

GHANA STUDIES COUNCIL

Newsletter Number 14 Spring 2001

Chair's Remarks

By David Owusu-Ansah

I extend my thanks to all of our association members who attended the 43rd annual ASA meeting in Nashville TN. Special thanks to Akosua Adomako-Ampofo of the University of Ghana) and Rebecca Laumann (University of Memphis) for helping with the several travel grant applications we sent out. The African Studies Association Visiting Scholars Fund contributed to bringing Professor Francis Agbodeka's to participate in the GSC panel. The Spencer Foundation and Ghana Airways were also among our supporters. Certainly, it was a delight to have the presence of a sizeable contingent of our colleagues from Ghanaian universities. Professors Akilagpa Sawyerr (former Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana) and Agbodeka (former Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Letters at Cape Coast), and Dr. Mensah Pra (Department of Sociology at the University of Cape Coast) were contributors to the panel on the "State of Education in Ghana." Dr. Akosua Adomako-Ampofo (Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon) was organizer and chair of the panel. The second sponsored panel by GSC was on "Colonial Memories: History and Memory in Ghana and Togo." Sandra Greene (Cornell University), Dennis Laumann (University of Memphis), Lane Clark (Independent Filmmaker) and Emmanuel Akyeampong (Harvard University) were presenters. We

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are hopeful that several of these contributions will become future articles for our journal, *Ghana Studies*.

I was also very pleased to see so many of us at the Women's Caucus-sponsored panel on Yaa Asantewaa. Whilhemana Donkor (KNUST at Kumase), Linda Day (Hunter College), Jean Allman (Illinois at Urbana) and Ivor Agyeman-Dua (Journalist) presented on this panel. (See an update on Ivor Agyeman-Duah's report on the Yaa Asantewaa documentary in this issue of GSC Newsletter.)

For the November 2001 ASA conference at Houston, TX, Ghana Studies Council has submitted two panels. "Of trees, travelers and chiefs" will be a panel discussion of recent scholarship on the history of the timber industry, the current state of the tourism industry and a discussion the state of chieftaincy in Ghana. Dr. Irene Odotei (Director, Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana), Dr. Ofori Ansa of Howard University and Dr. Raymond Dummet at Purdue University did contribute toward the organization of the panel. Our second entry for the Houston conference will be a general overview type -- "Ghana at the beginning of the 21st century." I do thank Baffour Takyi (University of Akron) for doing much of the work that contributed to getting the panel together.

Finally, I take this opportunity to recognize Dr. David Killingray (Goldsmith College at the University of London) for the years he acted as our UK contact person. Dr. Paul

Nugent (History Department of University of Edinburgh) is our new UK representative and he has already proven to be as efficient as David was in the past years.

Again, let me remind GSC members that I am completing my fourth year as chair of our organization. Following the examples of the two previous GSC presidents, I plan to resign my position at the 2002 ASA. I have no doubt that there will be an excellent replacement.

Ghana Studies Update
by Larry Yarak, Editor

I am pleased to report that we are making good progress on getting our peer-reviewed journal on an appropriate publishing schedule. As most of you know, volume 2 was published in April of this year. A complete table of contents of that issue, as well as instructions on obtaining a subscription, may be found at the journal's web site:

http://people.tamu.edu/~yarak/ghana_studies.html

[Note that the web address has recently changed. Please update your bookmark.]

Also at the *Ghana Studies* web site you will find the table of contents for volume 3, a special collection of articles commemorating the Yaa Asantewaa War, one hundred years after it was fought. Guest-edited by Emmanuel Akyeampon, the issue is complete and should be available to subscribers in the fall.

Volume 4 should be available by the end of the year. It will include a fine set of four papers assembled by Birgit Meyer and Paul Nugent on the theme of "Moral Discourses and Public Spaces in the Fourth Republic."

Future issues will carry, among others, articles by Joseph Adjaye on Akan Libations, Stefano Boni on the precolonial history of the Sefwi Oman, and a collection of papers on the current state of education in Ghana, guest-edited by Akosua Adomako Ampofo. Editorial board member Amos Anyimadu is working on assembling a collection of papers analyzing Ghana's December 2000 national elections.

The editorial board and I welcome the submission of articles on any subject, which have Ghana as their focus. Detailed instructions regarding the preparation of manuscript submissions may be found at the *Ghana Studies* web site. Briefly, authors should send three hard copies of their paper, double-spaced throughout, including all reference matter, by postal mail to the editor:

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Electronic files should also be submitted, preferably sent as an email attachment to the editor at yarak@tamu.edu, prepared using either WordPerfect or MS Word word-processing programs -- either Macintosh or Windows format is acceptable. Maps should be submitted as camera-ready hard copy and preferably also as Adobe Illustrator-format electronic files. Any questions about the preparation of manuscript submissions should be directed to the editor.

Finally, I want to thank again the numerous Ghana scholars who have volunteered their time to report anonymously on the papers submitted to the journal. They ensure the high quality of what we publish.

Minutes
Ghana Studies Council Meeting
17 November 2000
Nashville, TN
African Studies Association Annual
Meeting

Opening

The Chairperson of the Ghana Studies Council, David Owusu-Ansah, opened the meeting at approximately 11:10 am.

Chairman's Remarks

The Chair welcomed those who were in attendance. Membership forms were distributed for renewal of membership and a sheet was passed around for those who needed to update their e-mail addresses.

Minutes of last year's meeting were then approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Members were reminded that checks for membership for 2001 are still being accepted and should be made out to the "University of Minnesota" until June 1, 2001. Thereafter there is hope of opening an account in GSC's name in Illinois. This will make it easy for dues to be written out directly to GSC in the future.

The London account currently contains £330.00. David Killingray also announced that he would be resigning. Paul Nugent was nominated to serve as the next treasurer, managing the London/Britain account.

