

## **THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE INSTITUTION OF CHIEFTAINCY: THE CASE OF THE AKAN OF GHANA**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

A lot has so far been written about the Akan in terms of their political organization – chieftaincy<sup>1</sup> and religious beliefs and practices<sup>2</sup> but not much has been done in the area of the role their religion plays in the institution of chieftaincy. Although Abraham Akrong and Owusu Brempong have separate articles on the subject in the edited volume by Awedoba and Odotei, both writers did not dwell much on the religious elements in the areas such as the selection processes, enstoolment and the administration of a chief in the Akan traditional society which this paper addresses.

The main concern of this paper is to find out if indeed religion (African Traditional Religion) plays any fundamental role in the institution of chieftaincy as claimed by traditional Akan of Ghana. Specific key issues this paper addresses include: A brief description of religion- African Traditional Religion-, institution of chieftaincy, selection and installation (enstoolment) of a chief in the Akan society, and functions of a chief. The discussion also briefly touches on the institution as it operates in the contemporary Ghanaian society. The selection of the Akan is not only because it is the traditional society best known to me but also I am convinced that doing a case study such as this is likely to yield more scholarly dividends than to do a general study across Africa.

### **3. The Akan People of Ghana**

The Akan constitute the largest ethnic group in Ghana. The 2000 Ghana's Population Census put their percentage at 49.1% of the total population of Ghana. They are mainly found in middle and the southern part of Ghana. The Akan group is composed of different linguistic groups. The tongue of each group constitutes a dialect of the Akan language but most of the dialects are mutually intelligible. Two of them, *Twi* and *Fante* are however, widely spoken in the country. The *Twi* dialect also has two versions which are popular in Ghana. They are Asante *Twi* and Akwapim. Part of the Akan is also found in the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire. This was the result of the balkanization of the African continent during the colonial period.

4.

