

NKORANSA, C.1700-1900:
A STUDY OF ITS FORMATION AND
RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBOURS

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BY

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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

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SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, Martha and children,
Agyeiwaa and Fremponaah.

ABSTRACT

The state of Nkoransa was founded in the 1720's by migrants from the Kumase area. It was carved out of the territory of the Bono-Takyiman Kingdom after the destruction of that kingdom in 1722/23 by the Asante.

The nature of the political, social and economic institutions which evolved in the Nkoransa state was determined by the circumstances out of which the state emerged, the general developments within the state and external influences in the course of time. Fundamentally, the ruling lineage of Nkoransa adopted the Asante system of government. But to promote unity and stability the immigrant rulers actively involved the indigenous peoples in the political administration.

The social institutions which emerged in Nkoransa were, in essence, the result of a fusion of the values, customs and practices of both the Asante immigrants and their Bono subjects. This blend resulted in the submergence of distinctions between the way of life of the ruling class and that of their subordinates. Ultimately, the Nkoransa people

came to assume a Bono identity, the origin of the state's founders notwithstanding.

Nkoransa's economy hinged on agriculture. However, trading became a very important activity from the second half of the nineteenth century when Kintampo emerged as the most important commercial centre in northern Ghana, after the decline of Salaga. During the last quarter of that century, the state became the main centre of the kola trade in Ghana. Besides kola, rubber, gold, ivory and slaves were also important commodities traded in on the Kintampo market.

From the time of its creation until 1874, relations between Nkoransa and its northern and western neighbours tended to be hostile, while those with the states to its east and with Asante were cordial. This trend of Nkoransa's foreign relations was basically the result of her active involvement in Asante's northward expansion as from the eighteenth century when Asante was particularly aggressive in the area to the north-west, of which Nkoransa formed a part.

After the British defeat of Asante in 1874 the nature of Nkoransa's external relations altered radically. The change was due to the post - 1874 Anglo-Asante rivalry in northern Ghana. Asante was determined to revive its disintegrated northern empire which followed its 1874 defeat and to regain

full control over the north-south trade. Nkoransa was expected to play a leading role in that exercise. On the other hand, the British were resolved to end all Asante political and economic domination here. To achieve these objectives it became necessary for the British to first gain control over Nkoransa.

From the late 1870's Nkoransa began to drift away from total allegiance to Asante and to draw closer to the Eastern Brong states which had asserted their independence from Kumase in 1874 and had come together to form a defensive alliance under the protection of the British. Nkoransa's move towards this alliance was seen by the Asante as posing a serious threat to their policy of reconstruction. Consequently, Nkoransa came under Asante attack in 1892 and 1893. Though Nkoransa was defeated, British intervention prevented Asante from re-establishing its domination over the state.

In the late 1890's the government in Nkoransa became split over the issue of whether to serve the British or the Asante. Ultimately, Nkoransa decided to remain loyal to the British.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CO	Colonial Office
J.A.H.	Journal of African History
I.A.S.	Institute of African Studies
Legon	University of Ghana
S of S	Secretary of State
U.C.L.A.	University of California Los Angeles

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PREFACE

This is a study of the pre-colonial history of Nkoransa from the early eighteenth century to 1900. It examines two major themes. The first is the mode of formation of the state and the second, the nature of its intercourse with its neighbours during the last two centuries.

As a result of the lack of documents on Nkoransa, its history has been largely ignored and it is the purpose of this work to combine material from oral sources with such little written evidence as could be obtained from documentary sources to help fill any lacunae in Nkoransa's history. However, this work by no means exhausts the treatment of the chosen themes since it was impossible for the author to lay hands on all the relevant data that was required for analysis. What has been done is what was possible with the available evidence from both oral and archival sources.

This study has subjected certain factors relating to the formation of the Nkoransa state and the complex nature of its foreign relations to closer examination and has given them new meanings. It is my hope that the work would

stimulate the interest of readers and kindle the quest for further research in the largely unexplored field of Nkoransa's history.

I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude to all those who contributed in diverse ways to make this work see the light of day. It is, in fact, impossible to name them individually for the expression of my gratitude. However, I deem it appropriate to make special mention of a few individuals whose contributions to the success of this work were, particularly, inestimable. First, I wish to thank and express my deep appreciation to the Head of the Department of History, Professor D.E.K. Amenumey, for the special interest he took in my work and the constant encouragement he gave me. Secondly, I owe a great debt of gratitude to my Principal Supervisor, Dr. S.Y. Boadi-Siaw and my Co-Supervisor, Dr. Kofi Affrifah who read through every manuscript I wrote, made sincere comments and criticisms as well as valuable suggestions and also offered me all the guidance I required. They deserve my most heartfelt thanks. I also thank the entire staff of the Department of History, U.C.C., for the various forms of assistance I received both officially and unofficially. For the typing of my manuscripts at various stages of the preparation of this thesis I am grateful to the typists of the Department of Arts and Social Science Education, U.C.C.

In the course of my fieldwork I received assistance from several people to whom I would like to express my gratitude. First, I sincerely thank Dr. K.O. Brempong, a research fellow of the Institute of African Studies, Legon, for providing me with two volumes of documented traditions of the Techiman state and for directing me to other sources from where I obtained very useful research material. Dr. Wilfred Owen (Jnr) who made available to me his field notes and a draft paper he prepared on the history of Nkoransa also deserves my profound thanks.

Secondly, I thank all the helpful workers at the Balme and I.A.S. libraries, both at Legon, and at the search rooms of the offices of the National Archives of Ghana, (Accra, Kumasi and Sunyani) and Manhyia Archives, Kumasi, for their much needed assistance and courtesy.

Finally, I wish to thank all my informants, particularly the Paramount Chief of Nkoransa, Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV, who in spite of his numerous responsibilities, found time to grant me as many as seven separate interviews.

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Cape Coast, February 1997

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INTRODUCTION

From the time of its emergence during the third decade of the eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth, Nkoransa played a central role in most of the major historical events that occurred in the Asante hinterland. However, the political, economic and social developments within the state, during the period, and the extent of the impact of those developments on the history of the North-western region of Ghana, in particular, still await serious and detailed studies by historians. Work done on Nkoransa, so far, has tended to focus on the story of its founding and the superficial survey of its foreign relations after its emergence.

Brief references to circumstances leading to the rise of Nkoransa have been made by such early writers as C.C. Reindorf in The History of Gold Coast and Asante, (2nd ed. 1966) and R.S. Rattray in Ashanti Law and Constitution, (1929). During the second half of this century, W.E.F. Ward in A History of Ghana (rev. 2nd ed. 1958) and Professor J.K. Fynn, Asante and Its Neighbours (1971) have made similar references. The story of the rise of Nkoransa is told in much greater detail in Francis Fuller's A Vanished Dynasty: Ashanti (1921) and in three of Mrs Meyerowitz's works: Akan Traditions of Origin, (1952); At The Court of An African

King, (1962) and The Early History of the Akan States of Ghana, (1974). Besides the creation of Nkoransa, however, all the writers mentioned say little else.

Professor Francis Agbodeka's reference to Nkoransa in his African Politics and British Policy in the Gold Coast 1868-1900 (1971) focuses on the state's trade relations with Asante and the British during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Professor Ivor Wilks' Asante in the Nineteenth century (1975) and Thomas Lewin's Asante Before the British: The Prempean Years, 1875-1900, (1978) give patchy accounts on Nkoransa's external relations. The last two writers, however, present their accounts within the context of vertical and horizontal relationships involving the peripheral states of the Asante empire and the central government in Kumase.

In various articles, Professor Kwame Arhin has touched on the political and economic aspects of Nkoransa's history. His draft paper on the nineteenth century commercial emporium of Kintampo, to the north of Nkoransa entitled, "Government in Traditional Market Towns with Reference to Kintampo in North-Central Ghana" (1971) is a work that greatly stimulated the interest of this writer. The work

provides a strong basis for examining, in detail, the important role played by Nkoransa in the trade and politics of Ghana during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

One writer who has shown great interest in the study of the history of Nkoransa is Jack Goody. In an introduction to "Ashanti and the Northwest" in supplement No.1 to Research Review (1965), Goody presents historical accounts on Nkoransa, spanning the whole period covered by this work. Goody also co-authored "The History and Traditions of Nkoransa," in the same supplement, with C.Y. Boateng. As with the works of the other writers already referred to, the limitations to Goody's exposition on Nkoransa relate to depth of treatment of subjects.

Wilfred Owen's studies on Nkoransa provided very useful material which helped, to a considerable extent, in establishing the perspective of this study. Owen, who embarked on extensive studies in Nkoransa during the 1970's, collected and analysed oral traditions from most of the towns and villages of the state. He worked on the biographies of a number of nineteenth century Nkoransa rulers (Owen's field notes on Asante collective Biography Project, 1971), and wrote a draft paper on the local politics of Nkoransa during the 1890's. The paper, entitled, "Nkoransa on the Eve of British Control of

Asante," (1973) gives a lucid account of the perceptions of various personalities in Nkoransa in connection with options for attaining greater freedom from external control of the internal affairs of the state. Except for the fact that Owen limited his studies to the nineteenth century, particularly towards the end of it, the depth of his treatment of various subjects is commendable and inspiring.

The purpose of this study is to examine, in detail, the factors which accounted for the emergence of Nkoransa as well as those that conditioned the foreign policy of the state. In analysing the factors that were responsible for the formation of Nkoransa, the comparative decisiveness of such issues as prevailing conditions in the area where the state emerged; external pressures and the level of political consciousness of personalities involved in the process of state formation have been discussed. The external relations aspect of the study took account of the interrelationship between the dynamics of Nkoransa's internal politics and the influences of external powers. The impact of internal developments on the direction of the state's external policies has, thus, been given the necessary attention.

In broad terms, the study has been divided into two parts. The first part which deals with the creation, consolidation and organization of Nkoransa is based on original as well as

published material of relevance to the state's history up to about 1800. The second part discusses Nkoransa's foreign policy from the time of its founding during the third decade of the eighteenth century to 1900. This section is based principally on original research and on essential material from published sources.

The first part of the work begins with a background study involving a look at the geographical setting of Nkoransa and the impact of environment as well as the phenomenon of immigration of foreigners from beyond the frontiers of Ghana on the human activities and culture of the people of the state. The study also covers the situation in Nkoransa territory prior to the creation of the state. This section examines the ethnic composition of the population of Nkoransa; the geographical distribution of the population and the level of social and political organization of pre-existing inhabitants of the Nkoransa territory.

The background section is followed by an examination of the actual processes of Nkoransa's state formation and its organization. Here, the origin, migration and settlement of the founders of the state are traced. Then follows an examination of the political, social and economic conditions in the Bono area which made the emergence of Nkoransa possible. The first part of the work concludes with a study

of the strategies adopted by the early rulers of Nkoransa to consolidate the state and the political and social institutions evolved to run its affairs.

The second part of the work is devoted to a study of the nature of developments in Nkoransa's relations with other states. It first examines the pervading influence of external powers, particularly of Asante, on the character of Nkoransa's foreign relations for a greater part of the eighteenth century through to 1900. Then it deals with the interrelationships between internal and external pressures and their effects on the course of external relations of Nkoransa. In particular, it studies these: the impact of the exacting burdens associated with Nkoransa's subjection and military commitments to Asante; the impact of the British defeat of Asante in 1874; factionalism and the struggle for power in Nkoransa and the restrictions on freedom of action under British protection.

Essentially, then, this work is a story of the phenomenal rise of a state in central Ghana during the early eighteenth century; the rapid growth of the state in terms of territorial expansion, political influence as well as military power and finally, the significant impact it made on the historical developments of the area up to the end of the nineteenth century.

Principally, archival material and oral traditions provided the basis for the study. The archival sources came from the National Archives of Ghana (Accra, Kumasi and Sunyani) and Manhyia Archives (Ashanti Research Project and Records Office), Kumasi. The main sources from which data were gathered include files of the Secretary of Native Affairs and the Chief Commissioner of Ashanti's reports classified under the ADM.II series. From the Manhyia Archives, documented stool histories of several towns and villages as well as lineages were studied. A copy of a report of a British trade mission to the north-east of Ghana (then Gold Coast) in 1876 and another on G.E. Ferguson's diplomatic mission to the north in 1892 from the Public Record Office, London provided very useful source material. Both reports are kept at the library of the Institute of African Studies, Legon.

Owing to the scarcity of documentary material on the history of Nkoransa for the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth, this work depended heavily on oral traditions. Traditional sources also include those traditions collected and documented under a special project carried out by the Institute of African Studies, Legon, during the 1960's and 1970's. The writer collected oral traditions from Nkoransa and Mo between July 1995 and March 1996. Certain difficulties beyond the control of the writer prevented the

collection of oral data from Takyiman. Fortunately, documented traditions as described above which contain narratives by most of the prominent traditional rulers of the state in the late 1960's and early 1970's provided a great deal of the material required. Similar compilations for such adjacent states as Banda, Namasa, Prang, Yeji, Kwame Danso (Dwan) Abease and Atebubu enabled the writer to make the necessary cross-checking with Nkoransa tradition for a critical analysis.

The tradition recorded at the court of the paramount chief of Nkoransa was a sort of 'official history' which was collectively compiled by the Nkoransahene and his elders. The material, so compiled, was then presented to the writer in seven separate interviews with the paramount chief with some court officials present on some occasions. Such 'official' accounts normally have limitations as to the information provided. The writer, however, strove to establish the needed rapport in the course of gathering the data and was thus able to collect satisfactory material for the work. Moreover, narratives from other places in Nkoransa helped to complement the accounts at the court in the capital and served to check them.

Certain observations need to be made about the fieldwork relating to the collection of oral traditions. One of these

observations confirms the fear expressed by Philip D. Curtin about the diminishing wealth of oral traditions in Africa three decades ago. In an article entitled "Field Techniques for Collecting and Processing Oral Data" (Journal of African History, Vol.IX, No.3, 1968, p.369), Curtin noted thus, "the pace of modernisation and of political change is sweeping away older orally transmitted traditions." Though he gave no indication that he foresaw the complete extinction of orally transmitted knowledge, he was convinced, at the time of writing, that in the next two or three decades the wealth of traditional history would no longer be extant. He, thus, asserted that contemporary historians were the last generation that would have the opportunity of recording such older traditions as still existed. Philip Curtin's observation was found to be very true in Nkoransa's case. In the course of the research, this writer noted that many of the informants interviewed could only give accounts of recent twentieth century historical events, apart from the widely known story of the founding of Nkoransa following the fall of the old Bono Kingdom and the outstanding features of the reigns of the prominent nineteenth century rulers of the state.

The writer also observed that all the informants interviewed in the older pre-Nkoransa settlements claimed that their various towns or villages were independent of all other

known states or peoples in the locality until they fell under the domination of the rulers of Nkoransa after the conquest of the Bono Kingdom. Evidence obtained from several other areas, however, disproved these claims.

The problem of chronology normally faced by researchers who deal with oral traditions was also encountered by the writer. The sequence of major historical events in which the state became involved and the regnal periods of certain rulers of Nkoransa were mixed up. Efforts were, thus, made to clear up the confusion through the use of important landmarks of Ghana's history and evidence from archival sources.

Finally, the writer faced the problem of getting access to all the necessary data in some cases. A number of informants were not forthcoming during the initial contacts, however, the necessary rapport was built in most of such cases and useful information collected. But this was not until all doubts about the writer's identity and purpose of the interviews had been dispelled. In spite of the usual shortcomings of oral traditions, however, they provided an invaluable source of historical material that enabled this writer to interpret aspects of Nkoransa history as contained in this work.

CHAPTER ONE

PRE-NKORANSA STATES AND PEOPLES

A. Introduction: The State: Its Geographical Setting and Economic Activities

The state of Nkoransa¹ occupies approximately the middle of the Brong Ahafo Region with its traditional capital at Nkoransa town. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, Nkoransa was the main traditional state in Central Ghana which straddled what was formerly the central trade route leading from Kumase through "the Desert of Ghofan"² and Gbuipe to external markets in Hausaland and the Niger Bend. A section of the northern boundary of the Ashanti Region marks the southern limit of Nkoransa territory from where it extends northwards as far as the northern loop of the Black Volta river (See Map 1).

Nkoransa encompasses 6,004 square kilometres with a population far in excess of 150,000.³ This population is composed of peoples of diverse ethnic background who speak a motley of languages. In the south, the dominant language is Akan (the Nkoransa Brong dialect). In the north, several other languages are spoken. These are mainly of the Gur linguistic family.⁴ The diversity of ethnic groupings as

represented by the variety of languages is epitomised by the situation at Kintampo, the largest town to the north of Nkoransa. Besides the Brong community, the other inhabitants of the town belong to over a dozen ethnic groups constituting various proportions of the population. The groups include the Wangara (Senufo or Mande), Hausa, Gonja, Degha (Mo), Banda, Dagarti, Frafra, Wala, Dagomba, Grushi, Sissala, Chakosi, Gruma and other less significant groups. As a result of the former position of Kintampo as an emporium in the long distance transit trade which linked Ghana with other regions of West Africa and even the Maghreb, many of the inhabitants of the state are descendants of immigrants from Ghana's neighbouring states.⁵

The Nkoransa area forms part of the region physiographically referred to as Voltaian Basin. The area is largely made up of 'gently dipping' or flat bedded sandstones which generally speaking, are easily eroded during heavy rains.⁶ The northernmost part of the state, the area immediately south of the Black Volta river, is an almost flat and extensive plain with an elevation of between 60 and 150 metres above sea level. The southern district, which occupies part of the southern Voltaian plateau, however, has an average elevation of about 450 metres above sea level. The mean annual rainfall is variable. The rainfall figures gradually reduce as one moves from south to north. This

pattern replicates the general situation in Ghana. The southern districts of the state receive a mean annual rainfall of approximately 143 centimetres per annum while the northernmost parts record less than 125 centimetres of rainfall annually.⁷

The vegetation of the state follows the pattern of rainfall distribution. The vegetation is thickest in the south and thins out gradually towards the north, until the northernmost part shows a picture of a typical wooded savanna zone. Generally, the vegetation of a larger part of the state undergoes marked changes during different seasons. In the wet season, the area looks green and full of life. Soon after the rains, leaves begin to change in colour from lush green to yellow, and the trees begin to shed them. The whole area soon presents a parched and desolate look.⁸ To a very large extent, the present state of the vegetation is man-made. Regular bush burning, over-grazing and cultivation have all contributed to the change. There is in fact, evidence that Nkoransa has lost much of its forest cover. Most of the area is covered with grass, which is gradually moving southwards. This situation notwithstanding, the area retains its characteristics as a transitional zone between the wet, thick tropical forest of Ashanti and the dry savanna woodland of northern Ghana.

With the vegetation of Nkoransa being largely wooded savanna, subsistence agriculture is the main economic activity. This agriculture is generally based on the traditional shifting cultivation or "bush fallowing" system. The traditional system of farming is gradually being abandoned by some farmers who have taken to the use of chemical fertilizer to improve the yield of their farmlands when they become impoverished. These farmers, mainly maize and vegetable producers, are able to cultivate the same plot of land repeatedly for several farming seasons.

Most farms are mixed crop farms in which more than one crop is grown on a given plot of land. The most common food crops produced are yams, maize, groundnuts, millet, guinea corn, cassava, cocoyam, plantain, cowpeas and rice. The farmers export the produce in excess of their needs of the local population to urban centres south and north of Nkoransa.

The most important fruit produced in the area is mango. This is exported in large quantities to various parts of Ghana. Previously, mangoes could only be collected from wild mango trees but, in recent years, mango plantations are being cultivated, particularly, in the Kintampo area. For sometime now, many farmers have turned to the cultivation of vegetables such as tomatoes, okra, pepper and

egg plant, which mature quickly and have a high demand both locally and externally. Some of these farmers produce vegetables on full time basis. Others grow industrial raw materials like tobacco and cotton which have ready markets. To ensure that farmers meet the requirements of manufacturers tobacco and cotton production is regulated and supervised by technical personnel of tobacco companies and the Cotton Board. Of late interest in cotton production has declined due to low prices paid for raw cotton.

In the past, cocoa was an important crop produced in Nkoransa. The area has now lost its importance as a cocoa producing zone as a result of a steady decline in the quantity of the crop produced over the years. A major cause of the decline in cocoa production in the area is the high incidence of bush burning which has destroyed large acreages of cocoa farm. A second factor is the southward spread of the grassland and the consequent loss of some of the state's forestland which is most suitable for cocoa production. Thirdly, the introduction and wide acceptance of mechanized farming between the 1960's and early 1980's has enabled local farmers to embark on large scale maize production. This has adversely affected the output of cocoa, particularly, as cocoa farmers who have lost their cocoa farms through bushfire or some other means have taken to maize cultivation.

During the nineteenth century, two products which gained great commercial significance were rubber and kola nuts. The Nkoransa area became noted for the production and export of both crops. Rubber was exported southwards to the coastal area from where it was shipped overseas. On the other hand, kola nuts were exported northwards by land to markets outside Ghana. Kano in Hausaland and Timbuctu in the Middle Niger were important markets to which kola from the Nkoransa area was exported. Kintampo became the leading market for kola nuts in Ghana during the 1870's. According to R.A. Freeman, the market "attracted the commerce of the greater part of Northern and Central Africa."³ Kola nuts and gold from the forest zone, particularly Asante, were exchanged with slaves and manufactured articles, leather works, woven fabrics and metal ware on the Kintampo market. Today, these two products are no longer important in the state as export crops.

The growth of Kintampo as a major entrepot of the long distance trade between the forest region of West Africa and the commercial regions of Hausaland and the Niger Bend enabled the state of Nkoransa to acquire the tradition of a trading state. Indigenes of the state as well as immigrants and itinerant traders engaged in the lucrative import and export trade which centred on Kintampo. The Kintampo market led to the development of a network of kola depots at the

principal areas of production. Prominent among these were Bechem; Techimantia, Techire and Tanoso, all on the Kumasi-Sunyani route.

Besides food and cash crop production and trading, animal husbandry is also important in Nkoransa. Families usually keep small numbers of goats, sheep and fowls to serve domestic needs. In the past, a few people kept some cattle as a source of income. Most of these people were northern immigrants in whose areas of origin cattle rearing was a traditional activity. There were few cattle kraals and these were, almost all, limited to the area around Kintampo and beyond. Normally, people travelled to the north to procure cows and bulls for special occasions such as festivals and funerals.

Cattle rearing is gradually growing in importance as a commercial venture. To some extent ownership of a large herd of cattle has come to constitute a kind of status symbol. It is, thus, becoming the practice of most well-to-do people to acquire cattle herds of some size. Today, therefore, cattle kraals have been established in many parts of the state. The number of animals in the kraals range from a few tens to several hundreds. There are large kraals at Nkoransa, Kintampo, Babatokuma, Dawadawa, Kadelso, Portor and many other places.

One traditional activity which is fast losing its attraction is hunting for both big and small game. This was a learned profession usually handed down from father to son. Hunters were highly respected in Nkoransa society because they constituted the core of the fighting forces of the state. They also led in reconnaissance work and often pioneered the establishment of settlements. Many of the hunters' camps grew into villages and towns. Akomadan is believed to be one of such camps which developed into a large settlement.¹⁰ Kunso, about twenty five kilometres north-east of Kintampo was very important for hunting. A large number of big animals such as the elephant and the bush cow were killed at the village during the first half of the present century. Today, hunting has lost its charm in the area. One reason for this is the drastic reduction in the population of wild animals as a result of uncontrolled hunting in the past. Another reason is that, young people are not prepared to endure the hardships of hunting which involves sleeping in the bush for several days. Finally, the few prospective hunters and even the veterans are deterred by laws passed to regulate hunting and thereby protect wildlife. People are, therefore, not prepared to take risks when hunting has lost the prestige it enjoyed in the past.

Two important craft industries found in Nkoransa are pottery and blacksmithing. Pottery is usually undertaken by women,

the majority of whom are Degha women. The main centres of the pot industry are located in the Kintampo area. Most of the pots are used locally with a few exported to places outside.

Blacksmithing is widely practised in the state. Blacksmiths manufacture iron implements both for farming and for warfare. They fashion such implements as hoes, axes and weapons like arrow heads, spears and flint-lock guns. They also manufacture traps for catching rodents and other small animals as well as partridges. Blacksmiths formed a very respectable guild in Nkoransa in the past. During the nineteenth century, the state established a corps of blacksmiths for the purpose of manufacturing weapons for the Nkoransa army. These special smiths were stationed at a twin village called Akontonti-Dumase, (See Map 4), about ten kilometres north of Nkoransa. This establishment was referred to as Atomfooso (The Blacksmiths' Camp) and its chief was known as Atomfoosohene (Chief of the Blacksmiths' Camp).

In Nkoransa, man and his environment have influenced each other greatly. Over the years, human activities have led to marked changes in the area's vegetation with the result that, much of the state's forest cover has been lost. The largest part of Nkoransa area is now grassland. Changes in

environmental conditions have, in turn, influenced the traditional activities of the people in the state. Today, the farmers of the state are more of producers of savanna crops than forest crops. They produce such crops as maize, millet, guinea corn, groundnuts, cow peas and yams. Only small quantities of forest crops such as plantain and cocoyam are produced in the area.

In addition to agricultural activities, trading has also become a major economic activity in the state. The phenomenal growth of Kintampo into the leading commercial centre in the northern part of Ghana¹² in the 1870's accounts for the increase in importance of trade in Nkoranza. The main effects of increased commercial activities include the influx of immigrants into the state, the emergence of traders' towns (Zongos) in the major towns, and the rapid spread of Islam which is now the religion of a majority of the immigrant traders. The socio-economic life of the people of Nkoransa has, thus, been influenced to a great extent by environmental conditions as well as phenomenal historical developments in commercial activities.

\ B. Early States and Inhabitants of the Area

Not all the peoples who inhabit the area today originate from the place: some claim to be aboriginals, others are descendants of immigrants. Some of its inhabitants were

established in the area long before the state came into being while others moved in some time after its creation. It is not certain how long the pre-Nkoransa inhabitants had been living in the area. However, archaeological evidence suggests that the ancestors of the Bono of Manso and Takyiman had organised a state in the area by the middle of the fourteenth century.¹³ These early inhabitants belonged to lineages of autochthonous and immigrant origin. Descendants of the former usually point to nearby caves from which, they claim, their ancestors emerged some centuries before. For instance, the Bono of Manso and Takyiman claim to have emerged from a home at Amuowi, a few kilometres from Pinihi, (See Map 4), in the Nkoransa state.¹⁴ The people of Anyiman, (See Map 4) in the Nkoransa state also claim to have emerged from a cave called "Worobo" near their present settlement.¹⁵ The immigrant lineages, on the other hand, claim to have come in as refugees, as hunters or as warriors.

Many of the immigrants whose migration preceded the founding of Nkoransa such as the Droman were of southern Akan origin.¹⁶ These were later to acquire a local identity. They handed down some of their own cultural features and accepted others from the local inhabitants. In this way, they became Brong although the term was also used to distinguish the autochthonous from the immigrants.¹⁷

One group of the earlier inhabitants, the Bono,¹⁸ were well organised into a prosperous state with powerful rulers. Others who claim to have been independent entities usually lived in small communities with tiny populations. The southern section of Nkoransa territory appears to have been more populous than the north. The inhabitants of the south seem to have been better organised than those of the north where groups of people lived in isolated settlements far from one another.

As a result of the invasion of the Bono-Takyiman Kingdom by Asante, in the early 1720's, some of the original peoples of the area either fled or were driven out. The majority of those who remained were incorporated into the new state of Nkoransa through conquest, surrender or diplomacy.

Nkoransa tradition states that the founders of the state came from Amakom near Kumase. They claim that their migration took them first to the Ofinso district from where they later moved to Nkoransa. According to the Nkoransa, the first people they came across were the Nyafoman.¹⁹⁷ These were said to have been Bono people who had created a state which the migrants had to conquer in order to have a place to live. The Nkoransa claim that they defeated the Nyafoman with the help of Ofinso. For the assistance they gave to the immigrants, Ofinso came to possess most of the

lands of Nyafoman. For instance, Amuowi which is now part of Ofinso was a town which served Nyafoman.²⁰ The old capital of Nyafoman was situated near Abofour now in the Ofinso district.²¹ The remaining territory of Nyafoman was incorporated into what was to become the state of Nkoransa. Some descendants of old Nyafoman now live at Akumsa Dumase, (See Map 4), a small village about five kilometres from Nkoransa, on the Nkoransa-Takyiman road. The chief of the village is still known as the Myafomanhene (chief of Nyafoman).

The next group of people the migrants met in the area were the Degha, widely known as Mo. The Degha are a Gur-speaking people who are probably related to the Grushi or Sisala.²² These people had earlier migrated southwards to settle at Donkro (Longero)-Nkwanta, a town located some eighteen kilometres southeast of Nkoransa. They moved quickly back as the migrants advanced towards the present site of Nkoransa. Their settlement, Donkro-Nkwanta, (See Map 4) which they had evacuated, was occupied, briefly, by the immigrants before they moved finally to Nkoransa. The Degha (Mo) now live on both sides of the Black Volta river in the area between the north-eastern and north-western trunk roads that lead to Tamale and Wa respectively. Their main settlement is New-Longero, located on the outer bank of the southern loop of the river.

Nkoransa tradition gives two main accounts of the flight of the Degha northwards. One account states that they moved back on their own accord²³ while the other says it was the Asante immigrants who drove them away.²⁴ Both accounts, however, agree on the fact that the Nkoransa took away the stool of the Degha (Mo) and gave it to the son of the Nkoransahene who became the Ankobeahene. The Degha(Mo) were then made to serve Nkoransa through the Ankobea division. The Ankobea stool of Nkoransa is, thus, referred to as the Donkro Akonnwa (Donkro Stool).²⁵

H.J. Hobbs gives a contrary account. According to him the Degha, who were then living at Longero-Nkwanta, fearing an attack by Adu Donyina who was leading the immigrants from Amakom, met him and submitted to him peacefully. The two sides then "drank fetish" to proclaim the peace. Adu Donyina then, ordered the Mo to remain at Longero-Nkwanta.²⁶

Hobbs' account conflicts with the traditions of Nkoransa and Takyiman which agree on the fact that it was Baffo Pim rather than Adu Donyina who led the Amakom immigrants, founders of the Nkoransa state. Adu Donyina is mentioned as the man who led the migration from Amakom but he died on the way and, therefore, did not reach the Nkoransa area.

The tradition of the Degha themselves confirm the Nkoransa accounts which state that there was a northward movement of the former when the Asante immigrants reached the Nkoransa area. The Degha, however, claim that they moved away because they found the environment at Donkro-Nkwanta unsuitable for the savanna agriculture they practised in the north prior to their migration to the Nkoransa area.²⁷ Since the Degha moved away on the arrival of the immigrants, who were alleged to have already fought with and defeated some of the peoples in the area, it is more reasonable to suggest that the Degha fled for fear of being attacked by the new arrivals. The account of H.J. Hobbs may, therefore be rejected in the light of the unanimity of the traditions of the states in the area including that of the Degha themselves, all of which say the Degha moved away from the Nkoransa area soon after the arrival of the Asante immigrants.

After driving the Degha away, the immigrants met the Diuman people²⁸ who lived at a place some forty-eight kilometres south-east of Nkoransa. The descendants of the Diuman, who were moved from their original home to stay closer to the Nkoransahene, now live at Sessiman (See Map 4), one of the three sections of Nkoransa town. The other two sections are Nkoransa itself—the paramount chief's quarters—and Kissiman. The Diuman, like the Nyafoman, were Bono.

According to Nkoransa tradition Diuman was an independent state with all the features of a paramountcy. For instance, it had as its Krontihene (second-in-command) the chief of Akonkonti while the chief of Pinihi was the Gyaasehene (Head of the royal household). To support the claim of independence, the tradition makes reference to the semantic interpretation of the word Diuman or Dewoman. When broken into syllables one gets "Di-wo-man" or "De-wo-man" meaning in Twi, in both variants, "to possess one's own state." This connotes independent or autonomous status.

