), which later became the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG). Again, since one of the objectives of the study is to find the position of the church in response to Christian chiefs in their congregation we restricted ourselves to the PCG. Reliability of findings and conclusions will be based on data received from the respondents interviewed.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Mercy Amba Oduyoye's *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* provides a suitable framework for this thesis on "Christian Chiefs and African Indigenous Rituals in Ghana." Oduyoye is of the view that Christianity has come to Ghana and Ghanaians have contextualized it. That is to say that some Ghanaian Christians express their Christian faith within their Ghanaian culture. It is in this light that some Ghanaian Christians embrace the chieftaincy institution with its traditional, religious, and cultural aspects. However, Oduyoye asks the following questions which resonate with the major questions of this research. "Should African Christians become rulers of their people? Would they compromise their Christianity by taking part in traditional festivals as chief priests and representatives of their people?"²¹

The theory has an advantage of drawing attention to the issues related to "Christian Chiefs and Africa Indigenous Rituals in Ghana." It has also assisted us gain orientation as we seek to find answers to the question of the relationship between Gospel and Culture. Last but not least, it has helped in analysing our findings from the field of study.

1.7 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

1.7.1 METHODOLOGY

In research, it is very important to have a methodological approach that would serve as a guide to achieve the objective set for carrying out the research. The methodology directs the researcher on how to get the crucial information for the

²¹ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* (Accra: Sam-Woode Ltd, 2000), 56.

study. Also, it helps the researcher to obtain the right information from the respondents in relation to the research questions for a good conclusion. The research therefore utilizes the phenomenological approach by James L. Cox to provide a descriptive narrative on “Christian Chiefs and African Indigenous Rituals in Ghana.”

The researcher performed *epochē* which meant that although the researcher is a Christian he did not allow his Christian beliefs to influence the religious beliefs of the Anum people. Also, he did not pass judgement regarding the rituals performed by the Christian chiefs.²² He also adopted what is known as empathic interpolation. This meant that the researcher entered into the experience of the believing community under study.²³ The phenomenological approach is relevant for the research because it gives the respondents the opportunity to narrate their own story according to their understanding and belief.

Although the researcher is a Christian he maintained objectivity in his description of events. Thus, he applied the principles of *epochē* and maintained *epochē*.

1.7.2 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

I. PRIMARY SOURCE

Interviews were used to collect in depth information from key respondents. Also, the participants’ observation gave the researcher the opportunity to see at first hand the unique occasion of the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* (yam festival) by the chiefs and people of the Anum traditional area.

²² James L. Cox, *Expressing the Sacred: An Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1996), 21.

²³ Cox, *Expressing the Sacred*, 29.

In this research twelve respondents were selected to be interviewed. This includes six Christian chiefs, one non-Christian chief, two linguists, two queen mothers, and one catechist of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Ebenezer Congregation.

The six Christian chiefs informed the researcher that although Christian chiefs sustain the indigenous rituals associated with chieftaincy, they could also do that by delegation. Again, Christian chiefs could dialogue with the *abusua panyin* (head of family) concerning certain aspects of ritual he is not comfortable with.

The non-Christian chief on the other hand narrated the process of the ritual involved in confinement and enstoolment of chiefs. He also informed the researcher about the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* (yam festival) by the Anum people. The linguists informed the researcher on how a chief is selected and how Christian chiefs rule the Anum traditional area. The queen mothers divulged information on the process of installing a chief and how the Christian chiefs sustain the indigenous rituals associated with chieftaincy. Lastly, the catechist informed the researcher the position of the church in response to Christian chiefs in their congregation.

The relevance of the selection of the above group was informed by the fact that these personalities constitute major stakeholders as far as chieftaincy in Anum traditional area is concerned. Again, the respondents were born and bred in Anum, thus they have very rich experience on chieftaincy and traditional practices.

Under the open ended interview, the researcher had a personal face to face interview with the respondents. This enabled the researcher to ask follow up questions for clarification. As a result, it established a rapport between him and the respondents. And so, they divulged information without any hesitation and they were very much objective.

Furthermore, the different background of the respondents provided the grounds for each person to be objective as possible. The rich information helped in analysing Christian Chiefs and African Indigenous Rituals in Ghana.

II. SECONDARY SOURCES

In this study, secondary sources of data include published and unpublished literature. The materials are discussed below as literature review and some would also be used in the text.

1.8. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are quite a number of data on chieftaincy. However, there is not enough literature on Anum chieftaincy. The literature under review has been categorized into three thematic areas. These are chieftaincy, Christian chiefs, and rituals. In this review, the first part looks at chieftaincy as a concept of traditional leadership and the source of their authority. The second looks at the phenomenon of Christian chiefs. The third looks at the church, Christian chiefs, and rituals.

1.8.1 CHIEFTAINCY

There is some amount of literature on chieftaincy in general. Most of the literature on chieftaincy is on the *Akan* people of Ghana. That notwithstanding, the information provided is relevant for this study.

Abotchie has pointed out that the origin of chieftaincy in Ghana came into existence through conquest or as a reward for exceptional capabilities, such as

military prowess.²⁴ Thereafter, the line of succession becomes established. In addition to what Abotchie stated, chieftaincy also comes into existence through inheritance. That is one could be a chief by virtue of the fact that he or she comes from a royal lineage. This is strongly supported by Kwame Gyekye. He has stated that in several African countries, the chief is selected from among the members of the royal family. The person should come from the family that by history and custom was recognised and accepted by the traditional people.²⁵

Awuah-Nyamekye is of the view that the Chieftaincy institution is a very important form of traditional leadership among all indigenous communities in Ghana,²⁶ and the leaders are known as chiefs. Chiefs are not the only traditional leaders in their respective communities. There are other traditional functionaries who are leaders. Odotei and Awedoba rightly stated that the authority of chieftaincy is not vested in chiefs only. The other leaders include queen mothers, priests and priestesses, and other traditional functionaries.²⁷ For instance among the *Ga* people of Ghana, they were originally ruled by the *Wulomo* (traditional priest).

In his work *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti*, Busia stated that the role of the chieftaincy institution is both political and religious. As a political institution, the chief acts as the political head acting in a military, legislative, judicial, and executive position. As custodian of the land, the chief's economic role involves taking care of the land and natural resources for agricultural and other activities and he is also required to provide development for his

²⁴ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 169.

²⁵ Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction* (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2003), 109.

²⁶ Awuah-Nyamekye, "The Role of Religion in the Institution of Chieftaincy: The Case of the Akan of Ghana," <http://LUMINA.Vol.20.No.2.ISSN.2094-1188.Academia.edu.files>.

²⁷ Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba, *Introduction to Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 15.

people. As a religious leader he serves as the intermediary between *Nananom nsamanfo* (ancestors) and the people. As such, he is expected to perform rituals for himself and the wellbeing of his people.²⁸

Busia was concerned with the political position of the *Ashanti* chief in a modern political system. What is the position of the *Ashanti* chief in modern political governance? This was the question Busia wanted to find out. This was a legitimate question because central government had taken over the political role of the *Ashanti* chief.

Just as Busia questioned the position of the *Ashanti* chief in the modern political system, Abotchie also wanted to find out whether the chieftaincy institution is anachronistic in modern Ghanaian politics. He observed that in the wake of social change, modern institutional mechanisms have taken over the political role and functions of the chief. Due to this reason, some are of the view that the position of the chief is merely a ceremonial one.²⁹

From a historical point of view chieftaincy existed before the advent of Christianity in Ghana. Was chieftaincy established in all parts of the Gold Coast before the arrival of the Portuguese? Kwabena Opuni-Frimpong seems to suggest that chieftaincy had been established in other parts of the Gold Coast. He has noted that before their encounter with western missionaries, the *Akan* people developed traditional form of leadership.³⁰ He added that chieftaincy as an indigenous leadership possessed values and resources that prepared traditional leaders to offer leadership.³¹

²⁸ K. A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 234.

²⁹ Abotchie, "The Position of the Chief," 169.

³⁰ Kwabena Opuni-Frimpong, *Indigenous Knowledge and Missions: Perspectives of Akan Leadership Formation on Christian Leadership Development* (Accra: SonLife Press, 2012), 1.

³¹ Opuni-Frimpong, *Indigenous Knowledge*, 1.

From the expressions of these scholars, we can state that chieftaincy was present in other parts of the country.

Another important aspect of the chieftaincy institution is the black stool. In the wisdom of the ancestors they instituted the black stool to serve as a point of succession. Oseadeeyo Addo-Dankwa III has emphasized that to ensure peaceful replacement of a chief the ancestors used a special device [black stool] to ensure that.³² One can acknowledge the in depth wisdom of the ancestors by the use of the black stool to avoid succession conflicts. Thus, any person who qualifies to be a chief should trace his ancestry to the first occupant of that particular black stool.

It should be noteworthy that in some towns in the Northern part of Ghana, skins are used. From the above review one thing that is obvious is that a lot of publication has been done regarding chieftaincy among the Akan people. This indicates that less work has been done on chieftaincy among other ethnic groups in Ghana. Therefore, there is the need to do a study on chieftaincy among the Anum people of Ghana.

Chieftaincy institution shares social and political space with several other institutions in the wider society. Among these are religious institutions such as Islam and Christianity which have been adapted and adopted. This has led to some Christians becoming chiefs in indigenous communities in Ghana. They want to rule their people and still maintain both their Christian status and African identity. Such Christians want to be known as ‘Christian chiefs.’ How can one be a Christian and still rule over one’s people without compromising one’s Christian beliefs and practices?

³² Oseadeeyo Addo-Dankwa III, *The Institution of Chieftaincy in Ghana: The Future* (Accra: Gold Type Ltd 2004), 2.

1.8.2 CHRISTIAN CHIEFS

The chieftaincy institution which was once the revered form of traditional leadership in Ghana has been shaken by modernity, Islam, and Christianity.³³ In the past there was nothing like Christian chiefs in Ghana. The advent of Christianity has however led to formation of the Association of Christian Chiefs and Queen Mothers in Ghana (ACCQM).

Asante has mentioned in his work that Christians who have been enstooled as chiefs have all as part of their traditional role performed religious rituals in order to bring prosperity to their people.³⁴ This means that Christians who had been made chiefs were obliged to perform rituals. He added that none can be an adequate chief who does not perform rituals.³⁵ This means that any chief who does not perform the necessary rituals pertaining to chieftaincy may not be recognized by the community. It could even lead to destoolment of that chief.

Although Asante has argued that the tension between chieftaincy and Christianity is on the decline, he however admits that there are some areas still under contention. These are libation, polygamy, ancestral veneration, dependence on deities for well-being, and festivals. He concludes that these aspects of traditional culture have not received the church's approval in Ghana.³⁶

Awuah-Nyamekye is of the view that ACCQM are Christians who profess the Christian faith. They contend that some aspects of the religious role of chiefs contradict their Christian beliefs and practices.³⁷ To what extent can Awuah-

³³ Awuah-Nyamekye, "The Role of Religion in the Institution of Chieftaincy: The Case of the Akan of Ghana," <http://LUMINA, Vol.20, No.2, ISSN 2094-1188.Academia.edu files>.

³⁴ Asante, "Chieftaincy and Christianity," 234.

³⁵ Asante, "Chieftaincy and Christianity," 235.

³⁶ Asante, "Chieftaincy and Christianity," 238.

³⁷ Awuah-Nyamekye, "The Role of Religion in the Institution of Chieftaincy: The Case of the Akan of Ghana," <http://LUMINA, Vol.20, No.2, ISSN 2094-1188.Academia.edu files>.

Nyamekye classify all Christian chiefs as professing the Christian faith? We may not be in a position to classify all Christian chiefs as those who profess the Christian faith. This is because most of the chiefs in contemporary times belong to one denomination or the other as Asante has observed.³⁸ Again, some of them were born into Christian royal families. This indicates that they could be Christians by virtue of the fact that they were born into Christian homes, or because they belong to a church.

Asante, on the other hand, in his work “The Relationship between Chieftaincy and Christianity,” argues that the ACCQM was established to promote dialogue between chieftaincy and Christianity. He claims that due to the establishment of ACCQM the conflict between these two institutions has reduced.³⁹ Asante did not tell us the position of the church in relation to Christian chiefs in their congregations.

Akrong has also argued that one of the crucial difficulties arising from the field of research on chieftaincy is the relationship between chieftaincy and Christianity. He adds that, it has become an issue due to the relationship that had emerged between Christianity and traditional culture.⁴⁰ Again, he asserted that historically, the relationship between Christianity and indigenous African religion [chieftaincy institution] has always been one with conflict and accommodation.⁴¹ Scholars have stated some of the reasons that created conflict between the chieftaincy institution and Christianity.

Busia has observed that one issue Christians found difficult dealing with was chiefs declaring certain days as not going to farm. For instance, according to

³⁸ Asante, “Chieftaincy and Christianity,” 235.

³⁹ Asante, “Chieftaincy and Christianity,” 235.

⁴⁰ Abraham Akrong, “Religion and Traditional Leadership in Ghana,” in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006) 196.

⁴¹ Abraham Akrong, “African Traditional Religion and Christianity: Continues and Discontinues,” in *Reclaiming Human Sciences and Humanities through African Perspectives*, vol. 1, ed., Helen Lauer and Kofi Anyidoho (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2012), 307.

Christians, the observance of Thursdays as not going to farm will amount to confession of faith in *Asase Yaa* and her relation to harvest and famine and that would be a denial of the Fatherhood and providential care of God.⁴² Christians believed that to observe certain days as not going to farm will amount to ‘bowing’ to traditional practices and authority which is in conflict with Christian beliefs and practices. Christians argue that the Bible admonishes them not to worship any other god apart from Yahweh. “You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me” (Deut. 5:21).

Again, in Nigeria, some European missionaries referred to the chieftaincy institutions as ‘fetishism’ and ‘idolatry’ according to E. Bolaji Idowu. He stated that it was rather unfortunate to refer to the chieftaincy institution as ‘idolatry.’ According to him some European missionaries had misconceptions concerning the chieftaincy institution. They failed to understand the African worldview. He argues that to the African it is the spiritual aspect of their practice that is more important. The reality about the use of material or physical representations of emblems is that to the African the material has no meaning apart from the spiritual; the spiritual receives its importance and meaning from the material. The material thus becomes a symbol technically speaking. It is the divine entity that is represented by the physical object to which worship is rendered.⁴³ The bone of contention between chieftaincy and Christianity is the rituals associated with chieftaincy.

⁴² Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 136.

⁴³ E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (New York: SCM Press Ltd., 1975), 125.

1.8.3 RITUALS

There are various rituals associated with the institution of chieftaincy. Some of these include the processes of confinement and enstoolment, celebration of festivals, offering of sacrifice to deities, pouring of libation and the cult of ancestors among several others. Some Christians find some of these rituals as contradictory to their religious beliefs and practices. Yet, some Christians want to rule indigenous communities and maintain their Christian identity.

Agorsah describes ritual as the practical relationship one has with a supernatural force. Thus, all religions operate through several forms and ceremonies. He added that since ritual is performed in all religions, it is a misconception to tag the institution of chieftaincy as the only institution that performs rituals.⁴⁴ We cannot disagree with Agorsah that other religious institutions perform rituals. Christianity for example has baptism and confirmation as rituals.

The installation of a chief is accompanied by performing rituals. After the death of a chief, the selected candidate to replace the chief is expected to go through the ritual process of confinement and enstoolment. The ritual process is very important because through the process the chief automatically becomes the intermediary between the ancestors and the people. Also, the chief derives his sacredness from the ritual. This reflects what Busia has indicated that from the moment the new chief is enstooled his status becomes sacred.⁴⁵

The sacred nature of the chief makes him the intermediary between him and his people. It is in that capacity that a chief takes on a priestly character and mandated

⁴⁴ Agorsah, *African Tradition*, 33.

⁴⁵ Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 26.

to perform the religious rituals that are very significant.⁴⁶ The chief therefore plays the role of a priest. This is similar to the role of the Christian priest.

Chiefs are also expected to perform rituals after they have been enstooled as chiefs during the celebration of festivals. Abotchie has rightly pointed out that the chief is responsible for maintaining link between his people and the ancestors. His religious functions include performing rituals on important occasion such as *Akwasidae*, *Wukudae*, and *Odwira* festivals.⁴⁷ Does a Christian chief perform these rituals on festive occasions after he has been enstooled?

Some Christians are also of the view that the rituals associated with chieftaincy are ‘fetish’ and that the chief becomes the object of worship. However, it has been argued by Addo-Dankwa III that, the acts and rites performed by the chiefs such as veneration, pouring libation among others do not in any way make the chief ‘fetish’ and for that matter, in performing them, the Christian chief does not compromise his faith. The enstoolment of chiefs does not make them the object of worship, since traditional beliefs have it that the living should not be worshipped.⁴⁸

On the contrary, Busia has insisted that, per the act of enstoolment the status of the chief becomes sacred and thus the chief becomes an object of worship.⁴⁹ The chief does not become the object of worship as suggested by Busia. The reason is that the object of worship according to traditionalists is the Supreme Being. The chief is just the intermediary between the ancestors and the people. Does indigenous ritual performed by chiefs compromise the faith of Christian chiefs?

Another religious ritual associated with chieftaincy which in the view of some Christians conflicts their belief and practice is the cult of the ancestors. There are

⁴⁶ Kwasi Sarpong, *The Sacred Stools of the Akan* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1971), 26.

⁴⁷ Abotchie, “Position of the Chief,” 172.

⁴⁸ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 69.

⁴⁹ Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 26.

varied opinions among scholars as to whether the ancestors are worshipped or venerated.

R. Addo-Fening has argued that the ancestors are worshipped. He indicated that one important aspect of the *Abuakwa* religious system was the worship of the black stool which the people referred to as ancestral worship.⁵⁰ However, Addo-Dankwa III is against the argument that the ancestors are worshipped. He claims that the purpose of the cult of ancestors is to encourage the living to emulate the ancestors so that after they are dead, their memories could be preserved for posterity. This is emphasised by the fact that it is not everyone who qualifies to be an ancestor after death.⁵¹

Addo-Dankwa III further postulated that the *Akan* understanding of family includes the living and the dead, the living is not supposed to be worshipped, hence the ancestor could not be worshipped. He further argued that the confusion stems from the *Akan* word '*som*' which could mean either serve or worship in English. Some earlier researches with preconceived idea about indigenous African religion chose to apply the word worship to '*som*.'⁵²

Ninian Smart has also maintained that the ancestors are not worshiped. He argues that in Africa the ancestors are not seen as gods, and so he does not see how they could be worshipped. He also adds that to understand the relationship between the ancestors and the African people, it should be viewed from the point of communion. That is the African, within the frame work of their religious faith and belief; they are concerned with communication than worship. It is therefore in correct

⁵⁰ R. Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa 1700-1943: From Ofori Panin to Sir Ofori Atta* (Trondheim: Norwegian University, 1997), 33.

⁵¹ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 63-64.

⁵² Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 68-69.

for some religious faith and the west to misinterpret the relation the African has with the ancestors as worship.⁵³

Libation prayer is another ritual that some Christians consider as against their beliefs. Libation is simply prayer in African indigenous religion. It is the sacrificial pouring out of liquor to the supernatural forces or spirit. In discussing some of the challenges encountered between Christian engagements with African culture, Oduyoye has rightly stated that libation prayer was such that it is capable of bringing together all the benevolent ones who live in the realm of the spirit. It begins with God who is the Supreme Being, followed by the relevant deities to the ancestors, and the recent departed. The bringing up of these spirits is what baffles Christians and declared unacceptable.⁵⁴

Robert Owusu Agyarko's work on *Libation in African Christian Theology: A Critical Comparison of the views of Kwasi Sarpong, Kwesi Dickson, John Pobee and Kwame Bediako* looks at the respective views of these four theologians on libation. Sarpong was of the view that libation in its current form is not incompatible with the Christian faith. Bediako by contrast maintained that libation as is currently practiced among the Akan people is not compatible with the Christian faith. Lastly, Pobee and Dickson on the hand insisted that libation rituals are not compatible with the Christian faith. However, it could be adopted and adapted into the Christian faith so long as the content of the accompanying prayer is made in consonance with Christian theology.⁵⁵

⁵³ Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience*, 4th ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991), 61.

⁵⁴ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, "Christian Engagement with African Culture: Religious Challenges," in *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*, ed., James L. Cox and Gerri Ter Haar (Trenton: Africa World Press Inc., 2003), 94.

⁵⁵ Robert Owusu Agyarko, "Libation in African Christian Theology: A Critical Comparison of the views of Kwasi Sarpong, Kwesi Dickson, John Pobee, and Kwame Bediako" (Master's Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2005), v.

Ritual is the practical relationship between the supernatural forces. The chief derives his sacredness from the ritual processes of confinement and enstoolment. He gains his authority to serve as the intermediary between the people and the ancestors from the rituals. As a chief, he is expected to perform rituals during *Akwasidae*, *Awukudae*, among other festivals. Some scholars are of the view that, the ancestors are worshipped and others claim that they are venerated. Some Christians are of the view that the chief becomes an object of worship because he is the intermediary between the ancestors and the people. Again, findings of a critical comparison of four African theologians on libation and African Christian theology revealed divergent positions on libation rituals.

The proposed study will make a unique contribution to the chieftaincy institution in Ghana. This is because there is not much literature on Christian chiefs and African indigenous rituals. It will also make a unique contribution to the chieftaincy institution in Anum. The findings will be beneficial to the church because it would help them take a position on Christian chiefs in their congregations. Thus, the literature review is relevant to the study on ‘Christian Chiefs and African Indigenous Rituals in Ghana.’

