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Chieftaincy among Migrant Communities in Ghana: The Case of the Dagbamba in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis

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Abstract:

Individuals from Dagbon and other parts of northern Ghana have been migrating to the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis and its environs since the 1920s (Mort (2009)). Consequently, there was a substantial number of Dagbamba in the Metropolis making it imperative to institute chieftaincy to cater for the teeming population. This paper sought to find out the nature and role of chieftaincy among migrant Dagbamba in the Metropolis. Using the purposive sampling, interviews and observation techniques, it emerged that the Dagbamba held their chiefs in high esteem. The chiefs who performed ceremonial, interface, consulate and ambassadorial functions were however faced with challenges such as lackadaisical attitudes of some members towards functions. Further, tension resulting from the Yendi and Bimbilla skin affairs, religious sectionalism, and inadequacy of funds were mundane challenges to the chiefs. The paper observed that despite the challenges faced, Dagbamba chieftaincy was vibrant in ensuring the integration and protection of the rights and privileges of migrant Dagbamba within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Keywords: Dagbamba, chieftaincy, migrants, host society, ethnic.

1. Introduction

Chieftaincy in Ghana provides leadership in the ethnic and local levels. The Dagbamba, Ewe, Asante, Gonja, Fante and many more are societies that have chieftaincy institutions in Ghana. The institution gives the people identities which in turn galvanize the people to work towards the progress of their various societies. According to Awedoba(2006), the Dagbamba people who occupy a considerable portion of the Northern Region call themselves Dagbamba which is corrupted and written or pronounced as Dagomba. They consist of three linguistic units: the Dagbamba, Mamprusi, and Nanumba. The Nanumba live to the south of the Dagbamba and the Mamprusi are found to the north of the Dagbamba, the latter being the largest of the three ethnic groups. The traditional capital for the Dagbamba is Yendi located about 96 km east of Tamale. Nalerigu, which lies at walking distance from the district capital of Gambaga, is the seat of the king of Mamprugu while Bimbilla is the seat of the Nanumba paramountcy and capital of the Nanumba north District. The Dagbamba are noted for their tradition and culture of chieftaincy which is vibrant among them and remains an emotive issue. The attachment to the institution accounts for the zeal with which individuals compete for chieftaincy titles that are used to organize and administer the Dagbamba societies. Royals and especially the rulers are considered the most important and highly revered people in the society.

This paper focused on the Dagbamba chiefs in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. The chieftaincy institution is part and parcel of the Dagbamba society and whether in their homeland or in the Diaspora, they institute one to give them leadership. The Dagbamba community in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis had five chiefs in the various communities and suburbs. The chiefs were the centripetal force that galvanized the people in the performance of social activities.

The Dagbamba are Islamized ethnic group and the majority are practicing Muslims (Awedoba, 2006) whereas the host communities in Sekondi-Takoradi and its environs are largely Christian. The traditions of the native Ahanta and other Akan groups with whom the Dagbamba immigrants co-existed were distinctly different. Yet inter-marriages took place between these groups but not without attendant problems (Halawayhi, 2012). Such social problems including performance of funerals especially for less endowed individuals have made it extremely important to have chiefs who could provide leadership that could solve or at least manage the problems. This study was aimed at investigating the roles that chieftaincy played in the lives of the migrant Dagbamba in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

2. Methodology

The study which was qualitative in design employed participant observation and purposive sampling techniques to obtain data from interviewees. This methodology was preferred because it gave the researcher the opportunity to interact directly with players in Dagbamba chieftaincy in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. In the course of the study, all five community chiefs, their assistants called *Naa zo*; which literally means chief's friend and other sub chiefs numbering twenty-five were interviewed. This sample was chosen because it involved people who are knowledgeable in matters of chieftaincy relating to the Dagbamba. They answered

questions on qualification for the chiefly offices, relationship with the indigenes and other migrant groups, whether or not they feel accepted or rejected by the indigenous population, issues of religion and religious conflicts, the role of the chiefs and challenges the chiefs faced. Five other opinion leaders, including a retiree and a former human resource manager of a state company, who host a cross section of the Dagbamba community for socialization every Sunday between 5 to 6 in the evening were also interviewed.

