

## Investigation Into Ancient Process of Installing a Chief at Denkyira

### Ayanfuri Gyaman

Dr. Isaac K. Damoah

Email: damoahisaac760@gmail.com

#### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

##### Introduction

Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman is a village in Upper Denkyira West District. Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman kingmakers had been installing chiefs from the ancient days. Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene is a Palanquin chief. During the ancient days, Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene swore an oath of allegiance to Denkyirahene. At certain point in time Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene came under Denkyira Ayanfurihene. Because of this, Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene had to swear an oath of allegiance to Denkyira Ayanfurihene. After swearing an oath of allegiance, Denkyira Ayanfurihene had to send Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene to Denkyirahene to swear an oath of allegiance to Denkyira State.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To find out the ancient process of installing a chief at Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman

To find out the qualities of selecting a person as chief

To find out if Denkyira Ayanfurihene is a palanquin chief

#### ANCIENT PROCESS OF INSTALLING A CHIEF

In the olden days when Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman Stool was vacant, Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman kingmakers had to inform the head of the royal family that the Stool was vacant. The head of the royal family would tell the queen mother and the state family head about the message they had received from the kingmakers. The queen mother and the state family head had to select a royal to occupy the stool. If the queen mother and the state family head were united, the selection of the royal became easy. When the queen mother and the state family head were divided, then both parties had to choose his and her own royal. After choosing the royal, they had to present them to the kingmakers for approval. The kingmakers would choose one person to occupy the stool. Before the royal could be a chief, he had to be accepted by the kingmakers and the entire people in the village. If the kingmakers accepted the royal, they would have to tell Krontihene to inform the village about

selection of the royal. Krontihene was in charge of the people in the village and had to inform his elders. Krontihene would inform the kingmakers whether his elders admitted the royal or not. If Krontihene's elders accepted the royal, then the royal would be introduced to the entire village. When majority of the kingmakers accepted the royal and the people in the village rejected him, he could not be a chief. Because he would serve the whole village and the kingmakers also ministered to the chief. If the chief was accepted to occupy the stool, the linguist had to inform the village about the date of installation of the new chief. According to Mr. Agin as soon the royal is discovered to occupy the stool the kingmakers will inform their superior king. About the decision to install the royal as a chief. After installation of the royal as a chief, 40 days later the new chief appears before his superior king to swear an oath of allegiance.

#### PURPOSE OF SEARCHING FOR A ROYAL TO OCCUPY THE STOOL

- To prevent the Black Stool from being lost and resides in a wrong family

- To get the genuine royal to occupy the stool

Choosing a royal to occupy the stool should not be done in a rush but it needs time to study and search for the right royal. The chosen royal has to prepare physically and spiritually before he can occupy the Stool.

### **WHAT DOES IT IMPLY IF THE NEW CHIEF FAILS TO SWEAR AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO HIS PARAMOUNT CHIEF**

The chief is not recognized by his traditional council as a chief. In case of any issue he cannot defend his town at the traditional council level.

**THESIS STATEMENT:** Problem statement of the study was investigation into ancient process of installing a chief at Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman". The study found out the ancient process of installing a chief, qualities of selecting a royal as a chief and if Denkyira Ayanfurihene was a Palanquin chief.

**CLOTHES TO WEAR:** During installation of a chief, Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman sub chiefs must wear black clothes.

**WHY BLACK CLOTHES:** To remember Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman chiefs who had passed away.

### **GOOD QUALITIES FOR SELECTING A PERSON AS A CHIEF**

**Good character:** The queen mother and the state family head must select a person who exudes good nature.

**Reputation:** The candidate personal life should be without blemish.

**Imprisonment:** He must not be a person who has been sentenced to prison before

**Able person:** He should not have any deformity

**Knowledgeable:** The queen mother and state family head should choose a person who knows the history of the Stool.

**Progress minded:** He ought to be visionary guy who has good will towards the development of the area

**Murder:** He must not have record of murder

**Sound mind:** He should be sound in mind without any symptoms of mental illness

**Circumcision:** He should not be circumcised

**Wisdom:** The queen mother and state family head ought to select a person who is wise.

### **CONFINEMENT OF THE ROYAL AS A CHIEF**

In the ancient days the person to be installed as a chief would be confined in a room for more than a month. During this period, the kingmakers would teach him the history of the Stool, how to dance, to dress, principles of traditional administration, how to talk in public, to sit in state and how to walk. While the person had been confined, some of the sub chiefs would protect him and he should be given nutritious food. During this period, he must not walk alone. Mr.Agin said that the royal would be confined for a period of 7 days. 7 days later he would be carried in a palanquin. Krontihene of Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman confirmed that the royal would be confined for 2 weeks.

### **REASONS WHY THE ROYAL SHOULD BE CONFINED**

To educate him about the history of the stool.

To teach him to know traditional administration

To help him to know customs and traditions of the stool.

