

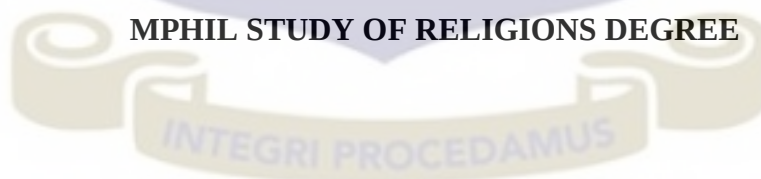
**PRE-BURIAL RITES IN TUTU IN THE AKUAPEM TRADITIONAL AREA
OF EASTERN PART OF GHANA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis with the exception of materials quoted from other scholarly works which have been acknowledged fully, is the original production of research work by the researcher under the supervision of Dr. Rose Mary Amenga-Etego and Rev. Fr. Dr. Cosmas Ebo Sarbah towards the award of MPhil Religions in the Department of the Study of Religions, University of Ghana, Legon.

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ABSTRACT

This study was largely inspired by a desire to illustrate the uniqueness of the *Amanebo* rite, a pre-burial rite, of the people of Tutu in the Akuapem Traditional Area in the eastern part of Ghana, and shed light on the relevance for its continuous observance in contemporary Tutu society.

The phenomenological approach was employed to guide the data collection. On the research field, the researcher employed interviews, participant observation and purposive sampling techniques to gather the required data. The researcher has employed Victor Turner's famous theory of 'Liminality', to ground the discussion.

Among other findings, the rite is seen as a mandatory liminal rite, which encompasses some aspects of religio-cultural beliefs and practices of the people of Tutu and that any attempt to modify or change it is met with strong resistance by the custodians of the community. The performance of the rites also revealed that their resistance was due to certain values cherished and revered by the people. Among them include the resolution of conflicts and seeming contradictions to bring reconciliation between the material and the spiritual, to initiate smooth transition of the deceased to ancestral home, to advocate the solidarity and communality of indigenous living for a common purpose and as a means to enforce the moral values of the community.

It can be concluded that the continuous observance of this rite and similar indigenous practices of the AIR or its functional equivalent, in spite of the contemporary social change has entrenched itself and may never wholly disappear. Indigenous religious beliefs and practices will continue to manifest its resilience over the other religious traditions. However, there is the need to perform a study to find out among other issues the correlation between such indigenous religious beliefs and practices and the development of the indigenous societies.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear wife, Asafo Maame Juliet Eno Araba Gyamerah, my daughters, Maame Adwoa Kyei-Nketsia Gyamerah and Ewura Adwoa Egyafua Gyamerah and my son, Owura Kwadwo Darkwah Gyamerah.



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absence when I was typing this work. Last but not least, I am very thankful to my parents, the late(s) Samuel Kwame Gyamerah and Grace Abu and my guardian John Kwasi Darkwah.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

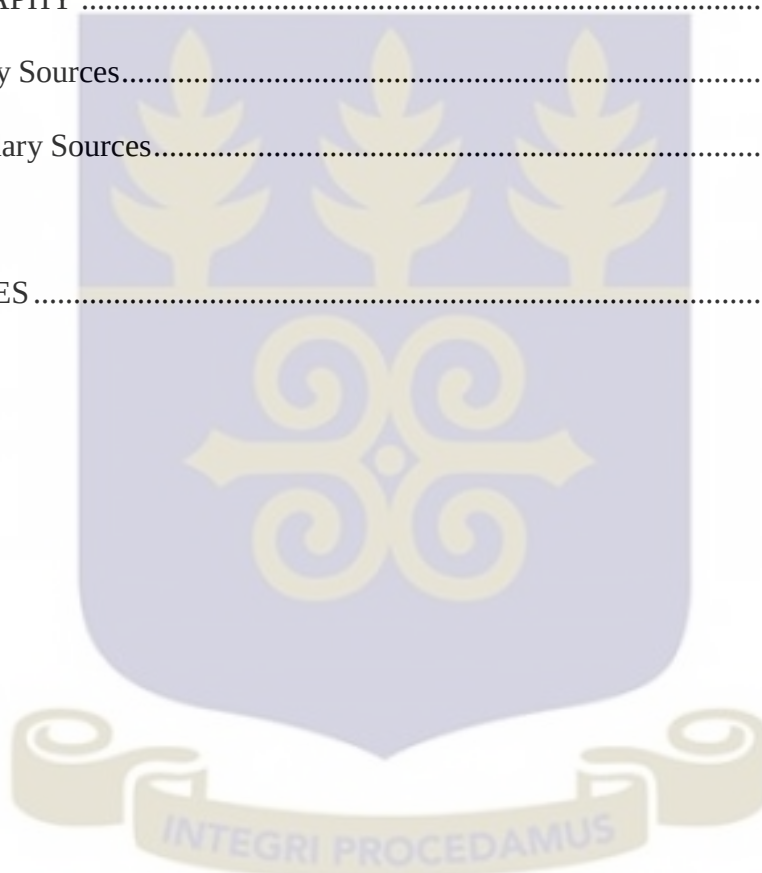
Content	Page
DECLARATION.....	i
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Research Question	6
1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study.....	7
1.5 Scope and Focus of the Study.....	7
1.6 Significance of Study.....	8
1.7 Literature Review	9
1.7.1 Ritual Studies	9
1.7.2 Rites of Passage	122
1.7.3 Akan Indigenous Religion	16
1.8 Theoretical Framework.....	19
1.9 Methodology.....	21
1.9.1 Methods of Data Collection.....	22
1.9.1.1 Primary Sources.....	22
1.9.1.2 Participant Observation	23

1.9.1.3 Secondary Sources.....	23
1.9.2 Samples and Sampling Techniques	24
1.9.3 Data Analysis.....	24
1.10 Definition of Terms	25
1.11 Ethical Organisation	29
 CHAPTER TWO.....	 31
THE TUTU OF THE AKUAPEM TRADITIONAL AREA	31
2.1 Introduction	31
2.2 History of Akuapem Traditional Area.....	31
2.2.1 Formation of Akuapem Traditional Area.....	32
2.2.2 The Abotakyi Accord (1733).....	35
2.2.3 Present Divisions of the Akuapem Traditional Area.....	36
2.3 Tutu People of Akuapem Traditional Area	38
2.3.1 Origin and Meaning of ‘Tutu’	39
2.3.2 Formation of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area.....	42
2.3.3 Tutu and the Akuapem Traditional Area.....	45
2.4 Political Organisation of Tutu Akuapem.....	47
2.4.1 Institution of Chieftaincy.....	48
2.4.2 Administrative Structures of Tutu	49
2.5 Religion in Tutu Akuapem	52
2.5.1 Akan Concept of the Human Person	53
2.5.2 The Akan Spiritual or Religious Concept – the Akan concept of spirits	56
2.5.3 Christianity in Tutu Akuapem	59
2.5.4 Religion in Contemporary Tutu Society	61

2.6 Conclusion	63
CHAPTER THREE	64
THE <i>AMANEBO</i> RITE OF TUTU	64
3.1 Introduction	64
3.2 Pre- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite	65
3.2.1 Pre- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for the natural death of common indigenes	65
3.2.2 Pre- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for royals	68
3.2.3 Pre- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for unnatural (bad) death	70
3.3 <i>Amanebɔ</i> Rite for natural (good) death	71
3.3.1 Gathering of Participants	71
3.3.1.1 The <i>Amanebɔ</i> Rite for Natural Death for ‘Common’ Indigenes	73
3.3.1.2 Response from the deceased family	74
3.3.1.3 Presentation of Successors and Children of the Deceased	75
3.3.1.4 Commitment towards community development.....	78
3.3.1.5 Presentation of Ritual Elements and Pouring of Libation	79
3.3.2 <i>Amanebɔ</i> for Royals: Chief, Queen-mother and Elders of Tutu	81
3.3.3 <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for Unnatural or Bad Death.....	84
3.3.4 End of <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for all Death.....	84
3.4 Post- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite	85
3.4.1 Post- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for good death of a ‘common’ indigene.....	85
3.4.1.1 Conveyance and Preparation of Corpse.....	86
3.4.1.2 Laying in state and wake keeping (<i>Wɔyere amu no mpa so na wosrepɛ</i>).....	87
3.4.2 Post- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for Royals.....	89
3.4.3 Post- <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite for Bad death.....	90

3.4.3.1 Accidental Death (<i>Atɔfo wu</i>).....	90
3.4.3.2 Death of Infants	91
3.5 Observations	93
3.6 Conclusion	94
 CHAPTER FOUR	 95
<i>AMANEBO</i> RITE IN CONTEMPORARY TUTU AKUAPEM.....	95
4.1 Introduction	95
4.2 Philosophical and Theological Underpinning of <i>Amanebɔ</i> Rite	95
4.2.1 Enforcement of the Moral Values	96
4.2.2 Medium for Conflict Resolution.....	98
4.2.3 Smooth Transition to the Ancestral World.....	100
4.2.4 Medium for Averting the Consequences of Unnatural Death	102
4.2.5 Significance of Afterlife	105
4.3 Religio-cultural concerns of <i>Amanebɔ</i> Rite in Contemporary Tutu.....	106
4.3.1 Sacred ground (space)	107
4.3.2 Libation (<i>Nsaguo</i> (<i>Apayɛ</i>))	110
4.3.3 Invocation of the Spirits	114
4.3.4 Spirit Possession and Prophecy within <i>Amanebɔ</i> Rite	116
4.4 <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite as a liminal rite	118
4.5 The influence of Contemporary Tutu society on <i>Amanebɔ</i> rite	123
4.6 Conclusion	126

CHAPTER FIVE	127
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	127
5.1 Summary.....	127
5.2 Conclusion	130
5.3 Recommendation.....	132
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 133
I. Primary Sources.....	133
II. Secondary Sources.....	134
 APPENDICES	 139



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In traditional African society rituals or rites permeate every aspect of the human life. In most African indigenous societies there are several rites that mark a person's journey in life as one passes from one stage to another and each stage is celebrated and recognised with special rituals,¹ commonly referred to as “rites of passage”. Religious ritual touches the foundations of what is either considered real or sacred when it demonstrates the presence of an ultimate meaning or transcendental dimension, a transformative power, and has sacred significance for participants. Arnold van Gennep posits that rites of passage are ceremonial responses, which societies have developed to help an individual cope with periodic challenges that confront him or her so as to move to the next station [of life].² Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner, according to James L. Cox, refer to it as the ritual process performed to initiate and indicate the various life cycles, calendrical cycles and the crisis cycles of a believing community.³ Denis M'Passou also concurs that these rites of passage from an African perspective are a very important means of training young people in the skills of living a useful and productive life; “a higher school of learning”⁴, as they pass from one stage of life to another in the society.⁵

The landmarks for rites of passage, as pertain in traditional African societies, which do not exclude the Akans of Ghana are, birth, puberty, marriage and death – burial

¹ Denis M'Passou, 'The Continuing Tension Between Christianity and Rites of Passage in Swaziland', in J. S. Mbiti, *African Religion and Philosophy*. (London: Heinemann, 1988), 116.

² Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*. (Chicago: The University Press of Chicago, 1966), in Milton Cohen, *Death Ritual: Anthropological*, pdf, 6 [Assessed 8th November 2013]

³ James L. Cox, *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa: Interaction Between Christian and African Traditional Religions*. (Great Britain: Cardiff Academic Press, 1998), vii-xii.

⁴ Denis M'Passou, 'The Continuing Tension Between Christianity and Rites of Passage in Swaziland', in James L. Cox. *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, 15.

⁵ Cox, *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, 15.

and funeral rites. In other African communities, rites of passage may also include other stages of life such as pregnancy; pre-natal rites performed to confirm pregnancy, foetal growth, and for safe delivery.⁶ In almost all human societies the most commonly observed rites of passage relate to life cycles, which are usually marked by elaborate ritual observances. The most prominent among these rites of passage is death, which usually concerns itself with the society's beliefs in souls or spirits and afterlife of the dead. Thus, the complexity of death makes it one of a number of life cycle crises which demand ritual observance, though the degree of elaboration of the ritual varies greatly even among societies of comparable levels of cultural development.

In most traditional African societies, when a person dies, families, friends, and neighbours respond in structured, patterned ways to the death, commanding some religious and cultural guidelines for the treatment and disposal of the body, referred to as “death rituals.” This may be more or less standardized but almost always involve a core of understandings, spiritual beliefs, rituals, expectations and etiquette. In the thought of the African, especially the Akan, death is a transition to another mode of existence, which involves a ritual of transformation from eldership to ancestorship. In the Akan indigenous thought, the burial and funeral rite or practice is referred to as *eyi yɔ*, and is perceived as a ceremony for celebrating, respecting, sanctifying, or remembering and culminating or venerating the life of the deceased. Thus, it is a rite of passage for the dead from this physical world to the world of the spirits. In Akan thought is, *woa toa nananom wo asamanado (nseɛdo)*, which literary means the dead has joined or gone to the ancestors at the ‘ancestral home.’⁷ It also includes all the funerary rites, which comprises all the complex beliefs and practices used by an indigenous community or culture, from

⁶ James L. Cox, ‘Rites of Passage and the Interaction Between Christian and Traditional Religions’ x.

⁷ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, (Nigeria: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), 135. In the African Indigenous Community of the Akans, the *ancestral home* is believed to be the home for all who have died in honour or with dignity.

internment to various monuments, prayers, and rituals, undertaken in honour of the dead; to remember and bid farewell to the deceased. Burial rite, as a rite of passage, is a sacred event or act that reveals not only the religious sentiments and faith of the indigenous African society but also the notion of death and the associated relationships established between the dead and the living and their descendants. It reinforces the fact that death is not only a transition from one world to the other – physical to spiritual, but also a continuation of life after death. The ritual process for the dead is performed in stages but varies from society to society. Kofi Asare Opoku posits that “The Akan, for example, have four stages: preparation of corpse, pre-burial mourning, burial and post-burial mourning.”⁸ However, the common knowledge among the Akan reveals that the stages can be more or less, at least three stages, depending on the degree of elaboration of the rites.

In Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area, which serves as the immediate geographical context of this study, there is a stage known as *Amanebɔ*, which is considered as a pre-burial rite. The *Amanebɔ* rite is a pre-burial rite that is common in almost all the towns and villages in and around the Akuapem Traditional Area. The Akuapem word *Amanebɔ* is derived from two Akuapem Twi words *Amane* and *bɔ*. *Amane* is literally translated as the ‘purpose, mission, or happenings’ and *bɔ* can also be literally translated as ‘to tell or create’. From this translations the term *Amanebɔ* in its general sense implies telling others, your guests about the purpose of a particular gathering, which in this case involves the happenings before and after the death of a deceased relative. The term *Amanebɔ* in the context of this study is the process whereby the *abusuapanyin* (family head), with the consent of the family or clan, formally informs the Chief and his Sub-Chiefs and the entire community of the events leading to the death of their deceased and other arrangements that will be made for the burial of the deceased, including the appointment and

⁸ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 135.

presentation of the next of kin. It can be perceived as the act of giving a situational report of a deceased relative to *Nananom* (a gathering of the Chief and his elders) and the entire community.

Amanebo has become a rite of passage, which is observed every fortnight between the families of the deceased and *Nananom* of Tutu, in the presence of (the entire)⁹ indigenes or natives of the community. Although, it is a general concept among the Akuapems, the uniqueness of the nature of the procedure adopted by the people of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area during the performance of the ritual, makes it a peculiar religious rite among the indigenes of Tutu. Whereas, in the other Akuapem towns, it is the concern of the immediate extended family after which delegates are sent (later on) to inform the Chief and his elders, that of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area is a communal event performed in the presence of the Chief, sub-chiefs and entire community. In fact, in the case of Tutu, the *Amanebo* has been centralised; wherever the death occurs, the *abusuapanyin* and his family must appear before the Chiefs and the entire community. Even when due to strange circumstances, beyond the jurisdiction of the traditional area, the burial cannot take place in Tutu, the rite is performed to announce the news of the decease. This customarily seeks to place the bereaved family in a better position to continue with the rest of the burial and funeral rites.

Again, in the other Akuapem towns, with the exception of Mamfe Akuapem, the *Amanebo* rite is done whilst the body is being laid in state. In Mamfe Akuapem, the *abusuapanyin* of the deceased accompanied by a few selected family members, meets the Chief and his elders at the palace on Thursday evening and informs them of the events before and after the death of the deceased relative, including the appointment and

⁹ The entire members of the community should be present but this is not the case in recent times. This would be dealt with in chapter four under the theme recent developments

presentation of next of kin.¹⁰ However in the case of Tutu, the rite is performed prior to the conveyance of the corpse from the mortuary to the *abusuafie*, family-house, of the deceased.¹¹

There are many variations of *Amanebo* as the rite is dictated not only by the circumstances of the death, "...making it good or bad death,"¹² but also by other considerations such as age and social position. For all natural deaths, which Opoku terms as "good" death, there is a 'common' *Amanebo* for all ordinary indigenes or folks. Even that of a child is quite different from that of an adult. Meanwhile, for the Chief, the sub-chiefs and the elders¹³, whose death are largely considered as natural, or good, it is slightly different. Also, with regards to unnatural, bad, death such as accidental death and even the death of some children, which are usually considered as a prohibition within the Akan indigenous religious belief system, the *Amanebo* does not follow the same procedure as in the case of an ordinary indigene. In this study, the researcher examines this unique phenomenon among the people of Tutu in Akuapem traditional area. The study takes a closer observation of the *Amanebo* rite by looking at its uniqueness from other burial rites in the Akuapem traditional area. It again touches on the recent trend and development of the rite and whether it raises any religious concern among the people of Tutu.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Burial rite, is indisputably perceived as a very important rite of passage, which is often observed by all inhabitants with due attention in any traditional society. Most importantly, burial rite, is an expression of a cultural blueprint, of attitudes, values and

¹⁰ Gerald Manteaw, Secretary to Mamfehene, Interviewed, 27th October 2013 at a burial service in Mamfe Akuapem.

¹¹ Nana Ankobeahene of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area,

¹² Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 135.

¹³ The elders in this case includes the respective queen mothers, linguists, and heads of clans of the various sub-chiefs. But in other instances it can refer to the Sub-chiefs. In statements as the Chief and his elders, the elders, in this context would be referring to the sub-chiefs and all other elders

ideals passed down by generations, which an individual learns as a member of society.¹⁴ These rituals are intended to smoothly transition the departed spirit to the world of the spirits, which is an important extension of the living usually referred to as the ‘living dead’ or ancestors.

However, the religiously pluralistic environment (Christianity, Islam and Akan Indigenous Religions) of Tutu indigenous society, which seems to create various different perceptions towards the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite among its indigenes and recent developments in Tutu concerning the *Amanebɔ* rite makes it an unavoidable issue that requires investigation. Some of the indigenes of contemporary Tutu society perceive that *Amanebɔ* rite should be abolished, whereas others who argue strongly that the rite is a successive generational rite, perceive and insist it is their responsibility to uphold its practice hence advocate for its continuance. Others are also of the view that the rite can be adapted with some modifications so as to create a harmonious society, which is perceived to emanate from a common ancestry.

1.3 Research Questions

The burden of this research was geared towards finding answers to the following questions:

How has the *Amanebɔ* rite been practiced (observed) among the people of Tutu in the Akuapem traditional area?

What are the philosophical and theological underpinnings of *Amanebɔ* rite among the indigenes of contemporary Tutu society?

What are the challenges confronting the observance of *Amanebɔ* rite in contemporary Tutu society?

¹⁴ Milton Cohen, “Death Ritual: Anthropological Perspectives” pdf, 1 [assessed 20th October 2013]

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

From these research questions, the study aimed at investigating and shedding light on the *Amanebɔ* rite among the people of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area of Ghana. To achieve the aforementioned aim, the researcher seeks to conduct a study to explore and comprehend the whole concept of *Amanebɔ* rite.

Also, the study was geared towards identifying and shedding light on the indigenous philosophical and theological (religious) underpinnings of *Amanebɔ* rite as well as investigate whether there are any challenges confronting the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite among the indigenes of contemporary Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area.

Finally, the study examined and analysed the significance of the rite as a liminal or transitional rite of passage in Tutu using the tripartite scheme of Turner.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The immediate geographical context of the study is Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area, which comprises a cross section of indigenes of Tutu Township and its surrounding villages such as Abenta, Akwatiakwaso, Pakro, Ahenkorase, Aboabo, Budu, Bankro and Talankro all in the Akuapem Traditional Area of the Eastern Region.

The research was conducted in these areas to promote the effective use of time and reduce the economic aspect of the research, since the researcher lives within the vicinity. In addition, the researcher's ability to communicate fluently and comprehend the language, Akuapem Twi, spoken by the indigenes of Tutu made the collection and gathering of the required data for the research much easier. Also, the scope was selected because most of the people living in Tutu are natives, the indigenous people, who are very meticulous with their traditions.

This notwithstanding, the researcher encountered some limitations among which included the dearth of written information about the people of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. Thus, although the people of Akuapem State have most of their histories written and recorded in various scholarly works, the people of Tutu Akuapem, seem to have nothing of the sought. Apart from the name ‘Tutu’ being mentioned in some literatures such as *Akwapim Handbook*¹⁵ and *Government and Politics in the Akwapim State 1730 – 1830*¹⁶ in the history of Akuapems, not much was said about them. They still depend on the oral tradition; retelling or re-enacting tales learnt from others, to keep their history alive from one generation to the other. Hence, the recording of such preserved history by oral communication; stories, songs, and poems, which are mostly evident in their rites of passage.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The rapid growth of other religious traditions in the midst of globalisation, makes it imperative to explore the relevance of such indigenous practices to contemporary indigenous religious communities. Hence the relevance of this study is to contribute to the on-going academic discourse on African indigenous religion globally.

Studies on the rites of passage, particularly with specific reference to the pre-burial rite among the people of Tutu will provide an extremely important glimpse of the role of the rite in the lives of the people within the Akuapem Traditional area.

As a religious phenomenon, it will help the younger generation of Akuapem and the academia to understand and appreciate the ritual process of the *Amanebɔ* rite and its relevance to the people of Tutu so as to advocate either for its continuance, abolition or modification.

¹⁵ David Brokensha. *Akwapim Handbook*, (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1972).

¹⁶ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh. *Government and Politics in the Akuapem State 1730 – 1850*. (Great Britain: Northwestern Press, 1973).

Finally, the research seeks to make available the research findings, which would include the history of the people Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area since there are comparatively no written documents on their existence and religious belief system, for scholarship.

1.7 Literature Review

Looking at the focus of the study, the literature review is divided into three thematic areas that is, the concept of ritual, rites of passage and ritual process and Akan indigenous religion.

1.7.1 Ritual Studies

The aim of the literature reviewed in the ensuing paragraphs is to present rituals as a religio-cultural phenomenon, which has the ability to effect socio-religious changes. Such a discussion necessitated the investigation of the definition, nature, characteristics and significance of ritual studies as postulated by various scholars.

Emile Durkheim, from the sociological perspective, defines ritual as (repeated) ways of acting that are generated inside societies and done to achieve the goal of stimulation and to create some projected images in the minds of the members of the group.¹⁷ F. W. Clothey, on the other hand, according to James L. Cox, in arguing that ritual is so crucial for understanding religion, claims it can “function as a paradigm and dramatization of the intent of religion itself...by the use of symbols, both visual and aural, which along with intellectual and sensual images provide the participant a sense of identity.”¹⁸ James Mbiti also posits that “ritual is a set form of carrying out a religious

¹⁷Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 11.

¹⁸F. W. Clothey, *Ritual* in James L. Cox, *Introduction: Ritual, Rites of Passage and the Interaction between Christian and Traditional Religion*, viii.

action or ceremony... [as] a means of communicating something of religious significance through word, symbol and action.”¹⁹

All these definitions seem to agree with the anthropological and phenomenological perception of ritual within the ‘context of religious life’,²⁰ especially among Africans, whose indigenous societies can hardly distinguish the sacred from the secular. Such a view understands ritual as a specific and usually repeated complex language of paradigmatic word and gesture which provides a pattern for understanding religion as well as living religiously.²¹ The emphasis being made by these scholars concerns the ability of ritual to religiously transform the participant into a new mode of being who would be of benefit to the society. Thus, all rituals seem to have some religious elements which are of benefit to the society: it provides the participants with a sense of identity.

Moreover, scholars argue that the basic elements, which facilitate the understanding and interpretation of any religious ritual process include “the sacred context within which it [the ritual] normally takes place (sacred place, sacred time, sacred tradition, and sacred participants), the transcendent power that marks the core of its meaning and the transformative power that makes it effective.”²² Catherine Bell’s studies on ritual genres and activities that are harder to categorize, those that can be ritual-like but are not quite ritual by cultural definition²³, also revealed six general categories that characterises all ritual activities with each focusing on a major attribute of “ritual-like” action. These characteristics which include formalism, traditionalism, disciplined invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism, and performance are, of course, neither

¹⁹ John S. Mbiti. *Introduction to African Religion* (Great Britain: Heinemann., 1977), 126.

²⁰ The phrase “*context of religious life*” is a description of the people who experience religion as a living [social] reality. William T. Hall, Richard B. Pilgrim and Ronald R. Cavanagh, *Religion: An Introduction*, 59, 60.

²¹ William T. Hall, Richard B. Pilgrim and Ronald R. Cavanagh. *Religion: An Introduction* (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 1986), 62, 63.

²² T William Hall, Richard B. Pilgrim and Ronald R. Cavanagh, 63 – 72.

²³ Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 91– 93.

exclusive nor definitive.²⁴ The implication of the scholars and Bell's views is that a better understanding and interpretation of any ritual, whether religious or cultural, cannot be done in a vacuum. Thus, all rituals depict certain basic features if not all the features mentioned by Bell.

Again, Bell in her scholarly analysis of how the notion of ritual has been used in the study of religion, society, and culture and to carve out an approach to ritual activities that is less burdened by assumptions about thinking and acting, disclosed the strategies by which ritualized activities do what they do.²⁵ Bell disclosed that to understand whether ritual mirror social change, resist it, follow it, or lead it, is not to see ritual activity as a model for something, but rather to see it as a strategic reinterpretation of the world.²⁶ She continued that it is therefore possible to argue in a positive way that the ritual lives of non-literate communities are different from societies where there are educated people and print houses. In these societies, according to her, the literate members create new forms of power and authority as compared to that of non-literate.²⁷ According to Bell, ritual traditions have been cast as a medium for the resolution of basic oppositions or contradictions. In the first approach, ritual is the arena where social conflicts are resolved which again leads to a reaffirmation of communal unity.²⁸ The second approach however, portrays ritual as providing change through adaptation or integration.²⁹ Bell emphasizes that tradition is not static but is "constantly produced and reproduced, pruned for a clear profile, and softened to absorb revitalizing elements."³⁰ Ritual is not just blind re-enactment of ritual precedent but is subject to constant reinterpretation and renegotiation.

In sum:

²⁴ Catherine Bell, *Rituals Perspectives and Dimensions*, 138, 139.

²⁵ Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 2 – 4.

²⁶ Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice*, 177, 194.

²⁷ Bell, *Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice*, 182.

²⁸ Bell, *Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice*, 35

²⁹ Bell, *Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice*, 123 - 125

³⁰ Bell, *Ritual Theory and Ritual Practice*, 123

Rituals are the means for changing and reconstituting groups in an orderly and sanctioned manner that maintains the integrity of the system. These groups include religious associations, totem clans, phratries (exogamous kinship groups), castes, professional classes, age groups, families, the political and territorial community, the world of the living, the world before it, and the world of the dead after it.³¹

Such a work would be very relevant because it affords the researcher the ability not only to narrate the ritual but look at the historical development and orderliness of the ritual practice. The researcher perceives that the historical development, which would become the ritual theory would determine the ritual practice; what the ritual would entail – the elements, acts, place and participants involved. In sum the knowledge acquired from these literatures facilitated the researcher's understanding and description of the pre-burial rite taking into consideration the religio-cultural context of the indigenous community under study.

1.7.2 Rites of Passage and Ritual Process

Despite societal variation, rites of passage are perceived to be at the core and foundation of virtually every religious, social and political dynamic, pervasively expressed throughout society. This discourse seeks to trace the concept of rites de passage from its origin and shed light on its adaptation by Victor Turner as ritual process.

Kimball commenting on Van Gennep's translated work *The Rites of Passage* posited that Van Gennep's analysis of ritual behaviour in its relation to the dynamics of individual and group life came at a time when "Auguste Comte had proclaimed the principles of positivism on which an objective science of society might be achieved."³² Thus, according to Kimball, Van Gennep argues that social (religio-cultural) events ought to be examined into their very details and in the local environment in which they were

³¹ Bell, *Rituals Perspectives and Dimensions*, 17

³² St. Kimball, 'Introduction' in Arnold Van Gennep. *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press in 1960, v, vi.

studied; from empirical observation rather than from metaphysical speculation.³³ Hence, Van Gennep, from Australian aborigine data, produced a schema to describe dangerous life transitions or thresholds (birth, puberty, marriage and death). The French word *passage* for passing through such a threshold has since become a loan word in English. His argument, according to Turner, was rooted in tribal superstition in which people saw ‘life crises’ as moments of psychic or spiritual (i.e. “magico-religious”) danger as evil spirits or ancestors might interfere to harm the child or the community – “perils of an ultra-human order”³⁴ which require religious rites.³⁵

Van Gennep, according to Turner, defined rites of passage as “rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position or age.”³⁶ Norris Brock Johnson also added that Gennep by this definition, suggests that the life of any individual or group ought to be conceptualised as a series of transitions deriving clarity and meaning through their dramatic expression in ritual ceremony.³⁷ Thus, during special events, in most cultures, rituals are organised to commemorate various stages of life and to fully initiate the individual to transition from one demarcated position to another one, which is also clearly defined.

Bell, further argued that rites of passage serve to order chaotic social changes that could threaten to disturb society. Such rites distinguish status groups with clearly marked boundaries, which contribute to the stability of social identities and roles.³⁸ Bell illustrates Turner’s initial analysis of the random or chaotic events among the Ndembu of northwestern Zambia and the basic genres of ritual action, and the characteristics of ritual

³³ St. Kimball, ‘Introduction’ vii.

³⁴ Victor W. Turner, ‘Themes in the Symbolism of Ndembu Hunting Ritual’ *Anthropological Quarterly*, 35 1962, 37 – 57.

³⁵ Stephen Bigger, ‘Thresholds, liminality and fruitful chaos: revolutionary change in education?’ PDF [Accessed 22nd October 2013]

³⁶ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 94.

³⁷ Norris Brock Johnson, ‘Sex, Color and Rites of Passage in Ethnographic Research’. *Human Organisation, Society for Applied Anthropology*, Vol. 43 No. 2, 1984, 108.

