

Ghana Studies Council Newsletter

Issue 16

Summer/Fall 2003

Chair's Remarks

By Ray Kea

University of California, Riverside

This year's newsletter arrives later than previous issues. I extend my apologies for the delay. The timely support and assistance of the History Department chair and office were indispensable. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for formatting and mailing the newsletter.

The Ghana Studies Council (GSC) is sponsoring two panels at the 46th annual African Studies Association meeting in Boston (30 October-2 November 2003). On behalf of Council members I would like to thank Jean Allman (University of Illinois) and Larry Yarak (Texas A&M University) for putting the panels together: "Considerations and Reconsiderations of Ghana's Precolonial Past" and "Youth in Ghana: New Research Perspectives on Gender, Education, and Sexuality." Members are urged to support the panels with their attendance. Last year's panels were a fine success, and all of us should make a concerted effort to continue this tradition.

Ghana Studies (no. 5, 2002) has appeared and, like its predecessors, the academic quality of its articles does the editor (Larry Yarak) and the editorial board proud. On behalf of Council members I would like to commend them for a job well done. Members are encouraged to submit articles to the journal. The new editors are Takyiwaa Manuh (Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana) and Lynne Brydon (University of Birmingham).

Larry Yarak, the Council's webmaster, has created a pdf file of the GSC Directory and placed it on the GSC website. This is for the convenience of the membership. The website address is:

<http://people.tamu.edu/~yarak/gsc.html>.

The African Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has changed its web servers. The new email address for African Studies Publication is:

publications@africa.wisc.edu.
The website address is:
<http://africa.wisc.edu/publications>.

At its December 2002 meeting GSC members voted to award

three grants-in-aid, up to 1.8 million cedis (\$200 US), to facilitate research, in any discipline, in Ghana. Eligible applicants have to be Ph.D. students or university faculty members who are permanently resident in Ghana. In May the executive committee (Emmanuel Akyeampong, Jean Allman, Ray Kea, David Owusu-Ansah, and Larry Yarak) selected three applicants – a PhD student, a senior lecturer, and a lecturer. While in Ghana, Jean Allman presented the awards. (For the awardees see below.) The quality of the applications was generally high, but the committee was disappointed at the small number of applicants. It would like a much larger applicant pool in the second round and would like GSC members to inform friends, colleagues, and others resident in Ghana about the research award.

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In Memoriam:
***Professor Nehemia
Levtzion, 1935-2002***

*David Owusu-Ansah,
James Madison University*

News of the death of *Nehemia Levtzion*, Hebrew University's Bamberger and Fuld Professor of the History of the Muslim Peoples, was received with great shock. I was particularly taken aback because the email that Tirtza (his wife) sent on August 22nd to announce the sad news was in Nehemia's own address. Nehemia communicated with many of us earlier this summer to inform us of his return to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem after six years of administrative assignment as Chairman of the Israel Council for Higher Education Planning and Budget Committee. Several weeks later, I wrote to acknowledge receipt of the email. Typical of him, he responded immediately to express his appreciation and asked that I "take care and keep in contact." Nehemia had plans to retire in a year or two, and surely, he had plans to attend the Boston African Studies Association meeting scheduled for late October of 2003. His death on the 15th of August 2003 was thus a shock even to those who had been in recent communications with him. He was 68.

For those engaged in the study of the history of Islam in Africa, Nehemia Levtzion needs no introduction. His *Ancient Ghana and Mali* (1973), which he dedicated to Tirtza, remains an invaluable contribution to the field. His joint publication with J. F. P. Hopkins, *Corpus of Early*

Arabic Sources for West African History (1973), was characteristic of Nehemia. He loved to work with primary sources, and he enjoyed collaborative scholarship. As recently as early this year (2003), Nehemia revisited the theme of the *corpus* and with Jay Spaulding they published the *Medieval West Africa: View from Arab Scholars and Merchants*. The work was preceded by another joint project with my good friend Mirian Hoexter, and Shmuel Eisenstadt titled *The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies* (2002). Review journals, however, show Levtzion and Randall Pouwels' edited *History of Islam in Africa* (2002) as the most recent major contribution to making the study of Islam accessible to students. Nehemia's edited book with Humphrey Fisher, *Rural and Urban Islam in West Africa* (1986) has served the same purpose of making materials available to teaching. In fact, he was involved in a project with David Conrad of our sister association, Mande Studies, when his untimely death occurred.

Born in British Mandatory Palestine on 24 November 1935, Nehemia Levtzion received both his bachelor and master's degrees in Arabic and Islamic history (1957-1962) from the Hebrew University. As part of his doctoral work at the University of London's School for Oriental and African Studies (1962-65), Nehemia came to

Ghana in September 1963 to begin fieldwork that lasted until August of the following year. It was during the Ghana years that he came to know Ray Kea and Ivor Wilks (both illustrious scholars and active members of Ghana Studies Council). In fact, it was also through Wilks and Kea that Nehemia was introduced to the manuscript "Cod Arab CCCII: Arabic Manuscripts from the Guinea Coast." Written by Gonja and Mamprugu Muslims at the request of Asantehene Osei Tutu Kwame (d. 1824) and for some of the leading Kumasi Muslims in the king's service, the Arabic materials became what I described elsewhere as a "handbook for the making of amulets." The Arabic writings were taken to the Katamanso (Dodowa) battlefield in 1826, where Asantehene Osei Yaw Akoto's forces confronted troops of the British, Danish, and their local allies. The manuscripts were among the Asante paraphernalia that were lost at Katamanso. In 1963, Ray Kea came across the over 900 folios of documents wrongly shelved at the Copenhagen Royal Library with their Middle Eastern collections. Nehemia's attention was drawn to the documents. His 1968 article, "Arabic Manuscripts from Early Nineteenth Century Kumase," published in the *Transactions of the Ghana Historical Society*, was significant because he was able to properly classify the content of the documents. Thus he made an added contribution to the

efforts of the Institute of African Studies (Legon) Arabic Project. It was also from the content of the documents that Ivor Wilks, with Nehemia and Bruce Haight, found additional information for their project on the history of Gonja, *Chronicles from Gonja: A Tradition of West African Muslim Historiography* (1986).

