

"SOME REFLECTIONS ON RESTUDYING THE NCHUMURU OF KRACHI  
DISTRICT"

By

Dr. D. Paul Lumsdon\*

After a ten years' absence from their area, I have just completed a follow-up study of Stress and Social Change amongst the Nchumuru people of Krachi District, in the Volta Region - a study with a special focus on assessing the long-term consequences of the Volta River Project in that area. In this brief article, I should like to share with the reader some comments and reflections on the personal impact I experienced from engaging in such a restudy, and from doing so after such a long period of time. The restudy was carried out from the beginning of February to the middle of July, 1979, and, since most of the following was written before I left Ghana, obviously there has not yet been time for the analysis and proper digestion of the mass of data which has been collected. Thus, I am concerned here with reporting on some personal reflections and feelings, not with presenting a detailed, professional, less-subjective and structural analysis - the latter, book-length presentation will follow in due course. The following is intended as a small contribution to the welcome, recent trend within Social Anthropology, whereby fieldworkers now do publish revelations about the art and artfulness by which their "hard" data and analyses have been generated; appropriate discretion prevails on a few points, for now.

For many years, I have been concerned with that sub-field of Social Anthropology known as "Psychiatric Anthropology", with research and theory about Psycho-Social Stress in particular: i.e., with how individuals and groups perceive, define, and cope with endogenous and exogenous stressors - "demands for adaptation" which tax the coping resources of physiological, psychological and social systems. I have argued that it is necessary for social scientists to understand "Stress" in order to

---

\*Co-ordinator of African Studies, York University, Canada.

better understand processes and outcomes of systematic change, and in order to develop an adequate theory of social change; a detailed presentation of my own Stress model is given elsewhere (Lumsden, 1975A). The empirical case-study of stress and change that I have been connected with since 1967 is that provided by Ghana's Volta Resettlement Project; in order to properly assess the complex impact and reverberations of this Project, my longitudinal study has been focussed on the history, ethnography and coping responses of one particular ethnic group, the Nchumuru or N'Ch mb l . Part of this ethnic group has been faced with the necessity to cope, both in the short- and in the long-term, with such Volta Project "demands for adaptation" as: (a) forced- or self-resettlement; (b) the formation of a large lake nearby; (c) new types of housing; (d) new neighbours, and an "increase in social scale"; (e) loss of farmland, as well as other economic and administrative constraints, and (f) a poorly conceived and executed compensation programme.

The historical background and the "base-line" ethnographic data for this study are presented in my 1974 Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (Lumsden, 1974; see also 1973, 1975B) - a thesis which must be revised and expanded in the light of later information; clearly, such a study has a built-in need for the carrying-out of several restudies, at set intervals (say, every 5 or 10 years) over time - as Colson and Scudder have done for the Kariba Dam Project in Zambia. Before outlining the personal impact of the 1979 restudy, it is necessary first to provide the reader with a sketch - a very incomplete one - of Nchumuru history and social organization.

#### I - Comments on Nchumuru History and Ethnicity:

The Nchumuru are a small, Guan-speaking ethnic group whose members today are largely located on their lands in neighbouring parts of three of Ghana's Regions: i.e., in Krachi District in the Volta Region, in Eastern Gonja District of the Northern Region, and in the Yeji-Atebubu-Kwame Danso-Bassa triangle of the Brong-Ahafo Region; in addition, small but organized clusters of migrant Nchumuru work in such urban centres as Accra and Tamale. Most Nchumuru are yam farmers and petty-traders, with

resource for the achievement of situational, tactical or strategical advantage or adaptation. The Nchumuru of today "know" who they are and who they are not, know which villages are theirs and which (e.g., Prang, Nkonya-Ntshumuru) are not - there is an ethnic boundary, a semi-permeable one and one with its own history.