It was reported (in the absence of the U. S. Treasurer) that GSC U.S. account currently has a surplus, even though it was not possible to report the exact dollar amount. It was also

noted that the funds are not accumulating interest. It was hoped, however, that the financial laws in the State of Illinois might allow the GSC to open, after June 1, 2001, a different type of account than what has been possible in Minnesota (where the funds are currently being held). This might allow the GSC to obtain a better interest rate on the funds being held.

Some funds were used in the past to help with the cataloguing of the CSO files at the National Archives of Ghana.

Monies are still available to help subsidize attendance at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association by Ghanaian graduate students studying in the U.S. To date there have been few applicants for this assistance.

It was also noted that the GSC would need a new Chairperson as David Owusu-Ansah's term is coming to an end next year. He advised that anyone who assumes the position should seek financial support from their department to cover paper and printing cost associated with the production of the newsletter since these costs if not subsidized could quickly wipe out any surplus.

Agenda Items/Announcements

1. The Chair reviewed an item that appeared in the last issue of the newsletter. This item expressed concern about fees imposed by the University of Ghana Office of the Dean for International Programs on summer programs for overseas students.

David Owusu-Ansah met with the Dean of International Programs last June (2000) at Legon. The Dean, who has just read the GSC Newsletter report of studies abroad fee at the University, expressed concern about what he considered to be a

misinformation in the newsletter and set out to make the necessary correction. The Dean (whose letter was read aloud) indicated that the fees were imposed not by himself, but rather by the University of Ghana Board of Trustees. He also indicated that no department at the University of Ghana was authorized to charge fees therefore the fees being imposed by the Dean's Office were not being demanded at the expense of fees that would normally go to the departments that host overseas students in summer programs.

Discussion followed. It was noted that the Institute of African Studies has always operated its programs on its own, but it was also observed that some departments at the University of Ghana did charge their own fees.

It was suggested that perhaps the Ghana Studies Council might write to the Dean to ask that some arrangement be made with the relevant departments on the distribution of program fees. Concern was also expressed that the Ghana Studies Council might not want to involve itself as an organization in this matter. Faculty at the ASA from the University of Ghana mentioned that a new dean of International Programs has been appointed and advised that new lines of communication be opened for further clarification on the issue.

The decision was to table the matter for the time being.

2. It was announced that the National Archives of Ghana (NAG) and the regional archives would like to start a research library of reference materials (articles and books) that use the archival materials located at NAG and its regional branches.

GSC members were requested to send or take with them such materials and to deposit them with the NAG, which has set aside a special room for such materials.

3. After the sheet with updated e-mail addresses had circulated, it was suggested that the e-mail addresses of the members should be published on the organization's web site only after receiving permission from the individual members to do so.

It was agreed that permission from individual members would be sought via the newsletter. The purpose for interest to publish the membership list at the web site is for quick identification of research interest areas. This is the alternative for creating a database of research areas as some members have requested.

4. Ideas were solicited for panels for the 2001 annual meeting of the ASA. The following topics were suggested:
 - a. Clothing and Dress (Jean Allman)
 - b. Chieftancy, Governance and Development (Irene Odotei)
 - c. History of the Asante Kings (Larry Yarak)
 - d. Ghana at the Turn of the 21st Century (Baffour Takyi)
 - e. Contemporary Ghanaian Diaspora (Kwasi Kwakye-Nuako)
 - f. Ghana Chiefs and Queens in America/American Chiefs and Queens of Ghana (Joe Amoako)
 - g. Ghanaian Literature (Kwawisi Tekpetey).

The deadline for submission to the Ghana Studies Council Executive Committee is February 1, 2001. GSC is allowed two sponsored panels. Chair will select the first two panels to be completed (organizers must submit complete

abstracts to Chair no later than the deadline).

5. The most recent issue of *Ghana Studies* (the volume for 1999) is currently in press. The table of contents can be found on the GSC web site. It was noted that the thematic organization for this issues (which involved as well a guest editor) worked very well. Members will receive this issue later than usual, however, for reasons that were out of the control of the editor.

It was noted that the first volume of the *Ghana Studies* had been sent out even though some had yet to pay for it. How to let people know whether they have paid or not will be addressed once the accounts have been received from the Managing Editor, David Henige.

Larry Yarak, Editor of *Ghana Studies* noted that to date the journal has included more articles on history than any other discipline. He encouraged non-historians in particular to submit articles for publication.

6. Members expressed interest in addressing some of the practical problems faced by the educational institutions in Ghana. Ideas included publishing regularly in the newsletter information about how best to send books. Kwasi Kwakye-Nuako (Howard University) volunteered to organize ideas about additional projects (for example, how to make journals available to those who don't have access to them). Those interested can contact him at the Department of Religion at Howard.
7. Two new books published in Ghana were available in limited quantities for purchase at the annual meeting:

- a. Dorcas Coker Appiah and Kathy Cusack, eds., *Violence Against Women and Children in Ghana*.

The book can also be obtained by contacting the following e-mail address: gencent@its.com.gh

- b. Fredericka Dodson and Wilhemina Donkoh, *The Just King: Osei Kwame Asibe Bonsu*

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:30pm.

GHANA STUDIES COUNCIL (GSC) LAUNCHED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA (LEGON)

GSC member, Amos Anyimadu of the Department of Political Science at the University of Ghana, and Takyiwaa Manuh, also GSC member and Deputy Director of the Institute of African Studies (Legon), were instrumental in organizing a formal launching of Ghana Studies Council last summer at Legon. Amos reported of the Open Lecture that GSC (Legon) sponsored. Gareth Austin was in Ghana at the time and graciously agreed to make a presentation. Gareth has allowed us to reproduce his paper as part of this year's Newsletter. On behalf of Ghana Studies Council, I extend our appreciation to Amos and Takyiwaa for an excellent representation of GSC International. For further information on the summer open lecture, contact Amos Ayimadu: amos@cti.dtu.dk. Telephone: 024 379 024 , 510515:

Under the distinguished auspices of **His Excellency Dr. Peter Alexander Schweizer, Ambassador of Switzerland to Ghana** and also author of *Survivors on the Gold Coast: The Basel Missionaries in Colonial Ghana*,

the Ghana Studies Council presents an Open Lecture:

Speaker: Dr. David Dorward, Director, African Research Institute, La Trobe University, Australia.

