

Yaa Asantewaa Redux: The Re-articulation of Womanhood in Post-Colonial Ghana

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"Chop Bars To Be Modernised," Daily Graphic, (Ghana) Aug. 10, 1977.

On April 21, 1975, General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, the Head of State of Ghana, the former Gold Coast colony and leader of the National Redemption Council (NRC), established the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD). The following day in an article appearing in the Daily Graphic, one of the most widely read news publications in Ghana, entitled "Kutu Inaugurates New council...Woman Power," the stated intent behind creating the NCWD was made clear. The council was created to give women the opportunity to maximize and realize their potential.[1] Acheampong in the council's inauguration address stated, "it was society as a whole that suffered or lost more if women's potential in brains energy and organizing power remained unused." [2] The outwardly appearance of this statement would be an indication that Acheampong was both progressive and resolute in identifying women as a necessary component of the Ghanaian national scene, however, the sub-caption of the article "We'll now make full use for our development," is telling.[3]

The creation of the NCWD was approximately 18 years after Ghana achieved independence. The years following Ghana's triumphant breakthrough as an

independent nation was fraught with instability. Numerous coup de tats jostled the country of the Black Stars between military regimes and civilian governments. Internal strife over the direction of the new state was amplified by a tenuous under-diversified economic system characterized by the inherent volatility of the international cocoa market. Internally, and perhaps as an afterthought, Acheampong looked to women as a resource to achieve the stable foundation for growth which to that point had been elusive for Ghana. Accordingly, this step to remediate gender inequality, while deserving a modicum of adulation for its attempt at progress, speaks to the idea that nation building was viewed, at least in Ghana, as a job best suited for men. In the same breath, by situating the value of women within the scope of Ghana's national development, Acheampong relegates women to little more than a tool, an object to which the nation or perhaps more succinctly, the government intended to co-opt for its own use. By conflating ideas of feminine utility with feminine liability, Acheampong gives license to a paradoxical image of women in Ghana. Women were both the problem and the solution to Ghana's political and economic woes.

One of the primary goals of the NCWD was to bridge the gap that existed between two types of women—those that were educated and therefore able to contribute to the productive sector of the economy, specifically socially mobile middle class women and those that were uneducated and dabbled in unproductive sectors of the economy, which is code for market women.[4] In effect, even at a point when women were the focus of change, they were either unabashedly or implicitly subordinated. By delineating what types of women were productive or unproductive, the Ghanaian government at that time attempted to make womanhood into an artifact of its own design. That men dominated the seats in the Ghanaian parliament who would see to the council's efficacy was further compounded by the overtly masculine nature of the military.[5] The attempt to control women, and in this case define their productivity is nothing new in Ghana. However, as the sources indicate, women in Ghana were adaptable and took action on their own terms—only fitting into round holes when they decide there are no longer any benefits to being square pegs.

Several questions arise from this topical analysis. What were the outcomes for this first generation of decolonized women during the national instability of the country during the 1970s? What were the changes in the shifting dynamics of female autonomy and the conjugal sphere? And what strategies did women employ to both combat and integrate themselves in the fluidity of change?

There is a noticeable lack of research concerning middle class Akan women in post colonial Ghana as they faced a paradox in that their mobility must be intellectualized as being within the architecture of an already established social and cultural order. Accordingly, women's actions were often dictated by the mores of Akan culture and society. This paper, therefore argues that middle class Akan women in the 1970s were the node of transition between old customary attachments and reconfigurations of their identity in the post-colonial Ghanaian state. The environment they lived in stifled their opportunities resulting in limited outcomes. Yet, these same women stood as vanguards for subsequent generations of women as they continued to craft strategies for autonomy through marriage, persistent pursuit of education for themselves, their young children and dependents, and through migration.

A groundswell of scholarship dedicated to women in Africa began in the 1960s and erupted into a veritable geyser in the 1970s. Largely undertaken by feminist anthropologists literature about women in Africa stressed the binary relationship of women as either dominated or resistant with particular attention being paid to the former in light of the heavy influence of Marxist-feminism in early gender studies.[6] Denise Paulme's *Women of Tropical Africa* stands as an example in considering women as dominated objects. Anthropological discourse on African women has been decidedly tethered to analyzing gender inequality, which assumed the premise that inequality sprang up out of a previously equitable social milieu.[7] Some of the egalitarian principles of early African societies, and in the case of this research, of the Akan of southern Ghana, were based on matrilineal heritage (or descent coming from the mother). British historians of African states were confounded by matrilineal heritage and thus applied an overwhelmingly colonial slant to investigations of gender in an African context.[8] This slant attempted to surmise matrilineal as an anomaly. In response studies, of African women underwent a paradigm shift as new theories and perspectives on African women were formulated on the basis of "the idea of gender relations in some non-western societies was marked by parity prior to the degradation produced by colonization was not abandoned...(which) influenced neighboring disciplines." [9]

Christine Opong, in 1974, presents one of the few scholarly treatises on middle class women in Ghana. Focusing primarily on the southern part of the country and the Akan people, Opong argues that the changing landscape of the institution of marriage created opportunities for women that were invariably tied to obligations to uphold familial obligations (conjugal and kin related), work obligations, and personal aspirations thus limiting women's access for development in the matrilineal society.[10] Christine Opong, Christine Okali, and Beverly Houghton articulated a groundbreaking

treatment of African women by arguing that women's position in Ghanaian society was on a steady decline into obscurity and perhaps worse—anonymity in *Woman Power: Retrograde Steps in Ghana* published in 1975. Here, the authors argue that discrepancies in access to education precluded women from cultivating autonomy relative to men and therefore undercut their play for power in decision making in the household, socially, and for self.[11]

Claire Robertson's *Sharing the Same Bowl: A Socioeconomic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana* published in 1986, attempted to historicize the agency of women in Ghana, but focused primarily on the political and economic determinants of success in the shadow of colonial contact. While articulating the agency of women in this manner ignores the pre-colonial context, Robertson's work sheds light on another binary construct of women's studies on the African continent pertaining to women's control over their own production and reproduction. Production in this case extends to maintaining care for the house and children, work in the conjugal domain and in reciprocity of labor including the obligation of providing foodstuffs for the family. Robertson argues reproduction is not the sole provision of the biological sphere rather it also belongs to the social sphere as women were the sole arbiters of childrearing and therefore transmitters of cultural values for future social beings.[12] Volleying back to anthropology is the work of Edholm, Harris, and Young entitled *Conceptualizing Women*, published in 1986, which is widely cited as one of the most integral scholarly works on women's reproduction concurring that our conception of women is distorted if their reproductive capacities are not carefully treated as a standalone variable rather than being mixed with other constructs of the African feminine identity of reproduction as solely biological"[13]

In 1989, historian and anthropologist Gwendolyn Mikell provides an illuminating example of how the monocrop cash system, introduced to Ghana by way of British colonialism, swept Ghana up into the undertow of perpetual flux creating cycles of dependency on external capital.[14] Mikell argues that the cocoa cash economy adversely reconfigured women's status as individuals and along matrilineal lines. Additionally, Mikell argues that the change in valuation of cocoa as an economic enterprise created tension in the conjugal sphere as resources were continuously strained. The 1990s and early 2000s would demonstrate a modification of the discourse from modes of productive and reproductive capacities by endeavoring to identify women's strategies not as an analog to colonialism but rather as vestiges of pre-colonial practices while still focusing on issues of control and autonomy.

