



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Spirit media : charismatics, traditionalists, and mediation practices in Ghana

de Witte, M.

Publication date
2008

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

de Witte, M. (2008). *Spirit media : charismatics, traditionalists, and mediation practices in Ghana*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

7

Defending Tradition

Afrikania's voice in public debates

Introduction

In chapter 5 I have presented the Afrikania Mission as a political-religious movement that fights for the public recognition and revival of Afrikan Traditional Religion. In the face of three centuries of Christian suppression of local religious practices and a current religious climate in which exclusionist and militant Christians publicly demonise traditional religion and its adherents, Afrikania leaders stand on the barricades for the defence of ATR. Despite its Christian-like outlook, Afrikania strongly positions itself as non-Christian and its struggle is first of all directed against Christian groups' denunciation of ATR. Chapter 6 dealt with the movement's ambiguous relationship with shrine practitioners and argued that Afrikania's public representations and discourses stand in tension with the practices and concerns of the latter. This chapter illustrates these points with three case studies of public debates over traditional religion and culture, in which Afrikania participated as the representative of ATR to counter Christian voices.

Despite its relatively marginal position as a religious group in Ghanaian society, especially in terms of numbers and public influence, the Afrikania Mission has become a strong and well-known voice for the defence of African traditional religion and culture in the public debate. It is mainly in relation to public debates and controversies over traditional practices that Afrikania enters the public sphere and is publicly known. Three such public debates were topical at the time of my research and kept Afrikania leaders occupied: the controversies over the 'ban on drumming and noise making,' libation, and trokosi. These political-religious debates on 'tradition' all have a longer history, but have intensified as a result of the increased public presence of religions and the mounting tensions between especially charismatic Pentecostalism and African traditional religion. Afrikania actively engaged in these debates through press conferences, TV and radio interviews, and letters to newspapers. Here I will mainly discuss the content of the debates, while the next chapter deals with these specific media formats. The debates and Afrikania's involvement in them highlight the dilemmas Afrikania faces in mediating between African traditional religious practitioners and a public sphere that is dominated by Christian voices and globalised discourses. They present concrete instances where Afrikania publicly acted as the counter voice of the Christian majority and spoke in the name of all traditional religion. In taking up the self-proclaimed position as the representative organisation of traditional religious practitioners and adherents, Afrikania leaders were challenged by the untenableness of such claims and by the gap between their public intellectual voice and the concerns of those they were talking

SPIRIT MEDIA

about and for. In the final analysis they faced the impossibility of representing traditional religion through the public formats they drew upon.

The ban on drumming: sound, spirits, and urban space

From 1998 to 2002 Ga traditionalists and born-again Christians in Accra clashed every May over the traditional 'ban on drumming and noisemaking.' During this thirty-day period of silence preceding the Ga Homowo festival, the traditional authorities in Accra do not allow drumming, handclapping and other forms of 'noisemaking.' This silence is meant to give the local deities the peace to look after the growth of the ritually sown corn before it is harvested and prepared into a ceremonial dish (*kpokpoi*) to 'hoot at hunger' (literal translation of *homowo*) during the harvest festival. It also enables chief priests and priestesses 'to seek communion with God for soul cleansing and spiritual direction and uplifting.' Several charismatic-Pentecostal churches refuse to respect the ban, claiming their right to freedom of worship and the right of Christians to not be involved in 'animistic' rituals. Traditionalist groups, such as the Afrikania Mission, the Ga Traditional Council, and Ga priests, in turn oppose the 'noise-making' that accompanies many Pentecostal services and require respect for the 'local cultural heritage.' Churches have been raided, worshippers wounded, and instruments seized, until in 2002 a Special Commission and a Task Force on Nuisance Control were installed to resolve the matter. In the public debate over this conflict various charismatic churches, Christian organisations, Ga traditional priests, the Ga Traditional Council, the Afrikania Mission, local government authorities, the national government, and the media struggle over sound and over issues of culture, religion, land, the constitution, and human rights.

While the Ga ban on drumming is centuries old, just as the presence of Christianity and its sounds in Accra, it was not until 1998 that the practice developed into a major struggle over sound and public space (Van Dijk 2001). In May that year a group of about 50 Ga youth and traditional rulers attacked the Lighthouse Chapel International (figs. 7.1, 7.2), a charismatic church in Korle-Bu, an old Ga neighbourhood in central Accra. Following this violent physical clash, police investigations, claims and accusations by both parties, and a myriad of views on the matter inundated the media. It was especially the contributions of listeners to radio phone-in programmes that led the Minister of Communications, John Mahama, to 'extreme circumspection' in order to prevent 'unguarded utterances that are currently whipping up ethnic sentiments around the issue.' Still, ethnic and especially religious tensions mounted and the conflict seemed almost irresolvable as both charismatic-Pentecostals and traditionalists called on the constitution, the former to defend their freedom of worship and the latter to demand respect for cultural heritage.¹ In 1999 the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) determined that 'while the ban on drumming is constitutionally protected, it does not extend to other groups, nor does it overrule the right of people practicing different religions to exercise their own freedom of worship.'² This declared the general enforcement of the ban unconstitutional, but did not solve the conflict; it rather worsened the situation. In

7. Defending Tradition



Fig. 7.1 Demolished fence wall of the Lighthouse Chapel, Korle-Bu, Accra.



Fig. 7.2 Lighthouse Chapel Headquarters, Korle-Bu, Accra.

May that year 'busloads of angry traditionalists armed with clubs and dangerous weapons' stormed Pentecostal and charismatic churches in various parts of Accra, seizing or destroying musical instruments and sound equipment.³ In May 2001 a Ga youth mob attacked the Christ Apostolic Church in Osu, Accra, destroying the sound system and other property and injuring several worshippers. A week after, five other Pentecostal churches in Accra were attacked.