Along with their "Guan" past, Nchumuru history and social organization reflect close ties with the history of such peoples as the Gonja, the Bassa, and, not least, the Dwaben Asante (see Lumsden, 1974; chapter 3). In addition to local migrations, conflicts (e.g., Asante conquest, Gonja attack) and other ~~inter~~-ethnic "bargaining" situations, present-day Nchumuru social organization also reflects the Colonial period's impact; after all, a significant part of Nchumuru territory is located between what became two market-places of major concern to rival Colonial powers, the famous markets of Salaga and Kote. British and German administrative decisions, the post-Colonial State's retention and modification of District boundaries, and, of course, the creative coping responses of the Nchumuru membership to a host of such historical stresses, are among the factors which have produced present-day Nchumuru "ethnicity", and their fascinating social organization - which I will now outline.

## II - How the Nchumuru are Organized:

(1) Political Hierarchy, and Patrilineal Descent: This matter is dealt with from the top on down.

(1a) As a result of historical and administrative vicissitudes, there are three separate Paramount Chiefs who are recognized and functioning for the present-day Nchumuru ethnic group - one in each of the three Regions mentioned. These Chiefs are:

(i) the NangyuroWura, located at the small and undistinguished village of Nangyuro in the Northern Region; an important symbol and a court-of-appeal for Krachi District (V.R.) Nchumuru, he has the fullest legal rights with respect to the Eastern Gonja District (N.R.) ones;

(ii) the BegyansoWura, associated with the town of Begyanso but now often residing at the more accessible market town of Chinderi, is Paramount for the Krachi District.Nchumuru. His "Divisional Chiefs" are located at the towns of Banda-Bunwueso, Papatia, Borae No.2, and Akanien. - that Begyanso's head was a "Chief" (as compared to Akanien's being but a "village headman") was noted by Captain Lonsdale in his well-known 1882 report. A legal, traditional "State Council" does not yet exist for these Nchumuru.

(iii) the CherepoHene or CherepoWura, the Paramount for the Cherepo people in Brong-Ahafo Region, who claim themselves to be, and are recognized by the others as being, Nchumuru. I was not sufficiently aware of their existence when I came to write my Thesis. This chief now is located in a fine "palace" in the Yeji Resettlement town.

(1b) The whole ethnic group is structured into seven Nsur (Kasur, sing.) or phratries; in alphabetical order these are: Banda, Begyanso, Chachiae, Ch nki, Kp nt nae, Su wae, and Cherepo's Aduana. Each phratry has its own special name, a male Chief (Su wae currently has two, one in both the V.R. and N.R.), and named Stool (whose name most members do not know); each consists not of clans, but of a number of related or allegedly-related villages, each of these having its own male head and protective deity. Of course, villages are important units of political and social action; but, they are not monolithic units.

(1c) The "essential core" of each village consists of one or more patri-clans (Mbuno), each with its special name, its male head, its own residential area, its "secrets" and properties (land, streams, etc.). Inheritance, by homogeneous transmission (male to next oldest male, female to female), occurs within the Kabuno, and can over-ride (and so helps to obviate) any patrilineal sub-unit or lineage that may form or may begin to become salient within the Kabuno. It is important to note that the Kabuno is not an exogamous unit. Along with one's village identification, one's Kabuno is the single most salient, talked about and omnipresent social unit. By a series of structural mechanisms (such as: the use of a Hawaiian type "kinship" terminology, in most cases, each Kabuno's possession of but one Ancestors' Shrine, etc.), the

fishing, condiment-growing, beer-making, goat-, sheep- and pig-rearing, etc., as other sources of income; they too suffer from Ghana's poor economic condition.

