

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

A HISTORY OF WA, 1500 - 1900

BY

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DECLARATION

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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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Supervisor's 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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ABSTRACT

Motivated by the works of scholars on the histories of ethnic groups like the Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Asante, the aim of this study is to delineate the origins of the Waala from the earliest period to the eve of British Colonial rule in 1898. Political, economic, and social developments between 1500 and 1900 led to the rise of Wa and the creation of the Waala Kingdom. Trans-Saharan trade routes passing through Wa exposed Wa to all participants in the trade and attracted some to settle in Wa. The mixing of different peoples in the area created socio-political institutions and blended various cultures, distinguishing the people of Wa from other peoples. To facilitate good governance, the Mamprusi ruling lineage involved the main social groups - autochthons and Muslims - in the administration of the Kingdom. Continuous developments in Wa soon caught the attention of external forces, both Africans and Europeans, who for diverse reasons struggled to capture and control Wa from the 1880s. In 1898, the British won the race for Wa. This study, therefore, chronologically examines the history of Wa from the earliest times critically looking at the various influences which transformed Wa for more than 400 years.

KEY WORDS

Agriculture

British Colonial Rule

Different ethnic groups

Race for Wa

Trading

Waala

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DEDICATION

To my daughters, Kudiratu, Huuda, and Ramziyah Songsoma

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INTRODUCTION

This study is about the history of Wa from 1500 to 1900. The choice of the year AD 1500 as the starting point of the study is not arbitrary. The reason is that in any historical study one has to start from somewhere, particularly, from a point in time when one can obtain evidence from both written and unwritten sources.

Background to the Study

The period, 1500-1900, provides sufficient space of time to delve into the history of Wa, an ancient town which has "the longest history of chieftaincy in the Upper West Region and the Wa chieftaincy predated the British colonisation of the North."¹ In other words, from the early sixteenth century (the time of its rise) until the end of the nineteenth century, Wa played significant roles in the political, economic and social developments in the Waala kingdom, however developments (human and material) within the kingdom during the period have not been studied in detail by historians.

Statement of the Problem

Brief references made to Wa by earlier authors such as Gabriel Tuurey, in *An introduction to Mole-Speaking Community*², discussed the origins of Mole-Speakers which, he asserts, include the Waala. He remarks that they "had nothing like a political rallying point."³ Ivor Wilks, in his article 'The Mossi and the Akan

¹A. K. Awedoba, *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts Towards a Sustainable Peace*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2009, p.47

²Gabriel Tuurey, *An Introduction to the Mole-Speaking Communities*. Wa: Catholic Press, 1982.

³Ibid., p. 13.

states, 1500-1800',⁴ mentions the fact that "Mamprusi and Dagomba cavalrymen in the seventeenth century founded Wa."⁵ In *West Africa and Islam, a Study of Religious Development from the 8th to the 20th Century*, Peter B. Clarke indicates that "Wa was founded in about 1650."⁶ Carola Lentz, in the article, "A Dagara rebellion against Dagomba rule: Contested Stories of Origin in North-West Ghana,"⁷ made no reference to the Waala though they are close neighbours of the Dagaaba.

It is J. J. Holden's article, 'The Zabarima Conquest of North-West Ghana',⁸ which mentions the Waala prominently but provides very little information about the Waala. Between the western and eastern sides of the Black and White Volta (rivers), Adu Boahen, in *Topics in West African History*, enumerates the inhabitants as, "the Vagala, Sissala, Dagarti, Tampolensi, Guan and Konkomba; Koma, Nafeba, Gbimba and Chamba,"⁹ but does not mention the Waala, who are also found in the area.

There exists several other works by scholars not referred to in the work, but overall, reveal the paucity of documentation on the history of Wa. Many tertiary students also briefly discuss Wa in their dissertations for the award of

⁴Ivor Wilks, "The Mossi and the Akan states, 1500-1800," in Ajayi (et. al, ed.), *History of West Africa*. Vol I.. London: Longmans, 1971

⁵Ibid., p. 472

⁶Peter B. Clarke, *West Africa and Islam: a Study of Religious Development from the 8th to the 20th Century*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1981, p. 96

⁷Carola Lentz, "A Dagara Rebellion against Dagomba Rule: Contested Stories of Origin in North-Western Ghana," in *Journal of African History*. (1994), p. 458.

⁸J. J. Holden, "The Zabarima Conquest of North West Ghana Part 1." in, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. Vol.viii, (1965), p. 60

⁹Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History*. Schools Edition, London: Longmans, 1966, p. 42.

degrees. Salimata Abdul-Salam's dissertation, *The History of Wa*,¹⁰ stimulated the interest for this study and also provided the basis for examining in detail the history of Wa from 1500 to 1900.

Literature Review

A careful study of the existing literature reveals that very little has been done, specifically, on the history of Wa from 1500 to 1900. Infact, three authors and two students of History: J. C. Dougah, Ivor Wilks, Bin Salih; Iddrisu Mahama and Salimata Abdul-Salam, have shown interest in the study of the history of Wa. Even the few existing works provide very limited information and, thus, a major challenge to the construction of the history of Wa is the paucity of available information. Being aware of this hindrance, I relied on the multi-disciplinary approach in analysing available material so as to put the history of Wa in a more historical perspective.

In *Wa and Its People*, J. C. Dougah intended "to give a full account of the history of Wa and its people (Waala)."¹¹ The aim of Dougah was to examine thoroughly who the Waala are, their origins, customs, political, social and economic life. He (Dougah) provides a general discussion of the Waala in eleven chapters. Chapters One to Five were devoted to the physical conditions of the Wa district, the origins and ativities of the chiefly class (*nabiihe*), excluding the accounts of the early settlers or the indigenous people (the *tendamba*). In Chapters Six to Eleven, Dougah discusses the Mossi and Muslim communities and the

¹⁰Salimata Abdul-Salam, *The History of Wa*, Legon: Dissertation for B. A. Thesis, University of Ghana, 1982, pp. 5-10.

¹¹ J. C. Dougah, *Wa and its People*, Legon: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, 1966, p. ix

social life (marriage, funerals and festivals) of the people of Wa, which are found to be akin to or largely related to that of the Lobi, Dagaaba, and Mossi, but not the practice of the indigenes (*tendamba*) of Wa. Dougah's work is a good start, but without the account of the *tendamba* the history of Wa is incomplete.

Ivor Wilks', *Wa and the Waala; Islam and Polity in Northwestern Ghana* is "essentially a study of the roots of conflict and communal violence in Wa."¹² The author sets out to discuss the origins of Wa and the Wala (Waala). However, from the start of the study Wilks remarks that, "it was not possible to map out the boundaries of Wa with precision."¹³ This negates the author's aim and as a researcher one of his tasks was finding out the precise size or extent of the Waala Kingdom he was studying.

In the first three chapters, Wilks examines the location and physical features of the area where Wa is located and laments that "it has been destined to be, if not, he did not understand why people came to be found where they are."¹⁴ The origins of seven groups of people in Wa: the *Tendamba*, Muslims, *Nabihi*, *Hausa*, *Lobi*, *Mande* and *Dagaaba* are discussed showing them as the first, second and third ethnic groups in the town. This was to show the order in which people arrived in Wa. Concluding these first three chapters, Ivor Wilks indicates that, "the *Waala* commonly speak a language called *Waale*, a dialect of *Dagare* of the *Dagaaba* language...the mass of the *Waala* are undoubtedly *Dagaaba* by

¹²Ivor Wilks, *Wa and the Wala: Islam and Polity in Northwestern Ghana*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 2

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 5

¹⁴*Ibid.*

origin."¹⁵ This is contested by the researcher based on available documents which will be explored in the study.

Ivor Wilks' main objective in his study of Wa was to "trace the roots of conflict and communal violence" which were common in the area.¹⁶ Therefore, Wilks examined the polity of the Waala and concludes that it comprised three levels of authority, namely, the *Tendaana* (head of landowners), *Wa-Naa* (the head of *Nabiihi*, the Princely class) and the *Yari-naa* (the head of Muslims). He examines the status, roles and the extent of authority each leader possessed and suggests that the nature of Wa polity caused conflict among the people.

Another important aspect of the Waala examined by Wilks was the chronology, which showed the order and process by which Muslim leaders took office and how the *namine* (chiefs) succeeded one another. However, he failed to show the order and process by which the *tendaanas* were replaced. Wilks mentions the indigenous people as "the Dagara, Willi, and Birifor in the west, and Tampolense, Chakale, Potuli and Pasala in the east,¹⁷" who the author claims, "descended from Mande and Dagomba origins."¹⁸ This is highly contested by many sections of the people and the issues disagreed upon are clarified in this study.

Oral traditions of both the *Dolimbo* (people from *Dolimo*, a town thirty kilometres west of Wa) and the *Dagaaba*, indicate that the indigenous people referred to above are not Waala. There is also an account of the movement of war-

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 20

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

bands of *Mande* origin, which gave rise to 'the *Tarawiri, Sienu, Dabo* and *Zono*' clans. This is also contested and the information is found to be inconsistent with how Wa was peopled and will be clarified.

The aim of Wilks was to trace the source of conflicts among the *Waala*. Conflicts among the *Waala* often arose when the seat of a chief became vacant. This objective of identifying the cause of conflicts was not achieved because as recently as 2010, "three royal gates involved in the Wa chieftaincy affairs filed a notice of appeal in the National House of Chiefs in Kumasi against the judgment by the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs which recognized Naa Fuseini Seidu Pelpuo as the Paramount Chief of the *Waala* Traditional Area."¹⁹ Hence, it should be understood that, Wilks' work showed how the conflicts emerged and the order the chiefs (*Wa-Naas*) took office but he could not clearly show how eligible contestants would ascend to the seat of office devoid of trouble.

A careful study of Wilks' work suggests that he depended mostly on Muslim clerics for information. This is because Muslims could read and write in Arabic but were, as some scholars refer to them, "strangers," and thus, were not knowledgeable in the traditions and custom of the early settlers. Therefore, Muslims did not understand and could not interpret properly issues concerning the indigenes and other peoples of Wa. Hence, Wilks devoted about eighty percent of his work to the Muslims (strangers) to the neglect of the early settlers. This renders Wilks' work an incomplete history of *Wa and the Waala*, and this study, therefore, seeks to fill all the gaps identified in Wilks' work.

¹⁹George Folley, 'Three Royal Gates appeal against Judgement', *Daily Graphic*, March 6, 2010, p. 23.

Mohammed Bin Salih, in his book, *The Kingdom of Wa; Elucidation of Our Origins and Settlements*, "sought to paint a clear picture of the history of the Waala without bias."²⁰ He indicated that the Waala kingdom is a heterogeneous kingdom and identified the "*Lobi, Isala, Chakale, Potule, Pasala, Tampulima, Nome, Vagla, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Mande, Hausa, Gonja, Jengbeyiri, Sensewla, Sembellee, Watarehe, Nupayire, Siseele and Kunatella*" as the various peoples who coalesced to be the Waala.²¹

The above list of ethnic groups needs to be reviewed and revised because certain groups of people mentioned are not regarded as Waala. For instance, the *Isala, Potule, Pasala, Tampulima, Nome*, and the *Vagla*, do not regard themselves as Waala. Bin Salih rightly mentions the *Tendamba* settlements as *Puohoyiri, Suuriyiri, Kpagburi* and *Mangu* but wrongly states that these settlements were under the *Widaana* and *Sokpari* (two leaders). Furthermore, Bin Salih argues that the Wa skin was the prerogative of the *Tendamba* and that all Muslim clans are 'saamba' (strangers), but he includes the *Tagrayiree, Bugliyiree* and *Limanyiree*,²² who are Muslims in the group he considers to be indigenous. By this one may be confused as to the distinction between the indigenes and settlers. These are some of the errors the researcher identified and hopes to investigate, ascertain the facts, and straighten the record in this study.

In, *Wa under British Colonial Rule, 1898-1957*, M.Phil. Thesis presented to the University of Cape Coast by Iddrisu Mahama targeted British colonisation

²⁰Mohammed Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa; Elucidation of Our Origins and Settlements*. Tema-Accra: Raqeem Press, 2008, p. 26.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p. 310.

in Wa, but briefly discusses the origins of the Waala. He indicates that the Waala are "a multi-ethnic group" and that "Wa was founded by the Lobi,"²³ a view the Waala oral tradition upholds. This opinion is found to be different from those of many works by earlier authors already referred to above. This, therefore, becomes the basis for tracing the history of Wa. In addition, a number of other sources do not specifically focus on the history of the Waala but are of importance to the general history of Wa. These were examined for information.

In "Wa as a Growth Centre, 1893-1973,"²⁴ Jacob Songsore examines the extent of the Waala kingdom before and during the British Colonial rule. In *Regional Development in Ghana; the Theory and the Reality*,²⁵ Jacob Songsore briefly discusses the geography and growth as well as the economic life of the Waala. Songsore's concern in the works was to show the extent of political and economic developments which have been identified as factors responsible for the migration of many ethnic groups into the region (Northern Ghana). These works, therefore, informed scholars about the importance of towns like Wa at the time and why external forces vied for the incorporation of Wa into their areas of influence.

R.S. Rattray, in his book, *The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*,²⁶ briefly discussed chieftaincy, an aspect of Waala history, and showed how the present

²³Iddrisu Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule, 1898-1957*. M.Phil. Thesis, Department of History, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast: 1999, p. 1.

²⁴ Jacob Songsore, *Wa as a Growth Centre, 1893-1973*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Ghana, Legon: 1975, p. 81.

²⁵Jacob Songsore, *Regional Development in Ghana: The Theory and The Reality*, New Edition, Accra: Woeli Publication Services, 2011, p. 28.

²⁶ R. S. Rattray, *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland, Volume 2*. London: Oxford University Press, 1932, p. 452

ruling class in Wa became the political leaders. However, Rattray did not focus on the indigenous people or their history because of the broad nature of his study. Hence this study will comprehensively elaborate on Wa and its history. Rather, A. K. Awedoba, in, *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts towards a Sustainable Peace*,²⁷ highlights the peoples of Northern Ghana and examines chieftaincy among the Waala. Awedoba's work clarified the fact that the inhabitants of Wa are indigenes and immigrants but does not do so in detail. However, the ideas from Awedoba's work have aided in the reconstruction of Waala history.

In *Chiefs, Constitutions and the British in Northern Ghana*,²⁸ Phyllis Ferguson and Ivor Wilks did not discuss the Waala, who had established and practiced a chieftaincy system similar to that of the Mamprusi, Dagomba and Gonja, which were adequately cited. Looking at the title of the book it seems Ferguson and Wilks may have discussed the Waala Kingdom. However, the reverse is the case. R. G. Thomas, in "George Ekem Ferguson: A Civil Servant Extraordinary,"²⁹ discusses the role of George Ekem Ferguson, in the incorporation of Wa and the Waala into the British colonial sphere but did not touch on the history of the Waala. Similarly, Francis Agbodekah, in *African Politics and British Policy in the Gold Coast, 1865-1900*,³⁰ briefly analysed British intentions

²⁷ A. K. Awedoba, *Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts Towards a Sustainable Peace*, p. 47

²⁸ Phyllis Ferguson and Ivor Wilks, "Chiefs, Constitutions and the British in Northern Ghana, in *West African Chiefs: Their Changing Status Under Colonial Rule and Independence*. Ile Ife: University Press, 1990, p. 330.

²⁹ R. G. Thomas, "George Ekem Ferguson: A Civil Servant Extraordinary," in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana. Vol. Xiii (II)*. 1972 p. 201

³⁰ Francis Agbodekah, *African Politics and British Policy i the Gold Coast, 1865-1900*

towards Wa but did not delve into British colonial rule in Wa. His work focuses more on British policy in the Gold Coast generally and Wa is only tangentially discussed.

R. B. Bening, examines in "The Definition of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1888-1904,"³¹ how European nations, particularly, France, Britain and Germany, divided territories they acquired in Northern Ghana in order to avoid future conflict. Again, Bening, in "The Evolution of Administrative Boundaries in Northern Ghana, 1898-1965,"³² examine how the Germans, French and British struggled for the control of parts of Ghana and briefly discussed Wa. His works informed the researcher about the extent of European activities in the entire Northern Region of Ghana (now Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions) which aided in the historical reconstruction of Wa. Benedict G. Der, also examines "Missionary Enterprise in Northern Ghana, 1906-1975: A Study in Impact,"³³ and briefly mentioned the restoration of peace and order in Wa by the British, but also indicated that the British interfered with the chieftaincy institution in the Waala kingdom, an idea used to enhance the study.

Adu Boahen, in *Colonialism in Africa: Its Impact and Significance*,³⁴ describes how several African political systems: the Asante (Ghana), the Yoruba (Nigeria), the practices of peoples of Central, Eastern and Southern Africa

³¹R. B. Bening, "The Definitions of International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1888-1904 in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana. Vol., xiv(II)*. 1973, p. 234

³²R. B. Bening "The Evolution of Administrative Boundaries in Northern Ghana, 1898-1965," Ph.D. Dissertation, Oxford University Press, London: 1971, p. 234

³³Benedict G., Der, "Missionary Enterprise in Northern Ghana, 1906-1975: A Study in Impact." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Ghana, Legon: 1983. p.10

³⁴Adu Boahen, *Colonialism in Africa: Its Impact and Significance: General History of Africa* Vol. I. London: UNESCO, 1985, p. 787

opposed the introduction of colonial rule in their respective kingdoms. Asante, an ancient kingdom in Ghana, for example, was discussed but he did not include other ancient kingdoms established at the time by the Mamprusi, Gonja, Dagomba and the Waala.

Salimata Abdul-Salam's, 'The History of Wa',³⁵ traces the origins, composition and nature of the Waala society and the political and economic development of Wa were briefly discussed in forty pages. The work summarised many aspects of the history of the Waala and a lot of issues are either misrepresented or mixed up. This study hopes to clarify the facts on Wa and the Waala and put the history of Wa in its historical perspective.

A number of works by some geographers, K. B. Dickson, and George Benneh in *A New Geography of Ghana*,³⁶ C.A. Ackah, in *West Africa: General Certificate Geography*³⁷ and E. V. T. Engmann, in *Population of Ghana, 1850-1960*,³⁸ were used substantially to indicate the location and population of Wa and the Waala. The above works also threw light on the economic and strategic importance of Wa which has supported ideas put up in the study.

In addition, Peter Sarpong, in *Ghana in Retrospect; some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture*,³⁹ discussed general aspects of Ghanaian life and culture: funerals, marriage etc. which were useful for the construction of this study.

³⁵Salimata Abdul-Salam's, *The History of Wa*. p.20

³⁶Kwamina B. Dickson and George Benneh *A New Geography of Ghana*; Revised Edition, London: Longman, 1988, p. 132

³⁷C.A. Ackah, in *West Africa: General Certificate Geography*, London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p.3

³⁸E. V. T. Engmann, *Population of Ghana, 1850-1960*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1986, p.13

³⁹Peter Sarpong, in *Ghana in Retrospect; Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture*. Tema-Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974, p. 88

Furthermore, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, and Daryll Forde, in *African Systems of Kingship and Marriage*,⁴⁰ is not strictly about Waala systems but it has served as a guide and given the researcher additional perspectives of the study.

Overall, there is not much work on Wa and the Waala. All the scholars mentioned discussed limited segments of the history of Wa and the Waala. In other instances, they (the ideas and facts) were dismissed altogether. Since the history of Wa and the Waala is not sufficiently addressed in the literature of the scholars mentioned above this thesis fills the gap by providing a comprehensive study of Wa and the Waala using many different sources, more especially, oral interviews that many of the scholars mentioned did not utilise.

Objectives of the Study

The study has three objectives. First, the study hopes to reconstruct the past of the Waala and clearly state who the Waala are, their origins, traditions and customs. These are some of the very elements that shaped the nature of towns, states or kingdoms. It is interesting to note that storytelling, riddles, poems and many other aspects of a people's culture, which were basic sources from which the youth obtained knowledge, are fast disappearing. Consequently there is the need to investigate and document the history of ancient settlements and peoples such as Wa and the Waala.

Secondly, European anthropologists during the colonial period directed their attention towards the study of the traditions and customs of people under

⁴⁰ A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, and Daryll Forde, in *African Systems of Kingship and Marriage*, London: Oxford University Press, 1975.

colonial rule. Their reason was, probably, to understand the people better and effectively rule them. Mindful of this objective, the colonial agents did not understand the nature of multi-ethnic groups such as the *Waala*, and either distorted or ignored much of their important past. For this reason, the study seeks to correct any misrepresentation in reports by European agents which are deposited in the Public Records and Archives Department (PRAAD) offices in Ghana.

The third aim of this study is to show the extent of the influence and impact of external forces, particularly Islamic religion and culture on the one hand and British colonial rule on the other, on Wa and the Waala. The presence of Muslims and the British in Wa influenced the cultural practices of the Waala. The culture of the Waala, especially their names and "tribal marks" which distinguished them from other people, are fast disappearing. This study would document some of the disappearing cultural practices.

Methodology

The study is a qualitative one based mostly on primary materials and relevant secondary works. The primary materials were gathered in four ways: conversations with knowledgeable people, oral interviews, administering of questionnaires to people and analysing recorded traditions. The area under study is found in the Upper West Region. Therefore, the discussion is focused mostly on people within the region, namely the *Waala*, *Dagaaba*, *Lobi*, *Sissala* and *Chakalee*. Furthermore, people in other parts of Ghana and West Africa whose traditions have links with the *Waala* such as the *Frafra*, *Grunshi*, *Mamprusi*,

Dagomba, Gonja, Zabarima and *Mossi* were interviewed and useful information gathered during the period of fieldwork was used.

The earlier authors (J. C. Dougah, Ivor Wilks and Bin Salih) make references to Arabic and Gonja Chronicles, which were searched for and used to support the oral and primary evidence. The people in the Wa district also exhibit a rich culture in their style of building, clothing and musical instruments. These, to a large extent, were studied and that also helped in the reconstruction of the history of Wa. Finally, the Researcher explored and used all available pieces of evidence from other neighbours who are closely related to the Waala to obtain credible information to complete this study. Recorded traditions contained in files found in the PRAAD depositories (offices) in Accra and Tamale classified as ADM 56 Series, Colonial Secretary's Office (CSO), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Northern Regions of Ghana (NRG) files were used.

The secondary sources, books and articles which contain relevant information on the Waala were examined and utilised. Private and public libraries in Ghana, especially University libraries, were visited to examine both published and unpublished works (books, journals and articles) by earlier researchers to obtain the information needed to complete the study. Being aware of the limitations of both oral and written documents, the researcher engaged in internal and external criticism of data gathered in order to reconstruct the history of Wa based on reliable evidence.

In addition, every available relevant information or evidence on the Waala recorded as minutes during Waala meetings, petitions, memoranda, reports at

seminars, durbars and annual Waala celebrations (festivals) as well as recorded documents of committees of the various administrative organs and traditional authorities meetings were critically examined and analysed. This gave the researcher a full understanding of information gathered, and enabled me to accurately interpret the information gathered. In other words, the researcher relied on the qualitative method of analytical, critical examination and description of historical evidence.

Organisation of the Study

The study has been divided into six parts beginning with an introduction. The introduction dealt with the background information, statement of the problem, literature review, objectives, methodology and organisation of the study. Chapter One examines the location, size, foundation and growth of Wa and the size and nature of the Waala kingdom from 1500 to 1900. Here, how Wa got its name and the way the inhabitants lived are discussed.

This background information is followed by the examination of how people migrated into Wa in Chapter Two. This is discussed in two parts. The first part is devoted to the indigenous or autochthonous people and the second part discusses the arrival and activities of immigrant groups, who basically are the princely and Muslim groups.

Chapter Three looks at how the Waala fared during the pre-colonial period. In other words, the political, social, and economic developments of the Waala as a people and how they transformed their society before and how it was after the introduction of British rule are discussed. Before the establishment of

British rule over the Waala, the state had been subjected to a series of attacks by external forces such as, the Zabarima, Samori Toure, the French and the British, for the conquest and control of Wa, an important commercial and educational centre at the time.

The race for Wa is the subject matter discussed in the fourth chapter. The British won the struggle for Wa and incorporated it into her dominion. Chapter Five, the final part of the study, focuses on the implementation of British rule and its impact on the life of the people.

The discussion ends with a conclusion in Chapter Six. This chapter gives an overview of how Wa began, developed progressively into a kingdom and later fell under the British colonial rule.

CHAPTER ONE

THE GEOGRAPHY OF WA

Introduction

One of the largest and oldest settlements in Northern Ghana is Wa. The settlement played a central role in the economic, cultural and political history of the region, yet it has received little attention from historians. With the exception of three scholars, J. C. Dougah, Ivor Wilks and Bin Salih, who in their respective works wrote considerably on Wa, many other scholars briefly mention or make brief statements about Wa. Hence, a student of history once remarked that, "the only people who had had the bad luck to have no written records on them happen to be those tribes [ethnic groups] lying between the forest belt and the Upper Niger Bend."⁴¹ These people include the people of Wa (*Waalaa*) whose history is being reconstructed in this dissertation. This chapter therefore examines the history of Wa focusing on the location, origins and nature of political, economic and socio-cultural change they (*Waalaa*), as a people, have undergone in the course of their evolution over several centuries.

The Etymology of Wa

Recent works on African social systems examined suggest that, "all African names have a meaning."⁴² But some names, according to John S. Mbiti, "may mark the occasion of childbirth, identify one thing from others, indicate

⁴¹ Gabriel Tuurey, *An Introduction to the Mole-Speaking communities*. pp. 11-12.

⁴² Peter Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture*: p.88.

one's clan or origin, reveals some historical event, a man's status or position."⁴³ Similarly, John Parker and Richard Rathbone suggest that, "naming nations was mostly coined by outside observers and, that, words such as Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia were originally Greek terms."⁴⁴ There are a lot of such suggestions by scholars about what traditions evolved regarding the adoption of names which can be used to explain how and why towns, such as Wa, got their names.

The group of people located to the north-east of Wa, precisely the present-day Kundugu and Finsi people, are believed to have been originally Mamprusi who migrated from Nalerigu, a town in modern Northern Region of Ghana, to their present site near Ghoraba and Parabogo rivers. This group was overtaken by nightfall and decided to pass the night at their present habitat and continue at dawn, saying "*ka ti fon se*," meaning "to get up early". The entire group overslept and woke up late and having found the vegetation of the area attractive and fertile they stayed put. So the expression '*a fon se*' came to be applied to all members of this group and later the British corrupted the term '*fon se*' to read "Finsi."⁴⁵

The administrative seat of the Northern Region of Ghana, Tamale, got its name in a similar manner. The present site of Tamale was originally a thick shea tree grove. It appears that people living within the shea tree area at the

⁴³John S. Mbiti, *African Traditional Religion and Philosophy*, London: Heinemann, 1969, p.118.

⁴⁴John Parker and Richard Rathbone, *African History: A very short Introduction*; London: Oxford University Press, 2007, p.20.

⁴⁵Interview with Bayong Bakubie II, *Kuoro* (chief) of Kundugu, aged 86, Kundugu Palace, 14th May, 1998.

time were often referred to as "*taama yel (yiri)*," which means "home of shea tree". The expressions '*taama yel (yiri)*' were corrupted by the British to "Tamale."⁴⁶ There is also the story about the usage of '*skins*' by Northern Traditional leaders. Emmanuel F. Tamakloe narrates a story about the chiefs, a fetish priest and their people in the Northern Region of Ghana who often sat on the skin of lions and tigers and used the various ornamented lion and tiger skins as their symbols of authority which they called "*a da gbon*," meaning "*a da's skin*." Hence, the name of the area where the chiefs, fetish priest and people lived was corrupted to '*Dagbon*' and the inhabitants called "*Dagomba*."⁴⁷

Similarly, there is an interesting story about the origin of the town Nkawkaw, located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The story is woven around the geographical landscape of the site of the town, which is hilly. Informants say the people used the hills as a defensive weapon against their opponents. When trouble erupted the people would run uphill and push down huge stones on the enemy advancing from below and by that they could repel attacks. Therefore, people dreaded the site of the hills and never went by when there was trouble. In the Akan language people described the site as "*nko ko wu*," meaning in English "do not go and die," which also has been corrupted to be "*Nkawkaw*."⁴⁸

⁴⁶Conversation with Salifu Mumuni, leader of the Sokpayiri clan, aged 92, Wa, 23rd May, 1998

⁴⁷E. F. Tamakloe, *Brief History of the Dagomba People*, Accra: Government Printing House, 1931, p.2

⁴⁸Conversation with Rose-Mary Raymond, Director of Special Education Division, Ghana Education Service, aged 59, Accra, October 8, 2013.

The name *Wa* is traced to the influx of people to its present site. All the groups of people now settled in Wa happened to have been attracted there by certain events or conditions. In *Waale*, the language of the *Waala*, the word "come" is rendered "*wa*."⁴⁹ Before the application of the word '*wa*', some early settlers took clan names such as: *Sokpayiri*, *Puohoyiri*, *Kpagburi*, *Kambale*, *Kokoyiri*, *Tadaanayiri*, *Dograyiri*, *Kpaneyiri*, *Suuriyiri*, *Widaanayiri* and *Mango*. These groups of people in the course of time coalesced into and were known as *Waala* and the places they settled called Wa which means to come.

The Geographical Setting of Wa

Wa is a rapidly developing town, now a municipality and the regional capital of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The inhabitants of Wa, collectively called *Waala*, according to their oral tradition, comprise of different groups of people who began to settle in the area which later came to be called Wa over six centuries ago [probably, from 1400 or earlier].⁵⁰ Another opinion suggests that Wa, "by the fourteenth century was a commercial centre" and is situated between the tropical rainforest region of West Africa and the Niger Bend.⁵¹

It is drained by the Volta river system: the Black Volta, Red Volta and White Volta, particularly, the Black Volta and its tributaries. Since the River Volta is the main river that drains the entire land area of the northern part of Ghana the region is conveniently referred to as the Voltaic Region or the Volta

⁴⁹ Information from Sumani Munja, Head of Puohoyiri clan and leader of the entire Balume ethnic group, aged 95, Wa, 14th July, 1997.

⁵⁰ Conversation with Naa Seidu Mumuni, Chief of Chansa, aged 72, Chansa (village), April 2, 1998.

⁵¹ Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, Schools Edition, p.54

Basin as the Ghanaian population geographer, Engmann, puts it. According to Engmann, the "Voltaian basin occupy roughly 45 percent of the total land area of modern Ghana."⁵²

Considering that Ghana's total land area, according to Ackah, "is 92,000 square miles (approximately 147,200 square kilometres)", the Volta Basin which is 45% of the land area of Ghana is 41,000 miles; approximately 66,240 kilometers.⁵³ Out of the 66,240 kilometres referred to above, Dougah asserts that, Wa district area "covers approximately 3,462 square miles (5,539.2 square kilometres)."⁵⁴ This entire land area of the Wa District, found in the Savannah zone to the north of modern Ghana, is a flat undulating open land, which lies between the Equator (0°) and the Tropic of Cancer ($23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N). Specifically, the Wa district "extends roughly from $9^{\circ} 45'$ N to $10^{\circ} 15'$ N and from the Volta (river) on the west (of Wa) to longitude 2° west of the Greenwich."⁵⁵

Located in the tropics, the Wa district annually experience hot and dry climatic conditions and record temperatures ranging between 23° C and 43° C during the rainy and dry seasons respectively. The rains begin towards the end of April and become very intensive in July and August. The dry season covers seven months starting from the middle of October to March each year. The high

⁵²E. V. T. Engmann, *Population of Ghana, 1850–1960*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1986, p.13.

⁵³C. A. Ackah, *West Africa: General Certificate Geography*, London: University of London Press, 1966, p.3.

⁵⁴Duogah, *Wa and its People*, p.3.

⁵⁵Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Tamale, NRG 8/2/217, "Essay on the Peoples of the Northwestern Province," by M. M. Read, Commissioner of the Northwestern Province, 1908.

temperatures and short periods of rain significantly reduce moisture and plant growth. Hence, the vegetation is generally savannah or the grassland type.

The seasons are two, the wet and dry seasons. The nature of the vegetation depends on the season. In the rainy season, for instance, common trees such as *dawadawa*, *baobab* and shea sprout making the area very green and full of life. During the dry season the vegetation witnessed in the wet season undergoes a dramatic change. The green grass dries up and the leaves of trees turn yellow and are shed. People burn this dry vegetation thus reducing the area to near desert conditions. During such dry periods, the terrain becomes very open and people are able to view objects from far distances without obstruction.

As one travels from Wa in the north to the south of Ghana one notices that the physical appearance of the Wa territory provides a strong contrast to the tropical rainforest of the Asante Region, about four hundred kilometres to the south of Wa. Therefore, Remigius McCoy indicates that, "the area was part of the Sahel, an arid region stretching across the breadth of North Africa, where drought and famine are as frequent and persistent today as they were then."⁵⁶ Similarly, Wilks examined the nature of the Wa district and remarks that, "nothing in this environment decree that it should be. The climate is unreliable, the soils indifferent, and disease rife. There are, however, its people."⁵⁷

Interpreting the opinions of both Wilks and McCoy above, meant the geographical environment of the area of Wa at the time was not very conducive for human habitation. The above suggestions seem misleading because the

⁵⁶Remigius F. McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, Montreal: The Society of Missionary of Africa, 1988, p.35

⁵⁷Wilks, *Wa and the Wala*, p.5

environment and climate of Wa area was not as hostile as depicted and for a long period of time it well supported its people by providing them with a viable means of livelihood.

A British Colonial Officer, M. Moutray Read, attests to the fact that people settled in the area of Wa "simply because there, they found a place where the soil was fertile, water plentiful and livestock flourished; further South livestock languish, further North water is more scarce."⁵⁸ Furthermore, Adu Boahen asserts that, "about 4,000 years ago, the savannah belt was more suitable for human habitation than the forest region to the South. That belt, called Bilad as-Sudan by the Arabs, thus saw a great multiplication of people long before those of the forest."⁵⁹

Wa, also located within the savannah belt, therefore, was no exception as it also experienced "the multiplication of people in the 1850s." This settlement pattern and the concentration of people in Wa described above is depicted by Dickson and Benneh, two Ghanaian geographers, on Map 1 overleaf.⁶⁰ The common settlement pattern adopted by people of different backgrounds, so concentrated within a small portion of land suggests that there are some historical origins, importance or meaning attached to the settlement pattern. This settlement pattern was not found in any town in Northern Ghana of the size of Wa.

⁵⁸Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra, ADM 66/5/1, General Information Book, Wa District, 1901.

⁵⁹Boahen, *Topics in West African History*. Schools Edition, p.3.

⁶⁰Kwamina B. Dickson and George Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*, Revised Edition, London; Longman, 1988, p.132.

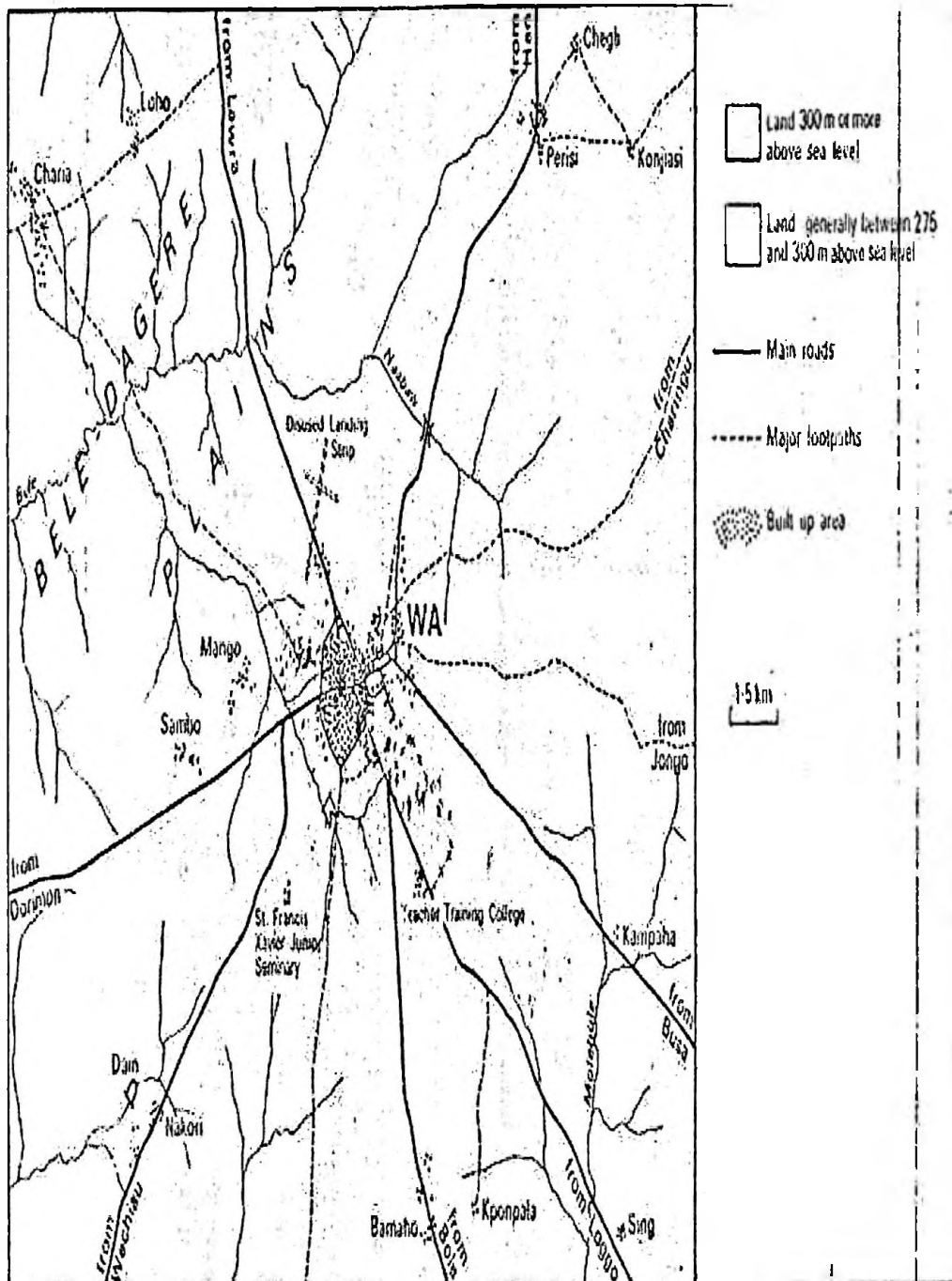


Figure 1: The Position, Site and Pattern of Settlements in Wa.

Source: Dickson and Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*, 1988, p.132.

Agriculture, trade, and politics also played important roles in the pattern of settlements adopted by people in Wa. Farming, fishing, and hunting were the

main economic activities in the area and these attracted the early settlers who cultivated different types of foodstuffs not far from their habitats and more than they could consume. There were two advantages in this. Dickson and Benneh noted that, "the availability of abundant game, food and water supply "attracted many other people to the area."⁶¹ The abundance of agricultural products also resulted in internal trade among communities. The trading activities within Wa led to the opening of market centres in six communities: *Ma-ngo, Kaleo, Sankana, Dolimo, Charia and Jang.*⁶²

Two major commodities, gold and kola nuts, also played significant roles in determining the concentration of people in Wa. Gold came from the region of Lobi (in the valley of the Black Volta) and Asante. Kola nuts were also obtained from the forest belt of modern Ghana largely produced by the Asante. These two most vital commodities of trade at the time passed through Wa to other commercial centres. As a result, Bening indicates that, "Wa became an important trade centre and from where several caravan routes passed through into the gold and kola nut producing areas of Asante and Lobi."⁶³ In other words, Wa served as the conduit for the gold and kola nut trade being conducted within and outside the kingdom into distant areas at the time. Gold and kola nut, as Fage, indicates

⁶¹Dickson and George Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*. p.132.

⁶²Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra, ADM 56/1/412, Monthly Report, Captain H. R. Srike, Acting Commissioner, Black Volta District to Chief Commissioner, Northern Territories, 1922.

⁶³R. B. Bening, "The Definitions of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1888-1904", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol XIV (1), 1973, p. 234.

"excited the interest of traders in Mandeland... and kola nut played a role in the social life of people of the region."⁶⁴

The general opinion held among the Waala is that it was because of the kola nut that the Mossi, an ethnic group from modern Burkina Faso, visited the area during the era of the Trans-Saharan Trade and later settled in Wa.⁶⁵ Wa was located on the western route of the Trans-Saharan trade, "the trade that linked together North Africa, the Mediterranean world, Europe, the Sahara, the Savannah and the forest region of West Africa and which began in the third century, reaching its peak and intensity between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries."⁶⁶ This trade, according to Samir Amin, "enabled the whole of the old world - Mediterranean, Arab, and European - to be supplied with gold from the main source of production in the Upper Senegal and Asante until the discovery of America."⁶⁷

Similarly, people in areas such as Wa where the trade routes passed definitely obtained their needs and played roles as middlemen. This became a principal source of employment for people in the Wa area and a factor for the growth of Wa. Besides human portage, trade was conducted by "the use of donkeys and bullocks, the principal carriers of trade goods to and from the areas

⁶⁴J. D. Fage, *History of Africa*, London: Hutchinson, 1978, p.91

⁶⁵Conversation with:

>Kabore, Mahama, Linguist, aged 60, Zongo (Wa), March 13, 2014

>Sidiiku, Migimah, Chief of Zongo, aged 65, Wa, March 13, 2014

>Baaba, Haruun, Head of Hausas, aged 70, Zongo (Wa), March 14, 2014

⁶⁶Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, New Edition, London: Longmans, 1986, p.1

⁶⁷Samir Amin, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa Origins and Contemporary form," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, (1972), p.508

of Buna, Lobi, Asante, Yoruba, Nupe, Igala and Jukun."⁶⁸ This means of transport did not only enhance trading activities conducted internally and externally across the whole region (present Upper West) but the burden of carrying goods by traders was done away with and that also attracted traders to the region, most of whom later settled there.

Every economic activity, particularly trade, thrives very well under peaceful and stable (political) conditions. These were available in Wa and traders in the district enjoyed them. This peaceful environment particularly was, perhaps, the main factor which attracted Hausa and Mande Muslims (Wangara traders and clerics) from the 1750s to settle in Wa. Surprisingly, people who later arrived continued to build their houses close to existing settlements and that gave rise to the pattern as shown on Map 1 (p. 24) in Wa.

The concentration of settlements was further necessitated by the exigencies of the time. This was the time states or kingdoms such as the Hausa states, and ancient Ghana, Mali and Songhai empires, rose and later collapsed. This resulted in the movement of people to safe places such as Wa, where developments in commerce largely conditioned the political, social and economic life of the people. This was also the time when, as Songsore states, "people needed to come together for mutual protection from more powerful neighbours."⁶⁹ Thus, began the founding and peopling of the area later called Wa and the development of the Waala kingdom, which are discussed below.

⁶⁸Bening, 'The Definitions of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1888-1904', p.234.

⁶⁹Jacob Songsore, *Regional Development in Ghana; The Theory and the Reality*, New Edition, Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2011, p.28.

The Founding of Wa

One important event in the history of Northern Ghana between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries was the migration of many ethnic groups to occupy parts of the Volta Basin - the territory between the Black and White Volta. The movement of people was the direct result of the rise of the Mole-Dagbani states (Mamprusi, Dagomba, and Mossi), the Gonja, the collapse of the ancient Western Sudanese states and the growth of commercial activities in the area of the Volta Basin.

Many of the people who moved and settled in parts of the Volta basin are the *Vagala*, *Tampolensi*, *Sissala*, *Dagaaba*, *Guan*, *Konkomba*, *Koma*, *Nafeba*, *Gbimba* and *Chamba*. Their migrations stimulated the process of state formation in the region. Within the Voltaic basin also emerged a number of towns: *Salaga*, *Daboya*, *Buipe*, *Bole* and *Wa*.⁷⁰ The research questions which may be asked include: when did these communities or towns, specifically Wa, emerge? Who founded Wa? What was the composition of the Wa state? How was the Wa state administered?

Some historians in their various works associate the founding of Wa with people from outside. For instance, Adu Boahen indicates that "in the fourteenth century, [i.e. from about 1300], the Wangara had founded the commercial centres of Wa, Buna and Bole."⁷¹ Peter Clarke also mentions that, "the kingdom of Wa was founded in 1650 by chiefs of Dagomba origins".⁷²

⁷⁰Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, Schools Edition, pp.53-54

⁷¹Ibid, p. 54.

⁷²Peter B. Clarke, *West Africa and Islam: A Study of Religious development from the 8th to the 20th Century*, London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1981, p.96.