³⁸ Catherine Bell *Rituals Perspectives and Dimensions*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc, 1997), 17.

activities.³⁹ Bell posits that prior to the usage of Van Gennep's three stage sequence of separation, transition and reincorporation, Turner had analysed the random or chaotic events among the Ndembu of northwestern Zambia in terms of four stages. These four main stages included "a breach in normal relationships, followed by an escalating sense of crisis, which calls for redressive action, and eventually culminates in activities of reintegration of the alienated or social recognition of their separate status."⁴⁰

For issues of life and death (pregnancy, birth, beginning sexuality and marriage, death) he proposed a three-part schema described as 'separation (spiritual retreat), transition (French *marge*) and incorporation (French *agrégation*).' Van Gennep concludes:

Our brief examination of the ceremonies through which an individual passes on all the most important occasions of his life has now been completed....We have seen that an individual is placed in various sections of society, synchronically and in succession; in order to pass from one category to another and join individuals in other sections, he must submit, from the day of his birth to that of his death, to ceremonies whose forms often vary but whose function is similar.⁴¹

Kimball's commentary, again, revealed that Van Gennep posited that the rites of passage; the rites of separation, rites of transition and the rites of incorporation, are not all developed to the same extent by all peoples in every ceremonial pattern.⁴² The rites of separation are very pronounced in burial ceremonies, whereas the rites of incorporation are rather pronounced at marriage ceremonies. Transitional rites on the other hand, are very vital in pregnancy, betrothal and initiation (puberty rites) ceremonies. They may also be adequate for adoption rites associated with bringing forth a second child. Therefore, although theoretically, a rite of passage comprises of pre-liminal, liminal, and post-liminal rites, they may not be used at the same degree of elaboration for describing all rituals. The

³⁹ Bell *Rituals Perspectives and Dimensions*, 39, 40, 91 – 93.

⁴⁰ Catherine Bell *Rituals Perspectives and Dimensions*, 39, 40.

⁴¹ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, English trans 1960 by M. B. Vizedom and G. L. Caffee, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, English trans 1960), 189. In Stephen Bigger 'Thresholds, liminality and fruitful chaos: revolutionary change in education?' PDF [Assessed 22nd Octobers 2013]

⁴² St. Kimball, viii. In Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*. 11

degree of elaboration of the rites varies greatly even among societies of comparable levels of cultural development and at the various stages of the rite, separation, transition and incorporation. A writer may choose to emphasize on one stage of the rite of passage over the other, depending on the stage where the degree of elaboration appears to be conspicuous. These three ritual procedures are not only interested in the “what” but also in the “how” and “why”.⁴³

Although the work of Van Gennep was not taken seriously by scholars of his contemporary such as ‘Charles Callender and Fadwa el Guindi’⁴⁴, Victor Turner resuscitated it. Turner might have adapted the theme ‘The Ritual Process’ in his study of the random and chaotic events of the people of Ndembu of Zambia, to categorise the stages and procedures of any ritual. Thus, a critical view of Turner’s theme ‘The Ritual Process’ purports that the three schema Gennep proposed, sought to lay more emphasis on the various processes or statuses or stages of the rites of passage. According to Stephen Bigger, Turner’s first enthusiasm for Gennep’s schema, was to shed light upon his own African data which had similar tribal religious assumptions to spiritual life crisis events.⁴⁵ This notwithstanding, Turner’s emphasis was on the transition stage, a period of liminality, that is “betwixt and between” the structure of society at the beginning of the ritual and the structure of society that is affirmed at the end.

This knowledge of rites of passage is very important to this study because it provides the researcher the required knowledge to do a critical observation of the *Amanebɔ* rite, which is also made up of series of stages of ritual process with similar starting points and conclusions like all other rites of passage for the deceased. In summary, a general knowledge of rites of passage and ritual process in particular, as elaborated by

⁴³ St. Kimball, ‘Introduction’, viii

⁴⁴ Charles Callender, and Fadwa el Guindi, *Life-Crisis Rituals among the Kenuz* Studies in Anthropology 3, (Cleveland, Ohio: Case Western Reserve University, 1970) in Stephen Bigger ‘[Assessed 22nd Octobers 2013]

⁴⁵ Stephen Bigger, [Accessed 22nd Octobers 2013]

Turner from his Africa data, will facilitate the researcher's understanding and description of the events prior to, during and after the *Amanebɔ* ritual process.

1.7.3 Akan Indigenous Religion (AIR)

The core of the religious ideas of the Akan people could be equally applicable to the various ethnic groups in Ghana, and indeed the fundamentals of the indigenous African perception of reality as a whole. In the articles, "Dancing Golden Stools: Indigenous Religion as a Strategy for Identity Construction in Ghana"⁴⁶ and "African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship"⁴⁷ it was argued that the definition or meaning of any religion and the identity of any group are much dependent on the religio-cultural belief systems and practices of the people being studied. From these two articles, the AIR is perceived as a religion that has a more practical than meditative or philosophical inclination, although, it may be embedded in certain philosophical thoughts. That is to say, the practitioners generally devote less attention and time to prolonged and systematic arguments and other theologies with regards to the validity of their religious experiences.

From the arguments advanced by the author of the latter article, Elizabeth Amoah, the AIR can be conceived as a system of strong belief in a community of spirits, cosmologically restricted to the natives of a specific Akan community, which finds its expressions in the cultural beliefs and practices of the Akan, where these spirits harmoniously work together to enhance the total well-being of humanity - *okra*, *sunsum*, *ntoro* and *mogya*. Cyrill Okorocha concurs that central to the Akan religio-cultural ideas

⁴⁶ Anonymous, 'Dancing Golden Stools: Indigenous Religion as a Strategy for Identity Construction in Ghana'. www.equinoxpub.com/journals/index.php/FIR/article/.../1269 [Accessed 22nd April 2014]

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Amoah, 'African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship'. This autumnal IIC lecture was held on Thursday 22 October 1998 in the Council Room at Mansfield College, Oxford. http://interfaith-centre.org/resources/lectures/1998_1.htm or <http://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/events/african-indigenous-religions-and-inter-religious-relationship> [Accessed 26th February 2014]

and practices is the belief in the multiplicity of spirits in the universe.⁴⁸ The Akan cosmos, like other African peoples, is divided into “two inter-penetrating and inseparable, yet distinguishable, parts”⁴⁹, which is religion and culture. In the light of this, there appears to be without hesitation some kind of correlation between the religion and the culture of the Akan. Thus, it is not easy to isolate what is purely religious from their customs and traditions, which in summary forms the basis of their worldview. These religio-cultural belief systems and practices are usually evident in the rituals of the people. The implication is that the ritual ceremonies marking off periods of transitions from one stage to another are composed of (sequenced) events and activities which collectively illustrates the nature, characteristics and relevance of AIR. By extension, the ritual activities, which forms the religious belief system of the Akan, are inseparable from the actions and thoughts (culture) of the indigenous people in most Akan societies.

Like African philosophy, most of the Akan religious belief systems and practices, largely, were not found in documents. Rather, such religious beliefs were embodied in the oral literature, the (philosophical) thoughts and the (religious, cultural and social) actions of the people and were mostly in fragments. The characterisation of AIR is based mainly on oral transmission; not written on paper, but in people’s hearts, minds, oral history, rituals, shrines and religious functions. Kwame Gyekye’s book *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, asserts that most of African’s philosophical thought, which to a large extent, from the researcher’s view, forms the basis of indigenous religious beliefs and practices, are embedded in the proverbs, myths and folktales, folk songs, rituals, beliefs, customs and tradition, art symbols and in the socio-political institutions and practices of the people.⁵⁰ A. T. Dalfovo, concurring to Gyekye’s

⁴⁸ Cyrill C. Okorocho, *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1987), 52

⁴⁹ Cyrill C. Okorocho, *The Meaning of Religious Conversion in Africa*, 52.

⁵⁰ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: An Akan Conceptual Scheme* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 13.

assertion maintained that in the study of any aspect of African culture (religion) it is very necessary to bear in mind the significance of culture and its relationship to indigenous thought and African philosophy, which is mostly couched in proverbs.⁵¹ These proverbs usually find their expression in their ceremonies such as those connected with rites of passage and art symbols on their drums or linguist staffs.⁵²

Furthermore, a great deal of the philosophical or religious material of AIR unearths the moral values of the Akan. Kofi Asare Opoku in disputing A. B. Ellis's claim that "Religion is not any way allied to moral ideas..."⁵³ – to imply that the indigenous religion has no values, confirmed that religion among the Akan "is allied to moral ideas and is indeed the basis of Akan ethics."⁵⁴ Opoku continued that the AIR usually expresses the convictions of the Akan's moral values, which has been beneficial because it has acted as a *cement* to hold the various societies together, thus providing adequate stability.⁵⁵

The implication of the aforementioned arguments is that to understand and interpret any religious conviction of the Akan requires a thorough consideration of their thoughts and actions as they perform the rituals for the various rites or ceremonies. It also provides a better ground to understand and appreciate the material and spiritual elements that make up the AIR, particularly, the concept and nature of religion, among the people of Tutu Akuapem. The various literatures also provide the researcher the opportunity of not looking at the insularity of both the colonialists and even some natives, who due to their present religious inclinations see such pre-burial rite as evil and fetish. Instead, study the pre-burial rite objectively to understand and analyse the relevance or irrelevance of the rite to the indigenous community. Above all, these literatures will facilitate the researcher's

⁵¹ Dalfovo, *African Proverbs and African Philosophy*. 37 – 48.

⁵² Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 163.

⁵³ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 157

⁵⁴ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 157.

⁵⁵ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. 11.

understanding of the indigenous philosophical and religious thoughts, which forms the basis of the pre-burial rite observed among the people of Tutu Akuapem.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Victor Turner's famous theory, 'liminality', adapted from Arnold van Gennep's analysis of 'rites de passage' was employed to ground the discussion of the study of the *Amanebo* rite among the people of Tutu.

Turner, after fieldwork in Africa, read Arnold van Gennep's 1908 *Rites of Passage*, and suggested that the activities connected with the rite that make up a ritual subject's life crisis when critically examined and analysed to determine their order and content, reveals three possible outcomes, which seem to differentiate them.⁵⁶ These three possibilities, also known as 'tripartite processual scheme'⁵⁷ include separation, liminality, and reintegration.⁵⁸ That is, according to Cox, C. R. Taber in explaining the significance of these three possible outcomes posited that:

...rites of separation, [are] to ensure proper departure out of a prior status, rites of transition [liminality], to ensure safety during the hazardous liminal period and rites of incorporation [reintegration], to ensure proper identification with and recognition in the new status,...⁵⁹

According to James L. Cox, Turner argues that the entire ritual process of many rites of passage, particularly death ritual, from separation through transition to incorporation, is liminal.⁶⁰ Hence, liminality or threshold crossing has dominated the pioneering work of Victor Turner from his time as an anthropologist in Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. The threshold, or *limen*, was the key to the neophyte's passage or transition

⁵⁶ St. Kimball, 'Introduction', in Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, English trans. 1960 by M. B. Vizedom and G.L.Caffee, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1908), vii. St. Kimball did write most of the introductory part of Van Gennep's "The Rites of Passage".

⁵⁷ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 13 – 14.

⁵⁸ Risto Uro. 'Ritual and Christian Origins' pdf [assessed 23rd September 2013] In Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 94.

⁵⁹ C. R. Taber, *Life Cycle Rituals*. In James L. Cox, *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, x

⁶⁰ James L. Cox, *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, x

from one room [state] to another. Consequently, for a short time, the person is in-between statuses, ‘betwixt and between’⁶¹ and Turner argues that the liminal ritual was aimed to reduce the potential threat of this. Turner posits that

During the liminal period, the characteristics of the ritual subject (“the passenger”) are ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state...The attributes ... are necessarily ambiguous since these [threshold] persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate stress and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here or there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial...It is as though they are being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew and endowed with [creative ritual] powers to enable them to cope with their new station of life.⁶²

He further argues that the ‘Thresholds’ lie between states or statuses, which the ritual subject needs to cross and the community needs to recognise the change.

In this study, the notion of liminality is employed as the framework for detecting and understanding the latent patterning of the experiences the researcher assumes to encounter during the process of the *Amanebɔ* rite. Turner’s processual model developed from his fieldwork among the Ndembu of Zambia, like the Akuapems of Ghana, is not only to provide the researcher the opportunity to understand and gather the specific details of the rite as a religious phenomenon but also to analyse its philosophical and theological thoughts underpinning the rite from the perspective of the indigenes religious inclination, Akan religious world view. In addition, the theory of liminality seeks to provide the basis for a comprehensive analysis of the *Amanebɔ* rite to ascertain the nature of the new trends and developments as well as the religious concerns raised by contemporary indigenes of Tutu. In sum, employing the theory of liminality as the framework provides the researcher grounds not only to be interested in the “what” but also in the “how” and “why”⁶³ of the rite.

⁶¹Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 95.

⁶² Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 94, 95.

⁶³ St. Kimball, ‘Introduction’, viii

1.9 Methodology

Generally, this research is a qualitative study and it employs a phenomenological approach. This approach being the main methodology for the entire work is basically an approach to the study of religion which requires that the scholar of religion suspends all judgements about the phenomenon being studied, by bracketing out potentially distorting presumptions stemming both from confessional Christian Theology and from positivistic science, such that, by using empathetic methods, he (the scholar) could enter into the experiences of the adherents to achieve understanding-in-depth.⁶⁴

Using the phenomenological approach to the study of religion does not seek to discredit the significance nor the important contribution to knowledge, but to explain fully the meaning of religion,⁶⁵ and avoid evaluative judgements which is to enable the researcher to open up and take a critical look at the Akan indigenous religious rite – the *Amanebɔ* rite, as a “‘cultural insider’ and ‘religious outsider’”⁶⁶. The implication, (inferred from Rose Mary Amenga-Etego’s explanation)⁶⁷, is that the researcher saw himself as a Christian, therefore a religious outsider to the indigenous religious belief systems of Tutu, but the community saw him as an insider, an Akan, who was part of them.

Until the researcher employs the principles of phenomenology, his perspective of the *Amanebɔ* rite could either be culturally or religiously biased. The main aim of employing the phenomenological approach in this study is to enable the researcher provide a primary data of the people of Tutu and still preserve the uniqueness of their history and religious beliefs and practices, particularly, the *Amanebɔ* rite. Thus, with such a data a

⁶⁴ James L. Cox, *A Guide for Phenomenology of Religion: Key Figures, Formative Influences and Subsequent Debates*. (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Corp., 2006), 86.

⁶⁵ James L Cox, *Expressing the Sacred: an Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion*, (Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1996,) 57.

⁶⁶ Rose Mary Amenga-Etego. *Mending the Broken Pieces: Indigenous Religion and Sustainable Rural Development in Ghana*, (Africa World Press, 2011), 18.

⁶⁷ Amenga-Etego. *Mending the Broken Pieces* 18.

critical descriptive analysis can then follow as is evident in chapter two and chapter three of this work.

1.9.1 Methods of Data Collection

The data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The researcher in gathering the data from the primary source employed the participant observation, personal interviews and purposive sampling technique.

1.9.1.1 Primary Sources

The researcher used structured and unstructured interview. The personal interview include having a personal interaction, ‘one on one’, with a respondent. The interviews enabled the researcher and respondents to develop a personal friendship and rapport⁶⁸ which also created a conducive environment for the researcher to meet the respondents face to face and to elicit relevant pieces of primary information. Better still the researcher by this method interacted and sought further clarification to validate pieces of information already gathered. In such interviews, permissions were sought from the respondents to record relevant parts of the interview. As an essential method to the research, it offered the researcher the opportunity to seek the meaning of or clarity on some of the acts performed during the observation of the rite.

In addition, informal conversations, which in the context of this study took the form of unstructured interview, although “time-consuming”⁶⁹, made it convenient to access relevant information otherwise difficult to obtain, in a much more relaxed manner. In all, the researcher interviewed twenty one people, comprising adherents of the

⁶⁸ Tom K. B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research: Sections 1 - 3*, 189.

⁶⁹ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*. (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden: The Netherlands, African Christian Press, 2005), 5.

indigenous religion, indigenous Christians of all categories – Pentecostals, Charismatics, Protestants and African Initiated Churches (AIC), royals, and bereaved family members.

1.9.1.2 Participant Observation

The active participant observation method, a more comprehensive method, permitted the researcher to be “socially, personally and spatially integrated into the group, which he was at the same time studying.”⁷⁰ Thus, the researcher was able to integrate himself into the community to observe, participate and record from within.

During the rite, the researcher had to be in a mourning dress, black clothes, in his attempt to be both “... [an] emotionally engaged participant and a coolly dispassionate observer...”⁷¹ of the rite. This offered the researcher the opportunity to participate and witness the *Amanebo* rite of four deceased persons; which include the late(s) Sisi Sakyibea, *Ankobe* of *Twafohene*, *Odikro* of *Ahenkorase* and Opanyin Dr. Isaac Duncan Ani, which occurred on 26th July 2013, 18th October 2013 and 1st November 2013, respectively. The *Amanebo* rite of the second and third deceased persons, who were all elders of Tutu, was slightly different from that of the common indigene. This is discussed in detail in chapter three of the work.

1.9.1.3 Secondary Sources

Looking at the focus and scope of the study, the researcher had to consult different secondary sources encompassing books, journals, articles et cetera, which were relevant to this study. These are published materials of scholarly opinion. Data from the electronic media specifically the internet were also used.

⁷⁰ Tom K. B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research: Sections 1 - 3*, (Accra: Ghana, SonLife Press & Services, 2002), 74

⁷¹ Babara Tedlock, “From Participant Observation to the Observation of participation: The Emergence of Narrative Ethnography” *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Spring, 1991), 69.

1.9.2 Samples and Sampling Technique

In this study, the researcher employed the purposive sampling technique to select his respondents. In his work, *Research Methods Techniques of Social Research*, Tom K. B. Kumekpor argues that in purposive sampling, “the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure, but they are intentionally picked for study because they satisfy certain qualities which are not randomly distributed but are typical or exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study.”⁷² The categories of people that were interviewed included, the traditional chief, Sub-Chiefs, traditional-priests, Chief linguist, two other linguists and some elders, who are the custodians and practitioners of the rite. The other indigenes and inhabitants, who were interviewed, included the participants of the rite (the bereaved family or person), and some of the leaders of other religious traditions in Tutu. These respondents were selected on the basis that they possess relevant information and draw opinions that were considered to be essential to the study.

1.9.3 Data Analysis

In evaluating the data that was gathered during fieldwork, a qualitative analysis was employed. This method relies on the quality of the information based on its relevance to the subjects being studied rather than on the quantity of responses to a particular issue.⁷³ That is, instead of drawing from a large representative sample, the researcher sought to acquire in-depth and intimate information from relatively smaller group of people. This method of data analysis is also employed since the researcher dwells largely on interviews which are intended to elicit detailed information from individual respondents.

⁷² Tom K.B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research*, (Ghana: Son Life Press and Services, 1999), 72.

⁷³ Barbara M. Wildemuth, ‘Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research’, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63 (1995), 881.

1.10 Definition of Terms

Amenga-Etego posits that situating key words or terms within the framework of a given study, according to Gerrie ter Harr, is an integral part of scholarship.⁷⁴ She further argues that according to Graham Harvey, such an exercise seeks to contextualise and delineate such terms by clarifying their usage for understanding a particular study. In this study terms such as ‘Religion’, particularly, the ‘Akan Indigenous Religion’, ‘culture’, ‘beliefs’, ‘(common or ordinary) indigene or native’, ‘inhabitants, settlers or emigrants’, ‘*Nananom*’, rite (*amanneɛ*) and ritual (*nyankomade*), family gathering and one week celebration and patrilineal and matrilineal inheritance have been employed in context and not as they are understood in English.

The concept ‘Akan Indigenous Religion’ (AIR), for the purpose of this study is seen to be derived from two terminologies, ‘Akan’ and ‘Indigenous Religion’. It is therefore imperative that both terminologies are primarily defined, separately – ‘Akan’ and ‘Indigenous Religion’ in order to meaningfully conceptualise and contextualise the concept ‘Akan Indigenous Religion’.

From a cultural–linguistic perspective ‘Akan’ is a useful term, which describes a group of people who share the same language (Twi)⁷⁵ and many similar cultural characteristics such as naming, puberty, marriage, burial and funeral rites and royal artefacts and who belong to the same eight ‘matrilineal clans’⁷⁶ and ‘patrilineal sub-groups’^{77, 78}. The name Akan has since 1950 been used by scholars in Ghana to refer to “...the language whose dialects include Fante, Akuapem, Asante, Bono, Wasa, Agona,

⁷⁴Gerrie ter Haar, ‘World Religions and Community Religions: Where does Africa fit In?’ *Occasional Paper* (Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen, August 2000), 1. In Amenga-Etego. *Mending the Broken Pieces*, 25.

⁷⁵ Anonymous, *Dancing Golden Stools*: [Assessed 22nd April 2014].

⁷⁶ The matrilineal clans of the Ashanti are: Ekoana, Asona, Bretuo, Agona, Aboradze, Atwea and Aduana

⁷⁷ The patrilineal sub-groups are: Bosompra, Bosommuru, Bosomtwe, Nkatia, Afram and Abankwade

⁷⁸ K. A. Busia. *The Ashanti and the Gold coast* in D. Fords. *Africa Worlds* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) 19.

Akyem, Kwahu, ...[and] spoken in the Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, and Central Region and parts of the Western and Eastern as a first language ...”⁷⁹ It is also spoken as a second language by the Anyi (Aowin), Sefwi, Nzema and Ahanta, in the West and the Guans of Efutu-Awutu and Anum-Kyerepong-Larteh in the South and East, respectively.⁸⁰ The Akan people are therefore a very large ethnic group living in Ghana, but due to the geographical context of this study, it is limited, generally, to the Akan people of Ghana and specifically to the people of Tutu in the Akuapem Traditional Area.

The term ‘indigenous’ (people, community, system or religion) has attracted negative connotation in Africa as it has been used in derogatory and chauvinistic ways by European colonialist and by post-colonial African governments and scholars, respectively.⁸¹ Notwithstanding all these possible negatives, it has now become a much wider intentionally recognised term by which it is possible to understand and analyse certain forms of beliefs and practices not only of Africans. While it is also true that Africans do not have an equivalent word to the term ‘indigenous’ it is mostly used interchangeably with other terms such as ‘aboriginal’, ‘native’, ‘original’, ‘first nations’, ‘tribal’, or other similar concepts.⁸² The United Nations over the past 50 years, in the context of human rights, have explained the term ‘indigenous people or community’ as the aboriginal people of a given land who have become marginalised.⁸³ However, Cox deviating from other biased western scholars posits that the primary characteristic of the term is that it refers to it being bound to a location; participants in the region who are

⁷⁹ Florence Abena Dolphyne. *The Akan Language: Its Sound Systems and tonal Structure*. (Accra, Woeli Publishing Service. 2006) xi.

⁸⁰ Florence Abena Dolphyne. *The Akan Language: Its Sound Systems and tonal Structure*, xi -xii

⁸¹ Report of The African Commission’s Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities, PDF, 2005, 18th December 2012, 86. This was extracted from a paper of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Population established by the United Nations Human Rights Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in 1982 and by the International Labour Organisation on its Convention 169”

⁸² Report of The African Commission’s Working Group of Experte on Indigenous Populations/Communities, 91.

⁸³ Report of The African Commission’s Working Group of Experte on Indigenous Populations/Communities, 91.

native to a place, or belong to it.⁸⁴ Drawing extensively from Cox's understanding of indigenous coupled with the context of the study, the term 'indigenous' is recognised as a term referring to the natives or original people who possess a distinctive social and religio-cultural identity, and have inhabited and made their living directly from a locality for hundreds or thousands of years with minimum influence from emigrants. In sum, the term indigenous describes the original settlers of a place or community.

The Akan, like other indigenous communities in Ghana, perceive religion as the core of life and livelihood, which characterises the past, influences the present and determines their future aspirations.⁸⁵ Thus, the Akan sees religion as a way of life – part of the day to day socio-cultural practices, which is influenced by a community of diverse spirits.

Hence, AIR with its several ramifications⁸⁶, in this study, can be conceived as a system of strong belief in a community of diverse spirits; God, gods and ancestors, cosmologically restricted to the native or original people of a specific Akan (Tutu Akuapem) community, which find its expressions in the cultural practices (rites, myths, folklores and rituals) of the Akan. In such a religion (AIR) the diverse spirits harmoniously work together to enhance the total well-being of humanity.

The other terms have been conceptualised and contextualised in this study and are as follows:

Culture is the integrated pattern of human knowledge, beliefs, social forms and behaviour that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.

⁸⁴ James L. Cox. *From primitive to indigenous: The Academic Study of Indigenous Religions*. (Edinburgh: Ashgate, 2007), 69.

⁸⁵ Amenga-Etego. *Mending the Broken Pieces*, 26.

⁸⁶ Amoah, 'African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship', 2 - 3

Beliefs are the mental acceptance of and conviction in the truth, actuality, or validity of something. It is also something believed or accepted as true, especially a particular tenet or a body of tenets accepted by a group of persons.

Inhabitants is employed in the context of this study as an inclusive term, which includes the indigenes, original settlers, and other settlers or emigrants, presently living in Tutu and its environs.

Common/ Ordinary Indigene is an adopted term used in this study to describe all natives other than *Nananom*: the Chief, Queen-mother, sub chiefs, shrine priest and the elders (*abusuapanyinfo*) of various clans of Tutu, including the, linguist(s) and queen mothers of the various sub-chiefs. **Nananom**, on the other hand, is a term that can be used interchangeably to designate a gathering of the Chief and his elders or the ancestors.

‘Family Meeting or gathering’ and ‘One week celebration’, according to common knowledge among Akans, are two separate terms that are usually used interchangeably because both (terms) are perceived to have the same objective of formally planning and announcing the burial arrangements of the deceased. But, due to the form each takes, this study has attempted to comparatively and contextually distinguish their use among the Asante and Akuapem. ‘The family meeting or gathering’, a common practice among the Akuapem of patrilineal descent, is usually considered as a quiet indoor meeting, organised among or between the immediate family of the bereaved and the extended family. But the ‘one week celebration’, usually, is celebrated among the Asante and Akyem who are of matrilineal descent. In recent times, it involves a gathering of all groups of sympathisers, including the immediate and extended bereaved family, who are offered drinks and food and they in turn donate either items or funds to the bereaved family. Traditionally, the donations are purposely to help the nuclear and extended family in the organisation of the burial of the deceased.

Abusuapanyin, is the head of the family of the deceased; he is usually the head of the clan or family. The *abusuapanyin* during the rite is usually assisted by a linguist and another close relation of the deceased, who are from the same clan.

Patrilineal and matrilineal inheritance, concerns the appointment of next of kin of a deceased relative – somebody who according to tradition or legal will of the father inherits the property or intestate of the deceased. The Akan patrilineal inheritance system suggests that a male, usually son, from one's father's group becomes the next of kin whereas the Akan matrilineal system suggests that the eldest male son from one's father's sisters becomes the next of kin.

Matured Adult Indigene in the case of the people of Tutu is any native, who is above 18 years and is gainfully employed and married or single.

1.11 Ethical Considerations

The highly contextual nature of participant observation seems to pose special ethical challenges, which needs consideration in this research work. The researcher managed to describe everything that he observed as accurately as possible. This was facilitated by a leader of the Calvary Methodist Church in Tutu Akuapem, A. A. Parry, who accompanied the researcher to the rite.

The ethics of the traditional society demands that information that borders mostly on their religious belief can only be given out when the proper procedure has been followed. Hence, the researcher had to seek for a formal permission from the Chief, in his home, to conduct the research. Then, at a formal gathering, *Awukudae* at the chief's palace, the other sub chiefs and elders, were formally informed of the researcher's intention. The chief, sub-chiefs, the elders and members of the community knowing that

the researcher did not discriminate or look down on their indigenous religious beliefs and practices, gladly and willingly accepted to offer their assistance.

Another ethical concern was finding the interpretation to some of the acts or songs performed during the rite. As Turner writes, it is one thing to witness people performing the gestures and singing the sacred songs of their rituals and yet another thing to arrive at what these gestures mean to them.⁸⁷ The researcher and his guide had to be at the ritual site, to seek for the meanings of what he observed, through informal conversations. In fact, the families, whose pre-burial rites the researcher observed, were not resentful of his interest in observing their rite with all the comments.

Again, like Turner whose wife's medical treatment enabled him to get access to the information he was looking for,⁸⁸ the researcher also had to observe all traditional protocols such as offering a token in place of traditional drinks to secure the required information and sometimes interpreting the meaning to some observed practices. During the research there were few occasions that the researcher had to willingly offer something, either in cash or in kind, to the informant or respondent for the services rendered. This was to enable the researcher have someone to accompany him to the ritual site and compensate the respondent for his time spent for the interview.

⁸⁷ Victor Turner. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, (New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction, 2011), 7.

⁸⁸ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 9.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TUTU OF THE AKUAPEM TRADITIONAL AREA

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present a historical survey of the people of Tutu in the Akuapem Traditional Area. The history of the Akuapem Traditional Area provides the framework within which the history of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area can be examined and discussed. Hence, it is imperative to begin the survey of Tutu with the history of Akuapem Traditional Area, which will include the description of Akuapem as part of the broader Akan group that shares similar belief systems and practices with the people of Tutu.

2.2 History of Akuapem Traditional Area

Generally, the Akuapem Traditional Area also called the Akuapem Ridge, to a large extent, is an Akan polity in the Eastern Region, northeast of Accra. From a cultural–linguistic perspective, ‘Akan’ is a useful term, which describes a group of people who belong to the same eight ‘matrilineal clans’⁸⁹ and ‘patrilineal sub-groups’⁹⁰. The only exception to the common matrilineal system of inheritance among the Akan is the Akuapem,⁹¹ Guan and Kyerepon settlers and not Akyem dwellers and Akwamu remnants, who practice the patrilineal system of inheritance. Generally, the Akuapem Traditional Area is composed of three broad groups of people; the Guans, the Akans and strangers.⁹² The Akuapem Traditional Area covers about 330 square miles (855 sq. km). The area was

⁸⁹ The matrilineal clans of the Ashanti are: Ekoana, Asona, Bretuo, Agona, Aboradze, Atwea and Aduana

⁹⁰ The patrilineal sub-groups are: Bosompra, Bosommuru, Bosomtwe, Nkatia, Afram and Abankwade

⁹¹ J.S. Pobee, *Towards an African Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon 1979), 44

⁹² David Brokensha. *Akwapim Handbook* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1972) 75.

once part of the Akwamu Empire from 1680 to 1730, but it then gained its independence.⁹³ The seat of the paramount Chief, Omanhene, was first at Asamankese, then Nyanoase, and today at Akropong. There were seventeen towns in the polity but presently due to the divisions at Larteh, there are nineteen towns in the polity. It has a healthy climate, good land, industrious people, and its proximity to Accra make Akuapem one of the most progressive areas of Ghana.⁹⁴

Historically the origin of the Akan word ‘Akuapem’ was derived from two Akan terminologies, ‘Akuw’ and ‘Apem’, which literally means ‘a force or group of thousand people.’⁹⁵ The historical antecedent of the term reveals that it was an adopted name for the Akyem rebels, ‘Akuw-apem’, ‘a force of thousand people’, who invaded and expelled the Akwamu State.⁹⁶ They were a rebel group that was already in existence under the leadership of Amu, which later fell under the Akyem Abuakwa warlord Ofori Dua, whose era saw to the establishment of Akyem dynasty in the Akuapem state.⁹⁷ Later in history, after the Abotakyi accord, the Akuapems apart from giving their allegiance to the Akim warlord also adopted and retained the name of the rebel forces ‘akuw-apem’ as the name of the new State, Akuapem.⁹⁸

2.2.1 Formation of Akuapem Traditional Area

Prior to the founding of Akuapem Traditional Area, the leadership of the highland community, which was made up mainly of Guans and the Kyerepons consisted of Priests

⁹³ Daniel Miles McFarland, *Historical Dictionary of Ghana*, Metuchen, N. J., & London, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1985, 26, 27.