The available archaeological evidence shows that a group of the Nchumuru have lived in the Begyanso area of Krachi District for some 300 or 400 years (thus being there before the "Krachi Lartehs" arrived); before that time, this group's ancestors (and perhaps at the same time, or somewhat later, the ancestors of the Cherepo-Nchumuru, and others) lived in the Brong-Ahafo "triangle" noted above, an area still in use today as part of the Nchumuru "heartland". Of course, the "ultimate" origins of the Nchumuru are tied up with the origins of the Guan-speaking peoples as a whole - a matter of some controversy. The Nchumuru themselves exhibit a diversity of opinion on their "ultimate" origins: the Cherepo and some of the other Nchumuru speak of the Larteh area as being their source; others point to "Banda Wala" in western Ghana, or to Ancient Ghana; still others have created a migration story to reconcile all the preceding versions in one convenient account; some elders just do not know of an "ultimate" origin, or espouse an auto-ochthonous, "out-of-the-ground" origin near where they now live.

Such responses to scholarly concern about "migrations" must not be allowed to obscure a very important point, and that is the fact that some evidence exists to prove that the Nchumuru have spent an impressively long time period in Krachi District and the Brong-Ahafo "triangle" - there have been several centuries of in situ development. Another group left this "triangle" and spent over 150 years in Dahomey, before returning. Furthermore, it must be clearly understood that "ethnic identity" is itself a historical and changing phenomenon; for no ethnic group anywhere should we expect to find all its present members stemming from only one (biological, geographical, cultural) origin in actuality; in addition, we already understand that "oral traditions" are not "objective" records of movements, chronologies or land claims, but rather are political documents for use in contemporary disputes. "Ethnicity" (like "kinship" is a bargaining chip, one coping

K busi or Kokob relationships; i.e., one's "relatives", one's cognatic "family". These are ties clearly and regularly expressed by the circulation of Nchumuru between different villages in order to attend appropriate funerals; the common saying, "we perform funerals together", articulates one of the dominant sentiments and structural ties binding particular individuals, Mbuno, and villages together. But the claim that two or more actors (individuals or groups) belong to the same, or are of, "one family" ("K busi k nko") can be used even more encompassingly, when "actual" cognatic ties are forgotten, not known, or perhaps never "really" existed, in order to embrace any useful or potentially useful Nchumuru: this resourceful usage is assisted by the presence of the folk belief that all Nchumuru are "related" together somehow. The Cherepo elders, for example, speak of their whole group as being K busi k nko with respect to all the other Nchumuru. The use of a Hawaiian "kinship" terminology further allows Nchumuru to over-ride, ignore or create useful "actual" ties; e.g., a man may call even a non-Nchumuru man, of appropriate age level, his "senior" or "junior" brother". And, with some circumspection, one can also embark upon a "friendship" relationship. Thus, there are a number of options, tactics, and human resources available for one's coping with everyday life; "kinship" imputation is one resource and technique.

### III - How the Nchumuru were Studied:

A few background remarks on the research design of both the 1968-69 and the 1979 studies are in order; both form part of an exercise in experimental anthropology.

In 1968-69, eighteen months' research was spent on examining Nchumuru social organization in all of Krachi District, and on intensively researching life in one Volta Resettlement (VRA) town (New Grube, containing members of five formerly separate villages), together with a comparative analysis of life in three other, nearby villages (Akaniem, Papatia, Kradente). These four main research sites at that time analytically could be arranged along a "continuum of disruption", from those most affected by the Volta Project (New Grube) to

Nchumuru have devalued and de-emphasized the formation, existence and utility of patrilineages within the patriclan: the clan is more salient than the lineage. The Kabuno is buttressed by virilocal residence: "residence" and "descent" principles must go together in discussing and understanding the nature of the Nchumuru clan. The (male) ancestry of some present-day Kabuno members, and even of some Mbuno themselves, is not "pure" in its "ethnicity" or "entitlement" - and a similar sort of permeability and "impurity" probably is true of all the "clan" systems in the anthropological record. Nor should it be assumed that Kabuno-nates are immune to jealousy, envy, spite, laziness, disrespect, or lack of willing co-operation, in their dealings with members of their descent group.