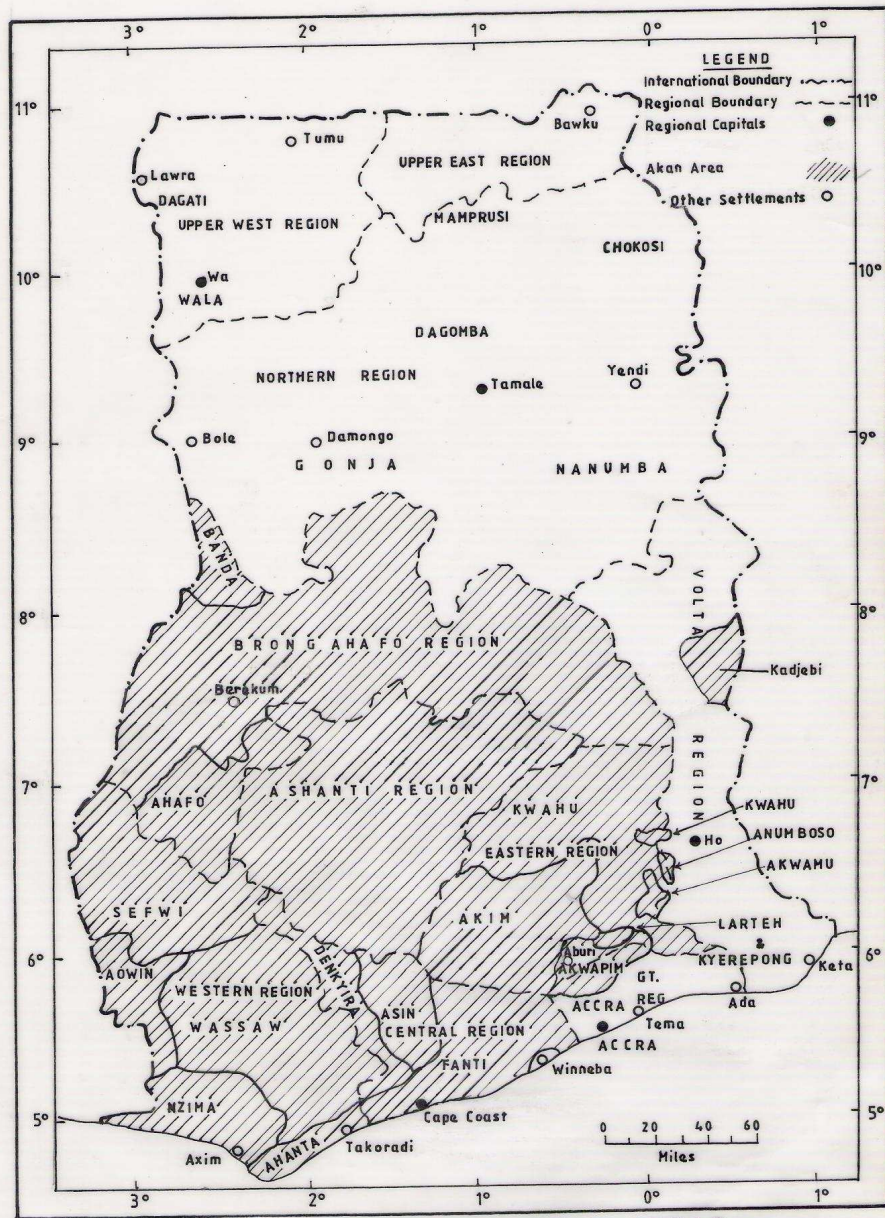


FIG. 1 MAP OF GHANA SHOWING AKAN AREAS

SOURCE : Author, 2009

**Methodology**

The content of this paper is the result of a research I conducted in some Akan areas in Ghana between January 2006 and December 2008. The direct material for this study is mainly, but not exclusively, primary because relevant secondary sources were used to guide the discussion. The aim of the research as stated above is to find out the role of religion in the institution of chieftaincy. The target group interviewed include: Chiefs, *Ohemaa* (queen-mothers), *Adehyepanyin* (the head of the royal family) and other traditional rulers, Religious officials, King-makers, opinion leaders and ordinary Akan citizens. The selection of the above groups was informed by the fact that they constitute the major stakeholders as far as the institution of chieftaincy in the traditional Akan society is concerned.

**5. Religion**

There is always a problem when the question, what is religion is posed, but it is not the aim of this paper to open the debate on the definition of the phenomenon of religion but rather to describe what the people under study see as religion. The spirituality of the Akan is what is generally known as African Traditional Religion and this religion from a close observation and interaction with the practitioners, can be viewed as the beliefs and practices of indigenous Africans which have evolved over the years and have been practiced by Africans from time immemorial. Simply, it is the religion known to the Africans before their contact with the Western European people and religions such Christianity, Islam and others. Awulalu has a beautiful description of African Traditional Religion.<sup>3</sup> The main elements of this religion include: a belief in the *Onyankopon* (Supreme Being/God), belief in the divinities or lesser gods, belief in the Ancestors, belief in the impersonal forces which manifest themselves in the operations of witchcraft, magic, sorcery, charms and amulets, totemism etc. For the Akan, it is these that give vitality, hope and thus make life meaningful. The Akan believe that these hosts of supernatural beings include both good and bad (evil) ones, but all qualify for cultic attention because they have a firm belief that these spirit beings have the capability to influence their lives either positively or negatively.<sup>4</sup> The influence religion has on the lives of the traditional Akan is so great that it permeates all their endeavours including their political, social economic lives etc.

## 6. Chieftaincy Institution

Chieftaincy is a system of governance or political arrangement under which the leader is known as a chief. Chieftaincy, can be said to be the most visible and prominent form of political system among all the ethnic groups in Ghana.<sup>5</sup> However, the history of the institution in Ghana as Awedoba and Odotei<sup>6</sup> rightly point out, is not uniform as it differs with society and there is evidence that, not until the colonization of the country, some Ghanaian societies did not have centralized governments under chiefs but lived in what has been described as acephalous-groups with no centralized political heads as such- way of organization. The Akan, however, created the institution of chieftaincy long before the arrival of Western Europeans and the subsequent colonization of the country. It is for this reason that the Akan model is chosen as a case study in this paper.