⁹⁴ Daniel Miles McFarland, *Historical Dictionary of Ghana*, 26, 27.

⁹⁵ Although the words ‘Akuw’ and ‘apem’ was found in <http://www.akuapemkuronti.org/akuapemhistory.html> [Assessed 10th October 2013] the interpretation of its origin was obtain by oral tradition from the Secretary of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area, Oheneba Kofi Sarpong Boafo, who is a Son of the first traditional Chief, Nana Boafo, of the Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area

⁹⁶ M. A. Kwamena Poh, *History* in David Brokensha. *Akwapim Handbook*, (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1972), 39.

⁹⁷ M. A. Kwamena Poh, *History*, 39

⁹⁸ M. A. Kwamena Poh, *History*, 41

and Priestesses⁹⁹; belief in the community of spirits.¹⁰⁰ The Akuapem were then known as the Hill Guan but comprised the Guan and Kyerepon, who were living very peacefully with their neighbours; the Agona, Ga, Krobo, Akyem and the Dutch, until the Akwamu came to the scene and started brutalising them.¹⁰¹ Consequently, the Hill Guan fell under the rule of the King of Akwamu who was then living at Nyanoase, near Nsawam.¹⁰² Thus, in the 17th Century, under the leadership of Ansa Sasraku I (1640 – 1674), Ansa Sasraku II (1674 – 1689), Basua Addo (1689 – 1699), Ansa Sasraku III (1699 – 1702), and Akwonno (1702 – 1725), Nyanoase was transformed into a huge and powerful Akwamu Empire.¹⁰³ Nyanoase was near the present day famous Accra market of Abonse or ABC.¹⁰⁴

The King of Akwamu ruled the Akuapem with a very strong hand and his subjects were very cruel to women of Akuapem. Prior to this, Nana Ofei Kwasi Agyeman of the Aduana fame, a trader from Gyakiti, and a chief in his own right, had already left Akwamu with his people to live at a village called Adenya.¹⁰⁵ Surrounded by his band of Mpoti Asafo with their proverbial seven guns, he later settled at Boampong (Kaabi), the Northern part of present day Akropong. Hence, when the Akuapem were unable to bear the treatment being meted out to them, the Akuapem united with the people of Gyakiti, then Kamena, and initiated a fight against the Akwamu for their independence but were defeated.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹ <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

¹⁰⁰ Elizabeth Amoah, *African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship*, Autumnal IIC lecture held on Thursday 22 October 1998 in the Council Room at Mansfield College, Oxford. [Assessed Tuesday 25th February 2014].

¹⁰¹ <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html> [Assessed 14th October 2013]

¹⁰² <http://www.akuapemkuronti.org/akuapemhistory.html> [Assessed 10th October 2013]

¹⁰³ <http://www.akuapem.com/akwamu.html>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.akuapemkuronti.org/akuapemhistory.html>

¹⁰⁵ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh. *Government and Politics in the Akuapem State 1730 – 1850*. (Great Britain: Northwestern Press, 1973), 138.

¹⁰⁶ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh. *Government and Politics in the Akuapem State 1730 – 1850*. 138.

As a sequel to the defeat and the continuous brutalities of the Akwamu on the Guans and the Kyerepong, which had gone beyond control and was intolerable, the leadership of Gyakiti and the Guan settlers summoned a meeting to chart and discuss a way out of their predicaments.¹⁰⁷ Nana Offei Kwasi Agyeman who was at the meeting with Nana Gyadu Nkansah, recommended to the Guan and the Kyerepong to extend an invitation to the Akyem warlords, known for their proficiency in warfare, for military assistance to fight the Akwamu.¹⁰⁸ His suggestion was accepted and a delegation led by Opanyin Ayeh Kissi, an elder of Nana Offei Kwasi Agyeman, was sent to the *Okyehene*, King Ofori Panyin and his elders at Akyem Abuakwa, who readily agreed to help. He therefore dispatched his warriors led by his nephew Prince Sabori to join the bandwagon of the Guans and the Kyerepong. There were about a thousand forces ('Akuw' 'apem') and they were able to swoop down the hill unto the Akwamus regiment at Nsakyie as they advanced.¹⁰⁹

Unable to withstand the shock of this highland change, the Akwamu forces broke, scattered and fled across the Volta River to the present day Akwamufie. This was the famous battle of Nsakyie (1730) after which the Akwamu's unspeakable acts of cruelty and depredation on the highland community came to an end. The remnants of Akwamu, the people of present day Aburi and its environs readily submitted themselves to the new power, and thus paved the way for the establishment of Akuapem Traditional Area or the Akuapem State, as enshrined in the famous Abotakyi Accord in 1733. Prior to the Abotakyi Accord, Prince Sabori after his great conquest settled at the village called Amamprobi, now in Akropong, where he summoned the Akuapems to a victory meeting. At the meeting, victorious Prince Sabori requested the Akuapems to untie the cartridge belt

¹⁰⁷ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh, 138 and <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

¹⁰⁸ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh, 138 and <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

from his waist, which proverbially meant they should pay him so that they could return to Akyem Abuakwa. As the people of Akuapem were incapable of paying any reward commensurate with the great feat, they unanimously pleaded with Prince Sefori to agree to remain in Akuapem as their king. Prince Sefori consented and went back to Akyem to inform his uncle, Ofori Panyin of it. The King of Abuakwa also gave his approval and Prince Sefori came back to Akuapem to be their first King, in 1730. This marks the beginning of the Akyem presence among the kyerepons and Guans of Akuapem highland.

2.2.2 The Abotakyi Accord (1733)

The common enemy, the Akwamus, having been driven away, and besides the fear that they might return, came the need to institute an internal security system to face any future eventuality. The Akyem warlords thus arranged a meeting among the Guans and the Kyerepons at Abotakyi. The purpose of this meeting was among other reasons to confirm and ratify the agreement made between Prince Sefori and the Akuapems at Amamprobi¹¹⁰ and to organise the territory into a convenient administrative order known as “Twi Military Order”, which was an administrative order practised by the Asantes and Akyems and even the Akwamus. The agreement was confirmed and ratified through a ritual performed by *Ɔkomfo Kyenku* of Obosomase at Abotakyi¹¹¹ – the Akuapem swore an oath with the promise that they would never withdraw their allegiance to King Sefori and his successors for all time.¹¹² In fact, oral tradition has it that the oath of allegiance of the Akuapem to the Akyem was symbolically sealed by ritually burying a stone or a piece

¹¹⁰ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh, 138 and <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

¹¹¹ David Brokensha, David Brokensha. *Akwapim Handbook*, (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1972), 41.

¹¹² David Brokensha, 40, 41; C. f. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh, 140 and <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

of rock and salt and after pouring libation amidst incantations, the Akuapems promised not to abrogate the allegiance until the stone germinates and grows like a seed.¹¹³

The administrative order diachronically became known as the divisions of the Akuapem Traditional Area. Thus, the consideration influenced the need for allocating offices and creating new stools. The administrative seat of Prince Sabori was then moved from Amamprobi to Nsorem, the present site of the Akropong-Abiriw market, just before he died in 1731. In the same year, his successor, King Fianko Betuafo began establishing the town of Akropong around the huge Mpeni tree. It was during the reign of the fourth occupant of the Ofori stool- King Kwapong Kyerefo – that the Black Stool was moved in 1743 from Nsorem to be housed at Akropong and the town of Akropong made the capital and the seat of government of Akuapem.¹¹⁴

2.2.3 Present Divisions of the Akuapem Traditional Area

Shortly after the founding of Akuapem State, the then Okuapehene, Fianko Betuafo who succeeded Sakyiama Tenten after the death of King Sabori, set out to finalise the organization of the new “Territory” into a regular Twi Administrative Order to establish the basis of Seniority among the Chiefs. Thus, with the defeat and attempt to fortify the Akuapem ridge or range, there was the need for the new regime to institute an effective internal security system to face any future aggression. This consideration influenced the process of allocating offices and creating new stools. In all, five military divisions¹¹⁵, excluding the position of *Okuapehene*, were created to rule the state under King Sabori, with the latter as *Okuapehene*.

¹¹³ K. Sarpong Bofo. Interviewed, 20th day of August 2013, Tutu Akuapem.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.akuapemkuronti.org/akuapemhistory.html> [assessed 10th October 2013]

¹¹⁵ David Brokensha, 103, 104. <http://www.akuapemkuronti.org/akuapemhistory.html> [Assessed 10th October 2013] and <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html> [Assessed 14th October 2013]. The Native Administration (divisional Chiefs) Order, 1934). This was an Order by the Governor and an exercise of the powers vested in him (the governor) by Section One hundred and twenty-one of the Native Administration Ordinance, and upon the request of the State Council of the Akuapem State.

Before the institution of these five military divisions, the *Kuronti* Division belonged to Nana Ofei Kwasi Agyeman, the Gyakiti warlord, who originally took centre stage in inviting the Akyem Abuakwa contingent and led the warriors to crush the Akwamu. He was made the Senior Divisional Chief with the title of *Adontenhene* No.1 and *Akroponghe*. In the course of time, specifically in 1934, the then *Okuapehene*, Nana Ofori Kuma, decided that the title *Adonten* No.1 was re-designated to that of *Kurontihene*. The change of title, however did not offset his position as the Senior Divisional chief and *Akroponghe*. The *Kurontihene* remained as the second-in-command to the *Okuapehene*. He owns Akropong, as such he is the *Akroponghe*. The re- designation did not change his position and status in the hierarchy of Akuapem, even though Nana Yaw Boafo the then *Krontihene* abdicated in protest over the change. The *Kurontihene* in concert and collaboration with the *Okoman* elders and the *Ankobeaf* administer the affairs of Akropong. In doing this the *Okuapehene* is consulted for his inputs. Hence, the *Adonten* Division, the centre or front guard, was taken over by the people of Aburi, which comprises Aburi, Ahwerease, Nsawam, Gyankama, Berekuso, Kitase and all their environs.

The *Gyaase* Division, the administrative division, consisted of the Akyems who were made to reside at Akropong and Amanokrom were made *Koman*. The position of *Gyaasehene* was given to Nana Kwatia Akompi, the leader of the collateral branch of the Akyems who settled at Amanokrom. They were also custodians of *Okuapehene* palace regalia and paraphernalia. The *Nifa* Division, commander of the right wing, consisted of the seven Kyerepong towns, Abiriw, Dawu, Awukugua, Adukrom, Apiredede, Abonse and Aseseeso. The *Nifa* Division of Akuapem had the Nifahene of Adukrom as the Divisional Chief. The *Benkum* Division, commander of the left wing, comprises Lareth Ahenase, Lareth Kubease, Mamfe, Mampong, Abotakyi, Tutu and Obosomase, which constituted

the left wing portion of the state or Benkum Division with the Chief of Larteh Ahenase as the Benkumhene. In the just recent past, 1991 to be precise, the *Kyidom* Division, commander of the rear-guard, was given to Mamfe Akuapem Traditional Area, which includes Mamfe, Mangoase, Saforo and its environs.¹¹⁶ The *Kyidom* Division by an administrative decision, until 1991, had been vacant due to a dispute that ensued among Mampong, Mamfe and Larteh-Kubease, who were all claiming ownership.¹¹⁷

2.3 Tutu People of Akuapem Traditional Area

Tutu Akuapem¹¹⁸ is part of the larger Akan polity, which belongs to the *Benkum* Division of the Akuapem Traditional Area, in the Eastern part of Ghana. Currently, the Akan ethnic group occupies about six of the ten regions of Ghana namely: Eastern Region, Ashanti, Central, Western, Brong-Ahafo, and some part of the Volta Region.¹¹⁹ Due to this the Akuapems, of which Tutu is part, like the larger Akan ethnic group, share the same language, Twi,¹²⁰ and many similar cultural characteristics such as naming, puberty, marriage, burial and funeral rites and royal artefacts. This would be evident as the study of the people of Tutu unfolds.

Oral tradition posits that the original name of the community was ‘Tete’ but diachronically metamorphosed to the present name Tutu. Currently, Nana Appiah Anti IV

¹¹⁶ Gerald Manteaw, Secretary to Kyidomman Traditional Council, Interviewed 30th November 2013, at Mamfe Akuapem.

¹¹⁷ Eric Ayisi and David Brokensha, *Political Institutions* in David Brokensha, 103.

¹¹⁸ Most of the presentations about Tutu were derived from oral tradition. That is although the name ‘Tutu’ was mentioned in the history of Akuapem, there is no recorded or written history about it. Hence, the current history was derived from various people including {kyeame Oke of Atifi Awurade, 84years, interviewed 22nd and 23rd July 2013, Nana Kwaku Amane II (Tutu Ankobeahene of K[b(-Tutu), Interviewed, 18th July 2013, K. Sarpomg Bofo (Secretary to Tutuman Council and eldest son of the Nana Bofo I) Interviewed, 26th July and 20th August 2013, Tutu Akuapem, Comfort Karr, a Methodist and Royal of ‘Kr[bo br[nmu’ 23rd July 2013, Nana Kofi Asiam (Ab[ntendomhene) a Methodist leader, Opanyin Donkor (Abusuapayin), interviewed 22nd July 2013. Nana Appiah Nti IV, Chief of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. 23rd August 2013

¹¹⁹ Florence Abena Dohphyne. *The Akan Language: Its Sound Systems and tonal Structure*. (Accra, Woeli Publishing Service. 2006) xi

¹²⁰ The language Twi-also referred to as Akan - is a tonal language from South Central Niger-Congo, Anonymous, *Dancing Golden Stools: Indigenous Religion as a Strategy for Identity Construction in Ghana* www.equinoxpub.com/journals/index.php/FIR/article/.../1269 [Assessed 22nd April 2014]

is the tenth chief of the Tutu Akuapem Traditional Council and the queen mother is Nana Ampiah. The people of Tutu are predominantly farmers, who are surrounded by their related farming communities, commonly referred to as *nkurase*, literally translated as ‘farming villages’. It is really an ‘indigenous community’¹²¹ with only a few emigrants, mostly teachers, nurses and technicians who have found themselves in there, either due to employment or accommodation.

2.3.1 Origin and Meaning of ‘Tutu’

Historically, from oral tradition and linguistic evidence, the indigenous inhabitants, Guan and Kyerepon and later Akwamu, on the Akuapem Ridge were migrants who have come to settle at their present places, excluding the people of Awukugua and Tutu Akuapem.¹²² Thus, the people of these two traditional areas, according to oral history have no ancestral home. Hence, the initial settlers of Tutu Akuapem, in particular, usually described themselves with the Akan axiom *yebedurui*, literally translated ‘we-arrived’. The implication of such an axiom is that the people of Tutu Akuapem had and have no ancestral home, where they migrated from. They have no origin, which in Akan is usually referred to as *amanfo*, literally interpreted as an ‘old town’ – a place where the people once inhabited but had been deserted for many years. In short their ancestral home cannot be traced as compared to some of the Akan communities.¹²³

For example, oral history has it that the Aduana clan traces the origin of the Akwamu to ancient Ghana, where as a result of the introduction of Islam in Western Sudan and the zeal of the Muslims imposition of their religion migrated to Kong, present

¹²¹ Indigenous community refers to the natives or original people who possess a distinctive social and cultural (religious) identity, and have inhabited and made their living directly from a locality for hundreds or thousands of years with minimum influence from emigrants.

¹²² <http://www.akuapemkuronti.org/akuapemhistory.html> [Assessed 10th October 2013]

¹²³ Okyeame Oko of Atifi Awurade.

day La Cote d'Ivoire.¹²⁴ From Kong they migrated through Adanse to other places such as Wam and Dormaa and from Dormaa migrated further to settle at Twifo-Hemang, then to other places such as Abakrampa, Asamankese, Nsawam, Akuapem and finally to their present settlement at Akwamufie, across the Volta River.¹²⁵ Historical evidence such as burial sites, archival materials and remnants of certain families, royals, are found in all these places to connote their pre-existence at such places. All *Aduana* people, no matter where they find themselves today, trace their ancestry to one of these sources, and so see themselves as one people, who hold on to a common belief system. In fact there are Akan axioms which validate the Akan belief in ancestral home, and affirms the belief that they have an origin. Axioms such as:

wo duru amanfo a na w'akae yaanom (nananom), which literally means 'anytime you get to the old town you remember the ancestors' and *obiara nnehɔa ode ne nsa benkum kyere nanya amanfo so* which is literally translated as 'no one points to his father's ancestral home or village using the 'left hand'¹²⁶.

All these axioms connote that there is a common acceptance within the Akan lineage, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, that the indigenes of any present day Akan community has an origin, an ancestral home, that can be traced, whether it is still in existence or is non-existent. As such, there are usually evidence of old burial site, old dilapidated structures or other archaeological remains to prove that some group of people had once lived there. But this was not the case for Tutu; they have no ancestral home and their ancestry cannot be traced to any other place but Tutu. This makes it an Akan indigenous community, whose cultural, social and religious beliefs and practices are also perceived to be indigenous, because they are distinct from any 'dominant group.'¹²⁷

¹²⁴ <http://www.akuapem.com/akwamu.html>

¹²⁵ <http://www.akuapem.com/akwamu.html>

¹²⁶ In the Akan Concept of decency and respect, it is believed that using the left hand in any form of communication, whether to pointing to a direction or presenting an offer to the elderly is perceived as a sign of disrespect.

¹²⁷ Report of The African Commission's Working Group of Experte on Indigenous Populations/Communities, PDF, 2005, 18th December 2012, 91. This was deduced by a United nations Working Group on Indigenous Population established by the United Nations Human Rights Sub-

Consequently, they have distinctive religious beliefs and values that makes it an indigenous religious community.

Again, evidence available in the community, points to the fact that almost ninety percent of the people living in Tutu are natives, the original people, with few outsiders. As such any attempt made either by ‘urban indigenes’ or the few outsiders to modify any of their religious beliefs and practices is met with a strong resistance from the custodians or elders of the community. This, notwithstanding, all recent exposure to other religious faiths that are present in the community and its surroundings, there is still that strong adherence to their religious beliefs and practices, which are commonly referred to as ‘*yen ammamere*’ – customs and traditions. The oral tradition of Tutu revealed that, due to this mind-set, the initial settlers of Tutu considering themselves as a peculiar group of people among the Akuapems adapted the name *kɔbɔ tete*¹²⁸, which literally meant ‘created of old’ or ‘people of old’. During gatherings they usually pride themselves with the saying “*Akuapem man no bae no na Tutu woho dedaw, a wonnim nea wofi bae,*”¹²⁹ which also implies ‘Tutu Akuapem, people whose ancestral home (place of origin) cannot be traced, it pre-existed before the settlement and formation of the ‘*Okuapemman*’¹³⁰.’ Gradually, the original name ‘*kɔbɔ tete*’ diachronically became corrupted to *kɔbɔ tutu*, hence the name ‘Tutu’ Akuapem.

Commission on Prevention of discrimination and Protection of Minorities in 1982 and by the International Labour Organisation on its Convention 169

¹²⁸ Oheneba Kofi Sarpong Boafo.

¹²⁹ Oheneba Kofi Sarpong Boafo.

¹³⁰ Okuapemman is an Akuapem Twi expression for Akuapem Traditional Area.

2.3.2 Formation of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area

Oral history or ‘mythology’¹³¹ recounts that Tutu indigenes, although they had no ancestral home, *amanfo*, they trace their ancestry from two people, a man and a woman, who descended from the skies in a big ‘ayowa a nkonsonkonson kuram,’¹³² with a bible in their hand. The bible in their hand raises a lot of questions. Some of these questions include “who were they?” “Were they Christian converts?” “If they were Christian converts, were they slaves who have been converted to Christianity by their slave masters?” Again, looking at the period during which this might have occurred (1700’s), can it be postulated that Christianity to Akuapem ridge seems to predate the advent of Basel mission to Akuapem? These are reflections that cannot be resolved by this study but need further investigation.

Thus, the man and woman were both in a big basin held with a chain. The indigenes described the process of their settlement as *wɔ bɛdurui, ɔbea ne ɔbarima* meaning ‘they arrived, a woman and a man’ and the place where the two settled was known as *kɔbɔ tete*, hitherto a forest. But now it is suburb of Tutu referred to as *kɔbɔ tutu*, with the *Ankobeahene* as the *abusuapanyin*. Many of the elders are of the view that it is the former name *kɔbɔ tete* that has been corrupted to *kɔbɔ tutu*.

According to Okyeame Oko, a respondent and the linguist to *Mankrado*, oral tradition argues that there were other people already occupying the locality before the arrival of the man and the woman. These occupants might have seen the descending of the two and thus, described the scene to other inhabitants. However, there was no record of who they were and where they might have migrated from and to. It might have been possible, according to the respondent, that they might have moved on to settle at another

¹³¹Peter K. Sarpong. *Ghana In Retrospect: Some Aspects of Culture*. 3rd Edition (Germany, Rottenburg: Maier-Druck, 2006), 125. Mythology is explained as a collection of sacred stories about the origin of people, family descent, or various socio-cultural phenomenon of a specific group of people.

¹³² ‘ayowa’ is said to be a very large tray. In recent times during funerals small ones are used by the widows to present all sort of items as presents to the family of the bereaved spouse.

place because during that period many people from Accra and its environs were all over the place as farmers. This narrative seems to corroborate with the history of the migration of the people of Larteh Akuapem, which posits that

many of the subjects who migrated occupied various quarters at their new settlement and specific quarters marked concentration of immigrants from specific villages. Where they emigrated from thus became their farmlands and hamlets. Some of these villages/farmlands have become present day Obosomase, Tutu, Mampong, Amanokrom, Mamfe. The Larteh people still use most portions of these lands as farms, although parts have become major towns”¹³³ and most of the lands of the people of Larteh has its boundary with these towns.

It is therefore not surprising to have Tutu as part of the Benkum Division of the Akuapem Traditional Area.

Later in history, the man, who was a farmer and hunter, settled at a place not further away from the woman, which was called *Funumano* to this present day. There are different interpretations to the name of this new settlement. The common knowledge among the people of Tutu is that it was the place where the *funuma – ano*, which is literally translated as ‘navel – mouth’, thus ‘the end of the umbilical cord’ of the first son of the couple, was buried. That is, the end of the umbilical cord naturally withers and falls off some few days after the birth of a child. There is the Guan-Akan belief system which posits that the “[indigenous] system of descent, inheritance and succession”¹³⁴, mostly determines where the end of the umbilical cord is buried. If it is a matrilineal system of descent, inheritance and succession, then the end of the umbilical cord would be buried at the matrilineal ancestral home or a place chosen by the mother and the patrilineal system is vice versa. Hence, burying the end of umbilical cord at the new settlement, *funumano*, substantiates the argument that the people of Tutu Akuapem like most Guans and some Akans have a patrilineal system of descent, inheritance and succession. In lieu of this, *funumano* community in Tutu has been designated as the suburb of Tutu community

¹³³ <http://www.akuapem.com/page.html>

¹³⁴ David Brokensha. *Society*, 78, in David Brokensha “Akuapem Handbook”

where prospective chiefs and queens emanate. That is the male and female descendants are the royals, from whom the Chief and Queen mother are appointed and enthroned by the King makers of Tutu Akuapem.

Their practise of the patrilineal system of inheritance is so much entrenched that the birth of a male child is of much joy to them as compared to that of a female. Thus, the birth of a male child always attracted an encouraging congratulatory remark to the woman, *yɛn tiri nkwa*; implying that the child is going to be of benefit to the entire community and not the parents alone. On the other hand, the birth of a female child, although brought some joy, attracted the congratulatory remark *wo tiri nkwa*; implying the child belongs to the mother alone and not the community. In fact, in cases of inheritance and succession the women were always referred to go to their father's house, *ko w'agya fi* which implied she has no 'portion', 'inheritance', in the family.

As a farmer and hunter, according to various respondents, the man travelled widely and the areas he covered were considered as part of the Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area, even to this present day. Some of these farming communities include Abenta, Akwatiakwaso, Pakro, Ahenkorase, Aboabo, Budu, Bankro and Talankro. These rural settlements, referred to as the Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area shared boundaries with other settlements such as Pompi, Mangoase, Obosomase, Aburi and Mampong. All these 'farming villages', according to oral history, were considered as rural settlements, where most of them lived and Tutu Akuapem was considered as their capital, the town. The farming villages were referred to as *ninkura*, which is literally referred to as village and Tutu township referred to as *Ofie* literally translated as 'home'. Hence in the 17th Century, Tutu only became very busy during the celebration of their annual festival, *Ohum*, between the months of August and September according to the Akan calendar, because

everybody came ‘home’. The research discovered that almost all rites of passages and traditional festivities were celebrated in Tutu but not in the villages. This accounts for the communal participation of all rites of passage including the *Amanebɔ* pre-burial rite at Tutu.

All these villages, till date, pay allegiance to the Chief of Tutu Akuapem, who also supervises the appointment of *ɔdekuro* to these villages. The *ɔdekuro*, is an appointed traditional elder, who acts as a caretaker and represents the interest of the Chief and also see to it that all rites of passage and traditional festivities are observed and celebrated in accordance with the beliefs and practices of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. Historical evidences reveal that intra-marriages¹³⁵ and attempts to find new settlements closer to each other, consequently, led to the establishment of various suburbs¹³⁶ within the Tutu township. These suburbs are referred to as *mmorɔnmu* in Akuapem Twi. There are currently ten *mmorɔnmu* in all, with each having a sub-Chief, its own linguist and queen mother.

2.3.3 Tutu and the Akuapem Traditional Area

The people of Tutu Akuapem were very well respected and feared among the indigenes of *Okupeman*. According to respondents, this was due to the bravery of their well-built men, giant, warlords referred to as *Tutu mmarimma akɛsɛɛ a wɔtow apem* which literally translated in Akuapem twi meant ‘strong and well-built men of Tutu, who defeat thousands’¹³⁷. However, their failure to hold on to their bravery gave them another name which nearly stripped them of their fame. Oral tradition argues that although the expulsion

¹³⁵ Intra-marriages, marriages, mostly arranged through the consent of the parents and family members, among close relations such as among cousins, nephews and nieces, was a common practise among the initial settlers of Tutu. It was a means of protecting family inheritance and dignity. However, due to modernisation and education the practice seems to be waning.

¹³⁶ *smaller communities or settlements in Tutu. Each of these smaller community have a sub-chief and abusuapanyin.

¹³⁷ Okyeame Oko, Interviewed 24th June 2013, at his residence in Tutu.

of the Akwamus was over, another group of people suspected to be from the Southern part of the Volta, threatened the peace of the Akuapem land. The *Okuapemhene* of Akyem ancestry, Nana Safori, according to K. S. Boafo, informed the *Ɔdekuro* and the indigenes of all Guan-Kyerepon villages that any of them who is able to ‘bring the head’ (kill and behead) of the leader of the group to the *Okuapemhene* would be rewarded with an enviable title, position. Out of all the villages, only the giant warlords of Tutu responded to Nana Safori’s request and true to their name, one of the giant men beheaded the treacherous leader. The oral tradition of Tutu posits that the victory was possible because the warlords of Tutu on Wednesday night prior to the battle bathed a herbal concoction prepared by *ɔbosom Tepireku*. This herbal concoction, which was a mixture of herbs and corn dough, gave the warlords some kind of ‘supernatural power’ that no implement, knife or gunshot could penetrate their body. Hence, they were able to behead the treacherous leader. For this reason the people of Tutu are prohibited from eating any kind of maize products on Thursdays.

However, for whatever reasons, they could not present the head to Akropong. Instead, it was presented by another person from Mampong Akuapem. The people of Tutu were therefore referred to as *Ape nnim adintso*, which in the Akan language can be rephrased as *na wope nnim adi na woadi ntso*; literally meaning ‘you sought for fame or honour but you have been scorned.’ Although it was a forbidden phrase it has now been accepted by the Tutu people as one of their flaws. Thus, it can now be mentioned in the midst of the indigenous people of Tutu but not in social gatherings and festivities.

Again, though reasons why Tutu could not present the head to the then *Akuapemhene* is shrouded in secrecy, some of the informants suggest that oral tradition suggests *Mampongfo sua a woantumi antwa bi enti yede fem won* literally meaning ‘the people of Tutu lend the head to men of Mampong, who did all they can but could not do

it'. From another oral tradition, however, it is suggested that the Tutu brave warrior on his return from his victorious expedition had an illicit affair with a Mampong-woman, who stole the head and gave it to her brother to present it at Akropong, hence the name *Ape nnim adintso*. From these two opinions it might have been possible that the spirit of communality that existed among the Akuapems during that period convinced the people of Tutu not to pursue the matter but to seek for peace. The smock of that brave warrior has been kept as a memorial in the 'stool house' of *Jobosom Tepirɛ Eku* and that before, *Adaɛ buɛ*, 'the opening of the celebration of Ohum Festival', the Chief and his sub-chiefs have to pay homage amidst some rituals performed by the *Ɔsofo*, *Ɔkɔmfɔ* or Shrine-Priest to the smock.

Again, notwithstanding the fact that Tutu Akuapem could not present the head, there is still a long outstanding cordial relationship between the indigenes of Akropong and Tutu Akuapem. Thus, oral history from the chieftaincy itself reveals that the royal family of Akropong were once given a settlement at Tutu to an extent that there was a 'royal cemetery', *nsamanpo*, created in Tutu, currently near the Methodist Junior High School.

2.4 Political Organisation of Tutu Akuapem

At the heart of the political organisation of Tutu is the institution of Chieftaincy, an institution, which was non-existent until the seventeenth century. That is, until the institution of Chieftaincy, which according to the Akan concept of chieftaincy was responsible for the spiritual and secular leadership, priest and priestesses were leaders among the Guans and Kyerepons of which Tutu was not excluded. In this discourse, the researcher examines the political organisation of Tutu, which epitomises the Akan concept of chieftaincy.