Hobbs asserts that the Diuman ruler submitted to the Asante migrants at Donkro-Nkwanta. They were then absorbed by the Nkoransa state. This office is still held by his successors.²⁹ This account by Hobbs ties in with the local tradition which indicates that the appointment of the Diumanhene as Nifahene stemmed from the fact that he surrendered without a fight and co-operated with the Asante invaders.

Claims that Diuman and Nyafoman were independent states prior to the arrival of the Amakom immigrants are contradicted by other accounts. Goody and Boateng assert that the chief of Diuman was the Nifahene of Takyiman.³⁰ Effah Gyamfi also says of the "Dewoman people" that "their leaders are referred to as the sons of the Bono Kings".³¹

He also concurs with the claim that the Dewoman King was the Nifahene of Takyiman. Furthermore, Goody asserts that the Diuman and the Nyafoman were all within the sphere of influence of Bono-Takyiman and that the chief of Nyafoman was the Kontihene of Takyiman while that of Diuman was the Nifahene.³²

It seems the basis of the assumption that Diuman, for instance, was an independent polity was the fact that it had its own divisional chiefs. But this is not the only index of the autonomy of an Akan state. Under the Akan traditional system of government, it is possible for a prominent sub-chief of a state, for instance a divisional chief, to have his own elders bearing such titles as Krontihene, Gyaasehene, Nifahene, Benkumhene and others. In fact, the political organisation of the sub-units of an Akan state replicates that of the central government of the state. The presence of a Krontihene and Gyaasehene in Diuman could, therefore, not necessarily make it an independent state.

The accounts of Goody, Boateng and Gyamfi are supported by Takyiman tradition which claims that before it was attacked by Asante in the 1720s its sphere of influence extended over a large area including Diuman and Nyafoman as well as Nsawkaw, Nchira and Sekodumasi.

The Takyiman claim of suzerainty over Diuman and Nyafoman as well as other inhabitants in the Nkoransa area seems to be amply supported by archaeological evidence. Effa-Gyamfi who undertook research in the Nkoransa-Takyiman area during the early 1970's asserts that the Bono Kingdom "seemed to have been a decentralised one in which other vassal states such as Dewoman, Nyafoman and Asekye had their own Kings and capitals, but they regarded Bono Manso as the main capital."³³²¹ The rulers of these segmentary states travelled regularly to the capital to consult with the King of Bono, their overlord, at Bono Manso. James Anquandah also refers to the states of Dewoman, Nyafoman and Takyiman among others as "tributary principalities" and their rulers as provincial rulers of the Bono state.³⁴²²

It may, thus, be suggested that Diuman and Nyafoman may not have been independent states as the Nkoransa tradition claims. At best, they may have been divisions of the Bono state which enjoyed considerable autonomy under the overlordship of the king of the Bono state.

The people of Droman who lived a few kilometres north-east of Nkoransa migrated into the Bono area some time before Nkoransa's founders arrived in the area. According to Nkoransa tradition the Droman migrated from Nsuta in Ashanti.³⁵²³ This claim is confirmed by Nsuta tradition.³⁶²⁴

The migration of the Droman into the Bono area was part of the phenomenon of northward movement of the Akan which began before the Asante attack on the Bono Kingdom in 1722/23. Before the invasion, the Droman were under the Hia²⁶uhene of Asante but were given to the Nifahene of Nkoransa when the state was set up.³⁷ Droman was thus, a non-Bono entity which was not under Takyiman and which was incorporated into the Nkoransa state. The chief of Dromankuma (Little Droman) serves the Nkoransahene through the Nifahene while the Dromankesehene (chief of Great Droman), serves the Nkoransahene directly. The exalted position of the Dromankese chief may probably have been in recognition of military assistance he gave to the Nkoransa during the Nkoransa-Asante attack on Bono Takyiman. Two other groups of people incorporated into the Nkoransa state were the Asekye³⁸ and Pianyinu,³⁹ both Bono.

By bringing all these various groups of people together the Amakom migrants acquired a population of considerable size with which they began to build a viable state.

According to local tradition, the new arrivals met some three old men when they finally reached the site of present day Nkoransa. These old men were Sene Diamin, Ampofu and Dasi. They had only one sister called Duoduwaa Amane.⁴⁰ To these old men, the new arrivals expressed their desire to

settle in the area. It is from these old men that Nkoransa eventually derived its name. Nkora in Akan is shortened from Nkokora which means "Old men" while nsa stands for mmiensa (three). Nkoransa therefore means "Three Old Men".

There is controversy over the origin of these three old men. Some accounts in the tradition of Nkoransa claim that the three old men were immigrants who moved into the Nkoransa area from Dwenase in Adanse.⁴¹ According to these accounts, the old men belonged to the Asene matriclan of which Baffo Pim, the founder of Nkoransa, was a member. The story further says that these old men also stayed for some time at Amakom from where the migration of the founders of Nkoransa was initiated. This version of the origin of the three old men appears to be exclusive to a particular family in Nkoransa called the Asooko family. Asooko means 'bloody hoe'. The tradition of this family says that the leader of their migration, Biyaa Akraasi, killed a child with a hoe and thus earned this epithet.⁴² The Asooko claim to be the true descendants of the three old men. They say it was the presence of their ancestors in the Nkoransa area that induced their clansmen to migrate into the area.

The claim of the immigrant origin of the three old men contradicts the traditions of adjacent states in the area. The traditions of Takyiman, Nkoransa and Wenchi agree that the three old men were of indigenous origin. According to

the Nkoransa when they first met the old men they (the old men) told their leader, Baffo Pim, that they were the sons of the Takyimanhene.⁴³³¹ Takyiman and Wenchi traditions also state simply that the old men were the Takyimanhene's hunters. According to the Wenchi account, Baffo Pim met some three old men when he arrived in the area where Nkoransa is situated today. When he asked them where they came from, they told him: "We are three old hunters of Ohin Amiyaw, owner of the town Tekiman."⁴⁴³² Degha tradition also mentions the encounter of the Asante immigrants with the three old men but fails to give any clue as to the origin of the old men.

The unanimity of the local traditions of all the states in the area on the indigenous origin of the three old men gives that claim considerable authenticity. As hunters specially stationed by the king of Bono, it is reasonable to assume that they would also be Bono and possibly come from a particular lineage in Takyiman. The fact that the supposed descendants of the three old men do not enjoy any prominent position in Nkoransa suggests that their ancestors were not immigrants who had any clan relations with the founders of the state. Had the three old men or their said descendants been co-clansmen they would have been given positions in the new state created by their guests. This is particularly true as some chiefs found in the area like the Diumanhene or

Dromanhene, who were also helpful to the migrants but were not related to them in terms of clan affiliation, were given such positions.

By far the most powerful and best organised pre-Nkoransa state in the area was the Bono-Takyiman kingdom. It was one of the earliest kingdoms or states to have developed in the interior of Ghana. According to Takyiman tradition, the state was in existence about three hundred years before Asante.⁴⁵ The tradition, further asserts that all other states in the area came later. The claims of the Takyiman are supported by an analogy drawn from the traditional method of defining the positions of children born to a woman among the Akan in Ghana. According to the practice, whenever a woman gives birth for the first time this is referred to as Abonowoo. By this assertion the word Bono means pioneer or first of a kind. The Takyiman claim that Bono is a term which strictly refers to the ancestors of the Takyiman people, regarded as the pioneer state in the area of Brong Ahafo. This is, however, a controversial matter. There are some who claim that the word Bono does not necessarily mean a pioneer, rather, it is derived from the fact that the ancestors of the people of Takyiman emerged from a hole. In the Bono dialect, the word used for hole is boo (vowels nasalised) or Bono and it is this word which has been corrupted into Bono.

Whatever the claim, the Takyiman assert that their ancestors were the true Bono. Their assertion is supported by two main arguments. First, they were one of the first organised Akan states in Ghana. Secondly, they assert that they were the first organised people to be established in the Brong-Ahafo area. All other states in the region such as Domaa, Atebubu, and Wenchi were later creations.⁴⁶ In terms of wealth and size, the Bono state surpassed all other contemporary Akan states. Bono culture later diffused into the other Akan states to its south, particularly, those of the forest region. Takyiman tradition claims that Asante culture came from Takyiman.⁴⁷ According to the tradition it was the Takyiman who taught the Asante the uses of gold. For example, the Asante learnt goldsmithing and the use of gold weights and balances from Takyiman. Cloth weaving, an important craft industry in Asante, was also imported from Takyiman. The Takyiman further assert that, talking drums originated from them.

The Takyiman people claim to be autochthonous. Their traditions of origin state that they came from a hole just about twenty five metres from a large rock-shelter called Amuowi, about two kilometres south-east of Pinihi, a village in the Nkoransa area⁴⁸ as stated elsewhere in this chapter. The Takyiman say that their ancestors came out of the hole on a Friday. The 'hole' people settled about seventeen

kilometres away and called that place Bono Manso. This settlement became the capital of the Bono state. Bono Manso later became part of Nkoransa after the conquest of the Bono-Takyiman state by Asante. The hole at Amuowi is still regarded as an important sacred place. Many myths have developed because of the reverence the Takyiman have for this hole. For instance, the local people claim that one would often hear drumming and rattling from the direction of the rock-shelter on sacred days (nabone in Akan). It is also a taboo for any Bono king to see the sacred hole. Furthermore, it is a taboo to farm on Fridays, as it is believed that the emergence from the hole took place on a Friday.

The material culture of the areas around Amuowi and Bono Manso discovered by archaeologists suggests that the two places were used by the same people and that Amuowi was the earliest site to be occupied in that area.⁴³⁷ This confirms the tradition of origin of the Bono-Takyiman who claim to be autochthonous. The tradition is still remembered in an annual Apoo festival song of the Takyiman part of which goes:

"Yefiri Amuowi o, Yefiri Amuowi o
Domankoma
Amuowi dadampowa"

A rough translation goes like this:

"We come from Amuowi
We come from Amuowi
Creator
Ancient Amuowi"⁵⁰

In spite of the Takyiman claim that they were the earliest people to settle in the area, there is evidence of earlier settlers. Certain accounts in Takyiman tradition say that when hunters of Takyiman were searching for a suitable site to build a settlement, the people of Gyamma were living in caves. Before the Bono capital was fully built a golden stool, called Sika Pudu, believed to have been brought out of the hole by the Bono was left in the custody of these cave people. From that time the people of Gyamma served as custodians of the stool of the Bono state and later Takyiman. This role is still played by them. This suggests that there were acephalous societies in the area who were eventually absorbed by the Takyiman.

Traditions of origin from holes may embody claims of autochthonous status. This may be supported by the fact that while later settlers in the area refer to certain towns or villages as being in existence at the time of their arrival these earlier inhabitants or 'earth' people do not refer to other people who lived in the area before them.⁵¹ For instance, Nkoransa tradition refers to a number of towns and villages which were in existence long before the Amakom

migrants arrived in the area. The peoples of these villages; Anyiman, Yefire, Kokuma and Paninamisa do not, however, refer to any pre-existing peoples in their respective areas of settlement. Yefire is believed to be one of the earliest settlements in the area.⁵² Takyiman tradition states that it is even older than Bono Manso. The present site of Yefire is also called Tutena⁵³ which means moving from one place to settle at another.

The traditions of Kokuma⁵⁴ and Paninamisa⁵⁵ (See Map 4) claim that the peoples of the two places came from one hole near Kyiri Ahi some twenty four kilometres south of Kintampo. Some time after their emergence from the hole they settled at the present site of Kokuma. Later a section of them, moved to settle at present day old Paninamisa originally called 'Biriman' after its founder, Biri. The Paninamisa group moved away, probably because of population pressure or some dispute.

Like the others, the people of Anyiman, as has already been mentioned elsewhere in this chapter claim to have emerged out of a hole. The chief of Anyiman states that every newly elected chief has to be taken to see the rock-shelter, out of which their ancestors came, before being formally installed.⁵⁶

The myths of origin from holes may refer to an ancient period when groups of people lived in rock-shelters or caves. Since this period may go back to the Early Iron Age, over a thousand years ago, the actual location may have escaped their memory and, therefore, a hole near a rock-shelter or cave may be taken as the place where their ancestors settled.⁵⁷ 45

Available evidence indicates that there was hardly any independent state or group of people in the Bono-Takyiman area prior to the Asante invasion as the "hole people" in Nkoransa claim. Certain Nkoransa accounts assert that such old towns as Paninamisa, Amoma, and Anyiman all served Takyiman. The tradition of Takyiman also claims that the entire territory which became Nkoransa formed part of the Bono kingdom until its conquest by Asante.⁵⁸ 46

The Takyiman say that as a result of the incorporation of less organised pre-existing societies and the founding of new settlements in the largely unoccupied area, the Bono-Takyiman kingdom came to embrace a large area. At the height of its power, the state was bounded to the north by Yabo and Yanne (Gonja and Yendi respectively) to the west by Ahwene Koko (Wankyi) and Nsoko (Begho); to the south by Ohwim, Kaase and Tafo states and to the east by Atebubu and Wiase.⁵⁹ 45

Bono-Takyiman seems to have been a kind of federation of states which were partially autonomous. The rulers of the constituent principalities or provinces attended regularly to calls by the king of Bono who was the Suzerain. The inhabitants of Asekye, Manso, Amoma and Takyiman, former constituent provinces of the Bono state, are able to guide visitors to the horses' pathways (aponkokwan) which led to Bono Manso, the capital of the Bono state.^{60/62} These were most probably the pathways regularly used by the sub-chiefs to reach Bono Manso, by means of horses, to hold consultations with their overlord.

The political control and influence of the Bono-Takyiman over the Nkoransa area prior to the Asante invasion appears to have been felt more in the south than in the north. This is suggested by the fact that Takyiman tradition hardly makes mention of any subject peoples known to have been living in the northern section of Nkoransa, particularly the area to the north of Kintampo. There is, however, evidence that the Takyiman had close contact with the peoples of the north and that, as a result, the influence of Islam and the traditional culture of the north was very strong in Bono-Takyiman.^{61/67}

In the northern part of Nkoransa, there were peoples who appear to have been of the Guan stock as well as others who

migrated southwards across the Black Volta river. These peoples lived in isolated settlements, far from one another. The Kintampo area was partly occupied by Guans prior to the creation of the Nkoransa state. The Nchumuru, who occupy the whole Guan area north and west of Atebubu, formerly inhabited Kintampo. They were driven away by the Asante invaders in the early 1720's.⁶²

The tradition of the Ankobea division of Nkoransa which oversees a section of Kintampo (the Damoama section) states that the people of Abease⁶³ who now live in the area to the south-east of Kintampo and north-west of Atebubu previously occupied parts of Kintampo. This is confirmed by the tradition of Abease. The Abease explain that they stayed at Kintampo for only a brief period. The people were originally Bono who formed part of the Takyiman state. They moved northwards to Kintampo when Takyiman was invaded by Asante. Later they continued their migration to their present location where they finally settled.⁶⁴ The Ankobea tradition also states that there were Mo settlers in Kintampo before Nkoransa was founded.⁶⁵

It is also highly probable that there were Banda elements in the area. The Nkoransa say that one of the first groups of people they fought in the area after the founding of their state, were the Banda.⁶⁶

Local traditions in the Kintampo area indicate that groups of Dagomba occupied various places in the locality. According to Nana Abenaa Baagyei II, Queen-mother of Jema, when a section of the Amakom immigrants came to settle at Jema, they found a small group of Dagomba people already living in the area.⁶⁷ The group was, however quickly absorbed by the immigrants. With time, the Dagomba became thoroughly Akanized. Their descendants now occupy the position of Krontire at Jema.⁶⁸ They are known locally as the "Anwaa". "Anwaa" is probably a corruption of the term "Nwong" which was used by the Gonja to refer to the Dagomba and Mamprusi.⁶⁹

At Krabonso, a village about fifteen kilometres south-west of Kintampo, there was a group of Dagomba settlers who lived together with the Bono people. The Dagomba were eventually absorbed and Akanized by the Bono. Their descendants are also known locally as Anwaa.⁷⁰ There was also a pocket of Dagomba settlers at Kintampo. According to the Krontihene of the Mo traditional area, Nana Adinkra Adjei II, when his people were on their southward migration to Donkro-Nkwanta they found a small group of Dagomba people at Kintampo.⁷¹

The northernmost area of Nkoransa was probably inhabited by Gonja elements. The area immediately south of the Black Volta river probably formed part of the larger Gonja state

situated north of the Black Volta and stretching across the full width of the country in that area.⁷² This area, usually referred to as "the Desert of Ghofan,"⁷³ was incorporated into Nkoransa through conquest. Nkoransa tradition refers to frequent wars against the Bote people of Central Gonja. The Asante also had occasion to attack central Gonja in order to pacify the area. The Gonja settlers in the north of Nkoransa, therefore, fled across the Black Volta river leaving the whole area north of Kintampo, up to the river, under the control of Nkoransa. Today "the Desert of Ghofan"⁷⁴ has a few villages such as Kawumpe, Gulumpe, Portor and Kadelso. The area is generally sparsely populated. According to Josiah Cofie, scholars like Wrench, Saunders and Morris attributed the sparse population to the incidence of trypanosomiasis and Asante raids.⁷⁵ Cofie is however of the view that other factors have also contributed immensely to the very low population density of "the Desert of Ghofan".

He argues thus:

From ... concrete evidence I am inclined to maintain that since the dawn of Ghana history, indeed times anterior to it, this 40 mile square of territory north-east of Kintampo has never contained a considerably larger population than at the present time, for the simple reason that it becomes flooded in the rainy season and intensely arid in the dry season, quite apart from other inherent disabilities of the soil itself. Herein, once again we are vividly reminded of the ultimate connection of the soil and the progress and welfare of Mankind.⁷⁶

All these suggest that the Gonja and any other groups of people who inhabited the extreme north of Nkoransa territory prior to the Asante invasion of Takyiman did not constitute any large population.

Before the eighteenth century, the area which became Nkoransa territory was occupied by various groups of people and states. These inhabitants included autochtones and immigrants. The autochtones were Bono-speaking Akan, while the immigrant elements included peoples of southern Akan origin as well as those from northern Ghana. Some of the autochthonous people had created polities which had features of states. Nearly all the peoples and states in the area, however, fell under the domination or sphere of influence of Bono-Takyiman, by far, the largest of the organised states. The Bono-Takyiman state occupied a very strategic position which enabled it to take advantage of the economic activities that went on in the area between the fringes of the forest region and the Black Volta river.¹¹⁶ As a result of its favourable location the state became very wealthy and powerful.

Bono-Takyiman continued to be prosperous until the early 1720's when the Asante invaded and destroyed it to give way to the rise of Nkoransa.

CHAPTER ONE

NOTES

1. Throughout this text 'Nkoransa' rather than the popular spelling 'Nkoranza' will be adopted. Nkoransa corresponds more appropriately with the local pronunciation and is the best reminder of the historical derivation of the word.
2. Joseph Dupuis, Journal of a Residence in Ashantee, (London, 1824) P XXXVI: The area referred to is that stretch of land which extends southwards from the Black Volta river to within a few kilometres north of Kintampo. According to Josiah Coffie, in an article entitled "The Desert of Gofan' was it Ever Densely Inhabited?" in Ghana Notes and Queries, No.5, April 1963, p.10, the area was designated "The Desert of Gofan" by Bowdich in a map he published well over a century ago. Coffie says that Bowdich did not visit the area himself but obtained his information about it from Caravans from the north, and from the Moshie, Hausa and Dagomba people whom he called Moors. These people passed through the area to come to Kintampo. They, in their accounts to Bowdich might have underscored the aspect of the land during the dry season when it would be desiccated, and when the grass had been burnt, the picture would be suggestive of a desert.

3. Ghana Statistical Service, Accra, 1984 Population Census of Ghana: The Gazetteer I p.XIX.
4. See Edward Hall, Ghanaian Languages, (Accra, 1983), Language Map facing p.5.
5. the Hausa and Wangara (Mande or Senufo) are two such immigrant groups.
6. Kwamina B. Dickson and George Benneh, A New Geography of Ghana, (Longman, 1988) p.12.
7. Ibid, See rainfall map on p.22.
8. Ibid, p.33.
9. R.A. Freeman, Travels and Life in Ashanti and Gyaman, (Westminster, 1898) p.181.
10. Akomadan derives its name from Ankoma nnan. Ankoma was the name of the hunter and nnan was his camp. Ankoma nnan, corrupted to Akomadan, therefore, means, in Twi, 'Ankoma's hunting camp.' See E. Effa Gyamfi, "Aspects of the archaeology and oral traditions of the Bono State," Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol.XV(11) 1974 p.217.
11. Interview with Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV, Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 24/8/95.
12. M. Johnson, Salaga Papers, SAL/28/1, Enclosure in 36 of 1885, Blue Book Kirby to Rowe.
13. James Anquandah, Rediscovering Ghana's Past, (Sedco, Accra, and Longman, 1982) p.38.
(Accra: Sedco and Longman, 1982)

- 2 14. Kwaku Effa Gyamfi, Traditional History of the Bono State: An Archaeological Approach, (I.A.S., Legon, 1979) p.15.
- 3 15. Interview with Nana Twea Boateng Brempong II Chief of Anyiman. 28/10.95. In attendance were Nana Kru Ampem, Linguist and Obaapanin Abenaa Asantewaa, a royal.
- 4 16. The Droman, for instance, migrated northwards from Nsuta. See R.S. Rattray, Ashanti Law and Constitution, ^{Oxford:} (Oxford 1929), 'History and Constitution of Nsuta' p.257.
- 5 17. Jack Goody, "Introduction" Ashanti and the Northwest", Supplement No.1, to Research Review, (Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1965), pp.2 and 3.
- 6 18. Historically, the term 'Bono' refers to the traditional state and people of Takyiman. The term connotes a pioneering role in view of the emergence of the state as the earliest Akan Kingdom in what is now Brong Ahafo Region. 'Brong' refers to Atebubu and other Akan states to the north-east of Ashanti while 'Abbron' refers to the state of Gyaman in the extreme north-west. Today Brong is a generic term for all the non-Asante Akan groups in Brong Ahafo. In this text Bono, Bono-Takyiman and Takyiman when used interchangeably will refer to the same state.
- 7 19. Interview with Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 15/3/95. In attendance was Nana Kwabena Effa, Pemasehene (one of

the Senior Linguists) of Nkoransa. Nana Effa made substantial contributions during the interview.

- 8 20. C.Y. Boateng, Oral Traditions of Nkoransa, (Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1965) p.45.
- 9 21. Jack Goody and C.Y. Boateng, "The History and Traditions of Nkoransa" in Supplement No.1 to Research Review (I.A.S.; Legon, 1965) p.171.
- 10 22. Boateng, Oral Traditions, pp.31 and 44.
- 11 23. Ibid, pp.26, 31 and 42.
- 12 24. Ibid, pp.6 and 46.
- 13 25. Interview with Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 15/8/95.
- 14 26. H.J. Hobbs, "History of Nkoransa," The Gold Coast Review Vol.3, 1927, p.117.
- 15 27. Interview with Nana Adinkra Adjei II, Krontihene of Mo, Kintampo, 13/7/95.
- 16 28. Diuman is sometimes spelt 'Duuman' or 'Dewoman'. The most popular spelling, derived from local pronunciation is 'Diuman'.
- 17 29. Hobbs, op.cit, p.118.
- 18 30. Proceedings of a court hearing on a dispute between the Nkoransahene and the Sessimanhene over the payment of tribute by the latter to the former. 1922, File D 957, National Archives of Ghana, Kumasi: Goody and Boateng, op.cit, p.173.
- 19 31. E. Effa Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology" p.221.
- 20 32. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest", p.4.

233. Effah Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology", p.222
234. Anquandah, op.cit, p.96.
235. Goody and Boateng, op.cit, p.172.
236. Rattray, op.cit, p.257.
237. Trial of the chief of Droma for his refusal to pay tribute to the Nkoransahene, Enclosure E. A.F.L. Wilkinson to the commissioner, Western Province of Ashanti, April 1926, File D 937, National Archives of Ghana, Kumasi: Goody and Boateng, op.cit, p.172.
238. Effah Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology", p.222.
239. Goody and Boateng, op.cit, p.174.
240. Ibid, p.175: Boateng, Oral Traditions, passim.
241. Goody and Boateng, op.cit, p.175.
242. Boateng, op.cit, p.19.
243. Ibid, p.31.
244. Omanhene of Wenchi, "The Three Old Men of Nkoransa," The Gold Coast Review Vol.4 1928 p.122.
245. D.M. Warren and K.O. Brempong, Techiman Traditional State: Stool and Town Histories PART I. (Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1971) p.69.
246. Effah Gyamfi, "Traditional History of the Bono State," p.14.
247. Warren and Brempong, op.cit, p.69.
248. Effah Gyamfi, "Traditional History of the Bono State," p.15; Warren and Brempong, op.cit, p.31.
249. Effah Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology" pp.219-221.

- 38-50. Ibid, p.220.
- 38-51. Effa Gyamfi, "Traditional History of the Bono State", p.19.
- 38-52. A prince of the Yefire stool, Mr. Daniel Adu Takyi claims that there is no settlement in the Nkoransa traditional area which is older than Yefire. Interview with Mr. Adu Takyi, Yefiri, 25/7/95.
- 38-53. Warren and Brempong, op.cit, p.100.
- 38-54. Interview with Nana Asiama Guahyia II, Chief of Kokuma, Kintampo, 18/7/95.
- 38-55. Nana Baffo Bediatuo II, chief of Paninamisa, confirmed Nana Asiama's assertion that the peoples of Kokuma and Paninamisa originated from the same place. Interview with Nana Bediatuo, Paninamisa, 29/7/95.
- 38-56. Interview with Nana Twea Boateng Brempong II, Chief of Anyiman, Anyiman, 8/10/95.
- 38-57. Effa Gyamfi, "Traditional History of the Bono State." p.19.
- 38-58. Warren and Brempong, op.cit, passim.
- 38-59. Effah Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology", p.222.
- 38-60. Ibid.
- 38-61. Jack Goody, "The Akan and the North", Ghana Notes and Queries, No.9 Nov. 1966, (I.A.S. Legon) pp.19 and 20.
- 38-62. Jack Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.3.
- 38-63. Boateng, op.cit, p.36.

64. K. Ansah Yamoah, The Traditions of Atebubu, Abease, and Kwame Danso, (Dwan) (Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1966) p.31.
65. Boateng, op.cit, p.36.
66. Ibid, pp.26 and 78.
67. Interview with Nana Abenaa Baagyei II, Queen-mother of Jema, 15/7/95. In attendance were Opanin Kwame Nnuro, Madam Yaa Amoaa, Queenmother's daughter and Madam Amma Apeaa a royal at the Queen-mother's court. Nana Baagyei's story was confirmed by Nana Asare Akomea II, Jemahene and Kyidomhene of Nkoransa traditional area. According to Nana Akomea, his ancestors who settled at Jema were led by Nana Akomea I. The stool of Jema is, therefore, referred to as Akomea Adwa (Akomea Stool) Interview with Nana Asare Akomea, Jema, 16/7/95.
68. The Krontihene of Jema, Nana Kwaku Adu states that his family descended from the Dagomba settlers who had occupied Jema before the arrival of the Asante immigrants who came to constitute the Kyidom division of Nkoransa. According to Nana Adu his ancestors migrated from Dagombaland under the leadership of a man called Seidu. Interview with Nana Kwaku Adu Jema, 17/7/95. Present at the interview was Nana Kwasi Berko

also known as Kwadwo Amoah, Gyaasehene of Jema. Nana Serko made appreciable contributions during the interview.

5769. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.23.
5770. Interview with Opanin Kwame Awiti Kufuor, a descendant of the Dagomba settlers of Krabonso. 6/7/95. Boateng, op.cit, p.36.
5771. Interview with Nana Adinkra Adjei II, Krontihene of Mo, Kintampo, 13/7/95.
5772. Cofie, op.cit, p.13.
5773. See Note 2.
5774. Ibid; pp.10-15.
5775. Ibid; p.11.
5776. Ibid; p.15.
5777. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.4.

CHAPTER TWO

FORMATION OF THE STATE OF NKORANSA AND THE EVOLUTION OF ITS ORGANS OF GOVERNMENT

A. Introduction

One of the most significant developments in the history of Ghana during the second half of the seventeenth century was the northward migration of several groups of the Akan from Adanse and Amansie, the area of the confluence of the Pra and Ofin rivers. This phenomenon was a direct consequence of the emergence of Akyem, Akwamu and Denkyira, all powerful states in the Gold Coast hinterland.¹

Initially, nearly all the northward migrants settled in the Kumase area and the surrounding region. Later, some of them moved further north, partly as a result of the upheaval which attended the rise of Asante. They settled at various places extending from Atebubu in the north-east to Bonduku in the north-west.

The northward movement of the Akan contributed to the emergence of a number of states. On the other hand, the presence of European traders at the coast from the fifteenth century, and the utilization of firearms also stimulated the

process of state formation in the Gold Coast hinterland. In addition, the presence of Mande and Dyula traders in the north-western region, between the forest zone and the Black Volta river, had far-reaching consequences for political developments in the Kumase region and its hinterland. Intrigued by the phenomenon of movements of people northward, Professor Ivor Wilks studied the fundamental factors underlying them and their consequences and made the following observation:

The extension to the coast of the Niger-Begho route was a matter of some consequence for the history of Ghana, for the event was closely connected, among other things, to the rise of the new Kingdom of Ashanti, destined in a short space of time to become indisputably the greatest and rising power of Western Africa. Not only did the very early expansion of Ashanti occur along the line of the route into and beyond Begho... but even earlier, the extended trade route had determined the line of advance of the groups.⁴

Just as the emergence of the Akan forest states and the consequent migration of various clans northward resulted in the rise of Asante, so did the rise of Asante lead to movements of others further north who created new states like Nkoransa, Atebubu and Gyaman.³

The creation of Nkoransa had some connection with the eighteenth century northward expansion of Asante. The founders were once members of the ruling lineage of Amakom, a pre-Asante state. They fled northwards into the old Bonc-Takyiman area to avoid the disturbances which engulfed the

Kumase district during the initial stages of the creation and consolidation of Asante.

Once established in the Bono area, the Amakom migrants invited the Asante to attack the Bono-Takyiman Kingdom. The Asante accordingly attacked and destroyed Bono. On the ruins of the Bono kingdom, the Amakom migrants founded Nkoransa which was later to serve as the 'launching pad' for Asante's northward thrust.

B. Origin, Migration and Settlement

The claim by the Nkoransa that they migrated from the Kumase area⁴ is corroborated by accounts in the traditions of Amakom,⁵ Takyiman⁶ and Mampon.⁷ Like several other Akan lineages, however, the Asene ruling clan of Nkoransa trace their origins beyond Amakom to Ayaase, near Dompase in Adanse. It was from Ayaase that they allegedly migrated to Amakom.⁸ The exact dates for their movement from Adanse or settlement at Amakom are not known. But, as will be shown presently, the event may have occurred during the second half of the seventeenth century.

The traditions are not unanimous on the cause of the migration from Amakom. One Nkoransa account states that the leaders of the migration moved away because they found it an honour to conquer other people and settle in new places.⁹

This suggests that there was overpopulation in their own home. Amakom, according to K.Y. Daaku, was the most populous state in the Kumase area during the late seventeenth century.¹⁰ On their part, the Amakom claim that some of the members of the ruling lineage migrated northwards as a result of a family dispute.¹¹ Interestingly, overpopulation and dynastic disputes have been cited in many Asante lineages as having caused their migration to their present territories.¹² In these circumstances one needs to explore for other factors to explain the movements of people in Asante.

Contrary to the Nkoransa and Amakom accounts mentioned, Takyiman and Mampon traditions indicate that the migration of a section of the Amakom people into the Bono area was the result of an attack and defeat of Amakom by King Osei Tutu of Asante. The Mampon even claim to have been asked by Osei Tutu to assist him in the war against Amakom.¹³

The arguments employed to support the claims of Nkoransa and Amakom are the same. First their traditions claim that years before the accession of Osei Tutu, there had been a treaty of friendship between Amakom, then a powerful state, and Kumase. This treaty was aimed at preventing an attack on Kumase, from the rear, in the event of a Kumase offensive against the Domaa at Suntreso. Domaa was probably a

considerable power at the time. Apparently, this treaty was negotiated during the reign of Obiri Yeboah, Osei Tutu's immediate predecessor who first fought the Domaa.