Jean Allman and Victoria Tashjian complicate our understanding of the colonial record of Asante at the onset of colonialism and indirect rule in *I Will Not Eat Stone: A Women's History of Colonial Asante* published in 2000. Allman and Tashjian showed how women adapted to and challenged the imposition of British colonial rule as imperial rule beset Ghana in a pattern of gender chaos. From an economic and social perspective, Allman and Tashjian further illuminated how the imperatives of the global market place and capitalism stagnated infrastructures of African countries and imposed social class stratifications resulting in disparities of wealth between the poor and a burgeoning middle class.

Takyiwaa Manuh's *Wives, Children and Intestate Succession* as well as *The 11th region of Ghana: Ghanaians Abroad*, published in 1995 and 2006 respectively provided grounding in the difficulties faced by women. *Wives, Children and Intestate Succession* discussed the statuses of wives and children in Ghana as a result of legal pluralism while *The 11th region* discussed the trends of migration and the creation of a Ghanaian Diaspora. Migration by the 1970s had not only become the prerogative of the middle class but also considers how women used migration as a tool by choice as well as necessity.

Building on this research, this paper continues to focus on middle class women by first locating the persistence of older cultural norms during a transitional period in Ghana for this first generation of decolonized women.[15] This highlights the challenges of negotiated and reconfigured spaces of gender for a subset of women who by virtue of their mobility were confined by adherence to cultural norms while also balancing aspirations of equity within the conjugal family and their own ambitions to increase their individual stock as well as that of their children. In other words middle class women faced the constraints of accepted social and cultural frameworks. This necessitated skillful maneuvering in the realm of decision making that women outside the margins of acceptable social conduct did not have to adhere to, while also being subjected to the subordination attendant to their traditional gender roles as women in the Akan culture.

Methodology and Sources

Oral histories together with newspapers were the most important sources utilized in this research. Evaluating outcomes for women cannot be systematically executed without understanding the morass of everyday life to which newspaper periodicals are uniquely suitable in providing while oral histories provide firsthand accounts of the 'everyday.' Archival research was also instrumental in conceiving this work. Archival research was conducted at the UCLA library on location in Los Angeles, California as well as

electronically with the Stanford library archives in Palo Alto California. Consultation sessions were held with the archivists and history faculty at the University of Legon in Ghana electronically.

The sources used for this research are varied including oral histories, government documents, and newspapers. Primary sources are taken in the form of oral histories from 12 men and women (8 women, 4 men) who were all born in southern Ghana. Seven of the informants were born in Kumasi, the capital city of the Ashanti region, three from Sekondi on the coastal expanse of the Ashanti region, one from Ahombre and one from Anyinyasin both coastal towns. The age range for the interviewees is 52-77 years old.[16] All of the informants are of the Akan people and speak at least two languages, English and Twi, the predominant dialect for the Akan. The class orientation of interviewees was middle-class.[17] Borrowing from techniques employed by Oppong, this research delves into issues such as access to education which was of paramount importance during the Nkrumah years, the expectation of marriage and motherhood for all Akan women which society decided shaped the identities of these women as adults, and their occupational choices that helped them define their own identities. This shared background places the informants at the transformative juncture between adolescence and adulthood when the complexities of the larger world start coming into focus. In particular in this instance, the informants represent the first generation of decolonized Ghanaian women who undertook the task of creating an identity out of a history when their identity was largely ignored.

Historical Background

To analyze the obstacles of gender norms of Akan women, we must first understand how British Colonialism affected relationships between men and women. British colonialism impacted the political, social, and economic structure of the Gold Coast family in three significant ways. First, the colonial administration attempted to pass laws to address the matrilineal descent model that they deemed out of step relative to their own customs. Accordingly, the colonial regime intended to privatize property ownership and change the customs of inheritance, although the latter would be preserved in some form by appeals made by Ghanaians who wanted to uphold the traditional structure of inheritance. Second, was the creation of missionary driven education which sought to educate Ghanaian men and women, to indoctrinate Ghanaian children with a Christian ethic and to, perhaps more importantly, train them to work within the colonial mercantilist economy that had evolved into a global capitalist economy. Most boys were trained to be civil servants, clerks, store managers, teachers, and most girls were trained to be bank clerks,

secretaries, teachers, and nurses prior to decolonization. Third, the introduction of capitalist ideology enmeshed in the cocoa cash economy.[18]

In response to the changing status of women under colonialism, women used their ingenuity to become successful in markets as traders, an extension of their pre-colonial trading activity, and as producers of foodstuffs for consumption of the family. Women also had roles as producers of surpluses for sale or trade, however their individual mobility was severely capped, as they were largely unable to obtain land on their own without the assistance of their husbands after independence. During this time, and even more so during the Kwame Nkrumah years between 1957-1966, women were politically active and made some headway towards gender equality. Jeffrey Ahlman's article *A New Type of Citizen: Youth Gender, in the Ghanaian Builder's Brigade* discusses the Nkrumah regime's progress in training women and men through the Builder's Brigade program. However, it is apparent that the disparity between men and women in labor sectors was still overwhelming dominated by men. Of the 8,500 young Ghanaians employed through the Brigade program in 1959, only 420 were women.[19] Political and economic unrest in the upcoming decade would derail women's progress however miniscule in scale.[20]

For the Nkrumah years and even shortly thereafter, as Charles Leeward, a former clerk at the Ghanaian Port Authority recalled, "Ghana was so good...nobody wanted to leave and go abroad...my rent for a two bedroom flat was \$3.00 a month!"[21] In addition to affordable rent, education had been nationalized and mandated by the government enabling access to primary education to all Ghanaians. However, by the end of the 1960s and into the beginning of the 1970s, political turmoil in the form of successive coups ousting Nkrumah in 1966 and Kofi Busia in 1972 from office and economic downturn catalyzed by the drop in the price of Ghana's number one export, cocoa on the global market, transformed the horizons of the country. In 1972, General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong, leader of the National Redemption Council, conducted a successful military coup of the Busia administration and placed himself as head of state of Ghana. Acheampong's economic and intrinsically political policy of *Yentua!* (translated as "We will not pay") soured international trade relations with other countries creating shortages of imported goods.[22] Shortages of commodities coupled with soaring inflation of the Ghanaian monetary note the Cedi, and rampant unemployment were a recipe for an economic collapse.