However, for lack of space, I cannot discuss the complexities of the Kabuno further, nor can I devote attention to the "household" (see Lunsden, 1975B). Other, "political" matters must be dealt with elsewhere too: e.g., the nature, role, and large number of Nchumuru "Queenmothers"; the role and influence of the Nchumuru Youth Association (the Cherepo Youth have a separate T-shirt/singlet slogan!); the process of and necessity for Government recognition of Kasur, "Divisional" and Paramount Chiefs (see Ghana Law Reports, 1975, Vol.I, concerning the present Begyansowura), and so on.

## (2) Complementary and Cognatic Emphases:

A description of Nchumuru social organization would be both inadequate and inaccurate if it simply emphasized the "descent" principle, and so ignored or downplayed the important roles played by affinity and consanguinity. A cognatic emphasis is also a key feature of Nchumuru social organization, and the imputation of "kinship" ties is a major bargaining or coping capability of their system.

Here, we are in the realm of that important social category of persons termed Nd puañae ("Mother's Brothers", in a classificatory sense), which link or imputation helps tie together (both internally and externally) the various Mbuno, villages, and Nsur. In addition, there is the even wider but equally useful category or imputation of

to those least affected (Kradente). Comparative analysis of these four sites allowed one to check hypotheses about the manifest and latent consequences of this Project's "demands for adaptation". These main sites are or contain villages affiliated with four of the phratries noted earlier (Banda, B gyamso, Chachiae, Su wae), including what now is Chachiae Kasur in its entirety. Altogether, these four sites provided a study population of 1,457, perhaps ten per cent of the total Nchumuru population in Ghana at that time - though under what heading the Cherepo were enumerated is not clear from the 1960 Census volume on "Tribes".

Though my major focus was (and is) on only one of the 52 VRA towns in Ghana, it is worth noting that a total of 6 of these 52 sites (i.e., New Grube, Dambai and Tokoroano in the V.R.; Yeji/Cherepo in Brong-Ahafo; Makongo and Bachin Gulubi in N.R.) have dominant or significant populations of Nchumuru - thus some generalizations can be made about the resettlement experience, and even more so since other Nchumuru villages have resettled themselves. It also might be noted that I have not used pseudonyms in my publications on the groups studied, in view of their members' own expressed desire that I make their "name" known to the wider world.

The methods used during the first 12 months of the 1968-69 study period were participant observation and the interviewing of key informants; the remaining months were spent in my training and directing a highly-motivated team of six local Nchumuru youngmen (all had only their Middle School Form 4 Certificate) in the administration of 10 different Social Surveys, these being carried out in the Nchumuru language. The Surveys were designed by myself while in Accra, were mimeographed at a Girls' Secondary School, and each form was read and checked by myself shortly after its completion; the topics covered included census matters, economics, religion, housing quality, inter-group relations, etc. This research was a success; co-operation in answering the Survey questions was almost 100%, a remarkable level of involvement considering the length of some of the Surveys (one was 13, another 16 pages per form), the fact that male household heads were the

targets of more than one Survey, and given the other demands on their time (such as necessary farmwork). This degree of co-operation and success could not have been accomplished without the prior establishment of trust and rapport between the local Nchumuru and myself.

On my muddy arrival at New Grube - after my first attempt at a major motorcycle trip, and on such roads! - I told the assembled elders that I was there in order to study Nchumuru "history, language and customs": few could have believed or understood this occupation at first. However, rapport was established quickly, I believe largely because of my active participation - through my dancing, "wake-keeping" and financial contributions - in the many funerals that happened to occur during this first study period: thus, "we performed funerals together". Other ways by which we came to "move" together included: my provision of free bandages and minor medicines on request; my ongoing attempt to learn and use their own language, rather than the Twi lingua franca; my distribution of my "wealth" (a student grant!) by the hiring of local helpers; frequent respectful greeting rites with, and drinks presentations to elders and to the priests or shamans of local deities; the embarrassing value the elders placed on having a "European" live in their midst - hoping that Government thereby would then become more aware of their needs and aspirations; their desire that their way of life be recorded and made known; my value as a convenient, bearded, white bogey-man for mothers to invoke when wanting to chasten their small children - I "weaned" a lot of babies! Later, a special drinks presentation, with libation-prayers, introduced each set of elders to the nature and purposes (though not to the specific hypotheses) of the Survey programme; co-operation was forthcoming also because in most cases the interviewer was "related" to the respondent - a fact that enhanced the reliability of the data collected too. It was also necessary to use a helper from that particular group, in most cases, simply because of the high degree of conflict that then existed within New Grube and between Akanien, New Grube and Papatia - for a discussion of Stress and "social pathology" at New Grube as it then was, see Lunsden (1975A). Much data from this 1968-69 fieldwork, especially that on Nchumuru religion (though see Lunsden, 1977) and on funeral customs, has not yet been made public.

