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URBAN PLANNING, INSTITUTIONAL PLURALISM, AND INDIGENOUS BELIEF SYSTEMS IN PERI-URBAN GHANA IN THE ERA OF LAND COMMODITISATION

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ABSTRACT

Context and background

Colonial legacy and the continuous implementation of neoliberal policies have led to the creation of institutional pluralism in the planning of customary land in peri-urban areas in Ghana. During land commoditisation, peri-urban customary land planning regularly involves physical planning authorities, traditional authorities, and private surveyors. The community members are rarely involved in the planning of their communities, and the planning often leads to eviction of the community members from their ancestral land. The evictions usually lead to conflicts between traditional authorities and community members, and in other cases, the dispossession precipitates multiple sales of land by different people.

Goal and Objectives:

The study examines how the introduction of urban planning practices in peri-urban Ghana creates institutional pluralism, resulting in the breakdown of indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation. In this era of uplifting the rich culture heritage of African communities, this study aimed to contribute to the subtheme on land and spirituality in the African socio-cultural context of the conference. The study recommends that to maintain land and spirituality in the African socio-cultural context, urban planning practices should be embedded in the indigenous land tenure systems, and the planning should involve community members.

Methodology:

This study deployed New Institutional Economics approach from the perspective of Social Anthropology to examine how the introduction of urban planning changed the institutional planning structure in peri-urban Ghana, leading to erosion of the indigenous belief systems on land during land commoditisation. The study was conducted in Aburaso and Kromose in peri-urban Kumasi between 2018 and 2020. The researcher adopted a qualitative research method and data was collected through in-depth interviews from 2 Regional Lands Commission Officials, 2 Physical Planning Department Officials, 2 traditional authorities, 5 clans heads, and 33 household heads in both communities.

Results:

The findings from the study showed that sacred days were no more observed in the communities. In addition, customs regulating access to streams were broken down. Prior to the planning of the communities, goats were prohibited in the communities. However, presently, people sent goats to the communities. The study argues that the change in planning institutions in peri-urban Ghana evolving from the introduction of urban planning during land commoditisation leads to breakdown of indigenous belief systems regulating land. People do not recognise sacred days and other customs that regulate land relations again.

Keywords

Urban Planning, Commoditisation, Institutional Pluralism, Indigenous, Peri-Urban

1. INTRODUCTION

Urban planning is continuously highlighted in planning literature as a necessity for urban land management and development (Naess, 2001; Akaateba, 2018; Boamah and Amoako, 2019). From colonial time till date, planning has been championed by the state as a *conditio sine qua non* for sustainable investment in land (Njoh, 2009; Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). Moreover, neoliberal scholars articulate that the immobility and virtual indestructibility characteristics of land make it unique from other factors of production, and land can be used as collateral in market transactions to boost economic development (Atkins, 1988; Bromley, 1989; Ho, 2005). Hence, neoliberal scholars argue that land has to be planned with the plots having defined land uses, sizes, and numbers to prevent boundary distortions. During colonialism, especially in Anglophone countries, dual planning systems were created (Njoh, 2009; Fuseini and Kemp, 2015; Boamah and Amoako, 2019). Towns and cities were planned according to colonial administrator's planning regulations and rural communities were left to traditional authorities to plan them based on their customs (Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017; Akaateba, 2018; Boamah and Amoako, 2019). After independence, the colonial dual planning system was sustained, and the widespread implementation of neoliberal policies in the 1980s fossilised the dual planning systems (Njoh, 2009; Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). The neoliberal land reform implementation with the goal to privatise land rights led to the adoption of cadastral planning (Obeng, 2018; Hull, Babalola and Whittal, 2019). Presently, state land institutions continue to create cadastres to assist land owners to register their land rights to obtain title certificate. The title certificate is perceived by neoliberal economists to support land owners to access loans from financial institutions (De Soto, 2000; Joireman, 2008). In many African countries, while urban landowners have site plans, allocation notes, and title certificates, the rural dwellers do not have such documents over their land (Chimhowu, 2019). The rural lands are still managed and planned by traditional authorities according to their customs and traditions.

In peri-urban areas in Ghana, urban planning is usually implemented when there is urban expansion towards the communities (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Fuseini and Kemp, 2015; Agyemang, Silva and Poku-Boansi, 2019). The urban expansion exacerbates land prices, resulting in land commoditisation. The introduction of urban planning in the peri-urban communities precipitates institutional pluralism in the planning of the customary land (Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor, 2010; Boamah and Margath, 2016; Akaateba, 2018). The change in the institutional planning arrangement affects the enforcement of the indigenous belief systems which hitherto were used to regulate land relations. In Ghana, existing literature on land tenure and administration has noted the erosion of sacred day observance in peri-urban Ghana during land commoditisation (Blake and Kasanga, 1997; Ubink and Quan, 2008; Yeboah and Shaw, 2013). These studies often portray the breakdown of sacred day observance and other customs as emerging from the change in land uses from agrarian to mostly residential land uses during land commoditisation. However, there is a paucity of information both empirically and theoretically on how the institutional change in planning emerging from the introduction of urban planning practices in the era of land commoditisation results in breakdown of the indigenous belief systems in peri-urban Ghana.