Similarly, Ivor Wilks, asserts that "Wala was the creation of three warrior groups namely, Dagomba from Yendi, Mamprusi from Nalerigu and the Wangara and Gonja from Mande."⁷³ Contrary to the three assertions mentioned above, Davidson suggests that, "the King of ancient Songhay Empire, Askia Dawud's Mandinka cavalry forces...founded around 1600 the state of Wa and Buna."⁷⁴

The aforementioned historians (Adu Boahen, Peter Clarke and Ivor Wilks) claim that the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Wagadugu, Gonja, Wangara, and Mossi, different ethnic groups who settled far from each other, founded the Waala State. This sounds implausible considering where each of the ethnic groups: Mamprusi, Dagomba, Wagadugu, Gonja, Wangara, and Mossi was located. Even if it was plausible, the various accounts by historians were brief statements which failed to convince readers and educate them about the founding of Wa. In view of this, I shall find out what the word 'founder' actually mean and that will serve as a guide in identifying the founder of Wa.

In the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, A. S. Hornby, defines the word founder as "the person who starts an organisation, institution or causes something to be built or any individual or group of persons who perform a singular responsibility built around a principle, an idea or a fact upon which something is based or grows from."⁷⁵ Accordingly, an in-depth study of how Wa came into being is needed. My concern is not to criticise a

⁷³Ivor Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*: p.48.

⁷⁴Basil Davidson, *A History of West Africa, 1000 –1800*, London: Oxford University Press, 1981, p.96.

⁷⁵A. S. Hornby, (2010), *Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, (English Edition), London: Oxford University Press, 592.

source or judge earlier works but to explore the various accounts and put the pieces of information gathered on Wa in historical perspective.

Waala local tradition claim that the site which later came to be known as Wa was first occupied by Lobi groups of hunters and farmers. The Lobi, who trace their origins to a place across the Black Volta, moved westwards and finally settled at *Sokpayiri*.⁷⁶ Another group, whose members are known collectively as *Chakalee*, claim they originated from Bulenge, a town forty kilometres east of Wa and first settled at a site called *Jamberihe*, where the Wa Regional Department Offices, Wa Prisons and Police Post are located today, but they later moved four kilometres westwards to the present sites named *Kambale* and *Ma-ngo* because the terrain of the old site was swampy or often flooded during the rainy season.⁷⁷

These early settlers (Lobi and *Chakalee*) were later joined by two brothers (Puoho and Widaana) and a son (Lorlor, Widaana's son) who founded settlements: *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri* (*Suuriyiri*) and *Kpagburi* respectively.⁷⁸ Together these communities cultivated foodstuffs and produced more meat than they could consume and these agricultural products led to some kind of internal and external exchange of goods among the communities. As Adu Boahen indicates, "commercially this region lies across the trade routes leading from Asante...and the Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire) to the region of ancient Ghana,

⁷⁶Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule, 1898-1957*, p. 8.

⁷⁷Testimonies of:

>Sumani Munja, Head of Balum clan, aged 95, Wa, 14th July 1997, and,

>Boore Jatoe, Head of Kambali clan, aged 88, *Kambali*, 20th December, 2013.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*

Mali, Songhai and the Hausa states, and became the key to the economic life of both the forest regions and the Western Sudan."⁷⁹

As a result, Wa was not only connected to several commercial centres in and outside the region but attracted the Mamprusi, Mande and Hausa peoples to Wa. The Mamprusi, according to the Ghanaian Archaeologist James Anquandah, arrived "around the first quarter of the seventeenth century."⁸⁰ Basil Davidson also indicates that, "the Dyula (Mandinka traders of Mali) turned it [Wa] into a new trading centre."⁸¹ The research question is when did people begin to settle in the Wa area? According to Adu Boahen, "as early as in the fourteenth century traders visited and supplied Kano, an ancient commercial town in modern Northern Nigeria, through Gonja, with kola-nuts from the forest region and gold from the Akan and the Lobi fields in modern Ghana."⁸²

During the period, rumours were heard in the entire northwestern Black Volta Region that some "white people" would appear and devour all people found there.⁸³ Later some white people identified in the local language as '*potokihe*' (Portuguese) arrived. Their arrival coincided with the spread of the rumour. The Portuguese, according to Buah, "by 1471, had reached the coast of modern Ghana."⁸⁴ If so, this meant that people began to settle in the Wa area long before the Portuguese arrived in Ghana. Critically examining the above assertions by

⁷⁹Boahen, *Topics in West African History, Schools Edition*, p.54.

⁸⁰Anquandah, *Rediscovering Ghana's Past*, p.80

⁸¹Basil Davidson, *History of West Africa, 1000–1800*, p.187

⁸²Boahen, *Topics in West African History, Schools Edition*, p.54

⁸³Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, May 2, 2015

⁸⁴F. K. Buah, *A History of Ghana*, London, Macmillan, 1980, p.65

scholars and informants, one can conclude that Wa was founded by the Lobi, who are discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

The Growth of Wa

Recent works and reports by scholars provide different descriptions of Wa. Ivor Wilks suggests that, "the town of Wa has long enjoyed the status of a central place and, until the end of the nineteenth century it was indeed the capital of the small but independent Waala polity."⁸⁵ Adu Boahen also indicates that, "in the 14th century Wa was described as a commercial centre."⁸⁶ Reporting in 1892, George Ekem Ferguson, a Fante officer of the British Colonial Administration, was unable to reach Wa but was informed by caravan traders that "Wa and Accra compared, the former was the larger town."⁸⁷ Furthermore, Dickson suggests that, "Wa had a population not less than 6,000 during the 19th century."⁸⁸ This was the result of several factors.

According to oral tradition, owing to commercial or economic opportunities available in the area, traders, travellers, explorers, invaders, and colonial agents visited Wa. It was mentioned that one "Adu Gyase, a trader from Asante, traded regularly in Wa."⁸⁹ Then in 1887 "Gottab Adolf Krause, a German, passed through Wa."⁹⁰ In 1894 George Ekem Ferguson again visited Wa and reported that, "Wa was not a walled city but the buildings were flat

⁸⁵Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*: p. 5

⁸⁶Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, Schools edition, p. 54

⁸⁷Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra, Co.879/52, African West, No.448, Ferguson's Mission Report, 1892, p.70

⁸⁸K. B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 261.

⁸⁹Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*, p. 5

⁹⁰Ibid., pp.5-6

roofed and date palms are present all over the area...and is the capital of Dagarti."⁹¹ This last word, "Dagarti" and similar words found in documents were used for the "Waala." Such incorrect terms are corrected in the study.

Going by descriptions such as above, and basing the argument on modern Ghanaian standards, Wa was at the time a big town. In Ghana, according to Dickson and Benneh, "every settlement with a population of 5,000 or over is officially regarded as a town."⁹² Wa, starting as a small principality by early 1600, grew to become the largest and the most important town in Northwest Ghana by the 19th century. Over 70 percent of its population at the time was engaged in urban occupation or commercial activities which provided the farmers, fishermen or hunters with their needs. Trade was, therefore, a principal factor for the growth of Wa.

As a result of the increasing importance of her commercial activities, Ladouceur describes Wa, "as the most rapidly developing town in the savannah region"⁹³ and the opportunities enumerated above attracted thousands of people to settle in Wa. There are no exact figures regarding the number of people found in Wa between 1500 and 1900. However, from the discussion so far Wa was a big, populous commercial town and was visited daily by diverse groups of people from all directions.

In the absence of reliable population data, a British colonial officer, Moutray-Read, reporting on the large congeries of people who inhabited Wa

⁹¹Ibid

⁹²Dickson and Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*. p.51

⁹³Paul Andre Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians: The Politics of Regionalism in Northern Ghana*. London: Longman, 1979, pp.21-26.

mentioned "a population probably considerably in excess of 361,806."⁹⁴ This figure was an estimated population of the entire Volta Basin which, as already referred to, "accounted for 45 percent of the total land area of Ghana". Using the standard figures of Ghanaian geographers, by 1600, Wa was referred to as a town, which implied that, the ^{population} of Wa was above 5,000.

There are no records to help with the computation of the population of Wa before 1900. One, therefore, has to extrapolate from documents of later periods. For instance, materials of the 1910s and 1940s can be of use in such extrapolations. According to E. V. T. Engmann, of the "1911 population figures for Ghana, 64,884 people live in the Wa district, with 2,810 of this living in the Wa town."⁹⁵ Dickson and Benneh estimated a population of 10,500 for Wa town in 1948.⁹⁶ In addition, Bin Salih suggests population figures of "14,342 (1960) and 21,374 (1970)" for Wa.⁹⁷

From the population statistics given, I describe Wa as a fast developing town largely because Wa played various roles such as a commercial, religious, communication and an administrative centre. Thus, urbanisation attracted many different groups of people to Wa. This account for the heterogeneous grouping of people in Wa who, interestingly, settled very close to one another in an order or pattern one cannot immediately assign reason(s) to.

⁹⁴PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/464, A Report in the Northern Territories, 1912, by Captain C.H. Armitage.

⁹⁵E.V.T. Engmann, *Population of Ghana, 1850–1960*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1986, p.67.

⁹⁶Dickson and Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*. p.43.

⁹⁷Mohammed Bin Salih, *A History of Wa: The Ahamdiyya factor*. Osu-Accra: Ahmadiyya Press, 2001, pp.2-3.

The *Waala* Kingdom

Generally, people talk about the existence of Wa district or the kingdom of Wa, but no person has so far indicated accurately its exact size and boundary. Ask the ordinary people and they generally indicate that the *Wa-naa* has authority and administers the entire territory of the Upper West Region. This means the jurisdiction of the *Wa-naa* extends into territories of the *Dagaaba*, *Sissala* and *Chakalee*, major people sharing boundaries with the Waala. In some instances, the Black Volta to the west and the Kulpawn River to the east of Tumu (town), the boundaries shared with Gonja and Mossi to the south and north of Wa respectively', are often used as the boundaries of the *Waala* kingdom.⁹⁸ On the other hand the *Dagaaba*, *Sissala* and *Chakalee* claim that the *Waala* have no such jurisdiction over their people and land.⁹⁹ This controversy can be resolved if a study like this is undertaken using earlier suggestions as a basis.

The first map of Wa District was drawn by A. J. Cutfield, a British Colonial Cartographer. Cutfield's map showed the Wa District as:

Starting from the point where the Iziri river, 20 kilometres north of Nadowli town joins the Black Volta, the boundary follows the course of the Volta downstream for 55 miles [approximately 88 kilometres] to where it is joined by the river San. Then, the boundary moves easterly until within five miles [approximately eight kilometres] of Chassia (village) inclusive and the line 45 miles [approximately 72 kilometres], gives to Wa: Dyuka, Ga, Tanina, Loggo, Jayiri, and Chassia. From Chassia, the boundary runs east and north of the direction to Bantena (village) in the bend of the Kulpawn [river] joining Duccie and Bantena

⁹⁸Interview with Issah Adamu, Prince of the Bewu Royal Family, aged 52, at his Bamaho residence, Wa, June 6, 2014. Separate group conversations with Waala clans were also held from 1st January to 20th December, 2014.

⁹⁹Interviewed with 50 Sissala and Dagaaba people in Konchogu and Dasima; Nadoli and Dolimo respectively and, particularly, Suglo, K. O., Prince, aged 72, Daffiama, May 17, 1998, Sohngminye Danaa II, Chief, aged 80, Dolimo (Palace), November 17, 2014, Dumah, James, B., Prince/Head of Kulon clan, aged 70, Funsu, May 3, 2014,

(villages) to Wa, Bungweli [Bulenge], Sate and Konkori (villages) to Bole and eastwards joining Bele and Kunduugu (villages) to Wa.¹⁰⁰ (See Map 2 overleaf)

Similarly, another British anthropologist, M. Moutray Read, indicated that the size of Wa District:

Extended as far north as Nadoli (Nadowli), Daffiama and Bussie (Dagaaba towns), to Funsu and Kundugu (Sissala towns) in the north east, to Dochire, Ga and Jeyiri (Chakale towns) to the south, sharing boundary with present Northern Region of modern Ghana, and to the west (inclusive Dolimon and Wiechau areas), bounded by the Black Volta, extended in the northeast to as far as the Kulpawn River reaching Kajokperi, a Wa village in the eastern boundary, and pass through Dussie (Duccie) and its small villages, being the most easterly part of the Wa district and to the south bounded by Bole, a town in present Northern Region of Ghana, and on the west by the Lobi.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Native Administration Report: Boon (Secretary) to A. R. Slater (Governor) of the Gold Coast, 1910.

¹⁰¹PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/217, Essay on the People of North-western Province, M. M. Read, RAT/1,1898

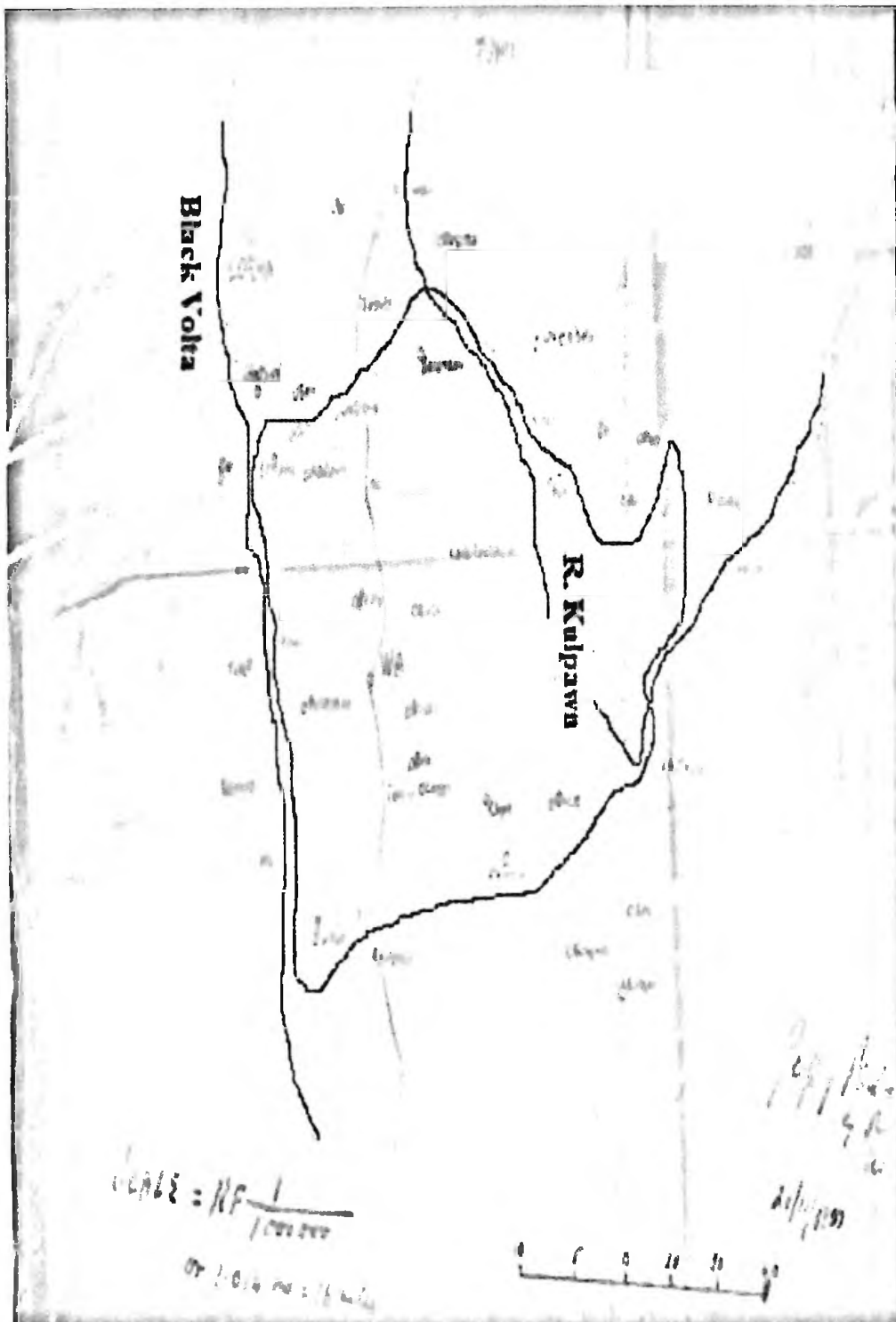


Figure 2: Wa District N. T. (Northern Territories), Showing Boundaries.

Source: PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/52, Wa District, 20/11/1922.

He (Read) did not illustrate his demarcated area on a sketch map. Read's suggested boundary of Wa District included territories for people identified as Dagaaba, Sissala and Dolimbo. From the result of interviews conducted many of the people mentioned above located about 30 kilometres west of Wa, contest the size of Waala kingdom as suggested by British colonial officers or cartographers.

Jacob Songsore illustrated the boundaries and extent of the Waala kingdom in two periods, the pre-Colonial and Colonial periods (See Map 3 overleaf). The pre-Colonial era was from the earliest days to 1898. The Colonial era or period was when the Waala kingdom became part of the British dominion in 1898. According to Songsore, the pre-colonial territory of the Waala kingdom "extended as far north as Belle (valley) and Pirise (Kperisi), two towns five kilometres from Wa; to Busa and Boli (towns), 25 kilometres in the east of Wa; to Pisi, a town three km in the south and ending eight km west of Wa."¹⁰²

Furthermore, Songsore indicated that, "during the colonial period, [from 1898 to 1957, when Ghana regained her independence] Wa shared boundaries with the Lawra district in the North, the Tumu district to the Northeast including Kunduugu (village) to the South ending at Ga, Jayiri and Dochiere (villages) and was bounded to the West by the Black Volta."¹⁰³ Jacob Songsore, from his description, talked about the Waala kingdom which existed before the creation of the Wa District in 1898 by the British Colonial Administration. This will be clarified later.

¹⁰²Jacob Songsore, "Wa as a Growth Centre, 1893 – 1973", Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Ghana, 1975, p. 81

¹⁰³Ibid.

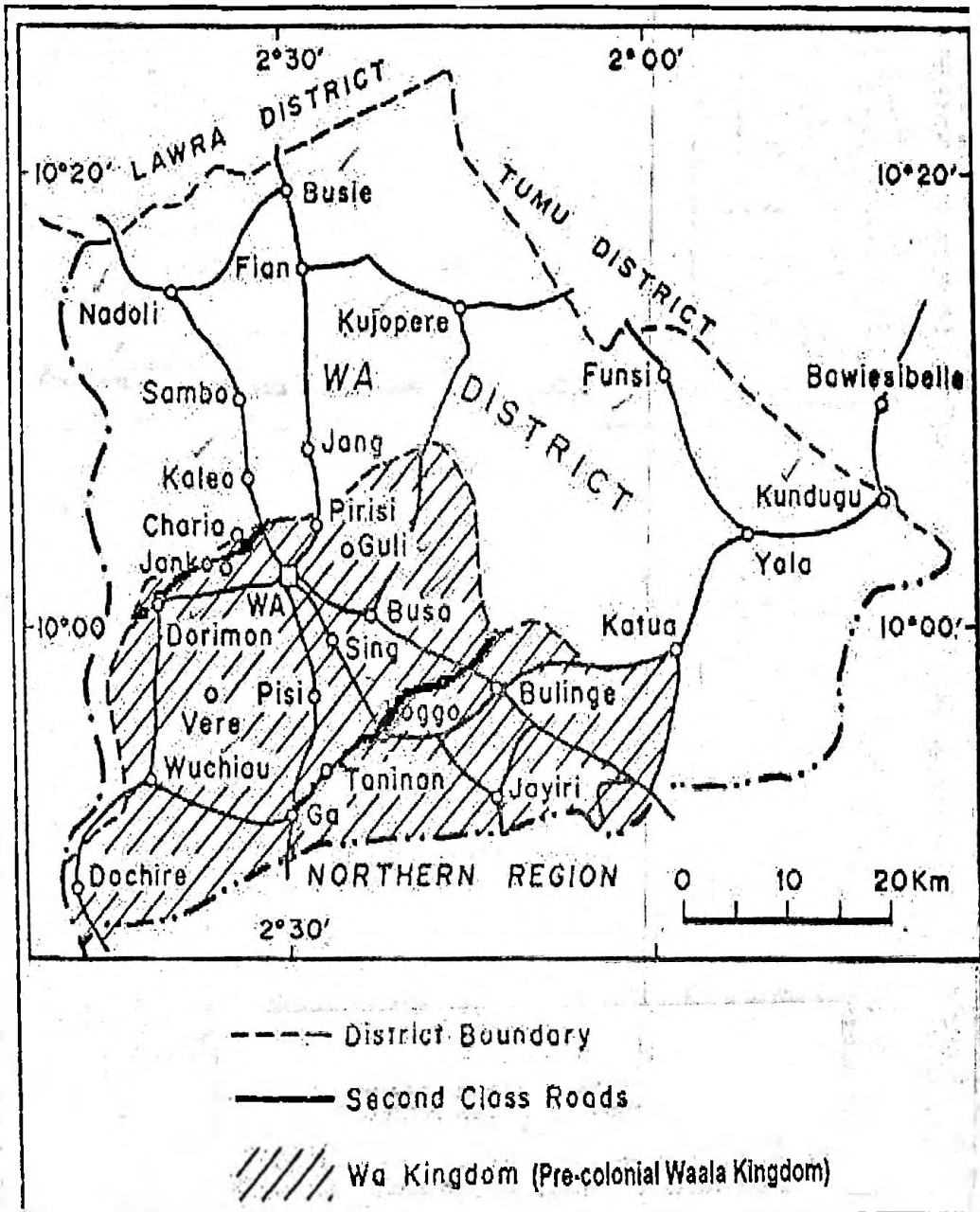


Figure 3: The extent of the Wala Kindom during Pre-Colonial and Colonial Times

Source: Jacob Songsore, "Wa as a Growth Centre", (Ph.D.Dissertation, University of Ghana, 1975), p. 81

Furthermore, Wilks suggests that, "the boundaries and extent of the *Waala* Kingdom comprised all the district or divisions which acknowledge the king of Wa as their chief" (See Map 4 below).¹⁰⁴ Wilks lists Wa, Busa, Sing, Kperisi, Gulli, Kaleo, Wechiau, Dolimon, Nadowli, Daffiama, Bussie, Lambussie, Funsu and Kundugu towns as the district or divisional capitals. Each of these towns had a number of villages to form a division and their respective areas of jurisdiction automatically came under the administration of the divisional chief. The *Wa*, *Busa*, *Sing*, *Kperisi* and *Gulli* towns are *Waala*, while the *Nadowli*, *Daffiama*, and *Bussie* towns are *Dagaaba*. The *Lambussie*, *Funsu* and *Kundugu* towns are *Sissala*. This was Wilks' composition and nature of the *Wa* District.

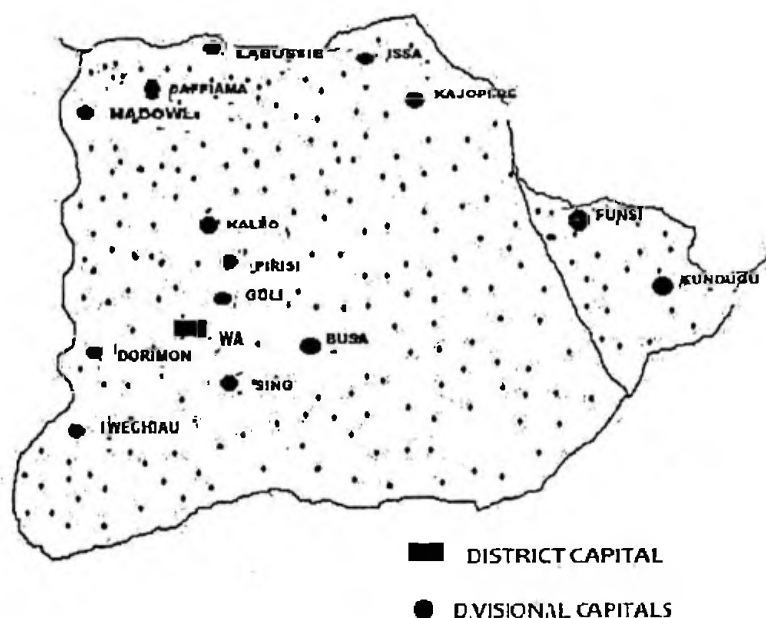


Figure 4: Principal Waala Villages, by Divisions.

Source: Adapted from Ivor Wilks, *Wa and the Wala*, 1989, p.10

¹⁰⁴Wilks, *Wa and the Wala*. p. 10

In his book, *The History of the Waala: the Ahmaddiya Factor*, Bin Salih indicates that, "Wa has three paramount chiefs; *Wichau-naa* (Wiechau-naa), *Dorimon-naa* and *Wa-naa*".¹⁰⁵ In terms of the boundaries of the Wa District, Bin Salih again states that, "on the western side one finds the Black Volta flowing past Wichau [Wechiau] and Dorimon area. In the east one finds River Kulkpong, flowing past the village of Chassia".¹⁰⁶ Bin Salih did not draw a map to represent the area he described as the *Waala* Kingdom. His information illustrates similarly what Cutfield, Songsore and Wilks earlier indicated.

Some inhabitants of the Wa district have different opinions concerning the extent of authority and jurisdiction of the *Wa-naa*. The people of *Wechiau*, *Dolimon* and *Bulenge* generally claim that their relations with the Waala date back only to the era of British colonial rule which lasted from 1898 to 1957, when part of Northwestern Ghana were forcefully brought into the Wa District under the administration of the *Wa-naa*. They gained their sovereignty from both Waala and British rule (the Waala in 1888; the British in 1957).¹⁰⁷

The researcher has also observed that the three maps 2, 3 and 4 (See pp. 37, 39, and 40 respectively), illustrated by Cutfield, Songsore and Wilks are similar and contain the same information. The only difference is what Songsore indicated as the pre-colonial and colonial territorial size of the Waala kingdom. Interpreting Songsore's work, before the era of British rule (1898), the territory

¹⁰⁵Bin Salih, *A History of the Waala*: 2001, p.10

¹⁰⁶Ibid, p.11

¹⁰⁷Information gathered in conversation with Naa Sohengmininyɛ Danaa II, Chief of Dolimo, aged 80, Dolimo, March 20, 2015.

west of Wa up to the fringes of the Black Volta were part of Waala kingdom. This is found not to be exactly so and will be clarified.

Many *Dagaaba* and other neighbour respondents interviewed, particularly K.O.Suglo, attest to the fact that the Waala kingdom covered "a small area of land. The exact size of this area is not clear."¹⁰⁸ Similarly, an indepth discussion on the size of the Waala kingdom suggests that the perked area on Map 5 overleaf, with major towns such as Kperisi, Gulli, Busa, Sing and Pisi, illustrates the territory of the traditional Waala Kingdom during the pre-colonial period. The reason for this demarcation was that this was the area of land the *Tendaana* granted the princely class before the advent of British Colonial rule in the area. In this area, the *Wa-naa* established his kingdom and appointed chiefs for communities, villages and towns under his jurisdiction.

Communities found to be very close to Wa, to the west and to the north: *Kambali, Sambo, Ma-ngo, Aaheyao, Gbegeruu, Jingo* and *Charia*, were not given chiefs by the *Wa-naa* because the territories of those towns were outside the jurisdiction of the *Tendaana*, Widaanaa Suri, the landlord of *Nabiithe* in the Waala kingdom. Another simple proof that the jurisdiction of the *Wa-naa* did not cover communities west and north of Wa was based on the fact that when *Wa-naa* Seidu was asked about the ownership of *Kambali*, "the *Wa-naa* replied that the land was not within Wa boundary area".¹⁰⁹ (See Appendix A; Foot note 109).

¹⁰⁸Opinions of

>Suglo, K. O., Prince, aged 72, Daffiama, May 17, 1998; and

>J. B. Dumah, Prince of Funsi, aged 70, Funsi, May 13, 2014

¹⁰⁹ Letter from Head of *Kambali* or Landlord (*Kpiengyenge*) to *Wa-naa* (Seidu *Waala*), on *Kambali* Land claim, dated 31st March, 1959.

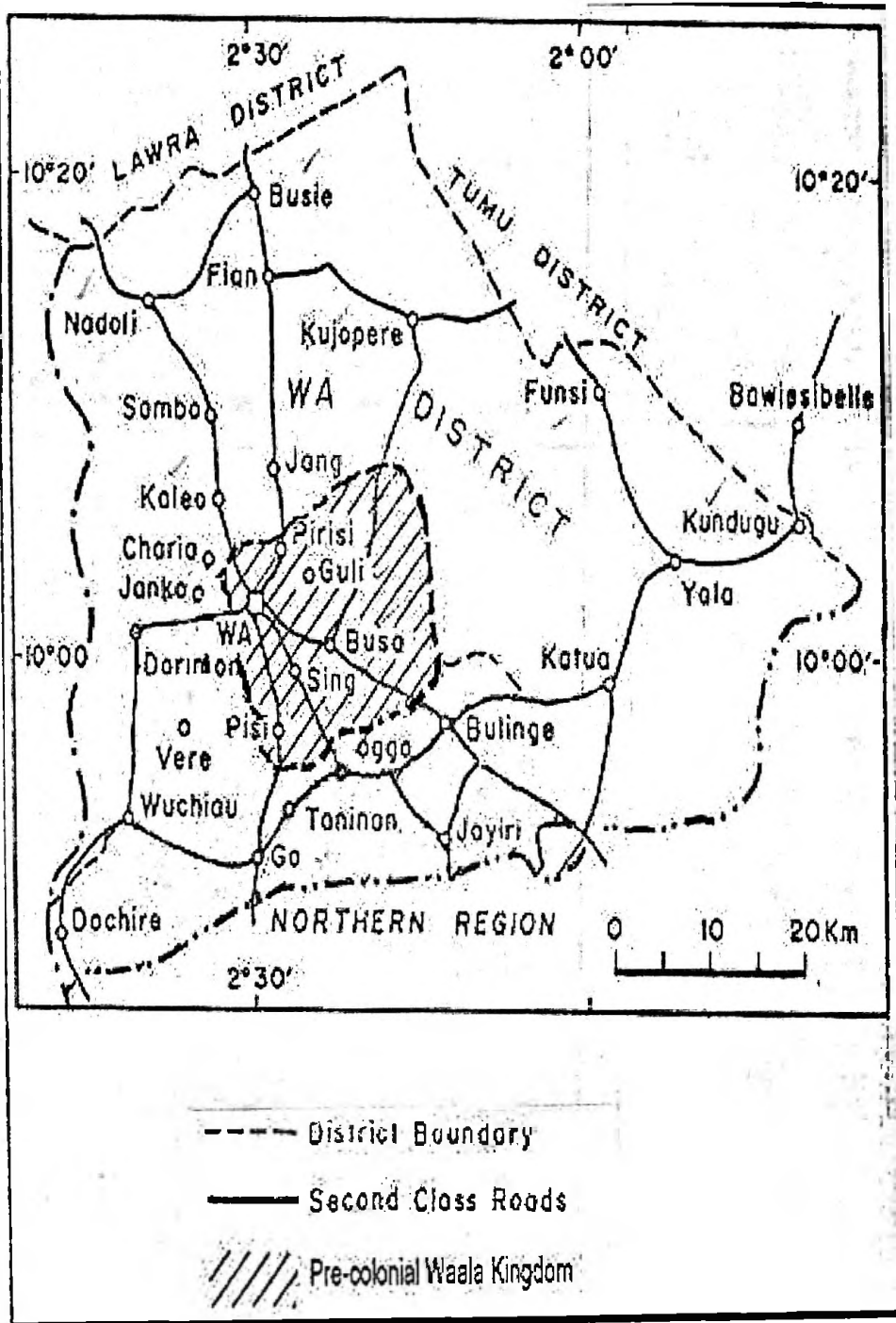


Figure 5: Waala Kingdom before, 1898.

Source: Adapted and Modified From Jacob Songsore, "Wa as a Growth Centre", (Ph.D.Dissertation, University of Ghana, 1975), p. 81.

They appoint their own chiefs (*namine*) and, still, the *tendaana* functions as in the past. Considering the closeness of the aforementioned communities, particularly Kambali, two kilometres to the *Wa-naa's* palace west of Wa town, many people assume that Kambali, Sambo, Aaheyao, Ggegeroo, Jingo and Chaaria were under the jurisdiction of the *Wa-naa*. The answer to this assertion is contained in the letter referred to above (Appendix 'A').

Based on the discussion above, one concludes that the ethnography of Wa is mixed. The various ethnic groups mentioned are: *Chakalee*, *Balume*, *Nabihe*, *Jabagihe* and *Yarihe*, who are now components of the Waala traditional area, as Bin Salih suggests, "in varying degrees."¹¹⁰

Settlement Patterns of the *Waala*

Paraphrasing two Ghanaian Geographers, Dickson and Benneh, the word settlement is how people live in a defined site. They identified two types of settlements - rural (village) and urban (town). In a rural settlement the inhabitants engage in activities such as cultivation of crops, rearing of animals and fishing, and which are directly related to the use of land. The urban people, on the other hand, are related to industry, commerce, and administration, which supply farmers, fishermen, or hunters their needs. The towns are characterized by demarcated roads and house layouts, with sites for service centres showing sectors such as the judiciary, security, administration and education.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰Bin Salih, *A History of Wa*. p.11

¹¹¹Dickson and Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*, p.51

The two types of settlement patterns described above are different from what the indigenous *Waala* established. In the context of the *Waala*, the village consists of independent nucleated settlements over an entire area collectively known as or called '*yiri*' (singular; *Waale*). This pattern, in my opinion, is the equivalent of a rural settlement. When clans demonstrate a continuous construction of homes in an orderly manner with the provision of facilities such as roads and recreational points, then this type describes an urban settlement. Each urban settlement (clan) of the *Waala* had a number of households made up of the husband, wife (wives), children and other relatives who constitute a unit known as '*jaga*' (singular) or '*jagahe*' (plural). Several '*jagihe*' constitute a '*yiri*' (clan).

Each '*jaga*' was headed by the male (father) who constructs and lives in a large rectangular flat-roofed structure constructed with earth sticks enclosing a large courtyard, a grain store or barn called '*bu-o*' and, in some cases, has a cattle kraal constructed close to the building. The example of this type of building was constructed by the people of Gbegeruu, a village located six kilometres northeast of Wa, and is illustrated as Fig. 1 overleaf. This type of building was common among the *Waala*, and according to Dickson and Benneh, was similar to "the Western Sudanese model."¹¹² The choice and adoption of the Sudanese type of building shows the extent of the influence the Lobi and Mande had on the architecture of the people of Wa.

¹¹²Ibid.



Figure 6: Typical Waala Building at Gbeeroo; near Wa

Source: Photograph by the Researcher, 2015

Apart from the rectangular nature of the building its enclosed or compacted style was for security reasons. By way of comparison, the Waala

indigenous house type differs greatly from what exists in present-day Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana, where buildings are in the form of "circular huts within an enclosed wall"¹¹³ (See Fig.7 overleaf). The *Waala* adopted the ancient Western Sudanese building model (type) due to certain advantages. First, the buildings were not easily attacked by fire which was common with the grass type in the Northern Region. Secondly, the rooms were very cool during the hottest parts of the year and also warm during the wet or cold season. This type of building, from information gathered, was influenced by the historical origins of the ethnic groups. The descendants of most *Waala* came from places in Mali, the original home of the building type.

As already referred to, the type of building was adopted basically for security reasons whereby people used the roof top of the buildings to defend themselves against their enemies. In fact, the buildings were cemented together in such a manner that a non-*Waala* may not easily find the way out if left unguided. It was also difficult to distinguish between buildings in the numerous communities in *Wa Tagrayiri*, *Sembelleeyiri*, *Nepayiri*, *Banbiriyyiri*, *Dograyiri*, *Vobile*, *Limanyiri* and *Nayiri* before 1900, when their buildings were the Sudanese type. The nature of how settlements were constructed together

¹¹³Sample type of Building in Yipala, a village located along the Kumasi - Tamale road in the Northern Region of Ghana.



Figure 7: A Typical Building of the Yipila people in the Northern Region of Ghana.

Source: A Photograph by the Researcher, 1st January 2007.

misinformed non-indigenes to think that the *Waala* belonged to one ethnic group. This is not the case and is clarified in Chapter Two.

Conclusion

Chapter one sought to show how the Waala, a mixed ethnic group, co-existed in a place some earlier scholars saw as not favourable for human habitation. In spite of the challenges there, if any, the Waala remained settled in separate wards and cooperated in many ways to the extent that it is now not possible to distinguish between the various different ethnic groups identified above. Interestingly none of the ethnic groups identified in the study is able to speak its language of origin: Mamprusi, Dagomba, Chakalii, Wangara, Gonja and Hausa dialects. These diverse ethnic groups, however, lived peacefully together and commonly operate as if they were members of one ethnic group. It would, therefore, be interesting to trace the origins and activities of the people who later, collectively, coalesced as Waala.

CHAPTER TWO

PEOPLING OF WA

Introduction

Discussions so far indicate that by the nineteenth century many ethnic groups from different locations were settled in Wa. Some of these people arrived before Wa came into being and others came when the state had taken shape. The early peoples are found settled near each other and the people who arrived later also settled close to each other. The order in which people settled gives the impression that they are different. This distinction is common in many regions.

In the region of the Black Volta, Bruce T. Grindal, classifies the inhabitants as "the indigenous Lobi-Speaking people and immigrant Mole-Dagbane groups."¹¹⁴ Discussing Dagaaba communities, Carola Lentz, classifies the inhabitants as "first-comers and late comers."¹¹⁵ Madeline Manoukian indicates that, "the peoples of the Northern Territories (now Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions) fall into two main classes of communities: those who claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants and those who claim to be descendents of immigrants or invaders from other parts of Africa."¹¹⁶ Similarly, the inhabitants of Wa (*Waala*) are in two main groups: *tengbiihi* (early settlers or indigenes), and *saamba* (strangers).¹¹⁷ In this chapter, I shall examine the nature, composition and origins of the two main groups of people: *tengbiihi* and *saamba*. In the

¹¹⁴Bruce T. Grindal, "An Ethnographic Classification of the Sisala of Northern Ghana", *Ethnology*, Vol. II, No. 4 (October, 1972), p. 412

¹¹⁵Carola Lentz, "First-Comers and Late-Comers: The Role of Narratives in Land Claims", In *Afrika-Studiecentrum*, Vol. 6 (2005), p. 157.

¹¹⁶Madeline Manoukian, *Tribes of Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1951, p.13.

¹¹⁷Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.310

preliminary discussion, the autography used will change into how words are pronounced by the local people.

The Early Settlers or Indigenes

According to A. W. Cardinal, the pioneer settler-groups in Wa are "the Waala, Dagaaba, Isala (Sissala), Chakalle (*Chakalɛɛ*) and Lobi."¹¹⁸ The Waala, in the opinion of Iddrisu Mahama, "comprises a collection of ethnic groups namely Lobi, Mamprusi, Dagomba, Gonja, Tarawiri, Wangara and Hausa."¹¹⁹ Bin Salih rather mentions "Lobi, *Chakalle, Tendamba, Saamune, Nabiihi and Yarihi*" as the indigenes of Wa.¹²⁰

From the examples above, and also in some other works examined, there is no consensus on the classification of *the Waala* into indigenes and non-indigenous. Even with the existing classified list, the indigenes and strangers are found to be mixed up. Critically examining both secondary and primary source materials, I have identified six indigenous ethnic groups: the Lobi, *Chakalɛɛ, Balumee, Mande, Jabagihe* and *Kantonsi*, who settled before the name Wa came into being. These groups are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

The Lobi

The word Lobi conjures a host of descriptions, and, as Bin Salih puts it, "is an all-inclusive name."¹²¹ This is evident in the accounts of scholars who have

¹¹⁸PRAAD, NRG 8/3/10, Tamale, Annual Report, Wa District: Political Organisation, by A. W. Cardinal, A British Colonial Officer, 1934

¹¹⁹Iddrisu Mahama, "Wa under British Colonial Rule, 1898-1957", 1999, p.1

¹²⁰Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*: p.310

¹²¹Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.25.

written about the Lobi. In 1892, George Ekem Ferguson reported that "Lobi was an independent state lying on the east of the Black Volta."¹²² This meant 'Lobi' was a geographical area (territory).¹²³ Further tracing the origin and location of the Lobi, Jack Goody indicated that, "in the north-western corner of the Gold Coast (Ghana) and across the Black Volta in French West Africa (Cote d'Ivoire) live an ethnic group known to the French as the Dagarti (Dagaaba) and to the English as Lobi."¹²⁴

Quoting Goody, Bruce T. Grindal asserts that, "earlier ethnographic works had assigned people to one of two 'tribes' [ethnic groups], Lobi or Dagaaba. Upon closer examination, however, Goody found considerable discrepancies among the authors concerning the location of the Lobi and the Dagaaba. Where one author would call the people of a village Lobi another would assert that they were Dagaaba."¹²⁵ The Lobi, according to Bin Salih, were "a conglomerate of scattered small bands," who migrated from areas along the fringes of the Black Volta and later settled in Wa and its environs.¹²⁶ On Map 6 overleaf, Paul Andre Ladouceur shows two original settlements of the Lobi in the Northern Region of modern Ghana.

¹²²PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15, in Enclosure No.39, Reports by Ferguson to Governor, Sir W. Brandford, 19th November, 1893.

¹²³R. B. Bening, "The Definitions of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1888-1904", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol.Xiv (ii), 1973, p.234.

¹²⁴ Jack Goody, 'Fields of Social Control among the LoDagaba', In *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain*, Vol.8 No.I, London, 1957.p.75

¹²⁵Bruce T. Grindal, "An Ethnographic Classification of the Sisala of Northern Ghana." p.412.

¹²⁶Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*, p.25.

Viere, Vierempere (in the Upper West Region) and Bole (in the Northern Region of modern Ghana) are located.

In their locations (settlements) the Lobi peoples are distinguished by culture into two-sub-groups; *Lo-Piel* (White *Lo*) and *Lo-Saala* (Black *Lo*)¹²⁷ Specifically, the *Lo-Saala* are found in the Lawra, Eremon and Dazuli areas and the *Lo-Piel* are settled in Hamile, Nandom and Flyboyiri communities. The two groups: *Lo-Piel* and *Lo-Saala*, collectively called *Lo-Dagaaba*, are referred to by inhabitants of Wa as "Lobi."¹²⁸ Linguistically, the Lobi speak a dialect similar to *Dagare* which also belong to "the Mossi (or Mole-Dagbane) language group or the Gur (Voltaic) languages."¹²⁹

From the discussion so far and based on pieces of evidence examined, I suggest that the word 'Lobi' is used in three ways to mean the geographical territory of the people Lobi, the people themselves and their language. Oral source data examined generally suggests that the Lobi had no clearly carved out state or had no well - defined territory of their own within the Wa district. As shown on Map 6 (p. 53) above, the inhabitants of the two original Lobi settlements broke up into family units [made up of the man, wife (wives) and children] and began spreading to parts of the Waala Kingdom. The family units settled on the eastern and western fringes of the Black Volta in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana respectively, which, according to Adu Boahen, were already inhabited by the "Vagla,

¹²⁷Jack Goody, "Fields of Social Control among the LoDagaba." p.75.

¹²⁸Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p. 25

¹²⁹Tuurey, *An Introduction to the Mole-Speaking Community*, pp.21-22

Tampulensi, Issala and Guan."¹³⁰ They (the Vagla, Tampulensi, Issala and Guan) abandoned this area whereby the ancestors of the *Waala* later occupied it.

According to Waala oral traditions, the Lobi were led to Wa by one Sokpari.¹³¹ The exact date Sokpari arrived in Wa is not very clear. Under the leadership of Sokpari began the nucleus of what became Wa. The main economic activity of the inhabitants was subsistence agriculture. Their agricultural practice was generally based on the traditional shifting cultivation or bush fallowing system, whereby farmers cultivated the same plot of land for several years and produced variety of crops including millet, beans, rice, maize, yam and cassava. With the availability of these food crops and with their background and experience in trade along the fringes of the Black Volta, the Lobi began to sell their surplus farm products to people east of Wa and west of the Black Volta.

Consequently, this trade began to grow and thus attracted more people to Wa. Ivor Wilks mentions "the Malian merchants trading in the region and later establishing themselves at *Nasa* and *Visi*," two towns found north of Wa.¹³² These traders later visited ancient trading centres such as; Buna, Bonduku and Kong, (in modern Cote d'Ivoire); Wagadugu and Gao (in modern Burkina Faso) and Daboya, an ancient Gonja town (in modern Ghana) where salt was produced and supplied to market towns.¹³³ Other products manufactured locally were simple

¹³⁰Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, Schools Edition, p.53

¹³¹Interview with Sumani Munja, aged 95, Head of both *Puohoyiri* and *Balum*, Wa, June 27, 1998

¹³²Ivor Wilks, "A Note on the Early Spread of Islam in Dagomba," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol.8 (1965), p. 93..