During the time of Osei Tutu the bond of friendship between Amakom and Kumase was strengthened: the scope of the treaty was widened to include a unique marital arrangement. Under this arrangement, an Amakom princess was married to the Asantehene, Osei Tutu⁴⁴ while the Asantehene, in turn, gave his own niece to a prince of Amakom called Adu.⁴⁵ Baffo Pim, the founder of Nkoransa and Opoku Ware I, the successor of Osei Tutu, were offsprings of these unique marriage arrangements. To this day, the paramount chief of Nkoransa is recognized as a son of the Asantehene while the Asantehene is also regarded as the son of the chief of Amakom.

The argument emphasises that with a treaty of friendship backed by such intricate marital relationships it was unlikely that Amakom and Asante would fight and, thus, cause a migration such as happened with the Amakom royals.

These non-war motivated migration arguments suffer from a number of shortcomings. Firstly, migrations involving members of ruling lineages normally occurred under extremely critical circumstances. In fact, only such adverse or

destabilizing situations as war or slave raiding could provoke the emigration of rulers or their close kins. Where succession disputes precipitated the migration of factions of the ruling house from their home, such movements occurred only when the disputes degenerated into serious crises. Even in such situations and also in cases of overpopulation the migrants, usually, did not move too far away from home except where it was too difficult to find suitable land nearby. Movements to distant places normally implied that the migrants wanted absolute security and protection from a powerful enemy. The migration of the Amakom to a place as far away from home as over one hundred kilometres, therefore, signifies that they might have been forced out of their original home and probably pursued by a militarily stronger power.

Secondly, the claim that the leader of the migration, Adu Donyina, left Amakom because of a family dispute over succession can hardly be accepted. According to Amakom tradition Adu Donyina was far from being eligible to contest the stool at the time he left. The line of succession indicated that there were four other men who were more qualified than Adu Donyina.¹⁶

A significant fact is that while the Amakom discount any war with Kumase they mention the killing of the Amakombene Akosa

Yiadom in a military conflict with the Asante. This ties in well with the Mampon account. The claim of the Amakom migrants that it was only a family dispute which led to their emigration northwards may therefore be rejected.

The present occupant of the Nkoransa stool, Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV, states, in his account, that there is no doubt that the migration of his ancestors to that area was prompted by a defeat they suffered at the hands of the Asantehene Osei Tutu.¹⁷ He says that the dispersion of other Asene groups to various parts of Ghana -- for instance to Agona Ksaba and Asamankese, in the Central and Eastern Regions, respectively -- was the result of the crushing defeat of Amakom by Osei Tutu.

It seems the various arguments put forward in the foregoing lend greater support to the contention that the ancestors of the ruling clan of Nkoransa migrated from Amakom because their state was attacked and defeated by Asante.

The exact date for the movement of the ancestors of the Asene of Nkoransa from Amakom is quite difficult to establish. Mrs. Eva Meyerowitz puts the defeat and flight of the Amakom migrants at 1700.¹⁸ It is not known how she arrived at this date. To be able to determine an approximate date for the event, it is reasonable to use the great war between Asante and Denkyira as a reference point.

Professor J.K. Fynn cites a Dutch report of 1699 which indicates that the war between Asante and Denkyira, with its allies, began in June 1698 and finally ended by November 1701.¹⁹ The period 1698 to 1701 can, therefore, be used as the reference point. If the attack on Amakom took place before the outbreak of the Asante Denkyira war, the migration might have occurred between 1680²⁰ when Osei Tutu acceded to the Asante stool and 1698 when the Asante-Denkyira war started.

To be able to challenge the might of a powerful state like Denkyira, it was strategically sound for Asante to consolidate its own position at home. There is therefore little doubt that Osei Tutu fought and defeated Amakom, believed to be the most populous state in the neighbourhood,²¹ and other states in the area before embarking on the campaign against Denkyira.²²

The sequence of events as they unfolded in the Kumase region during the reign of Osei Tutu, thus, indicates that the migration of the ancestors of Nkoransa took place towards the end of the seventeenth century. Though the exact date is unknown, the event might have occurred between 1630 and 1698 (the period of Osei Tutu's reign prior to the outbreak of the Asante-Denkyira war).

According to Nkoransa tradition, the migration was originally led by two men both named Adu.²³ Besides members of the royal family the migrants included men, women and children belonging to various families.

The first stop of the migrants was at Kodie, about fifteen kilometres north of Kumase. The aim was probably to enable the migrants to have some rest before continuing their journey to a more secure destination. According to the story the elder Adu decided to settle permanently at the rest stop and asked the younger Adu, whose full name was Adu Donyina, to go on and find his own settlement. The instruction given to Adu Donyina 'Ko-wo-dee' meaning in Akan ("go on your own") or ("go and find your own place") came to represent the name of present day Kodie, near Kumase, where the elder Adu settled. Kodie is probably corrupted from 'Ko-wo-dee'.²⁴

According to the Omanhene of Nkoransa, a recent chieftaincy dispute at Kodie was referred to him for settlement on account of the historical link between the ruling lineages of Nkoransa and Kodie.²⁵

The migration account goes on to say that Adu Donyina continued the journey after all entreaties to get the elder Adu to continue with him had yielded no fruits. Donyina was

followed by a considerable number of migrants. When Adu Donyina reached a place known today as Swedru or Soaduro, near Aboabogya, in the northern part of Ashanti, he stopped. Probably, he intended to make this place a permanent settlement because it seems the migrants stayed at Soaduro for a considerably long time. The actual length of time is uncertain but it appears they stayed there for at least two decades. Hobbs claims that the Asante army which invaded Takyiman reached the battlefield about eight months or probably even less after the arrival of the migrants at Nkoransa. Given that they arrived even one or two years before the invasion which took place in 1722 or 1723, the migrants, who left their home before 1700 might have stayed at Soaduro for not less than twenty years.

The name Soaduro or Swedru is derived from Adu Donyina's stay at the place in question. Various interpretations are given in connection with the etymology of the word. One interpretation is that at Soaduro, Adu Donyina became sick and he usually treated himself by dropping liquid substances extracted from leaves in his nostrils. In Akan, nasal dropping as a form of medication is referred to as 'So-aduro'. This version, therefore, holds that Soaduro is a corruption of 'So-aduro'. (drop medicine in the nostrils),²⁶ Adu Donyina's usual method of self medication.

Another version says that, when the migrants set off from Amakom, they were carrying Adu Donyina, who had received gunshot wounds as a result of the fighting with Kumase. At Soaduro he died and his people said 'Eha na yeaso no aduru' ('we carried him this far). 'Yeaso no oduru' eventually became shortened to Soaduro.²⁷

A third version which seems the most acceptable says that at Soaduro, the migrants rested and settled, they, therefore, said "Yeaso aduru". This is likely to be the apt expression of relief of a people exhausted from several days or even weeks of hazardous trekking. Probably Adu Donyina decided to settle at Soaduro because it was not too far from Kodie, his brother's place of settlement. To settle close to each other would be expedient for their security.

The Nkoransa regard Soaduro as a very important point in the process of their migration. It became a settlement of some importance which might as well have been the nucleus of a state had the migrants not moved from there. The Nkoransa still maintain links with the people of Soaduro. According to the Omanhene of Nkoransa, when the stool of Soaduro becomes vacant for any reason a candidate from Nkoransa can be selected to occupy it.

After staying at Soaduro for some time Adu Donyina died and was succeeded by his nephew Baffo Pim.²⁶ When Baffo succeeded his uncle he decided to move further north with his people.' His reason for moving away from Soaduro was that he was afraid of an attack on him by the Asantehene who had allegedly heard that the migrants had established there.²⁹ When Baffo moved from Soaduro, he and his followers made brief stops at various places before entering the territory which he came to possess and rule over. The main rest stops were Tetrem, Kyekyewere, Anyinasu, and Asekye-Dumase,³⁰ also called Sekodumase (See Map 3).

The claim by the Nkoransa that they fought with the Nyafoman in the course of their migration to the place where they finally settled may be contested. Jack Goody, for instance, has suggested that the conquest of Nyafoman and its incorporation into Nkoransa, together with others like Diuman, Pianyinu and Droman formed part of the Asante invasion of Takyiman. Goody, therefore, asserts that Baffo Pim fought Nyafoman after he and his followers had arrived and settled at the place of the 'three old men' rather than before.³¹

Even though Goody does not state the grounds for his conclusion, it seems reasonable to give credit to his suggestion. In the first place, the whole territory which

the immigrants brought under their control while they were supposedly, still moving, belonged to the Takyiman. Nyafoman was a province of Bono-Takyiman, which was considerably powerful.³² The ruler of Nyafoman was also very influential in the Takyiman state.³³ It is highly probable that Takyiman would have gone to the aid of Nyafoman if it had actually been attacked by any invading force. Such a counter-offensive could have been effectively carried out by Takyiman whose forces included a cavalry which could have been swiftly deployed.

If, in fact, Baffo's forces had attacked any of the provinces or possessions of the Bono kingdom, the three old men who notified the Takyimanhene of the arrival of Baffo and his followers would have sent an adverse report about the new arrivals instead of a favourable one. In the circumstances, the King of Takyiman would not have accorded Baffo Pim the kind of hospitality he allegedly showed him (Baffo). The king of Takyiman would not have accepted Baffo Pim as a protege in his kingdom if the refugee was known to have even attempted to invade any neighbouring state. Moreover, Baffo Pim and his followers were too few to attempt an invasion of any part of a state as large and powerful as Takyiman without the help of a more powerful and a much larger force. It is reasonable, therefore, to accept that the conquest and incorporation of peoples by Baffo Pim

to form the foundation of the Nkoransa state all took place during and after the Asante invasion of the Bono State.

Initially, Baffo Pim's decision to settle in the Bono state might have been influenced by the economic opportunities in the area. The Takyiman area fell within the orbit of the commercial activities which were extended southwards by the Mande-Dyula from the Middle Niger to the Banda country, between the northern edge of the high forest and the southern loop of the Black Volta.³⁴ The Bono state controlled the gold trade of the main centre of these commercial activities, Begho.³⁵ Baffo might have been aware, earlier, of the economic potential of this area since gold from Begho was reaching the coast through Tafo, Adanse and Asen by the 1670's.³⁶

The request for a place to settle was formally presented before the Takyimanhene through the three old men. First, the old men informed the chief of a nearby village, Forikrom, about fifteen kilometres to the west of Nkoransa, of the arrival of a group of people who wanted a place to settle. The chief of the village, in turn, sent the message to the Takyimanhene, the great monarch of the area. The Forikromhene, Kese Basahyia, was the Benkumhene of Takyiman and was probably the overseer of the Takyimanhene's hunting grounds in which the three old men operated.³⁷ The

Takyimanhene requested that the leader of the strangers be introduced to him. Accordingly, Baffo Pim was officially introduced to him. The King became highly interested in Baffo when he learnt that he was the son of another great king, the Asantehene. The Takyimanhene, having become satisfied with the identity of Baffo Pim as well as the reasons for his migration, officially admitted him with his followers into the country. It is probable at this point that in order to secure an asylum, Baffo told the Takyimanhene that they were only in search of a place to settle since there was over-population in their original home.³⁸ Baffo's mention of a war with his father would have aroused suspicion, among the Bono, about his intentions and could have led to his request not being granted. The migrants became the guests of the Takyimanhene. As such, Baffo Pim and his followers in accordance with the custom of the Bono people, were to be provided with food and shelter by their hosts until they became settled. According to Meyerowitz, it was even the Takyimanhene himself who provided labourers and materials to build a settlement for Baffo Pim³⁹ and his followers at the place of the three old men where Baffo, had indicated, he preferred to stay.

Local traditions in Nkoransa and Takyiman indicate that cordial relations came to exist between Baffo Pim and the King of the Bono-Takyiman State. The Nkoransa traditions

state that the relations were so intimate that Baffo was invited to the palace of the King to dine everyday.⁴⁰ The traditions of the two states also indicate that Baffo Pim, in the spirit of the friendship between him and the King of Takyiman, attended all the important ceremonies of the Bono people without fail.

One result of the contact was that Baffo Pim became well acquainted with the wealth and splendour of the Takyimanhene's court. It is widely claimed in the local tradition of Takyiman that the state was exceedingly rich in gold. Gold was said to be so abundant that the Takyiman people "picked it from the earth without any difficulty."⁴¹ The King of Takyiman, Ohene Ameyaw, is said to have erected a 'sika putuo' (a barn for the storage of gold). The tradition further states that Ameyaw always spent new gold as money. Courtiers of the state were often resplendently adorned in gold ornaments manufactured by a guild of goldsmiths solely responsible to the King's court. Even the King's horses were allegedly decorated with gold. The Queen-mother was also said to be very rich and possessed a number of items all fashioned in gold. She had such things as gold crockery, gold oware, (an in-door game), gold mortar and gold pestle. Most important of all, the King's stool was made of pure gold.⁴²

It is highly probable that Baffo Pim might have passed on information about the opulence of the Takyiman state to his paternal nephew, the Asantehene Opoku Ware, with whom he might have discussed the possibility of the conquest and annexation of the prosperous kingdom to Asante.⁴³

C. The Emergence of the State

Just as Aeneas was driven, by fate, in classical times to pick up the seed of Rome from the ashes of sacked Troy, so did Baffo Pim find the foundation stone of his state of Nkoransa in the ruins of devastated Takyiman.

The Asante conquest of the north-west beginning with the invasion of Takyiman and the emergence of Nkoransa did not occur by accident. It was a calculated design to tap the resources of the whole region and to secure Asante's rear against any attacks from that direction.

Long before the accession of Opoku Ware, Asante had been aware of the immense wealth of the north-west. The gold trade passing through Asante territory to the coast, from the second half of the seventeenth century, bore adequate testimony to this wealth. Asante had therefore been looking for an opportunity to bring the states linked with or producing this wealth under its control. If this could be done either by conquest or some other means Asante could

open a direct route to the north and the enormous wealth controlled by Takyiman could be obtained through revenue from tributes and the taxation of trade. Kumase could also establish contact, through the Mande traders in the area, with the cities of the Middle Niger, the southern termini of the trans-saharan traffic.⁴⁴

The Asante were also aware of the growing power of Gyaman in the north-west and Gonja to the north. If by some design Gyaman and Gonja could ally, they would pose a serious threat to the security of Asante. To prevent the possible linkage of these powers it was necessary to strike first and conquer these states individually or together. Economic gain and political security were, thus the motives behind the Asante designs on the territories in the north-west.⁴⁵ What Asante did was to exploit the presence of Akan elements who had earlier migrated into the area to effect its conquest of politically and economically important territories such as Bono-Takyiman and the goldfields of Banda and Gyaman.

Nkoransa and Takyiman traditions are unanimous on two important points relating to the fall of the Bono-Takyiman kingdom. First, the kingdom was destroyed as a result of

its invasion by Asante. Secondly, the conquest was facilitated by the fifth column activities of the Amakom migrants in the Bono-Manso area.

There are various accounts concerning the causes of the Asante invasion of Bono-Takyiman and the part played by the Amakom refugees in the Bono area in bringing about the invasion. The core of the various accounts in the traditions of Mkoransa and Takyiman as well as those of Abease and Atebubu is that the main cause of the Asante-Takyiman war was the treachery of the leader of the Amakom refugees in Bono, Baffo Pim.

According to one account, Baffo Pim was assaulted by a prince of Takyiman and in order to revenge he resorted to an act which created the impression to the Asantehene that the Takyiman wanted to fight Asante. The Asante accordingly made the necessary preparations and invaded Takyiman. The account says that when the Takyimanhene learnt that his son had slapped the Asante prince he made efforts to make amends by offering Baffo a large quantity of gold dust, worth about one thousand pounds (£1,000),⁴⁵ in compensation. But Baffo Pim, instead of dropping the issue, took the gold to the coast where he bought fire arms and gun powder. He presented the guns and the gun powder to the Asantehene as gifts from a great king he had met at 'sarem' (the north).

Traditionally such a presentation implied a formal declaration of war by whoever sent them. The Asante accepted the challenge and attacked Takyiman.¹⁷

Another account indicates that Baffo Pim was not offended at all but out of avarice he kept a quantity of gold which the King of Takyiman had given him as a present for the Asantehene. He then filled three containers with gun powder, lead and flint and sent to the Asantehene who became angered and began to prepare for an attack on the king who had challenged him to fight.

That the Asante invasion of Takyiman was directly provoked by the intrigues of Baffo Pim is a common strand in the various accounts of the circumstance leading to the event. The principal motive behind Baffo's action appears to have been more political than economic. According to the various accounts, Baffo came to possess a large quantity of gold which he obtained from the King of Takyiman either as compensation for an assault on him by a prince of Bono or by keeping part of presents of gold dust intended for the Asantehene. Considering the fabulous wealth of the Takyimanhene, it is possible that Baffo received as much gold as would satisfy any aggrieved person. Even if he did acquire wealth by keeping part of the presents of gold meant for the Asantehene, he could have kept that channel open for

as long as he wished since he was trusted by the Bono King and the Asantehene did not know the source or the quantity of gold sent to him at any given time. There was also every indication that the king of Takyiman was ready to send more gold to the Asantehene in order to promote friendship between the two great monarchs. Apparently, Baffo Pim had acquired a position of economic advantage which ought to have satisfied him, yet he worked for the invasion of the very state in which such an opportunity existed for him. The fact that Baffo was bent on pursuing the path of war when that of peace and wealth were open to him meant that his political ambition transcended any economic objectives he might have had.

The Asante invasion of Takyiman took place in 1722/23 and the latter was utterly defeated. The traditions of Nkoransa, Takyiman, Wenchi and Abease⁴⁸ all attribute the defeat of Takyiman to an alleged treacherous activity of Baffo Pim. The traditions indicate that after Baffo Pim had provoked Asante to fight against the Takyiman, he went to the Takyimanhene and persuaded him to bury all his guns in water for forty days. According to the story, Baffo Pim told the Takyimanhene that the secret of the remarkable successes of Asante in the wars they had been fighting lay in the simple but effective ritual of burying all their guns, loaded, in water any time they were to embark on a

military campaign. The story goes on to say that Baffo impressed on Takyimanhene that, when the guns were retrieved from the water, they performed better and became more deadly. Somehow, the Takyimanhene believed what Baffo told him and ordered that all the guns in his state be brought to him for burial in water in accordance with the instructions of an oracle. Traditional accounts in Nkoransa and Takyiman indicate that certain chiefs in the Bono state, for instance, the chief of Baafi, were skeptical about the ability of a wet gun to perform.⁴⁹ This tradition must, however not be accepted hook, line and sinker since the Takyiman had knowledge of the use of guns as the chief of Baafi had demonstrated.

Nkoransa tradition claims that Takyiman was so powerful a state that it was doubtful whether Asante could have defeated that state by military means alone.⁵⁰ Jack Goody refers to the traditions of Takyiman and Banda which also make similar claims. Goody also makes references to archaeological reports on the Bono kingdom which testify to the strength of the political organization of that kingdom. According to Goody, the reports indicate that Takyiman fought with horses "just like the Dagombas", and at the same time adopted the Akwamu military pattern before the Asante invasion of that state.⁵¹ Besides Takyiman's military strength, Asante had, itself, had its military power

considerably weakened as a result of a series of wars it had just fought with some of its southern neighbours.⁵² These facts, according to local traditions, explain the necessity of Asante adopting non military tactics in addition to its military skills and resources in order to be able to defeat Takyiman.⁵³

The subject of the fall of the Bono Takyiman has been dealt with by such scholars as W.E.F. Ward, C.C. Reindorf, Francis Fuller and Eva Meyerowitz. Meyerowitz, in particular, gave a detailed account of circumstances leading to the Asante invasion and the burial of guns in water. One writer, Effah Gyamfi, who also did some detailed work on the fall of the Bono Kingdom, attributed the defeat of Takyiman by Asante mainly to internal weaknesses in the former state. According to Gyamfi, the first of the weaknesses was the presence, in the Bono area, of Akan immigrants from the Kumase area. These immigrants, attracted by the prosperity and economic opportunities available in the Bono State, did much to bring the wealth of Bono-Takyiman to the notice of Asante. Before the war, Baffo Pim, himself, was said to have been an itinerant trader in 'Bono-Ntoma' or 'Kyekye' (Local Bono cloth), which he bought from Takyiman and sold in Kumasi.⁵⁴

The wealth of Takyiman was publicised in Asante in the early eighteenth century through the reports of such traders. Owing to these reports, Asante, apparently placed Takyiman on its priority as a state to be conquered for both economic and political gain.

Gyamfi also mentions succession disputes in Takyiman as a contributory factor to the weakening of the state. According to him certain members of the Takyiman royal family led by Abrakwamsi (or Amoakwamsi) and Nsamankwa opposed the candidature of the last Bono King, Ameyaw. They therefore migrated to the coast with a group of the Takyiman in protest against the final choice of Ameyaw Kwakye as king of the state.⁵⁵

The behaviour of the King of Takyiman and his sons was a factor which caused disaffection among the people and contributed to the internal weakness of the state. It is alleged that he extorted gold from his subjects and that he caused his servants to go from house to house collecting gold from the people.⁵⁶ Ameyaw's insatiable desire for gold earned him the epithet 'Ameyaw a odi sika atomprada' ('Ameyaw who spends fresh gold but once').

Besides avarice, Ohene Ameyaw allegedly indulged in sexual immorality. Tradition has it that he was so given to amorous

pursuits that he had special scouts who daily combed the market place for beautiful women to satisfy his lust. The elders at the court, who were disturbed by this unseemly behaviour, often exhorted the King but Ohene Ameyaw turned deaf ears to the advice of his elders. The moral laxity of the Takyimanhene offended the sensibility of the people and it is probably one of the reasons which, according to Effa Gyamfi, made some of them desert him when the Asante invaders reached Takyiman.⁵⁷

What the elders of Takyiman considered to be a more serious fault of Ohene Ameyaw was his failure to honour the ancestral spirits and state deities. As the intermediary between the people and their gods as well as ancestral spirits the Takyimanhene was obliged to take action on oracular messages from these impersonal forces believed to be the guardians and protectors of the state and its people. Unfortunately, Ameyaw neither heeded the warnings given by his fetish priests nor performed the rituals and sacrifices required of him.⁵⁸ The disrespect shown by the Takyimanhene towards the ancestral spirits and state deities greatly disturbed the elders but they suppressed their discontent until the Asante invasion during which they failed to give the necessary protection to the king who was carried into captivity in Kumase.⁵⁹

Perhaps what created the greatest resentment and discontent among the elders and the entire populace of the Takyiman state was the attitude of the King's sons who overstepped their privileges with impunity. According to local accounts, whoever dared interrupt the arrogant princes while they were on their way to water their horses was killed. This gave rise to the saying "hyia ponko a nni gyinae." ("If you meet the horse that is your end"). One of the princes, Kosakore, was so cruel that he made sport of throwing his spear in the sores of people. He was, thus, nicknamed "Kosakore, to pea" ('Kosakore the spear thrower').⁶⁰

All these indicate that on the eve of the Asante invasion of Takyiman the feeling of despondency among its people had so weakened the state that it was virtually impossible for the state to withstand a force as powerful as the Asante army. When, therefore, the news of the impending invasion became known many dissatisfied subordinate chiefs and citizens went and buried their guns saying. "se Ohene Ameyaw anya ne ko a onko nhve" ("if King Ameyaw has got his war let him fight it all alone and die").⁶¹

On the basis of the foregoing arguments, Effah Gyamfi concluded that, Baffo Pim never persuaded any Bone King to bury his guns as the popular traditions claim. He asserts

that the burial of the guns was "the result of internal conditions which reached a head on the eve of the invasion which had been effected through the treachery of Baffo." Gyamfi asserts that the burial of guns is well remembered in Takyiman tradition but that the action has been misunderstood by such writers as Reindorf, Ward and Meyerowitz. He is of the view that the action of the people was not a mark of technical incompetence as Goody asserts,⁶² rather, it was an act of protest against the misrule of the Takyimanhene.⁶³

Like Gyamfi and Goody, Mrs Meyerowitz also accepts the story of the burial of guns but attributes the success of Baffo Pim's cunning scheme to Takyiman's lack of war experience. She claims that the Bono knew little about firearms because they had not fought any major war for about a century and since the Asante had a lot of experience in fighting the Takyiman allowed themselves to be swayed by Baffo's trickery.⁶⁵ The argument of Meyerowitz apparently amounts to technical incompetence as asserted by Goody.

While acknowledging the importance of internal weakness as a potent contributory factor for the fall of the Bono Kingdom, as argued by Effah Gyamfi, this writer has misgivings about the whole issue of the burial of guns, the popularity of the account in several traditions

notwithstanding. The fact that some chiefs allegedly questioned the wisdom in burying guns in water when Baffo Pim suggested to the Takyimanhene to do so indicates that the people were not unaware that a wet gun could not shoot. Jack Goody, in fact, admitted that the Takyiman were not without guns. The blacksmiths of Takyiman made shot guns called Pantantuo and were therefore users of guns, though bows and arrows and spears were also in common use.⁶⁶

It is highly probable that Baffo Pim played a very important role by providing the Asante with vital intelligence information about the military capabilities of the Takyiman as is normally done in warfare everywhere but the decisive factor was what took place in the actual fighting on the battlefield. This writer is of the view that the defeat of Takyiman can be attributed to the technical advantage which the Asante had over them. Apparently, the Takyiman possessed inferior weapons as compared to those wielded by the Asante. According to local tradition, as already noted, the main weapons used by the Takyiman army included locally made shot guns, spears, and bows and arrows.⁶⁷ On the other hand the Asante possessed European made guns obtained from the coast. There is little doubt that after defeating Denkyira, Asante had access to European traders at the coast and might have acquired a reasonable hoard of firearms from these traders. In fact very few, if any, of these European-

made guns found their way into the territory beyond Asante. In terms of range and fire power the locally made guns could not match the more sophisticated European ones. Similarly the bows and arrows and spears wielded by the mounted column of the Takyiman army were nothing before the type of guns wielded by the Asante.⁶⁸

The rarity of European made firearms in the interior of Ghana, during the seventeenth century can be explained in terms of deliberate policies of the Portuguese and Dutch governments whose subjects were the main traders along the West African coast during the seventeenth century. Before 1650, these traders were officially forbidden, by their home governments from selling guns to heathens and muslims.⁶⁹ During the period of prohibition, the few guns that could be obtained were supplied by interlopers and virtually none of these reached the interior. After 1650 the restriction was relaxed and European traders began to sell guns to West Africans irrespective of their religious beliefs.

In spite of the removal of the restriction on the sale of European made guns to certain groups of West Africans, firearms were still not allowed to flow freely into the

interior. T.E. Bowdich observed in 1819 that firearms were prevented from reaching the inland states. He writes:

Firearms are unknown to such of the nations on the south of the Niger as Shereef has visited and the reason which he assigns for it is that the Kings in the neighbourhood of the coast, persuaded that if these powerful instruments of war should reach the possession of the populous inland states, their own independence would be lost, have strictly prohibited and by their wisdom of their measures, have effectively prevented this dangerous merchandise from passing beyond the limits of their dominions.⁷⁰

The above observation is quite relevant for the situation in Asante one of whose concerns was to prevent the states in its hinterland from strengthening their position militarily. Such a situation would threaten the security of Asante from its rear. The Asante might therefore have, particularly, been very strict in preventing the sophisticated European-made guns from reaching the states in its hinterland. To acquire firearms for its own use Asante had established trade relations with the coast at Elmina by the eighteenth century.⁷¹ The indication is that Asante possessed sophisticated guns imported from Europe as against the inferior locally made shot guns, bows and arrows and spears wielded by the Takyiman army. When therefore, the Asante army attacked the Bono-Takyiman, the latter seemed to be unarmed. It is the belief of this writer that all factors considered, what was decisive in the defeat of Takyiman was

that its forces did not possess the kind of sophisticated weapons which the Asante used against them.

Following the defeat and destruction of the Bono-Takyiman kingdom, its people became badly dispersed. According to G. Tranakides,

Some moved to northern Togoland, settling between Borada and Ahamansu-Papase; others went as far north as Kpembi in eastern Gonja and are called Mbong-Wule by the Gonjas, while others were moved to Manso near Bekwai and form the Amansi state.⁷²

Within the immediate locality, some of the Bono-Takyiman people took refuge in Gyaman while others found their way to the Atebubu area. The people of Abease, near Atebubu claim that their ruling house descended from a section of the Takyiman royal family which fled to the area as a result of the Asante attack and defeat of Bono-Takyiman.⁷³

The most significant outcome of the fall of the Bono-Takyiman kingdom was the coming into existence of the state of Nkoransa. About two thirds of the territory of the Bono kingdom was given to Baffo to rule by the Asantehene as a reward for his assistance which contributed to the defeat of Takyiman.

D. Evolution of Organs of Government

After the fall of Takyiman and the creation of Nkoransa, the two most important tasks that faced the ruler of the new state were its consolidation and administration. Owing to the turmoil into which the whole area to the north-west of Asante had been thrown as a result of the Asante-Takyiman war, Baffo Pim first gave greater attention to the consolidation of his state. To achieve his objectives in this area, he adopted two main strategies. These were the relocation of conquered peoples, or any group of people who were likely to rebel, and the establishment of security posts at strategic points within the state.

The first people to be relocated were the Nyafoman who had put up some resistance during Baffo's operation against them in the course of the Asante invasion. The Nyafoman were moved from their capital near Abofour to Akumsa-Dumase just five kilometres from Nkoransa. The Diuman who had submitted to Baffo Pim without a fight and had their capital about forty eight kilometres south-east of Nkoransa were thought to be too far from the Nkoransahene. They were, therefore, resettled at Sessiman only one kilometre from the residence of the Nkoransahene.⁷⁴

The primary motive behind these resettlements was to ensure that these potentially dangerous peoples were near enough to

the ruler to make close surveillance possible. It was also intended to prevent subdued peoples from entering into an alliance with any of the neighbouring states against Nkoransa. The measure was thus aimed at preventing the early disintegration of the state through rebellions and secession by any of its constituent peoples.⁷⁵

Baffo Pim also took steps to weaken the positions of the rulers of the resettled peoples in order to radically reduce their ability to mobilize for dissident action. The Nyafoman ruler, whose position was analogous to a provincial ruler in the destroyed Takyiman state had his position reduced to that of 'Odikro' (village head). This position is at the bottom of the hierarchy of chiefly positions in the Akan traditional political set-up. For a complete weakening of that ruler's position, he was placed under his own linguist who had defected to the Nkoransa camp during the fighting between the Nkoransa and the Nyafoman. The linguist was elevated to the status of senior linguist at the Nkoransahene's court. A black stool was created for him. This stool was an 'Obrempon' stool. (Obrempon literally means 'prominent' or 'Great' man in Akan). Under the political arrangement of Nkoransa an Obrempon is one who has been elevated by the Nkoransahene in recognition for some outstanding or distinguished deed which makes for the general good of the state. An Obrempon in Nkoransa serves

the Omanhene directly and not through any divisional chief as most subchiefs do.

The Diumanhene who had enjoyed a large measure of autonomy as a provincial ruler in the Takyiman state, also had his autonomy curtailed. Unlike the Nyafomanhene, however, he retained the position of Nifahene which he had held in the Takyiman state. As Nifahene, he became a divisional chief in Nkoransa. According to the Omanhene of Nkoransa the Diumanhene gained his position of influence because he surrendered to Baffo Pim without a fight and offered to serve him. He was, therefore, allowed to keep the area that had been under his control in addition to his appointment as Nifahene of the state. The Diumanhene was the only indigenous Bono to be made a divisional chief of the Nkoransa political set up.

A number of security posts were established at strategic points within the state to protect it against any foreign invasion. Agents from these posts were required to send intelligence reports on dangerous moves by people of suspicious character, particularly those from neighbouring states, to the central authority in the capital for prompt action.

On the western frontier, the capital of the defeated Bono state, which was taken over by the Nkoransa, served as the security post. The Nkoransahene appointed one of his men as Akwamuhene and made him settle at Kranka near Manso. The Akwamuhene had charge of security matters on the western side of the state. He was to be vigilant, particularly, on Baafi which had put up some resistance during the invasion of Takyiman.

