

**AKAN STUDIES COUNCIL**

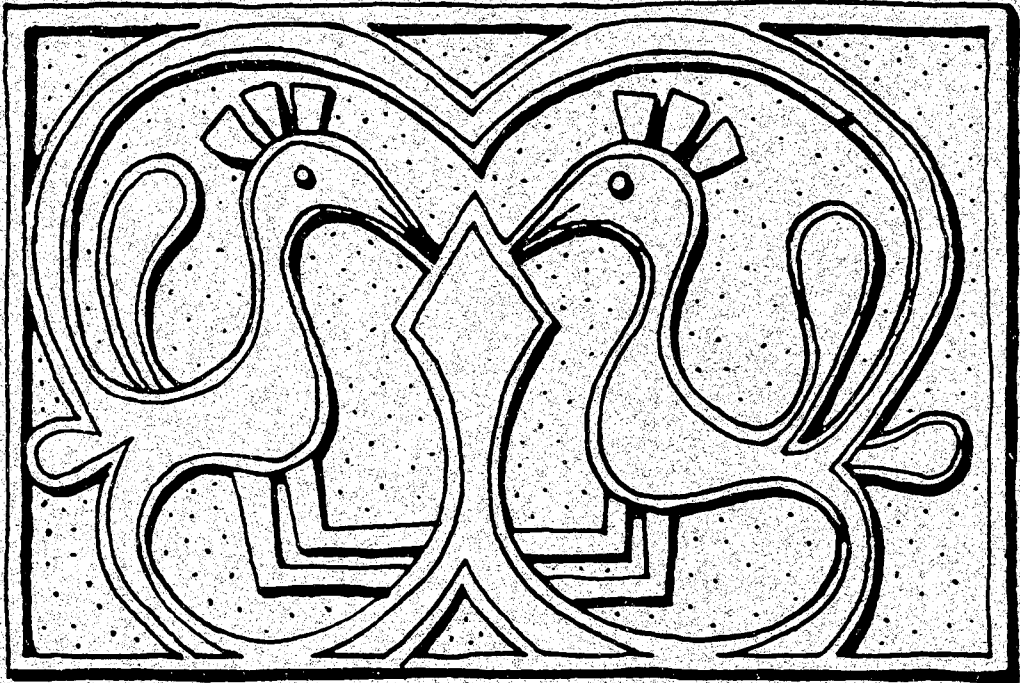
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**CONSEIL DES ETUDES AKAN**

**NEWSLETTER**

**number 6**

**winter 1993**



## **Akan Studies Council Newsletter**

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### **state-of-the-field editor**

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Ray Kea (University of California, Riverside)

Dan Mato (University of Calgary)

# AKAN STUDIES COUNCIL

## NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 6  
FALL 1992

### PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

by  
Raymond A. Silverman  
Michigan State University

I would like to apologize for the delay in producing this issue of *Newsletter*. Since returning from a lengthy trip abroad I've been trying to catch-up on a number of projects, including this one. We'll try to get the next issue back on schedule.

There is not a great deal of news to report that is not dealt with in the minutes to the ASC business meetings presented below. You will note that there have been a few changes (improvements) in the *Newsletter*. Perhaps most significant is the addition of a "Notes and Queries" section. I would like to thank Ivor Wilks, Merrick Posnansky and Larry Yarak for their contributions. We are also experimenting with translating into French the substantive parts of the *Newsletter*. Louis Wilson has enlisted the assistance of the French Department at Smith College for this important undertaking. His efforts are much appreciated. We are pleased to welcome Dan Britz of Northwestern University as the editor of the "Recent Publications" section. As you will see, his compilation of citations is superb. Finally, I would like to report that we have "diversified" the production and distribution of the *Newsletter*. The African Studies Center of Michigan State University has assumed the responsibility of duplication and several of our members, namely, Dan Britz (Northwestern University), Ivor Wilks (Northwestern University), Larry Yarak (Texas A&M), Robert Soppelsa (Washburn University), Ray Kea (University of California, Riverside), and Dan Mato (University of Calgary), will distribute the *Newsletter*.

There was a good deal of discussion at the

recent ASC business meeting held at the US African Studies Association Meeting in Seattle about the exclusive nature of the ASC. A number of members feel that the "ethnic" or "cultural" orientation of the ASC is wrong and has, in fact, generated a good deal of antagonism in Ghana. Many of the same issues that were raised at the first ASC business meeting held in Chicago in 1988 were discussed. In light of the fact that the French-speaking membership continues to atrophy, a number of members argued that we shift the orientation of the organization to Ghana Studies. In the end, the group decided to give the translation initiative a chance. For the time being the focus of the organization will remain Akan studies. We continue to pursue the primary goal for forming the ASC, namely, facilitating communication among scholars dealing with the Akan peoples of both Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. At the moment, only a small portion of our membership are scholars working in Côte d'Ivoire. In an attempt to stimulate greater participation we have implemented the translation initiative mentioned earlier. If this proves successful then we will continue to produce a bilingual *Newsletter* and we will remain the *Akan Studies Council*. If it does not, then we will revert to the original policy of publishing contributions in the language in which they are submitted (i.e., without translation) and it is quite likely that the ASC will become the *Ghana Studies Council*. I would like to urge our French-speaking members, especially those residing in Côte d'Ivoire to *please* make an effort to play a more active role in the ASC--organize a regional ASC meeting, submit contributions to the *Newsletter*, complete the information questionnaires that we include with each *Newsletter*, and recruit new members.

Robert Soppelsa has had difficulty soliciting contributions from people for the "State-of-the-Field"

section. If we do not have a better response in the future to his requests for participation we will jet-tison the section.

Once again, I must ask all of you to complete and return the enclosed member's questionnaire and to submit your annual dues--still only \$5. Only half of our members are paying their dues. We would like to begin to support some initiatives that cost money, so please remember to submit your dues. Thanks very much.

Finally, I would like to announce that this will be the last time I will write this statement. At the Seattle business meeting I resigned my position as President of the ASC. Because of other commitments, primarily a long-term project in Ethiopia, I will be unable to pursue my Akan research for the next few years. The President must be someone who regularly travels to Ghana and/or Côte d'Ivoire--ideally, I would like to see a Ghanaian or Ivoirien colleague assume the leadership of the ASC. I am pleased to announce that Jean Allman volunteered with unanimous support from the members in attendance at the Seattle business meeting to serve as the next President of the ASC. I will continue to edit the *Newsletter*. Any correspondence dealing with panel proposals or suggestions for ASC initiatives should be directed to Jean Allman, Department of History, 101 Read Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211 (USA). Please continue to send your dues and any correspondence concerning the *Newsletter* to Ray Silverman, Art Department, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824 (USA).

## EXPOSÉ DU PRÉSIDENT

par

Raymond A. Silverman  
Michigan State University

Je voudrais m'excuser du retard dans la production de cette édition du *Newsletter*. Depuis mon retour d'un long voyage à l'étranger j'essaie de rattraper mon retard avec plusieurs projets, y compris celui-ci. Nous tâcherons de publier la prochaine édition selon l'horaire prévu.

Il n'y a pas beaucoup de nouvelles à rapporter qui ne sont pas traitées dans le procès-verbal des séances d'affaires d'ASC, publié plus loin. Vous noterez qu'il y a quelques changements (améliorations) dans le *Newsletter*. Peut-être le changement le plus important est-ce l'addition d'une rubrique appelée "Notes et Questions". Je voudrais remercier

Ivor Wilks, Merrick Posanshy et Larry Yarak pour leurs contributions. Nous expérimentons aussi avec la traduction en français des parties essentielles du *Newsletter*. Louis Wilson a demandé l'aide du département de français à Smith College pour cette entreprise importante. On est très sensible à ses efforts. Nous sommes contents de souhaiter la bienvenue à Dan Britz de Northwestern University comme rédacteur de la rubrique appelée "Publications Récentes". Comme vous le verrez, sa collection de citations est superbe. Finalement, je voudrais rapporter que nous avons "diversifié" la production et la distribution du *Newsletter*. Le centre d'Etudes africaines de l'Université de Michigan, a accepté de l'imprimer et plusieurs de nos membres, c'est à dire, Dan Britz (Northwestern University), Ivor Wilks (Northwestern University), Larry Yarak (Texas A&M), Robert Soppelsa (Washburn University), Ray Kea (University of California, Riverside) et Dan Mato (University of Calgary), feront la distribution du *Newsletter*.