¹³³Interview with Yakubu Seidu Soalia II, aged 85, *Wa-naa*, May 3, 1998

He was a veteran in the trade conducted within Northern Ghana and outside Ghana, particularly to markets centres in modern Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. His

iron tools, arrow heads, knives, hoe blades and fishing hooks which were sold in *Dabɔ*, *Vieri* and *Tɔkali*, three fishing market towns located near the Black Volta.¹³⁴

To enhance trade in the area community leaders employed the services of the youth "as guards" to monitor and ensure that the trade routes were kept safe. Such actions saw the end of robbery and similar other cases. This encouraged the extension of commercial activities to many towns in the zone. In every big town traders passed through spots named "rest-stops" were set up to serve as resting places for traders and also for travellers to replenish their supplies. In towns where "rest-stops" were erected local women got employed as they sold cooked food and water to people.¹³⁵

The extent of technological development in the form of manufactures (locally produced goods), as pointed out above, and the commercial life of the inhabitants in the area may have convinced Ferguson who, in 1892, described the Lobi as "possessing great predilections for trade."¹³⁶ This statement reveals how enterprising and advanced the Lobi at the time were and their adventure in trading activities further advertised Wa to the outside world and to the extent that developments in the area caught the attention of both some African leaders and European colonialists, who in the 1890s vied for Wa. This is highlighted in Chapter Four.

unofficial name was *Kpaang*, meaning oil (shea butter), indicating the business he patronised.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Interview with Naa Alexander Widaana II, a retired Civil Servant and Chief of Takpo, aged 84, at his palace in Takpo, a village 35 km northwest of Wa, June 4, 2014.

¹³⁶PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15 African West, No. 448, Enclosure in No.39, Ferguson to Governor, 19th November 1892. p. 35.

The *Chakalɛɛ*

The name *Chakalɛɛ* (plural) or *Chakalɔɔ* (singular) refers to 19 clans of people found settled about 40 kilometres east of Wa and their territory is referred to as *Chakale*. They claim to have originated from Savelugu, a town in Dagbon (territory) of the Dagomba (people). Despite their ethnic background, the *Chakalɛɛ* do not speak Dagbane, but speak *Chakalii*, the local language developed by the inhabitants. How people of Dagomba origin soon turned to be and are called *Chakalɛɛ* can be explained from a linguistic perspective.

The general claim is that the ancestors of the Dagomba in *Chakale* met the *Safalba*, *Nafiiba* and *Issala* already settled in the area. They spoke similar dialects which differed from *Dagbane*. The Dagomba migrants were said to be only males and in the course of time took wives among the *Safalba*, *Nafiiba* and *Issala* (*Sissala*). Interacting with these peoples and mixing *Dagbane* (language of the Dagomba) with their dialects for years gave rise to *Chakalii*, a dialect that evolved from the diverse dialects spoken by the descendants of the *Chakalɛɛ*.¹³⁷

When their ancestors came from Savelugu to *Chakale* is not clear. What is known is that their leader, Gushiego, led a group of Dagomba hunters on a hunting expedition to their present location. Waala oral tradition further explains that during the long dry season, the males in most communities would go hunting from place to place for months and in those places they set up huts to rest and use

¹³⁷Conversation with Boore Jatoe, Head of Kambale, aged 90, Wa, May 2nd, 2015.

as warehouses for their produce. Later, as Abdul-Korah notes, "the huts or hamlets established by hunters became settlements or villages."¹³⁸

Gushiego and his group of hunters first settled at Jeyiri, a town located 30 kilometres east of present-day Wa. However, Gushiego and his people had to relocate later to *Bulenge* because the terrain of Jeyiri was not quite suitable for farming and hunting, the main livelihood of the people.¹³⁹ The name *Bulenge* was corrupted from the description "*bulee*" (pond) "*nge*" (this), which literally meant "this pond." The exact date *Bulenge* was founded is not also exactly known. It is claimed that whilst they were constructing their homes at the place now called *Bulenge* information got to Gushiego and his people that a new prince called *Darijama*, who is identified to be *Dariziogo*, was being proclaimed chief in Dagbon.¹⁴⁰ The name *Darijama* is identified to be, according to E. F. Tamakloe, "Naa Dariziogo, who was and ruled as Chief of Dagbon from 1543 to 1565."¹⁴¹ If this is true, then Gushiego settled in *Bulenge* many years before 1543.

As already pointed out, in the area which became *Chakale* lived several ethnic groups. These groups over the years freely mixed with each other which led to inter-marriages between their members. As more people joined the immigrants, within a short period of time, 19 communities were founded. *Bulenge* became the biggest village and, therefore, the capital town of all *Chakale*. From

¹³⁸Gariba B. Abdul-Korah, "Now If You Have Only Sons You Are Dead: Migration, Gender and Family Economy in Twentieth Century Northern Ghana," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, (2011), p.392.

¹³⁹Interview with Boore Jatoe, aged 88, at his Kambale residence, Wa, November 20th, 2013.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Emmanuel Forster Tamakloe, *A Brief History of the Dagomba People*. Accra Government Printing office, 1931, p.21

the earliest time, these villages came to be grouped into two main parts - *Samunee* (Eastern) and *Manuoree* (Western) *Chakale*.

The Western *Chakale* communities comprised of *Jeyiri, Chassia, Tuoha, Tissa, Sogler, Motigu, Dussie, Belliakpong, Belliabibile* and *Gurumbellεε*. The Eastern *Chakale* communities were made up of *Bulenga, Katua, Kande, Chagopaal, Tafali, Chagu, Dupari, and Gilang, Bisikaang*.¹⁴² Oral traditions explain that these communities were named after their leaders, events that occasioned the creation of the settlements or any significant activity that impacted so much on the life of the people. The community "*Sogla*", for instance, got its name from a statement in *Chakalii* (language) which is read as "*sogler*," meaning "a place to hide."¹⁴³

The two divisions, Eastern and Western *Chakale*, operated under different political structures until 1898 when British colonial rule was extended to the area. The Eastern *Chakale* communities were under the sovereignty of Kandia, a Gonja Chiefdom believed to have been ceded to the Waala kingdom in the 1890s. The Western *Chakale* settlements were independent states and they operated under a local system of governance known as "*tendaalong*."¹⁴⁴ This will be elaborated in Chapter Three.

According to Bin Salih, linguistically, *Chakalii* (Language) belongs to what is known as "the Gur Language group,"¹⁴⁵ and most of the dialects in this language group are disappearing or are being absorbed by other influential

¹⁴²Interview with Mumuni Yakubu, Circuit Supervisor Ghana Education Office), aged 52, Funsì, 5th January, 2015.

¹⁴³Ibid.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p. 31

languages. For instance, *Safalba* is a one unit of *Tampulimi*, the language of the Tampulima, who were located between Wa and Bole towns. Tampulini language is almost extinct. There live only a clan of the *Safalba*, about 50 members, at Ngandari near Bole.¹⁴⁶

The *Chakale* in Wa first settled at a site called *Jamberihe*, meaning "a good hiding place" because the whole area was forested, fertile and suitable for farming, fishing and hunting.¹⁴⁷ This is the site which became the nucleus of Wa town and where the *Wa-naa's* Palace, the Police, Prisons, Fire Service stations and some Regional Departmental offices are currently sited. This location was often found at the time to be marshy and flooded during the rainy season.

Hence Gushiego and his people had to relocate to a much higher ground found three km to the west named *Kambale*, which literally meant to circumvent or make a detour from the previous difficult terrain. *Kambale* is found on the left side of the Wa-Dolimo road. Opposite *Kambale* is *Ma-ngo*, another *Chakale* community founded by one Mwengo whose name was corrupted to read *Mangu* (*Ma-ngo*).¹⁴⁸ Waala oral traditions claim that the ancestors of *Kambale* and *Ma-ngo* were *Chakale*.¹⁴⁹ As farming and hunting people, some *Kambale* families

¹⁴⁶Interview with Alhaji Dong Nyoli, head of Mankoma clan, aged 90, at his residence, Wa, 10 November, 2013. Mankoma is located in Gonjaland (Northern Region of Ghana) where they migrated to Wa and settled at Ma-ngo, Dograyiri and Daanko communities in Wa.. The people of Mankoma are the care-takers of the grave-yard where the tombs of the Yagbonwuras (Paramount chiefs of Gonja) are. Mankoma is 20 kilometres to Bole southwards on the Wa-Kumasi road.

¹⁴⁷Information gathered in conversation with Boore Jatoe, head of the *Chakale* community, aged 88, in Wa, at his *Kambale* residence, Wa, November 20, 2013

¹⁴⁸Interview with Naa Wuuri Bongaangmine, the first Chief of *Ma-ngo* (1952 - 2006), aged 110, at his Ma-ngo residence, Wa, July 10, 1998. He began his reign at, perhaps, age 65.

¹⁴⁹*ibid.*

relocated to new places called *Yibile*, *Kpongu* and later *Kambalepaani*, which Bin Salih listed incorrectly as "*saamba*".¹⁵⁰ Other families of *Ma-ngo* clans led by two brothers, Bualah and Konduri, moved four kilometres north and founded the *Aaheyao* and *Gbegiroo* communities respectively.

Further north, some sections of the *Ma-ngo* later settled in *Loho*, *Papu*, *Nator* and *Goli*, and are presently known as Dagaaba villages but they trace their roots to *Chakale*.¹⁵¹ Another clan called *Muguyiri* founded by one *Jinbina* but located within *Ma-ngo* territory, according to an informant, was an appendage of *Kambale*. The people of *Muguyiri* claim they originated from a place now deserted but previously called *Buolia* (*Huoray*) found between *Gbanko* and *Kaleo* communities located 16 kilometres north of *Wa*.¹⁵²

Like the Lobi, the *Chakalee* practice *tendaalong* and, in terms of religious persuasion, they worship family deities collectively called '*baga*' (plural) or '*bagre*' (singular) and their most revered deity is known as *Bamba*.¹⁵³ The custom and traditions of the Lobi would also be highlighted later in Chapter Three. The establishment and growth of *Kambale* was due to the efforts of seven leaders, namely, *Gushiegu*, *Nungoni*, *Sampia*, *Kpienyenge*, *Kpiendo*, *Kankaoha* and *Naaba* (all deceased) and who belonged to the '*Sampia family*' of *Kambale*. Opposite *Kambale* is the settlement called *Sambo*, a word corrupted from the name of its founder: '*Song manbo*', meaning "searching for fortune." This is

¹⁵⁰Bin Salih, *A History of the Waala*. p. 4.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Salifu Bualah, Linguist, aged 56, *Aaheyao*, 12th January, 2014.

¹⁵² Interview with Boore Jatoe, Head of *Kambali*, aged 90, *Kambali*, 1 January, 2015.

¹⁵³ Information gathered from conversation with *Naaba Kpienyenge*, Head of *Kambali*, aged 75, *Kambali*, November 21, 1998.

another ethnic group whose people claim they originated from Gonjaland but the specific town or place of origin was not known.¹⁵⁴

The *Balume*

People of three clans: *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri* and *Kpagburi* coalesced and are known as '*Balume*', the group of people living in the area designated *Balum* in Wa. The founders of *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri* and *Kpagburi*, according to oral tradition, were three leaders: *Puoho*, *Widaana* and *Loɔloɔ* respectively. They first settled near *Sokpari* and his people. The decision by *Puoho* and *Widaana* to settle there was influenced by predictions of an oracle that "good things would come from the land" under a particular baobab tree. *Puoho* buried concoctions known as *balung/baloo* (descendants) under that baobab tree. *Puoho* and his people constructed their homes around the spot which came to be known as *Balum* in Wa.¹⁵⁵

The exact date of their (*Balume*) migration to Wa is not clear. However, several oral sources explain that when *Puoho* and *Widaana* arrived at Wa they noticed that the *Chakalɛ* had moved from their first location (*Jamberihe*) to the new site called *Kambale*. The exact date this movement took place was also not clear. However, members of the two clans, *Puohoyiri* (the clan of *Puoho*) and *Sokpayiri* (the clan of *Sokpari*), built their homes so close to each other such that the boundary of the two settlements could not easily be drawn.

¹⁵⁴Interview with Naa Ansohengminyɛ, Head of *Sambo*, aged 75, Wa, May 3, 2015.

¹⁵⁵Conversations with Sumani Munja, head of *Balum*, aged 95, at his *Puohoyiri* residence, Wa, May 20, 1998.

This pattern of settlement, in the opinion of Songsore, "was for the consolidation of the various ethnic groups against stronger and aggressive neighbours."¹⁵⁶ In other words, the settlement pattern of most pioneer settler groups at the time, which include the ethnic groups in Wa, according to Kuba and Lentz, "was a crucial asset for the security of newly founded settlements."¹⁵⁷ Most of the settlements found in the region, as observed, were also constructed along patrilineal and matrilineal relationships. On the other hand separate settlements were constructed for two reasons. First, conflicts or disagreement over socio-economic issues such as ownership of farmland often caused the movement of people from place to place.

Secondly people migrated due to constant disputes, and as Tamakloe indicates, "when, it came to getting an heir to the throne."¹⁵⁸ Sometimes, trouble erupted between eligible princes in most societies that practiced chieftaincy when vacancy to any office of chiefship or kingship was created by death, invalidity, dismissal, de-stoolment (as applied by the Akan ethnic group in Southern Ghana), or de-skinment (as adopted by Northern peoples of Ghana.- the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Dagaaba, Waala and Sissala.¹⁵⁹

Similarly, in the past, new settlements were founded particularly, in Wa, as a result of quarrels between family members especially, the heads. *Widaana* and

¹⁵⁶Jacob Songsore, *Regional Development of Ghana; The Theory and the Reality*, New Edition, Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2011, p.27.

¹⁵⁷Richard Kuba and Carola Lentz, "Arrows and Earth Shrines: Towards A History of Dagara Expansion in Southern Burkina Faso," *Journal of African History*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (2002), p.377.

¹⁵⁸Emmanuel Forster Tamakloe, *A Brief History of the Dagomba People*, p.21

¹⁵⁹George Folley, "Three Royal Gates appeal against Judgement." *Daily Graphic*, Saturday, March 6, 2010, p.23

Puoho, the two brothers who founded *Balum*, separated due to constant misunderstanding. Hence, *Widaana* went one kilometre north of *Puohoyiri* and founded *Suuriyiri*, and thus adopting a derogatory term derived from the two words; '*suuri*' (anger) and '*yiri*'(settlement). Then *Loɔloɔ* (*Widaana*'s son) who could not withstand the relationship between *Widaana* and *Puoho* also went three kilometres west and settled among a family of the Lobi on a settlement called *Kpagburi*. Later, another family of the Lobi at *Kpagburi* moved 1,000 meters further west and built the new settlement called *Kpagburi-yijihe*, which meant the red *Kpagburi* because the people at the time plastered their buildings with 'red clay'.¹⁶⁰

These misunderstandings and other social developments did not mean that the members of the four settlements: *Sokpariyiri*, *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri* (*Suuriyiri*) and *Kpagburi* were at variance with each other. The four clans continued to operate as one ethnic group. *Balum* was their ancestral shrine which belonged to all members of the clans and they made sacrifices there together through their overall head, the *tendaana*. The *tendaana* also led members of the four clans (*Sokpariyiri*, *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri* or *Suuriyiri* and *Kpagburi*) during funerals, festivals, naming ceremonies and other customary rites they performed.

One significant joint sacrifice *Balume* perform was at the water shrine called "*Sokpari kolee*," meaning the pond of *Sokpari*. This is a spot where natural water gushed out of the ground and, therefore came to called *jenjeng*. How the pond of *Sokpari* got the new name *jenjeng* is interesting. The new name *jenjeng*

¹⁶⁰Conversation with Sumani Munja, aged 95, and Salifu Mumuni, aged 72, heads of *Puohoyiri* and *Sokpayiri* settlements respectively, Wa, May 21, 1998.

came when the first Muslim-pilgrims of Wa arrived from Mecca (date not clear), the center of Muslim pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. These Muslim pilgrims saw in Saudi Arabia similar ponds like the pond found in *Sokpariyiri* in Wa and called the pond 'zamzam', an Arabic word, corrupted to '*jenjeng*' by the local people.¹⁶¹

Sokpari and his people worshipped the pond as their 'highest deity' or 'shrine'. Any reptile found in the pond, especially the crocodile, was their totem, and thus, all members of *Sokpayiri* and *Balum* tabooed such reptiles.¹⁶² Another water source or pond discovered comprised of several ponds called '*chago-bao*' which meant '*chago* valley' and located between *Sendamuni* and *Kumbiahe* communities where domestic and wild animals grazed and drank. This was a hunting ground for *Widaana* and his people.

The availability of good drinking water sources at '*jenjeng*' and '*chago bao*' attracted a lot of people to move from their original homes to settle close to the water sites. This resulted in the founding of new communities namely *Kambalipaani*, *Dopeeni*, *Dokpong* and *Dondoli*.¹⁶³ The leaders of these communities did not follow the settlement pattern discussed already but sited their communities far from each other to provide their families enough space to cultivate around their premises.

¹⁶¹Interview with Mallam Bangaaba, an itinerant Muslim Teacher at his Bangbiri-yiri residence in Wa, aged 70, Wa, June 10, 1998

¹⁶²Joint interview with Sumani Munja, head of *Balum*, aged 95, and Salifu Mumuni, head of *Sokpayiri*, aged 72, Wa, May 21, 1998.

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*

The Mande

Ivor Wilks tends to suggest that Malinke and Wangara ethnic groups collectively known as the Mande in modern Mali were found early in Wa. The Malinke were a warrior group and the Wangara were merchants trading from country to country and settling in many places. They settled at *Nasa* and *Visi*, two towns approximately 40 kilometres northeast of Wa, in the late 14th or early 15th century.¹⁶⁴ Waala oral sources explain that the Mande came to Wa when trading activities had increased in volume in Wa.¹⁶⁵ This trade, according to Adu Boahen, "had reached its peak and intensity between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. With time the trade was in the hands of the Mande *Dyula* or *Wangara*".¹⁶⁶ Mandeland, as illustrated by Harry A. Gailey on Map 7 overleaf, was spread out over three different locations in West Africa. One Mande state was found between the basins of the Senegal and Gambia rivers; another in modern Sierra Leone and the third in modern Mali.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴Wilks, "A Note on the Early Spread of Islam in Dagomba," p.93

¹⁶⁵Interview with Mallam Bangaaba, Muslim Teacher, aged 70, Bangbiri-yiri, Wa, June 10, 1998.

¹⁶⁶Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, New Edition. p.1.

¹⁶⁷Harry A. Gailey, *The History of Africa in Maps: Europeans areas of control in the Nineteenth Century West Africa*, California, Denoyer-Geppert, 1971, p.55.

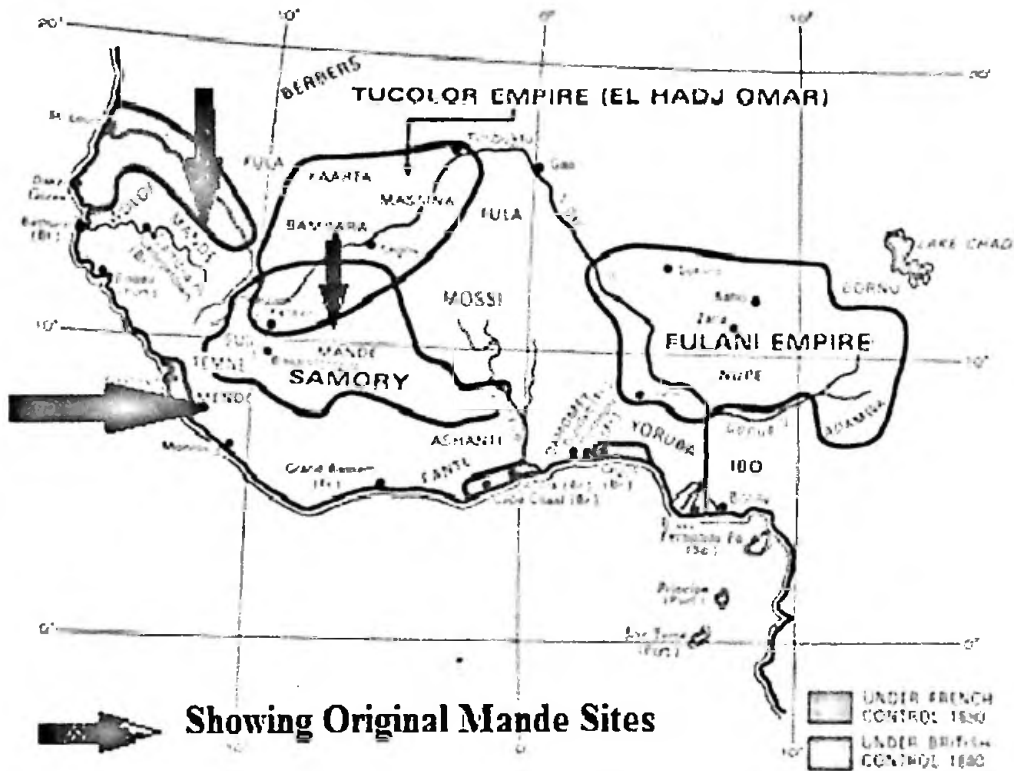


Figure 9: Map showing Mande Locations in West Africa

Source: Harry A. Gailey, *The History of Africa in Maps*, 1971, p.55.

Ivor Wilks asserts that the Wangara clan of Mande, made up of nine groups - Bamba, Kamaghatay, Timitay, Gbani, Jaba-gharty, Taraury, Kuluboli, Watara and Kawtay (Kamara) - spread at different times to different locations and from different directions.¹⁶⁸ It is known that it was the members of the *Taraury* and *Kunatay* clans who entered Ghana and were based at *Nasa* and *Visi* (towns). Waala oral traditions, however, suggest that the word *Mande* was the general name claimants from Mali, now settled in Wa, call themselves. According to Mande traditions, they began as three groups: the Wangara (merchants), *Kantonsi*

¹⁶⁸Wilks, "A Note on the Early Spread of Islam in Dagomba." p.93

(clerics or scholars) and the Malinke or Mandingo (the warriors).¹⁶⁹ What each of the groups came to Wa for would be highlighted in the subsequent paragraphs.

The Wangara were identified as the pacesetters during the Trans-Saharan trade through which Wa was connected to several trade centres, especially, the Akan and the Lobi goldfields in modern-day Ghana, Kano in modern Nigeria, and in this trade the inhabitants of Wa, particularly, the Mande (Wangara), played the role of middlemen.¹⁷⁰ The Wangara merchants began as visiting traders travelling between Mandeland and the communities established along the eastern and western fringes of the Black Volta where they sold their wares and bought their needs but often returned to their original homes in Mali.

From there the Wangara moved westwards into the Wa area where trading activities master-minded by the Lobi, had to a large extent, improved. It was the activities of the Lobi which attracted other Mande groups, namely, *the Ngbanja* or *Jabagihe* and *Kantonsi* (Malinke) to migrate to Wa.¹⁷¹

The *Jabagihe*

The Malinke were part of the Mande people from Mali who came to Wa in three batches and with time came to be known as *Jabagihe*. The Malinke ancestors in Wa began as traders and joined the Mande merchants trading from place to place. After years of trading with people in the area, both the Mande and Malinke settled in places which later developed as communities, namely, *Ma-ngo*,

¹⁶⁹ Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule, 1898 - 1957*, p. 129

¹⁷⁰ Information gathered from three knowledgeable elders and chiefs in Wa
>Hamidu Kenneth Dego-Naa, head of Bomiyiri, Wapaane, 3rd June, 1998.

>Kpankpan Salia, head of Kpagburi, aged 90, Wa, December 13, 2014.

>Piengyenge Dumba, head of Kambale aged, 85, Kambale, January 20, 2015.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

*Charia, Jonga, Tannina, Sing, Bussie, Naro, Kandia, Issa, Tabiasi, Biihe, Kolikpong and Boli.*¹⁷² These communities are located on the outskirts of Wa and their descendents are currently living there. In these communities members of the two clans (Mande and Malinke) in the course of time came to be called *Jabagihe* (plural) or *Jabaga* (singular). How the name *Jabaga* originated is explained variously below.

According to *Gonja Chronicles*, the word "*Jabaga*" was corrupted from the word "*Nbanja*," which was used by the *Juula* or *Dyula* Muslims from the *Kamaghatay* ward of Bighu (Begho) in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana near present-day town of Nsawkaw."¹⁷³ Another opinion asserts that the word *Jabaga* obtained its roots from the clan name *Jaba-ghaty* or *Kamaghatay* which was corrupted to read *Jabagihe*, the local name people call the descendents of the *Jaba-ghaty* or *Kamaghatay* (Malinke clan) in Wa. The Malinke were engaged in trading and farming and their ancestors were believed to have taken part in the gold-kola trade between Hausaland (Northern Nigeria) and the people found settled along the fringes of the Black Volta.¹⁷⁴

In the Upper West Region of Ghana today, the *Jabagihe* live in communities such as *Sing, Boli, Loggo, Kolikpong, Jeyiri, Biihe, Busa, Owlo, Nandor-Ko, Tabiahe, Issa, Naro, Kajokperi, Bussie, Mwankuri, Sankana, Charia, Kaleo, Sombo, Sabuli, Ping (in the outskirts of Wa); and Ma-ngo, Sambo,*

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ivor Wilks, Nehemia Levtzion and Bruce M. Haight, *Chronicles from Gonja: A tradition of West African Muslim Historiography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.15

¹⁷⁴ Information from Dong Nyoli, elder head of the Mankoma community in Ma-ngo, aged 95, Ma-ngo near Wa, November 18, 2014.

Dograyiri, Kpaninooyiri, Jabago and Dan-ko (in the Wa township).¹⁷⁵ Both Waala and Dagaaba oral traditions acknowledge that the ancestors of the people in these communities were among the early settlers in the region.

Carola Lentz explains how right to land is tied to members of communities designated "first-comers" and asserts that "these pioneers and their descendants often allocate land to later immigrants, grant them the right to build houses, bury their dead, and mediate in conflicts over territorial boundaries and land use".¹⁷⁶ These, as earlier explained, are some functions of the *Tendamba*.

From the foregoing, the Mande and *Jabagihe* who were found settled long in their present habitats are also indigenes because they own and allocate land and mediate in conflicts. This assertion differs from what some scholars wrote indicating that because the Gonja originated from the Northern Region of Ghana, they are among ethnic groups classified as immigrants. This is incorrect because as clearly explained the *Jabagihe* were settled before Wa got its name and that predated the arrival of the *Nabiihe* and *Yarihe* who also came from Mamprugu in the Northern Region of Ghana and Mande (Mali) respectively. This is elaborated upon under the sub-topic 'immigrants'.

The *Kantonsi*

The two names or words *Kantonsi* or *Saamunee* (plural) or *Saamunoo* (singular) in the context of the *Waala* apply to seven clans called: *Kunate*,

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

¹⁷⁶Carola Lentz, 'First-Comers and Late-Comers: The Role of Narratives in Land Claims', p.157.

Daabalee, Sambalee, Wurate, Zonbalee, Kandeela and *Kuribalee*.¹⁷⁷ Their places of origin, according to Wilks, are "Nasa and Visi... the *Taraury and Kunatay*" two Wangara clans found 20 kilometres north of Wa.¹⁷⁸ Waala oral traditions assert that two other settlements, *Kpalwogu and Kandia*, were later founded.¹⁷⁹ Just like how Wa got its name, stories are woven around the selection and adoption of names for *Kantonsi* settlements.

Oral traditions suggest that the leader and founder of the *Kantonsi*, one Ahmed Mansour, a Muslim scholar, embarked on a missionary tour visiting and settling in many places until he got to a site and remarked, '*kang tu kye kang na tonsi*' ('let me go this direction perhaps I will be lucky').¹⁸⁰ This statement was corrupted later to read *Kantonsi* applied to all *Kantonsi* descendants of Ahmed Mansour. Later, the name *Kantonsi* was interchangeably used with the name *Saamunee*, which in *Waale* means 'the eastern people' or '*Sa-muni*'.¹⁸¹

It is generally claimed that the ancestors of the *Kantonsi* often shelved the name of their place of origin when asked but mentioned that they came from '*Samuni*' (the east) and would not mention their actual town. The reason for hiding their identity was because their ancestors had in the past not treated their neighbours kindly but had now been overpowered and were being pursued by the new victors.

¹⁷⁷Interview with knowledgeable individuals and some elders of the *Kantonsi* clan at Viise and Wa, particularly:

>Dramani Huudu, an Imam, Kabanye, Wa, aged 58, February 10, 2015;

>Issahaku Seinu, head of Viise clan, aged 69, Viise, May 18, 1998.

¹⁷⁸ Wilks, "A Note on the Early Spread of Islam in Dagomba," p.93.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹Interview with Muslim leaders Alhaji Bangaaba, aged 65 and Alhaji Seinu Issahaku, head of Seinu clan, aged 69, Wa, 18th May, 1998.

The origin of the *Kantonsi* is traced to one Ahmed Mansour who was believed to have visited and studied in Yathrib (Madina) in Saudi Arabia. Ahmed Mansour after completing his studies embarked on missionary crusades which took him to modern Sudan, Niger, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and finally Ghana, and specifically to *Viise and Kpalwogu*, two principal towns northeast of Wa.¹⁸² This area was occupied by *the Issala, Safalba, Passala, Potule, Guruni, Kassim and Batige*, who the forces of Mansour drove out.¹⁸³

In place of the first settlers emerged *Viise* and *Kpalwogu*, two towns whose names were corrupted from statements made by two leaders: Imori Al-Hajj Umar and Seinu. First, Imori al-Hajj Umar (son of Ahmed Mansour), discovered a very fertile vast land and was said to have remarked that; '*kang visi a bo jisong ko*', which meant 'to look round (*viise*) for a good farmland'. This statement was corrupted to be '*Viise*' and thus the root of the word and now the name of the town founded on the site called '*Viise*', located 16 kilometres northeast of Wa.

Similarly, the name '*Kpalwogu*' was woven from the story of one Seinu (a leader), who discovered a suitable site for farming and decided to rest with his family under 'a tall mahogany tree'. In the local language "a tall mahogany tree" is called "*Kpa kpal wogu*." This was the site where Seinu and his people first built homes and which was corrupted to read *Kpalwogu*.¹⁸⁴

Exactly when the *Viise and Kpalwogu* settlements began is not yet clear. However, one can build on the accounts of some historians to establish the

¹⁸²Ibid (Seinu Issahaku), Head of Seinu family in Wa, aged 85, Wa, 10th December, 2014.

¹⁸³Ibid.

¹⁸⁴Interview with:

>Dramani Huudu, an Imam of Kabanye, Wa, aged 58, February 10, 2014.

>Issahaku Seinu, Head of Viise clan, aged 69, Viise, May 18, 1998.

timeline of the period. Adu Boahen indicates that, "by the eleventh century the Mandingo had found a number of chiefdoms in the area to the south of the Soninke under various Malinke clans. Among them were Kizi ruled by the Troare, Do or Dodougou by the Konate (Kunate), Sibi by the Kamara (Kamaratay) and, finally, Kangaba ruled by the Keita."¹⁸⁵

Ahmed Mansour was believed to have descended from one of the Malinke clans and was said to have devoted his life to missionary work. Hence, he travelled to many places and later settled between two towns along the border of Burkina Faso and Ghana, where *Toe* and *Viise* respectively were noted as having developed into Islamic learning centres.¹⁸⁶ These learning centres have disappeared. The disappearance of Muslim Learning Centres was common in the region and their revival became the task of nineteenth century scholars.

According to J. B. Webster, Adu Boahen and Espie Idowu, "throughout the Muslim world scholars were concerned that Muslim communities which had once led the world in the arts, sciences, government and military prowess were now in decline. By 1800 Muslims formed only small minority groups in non-Muslim states."¹⁸⁷ Scholars of the Western Sudan attributed this decay to the abandonment of moral standards, simple living habits and purity of faith of their ancestors. During the "nineteenth century therefore, began a number of reform

¹⁸⁵Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, New Edition (1966). p. 26.

¹⁸⁶Testimony by two itinerant Muslim leaders: Mallam Seidu, aged 70, and Karima Bangaaba, aged 65, Wa, 10th May, 1998.

¹⁸⁷J.B. Webster et. al., *The Growth of African Civilisation, The Revolutionary Years, West Africa since 1800*, London, Longmans, 1967, p.3.

movements aimed at restoring the Muslim world to its former greatness by a renewed devotion of Muslims to the highest ideals of their religion."¹⁸⁸

In many parts of West Africa, Muslim scholars prescribed two options - the use of force (war) and education (preaching and teaching people to understand and practice better the doctrines of Islam). Ahmed Mansour, who established himself as Imam in *Toe and Vise*, chose the method of educating and providing people with their needs in order to win their hearts to Islam. Some present itinerant Muslim scholars assert that Ahmed Mansour travelled far and wide establishing what later were called "Koranic schools" and built mosques wherever his people settled. Hence, people within the vicinity of *Vise* and *Kpalwogu* confer the title "*Sheikh*" (*al-Ansar*'; Arabic which meant "helper") on Ahmed Mansour.¹⁸⁹

When Sheikh Ahmed Mansour died the leadership passed on to one Imori al-Hajj Umar. During the era of Imori al-Hajj Umar's leadership many clerics came to study in *Viise and Kpalwogu*. With the support and ideas of the new scholars Imori Al-Hajj Umar opted to propagate and extend Islam through the use of force or arms hoping to create an Islamic state within the *Viise Kpalwogu* area and beyond. Hence, all able hunters were mobilised into an Association and groomed into adopting the use of force.¹⁹⁰ This coincided with troubles in Hausaland in modern Nigeria where Boahen notes that:

¹⁸⁸Ibid

¹⁸⁹ Testimonies of two itinerant Muslim leaders in Wa:

>Mallam Seidu Sena, Arabic teacher, aged 70, Wa, 10th May, 1998.

>Karima Bangaaba, Arabic teacher, aged 65, Wa, 10th May, 1998.

¹⁹⁰Ibid.

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century [by 1830] all the Hausa states were wiped off the political map of the Central Sudan, and in their place was established a single Fulani Empire ... the outcome of a political revolution organised by the Fulani under the leadership and inspiration of Usuman dan Fodio".¹⁹¹

Similarly, *Kantonsi* clerics used Hunter-Groups or in the present term Associations formed in *Viise* and *Kpalwogu* to invade non-Muslim settlements.

Consequently, in about 1860, the non-Muslim communities around *Viise* and *Kpalwogu* were constantly attacked one after the other in order to compel them to convert to Islam.¹⁹² This method of propagating Islam, as Adu Boahen puts it, "can indeed be regarded as a jihad in so far as it aimed at the expansion and establishment of Islamic government."¹⁹³ This was the objective of the *Kantonsi* but the idea failed.

According to oral traditions, the non-Muslim communities came together in self defence and successfully defeated the *Kantonsi* and their Muslim allies in about 1865¹⁹⁴. This led to the dismemberment or dispersal of the *Kantonsi*, who relocated to the West, East, South and North of *Viise* and *Kpalwogu*. Wa and Lawra towns (in modern-day Ghana) received a lot of the *Kantonsi* migrants.¹⁹⁵

In the opinion of Bin Salih, "the second migrant group to arrive in the Wa area after the *Tendamba* (the *Balumee*), was the *Samune* (*Saamunee*) of the Mande Dyula origin".¹⁹⁶ The first group of *Kantonsi* or *Saamunee* in Wa, according to oral tradition, came from *Viise* and *Kpalwogu*. They were visiting

¹⁹¹Boahen, *Topics in West African History, Schools Edition*, p.42.

¹⁹² Information gathered in conversation with Naa Kaaboh, Chief, aged 82, at the chief's palace (Lawra), 21st June, 2014.

¹⁹³Boahen, *Topics in West African History, Schools Edition*. p.46.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Malam Osuman Ahmed, Arabic scholar/Proprietor, aged 72, Wa, April, 1998.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Naa Kaaboh, aged 82, Chief, Lawra, June 21, 2014.

¹⁹⁶Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*: p.162.

traders who were caught up by the invasion of *Viise and Kpalwogu* and as a result they stayed in Wa at a site called *Kabanye*.

The date the *Kantonsi* arrived in Wa is uncertain. J. C. Dougah, suggests that "their (*Kantonsi*) settlement preceded that of the *Nabihi* under Pelpuo I, the progenitor of Soalia, who came to the throne in 1681."¹⁹⁷ If this is true, by Dougah's estimation then the *Kantonsi* arrived in Wa earlier than 1681. This is yet to be ascertained due to conflicting versions about origins of the *Kantonsi* clan. What is clear is that their appellation is *Kunatey* and they were an early settler group.¹⁹⁸

The Immigrant Groups in Wa

Baesd on accounts by scholars such as Madeline Manoukian, Paul A. Ladouceur, J. C. Dougah, Ivor Wilks, A. K. Awedoba and Bin Salih the autochthonous and immigrant status of peoples in various communities (including the inhabitants of Wa) are mixed up. Ladouceur indicates that, "Northern Ghana (which includes Wa) are strangers from other parts of West Africa."¹⁹⁹ Awedoba calls the *Nabihi* in Wa "immigrant royals."²⁰⁰ Dougah asserts that, "most of the Moslems in Wa are descendants of a branch of the Mandingo", an ethnic group in modern Mali.²⁰¹ Bin Salih, classifies the *Saamunee*, *Nabihi* and *Yarihe* (Muslims)

¹⁹⁷Dougah, *Wa and Its people*. p. 47 & p.115.

¹⁹⁸Conversation with 30 knowledgeable individual Waala Muslims during field trips to gather data, particularly information from Sulemani Haruna Bakuri, Chief Imam of Wa, aged 72, Wa, 20th May, 2015.

¹⁹⁹Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians*. p. 26.

²⁰⁰Awedoba, *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts*, p.47

²⁰¹Dougah, *Wa and Its people*. p.47.

²⁰² Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. pp. 2-3

as indigenous inhabitants but again lists the *Kunaatela* (*Saamunee*), *Bambiriyiree*, *Watarihe* and *Sembeleyire*, who are also *Yarihe* (Muslims) as "*Saamba*," meaning "immigrants."²⁰²

Based on the issues discussed so far one cannot clearly show who among the Waala are indigenous and those considered as immigrants. Therefore, based on further investigations, I classify the immigrants or strangers as the *Nabiihi* (the princely class), the *Tuomunee*, *Gonja* and all *Yarihe* (Muslim) groups. This grouping is based on the accounts by some of the scholars referred to above and oral sources examined. Their accounts are highlighted below.

The *Nabiihe* (Royals)

The word '*Nabiihe*', meaning descendants or children of the chief, was derived from the two words; '*naa*' (chief) and '*biihe*' (children). Most people in the three Northern Regions of Ghana address their chiefs and descendants with titles such as '*kuoro*' (chief) and '*mbisi*' (children), among the Sissala in the northeast of Wa; and '*ewura*' (chief) and '*ewuribi*' (children), among the Gonja in the Northern Region of Ghana. The Waala and Dagaaba, the two main ethnic groups in the Upper West Region of Ghana, address chiefs as '*naa*' and their children or descendants (both male and female) as '*nabie*' (singular) or '*nabiihe*' (plural). In this context the word '*nabiihe*' amongst Dagaaba and Waala refer to both the princes and princesses of a royal family.²⁰³

²⁰³General titles adopted and commonly used by Waala and Dagaaba (in the Upper West), and amongst the Dagomba and Mamprusi (in the Northern) Regions of Ghana.

There are conflicting opinions about the origins of the *Nabiihe* in Wa or in the *Waala* kingdom. Dougah indicates that the *Nabiihe* in Wa originated from "either Dagbon or Nalerigu."²⁰⁴ Adu Boahen, Ivor Wilks, Peter Clarke and Basil Davidson suggest "Mamprusi, Dagomba, Yatenga and Wagadugu" states as the probable roots of the *nabiihe* of Wa.²⁰⁵ Similarly, a British colonial officer, J. A. Cutfield, indicated that "the Waala kingdom was started by one Naba Salima (Sorliya), a Dagomba prince."²⁰⁶ Awedoba also asserts that, "the *Nabiihe* in Wa trace their origins to one Adam Toe who was either a Mamprusi or Dagomba."²⁰⁷

These assertions above made by earlier scholars so far failed to establish the actual root of the *nabiihe* in Wa. The reason is that the scholars mentioned several different kingdoms: Mamprugu, Dagomba, Mossi (Wagadugu), Yatenga, Gonja or Nanumba geographically located far from each other as the possible origin of the *nabiihe*. Rather, interviews conducted on knowledgeable individuals settled on Adam Toe (a Mamprusi) as the ancestor of the *Nabiihe* in Wa.²⁰⁸ The date Adam Toe came to Wa is not yet clear, but Dougah suggested "1625" as the probable year Adam Toe became chief of Wa.²⁰⁹ This meant Adam Tuo might have entered Wa a date earlier than 1625.

As chief, Adam Toe divided the kingdom into four parts among his sons:

²⁰⁴Dougah, *Wa and Its people*. p.47.

²⁰⁵Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*. p.37; Boahen, *Topics in West African History*. p.54; Clarke, *West Africa and Islam*. p. 96; and Davidson, *A History of West Africa*. p. 53.

²⁰⁶PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Native Affairs, 1908

²⁰⁷Awedoba, *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts*. p.47.

²⁰⁸Information gathered in conversation with 50 Respondants among Waala and Dagaaba, January, 2014 to February, 2015; See also Awedoba, *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts*, p. 47.

²⁰⁹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. p.115.

Na Pasa (Naa Kpaaha) settled at *Duori[Gulli]* (a section one mile (approx; two kilometres) north of the *Wa-naa's* palace; *Jawnyola (Jornyorhe)* went to *Sing*, a town five miles (approx; eight kilometres) southeast of *Wa*; *Yijisi (Yijiihe)* was located in *Busa*, eight miles (approx; 12 kilometres) in the east and *Najariya (Naajari)* was settled at *Pirsi (Kperisi)*, a town five miles or eight kilometres to the north of *Wa*.²¹⁰

These four towns - *Gulli*, *Busa*, *Sing* and *Kperisi* - later became the capitals of the divisions of the *Nabiihe*, who lived with other ethnic groups found settled in the territory of the *Waala* kingdom and whose members were called "*fufugla*", a term which was later replaced with the word *Waala*.

The name *Wa* by its etymology and, according to *Awedoba*, means "we came to watch a dance," which in *Waale* implies "*te wayeng ka te kaa seore*".²¹¹ This informs that dancing or entertainment was regularly in *Wa* and people often went to take part. Later the word "*wa yeng*" was corrupted to read as "*Wa*." Hence people in the course of time called their habitat *Wa* (in *Waale*) which means 'come' (in English).

After establishing his sons *Adam Tuo* died in his palace at *Fongo* (a section in *Wa* town). *Soalia*, the first son of *Adam Tuo* became the chief and moved from *Duori* to *Fongo*. He developed the state into what is known as the *Waala* Kingdom and after him its administration was in the hands of the *Nabiihe*. The structure of administration set up and the administrative style adopted are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

²¹⁰PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, *Wa* District Native Affairs, 1908. See also, *Dougah, Wa and Its People*. p.115.

²¹¹*Awedoba, An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts*, p.47.

The *Tuomunee*

The word *Tuomunee* (plural) or *Tuomunoo* (singular) refers to a group of people found in the settlement of Wa called *Tuomuni* and whose members, according to Dougah, "dress and present a new chief for installation."²¹² They claim that their ancestors originated from somewhere in Mandeland but moved to Dagbon for a long time and later came to Wa because of trade. Their first home was constructed "under a big baobab tree," hence the name '*tuo*' (baobab tree) and '*muni*' (under)²¹³.

One Froko led the *Tuomunee* to Wa. *Waala* oral tradition explains that Froko, by custom, was the grandchild of members of the princely class in Wa. As *Waala* custom further explain, in a figurative sense, the Froko were '*nabiihi pogebe*' which in *Waale* mean, 'wives of *Waala* royals', and, as such, the Froko perform the roles of linguists, which are similar to services of women (wives), in the palace of chiefs at the Village, Division and Paramount levels.²¹⁴

Waala oral tradition asserts that the *Tuomunee* (Froko) are specifically responsible for the ceremonial crowning of *namine* (chiefs) in the *Waala* kingdom. They conduct a chief to sit on the 'appropriate' skin three times, recite the customary ritual viz: *ka Naa Gura wa leowa ka'ng leohe a naang ku'o*, meaning "am taking the seat as '*naa*', and if *Naa Gura* return i will give back the

²⁰⁹ Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. p.115.

²¹³ Information from Bashirudeen Ibrahim, elder of Tuomuni, aged 55, Wa, 20th May, 1998

²¹⁴ Ibid.

seat to him; put the gown on him and pronounce him 'naa' from that time and day."²¹⁵

The Gonja

The word Gonja, in the course of time, and, among people in Ghana, came to be applied to some of the groups of people who claim they originated from Mande (Mali) and whose ancestor was one Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa, the founder of Gonja located in the Northern Region of Ghana. Accounts obtained from Gonja oral history and by some historians fail to suggest the specific date the Gonja came to Ghana but suggested a period between 1500 and 1600. The relationship between the Gonja and the Waala started before 1600 and is discussed in two stages in this study. The first part has already been discussed as the Mande and the *Jabagihe* (See pp. 65- 71). The second part or what would be discussed below concerns the conquest by Ndewura Sumaila Jakpa and its impact on Wa and the Waala.