2.4.1 Institution of Chieftaincy

All the Guan and Kyerepon settlements were theocracies; a political leadership of gods and their respective shrine-priests and priestesses,¹³⁸ excluding the Akwamu and Akyem immigrants, who already had a well-established chieftaincy institution. K. B. Dickson's Akan concept for the distinction between a town and a rural settlement, reveals that towns were designated as seats of Chiefs,¹³⁹ and the rural settlement designated for traditional elders (*ɔdekuronom*) who were usually appointed by the chief. Thus, between the 16th and 17th Century almost all settlements on the Akuapem ridge were considered as rural settlements with no human political leaders until the coming of the Akwamus and Akyem. This also might be, according to Okyeame Oko, the fact that until the coming of the Akyem, chieftaincy institution was not a matter of concern to the Guan and Kyerepon natives of Akuapem, including Tutu, which were predominantly farming communities.¹⁴⁰

Moreover, after the expulsion of the Akwamu and the treacherous warlords from the Southern part of the Volta and the Shai Hills, the *Okuapehene* sent a message authorising all the recognised Guan and Kyerepon settlements, including Tutu, to appoint human leaders, *ɔdekuronom* to replace the shrine-priests and priestesses, from Berɛkusu to Apirede and down to Aseseɛso. Hence, the installation of *ɔdekuro* of Tutu fell on Nana Eson Kofi and his descendants of *Funumano*.

Sometime later in history, due to the magnitude of respect and cordiality that existed between the *Okuapehene* and the *ɔdekuro* of Tutu, Nana Boafo Ayeboafo Asiedu Keteku, then *ɔdekuro* of Tutu, was invited and elevated to the status of a Chief, who could sit in a palanquin. Not only was Nana Boafo I given the chieftaincy title but he was also accompanied with its respective appellation, *Korɔnkɔhene, me pemwa wonkɔ, me twewa wommba*, which in the literal sense implies 'the unmovable Chief, who can neither

¹³⁸ M. A. Kwamena-Poh, *History*, in David Brokensha, 34.

¹³⁹ K. B. Dickson, *Settlements*, in David Brokensha, 91.

¹⁴⁰ M. A. Kwamena-Poh, *History*, in David Brokensha, 33.

be pushed nor pulled.’ Thus, he is a Chief, who cannot be easily tossed about or deceived. According to the informants, the appellation underscores the irresistible strength and mysterious ancestry of the people of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. Due to the indisposition of Nana Boafo, who lived for a little above 100years, the *Mankrado* of Tutu, Nana Yaw Adade Asiedu went and received the honour on his behalf.

In summary, Nana Boafo’s adherence to *Okuapehene’s* pronouncement of replacing priests and priestesses with traditional elders (*Ɔdekuro*) and later elevating them to Chiefs commenced the establishment of the chieftaincy institution in Tutu and its environs.

2.4.2 Administrative Structures of Tutu

Again, prior to the institution of chieftaincy, the Tutu community was administered by the *Ɔdekuro* and seven elders or heads of the various clans in Tutu, who were together referred to as *nkongua ason*¹⁴¹ – known in Akan concept as *abusua mpanyinfo*. Moreover, as part of the honour accorded Nana Boafo I, he was given the authority to appoint sub-chiefs for Tutu traditional area. He therefore conferred on his seven administrative elders (*nkongua ason*) –chieftaincy titles in accordance with the Akan Native Administrative Order also referred to as the five military divisions. Again, it led to the institution of the Akan system of chieftaincy in the ‘Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area’¹⁴², where the Chief was seen as the head of the administrative structure. Thus, whereas the (appointed elders) in the rural settlements assumed the *Ɔdekuro* titles, the *Ɔdekuro* of Tutu became the Chief and his *nkongua b’ason* became the sub-chiefs.

¹⁴¹ Okyeame Oko, interviewed 24th July 2013, at his residence in Tutu. The *nkongua ason*, also referred to as *aboboo ason* or *nkongua somfo ason*, which literally means the *seven gates*, were the seven administrative stools (heads) who supported the *Ɔdekuro*, now elevated as a Chief to govern the Tutu Traditional Area. The research revealed that this seven gates emanated from the seven clans of the Akan system.

¹⁴² Appendix I indicates a summary of the known Chiefs of Tutu Akuapem since it was founded and designated titles with their respective surburbs.

From then onwards, the sub-chiefs owed their total allegiance to Nana Boafo, *Tutuhene*, who was deputised by Nana Mankrado Adade. In the Akan political concept of Chieftaincy, the *Mankrado*, who is the *Kurontihene*,¹⁴³ holds the fort anytime the Chief is absent. The role of the *Mankrado* can be seen in the light of a Prime Minister as associated with the parliamentary system of governance. In the absence of both of them the *Ankobeahene* takes over. Before the chieftaincy institution, only the *ɔdekuro* and his *Mankrado*, had linguists and queen mothers. But after the *nkongua b'ason* had been conferred with chieftaincy (administrative) titles they took for themselves linguists and queen mothers.

Notwithstanding the institution of Chieftaincy in Tutu, the role of the 'Chief Priest' - *Tepirɛ Eku ɔkomfo* as the spiritual leader was not abolished. Thus, the *ɔsofo* of *Tepirɛ Eku* being suspicious of *Okuapehene's* pronouncement, as an attempt to rob him of his leadership influence in Tutu, refused to give the black stool to Nana Kofi Ason, the *ɔdekuro* of Tutu, even upon his request. Oral tradition posits that, according to *Tepirɛ ɔkomfo*, he cannot give the 'black stool', which symbolises the spiritual embodiment of Tutu community to the chief. Rather, he suggested that the Chief should continue to pay homage to *ɔbosom Tepirɛ Eku* as was done at the beginning and end of every *Ohum* festival. In fact, historical evidence suggests that before the celebration of any festivity such as the *Ohum* and *Mpohum* festivals of Tutu, the Chief and his sub-Chiefs as custom demands require the permission of the Shrine-Priest of *ɔbosom Tepirɛ Eku*. Hence, the Chief and his elders pay a courtesy call to the shrine-priest, who performs the required rituals, to grant them (the chief and his elders) the permission to commence the whole celebration.

¹⁴³ A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena-Poh, *Government and Politics in the Akuapem State 1730 – 1850*, 142.

Due to the shrine priest's rejection to hand over the black stool, *Okuapehene* gave Nana Kofi Ason a stool, which was proverbially titled '*me so dɔndɔ nso me mba*' literally meaning 'I am carrying a drum that cannot play'. The implication of the proverb, according to Okyeame Oko, was that 'although I am a chief I have been prevented from exercising my chieftaincy role as the spiritual leader'. Hence, till date, the shrine-priest is regarded as part of the elders of *Tutuman*, and is consulted on all issues that seem to border on the religiosity of the entire traditional area. Both, the Chief and traditional priest are still the custodians of all the religious beliefs and practices of Tutu.

The institution of chieftaincy with the corroboration of the Priests and Priestesses, was perceived as the period of formalising of all religious beliefs and practices in Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. In reality, the Chief was the administrative leader whereas the Priest was seen as the leader of all spiritual or religious issues of the town. This eventually led to the firm belief and practice of Akan Indigenous Religion, which is also the source of all ritual practices of Tutu.

Later on, apart from *Obosom Tepire Eku*, the recognised deity of the Tutu Traditional Area, emerged another deity emerged, *Obosom Wontumi* that was worshipped under the supervision of the *Mankrado* of Tutu. The *Mankrado* is also known to be the sub-chief of the *Aduana-Aborade* clan, which is centrally located at *Atifi Ewurade*, a suburb of Tutu township. History has it that there was a big tree at the present site of *Mankrado Seeso* and under it men considered to be spiritually powerful met to discuss important issues about Tutu as well as played traditional games such as *ɔware* and *dame*. Okyeame Oko continued that at one of such meetings, these men found on the top of the big tree a pot covered with a 'white cloth' (*nwira fitaa*). The pot was beyond the reach of any of them. Hence, these men decided to exercise their spiritual prowess in an attempt to bring the pot down from the tree or get to the pot. When all attempts had failed, the late

Mankrado went to his house, which was near the site, and upon returning, performed some mystical rituals and after screaming ‘*Kae! Kae! Kae!*’ the pot was found resting in his hands. Since then the *Mankrado* chieftaincy title has been designated as the second most spiritually powerful stool of Tutu. Also, the site where the incident occurred has been conceived as a sacred ground. This conception of regarding the site of the incident as a sacred ground has gradually been deepened by the inhabitants of Tutu. The basis for this conception, according to informants, can be attributed to, the establishment of *efitiem* (royal palace) of *Mankrado* in place of the tree, and the numerous rituals, blood (animal) sacrifices and libation prayers, of the *Aduana-Aborade* clan of Tutu, performed on the ground. Currently, the entire area surrounding the *efitiem* of the *Mankrado* is conceived as a sacred ground not only by indigenes of Tutu but also the emigrants living in Tutu. It is also for this reason that the *Amanebɔ* rite, which takes place on the same ground, is perceived as a religious rite, which in recent times has generated all sorts of arguments concerning its continuance, modification or rejection.

In summary, the study of the political institution of Chieftaincy and the corroboration of the Shrine-priest is a study of the indigenous religion; the religious beliefs and practices, of the people of Tutu Akuapem in all their complexities. In Tutu, the institution of chieftaincy is a pivot around which the performance of all religious obligations revolve.

2.5 Religion in Tutu Akuapem

According to Mbiti, “religion has dominated the thinking of many people of different origins, particularly Africans, to such an extent that it has shaped their cultures, their social lives, their political organization and economic activities.”¹⁴⁴ This attribution

¹⁴⁴ Mbiti. John S. *Introduction to African Religion* (Great Britain: Heinemann., 1977)

of religiosity to African peoples, though a general one, may be said to be true of the Akan people,¹⁴⁵ of which Tutu as part of the broader Akan ethnic group cannot be excluded.

Kofi Asare Opoku has rightly observed that

“... the phenomenon of religion is so pervasive in the life of the Akan and so inextricably bound up with their culture that is not easy to isolate what is purely religious from other aspects of life. It may be said without exaggeration that life in the Akan world is religion and religion is life.”¹⁴⁶

That is, before the arrival of missionary activities, religion in Tutu, as part of the broader Akan religion, had permeated all aspects of their life so well that it was impossible to have a prescribed distinction between the sacred and secular and between the spiritual and material. It also means that religion in Tutu cannot be studied in isolation from the social organisation of the Tutu community. Hence, the discussion of religion in Tutu seeks to examine the social organisation, without which the pre-burial rites cannot be understood. The social organisation of the people of Tutu, as in Akan concept, is perceived as the relationship that exists between the human person and spiritual elements of the community, which together make up the indigenous religious belief systems. The subsequent discourse seeks to examine the Akan concept of the human person and their relationship with the spiritual elements prior to any missionary activity.

2.5.1 Akan Concept of the Human Person

The Akan concept of the human person suggests that every individual, is made up of *okra* (soul received from God; relates the person to his creator), *sunsum* (spirit that comes from the father), *ntorɔ* (life that links a person to the paternal clan; is derived from the father) and the *mogya* (blood derived from the mother and determines the matrilineal

¹⁴⁵ Kwame Gyekye, *An essay on African Philosophical Thought: An Akan Conceptual Scheme*. (Cambridge, University Press: Cambridge, 1987), 129

¹⁴⁶ Kofi Asare. Opoku, *Aspects of Akan Worship* in Kwame Gyekye, *An essay on African Philosophical Thought: An Akan Conceptual Scheme* 129.

lineage).¹⁴⁷ Together, these elements combine to create a complete or whole person. Amongst these four elements the *okra* was seen as the most important. It is believed to be the part of the human beings that never dies.

The source of the *Okra*, soul, which is believed to be from the Creator, who gives it to everyone during birth, constitutes the innermost self, the essence. The Akan believes that it is a spark of God in every human being, which has an antemundane existence of God. The presence of this divine essence in a human being, in Akan philosophy may have the basis for the Akan proverb ‘*nnipa nyina ye Onyame mma, obiara nnye asase ba*, literally translated as *All men are the children of God; no one is a child of the earth*¹⁴⁸. Since the *Okra* is seen as derived from God, it is also seen as the bearer of *nkrabea* which means destiny or (fate). This fate is believed to be assigned by the Creator and is believed to be unalterable.¹⁴⁹ The *sunsum* is the second human element believed to be an intangible element. It is responsible for the character, disposition and intelligence of a person.¹⁵⁰ The next aspect of man is the *ntoro*. The *ntoro* is transmitted from a father to his children, including males and females. The *ntoro* is a spirit or a life force originating from the father and it is believed it accounts for the inherited characteristics of the children.¹⁵¹ The Akan believe that a human being is created when the *ntoro* of the father combines with the *mogya* (blood of the mother) at the time of procreation and that when a person dies, the blood returns to the earth. In Akan conception, the earth is conceived of as a woman, it is known as *asaase yaa*, thus the reference to it as ‘mother earth.’

Fundamentally, the social unit of the Akan is identified by their *abusua* (clan), the extended family, which maintains close ties of lineage. In Tutu the same word *abusua* is

¹⁴⁷ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu. *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism*. (The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden: African Printing Press, 2004), 47.

¹⁴⁸ Kwame Gyekye, *An essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*. 85

¹⁴⁹ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. 94 – 95.

¹⁵⁰ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. 96.

¹⁵¹ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. 98.

used to denote the nuclear family as well as the extended family. The reason was that prior to the colonisation of the Ghanaian societies, the indigenous societies or communities placed much emphasis on the external family, with little emphasis on the nuclear families. Everyone saw his or herself as an active member of the clan (*abusua*). Every individual was tied to his *abusua* by a blood relationship through the mother, which was considerate of the several groupings or dialects, Akuapem, Asante, Bono, Fante and Nzemas, within the Akan Community. As such, members of the same clan but different Akan groupings, when detected by the elders cannot marry. It is considered a taboo or a prohibition because the members are assumed to have originated from the same ancestry. Due to this common belief that all members of the same *abusua* are brothers and sisters, if an Asante who belongs to the *Aduana* clan migrates to an *Akuapem* area, he would be provided a place to settle by the *Aduana* of *Akuapem*.

Furthermore, every clan is believed to have a totem, which designates the clan collectively as a single unit¹⁵² and ties the clan to share the same religious beliefs and practices that centre on the clan's totem, such as mourning their dead. The totem is seen as a sacred creature that serves as the collective emblem of the group, without which the clan could not exist. Thus, "the totem provides members of the clan with their name, that is their identity and hence unity."¹⁵³ The animals and plants that are used as totems by Akan clans are chosen because they are believed to have at one time done something extraordinary to ensure the survival of the founder of that society or mystically manifested themselves in some lineage member in the past.¹⁵⁴ That plant or animal then assumes a sacred status and becomes an object of worship of all the descendants of that ancestor. Opoku therefore concludes that the general approach of traditional (indigenous) African

¹⁵² Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, 88

¹⁵³ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. 88.

¹⁵⁴ Peter Sarpong, *Ghana In Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 2006), 59, 60

societies, is to ascribe certain powers to objects in nature and this ascription is concretized by the periodic offer of sacrifices.¹⁵⁵ The totem of the clans, whose pre-burial rites was observed were a dog with a splint of fire in the mouth and crow bird, which are totems for the *Aduana-Abrade* and *Asona* clans.

2.5.2 The Akan Spiritual or Religious Concept – the Akan concept of spirits

The Akan also believe that there are spiritual elements that influence every aspect of life. The spirituality or religiousness of the indigenous Akan is based on certain spiritual elements, which are hierarchically arranged as: the belief in a Supreme Being (*nyame/nyankopon*), the deities (*abosom*), ancestral spirits (*nananom nsamanfoɔ*)¹⁵⁶ and the lower/lesser spirit powers (amulets and talisman) which is worn around the waist, *asuman*, a power believed to be obtained from small forest or nocturnal beings such as dwarfs (*mmoatia*, with feet facing backwards) , witches and wizards (*bayie*) and the use of magic (*nkonyaa*).¹⁵⁷

The Akan regard the Supreme Being as the creator of the universe (*ɔboadeɛ*) from whom all powers emanate and who is very active in the life of mankind.¹⁵⁸ According to Opoku and Gyekye, most of the Traditional Religions of Ghana had a belief in a Supreme Being who created the universe including human beings and everything on the earth.¹⁵⁹ Some have questioned whether the idea of the Supreme Being is indigenous to the African or it has come about as a result of Christian influence. However, God is regarded as the highest among the pantheon of spirits and as such must be approached directly without any intermediary. Quarcoopome claims that there was a daily worship at *Onyamedua*

¹⁵⁵ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 10.

¹⁵⁶ For a detail discussion on Akan ancestorship and tradition refer to Kwame Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, 163.

¹⁵⁷ E.G. Parrinder. *West African Religion*. (London: Oxford University Press 1949), 16.

¹⁵⁸ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Ghana: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), 21

¹⁵⁹ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* 21; Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press

(God's tree)¹⁶⁰, which was found in almost every compound of an Ashanti village. The *Onyamedua* (*Alstonia boonei*) tree for instance, served as a symbol of the Akan dependence on God. The tree which grew in shrines and palaces and on the compound of family houses, *abusuafie*, had a pot containing water placed in its forked branch. The water was used to bless the inmates of the palace or the house where the tree is located.¹⁶¹

The Akan believes in deities or divinities (personified spirits) called (*abosom*), who are believed to be the children of God and they have their respective jobs assigned to them by God. The deities are believed to inhabit natural objects like water (*nsuobosom*), rocks and caves (*bosombuo*), and house (*fiabosom*). Thus, in the indigenous worldview, most of these gods are usually associated with natural objects such as rain, mountains, and strange animals that are usually referred to as the children of God and as such are offered wine, ram, goats, and fowls as sacrifice for the general well-being of the community.¹⁶² Each of these divinities have their area of competence such as agriculture, morality, fertility and, wealth.¹⁶³ Furthermore, the gods from the Akan perspective are “means to an end and not an end in themselves” because they were created by God to fulfil specific functions.¹⁶⁴ The gods are therefore believed to have powers that place them above human beings; they abhor actions which upset the harmony of the community or ruin family life and are believed to administer punishment to those who infringe upon the moral code.¹⁶⁵ For instance, in Tutu Akuapem *ɔbosom Tepire ɛku* prohibits the shedding of blood,

¹⁶⁰ T. N. O. Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*. (Ibadan: African Universities Press, 1987), 68.

¹⁶¹ Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*. 33.

¹⁶² I. Wilks “Human Sacrifice or Capital Punishment: A Rejoinder” In *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol.21, No. 3. (Boston: University African Studies Centre 1988), 444.

¹⁶³ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*. (Netherlands: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), 27

¹⁶⁴ Kofi Asare Opoku. *West African Traditional Religion*, 54.

¹⁶⁵ Kofi Asare Opoku. *West African Traditional Religion*, 156.

whether guilty or innocent, and as well ‘prohibits the eating of any kind of maize products on Thursdays’¹⁶⁶.

Beyond these deities and gods are the ancestors (ancestral spirits) - the spirits of the dead who have departed from the land of the living and are believed to be in the land of the dead known in Akan as *asamando*. In the Akan indigenous worldview the ancestors are regarded, with all reverence, because they occupy a very unique and significant position in the realm of the spirits. Thus, the departed in Akan concept of spirituality, are not so far away and are believed to be watching over their families and community like a cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1).

The Akan believes in spirit powers often called *asuman*.¹⁶⁷ *Asuman* may take several forms including, amulets, talisman or beads which may be worn around the waist, neck or the wrist.¹⁶⁸ They may be obtained from the *abosom* priest or from Moslem ‘Mallams’ and are personal to the individual; it is believed that they are effective in working evil or giving protection against unknown spiritual powers. Some of these lesser spirit powers include *sasabonsam*, which literally connotes “evil spirits” such as witches and wizards (*abayifo*), and dwarfs (*mmtia*).

Among the Akan, it is the belief in these spiritual elements or powers that gives them vitality, hope and makes their life meaningful,¹⁶⁹ which eventually indicates their personhood and spirituality or religiosity. Thus, all these beliefs and practices (rituals) forms the basis of the Akan Indigenous Religion, because the Akan believe that the spiritual elements in most cases have the power to protect or destroy the soul, which is the

¹⁶⁶ See pages 42 for detailed discussion on the prohibition of eating any kind of maize products on Thursdays. Again, to a large extent, almost all the towns on the Akuapem Ridge have a specific day for not eating any kind of maize product.

¹⁶⁷ Noel Smith. *Religious Beliefs*. In David Brokensha *Akwapim Handbook*, 118.

¹⁶⁸ Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana*, 28.

¹⁶⁹ Awuah-Nyamekye, *Salvaging Nature: The Akan Religio-Cultural Perspective*, (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden: World Views, 2009), 13.

centrality of human existence. It is the well-being of the soul that these diverse spirits work harmoniously to protect from danger or destruction and to provide it the joy and peace it deserves.

Currently, in addition to the indigenous religious beliefs, there is the presence of other religious faiths in Tutu. The subsequent discussion looks at the advent of the two major religious traditions in Ghana, Christianity and Islam, which are very prominent in Tutu.

2.5.3 Christianity in Tutu Akuapem

Amidst several failures of missionary activities in Ghana, then Gold Coast, the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society through Andreas Riis in 1835 and 1843 succeeded in establishing a mission at Akropong in Akuapem.¹⁷⁰ The failures were attributed “...to the fact that the western missionaries who came to Africa were coming from a background of Christianity embedded in the enlightenment which perceived itself as superior to African cultural values.”¹⁷¹ Hence, the first missionary to get to the Akuapem ridge was the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society, which after 1926 became known as the ‘Presbyterian Church’.

It is therefore, not surprising to know that the Basel Mission was the first missionary group to introduce Christianity in Tutu Akuapem in 1910. They were later followed by The Methodist Church Ghana in 1918. This may account for most of the sub-chiefs being Presbyterians, with only a few being Methodist. Currently there are almost twelve Christian Churches in Tutu Akuapem township. History reveals that on the arrival of these two churches they were given settlements, which was at that time, further away from the shrines and the indigenous community. This was just to keep the missionaries

¹⁷⁰A. A. Boahen and M. A. Kwamena Poh. *Government and Politics in the Akuapem State 1730 – 1850.*, 111 - 123

¹⁷¹C. N. Omenyo *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana.* (Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Boekencentrum Publishing House, 2006), 44.

and the new converts away from what was referred to as ‘fetishism’; *abosomsom*; the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of Tutu. Although a ‘Salem’¹⁷² was not created in Tutu Akuapem as found in places like Akropong, Mampong and Aburi, the Christian converts of both Churches were given settlements which were by then distances further away from the indigenous community. This was due the initial hostile attitudes of missionaries to traditional culture and religion,¹⁷³ which was mostly perceived by them as fetish and devilish.

The Presbyterians were settled at the North-East and the Methodist at the South-West part of Tutu Akuapem. Whether it was the Christian missionaries or traditional rulers or shrine priests who opted for such places, history could not prove. Notwithstanding, Okyeame Oko, an 84-year-old linguist, revealed that the *Mankrado* of *Atifi Ewurade* offered the Presbyterians the land on which they presently find themselves. The Methodist Church Ghana, which was known to be the first to establish a school in Tutu in 1925, was also located at *Anafo Ewurade*. In fact oral history revealed that the present day Presbyterian Church lands closer to *Aboso Nketiam* and *Aboso Demi* were lands belonging to indigenes of the present day *Krɔbo*, which were forest belts. However, for fear of invaders and to avoid contact with the missionaries they were given a land at their present location by the then *Mankrado*.¹⁷⁴ Currently there are almost all the groups of Christian traditions in Tutu; Protestant, Pentecostal, Charismatic and African Indigenous Church, with the exception of Catholicism. Currently The Islamic religion has also joined the community for some years now.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Salem is a Basel Christian Suburb or community, which emerged when Christian converts were permitted to build their houses near to the ‘mission quarter’ in order to prevent them from mingling with the indigenous community.

¹⁷³ Denis M’Pasou. ‘The Continuing Tension Between Christianity and Rites of Passage in Swaziland’, in James L. Cox. *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, 28

¹⁷⁴ Comfort Karr. Interviewed 18th November 2013, at her store, Tutu Akuapem

¹⁷⁵ Okyeame Oko, Interview, 26th July 2013, Residence Tutu at Akuapem

2.5.4 Religion in Contemporary Tutu Society

Contemporarily, Tutu is a religiously pluralistic community, in which members of the different traditions, Christian, Islamic and Akan Indigenous traditions, are coexisting peacefully with each other. Initially, the interaction between, particularly, Christians and adherents of indigenous religion, although not cordial, was neither extremely hostile, thus, effecting the smooth and rapid growth of the Christian and Islamic religion. Hence, despite the influence of Christianity and Islam, indigenous beliefs and their related social customs are still (very) strong¹⁷⁶ in (Tutu) Akuapem.

It can therefore be perceived that there is an unconscious practice of syncretism; “...the process by which elements of one religion are assimilated into another religion resulting in a compromise or change in the fundamental tenets or nature of those religions”¹⁷⁷. This suspicion is based on the evidence that there are some indigenes, particularly elders of the community, who still profess to be Christians, (some are even leaders or presbyters of Church) who still lead in some of the religious cults and rituals (pouring of libation, animal sacrifices, ancestral cults), which the missionaries strongly opposed because they were perceived to be valueless pagan practices.

Amoah maintains that “converts continue to practise, even if in different forms, some of the resilient cultural practices that are intertwined with indigenous religious belief and practices, these converts live aspects of indigenous religions.”¹⁷⁸ She explains further that this usually occurs during crisis such as rites of passage, especially death – a moment of transition to another world to which the deceased should be properly prepared through the performance of appropriate burial rituals.¹⁷⁹ Thus, each adult individual, regardless of

¹⁷⁶ Noel Smith. *The Churches*. In David Brokensha, *Akwapim handbook*, 68.

¹⁷⁷ S. R. Imbach. *Elwell Evangelical Dictionary*, [Assessed 9th April 2014]

¹⁷⁸ Elizabeth Amoah, ‘African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship’ [Assessed 26th February 2014]

¹⁷⁹ Amoah, ‘African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship’ [Assessed 26th February 2014]

his religious persuasion, and with the common goal of giving appropriate and fitting rites to the deceased is required to contribute in one way or another towards the successful performance of the burial rituals, whether or not such rituals are indigenous. In sum the indigenes of Tutu despite the presence of other religious traditions, Christianity and Islam, are steeped in their indigenous religious beliefs and practices such that any attempt of alienation is regarded as a rebellion to what has been passed on to the generation from the ancestors.

Notwithstanding the resilience of the indigenous religion which continued to “exercise a firm grip” on indigenes of Tutu society, there is a warm cordiality among Christians, Moslems and the adherents of the indigenous religion of Tutu Akuapem, which has existed up to the time of this research. The possible reason for this cordiality may be due to the fact that they see themselves (indigenes of Tutu) as a people emanating from a common ancestry. The only challenge is that once a while, there are few exigencies that sometimes create arguments about the rejection or insistence of some of the indigenous belief systems and practices, like *Amanebɔ* rite. The various attitude of the indigenes towards the *Amanebɔ* rite in contemporary Tutu society is discussed in chapter four. Especially when it has to do with prohibitions or ritual offences, such as ban on drumming, which always occurs six weeks prior to celebration of the *Ohum* festival. Such encounters between the indigenous religion and Christianity in particular result in some aspects of either the indigenous or Christian religion to be rejected, adapted or modified. Thus, due to this long standing cordial interaction and a few arguments, some of the prohibitions or ritual offences have been modified, even the *Amanebɔ* rite. For instance, oral tradition reveals that it was due to Christian burial and marriage services that the day for the *Amanebɔ* rite was changed from Saturday to Friday.

2.6 Conclusion

The content of this chapter is a survey of the history of the people of Tutu in the Akuapem traditional Area. In this discourse the researcher has presented a survey of the initial settlers of the Akuapem Traditional Area, the origin, and meaning of Tutu and their relationship with the Akuapem Traditional Area. In addition, the political organisation and religious beliefs and practices of Tutu, which was in conformity with that of the larger Akan ethnic group, were also discussed. In the later part of this chapter, the researcher also looked at the presence of the Christian religious faith in Tutu.



CHAPTER THREE

THE *AMANEBO* RITE OF TUTU

3.1 Introduction

In most indigenous societies, when a person dies, family members, friends, and neighbours respond in a structured or patterned way to the death. The bereaved family goes through series of rituals before, during and after the burial. The Akan oral tradition maintains that the period preceding the burial rite, in traditional societies, was usually a day or two, for common indigenes or a week or two for royals due to the scarcity of preservation or mortuary facilities. However, in recent times, due to the availability of preservation facilities, the period prior to the burial is prolonged or delayed for several days, weeks or even months for both common indigenes and royals. This is strictly dependent on the social status of the deceased, the preparedness of the bereaved family, the period (sacred period) within which the death occurs and the condition of the corpse.¹⁸⁰

This chapter is a phenomenological survey of the *Amanebɔ* rite that the indigenes of Tutu go through before they are granted the formal permission, as tradition demands, to organise the burial and final funeral rites of a deceased relative. In this description, the researcher presents the ritual occurrences prior to (pre-*Amanebɔ*), during (*Amanebɔ*), and after the *Amanebɔ* (post-*Amanebɔ*) rite, which are all considered to be part of the pre-burial rite of the people of Tutu. Also, in each of the occurrences, the description considers three different categories of death as recognised among the adherents of the Akan indigenous religion, the ritual for the ‘natural’¹⁸¹ or good death of a ‘common’ indigene, that of *Nananom* (royalty), and the ritual for all unnatural or bad death. This is to explore whether each of such deaths demand different *Amanebɔ* ritual observances.

¹⁸⁰ Sarpong, *Ghana In Retrospect*, 29.

¹⁸¹ Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, 128.

3.2 **Pre-*Amanebɔ* rite**

In Tutu, the pre-*Amanebɔ* ritual for any of the forms of death, natural, unnatural or royal deaths, entails rituals to separate and preserve the corpse, *amu*¹⁸² *ne koraa*, and the preparation of the bereaved family towards the final burial rite of the deceased (*abusua aho boaboa or siesie*), which comprise several gatherings or meetings (*nhyiamu*) that takes place prior to the main rite. Inferring from Turner's processual schema of rites of passage as discussed in chapter one, the separation and preservation of corpse are evidences of the rites of separation whereas the other preparations prior to the burial rite denote the rites of transition (liminal period).

3.2.1 **Pre-*Amanebɔ* rite for the natural death of common indigene**

In Tutu, the moment a natural death occurs, whether in a health facility or home, information is sent to the immediate family, who send an elder or a close relative to take charge of the situation in order to separate the corpse from the immediate family. The corpse is immediately examined by an elderly person of the deceased, usually the *abusuapanyin* or his (*abusuapanyin's*) representative, to validate the death. Thereafter, the mortuary rites begins. Thus, the corpse is not ignored but immediately taken care of and later disposed of in accordance with the religious beliefs and practices of the people of Tutu, which is commonly referred to as burial rites. Until recently, the preservation mortuary rite performed involved the corpse being embalmed and placed in a seat for all the body fluids to drain off either in the house or at a preservation centre. But now, many choose to preserve the corpse in the mortuary. This depends on the status and age as well as the wealth of the individual and family.

