

Apagyahene, Nana Kwame Kyeretwie  
Apagyafie (Ash Town), February 26, 2006

Stopped by to see Nana Apagyahene at his house around 4:20 pm and had a stimulating conversation about Asante-Muslim relations though not on tape. As I explained what the religious tolerance project was about, he opined that this was a very important project, as the current conflicts between various religious faiths have more to do with politics than with religion.

That in Asante, Asante and Muslims have dwelt together in harmony for years. His family is a good example of mixing and religious tolerance. Muslims in Kumasi were first settled at Dominase, which was close to Apagya. Friendships formed between people in the two settlements, between Muslims and non-Muslims. That the grandfather of the present Asantehene's kramo, Alhaji Abdul Mumunir ibn Abubakar, who was the third Asantehene's kramo, asked for the hand of a woman in Apagya and was obliged. Did not decline because he was a Muslim or from the north (Gonja). Brought Muslim influence into Apagya. That his predecessor, Nana Kofi Adu who reigned for a long time and died when he was over 100 years, was a practicing Muslim though the Apagyahene. He prayed regularly daily and had his *buta* in a corner of Apagyafie. That the present Asantehene's kramo is his nephew. Other Muslims have come to marry in Apagyafie and there are currently four women in Apagyafie who wear the veil. As far as he is concerned all remain his subjects. When he performs rituals in the house, like libation, he expects everyone one in the house to be present. That he attends Muslim funerals and weddings of those members of the family that are Muslim. Thus he has relations in Kwadaso and Suame where the Muslims were settled. That a Muslim who is from Apagyafie cannot be buried without him first being informed.

Currently Apagya is again adjacent to the Zongo. During NLM days all kinds of conflicts with the Zongo people. The Zongo boys would threaten to beat them as they walked through the Zongo to government boys' school. So he and his brothers refused to go to school. His father called Alhaji Mutakil, a major figure from the Zongo, and told him about his son's fears. Alhaji assured the father that nothing untoward would happen to his sons. Subsequently every morning four strong boys showed up at Apagyafie to escort them to school.

That as Apagyahene he used to stroll around the Zongo as early as 4 am, a practice he has stopped recently because of unruly behavior by Zongo youth. In short, he has always been comfortable around Muslims and the Zongo.

He mentioned that the Atipim and Apagya stools were created by Asantehene Osei Kwame [?] after he won the stool: Atipim – ma pre me ti; Apagya – ma pagya me ho.