Il y a eu beaucoup de discussion à la dernière séance du comité d'ASC qui a eu lieu à la réunion du US African Studies Association à Seattle au sujet du caractère exclusif d'ASC. Plusieurs membres croient que l'orientation "ethnique" ou "culturelle" d'ASC est mauvaise et qu'en fait elle a provoqué beaucoup d'antagonisme au Ghana. On a discuté beaucoup des mêmes questions qui ont été présentées à la première séance d'affaires d'ASC qui a eu lieu à Chicago en 1988. Etant donné le fait que le nombre de membres francophones continue à baisser, plusieurs membres ont proposé un changement d'orientation de l'organisation, qui se consacrerait aux Etudes de Ghana. A la fin, le groupe a décidé de faire l'essai de la traduction proposée par certains. Pour le moment, le centre de l'organisation restera les études d'Akan. Nous restons fidèles au premier but de la formation d'ASC, c'est à dire faciliter la communication entre les savants qui s'occupent des peuples Akan de la Côte d'Ivoire et du Ghana. En ce moment, seulement une petite partie de tous nos membres sont des savants travaillant dans la Côte d'Ivoire. Dans un désir de stimuler une plus grande participation à nos travaux, nous avons mis à exécution l'initiative de traduction mentionnée ci-dessus. Si cela réussit, nous continuerons à produire un *Newsletter* bilingue et nous resterons le Akan Studies Council. Sinon, nous retournerons à la ligne de conduite originale, qui est de publier les contributions dans la langue dans laquelle elles sont soumises (c.-à-d., sans traduction) et il est très probable que ASC deviendra le Ghana Studies Council. Je voudrais

pousser nos membres francophones, surtout ceux qui résident dans la Côte d'Ivoire à faire l'effort de jouer un rôle plus actif dans l'ASC-- organisez une séance régionale de l'ASC, soumettez des articles au *Newsletter*, complétez les questionnaires que nous envoyons dans chaque *Newsletter*, et recrutez de nouveaux membres.

Robert Soppelsa a eu de la difficulté à obtenir des compte rendus pour la rubrique de "State-of-the-Field". Si nous ne recevons pas une meilleure réponse à ses demandes de participation, nous abandonnerons la rubrique à l'avenir.

Encore une fois, je dois demander à vous tous de compléter et de renvoyer le questionnaire inclus et de payer votre cotisation annuelle-- toujours seulement \$5. Il n'y a qu'une moitié de nos membres qui paient leur cotisation. Nous voudrions commencer à appuyer quelques initiatives qui cotent de l'argent, donc s'il vous plaît n'oubliez pas d'envoyer votre chèque. Merci beaucoup.

Finalement, je voudrais annoncer que c'est la dernière fois que j'écris cette lettre. A la séance d'affaires à Seattle j'ai donné ma démission comme Président de l'ASC. A cause d'autres obligations, principalement un projet à long terme en Ethiopie, je ne pourrai pas poursuivre ma recherche de l'Akan pendant les quelques années qui viennent. Le Président doit être quelqu'un qui va régulièrement au Ghana et/ou à la Côte d'Ivoire-- idéalement, je voudrais voir un collègue ghanéen ou ivoirien assumer la conduite de l'ASC. Je suis content d'annoncer qu'avec l'appui unanime des membres présents à la séance d'affaires à Seattle, Jean Allman a accepté de servir comme le prochain Président de l'ASC. Je continuerai à rédiger le *Newsletter*. Toute correspondance qui propose un sujet de discussion ou une suggestion des initiatives de l'ASC doit être envoyée à Jean Allman, Department of History, 101 Read Hall, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211 (USA). S'il vous plaît, continuez à envoyer vos cotisations et toute correspondance concernant le *Newsletter* à Ray Silverman, Art Department, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824 (USA).

## MINUTES TO ASC MEETINGS

### Minutes of the Akan Studies Council Meeting St. Louis, November 23, 1991

Present: Ray Silverman, David Owusu-Ansah, Ivor Wilks, Louis Wilson, Paul Jenkins, Dolly Maier, Merrick Posnansky, Gracia Clark, B. Kodwo-Hayford, Kofi Agori.

The meeting was called to order by Ray Silverman at 6:00 PM in St. Louis, at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association.

The *Newsletter* was discussed. It was originally issued biannually, now once a year. Peter Shinnie has been covering the expense of duplication and mailing, which costs roughly \$400 (Canadian) per issue. He is not certain how much longer he can subsidize it. It would help if we could collect dues from everyone. Right now there is \$475 (US) in the treasury. Libraries do want the *Newsletter* and we charge a \$10 institutional subscription rate.

It was noted that the Akan Studies Council did not sponsor any panels this year at ASA. We should sponsor at least one panel per ASA. Anyone with ideas for themes should communicate them.

Silverman indicated that he needs someone to take over the administration of the ASC. He is coming up for tenure next year and is also in charge of an Ethiopian exhibition that will demand much of his time over the next few years. The *Newsletter* is the major responsibility; in addition to the general editor, it requires a person to be in charge of the recent publications section and another to oversee the state-of-the-field section. Sometimes people agree to help write sections but fail to deliver. Right now Bob Soppelsa is in charge of the state-of-the-field section and Joe Lauer has been serving as an interim editor of recent publications. A general editor is needed. David Owusu-Ansah said he could do it for one year but someone else needs to volunteer for the other year. When no one volunteered he indicated that if Silverman could hold on for one more year he would takeover.

We all agreed it was important for all of us to inform colleagues of our existence and increase the size of our membership.

Owusu-Ansah said he was working on a new edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Ghana* and found that the state-of-the-field section and individuals reporting on their current research activities in the *Newsletter* helped him very much to keep up on

the field. He hoped people would continue to communicate in the *Newsletter*. Silverman noted in that regard that Larry Yarak's report on the Kumase conference was very informative and valuable.

Ivor Wilks commented that perhaps a one-year format for the *Newsletter* was too limiting. He suggested that perhaps we issue the *Newsletter* only when it warrants production, and that sometimes it might be useful to publish "nuts and bolts" items. Owusu-Ansah commented that the *Newsletter* was quite a valuable opportunity to communicate for persons who are otherwise cut-off. Silverman again appealed for interested persons to participate and noted sadly that the Francophone contingent was dwindling. He suggested that a bilingual *Newsletter* would help but that it would be quite expensive. He reminded the group that a major objective of the organization was to bridge the Francophone/Anglophone gap. Wilks commented that we might publish French translations of English contributions. Louis Wilson said he could help translate some things with assistance from his school's (Smith College) French Department. Paul Jenkins noted that in his experience it took about one to two hours to translate just one double-spaced page. With Wilson's assistance, the next *Newsletter*, will include abstracts in French of substantive English contributions, and visa versa.

Silverman once again brought up the subject of the annual ASA Meeting. Owusu-Ansah said that at least one panel per meeting was important, but noted the difficulties that many of us are experiencing in procuring institutional support for attending the ASA Meeting--for instance, his university will not pay for more than one conference per year. Silverman offered that the ASC could help individuals secure funding from their institutions by providing a short statement attesting to the individual's participation in the Akan Studies Council Business Meeting and other ASC-sponsored events.