To that end, as culture defines values imbedded in policy and as policy regulates interactions between people, this research is an analysis of

institutions—cultural, political, and social. What follows in the first section of this work seeks to investigate the spaces where relationships are adjudicated by conventional cultural norms as perceived through gender or what I have termed cultural jurisdictions of gender for Ghanaians of the first post-colonial generation.[23] Identified by kinship, property and inheritance and the politics of gender, cultural jurisdictions of gender provide a framework with which to understand what opportunities were available to women.

The second part of this undertaking entitled “Con-Jungle” the geography of marriage’, identifies the institution of marriage as a constantly shifting terrain where terms of power were routinely being defined and redefined by both men and women historically. This resulted in competition in the conjugal domain between men and women wherein the pursuits of female autonomy versus ascribed masculine hegemony were in persistent limbo with the control of familial resources and power of decision-making hanging in the balance. The final section of this work considers challenging prevailing definitions of female autonomy on terms that were both dictated to women and conversely defined by women. Focusing on migration as a tool or the “feminization of migration,” education, and breadwinning, the last section serves to discuss how women engaged in various strategies to redefine themselves and their feminine support networks, or the re-articulation of the matriclan.

Cultural Jurisdictions of Gender: Kinship, Property and Inheritance, & Politics

By assessing the obligations associated with matrilineal descent, politics and issues of inheritance and land rights (which have as a by-product the ballast of status and authority), this section considers the constraints levied on women as a result of cultural practices and customs and the political environment of the 1970s. In attempting to understand the milieu that formed the basis of Akan culture and gender relationships, this research seeks to evaluate the prospects for success of Akan women by locating the mechanisms and parameters of the environment in which social and economic relationships take place.

Urbanization and correlating migration trends (both transnational and intrastate) have largely created an intermixture of ethnicities, religions, and more than 30 different dialects in Ghana. The Akan people populate most of the southern part of the country including the littoral regions and the hinterlands of Ashanti. The Akan have traditionally practiced matrilineal descent. The means by which inheritance is passed through generations of a family is through the mother’s lineage whereas Western models ascribe to patrilineal descent; heirs to property are determined by father’s lineage.[24] A

woman's children belong to her line while the father belongs to his mother's matrilineal line. Accordingly, there was a division of labor between men and women with equivalent obligations, responsibilities, and say in the decision making process. The British Empire's implementation of the cocoa cash economy distorted the characteristic of the division of labor in the Akan culture.

The cocoa boom in the early part of the 20th century boosted the Gold Coast economy and also relegated women to positions wherein husbands exploited the unpaid labor of their wives and their children to work their cocoa holdings.[25] This development not only changed the dynamics of the traditional division of labor in Akan society, but also taken along with the attempts to privatize ownership of land made all profits and land associated with the cocoa cash economy that of the husband. In addition to not being compensated for their labor, women and children had no clear rights to property or security from their husbands/fathers as any land or property would be the rightful property of the husband's abusua (matrilineal line). This made women dependent on husbands to create cocoa farms for their wives and also marked a change in ideas of inheritance. Estate distributions began to be dictated by fathers/husbands that left wills granting their land and property holdings to their widows and children upon their death rather than their matrikin.

The Marriage Ordinance of 1884, which will be discussed in greater detail, flowed counter to the established method of succession in Akan society and resulted in women using the court system to challenge claims made by their husband's abusuas if the husband died intestate. That the matrikin wielded some measure of authority over the financial security and labor of women and her children provided matrikin with jurisdictional latitude and control over women's prospects for accumulation and survival—in other words, matrikin of husbands controlled women's autonomy. In the 20th century, the issue most in contention in the court system between widows and their husband's matrikin was rights to property and inheritance.[26]

The privatization of property as a result of the cocoa cash economy between 1910 and 1930 further complicated the already tenuous interpretation of property and inheritance. As land began to be increasingly bought up for cultivation of cocoa as a result of to intrastate migration and cross border migration by Nigerians and Ivoirians, women without capital from men were not in a position to own property. This often left women and their children without any security who by virtue of the discreet conjugal family were also increasingly cut off by matrikin. The amalgamation of British law and Gold

Coast customary law created what Takyiwaa Manuh has described as the nebulous standing of women and children in Ghana.[27] Beatrice Akua Duncan's *Cocoa, Marriage, Labour and Land in Ghana: Some Matrilineal and Patrilineal Perspectives* calls upon a Ghanaian proverb to articulate the dislocation of women from their kin by virtue of cocoa cash economy. Duncan's use of this saying bears quotation. *Awaree boa cocoa* ("marriage helps cocoa.") She juxtaposes that saying with a quote uttered by an informant in her research that exclaimed, *cocoa papae abusua* ("cocoa breaks up kinship relations").[28] There is a logical inference that can be drawn from these two statements.

If marriage helps cocoa, and cocoa breaks up kinship relations, then it logically follows that that marriage breaks up kinship relations due to the imposition of the cocoa capitalist economy in the Akan culture. Property was the conduit to financial sustainability and security. As Allman and Tashjian have shown, the docket for Akan native court systems in Ashanti was chock-full of intestate succession cases in the early decades of the 20th century.[29]

However, the cultural precedent established for jointly owned property (by husbands and wives) wherein the rights of the property were fully allocated to men had lasting effect and was less murky in divorce than in intestate disputes. Linda Dankwa recalled how her mother, Victoria Addo, lost all of the jointly owned property she held with her husband which included a lucrative night club in Accra called Stereo Spot and huge swathes of land that were used for pineapple cultivation for wholesale import and export trading stating "before the finalization of the divorce he (Addo's husband) sold all of their property and all of their stuff. All of her hard work was for nothing and now she did not have a penny and had to take care of five kids." [30] As Manuh has summarized, the issues of property and inheritance would not become any clearer until 1985 when the Intestate Succession Law was ratified 10 years after it had been brought to the Ghanaian parliament as legislation.[31]

As has been well documented in numerous works by Arhin, Akyeampong, Austin and others, women began to find tremendous success as entrepreneurs through trading and in limited cases ownership of cocoa farms. Into the 1940s and 1950s, a small number of women found niches as accumulators of wealth and stature.[32] In an interview conducted for this research Elizabeth Maccani Hayforn recalled "in most cases it was the women that had more money than the men." [33] Helen Asante remembers her great grandmother, Madam Elizabeth Leeward, a wholesale trader was able to provide for all of the members of the family by paying school fees for all of the children, buying land to erect "huge buildings for the family to live" and had an unimaginable amount of gold.[34] However, the occurrences of "big women" in the post-

colonial context were even more rare than during colonialism. Rather, during their lifetimes the informants for this research were embroiled in a sustained version of what Mikell has called “gender chaos.”[35] Subsequent to a succession of coups in the 1960s, the political machinations of the Acheampong regime beginning in 1972 contributed rather than allayed this social conflict.