The chief of Dromankese (Great Droman) who had supported Nkoransa and Asante was assigned the duty of watching over the eastern boundary. He was made an Osafohene (war captain) to match his role. Osafohene is a title conferred on a person in recognition of a heroic deed, particularly, during war. In Nkoransa, the Osafohene, like the Obrempon serves the Omanhene directly. An odikro may be elevated to the status of osafohene in recognition of a valiant deed.

Generally, there was not much to worry about on the eastern frontier. Atebubu, the main state there had been neutral during the Takyiman war. The traditions of both Nkoransa and Atebubu indicate that relations between the two states have been peaceful since the emergence of Nkoransa.

Like the eastern side, Nkoransa's southern frontier did not face any threat during the early years of the state's

existence. With Asante as an ally in the Takyiman war, the need for a security post in that direction was not immediately urgent. To serve a long term need, however, Raffo Pim appointed one of his own men the Gyaaschene, (Head of court administration) and stationed him at Nkwaben about thirteen kilometres south of the capital and about eight kilometres south of Akumasa-Dumase, the resettled site of Nyafoman. Nkwaben's position enabled it to cut off the communication lines between the Nyafoman and the south. This was intended to prevent any possible alliance between the defeated people and any other group in the south.

Probably the greatest threat to the security of Nkoransa came from the north. A section of the defeated Takyiman fled northwards and took refuge in various places. For instance one group sought refuge in Gonjaland while another went to Abease to the south-east of Kintampo.⁷⁶ In addition a section of the Mo, who had supported the Takyiman fled north-westwards across the Black Volta river.⁷⁷ There were also Banda elements in the Kintampo area while the central Gonja constituted a potentially powerful enemy.

All these various groups of people posed a serious threat to the security and stability of Nkoransa. In fact, later struggles with the Gonja and Banda in the Kintampo area, as will be shown in chapter three, underscore the reality of

the initial threat faced by Nkoransa from the north. In this area, therefore, four security positions were established at Jama, Kintampo, Dawadawa and Kunso. These were to watch, severally and jointly, the movements of enemies of Nkoransa who had taken refuge at various places in the north. They were to be alert and report any hostile moves by Gonja, a much older and better established state and Nkoransa's main northern neighbour at the time. For better security arrangement in the area, Baffo Pim, again, appointed one of his kinsmen, Akomca, as Kyidomhene (commander of the rear guard forces) and stationed him at Jama.⁷⁵ He was to supervise and co-ordinate all security operations of Nkoransa in that area.

The other important task Baffo Pim tackled was evolving a political system for the state. Consolidating the state and evolving a system of political administration were not undertaken as separate tasks; instead, they were done concurrently.

The Nkoransa, generally, followed the Akan system of traditional government as has been adequately described by such scholars as R.S. Rattary and K.A. Busia.⁷⁶ All the important features such as matrilineal inheritance, clan

relationship; procedures for the selection of a candidate to occupy a vacant stool, the law making process and the administration of justice were adopted by the Nkoransa.

According to the Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nana Kudom IV, the early rulers of Nkoransa did not institute any regulations for the destoolment of chiefs, particularly the Omanhene. He asserts that destoolment of chiefs was unknown in Nkoransa until the first half of the twentieth century. The Omanhene states that any Nkoransahene who, in the past, resorted to arbitrary rule was assassinated. He gave the example of Nana Kwasi Owusu I, (Wonsiamoa), who committed hideous crimes against his own subjects. Nana Owusu allegedly went to the extent of cutting open the stomachs of pregnant women to find out the sexes of unborn babies. No attempt was made to destool this tyrant but he was reportedly assassinated by the Adcntenhene and Benkumhene at a village called Boaben, (See Map 4), a few kilometres north-east of the capital.⁸¹ Thus, the Nkoransa initially got rid of bad rulers through physical elimination rather than through destoolment.

In making appointments to political offices, the first ruler of Nkoransa took into account the need for unflinching loyalties to guarantee the internal security of the state. In this connection, he used both maternal family connections

and paternal relationship as a basis for putting people in positions of trust. Family connections in this sense, also included clan affiliation which is important in the social organization of the Akan. Baffo Pim appointed most of his leading elders and councillors from the Asene clan to which he himself belonged. The Krontihene (second in command), Benkumbene, Kyidomhene and rulers of such strategic towns as Kintampo-Nwoase and Dawadawa, security posts in the north, all belonged to the Asene clan.⁸² The Adontenhene, one of those who accompanied Baffo Pim from Amakom to Nkoransa, but was not Asene, belonged to the Oyoko, the clan of Osei Tutu, Baffo Pim's father. Similarly, the Nifahene, the only non-Asante appointee among the leading elders of Nkoransa belonged to the Oyoko or Dako clan. The position of Ankobeahene was given to the son of Nkoransahene. An account in Nkoransa tradition states that all the leading positions in Nkoransa were given to members of the Asene and Oyoko clans.⁸³

In dealing with the indigenous Bono who were incorporated into Nkoransa, the Asene were careful not to incur their resentment. This was essential for the peace, stability and unity of the state. The Bono were, therefore, not left out in the distribution of positions. In addition to the position of Nifahene the Bono were given the role of Akyeamo. The Akyeamehene, (chief linguist) position was

given to an Oyoko lineage at Amoma one of the important settlements of the destroyed Takyiman kingdom. One of the most senior linguists of the Nkoransahene was chosen from Akumsa-Dumase.

The early rulers of Nkoransa also created the conditions necessary for the building of confidence in their government, and for ensuring that there was peaceful co-existence between the conqueror and the conquered. To achieve this end, the immigrant rulers embarked on acculturation. They handed down some of their own cultural practices and adopted others from the indigenes. In this way they became Bono. For instance Bono, the language of the conquered was adopted by the immigrants: it became the language of communication for both groups. The immigrants also abandoned the Sunday Adae festival of the Asante, (Akwasidae) and adopted the Wednesday Adae of the Bono, (Awukudae) or (Abron-dae-Wukuo).³⁴

The Asante immigrants also adopted the god Ntoa which was an important deity of the Bono as a national god of the new state. Ntoa was revered as much as Dam which was a traditional deity of the immigrants.³⁵

Apart from adopting certain cultural and religious practices of the indigenes the invaders did not tamper with certain

customary practices of the conquered people. For example, the immigrant conquerors did not interfere with the annual Khyifia festival of the Bono. Rather, they instituted their own festival known as the Monofia which is similar to the Khyifia.⁸⁶ All these measures were intended to effectively unify the new state to forestall possible disunity and disintegration.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the framework of a viable administrative machinery had been put in place, and remained as such into the nineteenth century. Local traditional accounts have tended to credit the founder of the state, Baffo Pim, with the whole work of devising the traditional administrative system of the state.⁸⁷ The long reign of Baffo Pim (1721-1762) must have enabled him to contribute much to the evolution of the traditional administration. But, clearly, as the present Omanhene states, it is unrealistic to attribute every achievement to the founder of the state. For instance, the present Omanhene asserts that the main work of building the superstructure of the government took place during the reign of Guakro Effa Panin (1799-1802). He explained that Baffo Pim's name was a kind of instrument for legitimizing positions. This, therefore, is the main reason why many people holding positions in the traditional political set-up claim that they owe their positions to Baffo Pim who

originally, appointed their ancestors. It is, thus, not uncommon to hear stool occupiers declaring that their stools were created and blackened by Nana Baffo.

One of the most important steps taken to facilitate the administration of the territory of Nkoransa was decentralisation. The state was initially divided into seven sections and placed under divisional heads who were directly responsible to the Omanhene. The seven initial divisions were headed by the Krontihene, the Adontenhene, the Benkumhene, the Nifahene, the Ankobeahene, the Kyidomhene and the Gyaasehene. Later when the complexity of the administrative system was appreciated, more divisions were created out of the initial seven to make the running of the state easier and more efficient. Ultimately all the remaining leading elders of the state became divisional heads.

Under the Nkoransa political system the divisions which in the past, formed the front army or the main body which, in many Akan states are collectively known as Adonten, are referred to as 'Animfoo'.⁶² These are the Krontira, Adonten, Nifa, Benkum, Ankobeaa, Pemase, and Twafoo. They are also referred to as the 'state',⁶³ while the Akwamu, Gyaase, and Kyidom, who formed the Nkoransahene's body guard, as well as the Queen-mother are regarded as representing the immediate

royal household. According to Nkoransa tradition, it is these last four elders who selected a candidate to occupy the Omanhene stool.³⁰ They are also the first to see the body of any Omanhene who dies and to inform the state, Aninfoo, about it.³¹ This was essentially a military arrangement which has survived and has, thus, become part of the political arrangement of the state.

Most of the divisional chiefs reside at the capital and only pay periodic visits to their divisions. Out of the current ten Divisional Chiefs seven (of them) live in the capital. The others Akwamuhene, Kyidomhene and Gyaasehene who had been stationed at strategic positions for security reasons, still live outside the capital. This means the majority of the leading Divisional Chiefs in the state would, normally, be available any time the Omanhene wanted to consult with them. When and where a consensus was needed the others would be sent for. In fact, of the three divisional chiefs stationed outside the capital, two, the Gyaasehene and the Akwamuhene reside at places within sixteen kilometres of Nkoransa.³²

As is obvious from all this, the distribution of political authority in Nkoransa did not depart from what obtained, generally in Asante and in all Akan states. In the formal power relationships among the Omanhene and his divisional

chiefs, Mtoransa had much in common with the Asante system of government. As in the latter state, the Mtoransahene assumed pre-eminence over all other chiefs. The exalted position of the Ocranhene did not, however, make him an absolute ruler. He was always obliged to act with the counsel of his council of Divisional Chiefs. As Battley remarked about Head Chiefs in Ashanti, even where commands coming from the Mtoransahene appeared to be emanating from himself as a "autocratic ruler; such is never really the case".³³

In Mtoransa the Queen-Mother (Okeraga) exercised considerable political power. Besides her normal role as the royal genealogist, the 'mother' of the Ocranhene and the entire ruling lineage and a 'guide' of the king, she wielded some exclusive political authority which approached that of the Ocranhene. The right to regency, when the stool became vacant was vested in the Okeraga. In such a case she combined her own position with that of the Ocranhene. For instance, following the assassination of Yasa Kwasi Ocran I ("Kwasi Wonsienoa") (c.1796-1799), Mtoransahene Afiu Ebohen became the regent because the successor to the stool was a minor.³⁴ Similarly the Mtoransahene Afiu Papaa acted as the Ocranhene after the Yaa Asantewaa uprising of 1900 when the Ocranhene and some of his elders were arrested and detained at Elmina.³⁵

The exercise of traditional political authority and the administration of justice are like the obverse and reverse sides of the same coin. All traditional rulers in Nkoransa, thus, exercise both political and judicial functions. The court system in Nkoransa, as in all Akan states, was hierarchical. Each political unit corresponded to a level of judicial authority. The lineage heads held arbitration on trivial matters of misunderstanding between members of a lineage, usually referred to as afisem.

The Omanhene's court was at the top of the hierarchy and was the highest judicial authority which had both original and appellant jurisdiction. It had jurisdiction over certain categories of cases which could not be heard at any lower court. The Nkoransahene had jurisdiction over cases which required capital punishment. In certain other Akan states which fell under Asante political domination before 1900, capital punishment could not be executed without the permission of the Asantehene.⁹⁵

As in other Akan states, the institution of Oath (Ntam) was of great political, religious and judicial importance in Nkoransa. The ntam, could be invoked to either set a judicial process in motion or to effect compliance with judicial decisions or enforcement of any customary law passed by the Omanhene and his council of Divisional Chiefs.

The ntam or sacred oath of the Nkoransa is Boo Akvi.³⁷ The Asantehene's oath, the Ntam Kesse (Great Oath) was also applied in Nkoransa. In the event of the invocation of the Great Oath, however, the related matter could either be examined at the Nkoransahene's court or in Kumase, depending on the particular circumstance leading to its swearing.

The emergence of Nkoransa can be attributed to two main factors. The first was the infiltration of the Takyiman state by Akan people of southern origin; and the second, the effects of Asante northward expansion. The northward expansion resulted in the fifth column activities of Baffo Pim and his Amakom migrants in the Takyiman area. Once the conquest of the district had been effected, he created a state there and called it Nkoransa. To rule the area effectively, Baffo Pim adopted the Asante administrative system.

CHAPTER TWO

NOTES

1. J.K. Fynn, "The Rise of Ashanti," Ghana Notes and Queries, No.9, Nov. 1966, p.25.
2. Iver Wilks, "The Northern Factor in Ashanti History; Begho and the Mande," Journal of African History, Vol.II No.1, 1961, p.33.
3. Kwame Arhin, (ed), The Papers of George Ehem Ferguson: a Fante official of the government of the Gold Coast, 1890-1897, (Leiden, Cambridge, 1974) pp.XII and XIII.
4. Interviews with: Nana Abonaa Baagyei II, Queenmother of Jema, Jema, 15/7/95; Nana Asare Akomea II, Chief of Jema, Jema, 16/7/95; Nana Asiana Guahyia II, Chief of Kokuma, Kintampo, 18/7/95; Nana Kwaku Baah II, Ex-chief of Ampoma, Ampoma, 21/7/95; Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV, Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 15/3/95; Mr. Kwarteng Amaning, a royal, Dawadawa, 18/8/95; Nana Twea Boateng Brempong II, Chief of Anyiman, Anyiman, 28/10/95; Also see C.Y. Boateng, Oral Traditions of Nkoransa, (I.A.S., Legon, 1965) passim.
5. Amakom Stool History AS/77 (I.A.S., Legon, 1963); Kept at Manhyia Archives, Kumasi.
6. D.M. Warren and K.O. Brempong, Techiman Traditional State: Stool and Town Histories Part I (I.A.S., Legon, 1971) p.131.

7. R.S. Rattray, Ashanti Law and Constitution, (Oxford, 1929), p.235. (See Note 3).
8. Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 17/8/95.
9. C.Y. Boateng, op.cit, p.11.
10. K.Y. Daaku, "Pre-Ashanti States," Ghana Notes and Queries, No.9, Nov. 1966, p.13.
11. Amakom Stool History, AS/77.
12. J.K. Fynn, op.cit, p.24.
13. R.S. Rattray, op.cit, p.235.
14. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 15/8/95: Eva L.R. Meyerowitz, The Early History of the Akan States of Ghana, (London, 1974), p.258.
15. Francis Fuller, A Vanished Dynasty: Ashanti, (London, 1921) p.11: Daaku, op.cit, p.13: J.K. Fynn, Asante and its Neighbours, 1700-1807, (London, 1971) p.37.
16. Amakom Stool History, AS/77.
17. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 17/8/95.
18. Meyerowitz, op.cit, p.200.
19. Fynn, Asante and its Neighbours, p.39: W.W. Claridge, A History of Gold Coast and Ashanti, Vol.1 (London, 2nd ed. 1966) pp.194 and 195.
20. Jack Goody, "Introduction: Ashanti and the Northwest," in Supplement No.1 to Research Review, (I.A.S., Legon, 1965) p.6 Goody puts the date for the death of Obiri Yeboah who was succeeded by Osei Tutu at around 1680.
21. Daaku, op.cit, p.13.

22. Fuller, op.cit, p.11: J.K. Fynn, Asante and its Neighbours, p.37: W.E.F. Ward A History of Ghana, (London, 1958) pp.118-121.
23. Boateng, op.cit, p.11.
24. Ibid, p.11.
25. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 8/12/95.
26. Boateng, op.cit, p.11.
27. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 8/12/95.
28. Certain Nkoransa accounts claim that Baffo Pim was the son of Adu Donyina. (See Boateng, op.cit, pp.11 and 26). Such a claim contradicts the popular assertion that Baffo was the son of the Asantehene, an assertion which is also recorded in the tradition of Takyiman. (See Warren and Brempong op.cit, p.131). It must also be pointed out that if the marital arrangement of which Baffo was an offspring took place after Osei-Tutu's defeat of Amakom, then Baffo might have been born after the migrants had left their original home. He might therefore have joined the migrants at Soaduro (Swedru) several years later as asserted by Meyerowitz, (See Meyerowitz, Early History, p.20).
29. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 8/12/95.
30. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 8/12/95: Also see The Omanhene of Wenchi, "The Three Old Men of Nkoranza," in The Gold Coast Review, Vol.4, 1928 pp.120 and 121.
31. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.4.

32. James Anquandah, Rediscovering Ghana's Past, (Sedco, Longman, 1982) p.96: E. Effah Gyamfi, "Aspects of the Archaeology and Oral Tradition of the Bono State," Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol.XV(ii), 1974, p.222.
33. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.4.
34. Wilks, "The Northern Factor," p.25.
35. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.4.
36. Wilks, "The Northern Factor," p.32: E.A. Agyeman, "Gyaman - Its Relations with Ashanti, 1720-1820." Unpublished M.A. Thesis, (Balme Library, Legon 1965) pp.36 and 37.
37. Boateng, op.cit, p.12: Meyerowitz, Early History, p.200.
38. Boateng, op.cit, p.11.
39. Meyerowitz, Early History, p.201.
40. There might not actually have been daily invitations. The account only indicates that Baffo was invited quite often.
41. Warren and Brempong, op.cit, pp.42 and 43.
42. Ibid, p.148: Kwaku Effah Gyamfi, Traditional History of the Bono State: An Archaeological Approach, (I.A.S., Legon, 1979), p.44.
43. C.C. Reindorf, The History of the Gold Coast and Asante, (Accra, 1966) pp.72 and 73.
44. Agyeman, op.cit, p.37.

45. T.C. Mc Caskie, "The Asante Empire and Its Northern Neighbours, 1700-1874," Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Balme Library, Leon, 1969) p.6.
46. Meyerowitz, Early History, p.202.
47. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 8/12/95: Boateng, op.cit, p.12a: Reindorf, op.cit, p.72: Ward, op.cit, p.137: T.E. Bowdich, Mission From Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, (London, 1819), p.234.
48. Warren and Brempong, op.cit, pp.21 and 48: K. Ansah Yamoah, The Traditions of Atebubu, Abease and Kwame Danso (Dwan), (I.A.S., Legon, 1966) p.32, Omanhene of Wenchi, op.cit, p.122, Omanhene of Nkoransa; 8/12/95: J.K. Fynn, "The Structure of Greater Ashanti: Another View," Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol.XV (i) pp.14 and 15.
49. Interview with Opanin Kwaku Lamtey, Regent of Baafi Stool, Baafi, 22/11/95.
50. Boateng, op.cit, p.14: Yamoah, op.cit, p.32: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," pp.4 and 5.
51. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.4
52. Fynn, "Asante and Its Neighbours," pp.43-48.
53. Boateng, op.cit, p.14: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," pp.4 and 5.
54. Effa Gyamfi, Traditional History of the Bono, pp.56-61.
55. Effah Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology," p.225.
56. Ibid., p.226.

57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., : Warren and Brempong, op.cit, p.20: Boateng, op.cit, p.13.
60. Effa Gyamfi, "Aspects of Archaeology," p.225.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.11.
64. Effah Gyamfi, Traditional History of the Bonc, p.61.
65. Meyerowitz, Early History, p.203.
66. Effah Gyamfi, Traditional History of the Bonc, p.54.
67. Ibid.
68. By the middle of the eighteenth century, firearms imported from Europe had spread deeper into the Gold Coast interior and this contributed immensely to the rise, consolidation and expansion of inland states such as Asante. The main type of weapon imported at the time was the musket which, with its superior performance over any locally made weapon, marked the introduction of a new military technology in local warfare. (R.A. Kea, "Firearms and Warfare on the Gold and Slave Coasts From the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries," J.A.H.,XII (2) 1971, p.207). The musket, generally, had a longer range and was considered by some local users on the Gold Coast as the best and most useful of their weapons (Ibid. pp.187 and 191). Since

musketeers had emerged as the principal military units in the Gold Coast in the late seventeenth century and during the first quarter of the eighteenth century (Ibid., p.208), large quantities of muskets were imported into the Gold Coast throughout the eighteenth century to meet the growing local demand for them. (B.A. Ogot (ed.) UNESCO General History of Africa V. (Paris 1992) See article by Adu-Boahen, "The States and Cultures of the lower Guinean Coast." p.409).

By the 1740's one Asante military unit numbered as many as 5,000 musketeers (Kea, op.cit., p.201). Asante military prowess during the eighteenth century, was thus, based on superior weapons. The Asante deprived the states to its north, through severe restrictions, of the latest high performance weapons and were, therefore, able to dominate those states militarily and politically. (Kea, op.cit., p.201, also see Bowdich, op.cit., p.235). Compare with the relative difficulty faced by the Asante in a 1764 attempt to subdue the rebellious Gyaman who had also acquired muskets. Joseph Dupuis, Journal of a Residence in Ashantee (London, 1824, p.24).

69. Daaku, op.cit., p.12.

70. Bowdich, op.cit., p.235.

71. Larry Yarak, "Elmina and Greater Asante in the Nineteenth Century," Seminar paper (Institute of African Studies, Legon). n.d. p.11.
72. G. Tranakides "Observations on the History of Some Gold Coast Peoples," Transactions of the Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society, Vol.1, 1952-55, p.37.
73. Yamoah, op.cit., p.31
74. Boateng, op.cit., p.24.
75. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 8/12/95.
76. Tranakides, op.cit., p.37: Yamoah, op.cit., p.31.
77. Boateng, op.cit., pp.31, 42, 46.
78. Interview with: Nana Asare Akomea, Jemahene; 16/7/95; Mr. Kwarteng Amaning, a royal of Dawadawa, 28/8/95; Nana Kwabena Asare, Ex-chief of Kunso, Kunso, 9/3/96. Nana Kwaku Koranteng II, Kunsohene 10/3/96. Nana Kwabena Asare states that Kunso and Dawadawa were in very close contact on security matters. He asserts that the close relationship between the two places has survived up to today.
79. According to Nana Asare Akomea, the Jema stool is referred to as Akomea Adwa ('Akomea Stool'), named after the first occupant and leader of the first Asante settlers at Jema).
80. R.S. Rattray, op.cit.: K.A. Busia, The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti, (London, 1951): Also see Dennis M. Warren, The Akan of

- Ghana, (Accra, 1986): Ernest E. Obeng, Ancient Ashanti Chiefaincy, (Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1986).
81. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 25/8/95.
 82. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 25/8/95. Interview with Nana Yaa Duda II, Nkoransahemaa (Queenmother of Nkoransah), 25/8/95. In attendance were Nana Amma Boahemaa and Nana Kofi Bafo, elders of the Queen-mother's palace.
 83. Boateng, op.cit., p.8. The core of the Asante Union was similarly constituted to ensure a stronger and closely knit central authority. See Adu Boahen et al., Topics in West African History (2nd ed, Longman, 1986) p.57: Also see S.F. Affrifah, "Akyem, C1700-1874: A Study in Interstate Relations in pre-Colonial Gold Coast." (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of London, 1976). p.32. Affrifah discusses the importance of Asona family connections to the building of a strong basis for Akyem government.
 84. Boateng, op.cit., p.50: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.3.
 85. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 25/8/95.
 86. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.3.
 87. This impression was gathered from the responses of almost all the informants interviewed by the writer. (See Note 4). The notion is also evident in the recorded tradition of Nkoransa. See Boateng, op.cit., passim.

88. Boateng, op.cit., p.4.
89. Ibid., p.40.
90. Ibid., p.21.
- 91, Ibid., p.40.
92. Theoretically, the political administration of Nkoransa was decentralised but, in practice, it was highly centralised when compared with the Asante government or that of Gyaman. See Emmanuel Terrey, "The Political Economy of the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman," Research Review, Vol.12, No.1, (I.A.S. Legon, 1980), p.1.
93. Rattray, op.cit., p.93.
94. Boateng, op.cit., p.38.
95. Wilfred Owen Jnr., Field Notes, Asante Collective Biography Project (March, 1971).
96. Busia, op.cit., p.17.
97. This oath refers to the trapping of the great warrior chief of the state, Nana Effa Guakro Panin, behind a rocky cave in a battle with the Banda during the early 1800's. Efforts by the Nkoransa army to rescue their chief proved unsuccessful. The great chief lost his life in that war or battle and the state suffered heavy casualties in spite of an eventual victory. Boo Akyi is therefore, an oath founded on this tragic incident. The oath means "behind a rock" in Akan. Boo means "rock" and akyi, "behind".

CHAPTER THREE

NKORANSA'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS: 1720'S-1874

A. Introduction

For a greater part of the eighteenth century and the whole of the nineteenth, Nkoransa's external relations were with its co-septentrional¹ provinces of Asante. These relations were, generally conducted within the framework of Asante's imperial policy towards its subject states in its hinterland.

From the 1720's to the early decades of the nineteenth century, Nkoransa's dealings with its northern and western neighbours were characterised by frequent conflicts. These conflicts arose mainly because Nkoransa acted as the main instrument for advancing the northward expansion of Asante. Resistance by other states to conquest often led to war between them and Nkoransa. Between 1726 and 1744, Nkoransa became the mounting stage for Asante campaigns against the goldfields of Banda and Gyaman as well as eastern Gonja, Krakye and Dagomba.²

Throughout the period, Nkoransa maintained very close ties with Asante. The relationship between Nkoransa and Asante

was not one that involved two partners of equal status. Rather, it was a subordinate-superordinate affair, Nkoransa being definitely the subordinate.

Relations between Nkoransa and its eastern neighbours, unlike those with its northern and western neighbours were friendly and entirely free from conflict up to 1874. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, Nkoransa was drawn into an anti-Asante defensive alliance initiated by its friendly eastern neighbours.

B. Initial Trends in Nkoransa's External Relations 1722/23-1750

Between 1722/23, when Asante conquered Bono-Takyiman, and 1750 the area to the north-west of Asante was thrown into turbulence as the various states in the area became involved in violent struggles. The struggles reflected a change *in* the balance of power in the north-west and the movements of peoples set in motion by the Asante invasion.³ It is in this confused and uncertain state of affairs that the relatively new state of Nkoransa began to conduct its own external policies.

While the first ruler of Nkoransa, Baffo Pim, was consolidating his position and that of his state he was at the same time expanding his territory northwards. The

policy of territorial expansion involved Nkoransa in several wars with her northern neighbours. According to local traditions, Baffo Pim embarked on campaigns against the Banda, Bote, (near Salaga), a Gonja town in the Mangkpa division and the Wromas (probably Grushi).⁴ The tradition adds that these were fought in order to get people to build the state. The expeditions were undertaken soon after the defeat of Takyiman. They appear to have been small scale affairs undertaken against localised opposition. For instance Baffo, according to Hobbs, made war on the "Yabums" and "Bottes" who lived south of the Black Volta because "they refused to recognize his overlordship."⁵ Presumably, this war relates to the wars on western Gonja initiated by Nkoransa, as recorded by Jack Goody.⁶

One of the fundamental factors underlying the series of conflicts between Nkoransa and Banda beginning from the 1720's was rivalry over the control over the area in which the important commercial centre of Kintampo was situated. The struggle for this territory was a recurrent feature in the relations between the two states down to about the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. The exercise of control over the area alternated between Nkoransa and Banda depending on the relative strength of the two states and the general political situation prevailing in the north-west at any particular time.⁷ For instance, after the Takyiman war,

Nkoransa drove the Banda to the Wenchi area. The Banda returned shortly afterwards to recover their lands but were driven back. After the Gyaman war of 1818-19, Banda overran the Kintampo area and regained control over the territory. Nkoransa again took control of the disputed territory when the Banda went into exile in Buna towards the end of Osei Bonsu's reign (1800-1824).

Between 1732 and 1750, the region embracing Kintampo, Banda, Bonduku and Buna was engulfed in a series of wars. Almost all of these wars took place during the reign of Opoku Ware, prior to the establishment of effective Asante control over the main centres of power in the region of the north and north-west. The wars were essentially a struggle for power between the Gonja and their main southern neighbours, Nkoransa, Banda and Abron, (Gyaman). By 1740 the last three states had all fallen under the sway of Asante. Gonja, however, remained outside Asante sphere of influence until 1744 when Asante carried out an invasion of eastern Gonja and Dagomba.²

Before 1740 Nkoransa formulated her policies towards its neighbours, quite independently. From 1740 the accelerated process of Asante's northward expansion largely determined the direction of Nkoransa's external relations.

In 1740 Nkoransa joined Asante in the invasion of Gyaman. Nkoransa's involvement in this campaign stemmed from its obligation to contribute a contingent to join the Asante in their military expeditions. This was in line with Asante imperial policy of levying contingents on subject states whenever she undertook foreign campaigns. In this war Asante defeated Gyaman.

After the defeat of Gyaman in 1740, the Asante replaced its ruler Abo Kofi, of the Yakase dynastic segment, with Kofi Sono of the rival Zanzan segment. The alternation of succession between these two dynastic segments had been designed to encourage wider participation in the political field in Gyaman. At the same time it provided a tool in the hands of outside powers to manipulate the system.³ During the later half of the 1740's the new ruler of Gyaman, Kofi Sono, was very active in the north-west. He embarked on military campaigns against states which he regarded as dangerous neighbours. Between 1748 and 1750, for instance, he made war on Gonja and Buna.⁴

In 1748 or 1749 Nkoransa was attacked by Kofi Sono. The proximate cause of the attack was the alleged killing of the brother of Kofi Sono's father "among the farms of Gwo" by the Nkoransa.⁵ That attack on Nkoransa was undertaken jointly with the Weila. Obviously, the attack was a

retaliatory action taken against Nkoransa for its involvement in the invasion of Gyaman in 1740 as well as a pre-emptive strike against a potentially powerful enemy who was an ally of Asante. The Kofi Sono attack was unsuccessful as a result of the two pronged attack the Nkoransa and Gonja launched against him. The Nkoransa counter attacked from their own end while the Gonja mounted strong opposition to prevent Kofi Sono from crossing the Black Volta into their territory. In 1749 one of the powerful war leaders of Gonja, the chief of Busunu, routed the forces of Kofi Sono and his allies many of whom fled to Dagonguraga (probably Mamprusi).¹²

As already indicated,¹³ Nkoransa territory had been used as a base by Asante in carrying out an attack on Banda in order to take control of the goldfields of Banda.¹⁴ From that time Nkoransa's relations with Banda became strained and remained as such almost throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this period, the cunning diplomacy of the Asante led to several conflicts between Nkoransa and Banda. Traditional accounts in Nkoransa assert that the state was drawn into all her major wars with Banda through Asante machinations.¹⁵ Both Nkoransa and Banda were subject states as well as close allies of Asante. The two subject states were obliged to give military support to their suzerain in its military campaigns. Significantly, however, Asante

avoided bringing its two allies together, probably, to prevent them from forming a solid power block in the north-west. Rather, it preferred to deal individually with them. Such a policy was, perhaps, necessary for Asante to be able to maintain its hold on both states.

Nkoransa maintained friendly relations with the Degha (Mo), to its north-west from the first half of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century. In a way, Degha was tributary to Nkoransa. It served the Asantehene but, it did so through the Ankobea division of Nkoransa. This meant that the chief of Degha did not even have direct access to the Nkoransahene, but through a divisional chief. This relationship started in the reign of Asantehene Opoku Ware who first made Baffo Pim responsible for the collection of tribute in the area of the southern tip of the Grushie wedge.¹⁶

Unlike its northern and western neighbours, Nkoransa's eastern neighbours maintained very cordial relationships with her. Atebubu, for example, occupied a most favoured position in Nkoransa's external relations.¹⁷ There were close links between these two states which occupied analogous positions in their respective areas - the north-west and the north-east. A saying in Atebubu illustrates the closeness of the relations between the two states.

According to the saying, 'Ayefade' (indemnity against a man who committed adultery with another man's wife) did not exist between the Nkoransa and the Atebubu.¹⁸ The tradition further states that this friendship dates back to the time Atebubu helped Nkoransa in a campaign during which the Nkoransahene was trapped behind a rocky cave. Presumably, this was the Nkoransa-Banda war in which the Nkoransahene, Guakro Effa Panin lost his life.¹⁹ This war appears to have been fought during the early 1800's.