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

For the purposes of this research, the work will be divided into five chapters. The first chapter consists of the introduction, statement of the problem, aim and objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, theoretical framework, methodology, literature review, organization of chapters and significance of the study. The second chapter deals with the Anum traditional area and chieftaincy. The chapter takes into consideration the origin of the Anum people, the indigenous world view of

the Anum people, origin of chieftaincy in Anum, governance structure and functions of a chief.

Chapter three looks at Chieftaincy and Christianity in Anum. The chapter looks at Christianity, Christianity in Anum, chieftaincy, and chieftaincy in Anum. It also discusses the relationship between chieftaincy and Christianity, traditional beliefs and practices in chieftaincy, can a Christian become a chief, the rise of Christian chiefs, and can Christian chiefs efficiently and fully rule Anum traditional area.

The fourth chapter looks at the discourses on chieftaincy and rituals in contemporary Ghana. It involves what is ritual, chieftaincy and rituals. It also considers Christian chiefs and rituals, belief in the ancestors, and dependence on deities for well-being. Chapter five is the conclusion and it consists of summary, recommendation and conclusion.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Literature on chieftaincy among the *Akan*, *Ewe*, and *Ga* traditional people of Ghana abounds. However, on the discourse emerging in the area of Christian chiefs and the indigenous religious rituals expected of chiefs in the traditional communities, not much information is available. Again, data on the PCG's attitude towards the phenomenal growth of Christian chiefs and their indigenous ritual responsibilities is scarce. Also, the fact that this thesis is focused on this crucial issue, which has not received much attention, and especially among the Anum traditional people, provides the much-needed contextual study for this emerging debate. Thus, the work would be relevant to scholars and researchers who are interested in pursuing further studies in the field of contemporary developments in chieftaincy, rituals, and resilience of the

traditional religions as well as Gospel and Culture. The findings and recommendations may also assist the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to take a position on the presence of Christian chiefs in their congregations.

The next chapter will look at the historical and religious traditions of the Anum traditional area. This includes historical overview of the Anum traditional area, the origin of the Anum people, the indigenous worldview of the Anum people, origin of chieftaincy in Anum, governance structure, functions of a chief, and conclusion.



CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE ANUM PEOPLE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we looked at the background to the study. We stated that the institution of chieftaincy existed before the arrival of the western missionaries in Ghana. The chieftaincy institution remains one of the important forms of traditional leadership in Ghana.

This chapter looks at the historical and religious traditions of the Anum people. The chapter takes into consideration the origin of the Anum people, the indigenous world view of the Anum people, origin of chieftaincy in the Anum including who is a chief, the process of succession, instoolment, and destoolment of a chief, governance structure, functions of the chief, and conclusion.

2.2 THE ORIGIN OF THE ANUM PEOPLE

According to Yaw Danso, the Anum people were part of the old empires of the Northern part of Ghana. They left for the southern part of the land and lived with the *Amaniapong* at *Asante Mampong*. They had to leave the place for *Adanse* because the relationship between them turned sour. During the migration they were led by the elders and the priests and under the direction of the deities. He added that the Anum people did not have a black stool during the time. They always relied on their elders for decision making. They often said in the *Guan* language when there was an issue ‘*Ene wo hu Anum*’ (we need to consult our elders). The people they lived with started calling them ‘Anum’ People (elderly people) and the name ‘Anum’ got stuck.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Yaw Danso, *The Basel Mission in Anum: 1863-1918* (Heritage Series, 2012), 2.

The Anum people are part of the *Guan*-speaking communities of present Ghana. It is believed that they were among the first settlers in the land of Ghana. Tradition has it that the Anum people after migrating south to live with the *Amaniampong* in *Asante Mampong* area left with the *Boso* people and a host of *Kyerepong* people. The *kyerepong* people are the *Guans* that settled at parts of the *Akwapim* ridge. From *Adanse* they moved to *Asebu* under the leadership of King Anno Asimeng. The communities of *Asebu*, *Anua*, *Afutu*, *Asenee*, *Anum*, and *Boso* were ruled by him. Anum and *Boso* were his close relationship.⁵⁷

It is said that King Anno Asimeng was a wicked king and he had his stool occupied at *Asebu* on the hill of *Bobowisi*, where his shrine was located. After some time, three communities rebelled against him because they wanted their freedom. They fought against him for several years because they wanted to oust him from the town. During the war the *Boso* people abandoned him to his fate and they fled away. He was left with only the Anum people by his side. The Anum people fought for close to five years and when they realized that they were being killed, they also decided to leave. The Anum people fled with Anno Asimeng. When they got to the *Okye* River it was flooded and so they could not cross.⁵⁸

As they were behind the *Okye* River, their enemies were after them. They consulted their oracle who told them that the god of the *Okye* River demanded a human sacrifice before they could cross the river. King Anno Asimeng was willing to sacrifice his life for the people of Anum. He swore to the Anum people not to have anything to do with the people of *Boso* since they abandoned him and fled. He again said that he would die with the stool because none of the Anum People was willing to sacrifice his life to save them. He told the Anum People that they would pay later in

⁵⁷ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 1-3.

⁵⁸ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 4.

future. The king entered the river together with the stool and got drowned. The river receded and the Anum people crossed the river on dry ground. After they had crossed, the river got flooded again and so their enemies could not get to them. The king left the Anum people with his *akpi* (god) and it was the *akpi* that directed them to *Nyanawase*⁵⁹ to settle there.⁶⁰

At *Nyanawase* their leader was Neny Kwasi Anyane together with his elder brother Neny Kolihue. During their stay at *Nyanawase* Kwasi Anyane got another stool for himself. It is said that Kwasi Anyane found a stool floating on a river.⁶¹ While at *Nyanawase*, there was a treaty between the *Akwamu* and the Anum people that they were equal allies. As time went on, the *Akwamu* people increased in strength and so they made the Anum people their subjects. There were about seventy-seven battles between the two people over issues of privilege of the *Anumhene*, and in particular about the regalia to be used by the *Anumhene*. Due to the numerous fights the Anum people decided that they will leave *Nyanawase* and they journeyed towards the Volta.⁶²

The first person to arrive in the Volta basin was Neny Kwasi Anyane who was sent by his elder brother Neny Kolihue. Neny Kolihue I was the occupant of the Anum stool at *Nyanawase*. It is believed that Kwasi Anyane arrived in 1724. In 1728, the rest of the Anum people left *Nyanawase* under the leadership of Neny Kolihue I. It is said that when they got to the Volta basin they were stopped by the *Dasiki* cataract under the big *Kpese* rock. They made preparation to leave one Sunday morning and as they arose from their sleep, a river suddenly filled the Volta bed and about hundred people were drowned. The leader himself lost most of his

⁵⁹ Nyanawase is present day Nsawam in Ghana.

⁶⁰ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 4.

⁶¹ Danso *Basel Mission*, 4.

⁶² Kwame Ampene, *History of Guan-Speaking People of Ghana: The Undisputed Aborigines of Ghana* (Boso: Laterian House, 2005), 80.

stool-paraphernalia and treasures. This led to the forbidden oath ‘*Okpese-bui-ase*’ (under the *Okpese* stone). From this tragedy water from the Volta had become a taboo at the *Letwi*⁶³ shrine.⁶⁴ The Anum people swore an oath that they would never drink from the Volta River because it was the river that killed and destroyed their property. However, after many years had gone by rituals were performed to allow water from the Volta River to be used at Anum.⁶⁵

It is believed that the present land occupied by the Anum people was settled by the People of *Boso*. The Anum people met a tribe called the *Danke*. Because they wanted more space to settle they found out from the priest of *Danke* what their *Letwi* (god) hated. The priest told them that *Letwi* hated big mushroom known as *Eblekpomo* (big mushroom). One day the Anum people scattered mushroom on the compound of *Letwi*. This made the *Danke* people leave Anum to settle at present day *Boso*. The *Danke* are the *Boso* people.⁶⁶

One influential person, Obeng Kwatia did, not go with the *Boso* people. The Anum people entered into an agreement with him so that in the event of war he would not betray them to the *Boso* people. They persuaded him to join the chiefs of *Amanfro*, *Amoanda* and *Apenkwa* to ‘drink fetish’ by placing four stones together in front of the chiefs house as a symbolic act. This is expressed as *Anum Ebui Inε* (the four sacred stones of Anum). These stones are in front of the *Omanhene*’s palace today.⁶⁷

According to Yaw Afari (an elder of Anum *Adeaba*), Anum has three main divisions. These are *Amoanda*, *Amanfro* and *Apenkwa*. *Amoanda* consists of *Maneyase*, *Tsenaahiase* and *Odumto*. Under *Amanfro* we have *Adeaba*, *Latsaase*,

⁶³ *Letwi* is the head of all the deities in Anum.

⁶⁴ Ampene, *Guan-Speaking People*, 81.

⁶⁵ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 6.

⁶⁶ Ampene, *Guan-Speaking People*, 81.

⁶⁷ Ampene, *Guan-Speaking People*, 81.

Agyeikode, and *Krotia*. Lastly, *Apenkwa* comprises *Ofoansi*, *Osase*, *Ajisu* and *Ekpagyrafo*. They also have a place called Christian Quarters. The missionaries as well as some of the local converts settled there.⁶⁸

The Anum Traditional area is situated within the mid-Volta along the Volta river Basin in Ghana. Although Anum is situated in the mid-Volta, it is part of the Eastern Region. That is why it is located within the *Asuogyaman* district. They occupy the mountainous area on the left bank of the Volta and lies just at the foothills of the famous *Tatabiri* Mountain.⁶⁹

According to Okyeame Yaw Nhyira (Anum *Ama* okyeame) the Anum traditional area comprises of *Osiabura*, *Asikuma*, *Osebeng*, *Labolabo*, *New Dodi*, *Nkwakubew*, *Opokuase*, and *Agu*. Nearby communities include *Tosen*, *Nanyo*, and *Boso*.⁷⁰ The main occupation of the Anum people is farming. However, before the arrival of the missionaries, they cultivated cassava, maize, and other varieties of yam known as *Nkanfo*, *Akpuka*, and *Obroni*. They also grew and traded in cotton, gold, copper and fish.⁷¹

2.3 THE INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEW OF THE ANUM PEOPLE

The indigenous religion of the Anum people has been practiced by the local people over the years before the Anum people came into contact with Islam and Christianity. The indigenous religion constitutes the worldview of the people of which the Anum people are no different. These include belief in *Onyame*⁷² (The Supreme Being), belief in *akpi* (deity), belief in *nenye eni* (ancestors), and belief in *ason ho*

⁶⁸ Interview with Yaw Afari on April 3, 2015.

⁶⁹ Interview with Yaw Afari on April 3, 2015.

⁷⁰ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

⁷¹ Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 150th Anniversary Brochure of the Ebenezer Congregation, Anum, 13.

⁷² *Onyame* in the *Gua* language means one who is Greater.

(witchcraft) among others. Indigenous religion is linked to the institution of chieftaincy because we have stated that, the chieftaincy institution is the embodiment of the cultural, tradition and religious beliefs of the people.⁷³

2.3.1 DEITIES OF THE ANUM PEOPLE

Before the arrival of the Basel missionaries the Anum people had several deities that they related to in their daily activities. They also offered libation prayer through the deities and the ancestors to the Supreme God. Some of the deities in Anum are *Letwi*, *Okpoi*, *Sakum*, and *Dente*.⁷⁴

It is said that *Dente* at *Krakyé* was in Anum. The people went to offer sacrifice to *Dente* in a cave and it pulled out one of its hands to bless them and also receive gifts from the people. The young men in the town decided to bring it out so that they could see its whole body. *Dente* asked the young men to stop because he was not in good shape. When they finally pulled it out, *Dente* was a half-naked human being. He cursed the Anum people that they would never be united because they had seen its nakedness. It is believed that as a result of that curse the Anum people are not united.⁷⁵

According to oral tradition Nenyé Kolihue left Anum for Accra to purchase some items to celebrate a festival. While in Accra he went to swim in the sea and he got drowned. But, after some few days he came back from the sea with *Sakum*. Nenyé Kolihue returned to Anum with *Sakum*. From that time the people offered sacrifices to *Sakum*. A common belief among the Anum people is that that the *Sakumo* (deity) in

⁷³ 150th Anniversary Brochure, 13.

⁷⁴ 150th Anniversary Brochure, 13.

⁷⁵ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 9.

Tema is the female counterpart of *Sakum*.⁷⁶ According to Danso during the annual festival celebration in Anum, the animal used for the ritual sacrifice is not slaughtered but the animal dies through incantations recited by the priest of *Sakum*.⁷⁷

Again, *Okpoi* is believed to be European and it has a white dog. Some people claim that they sometimes meet *Okpoi* with its dog at midnight.⁷⁸ According to Okyeame Yaw Nhyira, when other dogs in Anum encounter *Okpoi* and its dog they bark throughout the night. This brings a lot of noise to the town. In order to forestall the dogs from making noise, it has become a taboo to have a dog in Anum. This taboo still exists in Anum today. Okyeame Yaw Nhyira further indicated that when they see a dog in Anum the young people will kill it instantly. He however admitted that there could be dogs in some of the newly developed homes in Anum. But because it's a taboo, the dog cannot come out of the house onto the streets.⁷⁹

2.4 ORIGIN OF CHIEFTAINCY IN ANUM

We have stated that during the migration of the Anum people from the north to the south they were led by the elders and priests and directed by the gods. According to Okyeame Yaw Nhyira, Chieftaincy as a form of traditional leadership in Anum began when the people living in the community considered the idea of having one person to be their leader. The people selected Nenyé Kolihue I to be their first chief in Anum. Since then the family of Nenyé Kolihue I became the royal family of Anum.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 9.

⁷⁷ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 10.

⁷⁸ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 10.

⁷⁹ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

⁸⁰ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

Gyekye has rightly pointed out that in several African communities the chief is elected or chosen from the royal family.⁸¹

Okyeame Yaw Nhyira added that the selected chief in Anum must go through the ritual process of confinement and enstoolment. Through the ritual process of enstoolment the chief acquires a sacred personality and legitimacy to lead his people.⁸² Akrong has pointed out that through the ritual process of confinement and enstoolment the chief acquires the qualities of the ancestors. Through the ritual process the chief becomes a *de jure* ancestor and thus acquire a sacred personality.⁸³ The chief is given the title *Nenye*.⁸⁴ However, among the Akan people of Ghana, the chief is given the title *Nana*. Akrong has indicated that the title *Nana* is to recognize the sacred nature of the chief and also to indicate that he or she has the mandate to rule on behalf of the ancestors.⁸⁵

2.4.1 WHO IS A CHIEF?

In Anum traditional area there are several categories of chiefs. Anum is a paramount state and so it is governed by the *Omanhene* (paramount chief) and the *Ohemaa* (queen mother). The *Omanhene*'s family are most of the time the royal of the state. This is because they are the original settlers of the town. In addition to the *Omanhene* are the divisional chiefs and the sub-chiefs. It should be noted that some of the divisional chiefs come from the royal family of the *Omanhene*. For instance, the *Kyidomhene* and the *Adontehene* come from the royal family.⁸⁶ The *Omanhene* and the divisional chiefs occupy black stools. Most of the sub-chiefs do not occupy black

⁸¹ Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, 109.

⁸² Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

⁸³ Akrong, "Religion and Traditional Leadership," 197

⁸⁴ Anum people call their ancestors *Nenye eni*. Thus, *Nenye* means one representing the ancestors.

⁸⁵ Akrong, "Religion and Traditional Leadership," 198.

⁸⁶ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nkyira on April 3, 2015.

stools. For example, the *Mmrantehene* (youth chief) or *Nkosuohene* (development chief) do not have black stools. Due to these differences the ritual process of enstoolment of chiefs are different from each other.

Having stated that, article 277 of the 1992 constitution of the republic of Ghana defines a chief as a “person, who hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage.”⁸⁷

2.4.2 PROCESS OF SUCCESSION AND ENSTOOLMENT OF CHIEFS IN ANUM

The process of succession of chiefs in Anum traditional area takes place after a stool becomes vacant. According to Nana Okyempem Adu VII (*Benkumhene* of Anum), succession of the Anum *Omanhene* (paramount chief of Anum) is chosen from three maternal sisters from the royal family of the *Omanhene*. Similarly, among the divisional chiefs succession is also from three maternal sisters. Succession begins with the son of the eldest woman in the royal family. After the death, abdication or destoolment of the first son, the next person to occupy the stool is the son of the second sister. This continues in a cycle till the last of the three sisters have occupied the stool.⁸⁸ Thus, one can become a chief from his maternal family and not from his paternal family. The enstoolment process begins with nomination and confirmation.

⁸⁷ The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 153.

⁸⁸ Interview with Nana Okyempem Adu VII on October 10, 2015.

2.4.2.1 NOMINATION AND CONFIRMATION

According to *Okyeame* Yaw Nhyira, the prospective candidate to be enstooled as a chief in Anum is invited by the elders to Anum. This happens when the prospective chief does not reside in Anum. After he has honoured the invitation, he is informed that he has been nominated as a candidate to occupy the black stool. If he accepts the nomination, it paves way for the process of enstoolment to begin. If he does not accept the nomination, he is persuaded or given time to ponder over his nomination. If he still refuses, a second person is nominated among the children of the matrilineal royal family.⁸⁹ This process of nomination is different from other ethnic groups in Ghana. In other places it is the sole responsibility of the queen mother and her immediate advisors that meet to carry on with the nomination.⁹⁰

After the candidate has accepted the nomination the kingmakers have to seek the consent of his father. If the father does not consent to the nomination of his son, the son cannot become the chief. After the father has given his consent, he is presented with a sheep and a drink from the family.⁹¹ Having accepted the sheep and the drink the *abusua panyin* (family head) of the candidate's family then introduces him to the *abusua* (family). The *abusua* will give their approval to the nominated candidate. The candidate is introduced to the public for their approval. The candidate would be presented to the *Gyasehene* to begin the confinement ritual process.⁹²

2.4.2.2 CONFINEMENT OF A CHIEF

There are different schools of thoughts regarding the confinement of chiefs in Anum. According to Nenye Kolihue XI confinement is a period for preparing the

⁸⁹ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

⁹⁰ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 21.

⁹¹ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

⁹² Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

prospective chief to ascend the black stool.⁹³ Nana Okyempem Adu VII also indicated that there was nothing like confinement in Anum. His reason was that the prospective chief is a member of the royal family and so he received education on chieftaincy from the home.⁹⁴

Nana Adjowa Sabea I opined that in the past the confinement period was forty days but today it is two weeks.⁹⁵ Although these chiefs gave different reasons regarding the confinement of chiefs, the researcher is of the view that one cannot be enstooled as a chief without going through confinement rituals. The reason is that the confinement ritual initiates the prospective chief into the chieftaincy institution.

Having stated that, some of the chiefs interviewed indicated that the confinement of a chief is a period for educating the prospective chief. Nana Afua Ntowa I mentioned that it was a period for educating the prospective chief on traditional matters.⁹⁶ Nana Kolihue XI on his part mentioned that the prospective chief is educated on issues involving morality, taboos, the history of the stool, how to interpret the sound of the drum, and how to wear the traditional cloth among several others.⁹⁷

Okyeame Yaw Nhyira also informed the researcher that during the confinement period the prospective chief is taught how to interpret the sound of his drum. For example, when the drum sounds '*okasakyere*' it means that the *Okyeame* (linguist) is wanted at the palace. The reason is that the *Okyeame* is the one who speaks for the chief. Concerning moral issues, he is advised not to have sex with someone's wife, not to eat in public, not to drink alcohol in public, not to walk bare

⁹³ Interview with Nanye Kolihue XI on October 6, 2015.

⁹⁴ Interview with Nana Okyempem Adu VII on October 10, 2015.

⁹⁵ Interview with Nana Adjowa Sabea I on October 10, 2015.

⁹⁶ Interview with Nana Afua Ntowa I on October 10, 2015.

⁹⁷ Interview with Nanye Koliue XI on October 6, 2015.

footed, among several others. During the confinement period the prospective chief could go out of the room if he so wishes.⁹⁸

We wanted to find out from Nana Asiedu Ntow III (*Krontihene* of Anum) whether he went through the period of confinement and also whether they washed his feet with the blood of a sheep. Nana informed us that he went through the confinement period. It was a time for educating him on traditional practices. Some of the things he was taught included how to speak in public, how to dance in public, and how to wear his cloth. Nana indicated that a sheep was slaughtered. Some of its blood was poured in a plate and a little was sprinkled on his feet. This was a symbolic sign of cleansing him from all filth which he might have contaminated before he became a chief.⁹⁹

Nana Adjowa Sabea I told us that the confinement period was very strict in the olden days. It was strict because they acted according to the laws of the land. These days it is relaxed. The period is used to educate the prospective chief. He is taught not to reveal secrets of the town to anybody. He is washed with leaves and water to fortify his body. She mentioned that during the enstoolment period she told the kingmakers that she did not want them to slaughter a sheep and pour the blood on her feet. Nana indicated that a woman does not hold the *akofena* to swear an oath. In that situation one of the divisional chiefs could do that on her behalf. According to Nana Adjowa Sabea I it was the *Kyidomhene* who swore the oath on her behalf.¹⁰⁰ After the confinement period, the day for the enstoolment follows.

⁹⁸ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

⁹⁹ Interview with Nana Asiedu Ntow III on November 9, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Nana Adjowa Sabea I on October 10, 2015.

2.4.2.3 ENSTOOLMENT OF A CHIEF

The enstoolment process takes place at the palace of the *Omanhene*. Okyeame Yaw Nhyira informed the researcher that the *Gyasehene* is responsible for conducting the enstoolment. The family of the prospective chief provides one big gallon of palm wine and a sheep to the palace. After the divisional chiefs, sub-chiefs, queen mothers, the elders and the people have all gathered at the palace, the prospective chief is brought out of the room. From the room he lowers his cloth to his waist and the *Gyasehene* then asks him to sit on the floor. The lowering of the cloth to the waist is a symbolic gesture of showing respect to the other chiefs. Also, the sitting on the floor indicates humility.