Accordingly, this study aims to contribute to literature and examines how the introduction of urban planning changes the institutional planning structure in peri-urban Ghana, leading to erosion of the indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation. This paper is structured into seven

sections. The present section is the introduction. The next section presents the historical overview of urban planning in Ghana. The third section describes the conception of land and the indigenous belief systems in Ghana. The fourth section discusses peri-urbanisation, planning institutions and customary tenure practices. The fifth section highlights the theoretical framework and the research methodology of the study. The sixth section presents the results and discussion, and the final section presents the conclusion.

2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF URBAN PLANNING IN GHANA

Ghana (called Gold Coast during colonialism) has a land size of 238,539 square kilometres. The country is populated by many tribes of which the major ones are Guan, Akan, Mole-Dagbani, Ewes, Gonja and Ga-Adangbe (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). Historically, most of the tribes in Ghana migrated to their present locations from the West African Sudanese States (Sarbah, 1903). Berry (1995) describes that by the end of the sixteenth century, all migrations of the tribes to their present locations had ended.

Planning of Ghanaian communities began prior to the coming of Europeans to Africa (Baeyens, 2012; Ibukun, 2021). Pre-colonial communities were predominantly planned based on social solidarity. The planning was not deliberate, unlike colonial and post-colonial urban planning. The pre-colonial communities were planned to support each member of the communities, and the houses were built close to each other (Tipple, 1983; Ibukun, 2021). In certain communities such as Kumasi, some areas were declared as sacred (Tipple, 1983; Tipple, 1987). In addition, pre-colonial houses did have or not have streets. In parts of the communities where there were streets, the streets were narrow and were mainly used to access neighbours' houses (Tipple, 1983; MeQasa, 2014). The colonial period led to the introduction of urban planning to Ghana. Like other African countries, the urban planning was exported from the colonial master's home country (Njoh, 2009).

Major planning of the cities and the towns in Ghana began during the development and implementation of the 10-year development plan of Governor Guggisberg (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). Guggisberg's development plan led to the development of transportation systems, schools, and hospitals. However, Guggisberg's planning did not benefit the entire country. The planning greatly benefited the 'Golden Triangle' (Accra, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi). (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015; Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017). In addition, the Town and Country Planning Ordinance (CAP. 84) was adopted in 1945 (Adinyira, Botchway and Kwofie, 2011). The CAP. 84 created Town and Country Planning Department and a board to oversee planning of cities and towns in Ghana. The town and country planning board declared communities as a planning area and a master plan was drawn for the community (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). Layouts were then prepared using the master plan to regulate developments in the communities. However, there were inequalities in the declaration of areas as planning zones. The kind of people who resided in a particular area, thus being expatriates or indigenes, determined the kind of services that were provided to the communities (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015; Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017).

Moreover, during Nkrumah's regime (1995-66), planning was more of national development oriented instead of the extractive planning schemes devised during the colonial period (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). Nkrumah's development plan resulted in the development of Tema and the Golden Triangle towns (Accra, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi). Also, Nkrumah extended planning to the northern regions of Ghana (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). Nevertheless, after the overthrow of

Nkrumah's government, there was no intensive planning schemes that were initiated to develop the country till the end of 1980s (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015; Cobbinah and Niminga-Beka, 2017). At the end of the 1980s, the adoption of neoliberal policies led to the privatisation of state institutions and the reduction of government subsidies on services provided to the citizens (Berry, 2009; Berry, 2018). The government initiated decentralised planning system to develop the communities in Ghana (Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). From the 1990s till now, many Acts have been passed to support the decentralised planning system, and these Acts, among others, include Local Government Act (Act 462 of 1993), the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) Act (Act 479 of 1994), the National Development Planning System (NDPS) Act (Act 480 of 1994), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act (Act 490 of 1994). Presently, the Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016, (Act 925) repealed and consolidated all the previous Acts and the laws regulating planning in Ghana. Also, the Local Governance Act, 2016, (Act 936) was enacted to replace the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462).

Ghana has plethora of legislations regulating urban planning, yet, urban planning is poorly implemented in the country (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Fuseini and Kemp, 2015; Cobbinah and Niminga-Beka, 2017). Urban planning practices are commonly found in major cities and district capitals while remote peri-urban and rural communities are left unplanned. Scholarly works reveal that the poor implementation of planning laws and regulations are caused by inadequate logistics, inadequate planning staff members, lack of knowledge about planning laws by the citizens, and others (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Fuseini and Kemp, 2015). Owing to these challenges in urban planning in Ghana, there are still inequalities in planning of urban, peri-urban, and rural communities. In short, remote peri-urban and rural communities are unplanned and planning of these communities are done by community heads with little support from local artisans.

3. CONCEPTIONS OF LAND AND INDIGENOUS BELIEF SYSTEMS IN GHANA

In Ghana, like elsewhere in Africa, the conception of land transcends beyond the material realm. Throughout Ghana, all the ethnic groups attribute sacred significance to land (Asante, 1965; Asiama, 1997; Kasanga, 2000; Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 2003). Land is believed to be the heritage of ancestors, or the sanctuary of the spirit of ancestors and Asaase Yaa (supernatural feminine spirit). Awuah-Nyamekye and Sarfo-Mensah (2011) argue that the land as the heritage of the ancestors makes the chiefs (the occupants of the seats of the ancestors) the owners of the land. Traditionally, people believe that Asaase Yaa can be helpful if propitiated and harmful if neglected (Busia, 1968; Asiama, 1997). Thus, people who pacify to the earth god are blessed in their agricultural activities while those who neglect her receive nothing from her.