Dwan tradition also speaks of a loose federation between her, Atebubu, Nkoransa and Kwahu. The tradition claims that this friendship evolved out of the common allegiance all these states owed to Asante and the fact that these states formed one column in the Asante army whenever they fought for the overlord.²⁰ The traditions of Abease²¹ and Prang²² speak of cordial relations between Nkoransa and the eastern Brong states. A common Asante origin, in the case of Nkoransa and Atebubu, and a common allegiance to Asante, thus, formed the basis of friendly relations between Nkoransa and its eastern neighbours.

Relations between Nkoransa and Asante began as a politically expedient alliance struck, between Opoku Ware and Baffo Pim, to pursue their common political and economic interests in the Bono area. Initially, the status of the partners in the

alliance approached parity. As Asante power increased, the nature of the relations altered and Nkoransa became subordinate to Asante. Nevertheless Nkoransa continued to be regarded by Asante as a respected subject state in the north-west.

The fundamental factor underlying the close links between Nkoransa and Asante was filial bond. Baffo Pim and Opoku Ware who were contemporaries and the initiators of the Nkoransa-Asante relations were related by blood ties. As indicated in the previous chapter, Baffo Pim was the son of Osei Tutu who was succeeded by Opoku Ware. At the same time, Opoku Ware was the son of Baffo's maternal uncle. Fully aware of the relationship between them, the alliance the two men forged was founded not only on political expediency but also on the bedrock of blood ties. The grant of a vast territory to Baffo by Opoku Ware should therefore, be seen not only as a recognition of Baffo's contribution to his victory but also a generous grant from 'father' to 'son'. The special relationship between the Nkoransahene and the Asantehene was constantly called into play in the dealings between Nkoransa and Asante and it served as a good matrix for a long lasting alliance.

C. Nkoransa's External Relations
Between 1750 and 1800

In the course of the second half of the eighteenth century, Nkoransa became involved in a war between Banda and Asante. During the same period Nkoransa rebelled against Asante. According to Dadiesoaba and Offuman stool histories the Asante waged a war against a Banda chief called Sakyi, known to the Asante as Worosa.²³ The stool histories mentioned say that Worosa, the Banda King, a contemporary of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo (1764-1777), began to seize and kill Asante traders in his territory. These acts indicate a rebellion on the part of Worosa. At any rate, prior to the killings the Bandahene had announced his intention not to serve Asante any longer.³⁴ The behaviour of the Bandahene was allegedly reported to the Asantehene by the Nkoransahene Kofi Budu.²⁵ Nkoransa became involved in the Banda-Asante war which broke out as a result of the maltreatment of the Asante traders. Nkoransa was fulfilling her vassal role of fighting for Asante in her foreign wars.

The traditions have it that the Nkoransa could not "withstand" the fire power of Worosa, King of Banda.²⁶ The Nkoransa therefore retreated in desperation, their chief, Kofi Budu, being killed in the process. It was then that Osei Kwadwo sent reinforcement under the command of the

Dadiesoabahene, Atobra Kwasi. Atobra defeated and decapitated Worosa in an encounter in which the Asante army lost about one thousand men²⁷

One writer places the "serious war" with Banda in 1770.²⁸ The writer, T.C. Mc Caskie, claims that it was in this war that Nkoransahene, Guakro Effa I was killed.²⁹ There is the tendency for some writers to confuse the sequence of events in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century history of Nkoransa. Mc Caskie is one such writer. He claims that Guakro Effa was killed in an Asante-Banda war during the reign of Osei Kwadwo which ended in 1777.³⁰ In contrast Ivor Wilks associates the death of the same chief with the central Gonja war which was fought early in the reign of Asantehene Osei Bonsu (1801-1824).³¹ Traditional accounts, however, suggest that the Banda war in which Nana Guakro Effa lost his life was fought around the 1800's for, Nkoransa chronology indicates that Nana Guakro Effa did not die earlier than 1800. (See appendix B). One defect of Mc Caskie's claim is that Nana Guakro Effa I was not the contemporary of Osei Kwadwo during whose reign he says that Nkoransahene died. The contemporary of Osei Kwadwo was the third Nkoransahene, Nana Wiafe Akenten (c.1763-1780). Ivor Wilks' date of 1801 or 1802 for the death of Nana Guakro Effa I is not far from correct even though the Nkoransahene might not have died in a war with the Gonja as he asserts.³²

Towards the end of the eighteenth century there was a general reduction in the conflicts among the northern provinces of Asante. This situation may be partly attributed to the relatively quiet reign of Asantehene Osei Kwame (c.1777-1798). But Nkoransa as well as Banda revolted against their overlord.³³ The rebellion by the Nkoransa, which was crushed by Odumata or Adumata, Adumhene of Kumase assisted by Gyaman auxiliaries,³⁴ is probably what is recorded in Takyiman tradition. According to the tradition, Nkoransahene Wiafe Akenten (c.1763-1780) rebelled against Asante. It is claimed by this tradition that Takyiman played a leading role in suppressing the revolt. The revolt which according to Takyiman tradition resulted in the death of Wiafe Akenten might have occurred about 1780 for, Nkoransa tradition indicates that, that chief died around 1780. (See appendix A). The Takyiman saw the Nkoransa rebellion as a golden opportunity to take a sweet revenge on Nkoransa who allegedly sold them out to the Asante. On this point, the Takyiman tradition states thus:

The Nkoransa-Asante war brought
revenge for Techiman. Nkoransa lost
his (sic) war as Techiman had lost to
Kumasi during the time of Baffo Pim.³⁵

The Takyiman claim to have captured Nkoransahene Wiafe and kept him prisoner in Takyiman pending the arrival of the Asantehene's messengers from Kumase: Wiafe, however, blew

himself up with gun powder, clandestinely supplied him by his attendants before the arrival of the messenger from Kumase. This is not mentioned in Nkoransa tradition. The Takyiman tradition seems to confirm Bowdich's account of an Nkoransa rebellion since the Nkoransahene Wiafe Akenten was for a time a contemporary of Asantehene Osei Kwame during whose reign the rebellion occurred.³⁶ The last three years of Wiafe Akenten (c.1763-1780), if Nkoransa traditional chronology is used, coincided with the early years of Osei Kwame's reign, (c.1777-1798).

D. The Foreign Relations of Nkoransa 1800-1874

During the first three quarters of the nineteenth century Nkoransa became involved in conflicts with the Gonja, the Gyaman and the Banda. She also began to take part in Asante campaigns against the coastal states as well as the British.

In about 1802 Nkoransa joined Asante in a war against central Gonja. This war formed part of a series of conflicts which took place among the major states of the north-west, Nkoransa, Gyaman, Banda and Gonja between 1800 and 1802. These conflicts broke out following the destoolment of Asantehene Osei Kwame in 1798-99 and the death of his successor Osei Opoku II not long after he had been enstooled. The two events immediately sparked off rebellions in Gyaman, strongly supported by Kong and Gonja.

Nkoransa, however, did not rebel. The north-west was thrown into such confusion between 1800 and 1802 that it is difficult to determine the alignment of states in the struggles. It seems however that Nkoransa and others such as the Zanzan dynastic segment of Gyaman, Nsawkaw, Wenchi and Banda sided with Asante against Bole, Buna, and Kong who were allied with Daboya, Gbuipe and the Yakase segment of Gyaman.³⁷

Nkoransa became involved in the war with Gonja (1802) when the rulers of Gbuipe and Daboya threatened to attack her after they had invaded and sacked the capital of Banda. Ivor Wilks has indicated that the threatened attack on Nkoransa following the invasion of Banda - these two states had close ties with Asante - were attempts by the Gonja to restore Osei Kwame to the golden stool.³⁸

Wilks associated the death of the eighth Nkoransahene Guakro Effa with the central Gonja war. He says that Guakro Effa was killed when he led his forces out to meet the invaders.³⁹ Nkoransa tradition, however, asserts that the chief was killed in a war with the Banda. The sacred oath of the Nkoransa is founded on this tragic event. (See Chapter 2). The chief may not have been killed in this particular war as Wilks states, but in a related struggle with the Banda which probably took place around the same time. The central Gonja

war is, presumably, related to the Bote wars frequently mentioned in Nkoransa tradition.⁴⁰ The crushing defeat of the Gonja by the Nkoransa army supported by a large Asante force⁴¹ is probably, what earned the Nkoransa warrior chief the epithet "Effa Guakro" and "Effa-a-oboo-Bote-man," (Effa the Destroyer-of-Bote")⁴²

A contemporary account by one Abu Bekr es Siddik, who was captured by the Gyaman in a war with Buna in 1805, seems to clear much of the confusion surrounding the death of Guakro Effa. One version of the account⁴³ mentions "the death of Afwa, Sultan of Banda or Inkoransa,"⁴⁴ prior to the Gyaman attack on Buna. Another attributes the killing of this Nkoransa chief to Adinkera of the Yakasse segment of Gyaman.⁴⁵ The struggles in which the chief in question was killed all occurred during the first two years, or so, of the reign of the Asante-hene Osei Bonsu (c.1800-1824) and, Guakro Effa was, for some time before his death a contemporary of Osei Bonsu. It is reasonable to assume that the "Afwa" of Abu Bekr refers to Effa Guakro. This writer is of the view that Nana Guakro Effah I was killed in a war with Banda during the violent struggles which engulfed the whole of the north west in 1802. The turbulence of that year was followed by a five-year period of absolute peace. The next conflict in which Nkoransa became involved when the period of peace was interrupted was the 1807 Asante war with

Assin Atandansu and Fante in Southern Ghana. Obviously, the contemporary account of Effah's death by Abu Bekr as Siddik was recorded before his capture in 1805. Dupuis' account of developments in the north-west during the early nineteenth century indicates that after 1802, Nkoransa did not fight against any of the major north-western states until she joined Asante in a war against Gyaman in 1818-19. It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that Guakro Effah died in 1802.

Abu Bekr's account closely ties in with the Nkoransa tradition. Significantly, none of the versions of Abu Bekr's account associates the death of the king with a war between Nkoransa and Gonja, a northern neighbour of Nkoransa. The king was certainly killed in a war with one of its western neighbours, most probably Banda with whom Nkoransa was in frequent conflict.

The cause of this particular Nkoransa-Banda war, as stated by Nkoransa tradition, underscores the overriding influence of Asante in determining inter-state relations among its subject states. Nkoransa tradition claims that by the nineteenth century Nkoransa had become a strong power in the north-west. According to the tradition, Asante became afraid of the growing power of Nkoransa and resorted to some underhand moves to weaken or even destroy it. For instance,

Nkoransa was asked by Asante to attack Banda. Once Nkoransa launched the attack, Asante turned round and asked Wenchi and Nsawkaw to change sides and help Banda to defeat Nkoransa.⁴⁷

The Asante attitude is illustrative of the diplomatic cunning by which they maintained their political power and influence over their subject states. This issue is discussed elsewhere in this chapter in relation to Nkoransa-Banda relations. (See pp.112 and 113). Generally, however, Nkoransa proved quite indispensable to Asante for three main reasons. Firstly, Nkoransa on the whole was a dependable ally in the north-west. Secondly, Nkoransa played the role of a watchdog in the north while the Asante consolidated their own position during the reign of Opoku Ware. Thirdly and finally, Nkoransa served as a powerful buffer between Asante and other northern powers such as Gonja, the Brong of Abease and Atebubu and Mo.⁴⁸

Relations with Banda were a major concern of Nkoransa. Relations were generally strained. The conflict started during the very early years of the creation of Nkoransa in the 1720's. As Nkoransa expanded northwards the Kintampo area seems to have been the source of conflict between her and Banda as the two states struggled over its control. After a long tussle, Banda appears to have gained control

over a large area to the east of its territory, including Kintampo by the early 1820's. Joseph Dupuis in 1824 observed that Banda overran many areas after the Asante subjugation of Gyaman in 1819 and established a "frontier upon the river"⁴³ (i.e. The Black Volta river).⁵⁰ During the central Gonja war of 1802, Nkoransa and Asante forces drove the Gonja, who had been living south of the Black Volta, across the river. The river, thus, became the northern boundary of Nkoransa territory. Dupuis' account of the Banda establishing a "frontier upon the river," therefore, indicates a take over of parts of Nkoransa's territory up to the southern bank of the Black Volta. The Banda achievement was at the expense of Nkoransa and Gonja.⁵¹ Dupuis referred to Kintampo as being in Banda⁵² and even the capital of that state.⁵³ Nkoransa however seems to have regained control over Kintampo towards the middle 1820's when the Banda went into exile in Buna.⁵⁴ The Banda were accused of cowardice by Asante following a campaign against Gyaman. The Banda were fined heavily for this but they refused to pay and left their home for exile in Buna.

Nkoransa also became involved in Asante wars in the south in the nineteenth century. In 1807, Nkoransa, as well as other northern provinces were called upon to contribute contingents to support an Asante expedition against Assin Atandansu and Fante. The involvement of Nkoransa in the

conflicts between Asante and the coastal states supported by the British introduced a new element into Nkoransa-Asante relations. Nkoransa's campaigns became a very important index in determining its rank among all the various states which formed the Asante empire. This was particularly so when Nkoransa itself derived very little benefit, if any, from campaigns against such distant enemies. Generally, the contribution of a state to the war effort of Asante was an important criterion for determining its status in Asante scheme of things.

From all indications Nkoransa played a very prominent role in the 1807 and subsequent Asante campaigns against its southern neighbours. For example Nkoransa's force in the Asante war with Fante was about 10,000 soldiers.⁵⁵ Nkoransa did not contribute for specific campaigns, rather, it was given a permanent place in the Asante national army.⁵⁶ Nkoransa was thus, regarded as a province which was almost equal in status with metropolitan Asante states. The state was assigned to the Nifa division.⁵⁷ In the 1826 Akantamansu war the Nkoransahene was a general.⁵⁸ This suggests that the Nkoransa army had distinguished itself in the 1806/07 campaign in the south.

Events following the participation of Nkoransa forces in the Akantamansu war revealed the changing re-actions in Nkoransa

to the nature of M'boransa-Asante relations. According to the traditional history of M'boransa, Nana Owusu Ansa who led the M'boransa forces to the Abertamanu war failed to return to M'boransa long after the war had ended. The tradition says that he was deserted by his bodyguards and was taken prisoner. "He remained at the Denkyira court for seven years after which he returned to Kumasi." During the absence of Owusu Ansa he was replaced by a young boy, Ata Teta (Atta Fa), after he (Owusu Ansa), had been given up for dead and his funeral had been celebrated." When Owusu Ansa returned to M'boransa the elders refused to restore him to the stool in spite of Asante intervention." The refusal of the elders of M'boransa to restore Owusu Ansa to the stool despite Asante pleas on his behalf indicates that as early as the 1820's there might have been some discontent over M'boransa's continued subjection to Asante. By 1826 the exacting burden of participating in the numerous Asante campaigns was telling on M'boransa's subordination to Asante. Bowdich's figures of 1819¹¹ illustrates M'boransa's onerous military obligations to Asante during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. With the 1818-19 Gyaman war fresh in their minds, the M'boransa might have contemplated participation in the 1826 campaign too expensive and an unreasonable venture. Owusu Ansa embarked on it, probably, against the advice of his elders.

After its participation in the Akantamansu war Nkoransa seems to have adopted a foreign policy devoid of conflicts. The comparative peace which prevailed in the Gold Coast (Ghana) between 1830 and 1860 apparently contributed to this situation.⁶³

E. Nkoransa-Asante Relations: Widened Scope

In the course of the nineteenth century, ties between Nkoransa and Asante strengthened progressively. These ties became particularly strong during the reign of Asantehene Kofi Karikari (1867-1874). Within the scope of stronger links, Nkoransa played very active and significant roles in various aspects of Asante national life. As already indicated its military service to Asante was especially notable. Several observers have noted the existence of distinctions in the subject states within peripheral or 'Greater Asante'.⁶⁴ The status of each subject state and the privileges it enjoyed were determined mainly by its contribution towards the success of Asante military campaigns.

Nkoransa is one state which gained a number of privileges and tax exemptions as a result of its close relationship with Kumase.⁶⁵ The Nkoransahene, apart from being exempted from paying tribute, was himself made responsible for the collection of tributes in the Grusi wedge area of the north-

west.⁶⁵ Nkoransa earned other privileges through its "military genius and aptitude."⁶⁶ For example during the early 1870's the Nkoransahene was given one of the senior commands in the Asante army. At the time, "all senior commands ... were apparently assigned to office holders from the metropolitan region."⁶⁷ Apart from distinguished military service on the battlefield, Nkoransa made substantial contributions in terms of men in times of war. In this area it ranked almost equal to the leading Amanto. For instance, the Adansehene could produce only 1,000 men for the 1873-74 war but Nkoransa, Dwaben, Mampon and Bekwae supplied between 10,000 and 15,000 men each.⁶⁸

Nkoransa's status and role in the Asante government was, thus, greatly enhanced by its military achievements. By 1840 at least one observer, T.B. Freeman, considered Nkoransa one of the larger provinces of Asante.⁶⁹ In ranking the larger provinces, Freeman rated Dwaben first and Kokofu Fifth. The other three were Nkoransa, Mampon and Bekwae.⁷⁰ He, in fact, substituted Nkoransa for Nsuta normally the fifth largest state.⁷¹

Agnes Aidoo observes that the assessment of Nkoransa as one of the larger provinces of Asante made it "equal in status to the great Amanto."⁷² It may, however, be suggested that Nkoransa could be regarded as equal to the Amanto only in

terms of its military role in Asante. This role earned it considerable privileges but at best, it could be described as the "leading inner province," for, it was strictly regarded as an inner province⁷³ and never a metropolitan state, though it shared most of the qualifications of the latter.

Nkoransa exercised considerable influence on the internal politics of Kumase. During the reign of Asantehene Kofi Karikari, the Nkoransahene Guakro Effa II, widely known as Ata Fa, was very influential in the Asantehene's councils "and demonstrated great ability and skill on the battlefield."⁷⁴ In recognition of Ata Fa's distinguished services, Karikari conferred court honours on him. The decorations included gold sandals, state umbrella and other articles which, when made in gold, were, under Asante custom normally beyond the rank of Nkoransa.⁷⁵ According to the Omanhene of Nkoransa one of the tunes performed by the hornblowers of his state on important occasions recalls the honours conferred on the Nkoransahene by Kofi Karikari. The tune goes:

Hwan na ode maa me?
Kofi Karikari na ode maa me.
Hwan na ode maa me?
Ohene Karikari na ode maa me.

It translates thus:

Who gave it to me?
Kofi Karikari gave it to me:
Who gave it to me?
King Karikari gave it to me.⁷⁷

In August 1875 Asantehene Mensa Bonsu convened an extraordinary session of Asanteman Nhyiamu (Asante National Assembly), to discuss a national emergency situation involving Dwaben. Six leading states joined the Kumase Nsafohene to deliberate on the matter. Nkoransa was one of the six key states which took part in these important deliberations. All the remaining five states - Mampon, Bekwae, Kokofu, Agona and Asumenya - were metropolitan Asante states.⁷⁸ The Asanteman Nhyiamu, whose meetings the Nkoransahene attended was the highest decision-making body in Asante.⁷⁹

Nkoransa's influence was not only felt in the internal politics of Kumase but also in the area of Asante diplomacy. In 1876, for instance the Nkoransahene was on a high-powered delegation sent to Cape Coast, by the Asantehene to inform Governor Lees of a decree passed in Kumase to abolish human sacrifice.⁸⁰

Thus, in the course of the nineteenth century, Nkoransa-Asante relations became stronger and closer. The strengthened ties resulted largely from Nkoransa's

outstanding military contributions toward the aggrandisement of the Asante empire. As a result of the important role played by the Nkoransahene in both the internal politics of Kumase and Asante diplomacy, Nkoransa's status within the structural set up of the Asante empire became greatly enhanced in the course of the nineteenth century. By 1874 the position of Nkoransa had almost changed from one of a tributary to a great metropolitan Asante state.

CHAPTER THREE

NOTES

1. Ivor Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century, (Cambridge, 1975), p.54. Wilks refers to Asante's subject states to its north as 'Septentrional' provinces and those to its south as 'meridional' provinces. Wilks' use of the two terms is appropriate for the description of the Asante empire during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
2. T.C. Mc Caskie, "The Reality of Asante Power in the North", Seminar Paper, (I.A.S., Legon, 1968) p.2: J.K. Fynn, "The Structure of Greater Ashanti: Another View," Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol.XV(i), 1974, p 15.
3. Jack Goody, "Introduction: Ashanti and the Northwest", Supplement No.1 to Research Review (I.A.S. Legon 1965) pp.13 and 14.
4. C.Y. Boateng, The Oral Traditions of Nkoransa (I.A.S., 1966) p.26.
5. H.J. Hobbs, "History of Nkoransa" The Gold Coast Review, Vol.3, 1927, p.119: Also see the same author, ADM 11/1302, National Archives of Ghana, Accra.
6. Jack Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.13.

7. Boateng, op.cit., pp.78 and 79: Joseph Dupuis, Journal of a Residence in Asantee, (London, 1924) p.Lii: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.36.
8. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.4: Mc Caskie, "Reality of Asante Power" p.2.
9. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest", p.30.
10. E.A. Agyeman, "Gyaman - Its Relations with Ashanti, 1720-1820", Unpublished M.A. Thesis, (Balme Library, Legon, 1965) p.60.
11. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest", p.19.
12. Ibid., p.19.

Though the exact battleground for these conflicts is not known, there is an indication that they occurred somewhere along the section of the southern bank of the Black Volta river which forms a boundary between Nkoransa and Gonja. See Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.19.

13. Mc Caskie, "Reality of Asante Power, p.2.
14. Fynn, "Greater Ashanti", pp.14 and 15.
15. Several accounts in Nkoransa tradition indicate that the Nkoransa joined forces with Asante in all its campaigns against Banda except the one which Bowdich says took place during Osei Kwame's reign and is denied by Dupuis - (see Bowdich; Mission From Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, (London, 1819) pp.237 and 238 and Dupuis, op.cit p.244). Other accounts state that

Asante sometimes ordered Nkoransa to attack Banda on its behalf as happened in the conflict in which Nkoransahene Guakro Effa I was killed (see Boateng, op.cit, p.43, 52 and 79).

16. T.C. Mc Caskie, "The Asante Empire and Its Northern Neighbours, 1700-1874", Unpublished M.A. Thesis, (Balme Library, Legon, 1969) pp.10 and 11: Aidoo, "Political Crisis and social change in the Asante Kingdom, 1867-1901," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, (U.C.L.A., 1975) pp.135 and 136.
17. According to Atebubu tradition a "strong bond of friendship" has existed between the peoples of Nkoransa and Atebubu for a long time. K. Ansah Yamoah, The Traditions of Atebubu, Abease and Kwame Danso (Dwan), (I.A.S., Legon, 1966) p.10.
18. Ibid., p.10.
19. Ibid., p.10; This war was fought during the early 1800's. 1802 seems the possible date for the war. Nkoransa-Atebubu relations was, probably, established before this time hence, the possibility of Atebubu going to the aid of Nkoransa when the Nkoransa-Banda war broke out.
20. Ibid., p.10.
21. Ibid., p.56.
22. Fordjor, P.K. Prang, Yeji Traditions, (I.A.S., Legon, 1966) p.2.

23. Dadiescaba Stool History (I.A.S., Legon, 1963), AS/12.
Offuman Stool History (I.A.S., Legon, 1966) AS/166.
24. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.27.
25. Dadiescaba Stool History, AS/12.
26. Offuman Stool History, AS/166.
Dadiescaba Stool History, AS/12.
27. Dadiesoaba Stool History, AS/12.
28. Mc Caskie refers to a "serious war" Asante fought with Banda in 1770, during the reign of Osei Kwadwo. See his work "Asante Empire and Its Northern Neighbours," p.22.
29. Ibid., p.60
30. Ibid., p.60: Margaret Priestley and Ivor Wilks, "The Ashanti Kings in the Eighteenth Century: A Revised Chronology," Journal of African History, I,I,(1960), 0.94.
31. Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century, p.255.
32. Ibid.
33. Bowdich, op.cit., pp.237 and 238.
34. Ibid., p.238.
35. D.M. Warren and K.O. Brempong, Techiman Traditional State, Part I: Stool and Town Histories, (I.A.S., Legon, 1971) p.23.
36. Bowdich, op.cit., pp.237 and 238.
37. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.33.
38. Wilks, op.cit., p.255.
39. Ibid., p.255 (citing Dupuis)

40. Boateng, Oral Traditions of Nkoransa, passim.
41. Dupuis, op.cit, p.248.
42. Boateng, op.cit, p.33: The title 'Guakro' also means 'destroyer of towns' in Akan. These appellations are all related to Effa's devastation of the Bote.
43. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.33: This version, according to Goody, is referred to as Renouard's reading: Emmanuel Terrey, "The Political Economy of the Abron Kingdom of Gyaman" Research Review Vol.12, No.1, 'I.A.S. Legon, 1980), p.16.
44. Ibid., p.33.
45. This is an alternative version referred to as Madden's version. Ibid, p.33.
46. Dupuis, op.cit, p.249.
47. Boateng, op.cit, p.79: Also see J. Goody and C.Y. Boateng, "The History and Traditions of Nkoransa," in supplement No.1, 1965, Research, Review, (I.A.S. Legon), p.178.
48. Mc Caskie, "Asante Empire" p.59.
49. Dupuis, op.cit, p.Lii: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.34.
50. Dupuis, op.cit, p.Lii.
51. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.34.
52. Dupuis, op.cit, p.xvc.
53. Ibid, p.CVii.
54. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.36.

55. Bowdich, op.cit., p.317.
56. Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century, pp.73 and 82:
In the Asante Scheme of things, states like Nkoransa, which distinguished themselves in suppressing revolts in others, were rewarded at the expense of the offending state. They also had their status enhanced:
See Kwame Arhin, "The Financing of the Ashanti Expansion (1700-1820)," Draft paper, p.15.
57. Ibid., p.82.
58. Goody and Boateng, "History and Traditions" p.177.
59. Ibid., p.177.
60. Wilfred Owen, Field Notes, Asante Collective Biography Project Prepared in October 1975. (Notes taken in March 1971).
61. Goody and Boateng, "History and Traditions" p.177.
62. Bowdich, op.cit., p.317.
63. Mc Caskie, "Asante Empire" p.IV.
64. Kwame Arhin, "The Structure of Greater Ashanti," Journal of African History VIII, 1 (1967) pp.76-78:
Aidoo, Agnes A., "Political Crisis and Social Change in the Asante Kingdom, 1867-1901", Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, U.C.L.A., 1975, pp.122 and 123.
65. Aidoo, "Political Crisis" p.123: Wilks, op.cit., p.74.
66. Mc Caskie, "Asante Empire" pp.10 and 11: Bowdich, op.cit., p.321: Dupuis, op.cit., p.xxxii.
67. Aidoo, "Political Crisis" p.123.

68. Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century, p.73.
69. Aidoo, "Political Crisis", pp.314 and 315.
70. Ibid., p.123.
71. Wilks, op.cit, p.113.
72. Ibid., p.95. Though Nkoransa was a province, the distinction between her status and that of the metropolitan Asante states was blurred, during the nineteenth century, by the state's active involvement in the internal and external affairs of Asante. Nkoransa's incorporation into Central Asante seemed so advanced in the 1840's that she appeared as one of the leading Asante states (Amanto) to Freeman.
73. Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.123.
74. In the classification of the states of the Asante empire, Aman or Amanto refers to the core of the Asante Kingdom. The five leading aman; Dwaben, Mampon, Nsuta, Kokofu and Bekwae together with Kumase and the lesser central Asante districts formed metropolitan Asante. The status of various subject states of Asante depended on the political and administrative distance they maintained with Kumase. States which constantly felt the impact of the Kumase administration and were obliged to contribute military contingents to support Asante war efforts were recognized as 'provinces'. Others which only paid tribute and maintained tenuous contacts with Kumase were 'protectorates' or

'tributaries.' In broad terms, 'Inner Provinces' maintained closer ties with Kumase than 'Outer Provinces.' (see detailed discussion on the classification in Wilks, op.cit, pp.47-114: Arhin, "Structure of Greater Ashanti," pp.68, 69, 76-85: Dupuis, op.cit, pp.xxvi, xxvii, and civ Bowdich, op.cit, pp.317-: Fynn, "The structure of Greater Ashanti," p.2).

75. Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.204
76. Wilks, op.cit, p.77.
77. Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 23/8/95: In attendance was Nana Kwadwo Kontor, Nkonwasofoohene (chief stool carrier) of Nkoransa.
78. Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.340 and 341.
79. Ibid., pp.85 and 86.
80. Ibid., p.395.

CHAPTER FOUR

NKORANSA, ASANTE AND THE BRITISH: 1874-1900

A. The Northern States and Vanquished Asante After 1874

In 1874 the British invaded and defeated Asante. The event ultimately had a revolutionary effect on Nkoransa's relations with Kumase. Of all the hinterland states and peoples, only the Nkoransa did not rebel immediately against defeated Asante. It remained loyal up to the early 1880's when it took steps towards secession from Asante.

Several states and peoples in the north who rebelled against Asante after its defeat in 1874 were given considerable support by the government of the Gold Coast. British involvement in the subsequent developments of this area significantly altered the content of Nkoransa-Asante relations as well as Nkoransa's dealings with its other neighbours. From 1874 the emphasis on Nkoransa-Asante relations shifted from political expediency to mutual economic well being. This change of emphasis became necessary as a result of certain unfavourable developments,

particularly, in the north-east, which seriously affected the Asante northern trade and, thus, had severe consequences on her economy.

One of the developments which had an adverse effect on Asante northern trade was the blockade, by Atebubu and its Brong allies, of the north-eastern trade route to Salaga, the main outlet of Asante commodities, particularly kola nuts, exported to external markets in Hausaland. The closure was assisted or supported by others such as the rebel chief of Dwaben, Asafo Agyei. For instance, the Brong and Asafo Agyei's messengers maltreated Asante messengers accompanying the French merchant, Bonnat, who was on a mission to Salaga in late 1875.¹

Anticipating a possible Asante military response to their action, the Brong began to seek protection from the Gold Coast colonial authorities by sending gifts of ivory and gold dust to them at the coast.² As a matter of urgent defence, they, under the leadership of the fetish priest of the Dente deity at Krakye, formed a defensive anti-Asante confederation.³ Nkoransa joined this coalition in the 1880's when she also revolted against Asante, though she did not become very active in the confederation until the early 1890's.

In the extreme north-east there were more violent re-actions to the defeat of Asante. In Salaga, Asante's largest market in the north, several Asante resident traders were allegedly massacred and others imprisoned.⁴ According to Jack Goody, these revolts were reportedly at the instigation of the rebellious Dwabenhene who through his allies at Atebubu, controlled the north-eastern route.⁵ It seems, however, that the people of Salaga on their own gave concrete expression to their resentment of the strict Asante control over the town. For in Yendi, where Asante control was less rigid, the Asante residents there were not molested.⁶ As a result of all these developments in the north-east all trade between that area and the south-eastern coast, between Accra and Lome was diverted via the Volta and this meant great loss to Asante in terms of trade revenue.⁷

Kumase also lost control over the trade between The north-west and the south-western coast as direct trade contacts were established between Cape Coast and Bonduku.⁸ Hitherto the Asante had always sought to prevent such contacts in order to maintain their control over the gold supply and the trade in such commodities as salt and weapons.⁹

In the course of 1675 it became increasingly clear that the trade blockade against Asante in the north-east and extreme north-west had been quite effective. Nkoransa therefore

remained the only state in the Asante hinterland which could provide an outlet for Asante commodities, particularly kola nuts, which were exported to external markets in the north.

The successful maintenance of the economic blockade mounted by states in the north-east and north-west was, largely, made possible through diplomatic exchanges between them and the British at the coast. These transactions were conducted through various missions sent into those areas by the British from 1876.¹⁰ In those diplomatic exchanges, the colonial government was not interested in political rule.