The political realm invoked a duality of rhetoric that shaped the social environment and was undergirded most vociferously in news media. In an April 22, 1975, article appearing in *The Daily Graphic*, General Acheampong’s speech inaugurating the National Council on Women and Development, an ad hoc government agency which was propped up in response to the United Nations international declaration of 1975 as the “Year of the Woman,” alluded to the premise that statutory law contained no provisions that deterred women from actively participating in the development of the country.[36] The glaring omission in Gen. Acheampong’s statement is the regulatory authority of customary laws and therefore culture that provide the architecture of gendered perceptions of reality particularly for the Akan people. A column in *The Mirror* also dated on April 22, 1975 is entitled “Council honors women of the past” is revealing as it makes little mention of the future work the council would do to improve the lot of women, making the council’s creation more of a homage than a strategic plan of action to help women obtain equality and access on par with men.[37]

Government control over media was pervasive and repressive in the Gold Coast and during the transition to post colonial Ghana. Commensurately, Gen I.K. Acheampong and the NRC controlled the media and used it to promulgate and carry out its agenda. Acheampong’s pleas to women of the middle class morphed into a strategy of attacks against women of the market. As the years waned on and the weight of economic instability became more and more crushing on Ghanaian society, the shift in the NRC’s agenda became noticeable as the tone of the messages to women about women became decidedly more aggressive in newspapers. In an August 10, 1977 article published in the *Daily Graphic*, entitled, “Eradicating anti-social activities from society...Women asked to help,” the activity of market women (identified as profiteering, hoarding and smuggling) were analog to “anti-social activities from society,” which was tantamount to treason against the state—a state that had struggled to create an international identity and develop past the point of colonial residue.[38]

The direst constraint against Acheampong’s authority as head of state was the economic woes facing Ghanaians. Acheampong’s militarization of the market

illustrates the means by which the government attempted to mitigate commodity shortages broadly as well as control the productivity of women domestically.[39] As Claire Robertson has stated, women could always trade, however the measures undertaken by Acheampong as expressed through the news media sought to take the option of trading off the table for women further limiting their outcomes.[40] While print media continued to fan the flames of discord, a review of the National Council on Women and Development requires a closer investigation to advance how we conceptualize the status of and opportunities for women of the Akan people in post-colonial Ghana.

The NCWD aimed to bridge the gap between women from different socioeconomic realities. Women of education were the archetype for acceptable feminine behavior and women of the market represented the proverbial thorn in the side of the Ghanaian national development effort. Befitting the tenor of the international declaration of the year of the woman in 1975, the charter for the NCWD emphasized this objective by sanctioning programs focused on research “that identify areas of greatest need of Ghanaian women.”[41] The NCWD research was undeniably focused on the women of the market who represented the pariahs of this socioeconomic disconnect. The orientation of the NCWD platform suggested that the projects planned under its banner would provide modernized agricultural techniques to women by giving them new technologies that would “revive and improve upon traditional skills.”[42] In actuality, these technologies sought not to improve skills or provide epistemological context to attaining skills but rather to improve efficiency and accordingly increase productivity. The focus on “traditional skills” suggests that the idea of improving women was couched in mechanisms of social organization of the past.

It can be argued that the NCWD hoped to develop a certain type of woman but clearly not all women. There are no instances in the charter of the NCWD that articulate an awareness of the needs and aspirations of the middle class woman though these women were enjoined through political rhetoric to “raise the consciousness of Ghanaian women so that they can attain their full potential” to provide leadership and bring their wayward sisters into the stream of legitimacy and accountable productivity.[43] The council headed by a conglomerate of elite women served in an advisory role to the military government but was not imbued with authority to legislate policy. The United Nations’ coronation of 1975 as the international “Year of the Woman” was a suitable veneer for the government’s objective. Acheampong not only attempted to formulate womanhood along his own standards of acceptability, he also constricted middle class women who occupied the

socially preferential strata of womanhood. The plight of middle class women in Ghana in this context considers the price paid for social mobility. To be socially mobile is historically characterized by a proliferation of a bourgeois class. However, middle class women did not necessarily form the cohesion necessary or have the fiscal autonomy to foment a class revolution. Therefore, mobility for these women must also be contemplated as operating within already existing socially constructed hierarchies that required adherence to gender approved cultural mandates. Middle class women were inserted into a perpetual cycle of acceptable feminine agency. They were compelled to acquiesce to the rhythms of customary gender roles. As Rebecca Okoreeh stated in an interview session, “girls were expected to marry and have babies.” The status of middle class women was precarious as these women were not anomalous but the boundaries of the Akan culture marshaled an existence bordering anonymity.

While Acheampong continued to exhort middle class Ghanaian women towards activism for the cause of national development, he limited the scope of female activism to mitigating the damage caused by the “other” women to society. By creating this division Acheampong exacerbated class cleavages between middle class women and market women as a means to both gain control of an untenable commodities market that had been dominated by women and to keep those acceptable examples of womanhood, the middle class, in their place. In effect, the Acheampong government attempted to control the productive and reproductive economy of women much like the government had in the colonial era in the 1930s as both Allman and Akyeampong have addressed in previous works.[44] Rather than vilifying the accumulation of “public women” or forcing single women to marry in degrading spectacles of round ups as was the case in the 30s, General Acheampong utilized a more sophisticated strategy of divide and conquer waged in the media in an attempt to establish control.

Given that the readership of the Daily Graphic in the 1970s was predominately male and Acheampong’s propensity to curry popular support through the media, the government’s anti-feminist propaganda bled into the social arena and had taken its toll on already straitened gender relations—adding another boundary to cultural jurisdictions of gender. A look at courtship, marriage and conjugal relationships illuminate a pivot point for middle class women as they negotiate the transition of their statuses as women through their roles as mothers and spouses.