Moreover, land ownership in Ghana is recognised as communal, and there is no land without an owner (Sarbah, 1903; Asiama, 1997). Land is regarded as belonging to the dead, the living, and the future unborn generations (Ollennu, 1962). In pre-colonial Ghana, all members of a group (lineage, family, clan or community) took part in decision-making in relation to land allocation and management (Arko-Adjei, 2011). Land allocation could not be done without the concurrence of a council or clan members (Hayford, 1903; Sarbah, 1903). It is commonly believed, especially among the Akans in Ghana that the present generation who do not manage the ancestral land properly can be invited by the ancestors to the spiritual world. Membership of a person also determined a person's access to community's land in pre-colonial Ghana. Membership was obtained either

through birth into a lineage or acceptance into a community in the case of a stranger (Hymer, 1969; Asiama, 1997; Berry, 2002; Austin, 2007; Awuah-Nyamekye and Sarfo-Mensah, 2011). Furthermore, access to land was done through clan head, chief or religious leader. In pre-colonial Ghana, land was abundant. As a result of that, there was no insecurity of land to people (Hymer, 1969; Kasanga, 2000; Arko-Adjei, 2011). Sarbah (1903) and Amanor and Ubink (2008) point out that there were grazing fields, water bodies and forests available for use by community members. Though these grazing fields, water bodies and forests had owners, they were commonly used by the community members.

In peri-Ghana, customary land management and control are carried out within customs and traditions prior to peri-urbanisation. There are lands which are for smaller gods to support the traditional worship systems, and sacred days are observed in many parts of Ghana to regulate agricultural activities (Blake and Kasanga, 1997; Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). The sacred days are days people are not allowed to go to farms or till the land, especially in rural Ghana. Moreover, people are disallowed to go to some rivers on certain days or fish in the rivers or the streams (Daaku, 1972; Asiama, 1997; Fosu, 2020). There are groves and forests that people are prohibited to enter (Tippie, 1983). The customs used to control the management of land in Ghana are embedded in the cultural practices and social relations of the people.

4. PERI-URBANISATION, URBAN PLANNING INSTITUTIONS AND CUSTOMARY TENURE PRACTICES

In Ghana, peri-urban lands are highly commoditised due to high demand for land for residential uses. Farmlands are routinely converted to residential uses (Ubink, 2008a; Abass, Afriyie and Adomako, 2013; Appiah et al., 2014; Eledi and Kuusaana, 2014). Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor (2010) argue that the high demand for land for residential uses at the peri-urban areas in Ghana occurs due to urban land prices higher than the surrounding communities' lands. Other scholars argue that the high urban land prices emerge as a result of escalating urban population growth evolving from high birth rate, unchecked internal migration and globalisation in Ghanaian urban centres (Abdulai and Ndekugri, 2007; Awanyo, 2009; Cobbinah, Erdiaw-Kwasie and Amoateng, 2015; Kleemann et al., 2017). The scholars state that the expansion of the urban communities causes the peri-urban areas to be implicated in the processes of urbanisation. Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor explain that in Kumasi, for example, the high demand for lands for residential uses in the peri-urban communities has created "mosaic housing structures" which are poorly spread across the communities (Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor, 2010:1).

Generally, urban dwellers who want to purchase lands and build houses are attracted by the low prices in the peri-urban communities. The urban peripheries, therefore, become the sanctuary for the urban spill-over (Simon, McGregor and Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2004; Amoateng, Cobbinah and Owusu-Adade, 2013). Individual household developers, estate companies, state institutions, and foreign investors are the drivers of change in land uses in peri-urban areas in Ghana (Wehrmann, 2008; UN-HABITAT, 2011). Moreover, among the drivers of change in land uses in peri-urban communities, UN-HABITAT (2011) argues that individual households intensify more lands for housing than the estate companies and the state housing institutions. These individual households include high-income civil servants, Ghanaian expatriates, rich households, and middle-income earners from urban areas with income to build their own houses (Arko-Adjei et al., 2009; Amoako

et al., 2011). Many studies show that as more urban dwellers drift to the peri-urban communities, demand for rental housing and land increases. As a result, land gains value and the prices of land become high (Simon, McGregor and Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2004; Aberra and King, 2005; Owusu, 2008).

The high demand for land for residential uses evolving from rapid urbanisation predominantly affects the customary lands in peri-urban communities. Customary landowners allocate lands to housing developers at high prices which are usually equivalent to the open market value of the land (Kasanga et al., 1996; Asiama, 1997; Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Fiadzigbey, 2006; Ubink and Quan, 2008). Moreover, the commercialisation of the customary land leading to springing up of new developments causes the physical planning departments to declare such peri-urban areas as planning zones under the planning laws (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor, 2010). While the traditional leaders allocate the land to land seekers, the physical planning departments in district assemblies decide the land use type of the specific plots of land (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Boamah and Amoako, 2019). Thus, there is institutional pluralism in the planning of the customary land in the peri-urban areas owing to peri-urbanisation (Arko-Adjei et al., 2010; Arko-Adjei, 2011; Akaateba, Huang and Adumpon, 2018; Akaateba, 2019).

