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Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana: A Case Study of Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict under the Fourth Republic

Boakye, Paul Acheampong


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Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana:
A Case Study of Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict under the Fourth Republic

by

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A THESIS
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the factors that account for the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict and government’s inability to solve it. This research finds that the imposition of colonial and post-colonial political structures with no roots in pre-colonial political offices has led to conflicting interpretations of who the rightful successor to the Ga Mashie throne is. This has generated disagreements about the customs and traditions of the Ga people with particular reference to succession; and contested versions of ancestral and hereditary rights to political office. In addition, the difficulty in resolving the Ga Mashie conflict stems from the active involvement of successive governments and other political entities for parochial political interest. These results are illustrated through interviews with key personnel with knowledge on chieftaincy in Ghana, and extensive review of the relevant academic literature. This research adds to the limited literature on Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict and chieftaincy conflicts in southern Ghana.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thanks be to the Almighty God who has brought me this far. Indeed, ‘‘Nyame ye Nyame’’ (God is God).

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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMA</td>
<td>Accra Metropolitan Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARPS</td>
<td>Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNI</td>
<td>Bureau of National Investigations</td>
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<td>CFREB</td>
<td>Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Constitutional Instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Criminal Investigation Department</td>
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<td>CORE</td>
<td>Course on Research Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>Convention Peoples Party</td>
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<td>DISEC</td>
<td>District Security Committee</td>
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<td>GARHC</td>
<td>Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs</td>
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<td>GPS</td>
<td>Ghana Police Service</td>
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<td>GTC</td>
<td>Ga Traditional Council</td>
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<td>HI</td>
<td>Historical Institutionalism</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>JC</td>
<td>Judicial Committee</td>
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<td>NAO</td>
<td>Native Authority Ordinance</td>
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<td>NCBWA</td>
<td>National Congress of British West Africa</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<td>NHC</td>
<td>National House of Chiefs</td>
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<td>NI</td>
<td>New Institutionalism</td>
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<td>NJO</td>
<td>Native Jurisdiction Ordinance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLC</td>
<td>National Liberation Council</td>
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<td>NLCD</td>
<td>National Liberation Council Decree</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Peace Council</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<td>NRCD</td>
<td>National Redemption Council Decree</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Peoples Defense Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNDC</td>
<td>Provisional National Defense Council</td>
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<td>PNDCL</td>
<td>Provisional National Defense Council Law</td>
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<td>PRAAD</td>
<td>Public Records and Archives Administration Department</td>
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<td>RDT</td>
<td>Relative deprivation theory</td>
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<td>REGSEC</td>
<td>Regional Security Committee</td>
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<td>RHC</td>
<td>Regional House of Chiefs</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
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<td>TC</td>
<td>Traditional Councils</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

The institution of chieftaincy emerged naturally as the evolution of man in Africa and pre-industrial societies where chiefs\(^1\) (traditional rulers) or monarchs were the citadel of development and governance. Its emergence probably could be traced to the desire or willingness of one set of people, who regard themselves as forming a distinct group, to establish and maintain superiority over others among whom they are living (Arhin, 1985; Mair, 1977). In pre-colonial era, the chief was the spoke person of his people because of the inherent valor and wisdom associated with the institution. As the father of his traditional state, the chief performed several functions that included but not limited to military, judicial, executive, cultural, religious, administrative, economic and legislative duties (Boafo-Arhtur, 2001:1; Ray & van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, 1996: 7-11).

Even though the chieftaincy institution lost considerable powers to the colonial authority in most parts of Africa, the colonialist, as the rallying point of the people, later recognized them in Ghana. The colonialists used the institution of chieftaincy, only to serve their purpose. Chiefs served as agents of colonial administration in the collection of taxes and providing labour force for the colonialists. The colonialists subdued the powers of chiefs and the institution became subservient to the central government of the colonial administration. The indirect rule system introduced by the British colonialists was not aimed at preserving the traditional state and its

\(^1\) The study uses the term ‘chief’ to refer to the various forms of traditional rule that existed prior to colonialism.
institutions, but seriously undermined their powers to suit their political and economic interest (see Busia, 1951:109-164; Hailey, 1957).

In post-colonial African states, governments (both civilian and military regimes) equally recognized the enormous contributions of chiefs and the power thereof. Chiefs, therefore, became very important in both constitutional and unconstitutional regimes. The former, in most elections, courted the support of chiefs to either maintain power, or capture the levers of government after which they were jettisoned. The latter regimes, however, courted the support of chiefs to gain legitimacy (Boafo-Arthur, 2001; Ray, 1996). The institution of chieftaincy, therefore, became indispensable in Ghanaian politics with its attendant challenges. As Boafo-Arthur aptly states “the nature and challenges of the chieftaincy institution over the years are varied and range from colonially crafted mechanisms to break authority to the imperceptible marginalization of chiefs in political life through constitutional provision” (Boafo-Arthur, 2002:2).

In spite of these constitutional controls on the chiefs, the institution of chieftaincy in Ghana has remained resilient. The chiefs still wield considerable influence in the political equation (Ray & Eizlini, 2011). Hence, the inability of politicians to divorce themselves from the chiefs, particularly, in times of electoral politics in most parts of Africa, including Ghana. As Dankwa (2004) rightly notes, the “chieftaincy institution in Ghana emerged from the social fabric of the land… it is nobody’s creation and cannot be easily destroyed.”

However, the chieftaincy institution in Ghana suffers from many challenges. One of such challenges is the numerous chieftaincy disputes across the country, of which many result in violent or bloody conflicts. Ray (1996: 193) could not have said it any better when he opined that
“the continuing political importance of chieftaincy or traditional authority to many Ghanaians is illustrated by a series of chieftaincy disputes which erupted into violence.” Some scholars assert that conflicts are an inevitable and eternal phenomenon, that mankind could not develop without them, that there will always be conflicts, be it chieftaincy or any kind, as long as human society exists (see Dahrendorf, 1959; DeKadt, 1965). As a result, they argue that there will never be a time when poverty, conflict, and the attendant miseries of both are wholly banished from the earth. Yet, this is debatable. While the argument for the inevitability of conflict may be sustainable, its occurrence and impact can be minimized. This is because conflicts arise out of human interactions and behaviors, hence if we could identify these, then there is the likelihood that we could as well eliminate or minimize conflicts in whatever form it takes.

1.2 Statement of Problem

What has become a growing concern for scholars and Ghanaians in general is the increasing number of chieftaincy related conflicts witnessed in the various regions of the country. These conflicts neither are recent developments nor restricted to only one traditional area within Ghana. Nonetheless, many scholars assume that most violent chieftaincy conflicts occur in the northern part of Ghana. As a result, many studies on chieftaincy conflicts focus on northern Ghana to the neglect of other parts of the country especially the Greater Accra Region. However, almost every traditional area has encountered a chieftaincy dispute in one way or the other (Prah & Yeboah, 2011). These conflicts mostly emanate from chieftaincy-related problems including succession, payment and misuse of royalties (intra-chieftaincy conflicts) and land disputes (inter-chieftaincy conflicts). According to statistics of the Research Unit of the

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2 Ray, D. I. (1996). Divided sovereignty: Traditional authority and the state in Ghana. The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law, 28(37-38), 181-202 is however an exception to the many that assume that most violent chieftaincy conflicts occur in the northern part of Ghana
Chieftaincy Secretariat, two hundred and eighty-one (281) chieftaincy disputes were pending before the Judicial Committees of the ten Regional House of Chiefs in the country (Daily Graphic, September 2005). There are also hundreds of chieftaincy disputes pending in courts throughout the country.

Notable among them are the prolonged conflicts between Peki and Tsito; Nkunya and Alavanyo in the Volta Region; Mamprusi and Kusasi in Bawku, in the Upper East Region; Konkomba and Nanumba; and the Abudu and Andani in Dagbon, in the Northern Region of the country (Mahama, 2002). Others are the Ga Mantse succession dispute, the Anlo chieftaincy conflict, the Adoagyiri crisis, Princess and Aketekyi towns’ troubles, the eruption of the Tuobodom chieftaincy conflict among others (Prah & Yeboah, 2011). All efforts by religious organizations, non-governmental organizations, state institutions, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation of chiefs of repute have proved futile in resolving some of these conflicts. This is because these organizations or institutions have not yielded their minds to the fact that the causes of these conflicts are embedded in historical, socio-economic and political conditions, which motivate the protagonists in the early phases and in later conflict escalation. In addition, due to political maneuverings, several of the chieftaincy conflicts have become more complicated than ever.

It is against this background that this research seeks to explore the over six-decades of Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict (succession dispute) in the Greater Accra region. The recent conflict started in 2006 when Dr. Joe Blankson was installed as the Ga Mantse after the demise of Nii Amugi in 2004. The research seeks to investigate two specific questions: (i) how colonial policies sowed the seed for the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict; and (ii) how various governments
and political parties have fueled the Ga Mashie conflicts since the Fourth Republic. In addition to these two specific questions, this research attempts to explore the following questions:

i. What has been the nature of the relationship between the state and the chieftaincy institution during and after colonialism?

ii. What are the causes of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana?

iii. Why have the state institutions failed to resolve the Ga Mashie chieftaincy crisis?

iv. To what extent are these chieftaincy conflicts linked to national politics?

v. What are the effects of these conflicts on Ghanaians and the development of the country as whole?

1.3 Objective of Study

The study has a four-fold objective:

i. It will explore the chieftaincy institution in Ghana, with particular emphasis on the Fourth Republic;

ii. It will trace the historical evolution of Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflicts. It will also explore the conflict under the Fourth Republic;

iii. It will examine the inability of governments and state institutions at resolving the chieftaincy crisis in the country by examining some of the interventions put in place by the state to deal with these chieftaincy disputes;

iv. The study will further examine the effects of these conflicts on Ghana’s development and democratization process.
1.4 Significance or Justification of Study

Chieftaincy disputes are a major challenge for developing countries including Ghana. Preventing them and where in existence, minimizing its impact is very critical to the development of the country. Such an enterprise can only be undertaken when the chieftaincy conflict in question is well explored and understood. In this regard, a study such as this is crucial in understanding the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflicts as well as finding ways and mechanisms to help resolve the disputes. The choice of Ga Mashie is due to the strategic location of the Ga Mashie. Ga Mashie is at the heart of Ghana’s socio-economic and political activities. Any disturbance or breach in the peace and security in Ga Mashie will have serious repercussions for the social, economic and political wellbeing of the country. In addition, Ga Mashie is a hub of different cultures and traditions. The interplay among these cultures has had significant impact on the indigenous customs and traditions of the Ga people. These considerations make a study such as this worth pursuing. Although this is a case study, the findings help in understanding other similar intra-chieftaincy conflicts in the country.

Secondly, the recommendations will help policy-makers draft and implement decisive policies to help resolve and end many of the chieftaincy disputes in Ghana. Best practices as identified in the literature will assist policy-makers in this direction.

Lastly, the study adds to the existing limited literature on Ga Mashie chieftaincy institution in Ghana. There are quite a significant number of literatures on chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, but mostly on chieftaincy conflicts in the northern part of Ghana. Chieftaincy disputes in other regions of Ghana; especially the Greater Accra region has received very little attention. This study therefore sheds some light and adds to the existing limited literature on chieftaincy
conflicts in the Greater Accra region. The goal is to provoke more research in the area of chieftaincy conflicts and the mechanism for preventing and/or resolving them in other parts of the country.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

There is considerable literature on chieftaincy in Ghana and Africa as a whole because of the crucial role it plays in politics in times past and present political equations. The vast literature has looked at chieftaincy as an institution that has evolved over the years to remain relevant in post-independence African states. Considerable literature could be found on chieftaincy and the state (Adjaye & Misawa 2006; Boafo-Arthur, 2001; Dankwa, 2004; Ray, 1996), chieftaincy and development (Arhin & Pavanello, 2006; Bob-Milliar, 2009; Kleist, 2011; Ray & Eizlini, 2011), chieftaincy and politics or democracy (Boafo-Arthur, 2006; Dankwa, 2004; Keulder, 2000; Mahama, 2002), chieftaincy and local governance (Ayee, 2007; Nyendu, 2011; Ray, 2003). The central argument of these works is that the chieftaincy institution in Ghana is robust and dynamic; and continues to re-invent itself to become relevant in the changing political environment of the country. Some of these works see the chieftaincy institution as a partner and not a competitor of the post-colonial state (see Russell & Dobson, 2011), while others see chieftaincy as a competitor of the post-colonial state (see Rathbone, 2000; Ray, 1996). For both however, the post-colonial state would benefit greatly if it could harness the chieftaincy institution as a resource and mechanism for growth and development (see Adjaye & Misawa 2006; Dankwa, 2004; Keulder 2000; Ray, 1996). A threat, such as chieftaincy conflicts, to the institution is therefore argued by these scholars to be a threat to the security of the state.
Scholars over the years have therefore investigated what the motivation for groups to engage in violent chieftaincy conflicts such as those in Ghana are. This is because conflicts in whatever form do not just exist or come into being. They are the product of deliberate choices of people to pursue certain goals with violent means. In the light of this, this study deploys the Relative Deprivation Theory and the Historical Institutionalism to put this study into perspective and investigate the research questions.

1.5.1 Relative Deprivation Theory

Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) is a widely discussed field of contemporary sociology linked to the racial contact hypothesis. A common assumption of this field of research is the fact that the feeling of being disadvantaged is related to a reference group (Berger, Zelditch, Anderson & Cohen, 1972; Davis, 1959; Ferrer-i-Carbonell 2005; Flynn, 2008; Frank, 2007; Runciman, 1966; Silber & Verme, 2009; Yitzhaki, 1979). This feeling will arise from the comparison of oneself to others. Relative deprivation theory is based on the study of military institutions titled “The American Soldier” by Stouffer et al. in 1949. Using interviews, the authors show that dissatisfaction of US soldiers in the 1940s (especially among the non-whites) arose from the feeling that other people (the whites) were unjustly promoted faster than they were.

Staub (1999: 303) deployed this theory to understand the instances of collective violence and explored the roots of the Rwandan genocide in the mid-1990s. He opined that discrimination and limited violence change individuals and groups and can lead to an evolution that ends in mass killing or genocide. He further asserts that certain cultural characteristics make this process more likely, while the passivity of bystanders allows it to unfold. In essence, justice therefore has to do with comparisons and with the feeling that one is entitled to something (Wegener, 1991).

Karl Marx (1847) expresses this vividly:
“A house may be large or small; as long as the neighboring houses are likewise small, it satisfies all social requirements for a residence. But let there arise next to the little house a palace, and the little house shrinks to a hut. The little house now makes it clear that its inmate has no social position at all to maintain, or but a very insignificant one; and however high it may shoot up in the course of civilization, if the neighbouring palace rises in equal or even in greater measure, the occupant of the relatively little house will always find himself more uncomfortable, more dissatisfied, more cramped within his four walls.”

Relative deprivation is hence the experience of being deprived of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled to have. It refers to the discontent people feel when they compare their positions to others and realize that they have less than them. This discontent is because of instigators of difficult conditions of life in a society, including severe economic problems, great political turmoil, and great and rapid societal change. Even in instances when there are other potential instigators, difficult life conditions may activate them or magnify their instigating power (Staub, 1999: 305; Bayertz, 1999). Schaefer (2008: 391) consequently defines it as “the conscious experience of a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and present actualities.” Relative deprivation is therefore a term used in social sciences to describe feelings or measures of economic, political or social deprivation that are relative rather than absolute.

Walter Runciman (1966) enlarged the theory of relative deprivation by emphasizing the paradox of social life. People who do not see a chance to possess more than they have will not be dissatisfied with their situation. However, they will be dissatisfied with their situation if they see a chance to improve their situation by comparing themselves with other individuals who seem to be in a better situation. In addition, Runciman (1966) argues that the degree of relative

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3 Marx, K., 1847, Wage Labour and Capital, translated in 1891 by Frederick Engels, chapter on "Relation of Wage-Labour to Capital", available on http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/ch06.htm
deprivation can be seen as a result of the type of the deprived feelings. On the one hand, a person can feel individually deprived because he or she compares himself or herself to others. On the other hand, a person can feel deprived collectively because he or she compares himself or herself to his or her peer group or other reference groups. The questions to ask therefore are (i) to what group is a comparison being made; and (ii) what is the allegedly less well-placed group to which the person feels that he belongs? Runciman (1966) accordingly notes four preconditions of relative deprivation:

1. Person or group A do not have X
2. Person or group A knows of other persons or groups that have X
3. Person or group A wants to have X
4. Person or group A believes obtaining X is realistic

There is however a fifth precondition that must be outlined. This is when person or group A feels that what person or group B has is rightfully theirs or have legitimate claims to it. This is what appears to be the case with the Ga-Mashie conflict. All the factions in the conflict feel they have legitimate claim to the throne.\(^4\)

The concept of relative deprivation therefore has important consequences for both behaviour and attitudes; including feeling of stress, political attitude and participation in collective action. Therefore, when expectations do not meet attainment, there is a high tendency for people to confront those who they hold responsible for depriving them of their ambition.

RDT is relevant to researchers studying multiple fields in social sciences. Social scientists, particularly political scientists and sociologists (see Merton, 1938; Gurr, 1970; Rose, 4 The Ga Mashie conflict is discussed in Chapter Four
1982; Flynn, 2008), have cited ‘relative deprivation’ (especially temporal relative deprivation) as a potential cause of social movements and deviance, leading in extreme situations, to political violence such as rioting, terrorism, civil wars and other instances of social deviance such as crime. They argue that social movements rise through grievances of people who feel deprived of what they perceive as being entitled to. Similarly, individuals engage in deviant behaviours when their means do not match their goals. In the political realm, the lack of the right to vote or to be voted for is more likely to be felt as a deprivation by people who had it once than by the people who never had the opportunity to vote or be voted for. Considering the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict, using the RDT, it could be argued that the conflict erupts when one faction feels deprived of the throne. This feeling of deprivation leads to the aggrieved side attempting to restore parity. The end is conflict as we witness in many of the chieftaincy disputes in Ghana. Consequently, the prevention of violence requires the healing of wounds due to past victimization, as well as reconciliation, and the resolution of conflict between antagonistic groups, in addition to changes in elements of a group's culture.

1.5.2 Historical Institutionalism

The Historical Institutionalism (HI) approach also provides a useful insight into the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict. This approach is one of the three strands of the New Institutionalism approach (NI). The NI is a distinct theoretical research approach that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in reaction to the behavioral perspectives’ explanation of social and political phenomena and outcomes. Behaviouralism sought to explain how and why different actors undertake particular courses of action (Lowndes 2010: 60). The New Institutionalism, on the other hand, moves beyond the deductive study of formal structures of political institutions (organizations) that characterizes traditional institutionalism to inductive study of impact of institutions (formal
rules and informal conventions) on individuals as well as the interactions between. In doing so, the new institutionalist seeks to elucidate the impact of institutions on the determination of political and social outcomes (see Lowndes 2010:60-61; Hall & Taylor 1996:936). Accordingly, scholars have identified three distinct strands of the NI. They are the Historical, Rational Choice and Sociological Institutionalisms (see Steinmo, 2008:162; Immergut, 2006:240; Hall & Taylor 1996:936).

Rational Choice Institutionalism stresses individual material self-interest (utility maximization) as the main factor that shape political behaviour. Rational Choice sees politics as a series of collective action dilemmas and emphasizes the role of strategic interaction, structured by institutions, in the determination of political outcomes (Lowndes 2010:65; Hall & Taylor 1996:944-956). Sociological Institutionalism focuses on culture to explain why organizations take on specific sets of institutional forms, procedures or symbols that are diffused through organizational fields. It broadens institutions beyond formal rules, procedures and norms to include symbol systems, cognitive scripts and moral templates that provide the frame of meaning guiding human actions (Hall & Taylor 1996:947).

Immergut (2006:241-242), on the other hand, sees Historical Institutionalism (HI) as “a rather loose collection of writings by authors that tend to mix elements of rationalistic and constructivist explanations - or the 'calculus' versus the 'cultural' approach”. HI emphasizes the constraint of group conflicts and institutional structures on social and political behaviours and outcomes (Hall & Taylor 1996:937). Influenced by group theories of politics and structural-functionalism, HI asserts that conflict among rival groups for scarce resources lies at the heart of
politics and sees the polity as an overall system of interacting parts. They extend the meaning of institutions beyond organizations to include formal and informal rules, procedures, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity (Hall and Taylor 1996:938). It conceptualizes two broad contradictory interactions between institutions and individual behaviour – strategic interaction and interpretive interaction. The strategic interaction (calculus) approach posits instrumental human behaviour based on strategic calculation to maximize utility and that the preferences of actors are given through institutions exogenously (Hall & Taylor 1996:938). To this end, choices made about the institutional design of government systems influence the future decision-making of individuals (Lowndes 2010:65). Conversely, the interpretive interaction (cultural) approach postulates that political actions are bounded by worldviews. This is because the individual is an entity deeply embedded in a world of institutions, composed of symbols, scripts and routines, which provide the filters for interpretation of situations and oneself, out of which a course of action is constructed. Institutions, therefore, provide the moral/cognitive templates for interpretation and action (Hall & Taylor 1996:939).

This approach further assumes asymmetrical relations of power in institutional operation and development; path-dependent social causation (policy legacies – past policy choices constraining future choices); and diffusion of ideas (impact of integration of institutions with ideas or beliefs on political outcomes) (Hall & Taylor 1996:941). HI is therefore distinguished from other social science approaches by its attention to real world empirical questions, its historical orientation and its attention to the ways in which institutions structure and shape political behaviour and outcomes.

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Scarce resources in this case will be the Ga Mashie throne
Historical Institutionalism provides a unique insight into how the formal and informal institutions of the Ghanaian state and that of the people of Ga Mashie continually shaped the chieftaincy conflicts before, during and after colonialism. HI helps to understand how the imposition of colonial and post-colonial political structures (such as the Ga Traditional Council) with no roots in pre-colonial political offices over traditional institutions with roots in pre-colonial traditional offices led to conflicting interpretations of who the rightful successor to the Ga Mashie throne should be. It also helps to explain the attendant disagreements about the customs and traditions of the Ga people with particular reference to succession; and the contested versions of ancestral and hereditary rights to political office.

1.6 Operational Definition of Concepts

For the purposes of this research, the following terms and concepts are defined and used as follows:

1.6.1 Kings, Paramount chiefs and Chiefs

Chiefs are generally referred to as “those monarchs, other nobles holding offices, heads of extended families, and office holders of decentralized polities whose offices are rooted in the pre-colonial period” (Ray & Eizlini, 2011: 36). The 1992 constitution of Ghana defines a chief as a “person, who, hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage” (Article 277). The definition therefore comprises both kings and paramount chiefs. Unless otherwise stated (for the purpose of analysis
and differentiation), the terms kings, paramount chiefs and chiefs are used interchangeably in this research to mean the same thing as defined in the 1992 constitution.

1.6.2 Chieftaincy

The term chieftaincy is derived from the word chief and refers to the office and the institution of which the chief is the principal operator and stakeholder. Chieftaincy may, thus, comprise among other things the personnel holding offices such as chiefs, queen mothers, counselors and staff; rituals, symbol and other paraphernalia. This research adopts the definition of chieftaincy to mean the customs, laws, practice and process of electing or selecting and installing chiefs in Ghana as well as the legitimacy and powers conferred on them in accordance with the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

1.6.3 Chieftaincy Conflict or Dispute

There is a thin line between conflicts and disputes. Scholars in security and conflict studies simply define conflict as a struggle or contest between people with opposing views, needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals. Conflict is therefore seen to be the result of the interaction of political, economic and social instability, frequently stemming from bad governance, failed economic policies and inappropriate development programmes that have exacerbated ethnic or religious differences (Bassey, 2007:1).

On the other hand, the term dispute has its origin in disagreements between individuals. However, a statement by one person that is contradicted by another does not necessarily give rise to a dispute. The disagreement only becomes a dispute when one or other party cannot live with

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6 The term ‘chief’ was used by the colonial and post-colonial state in Ghana to refer to traditional rule that existed prior to colonialism.
the consequences of the disagreement, and insists on having it resolved. Disputes therefore mostly arise either from a genuine difference of opinion or from disingenuous self-interest. In this research however, both terms, chieftaincy conflicts and disputes, are used interchangeably to describe the open hostility between the feuding groups in the Ga Mashie Chieftaincy conflict.

1.6.4 Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution in this research refers to the various mechanisms adopted to resolve the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict and all other conflicts in Ghana. These range from such peaceful means as negotiations, mediations, arbitrations, adjudications or litigations, to violent confrontations.

1.7 Research Method

1.7.1 Qualitative Research

This research is a case study based on the qualitative methods of inquiry. Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2010). It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. Hence, qualitative researcher studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Qualitative research seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social
contexts of particular populations (Taylor and Bogman, 1984). A qualitative method of inquiry can thus be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The qualitative method of inquiry also enables the researcher and the participant (respondent) to build a less formal relationship than a quantitative method of inquiry would provide. This is because participants have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in detail than is typically the case with quantitative methods. The researcher in turn has the opportunity to respond immediately to what participants say by tailoring subsequent questions to information the participant has provided already (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005). Qualitative research includes ethnographic research, grounded theory research, phenomenological research, hermeneutic interpretive, narrative research and case study research. This research adopts the case study approach to examine the research questions.