### **WHAT HAPPEN THE NEXT DAY THE ROYAL WILL BE RELEASED FROM CONFINEMENT**

Asafoakye consults Krontihene and Krontihene informs him to see Gyaasehene and tell Gyaasehene that he and his group want to go to "Wrempem". Asafoakye does not consult Gyaasehene with empty handed. After Gyaasehene receives the offer from Asafoakye, he tells the rest of the sub chiefs that Asafoakye and his group wish to go to Wrempem.

**WHEN TO GO TO WREMPER:** At 12:30-1:00 am midnight Asafoakye and his group go to Wrempem and ahenekwaa carried the Black Stool to Wrempem. Asafoakye and his group go to Wrempem with weapons protecting the Stool.

**THE VISIT TO NSUBAATAN:** Before Asafoakye and his group go to Wrempem, they have to perform rituals to Nsubaatan. River Ntoom is a Nsubaatan for Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman people.

**WARNING:** Asafoakye and his group must not eat pepper until they finish their assignment.

**GYAASEHENE PREPARES FOR WREMPEM:** When Asafoakye and his group tell Gyaasehene, they prefer to go to Wrempem. Gyaasehene enters the Stool room and cover the great Back Stool with blanket because no one should see the Stool with his naked eye. After covering the Stool, he gave the Stool to Asafoakye and his group to go to Wrempem. Asafoakye and his group cannot go to Wrempem without the knowledge of Gyaasehene.

**WARNING TO GYAASE GROUP:** The gyaase group should not eat pepper until they complete all rituals connect to the Black Stool.

**ASAFOAKYE'S GROUP REACTION TOWARDS WREMPEM:** When Asafoakye and his group go to Wrempem carrying the Back Stool. They go to Wrempem singing warlike song and protecting the stool with weapons until they reach Wrempem.

**WREMPEM:** At Wrempem Asafoakye and his group inform River Ntoom their mission. River Ntoom is the place of Wrempem but Asafoakye and his group will not sleep until daybreak. The powers of the Black Stool and River Ntoom take control over Asafoakye and his group so that they protect the stool with seriousness. During this time, any person who enters the Wrempem without knocking will be in trouble.

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DAYBREAK:** When daybreak, the Gyaase group tells the royal to go to Wrempem and bring his stool which indicates that he is a king. Some of the Asafo group shall carry the royal to the Wrempem shouting akoo, akoo, akoo. This shout alerts

Asafoakye and his group that somebody is coming.

**WHEN THE ROYAL REACH WREMPEM:** When Gyaasehene, some Gyaase chiefs, Asafoakye and his strong men carry the royal to Wrempem, the Gyaase group tells Asafoakye and his group their mission. After hearing their mission, they give the Black Stool to them.

**THE GREAT TASK:** Gyaasehene and a few of the Gyaase chiefs, Asafoakye and strong men of the Asafo group go to Wrempem with a person who will carry the Black Stool.

**REASONS WHY THE ROYAL GO TO WREMPEM**

Wrempem specifies the purpose of the occasion. Without wrempem, the spectators do not sense the purpose of the occasion. It creates pictures in the minds of the spectators to understand the meaning of earthly kingdom and enables them to realize importance of the occasion. It defines the occasion and deepens spectors' minds to understand how earthly kingdom was established.

**THE ROYAL SHOWS HIS POWERS:** The person who carries the Black Stool leads in front of the royal and the Stool displays. This portrays that the Black Stool has elected what he likes. They pass through the village so that people see the royal who will soon become a king. After passing through village, they send the Black Stool to the Stool House.

**THE GATHERING:** The next day Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman sub chiefs shall gather with the whole village and the royal should understand that every good thing cannot be given free of charge.

**NANA SWEAR AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE:** The chief swears an oath of allegiance to the state family head (Oman Abusuapayin).

**OMAN ABUSUAPAYIN SWEARS AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE NEW CHIEF:** After the chief has sworn an oath of allegiance to Oman Abusuapayin, he has to hand over power to the new chief by swearing an oath of allegiance.

**WHY AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE:** To show that the royal has been accepted by his people as a chief.

#### **SPIRITUAL IMPLICATIONS OF SWEARING OF AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

When the chief swears an oath of allegiance to Oman Abusuapayin, he is asking Oman Abusuapayin to hand over power to him. It indicates that all the sub chiefs have to humble themselves to the chief. It portrays that the chief has to listen to the advice of his sub chiefs.

#### **HOW TO SWEAR AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE BEFORE A PARAMOUNT CHIEF**

The new chief has to hold the state sword of the oath of allegiance and stand before his paramount chief. The new chief mentions the stool name of his paramount chief and mentions his own stool name. The new chief states the stool's names of his ancestors who had occupied the Black Stool and assures his paramount chief that he will follow their footsteps. The new chief swears that he would be faithful to his paramount chief except illness.