“Con-Jungle”: The geography of marriage

To this point this paper has intended to situate the aspirations of women in

Ghana against the precepts of culture, custom, and modernization and has argued that women were limited in their outcomes by the customary relationships between men and women. This section serves to add breadth to the issues already discussed by giving more attention to the means by which men and women negotiated their interests in the conjugal domain. Conjugal is defined as the relationship between men and women, and their dependents if applicable, within the parameters of marriage and childrearing. What strategy did women use to manipulate advantage in this social, political, and economic domain? As marriage changed, how were traditional constructs of marriage mutated historically and to whose advantage?

The sociological paradigm of patriarchy can be extrapolated to understanding gender relations of the Akan. Men drew upon the labor and unique reproductive ability of women for material benefits and to increase wealth and status. Laws and customs made women dependent to men. As stated previously, the Marriage Ordinance of 1884 looked to provide assurances for widows by giving them rights to the land that they cultivated with their husbands but also severely damaged kinship relations while migration often aided in completely severing women from their original matrikin. Again, turning to print media, we can ascertain the communicable attitudes of gender relations fostered by Ghana's cultural horizons.

If the Daily Graphic was used as a direct mouthpiece for the NRC's political agenda, the Graphic's sister publication, The Mirror, though still certainly tinged with political underpinnings, was the proxy for both men and women on social issues. It was not uncommon during this research to find The Mirror littered with musings such as "in their typically selfish manner, women have always wanted everything for themselves that even though they couldn't cope they still craved more," and "Unfortunately, woman being the creature that she is, has not been able to divorce her very nature."^[45] The language alone is tainted with the misogyny prevalent in patriarchal societies and buttressed by cultural standards of gender inequities. Referred to as "creatures" and "typical" women were subjected to a status of inferiority—unable to reason through cravings or primal urges to rational thought unlike men. This was an ongoing perception of gender well into the 1990s and even until today.^[46] Glaringly covert was the disappearance of the once very distinguishable line drawn between middle class women and market women. Socioeconomic unrest appears to have been the culprit.

A weekly column of note featured in The Mirror entitled Male Mutterings offered a male perspective about social issues that obtained with particular focus on women. The dynamics of male/female exchanges specifically, power

negotiations within interactions between the sexes were in a transitional period. An article entitled “Where have all the Minis Gone” published in the April 25, 1975 issue of *The Mirror* gives weight to this position.

The author of the article, Koo Pia, is astonished to overhear a young woman chastising her older sister for her dedication to her “spineless husband.”[47] The article continues to describe how the young girl explains that she would rather find a well to do husband, bare him children, then seek a divorce to force alimony payments. Recognizing the girl as part of the cohort of “alimony seeking women,” the author suggests that women strategically made a perversion of marriage using it only as a means to obtain divorce through which they would be compensated. This presents a conflict arising from the perceived change in the *modus operandi* of southern Ghanaian women as it relates to the institution of marriage and also depicts the ways in which women grappled, leveraged and contested control over their own future security in marriage. The pictures accompanying the article show three fashionably dressed middle class women. The captions below the pictures describe how each woman garnered attention from various onlookers for being “cheerful girls.”[49] This is indicative of the objectified acceptable woman in Ghanaian society rather than the truculent and irrepressible version that were the antithesis of acceptability. That said, women were not mimes in the media but instead used the platform to air their own grievances against men as well.

The late 1960s also proved to be fertile ground for contests waged in the conjugal arena. In a July 23, 1967 article written in the *Sunday Mirror*, Gladys Kotey wrote a searing critique of Ghanaian men in what was then contemporary Ghanaian society entitled “Ghanaian Man as a Husband.” In describing Ghanaian husbands the author articulated husbands as akin to despots who ruled with impunity over women.[50] A quote from this piece bears repeating:

“the woman had said that Ghanaian men make lousy lovers and husbands...Much as I would like to have refuted this allegation, I couldn’t because there is a grain of truth in what she said. She comes from a culture where love, romance and respect for womanhood is an accepted fact of life. If our men don’t measure up to this yardstick, I would put it to ignorance on their part because of the structure of our society, it has always been the kind of society where the woman is inferior to the male.”[51]

This sentiment was pervasive in the interviews conducted for this research. Both male and female informants stated that women were given little respect and one informant even stating that her husband told her that she was not

even intelligent enough to drive a car.[52] However, marriage provided the arena for transitional change and opportunity to contest the limits imposed on the conjugal relationship between men and women by the cultural jurisdictions of gender. The testimonies of three informants Rebecca Okoreeh, Alfred Okoreeh, and Helen Asante illuminate this point while also shedding light on the changing geography of marriage in the 1970s.

Rebecca Okoreeh was the first born of ten children in a small town just outside of Sekondi. As was typical for many Akan women, her father arranged her marriage to a man she knew but did not choose. She expressed her disquiet openly saying that did not want to marry nor did she love the man, but she could not defy her father's wishes as he envisioned his daughter's marriage as the gateway for his children's exodus to the United States.[53] Rebecca would later divorce her husband due to mistreatment and lack of support. Alfred Okoreeh, born two years after Rebecca recalls that his marriage to Helen Asante "had all of the rituals completed," referring to the customary marriage rites of providing cloth to the wives family and pouring drinks to consummate the marriage contract.[54] However, when Helen was asked about the marriage she said there was no head drink in the rites performed because "that was something that non-Christians do." [55] This statement identifies the impact of colonial religion on Akan culture but more importantly reflects how cultural institutions such as marriage were under negotiation.

The competing interpretations of marriage for both men and women in Ghana in the 1970s presented a continuously shifting landscape. Axes of power were routinely redefined based in large part on a transition in the ideals and nature of marriage. This transition coupled middle class Akan women to the imperatives of older cultural practices and simultaneously thrust them into contemporary conceptualizations of autonomy both in the conjugal sphere and individually. One of the discursive bridges used by these women to future generations were the possibilities presented by migration—a theme that will be discussed below.

The Autonomy of She: The Feminization of Migration, Education, and Breadwinning

Thus far this work has engaged in evaluating the outcomes of Akan women in post-colonial Ghana by analyzing the effects of cultural and traditional customs on prescribed gender roles resulting in the continuity of less material opportunities for middle-class women. Additionally, the conjugal relationship has been examined to identify the competing interests for autonomy in marriage. The title of this section considers women as subjects/actors (she) rather than objects acted upon (her) to demonstrate the changing field of

emphasis on autonomy in Akan women's lives. Accordingly, this section considers the transition of gender roles to fulfill the obligation of women as mothers and to accommodate individual aspirations of women as viewed through migratory trends and occupational choices. Lastly, this section will consider the ways in which kinship has been reconfigured as a strategy for sustaining a matriliney for the post-colonial generation of Akans that provided oral histories of their lives. In effect, women attempted to preserve the cultural continuity of kinship in spaces that have been reconceived by women as autonomous actors. This reconfiguration was a by-product of the *tabula rasa* forced upon women who by marriage and inherently divorce were severed from their kin. Women used education for themselves as a primary tool to create their independent existences and provide for their children.