The ritual of separation begins with the pouring of libation on behalf of the immediate and extended family. The implication of the libation offered is that the family

¹⁸²It can also be known as *afunu*.

has accepted the incident as an act of Supreme being, hence, is asking for the permission and guidance of both the living (family of the bereaved) and the ancestral spirits to separate the deceased from the family as well as to carry on with the necessary arrangements to grant the deceased a peaceful entrance into the ancestral home. The corpse is then separated from his nuclear (spouse and children) and extended family and conveyed and deposited at the mortuary or preservation centre. Traditionally among the Akans, the *abusuapanyin* is expected to instruct any of the close relatives of the extended family to see to it that the room, especially bedroom, of the deceased is kept closed under lock and key just after the corpse is conveyed to the mortuary. It is believed that the bedroom is where most of the important documents or properties that is or will be of interest or importance to the family are kept. Hence, all measures should be taken to protect the documents and properties until the appropriate time, when they can be bequeathed to the rightful successors or inheritors, as tradition or law demands. However, in contemporary Tutu, particularly such a ritual has been minimised. This disclosure was made when the researcher as a participant observer at one of such gatherings at the house of late Dr. Ani Duncan, realised that the husband's door was not locked. Upon investigation through an informal conversation with the widow, Mrs. Comfort Ani, it was revealed that the practice is gradually dying off and that only few families, particularly royals, do enforce this ritual to the letter. These royals may be perceived to have in their possession properties, documents and jewellerys belonging to the extended family (clan or chieftaincy), which should be bequeathed to the rightful successors for continuity.

In such situations, another day is selected for identification and listing of the items in the room in the full glare of both the nuclear family and some selected members of the extended family. This ritual seeks to separate, in most cases, the widow from the immediate environment of the deceased. She is then put under the care of some elderly

women, who are close relatives. As part of the ritual, the widow(er) eats alone within closed doors and does not bath after 6:00pm. Also, he or she is not allowed to walk alone to public or private places, especially to perform her regular house chores. Thus, the widow or widower is always accompanied by elderly women/men of close relations in whatever he/she wants to do and wherever she/he wants to go.

The immediate families then send out messages to all relatives of the extended family, including the chief and elders of Tutu, to announce the death of their relative and to inform them of a family meeting. The family meeting, which currently and customarily takes place a week after the death at the family house of the bereaved, according to the Akuapem, is referred to as a ‘gathering’ (*nhyiamu*) and not ‘one week celebration’ (*nnawɔtwe da/nnawɔtwe die*) as performed among the Akyem, Fante and Asante. Previously, when the corpse was preserved for three or four days, the gathering did not wait until the eighth day (*nnawɔtwe da*) but it begins there and then, immediately after the demise.¹⁸³ However, the corpse of royals, especially chiefs and sub-chiefs and head of family and/ clans, were kept beyond one or two weeks.¹⁸⁴ The respondent further revealed that in both situations some specific herbs were used to embalm and/ cover the corpse in order to preserve it.

In Tutu, the gathering and celebration seem to have the same purpose; to put together a planning committee, to discuss the estimated cost of the funeral, and to discuss the source of funding, including selecting the date for the final burial and funeral rite. The date selected must be convenient to the immediate family and the Tutu community.

¹⁸³ Mrs. Comfort Ani, Interview, 13th May 2013, on phone at Tutu. She is an native of Tutu.

¹⁸⁴ Mrs. Comfort Ani, Interview, 13th May 2013, on phone at Tutu

3.2.2 *Pre-Amanebɔ rite for royals*

Okyeame Oko,¹⁸⁵ being preview to the demise of the late chief, Nana Boafo Ayebofo Asiedu Keteku II, and the late Mankrado, disclosed to the researcher the occurrences prior to the *Amanebɔ* of royals. According to Oko, the news of the demise of any of the royals of Tutu, as practised by most Akans, is initially shrouded in secrecy until the necessary inspection and confirmation has been made, particularly, by the appropriate administrative head of the traditional area.¹⁸⁶

He (Okyeame Oko) narrated that at the demise of the Chief of Tutu, the Mankrado, who was the appropriate administrative head in the absence of the chief, was informed. He (Mankrado) quickly and quietly followed the messenger to confirm the death. The door to the room where the corpse rested was immediately closed, including all other rooms, which was of much importance to them, particularly, the ‘stool room’ *nkongua dem*. Before leaving the scene, the *Mankrado* sent for the *abusuapanyin* of the chief’s family and clan, then together they summoned a meeting, which usually takes place late in the night, midnight or at dawn. Those present at the meeting were all the major sub-chiefs, the queen mother, the *abusuapanyin* of the demised chief and the traditional priest (*Ɔsofo*) of *Tɛpireku*. At the emergency meeting, which took place at the *Mankrado*’s palace, the appropriate administrative head informed them of the demise.

The Akan expression that is usually used for such an incidence is *Nana kɔ akura* (Nana is gone to the village) but in Tutu the common expression is *Nana a dan n’akofena atwere ho ati w ne nananom* (the Chief has left his traditional (royal or battle) sword behind in pursuance of his ancestors). Other expressions in Akan include *Nana etwa n’ani ahwɛ ban* (the chief has turned his face to the wall), and *Nana ada ne benkum so* (the chief is

¹⁸⁵ Okyeame Oko, interviewed July 2013, at Tutu in his Residence. He is 84 years and currently the Chief linguist of Mankrado. He is currently one of the oldest elders, specifically linguist, of Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area and Council. As at the time of the research he (Okyeame Oko) remarked that all the present chiefs of Tutu were enthroned under his watch.

¹⁸⁶ Okyeame Oko, interviewed July 2013, at Tutu in his Residence.

lying on the left or has slept on his left side). Libation prayers are quietly offered and the necessary arrangements are performed to secretly send the corpse of the chief to an approved preservation centre. The *Mankrado* and the head of the deceased chief's family or clan and sometimes the adult son of the deceased accompany the corpse to the preservation centre. Subsequently, several gatherings are held in consultation with the *Omanhene* and the *Benkumhene* of the *Akuapem* Traditional Area in order to have a befitting burial and funeral rite in honour of the deceased chief.

Again, in the event of the demise of the other sub-chiefs, including the queen mother, the chief, who becomes the appropriate administrative head, is informed and thereafter (the chief) follows the same procedure, gives instructions for all the important rooms to be closed and summons an emergency meeting of 'elders'¹⁸⁷. This according to the informant was seen at the demise of the late *Mankrado*, Nana Yaw Adade Asiedu. In his (the chief's) absence, the *Mankrado* or *Ankobeahene* or *Gyaasehene*, present at the time, acts upon the instruction of the chief to perform the necessary ritual and arrangements for the preservation of the corpse. However, at the demise of any of the elders, the sub-chief and his elders of the respective clan or family just inform the chief and continue with the other procedure till a formal announcement is made at a gathering at the palace.

In all situations, before they disperse from the emergency meeting of elders, another date is scheduled for a formal gathering. Like that of the common indigene there is no 'one week celebration' but rather a 'gathering' comprising the queen mother, sub-chiefs and their respective queen mother and linguists, the traditional priest, and the heads of families. The gathering for all elders of the royal families, takes place at the chief's palace, except that of the chief, which takes place at *Mankrado*'s palace. At this gathering the rest

¹⁸⁷ For detailed explanation refer to footnotes on page 5 of chapter one.

of the elders and the entire community are briefed and informed about the bereavement and the necessary arrangements required for the final burial and funeral rite of the deceased chief or elder is done. Previously, in the absence of preservation facilities, the chief was embalmed and placed on a mat on the floor or in a chair and covered with some leaves in a secret room, until all the burial arrangements are made for his burial.

3.2.3 Pre-Amanebɔ rite for unnatural (bad) death

In Akan indigenous belief system, death such as *atɔfɔ wu* (accidental death), death of infants, especially *fia* (death of a first child), death (mothers) at childbirth and death through mysterious circumstances such as protracted sickness or deaths perceived and confirmed to be as a result of a curse or an abomination, are all considered as unnatural death. Thus, it is common Akan knowledge, that death caused by such mysterious circumstances are unnatural or bad deaths. All premature death are regarded as ill-fated, hence, bad deaths.

In Tutu, all such deaths follow the same pre-Amanebɔ rite as seen in the case of the common indigene. Thus, the indigenes are permitted to go through the same separation of corpse and family gatherings. However, there are few distinctions regarding the period for the preservation, which is dependent on whether the deceased is an infant, a *fia* (death of a first child), or a matured adult. The preservation of deceased infants is usually between one to three days, except in cases of legal procedures then it can be preserved beyond one week. This is because death of infants, generally, does not go through Amanebɔ. The preservation of the corpse of matured adults of unnatural deaths may travel beyond one week depending on the arrangements made by the bereaved family. In view of this the bereaved family have to perform some pre-Amanebɔ rituals. All the other rituals performed for such unnatural death were seen as either a pre or post Amanebɔ rite as is discussed in the subsequent section of this chapter.

3.3 *Amanebo* Rite for natural (good) death

In this description the presentation considered the ‘gathering of participants’¹⁸⁸ and the process of the *Amanebo* rite. The process is discussed bearing in mind the various forms of death recognised by the Akan indigenous community, natural (good) death of a common indigene, unnatural (bad death), usually associated with death of a common indigene and death of royals, the chief and elders of Tutu.

3.3.1 Gathering of Participants

The process of *Amanebo* begins with the gathering of the various participants and observers. Whereas the participants comprise the family of the deceased and their elders, led by the head of the family (*abusuapanyin*), the observers are made up of both the inhabitants of Tutu, and other loved ones who have come to sympathise with the bereaved family. Between these two are the Chief and his elders, (*Nananom ne Asafo Supi*¹⁸⁹) and the ‘shrine-priest’¹⁹⁰ *Osofo* of *Tɛpire Eku*, and their respective linguists, who act as the officiants to supervise the entire ritual process. The *Asafo Supi*, acts as a facilitator between the chief linguist and the Chief.

Although tradition demanded that the Chief and all his elders were to be present, the researcher discovered in most of his observations of the rite that the chief, the *Mankrado*, and the *Gyaasehene* were continuously absent. In their absence the *Ankobeahene*, Nana Kwaku Amane II of *Kɔbɔtutu*, acted on their behalf. The spouse of the deceased, widow or widower, if any, was also absent. This triggered an informal conversation with the *Ankobeahene*, which revealed that their (the chief, the *Mankrado*, and the *Gyaasehene*) absence was due to their work schedule, which did not allow them to

¹⁸⁸ The people who participate or are involved in the performance of the rite.

¹⁸⁹ *Asafo Supi* is a title for the head of the warlords of Tutu Akuapem, who is perceived to possess special mystical powers, assumed to be given to him by *Tɛpire Eku* and other unknown divinities, to prevent or ward off any spiritual or physical attack on the people of Tutu Akuapem.

¹⁹⁰ This can also be referred to as traditional priest.

leave their respective offices on Friday morning except during sacred periods. Meanwhile, either two or all of them (the chief, *Mankrado* and *Gyaasehene*) make time to be present during the post-*Amanebɔ* rite, before the corpse is put into the coffin. This according to the *Ankobeahene* is an expression of the respect *Nananom* have for indigenes and the dead of Tutu.

The gathering occurs at the forecourt of the *Mankrado*, *Mankrado Sɛɛso*. Some of the indigenes and elders interviewed disclosed that there is an increased perception among the people of Tutu that the *Mankrado Sɛɛso* is a sacred ground. The basis for such a perception apart from its historical antecedent which is discussed in detail in chapter two of this study, was a place where most of the indigenous religious practices (rituals), libation prayers and animal sacrifices, including durbars of the *Aduana-Aborade* clan are performed and held, accordingly. Thus, *Mankrado*, the spiritual leader and chief of the *Aduana-Aborade* clan is recognised as one of the spiritual leaders of the community, particularly referred to as *Kurowura*.¹⁹¹ Oral tradition reveals that apart from the Tutu community deity, *Tɛpirɛ Eku*¹⁹², the *Mankrado* is the only sub-chief whose stool is known to have another deity, called *Wɔntumi*¹⁹³. In addition, though it was *ɔbosom Tɛpirɛ Eku*, whose counsel and revelation prepared the warriors for the battle between Akuapem and the treacherous warriors from Southern Volta, it was the combined effort of *ɔbosom Tɛpirɛ Eku* and *ɔbosom Wɔntumi* that led the warriors of Tutu to victory, as discussed in detail in chapter two of this study.¹⁹⁴ At the gathering, all officiants, participants and observers were in mourning cloth (*ayi ntama*) or dress which were usually black or dark-brown, to demonstrate their mourning mood and solidarity with the bereaved family. The researcher

¹⁹¹ Refer to Appendix 2

¹⁹² Name of the deity of the Tutu Community. For detail information refer to Chapter two.

¹⁹³ This is the deity of the *Atifi Ewurade* clan, *Mankrado* and his subjects. For detail information on the deity of *Wɔntumi* refer to chapter two pages 52 and 59.

¹⁹⁴ Okyeame Oko. Interviewed, in his residence at Tutu.

also, as a participant observer, was in mourning clothes to identify himself with the occasion.

3.3.1.1 *The Amanebɔ Rite for Natural Death for ‘Common’ Indigene*

This section is a description of the *Amanebɔ* ritual performed for the natural death of the commoner or ordinary indigene. The researcher had the opportunity to witness the *Amanebɔ* ritual process of two deceased persons, Sisi Sakyibea and Opanyin Dr. Isaac Duncan Ani. These deaths, according to the narration of the bereaved family, are natural deaths. These rites occurred on 26th July 2013, and 1st November 2013 respectively. The researcher will therefore use these unique field occasions to describe this aspect of the rite.

The rite was started by the Chief linguist, *Okyeame Kwakye*, who after calling the attention of the crowd to order, declared the purpose of the gathering as follows:

Agoooo Oman a yehyia, Nananom moadaworooma. Me pae agooo ma Opanyin Yaw Sakyi a wogyina ma Abusuapanyin Antwi, Krɔbo abusuapanyin. Wɔsɛ asem bi ato wɔn Na wɔntumi nka nti Nananom mbra mbeboa wɔn na wɔn nka.

Attention, all indigenes gathered, *Nananom*, I crave your indulgence to speak on behalf of the family of Opanyin Yaw Sakyi, who is standing in for *Abusuapanyin* Antwi Dakwa of *Krɔbo* clan. According to them (the bereaved family), they are confronted with an issue and are seeking the counsel and support of *Nananom* and the community to help them deal with it.)

Asafo Supi, on behalf of Nana Ankobea responded as follows:

Mofɛ no nti na Nananom ahyia. Nananom sɛ asem bi wɔhɔa mo kankyerɛ wɔn na sɛ mboa bi wɔhɔa wɔn mfa boa mo.

Nananom have gathered as a response to your call. *Nananom*, are ready to listen to you. If there is any issue, let them know whether they can be of any help.

The Chief linguist, then calls the attention of the deceased family to respond to *Nananom*'s request.

3.3.1.2 *Response from the bereaved family*

The *abusuapanyin* of the deceased family, delegated his linguist (spoke-person) and another relative to respond to *Nananom's* request. The linguists began with a brief biography of the deceased. The biography included the name of the deceased, names of his parents and his respective families or clans, the relationship between the widow or widower and the deceased before death (whether single, a divorcee or still married to the deceased, whether the spouse is deceased or alive, whether spouse of a second marriage or the only spouse), place of residence or sometimes his travel history, and the nature of work at the time of his death. In each case, the linguist's narration indicated that both had been sick prior to their death and that both bereaved families, in each case, showed much concern for their sick relative. The families made strenuous efforts towards their recovery. It is imperative for the bereaved families to narrate to the gathering to indicate the kind of support or concern offered to the deceased, particularly, those who were sick prior to their demise.

Such a narration stresses on the sense of community and humane living that existed among the indigenous people; highly cherished values of indigenous Akan life. John Mbiti underscoring the important belief and sense of community among Indigenous African Communities argued that whatever happens to the individual is believed to happen to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual and the individual can only say "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am. This is a cardinal point in the understanding of the African [Akan] view of man."¹⁹⁵ Thus, in an indigenous Akan community, the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately; the individual owes his/her existence to other people, including those of past generations - ancestors and his contemporaries.

¹⁹⁵ J. S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, London, Heinemann, 1990 ed., 106.

The linguists of the bereaved families ended the session by informing the gathering about the cause of the death, which according to the bereaved families, was ‘heart failure,’¹⁹⁶ according to medical report. No one at the gathering requested the validity of the medical report. However, further informal interviews revealed that such issues were usually dealt with prior to the rite. At this juncture, the Chief linguist, with the permission of Nana *Ankobeahene*, enquired from the *abusuapanyin(fo)* the validity of the account given and whether there were any omissions, corrections or additions that *Nananom* and the community should know. The *abusuapanyin(fo)* responded affirmatively that the account presented by their linguists were true.

3.3.1.3 Presentation of Successors and Children of the Deceased

As soon as it was proven that the biography and information relating to the deceased persons were valid, the *abusuapanyin(fo)* were asked to present the successors of the deceased person. In most Akan communities where the matrilineal system of inheritance prevails, only one person from the mother’s lineage or clan, is appointed as successor.¹⁹⁷ However, the tradition in *Tutu* revealed that the successors were usually appointed from the paternal and the maternal clans of the deceased. Hence, in this case, two persons were presented as successors for each deceased person to represent the paternal and maternal clans.

The children of the deceased were then asked whether they had any objection to the successors presented to *Nananom* and the community. The children of the deceased in response authenticated the choices made by *abusuapanyin(fo)*. This gave *Nananom* the mandate to accept and present the successors to the entire community. The *Ankobeahene*, who deputised for the Chief, on behalf of *Nananom*, reminded the successors of their new

¹⁹⁶ The heart failure signifies that the deceased died a natural death and not from any mysterious circumstance.

¹⁹⁷ Peter Sarpong. *Ghana In Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* 36.

role and responsibility towards the welfare of the children of the deceased, the widow or widower and the entire family.

From an informant, although this rarely happens, if any of the children or any close relative or elder of the deceased objects to the choices (successors), the ritual would be delayed or suspended until an amicable resolution is obtained. An informant source added that the tradition of *Tutu* insists that such objections are resolved either before the rite ends or before the corpse is laid in state or buried. Such situations sometimes require a closed-door meeting between *Nananom* and the core members of the bereaved family, including the one who raised the objection, to ascertain the details of the objection. If the successors are found guilty or the process is inconsistent with the tradition of *Tutu*, the necessary apologies and rituals are performed to appease the deceased, his (deceased's) family or children and the ancestors or deities, and to seek reconciliation between the deceased and the successors.

The basis for finding an amicable resolution to such situations before burial, is the Akan belief that postulates that if issues of such nature are not resolved, the deceased cannot be given a fitting burial. Thus, anytime an unfitting burial is granted, the deceased becomes disgruntled and is "...believed to have acquired new and great spiritual power..."¹⁹⁸ which can be used to the destruction of his or her descendants or successors. In a much broader sense the deceased has the potency to cause harm, mysterious illness or death, to the successor and even the descendants of the family and their elders, which is bound to affect the entire community. It is therefore, very necessary that all matters of such nature are resolved to grant the deceased a 'befitting burial'¹⁹⁹ in order to enable

¹⁹⁸ T. N. O. Quarcoopome. *West African Traditional Religion*. 133.

¹⁹⁹ 'Befitting Burial' is relative but in this study it describe a situation when all the family is able to go through all the necessary ritual performed on behalf of the deceased prior to the burial of the corpse.

them become ancestors, who would be of great benefit to their descendants, possess great spiritual power which can be in the interest of the deceased's descendants.²⁰⁰

During the presentation of the successors, the children of the deceased were also introduced and presented to the gathering. The introduction of the children consisted of their names, their present engagements and whether they were adopted or biological children of the deceased. Still on the issue of the introduction of the biological children, there was a further explanation to identify those who were born out of wedlock or before wedlock and whether they are children of a divorced marriage. This introduction, according to the patrilineal system of inheritance, is very necessary because it offers the family the opportunity to rightfully select the next of kin, who customarily must be the first male child, much easier. During the presentation of children, the children of Sisi Sakyibea²⁰¹ and that of Dr. Isaac Duncan Ani²⁰² were presented to the gathering by their respective relatives. The latter had their first two children before wedlock; one from each spouse, but the former had no issue before or out of wedlock. The elders asked further questions which always compelled the *abusuapanyin(fo)* to confirm whether all the children presented were their biological children.

Contrary to a similar situation at Mamfe Akuapem, where when the families presented the children, one of the elders pointed out that one of the children, who was supposedly known as the eldest, was born to the widow before wedlock.²⁰³ Due to this, the process was delayed until the verification was over before the bereaved family could proceed with the rest of the introduction. Also, in the case at Mamfe, according to the informant, that child had to step aside. The implication of his stepping aside meant that he cannot have any direct access to the inheritance of the deceased, except with the consent

²⁰⁰ Quarcoopome. *West African Traditional Religion*. 133.

²⁰¹ She had three children (two females and one male adult)

²⁰² He had six children (five females and one male adults) were presented

²⁰³ Gerald Manteaw, Interviewed, 27th October 2013 at a burial service in Mamfe Akuapem.

of the other children. Subsequently the elders advised the children that in the absence of their mother or father, they were to accord the successors their maximum respect and cooperation.

3.3.1.4 *Commitment towards community development*

Subsequently, the secretary to the Funeral Committee of Tutuman, who is also responsible for the collection of the development levy of the Traditional Area, was asked to give a testimony of the commitment and contributions of the deceased towards the development of the community, during their lifetime. In Tutu each adult indigene is occasionally obliged to contribute a specified levy, usually approved by the Chief and his elders as and when the need arises, towards the development of the community. During the ritual process, the secretary of the funeral committee is required to make a public declaration to inform the gathering of the deceased's loyalty and commitment to such an obligation.

In the case of these two deceased persons, the committee reported to *Nananom* and the community that the latter had all his levies paid up to date but the former had some outstanding payments, which has been redeemed by the family. It was also realised, according to the report of the Committee that the descendants (children) of this same deceased person (the former) has not been contributing towards the development of the community. Due to this, some of the elders told *Akyeame* Appiah, the linguist of the bereaved family, to counsel them to live as true indigenes of Tutu – showing much concern towards the well-being of the community.

Oral tradition revealed that the payment of this levy, including participation in other communal activities organised by the community demonstrates an indigene's loyalty and commitment towards the development and welfare of Tutu. One of the ways to assess and enforce this obligation is the public declaration of one's (the deceased) payments,

including that of his or her adult children and/ adult siblings (immediate brothers and sisters), during *Amanebɔ*. Until such payments are made, it is assumed the deceased is not an indigene of the community, hence, cannot be given a befitting burial. As such, to avoid any public ridicule, the bereaved family is allowed, prior to the *Amanebɔ* rite, to make enquiries of any default from the funeral committee and to make the necessary payments, if any.

3.3.1.5 Presentation of Ritual Elements and Pouring of Libation

Before the presentation of the ritual items to the gathering, the deceased family through *ɔkyeame Kwakye* announces to the gathering the funeral arrangements. Among the burial arrangements include when the corpse would be conveyed from the mortuary or preservation centre, where the corpse would be laid in state for wake keeping, and when and where the burial and funeral rite would be performed. Each bereaved family provides a crate of minerals, a crate of beer, a crate of Guinness, two bottles of schnapps, a bottle of *Akpeteshie* and a pot of palm wine to *Nananom*. These are considered as the ritual elements required for the rite. In the recent past, these drinks were displayed in the full glare of all the people present at the gathering. But now, only the drinks that are essential for the libation prayer, the bottles of schnapp, the bottle of local gin and the pot of palm wine, are displayed. Hence, from the researcher's perspective these are the items that can be considered as the ritual elements.

These sets of drinks are displayed for two reasons. Primarily, as an Akan tradition, the drinks are presented to *Nananom and nananom nsamanfo* as *ndaase nsa*, 'drinks of thanksgiving', a form of gratitude to *Nananom and nananom nsamanfo* for responding to their invitation and formally accepting their report. Secondly, they are the requirements for the libation, which is a public ritual performed to signify that the bereaved family has

been granted the permission to perform the final burial and funeral rites and that the entire community pledges them (the bereaved family) their support.

The Chief linguist upon receiving the drinks on behalf of the *Nananom* informs the gathering as follows:

Agooooo, wɔn a wɔtɛ ha, Nananom, moadaworomma; senea yɛn abusuapanyinfo ne Ayipasohenefo wɔkasa ni; wosɛ, “sɛ wɔafɛ Nananom ne ɔman no na wɔabetie wɔn nsem ama wɔn na wɔayɛ biribiara awie ama wɔn a, wɔrentumi nhwɛ mpanyin sa ara. Wokura wɔn nsamu nsa adaka, adakamu nsa biako, Ghana gin (akpeteshie) tumpɔn biako a wɔdɛ nsafufuu biako esi so na wɔdereda Nananom ase.” Wɔn a wɔtɛ hanom ne Nananom, moadaworomma; yɛn nsempa ooo

(Attention, all gathered here, *Nananom*, I crave your indulgence to inform you that, according to the family elders or head of the clan and the Chief mourner, “if you have responded to their call and accepted their report, they cannot overlook this kind gesture. Hence, they present to *Nananom*, a crate of drinks (Guinness), a bottle of Schnapp, a bottle of Ghana gin and a pot of palm wine, as an expression of their gratitude.” All gathered, *Nananom*, this is for your information.)

As usual the *Asafo Supi* responds on behalf of *Nananom* as follows:

Kyeame eyɛ amanne, Nananom agye. Nananom sɛ monhwɛ na amanne biara wɔdɛyɛ a eyɛ no wɔmfɛ nyɛ mma wɔn. (Linguist, this is tradition, the Chief and his elders have accepted the drinks. Use them for the appropriate ritual required for all such gatherings.)

The Chief linguist then reiterates *Asafo Supi*'s response to the gathering and proceeds to the site for the libation, which is the entrance to *Mankrado Sɛeso*. The libation began with the invocation of the spiritual fundamentals of Tutu and ended with petitions on behalf of the community, the bereaved family and the deceased. The libation was as follows:

Agoooo, agoooo, agoooo ɔsoro nsa, wiɛ! asaase yaa bɛgyɛ nsa,... wiɛ! Nananom mommɛgyɛ nsa ... wiɛ! Aduana, Abroade, Ekoɔna, Bretu ... Abusua mommɛgyɛ nsa, Anafo Ewurade Abusua mommɛgyɛ nsa, ɔpanyin Kwaku Ampaw nom mommɛgyɛ nsa nnom. Mefɛɛ mo anɔpa yi a, enyɛ bɔne. Eyɛ mo dehyɛ (Sakyibea.) ɔyare bɔɔ no. Mma n'abusua yɛɛ biara nanso wɔantumi anni ɔyare ne so. Ennɛ, ɔman, abusua ne Nananom abetenase, abɔ n'amanne, asew Nana ayi. Ennɛ, na yerehyɛ n'ayi ase oo kɔpɛm Dwowda. Yesɛ nkwa tenten, yesɛ ahoɔden, yefɛ sika. Nea ebeyɛ esiane pawgu ma yɛn, nea ebeyɛ abiw no de mo mpaw nngu ma yɛn. Nea ɔsɛfo ahyehyɛ no de mompaw ne nyinara nngu ma yɛn. Sɛ ɔtamfo na ɔyɛ saa momma yente ne nka. Na yɛte ne nka a, yɛde aseda pa ama mo. Mo a monom aborɔfo nsa, mode ni oo! Ahoɔden ne sika Na yehia. Monhyira hyira mma oo! wiɛ! Monhyira hyira abusua oo! ... wiɛ! Ena (Egya), wo a wokɔ, sɛ wokɔ a kɔda asomdwoem.

Mo a monom Ghana gin nso mode ni oo! Yesre ahooɔden, yesre sika na nhyira, se onipa bone bi na ɔyee saa, momma yente ne nka. Na se yete ne nka a, yebeda mo ase oo !

(Attention, attention, attention, heavens [Supreme being – God] we present [show] you wine, earth goddess this is your wine, ancestors come for your wine, *Aduana*, *Abroade*, *Ekooɔna*, *Bretu* ... clan come for your wine, *Anafo Ewurade* family come for your wine, *Opanyin Kwaku Ampaw*'s lineage come and drink your wine. If we invite [invoke] you here this morning, it is not of any evil intent. It is because of your son or daughter (*Sakyibea*). She became sick. Her children and family did all that they can but could not overcome the sickness.

Today, the chief and his elders, the bereaved family and the community are seated to publicly recount and inform the chief of the death and burial. Today (Friday morning), marks the beginning of her burial and funeral rites and will continue to Monday. We are asking for long life, we are asking for strength, we are calling for money. Whatever might result in an accident or conflict reject it for us. Whatever might result in a curse reject it for us. All plans of the evil one must be rejected. If the death is as a result of any enemy (evil emanation) let us be aware of it. When we become aware of it we will be grateful to you.

Those who drink foreign wine, this is yours! All we need is strength and money. Bless the children! Bless the family! Father as you leave, go and rest in peace.

Those who drink Ghana local gin (akpeteshie), this is yours! We are asking for strength, we are asking for money and blessings, if the death was caused by any bad person, let us become aware of him. When we are aware of such a person, we will be grateful)²⁰⁴

Then the supporting linguist responded *Akora, mo ne kasa!* (elder, this is a good speech or prayer).

3.3.2 *Amanebɔ* for Royals: Chief, Queen-mother and Elders of Tutu

Although the researcher never witnessed the *Amanebɔ* rite of a Chief, he had the opportunity to witness that of the *ɔdekuro Ansah*, the *ɔdekuro* of *Ahenkorase*, whose rite, according to an informant, the secretary to the Tutuman Traditional Council, was similar to that of a Chief but slightly different from that of a common indigene.²⁰⁵ The *ɔdekuro* of *Ahenkorase*'s death according to the bereaved family's report, was also considered as a natural death.

²⁰⁴ The term 'wine' is used advisedly to indicate the different kinds of drinks, palm wine, akpeteshie and schnapps, which were used for the libation prayers. Also all the names, including the clans, family and lineage mentioned in the first paragraph are in referring to the ancestral spirits of these clans, family and lineage. The implication is that these spirit are been called, invoked, to come out from their ancestral grooves to listen and act on the petition being made on behalf of the chief and elders, the community, the bereaved family and the deceased.

²⁰⁵ Opanyin Kofi Boafo Sarpong, interviewed at Tutu's palace.

The rite for *Ɔdekuro* occurred in the afternoon, at about 2:30pm, on Friday, 18th October 2013. It was at the chief's palace. The change of place and time for the rite, as compared to that of the common indigene, was traditionally attributed to either the perceived sacred nature of the deceased or event. Akwasi Sarpong writes that a very important value worthy of attention in Ghana is respect for authority [chieftaincy and eldership], old age and the spiritual, all are considered sacred.²⁰⁶ He continues that Akan chiefs, in particular immediately after enstoolment, which in the context of the people of Tutu includes eldership such as *Ɔdekuro*, are recognised as sacred.²⁰⁷ The implication is that issues concerning such persons of authority or of such nature (spiritual) are treated within a much higher sacred context than that of the common indigene. The sacred context also determines the nature of the people who were present at the rites. The gathering was made up of the sub-chiefs and their respective linguists, the heads of the various clans and the shrine priest and his linguist. This did not exclude the elders of the bereaved family. The widow and children of the bereaved were not present at the meeting. The reason was that *wei ye abusua sem*, 'this is purely a family (clan) issue.'