Undeniably, the commoditisation of the community lands affects the customs and the traditions which regulate land ownership, access, and control. Customs and traditions are mutated and modified to promote the selfish-interest of traditional authorities (Asiama, 1997; Gough and Yankson, 2000; Arko-Adjei et al., 2009). Boamah and Margath (2016) state that the customs and the traditions are negotiated and renegotiated to support the allocations of lands in the peri-urban areas in Ghana. Sacred days and other practices are lost in the peri-urban communities (Owusu, 2008; Arko-Adjei et al., 2009), and urban cultural practices such as pool party, night clubs, etc are introduced (Simon, McGregor and Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2004). Other benefits that peri-urban areas derive from commoditisation of customary lands for housing development in the context of rapid urbanisation include access to new information and assimilation of good urban lifestyles (Aberra and King, 2005; Adomako, 2013; Abass, Afriyie and Adomako, 2013; World Bank, 2014).

Moreover, the injustices in land allocations cause apathy towards community development processes among the indigenes. Indigenes who could not obtain any form of compensation payments often become reserved in discussing matters related to the community (Ubink, 2008a). Social cohesion collapses as people begin to prioritise their personal matters over community or clan problems (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Ubink, 2008b). The support that people obtain from their clan members and community eventually declines. Antonio and Griffith-Charles (2019) argue that the change in land relations affects the social identity and harmony among people in communities. In summary, commoditisation of customary lands generally transforms the institutional planning arrangements, social relations, land-tenure and the nature of customary land administration in peri-urban communities in Ghana. Therefore, this study is interested in how the change in the institutional arrangements leads to erosion of indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The New Institutional Economics (NIE) approach was deployed as a theoretical prism to explore how the introduction of urban planning practices changes the institutional planning arrangements

in peri-urban Ghana, resulting in the eradication of indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation. The approach was created by Ensminger and it reveals that exogenous factors [environment (social and physical), population and technology] influence relative prices. The change in the relative prices affects endogenous factors (ideology, bargaining power, organisation and institutions) (see figure 1). The outcome of the relative prices on the endogenous factors leads to distributional effects and social, political and economic behaviour of individuals that in turn affect the technology, population and the environment (Ensminger, 1992 cited in Haller, 2007; Lanz, 2018). Ensminger argues that the endogenous factors that are influenced by the relative prices are interconnected. Under the theory, institutions are described as “the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. Institutions are structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social or economic” (North, 1990:3 cited in Lanz, 2018). The ideologies are the discourses and narratives used by actors to legitimise their control over common property while the bargaining power is the ability to gain something you want from someone (Ensminger, 1992; Haller, 2007). The organisation, on the other hand, is a constellation of actors that organise themselves to gain control over common pool resources (Haller, 2007).

From figure 1, the study employed this approach to examine how population increase affects relative prices of customary land in peri-urban communities in Ghana owing to urban expansion. The study explored how the change in the relative prices leads to changes in the institutional planning arrangements, leading to a distributional effect of breakdown of indigenous belief systems.

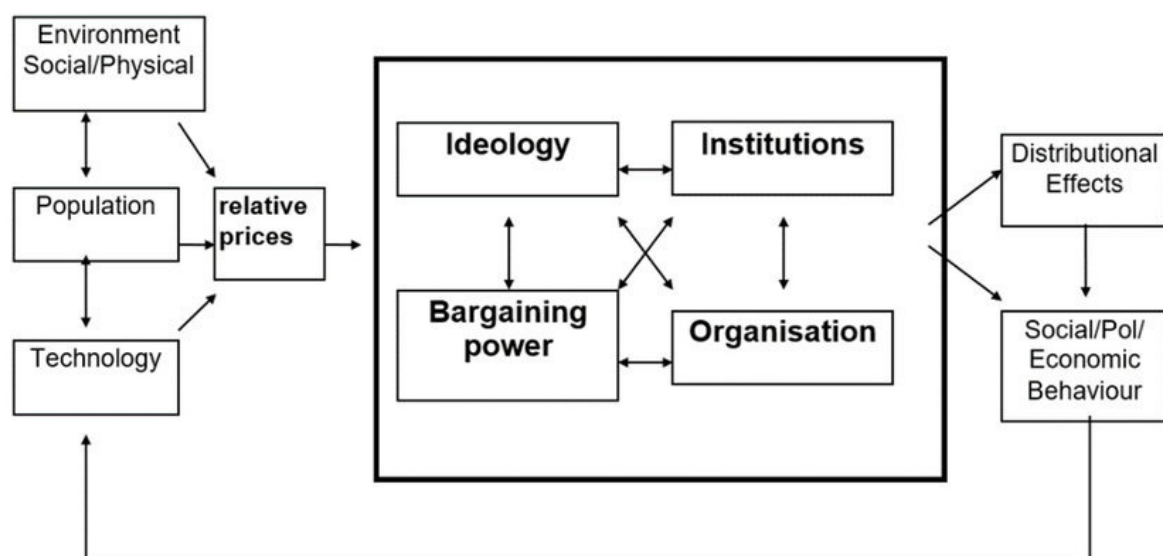


Figure 1: Framework for institutional change by Ensminger (1992:10) cited in (Haller, 2007)