1.7.2 Case Study Approach

A case study approach in the social sciences draws from the subject disciplines of law, psychology and medicine. A case study is an intensive study of a single case (bounded\textsuperscript{7} system) or cases (multiple bounded systems) for the purposes of understanding complex social phenomena (Creswell, 2013: 97-102; Gerring, 2004: 341-354; Yin, 2009: 4). As Vennesson (2008: 227) notes, “a case study is a research strategy based on the in-depth empirical investigation of one, or a small number, of phenomena in order to explore the configuration of each case, and to elucidate features of a larger class of (similar) phenomena, by developing and evaluating theoretical explanations”. Accordingly Stakes (1995: 1-4) identifies three types of

\textsuperscript{7} This means a case is bounded by time and place.
case studies namely: intrinsic, instrumental and collective case studies\(^8\). Regardless of these types, Stakes (1995: xii) points out that “a case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case”.

Therefore, in a case study, as Creswell (2013:97) rightly points out, the researcher “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g. observations, interviews, audiovisual material, documents and reports), and reports a case description and case themes”. Case studies are very good in developing and evaluating theories, as well as formulating hypotheses or explaining particular phenomena by using theories and causal mechanisms (Vennesson, 2008: 227). In view of this, a chieftaincy conflict such as that of the Ga Mashie that is very complex involving different levels of competition; conflicting interpretations of customs and traditions; sentiments; and opinions, a case study approach will enable the researcher to do an in-depth inquiry.

1.7.3 **Data Collection**

In accordance with the above, the study used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source of data was face-to-face open-ended structured interviews of key policy personnel and individuals who provided information to help address the research questions. The eligibility criteria were:

i. Opinion leaders from the seven quarters in Ga Mashie;

ii. Desk Officers/Staff from institutions who were responsible for chieftaincy related issues especially conflict;

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\(^8\) See also Creswell (2013: 99).
iii. Individual members of the Ghanaian society who had in-depth knowledge about the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict and chieftaincy related issues in general.

The interviews, mostly conducted in the English language with the exception of one, lasted between 45 minutes to 90 minutes. All the interviews took place at the offices of the interviewees in Accra, except one that took place in Kumasi, between January 27 and March 14, 2016. In all 15 interviewees were purposively sampled from different institutions and individuals who were linked to or were knowledgeable about chieftaincy conflicts in general and in particular the Ga Mashie chieftaincy problems. The 15 interviewees were drawn as follows: Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) (1), the Ministry of Interior (1), the National House of Chiefs (1), Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs (1), the Academia (3) and 8 from opinion leaders of Ga Mashie. Of the fifteen (15) interviewees, only one was a female. The rest were all males. The male dominance is probably due to the gendered nature of the chieftaincy institution in Ghana.

This research employed the purposive sampling method due to the complicated nature of the case study to enable us to identify key individuals who could provide useful and helpful information based on their experience and knowledge of the Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute. In some instances, a snowball-sampling technique was employed to acquire some additional participants. The sensitive nature of the chieftaincy dispute makes people reluctant to speak, hence the need for snowballing. Informal discussions were also employed in the collection of data. It was an attempt to engage interviewees in open and free discussions in order to allay any fears they might have had or entertained on the subject matter. The study also depended on secondary sources of data. These were mainly scholarly articles, local newspapers, policy documents and books.


1.7.4 Data Processing and Analysis

After collection of primary data through in-depth interviews, the data were transcribed for analysis using the leximancer software. This software was used to identify the high level concepts\(^9\) in the data, which delivered key ideas and actionable insights into the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict. To further understand these concepts, content analysis of the transcribed data was undertaken. As Berg and Lune (2012:49) notes, content analysis is “a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meaning”. The understanding of these concepts generated through leximancer enabled the researcher to identify the context, codes and patterns from the data to answer the research questions posed. For example, colonial policies and political interference came up as two of the concepts generated from leximancer. Content analysis of the data showed that the participants were of the view that colonial policies and political interference were two of the major causes of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. In addition, the study adopted the Process Tracing Approach that involves the establishment of causal link between independent and dependent variables. According to Collier (2011), Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Tansey, (2006), process tracing serves as a useful qualitative tool for examining histories, archival documents, interview transcripts and other sources of data. Apart from content analysis of policy documents, this research also examined relevant newspaper articles. Process tracing based on intensive, open-ended interviewing, and document analysis helped to understand the meaning and role of established regularities, and to suggest ways to uncover previously unknown relations between factors (Vennesson, 2008: 234). Conclusions were then drawn based on the reviewed literature and the variables identified in this research.

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\(^9\) Some of the concepts that were generated to explain the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict included colonial policies, political interference, greed, distortion of tradition, lack of succession planning, and lack of documentation.
1.7.5 Ethical Considerations

This research took a number of ethical considerations into account because human beings were the subject matter during the interviewing stage. The University of Calgary’s Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB) requires that a researcher obtain the necessary ethics clearance before proceeding to collect data on the field. This clearance is to protect the rights of both the researcher and the interviewees. In accordance to this, the researcher successfully completed the Course on Research Ethics (CORE) tutorial on the University of Calgary’s Research Ethics website and obtained a certificate to fulfill a pre-requisite requirement for obtaining ethics approval from CFREB. This was followed by an application to CFREB for ethics approval. The application was approved after going through a number of revisions on January 11, 2016 (Ethics ID: REB15-3189)10.

In the lead up to the scheduled dates for the interviews, the researcher sent introductory letters and informed consent forms to the identified institutions and individuals through email. On the day of each interview, the researcher gave a summary of the research and the purpose of the interview as well as reminding them of their rights as outlined in the consent form. Those who had already signed the consent form, handed it over to the researcher while those who had not did so either before or after the interview depending on their preference. Each participant was however asked to indicate if they wanted to be audio-taped and/or remain anonymous, before the commencement of the interview. Eight of the interviewees granted the permission to be audio-taped while seven did not. Four of the participants requested to be anonymous. The researcher kept the data safe and secured in a password-protected laptop and pen-drive to ensure it did not

10 See Appendix II for a copy of the Ethics clearance certificate issued to the researcher
accidentally fall in the wrong hands. The printed copies of the transcription were also kept under lock and in my room.

### 1.7.6 Researcher’s Biases / Reflexivity

An aspect of any qualitative study is the influence of the researcher’s biases because of the subjectivity of any qualitative research. As a result, neutrality and objectivity are two principles difficult to achieve in qualitative studies. Being an Akan, and sympathetic to the course of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the researcher was aware of his likeness for Dr. Joe Blankson to ascend the Ga Mashie throne at the time. It is therefore impossible to suggest that this research was completely free from the researcher’s personal biases and views. However, the scheduled interview guide allowed the researcher to engage the interviewees in an objective manner. Again, the inclusion of the different institutions and groups allowed this research to have a broader and wider perspective of the chieftaincy dispute in question. More importantly, engaging in informal discussions with interviewees during the data collection allowed for open discussions. This also allayed any fears the interviewees might have had or entertained on the subject matter. In addition to this, the researcher used triangulation (a variety of sources of information including official documentations, local newspapers, scholarly articles and books) to support the findings from the interviews, thereby reducing if not eliminating the biases of the researcher.

### 1.7.8 Trustworthiness of Research Data

Many critics are reluctant to accept the trustworthiness of qualitative research due to the difficulty in establishing neutrality and objectivity in qualitative studies. However, scholars such
as Silverman (2001) and Pitts (1994) have drawn upon Guba’s (1981: 79-81) four criteria\textsuperscript{11} for establishing the trustworthiness of a research to demonstrate how qualitative researchers can incorporate measures that deal with the issue of trustworthiness. Accordingly, this research adopts the naturalistic terms outlined by Guba (1981) to address the issue of trustworthiness in this study.

**Credibility**

To ensure the credibility of any research, Shenton (2004: 64) opines that the research must adopt “research methods well established both in qualitative investigation in general and in information science in particular”. Hence, the specific procedures employed (e.g. sampling, interviewing guide, data analysis, etc.) should be derived, where possible, from those that have been successfully utilized in previous comparable projects (Shenton, 2004). In addition, Creswell (2013: 250-251) indicates that there should be a “prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field including building trust with participants, learning the culture, and checking for misinformation that stems from distortions introduced by the researcher or informants”. This study satisfied these requirements as has already been outlined in the preceding pages on data collection.

In addition to the above, this study engaged in triangulation, where different sources of data were used to augment and validate each other. Participants were given the opportunity to decline to participate in the study, and those who did participate, did so voluntarily. The researcher also constantly debriefed the supervisor to ensure that the necessary guidance was received. Lastly, to ensure credibility, the biases of the researcher were outlined, and adequately catered for to ensure that the results obtained reflected the data collected from the participants.

\textsuperscript{11} Guba’s four criteria included Truth Value; Applicability; Consistency and Neutrality. It naturalistic terms were Credibility; Transferability; Dependability and Confirmability respectively.
Transferability

Since the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is difficult to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations. However, to meet this criterion, the researcher must, according to Creswell (2013: 252), undertake a “rich, thick description of the participants or setting under study”. This study has outlined clearly, the eligibility criteria employed for the sampling, the sample size used, the length and duration of the interviews and the entire field survey. This information provides sufficient contextual information about the study and fieldwork sites. It is up to the reader to determine transferability of this study.

Dependability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stress the close ties between credibility and dependability. Hence, a demonstration of the credibility of a research, as discussed earlier, goes some distance in ensuring the dependability of the research. Dependability may be achieved with overlapping methods. One of the main sources for dependability is an audit trail. Detailed notes and journals were written during the research process in order to review the activities of the researcher, which then supports meeting the credibility and transferability requirements. Triangulation was also used throughout the study.

Confirmability

The concept of confirmability according to Shenton (2004: 72) is “the qualitative investigator’s comparable concern to objectivity”. The researcher therefore took steps to ensure, as far as possible, that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher. This was made possible with triangulation, since this reduced the biases of the researcher.
1.8 Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations were encountered in undertaking this study. The most outstanding was inadequate data that could have further enriched the study and enhanced the analysis greatly due to the sensitive nature of this study. Gaining access to the institutions indicated and especially key staff who could speak to the issues concerned was a major challenge because of the busy schedule of these officials, even though recruitment letters were sent a month ahead of the scheduled interview dates. In some instances, these key officials delegated their subordinates to undertake the interview. However, it must be noted that, those officials who were delegated by their superiors to undertake the interviews, nonetheless, provided enough and helpful data to address the research questions. The absence of key officials for interviews would not in any way affect the outcome of this research, just that their presence would have enriched and enhanced the findings and conclusions.

A more profound challenge was gaining access to the chiefs within the Ga Mashie area. Not only were they busy, it was also time consuming and expensive as one had to go through a number of traditional practices before seeing a chief. As said in the Akan language ‘yen ko ohene anim ne nsa pan’ (literally translated to mean ‘we don’t go to the king’s palace with empty hands), seeing the chief required bottles of schnapps depending on the level of the chief in addition to an unspecified amount. These are not to induce or influence the chief or interviewees; it is just the tradition and custom. The receipt of these items is in no way a guarantee that the chief would speak to you as it happened in this research. Regardless of these difficulties, some chiefs granted the research interviews without the researcher going through these requirements.
Consequently, resources such as time and money became a major challenge. Raising money to undertake the field research was very hectic and tedious. The researcher however received an award of $1000 from the Thesis and Dissertation Research Grant (Office of the Vice-President (Research)). Though not adequate, it somehow eased the financial burden of the researcher. In addition, the interviewees would not go beyond a certain time because of their busy schedules. As a result, some questions that needed further probing to enhance the analysis were left for future dates that never materialized. The limited time spent with these interviewees was however very fruitful.

Again, language barrier and not being a native of Ga surprisingly proved to be a big challenge. The inability to speak the Ga native language made some of the opinion leaders refuse to grant an interview. Some even wondered why the researcher, being a native of Akyem, would be interested in Ga chieftaincy dispute. One of the opinion leaders remarked, “have you finished solving all the chieftaincy problems in Akyem? If not, why are you, a non-Ga, interested in Ga issues? Go and solve your (Akyem) problems before you come to us.” Obviously, some of the opinion leaders were not enthused that a non-Ga was researching what they perceived to be a Ga issue. However, those opinion leaders who willingly granted the researcher interview provided useful information to address the research questions.

Another interesting challenge encountered was the signing of the consent form. Many of the respondents wondered why they should sign any form because it was not the norm in Ghana. Hardly does any researcher in Ghana have to make respondents sign a consent form before or after a research interview. It took the researcher sometime to get some of the respondents to sign the form after gentle and careful explanations of the benefits to them as respondents, and the
researcher. The era of ethics approval and consent forms especially for studies such as this is new in Ghana and it will take some time for respondents in Ghana to get used to it.

Lastly, a major challenge was the ability to assess the validity of the information provided or claims made by the interviewees. This is especially so for the interviewees of the two fighting groups who made counter claims. While this was a major drawback for this research, just like with any research involving human beings, the documents collected (especially from the Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra) in addition to interviews with different people in different institutions served as a means to verify some of the information gathered during the interviews. The use of an open-ended structured interview guide also allowed the researcher to collect most often more than needed information. The researcher, thus, only considers information relevant to addressing the research questions.

1.9 Organization of Research

The work is organized into five different chapters. The first chapter provides the primary introduction of this study. It provides adequate background information to allow the reader understand the reason behind the study as well as what the researcher intends to accomplish. This chapter reviews relevant literature on the theoretical frameworks adopted for this study.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the chieftaincy institution in Ghana by reviewing the relevant literature. It attempts to look at the relationship between the chieftaincy institution and the state, especially during and after colonial rule. This chapter pays particular attention to Ghana’s Fourth Republic. The chapter also examines the roles and function as well as the
challenges of the National and Greater Accra Regional Houses of Chiefs as provided for by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

Chapter 3 examines specifically chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana focusing on the causes, effects and the different resolution mechanism put in place to address these conflicts. Chapter 4 deals with the case study: The Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute. The focus of this chapter is to address the research questions using the case study. It provides a background of the Ga people, exploring their social and political organization.

The final chapter, chapter 5 provides conclusions from the study, recommendations for users of the research, research implications, and opportunities for future research.
CHAPTER TWO

THE CHIEFTAINCY INSTITUTION IN GHANA

2.1 Introduction

There were several forms of ruler-ship found among Africans in the various societies prior to colonialism. However, it is very common for most scholars to lump all these rulers together and refer to them as ‘traditional rule’. Further, these scholars naively describe this ‘traditional rule’ as chieftaincy – a creation of the British imperialist during colonization. Unfortunately, not all traditional rules that existed prior to colonialism were chieftaincy. Hence, the description brushes aside the variations that existed among these types of rule. As Arhin (1985: 1) puts it, “the word ‘chief’, used indiscriminately, conceals real difference between the kinds of power or authority exercised by the various traditional office holders”. In addition, Arhin (1985: 1) makes the point that this indiscriminate use of the word chief “conceals the various degrees of power corresponding to the various levels at which power was exercised within a politically autonomous sovereign area”. There were three types of traditional rule prior to colonialism. These were: (i) rule in societies without obvious power holders beyond the level of the family groupings called clans or lineage; (ii) societies with power holders operating within centralized political authority systems; and (iii) a mix system of rule, which combines the features of the first two systems, indicated. Similarly, Keulder (2000: 150-170) also identifies at least three broad models of traditional leadership (kingdoms, chieftainships and headmanships) currently in Namibia.

The term ‘chief’ or ‘chieftaincy’ is thus a “creation of colonial administrators who, in their quest for a definable title for the existing traditional leader for purposes of categorization
within the imperial administrative structure, designated such leaders as chiefs or warrant chiefs” (Adjaye & Misawa, 2006: 1). For example, Section 2 of the Gold Coast Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (1883: 4) did not take into account the different levels of traditional authorities that existed. The section states, “Head Chief means a Chief who is not subordinate in his ordinary jurisdiction to any other Chief, and includes the chiefs known as Ohen, Ohene, Mantse, and Amagah.” The term ‘chiefs’ was used therefore as a “shorthand” common term by the colonial administration to designate a general phenomenon, which included both state and non-state political entities that were rooted in the pre-colonial era, and subsequently substantially changed by both the colonial and post-colonial states. Thus, the meaning and essence of chiefs were diluted to serve the interest of colonial administrators, and this has continued in many African countries with the so-called ‘formal political institutions’ doing their very best to minimize, if not eliminate the institution. That the institution has survived over the years, in the midst of threats and attempts to eliminate it, tells of its robustness and significance, even in modern politics.

2.2 Who is a Chief?

Chieftaincy as an institution in Ghana emerged naturally as the evolution of man in Africa and pre-industrial societies, where chiefs and monarchs were the citadel of leadership, development and governance. Its emergence probably could be traced to the desire or willingness of one set of people, who regard themselves as forming a distinct group, to establish and maintain superiority over others among whom they are living (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016; Mair, 1977). In pre-colonial era, the King, traditional ruler or

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12 The term ‘Chiefs or chieftaincy’ is used to refer to all the different types of traditional rules that existed prior to colonialism in Ghana. The distinction should be made to the effect that the pre-colonial political structures were transformed into chieftaincy by the colonial and post-colonial governments of modern day Ghana.
chief was the spokesperson of his people because of the inherent valor and wisdom associated with the institution. As the father of his traditional state, they performed several functions, which included but not limited to military, judicial\textsuperscript{13}, executive, cultural, religious, administrative, economic and legislative duties (see Arhin, 2006: 27, 36-38; Busia, 1951: 13-16, 26-27, 61-84; Ray & van Rouveroy van Nieuwaal, 1996: 7-11). The institution thus, brings to mind as Adjaye and Misawa (2006: 1) note, “a paramount chief, in his ceremonial regalia, bedecked with copious gold jewelry (Ghana), or beads and turban (Nigeria)” as seen in Figure 1 below.

\textbf{Figure 1: The Asantehene dressed in his regalia in a palanquin}

![The Asantehene dressed in his regalia in a palanquin](source: www.google.ca/search/images of Asantehene)

The images of a paramount chief, however, usually conceal the lowly images of some chiefs. There are ranking of chiefs from the lowest village chief (Odikro) to the paramount chief

(Omanhene) as in the case of the Akan in Ghana. However, the nature of their authority, roles and significance do not vary much. The ranking system only enables the chiefs to perform their duties in a hierarchical order. What differentiates them is the size of population and territory over which they assume office and control. Chiefs are therefore generally referred to as “those monarchs, other nobles holding offices, heads of extended families, and office holders of decentralized polities whose offices are rooted in the pre-colonial period” (Ray & Eizlini, 2011: 36).

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana defines a chief as a “person, who, hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage” (Article 277). This definition highlights four important features. First, the definition comprises both Kings and paramount chiefs. It does not take into account the different traditional rules that existed prior to colonialism. More importantly, it blurs the hierarchical lines of the structure of the institution as seen in centralized systems such as the Akans. Therefore, unless otherwise stated (for the purpose of analysis and differentiation), the terms Kings, paramount chiefs, traditional rulers and chiefs are used interchangeably in this research to mean the same thing as defined in the 1992 Constitution. Secondly, the definition highlights the importance of emanating or hailing from the appropriate family and lineage in order to legitimately become a chief. In many instances, there are multiple lineages/families to a stool or a skin, as is the case with the Ga Mashie. In such a situation, the kingmakers institute a system of rotation among the lineages/families (see Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011; Busia, 1951:1-9). Third, a chiefly candidate has to go through the appropriate processes of selection and installation in accordance with the customs and traditions of the people (Busia, 1951:1-13, Ray, 2003: 244). Finally, the definition of a chief
as contained in the 1992 Constitution is gender neutral (i.e. it covers both male and female occupants). Subsequently, the term chieftaincy, derived from the word chief, refers to the office and the institution of which the chief is the principal operator and stakeholder. Chieftaincy may, thus, comprise among other things the personnel holding offices such as chiefs, queen-mothers, counselors and staff; rituals, symbols, customs, laws, practice and process of electing or selecting and installing chiefs in Ghana as well as the legitimacy and powers conferred on them in accordance with the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

The vast authority, power and functions of a chief seem to portray him as a dictator and an all-powerful being likening him to the Hobbesian ‘Leviathan’. However, there is considerable evidence to suggest that this is not the case. There are checks and balances on the powers and authority of the chief. One of such notable checks is the institution of the queen mother. As Arhin (2000: 8) rightly notes, not only was “the queen mother a refuge for a fugitive from the chief’s court, but she was also the most effective adviser and she had the right to administer to him even a public admonition”. Other important institutions that check the chief are the council of elders and the ‘asafo’\(^\text{14}\). In the administration of justice or implementation of policies and programs, for example, chiefs consult the council of elders for their opinions. As Busia (1951: 15) notes, “the chief had to keep strictly the injunction that he was to act only on the advice of his elders”. Besides, the many incantations read to him on the day of his swearing-in that spells out the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ of the high office of a chief is an important check on the chief. Failure of the chief to adhere to the advice of the queen mother, council of elders, the ‘asafo’ and any breach of the incantations read to him may result in his removal from office. Moreover, the fear of reprisals from both the ‘gods’ and ancestors puts the chief in check, as any abuse, it is

\(^{14}\) The term ‘asafo’ is used to refer to the youth group of a traditional community who constituted the military arm of the community.
believed, brings with it calamities and punishment in several forms. This is not to suggest that chiefs do not abuse their powers. Like any other human institution, there are chiefs who abuse or undermine the system.

2.3 Chieftaincy and State Relations in Ghana

2.3.1 Colonial Era

The nature and challenges of the chieftaincy institution over the years are varied and ranges from colonially crafted mechanisms to break the authority of the indigenous monarchs to the imperceptible marginalization of the institution as they were transformed through constitutional provisions. The colonial administration was one of despotism, the suppression of the institutions of the people and the super-imposition of an alien institution. The British were more concerned with establishing effective control over the people than on considering what was traditional or legitimate. Faith in legitimacy turned out to be remarkably weak when it was a question of asserting control or obtaining loyalty. Legitimacy was merely a useful adjunct and it came to mean what was right from the British point of view, which more often than not, did not coincide with that of the people at large. As Lord Lugard (1922:203) succinctly puts it, “The native chief derives his power from the Suzerain and is responsible that this is not misused…and the chief himself must understand that he has no right to place and power unless he renders his proper services to the state”. To make the chiefs seem less important before their subjects and the administrative officers, the first Native Jurisdiction Ordinances introduced the notion of headchiefs in 1883 and the British colonial administration advised the administrative personnel to put a stop to the habit of addressing chiefs as Kings or more preferably, use the native titles (Kimble, 1963:460). The Native Jurisdiction Ordinances of 1878 therefore regulated the relationship
between the colonial administration and the chiefs, facilitating the incorporation of chiefs into the colonial administration. Colonial rulers exercised control over traditional rulers by either conferring or denying them the status of legitimacy (Harvey, 1966: 71-75). For example, the 1883 Ordinance granted the Governor the power to depose and deport recalcitrant chiefs (Simensen 1975: 39; Rathbone 2000a; 2000b: 62). Consequently, King Aggrey, for criticizing and petitioning the British administration for grossly undermining his rule as the King of Cape Coast, was arrested, deposed and deported him to Sierra Leone in 1865 (see Isichei, 1997:372).

In the same vein, the colonialists arrested and exiled King Prempeh I and some important divisional chiefs of the Asantes in 1896 to Seychelles Islands. The important military and political role Yaa Asantewaa played in the 1900 ‘Asante War of Resistance’ also led to her exile to Seychelles Islands.\(^{15}\) In addition, the 1904 Chieftaincy Ordinance made the Governor the final arbiter of the validity of an election or destoolment/deskinement of a chief.

Ray (1996: 188) accordingly points to a relationship that existed between the colonialists and chiefs where the former subdued the powers of the latter for economic and political expediency. As Boafo-Arthur (2003: 129-130) aptly notes, the British imperialist and its administration constituted a major challenge to the institution of chieftaincy in the then Gold Coast. It is not surprising therefore that opposition to foreign rule in the early years of Ghanaian politics largely came from traditional rulers such as King Aggrey of Cape Coast, King Kobena Gyan of Elmina, Prempeh I, the King of Asante and Yaa Asantewa, the queen mother of Ejisu. A case in point was when a chief from Akwamu by name Assameni, with the consent of Bassua, the Akwamuhene, took the St. Francis Xavier fort (originally known as Christiansburg Castle) in Cape Coast from the Danes with a number of his men who disguised themselves as merchants in

One could therefore understand why the British imperialist would undermine the chieftaincy institution to propel their rule. Prior to these developments, the unsavory hands of the British imperialist were long felt on the shores of the Gold Coast. The colonial authority severely undermined the Fante Confederation formed in 1868, prior to the introduction of indirect rule by the British, by starving the Confederacy of the needed funds for their operations.

However, in most parts of Africa, the colonialists later recognized the institution of chieftaincy as the rallying point of the people. The colonialists therefore, began to use the chieftaincy institution to advance their imperial interest from 1902 onwards in what is termed ‘indirect rule’ (see Ray, 2003: 247). For the purposes of this study, ‘indirect rule’ is defined as the utilization of traditional institutions as local administrative agencies (Crowder, 1964). In spite of the British imperialist knowledge of the important differences in the institutional set-ups of the colonies they had acquired, they attempted to apply the system of indirect rule uniformly throughout West Africa, thereby undermining existing governance structures. Therefore, the use of chiefs under the indirect rule cannot be attributed to the will and desire of the colonial institution to preserve and safeguard the institution as Ayemang-Duah (2007: 730) suggests.