As part of the rite, the linguist appointed by the *abusuapayin* of *Ɔdekuro*'s clan briefed the Chief and his elders gathered at the palace beginning with the biography of the *Ɔdekuro*, cause of his death and a testimony of his loyalty and commitment to his family and towards Tutu Traditional Area, which in this instance included his role as *Ɔdekuro* of *Ahenkorase*. This was followed up with the presentation of the required ritual elements which included an unblemished adult male sheep (ram), two crates of beer, two crates of Guinness, two crates of minerals, two bottles of foreign schnapps, two bottles of Ghana gin and two pots of palm wine. All these were presented to the Chief and elders amidst drumming and singing of dirges and warlike songs.

²⁰⁶ Sarpong. *Ghana In Retrospect*, 65.

²⁰⁷ Sarpong. *Ghana In Retrospect*, 65.

The presentation of the ram prompted the researcher to schedule another meeting with the chief linguist and two other linguists of the sub-chiefs. This occurred after the rite. This was to seek further explanation regarding the presentation of the ram. The engagement revealed that there were two kinds of enstoolment or enthronement rites, which has unconsciously resulted in the creation of two kinds of *Amanebɔ* rite for the Chief, the sub-chiefs and eldership of Tutu. That is, there are those whose enstoolment ritual, according to the informant, demands the sacrifice of a ram, ‘animal or blood sacrifice’, which is literally expressed in Akan as “*wotwa mogya gu wɔn nan ase (so)*” (blood sacrifices are performed on their feet). On the other hand, there are others (sub-chief and elders), who are either permitted to go through their enstoolment ritual without the sacrifice of a ram (blood) or permitted to perform the necessary rituals to invoke the bond of the ‘blood sacrifice’, due to old age or conversion to other religious traditions such as Christianity. Such elders still maintain their eldership (sub-chief and elders) of Tutu. From the discussion, it was realised that the latter does not require the offering of a ram during the *Amanebɔ* rite but the former requires it. All this was clearly summed up by the following expression in Akuapem twi:

sɛ ɔyɛ obi a wotwaa oguan guu ne nan so a, ... Wɔbɔ mpae twa oguan no kyerɛ sɛ ɔnam mogya mu na ebae, enti ɔnam mogyaemu kɔ nananom ho

If he was enthroned by the sacrifice of a ram (blood) on his feet...Through prayer, the same sacrifice is performed to indicate that he came (was enthroned) through the sacrifice of blood and through that blood would depart to join his ancestors.²⁰⁸

The common Akan expression for such a ritual is, “*woa dwira ne ho*”, which literally means “he has cleansed himself”. The implication is that all such sub-chief and elders are no longer bound to the traditional oath, which is believed to be sworn in the presence of the deities of the Tutu community. In the course of the research, the informant told the researcher that the *Amanebɔ* rite of the linguist of *Krɔbohene*, usually referred to

²⁰⁸ Kofi Sarpong Boafo, interviewed at Tutu Palace.

as *Twafohene* was performed without blood sacrifice because he had converted to Christianity. The presentation was then followed with the pouring of libation by the Chief linguist, who was assisted by the linguist of the shrine-priest and the linguist of the *asɔkwa*²⁰⁹ group. The libation was done in the midst of drumming and singing of dirges and warlike songs by the *asafo*²¹⁰ group and *asɔkwa* group.

3.3.3 *Amanebɔ* rite for Unnatural or Bad Death

In Tutu, like other Akan communities, the ritual for such demises does not follow the normal procedure as is performed in the case of natural deaths. In all such situations families of the bereaved are mandatorily required to go through some rituals to prevent the repetition of such unnatural deaths. But they are not mandatorily requested to go through the *Amanebɔ* rite, except for adult indigenes, which is also at the discretion of the bereaved family. In sum, deaths of infants, unnatural deaths, strictly do not require *Amanebɔ* rite but that of an adult indigene the *Amanebɔ* rite is not mandatory. However, if the bereaved family due to issues of successors and honour of deceased decides to submit to the ritual, the process is not different from that of natural death of the common indigene. Most of the rituals that take place for unnatural death can be considered post-*Amanebɔ* rite, which is discussed in section 3.4.3 of this chapter.

3.3.4 End of *Amanebɔ* rite for all Deaths

At the end of the rite, the bereaved family led by their family elders, *abusuapanyinfo*, have a right hand of fellowship with *Nananom*. The implication of such an act is to express their thankfulness for having the permission and support of *Nananom* and the entire community to perform the burial and final funeral rites of their deceased

²⁰⁹ A group of drummers who usually accompany the chief to all festive occasions.

²¹⁰ The group of warlords.

relative. The community also feels committed to support the bereaved family to organise a befitting burial and funeral rite.

Immediately after right hand of fellowship, the bereaved family leave the scene of the rite but *Nananom* relocates to the palace of *Mankrado*, usually referred to as *efiteam*. At the palace, and under the supervision of *Ankobeahene*, the drinks offered by the deceased relative are shared according to the political and administrative structure of Tutu. This commits *Nananom* and the members of their respective clans to be present at the respective burial and funeral rites.

3.4 Post-*Amanebɔ* rite

All rituals performed just after the *Amanebɔ* rite till the corpse is put in the coffin, in this study, is referred to as the post-*Amanebɔ* rite. Although the indigenous rituals performed during the post-*Amanebɔ* rite seems to be similar, in terms of the terminologies such as the preparation and decoration of the corpse (*wɔguare amu no siesie no*), the laying in state (*wɔyere amu no mpa so*), mourning and wake keeping (*woyi no adi na wosrepe*), there are slight differences with regards to the conveying of the corpse and period and/ duration the corpse can be laid in state, for the three different categories of death, good death, bad death and death of royals.

3.4.1 Post-*Amanebɔ* rite for good death of a ‘common’ indigene

During the post-*Amanebɔ* rite of a common indigene, two ritual activities do occur. That is the bereaved family and their loved ones and sympathisers, move in a form of a convoy to the mortuary to convey the corpse to the ‘family house’²¹¹ (*wɔ kɔfɔ amu no ba abusuaŋie*), after which the corpse is prepared (*wɔguare amu no*) and laid in state (*wɔyere amu no mpa so*) at dawn.

²¹¹ A common place, usually the paternal home, where all members of the extended family meet from time to time to deliberate on important issues facing the family.

3.4.1.1 *Conveyance and Preparation of Corpse*

Immediately after retiring from the rite, the family and numerous sympathisers from the community move to the preservation centre to convey the corpse. At the mortuary or preservation centre, the *abusuapaynin* pours libation before and after the body is placed into the vehicle. The implication of the prayer offered is to thank and seek for the assistance of the ancestral spirits to safely convey the corpse to the 'family house.' Most of the relatives, friends and loved ones present at the mortuary take some of the alcohol after the libation. Then, amidst drumming and dancing and all sorts of assorted dressing, and reckless behaviour (driving), the corpse is conveyed at a snail pace to the town. When the deceased is a prominent or wealthy adult indigene the recklessness is minimal or much solemn. Meanwhile, other relatives would be waiting for the corpse at the family house. If the deceased is an adherent of the indigenous religion, particularly those belonging to the cult of the traditional priest, the corpse is put in a cloth and carried on foot by able bodied men from the preservation centre to the family house.

Upon arrival of the corpse, another libation is poured whilst other family members react emotionally, weeping and wailing, as the corpse is being brought out from the vehicle into a room in the family house. In fact, failure for any relative to react emotionally, especially the bereaved spouse, children and close relations such as brothers or sisters, is perceived as a matter of concern to the family and community. There is sometimes the suspicion that such relatives who do not react emotionally through weeping might have knowledge about the cause of the death of the deceased. Hence, even men, who because of the Akan maxim '*ɔbarima nsu*' literally meaning 'a man does not cry' can be excused for not reacting emotionally are allowed to express their sentiments, cry, at this moment. At the family house, the corpse is bathed and made malleable, by making the

joints movable, by the help of an *undertaker*²¹² and in the presence of some of the children of the deceased and some few elders of the bereaved family. The undertaker and his assistants then take charge of the decoration of the corpse, in the presence of some of the children and relatives of the deceased.

Prior to the bathing the elderly women of the deceased welcome an entourage from the bereaved spouse's family, who present 'bathing-items'²¹³ (*egware de*) in honour of the deceased and his family. The bathing-items include different pieces of cloths, mats, traditional leather sandals, assorted toilet soaps, underwear, gloves, weave on or wig (in case she is a woman), powder, pomades and perfumes. The bathing items presented by the deceased spouse's relatives are often described to be insufficient to put more value on the deceased. It is believed that if they don't, the spirit of the deceased will not be happy. During the bathing of the corpse, the eldest child (male or female), depending on the gender of the deceased, is traditionally requested to be the first to pour the hot water on the corpse, before the actual bathing is done by any relative or the undertaker. The undertaker and his assistants, with the support of close relatives of the family, boldly and professionally, decorate the corpse (*wosiesie amu no*) with beads (*nhwene pa*) and other expensive ornaments to make it appear more beautiful and livelier. All this is done either on Friday night or Saturday at dawn.

3.4.1.2 Laying in state and wake keeping (*Woyere amu no mpa so na wosrepɛ*)

On Saturday, at dawn, the body is laid in state on a beautifully decorated bed placed either in an open space, an open room or an open porch, in the family house (*woyere amu no wɔ mpa so wɔ baabi a ɛyɛ fɛ wɔ abusuaɸi*) at dawn. In the family houses such open spaces are purposely designed and reserved for such functions, including other

²¹²An undertaker somebody whose profession is to prepare the dead for burial or cremation and also arrange funerals.

²¹³They are customarily approved Items usually demanded by the deceased family from the widow, children and in laws of the deceased.

rites of passage such as marriage and naming ceremony and family arbitrations. Though throughout the night there is a wake keeping, which is usually patronised by the immediate family members who are adherents of the indigenous religion and some of the churches or groups who still subscribe to wake keepings, the laying in state is done at dawn. Immediately after the laying in state the *abusuapanyin* offers a libation prayer to usher in the mourning of the dead and the filing past of the corpse. Fianko writes in his book *Twifo Amammuisem* (Twi Customs and Institutions) that “*wɔyere no wɔ mpa so...eno akyi no woyi no adi. Ene se mmea su denneennen nan so frɛ adɔfo ba ho begyam wɔn*”²¹⁴ (after the laying in state, the women mourn the dead (wailing/weeping) to invite sympathisers and loved ones to mourn with them). The implication is that mourning of the dead by the women, which usually occurs at dawn around 4:30am, opens and invites other mourners from the public to the wake keeping as well as to file-past the dead.

At the wake keeping there is also music from sound systems or drumming and dancing from various cultural or singing groups performed to encourage all the people present to keep the wake. It is also a period of making money among the indigenes. The indigenes sell items such as toffees, gum, fried eggs, bread, and all kinds of non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages. Also, the seamstresses and hairdressers or barbers have more dresses to sew and style, respectively. Moreover, with the Methodist and Presbyterian churches that do not subscribe to wake keeping, they perform a ‘pre-burial’ service at the family house on Saturday at dawn. Such families would not allow anybody apart from close relatives and the undertaker to observe the corpse until the pre-burial service is done.

Before the body is laid in the coffin either to be transported to the place of internment or to the church, in the case of Christians, another rite, the farewell rite is performed for the deceased. Thus, the bereaved spouse, the children, family and the in

²¹⁴Safori Fianko, *Twifo Amammuisem*. (London: Macmillan and Company Limited, 1958), 41.

laws of the deceased are required to present gifts such as rings, handkerchiefs, perfumes, assorted pieces of cloth and money (usually coins), which are dropped in the coffins to bid the deceased farewell. These items are usually referred to as ‘burial items’ (*asiede or ayiboade*); items presented in honour of deceased and to bid the deceased farewell. Also, persons owing the deceased some money or property as well as those to whom the deceased also owed same, are invited to come forward and declare or state their claim, respectively, before the coffin is closed.

All this rite is performed to ensure that the deceased passes on to the ancestral world peacefully without any impasse. It is also done to ensure that the deceased does not spiritually haunt those who owe him or her. The family of the deceased then takes note of those owing the deceased and those to whom the deceased owes some money and decides on the way forward to retrieve or pay the debt. The coffin is then covered with the offering of yet another libation prayer. Much importantly, this is done to ensure that the appropriate transition rite is performed to give the deceased a befitting burial.

3.4.2 Post- *Amanebo* rite for Royals

It follows the same procedure as that of the good death of a common indigene as indicated in the preceding discourse of this chapter. The only difference is the manner in which the corpse is conveyed, and the duration of wake keeping, which usually lasts between three to five days, depending on the royal status and the burial items. Generally the post-*Amanebo* rite does not occur immediately after the rite. Instead, it occurs on a separate day, when no one is allowed to perform a burial or funeral rite. The corpse is conveyed in secret, hence no indigene was able to inform the researcher of the exact period during which the corpse gets into the *efitiem*, chief’s palace.

3.4.3 Post- *Amanebɔ* rite for Bad death

This section is a description of some of the rituals for such unnatural deaths, which can be considered as a pre-burial rite of Tutu, that the researcher was privileged to be a participant observer. It is performed before the burial of the deceased but not necessarily prior to or during the *Amanebɔ* rite.

3.4.3.1 *Accidental Death (Atɔfo wu)*

Accidental death can be described as the demise of relatives through accidents such as vehicular accidents, drowning in rivers, murder and suicide, death of mother or child in or after labour, mysterious deaths from curses or death from protracted diseases. The researcher as a participant observer at two of such demises observed that prior to their burial, the bereaved family sought an express permission from the Chief and his elders by presenting four bottles each of beer, Guinness, mineral, and malt and a bottle each of schnapp and Ghana gin and a pot of wine. This was for the elders to perform the necessary rituals amidst the offering of libation prayer. As a matter of fact the only ritual the researcher saw was the libation prayers but all others were done behind closed doors. Libation prayers were offered using the ritual elements presented by the bereaved family. This (libation prayer) according to a respondent was a purification rite to cleanse both the community and the bereaved family, of any abomination or perceived curse such deaths might have caused. Subsequently, in order to prevent the reoccurrence of such misfortunes, the researcher observed that the corpse was not laid in state but prepared, decorated and placed in a coffin at the mortuary and sent straight to the cemetery for burial.

One of the deceased person was a Christian, Emmanuel Danquah²¹⁵, whose relatives after the bereaved family performed all the rites with extra cost were permitted to lay the deceased in state as was against the wish of the deceased's father who was an adherent of the Akan indigenous religion. This explains the flexibility of the Akan indigenous religion to other faiths.²¹⁶ However, something bizarre happened in the Church. In the course of the service one officiating clergy felt very unconscious and was close to death. Many of the observers attributed it to the opposition that was put up by the father, whom many knew as *Obosomfo*, someone who is a traditional worshipper who owned a shrine. The extra cost, from an informant, was to offer some money for further rituals to cleanse the community from such a prohibition.

3.4.3.2 Death of Infants

In the case of the *fia*, as discussed in the preceding section (3.2.3), the family is not required to go through the rite. Moreover, apart from the corpse not laid in state, the death was not celebrated but abrogated just after one week. Also during the day of burial the serving of food and drinks was not permitted. However, loved ones could offer some donations. These donations are dropped on a mat or piece of cloth laid before the bereaved parents.

Furthermore, after the permission was sought from the Chief and his elders, the elderly women of the deceased relative accompanied the husband and some elders to the mortuary. The mother of the deceased child was prevented from going to the mortuary. She (bereaved mother) was separated from the corpse but the husband was permitted so as to identify the deceased baby, after which he left the elderly women to perform the ritual. The elderly women amidst incantations such as '*wokɔ a kɔda*' (go and sleep) placed on the

²¹⁵ His death was a result of a vehicular accident.

²¹⁶ Amoah, 'African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship'.

child's corpse some leaves called '*abrɔtɔtɔ*'²¹⁷, as they continue with the same invocations. The meaning of all this ritual, according to one of the old women, is to banish and prevent such '*musuo*' (evil incidence or misfortune) from reoccurring. In Akan concept it is referred to as *musu yi*, which literally means 'the expulsion of evil'. The corpse was put in a box and carried straight to the burial site. Prior to this, the mother who was kept in the house with other elderly women and some ministers spouses, because they were Christians, was allowed to have a quick glance at the corpse. This according to the elderly women was to relieve the mother from all desperation and anguish. Again, because they were Christians, specifically Presbyterians, the Minister of the Church, Rev. Samuel Odame Afari, performed the committal at the burial site. However, according to an informant, if the parents were adherents of the indigenous religion, there would have been a libation at the burial site.

The parents were then asked to take their bath together whilst the ministers spouses in place of the elderly women, prepared *ɛtɔ*²¹⁸ with two eggs but without palm oil, for the couple to eat. According to an informant, it is believed that such a ritual would help to relieve the couple from their desperation and anguish, and if possible facilitate their sexual reunion and desire to have another baby. It was to be strictly supervised by the elderly women, but in this case the ministers spouse (two of them) were asked to supervise. The couple, with all these explanations from the elderly women, although staunch Christians adhered to the ritual. In cases where the woman had been suffering from what in Akan concept is called *awomawu*, which is high infant mortality (frequent death of infants) by a

²¹⁷ The leaves according to traditional belief has the spiritual power to expel any evil or curse associated with the death of the child as well as prevent such death from repeating itself.

²¹⁸ *ɛtɔ* is a meal prepared by mashing yam with some spices such as pepper and onion in an earthenware.

particular mother, the deceased baby is given a mark on the cheek to prevent it from ‘reincarnating’²¹⁹ and even if it reincarnates it can easily be identified.

All such deaths are perceived by most Akan communities, as in the case of Tutu, to be prohibitions or abominations or curses, which defile the people, gods and land of Tutu. Hence, the bereaved and the community or family are also seen to be unclean, therefore, there is the need for a ritual to cleanse the bereaved person, his or her family and community. As such, specific rites are performed to prevent the reoccurrence of such deaths and to pacify the gods and purify the land and to accept the deceased into their ancestral home. In the Akan concept of accidental deaths, it is believed that until such rites are performed, the soul of such deceased persons are still wandering or lingering in the vicinity and might be harmful to the indigenes of the community. All these involves the pouring of libation, whereby the spiritual elements of Tutu community are invoked. The libation and its repetitive invocations are believed to have the spiritual power (ancestral powers) to prevent a reoccurrence and if there is any evil or curse or mysterious reason for such deaths, expose them.²²⁰ Then after, the bereaved family go through what is referred in Akan common knowledge as *dwira*, which means ‘cleansing’.

3.5 Observations

At Tutu Akuapem, the Traditional State Institutions are very active. In that the Chief, *Mankrado* and *Gyaasehene* and elders were accorded much reverence. Also, the pouring of libation from the beginning of the rite through the various stages of the burial rite was very pervasive. It also seems like there is some mixture and tolerance of the other religions, existing side by side with each other without much confrontation even when they seem not to agree with some of the practices. Although both rites took place at sacred

²¹⁹ Sarpong. *Ghana In Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture* 36. The meaning of ‘reincarnating’ in this context means to prevent it from being born again into that same family.

²²⁰ T. N. O. Quarcoopome. *West African Traditional Religion*. 133.

places that of the ordinary indigene took place at the sacred grounds of the *Mankrado* but that of the elders took place at the palace of the Chief. Again, whereas the common indigene had the rite in the morning and ended before noon, that of *Nananom* begun in the afternoon, at 2:00pm. Also, drumming and singing of dirges and war songs were prominent during the rite of *Nananom*.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter is a detailed description and interpretation of the pre-burial rite of Tutu bearing in mind the three processual schema of Turner. This is what Clifford Geertz refers to as ‘thick description’. Thick description specifies many details, conceptual structures and meanings, as compared to "thin description" which is a factual account without any interpretation.²²¹ Thin description for Geertz is not only an insufficient account of an aspect of a culture; it is also a misleading one.²²² Thus, thin description is sometimes misleading in the sense that apart from presenting a factual account without interpretation, it usually leads to making broad and general statements about a phenomenon, which because they may be inconsistent with the exact meaning, is viewed with the greatest suspicion.²²³ The chapter shed light on the rite for the various deaths through participant observation. However, the other rites were described mostly through interviews.

²²¹ Clifford Geertz, ‘Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture’. In *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3-30.
<http://culturalstudiesnow.blogspot.com/2012/05/clifford-geertzs-thick-description.html>. Posted Friday 4, 2012 and assessed 8th November 2013.

²²² Clifford Geertz, ‘Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture’. 3-30
<http://culturalstudiesnow.blogspot.com/2012/05/clifford-geertzs-thick-description.html>

²²³ Clifford Geertz, *Religion as Cultural System*. In Daniel L. Pals “Seven Theories of Religion. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 242.

CHAPTER FOUR

AMANEBO RITE IN CONTEMPORARY TUTU AKUAPEM

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the examination and analysis of the *Amanebɔ* rite among the indigenes of contemporary Tutu society. Such an examination makes it essential to primarily analyse the indigenous philosophical and theological thought(s) underpinning the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite as a pre-burial rite. The analysis also takes a critical look at the possible religio-cultural concerns confronting the rite in contemporary Tutu. In addition, this chapter assesses the order and content of the *Amanebɔ* rite within the tripartite scheme of the rites of passage as adapted and developed by Turner. Lastly, the chapter discusses the influence of contemporary Tutu Akuapem society on the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite.

4.2 Philosophical and Theological Underpinning of *Amanebɔ* Rite

While it may be true that the Akan, like other Africans, do not have equivalent words for the terms ‘philosophy’ and ‘theology’, the Akan indigenous life and thought, beliefs and practices, are impregnated and guided by conceptions and reflections that may be broadly considered to be philosophical and theological. Thus, the Akan indigenous religious and cultural systems, relating to all circumstances of life, are based on reflection of doctrines about God, and human personality that most adult indigenes will articulate at the slightest prompting.²²⁴ Gyekye argues that “quite often the impulse of philosophical reflection finds its expression in religious life and thought.”²²⁵ The implication is that out of philosophising comes theology. Most of these theological and philosophical thoughts,

²²⁴Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye, *Person and Community: Ghanaian Philosophical Studies, I* (United States of America, Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data, 1992), 1.

²²⁵Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: A Conceptual Scheme* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 68.

which are inseparable, are embedded in proverbs, myths and folktales, folk songs, rituals, beliefs, customs and tradition of the people, art symbols and in their socio-political institutions and practices.²²⁶ In like manner, the *Amanebɔ* rite, as a pre-burial rite for the dead in Tutu, is embedded with philosophical and theological thoughts that underpin its continuous practice among contemporary indigenes of Tutu Akuapem.

In this discourse attempts are made to examine five important philosophical and theological thoughts, that underpin the observance of *Amanebɔ* rite in contemporary Tutu society. In the first place, it serves as a means of emphasising, educating and enforcing some of the values or tenets of the Tutu traditional area. Secondly, it serves as a medium for the resolution of basic oppositions or contradictions, either social or religious. Thirdly, it enables the smooth transition of the spirit of the dead to settle peacefully in the world of the spirits or dead, *asamanado*. Fourthly, it serves as a medium for averting the consequences of unnatural death on the living and finally, it reinforces the significance of afterlife to the living.

4.2.1 Enforcement of Societal Values

During the performance of the rite some of the ritual activities demonstrated the values cherished and revered by *Nananom* and the people of the Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. In Akan indigenous societies the values, religious or cultural, are the indigenous standard of behaviour that are acceptable and revered by *Nananom* and the entire Akan people. Among these values are truth, honesty, a sense of responsibility, loyalty, solidarity and communality. These values usually find their expression in communalistic rituals such as the *Amanebɔ* rite. E. Uzukwu argues that people of most indigenous society express in their communalistic rituals what moves them most, and

²²⁶Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought*, 13, 14.

since the form of expression is conventionalised and obligatory, it is the values of the group that are revealed.²²⁷ This seems to be the case of the *Amanebɔ* rite in Tutu.

From the researcher's observation of the rite and interaction with the respondents, there was a conscious effort by *Nananom* and the deceased relatives to demonstrate the authenticity and consistency of the information narrated to the gathering. Particularly, during the brief narration on the life, the cause of death and the bereaved families response to the deceased person's condition prior to his or her demise, the elders make several interventions to verify the validity of the information given by the family elders, *abusuapaynin*. Anytime such interruptions were made the narrator, respectfully, waited for the *abusuapaynin* to respond before he continues. In so doing, the community was emphasising on the values of "respect for authority"²²⁸ (elderly) and truthfulness, including the values of loyalty to *Nananom* and the entire community. A discussion with a respondent revealed that, at one particular instance when it was later found out that the cause of death, according to a section of the bereaved family, was contrary to that which was narrated during the rite, the bereaved family was summoned and sanctioned, accordingly, by *Nananom*.²²⁹ A sacrifice was then performed to appease the elders and the ancestors for misleading the community. It was assumed that such an information, if not dealt with, could disturb the peace and harmony of the community, which included both the living and the dead.

Another value that the rite sought to emphasise was the sense of responsibility and communal living. All these values seem to have a connection with each other. Consequently, anytime a person performs his responsibility, it indicates his loyalty to the elders and promotes the notion of communality among the people. These values were very

²²⁷ E. Uzukwu, *Worship As Body Language* (Minnesota: liturgical Press, 1997), 41. In Innocent Ebere Uwah, 'The Representation of African Traditional Religion and Culture in Nigeria Popular Films, 85.

²²⁸ Sarpong, *Ghana In Retrospect*, 65.

²²⁹ Eno Araba Gyamerah, interviewed, 28th October 2013 at Tutu Akuapem.

evident during the funeral committee's presentation of the deceased's commitment towards the community and the appointment of next of kin, as recounted in chapter three of this study. Traditionally, indigenes of Tutu, both far and near, are obliged to pay levies approved by the elders as their contribution towards the development of the Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area. At the demise of any adult indigene the records of all such payments are reckoned and the bereaved family informed of all defaults. Though the bereaved family may make payments for all defaults prior to the rite, the secretary of the funeral committee of Tutu, makes it known publicly during the rite. This is to inform and deter the indigenes present from indulging in such an attitude. It is also to encourage them to live their lives as responsible and loyal indigenes who are ready to help in the development of their community. Thus, it is to deter the living indigenes from being considered to be irresponsible, disloyal and antisocial. The latter is an embarrassment to the entire clan of the deceased. According to a female respondent,²³⁰ none of the clans of Tutu wants to be described with such demeaning features. Hence, the *abusuapaynin* and his elders would do all they can to settle such issues before the rite.

4.2.2 Medium for Conflict Resolution

The Akan, and the people of Tutu in particular, have the belief that the religio-cultural arena where human beings struggle to achieve their destinies produce conflicts that can result in confusion and chaos. Therefore, during situations such as death, there are rituals aimed at providing the space for the resolution of conflicts or contradictions. Such resolutions are geared towards the reconciliation between the material and the spiritual, the living and the dead. Bell opines that ritual traditions have been cast as a medium for the

²³⁰ Comfort Karr, interviewed 16th July 2013, at Tutu.

resolution of basic oppositions or contradictions, an arena where social conflicts are resolved.²³¹

Hence, the *Amanebo* rite, creates a sacred space for the whole Tutu Akuapem Traditional Area to diffuse any form of social and or political conflicts regarding the issues of inheritance and succession. Such resolutions are usually performed within a sacred context, where there is the invocation of a transcendent power that can cause an effective transformation in the life of the people. In the opinion of the researcher, such a ritual, due to the sacred space, creates what Akrong refers to as “redressive religion.”²³² Akrong explains redressive religion (theology) as a religious expression that deals with or seeks to address the private concerns or parochial interests of families or group of people in order to protect them from evil, danger and anything that is believed to be inimical to human wellbeing.²³³

It is an Akan knowledge that such conflicts or contradictions if not resolved before the burial of the deceased can potentially produce avenues for evil, hatred and violence to besiege the living and consequently lead to the destruction of the peace and harmony of the community. Besides, such conflicts, if not resolved, prevent the surviving relations, particularly the successors, from attracting or receiving the blessing of their ancestors. This usually takes place, specifically, during the presentation of the heirs or successors of the deceased at the sacred grounds. At this point of the *Amanebo* rite, the unstructured or liminal period provides avenues and channels for the people, particularly children of the deceased, to voice out any pent up feelings of frustration, anger and protest. In this way, the sacred period, becomes an important avenue for protest or criticism, as well as acceptance and revering of the chosen successor in an atmosphere of mutuality. Such an

²³¹ Bell, *Ritual Theory and ritual Practice*, 35.

²³² Akrong, *African Scholarship and discourse on African Traditional Religion*, Lecture Notes on African Philosophy of Religion, Trinity Theological Seminary, unpublished, 2006, 26

²³³ Akrong, *African Scholarship and discourse on African Traditional Religion*, 26.

act reminds and encourages all the indigenes of their moral obligation to respect and treat each other fairly.

4.2.3 Smooth Transition to the Ancestral World

In African religions, death as indicated in chapter one is a transition from an earthly state of existence to another, the realm of the spirits. Many African religions, like the AIR, believes that the concepts of life and death are not mutually exclusive concepts and that there are also no clear distinction between them. The implication is that death does not alter or end the life or personality of an individual but only change their earthly conditions to continue to live in the community and communicate with their families. The goal of life, in African (Akan) thought, is for an individual to become an ancestor after death, either a clan ancestor or a royal ancestor.

The Akan believes that part of man's personality survives after death. Sarpong maintains that the part that survives is commonly known either as a 'ghost' (*ɔsaman*) or in more respectable terminology as an 'ancestor' (*nananom nsamanfo*).²³⁴ This implies that not every dead person is automatically considered as an ancestor. Some remain as ghost whereas others are honoured as ancestors. For this reason, the deceased must be "detached" from the living to make a smooth transition to the next life, which in Akan thought is a journey to the world of the dead as either a ghost or an ancestor. The journey is perceived to consist of many interruptions. The spirit of the deceased is perceived of becoming thirsty and there is the "crossing of a river"²³⁵ as the dead journeys to his/her ancestral home. In view of this, great care is taken in burying the dead, to ensure that no aspect of the ritual is left out.

In the case of Tutu, the *Amanebo* rite is a channel through which the bereaved family and the entire community formally and publicly initiates the smooth transition of

²³⁴ Sarpong, *Ghana In Retrospect*, 22

²³⁵ Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought*, 137.

the deceased to the ancestral home. The process of transition continues during the post-*Amanebɔ* rite. In each of these processes of the post-*Amanebɔ* rite, rituals are performed to assist the transition. Some of these rituals as mentioned in chapter three of this study include, presentation of burial items such as rings, handkerchiefs, perfumes, assorted pieces of cloth and money (usually coins), which are dropped in the coffin. The *Amanebɔ* rite and post-*Amanebɔ* rite, the presentation of these burial items in both situations are symbolic, indicating that the acknowledgement of the news about the death as a reality and that the spirit is on transit to join the spiritual world, as an ancestor is eminent.