Historians acknowledge Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa as the leader and founder of Gonja, and he ruled, according to Buah, "in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries."²¹⁶ The exact location or boundary of Gonja at the time, according to Ladouceur, "seemed difficult to ascertain because transition between kingdoms was rather ill-defined."²¹⁷ Ladouceur further indicated that, "Gonja

²¹⁵ From the document, Enskinment and Deskinment of Chiefs by Customary Law and Traditional Councils, Appendix 'D', p.7

²¹⁶Buah, *A History of Ghana*. p.34

²¹⁷Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians*: p.26

expanded to encompass the area between the Black Volta and the Oti River".²¹⁸ Buah, on his part, mentioned that, "Jakpa controlled a vast kingdom stretching about 320 kilometres from Bole to Basari in the present-day Republic of Togo."²¹⁹ Specifically, S. Macdonald-Smith indicated that, "the Gonja kingdom covers a vast stretch of land in the Northern Territories spreading, as it does, from Kpandai in the southeast to Bamboi in the southwest. Its boundary in the north is only twenty-four miles [approximately 38 kilometres] from Wa and in the south the boundary is formed by the Black Volta and White Volta".²²⁰

Research findings indicate that Gonja share boundary with Waala 35 kilometres south of Wa, 20 kilometres to Tamale, Kintampo and up to the fringes of the Black Volta at Bamboi and Banda. How this area came to be known as Gonja is discussed.

From the second half of the 16th century (1550s), marauders were preventing traders along the Trans-Saharan Trade routes from moving further north from Begho to Mali to sell their goods. This caused shortage in the supply of essential goods, especially gold, to Mandeland. As a result, "Askia Dawud (the Overlord of the Songhay Empire) despatched a force of Mandinka cavalry to see what could be done about stopping this 'leak' in his supplies."²²¹ Therefore, seven Mande war commanders or captains: *Nabaa (Lamba)*, *Wam*, *Lanta (Lata)*, *Lemu*, *Jafa*, *Mmfu* and *Chari (Sa'ara)*, led by Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa came to the

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Buah, *A History of Ghana*, p.34

²²⁰ S. Macdonald-Smith, Chief Regional Officer, "Northern Territories Report," Tamale, July, 1956, p.4

²²¹ Davidson, *A History of West Africa*. p.96

region (Northern Ghana) to ensure that what disturbed the movement of traders in the gold trade was destroyed.²²²

When Ndewura Sumaila Jakpa and his warrior group were leaving Mande for the expedition, people back home wished them good luck and told them in *juula*, the language of the Wangara, "*ar gbanya tagjona kana jona*". The interpretation of this message in English is "to be quick and return home". It was from this expression that the name '*Gbanya*' or '*Kagbanya*' (singular) or '*Ngbanya*' (plural) was corrupted to later read as Gonja.²²³

The exact date Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa arrived in the region is not known. In fact, Adu Boahen asserts that, "the date for the foundation of Gonja was uncertain, but, by the kingship list, the founding of Gonja began during the second half of the sixteenth century" [which meant after 1550].²²⁴ According to Tamakloe, "it was during the reign of Na Dariziogo, Chief of Dagbon, (1543 - 1554) that, Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa came and settled in the Waala country".²²⁵

When the Mandinka forces entered the region they realised they would not be able to affect the movement of the gold trade because, according to Davidson, "the Akan gold-producers had begun selling some of their production to the Portuguese and other European traders along the Atlantic sea board".²²⁶ These Europeans were a tougher group for the Mande warriors to handle and that caused the Mande warriors to hesitate in the overall venture which was against Gonja

²²²Haruna Mahama(ed) *Jakpa Magazine*, Issue No. 001, (April, 2014), Gonja Land Youth Association, Accra, p.22

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴Boahen, *Topics in West African History*. p. 56

²²⁵Tamakloe, *A Brief History of the Dagomba People*. p.21

²²⁶Davidson, *A History of West Africa*. p. 96

military tradition. Gonja military policy, according to oral tradition, dictates that war leaders on state mission such as the aforementioned, never return if the planned mission was not accomplished. There is a common prescribed penalty. When the captain fails to win a task such as war or battle against an enemy and returned home his penalty was death.²²⁷

Therefore, Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa and his band of warriors "considered it the better part of valour not to return to their homeland, but rather to set themselves up as independent rulers."²²⁸ In other words, Ndewura Jakpa occupied part of the territory which became Northern Region of modern Ghana and created the *Ngbanya* state, which was corrupted later to be Gonja.²²⁹ Quoting Gonja tradition, Buah indicates that, "when the invading Mande arrived in their present territory in Northern Ghana they found settlements of the Asante [probably Akan]. These aborigines were subdued, but as could be expected, their language exercised some influence on that of the new arrivals. For example, the suffix 'wura', an Akan word meaning 'master' or 'lord', was added to names of towns to indicate the ruler of the place, e.g. Ndewura Jakpa."²³⁰ This assertion, however, seems incorrect is explained.

Going by what Fynn and Addo-Fening stated:

²²⁷Information gathered in conversation with Tuntumba Boresa I, (Sulemana Jakpa), Yagbonwura (Paramount Chief of Gonja), aged 80, at his Damongo palace, 28th April, 2014. He hails from Kusawgu Gate Generally, most Gonja interviewed hold the same view and proudly Gonja men boast that warriors, like hunters, are expected to return home with good news or catch.

²²⁸J. A. Braimah, "Timu" on the History and Social Organisation of the People of Gonja, Unpublished Article, 31st October, 1983, p.6

²²⁹Conversation with Yagbonwura Tuntumba Boresa I, at his Damongo palace, 28th April, 2014

²³⁰Buah, *A History of Ghana*, p.34.

It appears that the indigenous inhabitants were the Vagla, the Sissala, the Tampulensi and Guan who lived to the west of the White Volta. Others were the Konkomba, the Nafeba, the Koma and the Chamba who lived to the east of the river the Mande invaders met. Aside from the Guan, all these ethnic groups spoke languages which were very much the same. They also have the same culture, making the same kinds of things and living in the same kind of way.²³¹

This means, the "Grunsi, Kasina, Buile, Galebaga, Batige, Safalba, Anga, Senufu, Chakalle, Pasaala, Potule, Vagla, Sissala, Mo, Nome and Tampulima have a common ancestry, and that, the languages spoken by them are only different variants of the Gur language."²³² It was from the Gur languages that terms like '*wira*', which meant 'the highest or ultimate', were derived and applied to names or important office holders such as chief in the land.

The term "*wura*" (Akan) used by Buah was used from a different cultural background to wrongly replace "*wira*", the local term for "higher heights." For example, there exists a hill called the "*Ombuona wira*", meaning "the hill of Ombor", a village 15 kilometres northeast of Wa. Generally, among the Gonja the title '*Ndewura*' did not mean 'the ruler of the place' as Buah has suggested. But rather, "*Nde*" is a 'name' and *wura* (*wira*) is 'a praise title' and that *Jakpa* (in *Juula* or Wangara) meant 'the spear holder.'²³³

As earlier pointed out, Gonja tradition condemns to death any war captain who failed on a mission and returned home. To win a return ticket to Mande, Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa planned a scheme of conquest and expansion for the nascent Gonja state. The plan was to win over all communities found between

²³¹ F. K. Fynn & R. Addo-Fening, *History for Senior Secondary Schools*, Ministry of Education, Accra: Evans Brothers Limited, 1991, p.121.

²³² Ibid; Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*; p.20

²³³ Discussion with Yagbonwura, Paramount Chief of Gonja, Tuntumba Boresa I, At his Damongo palace, April 28, 2014

modern Gonja and Mandeland (modern Mali). This meant conquering all states within the territory earmarked and which included the Waala kingdom.

Sumaila Ndewura Jakpa did not take part in the conquest, but deployed three groups of warriors into the area of operation. One group led by 'Bole' went in a south-west direction and took over the *Mo, Vagla, Tampulensi and Lobi*, areas of the present Bole-Bamboi district.²³⁴ A second warrior group headed by 'Kung', operated between Mankoma, a town 20 kilometres from the Bole district, and Issa-Kajoperi, twin towns 50 kilometres north-east of the Waala kingdom. This territory, occupied by *Dagaaba, Vagla, Safalba, Tampulima, Lobi, Balumee, Nabiihe and Chakalɛɛ*, came briefly under the administration of Gonja. The third warrior group was recruited from the 'Busunu' area and they also operated in the northeast, between Issa and Wa.²³⁵ The impact of Gonja expansion in the area, particularly, on the Waala Kingdom, was extensive.

By the conquest and occupation of parts of the territory, the Mande (*Jabagihe*) people soon turned out to occupy and own land in communities namely *Sing, Boli, Loggo, Biihe, Kolikpong and Jeyiri*. In other words in most of these villages, '*tendaalong*', that is land ownership was and, still is in the hands of

²³⁴Information gathered from conversation with:

>Alhaji Sensau Mahama, aged 90, at his Wa residence, Wa, July 6, 1998 >Mallam Seidu Sena, aged 70 and Karima Bangaaba, aged 65, at their Wa residences during my research field work on M.Phil, Wa, 10th May, 1998. >Alhaji Sensau Mahama, aged 90, Wa, July 6, 1998

²³⁵Ibid.

some descendants of the Mande (Gonja). Interestingly, the Gonja warriors mixed *juula* (their dialect) with the local dialects which gave rise to Gonja (language).²³⁶

Similarly, some inhabitants in *Sombo, Bussie, Naro, Kaleo and Nadoli* communities, in present-day Daffiama/Bussie/Issa and Nadowli/Kaleo Districts, claim that they originated from Gonja but now tend to be and call themselves Dagaaba.²³⁷ Such claims, in respect of the inhabitants of some towns, make it difficult to clearly understand the composition of the Waala or Dagaaba. For instance, research has shown that the princely group in Kaleo claim that they originated from Mossiland (in Burkina Faso). There is also a section of people in *Naoro* who claim they originated from Kung, a Gonja divisional town in the Northern Region of Ghana. Similarly, the people of *Ko*, near Nandom, say they originated from Kung. These groups of people are in most communities in the Upper West Region of Ghana who now call themselves Waala or Dagaaba and speak *Waale* or *Dagaare*.

Apart from waging war on people, the Gonja warriors were accused of engaging in human trafficking. Building on information gathered from the Dagaaba, McCoy stated that, "the Zabog (Jabagihe) people, warriors from across the border came to lure away their young men and make slaves of them in far-off lands from which they would never return."²³⁸ The trade in slaves was organised by two war captains: *Baajoore* (a prince from Wa), and *Jaahibaga* (a Mande war

²³⁶General information gathered among peoples in the Upper West Region, particularly the Waala and their neighbours during field trips to gather data from January 1 to December 31, 2014.

²³⁷Ibid.

²³⁸Remigius F. McCoy, *Great Things Happen*. Montreal: The Society of Missionaries of Africa, 1988, p.45.

captain from *Jabago* (Gonjaland) and their activities caused so much panic in communities that out of fear people escaped only to be sometimes caught and enslaved. Hence, people would simply alert others by shouting the word '*jaahibaga*', which was a signal for people to escape to safety. After some time the name *Jaahibaga* came to be read *Jabaga* (singular) or *Jabagihe* (plural: *Waale*), *Zabog* (Dagaare), is now a word applied to the descendants of Gonjas in the Upper West Region of Ghana.²³⁹

Organised *Jabagihe* groups continued to disturb and forcefully occupy vast areas of land belonging to some indigenous peoples: the *Nchumburu*, *Tampulensi*, *Vagla*, *Issala (Sissala)*, *Safaliba*, *Mo and Lobi*.²⁴⁰ These acts of vandalism and lawlessness displaced a lot of people causing ill-feelings between the conquered and the victor who lives close. Luckily, possible future encounter between dissatisfied groups was averted by the timely arrival of the British.

By 1898 the British had incorporated the area into her dominion, an action which MacGaffey indicates, "declared the end of bow and arrow conflicts and urged the people to engage in trade and commercial agriculture."²⁴¹ This halted the activities of the *Jabagihe*, who then led sedentary and peaceful lives in *Mango*, *Sambo(Wa)*, *Wechiau*, *Polee*, *Tanina*, *Dolimon*, *Charia*, *Kaleo*, *Jonga*, *Sing*, *Biihe*, *Boli*, *Loggo*, *Kolikpong*, *Jeyeri*, *Naaha*, *Kandia*, *Bussie*, *Naro*, *Kajokperi*, *Tabiahe*, *Issa*, *Bussie*, *Owulo*, *Sabuli*, *Nandor- Ko*, *Tizza*, *Sombo*, *Birifo*, *Sankana*,

²³⁹Information gathered during field trips, January-December, 2014.

²⁴⁰Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.31

²⁴¹Wyath MacGaffey, "A History of Tamale, 1907-1957, and Beyond." In *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. New Series, No.10 (2006-2009), p.110.

Nginbale and Nator, communities in the Upper West Region of Ghana.²⁴² This, perhaps, would be contested by persons who often shelve their true ethnicity, especially peoples in some of the communities mentioned. However, an in-depth and objective study of the compositions of communities so far discussed show how people of 'Gonja' tradition came to be part of Dagaaba and are now of the *Waala*.

Muslim Groups in Wa

Some scholars tended to list Muslim (*yarihe*) settlements (wards) in Wa either as indigenes or immigrants. Bin Salih, lists "*Tagrayiri, Bugliyiri and Limanyiri* communities as early settlers (indigenes) and '*Jengbeyire, Sisseele, Sensewla, Bangkungyeliyire, Sembeleyire, Bambiriyire, Kunaatela and Watariyire*, who are also Muslim wards as *Samba* (strangers)."²⁴³ John C. Dougah says, "most descendants of the Wa Muslim community are a branch of the Mandingo."²⁴⁴

Furthermore, research conducted revealed that the Mandingo Muslim main wards were *Kabanye, Limanyiri, and Tagrayiri* and also shows that *Tagrayiri and Limanyiri*, two main Muslim wards, later expanded into *Dondoli, Jejeriyiri, Bangmarayiri, Sendemuni, Buguliyiri, Tamerimuni, Dampoeyipala,*

²⁴² Interview with chiefs and knowledgeable individuals in and outside the place of study (Wa): Dagaaba, Sissala and Mossi during field trips from 30th November, 2013 to 30th November, 2014. A lot of the information obtained was from Naa Banangmine Sandao II, Chief of Kaleo, aged 80, Kaleo, 30th November, 2013; Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 78, Takpo, January 2, 2014.

²⁴³ Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*.p.317.

²⁴⁴ Dougah, *Wa and Its people*. p.47.

Vuori and Sembeleyiri. Other Muslim sections which were not listed, *Kantonsi* (already discussed under early settlers), *Jengbeyiri*, *Watariheyiri* and *Nepayiri*, were, perhaps, because they were of different backgrounds. A critical examination of the Muslim groups suggests that their histories are mixed up. The solution to this problem is what is discussed in respect of six main Muslim wards identified in Wa - *Tagrayiri*, *Jengbeyiri*, *Limanyiri*, *Watariheyiri*, *Nepayiri* and *Sisiela* - in the paragraphs below.

The *Tagrayiree*

Two hundred metres behind the *Wa-naa*'s palace live clusters of clans on a site called "*Tagrayiri*," a name derived from the two words, '*tagra*' (name and appellation of people) and '*yiri*' (settlement), and the inhabitants are called *Tagrayiree*. Similarly, Bin Salih states that, "the name *Tagrayiri* was derived from the word *tariwere* and *tagra* is an appellation of a clan among the Mande Dyula, who claim that their ancestors originated from Mandeland in modern Mali."²⁴⁵ When the *Tagrayiree* arrived in Wa is not yet clear but three suggestions explain how the people of *Tagrayiri* came to be found in Wa.

First, some ancestors of the *Tagrayiree* came when trading activities in Wa was at its peak. The exact date of this is still unknown, but as already mentioned the peak of the trade was, according to Adu Boahen, between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Secondly, Dougah indicated that, it was Pelpuo I (Chief of Wa from 1681 to 1696), who invited one *Bunsali Bile*, meaning in Waale "small red fire", an itinerant Muslim scholar established at Nasa, a town 40

²⁴⁵Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*, p. 37.

kilometres northeast of Wa and appointed him as his advisor. *Bunsali Bile* later founded the ward known as *Tagarayiri*, named after his grandfather called *Tagra*.²⁴⁶ Thirdly, Bin Salih rather states that, "the people of Tagrayiri, led by Maaman (Mahama) Tugbolo and Sanda Mori, came from Mandeland...a clan among the Mande Dyula (in modern Mali)" to Wa.²⁴⁷ The above assertions appear not to give any convincing or exact explanation concerning the origins of the people of Tagrayiri.

Rather, oral tradition explains that two brothers, Sanda Mori (senior) and Maamaa Tugbolo (junior), left Mandeland and got to Jirapa (*Giraba*) and Hain (*Hæen*), two adjacent towns 60 kilometres north of Wa. That Sanda Mori (alias *Bunsali Bile in Wa*), a spiritualist and a warrior-Muslim scholar versatile in Islamic doctrine and, whose interest was to teach people about Islam, later relocated to a new site 20 kilometres east of Wa called *Naaha* (*Nasa*). *Naaha*, as earlier pointed out, was an important centre of Islamic Learning and scholars went there to upgrade their knowledge in Koranic doctrine. Sanda Mori constructed a mosque in this community and was said to relate very well with all the people.

As a warrior, he also supported and organised hunters into a strong "Association" in defence of the people in *Naaha* and beyond against invaders. It was on the strength of the prowess exhibited by Sanda Mori that Pelpuo I (Chief of Wa) invited him (Sanda Mori) to Wa, which resulted in the creation of the *Tagrayiri* ward.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Dougah, *Wa and Its people*. p. 47; Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*.p.272.

²⁴⁷ Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.31.

²⁴⁸ Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. p.47.

Another opinion, linked the origin of Tagrayiri to two Muslim leaders, Asiyahu' and his cousin. The former was the antecedent of the Muslims, referring to the *Limanyiri* people, and the cousin was the antecedent of the *Tagra-iri* (*Tagrayiri*) people. Waala oral history suggests that the man Asiyahu, mentioned above, was by custom, father to Ya Mori, the founder of the *Limanyiri* ward in Wa and the cousin was identified as Sanda Mori and he came through Jirapa to Wa.²⁴⁹

Another school of thought explains that the *Tagrayiree* in Wa belonged to a Tuareg family.²⁵⁰ The Tuaregs, according to Davidson, were "nomads of the southern Sahara, always hoping to win control of the market cities of the Western Sudan."²⁵¹ The Tuaregs, operating through one Traore (leader), rather kept and fed camels and horses of traders and by that got acquainted with people in communities between the Sahara and Wa. Due to the military raids conducted by the Tuareg, a Chief of Wa (found to be Pelpuo I) invited them to help drive out the Lobi and Dagaaba, two troublesome ethnic groups in the area.²⁵²

After successfully driving out the Lobi and Dagaaba, people enquired from Karima Buraama, the son and war leader of Sanda Mori, the secret(s) behind his successes. He remarked in Waale; "*Ng Sung la Gumo*," which meant "my goodness protects me." This statement came to be corrupted to read '*Sungumo*,' which became the name of the section of the first clan of *Tagrayiri* and where the descendants of Sanda Mori (alias *Bunsali Bile*) and his son Karima Buraama in

²⁴⁹ Conversation with Naa Seidu Mumuni, aged 72, Chansa, Wa, April 2, 1998.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Mohammed Hamidu, aged 61, Yibile, 24th March, 2015.

²⁵¹ Davidson, *History of West Africa*. p.96.

²⁵² Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p. 270.

the Waala kingdom live.²⁵³ To compensate the people of *Tagrayiri* for the defeat of the Lobi-Dagaaba insurgents, Waala oral history asserts that, the Chief (Pelpuo I) and the *Tendaana (Widaana)* of Wa granted the ancestors of *Tagrayiri* a vast area of land. This land, Bin Salih notes:

Is towards the North of Wa, bordering Kaleo to the North and Kperihi to the north-east, where the village of Kumbiehi is located on a rocky tract of land known as Kompieni and a famous tourist attraction called Am-buona-wura; the highest peak in the northwestern part of Ghana) to Gbagrapeehi and the settlement of Balaufieli (Baleco-fiile).²⁵⁴

The above assertion of land granted to *Tagrayiree* by Bin Salih was found, according to Waala oral traditions, not exactly so. The exact size and boundaries of *Tagrayiree* land could not be properly demarcated because of lack of proper area maps in the past. As pointed out earlier in Chapter One, the boundary of the Waala Kingdom was not more than two kilometres from north to south and it ended at the valley commonly called '*Belle Bao*'. What Bin Salih suggests as the land of *Tagrayiri* cover much of the area where other ethnic groups reside and claims portions of the land. Nearer to this boundary are presently found *Kumbeche*, *Do-kong (Dokpong)* and *Do-bile* communities, the Wa airport, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) Hostel and the Catholic Guest House called '*Teegbere*'.

The site on which *Tagrayiri* began developed into three other sections. One section was founded by an unknown Mande trader who was received as "a guest of the people of *Tagrayiri*" by the Head of the *Sungumo* clan. When this happened

²⁵³Interview with Seidu Mumuni, chief, aged 72, Gombiliimuni residence in Wa, April 2, 1998

²⁵⁴ Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*, p.270.

is also not yet clear. Their descendants claim that during conversations between their ancestors and the Mande guest it came to light that the Mande guest and the people of *Sungumo* (*Sungumee*) came from the same grandparent in Mandeland (Mali). Furthermore, it was understood that the ancestors of the Mande guest fathered the *Sungumee* in Wa. The Mande guest upon realising this, remarked in Wangara (language) "*a sieye kone kungo balo la*" ("a small head with a big hat"). Inspired by this information, the Mande guest stayed and that led to the creation of the section known as '*Konekuunbala*', corrupted from the saying "*a sieye kone kungo balo la*" and which came to be the second clan in *Tagrayiri*.²⁵⁵

Later, a section of the *Konekuunbala* clan relocated to a new site about 100 metres away from *Tagrayiri* and close to a shrine which belonged to the *Balumee* (*Tendamba*) called '*Sendi*'. Like how most settlements got their names, the descendants of the *Konekuunbala* group who settled by the *Sendi-shrine* came to be called after the shrine as '*sendimuni*' (settlement) or '*sendimunee*' (people).²⁵⁶

Due to developments in trade in and around Wa, families or sections of the *Tagrayiri* people in Naaha (village) moved to Wa. The settlement they established came to be called '*Nansaalayiri*', derived from the two words; '*nansaala*' (people from Naaha) and '*yiri*' (settlement), thus, *Nansaalayiri*, became the fourth clan in *Tagrayiri*.²⁵⁷ The above four clans (*Sungumee*, *Konekuubala*, *Sendimuni* and *Nansaalayiree*) constitute the *Tagrayiri* ward in Wa headed by the *Yari-Naa*, who

²⁵⁵Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.272.

²⁵⁶Ibid, p.268.

²⁵⁷Ibid.

co-ordinates the activities of Muslims in Wa. This is discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

The *Jengbeyiree*

The word *Jengbeyiree*, in the context of the Waala tradition, refers to four sections or wards which are found behind the first building of the present-day Wa Commercial Bank. Three of the sections claim they are Hausa from Hausaland in Northern Nigeria. The other group claim they came from Kung, a town in Gonja. Both the Hausa and Gonja live in a common site generally called *Jengbeyiri*, derived from the two words '*Jengbera*' (Hausa person) and '*yiri*' (home). The Kung people call their section *Kpanninooyiri*, taken after their first ancestor, *Kpanninoo*.

Hausaland, according to Yakubu Saaka, was the region "bounded to the west by the Niger (river) and to the east by Lake Chad but now occupied mainly by the modern state (country) of Nigeria."²⁵⁸ In other words, the people of Wa apply the words '*Jengbera*' (singular) or '*Jengberihe*' (plural) to mean "Hausa people and *Jengbeyiri* to mean "Hausa home". Though, Saaka points out that the, "Hausa has become the unofficial lingua franca for Northern Ghanaians" the Hausa in Wa do not speak Hausa but speak Waale.²⁵⁹ In this location, the '*Jengbeyiree*' settled in three main groups, namely; *Jengbeyikori* (old *Jengbeyiri*), *Jengbeyipaane* (new) and *Jimbaaneyiri*. When the *Jengbeyirihe* (Hausa) came to Wa is not certain due to conflicting opinions on the subject. What is clear is that

²⁵⁸Yakubu Saaka (ed.), *Regionalism and Public Policy in Northern Ghana; Society and Politics in Africa*, New York: Peter Lang. Publishing Inc; 2001, p.2

²⁵⁹Ibid.

they came to Wa in separate groups, at different periods and for different reasons.

The first *Jengberihe* came to Wa because of trade. As noted earlier, Wa was an important commercial town and the western route of the Trans-Saharan trade connected Wa to Kano, Buna, Bundugu and Kong (in modern Mali), Gao and Wagadugu (Burkina Faso) and Buipe, Salaga, Daboya and Bole (in Ghana). Through the routes, especially, the route from Kano came individual traders to Wa. One such trader, according to Dougah, "was a Hausa trader named Mahama who with his brother Jimba lodged with Bunsali Bile, the *Yari Na*, at *Tagarayiri*."²⁶⁰

If this was the case and Dougah is correct, then this first batch of Hausa arrived in Wa between 1681 and 1696, during the reign of Pelpuo I (*Wa-naa*). Later Mahama and Jimba settled at the present site and their settlement began the nucleus of *Jengbeyiri*. Waala oral traditions explain that Mahama and Jimba originated from Katsina, a town in Northern Nigeria, which Adu Boahen describes as, "the commercial as well as the educational centre of Hausaland."²⁶¹

With such a background, the people in Wa (*Balume*, *Nabiihe* and *Tagrayiree*) not knowledgeable in Islam, unanimously appointed a knowledgeable elder of *Jengbeyiri* (name unknown) as *Imam* or Muslim leader and counsellor in Islamic matters.²⁶² This arrangement did not last because of misunderstanding between the *Wa-naa* and the Imam. Waala oral traditions explain that the *Wa-naa* (Pelpuo I) had a serious disagreement with the elder of the *Jengbeyiri* section over

²⁶⁰Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. p.47.

²⁶¹Boahen, *Topics in West African History*. p.42.

²⁶² Interview with two educated indigenes: Naa Seidu Mumuni, Chief of Chansa, aged 72, and Momori Bondiri II, *Wa-naa*, aged 88, at the *Wa-naa's palace*, May 10, 1998, (when I was gathering data for my M.Phil Thesis).

a woman and, as a result, was stripped of the authority, roles and responsibilities of the head, the elder of *Jengbeyiri* and also their descendants were barred from interfering in Waala political and Islamic affairs.²⁶³ This religious aspect of the life of the *Jengbeyiree* is discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

Waala traditions indicate that Mahama had two sons: Mori Seidu (elder) and Salia, alias *Jengbe-teene* (the bearded Jengbera; younger). They were of different mothers, and as a result, their descendants latter settled as *Jengbeyiri* and divided into two groups: *Jengbeyi-kori* (old *Jengbeyiri*) and *Jengbeyi-paane* (new *Jengbeyiri*). Mori Seidu (the elder) stayed at the old site which was renamed *Jengbeyikori*. Salia or *Jengbe-teene* relocated but very close to the new site known as *Jengbe-yipaane*, meaning "a new Hausa home or settlement."²⁶⁴ Similarly the descendants of *Jimba* also created what is known as *Jimbaaniyiri*, derived from the name *Jimba*.²⁶⁵ Thus, *Jengbeyiri* is one settlement but is occupied by four segments consisting three Hausa and one Gonja group.

From the 1850s fresh Hausa families arrived in Wa. The cause of this, as Adu Boahen noted, was "the outcome of a political revolution organized by the Fulani under the leadership and inspiration of Usuman dan Fodio and, as a result, all the Hausa states were wiped off the political map of the Central Sudan."²⁶⁶ Hence, sections of people in Hausaland (Northern Nigeria) migrated to regions found to be safe or where there was enough protection against stronger

²⁶³ Ibid; Interview with Chansa Naa Seidu Mumuni and *Wa-naa* Bondiri II.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Alhaji Sahanuuni, alias Naa Anabi, elder of *Jengbeyiri* ward in Wa, aged 85, November 14, 2014

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Boahen, *Topics in West African History*. p.42.

neighbours. The Wa area at that time was identified as a safe place and, therefore, it received many people particularly people who needed protection from stronger neighbours. Therefore, from 1850 different ethnic groups arrived in Wa.

The first batch were a Wangara (Mande) clan from *Safane*, a settlement located in Mandeland (modern Mali) and their settlement in Wa is called "*Senseola yiri*," derived from the two words '*Senseo*' (the name of their leader) and '*yiri*', (settlement).²⁶⁷ The next group came from Kano, led by one Adama, a prince of Kano and a theologian. It is believed that Adama escaped from the nineteenth century troubles in Hausaland and travelled through Yapei, an ancient market place in Gonja to Wa. His descendants settled at a site known as "*Bang kung yeli yiri*" (interpreted as "know and say not settlement").²⁶⁸ As a theologian, Adama often knew in advance whatever would happen in the town, but never disclosed or alerted the people. This attitude became the life and nature of his descendants which earned them the name *Bankong-yeliyiri*.

In the 1890s, some other Hausa people, by virtue of their being in the service of the British Colonial Administration, came and settled in Wa. Between 1892 and 1897, reports by British colonial officers (names unknown) indicate that, a total of "100 Hausa carriers of Ferguson and porters" arrived in Wa.²⁶⁹ These people were either hired or nominated by traditional administrators as

²⁶⁷ Information gathered from opinion leaders and knowledgeable persons in Wa; particularly Mahama Sensau, elder, aged 92, Accra, July 6, 1998; Sahanuuni Naa-Anabi, elder aged 87, Jengbeyiri, November 14, 2014 and Mohammed Baakari Seidu, elder/ a retired Bailiff in the service of the Waala Traditional Council, aged 72, Wa, April 10, 2015.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/16 African (West), Enclosure 2 in No.6, Ferguson to Governor, 19th November, 1892, p. 8.

carriers to carry Ferguson when he became tired of walking, together with his luggage.²⁷⁰ Ferguson was a Fante in the service of the British colonial administration and assigned in 1892 to enter into Treaties of Friendship with chiefs and their peoples in the then Northern Region of Ghana. On 5th April, 1897, Ferguson was reported dead as a result of attacks by the '*Sofa*', the military group of Samori Toure. All the Hausa carriers escaped and later settled at a site in Wa called "*Zongo*", a Hausa expression which means a "lodging place of travellers" or, as Wilks indicates, "immigrant settlements."²⁷¹

The *Limanyiree*

There are conflicting opinions about the origin of the people living in *Limanyiri*, the name of a settlement derived from two words: *Liman* (Muslim leader) and *yiri* (home). First, a report by Moutray-Read, a British colonial officer, mentioned that one "Asiyahu was the antecedent of the Mahomedans (*Limanyiri* Muslims) ... The first *Limam* is Yamoru, son of Asiyahu."²⁷² Secondly, Dougah asserts that, "most of the Moslems in Wa are descendants of a branch of the Mandingo who followed trade routes from Mande through Danko, Jirapa, Nasa and Larabanga (towns)."²⁷³ Waala oral history rather indicates that a Muslim, Ya Imoru, was the founder of the *Limanyiri* ward who first settled at Nasa, but was invited to Wa by Pelpuo I who made him the *Limam* (leader) of

²⁷⁰In Conversation with Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 82, Takpo, January 2, 2014. He quotes his father and indicated that strong men from a village will carry the "white man" and porters will follow with all luggage to the next village. This village people will do same until the white man reached his destination, probably Wa.

²⁷¹Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*. pp.26-28.

²⁷²PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20 "Collection of Treaties with Native Chiefs" etc, in West Africa, 1897 See also PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District, Native Affairs .

²⁷³Dougah, *Wa and Its people*. p.47.

Muslims in Wa.²⁷⁴ Wilks indicates that, it was through Naa Suri (head of *Widaanayiri*) that a war band at Ghiraba (Jirapa) purported to be Muslims came to the Waala country.²⁷⁵

From the above assertions the origins of people of Limanyiri are explained from two points: Naaha and Jirapa. The issues raised were not exactly the case but are clarified by Bin Salih. Bin Salih notes that, one Yussifu Lanfiera left Mande and established at Naaha, a town 20 kilometres north of Wa. Later two nephews of Yussifu Lanfiera, Salifu Ziiri and Yaa Mori, in search of their uncle got to Jirapa where Salifu Ziiri stayed, but Yaa Mori continued to Naaha, where he joined his uncle. This was the time the Waala needed a learned Muslim scholar to lead and assist them in Islamic and other affairs, particularly to prepare charms against Lobi-Dagaaba incursions into Wa.²⁷⁶

To achieve this, sectional heads met regularly to brainstorm and select an *Imam*. It was during one such crucial meeting that the head of *Tagrayiri* was informed about Yaa Mori stationed at Naaha. Complementing what Bin Salih wrote, a recent document written by leaders of the Wa Muslim community indicate that, "Yaa Al-Hajj Umaru (Yaa Mori), the chief of Djiare of Yaro, a Muslim scholar and spiritualist, was invited to Wa and charged to lead them in 'tribal' [ethnic] wars against the Dagaaba and other minor ethnic groups in the vicinity of Wa."²⁷⁷ This supported the consolidation of the position of *Nabiihe* as

²⁷⁴Information gathered from Waala informants during field trips from January 1 to December 31, 2014

²⁷⁵Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*. pp.26-28.

²⁷⁶Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. pp. 310-317.

²⁷⁷Information obtained from Muslim document: "The memorandum of Reconciliation of Socio-Religious Norms and Discipline," by the Regional Chief Imam et. al., dated 5th

chiefs and the expansion of Wa to include the Dagaaba to the north, *Dolimbo* to the west and *Chakalee* to the east (See Appendix B).

The idea behind this plan was that the *Nabiihe* of Wa thought that their authority would be felt if all communities in the vicinity of Wa were brought under the administration of the *Wa-naa*. This meant expanding the territory to cover Lobi-Dagaaba and other peoples. Dagaaba Oral tradition reveals that all Dagaaba ethnic peoples comprising *Kambalee*, *Manteena*, *Charee*, *Kalebee*, *Sankanee*, *Lohee*, *Jintiina* and *Sombona*, that is, communities living within a twenty-kilometre radius of Wa came together and successfully defeated the Waala forces.²⁷⁸ In fact, Waala intrusion into Lobi and Dagaaba territories begun from the time the *Nabiihe* got the approval to be the chiefs (rulers) of Wa. Even with the support of the Muslims the nascent Waala kingdom was only able to maintain its traditional territory and check the penetration of Dagaaba forces into Wa.

Another version explaining the origins of the Limanyiri Muslims in Wa was that Yaa Mori came to Wa because of a misunderstanding between the *Wa-naa* and the head of 'Jengbeyiri' clan who was then the chief *Imam* of Wa. As a result, the head of the *Tagrayiri* section was directed by the *Wa-naa* to take up the position of *Imam* but he declined because he was not well read or prolific in the religion. Therefore, he invited Yaa Mori from Naaha to Wa to take up the position

January 2004, pp.1-3. This document sought to trace the roots of Muslims of the *Limanyiri* settlement in Wa.

²⁷⁸Ibid.

and, accepting the offer, Yaa Mori was proclaimed the first chief *Imam* for the Waala.²⁷⁹

In Wa, Yaa Mori got married and had "a son called Mahama Saglaa, who also had seven sons: Faaruko, Iddris, Abdul-Qadir, Maazu, Musah, Usman and Salihu. Their families became the nucleus of what became *Limanyiri*. *Limanyiri* comprises of 13 sections namely Voore, Vobile, Jejeidayiri, Golipaane, Dondoli, Limanpaayiri, Tamerimuni, Daanpoeyipaala, Faamuni, Wongwaanayiri, Bangmaarayiri, Dagadao-jaga and Abuupuorijaga.²⁸⁰ Their ancestors were very fluent in both Arabic and Hausa, particularly Hausa, and, therefore, the British "employed two direct descendants of 'Yamoru' (Yaa Mori), Mallam Abdulai and Mallam Izaka, as court interpreters and assistants respectively" in the colonial administration.²⁸¹

The *Watariheyiree*

Oral traditions explain that the ancestors of the the Watara (of Malinke tradition) known in Wa as *Watariheyiree*, came from *Kamaghte* in modern Cote d'Ivoire through Gbona (Buna), an ancient commercial centre west of the Black Volta, and finally settled at Wa. Their leader was called Maama, popularly known as *Gbonaalo* corrupted from the name of the town Gbona (Buna).

Gbonaalo first settled at Dobile, a section in Wa, where chiefs as well as individuals noticed that he was a strong spiritualist and went to him for

²⁷⁹Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.310. See also Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians*. p.26.

²⁸⁰Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*, pp.346-348

²⁸¹PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/2/55, Report on the Wa District Native Affairs. See also NRG 8/2/217, "Essay on the peoples of North West Provine," by M. M. Read, case No. 50/1932, Tribal Marks, N. T. (Northern Territories)

consultation. The chief of Wa at the time, *Naa Kpaaha*, therefore lured 'Gbonaalo' to re-settle with him at Fongo, where *Gbonnalo* married a lady from Konjiahe, a village seven kilometres east of Wa. He had three sons - Abudu, Ibrahim and Alhassan - who began what is known in Wa as *Watariheyiri* (the settlement of Watara).²⁸²

A second version on the origins of the Watara people indicated that they came from *Kpang*, a community in Mandeland, to Wa as guests of one *Limam Yakubu*. They were led by one Karima Maama (Mahama) who briefly stayed with *Limam Yakubu* and his people in *Limanyiri* where he married the daughter of *Limam Yakubu* and gave birth to a son called *Burum-bile* (Waale), which in English means "*small Buruma or Braima*". The descendants of Buruma (Braima) later built their own homes among the people of *Fongo*, with the reason that "no man was independent living with his in-laws."²⁸³

Going by this adage, the Watara relocated and settled among the *Kpaaha* royals of *Fongo*, where they taught Muslims Islamic doctrine, practices and served as advisors and *Imams* (leaders) in prayer, especially during Friday Muslim congregational prayer.²⁸⁴ When the Watara moved to Wa is still being investigated, but an informant alludes to the fact that the ancestors of the Watara settled in Wa when trade was favourable in the area or when there was trade boom [that is; between 1850 and 1900].

²⁸²Information from Ansumah Watara, aged 58, son of Maama Gbonaloo, *Watarayiri* clan, Wa, 9th January, 2015.

²⁸³Interview with Abubakari Seidu Mohammed, alias Baakari, a retired Judiciary Service Officer (Bailiff), aged 69, at his Fongo residence, Wa April 1, 2014.

²⁸⁴ Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. p.310.

The first and second versions about the origins of *Watariheyiri* seems to be discussing the same idea but in different words. The reason is *Fongo* and *Duori* are two clans or settlements founded by the royals of the *Kpaaha* Gate. In this regard, therefore, it has been established that the leader of *Watariheyiri* (Maama) first settled at *Limanyiri* and later relocated to their present site, *Watariheyiri*. Some *Watariheyiri* family members with the help and support of the *Kpaaha* royals later settled at *Duori* in Wa.

The *Nepayiree*

Waala oral traditions assert that the name '*Nepayiri*' was derived from the two words, '*nepa*' (human being in Akan), and '*yiri*' (settlement) from Waale. Two schools of thought suggest the origins of the people of *Nepayiri* (*Nepayiree*).

First, it was understood that one Mauri Kuladi from the *Kambara* clan of *Wangara*, while travelling to Saudi Arabia on pilgrimage begun some form of missionary work, visiting Muslim learning centres and got to Wa where he stayed. At Wa Mauri Kuladi married and had two sons, Yakubu and Maama. This marriage cut short Mauri Kuladi's intention to go on pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. His reward for this was the establishment of the section called '*Nepayiri*', located hundred metres north of *Tagrayiri*.²⁸⁵

The second version on the origin of *Nepayiri* indicates that its founder was rather one Al-Hajj Umaru Kulandi, a *Wangara* from Mande. Al-Hajj Umaru Kulandi was a cleric on missionary tour and visited Koranic learning centres. Al-Hajj Umaru Kulandi went as far as Dahomey and on his return went to places in

²⁸⁵Ibid.

the Asante in modern Ghana where he learnt and spoke only Twi (the indigenous language of the Asante).

Later, Al-Hajj Umaru, in the company of the Asante traders got to Wa, where high Islamic learning was in vogue. Al-Hajj Umaru Kulandi stayed in Wa as a guest of the *Tagrayiri* people. He was often not invited to any meeting on state matters because he understood and spoke only Twi. Not very happy with the manner in which he was not invited to participate in local matters, Kulandi would sit by the path where elders passed to go to meetings and often wore his cloth in the Akan traditional style and murmured in Twi, "*me nso ye nipa*" (I am also a human being). Later, members of Al-Hajj Umaru's immediate neighbours in Wa would in a derogatory manner called Umar's settlement and descendants '*Nepayiri*' and '*Nepayiree*' respectively.²⁸⁶

The Sisielle

The members of this ethnic group commonly apply the appellation '*sissey*'. They claimed to have originated from Mande, a section in the Kangaba state of Mali. Their leader was one Mallam Salihu, who left Mande with two brothers, Yahaya and Kassim, through Kong (in Mande), Bona (in Cote d'Ivoire), Bole and Wahabu (in modern Ghana) on missionary tours and finally settled at *Wallembeleεε*, a town near Tumu in the Isala [Sissala] area, for many years. When this happened is yet to be established. What is known is that Mallam Salihu married and had a large family.²⁸⁷ Later, probably in the 1930s, Mallam Salihu

²⁸⁶Interview with Abubakari Seidu M., Bailiff, aged 72, Wa, 1st April, 2014.

²⁸⁷Information from Abdulai Bin Salih, Teacher, aged 58, at his Jujereyiri, June 20, 2014.

and some family members relocated and settled at Wa where Islamic studies had progressed well by then.

As a mallam (Muslim leader) Salihu wanted to upgrade his knowledge in the Islamic doctrine in Wa. Migrating from *Wallembelɛɛ* his neighbours called his settlement *Wallembelɛɛyiri*, a name corrupted from the town *Wallembelɛɛ* in Sissala territory.²⁸⁸ Enquiries from Abdulai Bin Salih (my first informant) whether Mallam Salihu was a Sissala were unanswered. However, it is generally acclaimed by most Waala interviewed about the *Sisielle* that the descendants of Salihu are Sissala from *Wallembelɛɛ*.

Conclusion

Chapter Two sought to distinguish clearly the indigenous and immigrant groups in Wa. It also brought out clearly where the Waala came from. How the Waala fared in life, with particular emphasis on their political and socio-economic institutions, is the subject matter for Chapter Three

²⁸⁸Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. pp. 320-323.

CHAPTER THREE

WA IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD, 1500-1898

Introduction

It is clear from Chapter Two that the Waala comprise of three main groups - *Tendamba*, *Nabiihe* and *Yarihe* - which were regrouped into the indigenous and immigrant groups. Appreciating the level of development initiated by the people, Eyre-Smith remarked "Wa is the commercial and educational centre of the Northwest of the Northern Territory. That is to say, the eyes of the inhabitants are directed towards Wa for material wants."²⁸⁹

Similarly, impressed about the extent of development in Wa, Dougah comments "it (Wa) gives the visitor an impression of vigorous growth."²⁹⁰ What the Waala did and achieved in the pre-colonial period, that is, the time from its foundation to 1898 such that Wa and the Waala attracted wonderful comments like the two above are discussed in three thematic themes: political, social and economic in this chapter.

Political Developments of the Waala

In the political scene three main political systems were evolved among the Waala known as '*tendaalong*', '*naalong*' and '*yari-naalong*'. These are discussed below in turns.

²⁸⁹PRAAD Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Native Affairs, Appendix 'H', Minutes by Captain Sr. Eyre-Smith, 22nd June, 1932, p.6.

²⁹⁰Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. p.11.

The *Tendaalong* (Indigenous form of Administration)

Tendaalong is the traditional system of administration the indigenous Waala (the Lobi, Chakaleε and Balumee) developed and which recognises the oldest male in the family, clan and village or community level as its hereditary head or title holder commonly called '*tendaana*' (Waale), '*tindana*' (Mampruni), '*tengdana*' (Dagaare) or '*tengansob*' (Lobi).²⁹¹ In other words, *tendaalong* is practiced among inhabitants in communities who claim ownership of the land or are the land owners or *tendamba* (plural) or *tendaana* (singular) as in Waale.

The word *tendaana* is the title obtained by virtue of the male being the oldest person in the clan or is the term generally applied to both members (male and female) of the clan. The position of the *tendaana* is not transferable, but by custom is the title or position the oldest male on the political level holds. Similarly, *tendaalong* the process by which the *tendaana* rules and functions is structured like chiefship and is another form of local rule among the Waala termed *naalong* in *Waale*. This will be explained later. Its leaders ensured that rules and regulations of the society were obeyed and the behaviour of people were regulated or controlled in the prescribed manner.