The sheep is slaughtered and some of the blood is sprinkled on the feet of the chief. The blood is a symbolic cleansing (*dwira*) of the chief. The palm wine is shared for the chiefs and the people. After that, some white powder is poured on the prospective chief as a symbol of victory. From there the prospective chief is sent back to the room. In the room he changes his dress and puts on his beautiful *kente* cloth and wears his *ahenema* and other ornaments to match. After he has finished dressing he is led to the black stool room. He is placed three times on the stool and he is given a stool name. Finally, he is accompanied by the *Gyasehene* and the elders and the chief is introduced to the people as their new chief. After that he has to swear an oath to the *Omanhene*, the queen mothers, the divisional chiefs, sub-chiefs, the elders and people of Anum.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

2.4.2.4 SWEARING OF OATH

The act of swearing oath in chieftaincy is for the divisional or sub-chief to pay allegiance to the *Omanhene*, the elders and the people of Anum. The *Omanhene* also swears an oath to the elders, divisional chiefs, and the people. By swearing an oath the chief is committed to the rules governing chieftaincy. According to Nenyé Afari Sei III the new chief is given *akofena* (sword). The *abusua panyin* takes back the *akofena* and swears an oath to the new chief. He swears that he has placed the new chief on the black stool, when he calls on him (rain or shine) at any time he will attend to him, except he is indisposed. After the *abusua panyin* has finished swearing the oath, the sword is given to the new chief.¹⁰²

The new chief also swears an oath to the queen mothers, the divisional chiefs, the sub-chiefs, the *abusua panyin*, the *asafoatse* (chief of the *asafo*), the elders and people of Anum. The new chief swears that since they have put him on the black stool whenever they call on him he will answer except he is sick. Then a day is set for the new chief to swear before the *Omanhene* and the vice versa. After the swearing of oath the *Omanhene* would then send his name to the national house of chiefs to be gazetted.¹⁰³ To gazette a chief means to register his name with the national and regional house of chiefs. After the chief has been gazetted he is called *Nana*. Hence, the title *Nana* and *Neyne* is used inter-changeably in Anum for their chiefs.

2.4.2.5 DESTOOLMENT OF A CHIEF IN ANUM

In the Anum traditional area a chief could be destooled if a divisional chief or sub-chief shows signs of gross disrespect to the *Omanhene*, the elders, or the people. Again, a chief could be destooled if he indulges in excessive alcohol intake, or caught

¹⁰² Interview with Nenyé Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

¹⁰³ Interview with Nenyé Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

having sexual relationship with people's wives. Similarly, the *Omanhene* could also be destooled if he misconducts himself. The process of destoolment begins with the *abusua panyin* of the chief making an official complaint to the *Omanhene*. This is done after the *abusua panyin* has reprimanded the chief several times without showing any sign of remorse. The *abusua panyin* would also inform the family, the elders of the town, and all the other chiefs. He would then charge the chief by informing him of the reason why he wants to destool him. The *abusua panyin* will call for a meeting at the *Omanhene's* palace and present a sheep, a bottle of schnapps and a gallon of palm wine.¹⁰⁴

After he has provided the items, the *abusua panyin* will then tell the chief his faults. After that he presents the items to all present and then he pours libation. If the chief disagrees with the charge, it becomes a struggle between the chief and the *abusua panyin*. When this happens the chief is monitored and when he is found in town, the *abusua panyin* with the help of the people will remove his *ohenema* from his feet. This indicates that he has been destooled. Situations of such nature often lead to misunderstanding and fighting among the people. The reason is that the chief also has followers who support him.¹⁰⁵

2.5 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The governance structure in chieftaincy shows how the various chiefs rule in their various jurisdictions. In Anum traditional area the governance structure is headed by the *Omanhene* (paramount chief). He is supported by divisional chiefs, sub-chiefs, and queen mothers. Every chief has *Okyeame* (linguist) who is the spokesperson for the chief.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

According to Nana Okyempem Adu VII, the Anum traditional area is a Paramount state. The structure of chieftaincy in Anum has the *Omanhene* as the head. The head of administration in every traditional area is the paramount chief. The *Omanhene* is assisted by divisional chiefs, queen mothers, and the elders. He added that the governance structure is military in character. A military formation involved the *Omanhene* as the Commander-in-chief. The captain of the advance team was the *Adontehene*. The *Nifahene* was in charge of the right wing and the *Benkumhene* the left wing. The *Kyidomhene* was responsible for protecting those behind the troops. The idea was that the *Omanhene* wanted to win wars and to offer maximum security to the people and his territory.¹⁰⁶ Oseadeeyo Addo-Dankwa III agrees with the assertion that the paramount chief has other divisional chiefs and sub-chiefs with whom he put together policies to help rule the area.¹⁰⁷

Okyeame Yaw Nhyira and elder Yaw Afari informed the researcher that the paramount chief is the head of all the chiefs in the Anum traditional area. In fact the whole of Anum traditional area is under his jurisdiction. He has a queen mother, divisional chiefs, sub-chiefs, linguists, and heads of families that offer advice to carry out administrative duties.¹⁰⁸ Rose Mary Amenga-Etego has also observed that the institution of chieftaincy has a decentralized form of governance. The paramount chief does not take decisions alone but consults his council of elders. The representatives of the divisional chiefs, sub-chiefs, clan elders and households heads, constitute the council of elders.¹⁰⁹ *Okyeame* Yaw Nhyira added that the *Mankrado* is the deputy to the *Omanhene*. Any gift that comes to the *Omanhene's* palace is shared

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Nana Okyempem Adu VII on October 10, 2015.

¹⁰⁷ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 29-30.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with *Okyeame* Yaw Nhyira and Elder Yaw Afari on April 3, 2015.

¹⁰⁹ Rose Mary Amenga-Etego, "Religion and Democratisation: A Perspective," in *Unpacking the Sense of the Sacred: A Reader in the Study of Religions*, ed., Abamfo O. Atiemo, Ben-Willie K. Golo, Lawrence K. Boakye (Oxfordshire: Ayebia Clarke Publishing, 2014), 24.

in the palace of the *Mankrado*. Also, any visitor who comes to Anum and wants to see the *Omanhene*, he or she should first call on the *Mankrado*.¹¹⁰

Nenye Kolihue XI informed the researcher that other divisional chiefs include the *Gyasehene*, *Krontihene*, *Ankobeahene*, *Twafohene*, and the *Sanahene*. He mentioned that the *Kyidomhene* is the *abrewatia* (old lady) of all the chiefs. In times of decision making he is the last consultant. He is referred to as *abrewatia* because *abrewa* is perceived as an old lady full of wisdom. In times of decision making, the old people say that they are going to consult *abrewa*. Thus the *Kyidomhene* is considered as one with wisdom. In the olden days the *Kyidomhene* was the captain of the rear guard during war.¹¹¹

Nenye Kwasi Anyane V (*Adontehene* of Anum) on his part admitted that during the olden days the *Adontehene* was the captain of the advance guard in Anum. He added that when there is a meeting of all the chiefs he is their leader. During any gathering of chiefs, the *Adontehene* should be greeted first. He is also the leader of the chiefs during the celebration of festivals. Today, there are no more wars in Anum and so the *Adontehene* is involved in developmental programmes. He assumed the position of *Omanhene* because the *Omanhene* was indisposed.¹¹²

Nenye Bombo V mentioned that the *Benkumhene* and the *Nifahene* in the olden days were in charge of the left and right wing during war. At durbars or gathering of chiefs they sit on the left and right hand side of the *Omanhene* respectively. The *Benkumhene* is the chief of the *Benkum* division and the *Nifahene* is the chief of the *Nifa* division of Anum traditional area. They have both contributed

¹¹⁰ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 3, 2015.

¹¹¹ Interview with Nana Kolihue XI on October 6, 2015.

¹¹² Interview with Nana Kwasi Anyane V on April 3, 2015.

immensely to the development of Anum. They have organized the youth in the community to construct a road in the town.¹¹³

Addo-Dankwa III has rightly observed that the *Gyasehene* is responsible for the upkeep of the palace. He is always in the palace to make sure that very important stool items are in safe custody. He again supervises the daily activities and administration of the Palace. The Process of enstoolment of new chiefs is the responsibility of the *Gyasehene*. The *Ankobeahene* provides protection for the *Omanhene* during war time. He is the body guard of the *Omanhene*. The *Sanahene* is the treasurer or finance minister of the palace. It is his duty to ensure that all revenues coming into the Palace treasury are kept safely. He accounts for the money on some specific occasions. He has the tax of making payments of all approved expenditures.¹¹⁴

2.6 FUNCTIONS OF A CHIEF

2.6.1 RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS

Chiefs are very important personalities in indigenous communities due to the numerous functions they perform. In the worldview of the Anum people religion plays a crucial role in chieftaincy. This idea has been emphasized by Irene Odotei when she indicated that in the perspective and belief system of indigenous people, it is very difficult to detach religion from economic, political and social activities.¹¹⁵

According to Abotchie, the chief acts as the intermediary between the people and the ancestors. As the intermediary he has the responsibilities to perform religious

¹¹³ Interview with Nenyé Bombo V on October 17, 2015.

¹¹⁴ Addo Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 32.

¹¹⁵ Irene K. Odotei, "Women in Male Corridors of Power," in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Legon: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 89.

functions. As part of his religious functions he is required to perform rituals on behalf of his people. The ritual performed by the chiefs is to maintain a link between *Nananom nsamafo* (ancestors) and his people. The ritual is performed during the celebration of festivals such as *Akwasidae*, *Awukudae*, *Dapaa* and *Odwe Ogyi*. On these special occasions the chief performs rituals to cleanse the black stool, feed the ancestors and to request help from *Nananom nsamanfo* for peace, wellbeing, bumper harvest and the general progress of the community.¹¹⁶ In the Anum traditional area the chief is responsible for performing his religious function during the celebration of the annual *odwe ogyi* (yam festival) festival.

2.6.2 MILITARY FUNCTIONS

In our contemporary times the military functions of chiefs is no longer in effect. The reason is that with the introduction of republican states, it is the state security that is responsible for military battles. We can say the military function of the chief has become obsolete. However, in the olden days it was the chief who led his people into battle. During war time the chief was the primary target of the enemies. The arrest of the chief meant that his people had to surrender.¹¹⁷ The idea of going to war was the reason for the setting up of five main divisional chiefs in Anum.

2.6.3 JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS

The judicial function of the chief is very dear to the people because that is the place for settling disputes. G. K. Acquah has rightly pointed out that indigenous communities had a well-organized system of administration made up of the chief and his council of elders. In every community there were structures for conflict and

¹¹⁶ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 172.

¹¹⁷ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 171.

disagreement resolutions through the council. For instance, the chiefs and his elders made several important decisions through discussions and deliberations to resolve conflicts in Ghana.¹¹⁸ When disputes are settled the chief and his elders make sure that the factions are reconciled. Also, his judicial function helps in preventing crimes in the community.

According to Abotchie crime in indigenous communities is a serious offence because it harms not only the people in the community but the gods as well. Some offences that are harmful to both the people and the gods are stealing, adultery, incest, rape, assault, the invocation of a curse (*dua bo*), witchcraft, treason and breaking of a taboo. These transgressions are tried by the chief's court. In a situation where the accused offender is found guilty the punishment includes death penalty, dismissal from office, imposition of fines and ostracism.¹¹⁹

According to Nana Kwasi Anyane V, it is the duty of the chief to settle disputes. Also, if there is an invocation of a curse on a member of the community, it is the duty of the chief to revoke the curse. The requirement for revoking a curse is a sheep, a gallon of palm wine and a bottle of schnapps. Nana indicated that there were other items which he could not disclose. The one who invoked the curse is sent to a site and the sheep is slaughtered and the blood is mixed with other things. The chief uses the items to cleanse the person as a means of revoking the curse. After that a heavy fine is demanded in order to prevent people from invoking curses.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Justice G. K. Acquah, "The Judicial Role of the Chief in Democratic Governance," in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 66.

¹¹⁹ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 172.

¹²⁰ Interview with Nana Kwasi Anyane V on April 3, 2015.

2.6.4 ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS

As part of the chief's contribution to the economic and social development of his community he mobilizes his people for communal labour. When the chief wants to put up a school building, the community comes together and offer free labour for the project. For instance, the *Nifahene* of Anum traditional area organised his people to construct a street in his jurisdiction. In modern times the idea of communal labour is on the decline. Communal labour is the coming together of some of the people in the community to offer free labour to construct a project. In the past, the chiefs' source of income included royalties from stool lands, felling of timber, fines from adjudicating cases, and levies or tax received from the people.¹²¹

In addition, chiefs traded in commodities such as gunpowder, gold, cola nuts, slaves, and livestock among others. The revenue derived from these activities was used for hospitality, buying war materials for his military or *asafo* groups (these were groups that fought for the communities). Some of the money was also used for the day to day activities of the palace and the maintenance of the royal regalia. We need to acknowledge that any misappropriation of revenue was, and still is, an offence that could be a genuine reason for the destoolment of a chief.¹²²

These days some chiefs have set up educational funds to help support brilliant but needy students. They appeal to philanthropists and corporate organisations to donate to the fund. For instance, under the auspices of Nana Kwasi Anyane V, computers have been donated to the local school. He has also solicited for funds to provide medical equipment to the hospital.¹²³

¹²¹ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 24.

¹²² Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 173-174.

¹²³ Interview with Nana Kwasi Anyane V on April 3, 2015.

2.6.5. CULTURAL FUNCTIONS

We have stated earlier that the chief is the embodiment of the religio-cultural practices of the people. Abotchie has rightly stated that the chief as a person is considered as embodying the cultural heritage of his people. The culture of the people is found in their song, religion, customs, traditions, dance, rituals, beliefs, symbols, art and craft.¹²⁴

In Anum, the culture of the people is manifested during the celebration of Easter. A durbar is held to welcome all the Anum people who had come to Anum to celebrate the Easter. The chiefs display their mastery over the *kete* (traditional dance by chiefs) dance. The chiefs and people sing their traditional songs and the rich regalia of the chiefs are put on display. Some chiefs also ride in palanquins. Libation is poured to thank the ancestors for seeing them through the whole year. The women prepare *otim ne aboboi* (kenkey and beans), a local dish of the Anum people. The chaff of the corn is removed before it is grinded to prepare the kenkey.¹²⁵

2.6.6 POLITICAL FUNCTIONS

As part of the political function of the chief he is expected to maintain law and order within the community. The chief enforces the norms of the community by awarding favours to those who abide by the norms and punishment to those who go contrary to the norms. The chief is expected to inform his people about government policies and programmes. He provides land for the government for construction of schools, hospitals, airports, road among several other projects.¹²⁶ Again, chiefs are

¹²⁴ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 174.

¹²⁵ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nhyira on April 4, 2016.

¹²⁶ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 26.

represented on the council of state in Ghana. In spite of all these, chiefs are not supposed to play active roles in politics according to the 1992 constitution of Ghana.

One area of controversy in chieftaincy in Ghana is that chiefs are not supposed to indulge in active politics. This is included in the 1992 constitution of the republic of Ghana. It is controversial in the sense that the chiefs are the first point of call during election campaigns and yet they are not to be seen campaigning for one political party or the other. For this reason, Kwame Boafo-Arthur has argued that “the constitutional provisions that prevent chiefs from participating in partisan political activity are a challenge to the chieftaincy institution.”¹²⁷ He quoted Article 276 (1) “a chief shall not take part in active party politics; and any chief wishing to do so and seeking election to Parliament shall abdicate his stool or skin.”¹²⁸

Although chiefs are not supposed to be actively involved in party politics, they still play their political roles. Politically, the chiefs are supposed to be part of the district local assembly. Also, they are sometimes consulted by the President of the Republic of Ghana regarding projects that have to be constructed in the community. The chiefs provide space for the siting of schools in the community. For instance, the District Chief Executive of Asuogyaman District Assembly consulted Nana Kwasi Anyane V for the siting of a day secondary school. The chief gave the government land at Asikuma for the school project.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Kwame Boafo-Arthur, “Chieftaincy in Ghana: Challenges and Prospects in the 21st Century,” in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development* ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert k. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 157.

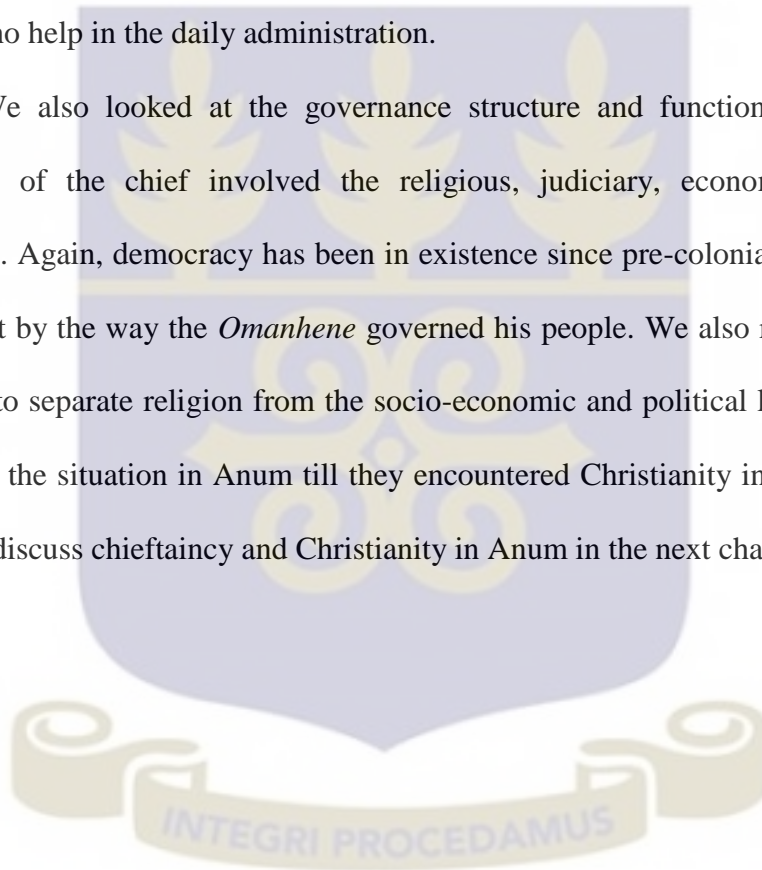
¹²⁸ Boafo-Arthur, “Chieftaincy in Ghana,” 157.

¹²⁹ Interview with Nana Kwasi Anyane V on April 3, 2015.

2.7 CONCLUSION

We have looked at the historical and religious traditions of the Anum people. The Anum people migrated from the northern part of the country to the south. They were led by the elders and the priests and directed by the deities. Anum is a paramount state and headed by a paramount chief. It was established that Nenyekolihue I was the first chief of Anum. Although the paramount chief is the overlord of Anum, he does not take decisions in isolation. He has divisional chiefs and sub-chiefs who help in the daily administration.

We also looked at the governance structure and functions of chiefs. The functions of the chief involved the religious, judiciary, economic and cultural functions. Again, democracy has been in existence since pre-colonial times. This was found out by the way the *Omanhene* governed his people. We also realize that it was difficult to separate religion from the socio-economic and political life of the people. This was the situation in Anum till they encountered Christianity in the 19th century. We will discuss chieftaincy and Christianity in Anum in the next chapter.



CHAPTER THREE

CHIEFTAINCY AND CHRISTIANITY IN ANUM

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we looked at the historical and religious traditions and the migration of the Anum people. We discovered that during the migration of the Anum people, they were led by the elders and the priests and directed by the deities. The Anum traditional area is a paramount state and so it is governed by an *Omanhene* with assistance from the queen mother, divisional chiefs and sub-chiefs. It was established that chieftaincy institution is a system of traditional leadership of governance. The people have a strong sense of their worldview, which involves belief in the spirits of the ancestors and deities.

In this chapter we shall delve more into the institution of chieftaincy in the Anum traditional area and its encounter with Christianity. Christianity was introduced to the Anum people by the Basel Missionaries. Before the arrival of the Basel missionaries in Anum, the chieftaincy institution existed. Christians and chiefs in the past were at loggerheads because of the latter's involvement of old age rituals that Christianity considered as 'idolatry.' However, the apparent spiritual conflict between the two institutions has reduced in recent times. This is because many Christians have included the garments of chieftaincy alongside the cloak of Christianity.¹³⁰

3.1 CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is a religion that originated out of Judaism in the 1st century C.E. The foundation or the basis of Christianity is on the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. This is referred to as the gospel. Thus, the followers

¹³⁰ Asante, "Chieftaincy and Christianity," 235.

are called Christians. There are many different varieties in beliefs and practices. Also, there are various branches of Christianity across the globe. Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism are the three major branches of Christianity. There exist other numerous subcategories within each of these branches.¹³¹

Until the latter part of the 20th century, most of the followers of Christianity were found in the West. Today, Christianity has spread to every part of the world. Adherents of Christianity believe in the one and only triune God as the creator of the universe. He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and they believe that Jesus is the divine and human Messiah sent to save the world. Christianity is also noted for its emphasis on faith in Christ Jesus. The sacred scripture of Christianity is the Bible. Central to Christian practice is the gathering at churches for worship, fellowship, and Bible study, and engagement with the world through evangelism and social action.¹³²

It is in the light of this that some Christians volunteered and came to Africa as missionaries to help spread the gospel. In Ghana, the missionaries established a number of churches. In Anum for example, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana was established by the Basel Evangelical Mission Society.