Prior to these symbolic presentations, the deceased is assumed to be in a liminal state, neither recognised as dead nor as a spirit or an ancestor. The *Amanebɔ* rite is therefore, performed to symbolically indicate the communal way of life where the spirit is smoothly transitioned to the spiritual world. As such, the liminal period marks the transition of the deceased from the land of the living, Tutu Community, to the land of the dead. Particularly, the libation prayer offered at the end of the rite, ‘...*sɛ wokɔ a kɔda asomdwoem*’ literally meaning “as you leave, rest in peace” stresses the idea of a smooth transition. There may be two implications drawn from this kind of libation prayer. The first is that the smooth transition of the soul of the deceased to settle peacefully among his ancestors is of necessity to the living. The second is that at death, the human person, is no longer regarded as a material being but a spiritual being, who has a role to play in the spiritual world, as an ancestor, for the well-being of the living. Hence, until the spirit of the dead is smoothly transitioned to peacefully settle among the ancestors, it is regarded as *ɔsaman twetwen* – a disgruntled ghost which is still lingering in the community.

Another typical illustration is the prayer of libation offered during the *Amanebɔ* rite, such as:

Yesɛ nkwa tenten, yesɛ ahoɔden, yɛfrɛ sika. Nea ebeyɛ esane pawgu ma yɛn, nea ebeyɛ abiw no de mo pawgu ma yɛn. Nea ɔsɛfo ahyehyɛ no de mommpaw ne

nyinara nngu ma yen. Se otamfo na dyee saa momma yente ne nka. Na yete ne nka a, yede aseda pa ama mo.

(Grant us long life, grant us strength, we ask for money (prosperity). Prevent all misfortunes bedevilling us, and prevent any form of curse. Reject every plan of the devil/evil against us. If your death was caused by any enemy let us hear of him. If we hear of him, we would render our appreciation.)

These words indicate the supposition that the deceased has smoothly joined his/her ancestors and has the power to intervene and influence the affairs of living both by granting them blessing, rejecting any form of evil plan against the living and revealing the cause of his demise, if any. Primarily, the libation prayer is suggestive of a smooth transition of the spirit of the deceased to his/her ancestral home. Secondly, it is suggestive of the people's belief, hence, the quest of the people of Tutu community to secure a better relation with the spirit of the deceased. Lastly, the prayer unconsciously invokes the spirit of the deceased in order to prove the cause of death. The invocation is an unconscious attempt to ascertain whether he/she (the spirit of the deceased) will be *asaman pa* – to promote the well-being of the surviving family or community or *asaman twetwen*, a lingering and harmful spirit, that will threaten the welfare of the surviving family or community. In the opinion of the researcher, the invocation of the spirit of the dead might have precipitated the phenomenon of 'spirit possession' and 'prophecy', a new trend of the rite, which would be thoroughly looked at in the next section of the discussion.

4.2.4 Medium for Averting Consequences of Unnatural Death

In the light of the "Akan theory of causality"²³⁶ that is "Everything has a cause...[and]...Nothing happens without a cause."²³⁷ The people of Tutu, as an example of an Akan community, pay specific attention to deaths that are considered to be unexpected or extraordinary; deaths that in their view do not occur according to the course

²³⁶ Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thoughts*, 77.

²³⁷ Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thoughts*, 77.

of nature.²³⁸ The spirit of such deceased persons apart from not being regarded as ancestors, are believed to have the power of causing harm to their descendants. Mbiti opines that, the ‘ghost’ – spirit of such deceased persons, register their restlessness or disgruntlement through dreams or by possessing the living, a mourner (relative or a friend), during the performance of death rituals or other rites of passage.²³⁹

The people of Tutu, like other Akan thinkers, maintain that deaths that are considered to be unexpected and extraordinary, mysterious deaths or deaths from protracted sicknesses, have the propensity to endanger the well-being of the surviving family or community. That is there is a common knowledge among the Akan that the spirit of such deceased persons, if left unattended, becomes spiritually empowered and disgruntled, and ready to threaten the well-being of the society. Thus, such mysterious deaths or strange circumstances leading to death can reoccur to haunt and harm the harmonious well-being of the bereaved family or community at large. Hence, when such incidences occur, all attempts are made to unravel the cause so as to demystify and avert any perceived threat.

J. Kwabena Asamoah Gyadu writes that, “Among the Akan of Ghana ... the operative principle in dealing with such sacred [act to demystify and avert any perceived threat] is *abisa*, “to inquire”.²⁴⁰ It is a religious process by which people find out about their destinies from those capable of “seeing” into the spiritual realm.”²⁴¹ Through this *abisa*, the request of the deceased are granted or other rituals are performed to appease the ghost to settle peacefully in the world of the spirits. In so doing, the deceased is given a "correct" funeral rite, supported by a number of religious ceremonies. This ritual is

²³⁸ Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thoughts*, 77.

²³⁹ Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 119.

²⁴⁰ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Theological Education and Religious Pluralism in Africa’, in J. K. Asamoah-Gyadu (ed.) *Christianity Missions & Ecumenism in Ghana: Essays in Honour of Robert K. Aboagye Mensah* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 2009), 168

²⁴¹ J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, ‘Theological Education and Religious Pluralism in Africa’, 168

perceived to end the reappearance of spirit of the deceased or terminate the reoccurrence of the mysterious death or effect of such a curse. Until the appropriate burial rites, which is usually determined by the religio-cultural blueprint of the indigenous society, are performed, the spirit of dead person is regarded as a wandering ghost. It might be argued that, in as much as, "proper" death rite secure a safe passage for the dying, it is also perceived as a guarantee of protection for the living, relieving the bereaved family and community of any perceived consequences.

During the investigation, the Ankobeahene²⁴², a respondent, asserted that the rite is a period when all issues pertaining to disagreements, curses and issues perceived to have led to the mysterious death, if any, are resolved or averted to avoid its repetition or any repercussion on the living. He further recounted that, in one instance, a bereaved family suspecting that the death of their daughter was abnormal consulted a traditional priest, *abisa*. The traditional priest through the lesser deities revealed that the demise of their daughter was as a result of an impasse that ensued between her and the traditional priestess of *Obosomase*. *Nananom* and the elders of the bereaved family then enquired from the traditional priestess, who also admitted that the revelation was true. That is the deceased woman, according to the respondent, had insulted the traditional priestess, which was an affront to the deities she was representing, hence, her mysterious death. Rites were then performed by the bereaved family to appease the gods to avert the curse.

Moreover, all disagreements or conflicts between siblings or successors are also settled or resolved before they are permitted to participate and contribute to the burial and funeral rite, including benefiting from anything that belongs to the deceased. In sum, the *Amanebo* rite, as a pre-burial rite, ensures that the deceased is properly and smoothly transitioned to the world of the spirit. There is an ambivalence about attitudes toward the

²⁴² Nana Akonbeahene, Interviewed, 18th July 2013, at his residence at Tutu.

recent-dead, which fluctuate between love and respect on the one hand and dread and despair on the other, particularly because it is believed that the dead have power over the living.

4.2.5 Significance of Afterlife

Kwasi Wiredu posits that there is a mildly paradoxical unanimity in African studies about the African belief in, and attitude toward, the afterlife.²⁴³ He argues that it is universally noted, on the one hand, that Africans generally believe that bodily death is an inauguration of life in another form.²⁴⁴ Wiredu argues further that the crucial conceptual issue is not about death not being the end of life but the concerns surrounding the nature of the after-world. In what sense is it an *other* world?²⁴⁵ In Akan thought and life the soul is conceived as a spiritual being. This belief is expressed in the Akan proverb, when a man dies, he is not really dead, *onipa wu a na onwui*. The implication is that when one dies, there is a part of him that does not perish. This non-perishable part is the soul. It is believed to be an eternal entity,²⁴⁶ which is the basis of the Akan philosophical and theological concept of afterlife. Upon death the soul (ɔkra) is believed to return to God and the spirit (honhom) to exist in the world of the spirits, known in *Akuapem twi* as *asamando*. Hence, they are referred to as *Nananom nsamanfo*, meaning ancestors.²⁴⁷

In Akan philosophy and theology, human beings are thought of as the children of God, and since God is believed to be eternal, an aspect of the human being is also thought to be eternal. In this case, the soul never dies, hence, the Akan proverb *nyame bewu ansa na m'awu*, which when literally translated means “[G]od will die before I die.”²⁴⁸ The

²⁴³ Kwasi Wiredu, ‘Death and the Afterlife in African Culture’ in *Person and Community*, 137.

²⁴⁴ Kwasi Wiredu, ‘Death and the Afterlife in African Culture’, 137

²⁴⁵ Kwasi Wiredu, ‘Death and the Afterlife in African Culture’, 137

²⁴⁶ Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought. The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, revised ed, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995). 100.

²⁴⁷ Amoah, ‘African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship’ 2

²⁴⁸ Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought*, 1995:100

understanding is that until God dies, humanity is bound to live forever and since from such a premise, it is presumed God is eternal and will not die, so also, the human being will not die either.

During the post-*amanebo* rite the decorations and bathing items presented are preparations for the deceased to embark on a journey to the other world. Wiredu writes that in Akan societies, like other West Africa societies, where people are not excessively reticent about eschatology, descriptions of the afterlife generally include explicit indications that the transition from this life is the journey to the next by land travel.²⁴⁹ The implication is that the liminal or transition rite facilitates the deceased's travel from one part of the earth by land to another part of the earth.²⁵⁰ So there is the crossing of a river. The most loathsome expectation in the afterlife is to end up as wandering spirit, vagabond, cut-off from the community and one's family.²⁵¹ The implication is that afterlife in Akan (African) indigenous religion has to do with the continuing relationship of the dead with the living, but not as the final end of humanity or the world.²⁵²

4.3 Religio-cultural concerns of *Amanebɔ* Rite in Contemporary Tutu

In some indigenous Africa communities, society remains a culture guided by religious norms. Douglas argues that the first thing to realize, in most Traditional African societies, is the close bond that exists between religion and social [cultural] life, African religions impregnate the whole life of the community from the beginning to the end of

²⁴⁹ Kwasi Wiredu, 'Death and the Afterlife in African Culture', 137

²⁵⁰ Kwasi Wiredu, 'Death and the Afterlife in African Culture', 137

²⁵¹ F.A. Oborji, 'In Dialogue with African Traditional Religion: New Horizon', *Mission Studies* 19 (1) 2002, 23. In D. T., Adamo, 'Christianity and the African traditional religion(s): The postcolonial round of engagement', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32(1) 2011,, Art. #285, [.doi:10.4102/ve.v32i1.285](https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v32i1.285) [Accessed 13 June 2013]

²⁵² E. Ikenga-Metuh, (ed.) *African Religion in Western Conceptual Schemes: The Problem of Interpretation*, (Jos.: Imico Books, 1987), 263. In D. T., Adamo, 'Christianity and the African traditional religion(s).

everything.²⁵³ Emmanuel Asante writes that “Scholars have long observed that a people’s culture embraces its legal systems, politics, economics and all other social systems and arrangements set up to ensure the welfare of the community—arrangements that are by and large, inseparable from religion.”²⁵⁴ He further writes that in Africa, as found in many Akan societies, it is impossible to talk about any aspect of culture without talking about religion.²⁵⁵ Thus, in Africa, like most Akan societies, all cultural matters are as well religious matters, hence the expression, ‘religio-cultural’ concerns, as adopted in this discourse.

The *Amanebɔ* rite, generally, as indicated in chapter one of this study, is one of the mandatory rites of passage, which encompasses some aspects of the religio-cultural beliefs and practices of the people of Tutu. However, due to factors such as education, urbanisation and religious pluralism, which are not the focus of this discussion, the contemporary indigenes of Tutu, particularly the Christian converts, have raised some religio-cultural concerns against the *Amanebɔ* rite. These religio-cultural concerns can therefore be said to be new trends confronting the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite among the indigenes of contemporary Tutu. Among the religio-cultural concerns the researcher unearthed during his interaction with some of the Christians and some adherents of the indigenous religion included, the sacred ground, libation prayer and invocation of divinities and spirits, and spirit possession and prophecy.

In the ensuing discourse the study explores the genesis and effect of these religio-cultural concerns as perceived by some indigenes of contemporary Tutu Akuapem society.

²⁵³ E. T. Douglas, *African Traditional Religion in the Modern World*. (McFarland and Company Inc, Publishers, 2005), 163.

²⁵⁴ Emmanuel Asante, *Culture, Politics & Development: Ethical and Theological Reflections on the Ghanaian Experience*. (Ghana: Challenge Enterprise, 2007), 17.

²⁵⁵ Emmanuel Asante, *Culture, Politics & Development*, 17.

4.3.1 Sacred ground (space)

The notion of sacred space is one of the most prominent dimensions of religious expression in the world, particularly in Africa. As discussed in the literature review in chapter one, scholars claim that one of the basic elements to categorise any ritual as religious depends on the sacred context within which it occurs, which usually comprises a sacred place (ground), sacred time, sacred tradition, and sacred participants.²⁵⁶ Particularly, the local sacred grounds are seen as portals to the primordial past through which people can receive the original life-force of their own deities or ancestors. A sacred ground is therefore a place where people encounter the sacred, understood as something truly extraordinary and overwhelming – something mysterious, awesome, powerful and beautiful.²⁵⁷

According to Mircea Eliade in his book on *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* explores how secular or profane space is converted into holy or sacred space, and suggests that this symbolic process reflects the spiritual characteristics associated with both the physical features and the deeper, abstract implications of defining a particular site as sacred.²⁵⁸ The implication is that a society's belief in the presence of a transcendent reality at places and the possibility of their interaction with the transcendent through all forms of prayer rituals, do not only describe those places as sacred, but are also some of the major reasons for pilgrimage to such places.

In Africa, against the backdrop that the earth is a spirit,²⁵⁹ or goddess,²⁶⁰ has resulted in the traditional notion of regarding the earth as sacred grounds especially places where the living interacts with the transcendent. Particularly in Akan cosmology, the earth

²⁵⁶ T William Hall, Richard B. Pilgrim and Ronald R. Cavanagh, *Religion: An Introduction* 63 – 72.

²⁵⁷ Daniel L. Pal, *Seven Theories of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 164.

²⁵⁸ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (United States of America: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1959), 20 – 27.

²⁵⁹ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 56

²⁶⁰ Sarpong, *Ghana In Retrospect*, 18.

known as *asaase yaa* (goddess) and ranked the second deity after God²⁶¹ is considered as a sacred ground. Asante posits that, Busia maintains that the spiritual power of the earth makes the plants grow – “she has power of fertility”²⁶². Due to such assertions the Akan indigenous religion has a lot of sites such as shrines located within and outside the palace and community that are designated as sacred grounds and are thought to concentrate the spiritual power of the transcendent. Examples of these are the stools room (*nkongua dan*), *Akonidi* Shrine at Larteh and *Antoa* in Kumasi, sites for pouring communal libations, traditional sites usually designated for Chiefs to sit in state, just to mention a few.

The people of Tutu, both the adherents of the indigenous religions and converts of the other religious traditions present in Tutu, specifically Christianity, conceive the *Mankrado seeso* as a sacred ground on two grounds, ‘the historical antecedent and the recent indigenous religious practices’²⁶³. The entire area surrounding the *efitiem* of the *Mankrado* is conceived as a sacred ground not only by indigenes of Tutu but also the emigrants living in Tutu. Thus, even though due to the present cordial relationship between the present Local Council of Churches and the Chief and his elders, prayer vigils are held on this ground, particularly, for *Ohum* festival, most of the Christians do not attend. But when the same crusades and prayer vigils are held at other grounds other than the *Mankrado seeso* the Christians attend in their numbers. On the basis of these reasons all activities that take place at such place (sacred ground) were conceived as divination and sorcery by some of the Christian converts.

In sum, the Christians of Tutu, who seem to be in the majority of indigenes in Tutu currently, perceive that the *Mankrado Seeso*, where the ritual takes place is a demonised sacred ground. Hence, the Christians against the backdrop of their conviction not to have

²⁶¹ Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion*, 56.

²⁶² Asante, *Culture, Politics & Development*, 35.

²⁶³ For any detail about the late *Mankrado* of Tutu and his encounter with the *wontumi* deity refer to chapter two.

anything to do with such divinities, argue that anyone who goes there leaves the place being polluted in one way or the other with a demonic spirit. An interaction with some of the ‘Christian converts’²⁶⁴ from the diverse religious denominations, who were respondents, revealed that if they had their own way, “I am not ready to attend ceremonies at such sacred grounds because it is perceived to be a demonised sacred ground belonging to *ɔbosom wɔntumi*.”²⁶⁵ Robert Scott in his summary of Emile Durkheim’s *Elementary Forms of Religion*, posits that on such sacred grounds a sacred force [spiritual power of the transcendent] is believed to have a radiating quality that diffuses and radiates out, in the process occupying objects and spaces adjacent to it.²⁶⁶ The power is believed to diminish with distance, so that the farther one is from the source the weaker its effects.²⁶⁷ This idea permeates beliefs about sacred grounds (spaces) in most indigenous religious societies in Akan cosmology as is the case of the *Mankrdao Sɛeso* of Tutu Akuapem. However, other Christian converts also raised counter arguments that they find nothing evil about it because it is a custom and tradition that has been handed down, hence, that does not affect any aspect of their beliefs and practices.

4.3.2 Libation (*Nsaguo / Apayɛ*)

Libation is very essential for the potency and authenticity of any indigenous religio-cultural event, particularly death rituals, in most indigenous societies in Ghana. Among indigenous societies, it is the major means of offering prayer among the adherents of the indigenous religion to the divinities and the ancestors. Thus, libation is very pervasive in almost all religio-cultural practices, particularly in all rites of passage among

²⁶⁴ These Christians converts, interviewed on 3 and 5th May 2014 Clergies and elders of the Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Churches who were either indigenes of Tutu or natives of the Akuapem traditional area and some have lived in and around Tutu for more than two decades.

²⁶⁵ Regina Otoo, Interviewed on 4th May 2014 at Calvary Methodist Church, Tutu.

²⁶⁶ Robert A. Scott, *The Gothic Enterprise: A Guide to understanding the Medieval Cathedral* (California: University of California Press, 2003), 151.

²⁶⁷ Robert A. Scott, *The Gothic Enterprise: A Guide to understanding the Medieval Cathedral* (California: University of California Press, 2003). 151.

the Akan people. The ritual aspect of libation prayer assumes a set form of formula which must be done correctly to achieve positive results.²⁶⁸ For instance during the performance of the *Amanebɔ* rite, the ritual was never complete without the pouring of libation; the rite begins and ends with libation. It seems like without it, nothing can happen between “the transcendent and that part of man that has a link with the supersensible world.”²⁶⁹ Thus, there seems to be a common understanding that the consummation and efficacy of the ritual is dependent on the libation and without it the ritual would not be indicative of the expected transcendental and transformative power.

Gyekye writes that “The language of the religious rite of libation immediately reveals the entities that are considered to be real in Akan metaphysics.”²⁷⁰ Example is the opening statement of the words that prelude the libation prayer such as

“Agoooo, agoooo, agoooo Osoro nsa, wiε! asaase yaa nsa,... wiε! Nananom mommegye nsa ... wiε! Aduana, Abroade, Ekoona, Bretu Abusua... nsamanfo mommegye nsa, ...”

Attention, attention, attention, heavens [Supreme Being – God] we present [show] you wine, earth goddess this is your wine, ancestors come for your wine

The opening statements attest to the entities considered to be real or to exist, and consequently indicates the transcendental and transformative power of the rite. Hence, the pouring of libation marks a concrete expression that the dead are part of the community – an important extension of the living usually referred to as the ‘living dead’ or ancestors. That is, the libation offered facilitates the soul of the deceased to the land of the dead. The performance of libation is often done by communal elders, on behalf of the society.²⁷¹

Libation is sometimes done with food and drink, separately or at the same time. In Akan thought and life, the ancestors continue to live a similar life comparable to the ones they led whilst on earth, hence, it behoves on the living to continue to provide them with

²⁶⁸ Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, 146.

²⁶⁹ E. Bolaji Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition* (New York Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1975) 84.

²⁷⁰ Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought*, 68.

²⁷¹ Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 37.

food and drink for their sustenance, even in their spiritual state of existence.²⁷² Sarpong concurs that in some indigenous societies the food is set before the corpses for the spirits to eat lest they become hungry.²⁷³ Moreover, in most instances, alcoholic beverages such as Ghana's local gin, and Schnapps are used for performing libation. Hence, the Akan would say *ade a yede nsa ye no wo de nsuo ye a enye yie*, which implies rituals that demand the use of alcohol cannot be done using water.

In sum, the act of offering libation prayers is the public display of the strong relationship between the living and the dead, the visible and invisible, and the material and the spiritual. It demonstrates the fact that these relationships continue to exist even after death, and that death alone is not powerful enough to break this bond.²⁷⁴ Libation also demonstrates that the dead do not sever their links with the living but continue to be members of their societies, and are required to fulfil their obligations as elders.

Notwithstanding all these positives disclosure of libation prayer, many people especially religious authorities within the Christian and Moslem fraternities argue that the practice is 'pagan', a practice that belongs to religious cult, which is the case confronting the observance of the rite in Tutu. Thus, the Christians are of the view that the practice of pouring libation, *nsaguo*, is demonic not because of the form or language of the prayer but much importantly the ritual elements employed (alcohol), the object of prayer (divinities – ancestors or souls of the deceased) and the invocation of the divinities, *abosom* and *nananom nsamanfo*. An interaction with some of the indigenes from both sides, Christians and adherents of the indigenous religion disclosed that the form and language of libation prayer is similar to that of the Christian prayer. Thus, in both prayers, prayers to the Christian God and indigenous divinities, involve a prayer of thanksgiving, invocation of spirit (invitation of spirit), and petitions for protection of life, prevention from curses or

²⁷²Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 1978, 37

²⁷³ Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, 39.

²⁷⁴ Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 5.

calamities and prosperity in life. Most of the libation prayers recorded in chapter three of this study are indicative of this assertion.

However, the point of departure for both religious traditions, the adherents of the indigenous religion and Christians, is the regular condemnation of the use of alcohol. The condemnation is grounded on the premise of alcohol's corruptible nature and its ability to make a person lose control of himself or herself so as to speak words or perform actions inconsistent with his or her normal character, societal norms or religious beliefs and practices. Hence, notwithstanding, the different 'Christian responses'²⁷⁵ concerning the issue of alcohol, the majority of African Christians have not decided to make a public declaration of approving it as one of its mode of worship.²⁷⁶ The practice is basically presumed by most Christians to be sinful.

In sum, the argument confronting the observance of the rite as far as the Christians are concerned include: Should Christians pour or submit to libation? Who should be the object of the libation prayer, the Christian God or the indigenous divinities or both? And with what elements should they perform the libation prayer with, water or alcohol? These questions are relevant because some Christians in Ghana, on the basis of Numbers 29:33 and 2 Timothy 4:6 have ignored the restrictions against the pouring of libation and have confidently submitted to it at burial rites with the intention of granting their deceased relations befitting burials. This is an indication that there are certain ambiguities that both the Christians and adherents of the indigenous religion are leaning on. In contemporary Christian worship it is increasingly becoming a controversial issue in the church, because of the inculturation of Christian religious beliefs and practices, some Christian scholars are declaring libation as a national heritage. For instance it is common knowledge that at

²⁷⁵ Some Pentecostals and Charismatics, including some of the Protestants hold the view that the practice is sinful and should not be encouraged among Christians whereas there others who see nothing wrong with its consumption either as alcoholic beverage or as a ritual element.

²⁷⁶ J. Osei-Bonsu, *Inculturation of Christianity In Africa: Antecedents And Guidelines From The New Testament And The Early Church*. (Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang, 2005), 78.

National events such as Independence Day parade libation is offered together with Christian and Muslim prayers to have a national representation.

4.3.3 Invocation of the Spirits

During the pouring of libation, the divinities are invoked, alongside the spirit of the deceased. These spirits sometimes possess the living, which is a religio-cultural concern to the Christians of Tutu because the practice is contrary to their new found belief and practices. The main contention that seems to make the libation prayer a religio-cultural concern is the object of prayer and the subsequent invocation of the object of prayer. The thought of the adherents of the indigenous religion is that for any libation to carry the potency it deserves, the gods and ancestors, who are the object of prayer must be invoked. Invocation of spirits has a linkage with ancestral worship. Hence, for a thorough discussion and understanding of the invocation of spirits, it is imperative to briefly look at the concept of ancestral worship or cult among the Akans of Ghana.

In Akan cosmology, ancestral worship is an attitude or feeling of reverence accorded to the spirit of “departed heroes or heroines”²⁷⁷ – persons who the community recognised were morally upright and had contributed meaningfully to the community either as a chief or an elder (royal ancestral worship or clan/tribal ancestral worship)²⁷⁸. This may be likened to the veneration of saints within the Christian tradition,²⁷⁹ particularly, in Catholicism. According to Sarpong the ancestral worship or cult, the supreme sanction of kinship ties, is a great stabilising force that counteracts the centrifugal tendencies inherent in the lineage system.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ Quarcorpome, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 128

²⁷⁸ Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, 42

²⁷⁹ Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, 42. For a detail comprehension on the concept of the veneration of saints refer to http://orthodoxinfo.com/general/gen_veneration.aspx [assessed 27th May 2015]

²⁸⁰ Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, 43

In Akan cosmology, the stools of these venerated souls, heroes and heroines, are blackened and stored in the stool house (*nkonngua dan*) to eternalise their memory.²⁸¹ The Akan believe that the blackened stools (*nkonngua tuntum*) are saturated with the spirits of these heroes hence the stool house are regarded as shrines or abodes of the spirits of the stool ancestors.²⁸² In lieu of this, anytime spirits are invoked during libation there is a common belief that the spirit of the deceased is being consulted. This reinforces the fundamental Akan (African) belief that the living requires the cooperation of the spirit of the deceased, particularly the ancestors, in the successful discharge of their duties as well as the successful performance of rites.²⁸³

However, the concept seems not to be different from that of Christianity, which also believes that the invocation of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, is very crucial for every prayer. The Christian in Tutu reluctantly participates in these rituals, because it involves another spirit other than the Holy Spirit. This is with the backdrop of the Christian sacred book that the invocation of any other spirit(s) apart from the Holy Spirit is considered divination and sorcery, an abomination against God (Exodus 20:1ff, Deuteronomy 18:10b – 14, 2 Kings 17:17b). The implication is that the invocation of any spirit like the gods (*abosom*), and the ancestors (*nananom nsamanfo*) apart from the Holy Spirit of the Christian God is considered as an act of idolatry which is a recipe to incur the wrath of God hence the Christian must flee from such beliefs and practices. This issue was of great concern to almost all the Christian groups, the Protestants, Pentecostals and Charismatics,²⁸⁴ but they lack the ability to stop it because “the minority comprising the adherents of the indigenous tradition who favour the practice almost always have their

²⁸¹ Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 39.

²⁸² Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 40

²⁸³ Opoku, *West Africa Traditional Religion*, 42

²⁸⁴ This expression was disclosed at a meeting held between the Tutu Local Council of Churches and the Tutuman Traditional Council to discuss issues of concern towards the celebration of Ohum festival held at an office of the Traditional Council of Tutu on 24th July 2013. The researcher was then the vice Chairman to the local Council of Churches.

way.”²⁸⁵ In summary, the Christians do not want to be associated with any invocation of spirits linked to the indigenous religion because it involves reverence and veneration of other spirits which is in contradiction to the Christian faith.

4.3.4 Spirit Possession and Prophecy within *Amanebo* Rite

Among the Akan of Ghana, ‘spirit possession’ is an indigenous religious practice whereby, in many instances, gods or goddesses (*abosom*) of the indigenous society inhabits a person, particularly a traditional priest (*Okomfo*), who is regarded as the *Osofo* of the Akan indigenous religion. In most cases, anytime there is spirit-possession the individual possessed comes out with certain declarations, pronouncements or revelations referred to as prophecy (*nkɔmhyɛ*) and not ‘divination’²⁸⁶. Prophecy, then, from the indigenous religious perspective can be explained as the process by which an individual claims a personal connection with supernatural forces to reveal the hidden truth concerning a calamity and further prescribes ways (*akwan kyere*²⁸⁷) of averting that calamity. This kind of prophecy is different from divination because the latter demands a personal consultation from the deity whereas the former is a spontaneous action, which occurs during the pouring of libation prayer, as is explained in the preceding discourse.

Mbiti explains that “During the height of spirit possession, the individual in effect loses his own personality and acts in the content of the ‘personality’ of the spirit possessing him.”²⁸⁸ This connection is unavailable to the average member of the community yet is manifested in ways accepted as tangible and credible not only by adherents of the indigenous religion but the entire indigenous community. Although spirit

²⁸⁵ Harry Agbanu, “A Critical Consideration of the Amememe (Cremation) Rituals among the Mafi-Ewe of Ghana” *Oguaa Journal of Religion and Human Values*, Vol. 2, October 2012, 32.

²⁸⁶ In this context the divination can be likened to *abisa*, whereby a family personally goes to a shrine to consult from a deity the causes of a mysterious incidence.

²⁸⁷ This phenomena is a term commonly used among the contemporary Charismatics to denote ways prescribed by a ‘prophet’ to avert any revealed challenge confronting his client. It is discussed in detail in the discourse of the influence of African (Akan) Indigenous religion to contemporary Ghanaian Christianity.

²⁸⁸ Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 82.

possession and prophecy is a common practise among the traditional priests or priestesses of the Akan indigenous societies, it has in recent times surfaced within the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite in Tutu Akuapem. In the case of the *Amanebɔ* rite, the spirit of the deceased may inhabit any of the mourners, either a relative or a sympathiser, causing him or her to prophesy. Anytime such possession occurs, according to a respondent, it indicates his/her (the deceased's) displeasure regarding the cause of death. Hence, the possessed, through the prophecy reveals the circumstance(s) leading to the cause of the death, including mentioning the name of the perpetrator, who is alleged to have caused the death.

According to an informant, in recent times there have been two instances where the spirit of the dead, inhabited relations who have come to mourn with the bereaved – ‘the spirit possessed a mourner’. On one occasion, the spirit of the deceased prophesied and mentioned the name of another relative as being responsible for the death and narrated the circumstances leading to his death. The spirit stated that the condition for the death was as a result of a disagreement that ensued between the accused and the deceased over his (the deceased's) enstoolment. Thus, the spirit of the dead revealed that the death of the *Odekuro* Adu of *Akweteakwaso* was caused by a relative who had opposed his elevation to the eldership title of *Odekuro*. This was confirmed by some of the elders and sub-chiefs because the impasse occurred before their very eyes during an ‘*Ewukudae*²⁸⁹’ assembly at the Chief's palace. This, according to the informant, initially created a tension between the family of the bereaved and the accused. Hence, the elders present at the *Amanebɔ* rite, after some few consultations, summoned the accused to appear before a council of elders, late in the afternoon, at the palace. The accused, although he denied the accusation, could

²⁸⁹ One of the Akan sacred days whereby by the Chief and his elders meets the people of Tutu to deliberate on important issues which usually bothered on the total development, social, religious, political, and economic life, of the community. Also, the Local Council of Churches and all other well-meaning groups of the community are invited to participate.

not deny his opposition to the (deceased's) enstoolment, hence, had to perform other rites, including the sacrifice of a sheep, to ensure that there would be peaceful transition of the deceased to his ancestral home. In the other instance the accused admitted and after performing the necessary rituals was demoted from his eldership as the linguist of a sub-chief.