Topic: Business in the Gold Coast: A Unique Perspective on the Life and Times of an F. and A. Swanzy Chief Agent.

Paper for Seminar at African Security Dialogue & Research, Paper read as part of GSC Launching Activities at North Legon, Ghana, 28 July 2000

AGRICULTURAL INTENSIFICATION AND CONFLICT IN GHANA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN SECURITY

by

Gareth Austin, Department of Economic History, London School of Economics (g.m.austin@lse.ac.uk)

NOTE: This paper is an informal one, without full references, and was written in part while I have been on archival work without full access to libraries.

Preface

The aim of this paper is to offer an economic history perspective on the proposition that increasing scarcity of cultivable land leads to violent conflict between and within local communities, from fighting over village boundaries to large-scale civil war.

But first let me say that it is a privilege and a pleasure both to be back at Legon and to be speaking at this impressive new center. Let me also say that I am in no sense a security expert. Rather, my perspective is that of an academic economic historian. In seeking to identify patterns of long-term change in resource scarcities, the possible risks they

entail for conflicts between and within local communities and states, and the choices they present to successive generations, I hope that the following reflections can contribute to your discussions.

My own work is at two different geographical and, as a result, methodological levels. My detailed primary-source research is on the economic history of southern Ghana, especially Asante, in the 19th and 20th centuries. On the other hand, I have begun to do more work at a survey and comparative level. In doing so I seek to place Ghana in a broad West African and even Sub-Saharan framework.

This short position paper has five main sections. The first is intended to establish the proposition that a historic transition is under way, in Ghana and in Sub-Saharan Africa generally, from relative land abundance to relative land scarcity. The second highlights the questions that this raises for human security. The third outlines three of the main ways in which communities and states have responded to land scarcities in African history. The fourth considers the implications of these responses for promoting or avoiding violent conflict. The fifth sketches some policy conclusions.

1. Observation: the long-term (and currently far from complete) transition to land scarcity

In the very long term, one of the most fundamental transitions in Sub-Saharan history must be that from being a region generally characterised - in economic terms - by a relative abundance of cultivable land in relation to the co-operating factors of labour and capital to the opposite. For most Sub-Saharan economies have been characterised historically by a surplus of land, in the economic sense that, with the technologies in use at any given time,

expansion of output has not been constrained by the supply of cultivable land (e.g. Hopkins 1973). There have long been exceptions in various areas at particular periods, and a full analysis would incorporate complications arising from seasonality and capital formation. But as a generalisation, as John Iliffe highlighted in his synthesis of African history, the proposition applies strongly until recently (Iliffe 1995).

Land surpluses were reduced in some areas by the expansion of export agriculture during the twentieth century, while in others the benefits of relatively-abundant land were denied to the majority populations by colonial or white-minority regimes which appropriated land for European settlers. Outside the settler colonies, notably in much of West Africa, a major source of increasing pressure on natural resources during the colonial period, and in some countries since, was the spread of export agriculture. But overall, the main motor of growing pressure on land has been the rapid growth of population. In most of the region, population has been rising almost continuously since the end of the world influenza pandemic of 1918 at the latest; and the process accelerated after 1945.

Even now, it must be emphasized that the transition is very far from complete. Large parts of rural Africa, most spectacularly in Sudan and in the Congo Democratic Republic are still 'land surplus' in the economic sense. Even in a relatively densely populated area heavily involved in farming for export and domestic markets, southwestern Nigeria, there are apparently still localities in which the supply of cultivable land is not a constraint on expansion of output (Akinola 1995). Moreover, the growth of population in the sub-region as a whole seems to have begun to slacken from the 1980s onwards, and only partly because of the tragedy of AIDS, though the growth rate of population remains closer to 3% than to 2% per year

(World Bank 1998: 325). This very day the newspapers are reporting the provisional results of the latest census of Ghanaian population, which indicates that the growth rate here has slackened slightly to 2.5% a year, because fertility has dropped slightly more than the continuing decline in mortality. Despite the slackening, the overall trend is clearly towards a general scarcity of land in Ghana and probably in most of the continent at some point: probably before the middle of the twenty-first century.

It is important to add that it is not only the quantity of land that matters, but also the quality: its specific potentials and limitations. A vivid example is the fact that most of the commercially valuable land in Ghana, at least in the context of market demands as they were in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is in the forest zone of the south rather than in the northern savanna. I examine this in detail in a book manuscript I am currently trying to complete. I think it is useful to introduce here the concept of 'forest rent'. Its originator, the French economist François Ruf, defined the term in the specific context of cocoa production: as the difference in the cost of producing a given quantity of cocoa by planting 'after forest clearance' as against 'by replanting on fallow land or after felling of the first plantation', the difference being a function of diminution in these 'agronomic benefits' (Ruf 1995: 6-7; see, further, Clarence-Smith and Ruf 1996). In the book manuscript I extend the term, defining 'broad forest rent' as all the non-renewable productive assets provided by (in this case, as I was working on Asante) the Asante forest zone. This includes (as it happens) gold deposits and spontaneously-planted kola, rubber and 'timber' trees (the 'forest rent' in the latter three cases would be defined exactly as with cocoa). Over the last two centuries, and especially in the twentieth with cocoa and massive population growth, much of this 'broad forest rent' has been depleted, and the

process goes on. To be sure, fertility may be restored after it has been depleted: but at a cost.

2. Why the transition to land-scarcity matters

The possible importance of this transition can be highlighted by observing that much of the historiography and comparative anthropology on precolonial Africa seeks to relate some of the widespread characteristics of the region's economic, social, cultural and political arrangements to land abundance and labor scarcity: from choice of technique in agriculture, through diverging inheritance and social approval of mothers who give birth to many children, to fiscal constraints on state formation - it was hard to extract a surplus from the direct producers when they could easily move on and out of the potential ruler's control (a classic pair of references is Goody 1971, 1976). In particular, low population densities can be seen as conducive to a major conflict-reducing element in pre-colonial history: the welcome which existing holders of land in Ghana and elsewhere tended to give newcomers (on condition that the latter recognized the prior and paramount claim of the former), and the relatively permeable definitions of many ethnic identities.