Wilks suggested that a *Newsletter* produced before the next ASA with information regarding a planned panel would increase interest and awareness. He suggested one panel on Akan/Mande studies and one on Akan studies. Wilson said that people on the West coast, like Bravmann and Reynolds, were not present this year. Jenkins said that our members in Côte d'Ivoire and France, like C.-H. Perrot, need to be invited early. He observed that people in Ghana, such as Ben Hayford at Cape Coast, were conscientious about regularly filling out the ASC questionnaire and he hoped they might wish to participate on panels.

Silverman said that we are currently mailing *Newsletters* to roughly 130 individuals (or libraries). If people are interested in a panel at ASA they should contact him.

There was no other new business. We adjourned at 6:45 pm.

submitted by: Dolly Maier (North Iowa University)

#### Procès-verbal de la ASC St. Louis, 23 novembre 1991

Présent: Ray Silverman, David Owusu-Ansah, Ivor Wilks, Louis Wilson, Paul Jenkins, Dolly Maier, Merrick Posnansky, Gracia Clark, B. Kodwo-Hayford, Kofi Agori

La séance a été ouverte par Ray Silverman à 18 h. à St. Louis, à la Réunion Anuelle de l'Association des Etudes Africaines (ASA).

Le *Newsletter* a été discuté. A l'origine il était publié deux fois par an, et maintenant une fois par an. Peter Shinnie avait couvert les frais de la photocopier et de l'envoi, qui cotent approximativement \$400 (Canadien) par numéro. Il n'est pas certain combien de temps il peut le subventionner encore. Si nous pouvons recevoir une cotisation de tout le monde, cela aiderait. Maintenant il y a \$475 (US) dans notre compte. Des bibliothèques veulent le *Newsletter* et nous leur demandons \$10, comme taux d'abonnement institutionnelle.

Il a été noté que le Conseil d'Etudes Akan n'a patronné aucune commission cette année à l'ASA. Nous devons patronner au moins une commission pour chaque colloque de l'ASA. Toute personne avec des idées de thèmes devrait les communiquer.

Silverman a indiqué qu'il a besoin de quelqu'un qui pourrait prendre l'administration de l'ASA. L'année prochaine est celle de sa "tenure" et il se charge aussi d'une exposition éthiopienne qui demandera beaucoup de son temps pendant les années qui viennent. Le *Newsletter* est la responsabilité principale du directeur de l'ASC; en plus d'un éditeur, il faut quelqu'un qui se charge de la rubrique des livres qui viennent de sortir et quelqu'un d'autre pour surveiller la rubrique "L'Etat présent de la discipline". Quelquefois il y a des gens qui consentent à écrire des articles mais qui négligent de les envoyer par la suite. En ce moment Bob Soppelsa est l'administrateur de la rubrique "L'Etat de la Discipline" et Joe Lauer sert d'éditeur intérim des publications récentes. Il faut un éditeur général.

David Owusu-Ansah a dit qu'il pourrait le faire pour un an mais il faut que quelqu'un d'autre se propose pour l'autre année. Quand personne ne s'est offert, il a indiqué que si Silverman peut continuer une année de plus il prendrait la relève après.

Nous avons été tous d'accord qu'il était important pour nous tous d'informer nos collègues de notre existence et d'augmenter le nombre de nos membres.

Owusu-Ansah a dit qu'il travaille sur une nouvelle édition de la *Historical Dictionary of Ghana*. Il trouvait que la rubrique "L'Etat de la Discipline" et les individus résumant leurs activités de recherches courantes dans le *Newsletter* l'aidaient beaucoup à être à la page dans la discipline. Il espère que les gens continueront à s'entretenir dans le *Newsletter*. Silverman a noté à cet égard que le rapport de Larry Yarak sur la conférence Kumase était très éclairant et valable.

Ivor Wilks a commenté que peut-être un format d'un an pour le *Newsletter* était trop limité. Il a suggéré que peut-être nous devrions publier le *Newsletter* seulement quand il le mérite, et à d'autres moments il serait utile de publier des annonces. Owusu-Ansah a noté que le *Newsletter* est une occasion valable pour des personnes qui sont autrement isolées de communiquer leurs idées. Silverman, encore une fois, a supplié les gens intéressés d'y participer et il a noté tristement que le contingent francophone diminue. Il a remarqué qu'un *Newsletter* bilingue aiderait, mais il serait cher. Il a rappelé au groupe qu'un objectif capital de l'organisation est de relier les Francophones et les Anglophones. Wilks a observé que nous pourrions publier des traductions françaises des communications, articles anglais. Louis Wilson a dit qu'il pourrait aider à la traduction de plusieurs choses avec l'assistance du département de français de son université (Smith College). Paul Jenkins a noté qu'il prend à peu près une ou deux heures pour traduire une seule page à double interlignes. Avec l'aide de Wilson, le prochain *Newsletter* comprendra des résumés en français des principaux articles en anglais, et visa versa.

Silverman a soulevé encore une fois le sujet de la séance annuelle de l'ASA.

Owusu-Ansah a dit qu'il était important d'avoir au moins une commission par séance, mais il a constaté les difficultés que plusieurs d'entre nous éprouvons pour nous procurer le soutien des institutions si nous voulons assister à la séance de l'ASC-- par exemple, son université ne paiera pas pour plus d'un colloque par an. Silverman a proposé que l'ASC pourrait

aider des individus à obtenir une subvention de leurs institutions en leur fournissant une attestation court témoignant de la participation de cet individu dans la Séance d'Affaires du Conseil d'Etudes Akan (ASC) et dans d'autres événements patronnés par l'ASC.

Wilks a suggéré qu'un *Newsletter* contenant des renseignements au sujet d'une commission déjà conçue, produit avant la prochaine séance de l'ASA, augmenterait l'intérêt du public. Il a proposé qu'on crée une commission sur les études Akan/Mande et une autre sur les études Akan. Wilson a remarqué que des gens qui habitent sur la côte Ouest, comme Bravmann et Reynolds, n'étaient pas présents cette année. Jenkins a dit qu'il faut inviter nos membres de la Côte d'Ivoire et de France, comme C.-H. Perrot, plus tôt. Il a observé que les gens du Ghana, comme Ben Hayford sur la Côte du Cap, remplissent consciencieusement les questionnaires de l'ASC, et il espère qu'ils voudront participer aux commissions.

Silverman a dit qu'en ce moment nous envoyons le *Newsletter* par la poste à 130 individus (ou bibliothèques), approximativement. S'il y a des gens qui ont envie de faire partie d'une commission à l'ASC, ils devraient se mettre en contact avec lui.

Il n'y avait pas d'autre affaires. Nous avons levé la séance à 18:45.

submitted by: Dolly Maier (Northern Iowa University)

#### **Report on Informal U.K. Meeting of the ASC University of Stirling, 8 September 1992**

Present: Selena Winsnes, Richard Rathbone (SOAS), Ray Jenkins (Staffordshire), Louise de la Gorgendiere (Cambridge), Roger Gocking (Lesotho), David Killingray (Goldsmiths), David Birmingham (Kent), Joseph Adande (Benin), Gareth Austin (LSE).

1) In light of Ray Silverman's report that participation of Francophone scholars in the ASC has declined, there was a general discussion of the old issue of whether "Akan" was the most appropriate label for the ASC. A variety of views were expressed.

2) David Killingray reported that the money left over from the *Ghana Studies Bulletin* had been given to the *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, which is being revived. This news was warmly welcomed.

3) Richard Rathbone proposed a symposium to be held in Ghana on the history of southern Ghanaian urbanity. This would be primarily a cooperative venture between SOAS and the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. Papers would be given both by Ghana- and foreign-based scholars. The most appropriate venue might be outside Legon or even Accra, in order to link the academic conference to a possible broader celebration of Ghanaian urban achievement. Richard said that he had already sounded out Kwame Arhin and Andrew Roberts about this, and had been hoping to discuss it further with Kofi Baaku, who had been expected to attend this conference [Kofi arrived next day after a much delayed flight, and welcomed the idea]. The proposal was also warmly welcomed.

submitted by: Gareth Austin (LSE)

#### **Report sur la Séance Informelle du ASC Université de Stirling, 8 septembre 1992**

Présents: Selena Winsnes, Richard Rathbone (SOAS), Ray Jenkins (Staffordshire), Louise de la Gorgendiere (Cambridge), Roger Gocking (Lesotho), Davis Killingray (Goldsmiths), David Birmingham (Kent), Joseph Adande (Benin), Gareth Austin (LSE).