Research did not stop with the ending of fieldwork in December, 1969; nor did contact cease, for photographs were sent back and a few letters were exchanged with some literates. That contact was not completely broken-off assisted in the success of the 1979 restudy. In 1970-71 and 1973 extensive archival research was carried out on British and German colonial records; in addition, I was able to interview or communicate with a number of colonial officials (former District Commissioners of Salaga or Kete-Krachi, etc.), then living in retirement in Britain or Rhodesia, or working elsewhere (U.S.A., the Solomon Islands), or with their next of kin (West Germany, South Africa) - for "doing" History is part of the Social Anthropologist's technique, duty, and domain. Some of the data so gathered are not otherwise available in Ghana; thus, during my 1979 trip, I was delighted to find that Nchumuru themselves were beginning to use my Thesis in pursuit of their own interests, as I had hoped. For example, one of the three Nchumuru students currently attending the University of Ghana has just recently submitted his B.A. thesis to the History Department, relying in part on my work (Brukun, 1979). As never before, the writings of today's Social Anthropologists are (as they ought to be) subject to the critical scrutiny and public response of members of the ethnic group concerned; such writings also may become part of such a group's perception of its history, and affect members' understanding and assessment of their selves - there are obvious benefits, dangers, and responsibilities entailed in such a feedback situation.

For the number of Nchumuru who so far have heard of, or have read, my writings on their people, the mere existence of such works seems to be a matter for a modicum of ethnic pride: the existence of oral tradition, one may speculate, can not slake the thirst of today's ethnic amour-propre as convincingly as can written testimonials to one's heritage and aspirations. Moreover, the fact that I had published a number of such papers since my first sojourn in their midst could be seen as a modest repayment for their earlier help, as a tangible sign of my continuing commitment, and as a further reason for Nchumuru to co-operate with the 1979 restudy - which I will now discuss.

Some five years after the completion of my Thesis, I was able to return during a Sabbatical Leave to conduct 5½ months of further participant observation and survey research among some of the Eastern Gonja, Kereke District, and Yeji Nchumuru. Once more the main focus was on life in the VRA town of New Grube and in the self-resettled towns of Akanien and Papatia; again the research endeavour was a success. I myself wrote 1,051 pages of fieldnotes on topics such as clanship, social change, land tenure, the cost of living, ritual sacrifices, Chiefship, schooling, alcohol use, local involvement in national politics, and the soccer craze. Moreover, more Mbuno genealogies were collected, and dozens of Government reports and other documents were obtained - though this trip, unlike the last, did not provide the time for perusing District Administrative Office files. In addition, a 14-page questionnaire was administered (again in the Nchumuru language) to each of almost 300 household heads in the three main sites, and a 4-page one was used for data collection on a few dozen "Strangers" households; the major questionnaire dealt with demographic matters, economics, marital history, subjective reports on health, "happiness" and "worries", funeral attendance, compensation payments, and so on. A short survey was administered to the wife or senior wife of all the male household heads at New Grube, while a very brief Market survey, and a sample survey of 50 of the unmarried young people (25 boys, 25 girls, all between the ages of 17 and 26) at that same site, also were carried out. These Survey forms had been prepared in advance, in Canada, and were designed in part with the testing of more than 20 hypotheses in mind; it will take several years to fully digest and make use of this mass of data. And, yes, my medical, child-christening, and dancing activities were resumed; the survey programme was introduced by my hosting of a large dance at each of the three main sites, while my dance with a "possessed" shaman during a noon-lit rite honouring the god Tigare was a hit of the 1979 religious season.