The interviews were conducted in Dagbanli (the language of the Dagbamba). The interview proceedings were recorded with a voice recorder and while taking notes at the same time. This was to ensure that the researcher could do double checking of the data collected in the course of the interactions. The maximum time spent on each interaction with respondents made up of the sub chiefs, chiefs and ordinary members categories did not exceed one hour. On the average, the interviews conducted during the Sunday meetings spanned one hour and thirty minutes. Islamic clerics who participated in the Sunday meetings preached and also socialized with other participants, therefore prevented me from having ample time to interview my potential respondents.

Participant observation was also used as the researcher lived among the migrant community under study for two years at Effiakuma where the majority of Dagbambain the Metropolis lived. The observation was done by attending social functions such as funerals, outdoorings and wedding ceremonies.

Finally, some of the information in this paper came from secondary sources such as books, newspapers and conference proceedings.

3. Results

A look at the results of the study points to the fact that chieftaincy served as a platform for interaction where new relationships were forged and grievances aired for the purposes of redress. Individuals with close family ties such as affine, brothers or cousins usually looked-for redress in the courts of the chiefs over marital or financial issues. Such close relations will hardly go to the police or court for any reason, but will rather seek for justice by reporting issues of malfeasance or abuse to the chiefs for redress. The chiefs also serve as the anchors of tradition organizing Damba and communal dance forms and durbars during festivals such as Eids (Islamic festivities). In their attempt to perform their legal and social function, the chiefs were faced with several challenges such as lack of funds, accommodation and space, and sectionalism problems etc., which derailed their efforts at consolidating the gains made over the years.

4. Discussion

The Dagbamba community is yet to organize a fire festival which is one of the major festivals celebrated in Dagbon. The festival actually marks the beginning of the year in their traditional set up. The Damba on the other hand is periodically organized and celebrated with pomp and pageantry. The overall social life of the Dagbamba is touched by their chieftaincy institution; the prominent ones are discussed below.

4.1. *Dagbamba and Social Integration*

The Dagbamba have had cordial relationship with the indigenes of Sekondi-Takoradi in particular and other parts of southern Ghana in general since the 1920s following the massive conscription of the people of Northern Ghana to the south to work in the mines and plantations in the 1920s (Mort, 2009). However, in recent times, some of the northern migrants may come to the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis as professionals and civil servants, while the majority of them work as scrap dealers in the Kokompe Market. A few of them are also engaged in the sale of lumber while others are real estate contractors (Halawayhi, 2012).

According to Claire (2008), the degree of integration between immigrant and host community is dependent on the interaction between immigrant group participation in the larger socio-political entity and the host society's acceptance or rejection of the immigrant minority. From this assumption, one can argue that the Dagbamba are well integrated in the Metropolis of Sekondi-Takoradi. First, they integrate through inter-marriages with native Ahanta and another Akan or with other settler-communities' resident in the Metropolis. The marriages are said to have offered them the opportunity to either gain contracts, or link them to potential business partners (Halawayhi, 2012). Halawayhi concludes that more Dagbamba are looking forward to contracting marriages with the Akans in the Metropolis in order to maximize the advantages that such marriages offer.

Secondly, various Ahanta traditional authorities including Effia, Essikado, Beahoo etc., sanction the enskinment of individuals as Dagbamba chiefs when proposals to that effect were made by the Dagbamba. To the extent that the native Ahanta chiefs recognize and also supervise the investiture without problems was an indication of integration and acceptance of the Dagbamba within the Ahanta cultural milieu.