1) En considération du rapport de Ray Silverman sur la baisse de participation des savants francophones dans le ASC, il y a eu une discussion générale sur la vieille question de si "Akan" était la désignation la plus propre pour le ASC. Des opinions diverses ont été exprimées.

2) David Killingray a rapporté que l'argent qui restait du Ghana Studies Bulletin a été donné aux Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, qu'on fait revivre. Cette nouvelle a été bien reçue.

3) Richard Rathbone a proposé un colloque qui aura lieu au Ghana sur l'histoire de l'urbanisme en Ghana du Sud. Ce serait essentiellement une entreprise coopérative entre SOAS et l'Institut d'Etudes Africaines, Université de Ghana. Les communications seront données par des savants du Ghana aussi bien que des pays étrangers. Le lieu de réunion le plus convenable pourrait être en dehors de Legon ou même d'Accra, afin de lier le colloque à une célébration peut-être plus large de

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l'accomplissement urbain du Ghana. Richard a dit qu'il avait déjà sondé Kwame Arhin et Andrew Roberts à propos de cela, et qu'il avait espéré le discuter davantage avec Kofi Baaku, qui devait participer à ce colloque [Kofi est arrivé le lendemain après un vol beaucoup-retardé, et il a accepté l'idée.] La proposition a été reçue aussi avec plaisir.

submitted par: Gareth Austin (LSE)

#### **STATE OF THE FIELD: ART HISTORY**

by

Robert Soppelsa  
Washburn University of Topeka

The response this year to queries regarding recent research by art historians in the Akan area was heartening: I received answers from colleagues in North America, Europe, and Africa. Though the responses were not numerous, it was good to know that you are reading ASC mailings and interested in contributing. That's not to say that there is not room for improvement! Perhaps, as the years wear on, more of our members will respond to my requests for contributions for this section of the *Newsletter*. Information received after this year's query, in alphabetical order by sender's name, follows:

Kathleen Bickford, recently returned from doctoral field work on textiles among the Akan in Cote d'Ivoire, writes that her research was successful. She worked particularly with the cultural meanings of contemporary machine-printed fabrics.

Patricia Crane Coronel, of Colorado State University at Fort Collins, continues to do research on arts of the Aowin. She has prepared a chapter on the Aowin Do masquerade for Patrick McNaughton's upcoming study of horizontal masquerades in West Africa, and will continue compiling data on Aowin regalia during a sabbatical this spring.

Martha Ehrlich, at SIUE/Edwardsville, continues to work on the cataloguing and analysis of gold ornaments discovered in the wreck of the pirate ship Whydah, which sank off Cape Cod in 1717. Ehrlich also begins a sabbatical leave in January, when she will begin a book on the Whydah finds.

Malcolm McLeod, of the Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery at the University of Glasgow, has completed the text of the forthcoming illustrated catalogue of Asante gold objects in the collection of

the British Museum (no publication date yet set).

Doran Ross, Deputy Director of the recently opened Fowler Museum of Cultural History at UCLA, is currently pursuing research in two areas: European liturgical prototypes for Akan kudoku, and types and varieties of Akan palanquins. Ross also contributed a chapter on elephants and ivory in Akan culture for his exhibit and catalogue, *Elephant: The Animal and Its Ivory in African Culture* (1992).

Raymond Silverman, of Michigan State University, for the last three years, has been involved curating an exhibition dealing with the art and cultural history of Ethiopia. With this major diversion he has been making slow but steady progress on a revision of his doctoral dissertation which explores the influence that Islam and Muslims have had on the arts of the Akan.

Jerry Vogel (formerly of Parsons in West Africa, now of Drew in West Africa) has been gathering data for the past several years on Aka Djé, an "outsider artist" in the village of Tanoh-Sakassou, in Baule country. Vogel and Robert Soppelsa presented a paper at the recent A.S.A. convention in Seattle on Aka Djé's environmental sculptures.

Thanks to those of you who responded to the query. I hope to have an even more enthusiastic response next year.

## ETAT PRESENT DE LA DISCIPLINE:

### L'Histoire de l'Art

par

Robert Soppelsa

Washburn University of Topeka

La réponse cette année aux questions relatives à la nouvelle recherche des historiens de l'art dans la région de l'Akan était encourageante. J'ai reçu des réponses de collègues dans l'Amerique du Nord, l'Europe et l'Afrique. Quoique les réponses ne soient pas nombreuses, c'était bien de savoir que vous lisez mes envois de l'ASC et que vous avez envie de collaborer à ses travaux. Cela ne veut pas dire qu'on ne peut pas faire mieux encore! Peut-être, à mesure que les années passent, plus de nos membres répondront à mes demandes de lettres pour cette rubrique du *Newsletter*. Les renseignements qui me sont parvenus en réponse aux questions suivent; les noms de l'expédition sont par ordre alphabétique:

Kathleen Bickford, revenue récemment d'un séjour parmi les Akan pour des recherches de doctorat sur les textiles, écrit que sa recherche est

couronnée de succès. Elle a travaillé particulièrement avec les significations culturelles des tissus contemporains fait par-machine.

Patricia Crane Coronel, de l'Université de Colorado à Fort Collins, continue à faire des recherches sur les arts des Aowin. Elle a préparé un chapitre sur la mascarade de l'Aowin Do pour l'étude qui prépare Patrick McNaughton sur les mascarades horizontales en l'Afrique de l'Ouest, et elle continuera à compiler des données sur les insignes royaux Aowin pendant un congé sabbatique ce printemps.

Martha Ehrlich, à SIUE/Edwardsville, continue à travailler sur le catalogue et l'analyse des ornements en or découverts dans l'épave du navire pirate Whydah, qui a sombré à la hauteur du Cap Cod en 1717. Ehrlich commence aussi un sabbatique en janvier, et elle commencera à écrire un livre sur les découvertes de la Whydah.

Malcolm McLeod, du Musée et Galerie d'Art Hunterian à l'Université de Glasgow, a complété le texte du catalogue illustré des objets en or des Asante dans la collection du British Museum, qui est en préparation (la date de publication n'est pas encore fixée).

Doran Ross, Directeur adjoint du Musée Fowler de l'Histoire Culturelle à UCLA, qui s'est récemment ouvert, poursuit actuellement sa recherche en deux domaines: les prototypes liturgiques européens du kudoku Akan, et les types et les variétés des palanquins d'Akan. Ross a écrit aussi un chapitre sur le rôle des éléphants et de l'ivoire dans la culture Akan pour son exposition et son catalogue: *Eléphant: L'Animal et son Ivoire dans la Culture africaine*.

Raymond Silverman, de l'Université de Michigan, sert depuis trois ans comme conservateur d'une exposition sur l'art et l'histoire de l'Ethiopie. A cause de ces travaux importants, il avance lentement mais régulièrement sur la révision de sa thèse de doctorat qui explore l'influence de l'Islam et des musulmans sur les arts de l'Akan.

Jerry Vogel (autrefois de Parsons en Afrique de l'Ouest, maintenant de Drew en Afrique de l'Ouest) recueille des données depuis quelques années sur Aka Djé, un "artiste étranger" du village de Tanoh-Sakassou, dans la région de Baule. Vogel et Robert Soppelsa ont présenté, au colloque récent de l'A.S.A. à Seattle, une communication sur les sculptures "environnementales" d'Aka Djé.

