

INSTITUTE NEWS

WORK IN PROGRESS

MIGRANT COCOA FARMERS IN THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN REGION

Kwame Arhin

This is a re-writing of my Report (1974) on the socio-economic survey of migrant cocoa farmers in the central and western regions for publication. The Report deals with the conditions in which twentieth century migrant farmers live and work. The re-writing has been considered necessary for the purpose of making the work generally readable; in particular, only a minimum number of tables has been used, and, figures from responses to the questionnaires, which were administered by interviewers and not filled in by respondents, have been re-presented in a simplified form.

"Migrant Cocoa Farmers in the central and western regions of Ghana" should be available in a published form within a year or so.

MEASURING "COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT"

My other on-going research project is an attempt to measure "commitment to development". My research area is the north but I am hoping that my findings will be applicable to other developing areas.

The starting-point of the enquiry is not some theoretical reading, but my own bewilderment about the apparent lack of "development" generally in Ghana but particularly in the savannah areas north of the Volta.

My first visit to what is now the Upper Region was in 1958, and the second in 1982. In 1958, I was impressed by what seemed to me to be preparations for a "take-off": agricultural development was being fuelled by constructional works - roads, bridges, office-buildings, market stalls. In 1982, I was overwhelmed by signs not only of non-development but of retrogression: a market without imported goods; a vast number of uncompleted projects, including economically vital bridges; contraction in the size of farms with concomitant increasing resort to the non-commercial types of labour, familial and co-operative labour; and apparent high school drop-out rates.

What did all this mean? It meant, first, non-development, that is no sustained increase in economic output and corresponding appreciation in the quality of life, or living standards. It meant, second, on the face of it, that "development" was not a generally accepted social goal, that there was no general commitment to development. But what is meant by "commitment to development" and can this commitment be measured?

I define "commitment to development" as a general acceptance of development as a "duty" in the sense that the Protestant bourgeois of the 17th and 18th centuries regarded the pursuit of wealth as a duty or a "calling" in Weber's sense; and suggest that it is possible to measure

this acceptance of development as a duty in two ways. Firstly, one can examine the rate of sustained investment over a period; that is, the rate at which there has been rational pursuit of wealth; and, secondly, one can examine the system of sanctions - rewards and punishments - with which society has been promoting or discouraging individual and collective pursuit of wealth.

The first requires a knowledge of what constitute wealth in which one can invest and expect returns. In the Bulsa district, the area of my current field work, the pertinent question is the rate of expansion of farms, of livestock, of the pito brewer's operations and the landlord's building programmes.

But the rate of expansion is a matter of the proportion of earnings that a man is prepared to save for investment purposes, which suggests that one should examine the expenditure pattern of the community. A 2.5 per cent rate of saving or investment on income would indicate a favourable disposition to development. But I am not certain which proportion of the community must show this propensity to save for the community as a whole to be said to be committed to development.

The second question is a matter of (a) attitudinal and (b) documentary research. (A) aims at finding out opinions about those who can be identified as "economic leaders" that is, the leading farmers, livestock owners, traders, landowners and brewers with recognizable assets, who the community regard as "rich" or "wealthy". Are the people so

regarded accorded a special status or rank by the community, and said to be worthy of emulation? How do they compare in "social rating" with traditional rulers, politicians, educated people such as civil servants, teachers, and nurses who constitute the local elite? (B) - documentary research - aims at finding out from the court and other records the sanctions attached to acts that promote or retard economic development.

In respect of B, one thinks in particular of embezzlers of funds intended for public projects, of the contractors who finish small portions of these contracts - roads, bridges, office buildings, market stalls, school buildings - and then abscond with huge advances often with the connivance of officials who have a cut in the loot. In the Bulsa district, one is struck by the great numbers of these uncompleted projects because they explain the striking lack of employment among both skilled and unskilled workers.

That these contractors are, generally, able to escape punishment of any sort suggests public indifference to the developmental process. But, more than indifference, it suggests the attachment of the public not to what may be called the "public good" but to private accumulation. There is a consensus that anybody who has the opportunity to do so should accumulate capital for himself; and since in Ghana the state owns the bulk of wealth, the private accumulation of wealth can only be done at the expense of the state; and it is substantively, though not formally, legitimate to do so. Those who deserve censure are not the predators

on state wealth but those who would insist that the predators and their collaborators be vigorously punished. The critics are the social misfits.