Little did I know in September 1980 when I came to study under Professor Ivor Wilks that I had become inextricably linked to this story in which Ray Kea, and Nehemia were active participants. On the morning of Monday 23 September 1980, Ivor showed me the folios of Arabic manuscripts that were to become the main source for my dissertation. This is not the time to go into discussing difficulties I encountered translating the documents or the support I received from friends and teachers. It will suffice to mention that it was because of my work with the Copenhagen manuscripts that I came to know Nehemia. On a brief fall 1982 visit to Northwestern, he invited me to lunch. At this first ever face-to-face meeting with the illustrious scholar, I found out that he had read my McGill masters' thesis, and to my surprise, he liked it. He was generous to extend an invitation to me to visit him in Jerusalem at the end of my studies at Northwestern. Later that fall, we met again in Toronto at the Canadian African Studies Association meeting at which he introduced

me to Professor Martin Klein. He also made the effort to show up at my panel presentation before rushing to the airport to make his flight back home. I saw Nehemia again in the fall of 1985 when I arrived in Jerusalem under the fancy title of Lester Martin Fellow at the Harry Truman Center for International Peace, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

In retrospect, my initiation to Jerusalem reflected the two remarkable qualities of Professor Levtzion. He believed strongly that knowledge must be shared and during his time spent at the Center for Advanced Studies, he invited as many scholars as his budget could support to come to Israel as participants in the various seminars he organized. His work with Humphrey Fisher resulted from one of these activities. The second such project on *Eighteenth Century Renewal and Reform in Islam* (1987) was published with John Voll as co-editor. Importantly to me, however, was the Levtzion attribute of opening doors to beginning graduates. Certainly, he made my stay in Jerusalem a very enjoyable one. I participated in presentations at the Truman Center, I met such scholars of Ghana as Naomi Chazan, and I attended many social functions including Passover dinner at Nehemia and Tirtza's. Though my work was not part of the Voll/Levtzion project, I had the opportunity to develop an article for inclusion in *Asian*

and African Studies before Ray Kea invited me to come to Carleton College in fall 1985 as a sabbatical replacement. But Nehemia maintained contact. His November 2002 visit to participate in James Madison University's Visiting Scholar program was the final honor he did me. It was just wonderful to see him and Tirtza again.

He always made us feel welcome and comfortable, he showed respect for our interpretative positions even when he thought otherwise, and he remained generous. He will be missed dearly.

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Grants-in-Aid of Research Awardees

The following three applicants received awards of \$200 US each:

Yaw Ameyaw, Botany Department, University of Cape Coast, "Morphohistological variation and its bearing on the alkaloidal content of *Cryptolepis sanguinolenta*, an antimalaria plant species";

John Collins, Musicology, Music Department, University of Ghana: "Educational Booklet for Highlife Music Scores";

Moses Nii Dorte Narteh, Musicology/Oral Literature, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana: "Music and Literary Style of Saka Acquaye's 'Lost Fishermen'".

On behalf of the Ghana Studies

Council I congratulate them on their achievement.

Ray Kea, University of California at Riverside

Historical Society of Ghana Annual Conference, July 26-28, 2002

In July 2002 the resuscitated Historical Society of Ghana (HSG) held its first conference since 1983, under the theme, "History, Our Heritage and National Development." It was an unquestioned success. The conference venue was the Institute of African Studies chalets in South Legon. In attendance were historians from all over Ghana, with a few expatriate scholars of Ghana participating as well. The University of Cape Coast sent a particularly numerous delegation. A lovely opening ceremony got the conference off on the morning of the 26th, followed by the presentation of papers and discussion in the afternoon. The following day had morning and afternoon paper sessions, followed in the evening by a discussion of the historical novel, *Ama*. It was a very long day! A business meeting of the HSG on the morning of the 28th rounded out the conference.

The HSG Chair and acting head of the Institute of African Studies, Dr. Irene Odotei, gave the welcoming speech. She announced that one of the revived society's major

new projects was the publication of a commemorative volume of essays in Ghana history on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Ghana's independence in 2007. She also paid special tribute to the late Albert van Dantzig for his work in keeping *Transactions* alive during the difficult years since 1983. Nana Ohene-Ntow, spokesman or the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, promised government support for the activities of the HSG in his speech as guest of honour. The renowned Ghanaian historian, Mr. F. K. Buah, delivered the keynote address, surveying the profound changes in the teaching of history that have taken place in Ghana during his lifetime.

The panels held in the afternoon of day one and throughout day two were well attended by participants and people from the community and generated much comment and discourse. Among the presenters were John Kwadwo Osei Tutu, Larry Yarak, Amanda Sackur (whose paper was one of the few not dealing with a Ghana-related topic), Brempong Osei Tutu, S. S. Quarcoopome, Irene Odotei, K. B. Manson, Joseph Adjaye, K. Osei Kwarteng, Misbahudeen Ahmed-Rufai, Kofi Baku, Kwame Ninsin, Amos Anyimadu, and Ebenezer. The academic part of the conference ended on day two with a presentation by Manu Herbstein, the author of *Ama*, and a discussion of the

relationship between historical fiction and history writing.

At the business meeting on the morning of the final day it was decided to attempt to publish some of the conference papers in an issue of the *Transactions*, the HSG's journal. The firm decision was also taken to build on the success of this year's conference by scheduling one for the end of July 2003, with a theme to be set later. The conference concluded with a brief, but touching visit with Professor A. Adu Boahen, the doyen of Ghana history, as a small but fitting tribute to the life's work of a major historian of Ghana, Africa, and the world.