Merci à ceux qui ont répondu au questionnaire. J'espère avoir une réponse même plus enthousiaste l'année prochaine.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

**The Archaeologist and the African Community**  
Merrick Posnansky  
Department of History, UCLA

All Archaeology is socially invasive. Not only do we intrude into the earth destroying the record as we seek to reveal the past but we also have an impact on the present, on the people among whom we temporarily reside. Very little attempt has hitherto been made to look at that impact. Many of us are now interested in ethnoarchaeology and we seek to understand the present in order to get insights into our understanding of the past but how often do we take the time to step back to see what we are ourselves are doing to the communities we investigate? On many Iron Age sites, however, there is a continuity of settlement and the interaction between excavators and local residents takes on an added significance as the archaeologists rely on the residents to provide oral traditions, to point out sites discovered during cultivation or to demonstrate their traditional technology.

There are subtle but definite changes that take place in many communities, particularly in the smaller and more traditional communities, when archaeologists first intrude and return and return again for long term investigations. The community which I will take as my case study is that of Hani in Brong Ahafo among whom I've worked since 1970, first excavating the medieval and modern town of Begho (Posnansky 1987) and later monitoring the changes taking place in the village culture over a twenty year period. My colleagues and I, who have included faculty and students of the University of Ghana as well as students and faculty from universities in the States, the United Kingdom and Germany, have made no less than 19 visits, some of up to ten weeks involving as many as 24 people at a time, over a period from June 1970 to January 1989. We have definitely played a role in the lives of people who have become our friends. During my visits I've been conscious of not only the need to record changes in the material aspects of the village but also to discover the villagers' outlook on life over a rather turbulent period of Ghana's history during which there has been an intense drought and a collapse and revival in the economy (Posnansky 1980, 1983). In 1989 I had an opportunity to assess what impact we had on a village with which we have had excellent relations and in which I still hold a position of tradi-

tional authority.

One important aspect of our work is that we altered the landscape by building a 2000 square foot coursed mud research center in 1971 a little under half a mile from the center of the village. This emphasized both our identification with the community and our intrusive nature even when we were out of town. In 1970 the village of Hani had around 1000 inhabitants and now has around 2000 representing a growth of around 3% per annum which is average for Ghana as a whole. Two thirds of the population has grown up or entered the village since we first became part of the community. They have grown up taking our presence or repeated visits for granted. The town is not on any through route and is some 32 miles, by very rough road, from the nearest large town. Within the first few years, our principal impact was on the economy, on the material culture and on social relations. We provided jobs, supplemented low farm earnings, bought goods for both consumption in the camp and to take back to Accra. We provided access to new technology. Our research center, though low cost in Ghanaian terms and less than \$3000 in international terms, demonstrated state of the art coursed mud and sun dried mudbrick construction. It had a rain water collection system from the roof with aluminum gutters running into a 3200 gallon concrete underground cistern. The windows were shuttered and mosquito gauze covered, the verandahs and floors were cemented, the walls were cement rendered and painted. We built a bar-b-que oven rather than used three stones to support a pot and had meat safes, drying racks for crockery and lines for clothes and large numbers of tables. Our toilets were dug deep, with planking over the pits. Our students brought with them new styles of dress, access to popular music and something of the excitement of the spending and entertainment patterns of the capital. Our students and Ghanaian staff mixed freely with the villagers, several preached in the Church and they became big city role models. They also begot children with some of the village women. Football, the national sport of Ghana, got a shot in the arm from our provision of both goal posts and new jerseys. The University team provided access to a wider world. For the first time Government officials took an interest in the village. The Regional Commissioner visited on several occasions, once to open the research center in 1972 and the village was featured on both television and radio. Articles appeared in the press giving the village visibility greater than that accorded to towns of larger size. Many other

strangers came, university faculty, clergymen, missionaries, diplomats and medical personnel. The archaeological crew brought with them magazines and newspapers and the villagers became more conscious of a wider world. The Chief's son went to America under the American Field Service program. Even diet was affected as we stressed the nutritional merits of such foods as beans. Health care improved as the villagers saw the advantages of on-the-spot medications, took advantage of our lifts to nearby hospitals and a health center became a reality once the research center was handed over to the village in 1981. The teachers in the schools found that they profited from the association with the university and in 1975 one of the American staff obtained funds and books from her home town for a small village library which doubled as a teachers' resource center.

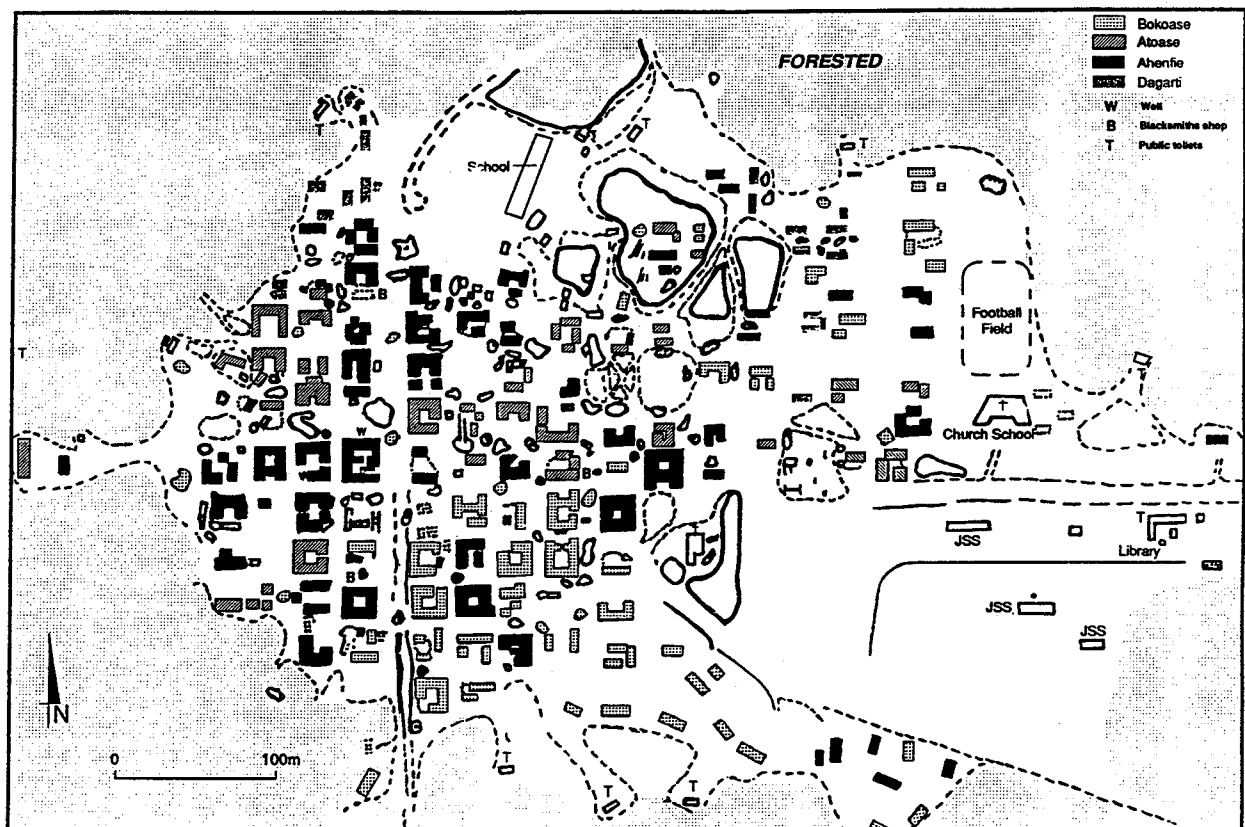
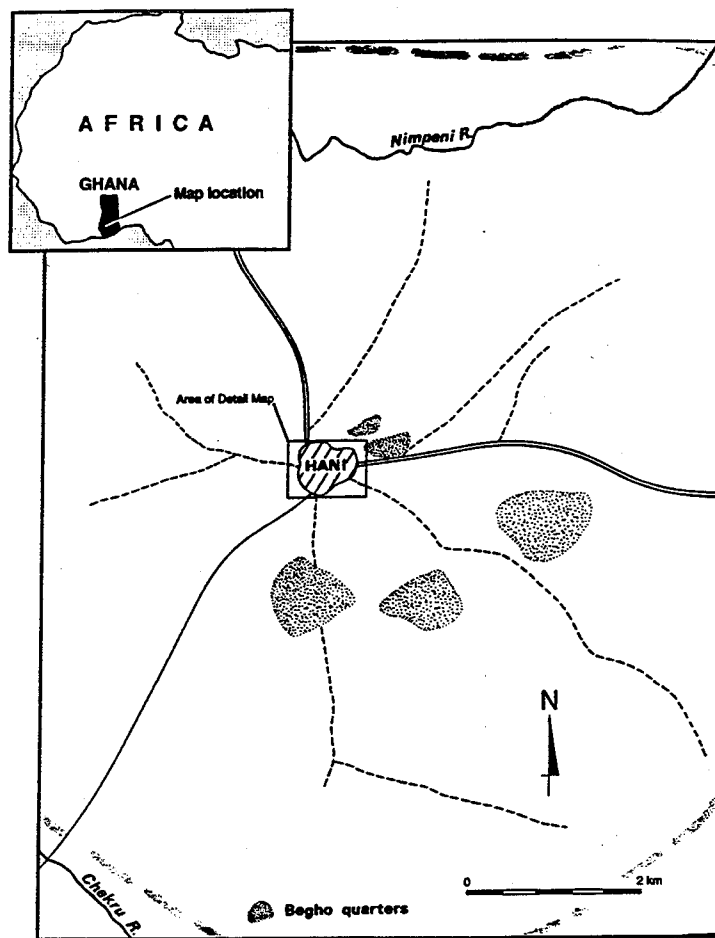
The status of the Chief was enhanced by the new contacts. Both he and his elders visited the capital. The visitors were interested in the traditional life and local crafts and the traditional sector, previously looked down upon by some of the young men, became more respectable. We became part of the traditional community and in time were informed about and consulted upon such matters as chieftaincy disputes. Our scholarship and objectivity were seen as advantageous to the community as well as our access to government officials in the capital. We interceded over Government loans and our influence was perceived as greater than it really was. In Ghana it is always useful to know people with wider networks of knowledge and influence.