The involvement of chiefs in the indirect rule system worked perfectly for the colonialist as it strained the relationship between the chiefs and the local educated elites (intelligentsia). Sensing the success that the unity between the chief and local elites (intelligentsia) can bring

17 For how the British undermine the institution of female leadership during colonialism, see Owusu-Sarpong, C. 8 The Predicament of the Akan “Queenmother” (“ohemaa”) in Reinventing African Chieftaincy in the Age of AIDS, Gender, Governance, and Development, 201, 201-238
18 The British denied the Confederacy the authority to tax lucrative trade in the region to fund their military activities.
(that is opposing colonial policies/rule), it was only prudent on the part of the British colonial administrators to undermine any future partnership as such by craftily creating tension and mistrust between the chiefs and local elites. Many of the nationalist movements that emerged in the early 1900s, thus, saw a sharp division between chiefs and the educated elites. For example, the British administrators, arguing that National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) was effectively eroding traditional values and institutions, were able to successfully manipulate and instigate the chiefs against the NCBWA (Webster, 1973). It is only in the formation of the Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society (ARPS) in 1897 to oppose the Lands and Forest Bills of 1894 and 1911 respectively that we witnessed a meaningful collaboration between the chiefs and educated elites in the Gold Coast. Skeptics of the institution of chieftaincy may, therefore, have to ponder over this question: Would colonial rule have survived for that long if not for indirect rule (involvement of the chiefs)?

2.3.2 Post-Colonial Era


Nkrumah, in the lead-up to Ghanaian independence in 1957 and afterwards until his overthrow in 1966, very substantially reduced the power of the chiefs but did not eliminate them as a political-legal-Constitutional category. His and all the other governments since independence have been concerned to control the chiefs but have not acted to restore substantially their powers or to eliminate them as a category of office-holders.
The relations between these two (the post-colonial state and the chieftaincy institution) is, thus, one of the most fascinating and complex aspects of contemporary African politics. What is happening is the attempt by the post-colonial state (successive governments in Ghana) to manipulate the institution to its advantage as any attempt to eliminate or delegitimize the institution in Ghana has failed. As Ray (2003: 250) aptly opines, “chiefs might not be the central component of the politics, economic and culture of Ghana, but chiefs are of great relevance to the people and state of Ghana”. The antagonistic relationship between chiefs and Nkrumah’s CPP government was evident in the number of laws enacted to reduce the economic, social and political powers of the chiefs in order to make them play a subservient role to the central government (see Ray 1986:83-116). For example, the Chiefs Recognition Act of 1959 was passed to give powers to the government to accord recognition to or to withdraw same from any chief. Other laws passed included the Chieftaincy Act, 1961 (Act 81), the Administration of Lands Act, 1962 (Act 123), the Concession Act, 1962 (Act 124), the Stool Land Control Act 1960 (Act 79) and Akim-Abuakwa (Stool Revenue) Act 1958 (Act 8). Article 1 of the Administration of Lands Act, 1962 (Act 123), for example, puts the management of stool lands in the hands of the minister. Article 2 gives the President the power to “direct the institution or defense of, or intervention in, any proceedings relating to any Stool land in the name of the Republic, on behalf, and to the exclusion, of any Stool concerned, and may compromise or settle any such proceedings”. These Acts, according to Boafo-Arthur (2003), were meant to facilitate government’s control of such lands and revenue accruing thereof.

The post-Nkrumah era witnessed similar relationship between the state and chieftaincy institution. Successive governments (both civilian and military regimes) recognized the enormous contributions of chiefs and their power thereof. The Busia administration, for example,
passed the Chieftaincy Act, 1971 (Act 370), which made elaborate provisions for chiefs. Chiefs therefore, became very important in both constitutional and unconstitutional regimes. The former, in most elections, courted the support of chiefs to either maintain power, or capture the levers of government after which they were jettisoned. The latter regimes, however, courted the support of chiefs to gain legitimacy (Ray, 2003a: 241-250; 1996: 186-193).

The greatest challenge to the chieftaincy institution in the post-colonial state of Ghana was, thus, the various mechanisms/laws put in place by the state. As a result, many scholars – modernization theorists in particular (see Levy, 1965: 29-40; Harneit-Sievers, 1998: 57-79 and Fallers, 1964) - predicted the end to the institution of chieftaincy. As Boafo-Arthur (2003: 126) notes:

Modernization theorists, in the 1950s and 1960s eagerly predicted and anticipated the withering away of chieftaincy in post-colonial states in Africa given the evolutionary nature of chieftaincy, and even the manner chiefs were imposed in some areas by the colonial rulers.

However, despite this prediction, the chieftaincy institution continues to retain its own inner dynamics, distinct from and frequently in conflict with the modern and secular political system in Ghana. As Ray (2003: 241) points out, the influence and resilience of the institution of chieftaincy enabled it to exist to the present day and the first president’s prediction that the chiefs might well lose their sandals never happened. Instead, today, chiefs in Ghana are wearing their ‘millennium sandals’.

The forgoing argument paints a picture of two rival institutions competing for legitimacy, essence and power. However, why the modern state saw and perhaps continues to see the chieftaincy institution as its rival is a question worth exploring. Arhin (1985) traces the evolution
of chieftaincy or monarchy as one of the political institutions that existed prior to colonialism to
the need for structures that could uphold and defend the egalitarian interest of the community as
a whole (Arhin, 1985). Their primary role therefore, was to regulate and control relationships
and social behaviour within a traditional community as modern-day government structures are.
Ray (1986: 92) argues that traditional leaders have three distinct claims to legitimacy in the
contemporary era. One of the sources of their authority, as argued by Ray (1986), is derived from
tradition and is exercised in consultation with senior advisers without being regulated by
provisions. Accordingly, the institution of chieftaincy is sanctioned in accordance with the
culture, customs and traditions of the people to whom it applies. Tradition as understood is
continuity from some pre-colonial status quo. Following from this, then it could be plausibly
argued that the chieftaincy institution is understood and legitimized as founded on the principle
of tradition. In the words of Hameit Sievers (1998: 58), “chieftaincy is always understood and
legitimized as being founded on the principle of tradition; chieftaincy without reference to
tradition seems an unimaginable concept - a contradiction in itself.”

However, Keulder (2000:151) points to the fact the presence of ‘invented traditions’ as
was the case during the indirect rule system makes it difficult to assume that the legitimacy of
chieftaincy or traditional rule is derived from tradition (see also Hobsbawm & Ranger 2012;
Ranger, 1997; Zerubavel, 1994). Consequently, he argues that ‘customs’ is their source of
legitimacy because there is “no ‘actual’ difference between ‘real’ and ‘invented’ customs” (p.
153). However, Keudler’s view of tradition is rather narrow. His subsequent distinction between
tradition and custom is too simplistic. As Adewumi and Egwurube (1985: 20) argued:

Chiefs or traditional rulers are individuals occupying communal
political leadership positions sanctified by cultural norms and
values, and enjoying legitimacy in particular communities to direct
their affairs. Their basis of legitimacy is tradition, which includes a whole range of inherited culture and way of life; a people's history; moral and social values and the traditional institutions, which survive to serve those values.

Therefore, tradition embodies custom (a way of life – norms and values-) and is indeed the basis for the legitimacy of chieftaincy or traditional rule. Colonial administration and post-independence governments have failed to dislodge this basis of legitimacy of chiefs (i.e. tradition). The uniqueness of the chieftaincy institution in Ghana is that almost every community has a chief. They (chiefs) offer leadership and protection, peace and security for their people. As traditional heads, chiefs are the first port of call, even by politicians when on campaign tours. The chiefs represent the spiritual embodiment of the people, mediating between the living and the dead (Busia, 1951: 23-27). From time immemorial, the chiefs have been agents of development. Today, one can cite numerous examples of many development projects, which chiefs have initiated and completed in their areas of jurisdiction (Ray et al., 2011). A good number of chiefs are taking up the challenges of the twenty-first century, tackling very modern issues as diverse as children’s rights, the environment, women’s rights, and HIV/AIDS. As the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II puts it:

Our predecessors engaged in inter-tribal wars, fighting for conquest over territories and people. Today, the war should be vigorous and intensive against dehumanization, poverty, marginalization, ignorance and disease. … Chieftaincy must be used to propel economic development through proper lands administration, through facilitating investments in our communities, and through codification and customs and traditions making it impossible for imposters to get enstooled and creating unnecessary situations for litigation (Ayee, 1997, p. 2).

Ray and Eizlini (2011:46-50); Ray and Brown (2011: 89-120) have discussed the involvement of chiefs in the strategy to fight/combat HIV/AIDS in Ghana in partnership with Ghana Aids Commission in a strategy termed as ‘social marketing’. They also indicate the building of organizations and institutions by chiefs to engage in HIV/AIDS education awareness creation.
In the contemporary Ghanaian state, Ray and Eizlini (2011: 35-52); and Bob-Milliar (2009: 541-558) see chiefs as a mobilizing force that lobby the central government for development projects in addition to organizing fundraising on their own for development purposes. Again, many chiefs are unifying force in the communities amidst the cultural diversities of the Ghanaian state.

On the other hand, any definition of the modern state typically includes the set of institutions that possess the legitimate authority to make the regulations that govern the use of coercive force for the people of the society in that territory. In Weber's influential definition, a state is that organization that successfully claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory (Weber, 1968: 91-92). Accordingly, Krause and Jutersonke (2007: 5-12) group the various functions of modern states into three: security, representation and welfare. Modern states are therefore, argued to be sovereign and represent the society as a whole. To obtain this power in a democratic society, individuals and groups compete among themselves in an election. Elections therefore, confer legitimate power on whoever is declared the winner. Authoritarian regimes, on the other hand, use force to obtain power. However, it can subsequently achieve legitimacy through several means including co-optation and massive economic development. Power therefore legitimizes the government by imbuing or empowering it with the means to fulfill its purpose of being through the provision of utility. The government can subsequently use power to eliminate potential rivals (or minimize their influence as has been the case in Ghana with regard to chiefs) so that it appears to be the best choice of leadership for the people. For example, Boafo-Arthur (2003: 130) argues that, “for resisting challenges to their
overall suzerainty, some chiefs stirred the ire of the colonial administration and were banished from their kingdoms into exile.” The Nkrumah-led CPP saw the chiefs as collaborators with the colonial administration and Nkrumah indicated his desire to deal with the institution as follows:

Those of our chiefs who are with us … we do honour … those … who join forces with the [British] imperialist … there shall come a time when they will run away and leave their sandals behind them (Kwame Nkrumah, Editorial, Accra Evening News, January 5, 1950, cited by Boafo-Arthur, 2003: 130. See also Ray, 2003: 141)

Nkrumah true to his words, and knowing he could not eliminate the chieftaincy institution, enacted several laws to weaken the institution. Successive governments under both military and democratic regimes continued to toy with the chieftaincy institution as well. The military rulers between the periods of 1966-1969, 1972-1979 and 1982-1992 did put in place policies and laws to minimize the influence and powers of chiefs. The National Liberation Council (NLC) after the 1966 coup removed or downgraded a number of chiefs who were seen to have been wrongfully elevated by the Nkrumah regime. The Acheampong regime also enacted the 1972 Chieftaincy Procedure Rules (C.I. 27) and the 1972 Chieftaincy Regulation (LI 798) as means to exercise some control over the chiefs. The Rawlings-led PNDC likewise enacted The Chieftaincy (Amendment) Law, 1985 (PNDCL 107) (see Ray, 1996: 185-193). However, the 1979 and 1992 Constitutions significantly improved on the relationship between the state and the chieftaincy institution as they once again allocated some powers to the chieftaincy institutions especially with the creation of the National, and Regional Houses of Chiefs, and Traditional Councils (1992 Constitution, Article 271 - 274). Article 270 bars Parliament from enacting any law(s), which (a) confers on any person or authority the right to

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20 This is the situation where some chiefs attempted to assert some form of autonomy from the colonial administration
21 See Knierzinger, J. (2011). Chieftaincy and development in Ghana: From political intermediaries to neotraditional development brokers. Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität
accord or withdraw recognition to or from a chief for any purpose whatsoever; and (b) in any way detracts or derogates from the honour and dignity of the institution of chieftaincy.

2.4 The Constitutional basis of Chieftaincy Rule in Ghana under the Fourth Republic


In September 1971, the then Prime Minister K. A. Busia’s Progress Party government passed the Chieftaincy Act, Act 370 to amend the statute law on chieftaincy to ensure its conformity with the provisions of the 1969 Constitution and make other provisions relating to chieftaincy. It also created a National House of Chiefs, which has been included in the 1979 and
1992 Constitutions. This Chieftaincy Act, Act 370 was subsequently amended by Chieftaincy (Amendment) Decree, 1973 (NRCD 166)2; Chieftaincy (Amendment) (No.2) Decree, 1973 (NRCD 226)3; Chieftaincy (Amendment) Law, 1982 (PNDCL 25)1; Chieftaincy (Amendment) Law, 1993 (PNDCL 307)4. In 2008, the Kufuor government reviewed Act 370 and enacted Act 759. The aim was to harmonize the various amendments into a single Act to conform to the provisions of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Chapter 22 of the 1992 Constitution therefore guarantees the “institution of chieftaincy, together with its traditional councils as established by customary law and usage” (p. 153). Consequently, Article 270 bars Parliament from enacting any law(s), which (a) confers on any person or authority the right to accord or withdraw recognition to or from a chief for any purpose whatsoever; and (b) in any way detracts or derogates from the honour and dignity of the institution of chieftaincy (p. 153).

Ironically, none of the five (5) constitutions treats the chieftaincy institution as part of the governance architecture of the state. The 1992 Constitution only guarantees the existence of the institution, conceding the fact that the basis of its existence lies in customary law, which predates the Constitution. As a result, the Constitution confines the institution to customary matters related to its standing in society. The disqualification of chiefs from engaging in partisan politics is, therefore, an indirect way of excluding them from the country’s governance structure and processes except in strictly customary matters.

2.5 Structure of the Chieftaincy Institution under the 1992 Constitution and Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759)

The 1992 Constitution (Article 271) and the Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759) establishes a Houses of Chiefs system, which consists of three levels, namely, (i) the National House of
Chiefs (NHC); (ii) Regional House of Chiefs (RHC); and (iii) Traditional Councils (TC). The NHC consists of five paramount chiefs elected by each of the ten (10) RHC. As provided for in the Constitution, where in a region there are fewer than five paramount chiefs, the RHC is mandated to elect such number of divisional chiefs to make up the required representation of chiefs for the region. The functions of the NHC include:

(a) to advise any person or authority charged with any responsibility for any matter relating to or affecting chieftaincy;

(b) to undertake the progressive study, interpretation and codification of customary law with a view to evolving, in appropriate cases, a unified system of rules of customary law, and compiling the customary laws and lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin;

(c) to undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminating those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful (Act 759, p. 6)

In addition to these, the NHC has appellate jurisdiction in any cause or matter that affects chieftaincy, which has been determined by the RHC and an appeal can be made to the Supreme Court (SC). This appellate jurisdiction is exercised by its Judicial Committee (JC), which consists of five persons appointed by the House and assisted by a lawyer of not less than ten years’ standing appointed by the NHC on the recommendation of the Attorney-General (Article 273, p. 154).

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22 See Sections 1 to 21 of the Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759) for the detailed provisions for the various Houses of Chiefs as outlined.

23 See Chapter 22, Articles 271 to 275 of the 1992 Constitution and Sections 1-5 of the Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759) for further details on the membership, powers, functions, elections, and meetings of the National House of Chiefs.
The RHC, on the other hand, consists of such members as Parliament may determine by law. Its functions are complementary to those of the NHC. Specifically, the Constitution enjoins the RHC to:

(a) hear and determine appeals from the traditional councils within the region in respect of nomination, election, selection, installation or deposition of a person as a chief;

(b) have original jurisdiction in all matters relating to a paramount stool or skin or the occupant of a paramount stool or skin, including a queen mother to a paramount stool or skin;

(c) undertake a study and make such general recommendations as are appropriate for the resolution or expeditious disposition of chieftaincy disputes in the region;

(d) undertake the compilation of the customary laws and lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin in the region.

The Traditional Council consists of a paramount chief and divisional chiefs. Its main function is to determine, in accordance with the appropriate customary law and usage, of the validity of the nomination, election, selection, installation or deposition of a person as a chief. In other words, it performs functions similar to those of the NHC and RHC at the paramountcy level.

The functions of the NHC are onerous especially when they deal with issues such as succession disputes and outmoded and socially harmful customs and usages, which have been the bane of traditional authorities. More importantly, the NHC, by the provisions of the 1992 Constitution and Act 759, is a court, bringing before it its own cases and sitting as judges on
these same cases. This is the reason why many of the chieftaincy disputes before it remain unsettled. In addition, the inadequate funds allocated to the Houses of Chiefs; and delays in the release of these funds affect the day administration of these houses of chiefs (A. K. Essien, personal communication, February 25, 2016).

2.6 Concluding Remarks

The advent of colonialism in Africa ushered in a westernized view of ‘a state’, which was to be legitimate and sovereign; governed by formal political institutions. This was not in consonance with what had traditionally existed prior to colonialism. The outcome was various tense relationships between the state and the chieftaincy institution during and after colonialism in an attempt to properly define and allocate legitimacy and sovereignty between the ‘state and its apparatus’ and the existing traditional systems (chieftaincy). The result is a ‘contested sovereignty’ as it appears. As Ray (1996: 1) aptly puts it “when chiefs have been seen as competitors for sovereignty, the state has moved to limit their power”. A consequence of this is what was witnessed in Uganda where serious tensions existed between the post-colonial leadership represented by the late president Milton Obote, who was intent on destroying the ancient Kingdom of Buganda, and King Mutesa II (the Kabaka) who challenged the authority of “modern” rule through the electoral verdict (Agyeman-Duah, 2007, pp. 730-731). Likewise, in South Africa, as Agyeman-Duah (2007) indicates, “settler societies uprooted the traditional governance institutions notwithstanding the resistance mounted by kingdoms and warrior tribes like the Zulu” (p. 730). This is more so when sovereignty is simply seen as a supreme,

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independent and original authority or as Hinley (1986: 1) puts it “the supreme and final legal authority beyond which no other final legal power exists in a state”.

Bodin (1955: 25-36) notes that sovereignty has four main attributes namely: 1) power to make laws binding on everyone; 2) power over the making of war and peace; 3) power to institute the great officers of state; and 4) the final resort to appeal from all other courts. This sovereignty is consequently derived from three principal sources: the degree of respect merited by an institution, the capacity to rule, and the recognition that the authority acts on behalf of and for the benefit of the people. These attributes and sources of sovereignty are rightly identified with both the chieftaincy institution and the post-colonial state in many African states including Ghana. Thus, it quickly brings to mind the concept of legitimacy (which is generally accepted to mean the ‘rightfulness of a thing’). Both institutions assume legitimacy of a kind. However, the bases of legitimacy differ between the post-colonial state (Ghana) and traditional authorities (chieftaincy institutions). As Ray (1996: 184) posits, “the sacred and political bases of legitimacy in traditional authority in a contemporary, post-colonial state such as Ghana are rooted in the pre-colonial period” while “the colonial and post-colonial states depend on legitimation strategies that are rooted elsewhere than in the pre-colonial period, whether these are conquest, treaty, popular consent or something else”.

Based on this insight, the question to ask, therefore, is: which of the two institutions possess sovereignty? Is it the state; the chieftaincy institution; or perhaps both in what Ray (1996: 181) terms ‘divided sovereignty”? The question gets milkier and complex when we consider the nuances of politics as the authoritative allocation of values and resources (Easton, 1965: 77-82). Alternatively, deciding who gets what, when and how within a given polity (Lasswell, 1958: 13-27). Within most post-colonial states of Africa, this is a daunting task as
both the post-colonial state and the chieftaincy institutions in some instances share this function. As a result, there are instances of conflicts between the two institutions, particularly when it comes to the issue of lands and developmental projects. Perhaps, it is the idea of a ‘divided sovereignty’ that has characterized and shaped the relationship between these two institutions at the national level in the post-colonial state of Ghana. This is because allocating society’s values and obtaining widespread acceptance within the society of the authoritative, or binding, nature of the allocations, according to David Easton, constitute the basic functions of any political society. As Easton (1965: 96) notes, “it is through the presence of activities that fulfill these two basic functions that a society can commit the resources and energies of its members in the settlement of differences that cannot be autonomously [i.e., individually or privately] resolved.” This authoritative allocation, in practice, is not the preserve of any of the two institutions. The extent of influence is what substantially differs between them.

From the above, it is clear the relationship between the chieftaincy institution and the post-colonial state under the Fourth Republic is a complex and ever-changing one. Undoubtedly, the chieftaincy institutions have survived and endured the exploitative British imperialism during the colonial era, and subsequently under both civilian and military administrations. The institution of chieftaincy in Ghana has always shown considerable resilience and robustness because while the legitimacy of modern governments is derived from legal rational authority; that of the chieftaincy institution is derived from tradition. As Boafo-Arthur (2003: 134) rightly notes “the chief is a political and social power center in the area he rules and ipso facto microcosm of authority who at times rivals the central government in legitimacy, recognition, and loyalty by subjects.” As a result, it is the power and authority inherent in chieftaincy that brought them into conflict with the colonial administration (prior to indirect rule) and later with
the CPP government and successive governments. It is for this reason that the formal political institution in Ghana through the enactment of several laws sought to undermine the chieftaincy institution over the years.

In addition, the institution has evolved to remain significant by projecting itself as the custodian of cherished local values amidst rapid social change. The important role of chieftaincy in the politics of contemporary Ghana is therefore never in doubt. This is well captured by the proposal of the Constitutional Committee in 1978:

In spite of certain features which have often given cause for serious concern and the not altogether satisfactory record of some chiefs in national life, we remain convinced that the institution of chieftaincy has an important and indispensable role in the life and government of Ghana, both for the present and for the foreseeable future. We, therefore consider it right and necessary that the institution should be protected and preserved by appropriate Constitutional guarantees (Republic of Ghana, 1978: 96).

This gives credence to the fact that chiefs continue to wield considerable influence in the political equation, hence, the inability of politicians to divorce themselves from them, particularly, in times of electoral politics in most parts of Africa, including Ghana. This is because the chieftaincy institution in Ghana emerged from and is embedded in the social fabric of the land. It is nobody’s creation and cannot be easily destroyed. Consequently, as Harneit-Sievers (1998: 57) argue, the chieftaincy institution ought to be “understood not only, and not even primarily, as belonging to a pre-modern, pre-capitalist past; but rather as institutions which have either (been) adapted to the contemporary socio-political setting, or even have been specifically created for or by it.” This has been the case of the chieftaincy institution in Ghana. In many parts of the country, people still turn to chiefs as their last resort in areas where the central government and the District Assemblies have failed. People see chiefs as bridges or
intermediaries through which they can bring their demands and issues before the central government for redress. Accordingly, when traditional authority is mobilized under the right conditions, extensive developmental projects can become possible. On the other hand, when traditional authority breaks down, violence may erupt, disrupting people's lives and certainly any chances of development for some time in the area. As Aidoo (1978: 48) noted “You cannot go to any village and … start propagating an ideology or political programme or anything in the air … the chiefs are very important if we are going to think about participation of all the people in Government. We have to use them from the grassroots level to the national level.”
CHAPTER THREE

CHIEFTAINCY CONFLICTS IN GHANA

3.1 Introduction

Ghana has witnessed and continues to witness chieftaincy disputes. These conflicts can either be intra or inter chieftaincy conflict. Intra-chieftaincy conflicts are conflicts between people of the same family or ethnic group. These conflicts usually emerge from contestations over succession to the stool or skin. Examples are the dispute between the Abudu and Adani Royal gates of Dagbon; the Wenchi chieftaincy dispute between the Ahenfie Yefri and the Ahenfie Sofoase Royal houses and the Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute (see Boafo-Arthur, 2006: 152-154). Inter-chieftaincy conflicts, on the other hand, are ethnic in nature, and fought between and among two or more different ethnic groupings over a stool or skin. It mostly involves dispute over territorial borders or land ownership. An example is the dispute between the combined forces of the Nchumurus, Nawuris, Konkombas and Bassare on one hand and the Gonjas in Northern Ghana; and the Nkonya and Alavanyo dispute in the Volta Region (see Lentz 2006). The possibility of these chieftaincy conflicts stems from a number of factors ranging from marginalization to exploitation.