The new NPP government led by president Kufour, who had come to power in January that year, realised that the conflict escalated and started new negotiations with the Ga Mantse ('chief'), Nii Adote Obour II.⁴ A committee on the ban on drumming and noisemaking (officially known as the Greater Accra Permanent Conflict Resolution and Management Committee) was set up to mediate between religious bodies and traditionalist groups and to prepare policy guidelines on the ban. Meanwhile, in the month preceding the 2002 ban on drumming, a Ga youth group was mobilising forces to 'enforce the ban and meet any opposition with war.' They blamed the violation of the ban by especially charismatic and Pentecostal churches for five mysterious disasters that had befallen the Ga Dangme state in recent years.⁵ They also claimed that the location of the Christ Apostolic Church in Osu was supposed to serve as a cemetery for local chiefs and *wulomei* (spiritual leaders) and that the land had been sold to the church illegally. To prevent violence that year, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) set up a Task Force on Nuisance Control that was to enforce a 1995 local bye-law abating excessive noise in the city throughout the year.⁶ The Task Force was made up of people from the AMA, the police, and Environmental Protection Agency; no traditionalists or representatives of the traditional council were included. Equipped with decibel measuring instruments, they went round the city to check sound levels, especially around churches, night clubs and drinking spots. Sixty people were arrested during the 2002 ban on drumming for excessive noisemaking, including representatives of several churches and bar operators. It was emphasised, however, that the enforcement of the law would continue after the ban on drumming. No violent clashes were reported that year, neither in the following years, but the situation remains tense. Apparently, the turn to an environmentalist discourse of 'noise pollution' and noise as a 'health hazard'⁷ provided a way out of the impasse between

SPIRIT MEDIA

one party claiming freedom of worship and the other party claiming the right to protection of cultural heritage, and both legitimising their claims with the constitution.

What is at stake in the conflict between Pentecostals and traditionalists over the ban on drumming is not only religion; it is also a conflict over different understandings of citizenship between 'native' Ga people and 'strangers,' mostly Akan (and born again), that have invaded the city of Accra, the national capital, yet situated in Ga country. The born-again Christians make claim to universal rights, guaranteed in the constitution, on the basis of their national citizenship, while the Ga traditionalists claim religious obligations that come with local citizenship and their spiritual ties to Ga land. The state takes up an ambiguous position in the debate, mediating between the 'universal' liberal democratic ideals of a modern nation-state, its cultural policy of preserving local cultural heritage, and its dependence on the popular and powerful Pentecostal and charismatic churches. In Ghana's new public sphere, then, various parties negotiate moral citizenship, human rights, religious doctrines, and ways of conceiving of human dignity and selfhood.

For many 'immigrants' in Accra, most of whom are Christian and Akan, the city is first of all the national capital and they see themselves more as national citizens than as strangers in Ga country. Moreover, being self-consciously born-again, many of them see themselves as 'better' citizens than traditionalists. They see no reason to respect a law associated with a religion they do not wish to associate with and claim their constitutional right to worship as they wish. Ga traditionalists on the other hand feel that their land is invaded by strangers who do not only loudly profess an exclusivist religion, but have also numerically and economically become far stronger than the Ga people. They have become a minority on their own land. The *wulomei* see that the charismatic and Pentecostal churches are making money on their lands while they themselves are living in poverty. Their assertiveness in the name of the religious obligations of local citizenship is thus also a way of claiming supremacy over people perceived to be intruders and feared to be totally taking over their land. A way of saying 'now for once you have to obey our law, because you are living on our land.'

Afrikania's position in the debate is difficult and ambiguous, because the traditional practices it seeks to promote or defend conflict with the 'universal' norms and rights of its nationalist project. In its effort to unite all traditional religions, ethnicity, blood descent, and land are de-emphasised in the broad traditionalist, national identity it seeks to promote. In the ban on drumming debate, then, Afrikania claims people's right to tradition on the basis of the constitution, that is, on the basis of national citizenship. The respect for traditional religion and culture it demands cannot be but very general and abstract. In practice Afrikania does not link up with the *wulomei* and other Ga traditionalists to make a fist against Christian hegemony and arrogance, because the ethnic identity that the latter fight for, is exactly what Afrikania tries to overcome. In fact, even though one of the attractions of Afrikania for traditional priests is the organisational backing and protection it offers in conflicts with Christians, there is not a single *wulomo* among Afrikania's membership, not even of the Arts Centre branch, which is located in a Ga neighbourhood in central Accra.

Instead of fighting side by side with the Ga traditionalists, then, Afrikania raises its voice in the debate in another way. At press conferences and in radio and TV

7. Defending Tradition

interviews devoted to the ban on drumming, Afrikania speaks up as the representative of traditional religion and culture in general and thus fiercely argues for the ban and against the charismatic churches defying it. At a press conference Afrikania organised after the first clash in 1998, for example, Ameve stated that the ban was a 'highly spiritual requirement' that should be respected by everybody living on Ga land regardless of one's religious conviction. Around the same time Ameve featured in the GTV talk show *About Life* where he explained the spiritual meaning of the ban in a highly intellectualist way:

The world, if I should say it in mystical terms, is a world of vibrations, full of things that we do not see. Now, me and you are talking on television. The rays that are taking these waves to the various instruments and interpret things for people to listen to and so, can they be seen? There is no way you can see a particular wave and say this wave is carrying this particular radio message. The waves are there all along, but only when you have a particular instrument you can catch them and see and hear. You have to bring a radio here to get a radio message. So in a similar manner the spiritual forces exist. And so many things connect to the spiritual forces. If you play a particular instrument at a particular time, you will get some vibration. Certain vibrations are attracted by certain instruments and certain level of sounds. So these vibrations are there, and you can use them to make harmony or to destroy. [...]

Vibration is the source of life, everything is vibration. Vibration is sound, is movement. You can manipulate everything with a certain type of sound. Setting the thing in a state of vibration. At certain times of the year, when the plants are going to take seed, certain sounds can destroy it. Just like when a woman is in the early stages of pregnancy, exposure to certain noises can cause abortion. Sounds that cause destructive vibration are: yelling, shooting, drumming, especially with drums made of leather, what we call membranophones. Some of these things cannot be explained to the masses, only those who are more advanced can understand. So to the masses we simply come up with a law that says don't do these things at this particular time. We live in a world of forces, we need to have rules that permit nature to do its work. We need more than these thirty minutes to explain the spiritual meaning, the scientific meaning, because our ancestors have taken years, generations to observe those things. These are experiences they have handed down to us up to today.⁸

Pastor Mensa Otabil, who was involved in the solution of the conflict as a member of the National Commission on Culture, in an interview with me trivialised the spiritual meaning of the ban for those defending it most passionately, especially the *wulomei*:

The *wulomei* are very negative about the intellectuals talking big English on TV. What they are saying about the power of sound, the anger of the gods, and the meaning of it all, is none of their concern. They are just surviving, so they use this opportunity to get money from the churches. It is just about money. It is so simple as that.⁹