What has survived from this vigorous inter-connection? Certainly the economy has improved due to greater awareness and access to information, government services and improved technology. Having greater visibility the village was able to get bore-holes for better water earlier than their neighbours. Building technology certainly improved with many houses being built of moulded mud blocks as used in several of our buildings, often using our old wooden moulds, rather than coursed clay. The training of the village carpenter and several masonry assistants by Seth Dankwa, the Department of Archaeology technical officer, has paid off in better window framing, concrete aprons around the buildings and the expanded use of guttering for catching rain water. In two instances underground water cisterns have been built, louvre shuttered windows have proliferated and smaller better built toilets dug to replace the rather grim and relatively shallow communal latrines of twenty years ago. As the village grew, the preferred area of growth was close to

the research center, known as Brunikrom 'the European quarter', so that the area between the center and the village became the modern sector with a Junior Secondary School, a private Catholic school, the houses of some of the more entrepreneurial young men, the Catholic Church and the football field. In 1988, a soldier who had returned from a period of service with the UN forces in Lebanon, even acquired a generator and now videos can be seen in the quarter. Unlike the village of twenty years ago in which villagers grouped themselves according to clan affiliation, in the new quarter the clans are mixed indiscriminately and many of the houses are modern with deep verandahs reflecting the style of the research center. In 1970 there were few Ghanaian 'foreigners', mainly a handful of Ewe teachers and some northern, largely Dagarti, laborers. By 1989 there were well over a hundred such foreigners and many had built houses. The foreigners had gained in status partly it seems from the attention given to the occasional archaeological foreigners from Accra and my election as Ahohohene, or chief of the strangers, in 1975. The links with the excavators had also provided some of the villagers with access to patronage, several young men had obtained jobs outside the village in the modern sector due to their contacts with Ghanaian staff members and several boys and girls had gained admission to outside schools. Villagers have an enhanced awareness of the potential for educational development through their contact with University personnel and it is possibly no coincidence that the village has a higher percentage of children at school than many of their neighbors. Even aesthetic sensibilities have changed. We planted some small hedge plants around our buildings and the practice is now widespread, particularly around the school buildings but also around several homes.

There has of course been a downside to the contact. The children of casual liaisons with the excavators have not always fared so well in the village. The greater materialism brought from outside has led some of the youth to seek easy routes to the apparent success of the University of Ghana students. Some of the standards, the dress and behavior of the students have not always been the ideal models for village youth. Being thwarted by the difficulties of getting higher education some have drifted away from village life and become part of the mass of disillusioned youth drifting in and out of town life and sometimes abandoning the higher moral values of the village.

When it comes to an awareness of the past the contact has certainly enhanced the village. They



proudly proclaim the name of the ancient town of Begho and couple it with Hani. There is however, a historical feedback from what they've learnt from the excavators and visiting scholars so that the elders of today no longer retain a purely traditional concept of their past. The villagers are nevertheless sensitized to the past, pick up artifacts, know what many of them are and keep them to show and give to the university. Many villagers were photographed and now have a permanent record of their relatives. Photographs of the chief, who died in 1986, as well as of different ceremonies, provide part of the stool records. We are perhaps fortunate that the village was a tight knit community, that the Chief and his elders had influence, that they were interested in their own past and were cooperative with our team. In other parts of Ghana the archaeologists are less fortunate. It is obvious that size and remoteness are factors which affect the impact of the archaeologists. The close integration of Ghanaian and expatriate workers helps to ensure that the local population can in some ways identify with the activities of the archaeologists.

These few words are not meant to be a homily on our own particular experiences but as plea to understand an aspect of archaeology in Africa that has been insufficiently studied. We ourselves are under as close scrutiny as the sites and artefacts we describe. The impact in time becomes cumulative. If we can step back and study ourselves as the pace of archaeological research accelerates then we will have a better chance ultimately of understanding the future role of archaeology in Africa

\* An expanded version of this paper was given at the meeting of the Society of Africanist Archaeologists at Gainesville in 1990 and will form a chapter in a forthcoming volume on Begho.

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#### **Résumé**

#### **L'Archéologue et la Communauté d'un Village ghanéen**

Un dépouillement des répercussions de l'activité archéologique et ethnographique pendant une période de vingt ans, de 1970 à 1989, sur le village de Hani des Brong Ahafo, le site de Begho. La communauté s'est fait mieux connaître; elle a plus d'accès aux services gouvernementaux et du développement technologique, bien que l'impact social ne soit pas uniformément positif. Une conscience du passé a été réhaussée quoique les résultats de la recherche changent rigoureusement la vue traditionnelle du passé. L'étude plaide pour une plus grande compréhension du bouleversement de la recherche sur les lieux.