Rather:

its concern was to encourage increasing trade between them and the coast, to open new routes which would skirt Ashanti and thus break the monopoly of Ashanti entrepreneurs of the North-south trade which had before 1874, been supported by Ashanti military and political domination of the area.¹¹

The support given by the British to the states to the north of Asante resulted in a significant weakening of Asante's political authority and influence in the area. Consequently, two important centres of power developed in the area. In the north-east was the loose federation of Brong states with its political and spiritual capital at Krakye. A similar role was played in the north-west by the

Kingdom of Gyaman. Within the Gyaman sphere of influence were Takriman, Doma (War), Berehun and Mbesim."

Harmed in by these two power bases was Nkoransa, the only state among the principal polities in the north to maintain its allegiance to Asante after 1874. From 1874 the most important factor which determined the course of Nkoransa's relations with Asante and with her other neighbours was the resolve of Asante to keep its hold on Nkoransa and to regain control over the other northern provinces. Apart from this Asante "policy of reconstruction" or reconquest, the struggle for complete independence by certain states in the north-west and British interference in the affairs of the interior of Ghana were also important factors which determined the nature of Nkoransa's dealings with her neighbours.

Since Nkoransa continued to owe allegiance to Kumasse she showed the willingness to offer assistance to Asante in her troubled years. In 1875, therefore, Nkoransa assisted Asante to establish a large market at Kintampo, in the northern part of Nkoransa territory, making it the "headquarters of the kola nut trade." The Kintampo market was to serve as an alternative to the one at Salaga which had been lost to Asante after her defeat in 1874.

The Kintampo market was originally at Kunso, a village located about twenty nine kilometres to the north-east of Kintampo (See Map 4). Kintampo itself appears to have been an important rest stop on the trade route that led from Asante to the Niger region in the north-west by way of Daboya.¹⁵ Dupuis in 1824 observed that:

The usual tract pursued by the traders from Asantee is to Kantano (Kintampo)... a city a little inferior in size and population to Coomassy itself....¹⁶

Though Dupuis' claim in terms of the size of Kintampo and its population, at the time, seems exaggerated, it indicates the importance of the town as a link in the network of the trade routes which brought Ghana into contact with northern external markets during the early nineteenth century and probably even before the nineteenth century. Enid Schildkrout asserts that, caravans from Mossiland and Hausaland went as far south as Kunase in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and perhaps earlier. Schildkrout mentions Salaga as the primary market in these exchanges and Asante's major northern outpost. Other important towns which were junctions where traders from the savanna and the forest exchanged goods during this early period were Kintampo, Takyiman, Wenchi and Yendi.¹⁷

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the control of Kintampo passed into the hands of the Banda when they overran parts of south-east Gonja and Nkoransa some time after 1819. But, when Nkoransa recovered the town from the Banda a few years later they, probably, pushed the nascent market to Kunso in about the mid-1830's.¹² It is from Kunso that the market was pushed back to Kintampo in 1875.

Kintampo's position as a long-standing rest-stop for merchants who traded south was one of several factors which influenced its choice. T.C. Mc Caskie also gives a number of factors which determined the choice of Kintampo as the place to establish the kola market. According to him limitation of choices after 1874; absence of profound disturbance at Kintampo over a long period, and reasonable ease in the defence of the town all influenced its choice as a suitable centre for a market.¹³

Within a relatively short period Kintampo rose to become a bustling commercial centre. Kwame Arhin observes thus:

Since kola was the trade staple of markets of the Ashanti hinterland and the centre of other exchanges and Kintampo was itself situated in the kola producing district of Nkoransa, as well as having the economic and political patronage of the rest of Ashanti, she outstripped Salaga in commercial importance by 1884.¹⁴

When Brandon Kirby, an official of the government of the Gold Coast visited the town in that year, he reported that it was:

The principal market in this part of Africa.¹¹

He also observed:

traders from Timbuctoo, the country behind Sierra Leone Gaman, Salagha and the interior constitute a population varying from 30,000 to 40,000.¹²

By Kirby's estimates the resident Asante population in the town was 3,000 to 4,000. He further observed that the market was important for ivory and for

Manchester goods, silk thread, cutlery, and brass ware, guns and gunpowder, salt and a small quantity of spirits.¹³

The control of Kintampo was essential to sustain Asante commercial interests against the threat presented by the rebel north-eastern Brong coalition as well as the loss of the market at Salaga in 1875. Economic expediency thus became a recipe for strengthened relations between Nkoransa and Asante after 1874. In the management of the Kintampo market, therefore, the Nkoransahene and the Asantehene cooperated well. They both appointed resident officials to collect tolls and maintain peace and order at the market by

Gyamasehene in occupying Takyiman town. In the ensuing struggle the Takyiman were overwhelmed and their chief Kwabena Fofie, fled to Gyaman. With the assistance of Agyeman, the chief of Gyaman, Kwabena Fofie, attempted to regain his country but without success.²⁶

In the extreme north-west another struggle erupted which threw the area into confusion. Nkoransa felt the reverberations of the struggle which involved the states of Badu, Seikwa, Banda, Nsoko and Gyaman. The conflict which was initially, between Badu and Seikwa eventually came to involve the other states in the area as Banda and Nsoko rallied to the support of Badu while Gyaman threw its weight behind Seikwa. The struggles caused a great deal of displacement of peoples in the area with refugees from Nsoko, Badu and Banda, under pressure from Gyaman, retiring to Longero under the protection of the Nkoransahene.²⁷ To restore order in the area, the Asantehene decided "to send a peace-keeping force of 3,700 soldiers into the north-west in the dry season of 1880-81."²⁸ During the same season in 1881-82, Nkoransa allowed Kumase to use Kintampo as a military base. The camp was, however, established with no other intention than "to make a token show of force,"²⁹ probably to intimidate the aggressive Gyamanhene, Agyeman, in order to prevent him from making further attacks on Banda.³⁰

From the early 1860's Nkoransa's dealing with her non-Asante neighbours became overshadowed by new developments in her relations with Asante. The generally excellent relations which had long existed between Nkoransa and Asante had begun to deteriorate after the mid - 1870's. This development stemmed from the high-handed rule of Mensa Bonsu which adversely affected Nkoransa. The harsh rule of Mensah Bonsu, derived from severe economic difficulties unleashed on the Kumase government as a result of the 1873-74 convulsions.

The 1872-73 Asante campaign in the south and the counter British attack in 1874 had exhausted the king's coffers. Impoverished by a serious short-fall in imperial resources and frustrated by imperial crisis, the Mensa Bonsu regime "resorted to force, extortion and political violence."³¹ Court fines and tolls on goods in transit were increased abnormally.³² The first contributed to the outbreak of revolts in the southern districts of metropolitan Asante while the second aroused disaffection in Nkoransa towards Kumase.³³ From the late 1870's Nkoransa began to quietly drift towards the eastern Brong confederation. Under diplomatic pressures exerted by secessionist leaders in Atebubu and Krakye, Nkoransa assumed a semi-autonomous posture vis-a-vis the Kumase government.³⁴

In re-action to Mensa Bonsu's harsh policies, particularly the extortionate tariffs placed on her goods passing through Asante, Nkoransa closed the great road linking Kumase with the flourishing commercial centre of Kintampo. The road was closed at Kofiase, near Donkro Nkwanta, some seventeen kilometres from Nkoransa, some time in the 1881-1882 period.³⁵ Some Nkoransa traditional accounts attribute the closure of the road to a particular incident involving some Asante traders who showed disrespect to the wife of the Nkoransahene at Kintampo.³⁶ According to the accounts the closure was declared to be very temporary, pending the resolution of the issue.³⁷ This is a modification of an official Gold Coast report describing the successful diversion of trade in Nkoransa through Atebubu, Kwahu and Akwapim. The report, according to Francis Agbodeka, indicates that Nkoransa helped-probably the British - to close the road.³⁸ There are other factors which might have influenced Nkoransa's action. Firstly, the closure was possibly in protest against the several demands made on the Nkoransahene, Ata Fa. For example, Mensa Bonsu insisted on the extradition of certain men in Nkoransa who were wanted for trial in Kumase in connection with certain alleged offences.³⁹ Mensa Bonsu's persistent demands seem to have generated and intensified secessionist agitation in Nkoransa. The situation also appears to have drawn Nkoransa closer to Gyaman which in the early 1880's had become a

'political magnet' for disaffected states as well as the centre for the independence movement in the north-west.⁴¹ When, therefore, the Asantehene continued in his extradition demands on Nkoransa, the Nkoransahene threatened to transfer his allegiance to Gyaman.⁴² This threat came after the Gyaman victory over Banda in 1862. There is no evidence, however, that Nkoransa and Gyaman did take any concrete steps to forge close links between them. Nkoransa kept aloof from the civil wars in Gyaman while the latter showed no inclination to come to the aid of Nkoransa.⁴³

In spite of the threat of secession, Nkoransa was not too keen on severing relations with Asante. The Nkoransahene had indicated that once his grievances were favourably addressed he would restore his allegiance to Kumase.⁴⁴ He, in fact, did so when, during the short reign of Kwaku Dua II, his grievances were redressed in 1884.⁴⁵ The restoration of normal ties between Nkoransa and Asante was achieved, partly, through the intervention of Brandon Kirby, the colonial official who visited Kumase and the interior provinces of Asante from January to April 1884. During Kirby's visit to Nkoransa he held several meetings with the Nkoransahene and his sub-chiefs on the issue of the closure of the road. In the discussions, he impressed on the Nkoransa the desirability and profitability of allowing traders to pass through their territory again. Kirby

The tyranny of Asantehene Mensa Bonsu made many Asante Akenkofo (traders) leave for the coast or migrate to Kintampo in Nkoransa.⁴⁹ By 1884 3,000 to 4,000 Asante traders had taken up residence in Kintampo.⁵⁰ As a result of the presence of these traders, Nkoransa's rubber and gold enterprises flourished.⁵¹ By 1892, traders from the coast had become aware of the rubber-producing potential of Nkoransa and were well involved in its rubber trade⁵²

Though the movement for secession was considerably strong in Nkoransa during the early 1880's, the Nkoransahene, Ata Fa, did not show absolute commitment to the complete severance of relations with Kumase. He, therefore, did not take advantage of the succession crisis and its attendant divisions in metropolitan Asante following the deposition of Mensa Bonsu in 1883 to assert Nkoransa's independence. Rather, he became actively involved in the dispute, strongly supporting his long-standing favourite, the deposed Kofi Karikari, who joined the contest for the golden stool. Other prominent central Asante states which took the same position as Nkoransa were Mampon, Nsuta, Kokofu and Agona. Nkoransa and these states were all advocates of the rights of the states to increased local autonomy which, they argued, were enjoyed under the earlier reign of Kofi Karikari.⁵³ Thus, Ata Fa, apparently preferred enlarged autonomy for Nkoransa to total separation from Asante.

The Kofi Karikari constituency was, however, outmanouevred, first, through the intrigues of a colonial government official, Captain Barrow, and finally by means of a military action of the rival Kwaku Dua faction led by the Akyempemhene of Kumase which led to the killing of several of Karikari's supporters including a leading adherent, the Mamponhene Kwame Adwetewa.⁵⁴ In spite of the failure of Nkoransa's favourite candidate to win the contest for the golden stool, the Nkoransahene expressed his preparedness to remain loyal to Kumase. His continued allegiance to Kumasi apparently stemmed from his desire to see Kintampo continue to play the middleman role in the Asante-Northern kola trade from which he received substantial revenue.

Ata Fa died in 1835 and was succeeded by Kofi Baffo, widely known as Kofi Abamo. Kofi Abamo who ruled for only forty days also favoured continued attachment to Kumase.

By the mid-1830's the movement for secession which had started quietly in Nkoransa politics from the late 1870's⁵⁵ had won substantial support. The next Nkoransahene, Kwasi Opoku Katakyie, (Kwasi Poku) (1835 to c.1838) was, however, not a thorough-bred secessionist. In the Asante political crisis which began in 1834 and culminated in the election of Kwaku Dua III (Prempe I) as Asantehene in 1838, Kwasi Poku refused to declare his support for any of the contestants to

the stool of Asante even though he was one of the important chiefs whose preferences carried weight.⁵⁵

The succession crisis in Kumase and its consequent civil war of 1887-1888 encouraged the Nkoransahene to pursue the path of secession. He steadily canvassed for supporters in Nkoransa who strongly advocated the joining of the Brong coalition.⁵⁷ The growing mood of Nkoransa for secession during the late 1880's foreshadowed a confrontation with the Asante government which refused to recognize Nkoransa's demands for autonomy within the Asanteman.⁵⁸

In 1888, the new Asantehene, Prempeh, had reasons to doubt the allegiance of Nkoransahene Kwasi Poku who had been a consistent supporter of the late Kofi Karikari, and seemed to have had some difficulty in transferring his allegiance to succeeding occupants of the golden stool. Moreover, Nkoransa became closely identified with the northerly metropolitan Asante states of Mampon, Nsuta and Agona who had supported the cause of Prempeh's rival, Yaw Atwereboanna.⁵⁹ Early in 1888, therefore, Prempeh requested the Nkoransahene to 'drink fetish' with him to give proof of his loyalty to the golden stool.⁶⁰ The Nkoransahene was evasive in his response to Prempeh's request. He refused to go to Kumase to drink the fetish. However, he asserted that there was no reason for the Asantehene to doubt his loyalty.

To prove his fealty, he pledged himself to recover authority over the eastern Brong territories, which were lost to Asante in 1874, for the Asantehene.³¹ This pleased Prempeh who presented Kwasi Poku with a golden sword and other decorations.

The refusal of Nkoransa to give its total allegiance to Prempeh posed a "particularly grave threat"³² to Asante's policy of reconstruction in the early 1890's. In January 1889 Gyaman had signed a treaty of protection with the British.³³ In November 1890 Atebubu also entered into a similar pact with the British government.³⁴ By the end of 1890 the British had succeeded in placing a limitation on the consolidation ambitions of the Asante. The British had also 'secured a jumping-board for further expansion in the hinterland."³⁵ With the Nkoransahene's defiance of Prempeh, the Kumase government faced the threat of a possible emergence of a coalition of dissident subject states extending across the entire Asante hinterland from the north-east to the north-west.³⁶ When, therefore, the Governor of the Gold Coast in March 1891, extended an invitation to the Asantehene to place all his territories under the protection of the British, Prempeh was given full support in council to take immediate action to assert the full control of Kumase over Nkoransa.³⁷

In late 1888 Nkoransa was attacked by Mampon. The reason was that in September of that year, Mampon had rebelled against Prempeh and the Mamponhene, Owusu-Sekyere, asked the Nkoransa to assist him against the Asante. Nkoransa and Mampon had taken the same position during the Kofi Karikari-Kwaku Dua struggle in 1883. Nkoransa had also not definitely supported Prempeh during the succession crisis of 1884-1888. Owusu Sekyere therefore, hoped to win the support of Nkoransa. Much to Sekyere's chagrin, the Nkoransahene refused to rally to his support. Instead, Kwasi Poku, demonstrated his willingness to assist Prempeh with troops to fight the rebel Mamponhene. This willingness to support the Asantehene did not please the advocates of secession among his subjects who seem to have assumed a dominant position in Nkoransa at this time. Consequently, Kwasi Poku committed suicide to avoid destoolment.²²

Meanwhile, before the death of the Nkoransahene the Mampon rebellion had been crushed by an Asante force under the chief of Edweso, Afrane. Mamponhene Owusu Sekyere fled with some of his followers to Atebubu.²³ From his base at Atebubu, Sekyere prepared to attack Nkoransa for refusing to help him in his rebellion against Kumase. It was during this period of tension between Nkoransa and Mampon that Nkoransahene Kwasi Poku died. He had become so distressed by the opposition to his regime that he even planned to

exterminate the entire royal house including himself and the Queen-mother. When his plan failed - the Queen-mother had got wind of it - he blew himself up with gun-powder.⁷⁰

On the death of Kwasi Poku, the Mamponhene, assuming he could exploit the internal troubles in Nkoransa, massed troops and marched through Ejura to invade Nkoransa. The Nkoransa turned to Kumase for help but none came. In spite of the failure of Kumase to come to their aid, the Nkoransa swiftly mustered their forces to face Mampon. In the ensuing confrontation, the Mampon forces were routed on the Fia river and Sekyere retreated to Atebubu.⁷¹ The claim by certain Nkoransa accounts that the Mamponhene was decapitated may be doubted since it was, probably, the same Sekyere who was a refugee in Atebubu when the Nkoransa went into exile in the area in 1893.⁷²

B. The Nkoransa-Asante War (1892-93) and After
Nkoransahene Kwasi Opoku Katakylie (Kwasi Poku), was succeeded by Effa Kofi (or Kofi Fa) who in private life was known as Kofi Du. The new chief was brought into office on account of his anti-Asante stance. During his reign, the issues involved in the political conflict in Nkoransa crystallized. This became evident when he was called upon by Prempeh, to swear the allegiance which Kwasi Poku had refused in 1888. Kofi Fa too refused, partly because he

probably, felt that the Nkoransa had been betrayed by Kumase for, after Nkoransa had demonstrated its loyalty by refusing to support a Mampon rebellion, Prempeh failed to come to the aid of Nkoransa. Kofi Fa began to look for allies in anticipation of an Asante attack. Nkoransa was divided between pro and anti-Asantists.

The pro-Asante elements in Nkoransa argued on historical and traditional grounds for a re-affirmation of political ties with Kumasi. The secessionists who favoured joining the rebel Brong Alliance, on the other hand, emphasised the need for economic well-being and internal stability and security which, they argued, would only be guaranteed when Nkoransa attained complete independence from Asante. A major grievance of the secessionists was Kumase's decision to encourage the growth of a market at Wenchi. The Wenchi market, they felt, would only be at the expense of Nkoransa's own at Kintampo and this directly threatened the economy of Nkoransa.⁷³ The policy to develop the Wenchi market and the failure of Kumase to give military support to Nkoransa during the 1888-89 Mampon attack ensured the election of a secessionist candidate, Kofi Fa.

After Kofi Fa had refused to commit his allegiance to Prempeh by not going to Kumase to drink fetish, as the Asantehene had demanded, he went ahead to take other defiant

steps. For instance, he refused to send the annual tribute of 30 young men and 30 young women to serve the Asantehene.⁷⁴

The Nkoransa rebellion presented a serious threat to Asante's economic interests in Kintampo and Wenchi and also to Kumase's relations with other northern states. The Nkoransahene went further to conclude a definite alliance with the leaders of the Brong coalition in 1892.⁷⁵

By the middle of 1892, the British policy of isolating Asante economically, in the interior, seems to have been quite effective. After inadvertently losing the bulk of the trans-Volta trade through Krakye, to the Germans, the British were forced to expand their own interest in the north-west. They had already concluded treaties of protection with Gyaman and Atebubu. In 1892, Governor Griffith brought Kintampo to the notice of the colonial office.⁷⁶ Further, in the early 1890's Nkoransa had the only viable rubber plantation besides some gold and ivory. The full control of Nkoransa was therefore, a pre-condition for the economic reconstruction of Asante.⁷⁷ The move by the Brong allies and the British to control Kintampo market and block all the northern roads as well as channel the flow of trade from the north-west to the western parts of the colony via routes beyond the control of the Asante government precipitated the invasion of Nkoransa by Kumase in August

1892. For, the loss of Nkoransa to the British would mean the complete encirclement of Asante by British territories as well as the economic strangulation of Kumase.

On realising that war with Asante was inevitable, Nkoransahene Kofi Fa began to distribute gifts to secure alliances. He first turned to his friendly eastern neighbours. To the spiritual leader of the Brong Confederation, the fetish priest of Krakye, he sent twelve slaves and a quantity of gold. In response, the priest sent charms and medicated gun-powder to Kofi Fa. The help the Nkoransahene received from the Atebubu, his main eastern allies was far below his expectation. The Atebubuhene, Kwabena Asante was reluctant to assist Nkoransa because, under the terms of the treaty of Protection signed between the British and Atebubu in 1890, he could not go to war with another state without first apprising and seeking the approval of the colonial government. Under pressure from the fetish priest of Krakye, and two of his own principal councillors, however, Kwabena Asante agreed to send some men to help Kofi Fa. He sent only thirty men who, he told the colonial government, were to watch the frontiers of Atebubu.⁷⁸

The Nkoransahene also expected the support of the colonial government. He therefore sent to beg the Governor in Accra to:

take him under the protection of the Queen, and as an earnest of his declaration he sent (Koto aban mu) four tusks of ivory and 12 paraguins of gold (value £86) to the government.⁷³

The governor, however, did not grant the request for protection, for the British had not adopted a 'forward policy' towards the extension of its rule to the interior.⁸⁰ In her search for allies Nkoransa got the full and active support of Mo, Abease and Prang,⁸¹

In the initial engagement Nkoransa and its allies were outmanouvred when Asante and its allies, Banda and Wenchi, cut off the Mo at the rear of Nkoransa. The Nkoransa forces under Kwame Twea, assisted by Abease and Prang accepted battle in that situation. The forces of Nkoransa and Asante clashed in the marshes of Kumfa where the Kumase army

Suffered severely from the fire of the Nkoransa in the swamps and marshes in the neighbourhood. Three hundred of them were taken prisoners and slain by the Nkoranzas and they retired to Kumase while the Nkoranzas returned to their country burned by the Kumasis.⁸²

The Nkoransa refer to the area where the Asante were defeated in the first phase of the 1892-93 war as Agyemfena,

(literally, "seize Swords"), indicating their victory over Kumase.

After this phase of the war, Nkoransa turned its attention on Banda. With the help of Mo and Atebubu the Nkoransa attacked and defeated Banda. This war was one of reprisal against the Banda for helping the Asante against Nkoransa.⁶³

In the course of these developments the Mamponhene, Sekyere, came into the picture. He attempted a mediation move, ostensibly, to bring peace between Nkoransa and Asante but the move turned out to be phoney. Tired of his stay in Atebubu as a refugee, Sekyere was anxious to secure the pardon of Prempeh to enable him to return to Mampon. To this end, he wanted to exploit the strained relations between Nkoransa and Kumase. He, therefore, covertly represented to Prempeh that he would secure the subjugation of the revolting Nkoransa and work out the re-annexation of eastern Brong to Asante from his base at Atebubu.⁶⁴ As a result of the recent war with Nkoransa, Sekyere could not deal directly with the Nkoransahene. Knowing the immense influence the Dente Oracle exercised over Nkoransa affairs, however, Sekyere tried to use the Dente priest to achieve his objectives. He sent his messengers to sell his peace initiative to the priest.

The perspicacious priest, Kwasi Gyantadu, probably suspicious of Sekyere's intention, rejected the suggestion of mediation by Sekyere. He told the Mamponhene's messengers:

Your King has fought with the King of Ashanti, he also fought with the king of Nkoransa: what sympathy has he with either Nkoransa or Kumasi or what interest has he in their reconciliation?⁸⁵

The fetish priest seized the messengers and their followers, about nineteen men, and twelve kegs of gun-powder and that ended the Mamponhene's sham peace initiative.

In 1893, Nkoransa faced another attack from Kumase. This time, Prempeh put a much larger force in the field. His troops were commanded by Bantamahene Amankwatia Kwame. The Kumase army was mobilized from all over Asante including, Kumase, Mampon, Bekwae, Nsuta, Kumazwu, Dwaben, Ofinso, Edweso, Agogo, Kwaman, Kuntanase, Mamponten and all metropolitan districts.⁸⁶ Nkoransa suffered two defeats in two decisive battles. The first occurred near Kintampo in August 1893. The Nkoransa fled towards Abease, but the Asante pursued them and overtook them at a place called Adumasa⁸⁷ (See Map 4) where a fierce battle was fought and the Nkoransa were decisively defeated. Though Nkoransa lost only five men,⁸⁸ its capital, Nkoransa, was ransacked and

2,000 to 3,000 women and children were taken captive to Kumase.⁸⁹ The Nkoransa stool and other regalia were also taken as trophies by the invaders.⁹⁰ Earlier, the Nkoransahene, while he was under severe pressure had requested for help from his eastern allies but only the Abeasehene, Kwabena Kru, responded to Nkoransa's call. Atebubu sent a belated help of 30 men. Nkoransa had already been defeated before the Atebubu help led by Kwame Akojina reached the battlefield.⁹¹

The Nkoransahene Kofi Fa first took refuge at Atebubu where he stayed for a few days and left for Wiase. The Nkoransahene's early departure from Atebubu stemmed from the fact that he doubted the sincerity of the friendship of the Atebubuhene, Kwabena Asante, who had hesitated in going to the aid of Nkoransa as ordered by the Dente priest. Kwabena Asante was also alleged to have "held communications through the king of Mampon with that of Ashanti".⁹² It is not known what the communications were about. But Kofi Fa may have thought that they possibly contributed to Kwabena Asante's delay in sending troops to help Nkoransa.

Nkoransa's defeat was largely due to its opponent's superior army and military organization. Asante put a much larger army in the field. Between 10,000 and 17000 men excluding camp followers were sent to the war by Prempeh.⁹³ The

maximum figure of 17,000 men was nearly three times the number of men Nkoransa contributed towards the 1873-74 Anglo-Asante war.⁹⁴ Between 300 and 700 of the Asante soldiers were equipped with the more modern snider rifle of which Nkoransa had none.⁹⁵ Another important factor that contributed to the defeat of Nkoransa in the 1893 war was that she received less support in that war than she did in the 1892 conflict. In the 1892 war Nkoransa received military support from Yeji, Prang and Abease, all eastern neighbours.⁹⁶ The Mo also actively supported Nkoransa.⁹⁷ But in the 1893 attack on Nkoransa only Abease and Mo provided active support but even this was woefully inadequate. In these circumstances the military strength of Nkoransa was too small to withstand the mighty Asante army.

Kofi Fa's consequent relations with Atebubu became strained because of the Atebubehene's disappointing behaviour. This was reflected in the Nkoransahene's decision to seek asylum at Wiase rather than Atebubu which was protected from Asante attack by a treaty with the British.

When the Nkoransa were fleeing to Atebubu, the Asante army pursued them. The pursuing Asante army encamped near Abease to await further orders from the Asantehene as to whether to push ahead or retire. The presence of the 8,000 strong Asante force in the region posed a serious threat to the

security of Atebubu and the other Brong States. Consequently, the British despatched an expeditionary force of 300 well trained Hausa soldiers equipped with a maxim gun, under Sir Francis Scott after the Atebubuhene had sent to inform the Governor about the state of affairs in the area.⁹⁸ Earlier, the colonial Governor had sent G.E. Ferguson to the borders of Nkoransa and Atebubu to spy on the movements of the Asante army. When the colonial forces reached Atebubu the Asante army had decamped,⁹⁹ probably out of the fear of an encounter with the British troops, equipped with the more sophisticated maxim gun.

By 1894, the colonial government had began to move towards the adoption of a forward policy with respect to the extension of its political authority into the interior of Ghana. From January of that year, Ferguson was authorized by the colonial government to conclude treaties with all the states to the north of Asante outside the "Neutral Zone".¹⁰⁰ On January 25 1894 therefore, the British signed a Treaty of Friendship and Freedom of Trade with the Nkoransahene.¹⁰¹ The signing of this treaty gave Nkoransa considerable relief from the fear of a possible immediate attack by Asante. In January 1896 the treaty was converted to one of Friendship and Protection and this marked the end of Nkoransa's subservience to Asante.

Late in 1895, Asante had entered into a kind of diplomatic relations with the Sofa chieftain Samori Toure who had occupied Bonduku. As a result of this diplomatic contact the Asantehene solicited military assistance from Samori against Nkoransa in particular and the north as a whole.¹¹¹ Rumours of a projected attack on Nkoransa by Samori's forces generated considerable apprehension among its people. The Nkoransahene therefore reported Samori's anticipated attack to the Governor of the Gold Coast.¹¹² The attack however did not occur because, according to one report, the 1,000oz of gold Samori demanded from Kumase for the financing of the Nkoransa operation was thought by the Asanteman Council to be too much.¹¹³ Though the attack on Nkoransa did not take place, the spectre of a possible coalition between Prempeh and Samori persisted. The Samorian factor coupled with a vigorous campaign by various colonial officials and christian missionaries for the annexation of Asante, contributed to another military operation against Asante in January 1896.¹¹⁴ Prempeh was arrested together with a number of the members of the royal family and taken to the colony from where he was exiled to the Seychelles.

As a result of the general disaffection against the Asante which was prevalent in Nkoransa around the mid-1890's, the state joined the colonial militia at Kintampo in the hasty campaign against Kumase.¹¹⁵ When Prempeh was arrested, the

Nkoransahene, Kofi Fa was invited to Kumase by the British. He was asked by Captain Steward to accept a regency over Kumase. Kofi Fa had worked with the British since 1894 and had apparently proved his loyalty to the colonial government, the British therefore may have calculated that to make the Nkoransahene regent over Kumase would be an effective way of replacing the Kumase ruling aristocracy and thereby deal a fatal blow to Asante hegemony in the Gold Coast. (Ghana). Kofi Fa declined the offer of the British on the grounds that he had no right whatsoever, under traditional custom, to ascend the stool of the Asantehene who was his father.¹⁵⁷ Perhaps, the Nkoransahene's strongest reason for refusing to accept the regency was his possible inability to secure the allegiance of the Asante, a precondition for successfully exercising his authority as a regent. Kofi Fa may also have speculated the resilience of the Asante in re-organising their forces. He, therefore, feared that if the Asante were able to marshal their forces for a counter-offensive he would be trapped in Kumase. For with the retreat of the British forces to the coast he would have no strong military backing.

Prior to the 1896 British military action against Kumase Nkoransa had faced the threat of a possible alliance of some of her northern and western neighbours, under Asante leadership. Prempeh was able to negotiate with Banda and

Bole, which had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Freedom of Trade in June 1892,¹⁰³ to join this alliance. To woo Banda, a traditional enemy of Nkoransa, into the alliance, Prempeh had promised her a large portion of Nkoransa territory.¹⁰⁴ He also had supplied her with war materials and money in compensation for her losses in the 1892-93 military operations against rebel Nkoransa.¹⁰⁵ Salaga also showed interest in the 'grand' anti-Nkoransa alliance. Salaga had been jealous of the increasing importance of the Kintampo market at its (Salaga's) expense.¹⁰⁶ The ruler of Salaga, the Kabachi Wula, was therefore, anxious to recapture for Salaga its former position as the leading commercial centre in the Asante hinterland through the rebuilding of trade relations with Asante.

The serious danger the anti-Nkoransa alliance posed to the economy of Nkoransa and the north-south trade in general is reflected in a correspondence by the Colonial Secretary in 1894 part of which states:

... any step which brings the Salaga nearer to the Ashantis is much to be deprecated... I have already represented to the Secretary of State the extreme desirability, indeed necessity, of preventing an alliance between the Salagas and Ashantis... Were such an alliance effected, Kintampo would cease to exist as a market town, and the greater part of the trade which now finds its way into the Gold Coast would be diverted....

Thus during the three years or so following the Nkoransa-Asante war of 1892-93, Nkoransa faced the threat of a possible encirclement by hostile states as a result of a new diplomatic initiative adopted by Prempeh to reconstruct the Asante empire. The threat, had it materialised, could have destroyed Nkoransa as a state. The British arrest of Prempeh, however completely removed this danger.

C. Nkoransa and the 1900 Uprising:
The End of an Epoch

The reign of Nkoransahene Kofi Fa was to be the high watermark in Nkoransa's secession from Asante. The position of the secessionists was considerably strengthened through the military support of the colonial authorities after the Nkoransa-Asante conflict in 1893. In late 1893, G.E. Ferguson, and Captain Scott, head of the Gold Coast Constabulary, had accompanied the Nkoransa people, who had taken refuge at Wiase, back home. A telegraph link was then established between Nkoransa and the coast through Atebubu. The British stationed a garrison at Nkoransa and in 1894 carriers from the town were asked to go to Kwahu for military supplies. In July 1896 a small garrison of 25 was also stationed at Kintampo.^{!!!} In the same year, the British distributed weapons to a number of men in Nkoransa.^{!!!} By all these measures the Nkoransa became considerably strengthened militarily. The British capped their support for Nkoransa with the protection they granted her in 1896.