SPIRIT MEDIA

He thus explained the conflict as essentially a political-economic one, where 'traditional religion' and 'cultural heritage' are mobilised to regain power and get access to money. The acting Ga Mantse, Nii Adote Obuor II, an Anglican himself, told me that

It is not a religious thing at all. Actually the period of silence has more of an agricultural and environmental significance than a spiritual one. It is meant for people to farm, harvest, fish, so that there can be abundance of food and no hunger. They add some mystical, spiritual air to it so that people would abide by the law.¹⁰

For Samuel Addai-Kusi, deacon of the Christ Apostolic Church, the issue was obvious: 'We are talking here about a conflict between the Christian religion and the traditional religion.'¹¹ Certainly, the conflict was also about religion, as initially it were only Pentecostal and charismatic churches that were found to disrespect the ban and none of the other sources of noise in the inevitably noisy metropolis. It was only later that sounds such as the Muslim call for prayer, amplified into the neighbourhoods, music played at open-air drinking spots and night clubs, yelling at football matches, wailing at funerals, military drumming and trumpeting at state ceremonies, and the beating by shoeshine boys on their tool boxes to attract customers entered the discussions.

We are dealing in this case with conflicting ways of conceptualising sound in relation to urban space and personhood (Van Dijk 2001). The 'official' discourse on the tradition of the ban on drumming is occupied during a specified ritual period with specific kinds of sound (drumming, hand clapping) that are believed to have a spiritual effect (on growth of agricultural produce; causing disasters). Afrikania, in representing the Ga traditionalists' point of view in the public debate, emphasises first of all this spiritual aspect of sound. But ironically, in so doing, it loses touch with the concerns of the *wulomei*, for whom this 'official traditional' discourse Afrikania voices out in the media may not be so relevant at all. They rather contest sound and noise because of the political presence implied. For them, the sonic occupation of public space in Accra is a way of asserting power, and especially so by those considered most threatening to their local authority, Pentecostal churches. Interestingly, in the Pentecostal politics of sound (Van Dijk 2005), sound equally has a spiritual component, facilitate movement of the Holy Spirit and exorcism of evil spirits (see also chapter 3 and 4). Sound is thus crucial in the spiritual struggle between the Holy Spirit and the Devil. Hence the leader of the Ghana Evangelical Society claimed that 'the ban is being used to denounce the work of God and obstruct the movement of the Spirit of God that brought the liberation of the church and the people from idolatry and captivity.'¹² What stabilised the conflict eventually was the mediating role of the state in turning away from a focus on religion and tradition towards an occupation with measurable levels of decibels throughout the year but during specified hours of the day. This conceptualisation of sound is closely connected to ideas about citizenship, civilisation, and a healthy body, but also hopelessly out of tune with actual sound politics in Accra.

7. Defending Tradition

Libation: cultural heritage and national development

In August 2002 the Deputy Local Government Minister, Captain (Rtd) Nkrabeah Effah-Dartey, publicly called for the abolishment of libation pouring at state functions. This traditional religious practice, he claimed, is harmful to national development, because it 'surrenders the country's destiny to idolatry.' A similar statement had been made earlier by the Ashanti Regional Minister, Mr. Sampson Boafo, in February 2001. A hot debate followed, in which Pentecostal statements about 'invoking evil spirits in the nation' and 'idolatry changing the country's destiny' clashed with arguments about 'Africanness,' 'freedom of worship,' and 'national cultural heritage.' Obviously, the discussion about libation has a long history, both in the Christian theological debate in Ghana on whether and how to accommodate cultural practices (e.g. Sarpong 1996), and in the political, nationalist discourse on cultural heritage. What was new, however, was the appearance of the question of 'superstitious beliefs' at the centre of Ghanaian development discourse.

The pouring of libation, generally with a strong alcoholic drink ('schnapps,' gin, *akpeteshi*), but also with water, palm oil, or food stuffs, is a central practice not only in the traditional religions of many of Ghana's ethnic groups. It is much more widespread as a cultural practice integral to the celebration of naming ceremonies, marriages, and funerals (De Witte 2001), ethnic cultural festivals, royal traditions, but also parties and informal gatherings.¹³ In these various cultural contexts, it is perceived in different ways; as a way of communicating with ancestors, gods, or God, of remembering them and honouring them, of invoking their presence, as the traditional form of prayer, or as a cultural duty. A distinction is generally made between remembering the ancestors and invoking the presence of their spirits through libation-pouring, with Christians practicing libation stressing remembrance and honouring, traditional religious practitioners pouring libation to call the spiritual presence of the ancestors and deities to the particular event, and indeed, Pentecostals fighting it exactly because it would invoke the presence of evil spirits. Conceived as the traditional form of prayer, the practice of libation has been incorporated together with the Christian prayer and the Muslim prayer at state functions to represent the 'three major religious traditions' in Ghana and express the multi-religious character of the nation. While the pouring of libation in all kinds of contexts is contested and not only recently so, it is especially its performance at state functions that has come to be under fire, because of the official government recognition it lends to what some people perceive as a backward or idolatrous cultural practice. Pentecostal groups were outraged, for example, when during the official state visit of President Bill Clinton to Ghana in September 2002, he was called upon to pour libation upon arrival at the airport in honour of the ancestors. What is contested, then, is not only the status of traditional religion as equal to Christianity and Islam, but also the invocation of spiritual power in the public domain of the nation-state.

Immediately after Captain Effah-Dartey had made his provocative statement in the media, Afrikania organised a press conference to voice its anger and defend the practice of libation at public functions. The meeting consisted of a speech by Ameve and questions by the press members answered by Afrikanians. Ameve started by adopting the official state discourse of secularism.

SPIRIT MEDIA

Ghanaians must be taught to understand that Ghana is a Secular State with a constitution, which provides for *Freedom of Worship*. Our parliamentarians are not voted into parliament on religious considerations. They are voted into parliament by all the citizens irrespective of their religious affiliations.

The two ministers of state in question, Ameve thus claimed, had subverted the constitution with their statements. Invoking Nkrumah's heritage, he continued that

when the government calls on the major religious groups to offer prayers at state functions, the purpose was not to make magic, but to demonstrate the world the unity of the people of Ghana. That is, despite religious diversity, we are firmly united as one people.