3.2 CHRISTIANITY IN ANUM

Christian missionary activities began in the Gold Coast, now Ghana, in the 15th century. The Basel mission activities began in 1828. The mission began its activities on the villages of Ningo and Osu which were close to the Danish fort of Christianborg. Around 1832 the Basel missionaries left the Christianborg fort for the mountainous regions of Akuapim where the weather was more conducive and favourable. Most of the early missionaries died in the course of propagating the

¹³¹ “Christianity,” accessed October 9, 2015, <http://www.patheos.com/Library/Christianity>.

¹³² “Christianity,” accessed October 9, 2015, <http://www.patheos.com/Library/Christianity>.

gospel. It was Andreas Riis who came to continue with the work. He moved the headquarters of the Basel mission to Akropong in the Akuapim hills.¹³³ After spending some time at Akuapim, the Basel mission decided to spread the gospel message to other parts of the country.

Fred Agyemang has observed that the Basel mission initiated a strategy in the 19th century for the purpose of sending the gospel message and formal education to other parts of the country. The strategy was to use Anum as the starting point to link *Salaga* in the Northern Region and other towns.¹³⁴ The Basel missionaries arrived at Anum in 1864 to spread the gospel message to the people. The first three Basel missionaries who started work at Anum were J. C. Fetzer, R. Klaus, and H. Rottman. The missionaries first encountered a chief by name Nana Kolihue I.¹³⁵ It was the chief that gave the Basel missionaries land for them to settle. The stage was set for the work of the Basel mission to begin in Anum.¹³⁶

On their arrival the chief and people of Anum welcomed them and the missionaries at a public meeting explained the intent of their journey. The chief allowed them to work among his people and gave them land on the hill to settle. Philip Kwabi acted as their interpreter and mediator since they did not understand any local language.¹³⁷

Nana Kwadwo Frimpong was the first person to host the three missionaries at *Osaase* in Anum. It was in the hall of Nana Kwadwo Frimpong that the missionaries began their work. Nana Kolihue I and his elders gave the three missionaries land on Mount *Mframandwo* to begin building a mission house. The mission house built by

41. ¹³³ Peter B. Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1986),

¹³⁴ Fred Agyemang, *Our Presbyterian Heritage* (Accra: Presbyterian Press, 2006), 181.

¹³⁵ 150th Anniversary Brochure, 13.

¹³⁶ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 17-18.

¹³⁷ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 22-24.

the missionaries in 1869 serves as the Administration block of the Anum Presbyterian Senior High today.¹³⁸

The missionaries began their activities by buying land and putting up buildings. They learnt the Guan language but later on abandoned it for the *Twi* language. Kwabi who was a catechist, preached in the town while the missionaries traded in cotton. The work of the missionaries in Anum and its environs grew gradually. It took a long time for the Anum people to accept the gospel message because they were deeply involved in African indigenous religions.¹³⁹

Danso has indicated that the Christian community at Anum in 1865 was 16, comprising 3 communicants and 13 non-communicants. Some of the Christians who were baptised include sixty year old Maria Mensah (the mother of Kwabi), Michael Kwame Sai, Frederick Bernhardt Akrofi from *Larteh* (served as the house boy of Mueller), and Joseph Kwame Dapa. Kwame Dapa helped the missionaries in their preaching activities.¹⁴⁰

After the death of the three missionaries Mueller was sent to Anum to continue with the work. Mueller in 1868 at one of his preaching tours encountered an old traditional priest and tried to convert him. He asked him to leave his idols and come and worship God. The traditional priest replied that he served God but did it through the deities because they were intermediaries between God and man.¹⁴¹ Mueller did not take it kindly with the traditional priest and he argued that the deities were just objects. He told the priest that God was the creator of the world and His power is observed through lightning and thunder. Even though the missionary's argument did not bring about positive results it was indicative of the perspective of

¹³⁸ 150th Anniversary Brochure, 13.

¹³⁹ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 26-27.

¹⁴⁰ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 26-27.

¹⁴¹ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 28-30.

the European missionaries that there was nothing good in indigenous African religion. Some of the missionaries were of the opinion that the African had no religion and no concept of God.¹⁴²

After the death of Mueller, Rev. Fritz Ramseyer and his wife Rosa were sent to Anum to continue the work. Ramseyer took over the leadership of the work at the station. Johannes Kuhne accompanied him and helped with the cotton trade. At the time Ramseyer got to Anum the war between the Anum people and Akwamuman had not stopped. As a result of the tribal wars and misunderstandings, the mission station was destroyed in 1869 by the Asante people.¹⁴³

The war almost brought the activities of missionary work in Anum to a halt. The people lived in fear and so they fled to live with their cousins on the Akuapim Mountains. While at Akuapim, thirty of the Anum people got baptized. They decided to come back to rebuild their town. Because they were baptized they were worshipping on their own. Albert Oko, a blacksmith from Osu in 1877 returned to Anum. He was a Christian and so he became a leader of the church. The Christians made a request for an agent who would revive the work of Christianity in Anum. As a response, David Asante was sent to Anum to begin the work all over again.¹⁴⁴

David Asante managed to spread the gospel to *Boso*, *Kpalime*, *To*, *Tsate*, *Kayera*, and *Toseng* communities including some villages near Anum. He worked for almost seven years in Anum and its environs. Under his leadership there was increase in the number of converts and many people were baptized. He established the Salem

¹⁴² Danso, *Basel Mission*, 30.

¹⁴³ J. Kofi Agbeti, *West African Church History: Christian Missions and Church Foundations: 1482-1919* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986), 68.

¹⁴⁴ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 53.

or Christian Quarters concept by the year 1888. By this date there were twenty two buildings at the Christian quarters.¹⁴⁵

3.3 CHIEFTAINCY

Addo-Dankwa III has observed that the uniqueness of the nature of chieftaincy could be much appreciated if we realized that it was deeply rooted in the social fabric of the people. He added that, after the Ghanaian chieftaincy had gone through the early stage of normal leadership, it has now settled on the foundation of the extended family structure. In Ghana today, the chieftaincy has family units with family heads as the base, with paramount chiefs at the top. This indicates that the *abusua panyin* (head of family) is also regarded as a chief in some communities.¹⁴⁶

Most of the political powers of Chiefs have been reduced with the introduction of democratic governance in Ghana. This is the reason why Abotchie posed the question: “Has the position of the chief become anachronistic in contemporary Ghanaian Politics?”¹⁴⁷ Abotchie’s question is relevant because the central government has taken most of the functions of the chiefs today. Among the functions of chiefs included military, religious, judicial, administrative, and legislative. However, political independence of Ghana has taken over some of the functions of the chiefs.

For instance, the military function has been taken over. This was due to the fact that the British took over the administration of the land. Again, there were no longer tribal wars. Also, with the promulgation of the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance of 1883 by the colonial masters, the judicial powers of chiefs have been reduced. Furthermore, their economic power, especially where the chiefs could levy its people

¹⁴⁵ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 54.

¹⁴⁶ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 1.

¹⁴⁷ Abotchie, “Position of the Chief,” 169-181.

to earn some income, was also taken over by the government.¹⁴⁸ These notwithstanding some chiefs are custodians of stool lands; hence they make some money through the sale of land and payment of royalties.

In spite of the fact that most functions of chiefs have been taken away, one function that chiefs have been able to retain is their religious function. This is possible because of the persistence of the indigenous religious beliefs and practices. Though several people in the communities have converted to Christianity, the people still give their chiefs some recognition because they occupy the seat of their ancestors (black stool). They also regard them as the link between them, the ancestors, and the deities.¹⁴⁹ When it is time to celebrate the *odwe odyi* festival, some of the people get involved. At the climax of the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival some of the people gather at the *Omanhene's* palace and welcome those who went to the ancestral home.

3.4 CHIEFTAINCY IN ANUM

Chieftaincy in Anum began after Nenye Kolihue I, his brother Kwasi Anyane, and the rest of the people settled in Anum. After they had settled, Nenye Kolihue I was made the first chief of Anum. History has it that after the death of Nenye Kolihue I, there were two contestants to the stool. These were Adamu and Tawiah who were both from the royal family. When Adamu became the next chief of Anum, Tawiah was aggrieved and so he agreed with the people of Akwamu to raid the Anum town on one *Akpo-Otu-Ble* day celebration.¹⁵⁰

The Akwamu people have been looking forward to capture the 'golden gong-gong' from the Anum people. It was the custom of the Anum people to bring the

¹⁴⁸ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 174-176.

¹⁴⁹ Abotchie, "Position of the Chief," 176.

¹⁵⁰ Ampene, *Guan-Speaking People*, 82.

‘golden gong-gong’ out of the shrine house during the celebration of the *Akpo-Otu-Ble*. On that day the Akwamu people attacked the Anum people and killed about seventy people. Even so, they were not able to get hold of the ‘golden gong-gong’ from the Anum people. Because Tawiah hailed from the royal house of Nenyé Kolihue I, the chieftaincy title of the Anum royal stool was cancelled from the lineage of Nenyé Kolihue I.¹⁵¹

Nenyé Bombo V also informed the researcher that the Akwamu people were able to kill the Anum people because there was merry making which created noise in the town. He explained that during the celebration of the festival some people went to the ancestral home to perform rituals. Due to the noise in the town the Anum people did not hear that their people were under attack. In order to prevent it from occurring again, a ban on noise making was imposed on the Anum people during the celebration of *Akpo-Otu-Ble*.¹⁵²

This was to enable the people in the community to hear the screaming from the people if they are under attack, by their enemies. Sometimes people do not understand reasons why there is a ban on noise making during the celebration of festivals. The Anum story illustrates the wisdom behind the ban on noise making during the celebration of festivals in some parts of Ghana.

3.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHIEFTAINCY AND CHRISTIANITY IN ANUM

The relationship between chieftaincy and Christianity in Anum has been cordial. The chief for instance gave the Basel missionaries land to settle as indication of the cordial relationship. However, differences of world views and the introduction

¹⁵¹ Ampene, *Guan-Speaking People*, 82.

¹⁵² Interview with Nana Bombo V on October 17, 2015.

of Salem or Christian quarters by the Basel missionaries marked the beginning of the conflict between the two institutions.

For instance, Addo-Fening has observed that the general problem that brought conflict between chieftaincy and Christianity in most parts of the country was the differences of world views. He stated that from the perspective of the chiefs, religion could not be separated from politics. To the chiefs, the role of religion was to sanction political authority and provide solace for the state. On the other hand, Christianity was of the view that state and politics could be separated. This would lead to freedom of worship of conscience, irrespective of their obligation to the state. This led to a polarized situation, with mutual suspicion between the church and the chieftaincy institution.¹⁵³ This situation was not different in Anum. The Christian converts knew that to live at the Salem provided freedom of worship.

The concept of Salem began at Akropong and it was replicated in all the mission stations set up by the Basel missionaries. Peter A. Schweizer referred to Akropong as the “Mother of All Salems,” because the Salem was the original abode for Christians in Akropong.¹⁵⁴ In the Salem the new converts were made to follow a rigorous and religious discipline prescribed by the missionaries. The converts were made to live by a different ethical code. As part of their training the missionaries did not allow polygamy, ancestral veneration, or the observance of rituals.¹⁵⁵

Agyemang has also indicated that those living in the Salem were placed under a Christian routine of morning devotion in church and homes. They were engaged in Bible teachings with discussions including questions and answers. Again, they

¹⁵³ Richard Addo-Fening, “Christian Missions and Nation-Building in Ghana: An Historical Evaluation,” in *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*, ed., James L. Cox and Gerrie Tar Haar (Trenton: African World Press, Inc. 2003),

¹⁵⁴ Peter A. Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast: The Basel Missionaries in Colonial Ghana* (Accra: Smartline Limited, 2000), 79.

¹⁵⁵ Schweizer, *Survivors on the Gold Coast*, 78.

observed Friday evening prayers and intercessions, and Sunday morning forenoon service. Others included Bible life, abstinence from immoral living, learning the catechism and confirmation classes for six months before one was confirmed, traditional ancestral worship was avoided, no pouring of libation, no shrine worship, and one could not be absent from church worship. A convert was removed from this exclusive Christian community when he or she went against any of the above mentioned sanctions. This was the hall-mark of the Basel Mission stations established at Akropong, Osu, Aburi, Abokobi, Krobo-Odumase, Nsaba, and Anum.¹⁵⁶

Although we have stated that Christianity and chieftaincy have coexisted peacefully, the Salem concepts created some challenges between them. This happened in both Anum and *Boso*. The creation of the Salem created the impression that those who were not in the Salem were ‘worldly’ people. The chief and people were not willing to leave their indigenous religion. They sometimes asked the Christians to strictly abide by the taboos of the town. On occasions where Christians refused to observe some of the taboos they were banned from fetching water from the wells in the town.¹⁵⁷

On one occasion, the chief of *Boso* received some gifts from Europe and he pledged to treat the Christians well. He assured the Christians that he would have friendly relationship with them. However, the friendly relationship he promised the Christians did not last long. The reason for the problem was that the chief of *Boso* was not happy with the way and manner the people were converting to the Christian faith. For example, the women who did not live at the Salem realized that the Salem women were treated far better than the town women. They also observed that the Salem women had some amount of freedom. As a result, most of the town women divorced

¹⁵⁶ Agyemang, *Presbyterian Heritage*, 36.

¹⁵⁷ 150th Anniversary Brochure, 15.

their husbands and became Christians. This certainly became a huge problem for the chief and his people to deal with. Again, the son of the chief had divorced two of his three wives so that he could receive baptism. This became a threat to the chief. He decided to put some conditions down to curb what went on in the traditional area.¹⁵⁸

The chief decreed that in future a woman could only become a Christian with the approval of her husband or parents. If a woman decided to become a Christian against the will of her husband the woman would pay her husband hundred per cent of the dowry the man paid to her during marriage. This replaced the fifty per cent as approved by custom. Again, no man was permitted to become a Christian. Any man or woman found to be a Christian was to be treated as an outcast. If the man was not bothered with the punishment, his relatives had to hand him over to the chief or fined one hundred and fifty marks. The elders and teachers went to plead with the chief over his decision. The chief and his elders agreed but only dropped the second condition and replaced it with another. Christians were forbidden to evangelize in the houses but only on the streets.¹⁵⁹

Although the Salem concept affected the cordial relationship between Christians and the chiefs, David N. A. Kpobi was of the view that with the circumstances at the time, the missionaries had no choice but to adopt the Salem concept. He argued that the missionaries adopted the Salem concept as a useful place for nurturing the new converts. He described the Salem as an innovative and practical way by which the missionaries responded to a prevailing situation at the time. He further stated that the indigenous people were knitted traditionally by a society that adhered to rules and taboos. So it was the Salem concept that could break that tradition. Although the Salem system was good, it presented a challenge to the new

¹⁵⁸ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 54-55.

¹⁵⁹ Danso, *Basel Mission*, 55-56.

converts, Kpobi admitted. They were caught in conflict situations because they did not know how to participate in some rituals and still maintain their new faith. The few converts that stood up and defied all the odds against traditional authorities, were often times banished from the town. Thus, through the establishment of the Salem, the new converts enjoyed some freedom of peace to receive Christian training and teachings.¹⁶⁰

Nana Afari Sei III mentioned that currently there is a good relationship between chieftaincy and Christians. The church invites the chiefs during their annual harvest programmes and they also invite the church during the celebration of the yam festivals. He said that during the celebration of one yam festival, the chiefs invited Rev. Tom Amoah Kumi who was the minister-in-charge of the PCG, Ebenezer congregation, Anum. According to Nana Afari Sei III, Rev. Tom was very happy to be part of the celebration of the yam festival. The reason was that Rev. Tom learnt so many things from the rituals.¹⁶¹

According to Nenyé Kolihue XI there is a cordial relationship between the chiefs and the church. They obey and respect them as their leaders. The chiefs invite the church during the celebration of the yam festival and other programmes organised by the chiefs. The chiefs organize annual thanksgiving church service programme. All the churches in Anum are invited and they do attend. That notwithstanding, there is conflict between the church and the chiefs. In the opinion of the church, some aspects of the rituals are against Christian beliefs and practices. Nenyé Kolihue XI argued that

¹⁶⁰ David N. A. Kpobi, "Conviction of Things not Seen: The West Indian Factor in the Establishment of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana," in *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, vol. XVI No.2, July 2008, 13-14.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Nana Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

it is rather a conflict between culture and religion. The reason was that the church and chieftaincy cannot have a clear distinction between culture and religion.¹⁶²

Nana's comments have been supported by Clarke. He writes that Christianity's primary goal was to propagate the gospel message and so they suppressed all contrary beliefs and rituals associated with chieftaincy. Even so, they do not also provide any objective and balanced view of African indigenous religion.¹⁶³

Catechist Benjamin Obuobi Ntim (the Catechist of PCG, Ebenezer congregation, Anum) informed the researcher that there was a cordial relationship between the chiefs and the church. He mentioned that Nana Afua Ntowa I (queen mother of Anum traditional area), Nana Adjowa Sabea I (queen mother of *Ademuseampa*), and Nana Afari Sei III (Mankrado of the *Nifa* division) are all members of the PCG.

3.6 TRADITIONAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN CHIEFTIANCY

Traditional beliefs in chieftaincy involve belief in the Supreme Being, divinities and the ancestors. They also believe that God is the creator of the universes but has other lieutenants which are the divinities. The core practices involved in chieftaincy is the cult of the ancestors and celebration of festivals. When a chief is enstooled, his status changes and he or she is made one with the ancestors. This indigenous ritual symbolizes a change of the chief into an occupant of a black stool.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Interview with Nenyé Kolihue XI on October 6, 2015.

¹⁶³ Peter B. Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd), 221.

¹⁶⁴ Gilbert, "The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?" accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

The chief acts as the intermediary between the ancestors on the one hand and the living on the other hand. They believe that human beings are weak and so they have to depend on benevolent transcendent powers for protection and sustenance. Traditional beliefs indicate that the ancestors have a continued existence, and they take interest in the affairs of the community. They possess the power to reward for good deeds and to punish for wrong deeds.¹⁶⁵

On festive occasions such as *Odwira*, *Akwasidae*, *Awukudae*, the chief is expected to pour libation in honour of the ancestors. Nana Adjowa Sabea I informed the researcher that most of the things associated with chieftaincy are culturally related issues. For instance during the celebration of *Akwasidae*, *Dapaa* and *Odwira* the ancestors are giving food. The chief puts meat and mashed yam on the black stool. They ask for the blessings of the ancestors. This, according to Nana, is more of asking than ancestral worship.¹⁶⁶

Nenye Kolihue XI on his part indicated that as part of his religious role, he is expected to pour libation in the stool room every forty days, which is known as *Akwasidae*. It is a day that they remember the ancestors because the black stool protects the people spiritually. He added that they also petition the ancestors for prosperity among others.¹⁶⁷

In relation to the cult of the ancestors which is at the core of chieftaincy, Asante has indicated that most Christians claim that it is incompatible with Christianity. They argue that it is nothing more than superstition and cannot be accepted by Christians. It goes against the Christian form of worship which infringes on the first commandment. He added that some Christians however do not see

¹⁶⁵ Gilbert, "The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?" accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Nana Adjowa Sabea I on October 10, 2015.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Nenye Kolihue XI on October 6, 2015.

anything wrong with ancestral veneration. To such Christian's ancestral veneration is the highest form of respect that one could give to the ancestors.¹⁶⁸

Arhin Brempong has also observed that the perception of some Christians towards traditional beliefs is that chieftaincy is associated with ancestral veneration. This is expressed in the pouring of libation during the celebration of *Adae* and *Odwira* festivals. They consider such practices as paganism and so they do not want to have anything to do with chieftaincy.¹⁶⁹

3.6.1 CULT OF THE ANCESTORS

The concept of the cult of the ancestors is very important in the institution of chieftaincy. The reason is that ancestors are ever present in the consciousness of the Ghanaian. Due to that the Ghanaian has always, in several ways, honoured or paid respect to the ancestor by preserving their cultural practices and celebrates their memories.¹⁷⁰ This is evidence in the celebration of *Akwasidae*, *Awukudae*, and *Odwira*. Thus, the chiefs rule on behalf of the ancestors. And so it is their responsibility to preserve the traditions which have been handed over to them by the ancestors. Busia has stated that the chiefs rule on the laps of the ancestors.¹⁷¹ This indicates that the chiefs are representatives of the ancestors. Who qualifies to be an ancestor?

According to Sarpong, one must be dead to be an ancestor. The person should have lived a long and ripe age and died a “good” death. Any person who dies through leprosy, epilepsy and any strange disease cannot be an ancestor. Also, if one dies tragically through drowning, or shot accidentally cannot be an ancestor. One must lead

¹⁶⁸ Asante, “Christianity and Chieftaincy,” 241-242.

¹⁶⁹ Arhin Brempong, *Traditional Rule in Ghana*, 68-69.

¹⁷⁰ Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, 161.

¹⁷¹ Busia, *Position of the Chief*,

a good exemplary life. Thus, a thief, rapist, murderer is not considered an ancestor. Lastly, except in rare cases, the person must have married with children.¹⁷² Among the Anum people the same qualifications are applied to any person who wants to be venerated as an ancestor.