#### IV - Some Reflections on the Restudy:

I now wish to outline some "impressions" or "reflections" relating to the impact on myself of the 1979 restudy; it is likely that all of the lessons and implications of this recent immersion have not yet been fully appreciated.

(1) One experienced a real sense of the passage of the years, both in my life and in theirs, and a keen sense of the progression of the developmental cycle of domestic groups. Each town has grown in size; one (Akanien) has completely abandoned its old dwelling area since 1969, while New Grube has more of a community "feeling" to it than it had before. Now New Grube has nature shade trees and is home to numerous dogs, goats, sheep and pigs (the in-site presence of the last three was against VRA "model town" policy in 1968) - one must be careful where you step! Inter-group conflict within New Grube seems much less overt than before: "new towns" too go through a developmental cycle; and the VRA town has been lived in and lived through by its domestic units. Children I knew last when they were but 9 or 10 years of age now have children of their own; other friends had produced 4, 5 or more children in the intervening years; one man who had been an unmarried youth in 1968-69 now has three wives, and the inevitable children; other friends and elders had died. As another indicator of the passage of time, and of the impingement of the wider world, it may be noted that only one satellite passed over New Grube on 1968-69 evenings, but now at least seven trace the heavens.

(2) Like most Ghanaians, the Nchumuru too are suffering from the effects of the past years of inflation, economic mismanagement, and many devaluations; changes in the prices of certain items, or their present-day unavailability, and in general the heightened cost of living and dying, are striking features. For example; in 1968-69, a new bicycle, needed by the men for travelling to and from their farms, cost 68 "new" cedis at Kete-Krachi, this being regarded as a high price; in 1979, when a new bicycle was available for sale, its cost was 1,400 or 1,600 cedis - until after the June Coup,\* when a "control price" of some 315 cedis was reported. Ten years ago, the "funeral" for a child might cost about 50 "new" cedis, and about 230 such cedis would satisfactorily fund the celebrations on the passing of a Kabuno-head; today such "funerals" cost 2,000-3,000 cedis and more. And the difference in the cost and availability of foodstuffs is a story in its own right, as is the matter of "income".

---

\*June 4th, 1979 led by Flt. Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings

(3) There also was a real sense of "homecoming" attached to the restudy, especially with respect to my residing once more in New Grube. By which, too, I mean that both I and the local people appreciated the fact that my voluntary return after so many years did entail a greater commitment to them and their fortunes in life, did mean and facilitate tighter bonds of friendship, did create a greater sense of obligation to help them in future - e.g., to help young people advance to higher education. My arrival in New Grube - with my ability to recognize the faces and call out the names of many former acquaintances, and my eventual departure - waving goodbye from a tractor as it sped twice through the town, were emotional affairs. In all this, there is the extra, special pressure one feels as to how and whether one can ever adequately live up to all the revived and new expectations (for financial aid, for producing the sort of book they await, etc.) - after all, I largely owe my career to the Nchumuru.

There is yet another aspect to this keenly felt sense of "homecoming"; this time it was very hard to completely maintain a "professional" aloofness, to keep my opinions on local issues to myself. Furthermore, thanks to the combative tendencies of a valued assistant, I found myself playing a direct and assertive role in dispute settlement processes on two occasions, one of these involving none other than the "Wife" of the important god Nana Kosoe. In other words, the role of "citizen" beckoned, at times most temptingly, like the Sirens' call.