My hypothesis is that there is only public commitment to private accumulation and not to general development; and that this legitimizes the depredations on the public coffers which accounts for the relatively mild judicial treatment of those unlucky enough to be caught.

"Measuring commitment to development", then, entails finding out the rate of investment, as may be seen from consumption patterns, attitudes to entrepreneurs, and the formal and practical sanctions against defaulters on public contracts.

The project should last about three years.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF MR. KROBO EDUSEI

The late Mr. Krobo Edusei was the leading lieutenant of the late President Kwame Nkrumah in the Ashanti Region. He was the very embodiment of what D. Austin calls the "Elementary School Leavers" revolution. His biography is intended to show the ideological origins of the nationalist revolution, at the middle-ranking level of the leadership of the CPP and also the character of the Convention Peoples Party.

Research at this stage is documentary to be followed with interviews in Kumasi and Accra.

The project will last about two years.

ETHNIC-MUSICOLOGY OF WEST AFRICA

Barbara L. Hampton

The overall aim of this project is to discover how the people of Kpehe, a working class neighbourhood in the city of Accra, Ghana, systematically conceptualize music structures in prescriptive and descriptive contexts. A data base derived from documentary evidence and empirical observations of Gome music, the principal musical activity in which all Kpehe residents regularly participate, in Accra, in the maroon towns of Jamaica, where it was created, and in Freetown, where it was taken by repatriated slaves whose descendants taught it to Ga labor migrants, will serve as a starting point. These data have led to an understanding of how Gome performances are shaped by social perceptions and feeling responses to everyday realities and are activities which themselves produce symbols and cultural meanings. These data raise further questions about the cognitive status of music concepts shared by Kpehe people. This research project is designed to answer these questions, build on the data base and thereby complete the study. Specific objectives are to discover musical concepts as articulated through

- 1) ethnohistorical accounts of music, including its origin and function,
- 2) metalinguistic denomination of elements of music structure and activities,
- 3) the aggregate of sound and movement patterns culturally designated as domains of expression and

- 4) the relationship between musical and other conceptual domains.

While theoretically and methodologically continuing the tradition established by the few and recent ethnomusicological reports on music theory currently limited to small-scale homogeneous societies, this project seeks to contribute comparative data from an urban community. It will be one of the first reports of cross-fertilization whereby an African-derived music formulated in the Americas was transplanted and perpetuated in West Africa without the aid of electronic or print media. The fact that the Accra situation shares significant features with those in other African cities and with African settlements in the Americas underscores the predictive and retrodictive potential of the study for illuminating the theoretical postulates that shape musical cognition, production and interpretation among the people of Africa and the Africa diaspora.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEY OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES IN ACCRA

M.E. Kropp Dakubu

One aspect of urbanization is that people attracted to the large urban centres often have extremely varied linguistic backgrounds. The cities take on a very polyglot character, especially in the poorer and more crowded residential areas. It is a matter of practical necessity that people of different backgrounds find a means of communicating with each other, at least for some purposes, and so we expect in such situations to witness the rise of a lingua franca, which may sometimes take

the form of a specifically urban variety of the chosen language. There have been studies of the sociolinguistics of a few large African cities, notably Kampala (Scotton 1972), and a few more general studies, see for example Cooper and Horvath 1973, Fishman, Ferguson and Das Gupta eds. 1968. In Ghana, although there have been several investigations of bilingualism, notably by Jean Ure (1979) and F.A. Dolphyne (1977), the nearest approach to a study of language in the context of Accra and urbanization generally was the Madina Survey, carried out in the late 1960s and reported on by Ansre (n.d) and Berry (1969). That survey, which is in any case now out of date, did not directly address the question of lingua franca. Rex Moser's survey of Sabon Zongo in Accra in the mid 70's collected a considerable amount of data, but this was never fully analyzed or published.

1) Problems

The present survey attempts to address the following general questions:

- 1) What precisely is the role of Hausa in the Accra migrant community? Given the popular stereotype of Hausa as the language of northerners, is it in fact the major lingua franca among migrants from northern Ghana, or between these migrants and local people?
- 2) Does any other language serve as a vehicle for wider communication among migrant groups from the north?

- 3) As people become more settled in Accra, do their language patterns change? That is, does language shift occur?