Tendaalong is hierarchically structured. At the lowest level of authority is the household, comprising the man, his wife (wives), children and other siblings, headed by the male (man) referred to as '*ba*' (*Waale*) meaning 'father'. He is assisted by the wife who family members called '*ma*' (*Waale*), which also means

²⁹¹Interview with:

>Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 80, Takpo, January 2, 2014,
>ames Baduom Dumah, a Senior Prince of Funsu, aged 75, Funsu, January 10, 2014, and
>Abubakari Seidu Mohammed, Bailiff/Linguist, aged 72, Wa, January 15, 2014.

mother. A number of households constitute a family which is headed by the oldest male and whose title is *dewudaana* or *judaana* (head of household) and its members are biologically related. A number of families that trace their origins from one root form the clan and that is also headed by the oldest male called *yidaana* (head of clan). Several clans form a settlement or community (village) and that is headed by a *tendaana*.²⁹²

The three levels of authority identified above: *dewudaana* (*judaana*), *yidaana* and *tendaana*, were not only used by the Waala but were commonly used among the Dagaaba, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Nanumba and Frafra, ethnic groups whose dialects are closely related. The term *tendaana* featured prominently in works by earlier authors but the other two titles, *judaana* and *yidaana*, were not sufficiently used though they played important roles in administration. The title *tendaana* was derived from the two words 'tenge' ('village') and 'daana' ('owner').²⁹³

Another term commonly used among the Waala is '*jaga*', referring to people who originate from one root and live in one compound home-setting, which is similar to the household, and whose head may be identified by titles like *dewudaana*, *jagadaana*, *jujeɛ* (*zuzee*), or *nenkpong* depending on the community to which one belongs.²⁹⁴ These title-holders (leaders) represent, control and administer sections of people and, therefore, are involved in the administration of the state in various capacities or degrees.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

By way of illustration the Ma-ngo community, located two kilometres west of Wa, comprises seven sections - *Tadaanayiri*, *Dograyiri*, *Kpaneyiri*, *Kokoyiri*, *Tuoyiri*, *Waluyiri* and *Saabayiri* - and each is a 'yiri' (settlement) or 'yie' (plural). The seven sections (*yie*) form a single community called *tenge* (Ma-ngo). A number of families or sections called '*jagihe*' (plural; households); '*jaga*' (singular; household), and which are headed by a '*jagadaana*' constitute a 'yiri' (a settlement) or 'yie' headed by a yidaana. They trace descent to a common ancestry and all the seven settlements constitute a '*tenge*' known as Ma-ngo under a *Tendaana*.

These divisions; '*tenge*', '*yiri*' and '*jaga*' were before British colonial rule "under the old traditional ruler, the Priest-King (*Tendaana*), now functioning as a chief in the modern sense and known under titles such as *tindana* (Frafra) or *tendaana* (Waale/Dagaare), *kuro* (Sissali), *kasaliwula* (Grunshi) and the *asasewura* (Akan)."²⁹⁵ These were the administrative titles autochthonous people applied before the ancestors of the 'immigrant royals' arrived and introduced the system of administration known as '*naalong*'. This will later be discussed in detail. However, at every level of authority ('*tenge*', '*yiri*' and '*jaga*') land was vested in the *tendaana* and it was only through the *tendaana* that land was allocated to prospective users. Scholars like Dominic Tuobesaane Paaga lists "the customary trustee of land as the family heads, *tendamba* and chiefs, who hold the

²⁹⁵PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/13, Annual General Report British Colonial Office, 1929/30.

land in trust for the generality of members of the land owning group."²⁹⁶ This does not apply among the Waala.

Research conducted clearly shows that land matters in Wa is the preserve of the *tendaana*. In other words, land matters are the concern of members of only the *tendaalong* group. Apart from land management issues the *tendaana* ensured that rules and regulations put in place for the smooth running of society were obeyed.

Similarly, Ward indicates that, the *tendaana* "acted as guardian of the land and all the spiritual connections of the clan, made sacrifices and prevented the pollution of land by bloodshed or purified the land if they failed to prevent bloodshed."²⁹⁷ Among the Sissala, groups of people found 140 kilometres to the northeast of Wa, landowners hold separate portfolios such as *betina* (home owner), *tortina* (shrine priest) and *tanhatina* (landowner).

This practice shows clearly the difference in landowning mechanisms established among the Sissala compared to what pertained in the Waala tradition in which the *tendaana* is the single authority for land management and the 'Earth-god'.²⁹⁸ The Sissala example also demonstrates how far the landowner ('*tanhatina*'; *tendaana*) exercises or delegates his authority among people, who Lentz describes as, "heathen acephalous."²⁹⁹ In other words and, perhaps, Lentz

²⁹⁶Dominic Tuobesaane Paaga, "Customary Land Tenure and Its Implications for Land Disputes in Ghana: Cases from Wa, Wechiau and Lambussie." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, Vol.3, No.18 (October, 2013), p.265.

²⁹⁷W. E. F. Ward, *A History of Ghana*, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1958, p.126

²⁹⁸Interview with James Baduom Dumah, Prince, aged 75, Funsu, 3rd May, 2014.

²⁹⁹Carola Lentz, "Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana," *In International African Studies*, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p.14

meant those *tendaalong* communities had "no heads or were probably not administered by hereditary chiefs" and would not consider political titles used by people such as the '*na*' (Mamprusi/Dagomba), '*naa*' (Dagaaba/Waala), '*naaba*' (Frafra), '*kuro*' (Sissala) and '*wura*' (Gonja). This was not the case.

According to Der:

If the terms acephalous and stateless are used to designate societies without rulers, then the peoples in the non-centralised areas of the Upper West and Upper East Regions of Northern Ghana were neither 'acephalous' nor 'stateless'. They were not peoples without rulers; for the institution of chiefship was widespread among them in the pre-colonial period. Indeed, their political systems were very similar to those of the Yao of Malawi, the Nyakusa of Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika) and the Alur of Uganda.³⁰⁰

Similarly, British colonial reports examined reveal that "five main chieftainships remain to this day as the *Kaleo-naa*, *Nadowli-naa*, *Bussie-naa*, *Daffiama-naa* and *Issa-naa*."³⁰¹ These are Dagaaba chiefs who some scholars earlier described as 'acephalous' or 'headless societies'. Based on such assertions, Der argued that, "the reports of the early British officers show quite clearly that the peoples of the non-centralised areas of Northern Ghana were not acephalous in the sense that they had rulers."³⁰² Generally, many Dagaaba, Sissala and Frafra informants strongly affirm that they had chiefs but, perhaps, not well developed to the admiration of British colonial anthropologists or some later researchers. The informants suggest that indigenous scholars should do an in-depth study of societies in pre-colonial Northern Ghana (Northern, Upper East and Upper West

³⁰⁰Benedict G. Der, "The Traditional Political System of Northern Ghana Reconsidered," In Yakubu Saaka (ed), *Regionalism and Public Policy in Northern Ghana*, New York: Peter King Publishing Inc. 2001, p. 37

³⁰¹PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/10, Annual Reports, Appendix C, 1934

³⁰²Benedict G. Der, "The Traditional Political System of Northern Ghana Reconsidered." p.58

Regions) to establish the facts. The Dagaaba administrative title *tendaana* or *tanhatina* of the Sissala was replaced with the title *naa*, where it was possible, by the immigrant royals.³⁰³

Oral traditions inform that the royals of Lawra are *Kantonsi warriors*.³⁰⁴ The royal rulers in Tumu, the *Kanton* family, claim they originated from Mossi.³⁰⁵ The royals (*nabiihe*) of Wa are Mamprusi descendants who imported the system in *Nayiri* (Mamprusi).³⁰⁶ The change in political leadership from the indigenes to immigrant royals in Tumu and Lawra was by conquest. In the case of Wa chiefship, "through persuasion the Widaana of Suuriyiri ceded the chief-ship of Wa to the immigrants (*nabiihe*)."³⁰⁷

If this was the case, many descendants of the '*tendamba*' have the feeling that contracts or agreements elapse and hope that in future the Wa chiefship ('*naalong*') would return to "its rightful owners" (*the tendamba*). Whilst waiting for a divine intervention to win back the Wa chiefship, the *tendaana* play the role of "major king maker" in the appointment and deposition of chiefs.³⁰⁸

Based on the discussions so far on the subject, it was incorrect for McCoy to assert that "it was only when the white man came, in the form of the British colonial officers to set up their administration in the Northern Territory in 1913 that chiefs were introduced for the first time among the Dagaaba and Sissala."³⁰⁹ Tracing the origins of the *tendamba* groups in Wa, Tuurey noted that, "speakers

³⁰³Alexander Widaana II, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, January 2, 2014.

³⁰⁴Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*, p.28.

³⁰⁵Information from Godfred Kanton, aged 55, Tumu, June 16, 2014

³⁰⁶Interview with Yakubu Seidu Soalia II, Wa-naa, aged 85, Wa, May 1, 1998.

³⁰⁷Awedoba, *An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts*. p.47

³⁰⁸Conversation with Sumani Munja, Head of Balum, aged 95, Wa, May 20, 1998.

³⁰⁹McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, Montreal. p.36

of variants or dialects of the Mole language are Dagaaba and that they were called Dagomba when they were in Dagbon but when some of them emigrated...to parts of what are now Bole, Wa and Lawra districts they ceased to be called Dagomba... but began to refer to themselves as Dagaaba."³¹⁰

By origins, the *tendamba* were not Dagaaba but were either Dagomba or Mamprusi. From this background, the "Dagaaba were familiar with the institution of chieftaincy but because of the misrule and wickedness of Dagomba chiefs they broke away and in their new habitats their ancestors denounced the title *naa* and adopted the title *tendaana*."³¹¹ Interestingly, research also reveals that in the past, the *tendaana* went through the same traditional rituals as the *naa* and on a selected date was made public to the entire community.³¹²

The form of government the indigenous people practiced was vested in the *Tendaana* (Earth- Priest) who governed the lives of his people through religious sanctions. In other words, all persons belonging to *tendaalong* believe and endorse the actions of the *tendaana* who was customarily one of theirs and must be obeyed. If the *tendaana* was disobeyed, the belief was that their ancestral spirits will be angry and the consequences would be disastrous on the community. This was the indigenous system of governance Salimata Abdul-Salam referred to as "theocratic," meaning that it was based on religious norms.³¹³

³¹⁰Gabriel Tuurey, *An Introduction to the Mole - Speaking Community*. pps.13-14

³¹¹Carola Lentz, "A Dagara Rebellion against Dagomba Rule, Contested Stories of Origin in North-Western Ghana." *Journal of African History*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (1994), p.458

³¹²Interview with Alexander Widaana II, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, January 6, 2015

³¹³Abdul-Salam Salimata, *The History of Wa*, B. A. Dissertation, University of Ghana, Legon, July, 1982, p.13.

The *Naalong* (Royals Governing System)

The term *naalong* (*Waale*) is the equivalent of the word chieftaincy, which refers to the local (traditional) system of administration or a centralised political system developed first among the Mamprusi, Dagomba and Gonja ethnic groups in the Northern Region of Ghana. This system of governance was later exported through various methods to parts of Northern Ghana. In the opinion of Awedoba, "Wa chieftaincy had been imported from the Mamprusi and Dagbon kingdoms."³¹⁴ Other view points indicate that, "a Dagomba prince called Sorliya (Soalia)"³¹⁵ or "Dagomba cavalrymen" organised the (Waala) kingdom into its centralised status.³¹⁶ Similarly, descendants of the four royal houses of Wa, interviewed, say Dagbon or Mamprugu was their place of origin. However, majority of the people interviewed unanimously claim that their ancestor was Adam Tuo, a Mamprusi who came from Mamprugu, an ancient kingdom found in the Northern Region of modern Ghana.³¹⁷ An in-depth investigation settles on Adam Tuo and Mamprugu as the leader and place of origin of the '*nabiithe*' respectively.

In brief, Adam Tuo left Nalerigu, the capital of Mamprugu, with one Haruna who was his customary 'father', meaning not his biological father. Adam Tuo and Haruna left Nalerigu due to constant dynastic troubles in search of a peaceful place to settle and, if possible, win the friendship of people he met, and

³¹⁴Awedoba, *Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts*; p.47

³¹⁵PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Native Affairs, 1932.

³¹⁶Abdul-Salam Salimata, *The History of Wa*, p.13

³¹⁷Conversation with a cross-section of individual members of all the four principal princely groups in Wa Municipality, particularly, Soalia II Yakubu S., *Wa-naa* (2001-2008), aged 85, Wa, May 3, 1998,

with the hope that someday the indigenes would make him the chief of their community. Adam Tuo and Haruna settled briefly in Jeyiri, Mamwe and Busa, towns found east of Wa and finally settled at *Gbetore* and *Degu*, two deserted settlements 15 kilometres east of Wa.³¹⁸

Adam Tuo left his father (Haruna) at Gbetore and went on a hunting expedition westwards and there bumped into a section of *Balum* people called *Widaanayiri* meaning "the home of Widaana" who accommodated him. There, Adam Tuo fell in love with Nantambo, a crippled daughter of Widaana Suuri, the traditional head and leader of Balum. This relationship soon translated into a fruitful one and paved the way for the political ambition of Adam Tuo, who was 'in search of a territory to rule as chief.' In the course of time Nantambo was found to be pregnant and Adam Tuo was found to be responsible. Out of fear he tried escaping but was apprehended, counselled and married to Nantambo.

Adam Tuo had three sons: Soalia, Gurah and Suuri which gladdened Widaana and his people to the extent that, they granted Adam Tuo the nod to be chief of *Balum*.³¹⁹ This fortune was later reported to Haruna, Adam Tuo's customary father, and siblings living in *Gbetore* and *Degu* villages. As Waala tradition demands, Haruna dispatched a team to accompany Adam Tuo back to *Balum* to thank the Widaana and his people for the honour done his customary son, Adam Tuo. A year later, Adam Tuo and his children felt uncomfortable

³¹⁸Interview with:

>Abubakari Seidu Mohammed, Linguist of Fongo-naa, aged 69, Wa, April 1, 2015,
>Momori Gallahad, Chief of Chansa, aged 85, Chansa, May 10, 1998, and
> Degu-naa Hamidu K., Chief of Degu-naa, aged 90, Bomiyiri, June 3, 1998

³¹⁹Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District, 1901

living with his in-laws. For this reason he relocated and built a new home 200 metres away from *Widaanayiri*. Thus, the site named *fongo*, a Dagbane word meaning "an entertainment centre," where the nucleus of what became the Waala Kingdom began.³²⁰

To be able to administer the territory successfully and effectively, Adam Tuo settled his sons within the territory or parcel of land granted him by Widaana Suuri, the *tendaana*. Soalia, the eldest son, was settled at a place called *Douri*, one kilometre west of *Fongo*; Gurah (the elder) was settled at *Gulli*, five kilometres northeast of *Fongo*; and Suuri (alias *Kpaaha*, the youngest) went two kilometres beyond *Gulli* and settled at the location currently known as *Konjiahe*.³²¹ His half brothers and children remained at Busa.

When Adam Tuo died (date yet unknown) Soalia succeeded him and moved from *Douri* to *Fongo* and following the example of his father, he stationed his five sons at *Gulli*, *Douri*, *Konjiahe*, *Nyageli* (a town found two kilometres beyond *Konjiahe*) and *Kpongo*, a settlement located southwest of *Fongo*.³²²

When Soalia died Suri Kpaaha succeeded him, followed by Gurah and Haruna who, according to custom, was the father of Adam Tuo. When these chiefs ascended onto the throne is not clear, but according to Dougah, "Soalia ruled from 1625 to 1656, Suri Kpaaha from 1656 to 1675 and Gurah from 1675 to 1681 when the throne passed on to Haruna" whose brothers lived at Busa with the

³²⁰PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District, Political Organisation, 1904.

³²¹Ibid.

³²²PRAAD Tamale NRG8/3/10, Annual Report, District Commissioner to Colonial Officer, Appendix 'D', 1908.

family name *Yjiihe*.³²³ This change was understood as a sort of plot against Gurah, which is explained below.

During Gurah's reign the nascent settlement of Wa was often attacked by marauders and the inhabitants responded positively by holding the attackers in check. However, speculations were heard widely about an imminent attack by invaders who had already assembled along the western fringes of the Black Volta in their bid to conquer Wa. Hence, the elders of Wa immediately consulted their oracles which revealed that if the chief of Wa led the Waala fighters the invaders would be defeated. As a result, chief Gurah organised many hunters and marched towards the western direction of Wa where the invaders were purported to have camped. Gurah and his contingent got to *Ma-ngo*, a settlement three kilometres west of Wa where Gurah entered a thick bush to further consult his oracles and ancestors for guidance whilst his fighters waited.

For hours the chief would not come out and no person dared enter the forest to find out because it was against the custom to counter check the action of a leader. They were in this dilemma when people (unknown) passing-by informed them that the invaders had passed southwards beyond Bole, a town 113 kilometres south of Wa.³²⁴ Unable to trace the whereabouts of the chief, the Waala fighters returned and reported to the elders of both *Balum* and *Fongo* who convened an immediate meeting of all the clan heads including the elders at *Busa* and *Gbetore* in Wa for a solution.

³²³Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. pp.14-17; Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*. pp.201-214

³²⁴Ibid., Dickson and Benneh, *A New Geography of Ghana*, p.133

The head of *Balum* at the time acted as chairman and was purported to have remarked that it was "only elders who could spot where the liver of a rotten carcass was." This statement implied that only the aged could help the Waala out of the dilemma. Going by this, the elders concluded discussions and permitted the commander and two fighting men to go back to where Gurah entered the forest to find out what happened. The three-member search team at the spot noticed that Gurah was nowhere to be seen but left his 'three spears' which they presented before the elders.³²⁵

The elders then discussed the issue of "the disappeared chief" for several days, but could not reach any consensus. The reason was that by Waala custom a chief was only replaced in the event of death, disability or deskinment (dismissal) of the sitting chief and after the 'chief to be' had performed the funeral rites of the late chief.³²⁶ None of the above mentioned conditions was applicable in the case of Gurah and the elders adjourned the meeting to two weeks. During this search meeting, Gurah's stepfather (Haruna) who lived at Busa stepped forward and knelt before 'elders of the land' saying in the local language (*Waale*):

*Ye pele puo kye de a naang kumo
Ka onang waleowa ka eng leohe a naang a ku o*³²⁷

This interprets as:

If the elders were content they should give the chiefship to me (Haruna) to rule and when Gurah re-surfaced I (Haruna) will return the chiefship to him.

This declaration was unanimously applauded by the elders and Haruna was endorsed as chief of Wa, who in official and public life came to be called '*Pelpuo*

³²⁵This is common knowledge among the Waala.

³²⁶Ibid.

³²⁷Dougah, *Wa and Its People*. p.47

I' coined from the term, '*pele-puo*' (content), and by that the descendants of Haruna came to be involved in the Wa chieftaincy affair and were recognised as senior princes and princesses under the title '*Pelpuo*'.³²⁸

Dougah asserts that following the example of Soalia (See p.126) Haruna (*Pelpuo I*) moved his family from "Degu (now a deserted place five kilometres east of Wa) to occupy ruined buildings, the relics of the aborigines of Ulu Lobi who now inhabit Tizza, a town in present Jirapa district".³²⁹ Further research indicates that the relics *Pelpuo I* built were those abandoned by the present *Kambali* people. The Ulu Lobi mentioned were rather found to be a section of the indigenous Lobi who relocated to a new site named *Kpagburi*.

Under *Pelpuo I*, the administration continued with the four parts and the divisional capitals still based at Busa in the east, Sing in the south, Kperisi in the north and Gulli in the north-east. Under each divisional capital were a number of villages administered by chiefs. At the top of the political hierarchy was the *Wa-naa*, who resided in Wa, the capital of the kingdom, and he was assisted by a 'council of elders' known in *Waala* administration circles as '*naa-kpanbiehe*' (plural). There were four other office title holders namely '*tandaga-naa*', '*salanga*', '*froko*' and '*yari-naa*' who were placed in charge of specific assignments.³³⁰ Each will later appropriately be discussed in this chapter.

The *Wa-naa* was the supreme head and had the power to declare war, make peace, make laws, deskin or enskin, with the consultation of the Council of Elders. There was also a council of justice which dealt with issues of

³²⁸Ibid.

³²⁹Ibid, p.16, p.115

³³⁰Salimata, *History of Wa*, p.14.

administration in the *Wa-naa's* palace.³³¹ At the divisional level administration was in the hands of divisional chief, who had jurisdiction over the areas under their control. Thus, the kingdom was divided into parts or what is commonly referred to as 'Wards' or 'Gates' which, according to Brown, "comprise a group of agnates belonging to a single lineage."³³²

In other words, a gate represented the unit of local government of an area over which an individual exercises jurisdiction but is divided into sectors: lineages, clans, villages and gates (wards). There may be variations in the composition of gates and in the form in which office was transmitted within gates. In a general perspective, Brown notes that, "in any community each office was the property of a single gate and succession was by genealogical seniority within the senior generations of the patrilineage".³³³

In the case of the Wa polity, out of four gates, three gates were granted to the descendants of Pelpuo I and one gate went to the descendants of Adam Tuo, the founder of Wa state. When Naa Suuri Kpaaha succeeded Pelpuo I from 1696 to 1706, by Dougah's approximation, he did not interfere with Pelpuo's demarcation of the kingdom into divisions. He rather endorsed what was known as "the system of guided primogeniture or succession by seniority and birth, or a

³³¹Ibid.

³³²Susan Drucker Brown, *Ritual Aspects of Mamprusi Kingship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975, p.35

³³³Ibid.

claim by the most senior person not by birth but as a 'customary father' of the four ruling families."³³⁴

From a recent document examined the composition of the four Waala Divisions is made clear.

The Gulli Division or *Kpaaha* Gate comprised *Konjiahe, Duori, Nyagli, Kpongu, Fongu, Sanche, Tafale, Gbantala, Nyugluu, Kpalsaga, Kangba, Siiru, Kadoli Satigu, Gogi, Dubie, Daboziri* and *Bugubelle* (Wa). Only six of these settlements: *Fongo, Duori, Guli, Konjiahe, Kpongu* and *Nyagli* provide candidates to the divisional chiefship when vacancy exists. Also the Kperisi Division or *Naajare* Gate had: *Yaru, Chegile, Jonga, Jonga-Tabiahe, Yibile, Polee, Cheringu, Bayiri* and *Kpaanamona* communities and only *Yaru, Chegile, Jonga, Yibile* and *Polee* chiefs compete for the divisional headship when vacancy occurs. The Busa Division or *Yijihe* Gate had eight communities namely *Gbetori, Duccie, Katua, Tuosah, Glang, Tiisah, Tampaala* and *Lahi*. It is only *Busa, Duccie* and *Katua* chiefs who are eligible to contest for the Wa chiefship. The Sing Division or *Jornyuohe* Gate comprised *Boli, Loggo, Chansa, Jeyiri, Chasia* and *Sing*, and their chiefs vie for the position of divisional chief.³³⁵

The Waala political structure so far discussed is found to be hierarchically structured. At the top of the whole kingdom is the *Wa-naa* whose office, by custom, is filled by the most eligible elder of the four divisional chiefs: *Yijihe, Jonyoche, Naajare* and *Naa Kpaaha*. Below the Paramount Chief are the four divisional chiefs stationed at *Busa, Sing, Kperisi* and *Gulli*, the divisional capital towns of the *Yijihe, Jonyoche, Naajare* and *Kpaaha* gates respectively. Each division is made up of a number of village chiefs who are responsible to their divisional head. All the four divisional chiefs are eligible to contest for the skin

³³⁴PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/10, Notes on the Rights of Succession to the 'Nalumship' of Wa, District Commissioner's Report, Tamale, to Colonial Office, Accra, 1932. (See Appendix 'D', p. 2)

³³⁵Draft Document on Names of Divisional and Sub-Divisional Areas in the Waala Traditional Area, Upper West Regional House of Chiefs, Wa, 2013.

(chiefship) of Wa. In other words, chiefs of any of the four gates qualify for selection to the position of *Wa-naa*.³³⁶ (See Appendix C)

There is a clause which indicates that, before a member of a gate succeeds to the skin as a *Wa-naa* such a person must have been a divisional chief and must have served in all his divisional villages and made sacrifices of "white ram and two white fowls" to the Gurah shrine at Ma-ngo.³³⁷

There were also Headmen or Head chiefs in communities namely *Daanko*, *Kpongu*, *Bamaaho* and *Kumbiahe* which were not subordinated to any other chief, but were directly administered by the *Wa-naa*. Other communities found in the northwest of Wa- *Kambali*, *Ma-ngo*, *Aaheyao*, *Gbegeruu* and *Sambo* -were and are still independent communities and are being administered by their own respective heads or *tendaana* now called in both public and official life as '*naa*'.³³⁸ In addition, colonial reports mentioned "Kojokperi, Finsi, Kundugu, Dolimo, Wechiau, Kaleo, Daffiama, Issa, Bussie and Nadowli" as divisions of the Waala kingdom.³³⁹ Similarly, "all *Chakale* communities as far as to Bulenga, Manwe

³³⁶Document: Enskinment and Deskinment of Chiefs by Customary Law and Traditional Councils, (undated) (See Appendix 'D', p.3).

³³⁷ Interview with Yakubu Seidu Soalia II, *Wa-naa* (1998- 2006), aged 85, Wa, May 3, 1998, Momori Gallahad, Chief of Chansa, aged 85, Chansa, May 10, 1998.

Information I (Researcher) obtained from my field trips for data confirmed that both *Wa-naa* Momori Bondiri II (1979-1998) and *Wa-naa* Yakubu Seidu Soalia II, *Wa-naa* (1998-2006) made the sacrifice at the Ma-gno shrine before ascending to the throne on their respective dates.

³³⁸Document- 'Enskinment and Deskinment of Chiefs by Customary Law and Traditional Councils- Appendix 'D', This also exist and is common knowledge and practice among the Waala

³³⁹PRAAD,Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Annual Report, Wa District: Political Organisation, 1932

and Chaggu" are mentioned as part of the Waala kingdom.³⁴⁰ These assertions are found to be incorrect.

What pertained was that before 1898 (the pre-colonial period), these communities were administered under their own traditions and by their own traditional heads. It was, as indicated in Chapter Two, from the era of colonial rule (from 1898) when all the communities referred to above became part of the Waala kingdom that different chiefs ruled over states comprised of people some of whom were not of their tradition. This will be elaborated in Chapter Four. To enhance political development however, a number of organs were set up to be in charge of appointment, installation and deposition of chiefs as well as the provision of Justice and Welfare Services.

Councils of Administration

Three councils- Council of Elders, Kingmakers and a Supreme Court- were set up to support, counsel and guide chiefs as well as other title holders to enable them perform effectively. The Council of Elders, initially or before 1898 was made up of representatives of the four '*tendaalong*' settlements (clans) namely *Sokpayiri*, *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri* (*Suuriyiri*) and *Kpagburi* and the head of the '*nabiihe*' (*Yijiihe*). Basically its functions were to counsel chiefs to work officially and to inform them about developments in the capital (Wa) and the entire kingdom. Through the elders the *Wa-naa's* orders reached every corner of the state. Similarly, the members of the Council of Elders also acted as the Council of Justice which from 1898, was known as the Supreme Court was headed by the

³⁴⁰Abdul-Salam Salimata, *The History of Wa*, p.14

Wa-naa. This council settled cases brought before it, suggested appropriate sanctions and heard cases such as assault, disobedience of orders from authorities, theft, rape, abduction and matrimonial issues.³⁴¹

The King-makers were responsible for the appointment, installation and deposition of chiefs. Regarding the appointment of chiefs at the village, divisional and paramount levels of administration various methods were employed by the elders to select the eligible chiefs.³⁴² Paraphrasing Manoukian, the Chief of Mamprusi is regarded as the ultimate source of *naam* (*naalong*). If a nominated chief was to be considered valid the mystical attributes which are the essence of *naam* must be ritually vested in the holder either by the chief of Mamprusi himself or by someone endowed with *naam* by him. Thus, the elector of most Tallensi and many Gurusi chiefs is the '*kuna aba*', a sub-chief of the chief of Mamprusi".³⁴³ This, did not apply in the case of Wa '*naalong*' headed by '*Nabiihe*' and who claimed their ancestors originated from Mamprugu. Waala oral traditions assert that, a Council of King-makers which functioned since the earliest times was represented by sectional leaders of *Sokpayiri*, *Puohoyiri*, *Widaanayiri*, *Kpagburi*; and the head of all '*nabiihe*' (*Yijihe-daana*).³⁴⁴

Concerning the appointment of a new chief, the vacancy created must be as a result of dismissal, death, disability (especially being blind), and others, and

³⁴¹ Abdul-Salam Salimata, *History of Wa*, p.14

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Manoukian, *Tribes of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, p.48.

³⁴⁴ Information from Boore Jatoe aged 90, and Dumba Pienyenge, aged 85, elders of Sampia clan of *Kambale*, at *Kambale*, 14th December, 2014

these conditions apply to all categories of chiefs in the kingdom: village, divisional and paramountcy levels.³⁴⁵

During the installation of a chief, certain important aspects of tradition and customs are observed. The installation ceremony was conducted by the head of the *Froko* clan witnessed by the *Yari-naa* and the *Imam*, who said a Muslim prayer after the *tendaana* had poured 'libation'. The *Froko* are members of the section called *Tuomuni* but are kinsmen of the *Balum tendamba* in Wa. The *Froko* acts as the linguist between the chief and any other party, dressed or enrobed the chief for enskinment as *naa* and conducted the *naa* to sit three times on the skin (meaning to raise the chief from the skin up and down three times), wore the '*naa*' the ceremonial gown and washed the *naa's* face with concoctions traditionally prepared in public.³⁴⁶

On an appointed date for the outdooring of the new chief, Sub-chiefs, Headmen and the general public gather in front of the '*naa's* palace for the ceremony. As the *Froko* escorts the new chief dressed in the traditional regalia, amid drumming and cheers by the public, especially women who sung songs of praises, follow the procession to the centre of the crowd where the new chief is sat on a skin of a leopard, and is held and raised up and down three times as custom demands and then rushed into the 'Royal Palace' called '*nayiri*' (chief's home). No speech was made by the chief to the people, who danced and drank a lot of a local drink called '*daang*' or '*pito*' to climax the event.³⁴⁷ The use of the skin of the

³⁴⁵Ibid.

³⁴⁶Ibid.

³⁴⁷Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, pp. 109-112.

leopard as the seat of the chief signified the power and authority of the *naa* and this came to be the totem of the *Nabiihe*.

Similarly, when a chief was not performing his duties in accordance with Waala custom such a chief was deposed or deskinning. The deposition of a chief took several forms. When the chief seduced or unlawfully abducted a woman as a wife, acquired property by dubious means, stole or disrespected his superior such a chief faced deposition. In addition, Waala customary law debarred the blind, insane (or history of insanity in a lineage), deaf or a physically disabled person, from being appointed chief. When the chief on the throne became incapacitated the eldest village chief by age was brought in as chief. Among the senior chiefs, if any of them was by custom a father such a chief was the obvious choice.³⁴⁸ There were, however, exceptions to the rule. When a chief became disabled on the seat, a regent was appointed until such a chief passed on. Then, the son of an enslaved woman lawfully married to a prince was not considered an enslaved person and, therefore, was qualified to be a chief.³⁴⁹ The conditions and measures discussed above shows that the Waala had put in place several controls to ensure good governance.

Generally some priviledges went alongside with the responsibilities of chiefs. Chiefs were entitled to a number of days work on their farms annually free of charge by all physically able adults (male and female). The annual farm assistance from community members was vividly enumerated by Moutray-Read, as follows: First, around November the chief's farm was cleared of grass and

³⁴⁸Conversation with: Naa G. S. Momori, Chief, aged 85, at the *Wa-naa's* palace, Wa, May 10, 1998.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

scrub. After two or more rains the farm was ploughed and sowed. In August weeds were hoed out. The fourth was hilling up and thus raising mounds around the plants in September and, finally, between October and November the crops are harvested³⁵⁰. However, to instil confidence in the potency of the administration of justice, an oath was often taken by both the complainant and defendant concerning a case brought before the *Wa-naa* or any *naa*. The *tendaana* administered the oath during the trial of cases in Waala courts.

*Ka maang po a ngma girii saa tahingma ko.*³⁵¹

This translates as:

If I swear falsely in this matter may 'lightning' kill me; instantly.

The *Tendaana* and his family members believe in the power of "thunder and lightning" and any person swearing by it but was guilty was killed by thunder. The head of the *Sokpayiri* clan possessed the power and control over thunder and lightning in Wa. He often conducted the swearing procedure as overleaf:

A calabash is brought by the Fetish Priest with a piece of iron fashioned in the form of a snake inside it. Water is poured in and the witness drinks it saying; if what I state now in evidence is not the truth may lightning kill me instantly.³⁵²

After the above concoction was drunk the oath was believed to have been administered and thus ended the proceedings or the trial of the case at hand and every person - chief, *tendaana*, elders and their descendants - left the hall and then

³⁵⁰PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/217 Read's "Essay on ...North-West Province," 1908.

³⁵¹Ibid.

³⁵²Ibid

awaited the response of the spirit of 'thunder'. The trial proceedings of cases in the traditionally mandated court had some cost element.

When a complainant brought an issue forward, "a ground payment" known among the Waala as "*pie naa yi*" [which implied ten (*'pie'*) and (*'naa'*) two (*'ayi'*) or 'twelve' times of the item required] was often brought forward as the testimony the defendant, as custom demanded, often offered the equivalent amount the complainant gave. Payment of fines at the time was in "kolanut, cowries or quantities of the item used as ground payment".³⁵³ For instance, if it was a type of grain an accepted size of a calabash was used as the measure and in the case of tubers twelve sizeable pieces of yam were recommended as payment.

This payment system was similar to what economists describe as 'exchange by barter' which involves exchanging commodities for other commodities. In the course of time this method of payment was replaced with the use of cowries, kola nut and others, the British 'nickel' (the shilling). With the introduction of the shilling particularly, court proceeds were divided into three parts and shared among the *kpambeε* (linguist), *tendaana* and *naa* in the proportion of 1:2:3 shillings respectively.³⁵⁴ This, for example, meant sharing 12 shillings among the '*kpambeε*', '*tendaana*' and '*naa*' in the proportions. This meant that each received shares of 2, 4 and 6 shillings respectively.

³⁵³PRAAD Tamale, NRG 8/2/217, Notes taken from M. Moutry-Read's "Essay on the People of North-West Province," 1908; 1932.

³⁵⁴Ibid

Organs of Administration

Four portfolios or offices were also set up to support the administration known as *Tandaga-naa*, '*Salanga*' and '*Yijiihe-daana*'. They principally saw to the welfare of the *Wa-naa*.

The office holder known as *Tandaga-naa* is a knowledgeable and respected member of *Kpaahayiri*, a clan found settled near *Widaanayiri* (*Suuriyiri*). The *Tandaga-naa*'s roles included the maintenance of the *naa*'s palace, particularly, during his absence or death and acted as regent until a new *naa* was appointed and installed. When the deceased was a Divisional or Village Chief, the brother or elder son acted as regent. He (the *Tandaga-naa*) was also the custodian of the grave yard of the *Wa-naas*, which is to the east of the fore-court of the *Wa-naa*'s palace. A second 'grave yard' meant for the burial of Senior Princes is located between *Suuriyiri*, *Kpaahayiri* and *Fongo* palace. In addition, the '*Tandaga-naa*' took care of the widow(s) of a deceased chief and handles the 'canes' the chief use to lash wrongdoers as punishment or to instil discipline.³⁵⁵

Another office known as the *Salanga* was created and the office holder was a citizen of *Daanko*, a village four kilometres to the east on the *Wa-Sing* road. The *Salanga* acted as the custodian of the *Wa-naa*'s palace, the 'skin' and other insignia whilst the '*naa*' was alive. Thus, he maintained and defended state property viz: spears, the living room of the '*naa*' and the musical instruments in the palace. He alerted the '*naa*' and *nabiihe* of any eminent calamity and advised the '*naa*' on every state matter people brought forward. By *Waala* tradition the

³⁵⁵Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.76

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³⁵⁵Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.76

death of the chief was not literally announced or mentioned but a statement such as *the chief's horse has disappeared or vanished* was mentioned internally and in public until every important relation and person was informed. After this, the *Salanga* announced that the chief was dead.³⁵⁶

The third office, *Yijihe-Daana* is the head of the '*Yijihe Gate*', which is referred to as 'the Senior Gate' by virtue of being the Gate that fathered all *nabiihe*. The *Yijihe-Daana* is based in Busa, a divisional town or headquarters. The Senior Gate represented the *nabiihe* in state matters, acted as the intermediary between the *Wa-naa*, the Divisional and Village chiefs and the *nabiihe*. He advised the *Wa-naa* on the enskinment and deskinment of chiefs, mediated where conflicts existed and represented the *nabiihe* as Kingmaker when it came to appointing or deposing a Paramount, Divisional or Village chief.³⁵⁷

There was also the office of the '*Yari-naa*' and the governing process is '*Yari-naalong*', derived from the word 'yarse' or 'yaraa'. The inhabitants of Wa call Muslims collectively *yarse* or *yarihe* (plural) or *yara* (singular), a word used to refer to muslims of both Mande and Hausa Islamic traditions. The name '*yara*' is also popular among the *Dagaaba*, the close neighbours of *Waala*. The *Dagaaba* at first worshipped deities as they were believers in African religion and were not yet Muslims or Christians. The *Dagaaba*, according to Nuolabong, "who converted as Muslims are referred to as *yar-Dagaaba*, literally meaning 'Muslim Dagaaba.'³⁵⁸

³⁵⁶Ibid

³⁵⁷Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.75.

³⁵⁸Aloysius Nuolabong, *Yar-Dagaba Participation in the Islamic Tradition: An Analysis of the impact of Islam on the thought and life of the Yar-Dagaba*, Ph.D.

Der also asserts that "the term, 'yarse', was applied to the Mande-speaking Muslim traders from the Upper Senegal and Niger region".³⁵⁹ In Wa, the '*Yari-naa*', in the Waala political system, played the role of a linguist and stood between the traditional chief and his people. In other words, the '*Yari-naa*' acted as a mediator in state affairs or acted as the '*wazir*', an Arabic word meaning 'advisor' and 'coordinator' and, in Wa, coordinated Muslim affairs and submitted his report for the attention of the *Wa-naa*.³⁶⁰

The office of a linguist in a centralised state system of government is very important because he was the first contact person before any contact with chief on every issue. Among the Gonja, in Northern and Upper West Regions of Ghana, the linguist is called '*dogta*' which means 'care-taker' or 'welfare officer' of the chief. The chief communicated, ate, travelled, and conducted both private and state affairs through his '*dogta*'.³⁶¹ Among the Waala, the linguist was variously named depending on his functions. The term generally applied at every political level was '*kpambia*'. He was always in the chief's palace and was known by different titles: *froko*, *dogta* and *yari-naa*.

When Pelpuo I became chief of Wa, he "created the office of the '*Yari Na*' or '*Yarihe Naa*', meaning chief of Muslims."³⁶² This meant that the political rallying point of Muslims in Wa was the palace of *Yari-naa*, with whom Muslims

Dissertation, Department of Religion and Human Values, University of Cape Coast, 2013, p. 3.

³⁵⁹ Der, 'The Traditional Political Systems of Northern Ghana Reconsidered?' p.37.

³⁶⁰ Nurudeen Mahama, An itinerant Muslim Scholar aged 62, Wa, 4th June, 2015

³⁶¹ Interview with Adams Issah, Prince (Bewu Family of Bole), aged 52, Bole, 6th June, 2014.

³⁶² Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.16.

met and deliberated on their concerns. The creation of this office was, basically, to monitor the activities of Muslims in Wa. The duty of the *Yari-naa* was, therefore, to influence Muslims to apply their spiritualistic activities for Waala to win over its enemies. The *Yari-naa* also ensured that Waala Muslims adhere to Islamic practices or Islamic doctrines.

Thus, he saw to the introduction of Koranic learning centres in Wa town in 1848 known as '*jango madrasah*' (in Waale and Arabic respectively or a 'palace learning centre'. This school was operated through one Seidu Jamperigu who was publicly known as '*imam*', an Arabic word for leader and teacher.³⁶³ The introduction of Muslim learning centres and the rejuvenation of Islamic activities in Wa largely influenced, according to Ivor Wilks, "the construction of the Wa central Mosque in 1885."³⁶⁴ The involvement of the *Yari-naa* in important state issues: nomination, installation, dismissal of chiefs and sanctioning offenders in the *Wa-naa*'s palace perhaps influenced Wilks to mistakenly describe the *Yari-naa* as "*naam*" (chief).³⁶⁵

Social Developments of the Waala

A Ghanaian scholar, Abena Dolphyne asserts that, "every human society has a body of beliefs that regulates the way people behave and relate to each other in the society."³⁶⁶ This, I term, the 'culture of the people'. Dominic Tuobesaane Paaga also notes that, "tradition denotes the idea of a set of norms, values and

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*, p.16

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ Florence Abena Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women, An African Perspective*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1991, p.1

practices that exist in a locality or among a group of people."³⁶⁷ The Waala exhibited aspects of their way of life any time one came into contact with them.

The pre-colonial inhabitants of Wa lived in separate wards known as '*yie*' (plural) or '*yiri*' (singular) and a number of such constitute what is called '*yi-ngmane*' (singular) or '*yi-ngmama*' (plural). Previously, it was not difficult to differentiate between '*yie*' because of clear boundaries. Due to continuous construction of buildings without adherence to boundaries it is now difficult to clearly show boundaries between wards. Several '*yie*' (wards or sections) trace descent to a common ancestor called '*baloo*' (clan) and a number of such sections are called '*boora*' (lineages) which comprise several families. These '*yie*' or '*boora*' were settled based on the historical origins of the inhabitants who called themselves names which were either of historic or familial importance.³⁶⁸ This assertion can be illustrated.

The Waala are divided into sections some of which are: *Sokpariyiri*, *Suuriyiri*, *Puohoyiri*, *Limannyiri*, *Jengbeyiri* or *Nayiri*. Each sectional name clearly shows who or what the founder, origins, roots or function of the Chief of Head was. By their names, it is easier to identify indigenes and immigrants. The division or settlement of people such as the Waala into sections based on historical lines, led Mona Fikry to point out that, "the coming together of migrant groups of mixed origins has not resulted in a homogenous group with a unified

³⁶⁷Dominic Tuobesaane Paaga, "Customary Land Tenure and Its Implication for Land Disputes in Ghana: Cases from Wa, Wechau and Lambussie," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, No.18 (October 2013), p.264.

³⁶⁸Information obtained during group interview with cross-sections of Waala, Dagaaba and Sissala during my field trips, 2nd January to 31st May, 2014.

identity."³⁶⁹ In the case of the Wa, Bin Salih described the inhabitants as "heterogenous,"³⁷⁰ yet they are commonly called *Waala*. What seems interesting is that none of these diverse people spoke their original language, but adopted *Waale* as their language and this represents proof of social cohesion and unity.

The grouping of the inhabitants of Wa into three sections based on their background provides the framework for understanding the nature of the *Waala* society. At the top of the society are the Princely Class headed by the *Wa-naa*, Divisional and Village chiefs who held political power in their respective areas of jurisdiction but offices were determined largely by the *tendaana*, the major king-maker at all administrative levels. Following the *nabiihe* are the *tendamba*, (the Earth Priest) who administered the indigenous religion and managed land, the most important source of life, and this will be discussed later. At the bottom of the society are the *yarihe* (Muslims). These Muslims soon stole the show in the political field in the sense that power in the hands of the princely class is shared more with Muslims than with the indigenous *tendamba*. This is due to the political roles Muslims played in the establishment and defence of the state during the pre-colonial era. Secondly, in terms of political power and religious potency, the increasing conversion of the indigenous peoples to Islam has relegated the *tendamba* to the background. This was partially discussed in Chapter Two and is elaborated in Chapter Four.

³⁶⁹ Mona Fikry, "Wa: A case study of Social Tensions and Social Values as reflected in the Oral Tradition of the Waala of Northern Ghana", Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Ghana, September, 1969, p.39.

³⁷⁰ Bin Salih, *The Kingdom of Wa*, p.10.

The Family in the context of the Waala

A number of scholars have variously defined the term family. Buah indicates that, "in the non-Ghanaian sense the family include only the parents and the children of the home and in the Ghanaian society it embraces a whole lineage."³⁷¹ A British colonial Anthropologists, Moutray-Read, also noted that, "the term family is very elastic and includes not only blood relations but relations by marriage and accordingly, a man may have some of his 'family' not only in Wa but in any part of the country (Ghana)."³⁷² If this were so, the term family among the Waala would include the man, the woman (women) and their biological children and other siblings.

Therefore, the popular *Waala* term '*dɔgeriba*' does not mean family but relations among family members and it is used in two ways: mother-side (maternal) or *ma biihe* (in *Waale*), where '*ma*' means mother (English) and '*biihe*' mean children. The father-side or paternal relation is termed '*ba biihe*': where '*ba*' is the equivalent of father and '*biihe*' mean children.³⁷³ Thus, both paternal and maternal family members are relatives or are related by blood, enjoy similar rights and perform the same duties.