Third, the differences in cultural traits have made integration with the host and Dagbamba communities viable. This buttresses the fact that cultural similarities hurt immigrant-host relations, whilst cultural differences facilitate social integration (Claire, 2008). The view of Claire is that when dissimilarities exist between cultures the possibility of integration and acceptance of the immigrant one is high. This author further opines that where there are similarities, rejection is highly probable as recorded between Hausas and the native Zamberima (Djamer) in Niamey in Niger, or the preference of Hausas to Yorubas in Accra Ghana since the Yoruba culture bears some similarities with the native Ga culture.

It emerged from the study that in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, ethnocentric motivated discriminations were experienced in work places, and also in the choice of partners where a Dagbamba man sought the hand of a woman in marriage from the Akan groups. The reverse was deemed to be true as indeed Dagbamba families were also reluctant to allow their daughters to marry Akans. This attitude is a confirmation of the position of Awedoba (2002) that there is a general dislike of families allowing their female members to marry outside of their ethnicity in Ghana for reasons bothering on insecurity.

4.2. Comparison of Modes of Chieftaincy in Dagbon and That of Sekondi-Takoradi

Among the Dagbamba, Nanumba and other sister ethnic units of northern Ghana, royals are at the apex of the social ladder (Halawayhi, 2011), which is the basis for chiefs being praised appellation such as *Gbugma* (lion), *Tihi ni mori lana* (owner of trees and grasses). Other forms are *Sagim lana* (the possessor of food), *Bankaso yonda* (the caretaker of the fatherless and motherless) among others. Chiefs are regarded so highly that in asking about their health from somebody when exchanging greetings, one cannot do so by mentioning their titles, rather it is done by asking ‘how is the horse of the palace doing’? This is used metonymically to refer to the chief or king as the horse is a symbol of authority. Only royals of paternal lineage have the right of ascension to the skins (chieftaincy offices). There are however specialized skins or offices meant for women of royal families and others for their children.

The Dagbamba chieftaincy in the Metropolis was largely reminiscent of what happens in their home land up north. This modeling ranged from the paramount skins to sub-chiefs and court elders including the type of titles used for the court elders. It is important to state that the courts in the Metropolis did not have the full complement of the offices required for administration and adjudication of cases. Officers such as *Wulana* (Aide to chief), *Naa zo* (chief’s friend), *Nakoh Na* (chief butcher), *Limam* (Imam), *Lun Na* (chief drummer), *Yidan gunu* (chief barber) were available in all courts within the Metropolis and performing their traditional functions. Several other officers who were supposed to be part of the council of elders in the court were conspicuously missing. They included *Dambalo* (court spokesperson), *Kpatihi* (representative of kingmakers), *Gomda*, *Kuga Na* to mention but a few. It was mentioned that the chiefs enskinned the officers that were expressly needed to carry out functions at ceremonies or for individuals of the community. The council of elders in Dagbon according to Staniland (1975), is made up of nine members who assist the king in the day to day administration of the state. This function was not different from what happens in the Metropolis except that council met only on Fridays but not on Mondays and Fridays as occurs in Dagbon. It is worthy of note to that in the village and provincial chiefdoms in Dagbon, most of the offices are not available as seen in the highest echelons of chieftaincy-the paramountcy. At the paramountcy level, all the needed offices are present and constantly occupied in order for them to perform their statutory functions. The appointment of officers in the Metropolis was need based just like the village or provincial court in Dagbon where officers are appointed to serve specific functions.

In Dagbon, enskinment is done with specific regalia meant for that purpose. The regalia used in the Metropolis were ordinary gowns, (usually white), hat and a traditional walking stick meant for chiefs. This was not also different from how the enskinment of a village chief is done in Dagbon. The dress code for the Dagbamba chief meant for occasions is a big gown worn over two or more smocks, a hat, walking stick and mugri (an up-to- the knee traditional boot). These were worn by the chiefs in the Metropolis as well.