There are several types of language shift, which may have important implications for communication patterns. Their incidence and nature can also be examined as an index of acculturation. An individual may come to feel more at ease, able to express himself more freely, in a language different from the one in which he started life. Children born in the mixed urban environment sometimes do not learn their parents' language, or do not learn it very well, or learn it only as a second language of restricted use. The increased possibility of linguistically mixed marriages in the urban situation may be relevant here.

It might also be useful to know to what extent people's linguistic repertoire is at the disposal of the modern media of communication that go beyond face-to-face contact. That is, can these people read, do they listen to the radio, and if so, in what languages, and how often? Northern migrants surely constitute a rather large proportion of the population of Accra, but little if any thought seems to have been given, by anyone, to how they can best be communicated with, and educated in the broadest sense. This is surely a matter of some moment for anyone interested in the improvement of life in the city.

The questionnaire, reprinted at the end of this essay, is aimed at eliciting the information necessary to approach these problems.

2) The Sample

The questionnaire is being administered to what is intended to be a representative sample of members of three ethnic groups, in the languages of those groups. Their homelands are distributed all the way across the old Upper Region: Dagaba from the north-west, Bulsa from the western side of the Upper East region, that is, approximately in the middle, and Kusaasi, from the extreme north-east. The Bulsa and Kusaasi were surveyed in late 1982. In 1983-84, somewhat different but parallel surveys were carried out in the Sandema and Bawku areas, that is, the "homelands" of these two groups, to gain a better perspective on the Accra material. Preliminary reports on the data collected in all four surveys have been deposited at the Institute of African Studies.

The survey of the Dagaba community in Accra began in October 1985 and is not yet (February 1986) completed. Each group is being sampled in three geographical sections: Central, or Nima-New Town-Maamobi; West, or Sabon Zongo-Abossey Okai - "Russia"; and North, that is outlying areas like Achimota. No northern section of the Kusaasi group was surveyed, as none of any size seems to exist. The Kusaasi sample is much the smallest, while the Dagaba sample is expected to be the biggest.

TABLE I

| | Kusaasi | Bulsa | Dagaba | Total |
|---------|---------|-------|------------------|-------|
| Central | 106 | 226 | 252 | 584 |
| West | 121 | 125 | (to be surveyed) | |
| North | 0 | 68 | 100 | 168 |
| Total | 227 | 419 | 500? | |

THE SAMPLE3) Some Provisional Remarks

Since the data collected is of a fairly complex nature, still incomplete, and not yet adequately analyzed, what follows is of a very general, provisional and discursive nature.

One conclusion that seems to present itself is that peoples from different parts of northern Ghana may have rather different linguistic patterns. The Kusaasi group seems to be generally more multilingual than the others. In this part of the sample, the average number of languages spoken (to any degree at all) was 5.7, compared to 3.9 among both the Bulsa and the Dagaba of Achimota. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that the Bawku area is itself ethnically very heterogeneous and highly polyglot, which is not true of the Bulsa and Dagaare areas. Even though the Kusaasi sample is only about half the size of the others, its linguistic repertoire, that is, the list of

languages that are spoken by at least one person in the group, is much the largest: 29 languages, compared to 13 for the Bulsa, 16 (so far) for the Dagaba.

While very nearly all the Kusaasi and Bulsa speak at least a little Hausa, and a majority in each group claims to speak it well, Hausa appears to be much less widely spoken among the Dagaba. In all three groups, the vast majority of Hausa speakers only learned it when they came south.

It is likely that there are also significant variations between different parts of the Accra area: 73 per cent of the Dagaba in Achimota claim to speak Ga, but the figure among the Dagaba in Nima is almost certainly much lower.

Sex is also a significant parameter in the linguistic situation. Except among the Kusaasi, women tend to be slightly less polyglot than men of the same group, and they do not always speak the same languages. As Table 2 shows, more Dagaba women in Achimota actively speak Ga than speak any other second language, and more speak Akan than Hausa. On the other hand, men speak Akan more than Ga, while Ga, Hausa and English have about equal standing among them:

TABLE II

| Language | Active Speakers (% of sample) | |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------|
| | M (55) | F (45) |
| Akan | 89 | 73 |
| Ga | 55 | 80 |
| Hausa | 55 | 40 |
| English | 51 | 31 |

Major Second Languages of Dagaba in Achimota

Active speakers are those who think they speak a language well or a little, i.e. do not merely "understand some".

It was also true of the Bulsa living in Kima that significantly more women than men in the sample spoke Ga.