The colonial government's military support for Nkoransa seems to have had a dual purpose. In the first place, the colonial government which had been considering the possibility of annexing Asante, particularly from 1895 when the British government endorsed a 'forward policy' of expansion into the interior of Ghana, hoped to use Nkoransa to provide rear support in the event of a military offensive against Kumase. Secondly, the British intended to strengthen Nkoransa against a possible attack on her by Samori Toure whom Prempeh had been courting into a military alliance in order to recover his lost provinces, a venture which the British were determined to frustrate at any cost.

Despite the general feeling of disenchantment with Asante rule in Nkoransa, Asantehene Prempeh, had gained a sizeable number of adherents among members of the Nkoransa government. Notable among these adherents was Krontihene Kofi Twumasi. Other strong supporters of Prempeh were Kwaku Fokuo, Akyeamehene of Nkoransa, Kwadwo Tufuo, Nifahene, Nana Ankama, Benkumhene and Nana Yaw Gyane, Adontenhene. Soon after the Nkoransa-Asante war in 1893 Prempeh attempted to make Kwaku Fokuo the ruler of Nkoransa in place of the substantive ruler Kofi Fa.¹¹⁵

By 1897, two opposing factions, each with a definite orientation, had emerged on the Nkoransa political scene.

These factions dominated and dictated the trend of political activities at home and determined Nkoransa's policy towards its neighbours. One faction was committed to the terms of the treaty of protection with the British and therefore may be described as pro-British. It was led by Nkoransahemaa Afua Boahen (known privately as Afua Dapaa). The other faction which felt nostalgic about attachment to Asante and favoured a continued commitment of allegiance to Kumase was led by Krontihene Kofi Twumasi. The split in Nkoransa stemmed from the dilemma of the state as to which of two powers, the British or the Asante, could provide it with greater security and at the same time allow its rulers and people greater freedom of action. Generally, the elders of Nkoransa were concerned about the growing unity and strength of Asante since the election of Prempeh as the Asantehene. In the face of the failure of a British expedition to the Wa area, owing to the defeat of Hinderson's forces by Samori's Sofa warriors early in 1897,ⁱⁱⁱ some of the elders were skeptical about the ability of the British to resoundly defeat Asante in any military confrontation, particularly, if Asante succeeded in forging a military alliance with Samori Toure. The Nkoransa also did not rule out the possibility of an Asante attack on them sooner or later. This was particularly so when Kumase became aware of the

arming of Nkoransa by the British, an action which the Asante might interpret as constituting a threat to their security.

Besides the question of security it probably dawned on the elders of Nkoransa that gaining protection from the British colonial government would entail the loss of considerable political authority and certain basic freedoms. For instance the subjection of certain political decisions to the approval of the 'protector' and restrictions on certain traditional religious observances were regarded as attempts by the colonial authorities to destroy the foundations of Nkoransa's political and social institutions. In re-action to the comparatively harsh rule of the colonial authorities which was unknown under Asante suzerainty, certain elements in Nkoransa became hostile to the garrison stationed at Nkoransa and Basel missionaries who came to open a mission station there in 1895.¹¹⁷ The missionaries were generally disliked because, they were seen as agents of the colonial government. To make life in Nkoransa unpleasant for the men of the garrison, the local people harassed them in a number of ways. One of the ways was for people to clandestinely put sand in food prepared for the soldiers.¹¹⁸ Whenever a complaint was made to the local authorities some of the elders attributed the action to Adinkra, one of the local deities.¹¹⁹ A repeated occurrence of this incident was one

of the reasons for the eventual dismantling of the garrison at Nkoransa.¹²⁰ The unfriendly attitude towards the British agents in Nkoransa was certainly incited by the pro-Asante elements within the government.

Though factional differences in Nkoransa did not degenerate into an armed conflict, they were not entirely devoid of anxiety. One particular incident which threatened to plunge the state into civil war was the sudden mysterious death of Nkoransahene Kofi Fa in early 1897. There were wild speculations that Kofi Fa was assassinated by the pro-Asante faction led by Krontihene Twumasi.¹²¹ For Nkoransahene was believed to have died shortly after receiving gifts of a talisman and some drink from Sergeant Momone, a Dagarti Member of the garrison.¹²² At a subsequent murder trial by the commander of the garrison, Sergeant Momone reported that he received the drink from Krontihene Twumasi. The Krontihene, however, denied the charge. Since the court criers and servants who were at the palace at the time failed to testify, the Nkoransahene's death was declared by the judge to be of a natural cause.¹²³

The outcome of the trial notwithstanding, the majority of the Nkoransa people, particularly the royals, strongly believed that the Nkoransahene was actually poisoned by the Krontihene. There had been signs of mounting tension during

the trial and the outbreak of violence was imminent. The threat of a break-down of order was, however, averted when the British Officer who handled the case warned that the entire town of Nkoransa would be destroyed if Krontihene Twumasi was attacked.¹²⁴ Consequently there were no violent incidents and the crisis passed.

Perhaps it is not out of place to muse over Kofi Fa's sudden and mysterious death. The motives behind the alleged assassination were presumably to strengthen the position of the pro-Asante faction and to take Nkoransa back to serve Kumase. The fact was that Kofi Fa's anti-Asante position had, from all indications, been irrevocable. Moreover, he had been too strong for Krontihene Twumasi to dominate and manipulate. Twumasi might therefore have thought of the assassination of Kofi Fa as the only means of gaining control over the government since the only legitimate successor to Kofi Fa, Kwame Kudom was an inexperienced young man with emotional problems who could easily be controlled. It was not uncommon for him to go through spells of crying and fear.¹²⁵ He was also "a weak and vacillating character".¹²⁶ Some of the elders thought that Twumasi even, had plans to usurp the stool of Nkoransa hence his strong inclination towards Kumase where he hoped to secure support to successfully pursue his ambition.¹²⁷ If Twumasi entertained such an ambition, then he and his pro-Asante

advisors failed to carry the state with them after the death of Nana Asofo. They failed to exercise any significant influence over the Nkoransahene, Afaa Nana, who had the task of selecting a candidate for the vacant stool.

The pro-Asante and pro-British politics which dictated the foreign policy of Nkoransa, particularly, from 1897 when the Union Jack was hoisted in the town, crystallized fully in 1899 when the question of whether to join or not to join the Asante rebellion arose. In early April, 1899 a British military officer, Captain Parneter, who was on his way to the coast for health reasons, was attacked and roughly handled by the people of Sekyedumase who were up in arms against the British.¹⁵⁷ With the help of an educated attendant, Bremer Lamptey, who stood by him gallantly, Captain Parneter had a fortunate escape and managed to return to Nkoransa. At Nkoransa he had a report from a local Basel Mission Catholicist, Api Hansen, concerning the attempted seizure of the golden stool by Governor Hodgson and the consequent general uprising in Kumase and other Asante towns including Sekyedumase. From Nkoransa Parneter telegraphed a message about the general uprising to British officials at Kintampo.¹⁵⁸

The new Nkoransahene Kwame Nudom who had been won over to the side of the pro-Asante faction had attended the

formalities which marked the first visit of Governor Hodgson to Kumase. He and Krontihene Twumasi had, however, arrived too late to witness Hodgson's attempted seizure of the golden stool. Kwame Kudom, however, might have been impressed by the reaction of the Asante chiefs to the arrogant manner in which Governor Hodgson had underscored the British usurpation of Asante political power. While still in Kumase, the Nkoransahene sent orders to his war chiefs to revolt against the British.¹³⁰ Before Kudom himself could return to Nkoransa to organise his men for the rebellion, he was stopped by the Kumase and compelled to "drink fetish" with them.¹³¹

In the absence of the Nkoransahene the Nkoransahemaa took full control of the affairs of the state. She was strongly opposed to her people joining the rebellion against the colonial government. She and her supporters were, however, not strong enough to countermand the order sent by the Nkoransahene who was commander-in-chief of the Nkoransa army. Furthermore she found it difficult to restrain the war chiefs and their party who were anxious to take possession of several thousand pounds in cash and large quantities of valuable supplies which were known to be stored by the British at Kintampo.¹³² An attack on Kintampo would cut off any support or re-inforcement the British would receive from the rear and this could prove disastrous

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By ...

meeting it was unconstitutional and was therefore unenforceable. The Ochemaa then adopted the strategy of refusing to call a State Council meeting.

The return of the Nkoransahene from Kumase in late April or early May, however, strengthened the hands of the war party again. The Nkoransahemaa remained loyal to the British and tried to hold the Omanhene and his supporters in check, but her own party had grown weak. The Asante at Sekyedumase brought great pressure on the Nkoransahene to join the revolt. The supporters of Kwame Kudom demanded the killing of the local Basel missionary, Hansen as the people of Takyimantia had done to Samuel Otu. They also planned to kill the telegrapher, Hasley, as well as the clerk of the state council Mr. Benson. The Nkoransahemaa, however, managed to save the three men by arranging their escape. When the pro-Asante group discovered that the catholicist, the telegrapher and the clerk had escaped they decided to join the rebellion without the approval of the Ochemaa. The group also took the daughter of the Ochemaa, Yaa Afire, hostage to force her to support the pro-Asante position. Under such heavy pressure the Nkoransahemaa and her supporters became virtually helpless. After giving up her daughter Nana Afua Dapaa sent a message to Kintampo saying that she could no longer hold out. Major Morris telegraphed a message to the Queen-mother that a large force was coming to her aid and so

she should "do her utmost to impress on her people the importance of their remaining loyal."¹³⁷

Upon a tip-off about the coming of the militia to Nkoransa, the pro-Asante group left for Sekyedumase. When on May 9th Major Morris entered Nkoransa with his force, a seven pounder and a maxim gun the Nkoransahene went into hiding in the bush and the Asante from Sekyedumase quickly returned to their village.¹³⁸ The force arrived just in time to influence the majority of the young men in Nkoransa who had been wavering. The Major discovered that the young men had concealed a number of loaded guns in the tall elephant grass on the outskirts of the town, a proof that the pro-Asante party was actually prepared to join the uprising. As a show of force, intended to deter them from joining the rebellion, Major Morris ordered the maxim gun to be fired into a nearby big tree.¹³⁹

The Major, feeling assured that the spirit of the pro-Asante group had effectively been broken and that the Nkoransa would remain loyal to the government, met the Nkoransahemaa Afua Dapaa at a big meeting in front of the royal palace. At the meeting a silver stool which Major Morris had seized soon after his arrival was formally handed back to Nana Afua Dapaa. "She was thanked and complemented for her loyalty."¹⁴⁰ When the troops reached Sekyedumase there was

a short skirmish after which the Nkoranshemaa's daughter was found. She had been rescued from the Krontihene by the fetish priest of the Akwabaa deity.¹⁴¹

✓ In appreciation of "her unswerving fidelity to the British Government even at the risk of her own life,"¹⁴² the Nkoransahemaa, Nana Afua Dapaa, was later presented with a number of items. These included a cap with the British Coat-of-Arms; a sash; two medallions and a mirror. On the silver bordering of the mirror which was in the shape of a heart was the following inscription:

Presented to the Princess Effna
[Afua] Dapaa of Nkoransa by the
British Government in recognition
of services rendered during the
Ashanti campaign of 1900.¹⁴³

Following the suppression of the Yaa Asantewaa uprising, Krontihene Twumasi and other pro-Asante elements in Nkoransa were arrested together with the Nkoransahene Kwame Kudom and sent to Elmina for detention. The other leaders who were arrested included: Akyeamehene Kwaku Fokuo; Adontenhene Yaw Gyane; Asookohene Kwasi Akuna; Nifahene Kwadwo Tufuo; Benkumhene Kwasi Kra and Okyeame Moobe. These pro-Asante Nkoransa leaders were detained at Elmina for about five years. During that time Nkoransahemaa Afua Dapaa combined her position of Ohemaa with that of Omanhene of the Nkoransa

states. The arrest of the pro-Zante leaders of the revolt brought an end to factional politics in the state.¹¹

The British suppression of the 1500 Zante uprising marked the cessation of all political relations between Rhodania and Zante. Rhodania recovered her sovereignty soon thereafter but only to find herself under the British

CHAPTER FOUR

NOTES

1. Kwame Arhin, "Introduction: Ashanti and the Northeast," Supplement No.2, Research Review, (I.A.S. Legon, 1970) p.6: Kwame Arhin (ed), Seminar on Asante and Brong, (I.A.S. Legon, 1973), See article by K.Y. Daaku, "Politics Among the Eastern Brong 1700-1960," p.6.
2. Arhin, "Ashanti and the Northeast," p.6.
3. Ibid., p.6: David Kimble, A Political History of Ghana, 1850-1928, (Oxford, 1963) pp.276 and 277: Daaku, "Politics among the Eastern Brong" in Seminar on Asante and Brong, p.5.
4. Ivor Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century, (Cambridge, 1975), p.280: Jack Goody, "Introduction: Ashanti and the Northwest", Supplement No.1 to Research Review, (I.A.S., Legon), p.38: Kwame Arhin, "Government in Traditional Market Towns with Reference to Kintampo in North-Central Ghana," Draft Paper, (I.A.S., Legon, 1971), p.16.
5. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.38.
6. T.C. Mc.Caskie, "The Reality of Asanti Power in the North," seminar paper, (I.A.S. Legon, 1968) p.5. Though Asante traders in Yendi were generally not molested some of them were imprisoned. (See Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest" p.38).

7. An important source of revenue like the collecting of slaves referred to as Ayibuadie (lit. funeral gifts) stopped completely while little revenue could be collected from states which were only nominally loyal (See Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.38).
8. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.39.
9. Ibid.
10. Dr. V.Skipton Gouldsbury was sent on a mission to Salaga and other areas in the north-east early in 1876 ("Report on a journey from Kumasi to Sahara (Salaga) for the purpose of opening up the roads and trade between the former and the coast," (Accra, 1876), Public Record Office, co. 96/119 (copy of document at the library of the Institute of African Studies, Legon): In July 1879 an English Commissioner, John Smith also went to Bonduku (Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.39); In 1881-82 Lonsdale travelled widely through the Asante hinterland on the same mission as Gouldsbury and Smith (David Kimble, op.cit., pp.276 and 277: Daaku, "Politics among the Eastern Brong," in Seminar on Asante and Brong. p.7.).
11. Kwame Arhin, "The Missionary Role in the Gold Coast and Ashanti: Reverend F.A. Ramseyer and British Take-over of Ashanti, 1968-1894," (article, reprinted from Research Review Vol.4 No.2, (I.A.S., Legon, 1968)p.6.
12. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.42.

13. Ibid., p.40: Arhin, "Missionary Role" p.6.
14. K.B. Dickson, A Historical Geography of Ghana (Cambridge, 1969) p.241.
15. Arhin, "Government in Traditional Market Towns," p.14: K.B. Dickson, op.cit, p.240.
16. Joseph Dupuis, Journal of a Residence in Asantee, (London, 1824) p.XCV.
17. Enid Schildkrout, People of the Zongo, (Cambridge, 1978), p.36: Dickson, op.cit., p.240.
18. Arhin, "Government in Traditional Market Towns" p.15: Goody "Ashanti and the Northwest", p.48.
19. T.C. Mc. Caskie, "The Asante Empire and Its Northern Neighbours", 1700-1874," (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Balme Library, Legon, 1969), p.76.
20. Arhin, "Government in Traditional Market Towns," p.17: Kwame Arhin, "Aspects of Ashanti Northern Trade in the Nineteenth Century," Africa Vol.40 No.4) 1970, p.365: J.A. Braimah and J.R. Goody, Salaga: The Struggle for Power (London, 1967) p.VI: Jack Goody, "Salaga in 1876" Ghana Notes and Queries, No.8, 1966, p.3.
21. Report by Mr. Brandon Kirby, Special Commissioner, of his mission to Coomassie and the interior provinces of the Ashanti Kingdom. January 3rd to April 2nd 1884. National Archives of Ghana, Accra, ADM.11/1/1733: Freda Wolfson, Pageant of Ghana, (Oxford, 1958) p.186: M. Johnson, Salaga Papers, SAL/281, Enclosure in 36 of

1885, Blue Book, Griffith to S of S, Dec. 13, 1892
(Affairs in Ashanti 7917 of Feb. 1896, p.78).

22. Kirby's Report, ADM.11/1/1733, p.94.

23. Ibid.

24. Brandon Kirby says in his report on his visit to
Kintampo in early 1884 thus:

The Ashantis inhabit a portion of
the town quite to themselves and
are under a headman called Poporokoo

Ibid.

It is highly probable that 'Poporokoo' is a corruption
of Prapraho mentioned in local traditions as one of the
Asantehene's officials who co-supervised the Kintampo
market with the Nkoransahene's representative in the
late 1870's and early 1880's (See Goody's collection of
traditions in 'Market Settlements in Northwestern
Ashanti: Kintampo,' in Supplement No.1, Research
Review, (I.A.S., Legon, 1975) pp.141 and 154).

25. Goody, "Market Settlements," p.141: Arhin, "Government
in Traditional Market Towns," p.17.

26. Wilks, op.cit., p.291: "Goody, Ashanti and the
Northwest," pp.40 and 41.

27. E.S.K. Owusu, Oral Traditions of Sampa, Hani, Debibi,
Namasea, Banda, Broahane and Mengye (Menji) B.A.,
(I.A.S., Legon, 1976) pp.92 and 123: Wilks, op.cit.,
p.292: Major V.C. Clime, Precis of Information
Concerning the Gold Coast Colony and Ashanti, (Compiled

in the War Office, 1904) p.118: Kwame Arhin, The Papers of George Ekem Ferguson: a Fanti official of the government of the Gold Coast. 1890-1897 (Leiden, Cambridge, 1974), p.35 (Ferguson's account of the Banda-Gyaman war obviously refers to the struggles in the extreme northwest which occurred in the early 1880's. The Banda, therefore, took refuge in Nkoransa after and not before the Asante war of 1873-74 as stated in the account).

28. Wilks, op.cit., p.292.

29. Ibid., p.294.

30. Agyeman was, however, not deterred by the Asante military presence at Kintampo. He, went ahead to attack Banda again in February 1882. (See Wilks, op.cit., p.294).

31. Agnes Aidoo, "Order and Conflict in the Asante Empire: A Study in Interest Group Relations," African Studies Review, Vol.XX, No.1 (April 1977) p.25.

32. Ibid., : Arhin, "Missionary Role," p.5.

33. Arhin, "Missionary Role," p.5.

34. Thomas J. Lewin, Asante Before the British: The Prempean Years, 1875-1900. (Lawrence, 1978) p.108.

35. Kirby's Report ADM.11/1/1733, p.93: Wilks, op.cit., p.296.

36. See collection of oral traditions in Francis Agbodeka's work, African Politics and British Policy in the Gold Coast, 1868-1900, London, 1971) p.194.
37. Ibid., p.163.
38. Ibid.
39. Wilks, op.cit., p.296: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.53.
40. Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.53.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Kirby's Report ADM.11/1/1733, p.93: Wilks, op.cit., p.296.
44. Wilks, op.cit., p.296.
45. Kirby's Report, ADM.11/1/1733, p.93.
46. Kirby's Report, ADM.11/1/1733, p.94.
47. Enclosure in 36, Kirby to Colonial Secretary, Chichiweri, Ashanti, 10/3/1884, ADM.11/1/1733, p.85: Also see M. Johnson, Salaga Papers SAL/28/1.
48. Kirby's Report, ADM.11/1/1733.
49. Agnes Aidoo, "Political Crisis and Social Change in the Asante Kingdom, 1867-1901," (Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, U.C.L.A., 1975), p.429.
50. Ibid.
51. Lewin, op.cit., p.108: Kintampo in Nkoransa also became the clearing house for the kola nut trade in the Gold

- Coast (Ghana). Dickson, op.cit., p.211: Also see Kwame Arhin, "Aspects of Ashanti Northern Trade", p.366.
52. By the end of 1892, three educated Fante traders had got themselves established at the court of Nkoransahene. Two of them, A.W. Benson and George Apea had wide connections in respect of the rubber trade, see Agnes Aidoo, "Political Crisis," pp.597 and 598: M. Johnson, Salaga Papers, SAL/77/1, Telegram, Ag. Governor Hodgson to S of S (Ashanti Affairs, c 7917 of Feb. 1896): Raymond Dumett, "The Rubber Trade of the Gold Coast and Asante in the Nineteenth Century: African Innovation and Market Responsiveness," Journal of African History. xii, (1), (1971) p.96: Kwame Arhin, "The Ashanti Rubber Trade with the Gold Coast in the 1890's". Africa, Vol.XLII, 1972 p.37.
53. Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.472.
54. Ibid., pp.479-483: (Also see same author, "The Asante Succession Crisis, 1883-1888," Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana, Vol.XIII, No.2 December, 1972 p.170).
55. Kirby states, in his report of 1884 that: "For some five or six years previous to the outbreak of the revolt" -- he was referring to the 1883 crisis which attended the abdication of Mensah Bonsu and the enstoolment of Kwaku Dua II -- "Koranza had entirely renounced its allegiance to coomassie," (Kirby's Report

- ADM.11/1/1733 p.94). This means that Nkoransa began her secession moves in 1877 or 1878.
56. Lewin, op.cit., p.108: Wilks, op.cit., p.574: Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.530.
 57. Lewin, op.cit., p.108.
 58. Ibid.
 59. Agnes Aidoo, "Succession Crisis," p.175.
 60. To "drink fetish" is to swear an oath to attest to the genuineness of a relationship or to show that a vow or promise will be kept. This is rendered nom abosom in Akan: nom (drink); abosom (fetish).
 61. Kwame Arhin, The Papers of Ferguson; p.37.
 62. Wilks, op.cit., p.297.
 63. G.E. Metcalfe, Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History, 1807-1957 (Gregg Revivals, Aldershot, Brookfield, 1994) p.747.
 64. Ibid.
 65. Arhin, "Missionary Role," p.7.
 66. Wilks, op.cit., p.298.
 67. Ibid.
 68. Interview with Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 24-8-95: Wilks, op.cit., p.297: Jack Goody and C.Y. Boateng, "The History and Traditions of Nkoranza," in supplement No.1, Research Review, (I.A.S., Legon, 1965) p.179.

69. Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.544: Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.37.
70. Omanhene of Nkoransa, Nkoransa, 25-8-95.
71. C.Y. Boateng, The Oral Traditions of Nkoransa, (I.A.S., Legon, 1965), pp.28 and 54.
72. Ibid., p.54: Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.42.
73. Lewin, op.cit., p.169: Wilks, op.cit., p.296.
74. Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.601.
75. Ibid.
76. Lewin, op.cit., p.170.
77. The civil wars of 1884-1888 had ravaged the rubber industry of metropolitan Asante. Moreover, Nkoransa controlled the only important market which was vital to Asante. (See Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.558). The attack of Nkoransa in 1892 was thus to strengthen Asante economically and to "revive the northern empire." (Adu Boahen, "Prempeh I in Exile - a paper read on Saturday, 19th August, 1972, at the National Cultural Centre, Kumasi, during the National Festival of Arts history Department, Legon).
78. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.39.
79. Ibid.
80. Lewin, op.cit., p.177: Kimble, op.cit., p.290 and 291: It was not until the middle of 1895 that 'forward policy' received the full support of the Colonial office.

81. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.31.
82. Ibid., p.39.
83. Boateng, Oral Traditions of Nkoranza, p.53: Owusu, op.cit., p.123. Banda tradition states that after the Nkoransa attack they had "no land again to settle on" so they moved to Ofinso and Akomadan. This confirms the claim by the Nkoransa that they defeated the Banda in the war. Also see Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.39.
84. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.39.
85. Ibid., p.40.
86. Ibid: Aidoo, "Political Crisis", p.601: William Tordoff, Ashanti Under the Prempehs, 1888-1935, (London, 1965) p.46.
87. Boateng, op.cit, p.54.
88. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.42.
89. Ibid.: Wilks, op.cit., p.298: Aidoo, "Political Crisis". p.602: W.W. Claridge, A History of Gold Coast and Ashanti, Vol.II (London, 1915), p.363.
90. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.42: Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.602.
91. Arhin, Paper of Ferguson, pp.39 and 42.
92. Ibid., p.42.
93. Ibid., p.31: Wilks, op.cit., p.298: Agnes Aidoo puts the range at between 15,000 and 17,000 troops (See "Political Crisis," p.601):

94. During this war the Nkoransahene commanded 10,000 troops on the field. (See Wilks, op.cit., p.82). But the assessment or quota for the Nkoransa state was 6,000 men. (See Henry Brackenbury, The Ashanti War of 1873-74: A Narrative. Vol.2, (London, 1874) p.362.
95. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.31.: Wilks, op.cit., p.298.
96. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.31.
97. Ibid., pp.31, 41 and 113.
98. African (West) No.448, "Correspondence respecting the mission of Mr. G.E. Ferguson into the hinterland of the Gold Coast Colony." Enclosure 2 No.21, The King of Atebubu to the Governor, Atebubu, May 17, 1872. (Copy of document at the library of Institute of African Studies, Legon). Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.41: Wilks, op.cit., p.298.
99. Arhin, "Missionary Role", p.9.
100. The 'Neutral Zone' was demarcated in 1888-89 by an agreement between the British and German governments as a "free trade" zone in which none of the two powers was expected to seek and assert its exclusive influence. The zone included Salaga and Yendi both important trading centres. See Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, pp.49 and 51. (Also see map on p.175): Kimble, op.cit., p.280 (see map opposite p.280).

101. National Archives of Ghana, Accra, "Collection of Treaties with native chiefs on the West Coast of Africa." ADM.11/1/1727, p.28.
102. Lewin, op.cit., p.192.
103. Wilks, op.cit., p.308.
104. Lewin, op.cit., p.192.
105. Ibid., p.193: Aidoo, "Political Crisis," p.604: Baden Powell, The Downfall of Prempeh, (London, 1896) p.125.
106. Boateng, op.cit., p.30.
107. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 25-8-95: Boateng, op.cit., p.30.
108. Metcalfe, op.cit., p.748.
109. Lewin, op.cit., p.175: Wilks, op.cit., p.299.
110. Lewin, op.cit., p.175.
111. M. Johnson, Salaga Papers, SAL/77/2, Affairs in Ashanti 7917 of Feb. 1896 p.78, Governor Griffith to S of S, Dec. 13, 1892: Goody, "Ashanti and the Northwest," p.60: Claridge, op.cit., p.370.
112. Johnson, Salaga Papers, SAL/77/3, Colonial Secretary to Inspector General Scott, Jan. 10, 1894. The Colonial government feared that if an allied force comprising Asante, Banda and Salaga should succeed in their various operations then Nkoransa would be absorbed by Asante and Salaga and the greater portion of trade then passing through Kintampo to the Gold Coast would be diverted. (Agbodeka, op.cit.) p.165.
113. Arhin, "Government in Traditional Market Towns," p.24.

114. It is recorded in Nkoransa tradition that: "One Colonel Scotts with 7 white officers and about one thousand soldiers brought Nkoransahene some ammunition." See Boateng, op.cit., p.30.
115. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, p.55: Wilks, op.cit., p.299.
116. Arhin, Papers of Ferguson, pp.156-164: Wilfred Owen Jnr. "Nkoransa on the Eve of British Control of Asante," Draft Paper, (Indiana University, 1973) pp.7 and 8.
117. Hans Debrunner, A History of Christianity in Ghana, (Accra, 1966) p.211: Noel Smith, The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 1835-1960, (Accra, 1966) pp.123 and 129.
118. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 15-1-96.
119. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 15-1-96.
120. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 15-1-96.
121. Owen, "Nkoransa on the Eve," p.9.
122. Ibid., p.8.
123. Ibid., p.9.
124. Ibid.
125. Owen, "Nkoransa on the Eve," p.10.
126. Frederick Myatt, The Golden Stool: An account of the Ashanti War of 1900, (London, 1966) p.72.
127. Owen, "Nkoransa on the Eve," p.10.
128. Claridge, op.cit., pp.474-480: Myatt, op.cit., p.72.

129. Claridge, op.cit., p.481.
130. Ibid., p.480: Boateng, op.cit., pp.76 and 77.
131. Claridge, op.cit., p.482.
132. Ibid., p.480.
133. Ibid., p.481.
134. Owen, "Nkoransa on the Eve", p.13.
135. Ibid., p.14.
136. Ibid.
137. Claridge, op.cit., p.483.
138. Ibid.
139. Owen, "Nkoransa on the Eve", pp.15 and 16.
140. Claridge, op.cit., p.483.
141. Omanhene of Nkoransa, 16-1-96: Owen, "Nkoransa on the Eve," p.16.
142. Claridge, op.cit., p.483.
143. This inscription can be found on the silver bordering of the heart-shaped mirror presented to Nana Afua Dapaa. The mirror, the sash and the medallions are kept at the palace of the Nkoransahemaa while the cap, which in a way symbolizes a crown of ultimate political authority, is in the custody of the Omanhene.
144. Nana Yaa Dadaa, Nkoransahemaa, Present were the Queen-mother's, mother, Nana Amma Boahemaa and Nana Kofi Baffo a leading elder of the Queen-mother's palace: Boateng, op.cit. p.38.

CONCLUSION

The state of Nkoransa was founded during the third decade of the eighteenth century. As in the case of many states in Ghana and other parts of Africa, the element of conquest was very important among the factors which accounted for the rise of Nkoransa. Unlike many other states, however, the emergence of Nkoransa was quite swift and dramatic as the state came into existence after only one particular conquest -- that of the Bono Kingdom. Prior to this event the founders of Nkoransa had, themselves, not undertaken any military conquest of their own.

The mode of formation of Nkoransa contrasts with what happened in the process of evolution of such states as Asante and Zulu. These states evolved rather gradually from several small independent lineages, clans or chieftains into single full states. Such a process involved a series of wars in which the militarily superior among the various competing groups gained ascendancy over the weaker ones. This mode of formation may be described as internal growth and development. In the case of Nkoransa, its growth was the outcome of external pressure. It was the result of the attack and defeat of the well-organized state of Bono, by Asante, and the creation of a new state out of the territory of the conquered.

An important feature of the Nkoransa state was that a large group of indigenous Bono people came to be ruled by a small group of Akan migrants from the Kumase area. This small group collaborated with the Asante to defeat Bono. The alliance between the migrants, who originated from Amakom, and Kumase was facilitated by the common cultural idiom and blood relations.

But the economic factor also played a part. While acknowledging that the Amakom people who became the founders of Nkoransa left the Kumase area as a result of the upheaval which attended the rise of Asante during the latter half of the seventeenth century, their migration northwards was economically significant. By the second half of the seventeenth century, the people in the Kumase region had become aware of the long distance north-south trade - particularly the gold trade - which linked the north-west with the coast of Ghana. The trade passed through Tafo and the Amakom people apparently knew about it. The group that migrated northwards, therefore, did not just move away to take refuge in the Bono area but it was also attracted by the profitable trading activities that went on in the north-west region. Similarly, it was the economic benefits to be derived from the political control over the gold-producing areas in the north-west as well as the control and direction of the trade in the area that motivated the Asante to effect

a military conquest of Bono with the aid of the Amakom migrants. The creation of Nkoransa was, initially, to provide Asante with a base in its hinterland for further conquests in both the north-west and the north-east.

States formed through conquest, as was the case with Nkoransa, would naturally, be difficult to maintain, especially during the early stages. Often it became difficult to command the total allegiance or loyalty of the conquered people and, in several situations, such conquered peoples tended to be very rebellious. And yet, the rulers of Nkoransa were able to consolidate their position and to maintain their state.

One of the factors which enabled the early rulers of Nkoransa to do this was the patronage of Asante whose military might served as a kind of bastion against foreign interference in Nkoransa's affairs. With Asante backing Nkoransa could even embark on territorial expansion during the very early years of the state.

Internally, certain methods were adopted in order to promote unity and to maintain stability. Two main approaches enabled the ruling clan of Nkoransa to achieve the desired consolidation of the state. The first was the equitable distribution of political authority between the migrants and

the indigenes. Even though the conquerors took nearly all the key leadership positions, the conquered were given a good number of important roles, including that of a divisional chief. As a result of their inclusion in the mainstream of the political administration of the state, the indigenes felt a sense of belongingness and active participation and this precluded internal revolts in Nkoransa.