Where is the dwelling place of the ancestors? The importance of the institution of the ancestors is that the dead are considered as part of the family. In African indigenous religious worldview the family consists of the living, the dead and the yet to be born. Smith has rightly observed that among the *Akan* people the *abusua* (family) includes not only those who are alive, but the dead and the yet to be born. Important rites such as birth, naming a child, puberty, marriage, death, and veneration of the ancestors; by the proper observation of these rites the life and well-being of the people are preserved.¹⁷³ For example, among the Samoans who are found in an island in the Pacific are of the view that the spirits of their chiefs are closer than those of the living. As such they are consulted on all important occasions.¹⁷⁴

It is believed that when a good person dies, he or she goes to a place known as *Asamando* (land of the dead). It is a place that the person continues life just on earth. If the person was a chief on earth, he rules as a chief there. It is in this regard that when a chief dies human beings are killed to go and serve the chief.¹⁷⁵ However, this idea of people living in a world of consciousness did not make sense with the Europeans who came to Ghana. They consequently made a blanket condemnation of the activities of the indigenous people. They referred to all of these as deception.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Peter K. Sarpong, *Peoples Differ: An Approach to Inculturation in Evangelization* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers), 98.

¹⁷³ Smith, PCG, 65.

¹⁷⁴ Sarpong, *Sacred Stools*, 5.

¹⁷⁵ Sarpong, *Peoples Differ*, 99.

¹⁷⁶ Clare Macrae, *The Sacred Tree: Divinities and Ancestors in Encounter with Christianity in the Religious Experience and History of the early Irish and the Akan people of Ghana* (Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 2001), 84.

3.7 CAN A CHRISTIAN BECOME A CHIEF?

Whether or not a Christian can become a chief is based on the religious role of the chief and the sacred nature of the chieftaincy institution. It is the religious basis of the chieftaincy institution which has brought Christianity and chieftaincy into conflict.¹⁷⁷

In the past, most of the chiefs were not Christians and so it was very easy to have chiefs who were not Christians. Today, most people from the royal lineage are Christians and belong to one church or the other. It has thus become very difficult to ask the question whether a Christian can become a chief. The fact of the matter is that Christians are already chiefs in Ghana. For example, in Akyem Abuakwa Nana Sir Ofori Atta became the first *Okyehene* to become a Christian chief.¹⁷⁸

Another example of a Christian who became a chief was Opanin Adu of Adawso in the Eastern region of Ghana. Opanin Adu later became known as Abraham Adu after he had received baptism from the Basel missionaries. The Basel mission gave him a linguist staff, a black umbrella and a gong-gong which served as a regalia and power of authority. The people perceived him as a Christian chief.¹⁷⁹ He was perceived as a Christian chief because he had received baptism from the Church and because he was a member of the church. Again, successive chiefs of Adawso were all Christians and they were recognized by the State and the Church.¹⁸⁰

Nana Affum Kafena III (*Ankobeahene* of Anum) is of the view that a Christian can become a chief. His reason is that chiefs do the work of God and are mandated to lead the community as well. His challenge has to do with the fact that chiefs are not

¹⁷⁷ Asante, "Christianity and Chieftaincy," 234.

¹⁷⁸ Peter Nyarko Duodu, "Christian Chiefs and Traditional Practices in Akyem Abuakwa Traditional Area" (Master's thesis, University of Ghana, 2013), 41.

¹⁷⁹ Ebenezer Ayesu, "Conflict of Institutions: Chieftaincy, Church and State: A Case Study of Adawso Akuapem (1960-1980)," in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed., Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 493-495.

¹⁸⁰ Ebenezer Ayesu, "Conflict of Institutions," 495.

allowed to attend communion in the church. He claims that if the church wants to go strictly by the teachings of Christ and the Bible then none is qualified to attend communion.¹⁸¹

Nana Asiedu Ntow III (*Krontihene* of Anum) believes that a Christian could become a chief. The reason is that chieftaincy is about leadership. He however believes that some aspects of chieftaincy are in conflict with Christianity. Nana indicated that he does not take communion because it is not good for him. His reason for not taking communion was that as a chief he is not expected to take communion.¹⁸²

Nenye Afari Sei III does not see why a Christian cannot become a chief. The most important thing is the faith the Christian chief has in Christ Jesus. Again, it also depends on the heart of the Christian chief. However, Nana was of the opinion that the Christian chief can do everything in the church, but cannot attend communion. We wanted to know if the church prevented him from attending communion.¹⁸³

He said that the church did not prevent him but he would not attend communion because of the rituals he performs for the black stool. Nana revealed that he had decided not to attend communion because it prevented him from making request from *nananom nsamanfo* (ancestors). The other reason why he does not attend communion is that he pours libation in the stool room. In his opinion it is unchristian and against his conscience. He concluded by stating that some people are Christians and attend communion, yet their life style does not reflect the life of Christ.¹⁸⁴

Rev. Mensah Mark Boye, a minister of the PCG, on his part stated that a Christian cannot be a chief. His reason was that the blood of the sheep is used to

¹⁸¹ Interview with Nana Affum Kafena III on November 9, 2015.

¹⁸² Interview with Nana Asiedu Ntow III on November 9, 2015.

¹⁸³ Interview with Nenye Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Nenye Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

pacify the gods and to fortify the black stool and this indicated that the chieftaincy institution is 'idol worship.'¹⁸⁵

Nana Affum Kafena III on his part argued that the use of animal blood was for symbolic purposes. For instance, a sheep is slaughtered and some of the blood is used to cleanse (*dwira*) the chief. The '*dwira*' is symbolically the washing away of all 'dirt' from the chief. The idea is that the chief may have visited some places before he became a chief. This is the reason why the chief has to be 'cleansed' from all 'dirt.' The only time a sheep would be slaughtered and the blood poured on the feet of a chief in Anum is when the chief has broken a taboo. For example if a chief has had sex with someone's wife it constitutes a serious offence.¹⁸⁶

3.8 THE RISE OF CHRISTIAN CHIEFS

In Ghana when we talk of Christian chiefs some people look at the Abokobi example. During the activities of the Basel Missionaries at Abokobi in Ghana, a Christian chief was installed in the PCG. The tradition of installing a Christian chief in the church by the PCG continues till this day. The Christian chief of Abokobi traditional area is Nii Samuel Mohenu III. In this work a Christian chief is not necessarily a chief who has been installed in the PCG. A Christian chief however, is a traditional ruler who has gone through the baptism and confirmation rites, and who believes in the resurrected Christ and confesses Jesus Christ as his or her personal saviour. This definition of a Christian chief came clearly from the field work.

The rise of Christian chiefs in Ghana began when some indigenous royals who were Christians accepted to become chiefs. Again, it stems from the fact that some chiefs were exposed to the Christian faith through formal education. Lastly, it was due

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Rev. Mensah Mark Boye on August 15, 2015.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Nana Affum Kafena November 9, 2015.

to the fact that most of the royals belong to a church. Asante has rightly observed that some chiefs became Christians because they have either been exposed to the Christian faith, through formal education, or by virtue of the fact that most of them belong to a church. For instance King Prempeh II had his education in a Methodist school, and *Otumfuo* Opoku Ware II had his education in an Anglican school.¹⁸⁷

In the PCG when Nana Agyemang Badu I was nominated to become the *Omanhene* of Dormaa traditional area, he informed the then SYNOD about his nomination. He made it known to the PCG that he had accepted to become a chief but he still wanted to be a communicant. After the SYNOD deliberated on his request he was allowed to become the *Omanhene*. He thus became a Christian chief and a communicant.¹⁸⁸

Again in recent times, chiefs are adherents and full members of various Christian institutions. In some communities, chiefs hold certain key leadership positions in various congregations in Ghana. The PCG appoints the most senior Presbyter as chief when the stool becomes vacant in communities where the church is dominant. For example, in *Adawso*, it had become the custom for the Presbyterian Church to select the most senior presbyter as chief.¹⁸⁹ In addition, an association of Christian Chiefs and Queen Mothers has been formed.¹⁹⁰ This confirms that there are quite a number of Christian chiefs in the country. This is evident in the number of Christian chiefs in the Anum traditional area.

Some of the Christian chiefs in Anum traditional area include Nenye Kolihue XI, member of Church of Pentecost, Achimota assembly; Nana Okyempem Adu V, member of the Anglican Church; Nana Bombo V, belongs to the International

¹⁸⁷ Asante, "Christianity and Chieftaincy," 243.

¹⁸⁸ Gilbert, "The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?" accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

¹⁸⁹ Ayesu, "Conflict of Institutions," 496.

¹⁹⁰ Asante, "Christianity and Chieftaincy," 235.

Charismatic Church, Accra-Fadama. Nana Asiedu Ntow III, Nana Afari Sei III, Nana Adjowa Sabea I, and Nana Afua Ntowa I, are all members of the PCG, Anum.¹⁹¹

3.9 POSITION OF PCG CONCERNING ‘CHRISTIAN CHIEFS’ IN THEIR CONGREGATION

The researcher wanted to know the position of the PCG concerning the presence of ‘Christian Chiefs’ in their congregation. Catechist Benjamin Obuobi Ntim of PCG, Ebenezer Congregation informed the researcher that any member of PCG who is a chief and occupies a black stool is not given communion. He argued that as part of the chief’s religious role he is expected to perform rituals during the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival in Anum. Some of the rituals include slaughtering of sheep and pouring the blood on the chieftaincy stone. This, in his view, contradicts the PCG’s doctrine and belief.¹⁹²

The catechist added that after the ritual performance in the shrine house, some of the people go to the ancestral home to perform rituals. They return from the ancestral home and inform the community that ‘*Letwi*’ sends blessings, good life, and prosperity. In the Guan language it is pronounced ‘*Mkpe ne nye ooo*’ (good wishes and blessings) and the people respond ‘*yee*’ (accepted). The catechist said that during such occasion he announces to all his church members not to be part of the gathering because it is *abosom som* (idol worship).¹⁹³

He opined that the PCG was not against the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival but they were against ‘Christian chiefs’ who observed the rituals. He also mentioned that one thing that heightens his suspicion about chieftaincy is that during

¹⁹¹ Interview with Okyeame Yaw Nkyira on April 3, 2015.

¹⁹² Interview with Benjamin Obuobi Ntim on October 29, 2015.

¹⁹³ Interview with Benjamin Obuobi Ntim on October 29, 2015.

the celebration of ‘*akpor otu*’ the sheep that is killed is sent to the shrine house. The sheep bleats thrice and dies without cutting its throat. He has therefore concluded that there was more in the rituals than meets the eye. ‘Christian chiefs’ do not also hold positions in the PCG. These are some of the reasons why ‘Christian chiefs’ are not recognized as full members of the PCG in Anum.¹⁹⁴

In addition to that the PCG constitution clearly states that a Christian should not occupy a black stool. The Third Schedule of the constitution looks at membership and life in the church. Chapter 19 looks at Christian beliefs and traditional customs. Under stools or skin functionaries it is stated that:

“No Christian is expected to be a stool/skin functionary, for almost every stool functionary has to participate in some ceremony connected with ancestral spirits and it is evident that no categorical declaration on purely civil significance of the various stool emblems and ceremonies can be made.”¹⁹⁵ This indicates that any ‘Christians Chief’ who occupies a black stool is not recognized as a full member of the church.

3.10 CAN CHRISTIAN CHIEFS EFFICIENTLY AND FULLY RULE IN ANUM?

There are divergent views as to whether Christian chiefs could efficiently rule indigenous communities. Pastor Cyril Tay claims that a Christian cannot combine Christian values, beliefs and also be an effective ruler. He indicated that the rituals involved in chieftaincy are unchristian and so the Christian chief would be serving two masters. These are the ancestors and the deities on the one hand and Christ on the other hand. He added that Christian chiefs have only received formal education and that does not mean they are Christians. He concluded by saying that one cannot

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Benjamin Obuobi Ntim on October 29, 2015.

¹⁹⁵ The 2000 Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 121.

combine Christianity and chieftaincy, except a new stool is constructed for the Christian chief.¹⁹⁶

Nenye Bombo V is of the view that a Christian chief can rule Anum traditional area effectively. The most important aspect of a traditional ruler is to build a good relationship with his or her people. How does the Christian chief impose himself on the people as a chief Nana asked? According to Nana people want to be treated with dignity and respect. So as a Christian chief one has to talk to his people like a father.¹⁹⁷

He added that the Christian chief should always open up to his people. Ideas should be shared with the people rather than imposing things on them. Again, his subjects should see him as a God fearing chief through his actions. Nana added that the moral conduct of the Christian chief is paramount if he is to succeed. His only challenge was that the PCG has told their members not to participate in traditional activities organised by the chief. This has led to very few people responding to the call of the chief. And it is affecting development in Anum.¹⁹⁸

In the opinion of Nana Adjowa Asabea I, a Christian chief could efficiently rule Anum. She mentioned that in the past there were several taboos associated with chieftaincy. Today, although they exist, some of them are not strictly adhered to. For instance, in the past one could not be a chief if he was circumcised. These days it is not the situation. Again, the Bible admonishes Christians to render what is Caesar's to Caesar and what is Christ to Christ. This interpretation, according to her, means that the Christian chief could perform her ritual role and at the same time perform her Christian duties.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Pastor Cyril Kwabena Tay on May 10, 2015.

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Nana Bombo V on October 17, 2015.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Nana Bombo V on October 17, 2015.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Nana Adjowa Sabea I on October 10, 2015.

A Christian chief can combine chieftaincy and Christianity and still be an effective leader. Also, this is an indication that the gospel and culture can co-exist peacefully in Anum.

3.11 CONCLUSION

We have looked at the relationship between chieftaincy and Christianity. Christian chiefs have formed the ACCQM in Ghana. We also found that the PCG does not administer communion to Christian chiefs that occupy black stools in Anum. Also, there are some Christian chiefs who do not take communion because it is against their conscience. This is due to the rituals they perform at the stool room. Although the conflict between chieftaincy and Christianity has gone down as indicated by Asante there are some aspects such as polygamy, libation, ancestral veneration, and depending on the deities for wellbeing which is the bone of contention. It is therefore necessary to discuss the discourses on chieftaincy and rituals in contemporary Ghana in the next chapter.



CHAPTER FOUR

DISCOURSES ON CHIEFTAINCY AND RITUALS IN CONTEMPORARY GHANA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three we looked at the relationship between chieftaincy and Christianity in Anum. We stated that Christianity was introduced to the Anum people by the Basel missionaries. We also found out that Nana Kolihue I was the first chief of the Anum traditional area. The catechist of the PCG Ebenezer congregation, Anum indicated that any Christian chief in their congregation who sits on a black stool does not attend communion. The reason is that in the opinion of the church some aspects of the rituals performed on the black stool are idolatry.

This chapter is a discussion on the discourses on chieftaincy and rituals in contemporary Ghana. It takes into consideration what is ritual, chieftaincy and rituals, climax of the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival in Anum, Christian chiefs and rituals, chieftaincy and libation, and cult of the ancestors. Also, rituals associated with the black stool, and dependence on deities for wellbeing would also be discussed. Since the scope of the study is the Anum traditional area, most of the discussions will be centred on Anum with examples from other parts of Ghana.

4.1 WHAT IS RITUAL?

The chieftaincy institution is the most visible form of traditional leadership among ethnic groups in Ghana.²⁰⁰ The ritual process of enstoolment transforms the status of the chief into a sacred person, who becomes the intermediary between the ancestors and the people. He has the legitimate authority to perform rituals that would

²⁰⁰ Akrong, "Traditional Leadership," 206.

bring prosperity to himself and the people. As such the chieftaincy institution is involved in many rituals.²⁰¹

Mbiti defines ritual as set form through which the people carry out a religious action or ceremony. Ritual becomes an avenue for the practitioner to communicate something which is of religious significance. This is done through word, symbol and action. Thus, ritual constitutes a belief or beliefs. The word or words used in ritual is very powerful because it is spoken with all seriousness and solemnity, and also it is repeated whenever a ritual is to be performed.²⁰² This definition of ritual indicates that every ritual has to be accompanied by word and action.

Rituals could be classified according to the specific function they perform for the adherents of a particular believing community. The function of ritual could be divided into three. These are life cycle ritual, crisis ritual, and calendrical ritual. Examples of the life cycle rituals include naming ceremonies, pubertal initiation, marriage, and initiation rituals. Examples of the crisis rituals include ill-health, barrenness, drought and calamities. Lastly, the calendrical ritual include the celebration of new year's festival, planting and harvesting rituals, thanks giving ceremonies, festivals, and honouring of ancestors.²⁰³

Mbiti has also mentioned that there are varieties of rituals in Africa. Some rituals have to do with the individual from before birth to after death. Other rituals are specifically for the society at large. It covers the total life and activities of the community. It includes the rhythm of the year with its seasons and various activities carried out by the people. Still, other rituals are performed periodically, as and when there is calamity, war, sickness among several others. Through ritual performance the

²⁰¹ Akrong, "Traditional Leadership," 196.

²⁰² John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1975), 126.

²⁰³ James L. Cox, *Introduction to Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, ed. James L. Cox (Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 1998), x-xiii.

people are able to exercise some amount of control over the unseen world and the forces of nature. To achieve this objective the people use everything at their disposal, including symbols and colours, incantations, invocations and prayers.²⁰⁴

Similarly, among the chiefs and people of the Anum traditional area there are varieties of rituals performed by the people. These include personal rituals, crisis rituals and calendrical rituals. The calendrical ritual is celebrated annually by the chiefs and the people. The annual celebration of the festival is known as *odwe ogyi* (yam festival). It is a festival that ushers in the harvesting of new yam and also feeding the ancestors.

4.2 CHIEFTAINCY AND RITUALS

One major role chieftaincy has maintained is the religious. Thus, on festive occasions the chief performs religious rituals. Some rituals are performed before the sowing of seed and before harvesting of new crops. Catherine Bell has indicated that the sowing of seed is often marked by offerings to ancestors or deities in order for them to provide protection for the field or harvest. Harvest rituals on the other hand largely depend on festivals in which the first fruits are given back to the deities or ancestors. This is accompanied by communal feast with plenty food, music, dance, and some amount of social freedom.²⁰⁵ Similarly, the celebration of the annual *odwe ogyi* festival among the Anum people is organized to feed and honour the ancestors. During the celebration of this ritual, often times the ancestors are perceived to arrive

²⁰⁴ Mbiti, *African Religion*, 126-127.

²⁰⁵ Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 103.

for the celebration. After the celebration they are escorted out of the palace or community at the end of the festivities.²⁰⁶

Arhin-Brempong has opined that it is the duty of the chief to perform periodic and annual rituals for ‘prospering’ his people, though the Muslims and the Christians in the community may not believe in the efficacy of those rituals.²⁰⁷ Before the harvesting of the new yam, the Anum people believe that the chiefs have to feed the ancestors for providing the new yam. According to the custom and tradition of the Anum people, the *Omanhene* and other divisional chiefs have different days to celebrate the *odwe ogyi* festival. Each of the chiefs celebrates the festival on the birthday of the stool. For instance, *Adontenhene* stool is Sunday; hence he celebrates the *odwe ogyi* on Sunday.

On October 25, 2015, three divisional chiefs celebrated the *odwe ogyi* festival in Anum. These are the *Adontehene*, *Ankobeahene*, and *Twafohene*. The stool day of all the three chiefs is Sunday. For that matter they chose one Sunday to perform the rituals. The *Adontehene* is Kwasi Anyane, the *Ankobeahene* is Kwasi Affum Kafena and the *Twafohene* is Kwasi Agyei.

The mode of ritual performance is the same by all the divisional chiefs. We shall describe how the *Adontehene* celebrated the *odwe ogye* festival. The program began at ten in the morning at the *Adontehene*’s palace. He sat in state to welcome visitors to his palace. Some young men brought out the *fontonfrom* (traditional drum) and other drums from a room. One of the young men chewed kola and spread it on two ‘human skulls’ hanged on the drum. After sometime the ‘human skull’ became reddish like blood. According to the one who chewed the kola, the idea was to scare people.

²⁰⁶ Bell, *Ritual*, 103.

²⁰⁷ Brempong, “Chieftaincy an Overview,” 36.

Some divisional chiefs and other dignitaries came to lend support. The divisional chiefs were the *Nifahene*, *Kyidomhene*, and *Ankobeahene*. The others were linguists, and traditional priests from Anum and *Boso*. After exchanging greetings the *Adontenhene's kyeame* (linguist) informed the gathering the purpose of meeting. The *okyeame* began with Christian prayer and after that poured libation. After the prayer, the *abusua panyin* (head of family) of the *Adontenhene* presented tubers of yam, onions, tomatoes, salt, pepper, one bottle of schnapps, one big gallon of palm wine, and a sheep to the *Adontenhene*. After the presentation to the *Adontenhene*, the divisional chiefs present, the elders and the *okyeame* all went to the stool room with the items. They all removed their sandals before entering the room.

After some time they came back from the room. The sheep was taken outside the palace and was slaughtered. A man brought a plate and took some of the blood of the sheep to the stool room. He put a leaf in the blood. The blood of the sheep was poured on a 'stone' outside the palace of the *Adontenhene*. After killing the sheep, the skin was removed and the meat was given to the women to prepare *fufu*²⁰⁸ and soup. The women also prepared *eto* (mashed yam). Some of the *eto* was mixed with palm oil and some was not mixed. This ended the morning session. There are several questions concerning the blood of the sheep that was poured on the stone. What is the religious or social significance of the stone? Who buried the stone in the ground? Is the stone the soul of the Anum people?