Larry W. Yarak, Texas A&M University

Minutes of the Ghana Studies Council Meeting - December 6, 2002

Ray Kea, the Council's new president and meeting chair, opened the meeting by thanking David Owusu-Ansah for his five years of service as the Council's president. He also thanked Mr. Ivor Agyeman-Duah of the Ghana Embassy in Washington for inviting the members of the Ghana Studies Council to the reception that had been held the previous evening at the Ghana Embassy to celebrate the reopening of the embassy's library. He also thanked

Takyiwaa Manuh and Benjamin Lawrance for organizing the two Ghana Studies Council panels at the 2002 ASA meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting were then accepted.

Announcements:

Jean Allman reported that the US treasury contained \$1,684 and Paul Nugent in the UK had £322. There was discussion on how this money should be transferred to the US account. It was also mentioned that some members in Europe had not received their newsletters. Members outside of Europe who had not paid their dues were encouraged to do so.

Larry Yarak announced that he was relinquishing the editorship of the Council's journal and that with issue # 6 the new editors would be Takyiwaa Manuh and Lynne Brydon. He said that volume 5 was in the proof and will be between 200-250 pages. Getting Akan characters printed was holding up production since it meant training the graduate students at the University of Wisconsin who set up the journal for printing to do this. Larry also mentioned how subscriptions for the journal should be filled out. Through a generous donation from Ivor Wilks a number of copies of the journal were going to be available to African subscribers. Issue three of the Journal had been particularly successful since it had been adopted for a course at the College of William and Mary.

Ray Kea acknowledged that

there had been some problems getting out the last newsletter but it would eventually be on the website. **Larry Yarak** will remain the webmaster and there was a round of applause for his hard work for the organization.

Discussion and Business Items:

There was discussion of the two panels that the Council will be entitled to sponsor for next year's ASA meeting. Ray Kea mentioned that the theme will be "Youthful Africa." There were eleven suggestions for possible panels: (1) Youth and citizenship; (2) Precolonial history; (3) Youth cultures; (4) Youthful contributions to the informal economy (5) Tourism: history and development; (6) Childhood narrative and changing constructions of youth; (7) Youth and education (8) Interface of popular culture with traditional culture (9) New cultural festivals; (10) Politics of the Ghana military; (11) Conflicts/conflict resolution around Ghana

Jean Allman and Larry Yarak offered to organize panels. Whoever gets their abstracts in first will be more than likely accepted by the ASA. Jean pointed out that 99 per cent of the abstracts sent in are accepted. There was also discussion about the role of organizers and chairs on the panels with the feeling that the chair should not be a presenter.

Takyiwaa Manuh, the new director of the Institute of African Studies at Legon,

reported on the brand new building the center now has thanks to the efforts of former director, Irene Odotei. The Danish aid agency, Danida, played a major role in funding this project. She mentioned that there was to be a second phase which would include a library. The major problem was getting books for the library and especially journals. Indicative of this problem Ghanaian theses cite old sources, and she promised that the Institute would send a car to the airport for anyone who came to Ghana with books/journals to give to the library. The Institute was also trying to increase the amount of enclosed shelving in the old library to prevent the loss of materials.

Gareth Austin mentioned that progress had also been made in making journals available to African universities for a fraction of their cost. Cambridge University Press was making its publications available at a fifth or tenth of cost. Online access was also helping with accessibility. Deborah Pellow also mentioned that USIA would be able to help with transportation if materials were sent to Washington. Emmanuel Akyeampong described his efforts to create a sandwich program at Harvard for Ghanaian students, and that he was talking to foundations about funding. He also mentioned that the West African Research Association was looking into the possibility

of having a conference in Ghana. He also mentioned that the Basel Mission Archive in Switzerland had placed over 5,000 photographs of West Africa on its website with lots of text. The URL is www.bmpix.org

Kofi Baku reported on the resuscitation of the Historical Society of Ghana. The first conference had been held in July with participation from scholars from the UK and the USA. The Society had appointed four editors and was planning on publishing two editions of its journal per year. The first was projected for January and the second for July 2003. Membership for external members was \$30. The next annual conference was going to have as its theme: Culture, Power and Authority in the History of Ghana. The president of the conference was going to be Irene Odotei and there were going to be representatives from all the public universities in Ghana. There was discussion about including the private universities as well. An invitation to participate was extended to all who were going to be in Ghana during the summer. Currently the Society was engaged in fund-raising. There was discussion on how to send money to Ghana.

Jean Allman raised the idea of the Council making small grants available to graduate students and faculty members resident in Ghana to help them finish projects on which they

were working. Larry Yarak mentioned that the Council had given money in the past to support archival projects in Ghana. There was discussion of how this new initiative could be implemented by using the Web to publicize the grants as well as make it possible for candidates to apply for this money. Benjamin Lawrance agreed to work up a form which he would give to Larry. Eventually the suggestion that there should be three \$200 grants-in-aid of research, open to faculty and graduate students resident in Ghana, was accepted by a voice vote. The executive agreed to work out the details and post this announcement on the Council's web site.

Benjamin Lawrance suggested that the Council should nominate Richard Rathbone, who is nearing retirement at SOAS, for the ASA's Distinguished Africanist Award. He agreed to post this suggestion on the Council's website.

The meeting, which began at approximately 7:00 pm, was adjourned shortly before 8:30 pm. There were almost 60 members in attendance, which made it possibly the best attended Ghana Studies Council annual meeting ever.

**Minutes taken and submitted by
Roger Gocking, Mercy College**

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A New Biography

Ivor Agyeman-Duah, *Between Faith and History: A Biography of J.A. Kufuor* (Africa World Press, 2003) 1-59221-129-1. The road to John Agyekum Kufuor's presidency was tortuous and reflects Ghana's political history, which since independence has been dominated by military interventions and dictatorships. Groomed for this position by some of Ghana's first generation politicians, Kufuor became Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister of Ghana at 30 after attending Oxford University. And he has since known no other profession. Since 1957, there has never been a successful transition of power from one government to another, without some disruption – and this book captures some of those momentous events and achieves the fusion of a narrative between the biography of a man and the history of a country. [Information from African World Press announcement.]