Takyiwaa Manuh has stated the 1970s brought about a "culture of migration in Ghana." [56] Husbands embarked on transnational migration to set up families abroad, and with the linear inference drawn above between marriage-cocoa-kinship, women with small children in tow were often left without a familial location. [57] For Helen Asante, her husband's migration was a six-year trial of separation before reunification while she struggled with her firstborn daughter Barbara to make it. Women were consigned through compulsory obligations of older customary practices, migration trends and a reinforced fetishization of female dependency on men but these women also facilitated states of varying degrees of autonomy from prosperity to isolation to alienation signifying a distinct transition was underway—a veritable sex change in the nature of migration.

The marriages for the female informants interviewed for this research were in some measure marshaled by transnational migration wherein their husbands left abroad to pursue work and educational opportunities. Meanwhile, the economic environment in Ghana was on a precipitous decline. An informant interviewed for this work, Akosua Ampiah recalled that in some parts of Southern Ghana hunger was so profound and identifiable that "you could tell how bad it was because so many people had on 'Acheampong's necklace'" a phrase that referred to protruding clavicle bones due to the scarcity of food as a result of the mismanagement of the Ghanaian economy during the Acheampong regime. [58] While many of these women had some kind of help in the form of remittances from their husbands abroad or limited assistance from their husband's kin they were largely on their own. Upon migration, middle class Akan women would look to education as a way to improve their stock and ensure their children's well being.

All eight of the women interviewed for this research completed secondary school in Ghana but did not attain university education while in Ghana; either furthering their education or picking up skills vocationally abroad in London or the United States. This supports Robertson's claim that women were not encouraged to pursue post secondary education as vigorously as their male counterparts.[59] Ms. Ampiah remembered that girls were immediately discouraged from pursuing any sort of math or science courses in school as there was still a belief that women were better suited as ancillary pieces to men's puzzles. As she bluntly put it, "it was hard being a woman in Ghana in those days." [60] Additionally, if a young girl got pregnant out of wedlock she would not continue school and would be ridiculed by other students for being a negligent mother.[61] The prospective teenage fathers however, were able to complete their academics unimpeded.[62] While this evidences Ghana's gendered and historically parochial approach to education, this particular sample avails itself of that generalization. Half of the male informants also did not attain university education until after migration which speaks more to the inadequacies of the educational edifice of post-colonial Ghana writ large. When recollecting her own school days, Rebecca Okoreeh recalls that classes were equally mixed between boys and girls but what was most memorable was many days there may only be one boy and one girl in the entire class.[63] Women had access to the education and job opportunities available to men, though many were still resigned to culturally inscribed occupations. However, as Oppong deliberates upon migration as Ghanaian women were highly invested in pursuing higher education with the support of their husbands or kinship and in many cases without the support of either.[64]

As the informants concurred unanimously, education was viewed as the key to sustainability and prosperity. Education was the objective for women who found themselves in many instances being breadwinners for their families, both conjugal and extended. Despite being stymied by cultural limitations on what women's work was, Elizabeth Maccani concedes that women always strived for the opportunity to work and education was the gateway to that opportunity.[65]

As the previous generation of Akan women found economic success through trading, their daughters did not even consider trading as a viable avenue for employment.[66] The growing economy in the then Gold Coast during the early 20th century, increased the accessibility to education, and the creation of more wage paying jobs gave young women new targets to set their eyes on. This is further confirmed by the oral histories supplementing this research. None of the female respondents mentioned trading as a desired occupational track and instead mentioned their wide-ranging desires to be pharmacists,

teachers, designers, engineers and secretaries. The types of career paths of interest for the post-colonial generation of women in this study was indelibly linked to increased access to education largely experienced by the middle class. However, notwithstanding the success in business achieved by a number of Akan women in post-colonial Ghana,[67] the legacy of patriarchy loomed large as an obstacle for women's equality in the workplace.

Women's roles in the business sector and in wage earning professions in general were wrought by gendered distinctions of male dominance. Contrary to this statement, in an article appearing in the February 8, 1976 edition of *The Mirror* written by Papa Ata entitled "Women in the Economy," the author states that women have "infiltrated all sectors (of the economy)...that they have been able to acquire the necessary 'qualifications' (for)."[68] The author provides inter alia that women's success in the business community had been a result of women having the "qualification" of attraction.[69] In an uncomfortable moment during an interview session with Alfred Okoreeh, he confirmed that he knew of more than one man in a position of power who had used that stature to coerce female job applicants into sexual favors.[70] This does not even consider the disparity in wages or the dearth of executive positions made accessible to women in the workforce.

Although business pursuits enabled some women to attain financial independence, Oppong has stated that most educated women in southern Ghana worked as nurses, teachers, and bank clerks in the 1960s and 1970s.[71] Nursing which Oppong states garnered 71% of gainfully employed middle class women in Ghana provides an interesting case study for its persistence in post migration occupational tracks.[72]

An interesting dynamic in the migration stories for many of these middle class Akan women was the persistence of nursing as a dominant occupation even after migration abroad. When queried as to the draw of nursing some informants said they loved the work, others said that it was a quick option to help get on their feet, while others like Rebecca Okoreeh reminisced that the money was good stating, "When my younger brother Frank came to America and saw his big sister's paycheck, he said 'wow, I know what I'm going to do' when his wife Evelyn came over and saw her husband's paycheck she said 'whoa, that's what I'm doing' when my younger brother Kwame saw his brother's paycheck and his wife Jackie saw his, it was rather academic." [73] Rebecca was the first of seven of her brothers and sisters to become registered nurse and Akosua was the second of three sisters in her family to become an RN. Yet, Akosua Ampiah offered the most compelling response. She stated that when she was growing up, nursing and teaching were two professions in

Ghana that guaranteed employment for women no matter how remote or discriminatory the place was in the country. Although, in Ghana the pay for registered nurses was uninspiring and nurses could not even speak if the doctor was speaking, the fact that many informants still chose nursing as a profession suggests that middle class women relied on cultural familiarity in seeking security while transitioning to their new autonomous space upon migration.

Additionally, as nursing provided an avenue for financial stability and prosperity in their new locale, these women were able to engage in patterns of remittances, financial contributions to a home country, to sustain their families in Ghana becoming role models for young women therefore re-articulating the contemporary matriclan.[74] As Madeline Wong echoes this point stating, “while migration necessitates physical move from localized extended family arrangement to a more nuclear one, women...constantly revise their roles and identities, honoring kinship ties while creatively negotiating its obligations in gendered ways.[75] It is also ironic that as Ghana has become one of the largest remittance economies in the world, that women are the invisible hand making the deposits.[76] This invisibility has been a regular feature in identifying women’s contributions to the productive sectors of Ghana’s economy historically.