Nenye Kolihue XI, the senior brother of the *Adontenhene*, informed the researcher that the stone buried in the ground is known as '*obonsam bo*' (literally meaning Satan stone). It is a symbolic representation of the soul of the Anum people. The blood of the sheep that was poured on the stone was for cleansing purposes. The

²⁰⁸ *Fufu* is a local food often prepared with cassava or yam.

reason was that during the year the stone may have been contaminated, hence they had to cleanse it during the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival. He added that the stone was buried in the ground by the founding fathers of Anum.²⁰⁹

Okyeame Okraku also indicated that the stone represented the source of the black stool. He used the electric bulb and its switch to illustrate the point. He stated that when you want to turn on an electric bulb it is turned on with the switch. It is the switch that sends power to light the bulb. In the same way, the stone represents the switch and the black stool represents the bulb. Thus, there is a connection between the stone and the black stool.²¹⁰

In other traditional states, the black stool is a symbolic representation of the soul of the people. Again, some use the stone to serve as treaties between two states. For instance, *okomfo* Anokye told the chiefs and people of Ashanti that the golden stool was the soul of *Ashanti* people. Their power, health, bravery, and welfare dwelt in the golden stool.²¹¹ Also, salt and stone was buried in the ground to serve as a treaty between *Gua* Akuapem and the Akyem states. The treaty could only be reversed if the salt and stone germinated.²¹²

Later in the afternoon we all converged at the *Adontenhene's* palace. The chiefs and the elders met once again and after some discussions they all entered the stool room. The rest of us were not permitted to enter the room. Thus, we cannot tell what happened in the room. But, in our view, they went there to perform rituals. After some time they all came back from the stool room. Those outside who wished to enter the stool room were permitted to do so. We were asked to remove our sandals before entering the room. We were not allowed to take photographs. In the room was the

²⁰⁹ Interview with Nana Kolihue XI on June 23, 2016.

²¹⁰ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

²¹¹ Rattray, *Ashanti*, 289.

²¹² Macrae, *Sacred Tree*, 87.

black stool placed on a table. Some of the mashed yam and part of the sheep's liver was on the black stool.

We have heard stories in the past that no one is permitted to enter the stool room apart from the chief and other functionaries. From our experience, the Anum people are permitted to enter the stool room on certain occasions. This is contrary to some of the stories we heard in the past. The *Okyeame* informed us that they use the blood of sheep to blacken the stool. This confirms stories that blood of sheep are used to blacken the stool. The *Okyeame* also stated that in the past human blood was used to blacken the stool.²¹³

In the stool room, the *Okyeame* sat in front of the black stool. Some of the people had written their names in a book with some amount of money. These were people who had come with various prayer requests. The *Okyeame* poured libation for each of them in separate turns. Some of the prayer requests included marriage, opportunity to travel, need for children, health, and employment opportunity among other things. This is a translation of the original text that accompanied the libation:

Our ancestors

We have come to you this day

It is you that bring healing to us when we are sick

But the doctors and other traditional healers claim the credit

Your son has come before you in search of healing

He has five Ghana cedis with him

He has promised to come and thank you after he is healed

The *Okyeame* poured the drink on the black stool and not on the floor. After pouring the libation, he put his palm on the black stool and rubbed the face of the

²¹³ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

petitioner with the drink. After he had completed his assignment we all left the stool room. The chiefs went back to the room. They were served *fufu* and soup prepared by the women. After they had finished eating the food they came back to take their respective seats. The *Adontehene* then went to change his regalia and dressed in a beautiful white *kente* cloth to grace the occasion. A mini durbar was held behind the *Adontehene's* palace in his honour. The divisional chiefs, elders and some of the people were all present.

After the chiefs had finished eating the *fufu*, the stool room was tidied up. The leftover of the *fufu* and soup was put in a yellow bowl called *ayewa* (brass plated bowl). One of the young men in the palace was asked to carry the *ayewa*. Meanwhile, the drummers were busy playing the *fontonfrom*. There was generally noise making in the palace. All these were done to prepare the way for *Nananom nsamanfo* 'to go back.'

Just as the man carrying the *ayewa* left the stool room, the *ayewa* began to sway him to the left and to the right. He acted as someone who was possessed. The *ayewa* had become very heavy for him to carry. To prevent him from falling, three strong men held the *ayewa*. What caused the man to sway from one side to the other? Was he pretending? Was *Nananom nsamanfo* in the *ayewa*?

Some people were of the view that *Nananom nsamanfo* were in the bowl. They had to be escorted back to the place they came from. And because they were reluctant to go, they caused the *ayewa* to sway the carrier. The scene at this point was very complicated. It was difficult to comprehend what was going on. It revealed to the adherents that the *Nananom nsamafo* had indeed 'come home.' Others also indicated to us that what we were observing was a demonstration of the powers of *Nananom*

nsamanfo. On their way to the final destination it became very difficult because the carrier could stand at a particular place for a long time.

The whole town was thrown into a frenzy mood. The women and children were shouting with joy. The carrier stood at a particular place without moving. The *Okyeame* poured some schnapps on his feet and pleaded with *Nananom nsamanfo*. Some women also shouted: 'we beg you *Nananom*, please allow him to go.' *Okyeame* Yaw Nhyira informed the researcher that no one was permitted to cross the man carrying the *ayewa*. Again, if the *ayewa* and its contents fell, the whole ritual had to be repeated. Gradually *Nananom nsamanfo* allowed the people to get to their final destination. The content of the *ayewa* was poured on the ground. The *Okyeame* poured libation and they marched slowly back to the palace. The carrier was seen turning his neck round indicating that he was very tired and felt some pains in the neck.

The people reported what happened to the *Adontehene* and his elders. They were welcomed by the chief and he thanked them for a good work done. The *Okyeame* sat on a stool and offered a libation prayer to thank the ancestors for accepting the food. After the libation prayer the *Okyeame* told his people that *Nananom nsamanfo* sends blessings, prosperity, peace, and wellbeing. The people responded that they have received the blessings and prosperity. After that the *Adontehene* gave his speech and his plans for the people. Finally, Nana thanked all who helped to make the *odwe ogyi* festival a success.

4.2.1 CLIMAX OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE *ODWE OGYI* FESTIVAL IN ANUM

Generally, festivals are focused on religious, socio-economic, political, and cultural beliefs and values of a community. On such occasions several people go back home to celebrate their family ties and help to revitalise the customs and values of the society. Festivals are closely related to traditional beliefs and the emphasis on ancestors, spiritual protection, and purification. Traditional festivals recognize the contributions of *Nananom nsamanfo* (ancestors) and so they pay tribute to them and seek their spiritual protection through libations of drink and food. The rituals accompanied with festivals are also avenues to purify the community. The rituals act as a way to cleanse the community and provide hope for the incoming years.²¹⁴

The climax of the *odwe ogyi* festival begins after all the divisional chiefs have celebrated the *odwe ogyi*. The climax began on November 16, 2015. The duration of the celebration is seven days. On the first day, the chiefs mandated to perform the necessary rituals converged at the sacred tree near the Anum rural bank. The place is designed like a garden. The ritual performed by the chiefs is known as *egyí ban* (providing security). The *okyeame* poured libation and after that, a certain plant which looked like a rope was tied around the place. There are two reasons for the ritual. The first is to protect the Anum people from calamity and external forces. The second is to purify the Anum people from all defilement. After they had finished performing the rituals, a ban on noise making was declared for one week.

In the olden days the people indulged in war. They therefore needed protection from external forces. The belief was that when they performed the rituals they received protection. Again, they believed that some people sin during the year. Some

²¹⁴ Steven J. Salm and Toyin Falola, *Culture and Customs of Ghana* (London: Greenwood Press, 2002), 150.

people may have caused abortion, some may have slept with wives of others, and others would have indulged in stealing among others. It was therefore necessary to perform rituals as purification rites for the community. This could not be done by ordinary people. It has to be done by chiefs who are the intermediaries between *Nananom nsamanfo* and the living.

On the November 23, 2015 the *kyidomhene* and some traditional priests met at *Letwi* shrine located opposite the *kyidomhene*'s palace. The *kyidomhene* serves as the *sumankwahene* (priest servant of the shrine) at the shrine. Rituals were performed in the morning. We were informed by *Okyeame* Yaw Nhyira that a week old lamb was needed for sacrifice. Some young men in the town were sent to other villages to search for the lamb. Why would a week old lamb be used for the ritual? The people used the week old lamb because they wanted a lamb that was without blemish or defect. A lamb is also a symbol of meekness and humility.

Later in the day some of the chiefs went to the shrine house to eat. From there almost all the divisional chiefs in Anum converged at the *Omanhene*'s palace and sat in front of the palace. Moments later nine people dressed in white cloth came out from the shrine. They held a ladle and a knife in their hands. They marched in a straight line to a place referred to as the ancestral home. The people in the town came out in their numbers to witness the occasion. We waited for them for about an hour. On their way back, the people greeted them with loud cheers and joy. The atmosphere was charged with noise making. The nine people greeted the people "*ene eni mne ni yeho* (greetings from the ancestors), and the people responded "*yoo*" (welcome). The import of the greetings meant that the ancestors had sent blessings, prosperity, and good health. And the people responded by saying that they had received them.

After they returned from the ancestral home, the nine people entered the shrine house. From the shrine house they presented a gallon of palm wine to the chiefs. The *Okyeame* served the chiefs and the elders some of the palm wine. The leader of the group reported to the chiefs concerning their journey to the ancestral home. The chiefs led by the *Adontenhene* thanked them for a good work done. Libation was offered to thank the ancestors for the climax of the *odwe ogyi* festival. After a while the leader of the shrine brought a bowl containing water and some leaves. He sprinkled the water on the people. Everyone present made sure some of the water touched him or her.

It is believed that the water has the potency of preventing the people from sickness. The headman in charge of the shrine indicated to the researcher that the water contained seven different plants.²¹⁵ But he was not prepared to name the plants. His reason was that when it becomes public knowledge, some other people could use it against them. Although we do not know the efficacy of the water, the way and manner the people rushed for it was an indication that it was potent. Again, it was difficult to tell whether or not some Christians were present.

4.2.2 CHIEFTAINCY AND LIBATION

Issues regarding libation have generated interest and controversy among Christians, scholars and the general public. It has generated interest due to the several interpretations people give to libation.²¹⁶ Some people are of the view that libation is poured to the deities and the ancestors. Some Christians are also of the view that libation is contrary to Christianity. Akwasi Sarpong has stated that the controversy surrounding libation has been extended to the institution of chieftaincy. The reason is

²¹⁵ Yaw Bofo is the priest in charge of the *Letwi* shrine; interviewed on February 24, 2016.

²¹⁶ Akwasi Sarpong, *Libation* (Accra: Anansesem Publications Limited, 1996), vii.

that as part of his religious duties the chief is expected to perform rituals such as libation in honour of the ancestors. This has added to the debate as to whether a Christian can become a chief or a chief can become a Christian.²¹⁷

In the chieftaincy institution libation has existed with the people for a very long time. What is libation? According to Sarpong libation is a form of prayer. Libation is poured to a God or the Supreme Being, the deities, and the ancestors.²¹⁸ Libation is the pouring out of liquor on the floor accompanied by words.

Okyeame Okraku mentioned that among the chieftaincy institution libation is a time the living communicates with the ancestors. They call on the ancestors to bless them in all that they do. He indicated that not all ancestors' names are mentioned during libation. It is only the names of dead chiefs that ruled and died on the stool. The names begin with the first chief that occupied the stool to the last. The one pouring the libation uses the name of the last ancestor as *Okyeame* to convey their requests to the other ancestors. Thus, the one pouring the libation informs the last ancestor that the current occupant of the stool wishes to tell him that, he should inform the rest of the ancestors that today is *Akwasiadae*. As such the chief wants to remember their good works. Therefore, he is using the drink to inform and invite them to be part of the gathering. This implies the name of any chief that was destooled or abdicated the stool will not be mentioned.²¹⁹

Again, libation is poured when a person dies 'prematurely.' Prematurely could be death through accident, drowning in water, fire, or poisoning. Such an untimely death is known as '*otofo wuo*.' When it happens libation is poured to ward off the spirit of the dead person. According to *Okyeame* Yaw Nhyira, if libation is not poured the spirit of the dead person could be seen by some people and would disturb the

²¹⁷ Sarpong, *Libation*, vii.

²¹⁸ Sarpong, *Libation*, vii.

²¹⁹ Interview with *Okyeame* Okraku on November 23, 2015.

people. For instance, when the researcher was in secondary school a mate of his fell from the first floor and died. One of the teachers poured libation to ward off the spirit of the student.

Does libation contradict Christian doctrine? Some Christians are of the view that the pouring of libation by chiefs is against the first commandment of God. “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.”²²⁰ Some Christians contend that since libation is addressed to deities and ancestors it means that chiefs have other gods in addition to God.

Libation is a form of prayer. Prayer is very important in all religions. It is a communication between human beings with the divine. In Christianity prayer is also communication between human kind and God. The difference between the two is the form and approach. Irrespective of that, libation is found in the Bible. In the Revised Standard Version of the Bible the following passages mentions libation. (Ex. 25:29, Ex. 29: 40, Ex. 29: 41, Ex. 30:9), and (Ex. 37: 16) “And he made the vessels of pure gold which were to be upon the table, its plates and dishes for incense, and its bowls and flagons with which to pour libations.”²²¹ If all these passages refer to libation, why do some Christians have problems with libation?

Sarpong has stated that libation should not be condemned. The reason is that it is only a dramatization of the wishes of the people. The wishes may be for somebody or against somebody. In libation prayer, nothing could be compared to anything or anybody to God. God remains the Supreme master. He included that libation does not

²²⁰ Exodus 20: 2-3.

²²¹ Sarpong, *Libation*, 30-35.

condemn an individual, but condemns evil people. He suggested however that, if there are certain aspects in libation that are not good they could be left out.²²²

Is it not interesting to note that during Christian prayers a lot is directed at killing witches and evil spirits? Lastly, at festivals organised by the chiefs, the Rev. Ministers are invited to pray to ask for God’s blessings and guidance. After they have finished with their prayers the senior linguist is called upon to pour libation for the prosperity of the state and all present, including Christians. After the celebration, the chiefs and people attend church service to thank God.²²³

4.2.3 RITUALS AND THE BLACK STOOL

The black stool is one of the most important objects in chieftaincy. According to Richard Rathbone, the term ‘stool’ refers to an actual stool or a throne the chief sits on. It also represents the chief’s office.²²⁴ The black stool is also a symbol of power and authority. The chief also represents the ancestors and the living. As such, every “paramount chief, clan chief, town or village head, and *abusua* possesses a stool.”²²⁵

Among the Asante people of Ghana for example, they have in addition to the black stool the golden stool. It is said that Okomfo Anokye charmed the golden stool from the sky. He told the Asante people that it contained the soul of the Asante people. They had to remain united under the golden stool. Okomfo Anokye asked the chiefs to cut part of their finger nails and he used the nails to perform ritual on the stool.²²⁶

²²² Sarpong, *Libation*, 49.

²²³ Macrae, *The Sacred Tree*, 173.

²²⁴ Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana 1951-60* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 13.

²²⁵ Smith, *PCG*, 73.

²²⁶ Yaw Sarkodie Agyemang, “Religion and Governance: A Study of Indigenous Asante Religious Institutions in Governance and their Integration into Contemporary Governance in Ghana” (PhD thesis, University of Ghana, 2009), 52-53.

Sarpong has indicated that the black stool is a low wooden seat that has been carved out of a piece of wood. It has its own specification and design. The black stool also serves as the unity and continuity of the community. These are the feelings that the people derive from the stool. The choice of wood for carving a stool has a religious connotation. The wood is chosen because they believe that it has some supernatural spirit of its own. The two types of wood for carving the stool are the *Nyamedua* and the *Osese* tree.²²⁷

Smith's writing about the Asante people indicated that at the death of the chief the white-wood stool is placed on the grave of the chief for a week. After the one week the stool is blackened with a mixture of spirits, egg yolk, soot, leaves, and gunpowder. A sheep is also slaughtered and its blood is smeared over the stool.²²⁸ Smith's description of how the Asante people blacken their stool has some similarities with the Anum people.

According to Okyeame Okraku the black stool is carved out from the *Osese* tree. The blood of a sheep is smeared on the stool to make it black. He said that the stool was established with blood. So it is very important to perform rituals with blood for the stool. In the past they used human blood but these days it is the blood of a sheep. He went on to inform us that without the black stool in the community the Anum people do not exist.²²⁹

The celebration of *Akwasidae*, *Awukudae*, *Odwira* or *Odwe Ogyi* festivals are occasions where rituals are performed for the black stool in the chieftaincy institution in Ghana. During these celebrations the ancestors are remembered and fed. *Akwasidae* is celebrated every forty days according to the *Akan* calendar. A week before *Akwasidae*, all the divisional chiefs are mandated to pour libation on the day of the

²²⁷ Sarpong, *Sacred Stools*, 9.

²²⁸ Smith, *PCG*, 73.

²²⁹ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

stool. For instance, among the Anum people the *Adontehene* pours libation on the Sunday that comes before *Akwasidae*. The reason is that the *Adontehene*'s stool day is Sunday. On the dawn of *Akwasidae* the *Omanhene* pours libation in his palace. Later in the morning all the chiefs have to meet at the *Omanhene*'s palace for them to discuss matters concerning the community. *Awukudae* and *Dapaa* are not celebrated by the Anum people.²³⁰

Celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival by the chiefs of Anum traditional area is an occasion for feeding the ancestors. Interaction with the dead is common among several cultures. Caring for, and feeding of the ancestors take place because the living believe that the dead have not escaped all human frailty and as such they still need some assistance and sustenance. The feeding of the ancestors is motivated by the continued filial duties the living have for the dead. By the ritual feeding of the ancestors, they are kept alive and their presence is felt through the ritual feeding.²³¹

On the day of the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival, the people living in the community are given the opportunity to enter the stool room with their prayer requests. Libation is poured on the black stool by either the *Okyeame* or the *Nkongua*. Some of the requests involve boom in business, marriage, health, child bearing and several others. *Okyeame* Okraku mentioned that the prayer requests of the people are often met. They come back to redeem their pledge as a way of thanking the ancestors. In Anum only schnapps and palm wine enters the black stool room.²³² We asked *Okyeame* Okraku why they do not use water to pour libation. He answered that what has to be done with water should be done with water and what has to be done with drink has to be done with drink.

²³⁰ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

²³¹ Pieter F. Craffert, *Meeting the Living among the Dead: Perspectives on Burials, Tombs and the Afterlife* (Pretoria: Biblia Publishers, 1999), 24.

²³² Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

Some Christians are of the view that members of the church should not visit the black stool room. The reason is that some of the rituals performed in the black stool room are contrary to Christianity. Yet, when some Christians are cursed (*dua bo*) they consult the chiefs to revoke the curse.

According to Nana Akwasi Anyane V some presbyters came to see him to revoke a curse for them. The Ghanaian is most likely to go any length in order to solve a problem. This is evidence in the fact that most Christians and non-Christians troop to ‘men of God,’ *mallams*, and traditional priests, for solutions to their problems. The point is that if the black stool can help solve people’s problems why do some people refer to it as fetish? Nana added that a man who was a native of Anum was very sick. He visited the hospital but the sickness got worse. When Nana was informed about it, he performed rituals at the stool room and the man was healed.²³³

4.3 CHRISTIAN CHIEFS AND RITUALS

We have stated that the debate regarding whether or not a Christian can become a chief has been abated. This is due to the fact that several Christians have become chiefs in Ghana. Today, the concern of Christians has to do with the rituals associated with chieftaincy. Rev. Monsignor Anthony Kornu, Vicar General of the Catholic Diocese, Ho, is quoted as saying that the church should accept their members who become chiefs. He added that when Christians are made chiefs it offered the church a golden opportunity of ‘purifying and Christianizing’ kingship. He further reiterated that “to allow such a precious opportunity to slip by will be a miserable failure, with regard to the urgent need for the evangelization of cultures.”²³⁴

²³³ Interview with Nana kwasi Anyane V on April 3, 2015.

²³⁴ “Religion of Monday,” accessed on February 3, 2016, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/religion/Christians-can-be-made-chiefs>.

Rev. Kornu observed that the main difficulty preventing Christians from becoming chiefs had to do with the rituals involved in chieftaincy. He believed that that could be dealt with through dialogue between Christians and traditional authorities.²³⁵ If the ritual involved in Chieftaincy is the main problem, in what ways do Christian chiefs handle rituals associated with chieftaincy? Do they go through the ritual processes of confinement and enstoolment? Do they maintain the rituals associated with chieftaincy? These and many more questions arise.

Nenye Afari Sei III indicated that Christian chiefs go through the ritual process of confinement before they are enstooled as chiefs. He claimed that the period of confinement is to educate the prospective chief on issues involved in chieftaincy. It is also a time for initiating the candidate into chieftaincy. For example, the prospective chief is taught how to dance and how to wear his cloth among several others. After the enstoolment the new chief is mandated to swear an oath. If the chief is a Christian and he does not want to swear the oath his linguist could do it on his behalf. This is a translation of the text of swearing oath:

I have been elected and enstooled

Today I have been enstooled

Nenye Kumi and their fight continues

I swear Kumi

I swear Asafo Saturday

I have accepted

I will continue with the work

I will lead my people, day, night, rain or shine

I will not turn my back against you

²³⁵ “Religion of Monday,” accessed on February 3, 2016, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/religion/Christians-can-be-made-chiefs>.

I promise to build the town for others to follow²³⁶

The significance of swearing the oath is a public declaration before the spirits beings and human of one's duty.

Nenye added that among Anum chieftaincy the blood of a sheep is not used to wash the feet of the newly enstooled chief as it is practiced in other parts of Ghana. In his book *The Institution of Chieftaincy in Ghana: The Future*, Oseaadeeyo Addo-Dankwa III indicated that among the Akan people the blood of the sheep is poured on the feet of the chief.²³⁷ He however mentioned that a sheep is slaughtered and some of the blood is poured in a plate and a leaf is added to it. The blood is sprinkled on the house and on the chief. This is for purification purposes. The reason why the chief needs to cleanse himself is that he may have found himself in some unclean places before he became a chief. Thus, he may have 'dirtied' himself.²³⁸

Nenye Kolihue XI indicated that the Christian chief goes through the ritual process of confinement before he is enstooled as a chief in Anum. He indicated that the confinement period is to educate the chief concerning traditional knowledge of the throne. Also, the chief is taught how to behave well in public, how to put on cloth and how to dance to the *fontonfrom* among several others. He stated that the period of confinement is supposed to be forty days. However, the number of days has reduced because some chiefs learn these things in the royal homes before they are enstooled. According to him both Christian chiefs and non-Christian chiefs go through the period of confinement.²³⁹

He added that swearing an oath is mandatory for all chiefs. It is the symbol of authority to rule over the people. The chief swears an oath to the *abusua panyin*,

²³⁶ Interview with Nenye Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

²³⁷ Addo-Dankwa III, *Institution of Chieftaincy*, 75-77.