After voicing this rather modernist view on religion, a view also put forward by various newspaper editorials (e.g. *Chronicle* 9 March 2001) and public commentators, he suddenly switched to legitimising libation by emphasising its spiritual power and challenging the miracle-performing power of other religions.

God accepted the *Libation Prayer* of Okomfo Anokye and handed down the Golden Stool that unites the Ashanti Kingdom and kept it intact up to date. This is the greatest miracle performed in Ghana through libation prayer. If any other religion in Ghana has performed miracles equivalent to this let them show it.

As in a good exchange of blows, Ameve then accused these 'other religions' (read: Pentecostalism) of what they accuse traditional religion of, retarding national progress.

It can be stated with certainty that all-nights and all-day prayer camps and churches that divert the minds of our people from hard work are directly responsible for the stagnation of our progress. These are the root causes of our problems.

Interestingly, in the debate on the effect of 'superstitious beliefs' on national development charismatic and Pentecostal churches have come to be under fire as much as traditional religious practitioners. A variety of social commentators, including many Christians (among whom also Mensa Otabil, as will be recalled from chapter 2), increasingly criticise the overreliance on spiritual forces and on the power of prayer, fasting, and exorcism these churches promote at the expense of rational ways of solving problems. The web columnist Y. Fredua-Kwarteng exemplified this widespread critique when he stated that 'the rapid growth in the number of spiritual or charismatic churches in the subcontinent has proved to be equally detrimental [as juju and witchcraft] to development in West-Africa.'¹⁴ Ameve, however, did not join this by now strong chorus of critical voices in his counter-attacks on charismatic Pentecostalism. Instead he chose to join the charismatics in their emphasis on the spiritual and hence defended the practice of libation by boasting about the miracles it can

7. Defending Tradition



Fig. 7.3 Detail of the Afrikania Mission signboard.



Fig. 7.4 The Afrikania Mission signboard after it was demolished.

invoke. His critique on charismatic Pentecostalism in this debate thus remained limited to the hours spent on worship instead of productive work.

Further, Ameve dismissed the idea that ATR is idolatrous as an 'ignorant mistake,' saying that 'idolatry is an emotion, which affects people in all religions. Some people idolise ideas or fellow human beings; others idolise beliefs, money or wealth.' As a response to widespread Christian and especially Pentecostal condemnation of traditional religion as idolatrous, he thus turned to an intellectual, psychological discourse that conceives of idolatry as characteristic of the human mind, and not of particular religions or religious practices.

In 2005 Afrikania's signboard, depicting a libation scene, was demolished and the libation paintings removed and found in the weeds by the road side (fig. 7.4). Whether this had any connection to Afrikania's speaking out on the issue of libation or not, it attests to the continuing contestation of libation in the public sphere. Both the debate on the ban on drumming and that on libation were prime occasions for Afrikania to enter the media in defence of traditional religion and culture. But the public controversy in particular that made Afrikania widely known and has come to be attached to its name is what is known as the 'trokosi war.'

Trokosi: tradition, 'fetish slaves,' and human rights

In 1994 several reports appeared in the Ghanaian media about the plight of young, female *trokosis*, who were allegedly kept and maltreated as slaves in shrines in the Volta Region. This raised the concern of citizens, government officials, development agencies, and missionaries, who argued and fought for the abolishment of such human rights violation by traditional practices and for the liberation of the 'slave girls.' This again triggered a counter-reaction from traditionalists, who denied the existence of cru-

SPIRIT MEDIA



Figs. 7.5 and 7.6 Illustrations with web article 'Punctured Hope Reveals the Agony of Trokosi Through the Eyes of an Irrepressible Survivor' by Jane Delson (www.daria-magazine.com/features_specials/features3.asp) about the feature film *Punctured Hope* (Dir. Bruno Pischiutta, Toronto Pictures, 2006).

elties and defended the 'trokosi system' as a valuable traditional cultural practice on the basis of the constitutional freedom of religion. Afrikania came to be the main fighter in this pro-trokosi camp. Over the years, the *trokosi* controversy grew into a public arena where different religious groups, NGOs, the state, foreign embassies, and the media interact in the negotiation of personhood and community, tradition, modernity and religion, and where the private – as private as the body – became a matter of public concern and local religious practice got linked up with national politics and global human rights activism.¹⁵ Public representation and the political power of images and texts have become key to what Christian NGOs call a 'fetish slaves liberation campaign' and Afrikania an 'international money making gimmick.'

The *trokosi* controversy has attracted quite some research and several studies and reports have appeared about the institution and its contestation (e.g. Ameh 1998; Dovlo and Adzoyi 1995; Eckardt 2004; Romanoff 1999). What *trokosi* or *troxovi* (as the institution is termed in Ewe) is, is heavily contested, especially as it exists in various forms, multiple translations of the terms circulate, and its definition serves the agendas of the various contesting groups. Traditionally it is understood to be a cultural-religious practice of crime-control in Ewe communities, whereby a virgin girl or young woman is appointed by her family to become a *trokosi* and serve at a shrine as reparation for crimes committed (in the past) by a (now deceased) relative in order to end the resulting misfortunes (divine punishments) that befall the family. Translated as 'wife of the god' by the advocates, she serves the *tro* (god) (and sometimes the priest) and is instructed in the ways and rituals of the shrine for a short or long period, according to the circumstance (cf. Rosenthal 1998:132).¹⁶ As servant of the god, she often becomes a highly respected member of the community and may even become a priestess herself. Translated as 'slave of the god' or 'fetish slave' by the 'abolitionists,' however, the practice has in recent years been defined as a dehumanising practice that violates victims' fundamental human rights.