All these contribute to making the *Amanebɔ* rite a very important religious ritual in the life of contemporary Tutu Akuapem community. However, the Christians and Moslems argue that all such spirits are not spirits of the Christian God and Moslem Allah hence the practice is demonic and must be discontinued or modified. It is the wish of these indigenes that at such gatherings the spirits were not invoked.

4.4 *Amanebɔ* rite as a liminal rite

The extensive survey of the *Amanebɔ* rite revealed that its ritual process or observances consist of all the three distinguishable consecutive elements of rites of passage, – separation (pre-liminal), transition (liminal) and (re)incorporation (post-liminal). However, concurring with Cox, the entire ritual process of the *Amanebɔ* rite, like other death rituals, from separation through transition to incorporation is dominated by the idea of liminality.²⁹⁰ That is even though the *Amanebɔ* rite portrays all the three processual schema of a ritual the degree of elaboration from the ritual observances makes it more of a transitional or liminal rite. For instance during the *Amanebɔ* rite the characteristics of bereaved spouse and children, including the bereaved relations are 'ambiguous'²⁹¹, in a state of betwixt and between. In such a state the ritual subjects, religio-culturally, have few or none of the attributes of the past or new status.

²⁹⁰ Cox, *Rites of Passage in Contemporary Africa*, viii

²⁹¹ Turner, *The Ritual Process*;, 94

The ritual subjects are “neither here nor there”²⁹² as they undergo adjustment to the newly acceptable status, during the transition rite. The implication is that the ritual is perceived as a means and period for preparing the mind of the bereaved spouse or children to cope with the death and accept their new status as widow or orphan, as well as accept the fact that this member of their family is deceased and is being prepared for the life in the land of the departed, from a state of eldership to ancestorhood. Akrong refers to this as “ritual of transformation”,²⁹³ which is the whole ritual process that has the ability to psychologically, spiritually and physically transform the ritual subjects to accept and fit into their new status with less difficulties.

The ritual of transformation in the view of the researcher can either be cultural and/or religious since in most Akan societies, such as Tutu, death rituals have their basis in the people’s sociocultural and religious beliefs. Thus, though death in itself demands much social attention, which finds its expression in the cultural values of the people, the ritual observances are generally religious in intent and import. The rite is therefore seen as a transitional rite that determines the community’s acceptance of the death as a socio-cultural phenomenon and the transformation of all the people involved in the ritual process, including the deceased as religious.²⁹⁴ The deceased man or woman, for example, assumes a new social role as a spirit (ancestor) that may be socially and religiously important to the living. The bereaved spouse also assumes a new socio-cultural role as a widow or widower (*okunafo*), and the children have an unnamed but changed status as lacking one or two parent(s) - motherless or fatherless (*agyaanka*) or an orphan (*awisaa*).

Until the rite is performed, neither is the death accepted as a reality nor can the bereaved relatives assume their new social statuses as widow/widower (*okunafo*) or as an

²⁹² Turner, *The Ritual Process*., 94. For detailed explanation refer to chapter one page 8.

²⁹³ Abraham Akrong, *African Scholarship and discourse on African Traditional Religion*, Lecture Notes on African Philosophy of Religion, Trinity Theological Seminary, unpublished, 2006, 68.

²⁹⁴Norbeck, “Rites of Passage” <http://britannica.com/ebchecked/topic/504562/riteofpassage> [accessed 16th April 2015].

orphan or fatherless (*awisiaa ana agyanka*), and the bereaved family cannot proceed with the rest of the burial and funeral rites. In addition, it is an honour for the bereaved family to realise that their deceased relative has become an ancestor and from a religious perspective assumes that their deceased, due to his new status as a spirit, the living-dead, has the power to influence the life of the surviving family or society. The spirit of the deceased is believed to have acquired new and great spiritual power of control which can be used in the interest of his descendants.²⁹⁵

In this liminal period the behaviour of ritual subjects is usually passive and humble and ready to obey their instructors implicitly, and accept arbitrary punishment without complaint.²⁹⁶ Turner writes that it is though they are being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them cope with their new station of life.²⁹⁷ This is a stage where the ritual subjects, particularly the widows, because they are neither here nor there, are subjected to all kinds of (abusive) widowhood rites and various unrealistic demands are made on the bereaved children.

Also, the rite of separation, though not too elaborate, “comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the [bereaved] individual”²⁹⁸ from his or her former status as a husband or wife, as prescribed by the cultural conditions. The bereaved spouse, prior to the liminal state is separated from the corpse that is kept at the mortuary or preservation centre. The rite of separation continues, even during and after the *Amanebɔ* rite, but is discontinued for just a shorter period during the post-*Amanebɔ* rite. Thus, during the post-*Amanebɔ* rite, when the deceased is laid in state, the bereaved spouse in the company of some elders is allowed to identify the corpse, whether the person laid in

²⁹⁵ T. N. O. Quarcoopome, *West African Traditional Religion*, (Ibadan: African Universities Press, 1987), 133.

²⁹⁶ Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 95.

²⁹⁷ Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 95.

²⁹⁸ Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 94.

state is the deceased spouse. In the Akan worldview, the identification is a necessary ritual that enables the spouse to accept and cope with the loss and as well as allay his or her fear of any threat that the spirit of the dead, religio-culturally, is presumed to have on the surviving spouse.

On the other hand, if the identification of the corpse is not performed there is a presupposed belief that the spirit of the deceased will continue to establish a relationship with the bereaved spouse. In the case where the bereaved child is not an adult indigene, a ritual is performed to separate, both physically and spiritually, the deceased parent from the bereaved children. This is known as separation (*ntemu*), the process whereby the bereaved child is brought before the parent's corpse and with the help of the successor, throws a lemon fruit on the corpse, cut another piece of lemon into two, and lastly tear a piece of cloth (usually a black and white mourning cloth) into two. All these are symbols indicating that, spiritually, the child has been separated from his deceased parent, and thus, the spirit of the deceased has no more influence over the bereaved child.

The idea of the rite of incorporation occurs when the elders and the community accept the rite to enable the burial to take place. This rite becomes evident in two ways. In the first place, the chief and his elders, including some of the elders of the bereaved family gather at the court of the *Mankrado* usually referred to *ofitiem*²⁹⁹, which is just behind the ritual ground. There, the drinks presented by the bereaved family, as indicated in chapter three, are shared among them. It must be pointed out that the researcher and his informant at one of the rites were granted permission to accompany the elders to *ofitiem*, where, as tradition demands, each of them was given a bottle of fizzy (soft) drink. They had to accept it in their presence to indicate their solidarity with the community. A rejection will have meant an affront and disregard to the elders and the entire community. Secondly, the

²⁹⁹Usually designates the royal court of the chief and his elders, which in this case is the royal court of the *Mankrado*.

rite of incorporation becomes evident when members of Tutu community and other sympathisers willingly accompany the bereaved family to convey the corpse from the mortuary to the family house (*abusuafie*). Both the sharing of the drinks among the elders and the sympathisers' willingness to join the bereaved family to the mortuary do not occur concurrently. The former occurs immediately after the rite and is followed later, depending on when the *abusuapanyin* grants the permission, by the latter.

These are very important symbolic actions, which indicate the Akuapem traditional area's acceptance and recognition, of the new status of the ritual subjects, as the bereaved family. Thus, whereas the former is a clear symbolic action indicative of a physical union in nature as compared to the "sacrament of communion"³⁰⁰, the latter is a symbolic action communicating the solidarity of the people of Tutu towards the bereaved family. Turner states that symbols initiate social action and are "determinable influences inclining persons and groups to action."³⁰¹ Thus Turner saw symbols and symbolic action as the important means by which societies maintained solidarity.³⁰² Symbols have the ability to move actors from different statuses, solidify relationships, resolve contradictions, and create social norms, which is the case of the post-*Amanebo* ritual observances. By extension the movement of objects (glasses, calabash, drink etc.) among persons (elders and bereaved family) constituting a defined group create a continuous social bond between them in the same way that a "communion" does"³⁰³.

In the researcher's opinion, the rites of incorporation also symbolise the period of liberation for the widow or widower and the bereaved family to mourn and perform the

³⁰⁰ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) 29. In William Ekow Ghansah, 'Encounters Between Christianity and African Traditional Religions In Fante Funeral Practices: A Critical Discussion of the Funeral Practices of the Fantes in Ghana', MPhil Thesis, University of Oslo, Norway, Spring 2012, 38 [Assessed 3rd April 2014]

³⁰¹ Victor W. Turner *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1967), 36.

³⁰² Victor W. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols*, 37.

³⁰³ Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 31. In William Ekow Ghansah, 'Encounters Between Christianity and African Traditional Religions In Fante Funeral Practices: A Critical Discussion of the Funeral Practices of the Fante in Ghana'.

other burial and funeral rite in honour of the deceased. Until the rite is performed the spouse, children and bereaved family do not have the liberty to mourn their dead.

4.5 The influence of Contemporary Tutu society on *Amanebɔ* rite

The contemporary Tutu society can be described as a complex society due to its exposure to contemporary religious and social change. These religious and social changes include, encounter or interactions among other religious traditions and AIR, and indigenes exposure to education, modernisation, urbanisation, and globalisation have in one way or the other affected some of the indigenous religious beliefs and practices, which in the case of this study is limited to the *Amanebɔ* rite. For the purpose of this discussion the researcher focused on the contemporary religious change, to be specific Christianity, and its influence on *Amanebɔ* rite.

Historically and prior to any missionary activity, the indigenous community members of Tutu have observed all indigenous rites of passage, including the *Amanebɔ* rite with less, if not without any, interferences. Thus, the missionaries arrived to find the native people of Tutu well-grounded in their own “primitive and heathen” religious beliefs and practices.³⁰⁴ The Akan indigenous religion was at the heart and soul of the culture of the indigenous Tutu society. In sum the indigenes of Tutu society prior to missionary activity and even now among the contemporary adherents of indigenous religion believe that being a true indigene of Tutu “means and requires participating in the religious rituals of the [Tutu] community.”³⁰⁵

However, since the advent of other religious traditions, the contemporary Tutu society can largely be described as a religiously pluralistic society. A society where all the three main religious tradition, Christianity, Islam and AIR, coexist with minimum

³⁰⁴Cosmos Ebo Sarbah, ‘The Planting of Christianity in Ghana: A Critical Review of the Approaches’ *Trinity Journal of Church and Theology*, Vol. 18 No. 2, September 2014, 10.

³⁰⁵Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, 4.

interferences. Most of the indigenes are living in “two worlds made up of the world of traditional [indigenous] religion and culture and the world of the Christian faith”³⁰⁶. Hence, there is a combination of indigenous religious with non-indigenous religious beliefs and practices. The indigenous religion coexist and sometimes blend with the other religious traditions, particularly Christianity. The blend has been such that most, if not all, the indigenes have at least some knowledge of Christianity but some of them also seem to conserve and strongly advocate for the indigenous beliefs and practices of Tutu. Scholars maintain that in such religious pluralistic environment, where one religion dissolves in the solvent of the existing culture (religion), depending on the prevailing, some aspects of the latter will inevitably be rejected, adapted or modified.³⁰⁷ Much importantly, the emphasis is on the variations of the indigenes different perspectives that emerges due to the encounter between two or more religious traditions on a particular religious belief or practice. This seems to be the case of the contemporary Tutu society.

The missionary contact with the Tutu (Akan) indigenous society, which is an encounter between Christianity and Akan indigenous religion, which may be seen in this study as the religious change, has resulted in the emergence of different perspectives among the indigenes. Firstly, there are Christian converts who perceive that any aspect of the indigenous religion must be rejected because they are deemed to be wrong, “pagan and fetish”³⁰⁸. Secondly, there are both adherents of indigenous religion and Christian converts who perceive that there can be a modification of some of the indigenous beliefs and practices because it touches on the fundamental aspects of human existence such as rites of passage. Thirdly, there are those who perceive some of the beliefs and practices of both religious traditions could be adapted or blended to promote peace and harmony in the

³⁰⁶K. A. Busia, “Has the Christian Faith been Adequately Represented” *International Review of Mission (IRM)*, Vol. 50 (1901), 86.

³⁰⁷Elizabeth Amoah, ‘Indigenous African Spirituality, Religion and Innovation’, a paper presented at the Annual General Meeting of the British Association for the Study of Religions, Lampeter, 1998.

³⁰⁸

society. Finally, there are those, mostly adherents of indigenous religion, who insist that the indigenous beliefs and practices must strictly be adhered to the letter.

In like manner, the indigenes of contemporary Tutu society have developed a variety of perceptions towards the observance of *Amanebɔ* rite. As already indicated in chapter three, the demise of any indigene of Tutu Akuapem requires the bereaved family to go through the *Amanebɔ* rite to place them in good standing with the community to proceed with the other burial and funeral rites. However, the religiously pluralistic environment seems to create different perceptions and attitudes towards its observance, whether it must be continued or abolished. There are indigenes, Christian converts, who are now leaders, elders and presbyters of the Churches in Tutu, who perceive it is a valueless rite hence needs to be rejected. There are indigenes, mostly adherents of the indigenous religious tradition, who still perceive that the rite is necessary and should be continued without modifying any of the processes involved. There is another group who are neither for nor against the observance of *Amanebɔ* rite.

This group of Tutu indigenes, who may also be Christians, argue that the adherence to this practice does not mean committing an act of apostasy. Rather, in their defence, it is an adherence to the customs and traditions of their people, which they deem as vital to the survival of the Tutu (Akan) society and identity. This group of people believes that it is only by the continual practice of indigenous customs that the Tutu society or identity can survive and retain its uniqueness.³⁰⁹ The latter group of indigenes perceive that for the fear of being branded a rebel and for the harmonious well-being of Tutu society, the ritual can be performed with some modifications that would be favourable to all the parties involved.

³⁰⁹Marleen De Witte, *Long Live the Dead! Changing Funeral Celebrations in Asante, Ghana*. (Amsterdam: Askant Academic Publishers 2001), 169.

These perceptions certainly make the rejection of the *Amanebɔ* rite appear to be theoretical and not pragmatic, since those who object to its application lack the ability to stop or avoid it and the adherents of those who favour the performance of the ritual, almost always have their way. The adherents of AIR insist that the *Amanebɔ* rite is of much significance to the socio-cultural, religious and moral development of the entire society, hence must be continued.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher has examined and analysed the rite to unearth five philosophical and theological underpinnings of the rite: enforcing moral values, resolving conflict between the deceased and the living, effecting the smooth transition of the spirit of the deceased to the land of the dead, averting and terminating the effect of disgruntled spirits of the deceased and the significance of afterlife, to warrant its continuous observance. In spite of the preceding underpinnings, the researcher identified and analysed four thematic areas of religio-cultural concerns: the sacred ground, pouring of libation, invocation of spirits and spirit possession, and prophecy, of the rite to Tutu community. Again, using the tripartite scheme of Turner on rites of passage as his framework, underscored the significance of the rite as a transitional rite which enables the bereaved to cope with the ambiguity of death as much as enabling the spouse or bereaved children to accept their new status with less difficulty. In broader perspective, the liminal rite solidified relationships, encouraged solidarity and emphasised on communal living. Finally this chapter has discussed the religious change in contemporary Tutu society and its influence on the observance of the rite.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

In this study, the researcher has attempted to draw attention to the fact that death rituals as a rite of passage are essential ceremonial responses which helps individuals globally to cope with periodic life crises. However, their significance in African societies have been largely expressed in the context of the indigenous religio-cultural guidelines, which reveals the religious sentiments and faith of the society, including their notion of death and associated relationship established between the dead and the living. Using the *Amanebo* rite of Tutu in the Akuapem traditional area in Ghana as a contextual example, the researcher examined and discovered the uniqueness of the rite and the different perceptions that surrounds its observance in contemporary Tutu society.

Victor Turner's famous theory, 'liminality', adapted from Arnold van Gennep's analysis of 'rites de passage', was employed to ground the discussion of the study of the *Amanebo* rite among the people of Tutu. In his book *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* Turner's analysis of the activities connected to the initiation rite of the Ndembu of Zambia clearly brings out three possible outcomes of almost all rites of passage as separation, liminality and reintegration.

Methodologically, the phenomenological approach to the study of religion was employed as a guide in the collection of the data for the study. The method for the data collection from the primary source for the study was participant observation, interviews and purposive sampling technique. The data collected was evaluated using qualitative analysis approach. The research reviewed some literature relating to the thesis topic and

research questions in four thematic areas: ritual studies, rites of passage and ritual process and Akan Indigenous Religion.³¹⁰

The research has endeavoured to explore, examine and shed light on *Amanebɔ* rite as a pre-burial rite of passage in contemporary Tutu society. In doing this, the researcher primarily using the history of Akuapem as the groundwork, has presented and discussed the historical context of the study: Tutu in the Akuapem Traditional Area. It comprised the origin and meaning of Tutu, its establishment as a traditional area, its political and religious structure and lastly the state of religion, AIR, Christianity and Islam, in contemporary Tutu traditional area. An overview of their history revealed that the socio-cultural worldview of the people of Tutu, like the broader Akan ethnic group, is strongly connected to the relationship that exists between the human persons (social organisation) and the spiritual entities (divinities) of the community. Hence, the research has presented a brief discussion on the hierarchical order of the spiritual entities of the Akan, which forms the basis of AIR.

The research using the phenomenological approach has presented a detailed description and interpretation of the pre-burial rite of Tutu, specifically, the *Amanebɔ* rite. The presentation covered the indigenous occurrences prior to, during and after the *Amanebɔ* rite. This is what Clifford Geertz refers to as ‘thick description’³¹¹. The detailed description in each stage of the *Amanebɔ* rite covered rituals for the common indigene and royals whose deaths were regarded as good or natural and the rituals for those whose death were considered as bad or unnatural. Though the processes of the former seemed to be the same the rituals were different.³¹²

The research also examined and analysed the rite to unearth five philosophical and theological thoughts underpinning the rite. It was revealed that the rite served as a means

³¹⁰See pages 13 – 22 for details.

³¹¹See pages 88 for detailed explanation and difference between ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ description.

³¹² See pages 60 – 80 for details

for enforcing and recapitulating the moral values of Tutu, medium for resolving conflict between the deceased and the living, medium for the smooth transition of the spirit of the deceased to the land of the dead, means to averting and terminating the effect of disgruntled spirits of the deceased and the significance of afterlife and its relationship to life on earth. Despite these underpinnings the research identified and discussed four thematic areas of religio-cultural concerns: the sacred ground, pouring of libation, invocation of spirits and spirit possession, and prophecy that confronted the observance of the rite.

The research subjecting the rite to Turner's tripartite scheme of rites of passage, separation (pre-liminal), transition (liminal), and incorporation (post-liminal), underscored the significance of the rite as a liminal or transitional rite. As such it enables the bereaved family to cope with the ambiguity of death as much as enabled the spouse or bereaved children to accept their new status with less difficulty. In broader perspective the liminal rite solidified relationships, expressed and encouraged solidarity and emphasised on the communality of indigenous living.

Finally this chapter has discussed the religious change in contemporary Tutu society and its influence on the observance of the rite. The implication is that due to the religiously pluralistic nature of contemporary Tutu society, a variety of perceptions have emerged concerning the rite. Whereas some perceive the rite as valueless and needing to be rejected or abolished, others are of the view that its philosophical and theological underpinnings makes it a necessary rite that should be continued in order to encourage and maintain the survival of the communality of the Tutu society. Meanwhile, there were also other indigenes, who perceive that with or without modification the observance of the rite was not apostasy but rather portrayed their allegiance and reverence to an ancestral tradition.

5.2 Conclusion

Generally, this study has looked at the performance of the *Amanebɔ* rite in the Tutu Akwapim traditional area. In this study, the researcher has provided a detailed description and interpretation of the pre-burial rite of Tutu.

As part of the study, the researcher found out that the *Amanebɔ* rite brings the people of Tutu together and unite them for a common purpose. It was found out that the vital relationship which founds the unity of the people of Tutu and individuals lies in the performance of the rite. This communion as participation in life and the resources of life, is the centre and synthesis of family, politico-social and religious life for the people. The members of the community of Tutu through the *Amanebɔ* rite experience a kind of solidarity. Thus, the ritual becomes a means available to the members of entering into mutual contact and of strengthening union.

The study of the *Amanebɔ* rite in the life of the people of Tutu, and the reverence they offer to their ancestors, and of their attitude to God, leads the researcher to the conclusion that religion permeates the whole life of the people of Tutu – their personal, family, and socio-political life. The researcher can conclude that the observance of the *Amanebɔ* rite has the psychological and social function of integration and equilibrium; it enables people to understand and value themselves, to achieve integration, to accept their situations in life and to control their anguish.

Again, the researcher can also conclude that despite social change as a result of modernization and urbanisation, particularly in the African context, the continual observance of the rite shows ways in which traditional religion has adapted to the pressures of modernity and urbanisation. It can be established that indigenous religion, or its functional equivalent may never wholly disappear from the Tutu (Akan/African) society regardless of the contemporary religious and social change. Thus, so far as the

issues of rites of passage such as burial rites are concerned, indigenous religious beliefs and practices will continue to manifest its resilience³¹³ over the other religious traditions. In terms of religio-cultural obtrusiveness, Christianity may be said to hold the pride of place among these other religious traditions, including AIR. Thus, it dominates the religious, and even more the public scene by sheer numbers of its devotees, but indigenous religious beliefs and practices too dominate the life and thought, of the Akan (indigenes of Tutu). It is for this reason that during life crises such as death or any kind of misfortune the Akan, whether a convert or not would revert to the indigenous beliefs and practices to meet their aspirations. The AIR is present everywhere and not only in the indigenous communities.

It can also be concluded that the ritual process apart from enforcing and recapitulating as well as instilling the moral values of truthfulness and accountability and a sense of responsibility, was also to emphasis the practice of seeking the cause of evil occurrences, power to deal with it or avert any future reoccurrence. This agrees with Omenyo position that one of the core “features of African primal religion that has stood the test of time is the practice of seeking the cause of evil occurrences, power to deal with it or avert any future reoccurrence, and the search of one’s destiny through divination.”³¹⁴

An overview of the rite indicated the community’s insistence that the ‘development levy’³¹⁵ being owed by the deceased which was settled before the rest of burial rites is performed, apart from being used as a seed fund for developing the community, also instilled the sense of discipline and accountability in the indigenes of the society.

³¹³See pages 29 for detailed discussion.

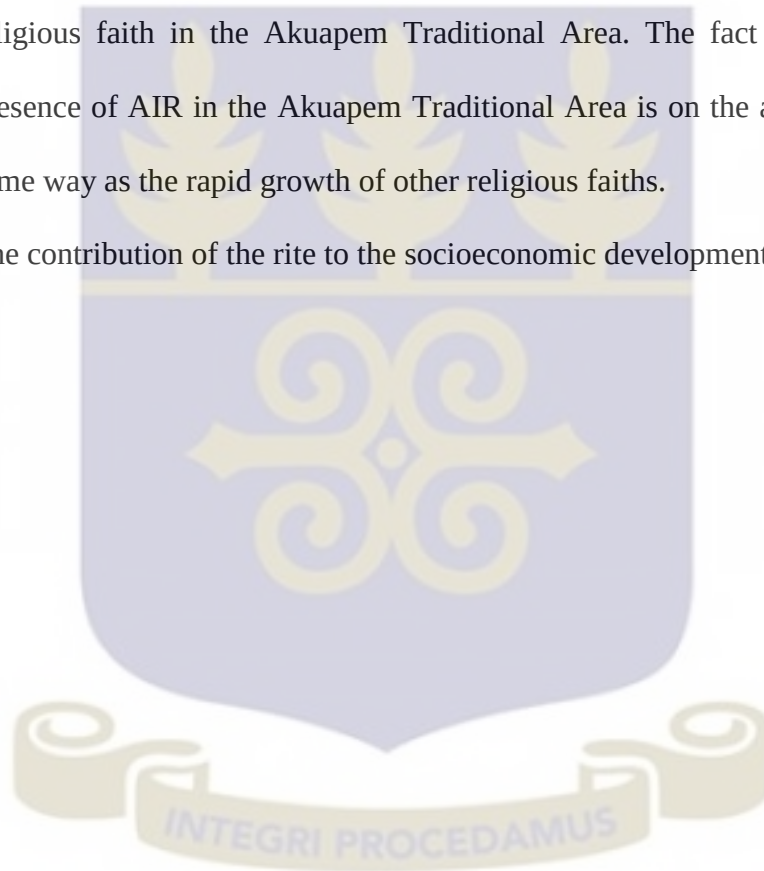
³¹⁴ C. N. Omenyo, “Man of God Prophecy unto Me: The prophetic Phenomenon in African Christianity Studies in World Christianity” *The Edinburgh Review of Theology & Religion*, [Edinburgh] Vol. 17:1, 30 – 49. <http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh/handle/123456789/4414>. [Assessed May 15th May 2015]

³¹⁵ See pages 73 and 74 for detailed discussions

5.3 Recommendation

The following are some of the areas in the study which are recommended for further research:

- The contemporary religious and social change and its effect on rites of passage.
- A comparative study of the gender roles in the observance of religious rituals in the Akuapem Traditional Area.
- The inter-faith dialogue that exist between the adherents of AIR and other religious faith in the Akuapem Traditional Area. The fact still remains the presence of AIR in the Akuapem Traditional Area is on the ascendancy in the same way as the rapid growth of other religious faiths.
- The contribution of the rite to the socioeconomic development of the society.



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3	Comfort Karr	55	Tutu Akuapem	23 rd July 2013 18 th November 2013
4	Nana Kwaku Amane II - Tutu Ankobeahene	68	Tutu Akuapem	18 th July 2013 22 nd July 2013
5	Okyeame Oko	84	Tutu Akuapem	22 nd and 23 rd July 2013 24 th and 26 th July 2013 17 th August 2013
6	K. Sarpong Boafo	66	Tutu Akuapem	26 th July 2013 20 th August 2013
7	Nana Kofi Asiam	51	Tutu Akuapem	24 th July 2013
8	Opanyin Kwame Donkor	97	Tutu Akuapem	18 th July 2013
9	Nana Appiah Nti IV	64	Tutu Akuapem	23 rd August 2013
10	Rev. Samuel Odame Afari	62	Presby manse Tutu	3 rd July 2014
11	Seth Anietey Danso	54	Apostolic Church, Tutu	4 th July 2014
12	Regina Otoo	45	Methodist Church, Tutu	4 th May 2014
13	Samuel Egyiri	42	Pentecost Church	5 th July 2014
14	Kingsley K. Nyarko	55	Charismatic Church, Tutu	3 rd and 4 th July 2013
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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Chiefs of Tutu Akuapem and their designated titles**Figure 1: Chiefs of Tutu since 1733 – 2014**

1. Nana Addo Kwadwo
2. Nana Atopi Anti
3. Nana Kwadwo Ketewa Asiedu
4. Nana Ason Kofi
5. Nana Mensah Anti
6. Nana Ason Kwadwo
7. Nana Kwadwo Anti
8. Nana Boafo Asiedu II – 1916 – 1985
9. Nana Appiah Anti IV 1985 – Till Date

Figure 2: Seven Stools ‘*Nkongua Bason*’ of Tutu and their respective political titles

SUBURBS	SEVEN STOOLS AND TITLES	POLITICAL OR DIVISIONAL TITLES	ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE(S)
Fummano	Odikro	Chief	Royals
Atifi Awurade	Mankrado	Krontihene	Kurowura Holds the keys to the land
Kobotutu	Ankobeahene	Ankobeahene	Supervises all developments or projects
Krɔbo	Krɔboahene	Twafohene	Executioner or slaughtering
Aboso Nketiam	Aboso Nketiamhene	Tufohene	Advisor
Aboso-Demi	Aboso-Demihene	Kyidomhene	Rear
Adoma	Adomahene	Gyaasehene	Custodian of all regalia and paraphernalia of the Chief's palace
Anafo Awurade	Anafo Awuradehen	Asafo Supi	Warriors
Akwandi		Tepire Sofo	Chief Shrine Priest
Apobiase		Tepire Kyeame	Shrine linguist

NB: the seven stools begins from the Mankrado.

APPENDIX II

RESEARCH TOPIC: PRE-BURIAL RITES OF THE PEOPLE OF TUTU AKUAPEM TRADITIONAL AREA

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

The research is aimed at exploring the process of the pre-burial rites, particularly *Amanebo* rite, among the people of Tutu and investigate the reaction of both the adherents of Akan indigenous religion and the indigenous Christians of Tutu towards the rite.

Kindly assist me to answer the following questions

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Background information

- i. Name
- ii. Sex
- iii. Age
- iv. Religion Christian/Moslem/Indigenous.

Since when did you become a Christian/Moslem/Indigenous?

- v. Status: a. In the family youth, elder, widow, orphan
 - a. In the community royal, youth, elder, widow, orphan
 - b. In the church leader, elder, clergy
- vi. Educational level (tick where appropriate)
 - a. Middle school (jss)
 - b. O/A level
 - c. Tertiary
 - d. Other

vii. Where do you live?

Tutu which *Bronmu*

Environs of Tutu mention the village

viii. Are you an indigene or a inhabitant

Organisation of funeral

1. Who is/ are responsible for organising burial rites?

A. Family B. Children C. Brothers/sisters

2. Who plays the following roles?

A. Traditional rituals B. Burial rites

3. What category of people are, respectively, in charge of conveying and preparing the body?

B. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INDIGENES AND TRADITIONAL ELDERS

1. What happens between the period when a person die till he is laid in state?

-death in the house

- death caused by accidents or disasters

- death of elders or chiefs

2. What necessitated the observance of the Amanebɔ rite?

3. How did the *Amanebɔ* rite begun?

4. Is the *Amanebɔ* rite of an (ordinary) indigene and that of an elder or the chief the same? If yes/no, how similar/different are they?

5. What is the Amanebɔ rite all about?

6. Why has the rite been centralised at the sacred grounds of the Mankrado chief?

7. Why is the Amanebɔ rite done a day prior to bringing the corpse and not as other Akan perform it?

8. Why is it a communal event?

9. Is there any difference between recent Amanebɔ rites and that of the past?

10. What relevance does the Amanebɔ rite have for members of the tutu akuapem traditional area?

11. Has there been any change or modification since its inception? Yes/no. Why yes/no

12. A. Can a bereaved family member refuse to observe it? Yes/no

B. Give reasons for your answer

C. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BEREAVED FAMILIES OR SPOUSES OR CHILDREN

13. How do you feel participating in the rite?

14. What are your reservations or concerns?

15. What do you wish should have been the case?

16. Does it cause any agitation?

17. Who and what are the agitations and its causes?

D. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

18. Have your members been complaining about the *Amanebɔ* rite to you?

19. What are some the concerns raised?

20. What is your view about the *Amanebɔ* rite?