#### **"INVENTING TRADITION" IN ELMINA: A NOTE ON THE BAKATUE FESTIVAL**

by

Larry W. Yarak  
Texas A&M University

In the 1840s the Dutch Ministry of Colonies sought to rationalize and regularize the legal interactions of its officers on the Gold Coast with the indigenous population. Dutch Governor A. van der Eb was therefore instructed to draw up a compendium of local laws and customs for use as a reference work in the ministry. Van der Eb submitted his report in May 1851, and it was published many years later in Holland under the title, "Native Law of the Coast of Guinea 1851".<sup>1</sup> A number of scholars of 19th century Ghana have used this document to good effect, but few have seen an unpublished supplement to it submitted by Dutch Governor C. J. M. Nagtglas in 1860.<sup>2</sup> Together these documents provide important information on topics as diverse as slavery, family relations, and laws on theft, murder, adultery, rape, and so on. Van der Eb and Nagtglas also gave brief descriptions of the major Elmina "customs" and festivals, including the annual Bakatue, the "opening" of the Benya lagoon (or river, as it is customarily called) to fishing after a period of ritual closure, an event which was held on a Tuesday, usually in July. More detailed accounts of the rites associated with festival may be found in the 20th-century works of E. J. P. Brown and J. S. Wartemberg.<sup>3</sup>

Bakatue today is the culmination of six weeks of activities in honor of Benya, the deity believed to

inhabit the lagoon. During the last three weeks Elminans are prohibited from fishing in the lagoon, beating drums, shooting guns, and performing funeral rites. The Benya *okomfo* ("priest") plays a central role in the Bakatue: he retreats into the Benya shrine house three weeks prior to the festival in order to propitiate the deity, emerging on the final Tuesday to lead a procession of Elmina dignitaries through the town to the bank of the lagoon, where he casts a net, ending the fishing ban. The Elmina king (*Edenahen*) also plays a prominent role in the procession and in the rituals involved in re-opening the lagoon to fishing.

For some years in the course of my research in the 19th-century "Elmina Journals" (the record of daily events kept by the Dutch governor) I had been intrigued by the fact that celebration of the Bakatue was recorded by the Dutch with regularity only from 1850; the earliest reference I have found dates from 1847.<sup>4</sup> Part of the mystery seemed to be solved by Nagtglas's 1860 description of the festival as "of a late date", i.e., of recent origin.<sup>5</sup> But the matter became more complex when I consulted Harvey Feinberg's dissertation on eighteenth-century Elmina. Feinberg cites an Elmina journal entry from June 1716 which recorded that the Elmina chiefs planned to recommence "a certain custom or rites concerning their gods" which they had been unable to perform since the late 17th century; during this "custom" there would be no fishing, no funeral obsequies, no firing of muskets, and no drumming.<sup>6</sup>

One way to reconcile these apparently conflicting references is to hypothesize that the public activities surrounding the "opening" of the lagoon to fishing - the procession, the casting of the net, etc. - may have begun only in the 1840s. In other words, the activities on the final Tuesday seem to have been "invented" as a public celebration involving the Benya *okomfo* and the Elmina political hierarchy to mark the end of what had been a long-standing practice of annual ritual prohibitions. Such a reading of the evidence is given additional weight when viewed against the documented rise to prominence of both the Benya *okomfo* and the *Edenahen* during the first half of the 19th century.

It is clear from records of the early 19th century that the position of the Elmina king was exceptionally weak.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, Dutch references to the Benya *okomfo* clearly placed him second in rank to the Ntona *okomfo*, who was held to be a descendant of the founder of Elmina. In 1836, in a dramatic conflict which arose over slaves seeking refuge at the Ntona shrine, Dutch soldiers forced their way into

the Ntona shrine house, arrested *okomfo* Kwamena Isa, and seized all those who served him.<sup>8</sup> He was subsequently banned from Elmina. The "invention" of the expressly public Bakatue may have marked Ntona's eclipse by Benya. Similarly, the prominent role of the *Edenahen* in the Bakatue symbolized the new-found prestige of the Elmina kingship, which had been achieved during the unprecedentedly peaceful and stable reign of Kwadwo Dsiewu (1831-63). Further research may help to refine the argument made here, but the key point would seem to be that historians should be alert to the fact that public festivals among the Akan, such as the Elmina Bakatue, have their own histories which merit our careful attention.

### Notes

1. "Inboorlingenrecht van de Kust van Guinea 1851", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, 88 (1931), 287-313. See R. Baesjou's discussion of this document in his "Dutch 'Irregular' Jurisdiction on the 19th Century Gold Coast", *African Perspectives* (Leiden, 1979), 2, 29.

2. "Gewoonten en kostumen der bewoners van de Goudkust, niet vermeld in het compendium van 's lands wetten en gebruiken", in: Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague (Dutch National Archives, hereafter ARA), Archief van het Ministerie van Koloniën 1850-1900, 956: *Verbaal*, dd. 25 June 1860, No. 22, enclosure: Nagtglas to Minister, dd. Elmina, 7 May 1860, No. 199.

3. E. J. P. Brown, *Gold Coast and Asianti Reader* (London, 1929), vol. II, 214-24; J. S. Wartemberg, *Sao Jorge d'El Mina: Premier West African European Settlement* (Ilfracombe, n.d.), 101-5.

4. I have recently rechecked the Elmina Journals for every July from 1829-71 (these may be found in ARA, Archief van de Nederlandsche Bezittingen ter Kuste van Guinea 359-70, and microfilm copies are deposited in the Herskovits Library of African Studies at Northwestern University). References to the "opening" of the Benya are found in 1847, 1850-9, 1861-2, 1866-7, 1869-70. In every reference but one, the event took place on a Tuesday in July; in 1859 it occurred on Tuesday, 2 August.

5. Nagtglas had arrived on the coast in 1851. In his account he also makes the interesting observation that the purpose of closing the lagoon to fishing was to conserve fish, which were spawning at this time of the year.

6. H. Feinberg, "Elmina, Ghana: A History of its Development and Relationship with the Dutch in the

Eighteenth Century", Ph.D. diss. (Boston University, 1969), 135.

7. For the rise of the Elmina kingship in the 18th century, see H. M. Feinberg, *Africans and Europeans in West Africa* (Philadelphia, 1989), 99-103.

8. ARA, Archief van het Ministerie van Koloniën 1814-49 1087: *Exh.* 1 April 1837, No.17: Verveer to Minister, dd. Elmina, 25 Dec. 1836, No. 9. See also Baesjou, "Dutch 'Irregular' Jurisdiction", 41-2

### Résumé

#### "Inventant la Tradition" en Elmina: Une Note sur la Fête bakatue

Un examen de l'évolution des traditions associées avec la fête religieuse (connue comme Bakatue) qui honore Benya, le dieu d'Elmina. Au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle les aspects publics de la fête ont été nettement mis en relief-- des changements qui reflètent le rôle plus important accordé à Benya ou à son prêtre. Rien qu'à observer cet aspect unique de l'histoire religieuse suggère que les historiens doivent être conscients du fait que les fêtes publiques parmi les Akan, par exemple le Bakatue d'Elmina, ont leurs propres histoires qui méritent une inspection soignée.

#### A Note on the Asante Resident as "Magistrate"

by  
Ivor Wilks  
Northwestern University

Kwadwo Akyampon was Asante resident in Elmina from 1822 until his death there ten years later. Yarak has discussed the nature of his duties, which included settling "such disputes as should be brought before him...."<sup>1</sup> In this note I draw attention to other evidence of this particular function, with reference to Kwaku Sakyi who was resident, in the early nineteenth century, first in Accra and then in Cape Coast.

The career of Kwaku Sakyi, also known as Sakyi Akomia, has been briefly outlined elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> To the best of my knowledge the first documented references to him date from the first decade of the nineteenth century. He was one of four Asante functionaries who, in 1808, promulgated a number of decrees in the Accra, Teshi and Labadi. The decrees had to do with curbing the use of the Asantehene's oaths, with making restoration and compensation the maximum penalties for theft, and with forbidding local shrines from affording a right of sanctuary to

runaway slaves. The four were then to proceed, for the same purpose, through the Adangme country as far as the Volta. The Danes were alarmed by this development, and succeeded in convincing themselves that the four were imposters.<sup>3</sup> They were, clearly, not. All held, or were to hold, important positions in the Asante administration on the Gold Coast.