The leading campaigner of what has come to be dubbed the 'abolitionist

7. Defending Tradition

movement' is International Needs Ghana (ING), the Ghanaian branch of a global Christian human rights organization, headed by Reverend Walter Pimpong. Its major activities are 'liberating' *trokosi* from shrines, running economic recovery projects for their reintegration into society, and carrying out or commissioning research. The basis of ING's campaign is the view that '*trokosi* practice is slavery ..., [it] is obnoxious, inhuman, contravenes human rights laws and must be stopped' (ING 1998:5). Some of the human rights abuses in *trokosi* shrines are said to be servitude ranging from three years to lifelong, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse by the priest, long working hours in unsuitable working conditions, and denial of appropriate food, education, and medical care (ING 1998; Dovlo and Adzoyo 1995). In its project of 'liberating over 5,000 women and children believed to be in Trokosi servitude,' ING is joined by a host of other organisations, that are campaigning, raising funds, commissioning research, or educating liberated *trokosis*.¹⁷ Afrikania's counter-campaign hinges on the argument that anti-*trokosi* claims are false, no human rights violation takes place, and *trokosi* as defined by the abolitionists does not exist. Instead, Afrikania says, the institution as it does exist controls crime by teaching young women how to be role models in their families and communities, which is an honour bestowed upon the girl.¹⁸ According to Ameve, troxovi shrines 'serve as hospitals, healing centres, pharmacies, courts of last resort and justice, places of worship and devotion, sanctuaries of refuge, schools of learning, conservatories of culture, morality, and lodges of esoteric knowledge' (Ameve 2002:48). Troxovi is thus anything but harmful and should be maintained under the freedom of religion act within Ghana's constitution. In June 1998, however, partly as a result of the ING lobby, Ghana's Criminal Code was amended to criminalise all 'customary or ritual servitude,' but this did neither put an end to the controversy nor to the practice.¹⁹

The *trokosi* controversy cannot be properly understood without taking into account its global dimensions. In her introduction to a collection of articles on the visual culture of human rights in *American Anthropologist*, Meg McLagan calls our attention to the ways in which in human rights campaigns in our globally mediated world, "'local" actors' claims are formatted into human rights "issues"' (2006:191). She argues that human rights advocacy has become a kind of 'transnational storytelling' (see also Gregory 2006), in which 'seeing is believing' and visual formats of persuasive images (film, video, and photography) play a crucial role in driving international audiences to action. Attention to the social processes through which global publicness is achieved and a visual culture of human rights is produced and circulated is crucial also to understanding Afrikania's response to the anti-*trokosi* campaign, which has come to be tied up with global publics, global media, transnational networks, and global actors with global voices. The 1999 US Department of State Report on International Religious Freedom defined *trokosi* as 'religious slavery' and 'an especially severe human rights abuse and a flagrant violation of women's and children's rights.' International audiences watched BBC and CNN documentaries on '*trokosi* slavery.' Western journalists visited Ghana to investigate the issue and wrote articles on 'Ghana's slaves to the gods,' 'Ghana's trapped slaves,' and 'Juju's fetish slaves' in newspapers and magazines. And a Google search for *trokosi*

SPIRIT MEDIA

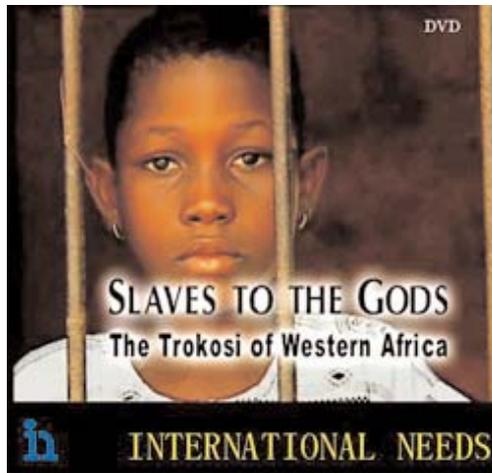


Fig. 7.7 DVD cover 'Slaves to the Gods: The Trokosi of Western Africa' by International Needs.

on the Internet yields 22,300 hits that link one to similar texts about 'systematic abuse,' 'vestal virgins,' 'child slavery,' 'sex slaves to the gods' or 'African sex slavery,' images of young, sad looking, poorly dressed girls (figs. 7.5, 7.6, 7.8), in one instance even behind bars (fig. 7.7), and 'trokosi slave petitions' to be signed and 'prayer requests for the slave project.'²⁰

McLagan argues that much of global human rights campaigning takes on the transnational cultural form of the testimony, that hinges on the presentation of the victims' body. This seems to be true for the globalised anti-trokosi campaign, where the testimony of former trokosi Juliana Dogbadzi

(figs. 7.9, 7.10) has become famous. This is her life story as it circulates on the Internet (see appendix V for full text) and in international campaigning material:

Sex Slavery

"I was a kid, seven years old, when my parents took me from our home to captivity in a shrine where I was a sex slave to a fetish priest."

Bio

Juliana Dogbadzi, enslaved in a shrine in her native Ghana as a young child under a custom known as Trokosi, was forced to work without pay, without food or clothing, and to perform sexual services for the holy man. She was able to escape seventeen years later, after several failed attempts, at the age of twenty-three. Trokosi comes from an Ewe word meaning "slave of the gods," and is understood as a religious and cultural practice in which young girls, mostly virgins, are sent into lifelong servitude to atone for the alleged crimes of their relatives. In 1997, it was estimated that approximately five thousand young girls and women were being kept in 345 shrines in the southeastern part of Ghana. Through Juliana Dogbadzi's daring escape and her subsequent efforts to denounce the system, the Trokosi practice was banned in Ghana; however, law enforcement against Trokosi is still lax. Dogbadzi speaks out against Trokosi, traveling the country, meeting with slaves, and trying to win their emancipation; and increasingly, she is not alone in her courageous stance.²¹

Leshu Torchin (2006) describes how in the case of the film *Ravished Armenia* (1919) and its context of the much larger fundraising campaign for the Armenian cause, the Christian underpinnings of the human rights movements offered an instrumental iconography of suffering that shaped an early 'rights imaginary' at the beginning of

7. Defending Tradition

the 20th century. Images of Turkish atrocities against Christians connected to 'a visual tradition of suffering in Christian iconography as they travelled through a sophisticated transnational network responsive to and dependent on these modes of expression: missionary organizations' (Ibid.:215). But aesthetic and narrative strategies also capitalized on an Orientalist imaginary and drew heavily on established tropes of the savage Turk, sexually avaricious and cruel, ravishing helpless Christian women. Finally, celebrity was mobilised as a mode of publicity.