Chieftaincy in Akan is based on the kinship system and the chief is mostly selected from the maternal lineage. The chief is usually considered as the first citizen of the village, town or state as the case may be. He is viewed as the source of all traditional authorities because he is regarded as representing the founding fathers of the state. In other words, he is the one who stands in the shoes of the ancestor as the visible representative based on the blood relationship between him and the ancestors of the clan.<sup>7</sup> This makes the office of the chief a sacred one because he is regarded as the earthly representative of the ancestors. In view of this, the appointment of a chief is normally preceded by divination and other rituals such as offering of prayers, sacrifices etc. This is meant to help the *Ohemaa* and the king-makers<sup>8</sup> to select a candidate who is acceptable to the people and the ancestors. Therefore, for the Akan, a chief is 'a person who belongs to the royal lineage or family and has duly been nominated by the *Ohemaa* and accepted

by the king-makers and has gone through the required customary processes and rituals designated for those who are qualified to ascend the stool of the founding fathers of the community concerned.<sup>9</sup> This explains why in Akan society, the chief is accorded the greatest respect and obedience.<sup>10</sup>

Even though, the sceptre, stool, skin, staff, crown and other symbols of office set the chief apart from all others in the community<sup>11</sup>, governance of the society does not solely rest with the chief but always there are other office holders in the administrative set up of the chieftaincy institution. These officials are to assist the chief to rule. They include the queen-mother, sub-chiefs, family or clan heads, and respectable people in the community. These groups of people who help the chief to rule are commonly known as 'Council of Elders' or 'Members of Council of State'. One of the responsibilities of the Council of Elders is to make sure that the chief does not abuse his office. In other words, the Council of Elders limits the chief's powers just as the powers of a president of a country today are limited by the constitution and other institutions such as the legislature and the judiciary as stipulated by the theory of separation of powers. Actions constituting abuse of office may include: disrespectfulness towards the Council of Elders and the King-makers, breaking the oath of office or committing adultery particularly with the wives of his subjects. At the first instance, the *Ohemaa* may advise the chief and if necessary scold him, but if he proves recalcitrant, official charges are preferred against him and if he is found culpable, a destoolment process follows.

Opoku has this to say about the role of religion in the traditional African society:

A close observation of Africa and its societies will reveal that religion is at the root of African culture and is the determining principle of African life. It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that in traditional Africa, religion is life and life, religion...Religion gives meaning and significance to their lives; both in this world and the next. It is hence not an abstraction but a part of reality and everyday life.<sup>12</sup>

It is this view that made scholars on African Traditional Religion like Parrinder<sup>13</sup> and Mbiti<sup>14</sup> to remark that Africans are always religious and that religion is a key factor in all their endeavours. The role of religion in governance in traditional Akan society has aptly been described by Busia thus 'the most important aspect of Ashanti chieftaincy (the largest Akan group in Ghana) was undoubtedly the religious one' as quoted in Cragg<sup>15</sup>. *Otumfoo* Osei Tutu 11, the present *Asantehene* re-echoed this view in an interview with the New African Magazine on his 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations thus: "The Akan tradition has always been with priest. We have always ruled through our priests. They were seers, and soothsayers; we wouldn't go to war without consulting them. A chief or king couldn't do anything without consulting the priests"<sup>16</sup>

## 7. Selection of a chief in the Akan society

The discussion thus far shows traces of religion in the chieftaincy issue among the Akan. The ensuing discussion will throw more light on the relationship between religion and politics in the traditional Akan society.