Conversely, intensifying pressure on land is often seen as not only transforming the economics of choice of agricultural technique in favor of more labor and/or capital-intensive techniques, aimed at raising output per unit area rather than output per unit of labor - but also as a major source of conflict within and between local communities. Even in pre-colonial contexts there are occasional examples of this. In the literature on southeast Africa the period of intense warfare in southeast Africa in the early nineteenth century, during which the Zulu kingdom emerged, has been interpreted as at one level - among several - a response to intense local

pressure on pastoral land (Guy 1980, Gump 1989). If this argument is true, this case is thus the 'exception that proves the rule' about the conflict-reducing character of land abundance most of the time in most of pre-colonial Africa.

It is clear that growing pressure on land has been and is an important element in many local disputes which have led to occasional episodes of violence over the last quarter-century: ranging geographically from clashes between pastoral Maasai and sedentary Kikuyu settlers in Kenya to recent clashes in parts of Nigeria (e.g. Egwu 1998). Admittedly, Paul Richards has argued very strongly against the claim that the Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars were the result of Malthusian pressure. As he puts it, 'Both countries face environmental problems but *not* environmental crises' (Richards 1996: 115). This is a useful distinction, though one that is not always easy to make in practice, given that 'problems' may be contributory causes even when - as usual - they are not sufficient.

In neo-Malthusian terms the extreme example is Rwanda and Burundi where, it has been argued, desperate and mounting over-crowding of agricultural land has contributed to the process of political polarization on ethnic lines over the decades. Particularly significant as evidence of the salience of the land issue is Andre and Platteau's finding that the victims of the 1994 Rwandan massacres included not only Tutsis plus Hutu members of opposition political parties, but also Hutu peasants killed apparently by fellow-Hutus from the same local community. In an admittedly small sample, a third of these seem to have been killed because of resentments related to their possession of relatively large land-holdings (Andre and Platteau 1998, pp. 39-41). More generally, it is extremely hard to avoid the conclusion that the extremity of the growing

pressure on land contributed to the escalation of violent conflict in the 1990s in both Rwanda and Burundi.

But large-scale fighting or killing is far from being the only kind of outcome from resource conflicts. Let us consider some of the various ways in which communities and states have responded historically to resource stresses in the sub-region.

3. Political (or political-economy) responses to resource stresses

One is peaceful migration. For example, the late Marion Johnson suggested that many towns in southern Ghana relocated at least once during their pre-colonial history, often in response to a local degradation of the environment such as the water supply having become polluted or the soil-fertility of the lands in convenient proximity to the town becoming exhausted (Johnson 1981).

A second is the development of a market in land use rights. I consider this issue at length in the book manuscript but don't have time to pursue it in this presentation, except to make two points. One is that a political authority is usually required to enforce the property rights concerned. Second, the state may or may not do so, or may do so only to some extent. In Asante the colonial state defended individual cocoa farmers' ownership of trees that they had planted, and allowed them to mortgage and even sell them. It also allowed stools to charge non-subjects rent ('tribute') on the produce of cocoa farms established on stool land. But the colonial government firmly rejected attempts by various chiefs, early this century, to impose rent on their own subjects. It is interesting to note that, in terms of neoclassical economics, it could be argued that this was a mistake: because it meant that subjects could enjoy participation in the forest rent, thereby depleting the resource legacy for future generations, without having to pay for

it. It is worth noting that during 1938-46 the making or extension of cocoa farms was actually banned in Asante, by the Ashanti Confederacy Council: though not because of soil exhaustion per se, but rather because of fear that there would not be enough land to grow the foodstuffs to feed the expanding population.

A third way in which communities could respond to resource scarcity was by using the coercive power of the state to impose a monopoly for its own subjects. In a sense, the Asante kingdom did exactly this by the early nineteenth century, in that it took control over a very large proportion of the gold and kola resources of the Ghanaian forest zone. Outsiders were generally excluded from participation as principals in the enjoyment of the 'broad forest rent'. This principle was basically maintained during the colonial period, albeit by now within reduced boundaries, in that the colonial state supported the Asante chiefs (or most of them) in preserving Asante ownership of the land. Outsiders were now allowed to farm for themselves, but only at relatively high rents, which few of those could afford: especially those from the cash-poor north. The effect of this monopoly was to increase the market value of the 'forest rent' of the Asante environment. It helped to enable Asante farmers to acquire northern labor, while it was initially impossible, and later hard, for northerners to access the Asante lands as farm owners in their own right.

4. Peaceful solutions or violent conflicts?

Having identified three of the main kinds of communal or state response to scarcities of cultivable land, whether in general or of particularly valuable land, let us now reflect on the potential for conflict.

The peaceful migration or, in the case of towns, re-location, option clearly has clearly

become much more rare as land surpluses have diminished. As land becomes more valuable, by definition the opportunity cost (the cost of the opportunity foregone) of being generous with it rises. Land may still be made accessible to non-citizens, but at increased cost. Moreover, it has often become harder to be accepted as a citizen. For ethnic identities may themselves be redefined in response to pressure on land. For example, Stefano Boni argues that in Sefwi-Wiawso, in the western region of Ghana, growing land scarcity (from the spread of cocoa cultivation as well as population growth) led to profound changes in communal identity during the twentieth century. Whereas previous strangers were assimilated, including being given land and junior political offices, from the 1950s they were defined as 'strangers' (however long they had lived there, and even if they claimed some Sefwi ancestry), excluded from local office and made to pay for their lands. In 1986 the local government authorities sent 'Sefwi' villagers to evict 'strangers', resulting in some local violence. Thus, according to Boni, rather than the fight over land reflecting ancient ethnic divisions, the growing value of land had prompted a redefinition of local ethnic identity to exclude as many as possible of what were now regarded as foreigners. In this case the central government intervened to resolve the issue by legislating to facilitate land title registration and to remove land issues from the jurisdiction of chiefs' courts: giving the stranger-farmers effective security of tenure (Boni 1999).