#### **WHEN THE CHIEF SWEARS AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO HIS PARAMOUNT CHIEF**

The chief swears an oath of allegiance to his paramount chief after he has sworn an oath of allegiance to his people

#### **SWORD OF THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman has her own sword of an oath of allegiance. The sub chiefs of Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman have never asked for the sword of an oath of allegiance. It is not every chief that has the sword of an oath of

allegiance. Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene has not used Denkyira Ayanfurihene's sword of an oath of allegiance to swear.

**WHEN TO SWEAR AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE:** The chief swears an oath of allegiance at 4:00pm

**IMPLICATIONS OF AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE:** The royal swears an oath of allegiance to show that he is a chief. If he does not swear an oath of allegiance, then he is not a chief.

#### **INSTALLING THE ROYAL ON THE BLACK STOOL**

Around 12:00 pm midnight the kingmakers consult Gyaasehene who controls the Black Stool Room. They will perform rituals to him, after accepting the rituals and he opens the Stool's door. They enter the room to install the royal on the Black Stool but never allow him to sit on the Stool. They would let the royal's buttock as if it is touching the Black Stool 3 times.

#### **SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF INSTALLING THE ROYAL ON THE BLACK STOOL**

Allowing the royal's buttock as if it is touching the Black Stool for 3 times indicates that spiritually he has been enstooled as a chief. The Black Stool has admitted him including the state gods. This makes him a king

**SELECTION OF STOOL NAME:** If the royal pays the money, the next day Gyaase group consult Gyaasehene before they enter the Stool room. When they perform the necessary rituals, Gyaasehene allows them to enter the Stool room and enstool the royal on the Black Stool and choose Stool name for him. After chosen Stool name, his private name is buried and he will be called by the Stool name until death. Nobody is expected to call the chief by his private name.

**HOW TO SELECT STOOL NAME:** There are many small black Stools in the Black Stool Room bearing the names of the past chiefs had died on the Stool. Around 12:00pm midnight the gyaase group will enter the Stool Room with the royal. The gyaase group blindfold the royal's eyes and tell him to take one of the small black stools. After taking the stool, they check name the written on the stool. The name written on the stool becomes his stool name.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE STOOL NAME:** When the chief has selected his Stool name, the Stool name would be announced to the entire village. So that they call him by his Stool name. The chief's elders warn the whole village not to call the chief by his private name again. The private name becomes a thing of the past.

**WHAT HAPPENS AFTER CHOOSING THE STOOL NAME:** Spiritually the chief's private name is buried and his stool name overshadowed the private name.

**RITUALS TO PERFORM BEFORE PALANQUIN:** Before the chief will be carried in a Palanquin, Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman sub chiefs have to perform rituals to the gods in Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman. Some of the gods are Sibruku, Ntoom, Obokese etc

**PALANQUIN:** The next day strong men from Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman carry the chief in a Palanquin. The chief being carried in a Palanquin declared his status in chieftaincy. It is not all the chiefs who are carried in a Palanquin. Some chiefs will never be carried in a palanquin until earthly kingdom come to an end.

**IN THE PALANQUIN:** A female child sits in front of the chief while the chief is sitting in the Palanquin. This implies that the chief is a stranger and he has to be guided by native of the village. Mr. Agin declared the female child who sat in front of the chief in the palanquin had been given to him as his betrothed wife. If the

chief was interested in her, he would marry her. Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhema said she did not know the reason why a female child was allowed to sit in front of a chief in a palanquin. Gyaasehene of Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman, Nana Kwasi Atta declared that it was custom and tradition to permit a female child to sit in front of a chief while the chief is riding in a palanquin. The head of the royal family at Denkyira Jukwa Mfuom said he did not know why a female child was permitted to sit in front of a chief in a palanquin.

**AFTER RIDING IN A PALANQUIN:** The chief and his sub chiefs gather at the palace. People will come to the palace to greet and welcome the new chief. They gave him pieces of advice and he also offers them some drinks.

**HOW LONG DOES INSTALLATION OF A CHIEF TAKE:** It takes almost a month to complete the whole process.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN THE ANCIENT DAYS:** In the olden days Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene sworn an oath of allegiance to Denkyirahene and not Denkyira Ayanfurihene. The following chiefs of Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman sworn an oath of allegiance to Denkyirahene: Nana Yaw Asem Bediako I, Nana Anofi Gyeabour I, Nana Amakra Gyeabour I and Nana Fobi Buo I. The above mentioned chiefs were early ancient chiefs of Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyaman who sworn an oath of allegiance direct to Denkyirahene. After they had been enstooled as Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene, they sworn an oath of allegiance to Denkyirahene.

**DENKYIRA AYANFURIHENE:** In the ancient days Denkyira Ayanfurihene was not carried in a Palanquin. All the chiefs of Denkyira Ayanfuri sworn an oath of allegiance to Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene.

**WHO HAD THE SWORD:** During the ancient days, Denkyira Ayanfurihene did not have the

sword of the oath of allegiance but requested the sword of the oath of allegiance from Denkyira Ayanfuri Gyamanhene.

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