As indicated above, the selection of a chief among the Akan is first and foremost based on hereditary. That is, the person must be from the royal family of the community in which he aspires to become a chief. Anything short of this will result in resistance which translates into chieftaincy disputes which have become rampant today. When a stool becomes vacant, that is, when the reigning chief abdicates or dies, arrangements are made for his/her replacement. In the case of the death of a reigning chief, his/her replacement is made after burial has taken place. Here all those who qualify may vie for the vacant stool. Several people may be interested but as stated, they must belong to the royal family. Royal lineage here means the family whose ancestors founded the community concerned. It is possible to find more than one family who may claim ancestry to the founding fathers of a place. In this case, more often than not, the position may pass alternatively from one family to the other or even on rotational basis among the kinship groups tracing their ancestry to a common mother.<sup>17</sup>

The selection is very rigorous because the person selected must be acceptable to both the ancestors and the subjects. Therefore, as the names come up, the *Ohemaa* and her elders do some sort of screening. The screening is done both 'spiritually' and 'physically'. This is done with the view to short-listing the candidates. The spiritual one is done mainly through divination to ascertain the right choice. It must be pointed out that although the *Ohemaa* is the principal king-maker in the traditional Akan society, she does not do it alone, for she has to engage in a lot of consultations behind the scene with the *Adehyepanyin* and those who matter in the royal family. For instance, when the short-listing is completed, the *Ohemaa* in consultation with the *Adehyepanyin* and a few trusted members of the royal family, secretly send trusted emissaries to some selected powerful diviners and shrines for consultation to ascertain which of the candidates will be suitable for the position.

The choice of the diviners is the one that will be acceptable to the ancestors. It must be stressed here that it is not only the ancestors who are consulted but the subjects especially the opinion leaders to know their preference among the candidates. This is what I call the physical screening. Here the factors that come into play are moral character of the candidate, personal achievements, patriotism and general commitment to the cause of the community. I see the physical screening as pragmatism, for although the chief rules in the stead of the ancestors, the subjects (the living) are the direct beneficiaries of the policies and programmes of the chief. When all the background checks have been made and one of the candidates has been selected by the *Ohemaa*, she then officially presents the name of the selected candidate to the king-makers as custom demands, through the *Gyasehehe* (chief of the Royal Household). The *Gyasehene* will also present the candidate to the *Kontihene* (the second in command of a traditional area), and the entire *Nsafohene* (sub-chiefs) of the traditional area concerned. After this, the chief – elect is handed over to the *Gyasehene* for him to confine the chief-elect for preparation for his official installation (enstoolment) through the required rites followed by official coronation on an appointed day.<sup>18</sup>

### **8. Enstoolment of an Akan Chief**

Among the Akan the most visible symbol of office of the chief is the stool<sup>19</sup> that is why when the Akan install a chief they refer to it as enstoolment. This shows why it is

obligatory for any one who becomes a chief to carve a stool for himself because the installation of a chief centres on the stool. In fact, the stool is even one of the first items that a would-be chief must provide before the enstoolment process begins. This is because as Akrong rightly observes, 'the stool on which the chief sits symbolizes the link between him and the founding ancestors. The stool, therefore, becomes a sacred location or the temple that represents the abiding presence of the founding ancestors.'<sup>20</sup> And in fact it is this stool that will be blackened after the death of the chief and added to the stock of stools in the stool room in the palace.

### **9. Administration/ Functions of a Chief**

Religion does not end with the enstoolment process but it rather becomes more crucial in the day-to-day administration of the community. It is important to note that the role of a traditional chief is both religious and political. That is, he is both the political head as well as the religious head of the state. He pours libation on his own behalf and on behalf of his subjects. He officiates during the celebration of festivals and other state rituals. Though a state may have a priest or priestess, the religious role of the chief is paramount in the traditional Akan state.<sup>21</sup>

It has been demonstrated from the above that during the confinement period, the chief-elect has a lot of taboos to observe. Owusu Brempong puts this thus, 'taboos are traditional commandments for every chieftaincy institution in Africa'.<sup>22</sup> He adds that Kings and Chiefs are sacred and must be protected by taboos. He cites Malefijt as reporting that early kings were often magicians and priests or were custodians of important deities.<sup>23</sup> For Gyekye, 'the taboos relating to his conduct and mannerisms are all intended to remind him, his subjects, and others that the position he occupies is sacred. The stool (or throne) he occupies is believed to be an ancestral stool.'<sup>24</sup> For instance, a menstruating woman should not enter the palace or touch the chief. This stems from the belief that the menstrual blood is a source of danger to the chief and all powerful people in the traditional society such as, priests, medicine men, diviners etc. This view was confirmed by all the Chiefs and queen mothers I spoke with during the data collection stage for this paper.