Kwaku Sakyi, or Sakyi Akomia, was known to C. C. Reindorf, who had presumably spoken to Accras who remembered his residence in their town. Reindorf remarked that "all difficult cases among the Akras themselves were settled by a special commissioner from Kumase." He represents the Ga as agreeable to this arrangement. When one of their number, Kwame Ata, was accused of using language disrespectful to the Asantehene, Reindorf reports that "Saki Akomia of Akra was commissioned by the chiefs of Akra to bring him over to Kumase to be judged by the king." Interestingly, Kwame Ata was found innocent, and was allowed to return to Accra.<sup>4</sup>

The degree of specialization in the Asante administration was such that separate functionaries were assigned responsibility for the areas surrounding each of the three European trading companies operating there: Danish, Dutch and English. By a process of elimination we can be confident that Kwaku Sakyi exercised authority in "English" Accra.<sup>5</sup> From there he was promoted to the residency in Cape Coast, the English headquarters. He was transferred there by 1817 at the latest, when Akwa Amankwa had become "the Captain of English Accra."<sup>6</sup> Indeed, in November of that year the *Assiantijnsche Groot Vaandrig Quakoe Sekkie* (Asante Great Captain Kwaku Sakyi) travelled from Cape Coast to Dutch headquarters in Elmina. His business on that occasion was to obtain permission for Samuel Brew to set up a trading post at the abandoned Dutch lodge at Mouri, and from there organise a supply of guns and gunpowder for the Asantehene.<sup>7</sup> The following month William Hutchison, British consul in Kumase, had an audience with the Asantehene at which messengers "sent up by Sikie the Ashantee Captain at Cape Coast," appeared. The business had to do with British protests at a perceived insult to their "flag" by Kwame Butuakwa.<sup>8</sup>

Joseph Dupuis, British ambassador to Asante, arrived in Cape Coast in January 1819. "The Ashantee captain resident had been stationed by the king at Cape Coast," he noted, "and was considered there as the organ of his government." Rumours were rife that the Asante armies had suffered a

major defeat in their campaign against the Gyaman. The people of Cape Coast took "a sudden umbrage at the resident, whom they looked on as a spy or inspector over their actions." The sequel came a few months later. "The Captain resident, who was a young athletic man," wrote Dupuis,

was taken suddenly ill in the month of March, while this misunderstanding existed, and his death speedily ensued, not without a strong suspicion of poison, which, it was whispered, had been administered by a slave of the caboceer Aggry, a man who received pay from the [English] company, and who was upheld as a superior chief, and dignified with the title of King of the town.<sup>9</sup>

Dupuis does not name the resident, but the presumption is that he was Kwaku Sakyi. Certainly I know of no later reference to him in what is a well documented period. Dupuis, who did not leave Cape Coast for Kumase until 9 February 1820, reported that no successor to the Cape Coast residency had been appointed.

A short account of an event, which must have occurred during Kwaku Sakyi's tenure of office in Cape Coast, draws attention (as Reindorf did), to the Asante resident's role as magistrate. It was written by Captain J. Thursfield Pierce of the Cape Coast Militia, and published in a little known and privately printed work.<sup>10</sup> I reproduce it intact, for its intrinsic interest:

In 1818, a man named Tando Cudjoe, a respectable native of Cape Coast had been very much oppressed by the Ashantees, they having destroyed his plantation and obliged him to pay large sums of money under various pretences; after which some of their Chiefs, who were remaining at Cape Coast, having been applied to, to decide some difference between him and his Fantee brethren, unjustly decided against him, which completed his ruin. So confident was he of the injustice of their decision, which he supposed to have been effected by bribery and improper representations made by some of his own Chiefs; that in despair, he determined on taking the only means of revenge left in his power. Under pretence of again talking the palaver, he requested their attendance at his house, to which they consented. Previous to their arrival, he took the head out of a barrel of gun-powder, which he placed in the centre of the room in which they were to assemble, and after putting a piece of board across it, and throwing a cloth over the whole, he seated him-

self upon it, and waited their arrival, when all were assembled, and their attention taken up with the argument, he ordered a slave to bring him a fire-stick, as if to light his pipe (they being great smokers) and taking it from him, plunged it into the powder and blew the house, himself and enemies into the air together; two or three, however, escaped, one of whom was Aygery, the present King of Cape Coast, who had, on entering the room, placed himself near the window, and on perceiving Tando put the stick into the barrel, he threw himself out, and was lucky enough to get away with only a few bruises.

It must be assumed, in view of Dupuis' testimony, that Kwaku Sakyi either did not attend the retrial, or was another of those fortunate to have escaped.

### Notes

1. W. Yarak, *Asante and the Dutch 1744-1873* (Oxford, 1990) 44-45.
2. Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1975) 137-40, 147-49.
3. R. A. Kea, "Four Asante Officials in the South-East Gold Coast (1808)" in *Ghana Notes and Queries*, 11, 1970, 42-47.
4. C. C. Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast and Asante* (Basel, 1895) 177.
5. Wilks (1975) 138-39.
6. T. E. Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee* (London, 1819) 83.
7. Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague: NBKG 350, 28 and 29 Nov. 1817.
8. Public Record Office, London: T.70/41, 30 Dec. 1817.
9. Joseph Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee* (London, 1824) xi-xiv.
10. Charles Hulbert, *African Fragments* (Shrewsbury, 1826) 58-59.

### **Résumé**

Une note sur le résident Asante comme "Magistrat"

Une note biographique concernant Kwaku Sakyi, connu aussi comme Sakyi Akomia, un résident Asante officiel sur la Côte d'Or pendant le premier quart du dix-neuvième siècle. Les premières allusions documentées à cet homme datent de 1808, et indiquent qu'il était un des quatre fonctionnaires Asante travaillant à Accra et dans les environs; il existe des preuves qui suggèrent qu'il surveillait les intérêts Asante en Accra "anglais". Kwaku Sakyi a été transféré à la Côte Cap pas plus tard que 1817 où

il a servi comme Résident Asante. Selon le témoignage donné par Dupuis, il y est mort apparemment (peut-être empoisonné) à la fin de l'année 1819 ou au début de 1820.

concludes his study with an overview of the Muslim presence in Asante during the middle of the 19th century.

summarized by: Raymond A. Silverman, MSU

## SUMMARIES OF RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS

David Owusu-Ansah. *Islamic Talismanic Tradition in Nineteenth-Century Asante*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991. 252 page. 1 map, 3 plates, 57 figures, bibliography, index. \$65.00.

This is an enhanced revision of Owusu-Ansah's 1986 Ph.D. dissertation, "A Talismanic Tradition: Muslims in Early Nineteenth Century Kumase." The focus of his study is Cod. Arab. CCCII, a collection of Arabic manuscripts maintained in the Oriental Section of the Royal Library in Copenhagen. The collection, discovered in Copenhagen by Ray Kea in 1963 and subsequently examined by Nehemia Levtzion, contains a variety of documents, including letters of correspondence and magical formulae or prescriptions for the making of amulets. An analysis of the paper and the contents of the letters reveal that the documents were produced in the late-18th and early 19th century. Based on this and historical evidence pertaining to Danish activities on the Gold Coast during the first part of the 19th centuries, Owusu-Ansah conjectures that the collection of documents was captured from the Asante in a military campaign in 1826. Owusu-Ansah uses his analysis of the magical formulae in Cod. Arab. CCCII as a vehicle for studying the use of Islamic magico-religious paraphernalia and the role of the specialists who produced these charms and amulets in early 19th-century Asante.

The book's first chapter outlines the problem of establishing a provenance for the manuscripts contained in Cod. Arab. CCCII: where did they come from, who made them and when were they made? The next chapter offers a summary of beliefs and practices in the Muslim world relating to the production of magico-religious devices. The third chapter presents translations of some of the magical formulae contained in Cod. Arab. CCCII, and the fourth discusses the production of charms and amulets. The next chapter examines the use of these magico-religious devices in an Akan context; specifically their integration into the Asante worldview. Chapter 6 considers the role of Muslim merchant-clerics in early 19th-century Kumase. Owusu-Ansah

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