For more information about the publication contact:
Africa World Press,
tel. (609) 695-3200; e-mail
awors@africanworld.com.

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***Endowment Fund
Established at the
Institute Of African
Studies, University of
Ghana, Legon***

An endowment Fund to promote African studies has been established at the Institute of African Studies, the University of Ghana, Legon. The Joseph Agyeman-Duah Foundation which starts running this August will help students working on their post-graduate and doctorate research dissertation and writing. Three outstanding students in any area of African studies will each year, be selected by the Institute as beneficiaries of The Joseph Agyeman-Duah Prize in African Studies, which carries a financial package of \$200 for each student. The fund, in memory of the late Joseph Agyeman-Duah, a deceased Research Fellow at the Institute and a pioneer member of The Historical Society of Ghana was created by the Center for Intellectual Renewal (CIR), a public policy institute. The late Agyeman-Duah did some outstanding research work in Akan history and culture, especially his unprecedented research and compilation of stool histories. He died in 1996.

The Founder of the CIR, Mr. Ivor Agyeman-Duah, an author and currently head of the Public Affairs Department at the Embassy of Ghana in Washington, DC, said that the seed money for the endowment is being managed by the Fidelity Discount House in Accra. He explained that it was raised from the sales launch of his sixth book, *Between Faith and History: A Biography of J.A. Kufuor* which was recently launched in Accra and was the

subject of discussion at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington DC. The CIR will also over the next two years restock the Institute's library with titles from the premier publishing firm and distributing network, Africa World Press in New Jersey who are publishing the American edition of President Kufuor's biography.

In all, over 400 book titles, ranging from academic, non-academic, poetry and biography from all over Africa are expected for the re-stock. A memorandum of understanding has already been entered into with the Institute of African Studies, Prof. Takyiwaa Manuah, who signed for the Institute, commended Mr. Agyeman-Duah for the initiative and said, "We are delighted at your initiative and proud that our students have been selected to benefit from The Joseph Agyeman-Duah Prize in African Studies." She expressed the hope that the endowment fund will grow to enable more students' benefit from it.

Submitted by Ivor Agyeman-Duah, Embassy of Ghana, Washington, D.C.

DONATION TO KOFORIDUA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

A lecturer at Northeastern University, Boston, Professor Kwamena Panford has presented a check for €10

million to his elementary school in Ghana, Srodae-Koforidua Catholic School, in recognition of the role it played in his education and life. He said the donation which is in memory of his mother, Mrs. Magaret Efua Atta Panford, was to help the school to purchase furniture. He was also following in the footsteps of his parents who were known for their philanthropic work in Korforidua and Saltpond. Since 1989 he has led a private initiative that has shipped and donated several hundred books to the University of Ghana's Balme Library as well as other libraries. In 1996, he taught without pay for one semester in the Sociology Department, University of Ghana.

Professor Panford, who is Chair of the African-American Studies Department, said he was motivated to use part of the proceeds from the sale of his book *IMF-World Bank and Labor's Burden's in Africa* and donations from his wife and friends to support his elementary school. He pledged to continue such efforts and thanked those who supported him in his endeavor.

[From the "Daily Graphic",
Monday, August 28, 2002]

ISLAMIC LITERACY TRADITION IN GHANA: THE WAY FORWARD

**Dr. M. Sey
Dept. of Religious Studies,
University of Cape Coast**

This paper was a presentation at the “First Muslim Minorities in Africa Conference” held in Accra, Ghana (20-23 January 2003), under the theme “Islam, Peace and Development.” Many of the participants were proprietors from Ghana’s Islamic school system. Dr. Sey’s paper has been abridged for inclusion in this issue of the *Newsletter*.

The *Makaranta* educational system has contributed immensely to the preservation of Muslim culture, the protection of the Islamic faith, and the propagation of Islam in Ghana. Arabic, the language of the Quran, continues to serve the *Makaranta* in the same manner as it did the medieval *madrasa*. This was the language in which Muslim scholars taught the important works of history, philosophy, medicine, religion, astronomy, geography, and all other Islamic sciences.

In the history of West Africa, the importance of educated Arabic scholars has received great attention. In a recent *Ghana Studies* article, Dr. David Owusu-Ansah presented an excellent overview on the subject.¹ It is, however, to Professor John Hunwick that I will turn to cite his vivid summation of the importance

¹David Owusu-Ansah, “History of Islamic Education in Ghana: An overview,” *Ghana Studies*, 5 (2002): 61-81.

of the Arabic language in the history of the region. In his work titled “Arabic Language and Muslim Society in West Africa,” Hunwick wrote that from the medieval period till the beginning of the 20th century, Arabic was the language of learning in West Africa. He continued that “throughout the interior of West Africa, the educated man was the person who could read and write Arabic, and his knowledge, slight as it may have been the case, gave him high status even among non-Muslims.”² These educated Muslims, as Hunwick noted, were all trained at the various Quranic Schools that were established in the commercial towns and villages where Muslims merchants frequented. The *Makaranta* therefore was the facility through which knowledge of Arabic and the Islamic faith was transmitted. This was the educational system that laid the foundation and, therefore, produced such scholars of international repute as Sheikh Marhaba, Mallam Muhammed Belly, Sheikh Umar of Kete Krachi, Sheikh Baba al-Waiz of Kumasi, Sheikh Awudu dan Tano, Mallam Nasiru Kabara, and even Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio, to mention but a few.³

² John Hunwick, “Arabic Language and Muslim Society in West Africa,” *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 4, 2 (1977): 2.