One important symbol of authority missing in the Dagbamba chieftaincy in the Metropolis was the presence of a horse. None of the chiefs ever had a horse or used one. Yet, the older generation exchange greetings by metonymically asking *nayili wuhu be wula?* This is literally translated to mean “how is the horse of the palace doing”? This statement is meant to enquire about how the chief is faring. However, the younger generation did not only know about this but also care less about issues of chieftaincy.

The type of praise singing and nature and sound of drumming was the same as in Dagbon. Though in the Metropolis, none of the chiefs was an allodial owner of a parcel of land, they were still given praises that reflect land ownership. It is true however that the chiefs provided social protection as the praise singing suggested.

The mode of selection of candidates for vacant positions also differed. In Dagbon, selection is done based on kinship relations with a former chief; it is supposed to be patrilineal and promotional as the offices are of different ranks (Awedoba, 2006). Ascension to the offices within the Metropolis was not promotional nor is it based on descent. Any interested individual could put in a bid for any vacant office once he resided there. Usually, the affluent and influential people put in their bids for the offices. The youth at the Kokompe Scrap Market always supported a bidder who is very influential with the police and could bail them or facilitate their freedom if they were arrested for buying stolen scraps.

Area/suburb	Former chief	Period of reign	Current chief	Period of reign
Takoradi	Naa Sayibu	Early 1980s- 1998	Naa Alhassan	1999 to date
Effiakuma	Naa Fusheini	Mid1990s-2001	Naa Dokurugu	2002 to date
Kwesimentsim	NaaMahamadu	Early 1980s - 2004	Naa Alhassan	2005 to date
Tanokrom	Naa Di	Mid 1980s-1990	Naa Ibrahim	2002 to date
Sekondi	Naa Sayibu	Mid 1970s-1991	Naa Issa	1992 to date

Table 1: Genealogy of chiefs

The chieftain in Sekondi was the oldest of the entire Dagbamba chieftain and it was claimed that neither the age nor size of a suburb determined who becomes the most senior chief. All the chiefs were equal in rank and represented the Dagbamba community of their respective suburbs. The Dagbamba practiced the patrilineal system of inheritance. Usually the first sons are supposed to inherit offices and titles. Younger siblings of the first sons are also qualified to ascend offices upon the demise of their senior brothers. There are instances where the sons of senior brother’s contest with their uncles when their fathers are no more. This is as a result of the fact that both brothers’ children and younger brothers would have had their fathers ascending the office and so are qualified to ascend it too. The current Tanokrom chief was the son of the first chief. This implied that succession to office which passes on from father to son, which is in nature with the Dagbamba inheritance system in Dagbon, is creeping into the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. If there were two or more sons of different former chiefs at the time of the demise of any chief, conflict over ascension to the vacant skin would be highly probable since they will all be qualified for the throne and likely to contest for it. The qualification of sons of former chiefs to

skins and that of their uncles coupled with open contestations to offices have been a major source of succession conflict among the Dagbamba and Nanumba (Staniland, 1974, Halawayhi, 2011). Vacant offices in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis were openly contested for by interested individuals. It is to be expected that at the demise of any of the current chiefs, his sons, brother, or any other interested person could clash over ascension to the throne.

4.3. Succession Conflicts

People bid and competed for nam (chiefly office) as is done in Dagbon but the competition in the Diaspora was not however as intense as in Dagbon. Usually the most influential person got the nod and approval by the native Ahanta chief as some influential people within the Dagbamba community kept seeing the chiefs on behalf of popular bidders. Then enskinment was done in the Dagbamba fashion and since qualification or illegibility did not depend on kinship but mere affluence and influence, tension or enmity resulting from competition over an office died soon after the successful candidate was inaugurated.