Marriage among the Waala

To make the discussion understandable the concept 'marriage' is examined from general perspectives. A Ghanaian anthropologist, Peter Sarpong, observes that, "basically ideas about marriage are the same all over the world. Everywhere

³⁷¹Buah, *A History of Ghana*, p. 43.

³⁷²PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/217 Reports by M. Moutray-Read, RAT 1/430, 1932.

³⁷³ Words used by Waala and Dagaaba traditions in the Upper West Region.

in the world people leave their mothers, sisters and other relatives in order to enter into alliance (marriage) with some 'strange' person."³⁷⁴ Marriage, according to Florence Abena Dolphyne, "is primarily the union between two families rather than between individuals."³⁷⁵ Furthermore, Radcliffe-Brown and Forde observed, "marriage as an event that concerned primarily the man and woman who are forming a union."³⁷⁶ Similarly, many *Waala* interviewed assert that marriage is the arrangement that enable two persons (male and female) to live together as husband and wife and give birth to children coordinated by families of the spouses.³⁷⁷

From the discussion, marriage starts in the family and permeates all facets of life in the society as a contract between families of the male and female. Among the *Waala* the common practise was polygynous marriages, which meant a man marrying more than one wife. The rationale for this was based on an Islamic doctrine which, according to Moutray-Read, "endorsed plural marriage. By that, a Muslim man can marry up to four Muslim women during one's life time."³⁷⁸ Similarly, "by native customary marriage system a man is at liberty to marry one or more wives according to his choice."³⁷⁹ Thus, in the past traditional *Waala* marriages began as contracts between the male and female but that took different forms or methods supervised by the elders of the two families.

³⁷⁴Peter Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect: Some Aspects of Ghanaian Culture*, Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1974, p. 77.

³⁷⁵Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women*. p. 1.

³⁷⁶Radcliffe-Brown & Daryll Forde (eds.), *African Systems of Kingship and Marriage*. p.43.

³⁷⁷Conversation with Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 80, Takpo, January 1, 2015.

³⁷⁸PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/2/215, African Marriage Law and Customs.

³⁷⁹Ibid.

There is the marriage type called '*dɔgeri pɔga*', which means 'relationship wife'. To illustrate this, an uncle or aunt's daughter was freely given to a man as wife, which is also known as '*ahe pɔga*' (marriage through the uncle). A girl could be helping with the house chores of a certain family and on reaching marriageable age, such a girl could be married to a male within the family. This is known as '*dendeu pɔga*' (betrothal wife).³⁸⁰ Sarpong describes betrothal, "infant marriage which is in fact only the initial stages of what, it is hoped, will develop into a real marriage, and a parent promises to give his unmarried daughter in marriage to a young man when she becomes nubile."³⁸¹

There is also the service wife known in *Waale* as '*tuubo pɔga*', which means a man renders various forms of service to the mothers and fathers of the girl such as the supply of firewood during the rainy season to warm his or her room or hoeing the in-law's farm for years before the marriage was endorsed.³⁸² Two male friends may agree to offer their male and female children in marriage to foster their long time friendship known in *Waale* as "*layiri or lasiri pɔga*", which meant relationship or custom marriage.

Another form of marriage was through courtship known as '*pɔga peembo*'. The process starts when a man spots his lover and the two initiate visits and exchange of gifts. This may continue for a long time and when both lovers are satisfied with their relationship, the woman was eloped or was secretly taken

³⁸⁰ Conversation with Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 80, Takpo, January 1, 2015.

³⁸¹ Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*: p. 80.

³⁸² A common practice among the Dagaaba and the Waala of Northwestern Ghana.

away from her father's home known as '*pɔg-juraa*' ('stolen woman').³⁸³ A woman may also be taken in payment of debt (*san pɔga*) owed by the girl's family. Lastly, a woman captured in war or bought (a slave) was married to a man in the family and such marriage is termed '*yeng-pɔga*', derived from the two words '*yeme*' (slave) and '*pɔga*' (woman).³⁸⁴

Among all the types of marriages enumerated above, elopement, agreement and courtship are common among the *Waala* and are highlighted in turns below. Elopement is the gradual process of courtship which involves "romantic methods" of luring the woman into love, constant visits and finally sneaking out with the girl to the intended husband's home. Elopement may occur at a market place or during an entertainment session to mark an occasion. Dougah notes that the elopement process "among the Lobi starts when there is a dance called '*Kobine*', performed annually during the months of August and September or weekly in the Lawra market. During the dance times girls were privileged to choose husbands at the close of the day's dance."³⁸⁵ Among the *Waala*, market days are the times both bride and bridegroom often met to make the choice. After that, courtship begins through regular visits, presentation of 'gifts', hoeing on the in-law's farm, to mention a few of the demands of the institution.³⁸⁶

³⁸³Interview with Widaana II, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, January 1, 2014; and, Boore Jatoe, Head of Kambale clan, aged 90, Kambale residence, 14th December, 2014. See also Gariba B. Abdul-Korah, "If its Your Money I will Pay and Go: Shifting and Contested Significance of Brideprice Payment among the Dagaaba of Northwest Ghana," *Journal of Asian and African Studies Vol.49* (2014), p. 335.

³⁸⁴Ibid., A common practice of the Dagaaba (Nadoli, Issa-Kajokpere areas), and *Waala* of Northwestern Ghana.

³⁸⁵ Group interview with 30 knowledgeable people of *Balum, Kambal, Waale-Sambo and Ma-ngo* communities in Wa from 3rd to 8th January, 2015.

³⁸⁶Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.85.

Similarly among the Tallensi, a group of people found in the Northeastern part of Ghana, precisely, in the Upper East Region of Ghana, a "small amount of tobacco and smoked guinea fowls" were presented regularly as gifts to the boy's in-lords (the girl's parents).³⁸⁷ When the quantity of presents received by the girl's parents were assessed and found to be satisfactory, a word of approval in figurative language was passed on to the suitor such as "*e taangaane birang*" (*Waale*), which meant "your shea fruits are ripe" implying that, the girl has reached marriageable age. By this approval, the suitor arranges in secrecy with the girl one day to sneak to his home, an action *Waala* term '*pɔga juubo* (sneaking out with a woman).³⁸⁸

There is also the 'marriage by agreement' which is arranged between the heads of the families concerned - that of the bride and bridegroom. Many parents and guardians prefer this type of marriage because it enabled them to research and choose a good husband or wife for their children. This type of marriage was what Dougah refers to as "Mohammedan...during which two important formalities, '*furi*' (betrothal) and '*amariya*' (wedding) constituted the skeletal structure of these marriage customs."³⁸⁹ This also goes through 'courtship' whereby the "suitor may be disqualified if he was suffering from a contagious disease, or was a professional thief, unemployed, disrespectful, a heathen or Moslem but did not keep up his prayers. When he was seen to satisfy all the required conditions,

³⁸⁷PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/200. "Marriage Law: 'Memorandum on Marriage Law among the Tallensi'," by M. Fortes, 1932.

³⁸⁸Ibid.

³⁸⁹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.83.

consent was given by the parents of the girl and the suitor's representative paid the '*furi*' fee of 12 shillings plus some kola nuts."³⁹⁰

After this, the suitor regularly provided the girl with clothes, cash or other things and financed domestic matters like funerals and festivals for the girl's family and often took off his footwear or showed other signs of respect to the elders until '*furi*' (already explained) was concluded. The '*furi*' day was the fixed date the family members of both the bride and bridegroom met in the home of the bridegroom. There, the *Imam* gave a sermon and recited portions of the Qur'an, counselling the couple to believe in Allah and swore that the contract was 'welded (endorsed)' until death separated them.³⁹¹

The term '*amariya*' (wedding) was derived from the Hausa language meaning 'feasting in honour of 'a new wife' or '*pɔge paala*' (*Waale*). The two families, before the wedding day, prepared the bridegroom by decorating her foot, dressed her in new clothes, counselled her on the dos and don'ts of marriage life, and ensured that the living room of the new wife was decorated with a new bed and mattress if financially capable. Then the man would then go for a good hair cut to befit the occasion.

On the wedding day, all types of meals were cooked in the suitor's home. At about seven in the evening friends of the bridegroom and members of the two families mostly, brothers, sisters and mothers, accompanied the bride with her belongings to the suitor's home. After exchanging greetings, the head of the man's family gave a welcome address followed by a message from the representatives of

³⁹⁰Ibid.,

³⁹¹Ibid.

the bride and bridegroom before refreshments were served. After this, members of the bridegroom party returned home leaving behind three girls to support the new wife for seven days with her daily chores. On the eighth day, the three accompanying girls would return home to end the Muslim marriage ceremony.³⁹²

In Waala traditions, some women were purchased (paid for) or captured during trade or ethnic conflicts. When such women were found to possess attractive qualities, they were traditionally married to a man in the family they were captured by or sold into. By Waala custom, captured women were given names that described how they were obtained. The name '*kɔnkɔreema*', for instance, was derived from the two words '*kɔnkɔre*' (forest) and '*ma*' (mother); and '*daama*' also implied '*daa*' (market) and '*ma*' (meaning mother).³⁹³ The other reason for which conquerors married captives was, according to Der, "to strengthen the ties between them (the conquerors) and the people".³⁹⁴ Such marriages were considered valid.

However, traditional marriages became valid or legal when certain customary rites were followed. Among the '*tendamba*', the '*tendaana*' would first make sacrifices to the ancestral spirits which was witnessed by clan members to signify validity or legality.³⁹⁵ A marriage was also considered valid if "the bride wealth was paid, the suitor hoed for the father-in-law and supported the bridegroom's family with grain during funerals or stressful times. The marriage was invalid or illegal when the bride wealth was not yet paid or the couple were

³⁹²Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.85.

³⁹³ Information from Abudu Mahama, Linguist, aged 58, Wa, 10th July, 2015

³⁹⁴Benedict G. Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, Centre for Savanna Art and Civilization, Woeli Publishing Press, Accra – North, Ghana, 1998, p.4.

³⁹⁵Conversation with Sumani Munja, Head of *Puohoyiri* clan, Wa, 1998.

detected to be members of the same clan."³⁹⁶ A valid marriage was also one that bore children and this has been categorised into two: legitimate and illegal (illegitimate) fatherhoods. Children born through physiological fathers are illegitimate and those born with unmarried girls are illegal. The ownership of children was determined by the legal status of the marriage and was conferred by the payment of bride wealth (dowry) which varies among the *Waala*.³⁹⁷

Before 1898 when British colonial rule was introduced Muslim families accepted "12 shillings and 100 pieces of kola nut whilst the '*tendamba*' clans took prescribed quantities of cowries, kola nut and animals (cows, rams, he-goats, fowls, etc)."³⁹⁸ In addition to the above items, among the '*tendamba*' a valid marriage was one that saw the bride quarantined or secluded for seven days in the house of her relative woman married already in the clan. This seven-day seclusion period would start the very first night the girl arrived. Early the next morning the brothers of the suitor informed members of the clan of the 'stranger', a figurative word referring to the 'new wife' commonly called '*saana*' (stranger; in Waale), and which became her name during the seven days quarantine period.

All clan members: grandparents, parents, children and siblings, visited daily and offered '*ansoma*' (good morning greeting) to the bride in her room decorated with cloths from women in the clan. Every night members of the clan: men, women, boys and girls gathered in the yard of the compound and entertained the bride and the 'accompanying sisters' to riddles, poems, wise sayings and a

³⁹⁶PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/200 Marriage Law: "Memorandum on Marriage Law among the Tallensi," M. Fortes, 1908.

³⁹⁷Ibid.

³⁹⁸Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.83.

dance known as '*ngmani*' (calabash) dance. The 'calabash' dance was organised in a simple form demonstrated overleaf:

The drummer sat in the middle of the crowd drumming on the calabash with a simple dance type followed by chorus from both males and female present. An old man recited proverbs alongside the choral music. Two dancers (male and female) came out in pairs and danced to the tune and the admiration of the crowd.³⁹⁹

At about midnight the entertainment was rounded-off. The seventh day marked the end of the entertainment and on that night knowledgeable men and women in the traditional area attended and counselled participants, particularly the bride, on the beliefs, values and don'ts of the clan to climax the occasion for the night.

The last activity known as '*pɔgpaali daa*', which meant 'market day ceremony of a new wife' was performed on the first 'Wa market' day. On that day women of good standing in the clan dressed in their best clothing and accompanied the bride to the market for two reasons. First, the bride was introduced to sections of the market environment that members of the clan occupy. Secondly, the event announced to the public that the newly married woman was now legally married and that would end customary marriage among the '*Tendaalong*' clans.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁹Description of the ceremony observed among Waala, Researcher.

⁴⁰⁰Observation made among Waala by Researcher.

Bride Wealth among the Waala

Any form of marriage among the non-Muslim *Waala* was valid if the 'customary fee' known as '*Cheori*' or '*chegri*' (meaning bride wealth, bride price or dowry), which was a fixed fee, was paid to the family of the girl. The dowry payment was not done once but is a continuous tradition of presentation of gifts to relatives of the bride: brothers, sisters, parents, grandparents and friends, who over the years contributed to the well being of the new wife.

Similarly, Buah remarks: "the man pays the dowry and gives further presents, including special money paid to the bride's mother for bringing up her daughter well from her babyhood. A token sum of money is also handed to the brothers of the bride before they symbolically handover their sister to another man".⁴⁰¹ What is paid to the brothers and sisters in *Waale* is termed '*dakyi boohoo*' (*boma*) and to the parents '*dieng booho*' (*boma*).⁴⁰² These, Sarpong indicates is, "misunderstood as a purchase price with which the husband bought a wife."⁴⁰³

Generally, among Waala two forms of dowry are paid. There are agreed forms of bride wealth for a newly married woman which differed from clan to clan and that also depended on the background of the woman. If the woman ever married and was dowried, her new dowry will be the equivalent of the first dowry which was returned to the former husband after divorce. The non-Muslim Waala paid dowry with cowries, fowls and sheep or goats depending on the clan the new wife came from. Before the dowry was paid, a fowl (cock) was presented to the

⁴⁰¹Buah, *A History of Ghana*, Macmillan, 1974, p.45.

⁴⁰²Naa Alexander Widaana, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, 1st January, 2015.

⁴⁰³Sarpong, *Ghana in Retrospect*, p.83.

head of the family known generally as '*sanda-nuo*' or introduction (knocking) fee.⁴⁰⁴ Among the Dagaaba, the close neighbours of the Waala, between two to six cows, quantities of cowries, fowls, sheep and or goats are some items payable to the bridegroom's family.⁴⁰⁵

The Muslims conduct two forms of marriage. First, was the '*furi*' (agreement) fee called '*sadarki*' (Arabic). The second comprised a list of items the man would purchase toward the marriage. However, if a Muslim contracted to marry a Dagaaba girl it was binding on the Muslim to perform the Dagaaba dowry custom and add the Muslim customary practice if he so desired.⁴⁰⁶ The dowry (bride wealth) payment is very important in Waala marriage life. Dowries serve as testimony or evidence to alert the general public about the matrimonial union officially or legally entered into. Dowries, when paid, regulate the behaviour of the married woman and in the event of unfaithfulness on the part of the wife the husband, was entitled to claim 'adultery fees'. By the payment of dowry (bride wealth) the couple wins respect and dignity in the community.

Among the Dagaaba, children born belong to the bride's family if the dowry was not paid. Waala considered children not covered by bride wealth as illegitimate and that disqualified such children from contesting, for example, the revered position of chief. When it was detected that the woman had committed adultery, a ritual which was differently performed to cleanse the woman found to be 'spoilt' which in Waale is known as '*pɔg-saanoo*' and the cleansing of the woman is referred to as '*pɔg-maali*' (cleansing a woman), a ritual differently

⁴⁰⁴Abdul-Korah, "If it's Your Money I will Pay and Go: p. 335.

⁴⁰⁵Naa Alexander Widaana, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, 1st January, 2015.

⁴⁰⁶Ibid.

performed. In some clans the man who defiled the woman is charged to present quantities of cowries, fowls, dogs, goats or sheep to the offended clan as custom determined.

Elsewhere, the man presented items determined by the elders of the clan. When the items were assembled, the elders, through the Fetish Priest (*Tendaana*), sacrificed the fowls and animals accordingly to their deities and ancestors. In some instances, the man who defiled the woman and the defiled woman are sat in the public and hooted at or were made to be accompanied around the village by children who clapped hands and rained insults on them. This was a disgraceful action hyped to scare others from such forbidden sex scandal.⁴⁰⁷

Childbirth among the Waala

The target of all marriages is the ability to have children. A marriage without children may lead to divorce or the man may be compelled to add a second wife because the first wife was barren. When children are being produced certain rituals are performed. With the coming of a new baby, on the seventh day, the new baby was given a name. This was done with the consent of the two families that contracted the marriage and in their company are friends of the spouses.

When the marriage concerned a Muslim couple, a Muslim leader read Quranic verses and asked for Allah's blessing, protection and guidance for the new baby and members of the entire clan. After the prayers food and drinks were served to the participants. With non-Muslims, 'the fetish priest' performed the

⁴⁰⁷Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief, aged 80, Takpo, 1st January, 2015.

ceremony. Names of newly born children were also chosen along religious lines. Muslims took Arabic names such as, Yakubu (male) or Mariam (female). The non-Muslims took local names that have meanings. For instance, the name '*Dong*' refers to an important annual festival celebrated and children (male and female) born on that day of celebration were named by it ('*dong*').

Another practice on the newly born baby is circumcision (male) or excision (female)⁴⁰⁸. Each practice was performed on the seventh day of the child's birth. On that day the child was publicly circumcised or excised. The main reason for that was, "to make the girl sexually inactive and by that the girl would be committed to the husband alone or, in other words, to make the woman less promiscuous and clean."⁴⁰⁹ There are reasons for the adoption of such practices. In the opinion of many Waala, female genital mutilation is a custom inherited and cannot be dropped. Mothers are jeered (mocked) at if their daughters did not undergo the practice and such ladies were considered dirty.⁴¹⁰ Similarly, the uncircumcised male was also not respected, especially among Muslim societies, who considered such a male as "not ready for God."⁴¹¹

Death among the Waala

The general belief among the Waala is simply that after birth comes death. When a non-Muslim was declared dead the notion was that the ancestors had

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⁴⁰⁹PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/34, Report from Chief Commissioner (Tamale) to Colonial Secretary (Accra), 1934.

⁴¹⁰Testimony: Song-nengninge Nafah, Leader of Ma-ngo Women Association, aged 90, Waluuyiri, February 2, 2015.

⁴¹¹Opinion of Alhaji Mallam Hindu Dramani, a Arabic Teacher aged 58, Wa, February 10, 2015.

taken him/her 'home'. Concerning a deceased Muslim the belief was that his/her job on earth had ended and he/she was called back to the creator. Two ways are followed in Wa in handling the dead. When a Muslim was pronounced dead, the deceased was washed and placed on a mat covered with a white cloth. After this, the most elderly male of the clan (family) declared 'mourning' by raising his arms saying: "*mba woye; mba woye; mba woye*" (3 times) and thus, declared "our beloved brother's, wife, mother, beloved or so is dead and by that the funeral procession was ushered in."⁴¹² This begun what is generally known as 'crying' (mourning). Other main activities included preparation of the grave and the burial gown (trousers and turban) called '*kahina*' (Waale), which the deceased would wear are then prepared. When the '*kahina*' was ready, "Muslim mallams arrive, dress the deceased, and put him/her in a coffin that is carried outside for the funeral prayer. Muslims who had performed ablution would then file behind the deceased and followed the Imam in prayer after which the deceased was carried for burial.

After the burial, a short funeral service was conducted during which the deceased person's children and relations gave money to the mallams who conducted the service. The ceremony ended when the Imam requested the public to inform the deceased family whether the deceased during his/her life time owed any person. At the same time, any person who owed the deceased was to disclose such debt.⁴¹³ Other Muslim funeral rites were conducted on the 3rd, 7th, 12th and 40th days after the person had passed on, and the climax was the one year funeral

⁴¹²Observation by the Researcher during the conduct of Muslim funerals.

⁴¹³Version of Alhaji Mallam Hundu Dramani, Arabic Teacher, aged 58, Wa, February 10, 2015 during his conduct of several funeral ceremonies I witnessed.

rite. On each of the days, community members gathered at the front space of the clan and engaged in prayers or thanksgiving service.

Alongside the prayer, money, cakes or any 'worthy item' was distributed to mallams present. On the fortieth day the widow was examined physiologically to assess if there was 'pregnancy'. If the answer was negative, the widow was allowed to enter into a new marriage. The next day, family members met and examined the property of the deceased and shared what was available among the children and widows as custom demands. The males were often given a greater share because they would continue to carry the burden of the family. The widows and daughters were given smaller shares because they would be living with a different family. There is also the final funeral rite, which happened a year after the deceased died. This was also a feasting and thanksgiving service day to complete the funeral rites of a deceased Muslim.

The non-Muslim funeral was conducted differently. Before mourning began, the "elders consulted oracles to find out the cause of the death. If the cause was the fetish, the body was quickly taken to the bush and buried in a narrow grave and no mourning was done. However, if the deceased died a natural death, that was through illness or old age all family members painted their faces with white and black clay during the ceremony. All relations remove their loin ornament and place them round the neck. The widows have ropes tied round their left wrists and the loose ends were held by the friends of the deceased."⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁴PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/34, Report from Chief Commissioner (Tamale) to Colonial Secretary (Accra), 1934.

While the mourning was ongoing, talking drums were intermittently sounded to announce the funeral to people near and far. The drumming was done in three ways. The drums were two, female and male, and were positioned on the left and right sides respectively of the drummer. If the deceased was an ordinary man, the female drum was hit three times as overleaf:

Ken teng, ken teng, ken teng; kin kin kahin; kin kin kahin.

Nansaara firah firah kon firi ngmine; Nansaara firah firah kon firi ngmine

*Ajeni koto ko; ajeni koto ko; ajeni koto ko.*⁴¹⁵

This translates as;

A mighty tree has fallen; A mighty tree has fallen (d/c).

The power of the 'white man' (*nansaara*) forced people to serve him but not God (d/c).

The drum ceremony is an example of an appellation that peers of the male deceased sung to him through drum language. This appellation, when sounded through the drum, informed any relative of the death of the person. On the other hand, if the deceased was a chief, the verse added was "*gbunogbuno bangvona; gbuno gbuno bangvona*," that is, a fugirative expression meaning "they swallow large balls" and that referred to "how powerful the chief was during the life time". If the deceased was a woman, the drum language was slightly the same but run as:

Kenteng, kenteng, kenteng; kin kineng kahi, kin kineng kahi (d/c)

*Kin kineng kenteng; kin kineng kenteng; dankara buochi; dankara buochi*⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁵A version of the drum language of the Waala and the Dagaaba of Northwest Ghana

⁴¹⁶Ibid.

The interpretation of the above simply meant "the soup provider" (*dankara buochi*) was dead; and the third message was sounded for emergency cases which run as:

Kenteng, kenteng, kenteng; kinkin, kinkin kenang

*Kenteng, kenteng, kenteng; kinkin, kinkin kenang*⁴¹⁷

After each of the above drum messages was sounded, the oldest elder present screamed three times and that was the signal to begin the 'mourning', which was followed by the general mourning of all mourners gathered. Persons responsible for digging the grave and preparing the corpse for burial would start these customary tasks.

Before burial, the uncle and family members of the deceased dressed like warriors with bows and arrows and shot at a closed door, a practise known as '*gbori teo bu*' (Waale/Dagaare), 'literally meaning "shooting at the door"'. Note that the term '*gbori*' is the name of a type of door-cover in both Waale and Dagaare and not a 'boat'. If the deceased was a woman, her 'basket' (*peo*) was returned to her (the deceased) father's house signifying that she (deceased) had returned home.⁴¹⁸ To climax the burial ceremony, the play mates of the deceased woman organised a simple play dance called '*kaore*', a vigorous dance which weak women dare not take part and after this the burial processes ended.⁴¹⁹

The deceased, if a male, was also dressed in a '*kahina*'. Depending on one's social status, a chief, clan leader or rich man, the gown put on such deceased

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ A popular funeral custom of the indigenous people (*tendamba*) but which is almost extinct due to the conversion of many *tendamba* as Muslims.

⁴¹⁹ A common women's dance organised to round-off the '*dugu*' dance.

persons was '*burimoha*' (Waale), meaning a dress for important persons. The deceased woman was dressed in a skirt that protected her 'womanhood' and was covered with a white cloth. Burial commenced once the deceased person's 'play mates' were paid a fee, referred to as "*saanda booho (boma)*," which meant an amount the 'play mates' may request but which was negotiated and settled. Such payment often cleared the way for the burial to commence and after that event the burial team carried the corpse to its grave. By custom, specific clans were responsible for burying their own dead. In other words, no person buried or even dug graves if one did not belong to the designated clan. After a successful burial the priest led elders of the community to declare the end of the funeral ceremony and, thereafter, the crowd dispersed.⁴²⁰

Finally, an annual funeral rite was organized for friends, lovers, relatives and family members. If the deceased had a male child, a bull was slaughtered 'traditionally', which meant breaking the left fore leg first and then the right hind leg of the bull and left in the sun for hours to ensure every important relation saw the animal(s) slaughtered. Later, the animal was killed were prepared and the meat was prepared and distributed customarily to beneficiaries. Part of the meat was given to women to prepare meals and this was accompanied with a lot of 'pito', a locally prepared drink from guinea corn malt.⁴²¹

⁴²⁰A common practice with some Dagaaba, among Waala and Gonja whether Muslim or non-Muslim. Further information from M. A. Salifu (alias Baakari), Linguist, aged 72, Wa, November 14, 2014.

⁴²¹Interview with:

- >Sumani Munja, head of Balum/Puohoyiri, aged 95, Wa, June 4, 1998.
- >Boore Jatoo, head of Kambali, aged 90, Kambali, May 2, 2015.
- >Nafah Yamusah, head of Waluuyiri section, aged 85, Ma-ngo, December 10, 2014.
- > Mantana Kuojo, Chief of Kunfale, aged 90, Kung, January 2, 2015.

Surprisingly, whether the deceased was a Muslim or non-Muslim male, "the widow was confined to the compound for 12 days, her hair loosened from any knots it may be tied and a strip of white cloth tied round the forehead".⁴²² Nothing was done to a deceased male and the reason is that the man married the woman, paid the bride wealth (dowry). It is also the belief that the spirit (or ghost) of the deceased hovered around the home where he/she lived whilst alive for forty days after death. This called for a special departing ceremony held on the fortieth day.⁴²³

Inheritance among the Waala

Among the Waala, inheritance is a delicate customary practice defined as property left behind by the deceased in the form of movables (livestock [cattle, sheep, goats, etc], wives, clothes, ornaments,) and un-movables (buildings, farm land, and the like) which would be shared customarily among the deceased children. As Abena Dolphyne notes, "marriages in Africa are polygamous, which means that a man's property has to be shared among his many widows and children on his death. In a matrilineal society (where lineage is traced through the mother), children do not have an automatic right to their father's property but can inherit the property of their maternal uncles."⁴²⁴

This does not apply to the Waala, among whom farmlands and property of members of the whole family are collectively inherited. After burial the elders

⁴²²PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/105, Reports from Chief Commissioner (Tamale) to Colonial Secretary (Accra).

⁴²³Ibid.

⁴²⁴Florence Abena Dolphyne, *The Emancipation of Women*. p.1

visited the deceased person's farm and picked samples, as evidence, of crops (tubers and cereals) the deceased possessed. A man who was of the deceased's age, by custom, took the foodstuff samples picked from the deceased's farm. This practice meant that the man who collected foodstuff samples had inherited the deceased. The man who inherited considers the deceased children as his biological children, listened to them when they are confronted with challenges and he helps them solve the challenges. The children also significantly play roles such as presenting gifts to their second father during occasions such as the Muslim *Ramadan*, referring to the Muslim 30 days fasting period, during his life time.

If the deceased had male children the rest of the farm produce and livestock were left to them and their responsibility was to manage the farm and livestock, especially cattle. The clothing and ornaments, in most cases, were distributed among the children. If the deceased was a female and left both movable and non-movable property, all the property went to her children.⁴²⁵ If the property of the deceased was not customarily distributed fairly it could ruin (devastate) members of the entire clan or family. Hence, most elders publicly ensured that all the children of the deceased received their fair share of the inheritance known in Waale as '*chang*'.

'Tribal Marks' of the Waala

Some inhabitants of Wa, the '*Tendamba*', '*Nabihe*', '*Tarawire*', '*Jabagihe*' and '*Kantonsi*', were using facial and body marks. The origins and why people in

⁴²⁵Conversation with Boore Jatoe, aged 95, Kambali clan, Wa, 20th January, 2015.

the past adopted 'tribal marks' varied. Generally, 'tribal marks' were given to people for identification purposes. Due to the uncertain unsafe political situation at the time, when people unknown were malhandled by others, people kept marks to be able to protect their kith and kin. Some 'tribal marks' were also imposed on people. It is believed that the Waala adopted Gonja 'tribal marks' because it was imposed by the Gonja who from the earliest time claimed jurisdiction over the Waala territory and its people. The latter were, therefore, bound to use Gonja marks⁴²⁶. Marks, therefore, served as the symbol for the identification of people and, through common marks, inhabitants of the Waala Kingdom referred to themselves as "*dogriba*", a very elastic term derived through relations who included blood, marriage and co-habitation".⁴²⁷

From the above discussion, a man's family members may be scattered in different parts of the Waala Kingdom, especially through marriage. The political condition in Wa from the 1850s was characterized by raids and conflicts with slave raiders and marauders which caused several families to relocate elsewhere. Wherever families met, certain insecure political conditions gingered in people ideas of fostering unity and togetherness as a single community. This sense of togetherness manifested strongly among people with a common identity such as tribal marks. It is a common belief among the ethnic peoples in the Waala Kingdom who use bodily marks that people marked were never touched by slave

⁴²⁶ PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Native Affairs, 1898-1900.

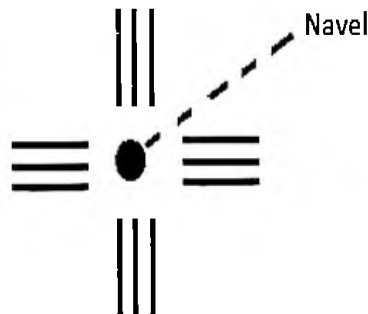
⁴²⁷ Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.96.

raiders as a sign of respect to the overlord of Gonja whose people were free from being sold as slaves.⁴²⁸

Considering the importance the British attached to socio-political life of people, Moutray-Read, studied and illustrated the pattern or how 'tribal marks' were marked on people. He described the pattern thus:

Three cuts from the side of the temple down the face to the jaw and then curved ending before the chin was reached. Then three roughly parallel cuts from six to ten inches (approximately 9 to 15 millimeters) in the length of both parts of the body: fore arm, upper arm, both sides of the chest above breast, ribs, thighs and calves of the legs. On the stomach are small cuts but shortened and not parallel from the navel outward up and down across⁴²⁹.

The above description was illustrated by Moutry-Read in the diagram below:



Festivals of the Waala

The Waala have twelve months in the year and sets aside a number of days in the year to celebrate or mark the occasions agreed upon on those specific days. The Waala have 12 months, namely, *Jinbente*, *Sofuraa*, *Dumba*, *Dummakona*, *Dumba-fulonaang*, *Dumbakotoku*, *Kpiinechieu-makona*, *Kpiinechieu*, *Anjelinje*,

⁴²⁸Opinion of Naa Yakubu Seidu Soalia II, *Wa-naa*, aged 73, *Wa*, May 3, 1998.

⁴²⁹PRAAD, *Tamale NRG* 8/2/217, M. Moutry-Read's, "Essay on the Peoples of North-West Province," 1930.

Sunkari, *Chieusong* and *Dong* in the year.⁴³⁰ Six out of the twelve months are marked as occasions and are described in turns below.

The *Jinbente* Festival

Jinbente is the first month of the Waala calendar year. It is celebrated by the non-Muslims to mark the flight of Prophet Mohammed [Peace and Blessings be Upon Him (PBUH)] from Mecca to Medina in Saudi Arabia. Briefly, the flight or *hejira* story indicates how non-Muslim Arabs defeated their Muslim brothers in the c. 600s. This story travelled across regions and got to some non-Muslim who, on the ninth day of '*Jinbente*' mark the victory over Muslims by feasting on food, meat and drink. The Waala ancestors are honoured and remembered on '*jinbente*' night when fathers and mothers prepared '*sao*' ('*tuozaŋfi*' in Hausa), a local meal prepared from millet and served in calabashes overnight for the souls of the dead parents to visit and eat.

The next morning, elders overturned the meal in the calabash and if there were scratches on the food, that signified the fact that the dead relative had eaten. If no scratches were found, it meant the deceased parents refused to eat indicating their annoyance with the living who then consulted the Head Priest or Diviner for the reason and solution. The dead were pacified after sacrifices were made and the fault corrected. After that, the remainder of the food ate or not ate by the deceased parents known as '*bikpiebihe sao*' (orphans TZ) was eaten by the *bikpiebihe* (orphan children).

⁴³⁰Dougah, *Wa and Its People* pp.98-103, and conversation with many Waala.

On the early night, that is about five o'clock p.m. organised boys went round every shrine chanting songs of praise in appreciation for giving them protection. Similarly, on the first morning of the '*jinbente*' feast, young males went out at about five o'clock in the morning and swept the patio of their paternal uncles' homes which attracted a reward in the form of presents - quantity of cowries, a fowl, goat, sheep, cow or a promised wife.⁴³¹

The *Dumba* Festival

Paraphrasing Dougah, the '*dumba*' festival is celebrated annually by Muslims to mark the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). This occurs supposedly in the third month of the year from the 11th to 18th day.⁴³² This is found by the researcher to be incorrect because as observed annually for the past thirty years in the forecourt of the *Wa-naa*'s palace, the activity is a tradition of the '*nabiihe*' (princely class) of the Waala traditional area.

A month before the festival began, the *Wa-naa* invited the '*namine*' (chiefs), '*nabiihe*', headmen of the '*tendamba*', Muslim leaders and other clan heads to solicit for their support for a successful celebration. People responded by offering various food items and animals to the *Wa-naa* to refresh participants during the week-long celebration.

The celebration started on the 11th and ends on the 18th of the month during which three important customs were practised for the youth to emulate. On the 11th day, and for the first event, the *Wa-naa* invited traditional leaders to

⁴³¹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, pp.98-99.

⁴³²Testimony of Chief Degu-naa Bomison, aged 90, Bomi-yiri, June 3, 1998; Dougah, pp.99-100

the palace where they sat on mats in a circle in the main yard and picked threshed and un-threshed rice mixed together, an activity termed '*mui tuuhebu*' meaning 'picking of rice'. Alongside, women and drummers entertained the crowd with music and songs.

When the picking was complete, the threshed rice was cooked. A sheep or goat is slaughtered and cooked to accompany the rice meal which all participants ate. On the same day, and by sunset, members of all indigenous clans, many of them walking and others riding horses amidst drumming, moved to the outskirts of Wa and, as Dougah puts it, "*a te waa neng dumba*" which means "to go and usher in the *dumba*'festival."⁴³³

From a spot determined by Elders participating announced to the crowd that *dumba* had been ushered in and, the crowd and drummers with festive songs and music, walked gradually back to the forecourt of the *Wa-naa*'s Palace where the festival was annually celebrated. There the elders report to chiefs and people present that *dumba* was brought home and, after this report, the *dumba* daily activities were performed. The '*dumba*' "songs are sung in the Gonja language" and that shows the extent of Gonja influence among the Waala.⁴³⁴ The festival lasts seven days and every afternoon the '*nabiihe*' (male/female) in their customary attire popularly called 'smock' celebrated the '*dumba* dance', a colourful moment during which the '*nabiihe*' dance and swung horse tails left and right according to the tune of the music. Dancers appeared in pairs, male and female, and as they exhibited their skills friends, relatives and admirers offered

⁴³³Dougah, *Wa and It's People*, pps 99-100.

⁴³⁴Ibid p. 99.

cowries or kola nut as presents- dancing and motivation to the dancers. Each night, the local dance known as 'dugo' also purported to have originated from Gonja was staged by members of a community assigned to do so by the festival planners. The sixth day of the festival marked the climax of the celebration, when the *Wa-naa* performed the custom described as "*naa naaho gambo*," which implies "the chief jump over a bull."⁴³⁵ This sounds miraculous to perform and, as such by implication people trooped to watch how the chief "jumped over a bull."

What occurred was that the bull was rather firmly tied down and the chief stepped over it ensuring that no part of his trousers touched it (the bull). If any part of the chief's attire touched the animal, he (the chief), by tradition, would die before the next '*dumba*' festival. After the *Wa-naa* successfully stepped over the bull, he was rushed into the palace cheered by the people whilst the dancing continued till dawn. The next day marked the end of '*dumba*' and by four o'clock in the evening, the '*Tendaana*' poured libation to the spirits of the land and that signified the end of the year's festival. In the same manner that the *dumba* was started it was dispatched at the outskirts of Wa and the activity is known as '*dumba beelebo*', meaning accompanying the *dumba*.⁴³⁶

The *Kpiinichieu* (Guinea Fowl) Festival

The term '*kpiinichieu*' is derived from the words, '*kpiini*' (guinea fowl) and '*chieu*' (moon), and it is applied to a festival invariably meaning "the guinea fowl moon." Its celebration is associated with Muslims. The origin of this festival is

⁴³⁵Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, pp.99-101.

⁴³⁶Ibid.

explained in two versions. First, during a battle between Muslims and non-Muslims in Saudi Arabia in c. 622, the Prophet of Islam (Mohammed) and his followers took shelter under trees in the thick bush, hungry and thirsty and guinea fowls settled on top of the trees and sprinkled water on the Prophet and his followers. The Prophet miraculously asked the guinea fowls to lead them to the water source for them to quench their thirst and the guinea fowls rather "dropped" more water on the Muslims and flew away.

A second version of the same story states that, in the Prophet's precarious situation a wet pig arrived. The Prophet again asked the pig to show them where the pond was and the pig complied. The Prophet and his followers quenched their thirst and that enabled them to continue with the battle against the non-Muslims. When the fighting ended in favour of the Muslims, the Prophet was impressed and, therefore, entreated all Muslims to deal kindly with the 'pig and eschew its flesh but ordered Muslims to punish the guinea fowl for its wickedness shown".⁴³⁷

The event was marked annually on the 27th day of the month of '*Kpiinichien*', meaning guinea fowl festival, as the day 'guinea fowls' disobeyed the Prophet Mohammed and his brethren. On that day capable Muslims buy a 'guinea fowl', pluck it bare whilst alive and whip it remorselessly until the fowls bled. When sufficient ordeal had been inflicted on the fowl, it was then slaughtered, cooked and eaten by the family to end the festival⁴³⁸. This festival seems to be not commonly observed, perhaps, because of the cost involved.

⁴³⁷ Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.100-101

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*, p.101

The *Sunkari* (Fasting Month)

Muslims throughout the world observe the ninth month of the Arabic calendar (PBUH) from 'Allah', during a jihad (war) in which as a period of fasting lasting 30 days. This was started due to a revelation to the Prophet Mohammed (PBHUH) from Allah during jihads (battles) in the c. 600s in which Muslims suffered a lot of casualties and fought without food. The message to the Prophet of Islam indicated that "the dead would automatically enter heaven" in the battle against the enemies of God and, thus Mohammed was urged to continue the battle. In addition to fighting the war in the cause of Islam, all believer-Muslims were mandated to fast for three days as an antidote to the loss of men on the battlefield. The two actions (fighting and fasting) could not help as many Muslims still died. The Prophet was later made to change the three-day fast to a thirty-day fast as a sort of mediation to Allah to support and forgive the Muslims alive and those dead. This second option worked.

As a result, Muslims were entreated to observe fasting for 30 days from dawn to sunset from that point onward. This fasting period came to be universally adopted by Muslims throughout the world, a practice passed on to generations of the Waala known in *Waale* as '*sunkari*'.⁴³⁹

The *Chieusong* (Good Moon) Festival

The word *chieusong* in *Waale* by interpretation mean 'good moon'. It is a day of celebration which occurs on the first day of the tenth Muslim month in the

⁴³⁹Information gathered in conversation with itinerant Muslim leaders in Wa and observations during my field trips to gather data in the Waala Kingdom from 1st January to 30th March, 2014.

Abraham "to replace his son with the ram." This is the story behind the Muslim celebration of the event known as *dhu'l-hijaa* (in Arabic) or *dongu* (in *Waale*).⁴⁴¹

From the discussions, it is worth mentioning that the annual festivals among the *Waala* originated from Islamic traditions. None of the festivals discussed above was started by the inhabitants themselves. Unlike festivals such as the *Odwira* (Akan), *Ohum* (Guan), *Ahobaa* (Fante), *Homowo* (Ga) and *Hogbetsotso* (Anlo-Ewe), which are known to have been started by the peoples themselves, the *Waala* ancestors had not on their own began any festival.⁴⁴² The reason for this assertion is that out of six festivals the *Waala* celebrate, four are linked to Islam and one each is associated with the '*Nabiithe*' (princely class) and the '*Tendamba*' or indigenous clans.

Waala Days of the Week

The English have seven days in a week- Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.⁴⁴³ Similarly, Hausa Muslims in Wa call their seven days, in the same order as the English week *alahadi*, *atenee*, *atalata*, *alariba*, *alaamusa*, *arjima* and *asibiti* respectively.⁴⁴⁴ Before the *Waala* came into contact with both the Hausa and the English, the inhabitants of Wa and the entire zone counted six days in a week and the days were linked to market towns: *Ma-ngo*, *Kaleo*, *Sankana*, *Dolimo*, *Charia* and *Jang*, which read as *Ma-*

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Fynn and Addo-Fening, *History for Secondary Schools*, p.168

⁴⁴³ Adapted from National Association of Graduate Teachers Annual Calendar, National Headquarters, Accra, 2014.

⁴⁴⁴ Adapted from Ghana Muslim Association Annual Calendar, Accra-North, 2014.

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⁴⁴² Fynn and Addo-Fening, *History for Secondary Schools*, p.168

⁴⁴³ Adapted from National Association of Graduate Teachers Annual Calendar, National Headquarters, Accra, 2014.

⁴⁴⁴ Adapted from Ghana Muslim Association Annual Calendar, Accra-North, 2014.

ngo daa, Kaleo daa, Sankana daa, Dong-daa, Charia daa and Jang daa respectively, and whereby the suffix '*daa*' (Waale/Dagaare) means 'market'.⁴⁴⁵

Land Policy among the Waala

Three major ethnic groups in the Upper West Region of Ghana, the Sissala, Dagaaba and Waala, adopt '*tahantina*', '*tengansob*' or '*tendaana*' respectively to mean the 'owner of land'. How land, an important socio-economic factor in production, was owned and managed by the Waala has not been clearly documented. This seems to be the general trend in many communities in Ghana.

In fact, it was only after 1900 that Ghanaian scholars seriously began to examine Ghana's land policy with the objective of drawing up a National Policy framework. Following the national effort, Waala land policy is examined on the basis of ownership, boundary, control, distribution and its management. Ownership of land in Wa started with hunters and farmers, who, during hunting expeditions and cultivation of farms usually set up huts far into the bush and, over time, the area or that piece of land became their property. In the course of time, other individuals or groups joined the hunters or farmers. Similarly, Samuel Awuah Nyamekye and Sarfo-Mensah indicate that, "the huts set up during hunting expeditions later develop into big settlements."⁴⁴⁶ Such settlements later became either the property of an individual or a group of people.

⁴⁴⁵ PRAAD, Accra, ADM 66/5/1, General Information Book, Wa District, 1956.

⁴⁴⁶ Samuel Awuah Nyamekye and Paul Sarfo-Mensah "Ensuring Equitable *Distribution of Land in Ghana: Spirituality or Policy? A Case Study from the Forest-Savanna Agro Ecological Zone of Ghana*," *International Indigenous Policy Journal*, Vol. 2 (2011), p. 6.

Among people in ancient kingdoms such as Mamprugu, Dagomba, Gonja and Nanumba, the '*tindana*' and '*naam*' or '*na*' held land on behalf of their people. This differs from the practice of the Waala and Akan. Among the Waala, as already referred to, land is held by the early settlers (*Tendamba*). Specifically, land among the Waala is obtained from the '*tendaana*' or "the Fetish priest or from the land god and no farm was made or anything done to the land which belongs to the ethnic group without the aid of the '*Tindaana*."⁴⁴⁷ Among the Akan who practice kingship and the matrilineal system, land "was either bequeathed to nephews or allocated to other male members of the extended family in accordance with the definition of the family land."⁴⁴⁸

Waala oral tradition further explains that land was obtained through inheritance and parents passed it to descendants as a gift and was not purchased.⁴⁴⁹ Similarly, the Akan also passed on land to children as inheritance. A mother's land is passed to her children and their siblings. In the same vein an uncle's land was or may be passed on to the sister's son, who inherited his uncle's property.⁴⁵⁰ This, as earlier pointed out, differs from what pertains in Northern Region of Ghana where chiefs have a strong voice concerning land management, which, perhaps, convinced two scholars, Kasim Kasanga and Nii

⁴⁴⁷PRAAD), Tamale NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Affairs Report, 1901, p. 5.