³ Ivor Wilks, John Hunwick, and Mark Sey, “Writers of the Greater Voltaic Region,” in John Hunwick, ed., *Arabic Literature of Africa*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 2003. In this volume,

But the case for transforming the traditional Islamic system of education into a modern facility in light current realities is compelling. In the past several years, I have had the opportunity to visit many Islamic schools in this country. Many of the pupils with whom I have spoken are all hopeful of going to Arabia for further studies. We all know that the likelihood of the majority of these students to have such an opportunity is very limited. The only way out of this educational bottleneck is to improve the conditions and quality of the Quranic schools here at home so as to make the graduates of the system employable within the country at the same rate as their non-Muslim counterparts from the government school. This is perhaps the greatest challenge facing the traditional Islamic system of education. For now, our students do not see any future in the educational system that so successfully produced the many prominent scholars of the past.⁴

Allow me the opportunity to ask some questions before we go any further. Is it not to the

the literary works of many such scholars, their travels, the extent of their scholarship, the books they read and mastered, their famous disciples and positions they held in the Muslim communities have been indicated.

⁴ March Sey, “Social and Educational Challenges of the Contemporary Muslim Youth: The Ghanaian Experience,” *Journal of Usuluddin*, 14 (Dec. 2001): 80. Academy of Islamic Studies, University of Malaya.

benefit of Islam in Ghana to have a good number of members of the faith who are doctors, nurses, architects, and engineers? How about a good representation of educated Muslims holding respectable administrative positions in government and in the educational system of the country? To continue keeping our children in the *Makaranta* system in this era of greater competition is certainly not the best practice. Why are we not allowing our wards to take advantage of modern education or are we afraid that they will not be competitive against our non-Muslim children? In fact, I have argued before that the same *Makaranta* school boy or girl, who is able to master difficult Quranic passages with parrot-like rapidity, if given the opportunity and congenial environment, could master any scientific learning with high degree of proficiency.⁵ The time to prove this is now!

The Need For Positive Change

The need to transform the *Makaranta* school into a modern establishment has been felt here and elsewhere for sometime now. The Malaysians were in the same situation several years ago and they made serious efforts to bring the institutions in line with modern expectations. The recent involvement of Malaysia in the Ghana economy is an indication that they have been very successful in modernizing

their Islamic education. In fact, Al-Azhar University, Cairo, was a purely Theological Institution when it produced the many men of learning and piety. At the close of the 19th century when Muhammed Abduh was made Rector of the university, however, Al Azhar modernized its curriculum by adding secular subjects and natural sciences. This made Al-Azhar University an institution to reckon with throughout the world. The transformation of Al-Azhar was consistent with Muhammad Abdul's perception of modernization. Thus, if that was acceptable to Islamic Egypt, then we here in Ghana have no reason not to transform our *Makaranta* system into institutions that address or, at least, take into consideration current realities. Yet, the resistance to change is understandable.

As S. A. S. Galadanci noted in his work on *Islam and Education in Africa* (1993), the issue of westernisation of education for Muslims is problematic because it was this same process that in the first place rendered those hitherto educated in the Islamic sciences illiterate. If this is the nature of the impact of modern education on Islam, why then are we proposing it? By our suggestion for modernization, are we not endangering the work of Islamic educators who have dedicated themselves to educating our children in the past?

These questions are important

for our contemplation because since colonial times, the standards for measuring literacy are based on the attainment of westernised certificates and degrees. These modern education certifications are received through the educational institutions of the state. The scenario is made all the more painful when one considers the fact that levels of knowledge attained in Islamic learning at the *Makaranta* schools are not recognised as a basis for public service employment. The need to transform the *Makaranta* system therefore becomes imperative.

The above observation is not a condemnation of the traditional Quranic education. The *Makaranta* instructions in Arabic language and its contribution in training children in religious knowledge and moral education were mentioned earlier on in this presentation. In fact, in his overview of Islamic learning traditions, Dr. David Owusu-Ansah commented positively on the system's relevance to the Islamic faith. But as citizens, we should also be aware of our current predicament and be concerned about the kind of education that prepares our wards to become full members of society. As Ghana's Prime Minister of the Second Republic, Professor Busia, observed in December 1966 at an University of Ghana public forum, "the better educated a person is, the better

⁵ Ibid.

a man he is; and the better a man a person is, the better opportunity he has had to be a better man.” As Muslims, citizens, and as parents, it is now entirely up to us as to give our wards a better opportunity for a better future.

The Scene is Set

The introduction of the Islamic Education Unit in 1987 set the stage for transforming the *Makaranta*. The seed for change was planted in the Northern Region of the country as individual initiatives. These persons designed an Islamic Education Unit for the purpose of creating a certain blend of Islamic cum secular education. One such person is the former Director of Education of the Northern Region in the mid-1960s, Mr. J. S. Kaleem. He is credited with recruiting Arabic and Islamic Studies instructors for some of the public schools in the region. This idea originated from his concern that Islamic education in the region had declined. Other contributors to this idea included Mr. R. M. Yakubu, Mr. J. W. Abroquah, Mr. E. I. Ben Nyarko, Dr. Muhammad Ben Abdullah and Alhaji Abdul-Rahman Gbadamasi.⁶ As Northern Regional Director of the Ghana Education, and later on as Director-General of the Ghana Education Service,

⁶ See Abdulai Idirisu, “British Colonial responses to Islamic Education: The Case of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, 1890-1940,” *Journal of the Institute of Education*, 1, (2000). Cape Coast.

Mr. Gbadamosi, especially, pushed the Islamic Education Unit idea. In the words of one educationist, “had it not been for Alhaji Gbadamasi, the Islamic Education Unit could not have been established.”⁷ So to Alhaji Gbadamasi and all those who were instrumental in the establishment of the Islamic Education Unit (IEU), we say *Ayekoo*.