During the bidding for nam in 2002 after the demise of Naa Fusheini in Effiakuma, there was near crisis. The current chief was almost ascending his position unopposed, but trouble started as some sympathizers of the Abudu gate in Dagbon wrote a protest letter to the Effia chief and the police saying the man was not a unifier and could not therefore promote cohesion between the Abudus and Andanis. This prolonged the enskinment since the security and native traditional authority had to ensure that every concern was addressed to the latter. Consequently, the matter was resolved as the Abudu youth was convinced by some Dagbamba elders that the embattled candidate would do justice to all manner of people. He was subsequently enskinned. Upon ascension to the office, the new chief called both the Abudu and Andani youth together in his house and thanked them for their support and understanding and called for decorum in the ways they behave on matters regarding the chieftaincy problem at Dagbon. He added that *m bi yen pii kagli ti so, ka pii dogu ti so dama Abudu ni Andan zugu, yizaa nyela n nirba*. This means that I will not give any one corn stalks and the other sticks (to fight with) because of Abudu and Andani, you are all my people. He demonstrated this commitment by attending occasions for the Abudus (who were opposed to him) and that of Andanis who supported his enskinment. The elders among the Abudus have recognized his effort at reconciliation and that has built some trust between them. He has since not had any confrontation with the Abudus since his enskinment and so his reign could be described as peaceful.

4.4. Role of Dagbamba chiefs in the Metropolis

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana assigns chiefs both statutory and non-statutory functions as follows: The statutory functions among other things are: Collection, refinement, codification and the unification of customary laws, adjudication in chieftaincy disputes. Others include compilation of lines of succession to offices in the various traditional areas, appointment of representations to various government statutory bodies including the Council of State, Prisons Council, National and Regional Lands Commissions and Regional Co-ordination Councils. Constitutionally, traditional rulers are barred from active partisan politics. The non-statutory functions of traditional rulers are derived from their positions as moral/natural leaders of their respective communities. As influential members of their communities, the Constitution mandates chiefs to undertake the under-listed functions: Settlement of disputes through arbitration and mobilization of their peoples for development purposes. In this capacity, they act as linkages between their communities and development agencies including central government departments, local government organs, NGOS, diplomatic missions, religious bodies and welfare associations. Arhin (1985) opines that chiefs act as public relations officers in order to draw the attention of the agents of 'modernization' or 'globalization' to their corners of the earth so as to advance their people's material welfare. The roles of the Dagbamba chiefs within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis vary some falling in line within the specification of the Constitution especially the non-statutory roles while others are completely different from the specifications of the Constitution probably because the chiefs in the Metropolis are not paramount chiefs and are only leaders of Diasporan Dagbamba. The functions of the chiefs could be seen in the following ways:

4.4.1. The Consulate Role

The various palaces served as consulate or port of call where new migrants may find accommodation and initial social contact and capital. The palaces also served as offices where visitors especially people who came looking for lost family members went for help. The compulsory labour migration of the 1900s to 1920s, (Mort, 2009), brought several Dagbamba to the Metropolis and opened the way for future migrations. Up to date, Dagbamba migrants looking for job opportunities continue to come to the Metropolis. Several of these migrants have not visited home for several years making families up north to come looking for them since the Metropolis remains a destination for migrant labourers. Chiefs were always being called upon to assist in searching for such people who have left their traditional homes to seek greener pastures in and around the Metropolis.

4.4.2. The Arbitrative Role

Spousal conflicts were always sent to the chief's courts for arbitration. Another issue which frequented the courts bothered on financial infidelity. People often complained about others who have duped them or refused to deliver goods for which monies have been paid. These and many more such as family squabbles were sent to the various chiefs for adjudication and for mending of cracks. Though chiefs did not have enforcement powers, their advice, and judgments were respected.

It must be noted however that it was the poor and low-income earners or people of low social standing who visited the palaces for intervention for their problems. The rich and highly educated people who work as bankers, accountants, lecturers and soldiers did not visit the chiefs' courts for any intervention. Some of them hardly interact with the chiefs and ordinary people. They are usually seen

when they attended weddings or funerals celebrations. Nonetheless, they were known by the lower class since the later looked up to them for solutions to their problems.