Chieftaincy conflicts (either intra or inter) are not recent developments and neither are they restricted to only one traditional area within Ghana, although it is commonly assumed the most violent chieftaincy conflicts occur in the northern part of Ghana. Almost every traditional area in Ghana has encountered a chieftaincy dispute in one way or the other. Mention can be made of protracted chieftaincy disputes in Donyina and Mampong in the Asante Region; Banda-Ahenkro and Tuobodom in the Brong Ahafo Region; Brekusu near Aburi and Akyem
Nkwantanang in the Eastern Region. There are chieftaincy disputes in Bimbilla, Bimbagu, Yendi, Daboya, West Mamprusi and West Gonja Districts of the Northern Region; the Ga Mantse succession dispute in Greater Accra Region; Kusasi-Mamprusi chieftaincy disputes in Bawku in the Upper East Region; and the Anlo chieftaincy conflict in the Volta Region (see Ray, 1996; Boafo-Arthur, 2006; Brukum, 2006; Tonah, 2005; and MacGaffey, 2006). By the end of December 2015, there were over 113 chieftaincy cases at the National House of Chiefs alone. The Western Region led with over twenty-two (22) cases whiles the Northern Region had seven (7), the least number of cases, but the most volatile in the country (A. K. Essien, personal communication, February 25, 2016). Reasons for these conflicts differ from place to place. They usually emanate from dispute over succession to stools or skins, control over stool lands and land litigation, political party interference, inordinate ambition for power and the lack of accountability and transparency by some traditional rulers.

Hence, for any society to content itself with formal prohibitions of conflict of any kind, force or intervention without tackling the more fundamental problem of the causes of these conflicts would be demonstrably foolish. Why do people fight? This simple question has no simple answer. The Relative Deprivation theory see reaction to perceived threat; enthusiasm of ideas; frustration over unsatisfactory conditions; and belief in the utility of threats of war and belief in necessity of military self-help as principally the reason why people fight, hence the numerous chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana and Africa as a whole. Conflicts therefore arise out of human interactions and behaviors, and not just because of the nature of man; thus, if we could identify these interactions and behaviors, then there is the likelihood we could as well eliminate or minimize conflicts in whatever form it takes. As Ninsin (1995: 50) notes, conflict is a

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25 This theory is discussed in Chapter 1.
“situation by which the aggrieved seek to attain their rights and privileges” or correct what they perceive to be incorrect.

Chieftaincy in Ghana is associated with political power, translating into, however mundane it may sound, the control of economic wealth in the form of stool properties such as land, mineral deposits, regalia and servants who work for the chief. This power relation is generally characterized by conflict and compulsion because power, as perceived by Max Weber (1864 - 1920), is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance. The breakdown of this relationship is what leads to violence. As a result, the pomp and pageantry that accompany the position of the chief makes the institution so attractive that, both royals and non-royals desire to use every means to ascend to the throne/skin, thus leading to conflict as espoused by the adherents of the human needs theory. The growing presence of absentee chiefs due to the changing socio-economic environment of the Ghanaian state compounds this problem. Many chiefs nowadays are highly educated and have varied expertise. Taking advantage of labor mobility, they ply their professions or trade in the cities and this implies leaving their palaces for long periods. As Boafo-Arthur (2006: 151) rightly notes, “given, the demands of modern life, such chiefs also need to enjoy stable income as opposed to revenues obtained through court fines, royalties which are infrequent, and other dues normally levied on the poor villagers for the upkeep of the chief and his huge retinue.” In effect, these chiefs become absentee chiefs relying on stool fathers or council of elders to take charge in their absence. The result is that the people sometimes see the absentee chiefs as ineffective and this creates the opportunity for others to usurp their authority in their absence, thus creating conflict situation (Boafo-Arthur, 2006: 150: 151).
Regardless of the type or source of these conflicts, chieftaincy conflicts especially violent ones, poses serious threats to the security of any nation. It has dire consequences on both the internal and external security of states particularly in the area of human resource, food, territorial borders and even national integration. The case under study – Ga Mashie Chieftaincy conflict - is of particular security interest to the Ghanaian state due to the location of Ga Mashie in Accra, the capital city of Ghana.

3.2 Chieftaincy Conflicts during Colonial Rule

A number of scholars (see Addo-Fenning, 1990; Berry, 1998; Lentz 2006 & 1993; Sackeyfio, 2008; and Sutton 1984) have attributed many of the chieftaincy conflicts in post-colonial Ghana to colonial rule. During colonial rule, traditional systems were created, recognized or repudiated according to the utility value of the system (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). This utility was determined by two principles namely effectiveness and loyalty. The most important thing was the establishment of control over the acquired territories and the second was the maintenance of that control. The desirability of force was agreeable to the British in the process of the conquest and repression. In this regard, recalcitrant or disloyal chiefs were removed and replaced, in some cases, allegedly by persons who had no claims at all. Most of the chiefs, therefore, owed their positions to a policy of self-enlightenment and active collaboration with the British (M. Sackey, personal communication, February 6, 2016). If the appointment of a person with no traditional base to the status of a chief worked, he could remain in office provided he was loyal. If he proved to be disloyal and/or

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26 Chapter Four will deal with the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict
27 G. N. T. Tagoe is the Head of GA Mashie Development Agency and also an opinion leader in Ga Mashie
28 M. Sackey is the Head of Research at the Institute of Local Government Studies, Accra
ineffective, he could be replaced (A. B. Awedoba\textsuperscript{29}, personal communication, March 4, 2016). People who appeared to have the necessary authority, for example, operated the chiefdoms of the Konkombas that were created by the colonial administration in northern Ghana. The colonial government recognized these chiefdoms as agencies for the maintenance of law and order. In other areas such as the Anufos and the Bassaris in the north-eastern part of Ghana; and the Nawuris in the East Gonja District of Northern Region\textsuperscript{30}, people who seemed to possess local prestige and authority were appointed chiefs. These people usually came from the chiefly peoples like the Dagombas, the Gonjas, the Mamprusis and the Nanumbas. Such actions by the colonial authority sowed the seeds of resentment and discontent among the so-called ‘stateless societies’. These imposed chiefs who had no traditional base, with few exceptions, knew nothing of their people or their organizations.\textsuperscript{31}

In addition, the interaction of traditional law and English law in the native tribunals led to confusion and thus, the native courts lost much of their power (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). For whilst the initial judgments by the native tribunals were based on traditional norms, appeal judgments were done in accordance with the principles of English law (see Amankwah, 1970:1-23; Simensen, 1975). The result was reversal in judgment of cases determined by the native tribunals and an increase in appeal cases. Accordingly, Sutton (1984: 43) argues that related to the question of increased political or chieftaincy conflict within African states is the question of the imposition of British legal standards during colonialism.

\textsuperscript{29} A. B. Awedoba is a Professor at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.
\textsuperscript{30} These groups were commonly referred to as ‘stateless societies’ because they were mainly egalitarian and did not have a centralized system of governance.
With this in mind, the claim that British colonial policies such as the indirect rule assumed that there was a real value in African social institutions could hardly be justified.

The introduction of the Gold Coast Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (NJO) in 1878, which was subsequently replaced in 1883, meant to control native authorities in the Protectorate by the colonial administration, posed a great threat to traditional authority in both the Protectorate and those outside the protectorate in the then Gold Coast in a number of ways. Section 29 of the Ordinance gave the District Commissioners power to suspend chiefs who abused their power. This was alien and did not conform to the customs and traditions of the local people because as succinctly put by Kludze (2000: 265), “it is the people who make and unmake a chief.” How can a chief who had been validly enstooled or enskinned by his people based on the customs and traditions of the people be suspended by a District Commissioner without recourse to the people, their customs and traditions? More so, for these District Commissioners, it was either they genuinely did not understand the customs and traditions of the people, or they deliberately failed to understand the customs and traditions of the people.

As Berry (1998) argues, understanding traditional systems of authority and social order was essential to strategies of colonial governance in Africa, yet custom proved frustratingly elusive. Sutton (1984: 41-62) therefore opines that, the Ada chieftaincy disputes in the early 1990s was largely due to arbitration or intervention of the then District Commissioner in the chieftaincy of the Ada people. The Ada state comprises nine tribes with each tribe having its own version of traditions and customs. Four of these tribes (Adibiawe, Tekperbiawe, Lonobiawe and Dangmebiawe) are descendants of the original settlers of the area, who are related to the Krobo; two tribes (Kababiawe-Yumo and Kababiawe-Chou) are of Akan origin; and the remaining three (Kudragbe, Korgbor and Ohuewem) are of Ewe origin. The Adibiawe were the rulers of the Ada
state until they passed it on to the two Akan tribes in exchange for protection. The Akan tribes rotated the stool between them. The legal disputes in Ada manifested themselves as conflict between claimants to religious office, as stool disputes, as conflict between sections of the Ada state and conflict between sections of the state and the colonial government. The patterns of chieftaincy dispute and alliance in the Ada state (between the four tribes of Krobo and the two tribes of Akan) are primarily not ethnic in origin. The dispute is about access to and control of the Ada state's resources especially after the discovery and exploration of salt in commercial quantities in the Songor Lagoon during the colonial period (see Sutton, 1981: 43-61). With the passage of the 1904 Chiefs Ordinance, the British became involved as evaluators and interpreters of customary law. In adjudicating the various Ada disputes, British officials described the Ada state, and tried to analyze the relationships within based on English law. Decisions of the then Chief Justice, Sir T. B. Griffiths, in 1904 and 1905 were therefore inconclusive. Similarly, attempts by government officials (District Commissioner, the Provincial Commissioner at Koforidua, and the Deputy Secretary for Native Affairs) were also inconclusive. This was because, these officials tried to solve a chieftaincy dispute rooted in customs and traditions with English law; and as the case was, the two laws proved to be incompatible, at least in this instance. More importantly, to ensure control of the salt revenues, the British covertly supported their favored candidate to occupy the Ada throne generating series of disputes in the 1920s (see Simensen, 1975: 63-65).

In addition to this problem, the exclusion of coastal towns, and unproclaimed districts under the NJO affected traditional authorities in those areas. Subjects challenged and undermined the authority of traditional rulers in these areas due to the concurrent existence of these British legal regimes, which on many occasions superseded traditional authority (M.}
Sackey, personal communication, February 6, 2016). Addo-Fenning (1990), for example, argues that:

By the end of the 19th century, central authority in Akyem Abuakwa was at the verge of collapse due partly to their exclusion under N. J. O. Sub-chiefs and subjects alike showed gross disrespect to the Akyem Abuakwa King by walking out of his court in the middle of a hearing, by publicly insulting him, or by assaulting his messengers. This situation was worsened with the influx of migrants (Asante, Akuapem, Ga and Northern peoples) into Akyem-Abuakwa, that hugely transformed the traditional ‘asafo’ that had previously been a passive, subservient, ad-hoc organization originally created by the Chiefs and Elders to carry out their bidding. As a result, the motivation for asafo action and the basis of solidarity were provided, not by ethnicity, but by a shared sense of political and economic grievance or social interests (pp. 32-33).

The extension of the NJO to areas such as Akyem-Abuakwa, on the other hand, gave the King and his sub-chiefs enormous powers to crush their rivals, exact obedience, and replenish their empty treasuries. This led to series of protests and agitations against the seeming abuse of judicial powers by the chiefs and the subsequent irresponsible sale of stool lands without rendering any account. These protests took violent form when chiefs were destooled by the asafo groups. In order to implement its policy of indirect rule successfully, the British colonialists passed the Gold Coast Native Jurisdiction (Amendment) Ordinance (1910) and the Native Prisons Ordinance No. 10 of 1910 that further strengthened the authority of chiefs. The Native Prisons Ordinance of 1910 that repealed that of 1888 made it lawful for any sentence or order of imprisonment of any native tribunals registered in the Register of Native Prisons. These new laws minimized tensions and chieftaincy disputes marginally but the seeds of discontent and disputes had already been sown.
Similarly, the 1904 Chiefs Ordinance gave the Governor wide powers with respect to the position of chiefs. The Governor’s decision was to be final whenever the election or deposition of a chief was questioned; and his decision was not subject to challenge in any court. Although the Governor’s verdict was supposed to be in accordance with native customs, in practice, he gave verdicts with little or no regard to customs. Thus, a chief with the support of the people could be destooled and as conversely, a chief who had lost the support or confidence of his subjects could be kept on the stool, simply because the supreme body that determined who exercised traditional authority was the colonial government. With this in mind, the educated elements in the Gold Coast at the time commented that:

The time is coming when a chief once installed will sit firmly on the neck of the people, like the old man of the sea, and rule them in his own way, without any lawful means of getting rid of him. (Kimble, 1963:494)

In exploring the inter-relations among stool debts, chieftaincy disputes and the production of knowledge about Asante ‘custom' through a case study of conflict in Kumawu, Berry (1998) opines that embedded in systems of governance, which colonial administrators regarded as ‘customary', chieftaincy disputes bore little obvious resemblance to forms of political contestation in Europe. Consequently, chieftaincy disputes were neither symptoms of the ‘breakdown' of traditional order and morality nor simple manifestations of newly emerging patterns of class conflict, but part of an ongoing struggle to define and exercise legitimate authority in a society both transformed and destabilized by the imposition of colonial rule. The creation of Native Treasuries under colonial rule raised questions of accountability, particularly the distinction between the state treasury and the occupant's personal assets, which was not

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32 The political contestations in Europe were mainly strikes and other forms of labor protest for higher wages and better working conditions.
always clear, a situation that has persisted until today. Consequently, many chiefs took advantage of this and engaged in profligate expenditure, hence incurring huge debts due to the unclear distinction between the ‘pocket’ of the chief and the purse of the public. Moneys (raised through fines, sale of lands, royalties) meant for the public were spent by chiefs without any form of accountability. The result was confrontation and in many instances violent conflict between chiefs on one side and rival royals, emerging elite class and the commoners on the other side. As Grier argues “at the heart of the conflict was the struggle between the traditional ruling class of royals and other privileged lineages, on the one hand, and the commoners or young men, persons of un-free or poor lineage, on the other” (Berry, 1998, p. 44). This was possible because of the many colonial policies and ordinances that sought to incorporate the chiefs and enhance their role and power in the administration of the colony. Thus, the chronic indebtedness of many stools was a source of recurrent friction and debate among colonial officials, chiefs and commoners, and a fertile source of chieftaincy disputes.

Moreover, internal differences in the political organizations of the local peoples, which may previously have had little intrinsic importance to their everyday life, became crucial during the period of British colonial rule and have come to dominate and structure ethnic identity and concomitant claims ever since, particularly, in the Northern and Volta regions. The British preference for organizational systems, which fitted into their patriarchal and hierarchal view of the world, sowed the seeds for the numerous chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana (H. A. Attipoe, personal communication, January 28, 2016). As Governor Sir Gordon Guggisberg declared in 1921:

Our policy must be to maintain any Paramount chiefs that exist and gradually absorb under these any small communities scattered
about. What we should aim at is that someday the Dagombas, Gonjas and Mamprusi should become strong native states. Each will have its own little Publics Works Department and carry on its business with the Political Officer as a Resident and Adviser. Each state will be more or less self-contained (Jönsson, 2007, p. 7).

This preference led the British to see groups or peoples whose political systems were cephalous (examples include the Dagomba, Nanumba, Mamprusi and Gonja chiefdoms in northern Ghana) as culturally superior as evident in the proclamation by Sir Gordon Guggisberg above. This meant other ethnic groups seen as acephalous/non-stratified/egalitarian societies and cultures that emphasized the importance of religious figures became subjects under the jurisdiction and administration of chiefly groups as was the case in the Northern region of Ghana (examples include the Konkombas, Nawuri and Bassari in northern Ghana). In the particular instance of northern Ghana, as Jönsson (2007: 8) rightly notes, the British reliance on English-speaking interpreters from cephalous societies in their dealings with a-cephalous groups enhanced the power and prominence of these chiefly peoples (cephalous chiefs) through policies such as the Land and Native Rights Ordinance of 1927. Consequently, in 1932, as indirect rule became official policy, the Native Authority Ordinance (NAO) formally defined cephalous groups as Native Administrations, making chiefs government officials, hence non-cooperation became illegal. This reinforced the perceived cultural superiority and traditional dominance of cephalous groups over a-cephalous groups in the Northern region.

Jönsson (2007: 7) again notes that since “acephalous groups felt they were left without clear political or legal recourse, some such as the Nawuri in Kpandai in the Salaga district of

33 Cephalous groups were groups that had centralized authority and hierarchical structures in place to manage the affairs of the local people. These groups usually have known leaders such as Kings and their sub-chiefs.

34 In October 1952, the Nawuri and the Nchumuru authorized Mr. H.E. Anku Morny, to represent them at the UN General Assembly’s session. His mandate was to protest against the amalgamation of Alfai with the Gonja kingdom, to demand the transfer of their area from the Northern Territories to the Southern Section of Togoland, and demand
Northern region, appealed their status to the UN in October 1952. Amongst the Konkomba, the attack on the Dagomba village of Jagbel in 1940, sometimes known as the “Cow War”, started an intermittent pattern of large-scale violent opposition to chiefly demands. The point to note here is that while chiefly political identities developed in parallel with the indirect rule system of the region, acephalous groups’ opposition to their subordinate status and exploitation shaped their emerging political consciousness. Subsequently, Jönsson, (2007:8) opines that “apart from institutionalizing political marginalization, the creation of, or emphasis on, a chiefly versus acephalous dichotomy resulted in a corresponding cultural marginalization that is still reflected in popular and academic discourse”.

The end result of any superior versus inferior; advantaged versus disadvantaged; the ‘haves’ and ‘have not’ relationship has always been violent conflict or protest as has been witnessed in many parts of the Northern region and Ghana as a whole. This situation is well evident in Lentz’s (1993) discussion of the succession conflict amongst the Dagaaba people of Nandom town in Upper West region. This conflict involves two candidates from the same clan claiming the position of the Nandom Naa. The on-going Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict typifies this scenario. The interplay of the above arguments re-enforces the basic understanding of the human needs and relative deprivation theories discussed in chapter one.

The study makes the argument that though in theoretical terms the chiefs were integral parts of the colonial administrative system, the effective policy initiators and policy makers were the British Officers. The colonialists burdened the chiefs with the unpleasant task of collecting the unification of British and French spheres of Togoland as demanded by the pan-Ewe nationalists (Nawuri-Nanjuro Petition 1952). See also See Mbowura, C. K., & Longi, A. I. B. F. Y. (2014). The Ethnic Factor in International Politics: Constructing the Role of the Nawuri in the Pan-Ewe Nationalist Movement. *Historical Research Letters, 10*, 14-26.
taxes to make the colonial administration self-supporting, making free labor available for the construction of basic amenities and in interpreting new regulations and restrictions to the people. The chiefs were thus required to implement the policies of the British as if they were his own, whilst the British officers hid behind the scenes, removed from the people. This made many chiefs very unpopular with their people as they were tagged as agents of the colonial administration. Emphasis tended to be laid on the duties of the top echelon of the native authorities and the development at the village level suffered as a result. The apparent success of the system in controlling change led to the creation of vested interest by some British officials.

Segregation, inequality and subordination were tolerated in the guise of preserving traditional institutions (Cowan, 1958: 25). In the native courts, corruption and graft were rife and in some cases, the British administration tolerated tyrannical rule by the chiefs. In post-colonial Ghana, similar cases of corruption and abuse of chiefly power particular with regard to the sale of lands are common occurrences in the daily newspapers. The provision of basic amenities lagged behind the payment of taxes and this resulted in questioning the usefulness of the native treasuries. The position of chiefs and the institution of chieftaincy were so undermined that only the support of the colonial administration prevented them from collapsing.

As the powers of the chiefs weakened due to the constant interference on the part of the colonial government, influence over the people decreased. The confusion over what the law should be, whether traditional or English placed the chiefs in the hands of other influential people who arranged their enstoolment and destoolment at will (Kimble, 1965:490). The chiefs had become mere puppets both amongst their own people and in the hands of the British. They were more of sergeant majors through whom the administration could address the rank and file than being effective leaders of the people. In some areas, the imposition of chiefs with no
traditional base led to the formation of separatist movements and protest organizations (Dudley, 1968:90).

3.3 Chieftaincy Conflicts in post-colonial Ghana

The immediate government of post-colonial Ghana, possibly aimed at eroding the seemingly powerful position of chiefs in the country, continued to fuel these tensions pitching one group against the other, which in some instances resulted in violent conflicts. The Nkrumah-led CPP government put in place measures to ensure that the authority of the post-colonial state was not rivaled by any other center of political power (i.e. the chieftaincy institution). Kwame Nkrumah arrogated to himself the power and authority to exclusively determine who qualified to be enstooled or enskinned as a chief in the country, based primarily on which traditional ruler or chieftain supported the riotous policies of the CPP government. Rathbone (2000: 61) notes that “as independence grew closer the government, once committed to the destruction of chieftaincy, now threw its support behind chiefs of dissident states which were enraged by their historical subjection to particular Paramount chiefs; but it did so only when those Paramount chiefs were opponents of the government”. Consequently, between 1951 and 1966, contrary to Nkrumah’s own belief in the continuity between African ‘communalism’ and modern ‘communism’, Nkrumah dabbled in, and surreptitiously tried to change the whole structure of the chieftaincy institution. To this end, almost all paramount chiefs in Ghana effectively became party stalwarts championing the course of the CPP. As Boafo-Arthur (2006: 149) notes, measures to facilitate

35 Powers that were originally in the bosom of the chiefs were assumed by the state through the enactment of laws such as the Akim-Abuakwa (Stool Revenue) Act, 1958 (Act 8), the Asante Stool Act, 1958 (Act 28), the Stool Lands Control Act, 1960 (Act 79), Administration of Lands Act, 1962 (Act 123), the Concession Act, 1962 (Act 124). These Acts were aimed at stripping chiefs of their economic power (see Boafo-Arthur, 1982).

the absolute dominance of the post-colonial state over the chiefs were completed with the enactment of the Chiefs (Recognition) Act of February 1959\textsuperscript{37} that gave legal powers to the government to accord recognition to, or withdraw same, from any chief. This was an affront to the customs and traditions of the people as these powers enabled the CPP government to make and unmake chiefs and to sweep aside tradition and history in the process; older understandings about traditional protocol, tables of precedence and hierarchy were ignored (Rathbone, 2000).

The National Liberation Council (NLC) that overthrew Nkrumah in 1966 introduced the NLC Decree No. 112, which removed all those chiefs who had come to power only because of the CPP. The sub-chiefs who had been made paramount chiefs before were also degraded again. Well over 100 chiefs were destooled. The destoolment of some chiefs during the Nkrumah-led CPP administration in the early 1960s and the subsequent re-enstoolment of these chiefs after Nkrumah’s overthrow by the National Liberation Council in the later 1960s only served to increase tensions and suspicions among rival factions.

Similarly, the Provisional National Defense Council’s (PNDC) initial perception of chiefs as elitists who should not be allowed to play any significant role in the governance of the Ghanaian state meant the conscious or unconscious nurturing of ‘conflictual’ relations between chiefs and the revolutionaries, especially the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs). For example, in Daboya in Northern Region, there was conflict between the chiefs (Wasipewura and the ‘River sub-chief’) on one side, and the third-generation Peoples Defense (PDC) and Town Development Committees (TDC) on the other, over the construction of a

bridge over the White Volta in 1984\(^{38}\). As Boafo-Arthur (2006) opines, whereas the chiefs regarded the revolutionaries as mere upstarts, the revolutionaries perceived the chiefs as the embodiment of the arrogance associated with traditional power. Similar to the period of the CPP under Kwame Nkrumah in the 1960s, the Rawlings led PNDC’s administration interference in chieftaincy led to some chiefs, perceived to be anti-PNDC, being removed and new ones who were seen to be pro-PNDC, but not necessarily from the royal family, installed.

Following the provisions of Article 270 of the 1992 Constitution, which banned Parliament from enacting any law(s) which confers on any person or authority the right to accord or withdraw recognition to or from a chief for any purpose whatsoever, some of those chiefs who were removed by the central government of the PNDC, or their lineage, now contest their removal and the customary appropriateness of their successors who they regarded as intruders and rivals (A. K. Essien, personal communication, February 25, 2016). Even though the 1992 constitution seems to safeguard the chieftaincy institutions, in practice, the state continues to manipulate and weaken the institution. An example is the creation of several divisions and paramountcies in Greater Accra, the recent being the elevation on November 19, 2011 of La, Nungua and James Town (Ngleshie Alata) to paramountcies, adding to the already created Teshie, Nungua and Tema paramountcies. The once powerful strong united Ga Mashie is now flooded with several paramountcies claiming autonomy and independence from Ga Mashie, thereby, weakening the control and power of the Ga-Mantse\(^{39}\). The outcome of these creations is


\(^{39}\) This is further discussed in Chapter Four
contestations over land boundaries and succession to the throne leading to protests and in some instances violent clashes (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016).

Although this dispute and others are deeply rooted in colonialism, politicians and political parties, (especially both the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) in recent times), have interfered for political purposes during the Fourth Republic (see Tonah, 2012; MacGaffey, 2006; Brukum, 2006; Staniland, 1975). The bloody succession dispute between the Andanis and Abudus in the Dagbon in (2002) only emphasizes this argument. Likewise, the NPP and NDC have politicized the Tuobodum chieftaincy dispute in the Techiman North district of the Brong Ahafo region that re-emerged in 2010 (Prah & Yeboah, 2011) and the on-going Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflicts.