One other occasion on which the chief's religious duties come to the fore is during sacred days of the stool he/she occupies, most especially on festival days. The following is the literary translation of a libation prayer made at the *nkondwafieso* by the *Qmanhene* of Berekum Traditional Area at one of the Kwafie festivals of the people of Berekum:

*Good morning Nananom (ancestors)*  
*Today is Kwafie, on behalf of my people,*  
*I offer you this drink.*  
*Receive it and grant us long life*  
*Grant health to me*  
*Grant health to the queen-mother,*  
*Grant health to the Akyeame (linguists/spokespersons)*  
*Grant health to all including strangers in our midst*  
*Visit us with abundant rains*  
*Let our crops yield plentifully*  
*So that we can feed you next year*  
*Permit bearers of children to bear children*

*Protect us against all forms of misfortune  
Whoever wishes evil, let evil fall upon himself*<sup>25</sup>

The above ritual utterances point out clearly the contextual or petitionary nature of the Akan prayer. The prayer always reflects the needs and aspiration of the people. Also on every *Adae* or sacred day, the chief is expected to enter the *nkondwafieso* to pour libation to ask for blessings from the ancestors who he represents, for he has sworn an oath to carry out all religious rites connected with his office. It is this that legitimises his position as a chief. It is for this reason that a chief is destooled in the Akan society if he reneges on this important religious obligation. The chief being the true representative of the ancestors in the traditional area, makes the chief in a formal sense, the legal representative of the ancestors in whom is located the authority to and the power of the ancestors to rule.<sup>26</sup> In the words of Akrong, ‘the sacred nature of kingship is based on the belief that the king’s divine status as the mediator of the divine power enables him to perform the necessary rituals capable of sustaining and protecting society from chaos’<sup>27</sup> It is, therefore, sacrilegious for one to challenge the authority of the chief. This also explains why there was no organized opposition in Akan traditional society. Even the laws, customs, taboos and codes of ethics initiated by the chief have divine backing since they are believed to have been sanctioned by the gods and ancestors; therefore, they invoke divine sanctions on anyone who disobeys them. There is compliance even when one is in solitude due to this firm belief of the people. Therefore, the system of government in Ghana before their encounter with Western culture can be said to be theocratic in a way and African Traditional Religion was the state religion.

One can deduce from the above that the legal basis of authority for the traditional Akan chief is religion. And it is quite clear that the appointment or selection of a traditional Akan ruler- chief has religious underpinning. The religious influence on the governance in the Akan society also comes to the fore even after the installation, the Akan believe that the safest means by which a chief can protect himself, his people and state is through religion (divination). This explains why diviners, magicians, medicine men and other ritual specialists are attached to chiefs’ palaces in the Akan traditional society. This belief seems to be endemic in Ghanaian society because from the time of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana to-date, it has been alleged that the heads of state of Ghana have in one way or the other consulted spiritualists or have a charm of some sort to protect themselves and their governments.

The religious role of the traditional leader is not limited to men but also it is extended to women. Thus the *Ohemaa* has the singular duty to make rain whenever the community faces drought. Whenever the need arises, councillors would tell her, ‘the people are crying’<sup>28</sup> and she has to act accordingly. Parrinder<sup>29</sup> continues that queen-mother does not act alone in the rain-making ritual but has to consult or engage the services of a rain- maker who is always a man. The concern here is that women ritual specialists abound in the Akan traditional society, why can’t one be engaged here since it is the sole responsibility of the queen-mother to ensure that rain falls? Can this also be one of the male chauvinistic tendencies that operate in traditional African societies?