²³⁸ Interview with Nenye Afari Sei III on August 29, 2015.

²³⁹ Interview with Nenye Kolihue XI on October 6, 2015.

Omanhene, chiefs, elders and people that he would always be available to serve them. The chiefs and people also swear an oath to the chief that they will pay allegiance to him. Nenyé further added that among the Anum traditional area the blood of a sheep is not poured on the feet of the chief. He however indicated that a sheep is slaughtered but a small part of the blood is used to purify the chief. The reason for the purification is that the chief is believed to be ceremonially unclean.²⁴⁰

Nana Okyempem Adu VII informed the researcher that Christian chiefs go through the ritual process of confinement. During the confinement period the chief is educated on chieftaincy issues. Again, chiefs are confined in a room to prevent them from being killed by someone who was not chosen. Also, during the confinement period the ancestors reveal hidden secrets to the chief. The chief is fortified with herbs because he would lead his people for war.²⁴¹

Nana indicated that Christian chiefs are mandated to swear an oath. For instance, Thursday is the day the *Benkum* division swears the oath of allegiance. Thursday is the day of the black stool. The chief swears to his *abusua panyin*, and the *abusua panyin* swears back to the chief. The chief then swears to the people, and the *asafoatse* (captain) swears on behalf of the people. The chief swears to the other divisional chiefs and after that he is introduced to the *Omanhene*. The chief swears the *ntamkese* to the *Omanhene*. The chief wears a black cloth as a symbol in remembrance of the ancestors.²⁴²

Nana further indicated that in his opinion he does not think the rituals associated with chieftaincy contradict Christian beliefs. He added that some Pentecostal churches tell their members not to visit the palace, some preach against the chiefs. Nana mentioned that these Pentecostal churches forget that their members

²⁴⁰ Interview with Nenyé Kolihue XI on October 6, 2015.

²⁴¹ Interview with Nana Okyempem Adu VII on October 10, 2015.

²⁴² Interview with Nana Okyempem Adu VII on October 10, 2015.

are born into families and some into royal families.²⁴³ Opuni-Frimpong has rightly observed that the reason why some churches asked their members not to visit the palace was that the European set a value for the Christian faith and it has remained with the people till today. Due to that, most indigenous people hate their own cultural practices.²⁴⁴

Nana Affum Kafena III on his part mentioned that Christian chiefs go through the ritual process of confinement. All chiefs are mandated to go through confinement. In the opinion of Nana, chieftaincy and Christianity do not conflict in any way. His reason is that the chief plays a dual role. The chief does the work of God in addition to the work of the community. He added that the PCG does not give Christian chiefs communion because they occupy black stools. If the Bible is the standard for attending communion, then none was qualified to attend communion. This is because no human being is perfect and all are fallible. He reiterated that some people in the church partake in the Eucharist, yet, they indulge in sinful acts. Nana indicated that due to the teachings of the church he did not receive communion when he was a member of the Presbyterian Church.²⁴⁵

Nana indicated that in Anum traditional area, the blood of a sheep is symbolically used for cleansing purposes. A sheep is slaughtered and some of the blood is put in a plate and sprinkled on the chief. This is to purify the chief because he may have contaminated himself before he became a chief. It means that the chief was 'dirty' and has to be cleansed. The blood of the sheep is poured on his feet only if the chief has done something wrong. For example, if the chief had had sex with someone's wife.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ Interview with Nana Okyempem Adu VII on October 10, 2015.

²⁴⁴ Opuni-Frimpong, *Indigenous Knowledge*, 4.

²⁴⁵ Interview with Nana Affum Kafena III on November 9, 2015.

²⁴⁶ Interview with Nana Affum Kafena III on November 9, 2015.

According to Nenyé Bombo V Christian chiefs go through the ritual process of confinement. The ritual process of confinement has both traditional and spiritual dimensions. Traditionally, the chief is taught how to speak in public, wear his cloth, wear sandals, how to sit and dance during state functions. Spiritually, the *abusua panyin*, the queen mother, *Gyasehene*, and the *Asafoatse* introduce the chief to *nananom nsamanfo* (ancestors). The new chief is taught how to relate with the ancestors. Nana added that in Anum traditional area the blood of a sheep is not poured on the feet of a chief during enstoolment.²⁴⁷

Nana further added that the Christian chief is mandated to swear an oath to the *Omanhene*, the other divisional chiefs, and to the people. The oath is to pledge allegiance to the *Omanhene* and the people that whenever the chief is called he would respond except he is sick. The other chiefs and the people also swear to the chief. Ancestral stool names are chosen by the royal family. For example, 'Asukpa' is his stool name. Bombo is the name of the chief he succeeded.²⁴⁸

Four chiefs unanimously indicated that it is mandatory for Christian chiefs to go through the ritual process of confinement in Anum. These are Nenyé Afari Sei III, Nenyé Kolihue XI, Nana Okyempem Adu VII, and Nana Affum Kafena III. However, Nenyé Bombo V and Nana Afari Sei III indicated that if the Christian chief was not happy with certain aspects of the ritual processes of confinement, he could inform the *abusua panyin*. Upon informing him he could ask someone to do it on his behalf. Again, they all agreed that the confinement period was for educational purposes. It was a period for educating the chief on how to behave well in public, how to dance, and observance of taboos associated with the black stool. Some of them indicated that

²⁴⁷ Interview with Nenyé Bombo V on October 17, 2015.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Nenyé Bombo V on October 17, 2015.

in the Anum traditional area confinement of chiefs was not common because most of them have non-formal education on chieftaincy before they are enstooled as chiefs.

That notwithstanding, the duration of the confinement period, according to Nenyé Bombo V, is seven days. Nana Okyempem Adu VII on the other hand mentioned that confinement period was optional. He also revealed that confinement of chiefs was also in a way to prevent the chief from being killed. All the chiefs indicated that Christian chiefs do swear an oath.

It is a general knowledge that before a chief is enstooled a sheep is slaughtered and the blood poured on the feet of the chief. In the work of Oseeadeyo Nana Addo Dankwa III, he mentioned that among the Akan people of Ghana a sheep is slaughtered and the blood is poured on the feet of the chief. Contrary to that view, Among the Anum chieftaincy the blood of a sheep is not poured on the feet of a chief during the enstoolment rites. The blood of a sheep is slaughtered and some is sprinkled on the chief and the house. It is done for purification purposes. The reason is that the chief might have contaminated himself before he became a chief. Again, the only time the blood of a sheep is poured on the feet of the chief is when he has misconducted himself. For instance, if a chief has sex with another man's wife the blood of the sheep is to purify him. This indicates that the enstoolment rituals of chiefs are not the same everywhere.

Do Christian chiefs maintain the ritual associated with chieftaincy after their enstoolment? All the chiefs in the Anum traditional area are mandated to celebrate the *odwe ogyi* festival annually. The festival is the occasion for feeding the ancestors.

Nana Affum Kafena III indicated that the Christian chief is required to perform rituals on certain festive occasions. For instance, during the *odwe ogyi* festival he has to feed the ancestors. The feeding of the ancestors involves rituals.

According to him, he does not reside in Anum but he had come to perform the necessary rituals in accordance with tradition. Again, the Christian chief is mandated to feed the ancestors. The ritual feeding of the ancestors is a period of remembering the ancestors who have occupied the black stool in the past. If the dead chief were to be living he would celebrate it. In the past the blood of human beings was used as sacrifice for the stool, but now it is a sheep. The chiefs discussed with the ancestors before they changed from human beings to sheep.²⁴⁹

Similarly, the *odwira* festival celebrated by the *Akuapem* people of Ghana is also held in honour of the ancestors. During the celebration of *odwira*, the black stools receive a ceremonial bath. It is also a time to purify the *Akuapem* state, provide security, and ask for blessings for the people. This is similar to what the Anum people do. We have indicated that a week to the climax of the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival, the chiefs purify and provide security for the Anum people. This is known as ‘*ye gyi ban.*’

Nenye Bombo V indicated that in his view the celebration of *odwira* is equivalent to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. He argued that Christians celebrate the Lord’s Supper in remembrance of Christ. Similarly, the *odwira* is celebrated in remembrance of the ancestors. He added that during the celebration of *odwira* all family members come together, cook and eat from one bowl. Also, it is a period of reconciliation. A sheep is killed and part of the meat is shared among all the chiefs. Similarly, during the Lord’s Supper Christians drink from one bowl.

Most Christians may disagree with the chief’s assertion that *odwira* could be equivalent to the Lord’s Supper. The reason is that during the Lord’s Supper a sheep is not slaughtered. Again, there are no rituals such as bathing the black stool during

²⁴⁹ Interview with Nana Affum Kafena III on November 9, 2015.

the Lord's Supper. However, the chief's assertion is that both the *odwira* festival and the Lord's Supper are celebrated in remembrance of the ancestors and Christ. Jesus asked his followers to observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of him. Again, the element of 'blood' in the form of 'wine' is used during the Lord's Supper. The 'wine' used during the Lord's Supper is a symbolic representation of the blood of Jesus among some Christian churches. But, among the Catholics it is the real blood of Jesus. Can we say that the celebration of the *odwira* festival is equivalent to the Lord's Supper?

Why are Christian chiefs not allowed to take part in the Eucharist? Christian chiefs are not allowed to take part in the Eucharist because of certain rituals associated with chieftaincy. The reason is that some of the rituals associated with chieftaincy contradict their Christian beliefs and practices. Some Christian chiefs argue that the *Omanhene* is the chief celebrant of the rituals and they are supporters. As such they do not understand why the PCG prevents them from receiving communion. However, there are some Christian chiefs who do not attend communion because certain aspects of the rituals associated with chieftaincy contradict their Christian beliefs and practices.

4.4 ARE THE ANCESTORS WORSHIPPED OR VENERATED?

There are varying school of thoughts regarding whether the ancestors are worshipped or venerated. In the view of some scholars the ancestors are worshipped and others opine that they are venerated. In spite of the divergent views the place of ancestors in chieftaincy cannot be over looked. The reason is that the chiefs are the intermediaries between the ancestors on one hand and the living on the other hand.

Chiefs perform rituals in honour or in remembrance of the ancestors on festive occasions due to their intermediary role.

Addo-Fening has emphasised that an important dimension of ancestor worship is *nkonwa tumtum* (black stool). He mentioned that ancestral worship is the logical consequence of teaching of *Akan* metaphysics which claims that the spirit of man survives after death. In their opinion the spirit of the dead is fully aware of what goes on in human society and are in a position to influence the destiny of the human race. They believe that their ancestors are embodiment of the black stool. This is the reason why chiefs and elders are shown much respect and reverence in their community.²⁵⁰ Thus, the ancestors are worshipped.

Some Christians are of the view that the ancestors are worshipped. They argue that when a chief is enstooled, his status changes and he becomes one with the ancestors. He receives a new name and a sheep is slaughtered and the blood poured on his feet. This ritual process of enstoolment transforms the chief into an occupant of a black stool. The PCG for example, considers this ritual as unchristian. Because of the ritual process of enstoolment the chief is thus considered as 'unfaithful to Christ.' As such the chief is prevented from attending Holy Communion.²⁵¹ Also, the chief as part of his religious duty is expected to perform sacrifices to the ancestors. This they consider as ancestral worship. That is the reason why the Basel Mission and the PCG for instance instructed their members not to involve themselves in palace affairs and *amanne* (customs). This led to a separate residential area for their members called Salem.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ Addo –Fening, *Akyem-Abuakwa*, 33.

²⁵¹ Gilbert, "The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?" accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

²⁵² Gilbert, "The Christian Executioner: Christianity and Chieftaincy as Rivals?" accessed October 10, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581860>.

Opuni-Frimpong argues that the ancestors are not worshipped. He claims that it is the misinterpretation of the word ‘worship’ that is in conflict with ancestral worship. He argues that if one works with the concept of worship (*som*) in theological construction of chieftaincy, the theology will have no feelings at all for the chieftaincy institution. What would happen is that the chieftaincy institution would be misrepresented as another faith that is in conflict with Christianity. Chiefs would be considered as worshipping in the palace.²⁵³ It is important to distinguish ‘*som*’ which could mean ‘worship’ from ‘*som*’ which could also mean ‘service.’ It is the translation of the native language into English that becomes a challenge. It is always better to allow the local language and its meaning to stand.

Following from what Opuni Frimpong has stated, it would be incorrect to consider the institution of chieftaincy as another faith. The reason is that the *Akan* word ‘*som*’ could have two translations in the English language. Why have some Christians translated the word ‘*som*’ to mean ‘worship’ and not ‘service?’ Is it because they want to see the chieftaincy institution as another faith? When one sees the chieftaincy institution as another faith, it leads to syncretism. Syncretism is bringing two or more faiths together in service or worship.

Meyer Fortes has provided some useful insights concerning ancestor worship. She has stated that the use of the word ‘worship’ is not endorsed by the indigenous people. She explains that “though it consists descriptively of ritual relations with the dead forbears, it is not co-terminous with worship of the dead.”²⁵⁴ Fortes further argued that the ancestors are still regarded as heads of their respective families or communities. As such they are invited or invoked on family gatherings or meetings such as naming ceremonies. In such as a situation they are fulfilling their ‘fatherly

²⁵³ Opuni-Frimpong, *Indigenous Knowledge*, 2.

²⁵⁴ Cited in Macrae, *The Sacred Tree*, 112.

role,' and cannot be regarded as an object of worship, more than what a living father would do.²⁵⁵

Gyekye on his part argues that the intense reverence of the Ghanaian for their ancestors gave some European scholars and Christians the impression that the ancestors are worshipped. He claims that the ancestors are not worshipped but are revered. The reason is that they revere their ancestors in order to receive good treatment from them. Again, the ancestors have been human beings before, and they are different from the deities and the Supreme Being. As such the ancestors cannot be worshipped but only honoured, remembered, and revered.²⁵⁶

Craffert has observed that veneration of the dead involves instances where the people in the community believe that the ancestors can influence the Supreme Being on behalf of the people. It is believed that there is life after death, yet the ancestors do not have the same quality as the Supreme Being. The ancestors receive gratitude from the living, but they are not worshipped. The ancestors play the role of intermediaries between the living and the Supreme Being. Therefore, they are only venerated for their continued interaction with the living.²⁵⁷

Having stated all these, there is also the practice of the worship of the dead which is different from ancestral veneration. It is known as the cult of the dead. The people actually worship the dead. In such communities the people do not only believe that there is life after death. They also believe that the dead have superior powers over the living. They believe that the dead can actually participate and influence the affairs of the living. The dead in such cases are equal to the Supreme Being and so they

²⁵⁵ Cited in Macrae, *The Sacred Tree*, 114.

²⁵⁶ Gyekye, *Cultural Values*, 161.

²⁵⁷ Craffert, *Meeting the Living*, 24.

deserve to be worshipped.²⁵⁸ Craffert's argument shows the distinction between the cult of the dead and the cult of the ancestors.

The 'fatherly' or 'motherly' role of ancestors should not be misinterpreted as ancestral worship. The reason is that the ancestors though dead are considered as part of the family. At family gatherings they are invoked to be part of the meeting. This is done by the pouring of libation. Again, among some Ghanaians names of dead relatives are given to their children. Furthermore, some Christians and non-Christians visit the grave side of dead relatives after forty days and one year. From all the arguments raised by Gyekye, Opuni-Frimpong, Craffert, and Fortes there is an indication that the ancestors are venerated and not worshipped. This is contrary to Addo-Fening and some Christians who hold the view that the ancestors are worshipped.

From what has been stated, it is the veneration of ancestors by chiefs that is the bone of contention between the church and Christian chiefs. From the perspective of the church, ancestral veneration by Christian chiefs indicates that, Christian chiefs serve the ancestors and Christ which contradicts their Christian beliefs and practices. Perhaps, that is the reason why Christianity still frowns upon chiefs receiving communion.

Again, the PCG does not recognize Christian chiefs in the congregation; rather, it is the chiefs who refer to themselves as Christian chiefs. If Christian chiefs are prevented from receiving communion, why do they still go to church? Is communion the qualification of being a Christian? Are Christian chiefs who do not receive communion indicating that the communion is not important to them?

²⁵⁸ Craffert, *Meeting the Living*, 25.

4.5 DEPENDENCE ON DEITIES FOR WELL-BEING

One of the controversial issues surrounding the chieftaincy institution is the dependence on deities for well-being. Some scholars and the public have argued that the chieftaincy institution is ‘idolatry.’ The reason is that some chiefs depend on deities for their well-being. Others also argue that although there are deities associated with chieftaincy, it does not make the chieftaincy institution ‘idolatry.’ Why does the chieftaincy institution depend on deities?

Addo-Fening has explained that the chieftaincy institution depended on deities because they were of the view that human kind was surrounded by many kinds of spirit beings, some good and some evil. They relied on the gods (*abosom*) so that they could neutralize the evil powers of those who practiced witchcraft (*abayifo*). This is one of the reasons why the Abuakwa chieftaincy for example was steeped in *abosomsom*.²⁵⁹ This does not necessarily mean that the chieftaincy institution is *abosomsom*. The chiefs needed protection from evil spirits and they found it among the deities.

As we have already mentioned in Chapter two, there are several deities in Anum. The Anum people regard *Letwi* as the patron of deities. According to Yaw Boafo (the priest in charge of the *Letwi* shrine) and Kwadwo Amponsah (assistance), *Letwi* belongs to the *Omanhene* of the Anum traditional area. The *Kyidomhene* is the *sumankwahene* (executioner) of the *Letwi* shrine. Some are of the view that all *abosom* are evil. However, in the view of Yaw Boafo *Letwi* is a good *obosom*.²⁶⁰

Yaw Boafo indicated that *Letwi* does not like blood and so they don’t use blood to perform rituals in the shrine house. Although a two week old lamb is sacrificed to cleanse the Anum traditional area, blood does not enter the shrine house.

²⁵⁹ Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa*, 31.

²⁶⁰ Interview with Yaw Boafo and Kwadwo Amponsah on January 24, 2016.

Also, because *Letwi* does not like ‘dirty things’ mortal remains of any Anum citizen that dies through accident, snake bite, suicide, gunshot is not allowed entry into Anum. Such death is considered *tofowuo* (unnatural death). Because of that it is considered as ‘dirty.’ It can only be permitted if the right ritual is performed.²⁶¹ *Letwi* does not like curse (*duabo*), but if one is under a curse, it can revoke the curse. The means of communication between the priest and *Letwi* is through libation.²⁶²

According to Yaw Boafo, *Letwi* is believed to do a lot of good things for the people. It is capable of healing different kinds of diseases. Also if one wants to travel abroad it can provide assistance. In addition, if a couple has been married without a child for years *Letwi* is capable of assisting the person. He mentioned that there are several testimonies to this effect. This is similar to the *Akoned* shrine at Akuapim Larteh. The *Akoned* cures barrenness, impotence, epilepsy, paralytic and mental illness, dipsomania, respiratory affections and skin rashes. Macrae indicated that he asked two PCG ministers to comment on the activities of the *Akoned* shrine in relation to healing. One replied “it is very much influenced by Christianity,” the other said “the church must aspire to provide this service also.”²⁶³

Okyeame Okraku of Anum traditional area indicated that the chiefs and people of Anum depended on *akpi* (*obosom*) for protection during war. In the olden days the chiefs led their people for war and they needed protection. It was important for the chief to be protected because in war when the chief died the whole community became subjects to the other community that killed the chief.²⁶⁴

Can we say that the chieftaincy institution could be considered as *abosomsom*? It has been revealed from the study so far that chiefs are associated with deities. The

²⁶¹ Interview with Yaw Boafo and Kwadwo Amponsah on January 24, 2016.

²⁶² Interview with Yaw Boafo and Kwadwo Amponsah on January 24, 2016.

²⁶³ Macrae, *The Sacred Tree*, 89.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Okyeame Okraku on November 23, 2015.

deities provide security for the chiefs during war. The deities are capable of healing the people. Nonetheless, the chieftaincy institution cannot be considered as *abosomsom*. The reason is that the deities are not the object of worship. The object of worship is the Supreme Being. The chiefs are able to distinguish between the Supreme Being, the ancestors and the deities.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Ritual becomes an avenue for the practitioner to communicate something which is of religious significance. This is done through word, symbol and action. The chieftaincy institution is responsible for festivals and rituals that provide the spiritual cleansing and wellbeing of the people. Christian chiefs go through the ritual processes of confinement before they are enstooled as chiefs. We discovered that most Christian chiefs perform their ritual roles. In the opinion of some Christians libation is contrary with Christianity. However, we found out that libation is a form of prayer that addresses the needs of the people. On the issue of whether or not the ancestors are worshipped or venerated, some scholars were of the view that they are venerated. The black stool remains an important object in the chieftaincy institution. As such rituals are performed for the stool and also animal blood is used to blacken it. Chiefs rely on deities for protection and well-being. Lastly, rituals follow a pattern of consecration, invocation, communication and sacrifice, while the social aspect tends to bring the people together.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter we looked at discourses on chieftaincy and rituals in Ghana. Christian chiefs performed rituals on festive occasions as part of their religious role. The ancestors are venerated and not worshipped because the ancestors are not the object of worship. This chapter consists of the summary, recommendations and conclusion of the whole research and it is divided into three parts. The first part is the summary of the research. The second part is the recommendations based on the findings of the study. The third part deals with the conclusion of the study. These recommendations will help the chiefs and the church to have a better appreciation of the issues involved in Christian chiefs and indigenous rituals in Ghana. It will again assist all those who want to do further studies in the area of the Gospel and Culture.