3.4 Effects of Chieftaincy Conflicts

Generally, conflicts, in whatever form, constitute a major impediment to socio-economic development of a state. Although the majority of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana remain localized, they often draw national and international attention since their consequences have a toll on national resources and development (Tsikata & Seini, 2004; Agyeman, 2008). Resources such as financial allocations which otherwise could be used for development are channeled into maintaining peace and security in these conflict areas. Thus, conflicts, prevents workers, and in most rural areas, farmers, from attending to their daily works for fear of losing their lives. In many instances, farms are set ablaze leading to the destruction of farm produce. For example, the Konkomba and Nanumba/Dagomba conflict in 1994/95 resulted in the loss of 2000 lives and

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40 G. N.T. Tagoe argues that the government creates the various divisions and paramountcies in Greater Accra so that the Ga people are not united to fight the government over and for Ga lands.
18,900 animals, over 500,000 tubers of yam and 60,000 acres of crops. In addition to these, 144 farming villages were burnt, 78,000 people displaced and millions of property belonging to the state and indigenes destroyed (Mahama, 2003).

In most commercial cities, the eruption of chieftaincy conflicts results in the state imposing several hours of curfews on the town. For example, Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District of the Northern region has been under curfew for months following renewed chieftaincy conflict between the Kokombas and Bimobas in April 2015 that led to the death of two people and the destruction of dozens of houses. Similar clashes between these two groups were recorded in 1985, 1986 and 1989 during which a number of casualties were recorded and many people were displaced. The imposition of curfews results in traders and businessmen/women being unable to engage in their commercial activities, thereby leaving markets and business centers deserted. This affects local revenue mobilization due to the breakdown of commercial activities and security. In addition, properties of individuals and households are lost through arson and looting. Schools are closed down, affecting the work of both teachers and students. The ultimate economic impact of these conflicts is the relocation of businesses and the workforce to other places where there is peace.

Chieftaincy conflicts thus, pose serious threats to human security and the socio-economic activities of a people. The escalation of such chieftaincy conflicts can have serious ramifications for the state as a whole (see Ray, 1996: 193-198; Drucker-Brown, 1988: 86-106; Skalnik, 1986: 89-109). It can weaken state institutions and structures, break national and social cohesion, and cause humanitarian tragedies such as internal displacement and refugees with their attendant problems of hunger, diseases and rape (Zeleza, 2008).
With these negative impacts of chieftaincy and any other conflicts on lives and properties of Ghanaians, it is mind boggling why efforts to minimize them seems not to have yielded much results. The state has put in place a number of measures to prevent, and where in existence, resolve or mitigate against the impact of these conflicts. The subsequent section discusses some of the measures put in place to deal with chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana.

3.5 Conflict Resolution Mechanism in Ghana

There exist several conflict resolution mechanisms in Ghana. These mechanisms fall into two broad categories: formal and informal resolution mechanisms. Consequently, it is the norms, cultural values and nature or type of the conflict that usually dictates which mechanism will be most appropriate. However, regardless of the type or nature of conflict, the formal resolution mechanisms always prevail. Accordingly, the state’s security agencies and services such as the Ghana Police, Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Bureau of National Investigations (BNI) have always played major roles in conflict situations. These agencies gather intelligence on (chieftaincy) disputes that are likely to degenerate into violent conflicts. This is the more reason why the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict has not become violent as witnessed especially in the northern part of Ghana (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). In cases of violent chieftaincy conflicts, the police and the military are deployed to protect lives and property. Their presence often brings a temporary end to violence in conflict areas. There are also Regional and District Security Committees (REGSEC and DISEC) headed by political appointees that focus on security matters that have the potential to disturb the peace and security within their jurisdictions (Awedoba, 2010).
Ghana’s legal system is another important formal mechanism for conflict resolution in the country. To this end, government uses Executive/Legislative Instruments, Acts or Decrees to limit the movement of contestants through the imposition of curfew. In the past, governments have given recognition to, or withdrawn same from, some chiefs in the bid to restore order and sanity (Awedoba, 2010). In recent times, litigants in a chieftaincy dispute are quick to head to the courts. Nonetheless, many of these litigants and their communities lack the understanding of the legal principles, hence their unwillingness to accept court rulings. This perhaps could be attributable to the perceived foreign principles that apply at the law courts; unfamiliarity of customary laws of the various communities by court officials; lack of interest or bias on the part of some court officials; the frequent and long adjournments; fear and anxiety on the part of illiterate witnesses among others (Awedoba, 2010).

Another legal means of conflict resolution in Ghana are committees and commissions of inquiries set up by government to take evidence and make recommendations for resolving a conflict. These committees/commissions are usually reactive in nature in the sense that it is after the conflict has taken place and the damage has been caused that they are set up to do a post-mortem. They rarely find the solutions to the problem; some never come out with any report and if they do their report is never made public (Awedoba, 2010). It must be added that sometimes too the government chooses which recommendation(s) to accept or implement. In the case of the Dagbon conflict, a number of committees and commissions have been set up since independence with the most recent been the Wuaku commission. The findings of these committees have not resolved the conflict.

More related to solving chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana are the traditional institutions outlined in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. These institutions have been integrated into the state
governance system, and are particularly useful in matters of chieftaincy. For example, the Traditional Councils have the mandate under section 12 of the Chieftaincy Act 370 (1971) to settle chieftaincy disputes ranging from the positions of Headmen to Divisional chiefs. Above the Traditional Councils, are the ten (10) Regional Houses of Chiefs (RHCs). Disputants have sent a number of chieftaincy disputes to the RHCs for redress. While the RHCs have settled some of the cases, others are still pending. At the apex of these traditional institutions in Ghana is the National House of Chiefs (NHC), which is charged to manage chieftaincy issues – including the resolution of disputes in the institution itself and in allied domains. The NHC’s judicial committee, comprising five members appointed by the House from among its members, exercises appellate jurisdiction over matters determined by a RHC. The diverse nature of the composition of judicial committee of the NHC might affect its effectiveness as conflict resolution institution. This is because they may not be very conversant in the norms and procedures in other chiefdoms other than theirs, and thus, could affect the adjudication of chieftaincy matters. The sheer number of cases and the prolonged nature of these cases before the JC of the National House Chiefs attest to this assertion. These members may have to refer to written documents\(^{41}\) and testimonies of contesting factions, which may not always be helpful, as each group tries to make their case looks better than the other group. This is the case with the GA Mashie chieftaincy dispute.

To promote peace in the country and to provide for related purposes, the NPP under President Kufuor created the National Peace Council (NPC) in 2005. The Council began operations in the same year without the necessary legal backing, as has been the case with many

\(^{41}\) These written documents are hard to come by in Ghana. Either they are not properly stored, or were never recorded and stored in the first instance.
councils and bodies in Ghana. The NPC got its legal backing in March 2011, when the NDC government passed Act 818 that legally established the National Peace Council (NPC). The objective of the Council is therefore to facilitate and develop mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution and to build sustainable peace in the country. Since its inception, the Council has mediated a number of chieftaincy disputes, but they do not have any enforcement capacity. The implementation of the decisions of the Council thus, rests on the willingness and voluntary compliance of feuding chieftaincy parties.

The other category of conflict resolution mechanisms in Ghana is the non-formal institutions. One of such institutions is the traditional practices. In many traditional areas, it is customary to put a disputed issue to the test by making contesting parties submit to supernatural arbitration through oracles (such as the popular river god deity ‘antoa nyamaa’ of the Asantes), sworn statements and oaths. The fear for the sanction that comes from the oracles and the oaths deters disputants who know their claim is unjust and thus abandon their assertions. Traditional festivals also provide the avenue for reconciliation among members of communities engaged in a feud.

Other non-formal conflict resolution mechanisms include the use of associations and prominent personalities within the Ghanaian society. These mechanisms have been applied to the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflicts and other chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. In the particular instance of the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict, there seem to be no end in sight. This is due to the failure of the state and the Ga Mashie people to harness the potentials of both the formal and non-formal conflict resolution mechanisms to find a lasting solution to the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict. The ad hoc resort to one of the two categories at any point in time, rather

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42 The National Youth Employment Program, now Ghana Youth Employment Development Agency, (GYEDA) was created in 2006 under President Kufour but got its legal backing in 2015 under President Mahama of the NDC.
than creating a synergy between the two categories of mechanisms, appears to be an exercise in futility.
CHAPTER FOUR

GA MASHIE CHIEFTAINCY CONFLICT

4.1 Introduction

The Ga-speaking people are not a single or homogenous group either by custom, tradition or in organization. It is the name given to the people of present day Accra and its surrounding towns and villages. It is widely believed that the customs, traditions and religion of the Ga people suggest they descended from the Jews who migrated to Nigeria, then to Benin and subsequently to the Gold Coast as far back as the later part of the thirteenth century (1275). This is evident in “the consecration of the Sakumo Gbatsu (shrine room), representing the Feast of Tabernacles of the ancient Jews, the eating of the Kpokpoi in the month of August, and the Homowo festival meeting, wherein oaths of good-will and friendship are renewed. The sprinkling of the doorposts with Nsuma or Akpade (red earth) is indicative of the blood of the Paschal Lamb used by the Jews at their Exodus from Africa representing the eating of the Passover and the purifying of self for a journey (Barnes, Osterly & Robinson, 1930: 87 – 94; Bruce-Myers, 1927:71). Sackeyfio-Lenoch (2014:23) asserts that “various Ga-speaking immigrants emerged from eastern areas of the interior Gold Coast and settled in family or other groups among the aboriginal Kpesi peoples of the southern coastal region beginning in the fifteenth century” as shown in figure 2 below.

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43 Ga in the Kpesi dialect means ‘town’. By the close of the fifteenth century, the people in Ga were referred to as Ga people and the language they spoke was also called Ga.
44 Kpokpoi is a special meal made of unfermented corn powder
45 ‘Homowo’ literally means hooting at hunger. It is a festival to remember hunger or scarcity of food in a certain period of the history of the Ga people and thank the gods for the provision of abundant food subsequently.
46 The Akpade rite is intended to expel or repel all that is bad and evil from every house
Presently, the Ga people occupy six communities in Greater Accra region namely: Osu, Ga Mashi, La, Nungua, Teshie and Temma. Their territory stretches for about forty miles along the coast, and is bounded on the west by the river Densu and the east by the Laloi Lagoon. It is bounded to the south by the sea and in the north by the sharply rising scarp of the Akwapim hills in the Eastern Region. Each town consists of the descendants of one or more parties of immigrants and of the aborigines among whom these immigrants settled. Each of these towns owns a strip of territory stretching northwards for distances varying between twenty and seventy miles (Manoukian, 1950:66). The aborigines (sikulebii) of the Ga countryside were the Kpesi people who spoke the Kpesi dialect. Migration led to several waves of settlers who did not drive out the Kpesi people. Subsequent waves of migration outside present day Ga towns led to different dialects (Osu, Teshie-Nungua, Ningo, and a debased type of Ga spoken in Accra). When the present day Ga towns were formed, the Kpesi people were still regarded as the owners.
of the land. This is evidenced by the recognition of the *wulomo* (chief priest) of the senior Kpesi god of each Ga town as the senior priest and the town landlord (*sitse*).\(^{47}\)

The Kpesi people and the immigrants lived in scattered farming settlement with no centralized government and military organization. Threatened with extermination due to slave raiding at the end of the 17\(^{th}\) century, these farming settlements gathered together into groups for mutual protection and set up military organizations akin to those set up by the neighboring Akwamus and Fantes of the Akan group. Consequently, the towns of Osu and Accra were founded, followed later by the Temma, Nungua, La and Teshie towns (Manoukian, 1950: 67). Ga Mashie currently occupies the area known as Old Accra as shown in figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Map of Old Accra\(^{48}\)**

![Map of Old Accra](image)

Source: E. D. G. Anim (personal communication, March 8, 2016)

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\(^{48}\) Old Accra comprises Ussher Town and James Town, which is still referred to as Ga Mashie. It forms the historical core of Accra and covers an area of 98 hectares (see map). It is located in the south of the city, extending to the Atlantic Ocean, and is bounded in the west by the lagoon, in the north by the industrial zone and in the east by the business district.
The Ga Mashie people (present-day Accra proper) migrated from Nigeria at the end of the 16th century, giving rise to the seven quarters of the Ga people. These are the Asere, Abola, and Gbese who are considered the oldest. Later Sempe, Alata and the Akummadzei emerged and constituted another set of quarters. Each of these quarters had its own stool and ‘mantse’, except for the Akummadzei. The Akummadzei were mainly descendants of one Dode Okaibi who lived peacefully with the Akwamu on the hill called Nyanyao49. When the Akwamu had grown stronger and numerous, they raided the Akummadzei and took them as captives and slaves who were later sold to the European slave traders. This may be the reason why the Akummadzie never had a stool of their own because they were under the Akwamu prior to the formation of the Ga homeland in the fifteenth century. The Otublohu quarter emerged between 1680 and 1730. This quarter consists entirely of the Akwamu people and some migrant Denkyira from the Central region who had come to Accra as servants of the Dutch. Workers from Lagos brought by the English to build James Fort in 1673 largely occupied the Alata quarter.

The formation of these quarters was due to conflict over ownership of lands along the coast, and the right to represent the people and negotiate with the Europeans in the early days of European expedition (J. M. Anang, personal communication, February 12, 2016). This led to the formation of political cleavages between lineages and factional groups, and the incorporation of a diverse range of settlers (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2014:24). The ultimate outcome was a split among the quarters into two halves. The Alata, Sempe and Akummadzei united for military purposes and sought the protection of the English, becoming James Town or English Accra. The two main sections of the Ga Mashie; namely, Asere and Abola joined by Otublohu and Gbese sought the protection of the Dutch and became known as Dutch Accra (Manoukian, 1950: 67).

49 The Nyanyao hill is presently under Ga Mashie in the Greater Accra Region
Until early 1840s, Accra remained a confederation of seven separate units, each one having its own stool and mantse (chief), with the exception of the Akummadzie. During the Asante-Fante war in 1824, the Fante people asked Ga people for help against the Asantes. The Ga people agreed to assist the Fante people. The Ga people then consulted the senior god of Accra (Sakumo) at the time about which Ga quarter mantse was to lead their combined forces against the Asantes. The senior god indicated the mantse of Abola quarter was to be Ga Mantse, leader of the combined forces of all the seven quarters, although the senior stool was that of the Asere (Fields, 1940: 157). However, this leadership was to be purely military. In all other matters, the Asere quarter was to remain senior.

Due to misunderstanding and lack of clarity concerning the meanings of the word Ga, which is primarily the name of the towns the Europeans called Accra; the language spoken there became known as Ga language, and all who spoke it were called Ga. The British preference for
working with one major chiefly authority in Accra and other Ga towns led to the assumption that the Ga Mantse who was really only mantse of the town ‘Accra’ was mantse of all the Ga people, and was subsequently recognized as such by the NAO of 1927. This is because the British understandings and policies regarding chieftaincy affairs were based on the Akan chieftaincy system, which differed substantially from Ga practices. This centralization system of the Akans was alien to the Ga people because each Ga town is separate and independent and only allied with the others in time of war (Manoukian, 1950: 67 - 68).

4.2 Political structure of the Ga

The people of Ga never developed a centralized state or political system. They comprised a number of autonomous and independent states. The Ga borrowed many of their political institutions from their closest neighbors (mostly Akyem, Fante and Akwamu). Consequently, the Ga people tend to have Akan-looking institutions (E. D. G. Anim, personal communication March 8, 2016). The Ga military organization – the stool, the mantse, the asafo, the dzase – were all copied from the Akans and dovetailed into the original Ga agricultural theocracy. The Ga Mashie group first learnt this from the Akwamu in the seventeenth century and by the end of the eighteenth century, it had reached the neighboring Osu, Temma, Nungua and La. The social organization of the Ga people, however, centers on “We”\(^{50}\) (or the family house) whose main chief physical characteristics are the separation of a woman’s compound from that of a man. A key feature of their social system is their inheritance or succession, which is patrilineal\(^{51}\).

As indicated earlier, the Ga speaking people are not a single group of people either by tradition, language or in organization. Each of the six Ga towns with its strip of territory

\(^{50}\) “We” is a Ga word which means household or family
\(^{51}\) Ga people inherit from the male lineage
stretching northwards from the coast is an independent political unit with a constitution borne out of its unique history. Their political systems are however similar even though they differ in details.

Until about the end of the 17th century, the Ga-speaking people formed discrete settlements of extended families, whose priestly heads (wulomei), assisted by hunters, were their only leaders. These farming settlements then gathered in groups for mutual protection and set up military organization, which they copied from their Fante and Akwamu neighbors. The priest-leaders remained the heads of civil affairs, and in each Ga town one became head priest, his lineage god, usually a lagoon god of the aborigines, became the acknowledged god of the whole town. The hunters became captains (asafotsemei\(^{52}\)) in the military organization (asafo). When warfare ceased and the population greatly increased, the asafotsemei took over the management of secular affairs (Manoukian, 1950: 81).

Each of the six resulting communities, anxious to maintain or increase its numbers, in order to repel inland raiders, allowed bands of friendly outsiders to join the town and receive benefits and protection in return for military aid. Thus, each town presently consists of several quarters (akutso), each representing a separate party of colonists, which attached itself to the original group of settlers, preserving many of its own customs and the worship of its own gods, but acknowledging the supremacy of the senior god of the town and its priest, who was head of the town.

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\(^{52}\) The asafotsemei (singular is asafotse) were the captains of the various asafo company
4.3 Key Offices of the Ga political structure

4.3.1 The Priest (wulomei)

The chief wulomo or high priest was originally the only ruler of the town but it became necessary, especially with the coming of the Europeans, for the purposes of negotiation, warfare and alliances, for him to delegate much of his secular authority either to lesser wulomei or to the military officials (N. Okine, personal communication, March 11, 2016). Presently, the formal authority of the chief priest is considerably limited or confined to ritual occasions: he officiates at public worship, offers libation to his god, interprets to the people the wishes of this god, prays for the people and advises them in times of trouble. The senior wulomo is often the nominal landlord of the town (Manoukian, 1950: 81, 95-96).

4.3.2 The Mantse (Chief)

This office and the war stool associated with it were part of the military organizations copied from the Fante and Akwamu people. The mantse was installed by ritual enstoolment, which gave him and his followers, supernatural bravery and safety during periods of war. The mantse may be appointed from one patrilineage house, or from several patrilineage houses in rotation as in the case of the GA Mantse. The members of the houses together from an electoral body known as the *dzase* (kingmakers), whose head is the *dzasetse*, without whose approval no one can be a mantse. The *dzase* elect the mantse, who is presented to the military officers of the town, collectively known as the *manbii*, for approval. The manbii could reject the mantse-elect by the *dzase*, who must then choose someone else. Once, approved by the manbii, the mantse-elect proceeded with the necessary rituals as prescribed by the customs and traditions of the Ga people (Fields, 1940: 157 – 158; Manoukian, 1950: 82).
During peace times, the wulomo, but not the mantse wielded authority in the community. However, negotiations between the Europeans and the Ga people in the early days were carried through the mantse. This was because the senior wulomo was prohibited from leaving his town. This contributes to the mistaken idea of the Europeans, such as the British colonial administration, that the mantse was the ruler of a Ga town.

4.3.3 The Asafo Officers

The asafo - an organization derived mainly from the Fante and adopted first by the Ga in Accra, and later by other Ga towns - was originally the military body of a town, which was also called upon to maintain internal law and order. Its internal functions remain important as a kind of public works department, and its officers deal with everyday administrative matters. In each town, the akwashongtse was formally the supreme military commander responsible for all the military organization and policy (Manoukian, 1950: 82-83). Under him was the sipi, who were responsible for the distribution of ammunitions during war times. Under the sipi are the asafotsemei who led the asafo company to war. As a common rule among the people, their position is hereditary and a man is usually replaced by his grandson.

4.4 Succession among the Ga people

The influx of migrants into present-day territories of the Ga people has led to considerable debate about the customary law governing succession among the Ga tribes. However, a careful study of the literature on Ga customs and traditions suggests that succession among the Ga tribes is through the male line (Manoukian, 1950: 73; Quartey-Papafio, 1910: 64-72). Thus, among the Ga tribes, sons succeed in preference to nephews. However, tribes that migrated into Ga territories, particularly, the Akwamu and Fante tribes, brought along their own
customs on succession, which was maternal or through the female line, hence a nephew succeeding an uncle. This (matrilineal) succession diluted the original succession laws of the Ga people (patrilineal). It has since being a source of dispute and conflict especially with regard to the succession to the Ga Mantse throne. Presently, of the seven Ga quarters, it is only the Otubluho\textsuperscript{53} quarter that follows the female line of succession. The remaining six quarters (Asere, Abola, Gbese, Sempe, Alata, Akummadzei) follow the male line of succession.

4.5 Ga-Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict

4.5.1 Brief history of Ga Chieftaincy Politics

The internal history of Ga is one of incessant political upheavals and well-calculated intrigues, which were contrived sometimes by different branches of the royal family and other times by people outside Tunma We.\textsuperscript{54} These upheavals were as a result of “conflicting interpretations of who the right successor to a chieftaincy stool should be, disagreements about custom and tradition, jurisdiction questions, and contested versions of ancestral and hereditary rights to political office” (Seckeyfio-Lenoch, 2014: 94). The first known stool-dispute in Ga history was the attempt of the Asere to take the Ga throne by force, which compelled King Ayi Kushi to retire to Ayawaso\textsuperscript{55}, the place from whence he came in 1452. There was not much of any political turmoil until the reign of Mampong Okai. From the time of Mampong Okai’s reign (1585-1610) to that of his grandson Nii Ofori Tibo (1733 - 1739), the political upheavals were so intense and callous that three monarchs were tragically killed. They were King Mangpong Okai, his wife Queen Dode Akaibi, and his son King Okai Koi (1635 - 1660). During

\textsuperscript{53} This quarter is largely inhabited by immigrants from Akwamu and Fante
\textsuperscript{54} Tunma We is the dynastic name of the Ga kingdom. This House provides the Ga kingdom with the Ga Mantse
\textsuperscript{55} ‘Ayawaso’ is one of the ten sub-metros in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly of the Greater Accra Region.
this turmoil, Nii Ofori Tibo (1733 - 1739), the son of King Okai Koi, fled to the coast and established the capital on the coast at old Accra\(^56\). King Ofori eventually went to Little Popo\(^57\) and established Tugba Dynasty there (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016; Quartey-Papafio, 1910: 66).

A number of significant political events occurred after the Ga capital was moved to the coast and before the beginning of the twentieth century. One of such events was the great constitutional change, which introduced a female line (maternal succession) to the Ga Mashie throne after the death of King Ayi (1680-1700). This enabled the enthronement of Ayi Kuma Tieku Bah son of Mangpong Okai’s daughter Okaile to rule from 1700 to 1733. This constitutional change was an exception; and necessitated by the unavailability of a suitable candidate from the patrilineal lineage, as has been the custom of the Ga people.

After the death of King Ofori, there were two claimants to the Ga stool, Okaidza and Tetteh Ahene Akwa. The Akans, who had migrated with Ankama\(^58\) sided with Okaidza and contended that, as Ankama was an Akan who ruled over the whole country as the Head Chief, the Akan custom should prevail over the Ga custom. The Ga people sided with Tetteh Ahene Akwa, the lineal male descendant of Ankama, and contended that, before Ankama came, Okai Kwei was the Head Chief, hence, the custom of the Ga people should prevail (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016; Quartey-Papafio, 1910: 67). The latter was enstooled and reigned from 1740 to 1782. This action of the elders of Tunna We had a devastating effect in Ga. It led to conflicting interpretations of who the rightful successor to the Ga Mashie throne

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\(^56\) Old Accra is present day Ga Mashie as shown in Figure 2
\(^57\) Little Popo is a small, but very warlike kingdom, the remains of the Accra people, who were driven out of their own territories on the Gold Coast, by the Akwamu 1680. It currently lies on the Ghana-Togo coastal boarder
\(^58\) Ankama assisted the Ga people to drive away the Akwamus and afterwards succeeded Okai Kwei as the Ga Mantse by the choice and consent of the people in 1660.
should be, and later, contested versions of ancestral and hereditary rights to the Ga Mashie throne. This led to several outcomes. First, Okaidza founded the Gbese; secondly, Tetteh Ahene Akwa took the original Ga ivory stool to Little Popo; and thirdly, Princess Momo married a Nai priest, which created the Amugi We. Similarly, in 1782, there were again two claimants to the Ga stool: Teiko Din and Teiko Tsuru with the latter installed as the Ga Mantse.