The education level in all three groups is generally low, especially among the women. This shows of course in the relative proportions that claim to speak English. A surprisingly large number (more than 20 per cent) claimed to read in the first language, Dagaare, Buli or Kusaal. Apparently the reading matter is almost entirely religious.

None of these three first languages of the groups surveyed are broadcast on the radio, even though Dagaare (the language of the Dagaba) is one of the officially sponsored national languages, and the language of a large majority of the people of the Upper West Region. Radio

listeners must therefore listen in a second language. The three groups showed marked differences in listening preferences. (They also differed markedly in how much they apparently listened to the radio. During the Bulsa and Kusaasi surveys in 1982, respondents complained that they could not listen to the radio for lack of batteries. In 1985 this was not mentioned.) The Bulsa listeners showed a marked preference for Hausa, although just as many Bulsa men listened to English. The Kusaasi, who apparently listen the least, seem to prefer English, while the Dagaba of Achimota prefer Akan.

It seems very likely that although more of these people are reached by radio than by print, many are hardly in touch with the media of mass communication at all, especially since considerable numbers do not listen to any language more than occasionally (where "occasionally" means less than once a week), and often do not claim to speak the broadcast language well. The Dagaba in particular expressed a strong (and surely reasonable) desire that they should be able to listen to their own language.

TABLE III

| Ethnic Group | Bulsa | | Kusaasi | | Dagaba (Achimota only) | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----|---------|----|------------------------|----|
| | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| % who listen to the radio | 82 | 64 | 61 | 54 | 98 | 98 |
| % of listeners who listen to: | | | | | | |
| English | 82 | 41 | 80 | 58 | 54 | |
| Hausa | 82 | 93 | 47 | 52 | 49 | |
| Akan | 64 | 73 | 29 | 14 | 82 | |
| Ga | 10 | 20 | 18 | 14 | 70 | |

Language Preferences on the Radio

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SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEY OF NORTHERN COMMUNITIES IN ACCRA

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Date of interview _____ Name of interviewer _____

1. Sex of respondent 1. M 2. F
2. Age 0. 15-9 1. 20-4 2. 25-9 3. 30-4 4. 35-9 5. 40-4
 6. 45-9 7. 50-4 8. 55-9 9. 60 (and over)
3. (a) Where do you come from?
 (b) What is your patri-clan? _____ matri-clan? _____
4. (a) How long have you lived in Accra?
 (b) Where do you live now? 1. Nima 2. Russia 3. _____
5. (a) Where were you born?
 (b) Where else have you lived for 3 months or more?
6. (a) What is your present occupation?
 (b) What other jobs have you done?
7. (a) How often do you travel to Kusaasi-land/Bulsa-land/Dagao?
 1. every year. 2. at least once in two years. 3. at least once in five years. 4. less often.
 (b) How often do you travel outside Accra?
 1. several times a year. 2. at least once a year. 3. at least once in five years. 4. less often.
8. What is the first language you learned as a child?
9. What language do you speak best now?
10. What is your father's language?
11. What is your mother's language?

12. Name all the languages you know. [This section to be answered for each language] 1. (a) language _____ spoken 1. well 2. little 3. understand some. (b) Where did you learn it? town _____ 1. at home 2. among friends 3. at work 4. at school 5. _____
- (c) Do you speak it. 1. only in Accra 2. only outside Accra 3. both.
- (d) Do you use it. A. 1. with your parents 2. with your spouse. 3. with your own children 4. with your brothers and sisters 5. with other relatives 6. with friends.
- B. 1. in your work 2. at hospital 3. at transport yard 4. in shops 5. at the market 6. in drinking bars 7. in chop bars/restaurants 8. in cinemas, concerts, dances. 9. at school. 0. other _____
13. Have you been to school? 0. no 1. to class/standard 3 2. to St.7/ class 6 3. Sec. F.2/ME. 4 4. 2ndary F.5/technical/teacher training 5. 6th form or higher.
- Have you been to makaranta? 0. No 1. 3 years 2. more
- Have you been to "night school"? 0. no 1. yes
14. What languages can you read? And how often do you read? [for all languages read] 1. Language _____ 1. every day 2. every week 3. occasionally 4. never.
15. Can you write? 0. no 1. yes 2. numbers/alphabet/own name.
- In what language? How often do you write? [for all languages written] 1. language _____ 1. every day 2. every week 3. occasionally 4. never.