Conclusion and Insights

This research has argued that the ceilings imposed on women’s outcomes for success in the southern region of post-colonial Ghana was dictated in large part by a desire to adhere to traditional standards of cultural norms. Colonialism and politics thereafter further distorted the relationship between men and women adding additional obstacles to female advancement. Contradictory to the tenets of the National Council on Women and Development’s mission, Acheampong did not endeavor to raise women to an equal status to their male counterparts for the benefit of national development as he stated in the Daily Graphic but rather to raise certain women to the standards of other women. This perpetuated the subordination of women to men as the playing field is locally gendered. Cultural perceptions of gender roles as shown in The Mirror resigned women to positions of relative inferiority to men and the philosophy of national development was routinely curated as a masculine enterprise. Indeed, upon successfully deposing Kofi Busia and becoming head of state, Acheampong stated in press release when discussing his Yentua! Policy, which ironically considered Ghana welching on international debts, that the new regime would “stand up and act like men.”[77]

The oral histories conducted for this study show how women negotiated the domain of the conjugal relationship in order to etch out spaces of security and have authority and autonomy with respect to decision-making. As the economy in Ghana took a dramatic downturn in the 1970s, the government used media to demonize a sector of women's labor in the country that had been vital to the nation's survival for during the 20th century but in doing so alienated women as a whole. In response, these Akan women began to slowly turn the tables on customary gender roles, beginning with confronting ideas of marriage, changing the nature of migration, refocusing the locus of financial responsibility, and therefore power, in the household through continued education and occupational choices. In doing so, middle class Akan women succeeded in refashioning the legacy of the matriline in the form of an olive branch linking there present with traditional Akan society. As Rebecca said proudly, "Stupid Rebecca who couldn't even think and could never drive a car...I bought a home, I put two kids through university here, and I brought my brothers and sisters here from Ghana..look at me now." [78]

Endnotes

[1] Okine, D.A. "Kutu Inaugurates New Council...Woman Power." Daily Graphic (Accra), April 22, 1975, Issue: 7626 ed.

[2] Okine, "Kutu" 1975

[3] Okine, "Kutu" 1975

[4] Ghana. National Council on Women and Development. National Development. Annual Report on the National Council on Women and Development. Accra, Ghana, 1975.

[5] Bofo-Arthur Kwame, "Ghana One Decade of the Liberal State." Table 11.4. Men outnumbered in the Ghanaian government by an average of 101:3 between 1969-1979

[6] Boni, Stefano. "Twentieth-Century Transformations in Notions of Gender, Parenthood, and Marriage in Southern Ghana: A Critique of the Hypothesis of "Retrograde Steps" for Akan Women." *History in Africa* 28 (2001): 15

[7] Boni, "Twentieth-Century Transformations," 15

[8] The evidence of matrilineal descent upon further examination unearthed the practice of gendered divisions of labor. The division of labor is understood as dichotomous yet parallel obligations between men and women in the

household. This conjugal arrangement was unique to Western ideology, which was based on the nuclear family positioning a father as the head of the household with a domesticated mother and their dependent children.

[9]Boni, "Twentieth-Century Transformations," 15

[10] Opong, Christine. *Middle Class African Marriage: A Family Study of Ghanaian Senior Civil Servants*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983. 120

[11] Opong, Christine, Christine Okali, and Beverley Houghton. "Woman Power: Retrograde Steps in Ghana." *African Studies Review* 18, no. 3 (1975): 74

[12] Hunt, Nancy Rose. "Placing African Women's History and Locating Gender." *Social History* 14, no. 3 (1989): 359-79.360

[13] Hunt, *Women's History and Locating Gender*, 360

[14] Mikell, Gwendolyn. *Cocoa and Chaos in Ghana*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1992.8

[15] The women under discussion were born in the 1950s and were in their late teens early twenties during the 1970s.

[16] The informants were either the first or second generation of educated members in their families meaning that either one or both of their parents were educated through secondary school at a minimum or the neither parent had received a formal education. All of the informants advised that their mothers were involved in trading in some form mostly on small-scale sustenance levels with the exception of one whose mother engaged in large scale import/export trading. All but one of the informants has been married and all have at least one child. Therefore, the interview subjects presented a fairly homogenous group from which a collective attitude regarding the topics of the interviews emanated.

All interviews conducted were approximately one hour long with the longest being one and a half hours and the shortest being thirty-nine minutes. The interviews were focused interviews wherein the idea was to utilize open ended questions giving the interviewee latitude to elaborate creating a more rich and ultimately more useful account of their life's events. The general framework of the interview questions focused on relationships between the informants and their mothers and fathers, education of the informant as well as the attained education for their parents and other immediate family members, labor, migration, Ghana at the time of migration, the informants extrapolation of

Ghana's trajectory, marriage, kinship, child-rearing and gender. Though this research largely considers women, men were interviewed as well because much of masculine identity is measured against femininity. Eight of the twelve interviews were transcribed.

Here middle class is defined as the stratified subset of people whose success in private enterprises such as entrepreneurship generally through land ownership and commerce, were afforded access to opportunities for wholesale trading and education resulting in elevated social standing for their families, economic versatility, and more sophisticated consumption patterns than lower class families though not quite at the level of upper class families.

[18] Gareth Austin discusses the shift to a capitalist economy by way of cocoa at length. See "The Emergence of Capitalist Relations in South Asante Cocoa Farming c. 1916-1933"

[19] Ahlman, Jeffrey "A New Type of Citizen: Youth, Gender, and Generation in the Ghanaian Builders Brigade." *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 53. No. 1. 2012. 92

[20] Boafo-Arthur, "Ghana One Decade." 252

[21] Leeward, Charles. "Interview with Charles Leeward." Interview by Alvin Okoreeh. March 31, 2018.

[22] Amamoo, Joseph G. *The Ghanaian Revolution*. San Jose, CA: Authors Choice, 2000. 120

[23] Cultural jurisdictions of gender is a term that I developed through the exercises in this research. In order to judge the opportunities for women it is imperative to bring focus to imbedded systems of how the Akan culture traditionally viewed women. In a gender dependent social construct much of the behavior and therefore perceived outcomes for women are dictated by the access accorded to them as well as the limits imposed on them. In this case, women's behavior and status is mediated by the various mechanisms of control that have cultural significance in the Akan society.

[24] Patrilineal descent is not only limited to the purview of Western ideology as Southern Ghanaian ethnic groups such as the Ga and the Ewe also practice patrilineal succession.

