

Kofi Krɛma Katoo, Banda-Ahenkro¹

Kofi Krɛma Katoo (also known as Sɛɛnfun Katoo) originated in Makala and is a subhouse of Gbaha Katoo.

Gbaha was married to Chamɛ Boofiɛn at the time that the Nafanas came from Kakala. They had three children—the eldest was Sie Lɔngɔ (male); followed by Teli (male); and finally Tangotei (female). Gbaha grew very old and was about to die. He called all his nephews to him and asked them to go to the bush and collect firewood so that a large fire could be built. This would enable Gbaha to sink into the ground--it is believed that Gbaha did not die, rather he sank into the ground. All of his nephews refused to go and collect the firewood and in the end it was only his children who would collect the firewood for him. Despite the fact that the nephews were supposed to inherit Gbaha's stool, Gbaha told his son Sie Lɔngɔ that he would give Sie Lɔngɔ the stool because the nephews had refused to serve Gbaha. Henceforth, the nephews would have to serve Gbaha's son.

After Gbaha's passing, Sie Lɔngɔ moved from Makala and came to settle in Ahenkro. Tangotei and Teli remained at Dumpofie where their mother lived. Sie Lɔngɔ moved to Ahenkro because it was the place from where his mother came.

Gbaha had two fetishes. One was called *Nyi* and this one he gave to his son Teli. It is believed that when lightning strikes a person, a house or a farm, it is due to misfortune or a transgression. The fetish *Nyi* functions to remove such misfortune in cases where lightning has struck. Gbaha's other fetish was called *Tie* and this he gave to his daughter Tangotei. *Tie* functions to make the inhabitants of the whole area prosper in farming and business endeavours. At the end of every year, a three year old cock is offered to the Tie fetish on any day coinciding with the day Jiniŋɛ. Formerly, the Tie sacrifices were the focus of an important festival. It was held at a time when plenty of food was available. Every family in the area prepared food and took the food to the fetish site, near Dumpofie. Here the people and the fetish ate the food. The paramount chief took a cock from his village and carried it on a palanquin to the fetish site. At every village on the way, the Chief would kill the cock as he reached the village, and take another cock from that village to kill at the next village. The last cock was killed at the fetish site. The paramount chief then obtained one sheep and one dog from the fetish village for sacrifice on the fetish. If the festival were practised on the grand scale that it was previously, the fetish would kill many people. This is because people today do not follow the customs like they should. Girls do not maintain their virginity until they have passed through the customary rites, and men are fond of sleeping with girls who are virgins, and so they chase them. Additionally, the festival requires that everyone in the area participate, and people are no longer willing to do this. Now, therefore, a mature cock is taken to the fetish and sacrificed one time in the year. The Tie fetish remains with Tangotei's house--it does not pass from father to son as is the case with many fetishes.

The Tie fetish is also offered a hen by a man on the death of his wife. Upon a wife's death, a live hen is tied around the husband's neck and he and his friends should go around the funeral house four times. Each time the man passes round the funeral house, he pauses and stands in front of

his wife's mother. The hen is taken after this and is offered to the Tie fetish. The representative of the fetish in Ahenkro responsible for taking the hen to Tie is Kwabena Munukpa.

It is because Sie Lɔngɔ was a son of the Makala people that his father's people are entitled to come and live in Ahenkro. Thus, whenever there was a quarrel between the family members at Makala or Dumpofie, groups could split off and come to stay here at Ahenkro. Several such incidences led to the removal of many Makala family members to Ahenkro. There are now [1986] four houses in Ahenkro that came from Makala. They are: Kofi Krɛma Katoo; Hanyaw Jagbini Katoo; Hakalo Katoo; and Kwabena Manje Katoo. These houses have independent representation at the palace; however they conduct all rites in common with Gbaha Katoo in Makala.

Krɛma is the man who brought this house to Ahenkro. He split off along with his wives, his children and his sisters to come to Ahenkro at the time of Bandahene Yaw Sielɔngɔ.

Male Heads of Family

1. Krɛma
2. Bankwadi
3. Koofie
4. Woli Jiniŋge
5. Kwadwo Abedi (head in 1986)

Female Heads of Family

1. Afua Kpɔɔ
2. Enyuno
3. Yatuŋmba
4. Amma Donkor (head in 1986)

Interview conducted 13 August, 1986 with Donkor Amma (Female Head) and Kwadwo Abedi (Male Head).

Interview conducted by Dr. Ann B. Stahl and Mr. James Anane.

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Stahl, Ann, and James Anane. 2011. Kofi Krɛma Katoo, Banda-Ahenkro. In, *Family Histories from the Banda Traditional Area, Brong-Ahafo Region, Ghana, 1986*, pp. 25-26. Brochure circulated 1989, reissued with photos and additional histories in 2011.