In his justly famous lecture on "The Scope of Anthropology", Levi-Strauss ably sums up the issue and the dilemma my experience reflects. In accurately describing the discipline as being "a restless and fervent study which plagues the investigator with moral as well as scientific questions" (1967: 51), he further speaks of the "distinctive character" of Social Anthropology: "of all the sciences, it is without a doubt unique in making the most intimate subjectivity into a means of objective demonstration" (*ibid*: 26-27). But, as he warns (*ibid*: 26), the successful fieldworker's challenging immersion in "total observation" does run a real "risk" - "the complete absorption of the observer by the object of his observations". To use the ringing words with which Levi-Strauss concludes his address (*ibid*: 53), such an "absorption" into local citizenship may

preclude one's fulfilling the anthropologist's twin duties with respect to the ethnic group concerned: one is always "their pupil", but must also be "their witness". This does not exhaust the matter.

(4) A possible experience in all synchronic fieldwork, but one even more likely (and forcefully) to occur in diachronic or longitudinal research, is the investigator's feeling of regret, disillusionment or despair over certain persons and situations; the more one is "attached" to the people, the stronger will be this experience. The economic situation has been noted; two other areas may be mentioned. First, after so many years, not all of one's former friends and acquaintances have the same (or remembered) character as before - some have changed for the worse; several have drinking problems; another is a convicted thief; another is not well treated by her husband, and so on. The prevalence of the over-use of, or over-reliance on alcohol (rather than of alcoholism per se) among the non is a matter for concern - but then, the rewards for a hard life are few.

Secondly, unlike the 1968-69 case, now most of the District's Nchururu Chiefs are literate, a fact which certainly ought to enhance their effectiveness as leaders - indeed, the Ch nki Kasur Chief, an abstemious and articulate man, is the current Chairman of the Krachi "District Council". However, one such Chief is not trusted by a significant number of "his" people; one (and perhaps a second) seems to have received a large amount of compensation money which ought to have gone to other people; to my (largely private) dismay, another is an obvious alcoholic - a disaster for his people.

(5) Given the short and crowded research time available, I did not intend to give high priority this time to language (re-)learning; however, I was amazed and delighted to find that even after these many years I did not have to go back to square one in using their tonal and hitherto unwritten language - some of the phrases came flooding to mind even before I moved back into New Grube. I have not yet achieved sufficient fluency; however, I consider my skill in speaking and "hearing" Nchururu to have been much better this time than it was in 1968-69, when I placed too much reliance on working through a few interpreters (highly-

motivated though they were). During this restudy, I felt much freer to move around on my own, assisted in this too by the fact that now a few more Nchumuru adults know some English - and, of course, the earlier pressure of "doing The Thesis" no longer existed. It should also be noted that, in the intervening years, a few, brief studies by professional linguists, have come into existence as aids to future research, notably the work of a Missionary group based at Ekundiye (N.R.) and currently working on a New Testament in their Twi-like written script of the Nchumuru tongue.

(6) In method and achievement, the restudy benefitted enormously from my prior research; this time the main features of Nchumuru life and social organization were known in advance, and so the restudy could be more focussed and assured. Moreover, thanks to their previous research exposure, the Nchumuru themselves were more experienced: they knew me and my character; more importantly, they now knew what a social survey is, how to handle it, what its time demands are, etc. All of this allowed for more rapid and richer data gathering.

(7) Four of the ten survey assistants used this time were also assistants in 1969; thus their experience helped not only themselves, but also helped show the others what to do. Again the calibre of the assistants varied, as did their salaries: from 8 to 13 cedis per day - a good salary by local standards; hiring still was partly a political matter, and called for careful diplomacy with the various sets of elders. The survey interviewers were an ecumenical crew: one was the local Catholic Catechist; another was the Tigare Priest for his group. Three turned out to be overly fond of drink - but fortunately, only so in their off-hours! Furthermore, and unlike the 1969 case, this time I was able to locate and hire a literate female assistant, which certainly enhanced the quality of the data gathered from the women and girls. The fact that so many assistants were involved with the survey forms did mean that extra care had to be taken to ensure comparability of questioning - to make sure that each used the same translation for each question, and to ensure the lack of interviewer bias. But, their number did allow much work to be done in the short time available, and their familiarity with the respondents enhanced the reliability of the data. I rechecked all