4.4.3. Ceremonial Functions

This was one function that the chiefs played which made their presence felt. On occasions such as naming and marriage ceremonies, funerals and Damba festivals the chiefs don their traditional attire and regalia looking glamorous. They usually act as the guests of honours and fathers of the occasions. Such occasions were often scenes of glamour as the chiefs splashed money to praise singers who reminded them of the nobility of their ancestors. Here they sat in council with all the retinue of title holders that constituted the council of elders.

4.4.4. Ambassadorial Function

The chiefs served as ambassadors or emissaries to the Dagbamba community by attending major function such as funerals in Dagbon or within the Metropolis on behalf of the Dagbamba community. As representatives of the Dagbamba community, the chiefs have the onerous responsibility to attend functions to which the indigenes invited the Dagbamba. For instance, in December 2012 when the Paramount *Chief of Essikado* traditional area, Nana Kobina Nketsia V performed the final funeral rites of his uncle, Nana Kobina Nketsia IV, the Dagbamba community was ably represented by the chiefs. They added colour and flavour to the occasion as their adornments of large smocks and *batakari*(kind of long traditional robe) combined with the Akan mourning cloths beautified the grounds making it a scene to behold. At the funeral ground near the Regional Office at Sekondi, the Dagbamba chiefs delivered a solidarity message as was done by other ethnic groups and Western Region Old Vandals Association. The Dagbamba chiefs made a cash donation and a cow as back in their home land, cows are usually slaughtered during funerals especially that of chiefs. The solidarity message pledged allegiance and loyalty of the Dagbamba people to the indigenous traditional authorities and also assured the indigenous traditional authorities of their continuous resolve to ensure integration of their culture to the indigenous Akan culture in order to strengthen the bond of fraternity between them.

4.4.5. Interface Function

In cases of problems which arise from misunderstanding in customs and traditions, the chiefs became the first port of call to resolve such matters. Such matters arose usually in interethnic marriages between the Dagbambas and the indigenous population. Halawayhi (2012), reports of a matter in which an indigenous Ahanta family asked a Dagbamba man to come for his marriage payment to signify the end of his marriage to their daughter. But the Dagbamba man and his family refused arguing that the act of returning payments was strange to their custom and traditions and that the divorce could be effected without the return. This was more so when children were born. The author added that when the Ahanta family summoned the Dagbamba man and his family before the Dagbamba chief of their area over this matter, the chief pleaded with the Ahanta woman and her family to keep the dowry since the children born to them was of paramount importance. They agreed albeit reluctantly and the matter was thus resolved.

A similar case became a subject of discussion in one of the Sunday social get-togethers in the house of a retired public officer. A Dagbamba man had a son with an Ahanta woman and did not care for the woman and the son. When the boy turned 12 years, the man and his family demanded for the boy. The woman's family was furious especially when the man did not even name the child. This matter was reported to the Dagbamba chief by the woman's family and swearing never to release the boy to the man. Both the man and woman's families were invited by the chief for arbitration. After an exchange of hot insults and curses by both sides, cool heads prevailed. The woman's family agreed to release the boy to the father to bring up but demanded a token compensation of 2000 Ghana cedis for the expenses incurred during the boy's naming ceremony, clothes and general upkeep. The man's family agreed and the matter was thus settled. By the time this paper was written the boy in question had integrated with the father's family in Effiakuma, a suburb of the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. He was renamed in line with the Dagbamba and Islamic tradition to which the father belonged since the name given to him at birth by the mother's people was Akan. He now responds to two names; either families of his parents call him by the name with which he was named. When matters of this nature arose, the chiefs received them for resolution. The chiefs therefore perform an interface role between the Dagbamba and indigenous traditions.

4.4.6. Rallying Role

The chiefs also rallied the Dagbamba community to offer assistance to individuals who were in need. There were several men who migrated into the Metropolis for greener pastures who have grown very old and too poor to go back home. Some of these people were without children as they have never married and so live at the mercies of philanthropists. They were usually seen begging for alms in mosques.