Ejizu has provided a good summary of both the political and the religious role of an Akan chief:

The traditional Ashanti Empire of Ghana is a combination of localised lineages that form a political community. Each lineage head possesses his own blackened stool representing the lineage ancestors and to which the lineage head pours libations. The *Asantehene* presides over the Ashanti nation with his own royal stool believed to symbolise the ancestral spirits. The person of the *Asantehene* is sacred and he primarily fills a sacred role as the ‘one who sits upon the stool of the ancestors’. He is hedged round with a number of taboos. In addition to his political role, he is the link between the living and the dead. He presides over important ritual sacrifices at the *Adae* and *Odwera* ceremonies. Thus, the Ashanti king is regarded as the first-born of the kingdom. He is the leader of the living and their representative before the ancestors, as well as the vicar of the ancestors among the living.<sup>30</sup>

### 10. Chieftaincy in Ghana today

Arguably, one can opine that chieftaincy; the once revered institution of the traditional Akan and for that matter traditional Africa in general, has been shaken to its very foundation due to modernity and the wind of social change blowing throughout the African continent and the historical fact of colonization with its western form of governance. The reality is, as Odotei and Awedoba<sup>31</sup> observe ‘traditional states now operate within the modern state and conforms to the structures that the state uses to regulate its operation.’ The state manipulation of the institution of chieftaincy began during the colonial era, for the indirect rule system adopted by the British colonial powers, subtly made chiefs appendages to the imperial power of Britain and thereby gradually lost their sovereignty. Even though the Independence Constitution of Ghana gave some sort of respect to the chiefs, the Convention People’s Party (CPP) Government under Dr Kwame Nkrumah came up with Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1959 which enabled government to dabble in chieftaincy (specifically through the Minister of Local Government) matters without regard to the Regional Houses of Chiefs as provided in the Independence Constitution. Even though, article 13 of the 1960 Constitution of Ghana stipulates that ‘chieftaincy should be guaranteed and preserved’, the chieftaincy Act (no. 81) of 1961 makes nonsense of Article 13 of the first Republican Constitution of 1960 in that Act 81 defines who a chief is as “an individual who has been nominated, elected and installed as a chief in accordance with customary law, and is recognized as a chief by the minister responsible for Local Government.” This is a clear case of contradiction and manipulation of the institution. No wonder Pinckney<sup>32</sup> bemoans this bizarre turn of events as it is found in Boafo- Arthur:

The gong-gong, which was used to summon the people, was often beaten by a party official, party rallies competed with traditional durbars, party drumming groups competed with those in the chiefs' courts, and village development committees were chaired by party officials.<sup>33</sup>

Those chiefs who resisted this were forcibly destooled. This put the fear into some chiefs and thus made them appendages of the ruling government. What might have accounted



for this move may probably be due to modernization theorists of the time who thought that 'chieftaincy would wither in post –colonial states'<sup>34</sup> and that 'modernization and traditionalism are incongruous.'<sup>35</sup> What this means is that the once revered institutions is becoming a shadow of its former self. It is important to state that the one area where Dr. Nkrumah recognized the role of the chiefs was during state functions where libation prayer would precede that of a Christian.

Today in Ghana, there is an association known as Christian chiefs Association of Ghana (CCAG), ostensibly these are Traditional chiefs who profess the Christian faiths. Some of them became Christians before their installation and some became converted after their installation. Their contention is that some of the rituals connected with chieftaincy are demonic and as such they do not want to associate themselves with them. For instance, some do not pour libation to the ancestors and the state gods during sacred days. They interestingly have appointed people to perform such rituals on their behalf. Is this not a clear case of contradiction and hypocrisy? If you are convinced that the ritual is demonic and thus bad, why do you ask your fellow person to do it? This simply means perhaps they do not understand their Christian principles well, for the Bible says, punishment awaits anyone who urges his fellow human being to do what is abominable in the sight of God. I find it difficult to understand this attitude of the so-called Christian chiefs. What is, however, clear to them is the fact that failing to perform your religious duties as a chief is tantamount to abdicating your position or you are forcibly destooled but they do not want to lose their positions as chiefs but want to keep two positions which according to their own interpretation are incompatible.