It is my observation that the Islamic Education Unit concept has come to stay. Many proprietors of the Islamic Schools have embraced secular subjects in the curricular, and in fact they have no regrets for joining the Islamic Education Unit. Many more proprietors are thinking seriously of embracing it. More importantly, our Chiefs and Imams do support the Islamic Education Unit concept. In a 1989 Council of Muslim Chiefs and Imams meeting at Sukura (Accra), for example, the Muslim leaders resolved to endorse the establishment of the Islamic Education Unit by the Ministry of education and commend the government for the efforts it is making towards reforms in education in Ghana today. We call on all Muslim Chiefs and educationists to accept and help the formation of the Islamic Education Unit in their respective areas and participate fully in these Units in order to bring the traditional *Makaranta* system up to the

⁷ From the reports and papers received from the Islamic Education Unit Headquarters in Tamale.

standard required to be able to face and accept fully the challenges and the advantages of the present educational system obtainable in the country.⁸

The Chiefs and Imams stressed the need for constant interactions between the people and the Islamic Education Units. They also hoped that the units would ensure a balanced emphasis on Islamic and secular subjects. To be sure, the blending of secular subjects with Islamic religious instructions were known in the Muslim communities prior to the creation of the Islamic Education Units in 1987. Pioneering work in this direction was undertaken in the 1950s when Mallam Ahmed Basha of Cow Lane, Accra, introduced English and Arithmetic at his schools. Mallam Basha’s death marked the end of the experiment in his school. At one point Mallam Abdul Salam Hamza, one of the earliest Quranic schoolmasters at Nima in the late 1940s also introduced English instruction into his school. This too did not last. In 1956, Alhaji Nuhu Sharubutu, the Imam Ratib of Accra old Makola Central Mosque (1938-1982) had government support to establish an English/Arabic Secondary School as part of the Ansarudeen Islamic School facility. This effort too failed

⁸ Mark Sey, “Muslim Community in Ghana: The Contemporary Scene,” *The Shariah Journal*, 5 (1977), p. 249. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

because of the lack of support from the Muslim community.⁹

Observations from the earlier failed attempts to modernize Quranic schools are indicative of the importance of the support of the general Muslim community, if the new reforms are to succeed. It is also imperative that the goals and objectives of the Islamic Education Units become known and accepted by the Muslim community. These objectives as provided by the Islamic Education Unit Headquarters in Tamale are as follows:

- To provide opportunity for Muslim communities in Ghana to gain easy access to secular education
- To enhance the success of the Government's policy of Free Compulsory Basic Education to every Ghanaian child and,
- To merge Islamic spiritual and moral teaching with secular education.¹⁰

The Islamic Education Unit operates under the Ghana Education Service and is headed by a General Manager. Under the General Manager are ten Regional Managers who are

⁹ Mark Sey, Interview with Alhaji Nuhu Sharubutu, Imam Ratib of Accra Central Mosque, at Sabon-Zongo, dd. October 1980.

¹⁰ This information was made available by courtesy of the Islamic Education Unit offices in Accra and Tamale.

assisted by accredited Local Managers and Head teachers whose task it is to supervise, maintain discipline, and see to the smooth running of the schools. To further facilitate the work of the Islamic Education Unit, a council of proprietors of Islamic Schools have been formed to provide some kind of support to the Unit by providing school structures and Arabic instructors.¹¹

The Government for its part provides textbooks and trained teachers for secular subjects as well as other logistics. The Ministry of Education also pays the salaries of Arabic instructors. The interest of Islamic school proprietors in the system, in addition to government support has produced some positive results since the inception of Islamic Education Units in 1987. Enrolment figures reproduced below support that observation. Even though the figures are modest, this is surely a sign of success for Muslim schools.

Table 1, however, does not give adequate indication of the staff situation and therefore the competent level of the overall staff of the schools. This makes it difficult to engage in a comprehensive analysis of the information. Besides, the data appear to be a little dated since the annual increases in the number of students are not indicated to reflect the rate of

¹¹ Ibid.

growth within the system. Because of this limited character of the first table, I will turn my attention to the second for some observations.

See Tables 1 & 2 at the end of the newsletter

Table 2 represents information from the Northern Region, where the Islamic Education Unit is headquarters. The information represents the current student population at the various levels of Islamic schooling. It is very interesting to observe that at the 159 nursery and kindergarten facilities, the difference in the enrollment figures for boys and girls is not great. This is however not the case at the 265 primary schools (28,694 boys to 5,861 girls). The number of girls at the 42 Junior Secondary Schools is about half of the total for boys. I must also note that of the 396 teachers at the nursery and kindergarten facilities, only 128 are trained. The remaining 268 are untrained. Of the 1,831 instructors teaching in the primary schools, 324 of them have received no professional training, while 87 out of the 333 instructors at the JSS level have also not received any professional teacher training. In fact, the conditions described above of the Northern Region Islamic schools are not unique to that part of the country. But while the disparity in the ratio between boys and girls in the system, and the higher numbers of untrained

teachers especially at the pre-school and kindergarten levels are of concern, the fact that almost 36,000 pupils are attending Islamic primary schools and a little over 6,000 are in Islamic Education Unit JSS in the Northern region alone is impressive!

As a way forward, serious attempts should be made to train the pupil teachers and re-train the trained teachers by way of refresher courses or workshops. The teachers should also be motivated adequately to enable them to stay on the job. The very fact that the table does not indicate any Senior Secondary School facility is unfortunate but it should not dampen our spirit to forge ahead with the small means that are at our disposal. Much of the problems bedevilling the Islamic Education Unit could be alleviated if individualism gives way to collective commitment. Certainly, improvements in the system can be attained through the merger of some of the facilities instead of the several individually owned schools serving in the community. Any individual proprietor who strongly feels that he is capable of going it alone should be encouraged to do so, but the merging and pooling of resources would certainly enhance conditions for those smaller establishments. Let us also hope that the few Senior Secondary Schools run by Muslim proprietors would consider joining the Islamic

Education Unit.