At the end of the civil war (Agbuntse\textsuperscript{59}) between James and Ussher Towns in 1884, a new era opened with the enstoolment of Nii Taki Obili, a member of Amugi We in 1904. A constitutional rift between the council of regency of Tunma We, which Asafoatse Kodzo headed, and the Ga Mashi mantsemei\textsuperscript{60} preceded the enstoolment of Nii Taki Obili. The origin of the rift was Asafoatse Kodzo’s installation of Brimah as head of the Lagosian\textsuperscript{61} community resident in Accra. The mantsemei challenged the constitutional authority of the elders of Tunma We to appoint Brimah. The elders of the stool tacitly ignored the challenge as they considered that the mantsemei did not have any right to question the Dzase’s action. The matter, however, developed to such proportions that the mantsemei were not informed about the enstoolment of Nii Taki Obili, which took place on January 25, 1904 (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). The colonial government intervened and advised the Ga stool elders to see what they could do to enable the mantsemei to participate in the enstoolment. In the interests of peace, the Dzase invited the mantsemei a week later. Nii Taki Obili wearing his crown was led from the Stool Room by Nii Okai Mensah, who told the mantsemei “\textit{nɔni mi fee lɛ, mifee} (what I have done I have done), because of this crown unsuccessful wars have been waged against

\textsuperscript{59}‘Agbuntse’ is a tree which attained symbolic value as a reference to the spot where the civil war took place in 1884
\textsuperscript{60}Mantsemei’ is the plural for the Ga word ‘mantse’ which means ‘chiefs’
\textsuperscript{61}These people migrated from Lagos in Nigeria and largely form the Alata quarter.
me.” He handed the king over to Nii Gbese, Nii Okaidza saying “Behold your king.” Then Nii Taki Obili administered the oath of allegiance and the mantsemei renewed their allegiance to the Ga stool. This closed the first political and constitutional crisis of the twentieth century, which had been precipitated by the installation of a head of the Lagosian community resident in the Ga area.

4.5.2 The Role of Gbese Mantse in Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Politics

The first occupant of the Gbese stool to act as Ga Mantse was Nii Okaidza, founder of Gbese quarter in 1742, after Tete Ahene Akwa had left Accra to Elmina in 1782. After his time, no occupant of the Gbese Stool acted as Ga Mantse until Nii Ayi Bonte in 1929. This was due to the destoolment of the then Ga Manste, Nii Taki Yaoboi, on the grounds of gross disrespect and lack of accountability to the people. Upon his destoolment, the Ga king makers (dzase) conferred the office of Acting Ga Mantse on Nii Ayi Bonte, which has since formed part of Ga common law (N. Okine, personal communication, March 11, 2016).

The rift between Nii Taki Obili’s Dzase and Nii Taki Yaoboi’s faction grew from bad to worse. After the second destoolment of Nii Taki Obili in 1943, Nii Taki Yaoboi who was destooled in 1929 attempted to be reinstated, but the dzase of Nii Takai Obili, assisted by the Acting Ga Mantse, Nii Ayite Adjin, foiled all his movements. While the accredited father of the Ga stool was alive, Akote Hammond, the dzasetse, and others installed Adjintse Tetteh, Oshi

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62 Tete Ahene Akwa competed with Nii Okaidza to become the Ga Mantse after the death of Nii Ofori Tibo in 1739. Tete Ahene Akwa was eventually enthroned as the Ga Manste and ruled from 1740 to 1782. His installment led to Okaidza’s founding of the Gbese quarter in 1742.

63 Nii Taki Obili was destooled on two separate occasions as the Ga Manste. He was destooled in 1918 and in 1943. On both occasions, he was accused of showing gross disrespect and lack of accountability to the dzase, the mantsemei and the manbii.

64 This office was the head of the family from which the Ga Manste was chosen. He had the final say on who was to be installed as the Ga Manstse from the ruling family.
Ahene, Tetteh Ashong as members of the dzase. In the course of time, dzasetse Akote Hammond died and Nii Tetteh Ashong was elected Acting Ga Stool Dzasetse. This enabled Nii Tetteh Ashong to enstool Nii Taki Tawia II as Ga Mantse on July 16, 1944. In October 1944, Nii Teiko Abonua II (Dr. C. E. Reindorf) was installed as Ga Dzasetse. Nii Taki Tawia II ruled for only three years. In the three years of his reign, there was no acute or turbulent political crisis in the Ga area. He was therefore called by the Ga people as the “Ambassador of Peace” until his death on December 23, 1947 (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016).

4.5.3 The Politics of Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Destoolments

The Ga constitution (unwritten) clearly states that the reins of government are in the hands of kings (mantsemei hie amemang) and that the supreme will rest with the people (man dzi man). The people vindicated their power by various methods including destoolment, which they largely copied from the Akans to check the sovereign who misbehaved.

The first Ga ruler to endure this punishment was Nii Taki Obili of the Abola Piam We ruling house in 1918 after a reign of fourteen years. The cause of the destoolment was attributed to his mortgaging of the Ga stool lands to a trading concern in 1918 with a view to shipping cocoa overseas. He was accused of not consulting the accredited members of the Ga Stool Royal Family. When the news of the transaction leaked out and the responsible elders sought audience with him on several occasions through the Abola mantse as demanded by common law, he flatly refused the requests. The dzase and the mantsemei held a series of meetings and finally they

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65 Dr. C. E. Reindorf was a prominent member of the Ga elite and was instrumental in advising the Ga Mantse. He was also a member of the Ratepayers Association that was formed in 1927
decided to destool him. The dzase preferred charges against him. The Akwashong\textsuperscript{66} though military in nature, functioned as a court of arbitration during peace time and acted as accountability mechanism in the case of chieftaincy matters. It also played a conciliatory role between opposing sides in chieftaincy and political disputes. Accordingly, the Akwashong, sat on Sakumo-tsoshishi (the shrine to the God of War) to decide on a destoolment case brought against Nii Taki Obili in 1918. The Akwashong found Nii Taki Obili guilty and they subsequently declared him destooled on August 10, 1918 (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). Nii Taki Obili was destooled not because he mortgaged the Ga Stool lands, because some of the sovereigns before him (notably King Okai Kwei) engaged in similar economic adventures, but rather his destoolment was due to his disobedience, show of gross disrespect and lack of accountability to the dzase, the mantsemei and the manbii.

The second destoolment was Nii Taki Yaoboi (1919 - 1929) of the Amugi We ruling house. The Asere quarter nursed bitter grievances against Nii Taki Yaoboi for reasons not well-known. When Nii Taki Yaoboi agreed to a scheme for dredging the Korle Lagoon, the Asere quarter and others spread the false rumour that he had sold the lagoon. The people became infuriated and staged several attempts to destool him. The attempts were so constant (four times) that the late Akilagpa Sawyerr aptly described them as “annual festivals.” The attempts failed, because Nii Kodzo Ababio, Nii Ayi Bonte, Dr. F. V. Kanka-Bruce, Lawyer Akilagpa Sawyerr and other prominent members of the Ratepayers Association\textsuperscript{67} supported him against the Manbii

\textsuperscript{66} In Ga traditional constitution, military power is, in the first instance, vested in principal captains of the various quarters which form an authority known as Akwashong

\textsuperscript{67} Ratepayers Association was one of the three proto-political parties that emerged in the 1927 to contest the Municipal and town Council elections in 1927.
Party\textsuperscript{68} of Hon. Kodzo Thompson (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). When Nii Taki Yaoboi’s supporters joined the other camp, Nii Taki Yaoboi was finally destooled in 1929.

The third destoolment was Nii Taki Obili from the house of Abola Piam We who began his second reign in 1934. In an interview with J. M. Anang\textsuperscript{69} (February 2016), he indicated that Nii Taki Obili did his best in every sphere of human endeavor, due to the circumstances that led to his overthrow in 1918. However, his refusal to heed to the counsel of the dzase to appoint a regent to administer the affairs of the Accra Area led to his destoolment. The dzase destooled him for the second time in 1944 for showing gross disrespect to the Dzase and the manbii (J. M. Anang, personal communication, February 12, 2016). It is widely alleged that Nii Yaki Yaboi who was destooled in 1929 was behind Nii Taki Obili’s second destoolment.

The fourth \textit{Ga Mantse} to be destooled was Nii Taki Kome II from the Teiko Tsuru ruling house who ruled from 1948 to 1962. His destoolment was largely due to the manner in which he was selected and enstooled as \textit{Ga Mantse} in October 1948. When Nii Taki Tawia died in 1948, it was the turn of the Taki Kome ruling house to nominate a candidate for the Ga Manste. The nomination turned out to be a very contentious one. \textit{Taki Kome We} consists of three sub-houses: Lomoko, Naa Kôle, and Ashamankaile. Lomoko gave two candidates in the persons of C. A. Lomoko and E. N. Lomoko; Naa Kôle gave one candidate, Ashaley Okee; whiles Ashamankaile provided two candidates, Paul Tagoe and Tawia Broche. When votes were cast by the dzase, C. A. Lomoko had the highest number, but the Dzasetse, Nii Teiko Abonua II, recommended E. N. Lomoko.

\textsuperscript{68} This party was formed in 1921 to articulate a different, more distributionally favorable definition of customary law. It consisted of self-employed traders, market women and fishermen.
\textsuperscript{69} J. M. Anang is the National Cultural Coordinator at the Headquarters of the Ghana Education Service, Accra. He is also a Ga Mashie opinion leader and hails from the Abola quarter.
Lomoko to the *mantsemei* through Nii Ayite Adjin, Gbese Maƞtse, who had been removed from office as Acting Ga Mantse. When Nii Ayite Adjin, Acting Ga Mantse, was deprived of his office by the dzase, Nii Adjei Onanɔ, La mantse, became Acting Ga Mantse. Nii Adjei Onanɔ and the other mantsemei probed the complicated nominative issue and finally elected C. A. Lomoko, who was enstooled as *Ga Mantse* on October 24, 1948 under the stool name of Taki Kome II. Nii Taki Kome II did not cooperate with his dzase, particularly the dzasetse\(^7\). He, for example, removed the dzasetse more than once. From the beginning of his reign, he confronted and embarrassed the *mantsemei* with his policy of non-cooperation. He took unilateral decisions without reference to the *mantsemei*. For example, prior to the 1951 in the Gold Coast, the mantsemei and some Ga elders aligned with the UGCC approached Nii Taki Kome II to deport Nkrumah from Accra due to his unfavorable policies. Taki Kome II refused to deport Nkrumah but rather backed Nkrumah and campaigned for CPP candidates. Due to this action by Taki Kome II, he was destooled in 1952 by the Ga State Council (GSC), but the governor refused and reversed his destoolment on the grounds of the GSC exceeding its authority. The governor was right in the sense that by the customs and traditions of the Ga people, the installation and destoolment of a Ga Manstse is the preserve of the dzase. However, the intervention of the governor appears to have also contested the customary role of the dzase to destool the Ga Manste. The dzase made another attempt to destool Taki Kome II in 1957 on the grounds of Taki Kome’s autocratic leadership style. On this occasion, the GSC with the support of the CPP government intervened and declared the dzase’s attempt to destool the Ga Manste were both uncustumary and unconstitutional (Sackeyfio-Leno, 2014:122-123). Finally, in 1962, the *mantsemei* succeeded in destooling him for gross disrespect, his policy of non-cooperation and his unflinching support of the CPP movement and its founder Kwame Nkrumah.

\(^{70}\) The then dzasetse, Nii Teiko Abonua II, supported the installation of E. N. Lomoko as the GA Mantse.
4.6 Constitutional Change

After the destoolment of Nii Taki Kome II in 1962, the Dzasetse ordered a change in the constitution. A committee was set up by the dzasetse to explore the place of Akropong and Adzimankese within Tunma We dynasty and report their findings. Accordingly, Teiko Tsuru We, Amugi We, and Taki Kome We were to be changed to Akropong and Adzimankese, respectively. Teiko Tsuru We members argued that their House is Akropong, but some expressed the opinion that Amugi We is Akropong. Amugi We members, however, claimed that they hailed from Adzimankese. Taki Kome We members proved with an evidential letter that Teiko Tsuru We and Taki Kome We formed Adzimankese, but Teiko Tsuru We insisted that they alone are from Akropong while Amugi We maintained their attachment to Adzimankese. During the discussion, Piam members argued that Piam is connected with Amugi We. The ruling houses, therefore, were Adzimankese comprising Teiko Tsuru We and Taki Kome We; and Akropong consisting of Amugi We and Piam. No one seems to know the origin of Akropong, but it is considered the most senior House established in the reign of Ayikuma Teiku Bah (1700-1733), thus, giving it a monarchical origin. Adzimankese, on the other hand, is argued to be priesthood in origin and that it originated after the defeat of Akwamu in 1733 with the name having been given to Naa Korkoi for her bravery in that war (N. Okine, personal communication, March 11, 2016).

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71 Naa Korkoi was a female royal from the Tunma dynasty that played a key role in the defeat of the Akwamu people by the combined forces of the Ga and Akyem peoples in 1733.
4.7 Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict after the destoolment of Nii Taki Kome in 1962

The chieftaincy crisis that emerged at the death of Nii Taki Kome in 1962 began when some members of the house of Amugi We, which was to provide the candidate for the vacant post after the demise of Nii Taki Kome, raised the question of eligibility and the place of Nii Tetteh Kwei, the dzasetse in Nii Taki Yaoboi’s reign. They argued that female line pedigree does not occupy the Ga Stool and that since Nii Tetteh Kwei was a Ga state drummer, and not from the royal lineage, his grandson Seth Mensah Tetteh Quaye was not a legitimate candidate. The house of Amugi We was however of the view that they had access to the Ga Stool through Momo, daughter of Tetteh Ahene Akwa (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). Knowing this historical fact and that Nii Tetteh Kwei belonged to Tunma Dynasty, the elders of Amugi We selected Seth Mensah Tetteh Quaye as their prospective candidate. The nomination and election of Seth Mensah Tetteh Quaye were carried out from the Akwashong to the dzase through Nii Gbese and Nii Abola as laid down by Ga common law. The dzase also performed the engagement custom and all the mantsemei and concerned wulomei in the Ga Area were informed about the date of the enstoolment.

However, District Commissioner Bulley of Accra Central interfered and called for the postponement of the enstoolment ceremony through a telegram to the dzasetse, Nii Teiko Abonua II and Nii Pesamaku III, the Acting President of the Ga Mashi Traditional Council. This was because a section of the dzase from Amugi We had challenged the constitutional validity of the election of Seth Mensah Tetteh Quaye. The Government, therefore, appointed Mr.

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72 This Ga Mashie Traditional Council and other Traditional and State Councils were political structures created by both the colonial and post-colonial state of Ghana and do not have roots in the pre-colonial political structures of the Ga Mashie people. For example the Ga State Council was created by the colonial administration under the NAO of 1927,
Dowuona Hammond, the then Minister of Education, and Mr. S. T. Provencal to meet the dzase for resolution of any grievances. Upon deliberations with the dzase, the government appropriately indicated to the dzasetse that the election and enstoolment of a Traditional Ruler of an area rested with the dzase. The Acting dzasetse subsequently held a meeting on May 2, 1964 at the Ga Mantse’s Palace, where with the exception of one person; all the members present gave their solid support to the Ga Mantse-elect, Seth Mensah Tetteh Quaye.

Ironically, on September 1, 1964, Ataa Amui (Head of the house of Amugi We) and the Acting dzastse, pressed by a section of Amugi We, selected Mr. S. O. Yartey as the new candidate. The Ga dzasetse, Nii Teiko Abonua II, approved the candidacy of S. O. Yartey. Gbese Mantse accordingly recommended him to government as Ga Mantse-elect. They attempted to enstool him, but a prominent member of the dzase, Prince C. Tackie, then head of Akropong, foiled it and successfully appealed to the police to guard the palace. Thus, the plot of the dzasetse and the Acting Ga Mantse was frustrated.

The enstoolment question concerning the claims of the two candidates, Seth Mensah Tetteh Quaye and S. O. Yartey, was consequently placed in the hands of the government, and it was referred to the appropriate quarters to determine the issue. The Commission of Inquiry recommended that both candidates be rejected; and a new candidate elected (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal communication, February 8, 2016). Following the government’s decision, Nii Teiko Abonua II asked Amugi We for a candidate for the third time. A faction of the Amugi We house led by R. M. Amui and Nii Anum preferred one William Yaotey Tackie while another faction presented S. Yaoboi Yaotey. At a meeting on Friday December 11, 1964, the Amugi We house confirmed their nomination of W. Y. Tackie with a letter dated December 10, 1964. Ataa Amui
Tsuru, head of Amugi We, and Ataa Anum, the stool priest, were present and after a serious
discussion of the whole issue, the mantle again fell on William Yaotey Tackie as successor to the
vacant stool. At this meeting, the group opposed to W. Y. Tackie within the Akropong, Teiko
Tsuru We broke off in disorder. This put on hold the election and confirmation of W. Y. Tackie
as the Ga Mantse-elect as they could not reach an agreement.

Following a series of mediation and meetings by influential people such as the head of
the Amugi We ruling house, Ataa E. A. Ammah, the dzase convened a meeting on Saturday,
December 19, 1964 at the residence of the dzasetse. At this meeting, the majority of the
electorate passed a resolution supporting S. Y. Yaotey’s candidacy. This was after the dzasetse
had addressed a letter to the Secretary of Amugi We faction on December 19, 1964 in which he
stated that the alleged nomination of Mr. W. Y. Tackie “is unconstitutional as the right to
nominate and elect a Ga Mantse lies only with the Ga Stool Dzase electorate.” The letter further
clarifies, “I, therefore, cannot find my way clear to give either my support or confirmation of
your candidate.” Thus, the dzasetse’s letter closed the third dispute within Amugi We and
consolidated the election, facilitating the enstoolment of Mr. S. Y. Yartey. In addition, in a letter
dated December 20, 1964, R. M. Amui and Nii Anum dismissed the allegation that they took part
in the nomination of Mr. W. Y. Tackie. They stated that the allegation “is a deliberate
fabrication, designed to implicate us in the unconstitutional strategy which aims at obstructing
the Ga Stool Dzase electorate to perform their rightful duty” (G. N. T. Tagoe, personal
communication, February 8, 2016).

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73 Atta E. A. Amma was the head of royal houses, and was an active participant in electing and enstooling a new
king in 196. He is regarded as one of the foremost 20th century authorities on Ga culture and traditions.
Having cleared the hindrance, the Amugi We section of the electorate formally presented Mr. S. Y. Yaotey, Ga Mantse-designate, to Nii Teiko Anonua II, Dzasetse, and the other electorate on Wednesday, December 23, 1964. Those opposed to S. Y. Yaotey’s election (J. Blankson Lartey, W. A. Lawson, Addoquaye Pappoe of Amugi We house, J. A. Lartey of Teiko Tsuru We and Ashaley Okoe, the secretary of Taki Kome We) were not present. The Dzase named him Nii Taki Amugi II. On Thursday December 31, he was formally presented to Nii Abola, and then on Monday January 4, 1965 he was presented to the Gbese Mantse according to custom with his stool name. On Saturday February 20, 1965, in accordance with customs and traditions, a ram was killed and distributed by the ruling house from which the Ga Mantse-elect was chosen to the mantsemei from Tema to Awutu with a message indicating the date of the enstoolment ceremony. Although the Asere mantse accepted the notification ram in principle, he maintained that the dzase informed him neither that Government had rejected the first mantse-elect nor made him aware that they had elected a new Ga Mantse. For the purpose of political unity, the Acting Ga Mantse and two members of the dzase (the Acting Dzasetse and the Dzase Otsame) met Nii Asere at Agbon in Accra and settled their differences.

The necessary customary rites including the purification of the stool house by the Acting Nai Wulomo, Numoo Yaoboi; the censing of the house; the enstoolment ceremony in the stool room; and the playing of the various drums notes announcing that the mantse had been formally enstooled were performed.

74 Their presence would not have had any significant outcome on the election since they were in the minority, and those in favor of Yaotey’s nomination were in the majority
4.8 Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict since 2004

The current Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict centers on the legitimacy of a successor to the late chief, Nii Taki Amugi II. As in previous disputes, the Tieku Tsuru We put forward two candidates, Dr. Joe Blankson and Adama Latse. The Teiko Tsuru We made two main arguments in support of their case. First, they argued that the traditional cloth that was sent from the house of the deceased chief to the successor was sent to the Teiko Tsuru We. Secondly, they claimed that the Abola Piam We, where Adama Latse hails from were not royals in the true sense of the word but historically were slaves who were integrated into the Ga society. The Abola Piam We on the other hand made the argument that it was their turn and not the Teiko Tsuru We to install a Ga Mantse after the demise of Nii Amugi. They argued principally that the candidate of Teiko Tsuru, Dr. Joe Blankson, was not eligible owing to his maternal lineage. This is because the Ga people are patrilineal; hence, the approval and installation of Dr. Blankson will be against the customs and traditions of the people (N. Okine, personal communication, March 11, 2016).

A memorandum of understanding made and signed on March 23, 2005 in Accra by the four Ruling Houses (Nii Teiko Tsuru We, Nii Tackie Komey We, Nii Amugi We and Abola Piam We) acknowledged the right of the Abola Piam We to appoint a person most suitable for the office of Ga Mantse. In furtherance to this, the memorandum stated:

That the customary Mantse (cloth) from the said Ruling House (Amugi We) shall be delivered to the elders and representatives of Abola Piam We – for the Ga Mantse elect according to the recognized customary rotating succession.

Consequently, four contenders (George Nii Adama Tackie-Abia, Henry Nii Ayitey Aryeetey, Kelvin Tackie Abia and Nii Kuja Okine) were shortlisted from the Akropong Division of Abola for the Ga Mantse throne with the odds favoring Kelvin Tackie. Surprisingly, the Ga
Traditional Council, inducted Dr. Joe Blankson as the new Ga Mantse under the stool name King Tackie Tawia III on June 11, 2006. The performance of certain rites at the Ga Mantse’s Palace in Accra followed the induction ceremony, making him the King of the Ga State. The Nai Wulomo, Numo Tete III, performed the rites, which involved the pouring of libation and the slaughtering of a spotless white sheep whose blood he splashed on a shrine at the palace to signify his induction into the traditional council. According to the traditional authorities, the ritual signified that King Tackie Tawia III was the undisputed King of the Ga State and could now occupy the seat at the palace and assume the presidency of the traditional council. The ceremony was witnessed by some members of the traditional council, including the acting President and Sempe Mantse, Nii Adotey Obuor II, the Ngleshie Alata Mantse, Nii Kojo Ababio V, the Osu Mantse, Nii Nortey Owuo III, the Tema Mantse, Nii Adjetey Kraku III, and the Nungua Mantse, King Odaifio Wulentsi III. The rest were the Otublohum Mantse, Nii Dodoo Nsaki II, Akumajay Mantse, Nii Ayikai III and the Osu Alata Mantse, Nii Kwashie Anaefi IV. Some sub-chiefs of the Ga State were also present.

His installation obviously sparked off controversy as a section of the Teiko Tsuru Royal Family challenged his eligibility. They argued that, the newly crowned Ga Mantse was not approved through wide consultation among the dzase from the four royal houses. One of the litigants remarked:

Normally we will all have accepted the new Ga Mantse as the king of the Ga state had all the rules published by traditions been followed. But in this particular case the rules were not followed. The system of succession and inheritance is based largely on the patrilineal form and naming systems, which has been structured over 500 years. But throughout our history people have sought to undermine the system. Dr. Joe Blankson purported to have been
installed as Ga Mantse, hails from the matrilineal side, and so he is called Lartey Sempe. This was followed by an announcement by Nii Teiko Tsuru We, just a day to the burial of the late Ga Mantse on January 27, 2006, that Kelvin Nii Tackie was the legitimate candidate for the stool. Blankson’s coronation, however, survived threats of court injunction after the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs had dismissed an ex parte motion for interim injunction by the acting Head of the Abola Piam We, Joseph Yahaya Addy. Nii Owula Blofonyo consequently petitioned the Greater Accra Regional Houses of Chiefs on April 4, 2006, against Dr Blankson seeking a declaration that his purported installation as Ga Mantse in March 2006 was contrary to Ga custom, and therefore, be null and void. Joined in that suit are; Nii Akropong III, Head of Teiko Tsuru We and Nuumo Tette, Ga Wulomo (Chief Priest), now deceased.

Matters became more complicated when, the main contenders, the Abola Piam We, fed up with the slow pace at which the case was being handled by the Regional House of Chiefs, also installed a rival chief, Boni Nii Tackie Adama Latse II, known in private life as Mr. George Tackie, on Sunday, June 12, 2011. The enstoolment of Nii Adama Latse II therefore brought to two (2) the number of occupants of the Ga Stool at the time. While the chieftaincy dispute was (and is still) pending at the RHCs, King Tackie Tawia III passed away in December 2012.

Even though the case is still pending at the RHCs, the National House of Chiefs gazetted the rival Ga Mantse, Boni Nii Tackie Adama Latse II on April 24, 2015 as a Paramount Chief and Ga Mantse in succession to the Late Ga Mantse Boni Nii Amugi II (A. K. Essien, personal communication, February 25, 2016).

75 The name Lamtey Sempe is not one of the royal names of the Ga people hence anyone with such a name could not ascend the Ga Mashie throne.
However, in August 2015, the Ghanaian media reported that the Dzaasetse of the Ga State, Nii Dr Tetteh Kwei II and the accredited heads and elders of the Ga Paramount Stool, known as Dzaase, have installed a new Ga Mantse, in the person of Dr. Kelvin Nii Tackie Abia Tackie, with the stool name King Dr Tackie Teiko Tsuru II. They argued that by the Judicial Committee of the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs (GARHC) Ruling (Ruling, Suit No. GARHC/P4/2007), Nii Tetteh Kwei II is the recognized Dzas-setse, vested with the authority to install a Ga Mantse. In their view, King Tackie Tawiah III was never recognized as a Ga Mantse, hence their right to install a Ga Mantse.