Chiefs as agents of development in their respective communities cannot be overemphasized. This, they do, by providing security in the areas, justice and mobilisation of the people to undertake communal labour for the execution of development projects. This explains why development becomes stalled in the areas where there are no substantive chiefs or there are protracted chieftaincy disputes. Even the land to be released for development must come from the chief, who is traditionally the custodian of the stool land in his/her, area of jurisdiction.

One motivating factor that keeps the fire in the chief's burning is the fact of religion and culture. Culture is that which gives a unique identity to any group of people anywhere in the world, and since the institution of chieftaincy is a key element in the Akan culture and for that matter many African peoples, the Akan chiefs, the custodians of the Akan culture would tenaciously guard it even in the face of difficult challenges. And it is this that has kept the institution going despite the odds and if any thing at all, it will transform itself to meet the realities of the times. It is here that Bottah's quotation of Major (Rtd) Courage Quashigah; Minister of Health of Ghana is relevant:

That posterity would continue to demand accountability on cultural heritage bequeathed the chieftaincy institution, if they allowed the unique and valued inheritance to play second fiddle to western cultures. He therefore, entreated chiefs as the custodians of the land traditional belief and systems to guard against

the phenomenal adulteration of the country's traditional customs, values, norms and practices or have no rallying point as a people.<sup>36</sup>

These are factors which no contemporary government of Ghana can choose to ignore. It is this reality that has informed the framers of our Constitutions of 1969, 1979 and 1992 to give the due recognition to the chieftaincy institution. Article 270 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana prevents the Parliament from enacting any law which directly or indirectly intends to control the institution of chieftaincy in Ghana today.

## 11. Conclusion

The worldview of the Akan has been noted to be overwhelmingly theistic and this finds expression in all their endeavours. This comes out clearly in their system of governance- chieftaincy. The stool which the reigning chief occupies symbolizes his/her link with the ancestor of the state. This, therefore, makes the chief the visible link between the living and the dead. Thus, his/her person from the moment he/she ascends the stool, becomes sacred. He/she becomes both the political and spiritual head of his/her people. In view of this, he/she is guided and guarded by a host of taboos. This ensures the sanctity of the institution of chieftaincy. The foregoing discussion so far, points out clearly that in Akan traditional society, it is unthinkable to talk about separating religion from politics because political leadership is intrinsically fused with spiritual leadership. In other words, religion forms the legal basis of traditional authority and, therefore, to decouple the two is nothing less than removing the torso from the institution of chieftaincy.

Drawing from the Akan understanding of who a chief is, the processes involved in his/her selection and installation, his/her duties as a chief and even the burial rites accorded a chief, this paper can conclude or posit a theory that religion - African Traditional Religion - is an indispensable element in the institution of chieftaincy among the Akan of Ghana (and this may hold good for other African traditional communities). This is because the supernatural (Supreme Being, gods and the Ancestors) are the pivot around which the institution revolves and anyone who loses sight of this reality, will lose the very essence of the institution of chieftaincy among the Akan of Ghana.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Busia, 1951; Austin, 1970; Pinckney, 1970; Ninsin, 1989; Yeeba, 1991; Pobe, 1991; Chazan,1992; Aryee,1992; Bofo-Arthur, 2001; Odotei & Awedoba, 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Rattray,1923; 1927; Meyerowitz,1958; Debrunner,1961; Parrinder,1961;Danquah,1968; Sarpong,1974; OApoku,178;Warren,1986.

<sup>3</sup>J.O.Awulalu, 'Sin and its Removal in African Traditional Religion' in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 44/2 1976 p.275.

<sup>4</sup>An interview with Okomfo (priest) Kissiwaa. December 7, 2007.

<sup>5</sup>Abraham, Akrong,. 'An Akan Christian View of salvation from the perspective of John Calvin's Soteriology' (Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, Ph. D. Dissertation, 1991), 206.