⁴⁴⁸Kasim Kasanga and Nii Ashie Kotey, "*Land Management in Ghana: Building on Tradition and Modernity*," An Article Sponsored by the Department for International Development (DFID), U.K., p.16.

⁴⁴⁹Conversation with Sumani Munja, head of Balum, aged 96, Wa, June 20, 1998.

⁴⁵⁰Conversation with Prof. Kwame Osei Kwarteng, Head of Department of History, University of Cape Coast, aged 55, at his Office, Cape Coast, November 4, 2016.

Ashie Kotey, to remark that, "if one was a 'stranger', such a person must first seek the permission of a chief to settle in the area".⁴⁵¹

Generally, a portion of land was allocated to any prospective person if customary rites were followed. In Asante before a "farmer cultivates a new farm he offers a sacrifice of mashed yam and eggs to the spirit of the earth to assure him of safety and a good harvest whilst he works on the land".⁴⁵² Similarly, when the *Wa tendaana* was to grant land to a developer sacrifices in the form of drinks (especially a local drink called *pito*), fowls and animals (goat, sheep, etc), cowries and or kola nuts were presented to the *tendaana*. Land, as understood by the *tendamba* was a gift from God and first acquired by their ancestors. It was, therefore, freely accessed and not sold, but granted on certain conditions as custom demands. When custom is followed some sort of payment is made to the land - owning authority known as '*Cheuri*' in Waale, meaning "dowry for the land" was made by the applicant before the portion of land was granted for use.⁴⁵³

Waala land tenure system generally follows customary rights and by rough estimates, 99 percent (99%) of the entire land area was either privately or customarily owned. Customary law, according to Paaga, "is the body of rules whose legitimacy is founded on tradition, which generally denotes the idea of a set of norms, values and practices that have been applied from time immemorial

⁴⁵¹Kasanga and Kotey, "*Land Management in Ghana*," p.13.

⁴⁵²Asiama, "Comparative Study of Land Administration Systems". p.5

⁴⁵³Conversation with Boore Jatoo, head of *Kambali*, aged 90, at his *Kambali* residence, May 2, 2015.

in a locality or among a group of people."⁴⁵⁴ The Waala system is built on the *tendaana* who Moutray Read describes as "the priest of the land fetish and owner of the land for the tribe [ethnic group] and is always the biggest power."⁴⁵⁵ Among the Asante "the Asantehene (the overlord of Asante) opined that land in Asante belongs to the Golden Stool with paramount chiefs in possession of portions of the land."⁴⁵⁶ The skin (chief) in Wa does not own land, rather, land distribution was in the hands of the early settlers or indigenes (*tendamba*) who held allodial title to land.⁴⁵⁷ The mechanisms by which families and clans managed land was the use of trees, ponds, anthills and footpaths, especially to demarcate areas in order to reduce disputes and litigations among people.⁴⁵⁸

Generally, land-holding in Wa is male - dominated. Females hold political titles such as '*wuriches*' or '*maakaajias*' at the village, division and paramount levels and yet, as Stiftung observes, "land has long been recognised as key to advancing the socio-economic rights and well-being of women and their position in society. Access, control and ownership of land largely remain in the domain of

⁴⁵⁴Dominic Twobesaane Paaga, "Customary Land Tenure and Its Implications for Land Disputes in Ghana: Cases for Wa, Wechiau and Lambussie," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No.18 (October 2013), p.264.

⁴⁵⁵PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Affairs, 1932, p.5.

⁴⁵⁶Hamidu Ibrahim Baryeh, "Land Management and Tenure Systems in Peri-Urban Areas of Kumasi-Ghana," *Kumasi National Resource Management Research Project Inception Report*, Vol. 2, Part 3 (July 1997), p.2

⁴⁵⁷Interview with Naa Sohengmininye Danyagire Goree II, Chief of Dolimo, aged 72, at his Dolimo palace, 20th January, 2015.

⁴⁵⁸Information from Dawudi Issahaque Fawzy, Secretary (chief Imam's office), aged 66, Wa, 21st January, 2015.

male privileges, enhancing patriarchal structures of power and control over community resources, history, culture and tradition."⁴⁵⁹

Due to the absence of accurate land policy guidelines, Alhassan and Manuh note that, "from 1878 to 1910, the British Governors introduced a series of laws called Native Jurisdiction Ordinances which were intended to regulate the powers and authority of indigenous rulers or authorities... and thus, would weaken the authority of the traditional authorities."⁴⁶⁰ The impact of British influence on land will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Economic Developments of the Waala

The indigenous Waala began as agriculturalists and practiced what in the field of agriculture is referred to as the "compound farming system," whereby people weeded and planted around or near their homes. This system was favoured for two advantages. First, because of mistrust or fear of wild animals, people farmed around where they lived. Secondly, the area was still virgin land and people saw no reason for going far into the forest to produce cereal crops and legumes which could be cultivated just within the settlement.

Trade in agricultural products also gradually picked up and led to the opening of weekly markets in Kaleo, Sankana, Charia, Dolimo, Jang (Zang), Mango, Bussie and Tangasia. According to J. I. Reynolds, "the Mango market, which

⁴⁵⁹Henrich Boll Stiftung, 'Perspectives, A Political Analysis and Commentary from Africa on *Women and Land Rights: Questions of Access, Ownership and Control*. (undated), p.5

⁴⁶⁰Osuman Alhassan and Takyiwaa Manuh, "Land Registration in Eastern and Western Regions of Ghana," *Research Report 5*, Russell Press, Nottingham: November, 2005, p.7.

occurred every six days, had become the greatest centre of exchange in the sub-district."⁴⁶¹ Trade development accounted for the growth of the towns in the area. Trading activities were extended to people located along the fringes of the Black Volta and beyond, particularly to Buna and Bundugu in Cote d'Ivoire, which brought the local traders into contact with Mande, Asante and Lobi traders. When this contact exactly began is not yet clear.

Around the beginning of the 17th century many immigrants settled permanently in Wa and that caused its population to increase astronomically. Kwamina. Dickson suggests "a figure not less than 6,000...about three times the size before its (Wa) destruction in the 1880s."⁴⁶² Before then, since people were there to buy trade goods trading was, according to E. W. Bovil,"carried across the Sahara from very early times...to the northern hinterland of the Gold Coast and beyond."⁴⁶³ This was long-distance trade which passed through Wa, and Wa, according to Songsore, "served as the stopping place for most caravans from their journeys to and from the south and trade became the most important source of wealth for the Waala (Waala)."⁴⁶⁴ As a result of this wealth, towards the end of the nineteenth century, many Africans and Europeans vied to capture and control Wa. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

⁴⁶¹PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1 /416, J. I. Reynolds, British Commanding Officer, Monthly Report on Administration: Black Volta District, February, 1901.

⁴⁶² Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*, p.261

⁴⁶³ E. W. Bovil, *The Golden Trade of the Moors*, Oxford, 1958, p.1

⁴⁶⁴Songsore, *Wa as a Growth Centre*, p. 81.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the political, social and economic development of the Waala. In the political domain, their system of governance which earlier scholars described as 'pluratistic authority' was examined. The local polity discussed introduced terms such as *Judaana*, *Jagadaana* and *Yidaana* which earlier scholars like Ivor Wilks, Bin Salih, and J. C. Dougah did not use in their works. Rather, they used the term *tendaana* extensively. Many other institutions developed by the Waala and discussed give the impression that the Waala were advancing politically and socially and these developments attracted people to Wa. Importantly, Wa was advertised to the rest of the World by the activities of its inhabitants and, consequently, from the 1880s, Wa would experience external intrusion by external forces who had come to know about the advantages of controlling such an important town.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STRUGGLE FOR WA, 1880-1898

Introduction

This chapter examines what a Ghanaian scholar, A. A. Iliasu, earlier mentioned as "the present conditions of the country" referring to the social, economic and political situation of the Northern Territories (in the 1880s), now Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana, where the Waala kingdom is found. A critical analyses of Iliasu's opinion informs us that there were:

Widespread fears of poor harvest and attendant famine, the depressed state of trade between the Northern Territories and the Hausa and Mossi states...the permanent appropriation by France and Germany of portions of the major routes...and finally the disintegration of almost all the Centralised States (Mamprugu, Dagomba and Nanumba) as a result of the ravages of Samory, Babatu, Amarlia (Amariya) and other free lancers.⁴⁶⁵

Therefore, the study examines the nature of the challenges the Waala kingdom faced during the period, especially in the nineteenth century. Commenting on the situation in Wa by the 1890s, Phyllis Ferguson and Ivor Wilks noted that: It was different but no less fluid. Since the mid-nineteenth century (c.1850) the state (Wa) had been subjected to external threats of varying degrees. The Waala response to incursions from Gonja to the South had to call on the Asante (c.1860) and the Dagomba in the 1880s for their assistance.⁴⁶⁶ The information about the relationship between the Waala, the Gonja and the Asante,

⁴⁶⁵A. A. Iliasu, "The Establishment of British Administration in Mamprugu, 1898-1937," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol.XV1 (1) (June, 1975), p.1.

⁴⁶⁶Phyllis Ferguson and Ivor Wilks, "Chiefs, Constitutions and the British in Northern Ghana," In *West African Chiefs: Their Changing Status under Colonial rule and Independence*, Ile Ife: University of Ife, 1990, p.330

and with similar other external forces which operated in Wa and its environs, are discussed below in separate paragraphs in turns.

Asante and Gonja influence in Wa

Two Ghanaian Scholars, Adu Boahen and Buah, discussed the influence of Asante in Northern Ghana, from the 1720s. According to Adu Boahen:

During the reign of Opoku Ware (1717-1750), Asante conquered and annexed Tekyiman, Banda, Gyaaman, Gonja and Dagomba. He adds that, the expansion of Asante northwards brought into the union a large number of people who had already been converted to Islam or Mohammedanism. Soon, Mohammedans who were well-educated in the Islamic sciences and in Arabic were employed in the Asantehene's court as private secretaries and civil servants. Koranic schools were also established in Kumasi.⁴⁶⁷

Adu Boahen tended to show that, "the extent of the Asante Empire covered the entire Northern Regions of Ghana and even parts of Burkina Faso found farther north."⁴⁶⁸ Quoting Gonja tradition, Buah indicates that, "when the invading Mande warriors (Gonja) arrived in their present territory in Northern Ghana, they found settlements of the Asante (Akan). These aborigines were subdued."⁴⁶⁹ Again, Buah asserts that, "during the reign of the Asantehene, Opoku Ware I (1720-1750), Dagbon was reduced to being a tributary state of the Asante."⁴⁷⁰ Buah, however, failed to mention how Gonja fared when Asante became involved in the politics of the region.

In fact, Adu Boahen mentions that "by the thirteenth century commercial relations were established by the Akan (which include Asante) with the Mande

⁴⁶⁷ Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, 1966, p.76.

⁴⁶⁸ Boahen, *Topics in West African History, New Edition*, London, Longmans Group Limited, 1986, p. 62.

⁴⁶⁹ Buah, *A History of Ghana*, p.34.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid, p.33.

(now Gonja in Ghana) and Hausa people to the north of lower Niger."⁴⁷¹ The Asante and Gonja may have cooperated far more than they were said to be at war as suggested by Buah and other scholars. This study, therefore examines views by earlier scholars such as Adu Boahen and Buah, as against oral traditions of ethnic groups living along the Black Volta, Gonja as basis for contesting the views of the aforementioned scholars concerning Asante and Gonja relationship.

Generally, most informants contacted doubt the idea of Asantes being aborigines in the present location of Gonja. The general claim was that the ancestors of the Asante were believed to have originated from somewhere farther Northwest of Wa and had no link with the ethnic groups beyond Bamboi, a town near the Black Volta where one can cross to either northern or southern Ghana.⁴⁷² The oral traditions of many Akan groups, agree that "Bono, now in the Brong-Ahafo Region of modern Ghana, emerged as the cradle of the Akan (including Asante), people in present-day Ghana, but there was no mention of any Akan group, particularly Asante, at war with Gonja."⁴⁷³ Rather, Emmanuel Forster Tamakloe indicates that;

When Jakpa resolved on the conquest of Asante (Asante) but being told that the Asante were anthropophagi, and owing to the fatigue of war which caused his principal men to murmur, he desisted from the horrible attempt. However, after a time, despite the warning given him, he crossed the Volta in the direction of *Yegi (Yeji)* to *Brumase (Aburmase)* and there, he encountered the Asante. A formidable battle took place in which Jakpa was mortally wounded and carried to '*Suruminchu*', the place now named '*Buipe*' in Northern Ghana, where he breathed his last.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷¹Adu Boahen, "The Rise of the Akan", In *The Middle Age of African History*, London, Oxford University Press, 1967. p. 21

⁴⁷² Information gathered in conversation with Prof. G. B. Der concerning Asante relations with Northern Ghana, February 10, 2014

⁴⁷³Buah, *A History of Ghana*, p.9.

⁴⁷⁴Tamakloe, *A. Brief History of the Dagbamba People*, p.25.

Among the Gonja, "the word '*Aburmase*' (town) above is read as '*ibur muase*' meaning the place of paralysis, and which meant all the Gonja lost their spirits when their superior died."⁴⁷⁵

After the interment of Jakpa, "it was decided that a prince or chief who has a large household and plenty of followers should be his (Jakpa's) successor. The Chief of Kungu (Kung) a division of Gonja was accordingly elected."⁴⁷⁶ The descendants of Kung chiefs, whose ancestors were the pioneer occupants of the Yagbon skin, have also dismissed the idea of Asante defeating Gonja. They rather indicate that when Gonja wanted to expand southwards, the Mo and Brong (Bono) states were first attacked. The Asante came to the aid of the Mo and Brongs and during one encounter Asante captured 500 Gonja fighters most of whom came from Kung. In order to ransom the captured Gonja fighters Gonja pledged to compensate Asante for ten years with an unspecified number of enslaved people, animals and quantities of food items after which the captives were set free.⁴⁷⁷

When this happened is not exactly known, but Adu Boahen indicates that, "between 1722 and 1745 Takyiman, Gyaman, Gonja and Dagomba to the north and north-west were vanquished."⁴⁷⁸ This assertion is what some historians base on and claim that Asante had conquered Gonja. During discussions with Benedict Gordon Der, a Professor of history in the University of Cape Coast on

⁴⁷⁵ *Jakpa Magazine*, (2014), p.25

⁴⁷⁶ Tamakloe, A. *Brief History of the Dagbamba People*, p.25.

⁴⁷⁷ Information gathered in conversation with some Gonja Chiefs at Damongo (capital) and seat of Yagbum-wura (ParamountChief) in the Northern Region of Ghana, particularly Kuojo Mantana (Chief of Kungfal or Kungfalwura), Damongo, 28th April, 2014.

⁴⁷⁸ Boahen, "The Rise of the Akan," 1967, p. 24

aspects of the history of Wa, the idea that Asante ever annexed Gonja came up and was dismissed by him as incorrect. That, there was no evidence of the *Waala* ever asking for Asante's military assistance to assist Wa against any group. Rather the Asante traders were found trading with the *Waala* and their neighbours.⁴⁷⁹

What was also clear was that the *Waala* and the *Gonja* had long-standing good relationship which none would want to damage. In fact, a British colonial report suggests that, "Waala and Gonja are related. The *Wa-naa* is a man of Ndewura Jakpa (the founder of Gonja), who divided land between the *Wa-naa* and Kung-Wura (chief of Kung in Gonjaland) and the boundary was set at the swamp lying just north of Nyoli", a village twenty- one kilometres south of Wa.⁴⁸⁰

From discussions so far, Asante and Gonja involvement in *Waala* affairs is assessed in two ways. First, concerning Asante conquering Gonja, it is debatable since most respondents dismissed it as unfounded. Secondly, Gonja occupation of the *Waala* kingdom was found to be credible to a larger extent. This assertion is made on the strength that, in most communities (towns or villages) in the *Waala* kingdom one section of the people traced their origins to Gonja. Gonja citizens are permanently settled in parts of the *Waala* kingdom namely *Daanko, Sing, Boli, Kolikpong, Jeyeri, Kandia (Kande), Biihe, Jonga, Jonga-Tabiahe and Tanina* (sections on the outskirts of Wa) and *Ma-ngo, Jabago, Dograyiri, Konta, Sambo and Kpaninooyiri* (sections in Wa town).⁴⁸¹ Apart from the Gonja, people who came to be involved in the affairs of Wa are Zabarima, the Diula (Dyula)

⁴⁷⁹Conversation with Prof. G. B. Der, Department of History, University of Cape Coast, at his Office, February 20, 2014.

⁴⁸⁰PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/1/100, *Waala-Gonja Boundary Disputes*, 1927

⁴⁸¹*Ibid.*

clan of the Mandinka ethnic group, the French, the Germans and the British. Their activities are discussed in turns below.

The Zabarima

The Zabarima, "an ethnic group from the east bank of the Niger (river) beyond Sey (town) in the east", 192 kilometres to Wa, were the first organised external people to meddle in the affairs of the Waala.⁴⁸² According to J. J. Holden, "they (Zabarima) came from a sparsely cultivated area Southeast of Niamey (capital of Niger) and East of the Niger...through Dagomba (Dagbon) as traders, mercenaries or Malams, perhaps as all the three, to Wa."⁴⁸³ The time the Zabarima arrived in Wa and the territory they occupied are not clear because no ethnic group mentioned them in their traditions. However, Holden indicates that, the Zabarima controlled "an area stretching from Ougadougou (or Wagadugu, in Burkina Faso) to Wa."⁴⁸⁴

If so, in this location the Zabarima organised themselves into three operation camps stationed at different locations and were, according to Benedict G. Der, "coordinated by one Alfa Hano daa Tadano who for four to five years was in charge of operations in Grunshi",⁴⁸⁵ a term derived from "the Sonrai word Grunga meaning a fetish".⁴⁸⁶ A second Zabarima group headed by one Isaka

⁴⁸²J. J. Holden, "The Zabarima Conquest of North-West Ghana," Part 1, In *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. VIII (1965), p.60.

⁴⁸³Ibid.

⁴⁸⁴Ibid, p. 73.

⁴⁸⁵Benedict G. Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p.20.

⁴⁸⁶Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Tamale, NRG 8/2/217, M. M. Read's *Memorandum on the North-West Province*, 1913, p.14.

Karaga dan Aljima operated in the Mossi state.⁴⁸⁷ The third group, paraphrasing Der, was under one Alfa Gazare daa Mahama who was assisted by one Mahama daa Issa, publicly called Babatu, and whose group camped at Kasana, [a village approxi; 22 kilometres north-east of Tumu], and from where they staged several operations raiding Sissala (in the Upper West Region) and Grunshi, Kasena, Kanjaga and Builsa areas (in the Upper East Region).⁴⁸⁸

The Zabarima raided communities due to economic and political reasons. Der indicates that, by "1885 Gazare had died and Babatu, a more ruthless and notorious slave raider, succeeded to the Zabarima leadership and extended raids to Frafra and Tallensi towns in the Upper East Region and the Dagara and Waala areas in the Upper West Region."⁴⁸⁹ Quoting Nehemia Levtzion, Der asserts that, "disputed succession to chiefship among rival claimants often gave rise to the Zabarima intervention in most local politics through invitation from the contestants to the chiefship."⁴⁹⁰ Another reason of a royal lineage like that of Wa was to expand their territory by conquering and incorporating communities dotted in the region into their kingdom.

The Waala therefore sought for and collaborated with the Zabarima to attack Dagaaba and Sissala communities. Dougah notes that the first town attacked was "Charia, a community located five miles (eight km) to the west of Wa and when Chief Gbane (Chief of Kaleo) interceded for them, Wa

⁴⁸⁷ Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p.31.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid, p.20

⁴⁸⁹ Der, "Traditional Political Systems in Northern Ghana Reconsidered," In Yakubu Saaka (ed.) *Regionalism and Public Policy in Northern Ghana: Society and Politics in Africa*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc; New York, 2007, p.39

⁴⁹⁰ Der, "Traditional Political Systems in Northern Ghana: Reconsidered," p.39.

withdrew."⁴⁹¹ Then, Wa accused the Papu people of murdering one Abu from *Yijihe* (*Nabihe* principal gate) and Yimuaha, a slave belonging to the head of *Suuriyiri* (a section in Wa). To avenge the death of Abu without Kaleo interceding, the "*Wa-naa* gave Gbane 12 shillings and 500 cowries...and upon receiving the gifts the Kaleo *Naa* pledged not to intercede for Papu. Therefore, Papu was defeated and a lot of its people captured and sold into slavery."⁴⁹²

Having enjoyed the cooperation of the Kaleo-naa and the assistance of Baajoore who was deceitful and described as "by nature a recreant, outwardly intrepid but inwardly pusillanimous", in defeating Papu the Wa-naa employed Baajoore as his commander and chief advisor.⁴⁹³ In 1883, Wa attacked Kanyini, a village fourteen kilometres northeast of Wa for the murder of two Waala princes (Janguna and Abudu Maraa). The chief of Kaleo advised the *Wa-naa* against his action but failed to stop him from invading Kanyini.⁴⁹⁴

Frequent Waala and Zabarima attacks on the Dagaaba and Sissala forced them to take steps to defend themselves and *Dagao*, the Dagaaba territory. Village members in the night slept on top of their roofs to watch and escape from invaders. As Ferguson and Wilks note, "the village architecture was adopted to withstand sieges...the Sissala and Awurea village architecture had the appearance of a miniature fortress."⁴⁹⁵ Throughout North-west Ghana the type of building illustrated on page 49 was built in all communities because of its numerous advantages pointed out already in this study. Energetic young men were also

⁴⁹¹Ibid.

⁴⁹²Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.20.

⁴⁹³Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵Ferguson and Wilks, "The Mossi and Akan States, 1000-1800," p. 345.

organised to play 'watch dog' roles and they signaled to community members when an enemy, either human or wild animal - hyenas, lions, leopards, etc - approached. Local warlords: *Mogila* of Ma-ngo, *Wao* (Wɔɔ) of Fian, *Sandao* of Kaleo and *Tanjia* of Gwollu, also organised in the defence of their communities. To protect his people, "at Gwalo (Gwollu) the chief, Tengie (Tanjia), had outer and inner walls built around the town."⁴⁹⁶ .

The main reason behind the frequent Waala attacks on the Dagaaba was simple. The Waala Princely Class generally claims that they shared a boundary with the Sissala of Lambussie and Tumu. Hence, the Waala wanted to subdue territories from Lambussie which were purported to be part of their kingdom but settled by Dagaaba and the Sissala at Finsi and Kunduugu.⁴⁹⁷ The Waala Princely Class believed that its authority and influence would be felt if they conquered lands by themselves. They would also impose chiefs on the communities brought under their control. This has not been the case of 'chiefship' in Wa and was their aim.

Wa was not a conquered state and the chiefship was ceded to the '*Nabiihe*' by the Tendaana, the Widaana of Suuriyiri. In this position the Wa ruling class felt they commanded no authority and hoped to reverse the trend by defeating and incorporating Dagaaba communities into their kingdom. If this were to be achieved, the *Nabiihe* (princes and princesses) would be made '*namine*' (chiefs) and '*wurikyehi*' (queen-mothers) in Dagaaba communities. That would mean the *Nabie* would have authority and power over the Dagaaba and their land, their

⁴⁹⁶Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p.21.

⁴⁹⁷Information obtained through interviews from Naa Seidu Mumuni, *Kparoo-naa*, aged 95, at his Gombiiliimuni residence, Wa, May 23, 1998. Knowledgeable individuals among Waala, Sissala and Dagaaba were also interviewed during my field trips to gather data from 1st January to 31st December, 2014.

most important economic resource. As a result to every *Nabie*, their purpose in Wa was, as Mahama puts it, a "fait accompli", meaning "an accomplished task."⁴⁹⁸

To achieve this, the Waala invited Babatu to assist them to conquer the Dagaaba and promised Babatu "100 slaves, 100 horses, 100 cows, 100 sheep, 100 goats and 100 fowls if he supported the Waala to defeat the Manyala," who are the people of *Issa*, *Wogu*, *Tabeasi (Tabeehe)*, *Sajia (Sajiyε)*, *Kajokperi*, and *Kpare*.⁴⁹⁹ The Waala and Prince Baajoore, in particular, did not know that Babatu had a long standing objective to capture Wa and make it a new headquarters because of its abundance of food, lucrative trade and increasing population which, in particular, would serve as a source of recruitment of 'strong men' into his (Babatu) army and also when the need arose the weak men, women and children would be sold or exchanged for goods.⁵⁰⁰

Oblivious to Samori's intentions, Der notes, "the Waala in 1887 attacked the Dagaaba in collaboration with Babatu. The villages attacked were Issa, Wogu, 'Busie, Sabuli and Mwankuri (the Manyala)."⁵⁰¹ The *Manyala* claim they "originated from Kung, a Gonja divisional town located east of Tuna (town) on the Wa-Kumasi trunk road but have turned Dagaaba and speak Dagaare."⁵⁰² All Dagaaba communities led by Kaleo and Sankana supported the Manyala and, in a very long battle between the forces of the *Wa-naa (Nabiihe and Balumee)* and the forces of the Dagaaba (*Ma-ngo, Kambale, Sambo, Aaaheyao, Gbegeroo, Jingo,*

⁴⁹⁸Mahama, *Wa under the British Colonial Rule*, p.41.

⁴⁹⁹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.22.

⁵⁰⁰Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*: p.116.

⁵⁰¹Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p.21.

⁵⁰²Tuurey, *An Introduction to the Mole-Speaking Community*, p. 26.

Loho, Charia, Sankana, Papu, Goli, Nator, Gbankor, Takpo and Kaleo communities), Wa was defeated.

The consequences of the Waala-Dagaaba encounter were very disastrous for the Waala. Sections of the *Nabiihe* and *Balume* left Wa for *Wechiau and Dolimo* areas (in Ghana) and across the Black Volta to *Bouna and Bundugu* (in Cote d'Ivoire) for safety.⁵⁰³ This happened, as explained from research interviews conducted with knowledgeable Waala and Dagaaba individuals, before the Waala-Dagaaba Sankana encounter in 1887. Specifically, as Dougah asserts, they (Dagaaba) defeated "the Waala-Zabarima forces in 1887 around *Lanfiatuhe, Bajuriyiri and Narrow (Noooro)*," towns found between 18 to 24 kilometres north of Wa.⁵⁰⁴ This defeat was disastrous for all the combatants-the Dagaaba, Waala, Zabarima and their supporters. For instance, Dougah indicated that:

In the middle of the fight, a section of the Waala army conscripted from Bulenga and its surrounding villages marched bravely into the river called *Kpankparibiri* to meet Babatu's forces. The enemy charged bravely on them and none escaped. When Bajuri saw that the tide of success was turning against him, he escaped leaving his army at the mercy of the enemy. Many were captured and made slaves...and Bajuri was known to have died in Jentilipe, a Gonja village, where he was buried and his grave can still be seen by the road side.⁵⁰⁵

Many Waala escaped to Kintampo, Bamboi Bundugu and Bouna. Interestingly, the Waala call the head of the family who returned from Bouna to *Wa Bounaalo*,

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴ Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.23

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid, p.24.

(chief) has a hand in land issues. What pertains among the Waala regarding land management is similar to what Benjamin Kunbour suggests exists among the *Dagara* in *Dagao*, where "the ultimate control over land and its resources may rest in the hands of interests lying outside these communities."⁵¹⁰ The *Dagara* land system also applies to the *Tendamba* of Wa. It is but a complex practice and that would be difficult to change in future even though the (*Tendamba*) wishfully thinks so. Similar thoughts about taking back the land their ancestors gave out to some ethnic groups, which they think was not properly done, harboured by some families of the *Tendamba* did not create a healthy environment and communities hitherto united have been at variance.

The people in Wa were still pondering over their defeat at Sankana by the Dagaaba when Babatu demanded from the Waala the 'promise' the two agreed upon if he (Babatu) assisted the Waala in the war against the Dagaaba. Babatu's request was received by the Waala with mixed feelings. Their reason was that even though they lost the war and suffered greatly yet Babatu wanted his payment for the cost incurred. The Waala bravely told Babatu that the task was not achieved; therefore he deserved 'no payment'. This did not go down well with Babatu who, at that moment, was helpless and could not fight against Wa. In annoyance Babatu and his Zabarima force, that came to Wa in "1883 to 1888", left Wa to Kassana, his camp near Tumu in the east.⁵¹¹ Thus, the long-standing friendship between the Zabarima and the Waala was severed.

⁵¹⁰ Benjamin Bewa-Nyog Kunbour, *Decentralisation and Land Administration in the Upper West Region of Ghana; A Spatial Exploration of Law in Development*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Warwick, August, 2000, p. 9.

⁵¹¹ Ferguson and Wilks, *Chiefs, Constitutions and the British in Northern Ghana*, p.330

Babatu's Relations with the Grunshi

From the works of scholars such as Ivor Wilks, Phyllis Ferguson, J. J. Holden, Adu Boahen, J. C. Dougah, B. G. Der, and Bin Salih, the general impression created was that after the Dagaaba defeated the Zabarima in 1887, Babatu returned to Kassena (near Tumu), one of his headquarters, to develop his future plans. These plans were basically attacks on Wa and Grunshi.

Babatu turned first against the Grunshi where many Waala had relocated in order to weaken the Waala, and that would also serve as his reward for the cost the Zabarima incurred during the battle at Sankana against the Dagaaba in 1887. In 1888, B. D. Der states that, "in a series of engagements between the two (Amariya and Babatu) ended in a military deadlock and even an attempted arbitration by Sarantieni Mori (son of Samori, another slave raider) failed."⁵¹²

Information about Samori Toure was found in a British colonial report that "trade between Kintampo and the western countries [referring to the Wa area and beyond] was being diverted by Samory to Wenchi, a town between Kintampo and Bontuku (Bundugu)."⁵¹³ This, in the opinion of Der, was incorrect. According to Der, "from all available pieces of information examined the earliest indications of Samori's designs in connection with North-West Ghana were in December 1896."⁵¹⁴ Thus, Samori and his agents were not yet directly involved in events in the Northwest, particularly in the Wa area, but from 1896. Der, from oral data

⁵¹²Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p. 23.

⁵¹³PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/28 Statement made during the Delimitation of Boundaries under the Anglo-French Convention, 14th June, 1898.

⁵¹⁴Benedict G Der, 'Samori's Relations with North-West Ghana, 1892-1898': A Seminar Paper, 1998, p.2.

gathered during field trips for data might have also gotten the fact on Samori's operations in the Wa area wrong.

Waala and Dagaaba oral traditions assert that, gangs of raiders, purported to be coming from the south-west, that is Samori's camp at Bole, continuously attacked communities near Wa.⁵¹⁵ As a result of the activities of the Zabarima and Samori, "slave trading became more intense particularly in the latter part of the nineteenth century."⁵¹⁶

As already mentioned, in the early nineteenth century one of the main desires of all European nations trading in parts of Africa was to do away with slave trade as it disturbed their trading activities. The 1890s also fell within the era during which European nations were intensely involved in the "scramble for parts of Africa."⁵¹⁷ [Hence any thing that would stand in the way of, or, hinder, European interests would be crushed]. The activities of both Europeans and Africans in Wa are discussed below in turns.

Europeans and Africans vie for Northwest Ghana

The interest of European powers and their involvement in African affairs officially began in a more organised fashion in the nineteenth century. In fact, according to Moutray Read, "during the first few years of the 19th century the activities of the European powers, particularly, Great Britain, France and Germany, had increased throughout Africa and in no part of the continent has it

⁵¹⁵Conversation with K.O Suglo, a retired Civil Servant, aged 75, Daffiama, 17th May, 1998.

⁵¹⁶Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, pp.20-26.

⁵¹⁷Boahen, *Topics in West African History* pp.117-122.

been more evident than in those countries lying to the west of the middle and lower Niger."⁵¹⁸ This area include Wa where European nations from the 1890s sponsored explorers and researchers to study and report on the economic and socio-political life of the people. Quoting Ladouceur, "a German explorer, Dr. G. A. Krause, travelled from Accra to Salaga and northwards to Ougadougou. In 1888 the French explorer, Louis-Gustave Binger passed through Mamprusi, Karaga, Salaga and Kintampo on his way from Bamako in the Niger River bend to Bassam on the Gulf of Guinea."⁵¹⁹ The outcome of their research report pushed Germany, France and Britain to immediately dispatch missions into Northwestern Ghana to solicit the friendship of Chiefs and their people.

First British Mission to Northwest Ghana, 1892

On 17th March 1892, the British Representative of the Chamber of Commerce (in London) instructed Lord Knustford (Secretary of State for the Colonies) to communicate with the British Foreign Office (in Accra, Ghana) as to "the possibility of securing the territory behind the Gold Coast up to the Niger."⁵²⁰ The territory earmarked for appropriation was later referred to as the Northern Territories, now Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions, of Ghana.

Following this instruction on 5th April, 1892 a telegraphic message further instructed the Governor, Sir William Bradford Griffiths, in Accra "to take steps to establish British influence over the hinterland of the Gold Coast beyond Asante

⁵¹⁸PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/28, Delimitation of Boundaries under the Anglo-French Convention, 14th June, 1898.

⁵¹⁹Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politician*, p.89.

⁵²⁰PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15 Correspondence in respect of the Mission of Mr. George Ekem Ferguson into the Hinterland of the Gold Coast Colony, 1892.

(referring to the same Northern Territories); convey instructions for the dispatch of an officer to conclude treaties with the natives and the officer to be sent should be warned accordingly."⁵²¹ This was a caution regarding what was referred to as the "conditions in the country," meaning the "the socio-politically difficult situation" in the region and the officer to be assigned was to be knowledgeable in global politics on Africa at the time.

Among all British agents (both Europeans and Africans) George Ekem Ferguson, was appointed and instructed to "secure the territory beyond Asante." Specifically, Ferguson's task was to sign treaties with ethnic groups found settled after crossing the Black Volta at Bamboi town and stretching to the North, East and West of the Northern Territories. Broadly, three specific assignments were given to Ferguson: to secure with the 'Native Chiefs' treaties of friendship particularly with the chiefs of Bole, Bona, Bontuku (Bundugu) and Wa and incorporate them (states listed above) into the British sphere of influence; to prevent the French from closing the communications between the Gold Coast Colony and the Territories lying to the North of the Neutral Zone or to forestall French encroachment to these regions; and to secure the predominance of British trade in the interior."⁵²²

In other words, Ferguson was to secure the territory as far as to the Niger, which is the natural boundary to the north of the ninth parallel North Latitude, as the British sphere of influence, sign treaties with Chiefs of territories not occupied

⁵²¹Ibid.

⁵²²PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15 Correspondence in respect of the Mission of Mr. George Ekem Ferguson into the Hinterland of the Gold Coast Colony; Enclosure 2, in No.1, A telegram Message from Foreign Office (London) to Sir William Bradford Griffith Governor of the Gold Coast Colony, Dated 5th April 1892.

by any other European power, and that the territories should be protected from the encroachment of foreign governments but outside the "Neutral Zone." The Neutral Zone was:

The area bounded to "the North by the 10th North Latitude, South by the 8^o 8' North Latitude, at the Western boundary along Longitude 1^o31'30" West; Eastern boundary does not appear to follow a line of Longitude but a line from Longitude 0^o21'East on the 8th boundary to 0^o15'30" on the 10th parallel.⁵²³

Having received and grasped the instructions well, on 29th April, 1892 Ferguson left Aburi, in the Eastern region of Ghana, for the North.⁵²⁴ On 9th May, 1892, Ferguson reached Baule (Bole) town, an important trade centre at where:

The caravan trade routes from Bontuku (Bundugu) and Kong (in Cote d'Ivoire) met, where a treaty was signed with the Chief of Bole (name unknown). From Bole, Ferguson asked for people to guide him to proceed to Wa but the Chief of Bole objected to this request and rather advised Ferguson to divert to Daboya, a Gonja town noted for the production and supply of salt.⁵²⁵

Finding that "by pressing the matter for guides to go to Wa and Bona was injudicious to the object, Ferguson accepted the guide to go to Daboya proposing to proceed to Wa from Daboya, if possible."⁵²⁶ The Chief of Bole's reason for not assisting Ferguson was the claim at the time that:

Wa was under them (Bole). That Gardiari came to attack Wa and we (Bole people) fought against him (Gardiari) and it (Wa) was given over to us (Bole) by Gardiari and the people of Wa themselves asked us (Bole people) to become their protectors. The King of Wa gives us (Bole people)

⁵²³Bening, "The Definition of International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 188-1904," p.234.

⁵²⁴PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20 African West Enclosure 1 in No. 38, 1892

⁵²⁵Ibid.

⁵²⁶Ibid.

presents every year for this consideration. So we (Bole people) cannot allow you (Ferguson) to go to Wa.⁵²⁷

The authorities in Wa acknowledged that fact and:

They remained under Baule (people) until after the time that Gardiari invaded Wa in 1888. The Baules on that occasion sent a handful of men to help Wa. Upon receiving messages that Baule people's hidden intention was, afterwards, to sell 'natives' of Wa as slaves their offer was turned down. Since then, notwithstanding the claims of Baule the people of Wa have succeeded in maintaining their independence of Baule.⁵²⁸

Unable to reach Wa, Lobi and Bona (Gbona), Ferguson was reliably

informed by traders, travellers and acquaintances that, "Lobi was an independent state ... rich in alluvial deposits of gold and Wa was a large Dargarti (Dagaaba) town with a Mussulemen (Muslim) population, where trade routes from Bole, Bona, Lokosu and Daboya converge."⁵²⁹

On 20th October, 1892 Ferguson reached Daboya where he held 'palaver' (forum) with the chief and people. The Chief of Wasipe (stationed at Daboya), "the overlord of that traditional area signed a 'Treaty of Friendship' with the British Government on behalf of *Wallembelle, Sabule, Du, Hallembewale* (towns in the Upper West Region) and Yagaba (town in the Northern Region of Ghana)."⁵³⁰

On 25 October, 1892, Ferguson reached Dagbon and reported about "the refusal of the King of Dagomba (an astute and a crafty king) to afford him the

⁵²⁷PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/6 Report on Wa District, Mr. Ferguson to Governor Sir William Bradford Griffith, November 18, 1892.

⁵²⁸PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/49 Captain Eyre Smith's Memorandum on Native Administration, Northern Territories, Case No.1265/98.

⁵²⁹PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15 Correspondence in respect of the Mission of: Mr. George Ekem Ferguson into the Hinterland, 25th October, 1892.

⁵³⁰PRAAD), Accra MFA 4/15, Correspondence Respecting the Mission of: Mr.G. E. Ferguson into the Hinterland in Enclosure 1 No. 39 1892, p.35.

assistance of a messenger to guide and introduce him to the King of Gambaga."⁵³¹ This attitude of refusing to support Ferguson with guides by centralised states like Baule, now Bole (Gonja) and Dagomba, signified that the chiefs and their local people were not in the position to accept the British offer of 'friendship and protection'.

Similarly, Der asserts that, "there was resistance on the part of the inhabitants of these areas to British occupation and, in some cases, as among the Dagara, Kassena and Tallensi, pitched battles were fought between British columns and the local people."⁵³²

Babatu Returns to Wa, 1892

In October 1892 a skeletal British contingent left Wa for Accra, and Babatu who had camped near Tumu in the east of Wa, then began his operations towards Wa. Earlier, the activities of Babatu before 1892 were discussed and it came to light that the series of encounters between Babatu and Amariya "came to a deadlock." This meant Babatu had to devise new ways to survive. A method Babatu adopted was to establish strong ties with powerful chiefs or communities either through friendship or marriage to win their favour and assistance in future battles with any group. In societies where there were persistent dynastic disputes, Babatu and his forces were also readily available for the highest bidder. If a territory was found to be economically viable such an area was to be attacked and possibly annexed. In the 1880s Baajoore, a Waala prince and trader, became

⁵³¹PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15 Report, Mr. George Ekem Ferguson to Governor Sir W. B. Griffith, 8th November, 1892.

⁵³²Der, "The Traditional Political Systems in Northern Ghana Rediscovered," p.38

Babatu's friend. Babatu also married the daughter of the Yagbumwura, the Gonja Paramount Chief, and that won him the support of the latter's sub-chiefs.⁵³³

The objectives enumerated above guided Babatu and all Zabarima in their respective camps as to where, how and when to attack a community. These designs were perhaps, due to the mere presence and criss-crossing of the whole of Northern Ghana by agents of European powers which put fear into Babatu to temporarily suspend attacks on communities and study the political situation. His fears were compounded by an old rumour spreading throughout the region suggesting that some light-skinned people will appear one day and devour every life.

Relating with the experience of some early missionaries, McCoy indicated that, "even the children remained aloof in the beginning, warned no doubt by their elders to beware of the suspicious-looking foreigners."⁵³⁴ [This statement was, perhaps, referring to Europeans who were then present in the region.]. From October 1892 onwards such fearful stories heard daily in the region created panic and fear destabilising families and organised groups. Even the Zabarima, not comfortable with the stories, suspended their activities throughout 1893 and 1894.⁵³⁵ In other words, the Zabarima wanted to assess the situation regarding European intrusion.

⁵³³Information gathered from conversation with:

>Mantana Kuojo, Chief of Kunfale in Gonjaland, aged 90, Kung, January 2, 2015

>Mumuni Seidu Kparoo-naa, Chief, aged 85, Gombiliimuni (Wa), May 23, 1998

>Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 80, Takpo, May 2, 2015.

⁵³⁴McCoy, *Great Things Happen*, p.30

⁵³⁵This assertion is made because from available documents examined nothing was mentioned about the Zabarima operations in 1893 and 1894.

The French Move to Wa

As far back as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries European traders - Portuguese, Dutch, Swedes, English, and Danes - were trading along the coast of West Africa, and the French along the coast of Senegal. It is also on record that in the nineteenth century, there was an industrial expansion on manufacturing in European countries which created awareness, a desire and an interest of European Governments to look for markets outside Europe.

To achieve this, an idea was first put forward by Jules Ferry, the French Prime Minister, who urged the French government to understand that, "the greatness of a country rested on its economic strength."⁵³⁶ This implied that France would be great if she "acquired colonies, where she could buy in the cheapest markets and sell her manufactures there at high prices."⁵³⁷ After France was defeated in the war of 1870/1871 by Prussia, France became all the more aggressive later and strove with England to acquire as much of the African continent as it could."⁵³⁸ In addition to the above, Ferry's government was voted out of power in 1885 and that temporarily buried the idea of aggressive colonisation. But later, governments would become very active in the scramble for colonies in Africa.⁵³⁹

In the last ten years of the 19th century European industrial manufactures expanded and the desire to sell their products led to intensive competition among

⁵³⁶J. B. Webster et. al., *The Growth of African Civilization*: p.268.

⁵³⁷Ibid; See also Boahen, *Topics in West Africa History*.

⁵³⁸Prosser Gifford & W. M. Roger Louis (eds.), *France and Britain in Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971; G. N. Sanderson, *England and Europe and the Upper Nile, 1882-1889*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1965.

⁵³⁹Ibid., Gifford & Roger Louis (eds.), *France and Britain in Africa*. See also Sanderson, *England and Europe and the Upper Nile, 1882-1889*.

European powers for colonies in Africa. Webster and others mention that, "the French began to acquire large territories in the Senegal," which formed the stepping-stone to further colonisation in West Africa.⁵⁴⁰ Hence, like Britain which appointed Sir William Bradford Griffiths as Governor to administer British colonial interest in the Gold Coast (Ghana), France also "appointed Faidherbe as the Governor for the French settlements along the coast of the Senegal."⁵⁴¹

The main assignment for Faidherbe was "to ensure co-operation with a powerful African state in the interest of commerce but determined that the Tokolor Empire should not extend her influence to the coast whereby al-Hajj Umar would dictate to the tiny French settlement."⁵⁴² Faidherbe's implementation of French colonial policy and the determination not to allow al-Hajj Umar to extend his authority towards the coast led to conflicts between France and the Tokolor Empire from 1881 to 1888 leading to the weakening of the strength and loss of much of Tokolor territory.⁵⁴³

Therefore, in order to regain his authority and independence, al-Hajj Umar developed a plan to play-off the British against the French by informing the British that the ambition of the French was to conquer the whole of the Sudan. His motive was to deceive the British and court their friendship. Similarly, in 1886 Samori signed the "Treaty of Bisandugu" and ceded his territory north of the river Niger to France in return for 'French friendship'.⁵⁴⁴ Both al-Hajj Umar and

⁵⁴⁰Webster (et.al), *The Growth of African Civilization*: p.268; See also Boahen, *Topics in West Africa History*.

⁵⁴¹Webster et. al., *The Growth of African Civilization*. p. 25

⁵⁴²Ibid. See also Boahen, *Topics in West Africa History*.

⁵⁴³R. Robinson & J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, London: Macmillan, 1963.