The study was conducted in Aburaso and Kromoase in peri-urban Kumasi, Ghana (see figure 2 below) between 2018 and 2020, and is part of the researcher’s postgraduate study in peri-urban Kumasi. The researcher adopted a qualitative research method, and the data was collected through

in-depth interviews. The research participants included 2 Regional Lands Commission Officials, 2 Physical Planning Department Officials, 2 traditional authorities, 5 clans heads, and 33 household heads in Aburaso and Kromoase. The research participants such as the Lands Commission Officials, Physical Planning Department Officials, traditional authorities and clan heads were purposively selected while convenience sampling was used to sample the households. In addition, the in-depth interview schedule guide was modelled around themes such as land administration and planning prior to the land commoditisation, land commoditisation processes in Aburaso and Kromoase, changes in planning institutional arrangements, and its effects on indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation. The interview was conducted by the researcher and all ethical considerations were duly observed. Secondary sources of data were gathered from relevant research materials such as peer reviewed academic journals, books, and research reports. The secondary data was used to discuss and analyse the primary data. The primary data gathered was analysed with the use of thematic analysis. The researcher transcribed all the responses of the research participants to obtain the transcripts of their responses. Open coding was used to generate themes from the transcripts. The generated themes were used in addition to the secondary data to analyse the data. The research participants' names were represented with other names which were different from their original names.

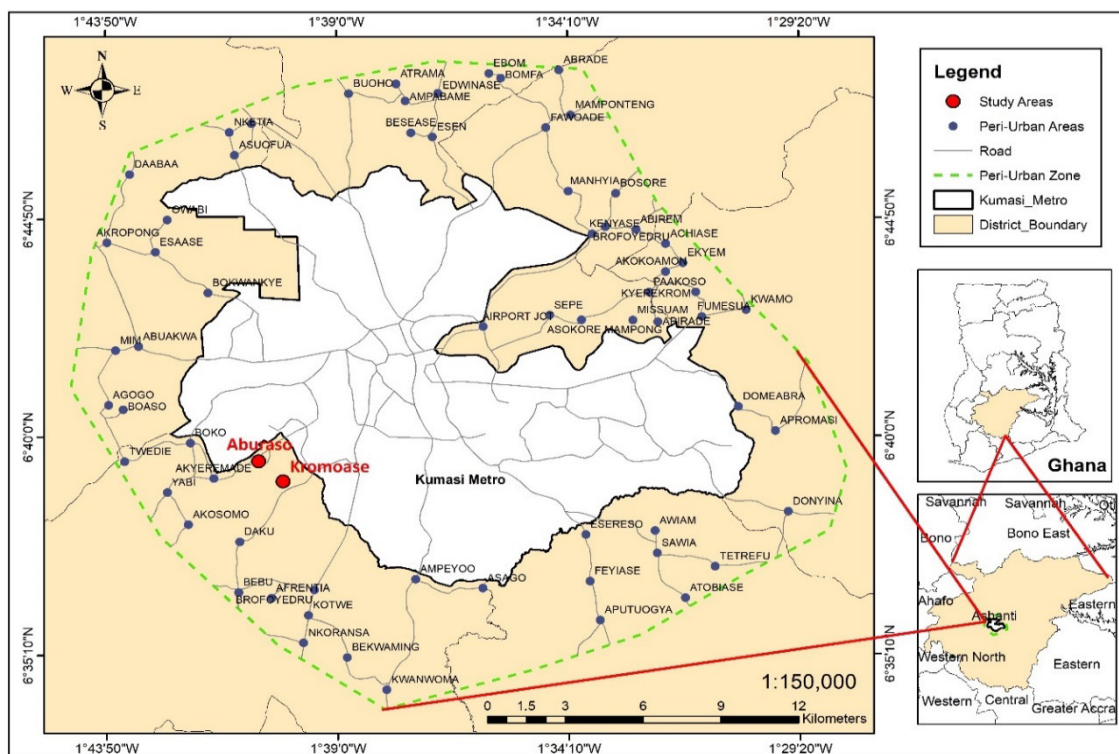


Figure 2: Map of Kumasi Metropolis and peri-urban Kumasi, Ghana

Source: (Geomatics Engineering Department, KNUST, 2019)

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were presented and discussed using the following specific themes: land management practices and planning prior to land commoditisation, land commoditisation and planning institutions in Aburaso and Kromoase, and institutional change in planning and indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation.

6.1. Land Management Practices and Planning prior to Land Commoditisation in Aburaso and Kromoase

The research findings show that in the early periods, the people in Aburaso and Kromoase observed different land management practices. These land management practices include observance of sacred days, boundary identification, and communal labour. In both communities, streams and *Ntɔmmɛ*¹ were used to identify the boundary between the communities and the neighbouring communities. Also, *Peepee*² was used to identify the boundary between clan lands as well as boundaries between parcels of lands for farmers cultivating crops on the same clan land. An indigenous household head, who is a member of the royal family in Kromoase mentioned that: “We (Kromoase) share boundary with Aburaso and we have *Ntɔmmɛ* on the boundary. The stream, *Buabena* is our boundary between Akyeremade and Anwa Afaseibon. In Agona Patase, now Agona Nzema, the stream, *Akokosu* is our boundary” (Interview with Mr Appiah, Kromoase, 09/01/2019).