<sup>6</sup> Irene K. Odotei, and K. Albert Awedoba,. eds. *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*. (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 16.

<sup>7</sup>Kwesi Yanka. *Speaking for the Chief*. (Indianapolis, 1995), 95.

<sup>8</sup> The designated search committee in the traditional area which has the sole responsibility to look for fitting candidate to ascend the stool whenever the need arises. They have to present their nominee to the queen-mother for her to accept or reject if she has a cause to do so

<sup>9</sup> An interview with Nana Danso Mensah, a traditional ruler, 10 September, 2008 at his residence.

<sup>10</sup>S. Awuah-Nyamekye. "Kwafie Festival of the People of Berekum" BA Dissertation, University of Cape Coast, 1995, pp12-13

<sup>11</sup>Dawson, Christopher. *Religion and Culture*. (New York, 1947), 109.

<sup>12</sup> Kofi Asare, Opoku. *West African Traditional Religion*. (Accra, Bang kok, Hong Kong: FEP International Private Limited, 1978), 1.

<sup>13</sup>E. G. Parrinder. *African Traditional Religion 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed*. (London: Sheldon Press, 1962.), 9.

<sup>14</sup>Mbiti, J.S. *African Religions and Philosophy 2<sup>nd</sup> revised and enlarged Ed*. (London, Ibadan, and Nairobi: Heinemann, 1989).1

<sup>15</sup>K. Gragg. *House of Islam*. (Belmont, California: Dickson Publishing, 1969).

<sup>16</sup> An IC Publication, New African Magazine 43<sup>rd</sup> Year, April 2009 No 483.

<sup>17</sup> An interview with Nana Adu Gyamfi Kumanini, the Akwamuhene of Berekum Traditional Area, 12 November, 2008, See also, Diawuoh, n.d. <http://www.africanexecutive.com>.

<sup>18</sup> An interview with *Ohemaa* Akosua Asibuo, 15 November, 2008.

<sup>19</sup> An interview with Nana Korang Kusi, head of the Ntwan family of Berekum, 15 November, 2008)

<sup>20</sup> Abraham, Akrong. "Religion and Traditional leadership in Ghana" In Odotei, K. Irene, Awedoba, K. Albert. 2006. Eds. *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*. (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 198.

<sup>21</sup> An interview with *Okomfo* Adjei Ampofo, traditional Priest, 12 November 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Brempong, Owusu. 'Chieftaincy and Traditional Taboo: An Empirical Approach' In Odotei, K. Irene, Awedoba, K. Albert. Eds. *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*. (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 213.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. see also Meyerowitz, L.R. Eva. *The Akan of Ghana: Their Ancient Beliefs*. London 24 Russell Square: Faber & Faber Limited. 1958), 54.

<sup>24</sup> Kwame, Gyekye. *African Cultural Values: An introduction for Senior Secondary Schools*. (Accra: Sankofa Publishing Co. LTD., 1998), 83.

<sup>25</sup> S. Awuah-Nyamekye. "Kwafie Festival of the People of Berekum" BA Dissertation, University of Cape Coast, 1995, pp12-13.

<sup>26</sup> Busia, 1951:38.

<sup>27</sup> Akrong 1991:196.

<sup>28</sup> Parrinder, 1962: 80; Meyerowitz, 1958:29.

<sup>29</sup> Parrinder, 80.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/community.htm> n.d.

<sup>31</sup> Odotei and Awedoba 2006:17.

<sup>32</sup> Pinckney 1972, 95.

<sup>33</sup> K..Boafo-Arthur, 'Chieftaincy and Politics in Ghana since 1982' in *West Africa Review* Vol. 1, No 1, 2001.

<sup>34</sup>Marion Levy, 'Patterns of Modernisation in Political Development in Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, March, 1966.

<sup>35</sup>Fallers, Lloyd.. The King's Men: Leadership and Status in Buganda on the Eve of Independence. London: Oxford University Press, 1964)

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