Compared to the Christian institutions, we have a long way to go. As a way forward, it may be suggested that an Education Fund be established to help needy but brilliant Muslim students in both secondary and tertiary institutions. We should also venture into the establishment of Technical, Vocational, and Teacher Training institutions. Well-meaning Ghanaians have stressed in recent years that the future of Muslims in this country lies in the acquisition of secular education in addition to the knowledge of Islam.¹² It is true, as Muhammad Atiya Al-Ibrashi notes, that the first and highest goal of Islamic education is moral refinement and spiritual training. It is equally true to say that this

¹² I have interviewed several Islamic school proprietors in Accra, Kumasi, Tamale, Takoradi, Koforidua, Nsawam, Sunyani, Bolga and other places between 1994 and 2002. Discussions with these persons continue. In this regard, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Professors John Hunwick of Northwestern University and David Owusu-Ansah of James Madison University (both in the United States). Their trips to Ghana and their engagement in research in Islamic learning in Ghana have facilitated renounced interest and communication with the various stakeholders in Islamic Education in Ghana. Dr. Owusu-Ansah, Mr. Abdulai Iddirisu (formerly of the University for Developmental Studies) and I are engaged in a comprehensive research on this same subject. We are hopeful that our work will contribute to the discussion.

goal is amply supported by the traditional Islamic education system, as we have known it for many generations. Yet, Al-Ibrashi goes on to note that Islamic education should not neglect to prepare the individual to earn a livelihood by the study and practice of various professions, arts and trades.¹³ We may therefore conclude that vocational, technical, and industrial training for earning a livelihood, fall squarely within the framework of the *hadith*, which says that “the search for knowledge is obligatory for all Muslims male or female.” Calling on Muslims to introduce modern subjects into the *Makaranta* system for the training of students in various trades and professions therefore does not constitute a breach of any Islamic injunction. Neither is the introduction of modern subjects into the *Makaranta* system, as outlined in the Islamic Education Unit, a compromise of Islamic teachings. Rather, it is a fulfilment of a noble vision to make Islamic education wholesome and in line with current realities for the benefit of all and sundry in this society. Let us therefore pool our resources together to ensure that our children are given the proper and relevant education that will enable them to be useful citizens for the future of this country. Certainly, we must envision

¹³ Muhammad Atiya Al-Ibrashi, “Education in Islam” *Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs*, Cairo, 1967, p. 14.

that time in our future when many parents, irrespective of religious affiliation, can look to the Islamic schools as possible alternative institutions of learning for their wards. Indeed, that would be our finest hour. *Wa Salamu Alaikum.*

Submitted by David Owusu-Ansah, James Madison University

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The TICCS Master of Arts in Cross-Cultural Development

Tamale Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies (TICCS) is a research and teaching Institute of the Catholic Church in Tamale, N. Ghana, which fosters a deeper understanding of African culture for holistic human development. TICCS offers MA degrees in cooperation with Akrofi-Christaller Memorial Centre (ACMC) Akropong, and the University of Development Studies (UDS), Tamale. It offers seminars, workshops and supervised 'immersion' courses in language-learning, culture-learning and 'action-learning' for culturally appropriate development. TICCS also fosters research on aspects of culture and development in Ghana, and publishes on these and related themes. Tamale Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies (TICCS) is affiliated with the University of Development Studies (UDS), Tamale and is launching a Masters degree in Cross-

Cultural Development in conjunction with UDS.

Rationale

The rationale for TICCS and its programs in cross-cultural training for development is based on the premise that integral development needs to be grounded in the culture of the people. In the coming global age, development providers will be required to cross over from one culture to another in order to plan and implement development. Providers must be able to see things from the insider's perspective, experience their culture-based attitudes and values, and be able to reflect critically upon this process. They need to be able to challenge not only African cultural biases but they must become aware of and challenge those of the Western establishment. They need training that will guide them through this process. They need tools that will assist them to overcome their own ethnocentrism and to cross over the three barriers preventing dialogue for change. Against the perceptual barrier they will need to learn to perceive in new ways. Against the barrier of cultural identities they will need to learn to take on new cultural identities and to assign new meanings to their world. Against the behavioral barrier of personal, social and institutional habits they will need to learn to act in ways that are perceived as appropriate by insiders.

Following this rationale, the TICCS programs offer a "cultural roots" approach to

Development Studies. The programs are both academic and practical with a strong emphasis on field training. Students enter into a problem-solving dialogue with the local communities they are meant to serve and they come out with workable culture-specific programs that relate to real needs.

How is the program accredited?

The degree will be granted by UDS, which is fully accredited by the National Accreditation Board, Ghana Ministry of Education.

What is the MA Program all about?

- The program blends development theory and practice, the classroom and the field, as it seeks to prepare a new brand of development practitioner for a culturally based, bottom-up approach to development.
- Participants learn a local language and culture in context and are guided through the process of becoming an insider in their new culture.
- By means of scholarly reflection, interpretation and analysis, participants are helped to explore local cultural pathways and interpret cultural themes.
- Through close supervision, they are helped to discover and evolve specialised, culture-specific, problem-

solving development initiatives for their local contexts.

- Although the immediate cultural context for the training is Ghana, the lessons are applicable wherever development encounters culture.

Who is it for?

- Development theorists on sabbatical or wishing to pursue further studies from a cross-cultural perspective.
- Students of Interdisciplinary Studies wishing to integrate their disciplines.
- Development practitioner and fieldworkers wishing to pursue a culture-based, practical approach to development from below.
- Graduates in fields related to development studies who wish to broaden their area of expertise.
- Professional educators wishing to master the use of social and cultural analysis in their field research.

What are the benefits?

- It is a professional preparation for development organizations and NGOs.
- It is an ideal preparation for field workers.
- It is an ideal preparation for development theory and practice.
- It is an ideal preparation for development related

to specialized area studies.

- It is ideal as a multi-disciplinary sabbatical for academics.
- It is a professional degree for teaching or training purposes.
- It is a foundation for a further degree in development related disciplines.

Who is eligible?

Those with a good BA degree, preferably in the social sciences, from a recognized university.

How long does it take?

The program takes 16 months spread over two academic years. The first part (37 weeks) is at TICCS, Tamale and the second part (16 weeks) is at UDS, Tamale.

When does it start?

The program starts October 2004. Applications are accepted from October 2003.

Exit & Entry Learning

The cross-cultural learning process at TICCS follows two broad movements: exit-learning or “learning to leave” and entry-learning or “leaving to learn”.