On the other hand, few indigenous household heads from Aburaso and Kromoase stated that there was no distinguishable boundary between clan lands. The research participants explained that the clans were living together as one family so there was no need of boundaries. In Kromoase, an indigenous household head declared that:

We did not have identifiable boundaries. This is because we came to meet the wife of *Asantehehene*³ and we were living peacefully with her. So, the land we were given, we knew the boundaries. If you are living with a person in love, what is the need of a boundary? (Interview with Mr Asamoah, 07/01/2019).

In scholarly literature, many studies have concluded that boundary identification is a major challenge in customary land tenure systems in Ghana (Mends, 2006; Arko-Adjei et al., 2009; Akrofi, 2013). The studies highlight that boundary identification has created contestations and poor land administration in many communities in Ghana. Contrarily, the findings on land management practices of the current study highlight that boundary identification was not a major problem in Aburaso and Kromoase in their early history. The communities knew their boundaries and they used specific plants and streams to differentiate clan lands and communities’ lands.

Moreover, sacred days were observed by the people in Aburaso and Kromoase prior to this period of massive land commoditisation. In both communities, the research participants conveyed that farmers were not allowed to go to farm on Tuesdays. The participants revealed that Tuesdays were sacred days for the Mother god of the Earth, *Asaase Yaa*, and the community members were expected to rest from their farming activities. Goats were also prohibited in both communities. The

¹*Ntɔmmɛ* is a plant mostly used to identify boundaries between communities or clans’ farmlands.

² *Peepee* is a plant commonly used to identify boundaries between clans’ farmlands or farms of clan members on a particular clan farmland.

³ *Asantehehene* is the highest king in the Asante nation and all other paramount, divisional and sub-chiefs are under him.

smaller god of Aburaso, *Kurapaakuo*, and the smaller god of Kromoase, *Kwabrafo*, disliked goats. In Aburaso, an indigenous household head who was a smallholder farmer outlined that:

Here, we don't go to farm on Tuesdays. Also, we do not bring goat into this community. My husband went to farm on one Tuesday. While he was setting up his traps, he heard a voice saying, "Give me way". When he came home, his leg swelled. He didn't know that it was the Mother god of the Earth who wanted to reveal herself to him (Interview with Mrs Korankye, Aburaso, 27/12/2018).

Asante (1965) describes that the customary land tenure systems revolve around traditional worship. Certainly, this finding from Asante (1965) was reinforced by the findings on observance of sacred days in Aburaso and Kromoase in their early history. Both communities customary land tenure systems were modelled around traditional worship of smaller gods. Also, the observance of sacred days reveals that the founders of Aburaso and Kromoase understood the implications of continuous farming on the lands, the climate, and the vegetation in the communities. Though the observance of the sacred days is presently regarded as ancestral worship, it can be concluded that the practice helped the communities' lands to replenish lost nutrients weekly. On the other hand, the prohibition of certain animals into the communities emerging from the worship of particular smaller gods affected goat rearing in the communities.

Furthermore, the Aburaso people were not allowed to fetch water from *Abufufuo* stream on Sundays. Likewise, in Kromoase, people did not fetch water from *Kwabrafo* stream on Tuesdays. The research participants also mentioned that the smaller gods protected the community from dangers. A research participant in Kromoase revealed that:

Kwabrafo protected us. When you travelled or went to a club and returned at night, Kwabrafo would follow you till you get to your house. Also, Kwabrafo was the community security. Kwabrafo patrolled the community every night, and the god was often seen in a white robe. So, in this community, there were no armed robbers. (Interview with Mr Asumen, Kromoase, 07/01/2019)

In Aburaso, a research participant stated that there was a house the community built to support puberty rites. The research participant revealed that there were old women who were in that house who assisted in the puberty rites ceremony (Interview with Yiadom, Aburaso, 28/12/2018). In fact, it is evident from the findings that the land management practices and planning in the early history of both communities revolved around traditional worship and embedded in the communities' social relations. Land ownership, access, allocation and management practices were developed along the belief systems of the communities.

6.2. Land Commoditisation and Planning Institutions in Aburaso and Kromoase

Peri-urban expansion is a key feature of urbanisation in Ghana where urban growth is associated with rising pressures on land. The research findings show that in the early history of Aburaso and Kromoase, chiefs allocated lands to land purchasers for housing and collected drink or no drink. As years went by, a token of money was added to the drink and presently, the drink has been turned into money (drink money) which is equivalent to the open market value of the land. In Kromoase, the average price of a 0.5 acre of land in 1997 was GHS15.00, however, presently, it costs GHS

40,000.00 (Interview with Dr Dankwah, Kromoase, 06/02/2020). Similarly, in Aburaso, while in 1996, the average price of a 0.5 acre of land was GHS 20.00, currently, the same land size stands at GHS 30,000.00 (Interview with Mr Kuffour, Aburaso, 31/12/2019).