Markets in land in some form have appeared in response to growing land scarcity in various parts of Africa, including Rwanda: though the sales there often seem to have been made outside (indeed, against) the law (Andre and Platteau 1998: 19-20). A controversial policy question is whether the state should proceed to register individual plots, to enhance security of tenure and

thereby reduce the risk and cost of land sales. The extreme political sensitivities would make this enormously difficult: certainly no land registration scheme imposed by a government that is perceived as representing only Tutsis or only Hutus would be stable in the long term - unless maintained by force. Yet, for what it is worth, my reading of the Rwanda literature is that the case for land titling there is not economic but political. For there are serious economic objections: namely that in Africa indigenous land tenure systems have proved generally to be efficient in adapting to changing factor ratios; and that in the specific case of Rwanda and Burundi the very small size of most of the plots means that the transactions costs of the reform itself would exceed the efficiency gains in the short and even medium terms (Andre and Platteau 1998; cf. Platteau 1996). But it could be argued that if there is ever to be a genuine and durable peace settlement, property rights will have to be an element in it: otherwise land will recur as a divisive issue. Specifically, such a settlement would need to guarantee that neither side got everything it asked for and that each side got something.

As for resource monopolies, unequal access to resources does not always lead to violent conflict. In the case of savanna-dwellers' access to the 'broad forest rent' of southern Ghana, and specifically Asante, this may have been partly because the monopoly (or at least its effects) has been progressively eased during much of the twentieth century. Following the prohibition of domestic slavery in Asante in 1908, and with the adoption of cocoa cultivation (already under way, since c.1900), there was a shift from people of northern origin working as captive labor in Asante to working instead as free wage laborers. It is interesting to note that the shift from annual wage contracts to sharecropping (*abusa*) terms in the cocoa farm labor market in Asante in the 1930s-40s was the result of

increased bargaining power of northern labor (Austin 1987).

Thus northern laborers gradually increased their share of the 'broad forest rent'. Ironically, it is not in Ghana but in Côte d'Ivoire, where the late President Houphoët-Boigny liberally encouraged people from the north of the country and from Burkina Faso to come and farm for themselves in the cocoa and coffee belt, that the politics of migrant labor have become extremely sensitive politically. As far as I understand it, the issue is the status of the 'adopted' Ivoirians, perhaps one-third of the population, who entered the country (primarily from Burkina) to participate in, and contribute to, the economic expansion of earlier decades.

Finally, let us remember that the economic implications of a higher labor-land ratio do not have to be bad: on the contrary, Ester Boserup's celebrated claim that demographic pressure is the mother of higher total-factor productivity (the ratio of output to the sum of factor inputs) is borne out in a Kenyan case-study (Tiffen and Mortimore 1994; Tiffen 1995).

5. Policy implications

Let me sketch the main implications for policy of the preceding discussion. When it comes to attempting negotiated settlements of existing intractable impasses, as in Rwanda, it may well be necessary eventually for governments to adopt policies that are sub-optimal economically, at least in the short term, in order to improve the chances of long-term social and political cohesion.

On the problem of how to avoid or ameliorate future conflicts, the following points should be made. First, land is not yet scarce everywhere: an Africa-wide prescription about the implications of population pressure

on land is no substitute for country or even provincial-level assessments. Second, where land scarcity is already, or is fast becoming, a reality there are some general implications for economic policy. The aim of raising total factor productivity is insufficient: it is crucial that this be done, as far as possible, through labor intensive rather than labor-saving technologies. Indeed, a capital-intensive 'green revolution' could lead to even greater concentration of population in the towns, making urban employment the sole means of creating a productive basis for the social integration of most of the property-less. As it happens the original 'green revolution' methods, Asian or Mexican-style, were rarely applied successfully south of the Sahara apparently partly because they tended to be land-saving in what were still generally land-surplus areas. This obstacle to diffusion may be less serious in future: though there remains the problem that these technologies have tended to require relatively substantial capital inputs. Third, the need to raise off-farm income opportunities is ever more urgent: partly because of the land transition but also because of the existing widespread urban underemployment. The provision of regular employment or self-employment opportunities appears to have benefits in terms of increasing personal satisfaction and reducing the potential for social conflict that go beyond the income effect.

Conclusion

This talk has been an attempt to offer a historical perspective on a long-term transition in resource availability, which may be of profound importance for human security as well as for several other key aspects of social life in the sub-region. Overall, my position is that land scarcity is never a sufficient condition for violent conflict, but that it is often an important contributory one. Thus the argument here is not deterministic: there are choices, but the devil is in the detail.

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Professor S. T. Addo To GSC on Studies Abroad at the University of Ghana, Legon

Dear Dr. Owusu-Ansah,
RE – POLICY OF DEAN OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

My attention has been drawn to deliberate misinformation in your Newsletter No. 13 pertaining to a so called imposition of a \$2,000 fee by the Dean on all summer programs conducted at the University.

I can confirm that the University of Ghana has imposed a fee of \$2,000 on each summer program run in the University each year. Please note that no individual officer in any decently managed university imposes fees on anybody. Boards and Committees administer our university.

Let me also draw your attention to the fact that no unit or department in the university is currently permitted to levy any charges on anybody in respect of summer programs. All summer programs are supposed to be managed or co-ordinated from this office. The \$2,000 fee charged by the university excludes stipends paid to Ghanaian Faculty hired as Guest Lecturers on all summer programs.

Kindly bring above information to the notice of your members.