In a sharp rebuttal, the Ga Traditional Council (GTC) held a press conference rejecting Dr. Kelvin Nii Tackie Abia Tackie as the new Ga Mantse, claiming that his installation was a sham. Speaking at a news conference in Accra on Tuesday August 4, 2015, the Gbese Mantse, Nii Ayibonte II, said Nii Latse II had, since June 11, 2011, been the only Ga chief with his name gazetted in the RHC. Similarly, government officials including the Minster for Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs, Dr. Henry Seidu Daannaa and the Greater Accra Regional Minister, Nii Laryea Afotey Agbo denounced the installation of a new Ga Mantse. In an interview granted to Accra-based Star FM on August 5, 2015, the Greater Accra Regional Minister, Nii Laryea Afotey Agbo, stated, “The only recognized King of the Ga State is King Boni Nii Tackie Adaman Latse II.” Accordingly, to him, “the recent installation of Dr. Kelvin Tackie Abia as the new Ga Mantse is illegal and must not be recognized by residents of the Ga State since the right process was not followed before the installation.”

As of today, there are two factions in the Ga State and each faction has its own Ga Mantse. The Ga Traditional Council has Nii Adama Latse II as Ga Mantse from the Abola Piam
We; while the Dzaasetse of the Ga State and the accredited heads and elders of the Ga Paramount Stool have Dr. Nii Tackie Abia Tackie as Ga Mantse from the Teiko Tsuru We.

4.9 Effects of the Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict

The security agencies have kept the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict under control under the Fourth Republic. The conflict has not erupted into a fully blown-out conflict, even though there have been pockets of violence whenever the opposing sides clashed. This is because of the heavy presence of the security agencies in the Greater Accra Region. As indicated earlier, Greater Accra houses almost all the important offices of the State including the security agencies. The security agencies (police, military, BNI, NSC) are therefore positioned to pick up early warning signs of any imminent clash between the opposing chieftaincy groups and act swiftly to forestall the eruption of any such clashes into major violence in the capital (S. Amankwah, personal communication, February 3, 2016). In the situation where violence has broken out, the security agencies have been quick to deal with it to forestall order and discipline. It must be noted however that the pockets of violence that have been recorded have led to the destruction of the peace and properties in the area.

These clashes have the potential of disturbing the governance and peace of not only Accra, but also in the entire country. As has been witnessed in recent times in Kumasi, Tamale and other parts of the country, violent clashes of any form usually lead to the declaration of a State of Emergency and the subsequent imposition of curfews in the area. Such a situation in Accra will have dire consequences on the economic, social and political fortunes of the Ghanaian state simply because Accra is the heartbeat of Ghana. It is the place where everything happens
from business to pleasure, politics to governance and culture to education as seen in the figure (5) below.

**Figure 5: Present day Accra with some important landmarks**

Source: E. D. G. Anim (personal communication, March 8, 2016)

4.10 Concluding Remarks

The over six decades of Ga Mashie chieftaincy disputes has lingered on for three principal reasons. The first principal factor is the failure of the Ga state to clearly differentiate between maternal and paternal succession. Clearly, available literature supports the argument that the Ga state is a patrilineal society; and hence succession is through the son and not nephew.
as pertains to the Akans. However, in situations where there are no credible successors from the male line, female line of succession is allowed. The failure of Ga leadership to identify and document such exceptions has created the room for future claims to the throne by female line. This is the case with Dr. Joe Blankson, whose claim to the Ga Mantse throne is through the female line. In this particular case, the grandmother of Dr. Blankson was the daughter of Tackie Tawia I of the Teiko Tsuru We. This obviously disqualifies him from ascending the throne, unless it is proven beyond all reasonable doubt that, there were no qualified candidates from the patrilineal side. Unfortunately, this was not the case, as Kelvin Tackie Abia, had been nominated by the kingmakers prior to Dr. Blankson’s installment. The installation of Dr. Blankson challenges the customs and traditions of the Ga state and highlights the influence that foreign ethnic groups (particularly the Akans) have had on Ga succession.

Another major factor is the inability of the NHC and Ga Mashie kingmakers to clearly define and agree on the number of ruling houses from the Abola quarter among which the stool is to rotate as mandated in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Article 272(b) of the constitution stipulates that the NHC shall “undertake the progressive study, interpretation and codification of customary law with a view to evolving, in appropriate cases, a unified system of rules of customary law, and compiling the customary laws and lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin.” This has proven to be daunting task for both the NHC and Ga Mashie kingmakers. While some, particularly from the Teiko Tsuru We, argue that there are only three ruling houses (Teiko Tsuru We, Amugi We, and Taki Kommey We), others are of the view that there are four ruling houses (Teiko Tsuru We, Amugi We, Abola Piam and Taki Kommey We). In 1964, the head of the Royal Council successfully amalgamated the three ruling houses into two ruling gates: Adzimangkese gate comprising Teiko Tsuru We and Taki Kome We and Akropong gate
consisting of Amugi We and Abola-Piam. There is, however, considerable debate as to whether the Abola-Piam We is from the Royal Tunma We Dynasty from where the other three originates. It is argued that the Abola-Piam We house was not royals but slaves or servants who used to serve the King in the royal house (indv_001, March 11, 2016). This paints two scenarios as to the succession to the Ga Mantse by the Abola quarter as shown in Figure 6 and 7 below:
Figure 6: Scenario 1 (Ga Mantse Succession for Four Ruling House)

Ga Mashie State (Ga Mantse Ruling Houses)

Asere  Gbese  Sempe  Abola  Alata  Akummadzei

Tunma We Dynasty (Royal house)

Akropong Gate  Adzimankese Gate

Teiko Tsuru We  Taki Kome We  Amugi We  Abola Piam We

Figure 7: Scenario 2 (Ga Mantse Succession for Three Ruling House)

Ga Mashie State (Ga Mantse Ruling Houses)

Asere  Gbese  Sempe  Abola  Alata  Akummadzei

Tunma We Dynasty (Royal house)

Akropong Gate  Adzimankese Gate

Teiko Tsuru We  Taki Kome We  Amugi We

Source: Researcher developed this from the field interviews conducted in Ghana between February and March 2016
If the Abola Piam is accepted as a ruling house, then the scenario presented in Figure 6 holds. If that is the case, then it is the turn of the Abola Piam to provide a Ga Mantse as depicted in Figure 8. Since the inception of the rotation policy in 1944, all the other three ruling houses have had a turn to ascend the thrown with the exception of the Abola Piam We as illustrated in Figure 8 below:

**Figure 8: Ga Mantse Succession since 1944**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teiko Tsuru We</td>
<td>Taki Kome We</td>
<td>Amugi We</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Source: Researcher developed this from the field interviews conducted in Ghana between February and March 2016

On the other hand, if there are three ruling houses as argued by Teiko Tsuru, then indeed it is the turn of Teiko Tsuru family to install a Ga Mantse as depicted in scenario 2 of Figure 2. The question therefore will be to address the issue of maternal and paternal inheritance; which earlier discussions have addressed.

The other important factor in the ongoing Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute is the subtle influence of successive government and political parties, particularly the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). This has always led a divide between the king makers (Ga Paramount Stool Dzase); and the Ga Traditional Council. The result is the creation of parallel offices who then install their preferred candidate as Ga Mantse. This was the case when a pro-NPP Ga Traditional Council, with the support of some state officials in the Regional Administration, particularly, Mr. Stanley Nii Agyiri Blankson\(^7\) installed Jo Blankson

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7 Mr. Stanley Nii Agyiri Blankson, brother of Dr. Joe Blankson was the Chief Executive Officer of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly.
as the Ga Mantse in April 2007. The Ga Paramount Stool Dzase, led by a disputed Ga Dsasetse, Nii Yaote Oto-Ga II, in a press conference held on April 12, 2007 openly kicked against the installation and indicated the dzase would not tolerate impunity, illegality and shameful distortion of the truth, customs and traditions of the people of Ga. The NPP seemingly recognized the Ga Mantse by paying courtesy calls on him and inviting him to national events in his capacity as the Ga Mantse. A case in point was when the Presidential Candidate of the then ruling NPP, Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufo-Addo, extended his courtesy-call itinerary to the Ga-Mantse in 2008.

Upon assuming office in January 2009, the NDC under Prof. John Evans Atta-Mills refused to acknowledge Dr. Joe Blankson as the Ga Mantse. Instead, they covertly engineered the installation of a new Gbese Mantse, Nii Ayi Bonte II, who is a known NDC adherent. The Gbese Mantse later led a pro-NDC Ga Traditional Council to install George Tackie-Abia as Ga Mantse with the stool name Nii Tackie Adama Latse in 2011, and subsequently had him gazetted on April 24, 2015. Another claimant to the Dzasetse of the Ga State, Nii Dr. Tetteh Kwei II, and the accredited heads and elders of the Ga Paramount Stool, known as Dzase, installed Dr. Kelvin Nii Tackie Abia Tackie. He has also installed a new Ga Mantse, Dr. Kelvin Nii Tackie Abia Tackie, under the stool name, King Dr. Tackie Teiko Tsuru II in August 2015.

The Greater Accra Regional Minister, Nii Laryea Afotey Agbo, in an interview with Citi FM on August 5, 2015 described the installation of the new chief as fictitious and an attempt to disturb the peace of the Ga community. He indicated a meeting with the Bureau of National Investigations (BNI) and the National Security Council (NSC) to find out the intent of the “new” chief. The continuous maneuverings of the political parties and successive governments, thereby creating factions within the Dzase and Ga Traditional Council creates a fertile ground for the
conflict to thrive. There are two basic reasons why politicians and political parties involve themselves in the Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute.

One is the issue of votes during general elections. Political parties and their candidates align to different groups in chieftaincy conflicts during elections with the hope of receiving the support and votes of these groups. For example, the NPP profited from such an alliance with the Taki Kome We when the well-known and resourced Blanksons supported the candidature of Reginald Nii Bi Ayibonte of the NPP to win the Ododiodio constituency in the 2000 general elections. The NPP returned the favor by making Nii Adjiri Blankson the Mayor of AMA, while his brother, Dr. Joe Blankson, was in 2005 installed as the Ga Mantse against all odds. Similarly, the NDC aligned with the Abola Piam We house and Nii Ayi Bonte II of Gbese to ensure that their preferred candidates won the Odododiodio seat from the NPP in the 2004 elections, the 2005 by-election, the 2008 elections and the 2012 general elections. The NDC also returned the favor by making sure that Nii Tackie Adama Latse was installed in 2011 and gazetted in 2015 as the Ga Mantse, while petitions challenging the installation of Dr. Joe Blankson were pending before the GARHC.

Another reason for the involvement of political parties and politicians in the Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute is the grabbing of Ga State lands. Accra is the most developed part of Ghana and houses all the important offices of the State including the seat of government. All other important offices (Ministries, Banks, High Commissions, and Embassies) are located in Accra. Accra again houses the only international airport in the country. These factors have made lands in Accra precious and expensive commodity to the extent that every politician is ever ready and eager to grab some of these lands. Under the Accra Redevelopment Scheme initiated in 1992 by the NDC and continued by the NPP in 2000, state lands acquired by successive governments
since colonial times from the Ga people in prime areas such as Osu, Cantonments, Ridge, Kanda and Airport Residential areas were sold cheaply to politicians and their cronies. A case in point is when Jake Obetsebi Lamptey, serving as a Minister of State in the Kufuor administration bought the No. 2 Mungo Street bungalow, a state property he occupied, for $400,000. Other top NPP officials who acquired State lands in Accra included the then Speaker of Parliament Ebenezer B. Sakyi Hughes; Ursula Owusu; Dr. Charles Wereko-Brobey, Yaw Osafo Maafo, Ms. Shirley Ayorkor Botchway; Dr. Osei Akoto; Mr. J. H. Mensah; and Dr. Joe Blankson77. The NDC similarly sold state lands in Accra to their ministers under the Rawlings era between 1992 and 2000. Personalities that benefited under the NDC included Prof John Evans Atta Mills78; Betty Mould Iddrisu; Professor Kofi Awoonor; Edward Kojo Salia; Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni; Mustapha Gariba; and Martin B. K. Amidu. Due to the desire of these politicians to acquire and own lands in Accra, they support factions in chieftaincy dispute with the aim of amassing these lands should their preferred candidate ascend the throne.79

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77 Dr. Joe Blankson was in 2005 installed as the Ga Mantse
78 Prof. John Evans Atta Mills became the president of Ghana in 2009 after the 2008 elections
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS; RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS,
LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

5.1 Conclusions

Ghanaian societies together with their institutions have been undergoing tremendous changes ever since they got into contact with Europe. One important factor in this trajectory of societal changes is colonialism, which triggered a torrent of changes in the Ghanaian society. Of significance to this research was the imposition of a new political order into which all existing traditional states, political communities, societies and identities were incorporated during the colonial era. The modern state, thus, became the overarching structure, which subsumed all previously existing socio-political entities and subordinate parts. The emergence of a new state structure therefore had serious implications for the modus operandi of traditional polities and the legitimacy of their existence as well as functions. The use of chieftaincy for indirect rule by the colonial state signaled the fact that the chieftaincy institution would no longer exist and function as an autonomous institution. Consequently, it was to exist and function in accordance with rules determined by a higher political entity – the state. The institution of chieftaincy continues to face this structural problem. This is because since colonial times, successive governments have systematically reduced chieftaincy to a subordinate part of a huge political super-structure called the Ghanaian state; and within this super-structure, the institution has virtually lost its relevance as an instrument of self-government and development.

The colonial state consciously redefined the position and power of the chieftaincy institution in a manner that served its imperial purpose. Chiefs and their councils therefore
governed only from the fringes of the colonial state, and in accordance with the permissible. Unfortunately, the attitude of the post-colonial establishment toward the chieftaincy institution has been rather vague. Between 1951 and 1965, the CPP government’s policy was to confine chieftaincy to an ornamental role, just to embody the people’s rich history and culture. The CPP government hence considered chieftaincy as a cultural artifact whose importance and relevance lay in the history of the people. This therefore conferred legitimacy and secured it a place in the mind of the nation, and distinguished it from the people’s representative institutions, whose power to govern was derived from the constitution and legitimized through elections in accordance with democratic principles.

The post-1965 Ghanaian state, on the other hand, has merely paid lip service to the chieftaincy institution. It has not been audacious in translating its adoration of the institution into an enduring solution to the structural problem that confronts the institution. The 1969, 1979 and 1992 Constitutions of Ghana systematically kept the institution outside the pale of those formal structures of power and governance. President Atta-Mills cancellation of the performance of libation80 (traditional prayer) by traditional priests during national events such as Independence Day celebration in 2011 attests to the lip-service chieftaincy receives from the state because performing libation (traditional prayers) is very important to the chieftaincy institution in Ghana.

Interestingly, the chieftaincy institutions have survived and endured the exploitative British imperialism during the colonial era, and subsequently under both civilian and military administrations. The institution has always trimmed its sails to different political winds without either capitulating to higher authorities or trying to meet them head-on. The institution is thus

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80 Since Ghana’s independence in 1957, the three dominant religions groups (Christian, Islamic and Traditional) have always offered prayers for the nation during independence celebrations on March 6. However, in 2011, traditional prayers was cancelled, much to the dismay of traditional priests, by the then President John Evans Atta-Mills. This has continued to date.
highly revered by Ghanaians; not only because of its traditional role of maintaining the culture and traditions of the people, but rather the acceptance of its new challenge as ‘agents of development’ in the modern politics of Ghana (see Arhin and Pavanello, 2006; Ray and Eizlini, 2011:35-60). This is in line with Bob-Milliar’s (2009) argument that chieftaincy, in contemporary times, has come to serve two major functions: statutory (settlement of chieftaincy disputes and the codification of customary laws) and non-statutory (socio-economic development).

Unfortunately, a number of problems saddle the chieftaincy institution. One of such problems is the increasing number of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. These conflicts are largely due to succession disputes. From the literature reviewed and interviews conducted, this study concludes that the numerous chieftaincy conflicts are mainly due to political or governmental interference, leading to distortions of the customs and traditions of the Ghanaian people. These distortions created superior-inferior groups, thereby generating tensions and the feeling of resentment. During colonial rule, traditional systems were created, recognized or repudiated according to the utility value of the system. Successive governments after independence have continued to fuel these tensions pitching one group against the other, which has resulted in violent conflicts in some instances. Between 1951 and 1965, President Nkrumah arrogated to himself the power and authority to exclusively determine who qualified to be enstooled or enskinned as a chief in the country. He based this primarily on which traditional ruler or chieftain supported the policies of the CPP government without recourse to the customs and traditions of the people. Consequently, the destoolment of some chiefs during the Nkrumah-led CPP administration in the early 1960s and the subsequent re-enstoolment of these chiefs after Nkrumah’s overthrow by the National Liberation Council in the later 1960s only served to
increase tensions and suspicions among rival factions. The outcome of such constant intervention by the colonial administration, and the post-colonial state into the chieftaincy institution resulted in total chaos and confusion, and the attendant succession disputes.

A clear example is the on-going Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict. The colonial authority did not directly interfere in the succession issues of the Ga people. However, the official recognition of Ga Mantse as the overlord of the Ga people under the 1904 Gold Coast Ordinance alongside the creation of the Ga State Council under the NAO of 1927 served to enhance the position of Ga Mantse to one comparable to the status of the ‘Asantehene’ as an overlord. This obviously made the throne attractive and enviable because of the prestige that came with it. Consequently, the desire to ascend the throne became much more intense among both royals and non-royals alike. The study found that some elements within the Ga dzase began to distort the custom and tradition in favor of their preferred candidates. This was because heirs apparent to the Ga Mashie throne were not always clear and sometimes were non-existent. The study found that the current chieftaincy conflict stems from a number of factors.

First, there is dispute as to whose turn it is to provide the Ga Mantse. As discussed earlier, both Teiko Tsuru We and Abola Piam We houses are claiming the throne. The problem is even more complicated even at the family level as each of the two contesting ruling houses has its own internal dispute as to who the rightful candidate should be. For example, within the Teiko Tsuru We ruling house, there were two claimants (Dr. Joe Blankson and Dr. Kelvin Tackie Abia) to the throne. The Acting President of the Ga Traditional Council installed Dr. Joe Blankson as Ga Manste under the stool name Nii Tackie Tawiah III in March 2006. On the other hand, the Dzasetse of the Ga State, Nii Dr Tetteh Kwei II installed Dr. Kelvin Tackie Abia as the Ga
Mantse under the stool name Nii Tackie Teiko Tsuru II in August 2015 as shown in figure (9) below.

**Figure 9: Teiko Tsuru We House Claimants to the Ga Mashie Throne**

Source: Researcher developed this from the field interviews conducted in Ghana between February and March 2016

A similar situation exists in the Abola Paim We ruling house. There are two claimants to the throne (George Nii Adama Tackie Abia and Henry Nii Ayitey Aryeetey). The dzasetse and acting Asere Mantse of the Ga State Council, Nii Amarkai III, installed George Nii Adama Tackie Abia as Ga Mantse in June 2011 under the stool name Boni Nii Tackie Adama Latse II. He was subsequently gazetted in April 2015. Prior to this, Wulomo Akroshie, in-charge of the Sakumono Stool had installed Henry Aryeetey under the stool name Nii Tackie Oblie II in 2008.

From the above situation, the study found that different personalities and offices claim to be the rightful individuals to install a Ga Mantse. One of such offices is the Ga Traditional Council which is a creation of the both the colonial and post-colonial state of Ghana (see Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2014:98). However, the study found that by the Ga custom and tradition, it is
only dzase, led by the dzasetse who has the power to hand over whoever would be nominated as the Ga Mantse to the Ga State. Nii Agyemankese II, Head of Tackie Komey Royal Ruling House and Head of the Adzimankese Division of the Ga Paramount Stool Dsase moved a motion at the Accra High Court in April 2016 for an interlocutory injunction, restraining George Tackie Abia (Nii Tackie Adama Latse II) from being inducted into the Ga Traditional Council as Ga Mantse. This follows a petition by Dr. Nii Tetteh Kwei II (Ga Paramount Stool Dsasetse), Nii Tetteh Ashong V (Ga Seitse/Oshiahene), and Nii Agyemankese II (Head of Nii Tackie Commey Royal Ruling House and Head of Adzimankese Division of the Ga Paramount Stool Dsase)\(^81\) against George Tackie Abia (Tackie Adama Latse II), the installed and gazetted Ga Mantse, and twelve (12) others at the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs. In this regard, the study found that the Royal Council’s identification of four instead of three ruling houses in 1962 as shown in figures 6 and 7 was incorrect\(^82\). This problem is compounded by the tussle over who the rightful Gbese mantse is. As indicated earlier in the chapter, the Gbese mantse plays a key role in the installation of a new chief. Presently, there are two occupants (Nii Okaija III and Nii Ayi Bonte II\(^83\)) of the Gbese stool. This has been the bane of the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict as the study found.

Secondly, a constitutional change before the beginning of the twentieth century after the death of King Ayi (1680-1700) that enabled a female succession to the Ga Mashie throne further distorted the customary law governing succession among the Ga peoples. This distortion

\(^81\) The petitioners included Nii Akropong IV (Abola Piam Royal Ruling House and Head of Akropong Division), Nii Teiko Abonua IV (Head of Nii Teiko Tsuru Royal Ruling House of the Akropong Division) and Nii Amui de Graft Quaye (Head of Amugi Royal House of the Agyeman Kese Division of the Ga Paramount Stool Dsase).

\(^82\) See Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2014:27. See also Kilson, 1974.

\(^83\) Nii Okaija is supported by the NPP. His lawyer is Nii Ayikoi Otoo the former Minister of Justice and Attorney-General under President Kufuor while Nii Ayi Bonte is backed and recognized by the NDC as the Gbese Mantse. A Supreme Court Judgement on Civil Motion No. J5/45/2015 dated Tuesday, February 9, 2016 however appears to confirm Nii Okaija as the Gbese mantse
emanates from the influx of migrants into present-day territories of the Ga people. However, a careful study of the literature on Ga customs and traditions indicates that succession among the Ga people is through the male line. Thus, among the Ga tribes, sons succeed in preference to nephews. Maternal (nephew) succession pertains to the Akan groups that settled among the Ga people. This contentious issue of paternal versus maternal succession introduces the question of gender in traditional institutions in Ghana. The role of women and men were cultural ascribed and specific to each culture. With regard to the case study, women had their culturally ascribed role and the Ga society did not usually allow them to either ascend or provide a successor to the throne. However, there were exceptions to the norm in the event no suitable male line successor was available. The study found that Ga women had virtually no say in who becomes the Ga Mantse. This is rather interesting. As discussed earlier, the literature assumes that the Ga people borrowed most if not all the chiefly institutions of the Akan people they met. Among the Akans, the Queen mother was a major stakeholder and played a key role in the determination of a successor to a vacant throne (Busia, 1951: 9, 19; Owusu-Sarpong, 2011: 201-248; Rattray, 1923: 84-5). This is not the case with the Ga people. Not very chiefly institution was thus copied from the Akans, as the literature would want us to believe. The study found that the Ga people copied those chiefly institutions that aligned with the gendered environment within which Ga customs and traditions functioned.

The study also found that the difficulty in resolving the current Ga Mashie conflict stems from the active connivance or involvement of political entities. The feuding factions have found solace in the two dominant political parties – NDC and NPP. These political parties covertly support factions in the conflict for the purposes of obtaining electoral favors and Ga lands. There
is however not enough evidence to support these assertions as Ga Mashie since 1992 elections have been known to be strong hold of the NDC.

More interestingly, the study found that, the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict, just as in other chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, goes through three main stages. At each of the three stages, the actors employ different tools for achieving their objective of ascending the throne. The conflict can as well be resolved with the appropriate resolution mechanism at each stage of the conflict as shown in figure below:

**Figure 10: Chieftaincy Conflict Lens Model**

From figure 10 above, chieftaincy conflicts emerges on the onset of a vacant stool/skin due to death, resignation, abandonment or destoolment. Interested individuals begin to lobby and engage in subtle campaigns to ascend the throne. At this stage, the kingmakers engage in series of discussions to determine the rightful successor to the throne. Opinion leaders within the
community are called upon to mediate should a consensus not be reached among the contestants and kingmakers. Entrenched positions are not taken at this stage leading to relative peace, calm and stability. The second stage kicks in when the conflict is not resolved at this first stage. At the second stage, many of the contestants drop out leaving a few. Individuals who were contestants at the initial stage become claimants. Factions and entrenched positions begin to emerge with each faction making claims to the throne. To whip public sympathy, the claimants engage in a number of press conferences to argue their case to the public. There are frequent clashes between supporters of the claimants especially during festivals and other community gatherings. At this stage, the stakes are a bit high for the feuding claimants, as neither seems prepared to yield grounds to the other side. The resolution mechanism discussed in stage one applies to this stage as well. However, this stage requires frequent dialogue and mediation; and the use of opinion leaders within the community as there is usually a divide among the kingmakers.