The findings illustrate that the massive land commoditisation in the communities began in the mid-1990s, when traders, Ghanaian expatriates, civil servants, masons, and others immensely relocated into the communities from the Kumasi Metropolis and other neighbouring communities due to the expansion of the Kumasi Metropolis. An officer in the Regional Lands Commission of Ghana, Kumasi explained the major causal factor of the migration of people to Aburaso and Kromoase in this way:

The major factor is congestion. The CBD of Kumasi Metropolis and its surrounding environs are congested and the noise in the CBD is increasing daily. As a result of this, people are moving to get a quiet place. So, they move to the peri-urban areas. Also, the high cost of property in the first-class residential areas in the Metropolis forces people to get places they can access the same residential use at very affordable prices. (Interview Mrs Rhoda, Lands Commission, 25/01/2019)

Similarly, an official in the Physical Planning Department of the District declared that:

Aburaso and Kromoase are now close to Kumasi. The lands in Kumasi are very expensive. So, the people look for places the land prices are affordable and they can still work in Kumasi. This is why Aburaso and Kromoase lands are being sought for residential use. (Interview with Mr Tutu, Physical Planning Department, 16/01/2019)

Unlike elsewhere in the world where migration of people into the peri-urban communities are motivated by government policies, infrastructural development, and increase in urban household size (Filion, Bunting and Warriner, 1999; Webster et al., 2003; Adam, 2014), the findings on the causes of the exodus of outsiders into Aburaso and Kromoase were inconsistent with the findings from these studies. The evidence from the current study corroborates the findings obtained by previous studies conducted in peri-urban Ghana. In these studies, the findings show that the major cause of migration of people into peri-urban interfaces in Ghana is rapid urbanisation (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Arko-Adjei, 2011; Akaateba, 2018; Akaateba, 2019). From the research finding, the rapid urban expansion of the Kumasi Metropolis increased the noise and the prices of land and rental housing in the Metropolis. The peri-urban communities like Aburaso and Kromoase where land prices are affordable and noise level is very low attracted many urban residents and others who wanted to build houses in the urban centres. The influx of the urban households into Aburaso and Kromoase to seek land chiefly for housing resulted in the conversion of agricultural lands to residential uses.

Furthermore, the springing up of new developments at the beginning of the massive land allocations in both communities in the late 1980s led to the declaration of the communities as land titling and planning zones. The declaration of Aburaso and Kromoase as planning zones led to the recognition of the traditional authorities as the only social group in charge of land allocations under the current 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Other clans could not allocate their ancestral lands to land seekers for any other land uses. The head of the Physical Planning Department in Atwima Kwanwoma District revealed that:

In Kromoase or Aburaso or the District, we do not deal with families. We deal with the traditional authorities like the chiefs and the queen mothers. I know that in Kromoase, the land belongs to the wife of Otumfuo. Even though there is a chief sitting there, the queen mother has more power than the chief. You do not need to deal with individuals who say they have lands which belong to their families. As long as there is a chief, individuals who have lands have to see the chief and arrange with him before they can sell their lands. For instance, if we are demarcating the land and we get to your family land, the interaction should be between the chief and you about your land if you want to sell. (Interview with Mrs Ophelia, Head of Physical Planning Department, 16/01/2019).

The research findings further show that the recognition of only the chiefs as the social group in charge of all land allocations resulted in land contestations in the communities. In Aburaso, there was a chieftaincy dispute over 20 years old. Also, in Kromoase, there were litigations among the clans at the early years of the land commoditisation in the community. An indigenous household head in Kromoase stated that:

Every clan was fighting to get a portion of the land. Originally, the Kotokuom clan started the fight and the Asantehene gave a portion of the land to the clan. Afterwards, the Benafiem clan (my clan) also started demanding a portion of the land and the Asantehene gave some of the plots to the clan. Except Kotokuom clan, even the plots of land the queen mother gave to the clans, before you can sell them to anyone, you have to go and see her. (Interview with Mr Agyei, Kromoase, 3/01/2019)

Moreover, the traditional leaders allocated plots of land by giving the land seekers allocation notes. Also, the Physical Planning Department gave building and development permits to land seekers before land purchasers could develop their plots of land. Land purchasers without an allocation notes could not get building and development permits to develop their land.

Drawing from the NIE approach (Ensminger, 1992 cited in Haller, 2007), the expansion of the Kumasi Metropolis resulted in an increase in the demand of land in Aburaso and Kromoase. The increase in the land purchasers precipitated commoditisation of the customary land in both communities by the traditional leaders. The change in the relative prices of land affected the original planning institution in both communities. The actors in the customary land market changed, and the key actors were traditional authorities and the Physical Planning Department. The traditional authorities drew on both customs and state laws to increase their bargaining power over land while the Physical Planning Department used state laws to regulate land demarcation and development in the communities. The traditional authorities and the Physical Planning Department collaborated to dispossess indigenous households from their ancestral land through the preparation of layouts and provision of allocation notes and permits to land purchasers. In short, there was institutional pluralism in the planning of the customary land in Aburaso and Kromoase, leading to conflicts and dispossession of the indigenes from their land.