With kindest regards.
Sincerely
Prof. S. T. Addo, Ph.D.
Dean

**AN ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP
THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
& KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY
Information submitted to GSC by Dan
Paracka (Assistant Director)**

The signing in March 1999 of the linkage agreement between Kennesaw State University and the University of Cape Coast inaugurated comprehensive bilateral relationships between the two institutions, and multilateral relationships that have included other institutions in West Africa and in the University System of Georgia. The following description emphasizes three important aspects of this relationship: Grant Activities, Study Abroad, and Faculty Exchange.

Instructional Technology Training for Basic Education in Ghana

This project is funded by the Association Liaison Office for University Cooperation in Development (ALO), and has been designated as a partnership activity under the auspices of President Clinton's Education for Democracy and Development in Africa (EDDI). The \$133,000.00 instructional technology project brought eight Ghanaian educators to Georgia in November 2000 and another eight will visit in 2001. For the project, Kennesaw is the leading institution of a consortium of seven university systems of Georgia schools. The goals of this project are as follows:

- a) Provide instructional technology training to faculty and staff of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast (UCC) so that they become supertrainers.
- b) Assist the supertrainers as they conduct training sessions for their colleagues and students at UCC, and selected teachers currently serving in schools in Ghana.

- c) Establish an Instructional Technology Training Center (ITTC) at UCC; Print manuals and guide books on instructional technology and distribute these to schools in Ghana.

The Instructional Technology Training for Basic Education in Ghana Grant proposal grew in part out of two earlier grants funded by the "Global Partnerships Program" of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The first was funded in 1999 and served to link a consortium of four higher education institutions in Georgia with three higher education institutions in West Africa. It supported workshops that helped the partner institutions assess needs and possible areas of collaboration. The second Global partnerships project facilitated further collaboration and focused on the development of educational curriculum among member institutions through faculty exchange in the respective Colleges of Education.

Study Abroad

The grant is only the latest proof that Kennesaw States' linkage with the University of Cape Coast (UCC) in Ghana is a highly productive one. This past summer Dr. Adebayo led a group of fifteen students from across the University System of Georgia on a five-week study abroad program to UCC. The students not only learned about Ghana but also learned much about themselves.

Editorial Comments: The Kennesaw experience at the University of Cape Coast is further evidence of the interests and willingness of academic institutions in Ghana to support study abroad programs. For example, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is visiting the University of Science and Technology in Kumase this summer. The Tamale Institute for Cross-Cultural studies also announced

summer programs in last year's newsletter. Several summer studies organizers have also conducted non-university affiliated summer programs in Ghana. Furthermore, in addition to the various housing arrangements found in Ghana, it has come to my attention that the CIEE affiliated Student and Youth Travel Organization (SYTO) has opened its youth hostel in Accra. In other words, the opportunities available for conducting successful summer programs for students in Ghana are increasing to meet the varying goals and objectives of universities and program organizers.

FORD FOUNDATION: Special Initiative for Africa

Ghana Studies Council member Akwasi Aidoo, Ford Foundation West African Representative, has been made the organization's Director for Special Initiative for Africa. Akwasi's appointment takes effect on 1 November 2001.

In the memo announcing the new position, the Ford Foundation described the special initiative as an organization-wide "effort to support uniquely African continental responses to issues of peace and conflict, identity and citizenship and regional integration." The initiative, is expected to begin with an "incubation phase" to be based in New York during which time much attention would be applied to "planning, grantmaking and convening of key institutions working in Africa." Ultimately, it is anticipated that the initiative will become an "independent African-based Foundation or Fund, which provides effective stewardship of resources generated by a lasting endowment."

Those of us, who have known Akwasi Aidoo since the Cape Coast University days, are sure that he will do an excellent job. Please

join me to extend Ghana Studies Council's best wishes to him and to the Ford Foundations.

Dear Ghana Studies Council Members:

A Call From the National Archives of Ghana

The National Archives of Ghana, now known as the Public Records and Archives Administration Department, is in the process of creating a Research library at its headquarters in Accra. The intent is to establish an interdisciplinary collection of books, dissertations, theses and articles that reflect the kind of top-notch research undertaken by scholars at the archives. It will provide visitors to the archives -- students, scholars and others -- with easy access to secondary research materials on site.

You are encouraged to send copies of articles, monographs, theses, etc, which are the product of your work in the National Archives in Accra or in any of its regional branches, to:

A.K. Mensah
Chief Records Officer
Archives Division
PRAAD
PO Box 3056
Accra, West Africa.

We thank you, in advance, for your support and generosity.
Signed: Jean Allman

ATTENTION ALL GSC MEMBERS:
“BOOKS TO BALME LIBRARY”

After our discussions at the last GSC meeting regarding the critical state of Balme Library at the University of Ghana, the Council is

initiating a project -BOOKS TO BALME. During the first stage of this project we are asking ALL GSC MEMBERS, particularly those resident outside Ghana, to please send any and all of the following to Balme Library: copies of books you have published, offprints of articles, copies of theses and dissertations, extra copies of recent books (since 1985) of particular relevance to your discipline.

As many of you know, there is an appalling shortage of recent literature at the Library, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. If each of us takes the time to send what we can, we can make a big difference collectively. So, please take a moment to send your contributions to:

A. K. Martey
Acting Librarian
Balme Library
University of Ghana
Legon, GHANA

If you have any questions or concerns re: mailing or shipping, please contact Jean Allman at jallman@uiuc.edu. For questions re: the library's holdings, please e-mail balme@libr.ug.edu.gh.

YAA ASANTEWAA: THE MAKING OF AN INTERNATIONAL TV DOCUMENTARY AN AUTO-REVIEW
by Ivor Agyeman-Duah

The Making the Yaa Asantewaa Documentary raises two inquiries. The first is the excitement I felt about the project but more importantly, I was more overwhelmed by undetermined possibilities as I traveled with a TV crew within Ghana and across the Indian Ocean to the Seychelles Islands. The other could be my research into this production and new findings or interpretation. Since I do not know which is more important then the other, I will talk about both.

Yaa Asantewaa, as the documentary is called, is in two versions. The footages are of interviews with experts on nineteenth century Asante, scenes and historical monuments within Asante, Elmina Castle and Seychelles Islands.