The conflict enters the last stage when it is not resolved at the second stage. At this stage, the claimants become litigants. The stakes are very high, with factions taking entrenched positions. There is a lot of politicking as each litigant court the support of political groupings. The kingmakers and opinion leaders are sharply divided, and the end to the conflict is never in sight. There are occasional violent confrontations and clashes among the supporters of the litigants during festivals and community gatherings. Litigants at this stage resort to formal court procedures starting with the Houses of Chiefs depending on the level of chieftaincy dispute, and ultimately the formal court system of the state. The apex court of the land (Supreme Court) becomes the final arbiter. In some instances, the government establishes Committees and Commissions to resolve the conflict. Many of the chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana go through these stages. The Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict has gone through these stages and it is currently at the
third and last stage. The conflict started with over eight contestants. As the kingmakers and opinion leaders failed to resolve the conflict over the period, many of the contestants dropped off. Currently there are two known litigants (George Nii Adama Tackie Abia and Dr. Kelvin Tackie Abia) at the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs contesting for the throne.

The Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT)\(^{84}\) helps to explain the first two stages of the conflict. At this stage, individual contestants engage and market themselves to the community. They explain to the community (particularly their sympathizers) why they, and not the others, should be the next successor; and anything contrary to that, is to them, a deprivation of their rightful inheritance. This builds a kind of psychological imprint in the minds of their supporters who then see that any decision other done that, which installs their candidate as a deprivation. Accordingly, they engage in all manner of activities including violence to obtain their objective.

Historical Institutionalism (HI)\(^{85}\) on the other hand helps to understand the third stage of the conflict. At this stage, the claimants begin to argue their case citing similar instances that have happened in the past. They use past policies (legacies) as a means to lay claim to the stool. This is the case with the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict. Each of the litigation factions is laying claim to the throne base on a historical antecedents. In addition, past colonial and governmental policies have shaped the conflict by diluting the customs and traditions of the Ga Mashie people leading to conflicting interpretations.

### 5.2 Recommendations

This research makes a number of recommendations for the consideration of government and policy makers:

\(^{84}\) This is discussed in Chapter One.
\(^{85}\) This is discussed in Chapter One.
First, the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs should remember the popular axiom that ‘justice delayed is justice denied’ and speed up the adjudicating processes at the Judicial Committee (JC). This is because parties to a conflict, when they sense that the case is been unduly delayed, usually take the law into their own hands. This has been the case with the Ga Mashie conflict. A petition filed against Dr. Joe Blankson’s installation in 2006 has been pending until his death in 2012. Another petition filed against the installation of Nii Adam Latse in 2011 is still pending before the Regional House of Chiefs and the Accra High Court. A swift determination of cases brought before the JC will instill some confidence in the committee. In furtherance to this, the government should adequately and timely resource this Judicial Committee to enable it to discharge its duties timely and efficiently.

Secondly, the government and Ga Mashie elders should explore the use of non-formal mechanisms such as mediation (use of statesmen and prominent personalities) to settle the conflict. This is because the formal mechanisms, particular the court/legal system, usually produce a winner-loser or winner-takes-all outcome. In such a situation, the loser(s) is prone to not accept defeat and persist with the conflict. However, a mediation effort, which aims at a winner-winner outcome, is more likely to resolve the conflict situation. Again, it is quite evident that all factions are apprehensive of the intentions of either of the current two major political parties (NDC and NPP). This makes it difficult, if not impossible, for a government formed by any of these parties to be able to resolve the conflict through direct involvement of the State and its institutions. This is because the ruling government and other political groups have most often than not taking sides in the conflict. For example, President Kufuor set up the Wuako Commission in April 2002 under Article 278(1) of the Constitution, to investigate the tragic disturbances that occurred in Yendi in the Northern Region between 25th and 27th March, 2002,
resulting in the death of the overlord of Dagbon Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II. The two factions in the conflict (Abudus and Andanis\textsuperscript{86}) on several occasions rejected some of the claims and recommendations of the Commission’s report through a series of press conferences. The Andani group, in particular, accused the Commission of bias. The dispute has to date not been resolved. With political colourization of most of the chieftaincy disputes in Ghana, the only way out then for the government is to facilitate dialogue and mediation among the factions.

Thirdly, it is very important that the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict be depoliticized. To this end, politicians must cease their overt and covert activities inciting one group against the other. They ought to be mindful of their pronouncements on the conflict as well as the promises they make to the parties in the conflict. In addition, political parties should condemn and distance themselves from criminal activities irrespective of the political affiliation of the individual(s) involved. Similarly, politicians must give the security agencies, principally the police, a free hand to prosecute the criminal aspects of the conflict, if any. The security agencies must dissociate itself from the tentacles of the ruling government and work with an objective view of protecting citizen’s life and property.

Fourthly, all factions to the conflict must make some concessions. Taking entrenched positions as it is now will make it difficult for the resolution of the conflict. The Teiko Tsuru house believes strongly it is their turn to provide the Ga Mantse. The Abola Piam house also strongly believes they have a legitimate claim to the stool. While each faction may have a legitimate claim; it is only when concessions are made that a solution will be found. Though difficult, one of the factions must be willing to let go the throne for a new rotation to kick in because the rotation that was started in 1919 by the dzase obviously has not worked as expected.

\textsuperscript{86} Abudus are known supporters of the NPP while the Andanis support the NDC.
However, any such concessions ought to be sealed by a court of competence, well documented and stored for future reference should the need be.

Finally, there should be a conscious effort by the government, National and Regional Houses of Chiefs and the Ga Mashie Stool to codify the succession line to the Ga Mantse stool as mandated by Article 272(b) of the 1992 Constitution. This is by no means an easy task as attempts at such codification in the eastern Region failed. However, the Registrar at the National Houses of Chiefs, Mr. Alexander K. Essien, in an interview indicated that, the Ashanti Region has successfully undergone such codification exercise (personal communication, February 25, 2016). The codification of the succession laws will replace the usual resort to oral tradition and clearly spell out the ruling houses and lines of succession. This will remove any ambiguity should the stool become vacant.

**5.3 Research Implication**

The goal of this research was to contribute to the conflict literature on chieftaincy in Ghana by grounding empirical research on the causes of chieftaincy conflicts using the Ga Mashie conflict as a case study. By doing so, it is the hope of the researcher that this research has contributed to a clearer and theoretically grounded understanding of the cause of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, and in particular that of the Ga Mashie. It is also my hope that by adopting the Relative Deprivation Theory as discussed in Chapter 1, this research has further expanded the factors that motivate people to fight or not in any given circumstance. With the understanding of relative deprivation as the experience of being deprived of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled to have, all sides (between the two ruling houses and among the competing candidates in the two ruling houses) in the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict share similar
experiences. In such situations, when expectations do not meet attainment, there is a high
tendency for people to confront those, who they hold responsible for depriving them of their
ambition, as has been the case in the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict. Finally, the researcher
hopes that this study will provide a positive contribution to governments and policy makers
dealing with chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana and beyond. The study has shown that the reliance on
the formal mechanisms in chieftaincy conflict does not always lead to an end of the chieftaincy
conflict because of the winner- loser outcome of such mechanisms. Hence, an approach that
emphasizes on non-formal mechanism such as mediation would be most desirable for solving
chieftaincy conflicts.

This research has highlighted some of the flaws in the assumption of modernization
theorist on traditional institutions. The assumption by the modernization theorist that traditions
are backward, not developmental and mutually exclusive of modernity is flawed in many
respects. For example, the chieftaincy institution, as indicated earlier, has taken on its new
challenge as ‘agents of development’ in the modern politics of Ghana. Many chiefs in Ghana
today are championing developmental projects in their various locations. Chiefs in Ghana
continue to serve as a useful link between governments and their people regardless of the modern
political representation channels espoused by the modernization theorist. This research has
therefore highlighted the robustness of the chieftaincy institution in spite of the various
impediments and attempts to eliminate it.

In addition, this research has also expanded our understanding of the factors that account
for the numerous chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, and what different people in different places
and in different times may consider being of ‘value’\textsuperscript{87} to them. In the case of the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict, it is more of intangible goods (such as honour, prestige, respect, etc.) than tangible items in the form of lands and other properties. The Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict shows the interplay of different levels of authority and individuals within the Ga community. The most being the interplay between the colonial and post-colonial political structures such as Ga Traditional Council, which has no roots in pre-colonial traditional political offices and traditional institutions that have their roots in pre-colonial traditional offices. The outcome of such interaction as shown in this research has been the conflicting interpretations of who the rightful successor to the Ga Mashie throne should be. Other outcomes are the disagreements about customs and traditions of the Ga people with particular reference to succession and contested versions of ancestral and hereditary rights to political office as the current case against Dr. Joe Blankson and George Tackie Abia shows.

More importantly, this research has shown the weaknesses in some of the mechanism put in place by the State to resolve these chieftaincy conflicts. The formal mechanisms, in particular the Judicial Committee of the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs, have not been able to successfully deal with the numerous petitions that have brought before it against Dr. Joe Blankson and George Tackie Abia in particular. The delays in settling the matter has led to occasional clashes among the supporters of each group especially during the celebration of the \textit{Homowo festival}, because each group would want to celebrate the festival as the Ga Mantse by having access to the Ga Mantse palace in Kaneshie, Accra. In addition to this, the Judicial Committee lacks the necessary financial resources to enable the members sit regularly to adjudicate these matters.

\textsuperscript{87} Value as used here refers to anything that any group of people may find significant enough to fight for. This includes both tangible things (land, property, etc.) and intangible things (prestige, fame, honour, etc.).
5.4 Future Research

The study has opened up many opportunities for future research. Future research may look at the inter-relationship between gender and chieftaincy to assess the gender dimensions of the chieftaincy institution. In addition, there is very limited literature and research on the activities of the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs and especially the Judicial Committees of these Houses. This research further leads to the question of land and chieftaincy, ethnicity and chieftaincy and democratic representation and chieftaincy. These questions were beyond the scope of this research. Further research into these areas will enhance the understanding of traditional institutions in Ghana and Africa as a whole.
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APPENDIX 1:  LIST OF GA MANTSE (KINGS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of King</th>
<th>Period of Rule</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nii Ayi Kushi</td>
<td>1510 – 1535</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Nii Ayite</td>
<td>1535 – 1560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Nii Koi Nalai</td>
<td>1560 – 1585</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Owura Mampong Okai</td>
<td>1585 – 1610</td>
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<td>5. Queen Dode Akaibi</td>
<td>1610 – 1635</td>
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<td>6. Nii Okaikoi</td>
<td>1635 – 1660</td>
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<td>7. Nii Ashangmor</td>
<td>1660 – 1680</td>
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<td>8. Nii Ayi</td>
<td>1680 – 1700</td>
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<td>9. Nii Ayikuma Teiko Baa</td>
<td>1700 – 1733</td>
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<td>10. Nii Ofori Tibo</td>
<td>1733 – 1739</td>
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<td>11. Nii Tete Ahene</td>
<td>1740 – 1782</td>
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<td>12. Nii Teiko Tsuru</td>
<td>1782 – 1787</td>
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<td>13. Nii Saba Osepree</td>
<td>1787 – 1801</td>
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<td>14. Nii Amugi I</td>
<td>1802 – 1812</td>
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<td>15. Nii Kudza Okai</td>
<td>1812 – 1823</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Nii Adama Akuradza</td>
<td>1823 – 1825</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Nii Taki Kome I</td>
<td>1825 – 1856</td>
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<td>18. Nii Ofori Gakpo</td>
<td>1856 – 1859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Nii Yaote</td>
<td>1859 – 1862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Nii Taki Tawia I</td>
<td>1862 – 1902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Nii Taki Yaboi</td>
<td>1919 – 1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Nii Taki Obili II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>**Boni Nii Tacki Adama Latse II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Nii Taki Tawia III rule is been contested and is currently pending at the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs. He however died in December 2012.

**Boni Nii Tacki Adama Latse II is currently gazetted as the Ga Mantse. However, there is a petition against his installation as Ga Mantse at the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs, and a suit filled at the Accra High Court challenging the processes leading to his name been gazetted in the National Register of Chiefs.
APPENDIX II: CFREB CONSENT FORM

Researcher, Faculty, Department, Telephone & Email:
Paul Acheampong Boakye
Department of Political Science
University of Calgary
(403) 220-220-6482/ (587) 215-8380
paul.boakye@ucalgary.ca

Title of Thesis:
Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana: A case study of the Ga Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict under the Fourth Republic

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information. The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Purpose of the Study
This research seeks to explore the age-long Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict (succession dispute) in the Greater Accra region. The research seeks to investigate two specific questions: (i) how colonial policies sowed the seed for the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict; and (ii) how various governments and political parties have fuelled the Ga Mashie conflicts since the Fourth Republic. In addition to these two specific questions, the research shall also attempt to explore the following questions:

i. Why have the state institutions failed to resolve the Ga Mashie chieftaincy crisis?
ii. To what extent are these chieftaincy conflicts linked to national politics?
iii. What are the effects of these conflicts on Ghana’s democratization process?
iv. What are the effects of these conflicts on Ghanaians and the development of the country as a whole?

This study is to enable the researcher (Paul Acheampong Boakye) complete his MA thesis, which is a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts. The questions you will be asked will deal only with your area of professional expertise; no questions of a personal or tangential nature will be entertained. The researcher would appreciate your professional opinion in order to answer their research question(s), and learn about your area of expertise.
What Will I Be Asked To Do?

By participating in this study you will be asked to take part in a face-to-face interview, unless you have other preferences. The researcher will accept all responsibility for travelling to a mutually agreed upon location. The interviews will run for a period of one (1) hour, longer if your schedule permits and you agree. Should a follow up interview be necessary, you may be contacted to ascertain availability.

With your professional expertise and knowledge, you will be asked to provide insights into chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana and the Ga-Mashie chieftaincy conflict in particular. The information provided will be used towards the interviewer’s completion of the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

The completed thesis will be graded as by the thesis supervisor, Dr. Donald I. Ray. It will also become part of the graduate student’s understanding of the topic being researched, and if it is relevant to their future research, may appear and therefore be distributed via conference papers, and professional publications. Any use of the interview material for thesis, papers, or presentations outside of this specific MA thesis will be consistent with the consent originally given by the participants.

If you wish to take part in the study and have your information publically accredited or to remain anonymous, then please indicate so on the form below, and sign your name after completing the form. Participation is completely voluntary, and you may refuse to participate in this study at any time. You have the right to decline to answer any and all questions, and may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Your answers do not require you to divulge or discuss confidential or sensitive information. Please contact the author within thirty (30) days of the interview to ensure that your data is not incorporated into the study should you decide to withdraw. If you decide to withdraw from the study during or following the interview, the information collected can and will be destroyed.

After completing the form please return it to the researcher, either during the face-to-face interview, by faxing it to 403-282-4773 marked to the attention of Paul Acheampong Boakye or by emailing it to paul.boakye@ucalgary.ca

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?
Participants reserve the right to privacy. There are several options for you to consider if you decide to take part in this research. You can choose all, some, or none of them. Please review each of these options and choose Yes or No:

I grant permission to be audio taped: Yes: ___ No: ___
I grant permission to have my institutional affiliation to be used: Yes: ___ No: ___
I grant permission to have my professional qualifications cited: Yes: ___ No: ___
I wish to remain anonymous: Yes: ___ No: ___
I wish to remain anonymous, but you may refer to me by a pseudonym: Yes: ___ No: ___
The pseudonym I choose for myself is: _______________________________________
You may quote me and use my name: Yes: ___ No: ___
I would like to be sent an electronic copy of the thesis upon completion Yes:___ No:___
Sample Questions for a participant
1. Describe your role within the chieftaincy sector
2. Can you briefly tell us about chieftaincy or traditional governance in Ghana?
3. How would you explain the numerous chieftaincy conflicts in the country?
4. What accounts for the on-going Ga-Mashie chieftaincy conflict?
5. Can you describe the outcome/impact of these conflicts on the nation’s peace and security, as well as national development?
6. Can you describe the chieftaincy conflict resolution mechanism in place (i.e. the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs)?
7. How can we minimize or eliminate chieftaincy conflicts?

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate?

The information provided by participants will be used in the completion of the researcher’s graduate thesis. This work will be seen and graded by the thesis supervisor, Dr. Donald I. Ray. As noted above, the data collected will also become part of the stock of knowledge carried by the student conducting the research. A possible risk is being identified as having taken part in the study. The researcher will do their utmost to reduce this risk through respecting the wishes of participants who prefer to remain anonymous or make confidential statements, and by properly storing the information provided by participants to ensure it is not distributed with participant’s identities.

Benefits include a broader and deeper understanding of the academic area of the research thesis. Participants may gain a better understanding of the views of other experts on chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. Policy suggestions put forward in the final report may be of interest to participants, particularly insights into resolving chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. Electronic copies of the thesis can be sent to participants at no cost upon completion.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

Interviews will be recorded using both a digital recorder and handwritten notes, unless the participant indicates a preference to not be recorded. The recorded interviews and written notes will be transcribed by the researcher into an electronic document, after which the original digital recording or handwritten notes will be permanently deleted or shredded. The electronic copies of the interview and corresponding notes will be kept for the duration of the researcher’s MA program, to provide the researcher the opportunity to complete his thesis.

The participant may at any time request that information go “off the record”. NO PART of this information will appear anywhere in the thesis, or any other work by the researcher. The researcher wishes to encourage open and honest communication and will respect this obligation to the upmost. At any time prior to the submission of the thesis for assessment (April 30, 2016), you may retroactively request information to go “off the record”. Any “off the record” information will not be used or connected with the participant in any way.
Participants may indicate a preference to not be recorded, or to be anonymous altogether. You will be assigned on this form and only cited in the thesis using an identifier code, for example, “Interviewee 001” and so on for each respective participant.

The recorded interviews and written notes will be transcribed by the researcher into an electronic document, after which the original digital recording and handwritten notes will be permanently deleted or shredded. All information provided will only bear the identifier code of the participant. Only the researcher and his supervisor will have access to the master list identifying each participant and their affiliation. This list will be kept on a separate encrypted USB Flash Drive and locked in a filing cabinet in the researcher’s home. The information will be kept for up to one year, after which the data will be erased, and the USB Drive reformatted.

Participants are free to withdraw their participation at any time before, during, or after the interview (by March 31, 2016). The information provided by withdrawn participants will not be used in the researcher’s thesis, or any other work. All interview notes and transcribed interview recordings taken up to that point will be shredded, or permanently deleted.

Signatures
Your signature on this form indicates that 1) you understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research thesis, and 2) you agree to participate in the research thesis. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research thesis at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant’s Name: (please print) _____________________________________________
Participant’s Signature: ___________________________ Date: ______________
Researcher’s Name: (please print) ___________________________ Date: ______________
Researcher’s Signature: ___________________________ Date: ______________

Questions/Concerns
If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Researcher
Paul Acheampong Boakye
MA Student
Department of Political Science
University of Calgary
(587) 215-8380
paul.boakye@ucalgary.ca

If you have any concerns about the way you’ve been treated as a participant, please contact the Research Ethics Analyst, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-4283; email: cfreb@ucalgary.ca
A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference. The investigator has kept a copy of the consent form.
INTRODUCTORY AND RECRUITMENT LETTERS

Department of Political Science,
University of Calgary,
2500 University Dr. NW, Calgary,
AB, T2N 1N4
December 7, 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am Paul Boakye, an MA student with the Department of Political Science, University of Calgary. I am currently in my 2nd year conducting a research on the topic Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana: A case study of the Ga-Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict under the Fourth Republic. This research is a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science.

I would be most grateful if you could grant me an interview of about one (1) hour on the above subject and also provide me with any information to assist me complete the above project successfully. The interview will mainly focus on issues on chieftaincy conflict with particular attention on the Ga-Mashie chieftaincy dispute. Please find below sample of the questions for your perusal:

1. Describe your role within the chieftaincy sector
2. Can you briefly tell us about chieftaincy or traditional governance in Ghana?
3. How would you explain the numerous chieftaincy conflicts in the country?
4. What accounts for the on-going Ga-Mashie chieftaincy conflict?
5. Can you describe the outcome/impact of these conflicts on the nation’s peace and security, as well as national development?
6. Can you describe the chieftaincy conflict resolution mechanism in place (i.e the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs)?
7. How can we resolve the Ga-Mashie chieftaincy dispute

The interview will be audio-taped with the prior consent of the interviewee. Where consent is not given for audio-taping, the researcher shall make hand-written notes during the interview.

Please be informed that the University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board would approve this study before its commencement, hence, I will be under strict obligation to observe all ethical implications of the study, including the protection of your confidentiality, anonymity and freedom throughout the course of the study and after.

Should you have any concerns or questions, please contact me via the following: email: paul.boakye@ucalgary.ca or phone: +1 587 215 8380.

I look forward to hearing favorably from you. Thank you

Yours faithfully,

Paul A. Boakye.
Dear Sir/Madam,

**Request for Interview with Mr. Paul Acheampong (MA Student and Researcher) for the completion of his MA Thesis at the University of Calgary**

The above-named researcher is currently conducting a research project — *Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana: A case study of the Ga-Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict under the Fourth Republic* — for the purpose of completing his MA thesis at the University of Calgary. The research aims at tracing the historical evolution of the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflicts, and explaining how social choices are made relating to chieftaincy disputes.

The fundamental goal of the study is to provide an ideational perspective on an identity-based chieftaincy conflict such as that of the Ga-Mashie coupled with outside interference that began with colonialism and later political parties and elites after independence. The study will also examine the inability of governments and state institutions to resolve the chieftaincy crisis in the country by examining some of the interventions put in place by the state to deal with these chieftaincy disputes.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this study. The researcher is, therefore, under strict obligation to observe all ethical implications of the study, including the protection of participants' confidentiality, anonymity and freedom throughout the course of the study and after.

As part of this study, the researcher needs to conduct an individual face-to-face semi structured interview (at least 45 minutes) with people who are experts and knowledgeable on chieftaincy conflicts, particularly that of Ga-Mashie.

We would therefore be most grateful, if your organization could recommend someone in your institution/organization to grant us an interview on the above subject matter. The recommended individual is, however, under no obligation to participate in the interview.
The interview will be audio-taped with the prior consent of the interviewee. Where consent is not given for audio-taping, the researcher shall make hand-written notes during the interview.

Your help in identifying potential participants for this study is warmly appreciated as it will go a long way to help shape future policymaking in Ghana on chieftaincy related issues, especially in the area of conflict resolution.

The interviews are expected to take place from January 15, 2016 to March 15, 2016. If you would like to obtain more information about the research project, please contact the researchers below.

Best regards,

**Researcher**
Paul Acheampong Boakye  
MA Student  
Department of Political Science  
University of Calgary  
(587) 215-8380  
[paul.boakye@ucalgary.ca](mailto:paul.boakye@ucalgary.ca)
APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Thesis title:
Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana: A case study of the Ga-Mashie Chieftaincy Conflict under the Fourth Republic

1. Describe your role within the chieftaincy sector
2. Can you briefly tell us about chieftaincy or traditional governance in Ghana?
3. How would you consider the impact of colonialism on chieftaincy in Ghana?
4. How has the post-colonial state impacted the chieftaincy institution?
5. Is the chieftaincy institution still relevant?
6. How do you assess the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs
7. How would you explain the numerous chieftaincy conflicts in the country?
8. What accounts for the on-going Ga-Mashie chieftaincy conflict?
9. Has land (i.e. Ga lands) played in any role in your view?
10. Can you describe the outcome/impact of these conflicts on the nation’s peace and security, as well as national development?
11. What significant roles can the Ga-state Council and the Greater Accra Regional House of Chiefs play in resolving the Ga chieftaincy crisis
12. Can you describe the chieftaincy conflict resolution mechanism in place (i.e the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs)?
13. How can we resolve the Ga-Mashie chieftaincy dispute and other chieftaincy conflicts in the country
14. Any final comments on the above subject matter
15. Please your name, institution and position
### GLOSSARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We”</td>
<td>Ga word for family or Ruling House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agbuntse</td>
<td>It is a tree which, attained symbolic value as a reference to the spot where the civil war between James Town and Usher Town took place in 1884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akpade</td>
<td>Red earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akutso</td>
<td>Quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akwashong</td>
<td>An authority comprised of the various captains of the various quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akwashongtse</td>
<td>Head of the Akwashong (The supreme military commander)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amagah</td>
<td>It is Ewe name for a chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asafo</td>
<td>It is the military organization of the Akan and Ga peoples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asafoatsemei</td>
<td>an authority comprising the leaders/captains of the various military organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asantehene</td>
<td>King of the Asante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzase</td>
<td>Ga kingmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzasetse</td>
<td>Head of the kingmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpokpoi</td>
<td>It is a special meal made of unfermented corn powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpokpoi</td>
<td>A special meal made of unfermented corn powder and sprinkled during the Ga homowo festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manbii</td>
<td>The people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mantse</td>
<td>Ga name for a chief or King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mantsemei</td>
<td>It is the plural for the Ga word ‘mantse’ that means ‘chiefs’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naa</td>
<td>Title of a Ga queen. It is also used a title for a King in some parts of northern Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nii</td>
<td>Title of a Ga King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohene</td>
<td>Akan name for a chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakumo Gbatsu</td>
<td>Shrine room of the Ga people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakumo-toshishi</td>
<td>The shrine of the God of War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikulebii</td>
<td>Aborigines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sipi</td>
<td>Ga title for those responsible for the distribution of ammunitions during war times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitse</td>
<td>Landlord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wulomo (wulomei)</td>
<td>Chief priest (Chief priests)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>