6.3. Institutional Change in Planning and Indigenous Belief Systems

The institutional change in planning led to the use of both customs and state laws to regulate land allocations and developments which hitherto did not exist. The research findings reveal that the traditional authorities were unable to enforce the customs and the traditions of the communities in this era of commoditisation of the communities' lands. In Aburaso and Kromoase, Tuesdays were

the sacred days, however, the study shows that the sacredness of a Tuesday is no longer observed in both communities. A research participant in Aburaso explained that the community did not regard the traditional practices anymore due to conversion to Christianity and commercialisation of the lands. The research participant stated that: *"Here, we don't go to farm on Tuesday but now it is not observed because most of the lands have been turned into houses. Also, there are outsiders who do not understand our traditions and customs"* (Interview with Mrs Korankye, Aburaso, 27/12/2018).

Moreover, the litigations among the clans in the communities caused community members to disrespect the orders of the traditional leaders. In some instances, there were misunderstanding between the traditional authorities and the Physical Planning Department on the land-use planning. An official in the Physical Planning Department mentioned that the traditional authorities changed other land uses to residential uses without their knowledge. The official in the District declared that:

The department's major challenge in managing the lands with the traditional authorities is that the lands that have been earmarked for other purposes are turned into residential uses without our knowledge. When you look onto our planning scheme, maybe, it was earmarked as a school, market or hospital. But if you go there now, it has been turned into a residential area. The chief will not inform us until the land purchaser starts building and we go there and stop him. The chief doesn't care whether proper documents will be done for the land purchaser or not. He has sold the land and taken his money and the rest he does not care. (Interview with Mr Tutu, Physical Planning Department, 16/01/2019)

The traditional authorities also blamed the Physical Planning Department of supporting illegal land allocations. The regent chief in Aburaso indicated that many house owners obtained building and development permits without the endorsement of the traditional authorities. The regent chief stated that:

When you go to the newly-developing area, the house owners will say we have District's permit or District's jacket. It has been a battle we have fought with the District for some time but they have also realised that if they do not get money from the house owners, they cannot run the District. (Interview with Regent Chief, Aburaso, 28/12/2018)

The findings on enforcement of customs and traditions are consistent with the evidence obtained by previous studies conducted in Ghana (Blake and Kasanga, 1997; Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Ubink, 2007; Arko-Adjei, 2011). The studies illustrate that commercialisation of lands in peri-urban communities in Ghana causes people to disregard the observance of sacred days. In Aburaso and Kromoase, the Tuesday sacredness was totally absent. Drawing from the NIE approach, the distributional effect of the institutional change in planning of the customary land is the erosion of the indigenous belief system. The key actors during the land commoditisation shopped institutions to control and allocate the customary. They also increased their bargaining power through enforcement of the state laws and traditions. All the customs that regulated fetching of water in streams were eroded. Some parts of the streams dammed to build houses. Also, goats that were previously prohibited are brought to Aburaso and Kromoase presently. The neglect of the community members in the urban planning processes affected the enforcement of the customs and traditions that hitherto regulated the behaviour of people in the communities. In short, peri-

urbanisation changes pre-existing cultural practices regulating land tenure relations, and this transforms social relations which exist among indigenous people in communities.

7. CONCLUSION

It is well documented in the literature that institutional change results in changes in political, social and economic relations among people (Haller, 2007; Lanz, 2018; Lanz, 2019). In this study, the introduction of urban planning in Aburaso and Kromoase owing to the expansion of Kumasi Metropolis led to institutional pluralism in the planning of the customary land. The key actors that planned the customary land were the traditional authorities and the Physical Planning Department in Atwima Kwanwoma District. The community members were not involved in the planning of their communities. The traditional leaders used both customs and state laws to legitimise their control over the land while the Physical Planning Department used state laws to validate their management of the communities' land. The change in the planning institutions and actors created contestations between indigenous people and traditional leaders. Also, the institutional change resulted in dispossession and poor enforcement of indigenous belief systems. Sacred days were not observed. Furthermore, goats which were prohibited prior to the massive commoditisation of the communities' land are presently brought to the communities by the people. Also, the sacredness attached to not fetching water from the streams on certain days is not observed in both communities. In addition, some portions of the streams have been dammed to build houses.

Contemporary, the World Bank, donors and some scholars argue that customary land institutions should be strengthened and where possible customary land administration should run concurrently with state land administration to support tenure security and boost economic development (Migot-adholla et al., 1991; Platteau, 1996; Deininger, 2003; Collins and Mitchell, 2016). However, this study argues that institutional pluralism, especially in the peri-urban Ghana leads to the breakdown of indigenous belief systems during land commoditisation. The rich cultural heritage that binds the people is broken down. People are dispossessed from their ancestral land and only traditional leaders greatly benefit from land allocations. The study, therefore, recommends that in order to promote effective and efficient urban planning to support indigenous belief systems and the spirituality of land in Africa, urban planning should be embedded in indigenous land tenure systems in peri-urban communities. Also, community members should be involved in the planning of their communities.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITION

Institutional Pluralism: It refers to the situation where both statutory and indigenous institutions are used to govern a particular resource.

Indigenous Belief Systems: They are the customs, traditions and practices that are used to regulate the conduct and behaviours of people in a specific community.

Land Commoditisation: It is a situation where land is regarded as a commodity and sold in the open market at the market value.

Peri-Urban Ghana: It is the urban peripheries of major towns and cities in Ghana.

Urban Planning: It is the process of demarcating a parcel of land into various uses such as commercial, residential, recreational, etc.