There were instances where assistance in the form of monetary contributions was sought from people to send them back to their home villages. Some poor people took their daily meals from the various chiefs. The chiefs as well rally people to bury the poor Dagbambas whose families were far away or were not capable of organizing a decent burial. Halawayhi (2011), reports of a similar reason for which the Bimbilla Na installs chiefs for the various ethnic units in the town to receive strangers and to organize burial for people from their home societies. Unlike Asantes who prefer to be buried in their family graveyards in order that they can continue to live with their ancestor in the spiritual world (Busia, 1968), the Dagbamba do not care where they are buried. In case of the demise of a Dagbamba, he or she is buried in the town where the death occurred. After burial, three pebbles of stones are picked from the grave if the deceased is a man and four if a woman. The pebbles are sent to the deceased's home town as a symbol of the death and funeral rites are performed with the pebbles at the center of the rites and activities. These pebbles are first sent to the paternal family where the

funeral is first performed then to the maternal family house of the deceased where the funeral finally ends and the pebbles buried in that house. No decease from the Metropolis has therefore been ever sent to Dagbon for burial.

4.5. Challenges of the Chieftaincy Institution

Generally speaking, the chieftaincy institution has always been faced with lots of challenges. Historical challenges in the form of colonial attempts to sidestep the institution and the attempts by the immediate post-independence governments to subjugate and divest chiefs of their economic strength through drastic laws, have hampered the strength of the institution Boafo (2003). The author further notes that currently, the 1992 Fourth Republic Constitution bars chiefs from participating in partisan politics thus infringing on their inalienable right of free association.

Though the Dagbamba chiefs in Sekondi-Takoradi were not allodial rulers and some of these inhibitions may not be applicable to them because they were mere heads of their ethnic kinds, they are also faced with several challenges that threaten the efficacy of the roles and efforts they made to ensure cohesion and forward movement of their people. Among these challenges were:

4.5.1. Inadequate Funds

The chiefs did not have adequate funds to embark on projects that they wished they could carry out for their people. For instance, in their homeland up north, chiefs have a constant dinner called 'gando' which is meant to feed the poor and wayfarers including the chiefs' households. Chiefs in the Metropolis wished they could afford to feed the mass of people for which Dagbamba chiefs are praised as 'sagim lana' which means owner of food, but they were however not able to afford this mass feeding leading to some of their dependents eating outside from food joints.

The chiefs' inability to accommodate people who were related to them or associated with their family members has remained a source of worry and a mounting challenge. When the chiefs received visitors from their homeland for various reasons accommodating them has always been a problem since such visitors came in their numbers.

4.5.2. Non-Participation

Some members of the Dagbamba community sat on the fence during the performance of some activities. Most of those who showed this lukewarm attitude were the highly educated and gainfully employed residents such as bankers, accountants and lecturers. When such professionals appeared at social activities such as weddings, funerals etc. which were always presided by the chiefs, some colour and flavor were added to the ceremony by their mere presence. But they rarely did and sometimes when, they were asked to make contributions towards the occasions they readily did so, but may not appear personally for the occasion. The occasions of these professionals were usually well patronized by members of the Dagbamba community with zeal. They have bused people to areas such as Shama, Diabene and Nkroful for occasions such as wedding, naming ceremonies and funerals with pomp and pageantry. Some of the chiefs were present to grace the occasions in some of the occasions witnessed by this author.

4.5.3. The Yendi and Bimbilla Skin Affairs

There are controversies regarding the ascension to the Yendi and Bimbilla skins. The former one is the oldest resulting in the popular Abudu and Andani affair. The people in the Metropolis were also divided between these two royal gates though they did things in common; things are very difficult to resolve when conflicts occur to the latent undertone of enmity. Even among the chiefs, those who were Abudus were closer to their kind and the same can be said of the Andanis. Trivial issues were dragged just because the people involved belong to different chieftaincy camps.