Part One is called “Asantemanso: Praises to the Empire Builders.” It starts with some shots at Asantemanso, the sacred village where it is believed the Asantes first descended from heaven by a golden chain. Thus, Asantemanso was an early settlement that played an important role in the development of Asante. It also examines the role of nineteenth century Asante women such as Akyaawa Yikwan, royal of Akorase and Oheneba to Asantehene Osei Kwadwo whose important profile was first constructed by Ivor Wilks. It also examines the geographical boundaries, political situation and how Nana Prempeh became Asantehene after the civil war of the 1880s.

Part Two, “Yaa Asantewaa: The Men Died at the Battlefield,” is a detailed profile of Yaa Asantewaa from birth to death. It shows the family house at Edweso, interviews with her descendants, her actual role in the war and her later conversion to Christianity in the Seychelles Islands. Here Prof. Adu Boahen guides us through a revealing and new interpretation.

Part Three is titled “The Golden Stool: From The Avernus We Rise.” In this, we are told the stories of how four Asante chiefs committed matricide so that the Golden Stool and the Kingdom would live. Bishop Peter Akwasi Sarpong leads us and thinks the Golden Stool has the same significance as the Adam and Eve myth in the Bible or the importance of the Ciboria in the Tabernacle.

Part Four is “Seychelles: Bondage of Exile.” It covers a voyage I made to the Seychelles

Islands in early January 2000 in search of the past and the discovery of the wooden stool and kudoku, property of King Prempeh left there. It is in the possession of a Seychellois of Indian ancestry; there are footages of the house where King Prempeh lived; his descendants still living on the Island and the cemetery where some of them were buried as well as interviews with Government officials.

The last part is an epilogue titled “Asante: Today's Present is Tomorrow's Past.” It has an interview with the Asantehene Otumfuo Osei Tutu II and a look at commerce, economy, education and the future of Asante.

In this documentary, I employed the services of distinguish scholars whose pioneering work centered on nineteenth century Asante. Acknowledgement is given in the credit list.

Yaa Asantewaa is an independent TV production. It had the technical support of Film Africa Limited and TV 3 in Accra and the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation in Victoria.

After raising about one-tenth of the budget from local companies and hotels in return for adverts in the documentary, I had to go into co-production with T.V.3 if the documentary was to come out at all. When I started working on this in July 1999, I thought I could finish it for the centenary celebration in June 2000. Though I could not, the companion book did and received favorable reviews in the Ghana and Seychelles media.

One might ask did the production bring different interpretation or finding than previously known? Yaa Asantewaa’s does not have a popular appeal in the Seychelles Islands as King Prempeh. For me this is interesting. The centenary in Ghana was dominated with her achievements as war leader. About 95 percent of media coverage of activities reflected on her. Little was said

about Nana Agyeman Prempeh and the fact that his preference for exile was strategic and not fear.

Before the celebration in Kumasi, I was in Seychelles and the story there was different. They were feverishly preparing for September -- the centenary of the landing of Nana Prempeh on the Island in September 1900. I carried with me a letter and a gift from Asantehene Osei Tutu II to President Rene and plans were in progress for the Asantehene to visit the Islands last September. The invitation from the Buckingham Palace blocked such a historic visit.

Few people, apart from researchers, know of Yaa Asantewaa in Seychelles. The name Prempeh is much respected. I was staying at a hotel when the few remnants of Prempeh visited and asked that I pack my baggage for their beautiful home. They do not know much about Yaa Asantewaa but everything about Prempeh.

For me, the stories of Prempeh and Yaa Asantewaa is one but told in two different tales. Is it a question of historians not telling us the whole story or the listeners judge and pick their own heroes? I do not know but I know that not much popular history had been written about events from the 1880s to the 1920s. In the course of the documentary, I did a lot of research in villages and within the Kumasi metropolis with Prof. Adu Boahen to fill in basic inquiries for public enlightenment.

One fact is, the British distorted the image of the Asante prisoners before the prisoners got to the Islands. They were painted as savages and uncivilized. The people were made to believe that the exile was only a break to continual savagery. Presenting Yaa Asantewaa as leader of a war or in the light of heroism was to cancel the savage label. Also,

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because of her old age, not much attention was given her.

In the Seychelles archives, records show that when Prempeh left in 1924, he took the bones of the dead (including Yaa Asantewaa) to Kumasi. The bones were given to the families for re-burial. At the centenary celebration in Kumasi, there was the big question of Yaa Asantewaa's bones. Some of these questions are what the documentary attempts to answer.

Please Note:

The production of the Yaa Asantewaa Documentary has been completed and has premiered at the Public Affairs Section of the United States Embassy in Accra, Ghana. For now, interested individuals and institutions can purchase the package of five episodes plus the two companion books and the cost of postage at \$100.00. Please make checks payable to IVOR AGYEMAN-DUAH and send the request to P. O. Box CT 3903, Cantoments, Accra, Ghana, West Africa. You can also contact Ivor Agyeman-Duah at his **E-mail: ivor@hotmail.com**

BOOK REVIEW

**Review of Birgit Meyer's *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* by Sandra E. Greene
Cornell University**

In this outstanding study of the encounter between German Pietist missionaries and the Ewe-speaking peoples of Ghana, Birgit Meyer breaks new ground in the study of the history of religion in Africa by focusing on the extent to which "main-line" churches (those that trace their roots to the religious institutions first established by missionary groups) have been influenced not only by their particular missionary roots but also by traditional religious beliefs. Until recently, most scholars interested in the linkages that

exist between indigenous Christianity and “traditional” religious beliefs have largely confined themselves to the study of “independent” churches, those established by Africans as local alternatives to the missionary churches. Meyer explodes the notion that “indigenization” has occurred almost exclusively in these independent churches. She does so by focusing on the extent to which the “main-stream” Evangelical Presbyterian Church (E.P.C.) that developed in the Ewe-speaking areas of Ghana vernacularized their practice of Christianity by giving much more prominence than the missionaries would have wanted to the existence of the Devil. Her goal, which she very ably achieves, is to prove that even within the “main-line” churches of Africa, Christianity is not simply an extension of missionary influence, but is a “continuously developing product,” a form of modernity, deeply influenced by “traditional” religious beliefs.