Despite the totally different contexts and time frames, the parallels with the anti-trokosi campaign are striking. Like the heroine of *Ravished Armenia*, Juliana Dogbadzi's personal life-story was turned into a marketable script (in the broad sense of the term). Also, this script is characterised by a similar mix of sexual sensationalism, religious discourse and commercial interest. From Dorgbadzi's story: 'I was raped repeatedly by the priest on torn mats on the cold floor of windowless huts. ... I was about twelve when I was first raped.'²² Also, there is implicit religious language in the story: 'The shrine claims powers it does not have in order to instil fear in the slaves and to stop them from escaping.' The eradication of false fear is the classical missionary argument for spreading Christianity. In some campaigning texts the religious, evangelical orientation is much more explicit (see also fig. 7.8):

Real, eternal hope for these girls is found only in Jesus, who fully paid the atonement for all our sins when He died on the cross in our place and rose again triumphantly. Idolatry has held the Ewe tribe captive for centuries, but now God is loosening those bonds. These girls have seen the horrors of idolatry up close. After their release, is it any wonder they show a great interest in knowing Jesus Christ? Our programs include opportunities to share the Good News with the girls and with their communities. He gives them Real Hope!²³

Fig. 7.8 'About the System of Child Slavery Known as Trokosi or Ritual Servitude,' 'before-after' story published on the website of Every Child Ministries (www.ecmafrica.org).



Yayra was a miserable young girl abandoned at an idol shrine when her mother was given as a human sacrifice in a desperate attempt to appease the angry gods, and died there as a trokosi slave. After Yayra was rescued from the idol shrines, she rejected her shrine name and chose instead to be called, "Yayra", meaning "blessed." Yayra believes she is blessed indeed to be free from the awful system of idol worship that enslaved and killed her mother, blessed to be able to live at ECM's Haven of Hope through sponsorship, blessed to be attending school. She has received Jesus as her Savior and is developing into a beautiful young woman.



SPIRIT MEDIA



Fig. 7.9 Portrait of Juliana Dogbadzi by Eddie Adams (Cuomo and Adams 2000).

Juliana Dogbadzi turned into a 'martyr,' that Western and largely Christian audiences were happy to save. Certainly, Dogbadzi's heroine status also had its commercial sides and she became a well-marketed celebrity. In 1999, for example, she was elected the Reebok Human Rights Hero. In the stylish coffee table book *Speak Truth to Power* by activist Kerry Cuomo and photographer Eddie Adams (2000) and sponsored by The General Motors Foundation, her picture and story feature together with those of other human rights celebrities, such as Desmond Tutu, Marian Wright Edelman, the Dalai Lama, Dianna Ortiz, and Vaclav Havel. Like the Armenia campaign, then, the anti-*trokosi* campaign is characterised by an uncomfortable alliance between religious organisations, commercial media, and human rights activism.

Its transnational dimension makes the '*trokosi* war' very different from the ban on drumming and the libation controversies and also much more difficult for

Afrikania to engage in. Afrikania's strategy, then, is not to format their claims in similar ways in order to get them represented in the global human rights circuits, but to expose precisely the ways in which local anti-*trokosi* activists' interests are moulded into the discourses and visual formats of global human rights activism, local 'victims' are celebrated as globalised 'martyrs,' and local priests are turned into a kind of universal, sexually avaricious and cruel savages. Specifically, Afrikania tries to expose the degree of performance, staging, and 'lies' involved in the process of global *trokosi* publicity and attacks the axiom of 'seeing is believing' that underpins the use of photographs and video in the campaign. In letters to newspapers, press conferences, papers presented to government agencies and foreign embassies, and an Afrikania publication (Ameve 2002), Ameve and other Afrikania priests point to the ambiguity, if not hypocrisy of many of the local actors' interests. They claim, for instance, that the *trokosi* liberations by International Needs are staged, with local school children and market women being paid to dress up in traditional attire and pose as *trokosis*. Ameve told me about a liberation ceremony where Afrikania interfered:

The children thought they were going to do some kind of cultural performance and happily complied, not knowing what the recordings were going to be used for. They had cleared some part of the bush and put a small hut there, the 'trokosi shrine.' It was a very small place, how can there be over a hundred trokosis in such a place? But from the camera angle it would look very big.

Such video recordings, Afrikania claims, are then sent to international human rights agencies and foreign embassies to raise funds and to the media to raise public support for the so-called liberation campaign (e.g. Afrikania Mission 2001).²⁴ Afrikania priest Osofo Azazu stated to me that 'all you have to do to get rich is organize some women

7. Defending Tradition

and girls, film them as slaves and send the material abroad to the international organisations and the money will start flowing.' Afrikania priest and Secretary General, Osofo Tordzagbo, who conducted research on *trokosi* and the abolition campaign, complained that 'people all over the world believe these stories, because the abolitionists have the means and control the media to circulate their lies. All the *trokosi* news is made up and devoid of any truth, but people don't want to hear the truth.' Because of the donor money involved, abolitionists also inflate figures about *trokosi* women and liberated *trokosis*, Afrikania claims. Moreover, priests are being paid 'compensation' for each liberated *trokosi* or are forced to liberate *trokosis* they do not have and thus they also inflate or make up figures themselves (cf. Eckardt 2004) and comply to staging liberation ceremonies.²⁵ In addition to this 'big international fraud,' Afrikania points to the

evangelical urge of many Christian NGOs and activists and claims that the movement to eradicate *trokosi* is in fact an evangelisation movement aimed at destroying ATR and converting traditional religious practitioners to Christianity. As stated in a paper titled 'Trokosi Abolition Fraud,' presented to the Ministry of Interior and cc-ed to various media houses, foreign embassies and NGOs, 'the Christian rhetoric in which the Troxovi Institution is couched and condemned clearly shows that the campaigners against the institution are more interested in upholding an imagined superiority of Christianity over African Traditional Religion' (Afrikania Mission 1998a:17). Another paper concluded that 'an attempt is being made to replace African Traditional Religion with Christianity. This is unfortunate and discriminatory' (Afrikania Mission 1998b).

One success resulting from Afrikania's activism in the *trokosi* war is that the description of *trokosi* in the latest US Department of State Report on International Religious Freedom (2005) much more reflects Afrikania's view of the practice than before, when it echoed International Needs' claims, especially where it concerns numbers (see note 81) and sexual abuse.²⁶ Many international human rights NGOs, however, especially Christian ones, perceive and present the movement as promoting 'harmful traditions,' 'slavery,' 'idolatry,' and 'backwardness.'²⁷ Nevertheless, despite widespread negative public opinion about the practice of *trokosi* and the provision of the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 314, there has been no prosecution under the act so far.