In terms of party politics, the Abudus are largely New Patriotic Party (NPP) whilst the Andanis are National Democratic Congress (NDC) sympathizers (Halawayhi, 2011). The author further states that among the Nanumba who are also divided between Andani Dassana and Salifu Dawuni over the Bimbilla skin, people are not wholly sympathetic to any political party. People still support and vote for parties of their choice but not forced to do so on chieftaincy grounds as it is the case among the Dagbambas. In a similar support fashion, as with the party politics, the Andanis are in support of Andani Dassana whilst Abudus are backing Salifu Dawuni. This kind of support system among the people under study made issues of conflict difficult to resolve especially if it involved people who lend support to opposing chieftaincy factions.

4.5.4. Religious Sectionalism

The Dagbamba who are largely a Muslim people were divided between the various Islamic sects namely Ahlu Sunna and Tijaniyya. Members of these sects have always been opposed to each other both in Dagbon and in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis especially over the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. In one of the Sunday meetings of the Dagbamba people attended by this researcher an Islamic cleric explained that there is a long-standing rift between these two **Muslim** sects and that the **Ahlu Sunnas** strictly adhere to the teachings and practices of the **Holy Prophet Mohammed**, Peace Be Upon Him, whereas the Tijaniyyas have, besides the five canons of Islam, certain optional practices which the Ahlu Sunnas condemn as not conforming to the strict practice of the religion.

This rift was raging on between the Dagbamba Muslim groups thereby breeding suspicion and mistrust among them. When problems occurred among people belonging to the different sects, the rifts were deepened with their friends stoking the fire instead of calling for calm. This enmity posed a huge challenge to the chiefs in their effort at fostering unity among the Dagbamba in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

4.5.5. Scarcity of Time

Making time to attend social activities to which the chiefs were invited is always a challenge. Several people extended invitations to the individual chiefs to grace their occasions and if they attended some of the occasions but were not able to attend others that became a source of enmity as those whose occasions were not graced felt discriminated against. The organizers of those events simply saw the inability of the chiefs to grace their occasions as a refusal, it then became a source of bitterness.

All the five chiefs in the Metropolis were business men. Two were in Real Estates and the other three were cattle business men. Making time for social activities was possible only on Sundays where most occasions were performed and this made it difficult for the chiefs to honour all invitations. Sometimes the chiefs delegated their sub chiefs and Council members such as the Naa zo (chiefs friend) and Wulana (Aide to the chief) to represent them. Other organizers of those social events were not usually satisfied since the presence of the chiefs themselves would have made the occasions more colourful.

5. Conclusion

The Dagbamba were said to be well integrated socially within Sekondi-Takoradi as a result of their involvement and role in the larger socio-economic activities of the Metropolis. The integration is heightened by inter marriages with the indigenes coupled with the fact that the Dagbamba culture is distinctly different from the indigenous Akan ones thus facilitating the phenomenon of integration. It was realized that the chieftains within the Metropolis were modeled after the Dagbon ones but with some key offices missing. The chiefs were highly regarded and they perform ceremonial and diplomatic functions, consulate and interface functions as well as arbitrational duties. The chieftains within the Metropolis faced challenges such as inadequacy of funds and time, tension resulting from religious sectionalism, chieftaincy related tensions and lackadaisical attitude of members towards occasions and functions. Despite the challenges faced the institution was vibrant and highly regarded and more Dagbamba continue to vie for titles in order to gain recognition and enhance their social standing.

6. Recommendation

The writer proposes that a research be conducted on the chieftaincy of other migrant ethnic units such as Ewe, Dagati and Frafra among others. This would provide comprehensive knowledge on how migrant groups in Ghana organize themselves in host societies. The research should further bring to bear the kind of relationships that exist between the migrants and their host societies, and that which exist between various migrant groups so that in the event of a sour relationship, government and other social agents can provide the needed intervention to prevent any escalation

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