the forms shortly after their completion, and was also able to keep an eye on the interviewers at work in New Grube and Papatia, though less so on those at Akaniem - for this last involved me in a 10-11 mile walk on each visit. Moreover, the necessary rechecking of the forms was itself a very time-consuming business, one which often inhibited my performing other tasks, seeking other pleasures. But this research was a success.

(8) The obvious also needs to be stated: the restudy provided data which shed new light on data gathered and analyses made before, which revise that earlier data, and which cover new ground - more about Nchumuru society now is known. For example, the nature of their "kinship" system, the role of "Queenmother", and the prevalence of female shanans, are much better known topics now; Nchumuru women's views on their husbands are better expressed - and many are not flattering!

The restudy also provided the chance to visit some places not examined before: e.g., Yeji, where I first came to appreciate the significance and organization of the Cheropo, and Nangyuro, where a 17-mile walk allowed me to greet the ManyuroWura and to get a sense of what the Daka River was like before the Volta Project. It might be added that the restudy has fed some jealousy in certain Nchumuru towns that I have not yet been able to visit or reside at; this, of course, can be corrected.

There are a number of other involving items that could be treated herein - such as: the horrors of the March, 1979, currency changeover and devaluation; the excitement of the National election campaign, which saw 4 of the 140 Parliamentary seats won by Nchumuru; and the "Rawlings Effect" of the June Coup on local social and economic life - but space forbids. One is left with a deep sense of gratitude for all the help so willingly given, a sense of curiosity as to what eventual local impact one's financial help to a handful of advanced students and to an assistant wanting Bible School training will have, and a sense of loss, arising from the present separation from friends there and from the realization that a number of these hospitable people will not be alive when and if another restudy takes place.

In conclusion, this brief consideration of the Nchumuru life-way and of some reflections arising from a restudy thereof, itself reflects the operation of the intellectual process Levi-Strauss (ibid: 43) aptly refers to as "anthropological doubt". Thus, this paper itself encapsulates an endeavour to be "their pupil, their witness".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to express my thanks to the Nchumuru people and my assistants, to the Canada Council, and to the University of Ghana's Institute of African Studies, for their help and support. This is a revised version of a Seminar given at the I.A.S., Legon, July 11, 1979.

REFERENCES CITED

- (1) Brukun, N.K. 1979: A Brief History of the Nchumuru People. Unpub. B.A. thesis, History Department, University of Ghana, July, 1979; 51 pages.
- (2) Levi-Strauss, C. 1967: The Scope of Anthropology. London: Cape.
- (3) Lunsden, D.P. 1973: "The Volta River Project: Village Resettlement and Attempted Rural Animation". Canadian Journal of African Studies. Vol.7, No.1:115-132.
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_ 1974: Nchumuru Social Organization and the Impact of the Volta River Project. Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Anthropology, Univ. of Cambridge, U.K. 325 pp.
- (5) \_\_\_\_\_ 1975A.: "Towards a Systems Model of Stress", in Vol.2 of Stress and Anxiety. Ed. by I. Sarason & C. Spielberger. Washington: Hemisphere. pp.191-228.
- (6) \_\_\_\_\_ 1975B: "Resettlement and Rehousing: Unintended Consequences among the Nchumuru", in Changing Social Structure in Ghana. Ed. by J. Goody. London: International African Inst. pp.201-228.
- (7) \_\_\_\_\_ 1977: "A Traditional God in a Time of Change: Nana Kosoe of the Nchumuru". Paper delivered at the American Anthropological Assoc. Annual Meeting, at Houston, Texas. Minco; 57 pages.

A Note to the Ghanaian Reader: copies of my writings are available in the Institute of African Studies Library, Legon.