Conclusion: in defence of tradition

What all three conflicts over culture and religion described above make clear is that in post-colonial Ghana, religion and culture have become arenas for struggle between different societal groups and matters of conscious choice and contestation. Public rep-



Fig. 7.10 Portrait of Juliana Dogbadzi by Eddie Adams (Cuomo and Adams 2000).

SPIRIT MEDIA

resentation has become crucial to this struggle, especially so since the liberalisation of the media in 1992, that gave way to a plurality of voices. Whereas in the past the status of traditional religion and culture was protected by the state (as it still is constitutionally), its legitimacy is now questioned from different sides, especially Pentecostal, but also governmental ones. In Afrikania's struggle for the legitimacy and defence of traditional religious practices public representation is key.

Afrikania's voice in public debates is not unequivocal. In a public sphere that is dominated by Christian voices, Ameve and other Afrikania leaders are all the time 'talking back' and follow different, often surprisingly contradictory strategies. Most often they speak the language of secularism and religious freedom, equality and tolerance. In response to Pentecostals' condemnation and demonisation of traditional religious practices, this strategy of preaching tolerance is also a way of returning the ball and demonstrating the moral superiority of traditional religion. This was clear in the debates on the ban on drumming and on libation. Paradoxically, however, the secularist argument fundamentally contradicts Afrikania's project, which is to provide Ghana with a national traditional religion on the basis of which and through which the nation should be governed. The secularist stance is an answer to the obvious unfeasibility of this utopian aim. Ameve especially also likes to speak the language of mysticism in public, explaining the spiritual meaning or 'technology' behind certain practices, such as in the case of the ban on drumming. This is a detached, intellectualist discourse, arrogant even when he claims that 'these things cannot be explained to the masses.' He employed a very different strategy again when he claimed spiritual power and miracles in competition with Pentecostalism in defending the practice of libation. Instead of explaining how and why libation works, he urged the public to just believe in its power. Finally, the discursive strategy followed in the case of the *trokosi* war was to reveal the 'truth,' expose 'falsehood,' and unravel the conspiracy of Christian groups, the government, foreign religious and political institutions against African traditional religion. Again, a way of claiming moral superiority over the implicitly or explicitly Christian opponents, not only in response to being demonised by Ghanaian Pentecostals, but more so in response to being dehumanised by global media representations.

Despite this volatile voice, Afrikania's public defence of traditional religious practices hinges on its access to and disposal of public knowledge. Afrikania leaders participated in the three debates discussed on the basis of their knowledge of public policy and law, especially the constitution, and their intellectual ability to advance critical arguments. They are capable of critiquing the problematic terminology of the national debates, such as 'slavery,' 'idolatry,' and 'development,' and are well-versed in globalised discourses of human rights, religious freedom, secularism, environmentalism, and health. What they profess is 'universal knowledge,' knowledge that is universally valid, shared, and accessible. What they do not at all connect to is the spiritual knowledge of the Ga *wulomei* and the Ewe *trokosi* priests, which is secret, restricted, and not openly valued (but all the more powerful) in the public sphere. Not only do Afrikania leaders have no access to such knowledge, it also does not fit the formats of public debating.

What Afrikania's role in the three public debates makes painfully clear, then, is

7. Defending Tradition

that the movement can never be the representative of traditional religion. This is not only so because its aim of promoting a national traditional religion contradicts the ethnic interests of some of the traditional religious practitioners, as most pronouncedly in the case of the ban on drumming. On a deeper level, Afrikania's claim of representing traditional religion is untenable, because the very practice of representation contradicts the very unrepresentability of African traditional religions (Meyer 2006c). With this I do not mean that such religious and spiritual practices and beliefs do not or cannot play a role in Ghana's public sphere. Or that the secret, spiritual knowledge of traditional religious specialists is confined to the private. On the contrary, as Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar (2004) have argued, beliefs about an invisible world of spiritual powers and practices of mediating between this invisible and the visible, human world are intrinsic to African politics and public spheres (see also Geschiere 1997; O'Brian 2000). The point I wish to make rather is that such practices and beliefs exist in and are expressed through different, often more hidden registers. While the formats of representation in the public sphere and participation in public debates are visible, discursive, cerebral, and overt, the formats of traditional religiosity are often invisible, embodied, sensual, and secret. The presence of spiritual power in bodies, objects, and places cannot be captured by polemic discourse, activist formats, or public symbols. Keeping silence during certain periods, pouring alcohol, and serving gods at shrines are practices of communication with gods and ancestors, practices of establishing and sustaining relationships between human subjects and spiritual powers. This is a register of communication far removed from that of public representation and activism.

Notes to chapter 7

¹ Chapter 5, article 21 (1) (c) of the constitution guarantees everyone the right of 'freedom to practise any religion and to manifest such practice.' Article 26 of the same chapter states that (1) 'Every person is entitled to enjoy, practise, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion subject to the provisions of this Constitution,' but also that (2) 'All customary practices which dehumanise or are injurious to the physical and mental well-being of a person are prohibited.'

² *Ghana Review International*, 18 May, 1999, accessed at www.ghanaweb.com news archive.

³ Churches attacked in May 1999 included: the Church of Pentecost (Dansoman), the Assemblies of God (James Town), Word Harvest Church (Kwashieman), Victory Bible Church International (Awoshie).

⁴ The Ga people have two types of traditional authorities, *mantsemei* (chiefs) and *wulomei* (priests), and the relationship between them is complicated. In pre-colonial times the *wulomei* were the rulers and they had a political and a spiritual function. When the British came, they insisted on talking to a chief, as they were used to in Fante land. The Ga people then elevated certain people as chiefs according to the Akan chieftaincy system. Now chiefs and *wulomei* are both 'traditional rulers.' Chiefs handle jurisdiction and political matters; *wulomei* handle spiritual matters. In practice this 'division of labour' is of course not that clear-cut, for example in the case of the ban on drumming. Moreover, the relationship between both kinds of rulers is tense, as the chiefs claim authority over

SPIRIT MEDIA

Ga country and superiority over the *wulomei* and the *wulomei* look with mischief at the chiefs, because they feel they are the ones who have the traditional power.

⁵ These disasters were: the May 9 stadium disaster in 2001 that claimed the lives of over 100 persons; the death of a *wulomo* who could not perform his traditional rites two years before; the floods that hit Accra and its surroundings three years before; the death of a traditional priest who was forced by the previous government to celebrate the Homowo; and the sudden death of the prosecutor.