Another important means by which the Nkoransa state was strengthened was acculturation. Interestingly, this was not a one way affair in which the dominant group compelled the conquered subjects to abandon their own cultural practices and adopt those of their rulers. Rather, it was a situation of reciprocal adoption of various aspects of the cultural features of both the ruler and the ruled. This process culminated in a sort of 'cultural fusion' which resulted from a blend of aspects of the cultural practices of the migrants and the indigenes. A significant development of the process of acculturation in Nkoransa was the adoption of the language of the autochtones by the migrants. Ultimately, the entire population of Nkoransa came to be identified as Brong. In this way the conqueror and the conquered coalesced into one group of people with a single identity.

The relations between Nkoransa and its neighbours followed a pattern which remained virtually unchanged up to the end of the nineteenth century. During the whole period her relations with certain states to its north and west, notably Gonja, Takyiman and Banda, were hostile. On the other hand, Nkoransa's relations with her eastern neighbours, particularly Atebubu, were peaceful and cordial. The main factor which accounted for the hostile relations between Nkoransa and Takyiman was the alleged treachery of Baffo Pim, a treachery that made it possible for Asante to invade and defeat Bono-Takyiman. The Takyiman never forgot and never forgave Nkoransa for helping Asante to destroy their Kingdom and for taking over about two thirds of their territory to create a new state.

In fact only conscious efforts by the peoples of the two states can remove the bitterness or, at least mollify the feelings of both. The initiative can be taken by influential groups in Nkoransa and Takyiman. The educated classes, especially, can collaborate to educate both the young and the old to put the past behind them and forge ahead as one people living in the same geographical area.

The Gonja who supported Bono-Takyiman during the Asante invasion of the latter also could not trust the Nkoransa who had aided the invaders. Moreover, the long-established

northern kingdom saw the new state as a menace to its sovereignty. Nkoransa's territorial expansion which took a mainly northerly direction made the Gonja feel even more apprehensive about the security of their southern frontier. On their part, the Nkoransa felt that with the powerful Gonja lying on their northern frontier they needed to take serious measures to ensure that their state was not invaded from the north. They were therefore, determined to push the Gonja people who lived south of the Black Volta river northward across the river into the main territory of the Gonja. This situation of mutual suspicion between Nkoransa and Gonja brought them into military conflict on several occasions.

Nkoransa's encroachment on the territory of Banda was a major cause of the hostile relations between the two states. The bone of contention was the control of the territory in which Kintampo was situated. The area, at first, appeared to have been part of Banda territory. But with the expansion of Nkoransa northwards, the control of the area became a contentious issue. The territory shifted from the hands of one state to the other at various times for about a century. It was not until the 1830's that Nkoransa gained final control over the area.

In contrast, good relations existed between Nkoransa and its eastern neighbours. A reason for this was that the states in that area did not become involved in the upheaval that followed the defeat of Bono-Takyiman by Asante and which brought Nkoransa into being. Another reason was the common Asante origin of the ruling lineages of Nkoransa and Atebubu. Solidarity derived from common origin promoted friendly relations between the two. Eventually, the other states in the east came to share in the good relations between Nkoransa and Atebubu. Nkoransa and the eastern Brong States also fought in the same division of the Asante national army. This common military obligation tended to bring Nkoransa and those states closer together. The good relations between Nkoransa and its eastern neighbors can also be explained in strategic terms. In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Nkoransa recognized the need to maintain permanent peaceful and cordial relations with certain states in the light of the frequent conflicts between her and the states to its north and west. Such friendly states could either give her military assistance in her campaigns or at least remain neutral when she did not require their help. By that policy Nkoransa prevented its complete encirclement by hostile neighbors.

Up to 1874 Nkoransa became involved in a number of conflicts with several states, including far away Gyaman, on account

of her military obligations to Asante. Nkoransa thereby incurred the enmity of some of its neighbors.

From the late 1870's, relations between Nkoransa and Asante began to deteriorate. Until then, Nkoransa had been the only state in the north to remain loyal to Asante after the defeat of the latter in her war with the British in 1873-74. The strained Nkoransa-Asante relations stemmed from the heavy taxes imposed on Nkoransa traders by Kumase. For a brief period, the situation improved but from the late 1880's Nkoransa began to take definite steps towards a total and final detachment from Kumase.

Fortunately for Nkoransa the increasing British influence in the north proved to be of great help. With the strengthening of Gyaman and Atebubu against Asante through the granting of protection in 1889 and 1890 respectively by the British, Nkoransa strengthened her ties with the Eastern Brong states by making moves to join the anti-Asante defensive alliance formed by those states. In 1892 Nkoransa formally joined the alliance. Consequently, she was attacked by Asante which was determined to maintain its hold on her.

In spite of the defeat of Nkoransa by Asante in the war, which was fought in two phases in 1892-93, the British

managed to prevent Asante from re-establishing its control over Nkoransa. By the middle of the 1890's the control of Nkoransa had become an important factor in the Anglo-Asante rivalry in the interior. The British saw Nkoransa as an important force which could provide them with rear support for their anticipated take-over of Asante. Asante also viewed Nkoransa as being of strategic importance in her struggle with the British.

Nkoransa tended to draw closer to the British who offered her protection against Asante, following the Nkoransa-Asante war of 1892-93. In the late 1890's however, skepticism about the adequacy of British security for Nkoransa as well as certain unfavourable policies made a section of the Nkoransa government become disillusioned with British rule. These began to agitate for the re-introduction of Asante rule which they felt was more humane. This situation eventually led to a division of Nkoransa along pro-Asante and pro-British lines.

The factional situation in Nkoransa came to a head in 1900 as the pro-Asante and pro-British groups struggled over the issue of whether to remain loyal to the colonial government or to join rebel Asante. The main element in this struggle was a clash of personalities. It was a matter of a Queen-mother who was a strong character, assertive and could be

firm and resolute in the face of crisis, against a Paramount Chief who vacillated when torn between two powers in a situation of conflict. In the end the strong character of the Queen-mother enabled her to sway the people of Nkoransa to the side of the British, thereby preventing Nkoransa from siding with Asante.

This study revealed a number of issues about the political and social history of Nkoransa which require further investigation. One question relates to formal power relationships among the various holders of political office. For instance, during the nineteenth century a couple of Queen-mothers tended to exercise extensive political authority. This situation requires a study of the degree of political power which is constitutionally conferred on the Queen-mother vis-a-vis that of the Paramount Chief as well as the Divisional Chiefs. In this regard, the extent to which the hierarchy of political offices in Nkoransa departs from other Akan states, particularly the Asante political system on which Nkoransa's own was modelled, may make interesting study. A detailed study of the impact of external influences on internal historical developments in Nkoransa is also a subject whose study may be undertaken.

Another area of interest is the role of traditional religion in the political and social lives of the Nkoransa.

Traditional religion has so permeated the lives of the people that hundreds of shrines for various deities are scattered all over the state. Even with the spread of christianity and Islam into the state the worship of deities is still important in many towns and villages. Traditional religion might therefore have greatly influenced the social and political institutions of Nkoransa. The study of such a subject will be worthwhile.

APPENDIX A

REGNAL LIST OF PARAMOUNT CHIEFS OF NKORANSA PROVIDED BY THE OMANHENE OF NKORANSA

NAME OF RULER	REGNAL PERIOD
	REMARKS
1. NANA ABU DONTINA	c. 1713-1721 (Leader of Migration, Died at Swedru)
2. NANA BAFFO PIK	c. 1721-1762 (Founder of Nkoransa state)
3. NANA WIAFE KOPI (AKENTEK)	c. 1763-1780 (Died on Stool)
4. NANA FII EYEMAN	c. 1780-1784 (Died on Stool)
5. NANA EFFA (KRAMTRAM)	c. 1784-1790 (Died on Stool)
6. NANA AFGSA KODOM ADWETAA	c. 1790-1796 (Died on Stool)
7. NANA KONSIAMOR (Alias AKWASI NTAKO KETE)	c. 1796-1799 (Killed at Eoaben)
8. KWADWO KWUSU ANSAE	c. 1799-1807 (Died a Natural Death)
9. NANA GUARBO EFFA (PANKI) I	c. 1807-1817 (Killed in Banda War)
10. NANA GUARBO EFFA II (ATA KWADWO)	c. 1817-1855
11. NANA KOPI ABANCO	c. 1855-1855 (Ruled for 40 days only)
12. NANA KWASI POKU (Nicknamed Katakyle)	c. 1855-1857 (Suicide with Gun Powder)
13. NANA KOPI DU (EFFA) III	c. 1857-1857 (Poisoned by an unknown person through drink)
14. NANA KWAME KODOM (Alias KWAME KUMASE)	c. 1897-1910 (Destooled)
15. NANA KWADWO FAE V	c. 1910-1922 (Died on Stool)
16. NANA KWABENA WIAFE II	1922 (Ruled for 40 days) Destooled for being too young
17. NANA KWAME BAFFO II (1st Literate King)	1923-1927 (Destooled)
18. NANA YAW KODOM III	1927-1931 (Destooled)

NAME OF RULER	REGAL PERIOD
	REMARKS
19. NANA KWABENA WIAFE (AGAIN)	1931-1937 (Destooled)
20. NANA YAW KODOH III (AGAIN)	1937-1948 (Destooled)
21. NANA GUAKRO EFFA VI	1948-1956 (Destooled)
22. NANA KWANE BAFFO III	1956-1969 (Destooled)
23. NANA GUAKRO EFFA VI (AGAIN)	1969-1987 (Died on Stool 12th June, 1987)
24. NANA AGYEMAN KODUK IV (OKAFARTIE)	Installed on 17th September, 1987.

APPENDIX B

NKORANSA KING LIST AS REVISED BY THE WRITER

There appears to be some confusion in the Nkoransa King list. This must be cleared. On the list furnished this writer by the Paramount Chief of Nkoransa, the reigns of Nana Guakro Effa Panin (I) and Nana Kwado Owusu Ansa seem to have been transposed. The regnal periods of Nana Owusu Ansa and Nana Guakro Effa according to the list are: (1799 to 1807) and (1807 to 1817) respectively. This shows that Nana Owusu Ansa reigned before Nana Guakro Effa. But this arrangement does not agree with the facts of Nkoransa traditional chronology. The tradition says that Nana Owusu Ansa participated in the Akantamansu war of 1826. According to the tradition, he became Nkoransahene not long before the 1826 war broke out. When the stool became vacant, he could not immediately accede to it because he was a minor. Consequently, his mother, Adwoa Eoahen, the Queen-mother of Nkoransa became a regent for a considerable length of time.

Since Owusu Ansa fought in the Akantamansu war, he could not have been the Nkoransahene who began to reign in 1799 and died in 1807. On the other hand, Nana Guakro Effa Panin is not mentioned in Nkoransa tradition in connection with major events, involving Nkoransa, which occurred after the 1800's. If Nana Guakro Effa I, regarded by the Nkoransa as one of

their greatest warrior chiefs, had lived and reigned during the 1810's, there is little doubt that he would have been mentioned in connection with such major historical developments as the preparations that were being made in 1817 towards the Asante-Gyaman War of 1818-19, in which Nkoransa participated. Thus, the facts of Nkoransa traditional history indicate that Nana Guakro Effa Panin reigned before Nana Kwadwo Owusu Ansa and not vice versa. Early nineteenth century sources indicate that Guakro Effa I died in about 1802.

Another error on the Nkoransa King list is the date for the end of the reign of Nkoransahene Guakro Effa II, popularly known as Ata Fa. According to the list Ata Fa died in 1855. But Brandon Kirby's report on his "Mission to Coomassie and the interior provinces of the ASHANTI KINGDOM" from January to April 1884 states clearly that he (Kirby) held "numerous meetings" with "King Ata Fuah and his chiefs," during his visit to Nkoransa in February 1884. (See Kirby to Governor, ADM 11/1/1733, National Archives of Ghana, Accra, pp.93 and 94). Ivor Wilks also asserts that Ata Fa died at an 'advanced age' in 1885 (see Asante in the Nineteenth Century, p.296).

Judging from the foregoing facts the reigns and dates of a number of rulers may be revised thus: Guakro Effa I (c.

1799-1802); Kwadwo Owusu Ansa (c. 1802-1826) (Owusu Ansa's period includes the regency of his mother); Guakro Effa II (Ata Fa) (c. 1826-1885). (Here, an allowance must be made for the period during which the Nkoransa were expecting Owusu Ansa to return from the 1826 campaign after it had ended. (Chapter Three). Assuming that Owusu Ansa was replaced one or two years after the end of the war, Guakro Effa II's reign would have commenced in 1827 or 1828); Kwasi Opoku Katakylie (c. 1885-1888) (Opoku committed suicide in September 1888 (See Ivor Wilks, Asante in the Nineteenth Century, p.297); Kofi Fa (c. 1889-1897). See the revised King list in Appendix B.

REVISED KING LIST OF NKORANSA

NAME OF RULER	REGNAL PERIOD
1. ADU DONUINA	c 1718-1721
2. BAFFO PIM	c 1721-1762
3. WIAFE AKENTEN	c 1763-1780
4. FEI HYEAMAN	c 1780-1784
5. EFFA NKANTRAM	c 1784-1790
6. AFOSA KODOM ADWETAA	c 1790-1796
7. KWASI OWUSU (WONSIAMOA)	c 1796-1799
8. GUAKRO EFFA PANIN	c 1799-1802
REGENCY OF NKORANSAHEMAA	c 1802 to mid-1820's
ADWOA BOAHEN	c Mid-1820's-1827/28
9. KWADWO OWUSU ANSA	c 1827/28-1885
10. GUAKRO EFFA II (ATA FA OR ATA KWADWO)	c 1885-1888
11. KOFI ABAMOO	1885 (Ruled for 40 days only)
12. KWASI POKU KATAKYIE	c 1885-1888
13. KOFI FA	c 1888-1897
14. KWAME KODOM (KWAME KUMASE) II	1897-1910
15. KWADWO FA V	1910-1922
16. KWABENA WIAFE II	1922 (destooled)
17. KWAME BAFFO II	1923-1927
18. YAW KODOM III	1927-1931
19. KWABENA WIAFE II	1931-1937
20. YAW KODOM III	1937-1948
21. GUAKRO EFFA VI	1948-1956
22. KWAME BAFFO III	1956-1969
23. GUAKRO EFFA VI	1969-1987
24. AGYEMAN KODOM IV (OKATAKYIE)	1987 (Current)

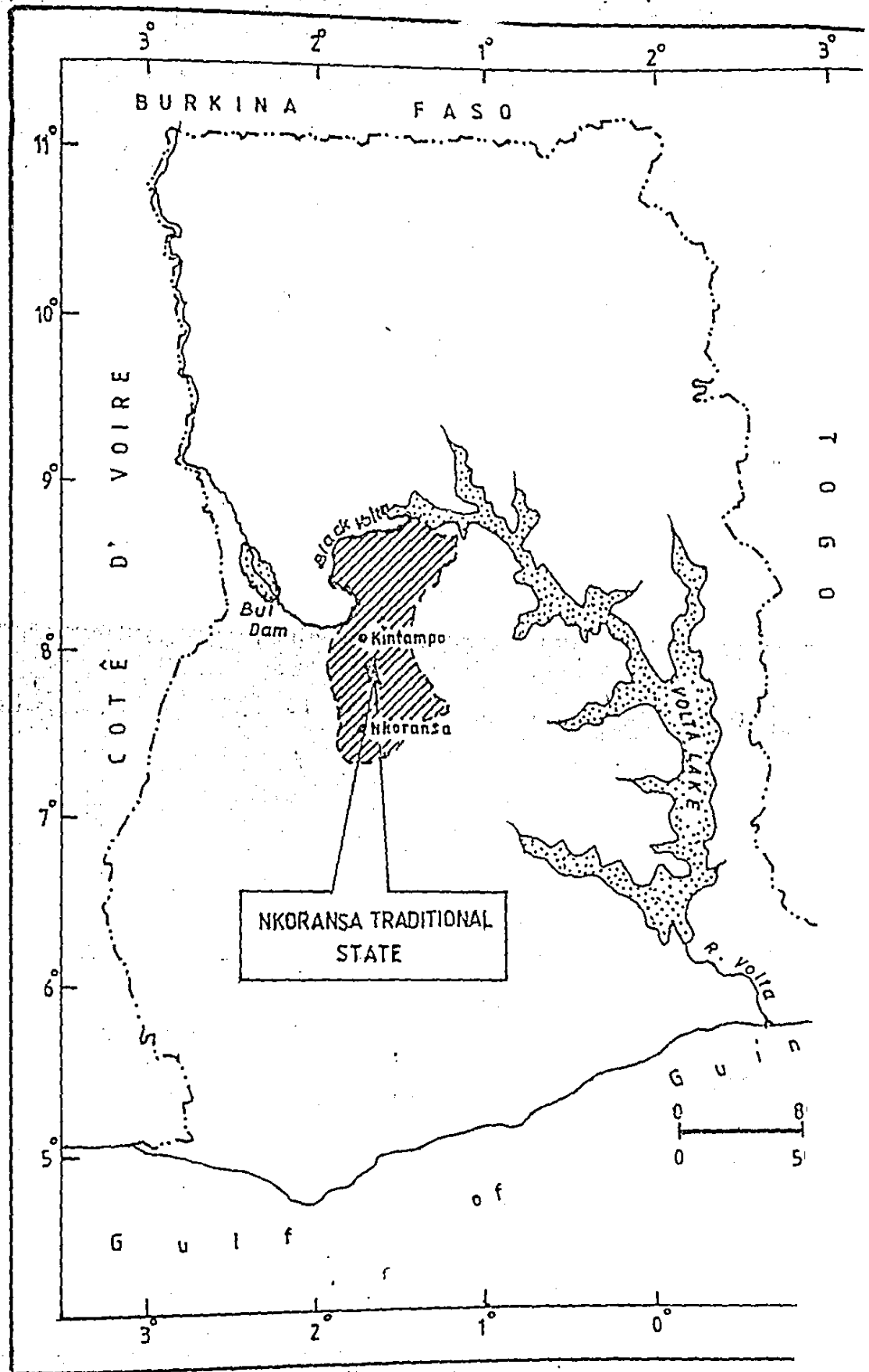
APPENDIX C

REGNAL LIST OF NKORANSA QUEEN-MOTHERS PROVIDED BY THE OMANHENE OF NKORANSA (EXCEPT FOR A FEW CASES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, NO DATES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR REGNAL PERIODS OF THE QUEEN MOTHERS)

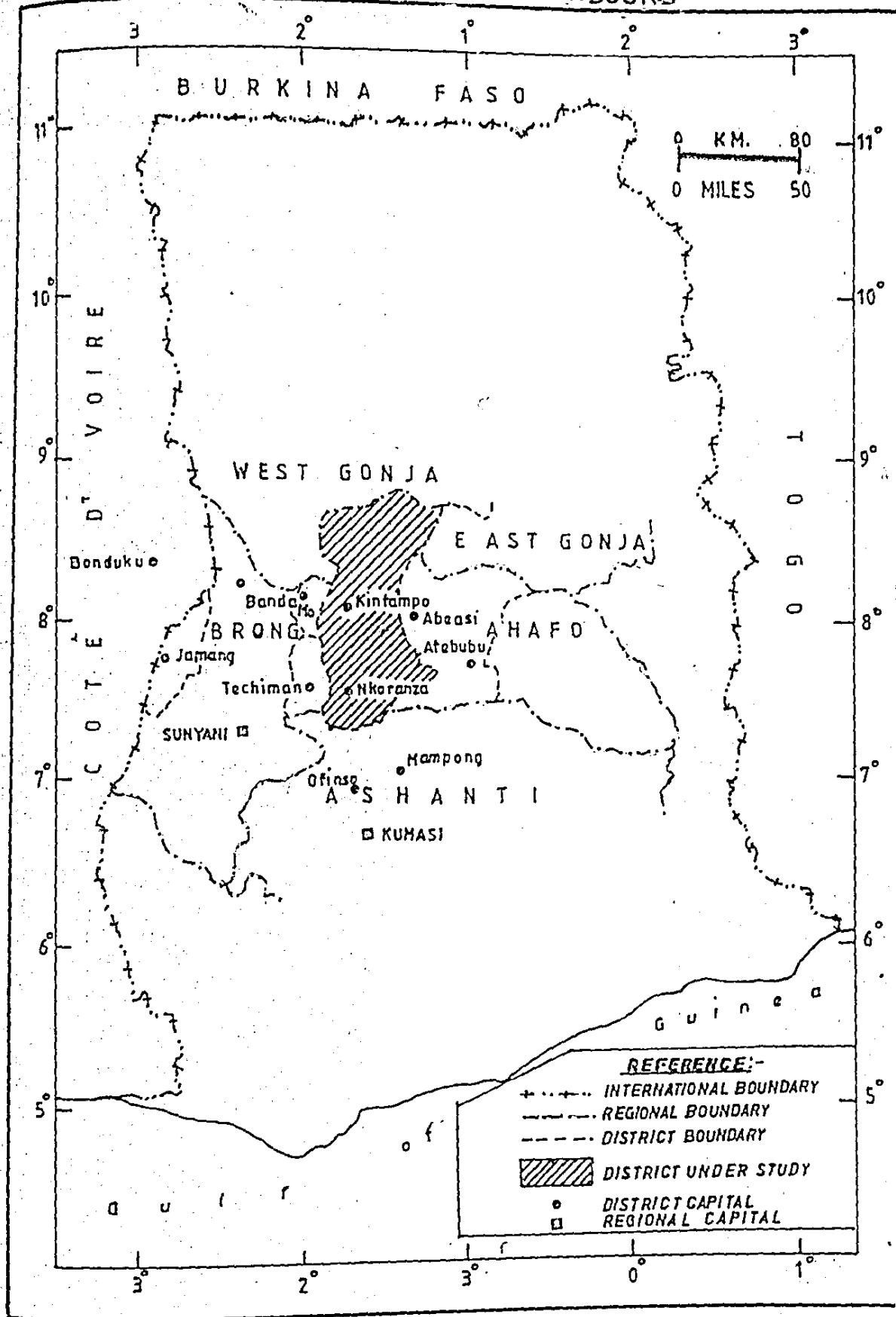
NAME OF QUEEN-MOTHER	DATE/REMARKS
1. NANA SAPOMAA I	n.d. (Sister of Adu Donyina and wife of Osei Tutu, mother of Baffo Pim).
2. NANA AKOSUA AMPOMA I	n.d. First enstooled Queen-Mother, Ruled during the time of Nana Baffo Pim and Nana Wiafe Akenten).
3. NANA BAAGYEI I	n.d. (Ruled during the periods of Nana Fei Hyeaman and Nana Effa Nkantram).
4. NANA KOKURAA I	n.d. (Ruled during the periods of Nana Effa Nkantram and Nana Afosa Kodom)
5. NANA KRUWA AMPOMA II	n.d. (Ruled during the time of Nana Wonsiamoa)
6. NANA BOAHEMAA I	n.d. (Ruled with Nanan Guakro Effa I and Nana Kwadwo Owusu Ansa)
7. NANA DUDAA I	n.d.
8. NANA SAA DATE	n.d.
9. NANA AFUA BOAHEN (AFUA DAPAA)	n.d. Ruled with: Nana Kofi Du (Kofi Fa); Nana Kwadwo Effa V; Nana Wiafe II; Nana Kwame Baffo II; Nana Yaw Kodom. (She was Queen-mother for approximately forty years. She was both Queen-mother and Omanhene (Paramount Chief from c1900-1923)

NAME OF QUEEN-MOTHER	DATE/REMARKS
10. NANA AKOSUA DUKU (NANA AMPOMA II)	n.d.
11. NANA BOAHEMAA II	1936-1946
12. NANA AFUA SAPOMAA II	1946-1980 (Ruled with Nana Yaw Kodom III, Nana Guakro Effa VI and Nana Kwame Baffo III.)*
13. NANA AMPOMA III	1980-1991
14. NANA YAA DUDAA II	1992 (Current) *NANA GUARKRO EFFA VI RULED AGAIN AFTER NANA BAFFO III.

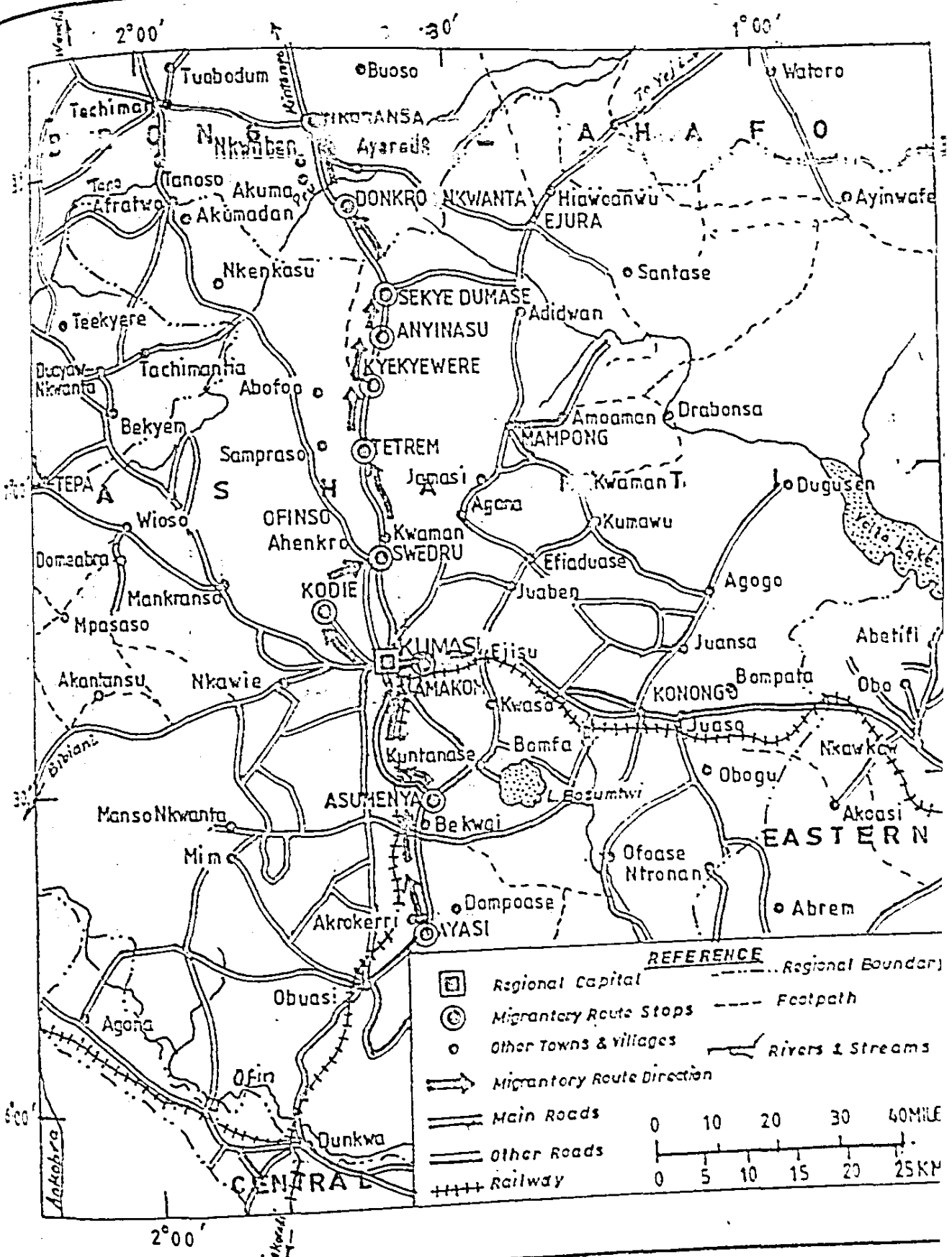
Map 1 : NKOF NSA TRADITIONAL STATE



Map 2 : NKORANSA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS



THE MIGRATORY ROUTE OF THE NKORANSA PEOPLE

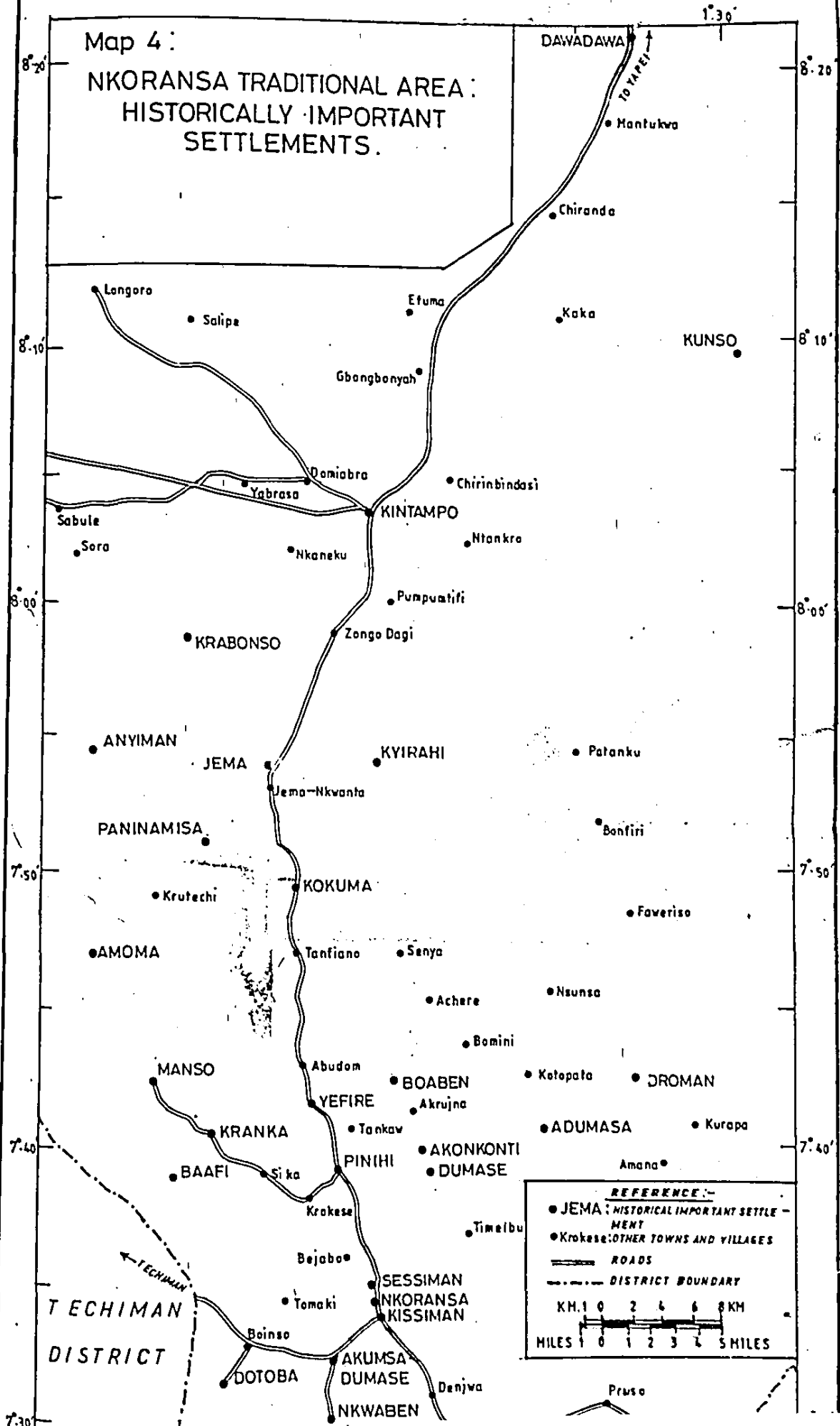


REFERENCE

- Regional Capital
- Migratory Route Stops
- Other Towns & Villages
- Footpath
- Rivers & Streams
- Migratory Route Direction
- Main Roads
- Other Roads
- Railway

0 10 20 30 40 MILE
0 5 10 15 20 25 KM

Map 4:
 NKORANSA TRADITIONAL AREA:
 HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT
 SETTLEMENTS.



REFERENCE:-

- JEMA: HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT SETTLEMENT
- Krokese: OTHER TOWNS AND VILLAGES
- ROADS
- - - DISTRICT BOUNDARY

KM. 0 2 4 6 8 KM
 MILES 0 1 2 3 4 5 MILES

TECHIMAN
 DISTRICT

Prusa

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