Meyer begins her study by examining the historical and cultural background of the Ewe-speaking peoples of Peki (who are the principle focus of her research) and the German missionary communities that produced those who were later to work among the Ewe-speaking peoples of Ghana and Togo. She documents the nature of Peki gender relations and Peki’s political and economic culture before the missionaries made a substantial impact on these practices; she also examines the impact of British colonization on Peki’s economic culture and how this culture influenced and was influenced by missionary activity in the area. Her examination of the German Pietists who worked as evangelists among the Peki Ewe covers similar ground. Meyer does an excellent job, for example, of discussing the economic climate in the communities from which many of the Pietist missionaries came, and how this economic climate influenced their approach to their religious faith. She

notes that the Pietists constituted a conservative movement in Germany that favored a chiliastic outlook on life; this movement also emphasized sobriety, de-emphasized ritual, and gave considerable importance to the notion that one should focus on the inner self, individual choice, and the Biblical word as a powerful allegorical tool that could be used to combat the influence of the Devil. It is this last point that then becomes the center of her analysis. For according to Meyer, the German Pietist missionaries who operated among the Ewe placed considerable emphasis on portraying Ewe beliefs and practice as the work of the Devil. All involvement in traditional ritual activities was banned for members of the new faith; and transgression of this ban could lead to expulsion from the church for engaging in devilish practices. Meyer argues that while many Ewe embraced for their own reasons Pietist Christianity and accepted the importance of eschewing participation in non-Christian practices, those affiliated with the missionary church still managed to make these imported doctrines their own. They translated the concept of the Devil according to indigenous understandings about the power of external spiritual forces to affect one’s health, and in so doing, they gave much greater importance to the notion of the Devil (as seen in a continued belief in witchcraft) than the missionaries would have preferred.

In the last three and perhaps strongest chapters, Meyer examines the emergence after the 1950s of tensions that had always been present within the E.P.C. over how to deal with the Devil. It was these tensions that eventually led to splits within the Church. On the one hand, many within the E.P.C. sought to continue upholding the approach first introduced by the German Pietist missionaries and subsequently adapted to their own needs by the Ewe ministers who came to govern the church after World War One. This approach mandated that while it was important to

acknowledge the existence of the Devil, Satan should not become so important that church members spent more time worrying about the Devil than worshipping God. Others, however, believed that one had to address the Devil as a concrete reality and that this should be evident in how one worshipped God. It was not sufficient to attend worship service and to lead a good life. One had to participate “fully in body and spirit” in order to fill oneself with God’s spirit so as to ward off danger, to escape evil temptations and to be able to exorcise evil from self and others. Meyer documents the split that eventually shook the Church because of differences in doctrine and practice within the E.P.C., but she also situates these developments within the larger societal context where the increasing popularity of Pentecostal churches forced the EPC to reassess how it handled beliefs about the Devil.

Meyer does an outstanding job in examining the historical origins of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the struggle of the Peki Ewe to make the missionary legacy their own and the tensions that emerged over how to make church doctrine and practices “modern” in the context of an ever-changing Ghana. There are areas, however, where I believe her analysis could have been a bit sharper. In her discussion of “traditional” Ewe and German Pietist beliefs, Meyer emphasizes the similarities that existed between these two systems. Both believed in the existence of external spiritual forces (other than God); both recognized them as a potential source of evil/sickness. Too little attention is given to the differences between these two systems, however. For the Pietists, this external spiritual force, the Devil, was more of a mental construct than a physical reality. It could influence one’s health but none of the missionaries who worked among the Ewe engaged in exorcism or faith healing because they saw the relationship between these illnesses and the Devil in primarily symbolic

terms. The Devil was a metaphor for that which could tempt one to engage in any number of bodily excesses: drunkenness, lust, and greed. It was these excesses that caused illness, not the Devil per se. The Ewe, however, understood external spiritual forces as real entities that were the direct cause of sickness and this, in turn, called for the physical removal of the spiritual forces that were afflicting the body. The concepts are similar, yet also quite different. Meyer notes that both the German Pietists and the Ewe emphasized the power of the word. Yet there, too, differences existed. For the Pietists, the word’s power existed in its ability to illuminate through allegory. For the Ewe, the word had not just allegorical power but real, material power to transform and create. By de-emphasizing the distinctions that existed between Ewe and Pietist notions about the power of the word and the existence of external spiritual forces, Meyer leaves the reader with the sense (despite her statements to the contrary) that Christian Ewe’s simply appropriated German Pietist notions about the Devil and ran with them. How they made the concept of the Devil their own is rather murky because the distinctions between the two systems of thought are not given enough definition. This concern should not, however, distract one from the fact that Meyer has made a major contribution to the analysis of religion in Africa. Her book is an outstanding study that should be read by all who are interested in the history of religion in Africa, Ghanaian religious history and those interested specifically in the Ewe.

OBITUARY

GSC member and former professor of History at the University of Ghana, Legon, Albert van Dantzig passed away after a long illness. We have two excellent remembrances of Professor van Dantzig posted at the GSC website. We thank GSC members Adam Jones and Paul Jenkins for their warm remembrance of Professor van Dantzig.

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Ghana Studies Council Database

At the annual meeting at the ASA at Nashville, it was suggested that Ghana Studies Council developed a database of members for our website. The advantage is that research information from GSC members will become easily accessible and of course we will not be obliged to include the large “Directory” in each of our Newsletters. While most of the GSC members at the ASA found the idea of a database to be useful, we still cannot include your information online without your formal written permission. Please complete this permission form and return it to me. Thank you!

My address: Department of History, James Madison University, MSC 2001, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.

I do allow Ghana Studies Council to include my research information in the proposed association database.

I do not want my research information to be included in the proposed Ghana Studies Council database.

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