⁶ Accra Metropolitan Bye-law on Abatement of Nuisance: the noise level permissible at residential areas is 55 decibels between 0600 and 2200 hours but this comes down to 48 decibels between 2200 and 0600 hours. In areas with some commercial or light industry the levels are 60 decibels and 55 decibels in the day and night, respectively. At places of entertainment or public assembly and places of worship located in this zone levels are 65 in the day and 60 decibels in the night.

⁷ Noise was described by an environmentalist in the public debate as 'an acoustic phenomenon that produces an unpleasant or irritating auditory sensation', which has the effect to 'increase heart rate and blood pressure, shorter attention span, loss of memory, anxiety, reduced field of vision, gastrointestinal problems, physical and mental fatigue, insomnia, bulimia, chronic hypertension, depressive or aggressive behaviour' (Ghana News Agency, 11 April 2002). In April 2004 the Environmental Protection Agency launched an annual National Noise Awareness Day under the theme 'Stop Noise, Protect your Hearing, Protect your Health.'

⁸ Kofi Amede in *About Life*, Ghana Television, 20 May 1999.

⁹ Interview 19 December 2002.

¹⁰ Interview 17 January 2003.

¹¹ Interview 17 January 2003.

¹² www.ghanaweb.com news archive, 21 May 1999.

¹³ See Akyeampong 1996 for an excellent study of the social history of alcohol in Ghana.

¹⁴ Y. Fredua-Kwarteng, 'Trial of Irrationality in West-Africa – Rejoinder', www.ghanaweb.com, feature article of 25 July 2004.

¹⁵ See Ameh (1998) for an overview of the historical development of the anti-*trokosi* campaign.

¹⁶ The translation of the Ewe term *trokosi* is inherently political. *Tro* is usually translated as god, deity or fetish and *kosi* as wife, virgin or slave. The term 'slave' is especially problematic, because Ewe notions of slavery do not connote the strict hierarchy of inferiority and superiority, possession and property that Westerners might infer into such terms (cf. Rosenthal 1998:133). It is these Western connotations of 'slave', especially in combination with those of 'fetish', that make 'fetish slave' an effective, but problematic catch word in global human rights campaigns.

¹⁷ Among these are Mark Wisdom's Fetish Slave Liberation movement (FESLIM), Missions International and the Vocational Training Centre for Vestal Virgins (headed by Canadian Sharon Titan), Survivors for Change (founded by former *trokosi* Juliana Dorgbadzi), and the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). The International Central Gospel Church organised a fundraising Christmas concert for the education of liberated *trokosis*.

¹⁸ This argument is shared by other pro-*trokosi* organisations, such as the Troxovi Institutional Council, the Ghana Psychic and Traditional Healers Association, and Dr. Kumordzi's Hu-Yewhe Association.

¹⁹ The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 314 of 1998 reads: 'Whoever sends or receives at any place any person or participates in or is concerned with any ritual or customary activity in respect of any person with the purpose of subjecting that person to any form of ritual or customary servitude or any form of forced labour related to customary ritual shall be guilty of a second degree felony and

7. Defending Tradition

liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years.'

²⁰ <http://www.in-australia.org.au/stbpetition.htm>, accessed 1 June 2006.

²¹ http://www.speaktruth.org/defend/profiles/profile_02.asp, accessed 1 June 2006.

²² This kind of sexual sensationalism was criticised by a shrine secretary, Ahadji, interviewed by Rachel Eckardt: 'This marital aspect of the priests and the trokosis is one of the sensational hot spots, worldwide. When the abolitionists were trying to sensitize to the whole world that trokosi is the worst practice of the human race, then all these issues come in: they have sex with them on the bare floor, whipping them, raping those of very young age and all of that. That is what they say to sensitize people and raise their emotions. They insult the whole African race just to solicit money. They put us at the level below beasts, even apes and monkeys don't do that. That a human being would do that to another just to solicit money from foreign donors is very unfortunate' (quoted in Eckardt 2004:63).

²³ www.slavechild.com by Every Child Ministries, accessed 5 June 2006.

²⁴ Similar accounts were given by several shrine priests interviewed by Eckardt (2004). I attended one International Needs liberation ceremony myself. While I cannot judge whether the women liberated that day at Agave were 'real' trokosis, I was struck by the obvious control of ING over the whole performance, including the arrangement of wooden benches for the priests and the trokosis, plastic chairs for the ING people from Accra, and a 'high table' for foreign dignitaries, the Christian opening prayer by a pastor, the speeches, the 'emancipation rituals', and the 'signing' of the legal liberation documents by the priests. The unequal power balance between the local traditionalists and the Accra-based activists was highlighted during this last 'ritual', when a young International Needs lady routinely pressed the thumbs of the elderly priests queuing in front of her table on the ink pad and the forms. An argument arose when one of the priests who was able to read and sign for himself strongly objected to the use of the term 'fetish slaves' in the document and refused to sign before this was changed into 'trokosis.' The terms were then changed with pen in the printed documents and he signed. Other than this small, but significant act of resistance, the chiefs seemed to have no other choice than to play their role in a spectacle put up by others, a point the chief priest also hinted at in his libation prayer.

²⁵ While the 1999 US Department of State Report on International Religious Freedom mentioned 4000 trokosi women and girls living in bondage (thus echoing International Needs claims), the 2002 Report stated that 'According to the local NGO International Needs, there were more than 2,000 women or girls in Trokosi shrines; however, according to credible reports from international observers, there were no more than 100 girls serving at Trokosi shrines throughout the Volta Region.' An Adidome assemblyman working closely together with FESLIM admitted to me that 'Yes, as for the figures, they are not reliable. The figures are inflated by the NGOs, because they also have to make a living. While they are doing the liberations, they also have to eat' (interview 10 January 2003).

²⁶ 'The practice explicitly forbids a Trokosi or Fiashidi to engage in sexual activity or contact during the atonement period. In the past, there were reports that the priests subjected girls to sexual abuse; however, while individual instances of abuse may occur and many priests have eventually taken Trokosis as their wives, there is no evidence that sexual or physical abuse is a systematic part of the practice' (US Department of State 2005).

²⁷ See for example the accusing articles on 'Afrikania, Idolatry, and Slavery' on the website of Teaching Africa (Every Child Ministries) (www.teachingafrica.com).