[25] Mikell, Gwendolyn. *Cocoa and Chaos in Ghana*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1992. 109

Allman, Jean, and Victoria Tashjian. "I Will Not Eat Stone": A Womens History of Colonial Asante. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2012. 143

[26] Property cannot feasibly be limited to ideas of lots or tracts of land in southern Ghana. For the Akan historically, people, particularly slaves, pawns, women and children have all been considered property. In John Mensah

Sarbah's Fanti Customary Laws, it is stated that in some Akan districts, it is necessary to apply for a woman's hand in marriage through her parents or matrikin for consent to marry. Once consented by the family, an exchange of money, trinkets, and alcohol takes place for the betrothed. In this case marriage is a transaction. As McCaskie has also noted poignantly when discussing adultery cases, women were "convertible economic goods." The attempted fusion of the Marriage Ordinance of 1884 and customary law for the Akan people made it such that the type of marriage that you entered into determined inheritance and succession. Under the marriage ordinance, couples would register their marriage and take an oath of monogamy. Any jointly held property would be that of the conjugal family while any property owned by the respective matrilineal lines would remain theirs. The security provided by the marriage ordinance was desirable to many women as it provided some level of security through property inheritance. As Oppong states, "there is massive evidence of discontent at the continuation of this matrilineal inheritance system." Since customary law stated that the resources such as the labor of wives and children were the property of the husband, contests over the rights to the jointly cultivated farmland by the conjugal unit between abusuas and widowed wives ensued when husbands in those units had died. The claims of property were generally the jurisdiction of the native court system, which may or may not observe customary law depending upon the merits of the case.

[27] Manuh, Takyiwaa. "Chapter 2. Wives, Children, and Intestate Succession in Ghana." *African Feminism*, 1997, 78.

[28] Beatrice Akua Duncan, *Cocoa, Marriage, Labour and Land in Ghana: Some Matrilineal and Patrilineal Perspectives*, 305

[29] Allman, Tashjian, "I will not eat stone." 143-148

[30] Dankwa, Linda. "Interview with Linda Dankwa." Interview by Alvin Okoreeh. April 8, 2018.

[31] Manuh, *Wives, Children Intestate Succession*. 89

[32] Akyeampong, Emmanuel. *Africa's Urban Past*. Edited by David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone. "Wo pe tam wom pe ba' (You like cloth but you don't want children)" *Urbanization, Individualism & Gender relations in Colonial Ghana c. 1900-1939*. Portsmouth, NA: Heinemann, 2000. 225

- [33] Maccani, Elizabeth Hayforn. "Interview with Elizabeth Abena Hayforn Maccani." Interview by Alvin Okoreeh. February 27, 2018.
- [34] Asante, Helen A. "Interview with Helen Araba Asante." Interview. March 30, 2018.
- [35] Mikell, "Cocoa and Chaos." 108
- [36] Kotey, "Kutu inaugurates council"
- [37] Yeboah-Afari, Vicky. "A Tribute to Our Women of the Past." *The Mirror* (Accra, Ghana), April 22, 1975
- [38] Kotey, Richard. "Eradicating Anti-Social Activities from Society...Women asked to help." *Daily Graphic* (Accra, Ghana), August 10, 1977, 8338th ed.
- [39] Murillo, Bianca. *Market Encounters Consumer Cultures in Twentieth-century Ghana*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2017. 140
- [40] Robertson, Claire C. "Formal or Nonformal Education? Entrepreneurial Women in Ghana." *Comparative Education Review* 28, no. 4 (1984): 657
- [41] Ghana. National Council on Women and Development. *National Development. Annual Report on the National Council on Women and Development*. Accra, Ghana, 1975.
- [42] National Council Annual report 1975
- [43] Ghana. National Council on Women and Development. *National Development. Annual Report on the National Council on Women and Development*. Accra, Ghana, 1985
- [44] The perceived waywardness of women in the colonial context is covered in sharp detail by Emmanuel Akyeampong see "Wo pe tam won pe ba' ('You like cloth but you don't want children) Published in David Anderson and Richard Rathbone's *Africa's Urban Past*. For details of the 1930s government seizure of single women to force them into marriage see Jean Allman's "Rounding up Spinsters"
- [45] Ata, Papa. "Women Should Help" *The Mirror* (Accra, Ghana), February 27, 1976, 1003

[46] Donkor, Giftie W. "Women's Liberation: The Struggle Continues" Daily Graphic (Accra, Ghana), March 12, 1992, 12841 ed.

[47] Pia, Koo. "Where have all the minis Gone?" The Mirror (Accra, Ghana) April 25, 1975 1133ed. 6

[48] Pia, "Minis." 7

[49] Pia, "Minis." 6

[50] Kotey, Gladys. "Ghanaian Man as a Husband" Sunday Mirror (Accra, Ghana), July 23, 1967 ed. 728

[51] Kotey, G "Ghanaian Man"

[52] Okoreeh, Rebecca. "Interview with Rebecca Okoreeh." Interview by Alvin Okoreeh. March 18, 2018

[53] Interview Rebecca Okoreeh

[54] Okoreeh, Alfred. "Interview with Alfred Okoreeh." Interview. March 31, 2018.

[55] Interview, Helen Asante

[56] Manuh, Takyiwaa. An 11th Region of Ghana?: Ghanaians Abroad. Accra: Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2006. 24

[57] Oppong, Christine. Middle Class African Marriage: A Family Study of Ghanaian Senior Civil Servants. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983. 120

[58] Ampiah, Akosua. "Interview with Akosua Appiah." Interview by Alvin Okoreeh. April 13, 2018.

[59] Robertson, Claire. "The Feminization of Poverty in Africa: Roots and Branches." The Brown Journal of World Affairs, Summer 1998. 197

[60] Interview, Ampiah

[61] Interview, Ampiah

[62] Interview, Ampiah

[63] Interview, Rebecca Okoreeh

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[65] Interview, Elizabeth Maccani Hayforn

[66] Claire Robertson, "Formal and Non-formal," 643

[67] Parrott, Jennings. Hon. Annie Jiagge "Polygamy a 'curse' and It's Costly." *Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles), April 7, 1975.

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[70] Okoreeh, Alfred. "Interview with Alfred Okoreeh." Interview. March 31, 2018.

[71] Oppong, Abu. *Seven Roles*. 26

[72] Oppong, Abu. *Seven Roles*. 26

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[75] Wong, Madeleine. "The Gendered Politics of Remittances in Ghanaian Transnational Families." *Economic Geography* 82, no. 4 (2009): 361

[76] Manuh, An 11th Region. 23

[77] Amamoo, *The Ghanaian Revolution*. 120

[78] Interview Rebecca Okoreeh

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