5.1 SUMMARY

The Anum people who are part of the Guan speaking communities were also part of the old empires of the Northern part of Ghana. During their migration they were led by their priests and the elders under the direction and guidance of their deities. They settled at their present location in 1724 and Nenyé Kolihue I was their first chief. As such, the institution of chieftaincy existed before the arrival of Christianity in Anum. Christianity was introduced to the Anum people by the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society. Fetzer, Klaus and Rottman were the first Basel missionaries to arrive in 1864.

The research was conducted to investigate whether Christian chiefs go through all the ritual process of confinement and enstoolment and whether they maintain all the rituals associated with chieftaincy in the Anum traditional area. It was discovered that they do. However, it was also revealed that the extent to which a chief is involved in these rituals varies because there are several categories of chiefs in the Anum traditional area. These are the paramount chief, divisional chiefs, queen mothers, and sub-chiefs. For the paramount chief, divisional chiefs and some of the sub-chiefs who occupy black stools, rituals are a crucial part of the leadership. However, the rest who do not occupy black stools, their ritual roles are insignificant. Due to these differences the ritual process of enstoolment of chiefs is different for each category.

Oduyoye's *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* provided a suitable framework for the study. It is clear from the book that even though Christianity came to Ghana it is now indigenized. Consequently, some royals from the indigenous communities who have become Christians are now taking positions in traditional leadership as chiefs. This has created some concerns within the communities as to whether these Christian chiefs can efficiently and effectively rule their communities. This concern is basically in the area of rituals which in themselves are not different from the questions which have been posed by Oduyoye. She asked two critical questions, "should African Christians become rulers of their people? Would they compromise their Christianity by taking part in traditional festivals as chief priests and representatives of their people?"²⁶⁵ How could these chiefs maintain their traditional leadership without compromising their Christianity? The question has an advantage of drawing attention to the issues related to Christian chiefs and African indigenous rituals in Anum. From the research it is clear that Oduyoye's view that

²⁶⁵ Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* (Accra: Sam-Woode Ltd, 2000), 56.

even though some Africans have embraced Christianity they have not abandoned some of their cultural beliefs and practices. Thus, in Anum it is clear that some royals have become chiefs and continue to be Christians from their own perspectives. For such Christian chiefs as long as they have gone through the baptism and confirmation rites in the PCG they remain Christians even though their position as traditional rulers demand that they take part in some of the rituals associated with chieftaincy.

In Anum, the chieftaincy institution and the PCG had a cordial relationship at the beginning. However, differences in worldviews with specific reference to indigenous rituals became an issue. The Anum indigenous worldview does not separate its religion from its indigenous leadership (chieftaincy). Thus religion endorses indigenous political authority. The Church leaders on the other hand argued that the state and politics could be separated. This would lead to freedom of worship of conscience, irrespective of their obligation to the state.

As a result of this argument by Christians they introduced the Salem systems to separate the new converts from the activities of the community. This contributed to the creation of the Salems in Anum. However, this did not solve the problem, because community members are expected to be part of community-based festivals like the *odwe ogyi* festival, which conflicts with the motive of establishing the Salem. This led to a confrontation between the chief and the leadership of the church. The chief banned Christians from fetching water from the wells. Christians were not allowed to evangelise in the homes of the people. The chief also decreed that a woman could only become a Christian with the approval of the husband. Eventually, the church could not prevent the impositions made by the traditional leaders.

Eventually, some members of the royal household became Christians. In the current situation some of these Christians (descendants of converted royals) are

returning to their roots to take up their indigenous leadership as chiefs without necessarily relinquishing their church membership. This group of chiefs refer to themselves as Christian chiefs. However, the church is indifferent to this new labelling. The PCG allows them into the congregation, receives the payment of tithes and other financial contributions from such chiefs. Nevertheless, the Christian chiefs are not allowed to take up roles in the church or participate in the Eucharist.

The label ‘Christian chiefs’ has however attracted attention from both scholars and community members questioning the basis for fronting the Christian identity in the chieftaincy. Some indigenes do not even add it in their relationship because they are just called Nana. This is because these Christian chiefs go through the ritual process of confinement and enstoolment. They also maintain their ritual roles after they have been enstooled as chiefs. Additionally, they take part and supervise the celebration of the *odwe ogyi* festival.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings from this research, the following suggestions and recommendations are made. The study has shown that Christian chiefs in the Anum traditional area go through the ritual process of confinement and enstoolment. The confinement period is used to educate the candidate on chieftaincy matters. It is also part of the process of initiating the candidate into the chieftaincy institution. With the importance given to education within this confinement period it would be significant to have a detailed study on the process of confinement.

The research also revealed that Christian chiefs maintained their ritual role of chieftaincy after they have been enstooled as chiefs. This was evident in the fact that Christian chiefs celebrated the *odwe ogyi* festival in Anum. The celebration of the

festival was an occasion to feed the ancestors, cleanse the town, and ask for prosperity and blessings from the ancestors. The PCG however, does not allow its members to attend the *odwe ogyi* festival. The reason assigned is that it contradicts their Christian beliefs and practices. There is also a need for a research that examines the historical dimension of this conflict and its impact on church and culture in African communities.

The respondent communities were of the view that Christian chiefs can efficiently and effectively rule in Anum. Nonetheless, the PCG is also indifferent about the existence of 'Christian chiefs' in their congregation. They are however not allowed to hold positions in the church because they are of the view that they cannot be chiefs and Christians at the same time. It is recommended that further studies be conducted into this dilemma.

5.3 CONCLUSION

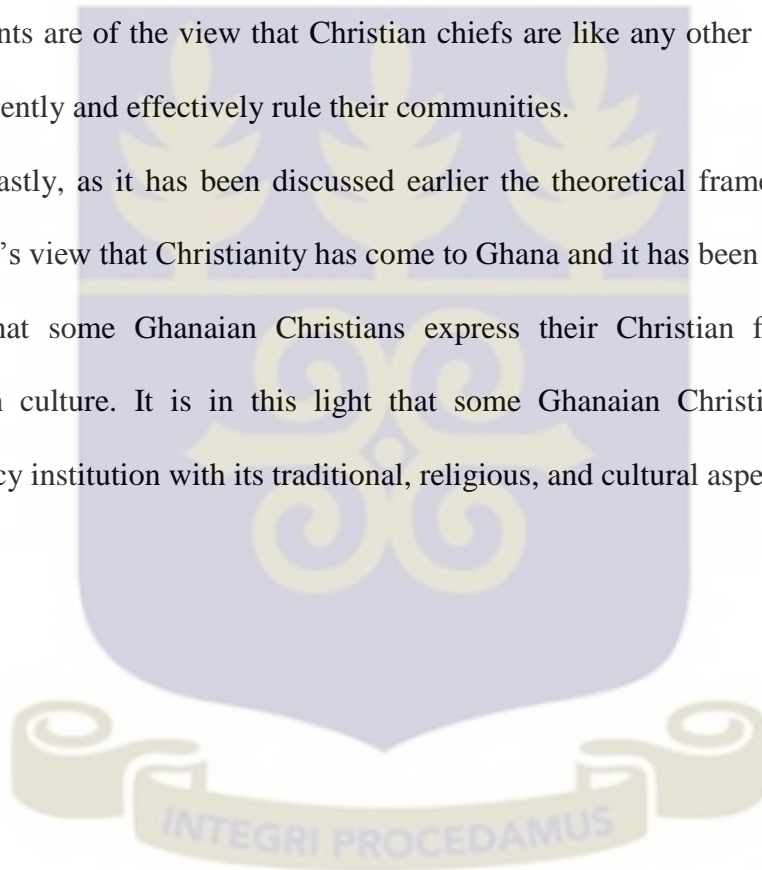
The study has shown that there are different categories of chiefs in Anum traditional area. The *Omanhene* is the head of all the chiefs and he is supported by queen mothers, divisional and sub-chiefs. It is the family of the *Omanhene* that are the main royals of the state. However, some divisional chiefs could also come from the royal family of the *Omanhene*. To call all chiefs Nana comes with some challenges, and so chiefs should be identified with their positions. The *Omanhene* should be called Nana *Omanhene*, the queen mother; *Nanahemaa*, and the *Adontenhene*; Nana *Adonten*. This would help the general public know the different categories of chiefs in the country.

The Christian chiefs join the congregation to worship. They claim they are Christians because they have gone through baptism and confirmation. They are also

chiefs because they have been enstooled by their indigenous communities according to their traditions. As chiefs they are expected to perform their indigenous religious duties. These religious duties include the celebration of festivals such as *Akwasidae*, *Odwira* and *Odwe Ogyi*. However, it is these rituals that the PCG still frowns upon.

Generally, respondents asserted that Christian chiefs go through all the rituals associated with chieftaincy. Additionally, they do not only supervise the celebration of festivals, they actually participate in them. For this reason the community respondents are of the view that Christian chiefs are like any other chiefs hence they can efficiently and effectively rule their communities.

Lastly, as it has been discussed earlier the theoretical frame of this thesis is Oduyoye's view that Christianity has come to Ghana and it has been indigenized. This means that some Ghanaian Christians express their Christian faith within their Ghanaian culture. It is in this light that some Ghanaian Christians embrace the chieftaincy institution with its traditional, religious, and cultural aspects.



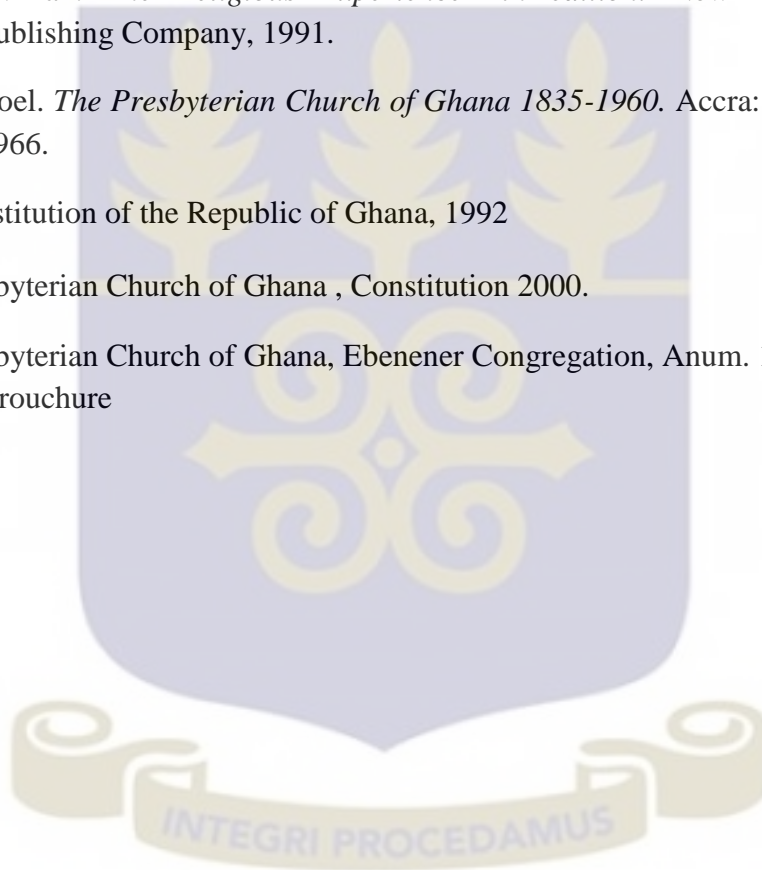
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Please could you tell me who is a chief?
2. Could you explain to me what it takes to become a chief?
3. Please who is qualified to become a chief?
4. Please does this include Christians? If yes, If no
5. Could you tell me what constitutes confinement? And what is the period of confinement?
6. Please do Christian chiefs go through confinement? If yes, please do they go through the same principles of rituals?
 - i. Swearing of oath
 - ii. Washing of feet
 - iii. Choosing ancestral stool name
7. Please do you think the rituals conflict Christian values, beliefs and practices?
8. Please what are the roles of a chief?
 - i. Does it include ritual roles?
9. Please do 'Christian chiefs' continue to play their ritual roles? If yes how do they do it?
10. Please if not how is that fulfilled in their indigenous communities?
11. Please what is the position of the community in relation to Christian chiefs?
12. Please can indigenous communities be efficiently ruled by Christian chiefs in Anum?
13. Please what is the position of the church on indigenous rituals?

14. Please what is the position of the church in relation to Christian chiefs in their congregation?



APPENDIX B

OCCUPANTS OF THE BRUKU STOOL OF THE ANUM TRADITIONAL AREA

Nenye Bruku (Nephew of Kwasi Anyane)	1750-1800
Nenye Okae Kofi (Asiampong Asirifi)	1800-1811
Nenye Ofosu (Okumi)	1811-1823
Nenye Apea Kumi I	1823-1860
Nenye Kumi II (Hienno Kwame)	1860-1873
Nenye Kumi III (Okpone Kwame)	1873-1892
Nenye Kumi IV (Obese Kwasi)	1904-1907, deposed
Nenye Kumi V (Yaw Nkrumah)	1907-abidicated
Nenye Kumi VI (Kwadwo Nyarko)	1910 deposed
Nenye Kumi VII (Ayensu Kwao)	1910-1970
Nenye Apea Kumi II (Kwasi Debrah)	1970 till date



APPENDIX C

OCCUPANTS OF VARIOUS STOOLS IN ANUM TODAY

Omanhene Nana Apea Kumi II

Kyidomhene Nana Kolihue XI

Adontehene Nana Kwasi Anyane V

Bekumhene Nana Okyempem Adu VII

Nifahene Nana Bombo V

Ankobeahene Nana Affum Kafena III

Sanahene Nana Kwabena Kuma

Krontihene Nana Asiedu Ntow III

Twafohene Nana Kwasi Agyei IV

Gyasehene Nana Kwame Gyau III

Mankrado of the Nifa division Nenyé Afari Sei III

Queen Mother of Adamuseampa stool of Anum Nana Adjowa Sabea I

Queen Mother of Anum Traditional Area Nana Afua Ntowa I



APPENDIX D

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Nana Kwasi Anyane V

Nana Kolihue XI

Nana Bombo V

Nana Okyempem Adu VII

Nana Afari Sei III

Nana Affum Kafena III

Nana Asiedu Ntow III

Nana Amofa-Aku II

Okyeame Yaw Nhyira

Okyeame Okraku

Nana Afua Ntowa I

Nana Adjowa Sabea I

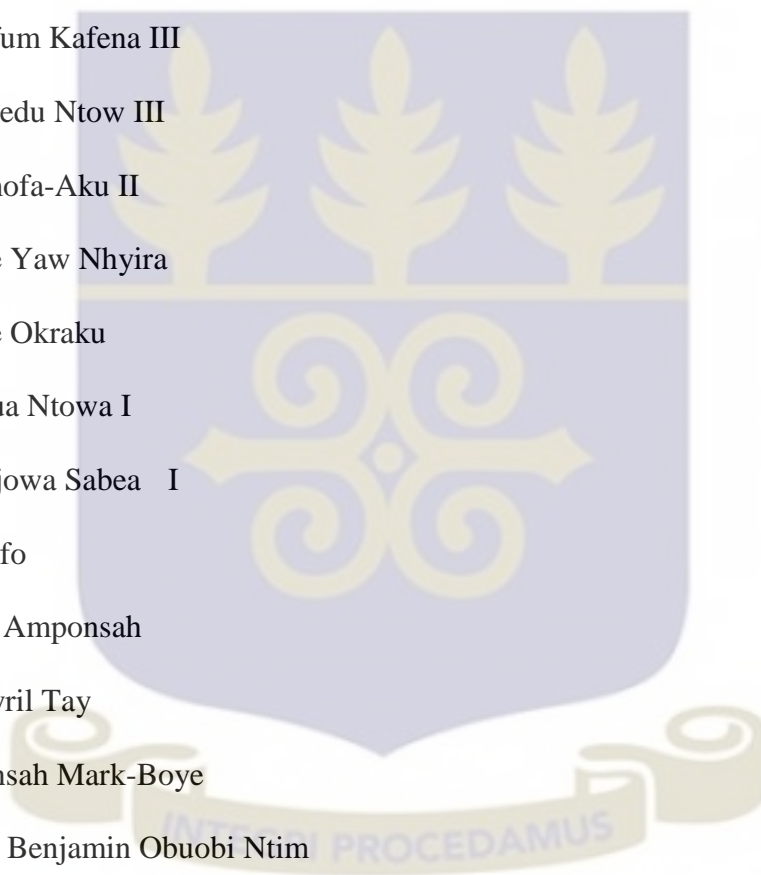
Yaw Boafo

Kwadwo Amponsah

Pastor Cyril Tay

Rev. Mensah Mark-Boye

Catechist Benjamin Obuobi Ntim



APPENDIX E



THE ANUM TRADITIONAL AREA



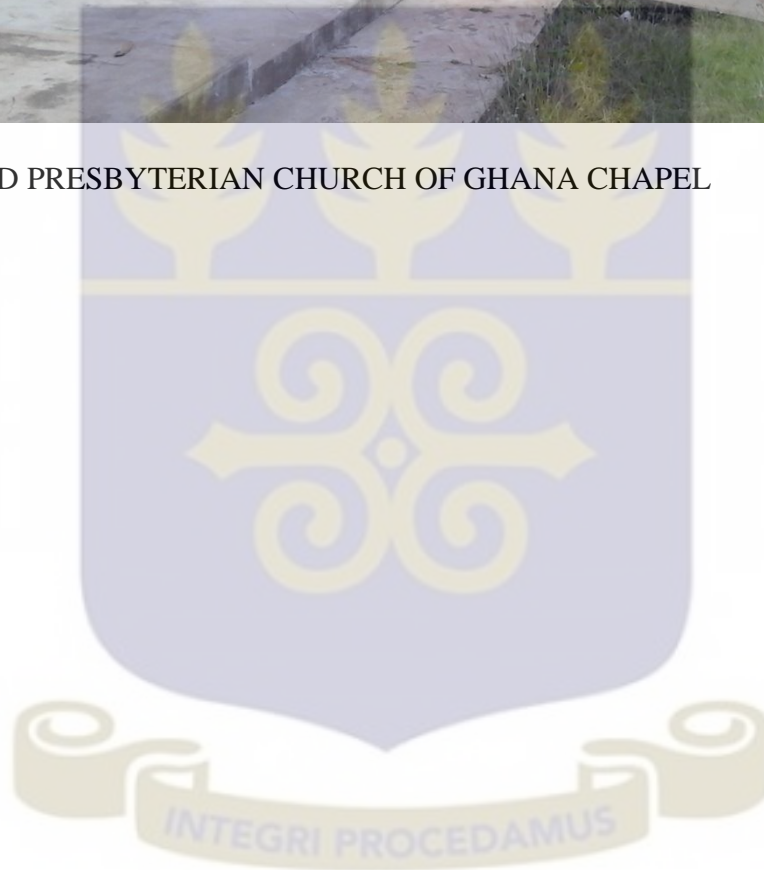


THE OMANHENE'S PALACE





THE OLD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA CHAPEL





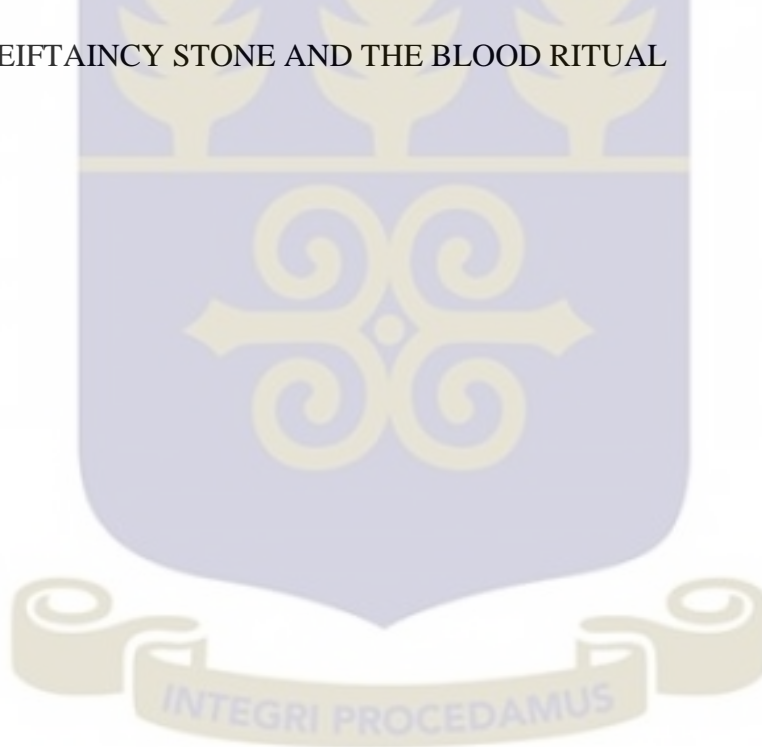
NANA KWASI ANYANE V CELEBRATES THE ODWE OGYI FESTIVAL



PRESENTATION OF ITEMS FOR THE RITUAL



THE CHEIFTAINCY STONE AND THE BLOOD RITUAL





THE LETWI SHRINE





THE SAKUM SHRINE