Exit-learning is the preparatory stage. All learners bring their culture-based biases and expectations to the learning process. These must be recognized, challenged and negotiated. In exit-learning learners become aware of the myriad ways in which our first

culture controls us. They learn to step outside this and reflect on it, and to take the necessary steps to adjust for these blocks and biases. The TICCS Introduction Course and the workshops and courses in cultural analysis focus primarily on exit-learning.

Entry-learning is the advanced stage. It involves a real movement ‘out’ of one’s first culture; away from familiar surroundings, familiar sights and sounds, tastes and smells, people and activities. The deeper one moves into a new language and culture, the more one must leave one’s first. The movement of entering is conditioned by one’s ability and commitment to leave. This ability and commitment needs to be fostered and directed because it is constantly challenged by the hold our first culture maintains over us, our values, attitudes, habits and perspectives. Thus the entry-learning process needs to be highly supervised. The TICCS field-education programs focus on this second stage of

For further information contact: The Director, Tamele Institute of Cross-Cultural Studies, P.O.Box 1012 Tamale, Ghana; Ph. +233-71-22914; Mob. +233-24-331759 ticcs@africaonline.com.gh; www.ticcs.com.

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APPEAL FOR \$96,000 FOR THE MUSIC DEPT., UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

The Music Department of the University of Ghana at Legon is planning to expand various initiatives established by its last Director, Dr Willie Anku. The Music Department has a long established role in providing formal music education for students going into governmental organizations (schools, cultural institutions, police and military bands etc). Since 1997, Dr. Anku expanded the scope of the Department to provide students with training for jobs within the private sector and commercial music industry. He did this by expanding the courses on African popular music, introducing an electro-acoustics course and a student/community outreach program called "Process of Art."

The new orientations of this new Music Department curriculum include the following foci:

PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS

Courses that are focused towards commercial music administration, promotion and marketing, studio engineering, cassette, music-video and CD productions, radio and TV music production and presentation, music journalism, music publishing and a familiarity with copyright law. Whereas the need for musicians in the government

sector has dwindled over the last 15 years there has been an enormous multiplication of local private TV channels, FM radio stations and recording studios. Also important is the recent growth of a large Ghanaian commercial music sector linked to local "gospel" highlife and a rising international interest in African and "World" music. Our students need to be trained for this new private commercial music market that is opening up at home and abroad.

NEW JOB CREATION

For five years now we have been running the Process of Art outreach program where students have been introduced to the wider musical community and have gone into dialogues with those operating in the Ghanaian and African music sector: music distributors and promoters, copyright and music union officials, film-music experts, TV company owners, marketing experts, established Ghanaian/African music stars, instrument makers, electronic music experts, recording engineers, etc. This enrichment program needs to be augmented to include the temporary attachment of students to mass media organizations, music unions, marketing outfits and recording/production companies to develop hands-on expertise in these fields. Furthermore students will be encouraged to explore and create new job opportunities for themselves through a process of monitored

contextual inquiry.

NEED FOR EXPERTISE IN ELECTRO-ACOUSTICS

The students need to keep abreast with new developments in music technology: knowledge of digital as well as analogue recording techniques, the application of music software, the use of computers for compositional purposes, the sampling of sounds and so on. Furthermore, over the last 15 years or so new forms of "techno-highlife" (Burgher highlife and Hip-Life) have evolved in Ghana that need a sophisticated knowledge of computer technology for further development. Many of the public complain that at the moment the technical aspect of these new forms of highlife are too low. Our music students trained in computer skills will be able to help raise the technical standard of this new music and at the same find jobs for themselves within this commercial field as well.

AUGMENTING COURSES ON AND PERFORMANCES OF HIGHLIFE AND OTHER BLACK AND AFRICAN POPULAR MUSIC

Just as jazz, the rumba, calypsos, and the samba have become national music of the United States, Cuba, Trinidad, and Brazil – so has highlife become the national music of Ghana. However, although the Music Department has an established track record of

courses related to traditional African music and western 'art' music, courses on highlife and African popular music have only recently been established. As a result there is little academically written or scored material on highlife and, as of yet, the University does not have a first-class highlife band. Both deficiencies need to be rectified. This is especially pertinent today with the explosion of international interest in African and "World Music". This has created a multi-billion dollar industry and is attracting musical tourists and students to African countries, including Ghana. Indeed the School of Performing Arts, of which the Music Department is a part, attracts the highest percentage of foreign students to the university each year. A well developed highlife/ African popular music component of the Music Department would assist Ghanaian students in entering the lucrative international music market and attract more foreign music students who bring precious foreign exchange to the university.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS THAT NEED TO BE IMMEDIATELY EXPANDED AND DEVELOPED BY THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

World Class Highlife Band. This will need the upgrading of musical equipment of the present Music Department Pop Band and the hiring of 4 top-class highlife artist to train and assist the students.

Development of Performance Space. Dr. Anku has obtained the space and building permit from the university to build a Drum Village rehearsal and performance space. This needs to be developed in two stages. The first will involve the equivalent to \$10,000, the second stage will cost a further \$20,000. The Drum Village can also be used for running University music shows and 'afternoon jumps' which will give the students an experience in the staging, promotional and catering aspects of running a professional show.

Establishment of a digital-cum-acoustic recording studio. This will be set up to give state-of-the-art training to our students. The studio can also record university and other bands. The studio equipment and additional computer music equipment will be for an electro-acoustic course already established by Dr. Anku.

Expansion of the Process of Art Program. Monies will be needed (particularly for transport) for student out-reach enrichment projects as well as for continuing the present policy of inviting experts to interact with the students.

New books, videos and audio-visual equipment for the Music Department Library. The particular emphasis will be of books and videos in areas related to African traditional/popular music and the music of the Black Diaspora. Needed materials also include

VCR's, DVD's, projectors, and listening equipment.

Educational Highlife books
The collection of music included biographies and graded transcriptions and lyrics of classic highlife tunes for educational publications for school and universities.

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