⁵⁴⁴Webster et.al., *The Growth of African Civilization*. pp.51 - 53;

Samori failed to understand that France and Britain were two colonialists operating in different territories but had similar objectives.

Second British Mission to Wa, 1894

Reports from traders, explorers and other agents reached British colonial office in London about the designs of al-Hajj Umar and Samori. In response, Great Britain immediately began the necessary preparations for officers to secure territories towards the west of the Neutral Zone. To Britain, "it was very desirable to secure them firmly against any encroachments on the part of the French."⁵⁴⁵ Secondly, in December 1893 it became known to the British Colonial Government in Accra, from pieces of information gathered from traders, travellers and explorers that "German officers were endeavouring or making efforts to establish relations with some African chiefs in territories outside the Neutral Zone."⁵⁴⁶

This was not in line with the terms of the Anglo-German Agreement signed in 1888 between the two countries since the agreement barred both the British and Germans from acquiring territories within the 'Neutral Zone. This information did not also go down well with the British because the presence of the Germans would aggravate the already disturbing situation in the Northern Territories due to French operations in the region. Therefore, the Colonial

See also Boahen, *Topics in West Africa History*.

⁵⁴⁵PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15 African West, Enclosure No.83, 28th February, 1893, p. 112.

⁵⁴⁶Sampson, "George Ekem Ferguson (Born, 1864-1897); As An Explorer," p. 83

Jama, Banda-Nkawnta, Atebubu and Nkoranza, later emerged.⁵⁴⁹ In February 1894, ethnic groups in the East- the Dagomba, Mamprusi and Grunshi - had endorsed "Treaties of Friendship and Freedom of Trade" with Ferguson on behalf of the British Government.⁵⁵⁰ Then, on 30th March, 1894, further treaties were signed with "Bouna (Bona) and Bondugu and Lobi."⁵⁵¹

On 4th May, 1894, Ferguson got to Wa, the capital town of the Waala kingdom, where he "met and addressed a large crowd of Chiefs, Headmen and people in Hausa and Twi (languages which most people there understood). The *Wa-naa* (Seidu Takora), alias *Batakarikese*, a Twi word referring to the *Wa-naa*'s big gown, the Alimani Yamusah (the Yerinaa or the Muslim leader), Jembrugu and Kobitige (the head and deputy of the Tendamba clan respectively), and Adam (the head and chief of the Froko clan) the signatories to the previous treaty were present (See Appendix D).⁵⁵²

Similar treaties were entered into with the Dagarti (Dagaaba) of Kaleo, Sankana, Takpo, Bussie, Daffiama and Issa communities; and the Mamprusi, in the Northern Region of Ghana, which significantly "appear to secure to the British a continuous belt of country around the west and north of the Neutral Zone."⁵⁵³ (Appendix E) These treaties, therefore, would be considered as satisfactory to both the British and the Chiefs and their people because the British had entered into treaties desired and the local inhabitants now lived in a peaceful environment.

⁵⁴⁹PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/27, Monthly Report, Black Volta District, 1904

⁵⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵⁵¹Ibid.

⁵⁵²Ibid.

⁵⁵³PRAAD, Accra MFA 4/16 African West, Report from War Office to Colonial Office, 27th August, 1894.

In November 1894, Ferguson left the north for Accra and there reported that he had "no contact with any European power and no hindrance even from an African power such as al-Hajj Umar and Samori Toure, who, before, claimed jurisdiction over vast territory (which included the Waala kingdom) but warned the British to be wary of the French."⁵⁵⁴

The Second French Mission to Wa, 1895

Various reports from the 1890s studied, suggest that Britain and France were rivalring over territories in Africa, particularly West Africa and the northwest of Ghana, where commercial activities were very intensive and lucrative. Therefore, on 1st January, 1895, the French Government despatched Lieutenant Baud from Ougadougou (Burkina Faso) southwards into Northern Ghana to sign treaties with Chiefs and their people.

Lieutenant Baud and the French column first went to the Grunshi, where a treaty of protection was signed with Amariya (Grunshi leader).⁵⁵⁵ On 30th January, 1895, Lieutenant Baud signed another treaty with the Chief and people of Say, a town farther northeast of Grunshi and on 10th February, with the chief of Malla, an important trade centre found in the northeast which is now located outside Ghana.⁵⁵⁶ From the northeast, Lieutenant Baud passed through Gambaga,

⁵⁵⁴Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, pp. 23-24.

⁵⁵⁵Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p.23; Tamakloe, *A Brief History of Dagomba People*, p.54.

⁵⁵⁶Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, p.24

Nalerigo (in Ghana) and Yagaba (Togo) and later got to Wa (Ghana) on 1st May, 1895.⁵⁵⁷

The places the French agents visited indicates that the 'French plan' was specifically to capture the Northwest and the Northeast (now the Upper West and Upper East Regions) of Ghana. The reason for this is that, "Wa was strategically positioned and crucial in linking French possessions in modern Benin to the east and Cote d'Ivoire to the west."⁵⁵⁸ In fact, if Northwest Ghana became a dominion of France it meant the whole of present-day Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, and about half the area of the Northern Territories of Ghana would have been French colonies, hemming in the small Gold Coast Colony or Southern Ghana. This was in every dimension dangerous because France would appear economically advantaged and politically stronger than the other European powers, specifically Britain.

In Wa, Lieutenant Baud met the Chief (*Wa-naa*, Seidu Takora) and a section of his people. After listening to Lieutenant Baud's message, the *Wa-naa* showed Baud the "Treaty of Friendship and Trade" the Waala already entered into with Ferguson (representing the British). Despite this revelation Baud lured the *Wa-naa* to sign a 'Treaty of Protection' and after that he left for Bouna, where a second French column was stationed.⁵⁵⁹ At Bouna Lieutenant Baud submitted his report to the French Government:

⁵⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁵⁹PRAAD, Accra ADM 56/1/267, Enclosure 1, Report on Wa District by Donald Mackworth, June 6, 1898.

En partant de Oua, la mission Baud se dirigea sur Bouna pour pouvoir delà rejoindre la colonne Monteil. Le 6 Mai 1895, deux jours après avoir quitté Oua, le lieutenants Baud et Wermeersch traversaient la Volta noire et prenaient contact avec les gens de Bouna, Commander Decoeur and Lieutenant Baud.⁵⁶⁰

The interpretation of the above message is:

Upon leaving Ouaga (Wagadugu), the Baud mission moved towards Bouna in order to rejoin the Mountain Province (Colony) from there. Two days later, after leaving Ouaga on the 6th of May, 1895, Lieutenants Baud and Wermeersch crossed the Black Volta and conferred with the people of Bouna.⁵⁶¹

This message prompted the British to speculate about how far the French had moved into the interior and what their intentions were. What was also important for British attention was the report on "treaties of protection" the French signed with the *Wa-naa* and information about the continuous attack on communities in the area by slave raiders whose activities are discussed below.

Samori's Designs for Wa

Paraphrasing Webster, Adu Boahen and Idowu, Samori was a Diula or Dyula trading in gold from Wassulu and cattle from Futa Jalon (along the Senegal and Gambia River basins) and, probably, visited Freetown and the Tokolor Empire. He was not born a Muslim but was converted to the faith under a scholar-chief of Wassulu. By about 1870, with surprising speed, Samori had brought the small Wassulu area, covering 115 square miles (approximately 184 square

⁵⁶⁰PRAAD, Accra MFA 4/17, Further Correspondence, Mr. G. E. Ferguson.

⁵⁶¹Interpretation by Alhaji Seidu Tungbani, a Post-Certificate Graduate Student in French, University of Cape Coast, 6th June, 2014.

kilometres), and the third largest political unit of the Western Sudan, under his authority.⁵⁶²

Specifically, the Mandinka Empire of Samori Toure covered an area in the Western Sudan "bounded on the west by the Futa Jalon, on the south by the forest, on the north by the Tokolor Empire and on the east by the Mossi and Asante kingdoms."⁵⁶³ Acknowledging the existence of Samori Toure's empire, Adu Boahen states that, "Samori Toure defended his huge empire stretching from Boure (Buna) to Northern Ghana from 1891 until 1898."⁵⁶⁴ Similarly, Der notes that:

Recent works on Samori have tended to assume that the boundary and extent of his second empire which lasted from 1892 to 1898 included practically the whole of modern North-West Ghana. A map accompanying one of these treaties shows the Samorian Empire as covering about the entire territory between the Black and White Voltas.⁵⁶⁵

These assertions concerning the empire of Samori Toure are contested by Der as incorrect, which is also my opinion. According to Der, 'the earliest indications of Samori's designs in connection with the North-West of Ghana were in December 1895, and that George Ekem Ferguson who had undertaken two tours of the North in 1892 and 1894 to conclude treaties of Friendship and Commerce with the hinterland chiefs (referred to) made no mention of Samori's activities in his reports to the Governor.'⁵⁶⁶ One report suggests that "in the middle of 1892, as a result of French military pressure Samori Toure commenced the evacuation of his home territory in Wassulu eastwards, and thus, contemplated

⁵⁶²Webster et. al., *The Growth of African Civilization*. p.47.

⁵⁶³Ibid, p. 46.

⁵⁶⁴Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, p.133.

⁵⁶⁵Der, "Samori's Relations with North-West Ghana, 1892-1898," p.1.

⁵⁶⁶Ibid, p. 2

the extension of his influence to the markets of the Black Volta region".⁵⁶⁷ This information does not affirm that Samori captured any area within the Black Volta zone. Rather, there is evidence that Samori sought alliance with the Gyaman, which they rejected and, therefore, he had to move back to Jimini, leaving the conduct of affairs in the Black Volta region in the hands of his son, Sarankye (Sarantieni) Mori.⁵⁶⁸

Waala oral history also indicates that Samori's forces briefly occupied the site on which emerged later towns namely *Yibile, Kadoli, Gogu, Charingo, Gudaayiri, Yaroo, Jonga-Tabiasi, Guonuo, Kataa* and *Kpare*; and in Wa Samorian forces were stationed at the site where Saint Francis Xavier Minor Seminary School is located.⁵⁶⁹ This, perhaps, was what earlier authors misunderstood or misinterpreted and wrote that, "the Samorian Empire covered almost the entire territory between the Black and White Voltas", which include Northwestern Ghana where the Waala kingdom is located.⁵⁷⁰

Babatu and Samori's Joint Operations against the Waala and Dagaaba

Babatu and Samori, in order to achieve their objectives, had to carry out joint raids. Collectively, as Dougah puts it, "the two (Babatu and Samori) agreed to divide the country between them so as not to disturb each other's trade".⁵⁷¹ The area was highly populated and Babatu and Samori felt that if they conquered that territory, it would serve as a reservoir for the supply of logistics and strong or

⁵⁶⁷Wilks's, *Wa and the Waala*. pp.120 - 121.

⁵⁶⁸Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹Interview with knowledgeable individuals, chiefs and clan heads, during field trips to gather data, 1-30 December, 2014.

⁵⁷⁰Der, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, p.23

⁵⁷¹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.22.

energetic men who would be recruited into their army or exchanged for their needs: horses, guns and food.

Therefore, Babatu and Samori who were then based at Kassana and Bole respectively launched sporadic attacks on communities around their locations, particularly people they call their enemies. As earlier discussed, Babatu's aim was to punish the Waala and Grunshi because they raided his people at Issa and Tabeasi. This was also because the Waala failed to honour their promise of defraying the expenses his forces incurred in expeditions on their behalf against the Dagaaba.⁵⁷² Samori on his part wanted to maintain control over the territory between the Black and White Voltas which included Wa.

For the above reasons, Babatu and Samori co-operated to attack and capture the Northwest, particularly '*Dagao*' (Dagaaba land). Unfortunately, this was the era during which Europeans were found in most parts of Africa and were at loggerheads with 'slave raiders'. Hence, Dougah asserts that, "the Northern campaigns of Samori and Babatu stimulated the interest of the English and the French in the whole of the region."⁵⁷³ Therefore, towards the end of the 19th century, the Waala kingdom became the scene of a series of struggles between the forces of Babatu, Samori, the British and the French.

The Struggle for Wa

Five main contestants: two Africans (Zabarima under Babatu and the Mandinka Empire under Samori Toure) and three European nations (France,

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ Ibid, p. 26.

Germany and Britain), from 1896, vied for control of the Waala kingdom. Their activities may tempt one to describe the period from October 1896 to December 1898 as 'very eventful and remarkable' in the history of the kingdom. This assertion is made because since 1896, contestants battled over the control of the kingdom.

Babatu entered the race to capture Wa , because of her "wealth". The Waala owed Babatu and during payment unknowingly exposed their treasury, "a large room full of cowries" but gave a fraction of the treasury to Babatu as payment for assisting the Waala in the 1887 battle against the Dagaaba.⁵⁷⁴ The wealth of Wa gingered Babatu who planned to capture and make Wa his third capital. His first and second capitals were at Sati, (near Navrongo in the Upper East) and Kassena (in the Upper West). If Babatu achieved that, he would control the lucrative trade that passed through Wa. Therefore, Babatu looked for an excuse in order to attack Wa. The pretext used was a case in which a native of Kung called Kanchinaa was murdered by Prince Baajoore of Wa. Babatu was married to a woman from Kung and therefore was a son-in-law to the people of Kung. In defence of Kung, Babatu asked Baajoore to prepare for war.⁵⁷⁵

Wa was attacked in 1896 and, in defence, the *Wa-naa* (Seidu Takora) asked for military assistance from the chief of Kaleo (Naa Gbane).⁵⁷⁶ The request failed because a secret arrangement between the *Wa-naa* and Samori Toure

⁵⁷⁴Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.23

⁵⁷⁵Information from Kuojo Mantana, Chief of Kurfale of the Kung Division in the Northern Region of Ghana, aged 92, Kung, 28th April, 2014.

⁵⁷⁶Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.22

asking the latter for military assistance against the Dagaaba had leaked.⁵⁷⁷ All Dagaaba communities such as *Kambali, Ma-ngo, Charia, Sambɔ, Takpo, Sankana, Sombo, Nadoli, Bussie, Issa, Tabeasi and Kajokperi* and their neighbours, therefore, mobilised in the defence of *Dagao* (Dagaaba land).⁵⁷⁸ To counter this, the princely class of Wa (*Nabiihe*) asked both Babatu and Samori for their military assistance.

Reports indicated that since early 1896, "Samori's forces stationed at Bole (in Ghana) and Dokita (in Cote d'Ivoire) were advancing and attacking communities towards Wa."⁵⁷⁹ Samori's aim was to recapture what he claimed as 'Samorian territory' (already explained). His forces were very active in the area when it was reported that Europeans (Germans, French and British) were operating in parts of the region.

The Germans, as Magnus Sampson puts it, "were endeavouring to establish relations with chiefs in the zone."⁵⁸⁰ However, Germany, from available colonial reports, had earlier signed an agreement known as the "Anglo-German Agreement of 1888."⁶⁰¹ This 'Agreement' prevented Germany from seeking territories Britain had signed treaties with. Hence, there was very little German influence in the area. Rather, it was the French who had remarkable influence in the area. Whilst working on the Volta road survey in October 1895, Ferguson heard that, "the French expedition from Dahomey (Benin) had passed through Borgu (Bawku)

⁵⁷⁷Ibid, pp.20 - 27

⁵⁷⁸This is common knowledge among the Waala and Dagaaba, particularly, from A.Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 80, Takpo, May 2, 2015.

⁵⁷⁹PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/21, Report by Inspector J. H. Cramer to Captain Stewart, Enclosure 2 in No.294, 1897.

⁵⁸⁰PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/17, Further Correspondence, p.36; MFA4/15, Enclosure in No.83, Foreign Office to Colonial Office, February 28, 1893.

and Grunshi to Wa and Bouna. Also, Samory's people had been repulsed at Sankana in Dagarti (Dagao) and so they retired to Baule (Bole) and Wa.⁵⁸¹ This information may have urged the French who were stationed in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) to despatch two columns into the region with instructions to capture Samori, occupy Wa and incorporate the Northwest into French dominion.⁵⁸² In 1896, one French column led by General Chanoine succeeded in signing a treaty of protection with Sibu Napona, a Grunshi known as 'king of Asseydou'.⁵⁸³

The second French column under Captain Hugot went through Leo, a town in Burkina Faso but near Tumu in Ghana, where news got to the French forces that the Sofa, which was the name of Samori's army, had forced the British to evacuate Wa on April 6, 1897. Hugot's forces, already in Duccie, had "driven out Babatu on June 12 and successfully entered Wa, where he renewed 'a treaty of protection' with *Wa-naa* Seidu Takora."⁵⁸⁴ These and similar reports about French activities in the region compelled the British to return to Wa.

On 1st January, 1897, the Governor of the Gold Coast approved instructions to two groups of officers to go on missions to Gambaga, Wa and Bona. Captain Donald Stewart headed the team to Gambaga and Lieutenant Francies B. Henderson and George Ekem Ferguson, accompanied by fifteen guards, were assigned to Wa and Bona. This was the third mission by the British

⁵⁸¹Roger Thomas, 'George Ekem Ferguson: Civil Servant Extraordinary', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. XI11, 11 (1972), p.201.

⁵⁸²PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20, Further Correspondence, Enclosure in No.28; Letter of Mr. Ferguson (Travelling Commissioner) to Sir William Maxwell (Governor, Accra), 1897

⁵⁸³Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*: p.132

⁵⁸⁴Ibid.

intended "to authenticate the earlier Treaties of Friendship and Trade signed in 1892 and 1894 and specifically to re-sign 'Treaties for Protection' with chiefs in the hinterland."⁵⁸⁵

This meant that in 1897 both the French and British were in Wa and, thus, began the race for Northwestern Ghana, particularly Wa. On January 2, 1897, Lieutenant Henderson reported that "the situation here may be summed up in one word 'Samory'. He practically claims the whole country up to the 'Neutral Zone' and I [Henderson] fancy he [Samory] will stick to it. He has made an enormous camp at Baule (Bole) and will, I believe, return there from Bona."⁵⁸⁶ Furthermore, Henderson reported that "the size of his (Samory's) camp is 10-12,000 men. A good part of these will merely be followers or slaves chiefly with Danish guns. He (Samory) has rifles and they are apparently what we (British) gave him (Samory) in Sierra Leone. All that I (Henderson) have seen are something like old Prussian needle-gun and which have the date 1866 marked on the barrel."⁵⁸⁷

Based on these reports, Henderson was "instructed not to proceed to Wa but to communicate with Samory if the opportunity occur and if it can safely be done warn him that he runs risk of fate experienced by Asante [referring to the 1874 war with the British] if he continue to molest friendly 'tribes'. Also, Henderson was to place a small detachment of 'Constabulary' (earlier explained) at once in the principal town in the hinterland with which treaties of friendship have been

⁵⁸⁵PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20 African West No.529, Further Correspondence, Enclosure 2 No.12, Foreign Office to Colonial Office, January 11, 1897.

⁵⁸⁶Ibid, Enclosure in No.52, Report by Henderson to Governor, 1897.

⁵⁸⁷Ibid.

made."⁵⁸⁸ These warning instructions were issued due to information from travellers, traders and colonial agents that the Sofa were "in occupation of Bona, Wa and other places with which the British had signed treaties."⁵⁸⁹ It was also noted that "the Sofa had established relations with the German authorities at Krachi, a town in the Volta Region of modern Ghana, where slaves were openly sold."⁵⁹⁰

Trade in slaves (human beings) was one activity which often destabilised communities and led to the death of people. This trade and the activities of the Sofa also disturbed the trade in goods, for which most Europeans came. A section of the trade in goods conducted along the Black Volta settlements, for instance, was reported as being diverted by the Sofas. Samory was entrenched in the region and, according to Lt. Henderson, "to drive out Samory required 500 men with guns, sufficient food supply to last one week because there was practically nothing between Lawra and Baule and within 15 mile (approx; 24km) radius of Baule (Bole), the key position occupied by Samory."⁵⁹¹ Despite the warnings and challenges enumerated above, Henderson was allocated "50 men under a European officer, 2-seven pounders, 2-rockets and 100 rounds of spare ammunition per man."⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁸PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20 African West No.529, Further Correspondence, Enclosure 2 in No.23, Report Foreign Office to Henderson, January 11, 1897.

⁵⁸⁹Ibid, Enclosure 2 in No.52, Letter Henderson to Governor, Enclosure in No.93; and Letter by F. M. Hodgson (Governor) to Lt. Henderson, Travelling Commissioner, January 2, 1897.

⁵⁹⁰Ibid.

⁵⁹¹Ibid.

⁵⁹²PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20 African West No.529, Further Correspondence, Enclosure 2 in No. 93, letter from Henderson to Governor, 9th February, 1897.

Given this military support, Henderson was partly prepared to face an aggressive group such as the Sofa. Fortunately, news came that the Sofa had been defeated by the Dagaaba at Sankana on 26th December, 1896.⁵⁹³ The news gave Henderson a free passage to Wa on 1st January, 1897. By 7th January, 1897, another message reached the British that Babatu stationed in the northeast of Wa was raiding Bulenga.⁵⁹⁴ Immediately, Henderson despatched a written message to Babatu which informed him that "the king and people of Dagarti were now under the protection of Great Britain and that he must therefore withdraw his forces from their territory and should he refuse to comply he would be obliged to resort to force to compel him to do so."⁵⁹⁵

When Henderson got no reply from Babatu, he "sent Ferguson with 15 Hausa escorts to Bulenga, (approx; 47 km from Wa) to reconnoiter and, if necessary, to see Babatu."⁵⁹⁶ In Bulenga, Ferguson "held a 'palaver' [forum] which was attended by Babatu and all his fighting men (3,000 men, 300 horses) on four clear issues namely: that Dagarti were under British protection; all the adjoining countries were within the sphere of British influence; he (Babatu) was to give up all captives and also acknowledge the independence of Amariya, the Grunshi chief."⁵⁹⁷

Following the directives, Babatu replied that "the people of Wa in conjunction with Amariya had raided his people of Issa and Tabeasi, and that, the

⁵⁹³Ibid. Enclosure 2 in No. 28, Letter of Henderson to the Colonial Secretary, December 13, 1896.

⁵⁹⁴Ibid, Enclosure 2 in No. 95, Letter of Henderson (Wa) to Governor, January 23, 1897.

⁵⁹⁵Ibid. Enclosure 2 in No. 93, Francis B. Henderson's Letter of 9 February, 1897.

⁵⁹⁶Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Accra, MFA 4/20, Enclosure 2 in No. 113, Letter of Henderson to Governor, 28 January, 1897.

⁵⁹⁷Ibid.

him that "Henderson should rather send a message by two soldiers if the mission was a friendly one and two Hausas (names unknown) were sent to Bona."⁶⁰⁴ A third messenger from the Prince called Sidiki arrived from Bona and said that "Henderson should return to Lawra, the British boundary, and wait till he was invited to Bona."⁶⁰⁵ Then, the two Hausas sent to the Prince returned "accompanied by a Priest, Abu Bukari Demba, sent to hear my message as the Prince did not want me (Henderson) to come to Bona".⁶⁰⁶ The reasons for not allowing Henderson to enter Bona were two.

First, "the people of Bona had killed 40 of Sarentieni's people so he had besieged the town to punish them and, [secondly,] that the English had taken merchandise from his traders and, therefore, he did not wish to meet Henderson, an English officer."⁶⁰⁷ Despite the strong warning on 3rd April, 1897, Henderson got to Lobi with 40 men and was attacked by the forces of Sarantieni Mori. The fight continued till 5th April when, probably getting out of supplies, Henderson's forces had "to retreat to Wa with Ferguson badly wounded through a poisonous arrow."⁶⁰⁸ Henderson stayed back with a few escorts and after a long period of "negotiations to visit or not to visit and dialogue with the Prince at Bona rather he was invited to Dokita where he was taken prisoner."⁶⁰⁹ Henderson was interviewed by Bukari Demba, Samori's agent, on three issues: why he had come to Dokita: why he drove the Sofa agent called Ali away from Wa; and why he

⁶⁰⁴Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵Public Records and Archives Administration Department PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20, Enclosure 2 in No. 52, Maxwell to Chamberlain, February 22, 1897.

⁶⁰⁶Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹Ibid.

built a fort in Wa."⁶¹⁰ Henderson's answer was simply "to see the Almamy (meaning the Commander in Chief)."⁶¹¹ Under the situation, Henderson was "advised to apply any means in his power to effect his release and that he should offer 1000 pounds as his ransom which would be paid immediately on his arrival in the fort [at Wa]".⁶¹²

When the British negotiators (Hausa escorts) met with Bukari Demba the additional terms were that "the Almamy orders that none of Henderson's men were to be killed but given to him; the British should evacuate the fort with all baggage and stores; march down to where the Prince was staying [Bona]; lay down their arms and give up everything after which they would be supplied with guides to take them to the coast and that, it was for one to accept or refuse these terms."⁶¹³ As a result of the above ultimatum, Henderson was reported to have remarked, that "the palaver was not good", which meant 'the situation with the Sofa was unbearable'.⁶¹⁴ Later, it was reported that "Henderson had been sent to the coast with a letter to the Governor whilst the Sofa were waiting to see if the roads would be opened."⁶¹⁵

The British officer in charge of affairs at the time, Captain Cramer, reported that "people from neighbouring villages informed him that Samori was

⁶¹⁰PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/21 African West No.538, Further Correspondence: September to December 1897, Enclosure in No.487, W.E. Maxwell to Chamberlain, p.81.

⁶¹¹Ibid; Enclosure in No.538, Report Foreign Office (London) to Colonial Office (Accra).

⁶¹²Ibid.

⁶¹³PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20, African West, in Enclosure 2, No. 294; Further Correspondence: January to August, 1897, Report from Inspector J. H. Cramer to Captain Stewart, p.277.

⁶¹⁴PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/21, African West No.538, Report: Foreign Office (London) to Colonial Office (Accra).

⁶¹⁵PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/20, Enclosure 5 in No. 242, Report by Captain Cramer, April 20, 1897.

coming. The chief of Wa beat his drums to call his men to run away from Samori."⁶¹⁶ In addition, it was reported that "Dr. Kennedy had died of dysentery and was buried within the British Fort built at Wa."⁶¹⁷ This was a big setback to the entire contingent because Kennedy was responsible for their health and wellbeing. Under the circumstances the British were compelled to evacuate from Wa.

Then, Captain Cramer enquired about Ferguson and a runaway carrier answered that they did not see Ferguson. Reports examined confirmed that Ferguson, who was carried in a hammock, was "abandoned by his carriers due to panic as a result of the sporadic firing of guns by the Sofa the night before. Ferguson was found by two Sofas the next morning and he pointed his empty revolver at them. These two men run away and returned with others who shot and killed Ferguson and cut off his head."⁶¹⁸ Ferguson's remaining body was retrieved and buried on 7th April, 1897, by some courageous Waala men who stayed back to defend the town.⁶¹⁹ The news of the death of Ferguson and evacuation of the British from Wa alerted the Dagaaba who, according to Dougah, "came in large numbers and were waiting two miles (four km) North of Wa" [to monitor the situation in Wa and defend Dagao].⁶²⁰

Surprisingly, the Sofa were reported to have withdrawn from Wa due to two reasons - the concentration of the Dagaaba towards Wa and the defeat of

⁶¹⁶Ibid, Enclosure 2 in No. 294, Report from Inspector J. H. Cramer to Captain Stewart.

⁶¹⁷PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/21, African West No.538, p.82.

⁶¹⁸Ibid.

⁶¹⁹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p.27. See also, Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, p.35.

⁶²⁰Ibid.

Babatu-Waala forces - threw fear into the Sofa. Hence the Sofa leadership advised for their temporal withdrawal from Wa. This decision was also because the British had withdrawn from Wa, an action Samori understood as a strategy or ploy to counter the Sofa attacks because it was reported that, "as the British were marching out of Wa the French were entering."⁶²¹

On May 1, 1897, Captain Hugot and Baud, for the second time were back in Wa. This second mission was intended to continue what had been achieved in 1895/96 (already discussed). Immediately, Captain Hugot initiated the process of establishing the French colonial system of Government in the region whilst waiting for fresh orders from the French Colonial Office in Cotonou, capital of Benin. The first step was assigning Colonial Officers to study and assess the local political situation as well as assist the local people to resettle in their respective homes by providing them with their immediate basic needs. This was to atone for the destruction of their territory by raiders.

Therefore, three wells were sited 200 metres away from the *Wa-naa's* palace. One was sited along the Kabanye-Hospital road, another at the current location of the Wa Senior High Technical School, and the third inside the Wa Forest Reserve. The Waala commonly call the French wells '*koowaa*', a word derived from the Hausa language meaning 'public water'. These wells were drilled by the French to provide the inhabitants with good drinking water.⁶²² The provision of such social services by the French and the information received that Babatu had hoisted the English flag prompted the *Wa-naa*, Seidu Takora, to place

⁶²¹Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, p. 27.

⁶²²The word '*koowaa*' is a Hausa word, the general local term people called the French Wells drilled in 1897.

his territory under 'French protection', and this move initiated friction between the *Tendamba* (Landowners) and *Nabiihe* (Royals).⁶²³ They were in this situation when the British mission returned to Wa.

In 1897, both the French and British were found in Wa vying for its possession and incorporation into their respective dominions. Thus, on May 1, 1897 the French mission under Captain Hugot had returned to Wa and information gathered indicates that the French had occupied a place that later developed into a settlement called '*Zongo*', a Hausa word meaning 'settlement for strangers'.⁶²⁴

In October 1897, under Captain D. Mackworth and Assistant-Inspector Herbert John Collent Leland, the British also returned to Wa and camped at a site later named '*Dondoli*', meaning 'an upland area'.⁶²⁵ The study of records of correspondence between the British and French Foreign Offices in London and Paris suggests that messages were exchanged between the British and the French Governments "on the subject of French occupation of Wa."⁶²⁶ Whilst waiting for Orders from the British and French foreign offices, a kind of deadlock ensued between the French and British subjects in Wa.

To break the impasse two meetings were held. One meeting was held with the main traditional authorities: *Wa-naa*, *Tendaana* and six Principal Clan Heads:

⁶²³In conversation with Naa Momori Bondiri 11, *Wa-naa* (1978-1999), aged 80, who was Secretary to the Waala Traditional Council, (1954-1958), at the *Wa-naa*'s palace, May 10, 1998.

⁶²⁴*Ibid.*

⁶²⁵Information from Naa Alexander Widaana, aged 85, Chief of Takpo and a retired civil servant, Takpo, January 1, 2015.

⁶²⁶PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/19, African West, Report on Ferguson's Treaties, Enclosure 1 in No.36, 14th September, 1896.

Yijiihedaana, Puohoyiri, Sokpariyiri, Suuriyiri, Kpagburi and *Yari-Naa* for the *Wa-naa* to prove which of them (British or French) claims jurisdiction over Wa. Waala oral history explains that, *Wa-naa* and *Nabiihe* supported the French. The *Tendaana* and *Yari-Naa* threw their support behind the British. The two entrenched positions nearly divided the town but due to the timely intervention of Colonial Agents, a Waala Public forum was conducted and the large gathering applauded the British.⁶²⁷

The results of the local forum did not stop the French who awaited orders from their Foreign Office in Paris (France) or Cotonou (Benin) concerning a meeting between the Foreign Offices in Paris and London. The commission set up to arbitrate was known as the Anglo-French Convention of June 1898, whereby Anglo meant English, which was mandated to settle the issue of who was for Wa and, according to Bening, "fix by mutual agreement, after examining titles of rights of possession and protection, the most equitable delimitation between their respective possessions in the region as far as to the lower Niger."⁶²⁸ Both the British and the French opened defence in respect of their claims to the area designated the Waala kingdom.

The French were first to put up their defence and brought up five points against the validity of Ferguson's treaties of 1892 and 1894. Paraphrasing available reports, the French asserted that Ferguson's treaties contained clauses not very precise or clear in themselves and pointed to words such as 'Treaties of Friendship' and 'Trade' and argued that those words did not imply that 'the natives

⁶²⁷Wa-naa Momori Bondiri 11, aged 80, at his Wa palace, May 10 1998

⁶²⁸Bening, "The Definitions of International Boundaries of Northern Ghana, 1888-1904," p.240.

were placed under the protection of England'. Also, they deemed Ferguson's clauses as simple commercial arrangements concluded by a man of colour (a Blackman) and not by a White (an English official). As well, the French pointed out that the treaties were not signed by the Chiefs in Arabic, the language they could write and read, and gave the example of treaties of Wa, Sansane Mango and that of Mamprugu, which were endorsed at Wa and Gambaga respectively, and not at the residence of the Overlord or King of Mamprusi at Nalerigu.⁶²⁹

This last point explains that the French wanted the treaties to be endorsed by individual chiefs no matter the status and authority of such a chief. Therefore, the French in conclusion remarked that "this was the first time in the history of African negotiations between Great Powers and Native Chiefs that a coloured plenipotentiary had been selected for the duty and that the selection was unfortunate so much that it gave certain character to the negotiations."⁶³⁰

From examination of available documents, Britain defended Ferguson's treaties as valid on three counts. Their first point was that, when the French mission went to the British areas of jurisdiction, for example to Bona, the kings often informed the British Government about such developments which were communicated to the French Government. Secondly, Ferguson's treaties were valid because he acted as the accredited representative of the British Colonial Governor in Accra. Finally, the endorsement or 'marks' made by chiefs meant the hinterland chiefs had been bounded by Ferguson's treaties. The chiefs were not to

⁶²⁹ PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/19, African West, Observations on Ferguson's Treaties, Enclosure 1 in No. 21, Marquess of Dufferin to Marquess of Salisbury, 24th February, 1896, p.28.

⁶³⁰ Ibid., Enclosure 1 in No.21, Marquess of Dufferin to Marquess of Salisbury, 24th February, 1896, p.28

enter into another treaty with a second European power but which the French ignored.⁶³¹

Whilst the meeting of the Anglo-French Commission was ongoing, news about the result of the public opinion forum organised at the local level reached the two Foreign Offices that 'the Waala had asked the British to stay and rejected the French'.⁶³² Consequently, the Anglo-French Commission folded up on the matters in respect of the Waala kingdom on 14th June, 1898, when the area of Wa was locally and internationally recognised as the possession of the British Government. Thus, the Waala kingdom, by the June 14, 1898 agreement, became part of the British dominion and from "the Black Volta up to the 12th parallel of North latitude" became the recognised boundary between the British and the French.⁶³³ Therefore, from June 1898, the British introduced a colonial system of administration in Wa, which is the subject matter of Chapter Five.

Conclusion

This chapter narrated the development of the history of Wa from the 1880s, when both Africans and Europeans came to be involved in the affairs of Wa. These basically included attempts to control Wa which continued up to 1898, when the area came under British colonial rule. After the British won in the struggle for Wa and finally controlled Wa, the next chapter (Chapter Five) examines how Wa fared under British Colonial rule.

⁶³¹ Ibid., Enclosure in No.36, Report on Mr. Ferguson Re-visited, 14th September, 1895, p.53.

⁶³² Information common among Waala and Dagaaba.

⁶³³ Bening, "The Definitions of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, p.240.

CHAPTER FIVE

BRITISH COLONIAL RULE IN WA, 1898-1900

Introduction

By 1898 Wa was part of the British dominion of the Gold Coast and its inhabitants, the Waala, became British subjects. This chapter examines Waala-British relations from 1898 up to 1900, the end of the study period. The issues discussed are: preliminary steps taken to establish British rule, the system of administration introduced and the impact of contact with the British on the life of the inhabitants (Waala).

Preliminary Steps taken towards Establishing British Colonial Rule

Discussing the extension of British administration in Mamprugu, Iliasu indites that, "the important question was the best way of administering for the good of trade the large tract of country referring to the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast colony which has been brought under Gold Coast Administration."⁶³⁴ The interests and aim of the British soon became a wishful thought. This was because of the land area that the British Colonial Officers and Agents, as Martin Staniland puts it, was "acquired at great cost, but quickly realised ... had very few of the assets which made colonialism elsewhere such an uplifting and profitable enterprise."⁶³⁵ Despite this realisation, the British Government had to establish its dominion over the Northern Territories because of the general trend regarding the acquisition of areas in Africa by European nations.

⁶³⁴ A. A. Iliasu, 'The Establishment of British Administration in Mamprugu, 1898-1937', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. XVI, No.1 (June 1975), p.1

⁶³⁵ Staniland, *The Lions of Dagbon*. p.39

Therefore, the British Government took immediate steps for the control and administration of "the Northern Territories or what was referred to as 'the hinterland of the Gold Coast Colony beyond the 9th parallel of Latitude" which became part of the British dominion no matter its cost.⁶³⁶ Through the British Foreign Office Fredrick Hodgson was appointed Governor of the Gold Coast colony and for the Northern Territories in 1899. Like other officials before him, Fredrick Hodgson was "instructed to be mindful of French designs towards the Northern Territories and that if it became part of French dominion that would effectively cut off British connections. To ensure British influence was felt throughout the entire dominion."⁶³⁷

To implement the directives enumerated above, Governor Hodgson assigned six officers - Lieutenant Colonel Henry Ponting Northcott, Captain Donald Mackworth, Captain Eyre-Smith, Captain Berthon, Captain B. Moutray Read and R. S. Rattray - to prepare the ground for smooth governance of the region.⁶³⁸ The administrative issues to be tackled by the six officers were: to re-sign treaties with communities that previously had entered into agreement with George Ekem Ferguson and Henderson in 1892, 1894, 1896 and 1897, and research on the inhabitants. The findings would serve as basis to set up a suitable colonial administration for the area. By re-signing the treaties, the International community, especially, the French, will be assured that the Chiefs and their

⁶³⁶Benning, "The Definition of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana," p1.

⁶³⁷PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15, African West, No.448, Enclosure 1, War Office to Colonial Office, 28th February, 1895.

⁶³⁸PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/15: Names of some British Officers and Agents Assigned from 1897-1900.

people were British subjects. The research data would further inform "the nature of the country, its inhabitants, its resources and conditions", which would influence the form of government to be introduced in the area.⁶³⁹ To assess the extent of deprivation and acquaint themselves with the area as well as the conditions of its people, in February 1898, Lt. Northcott and his team went on "reconnaissance tours." The data gathered revealed to the British that peace was the most important ingredient needed to successfully colonise the Northern Territories for the good of trade. In March 1898 Northcott was replaced by one Major Morris as head of the British forces based in Wa. Major Morris continued with the public education tours to inform the local people on the need to forget about the past, unite and enjoy "the benefits of British system of government."⁶⁴⁰

These benefits as understood were the protection and security the British pledged to continuously provide. However, Northcott earlier remarked that the provision of the benefits "would not be free and suggested that the local people should be in readiness to support variously towards the cost of administration."⁶⁴¹ This statement was misinterpreted by the inhabitants and colonial reports showed that it led to bad feelings among the people in many sections of the district. Major Morris, having noticed this, instructed all District Commissioners:

To exercise a lot of patience and firmness in their actions, and that, the necessity for frequent and heavy punishment was generally a proof of incapacity on the part of the officer inflicting the punishment. And that, since the local people were unaccustomed to British ways of life, officials were

⁶³⁹PRAAD, Accra, ADM4/20 African West; Collection of Treaties with Native Chiefs etc, in West Africa.]2.

⁶⁴⁰PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/35, Instructions to Officers in-charge of Districts, January 1898 to March 1899.

⁶⁴¹Ibid.

enjoined to explain well whatever was required to be done but warned that the encouragement of trade was one duty falling on officers. Furthermore, District Commissioners and other officers were instructed to acquaint themselves with their districts.⁶⁴²

To effectively do as directed, British officers and agents had "to travel into every corner of the district, reach out to every group of people, to study and report on the tradition, customs, economies, etc, of the people."⁶⁴³ The data collated adequately informed the British Government and agents about pockets of obstacles which were continuously undermining their efforts. Measures were, therefore, immediately intensified to bring the turbulent groups under control.

By June 1898, colonial officers reported that "peace and order had been restored in the region."⁶⁴⁴ In spite of this report, further reconnaissance tours were conducted to confirm the earlier reports. Hence, Captain Berthon revealed that, "the district was quiet and Kings and Chiefs had given him assistance when he [Berthon] called on them."⁶⁴⁵ Berthon further remarked, "I am very pleased with the general behaviour of the natives and their willingness to help me and I have no complains to make in this direction."⁶⁴⁶ Other reports gave information about the state of the country stressing that in every settlement "traders could pass through anywhere and not be molested in anyway. Passing through the Lobi

⁶⁴²Ibid.

⁶⁴³PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/412, Monthly Report on the Black Volta District, April, 1904.

⁶⁴⁴PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/416, Monthly Report on the Black Volta District, December 31, 1901.

⁶⁴⁵Ibid.

⁶⁴⁶Ibid.

country plenty of Mohammedan traders were found in the markets selling unmolested."⁶⁴⁷

What was generally typical about people in the region was that they lived as petty independent states, a task for the British administrators whose main objective was "to bring the heterogeneous communities in the area under a single authority."⁶⁴⁸ To achieve this British officers and agents were therefore directed to "educate the people in the ways they should go."⁶⁴⁹ Before this directive was implemented, British anthropologists had researched about the life of each ethnic group and that was to form the basis to educate the people. Concerning political development in the area, one report examined suggests that, "the Waala were a more civilized race than the other surrounding ethnic groups. That, the Waala had a system of chieftaincy which acknowledged the *Wa-naa* as the Paramount Chief and that no such recognised chiefs were found in the other tribes."⁶⁵⁰

This assertion was found to be incorrect and the reason is that another report studied talked about "Dagaaba chiefs of Kaleo, Bussie, Daffiama and Issa as head chiefs who had developed comparable political and social structures as did the Waala."⁶⁵¹ This revelation meant 'chieftaincy' was long known among both Dagaaba and Waala but in varying degrees. In June 1898 Northcott was appointed as Commandant and Commissioner of the Northern Territories and he

⁶⁴⁷PRAAD, Accra, ADM56/1/410, Captain Berthon's Monthly Report on the Black Volta District, December 31, 1904

⁶⁴⁸Rattray, *Tribes of the Asante Hinterland*, p.452

⁶⁴⁹Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), Tamale NRG 8/2/54, Native Administration, General Legislation

⁶⁵⁰PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Affairs, 1904. See also NRG 8/3/10, Annual Report, Wa District, 1908.

⁶⁵¹Ibid.

began the administrative structures the British colonial administration designed for the administration of the region and which the administrators were to depend on.

Introduction of British Colonial Administration

One immediate step Northcott took was the division of the Northern Territories into the Black and White Volta Districts. The White Volta District comprised the greater part of what is now named the Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana. The Black Volta District covered the present southwestern part of the Northern and Upper West Regions of Ghana. This was the territory where the Waala kingdom was found. The District capital was first based at Bouna [now in La Cote d'Ivoire], an important trading centre occupied by British troops in November 1897. Later, in early 1898, the headquarters of the Black Volta District was transferred from Bouna to Wa, a change which Benning indicated as "the practical expression of the intention of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Ponting Northcott to pursue British claims to the town and the disputed territory on either side of the rivers (Black and White Volta) after which the districts were named."⁶⁵²

The division of the Northern Territories into the White and Black Volta Districts was for 'administrative convenience' but as will be pointed out later, it had repercussions on the local people. Generally, all colonial powers adopted the policy of military occupation of settlements claimed by virtue of treaties signed with chiefs and people but the boundaries of territories occupied were, as Benning

⁶⁵²Benning, "*Ghana Administrative Areas and Boundaries, 1874-2005*," p. 94.

puts it, "indeterminate."⁶⁵³ This was the result of complicated past political and military operations, chaos and confusion which led to general physical insecurity in the region and the absence of accurate mapping which Africans were not used to. Hence, the size and limit of divisions or areas, according to Bening, was based on three guiding principles: the ubiquity of the White man (who visited every corner of the area and divided the area into sub-districts); 'the size which Europeans could effectively regulate' and the need to adhere as nearly as possible to existing racial (ethnic) boundaries so as to provide for equality of area in the district."⁶⁵⁴ Every policy introduced was therefore an attempt, as Northcott remarked, "to formulate a scheme for the administration and the development of the region."⁶⁵⁵ The suitable system of rule (administration) the British envisaged was introduced in two phases known as the Semi-military Rule and the Civilian Administration which are discussed below.

The Semi-Military Rule

The British began to set up a form of administration from January to December 1898, referred to as 'Semi-military' rule for the area, because the administrators were Military personnel who were supported by a unit of the Second Battalion of the Gold Coast regiment. The choice of Military personnel was necessary because of 'prevailing conditions in the region' (already explained) and the indigenous system of government in most local societies had also disintegrated or were near disintegration. Consequently, strong ethnic groups

⁶⁵³Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵⁵Ibid.

became 'autonomous chiefdoms' but "the authority of a chief hardly extended beyond a town."⁶⁵⁶ In such a situation, some parts of the region (Northwest) came to be described as "the wild parts of the country."⁶⁵⁷ Furthermore, reports by British officers indicate that, "the Dagaris (Dagaaba) had taken the English flag but say they don't want the White man or his laws. They won't have the French but want the English to protect them against the French. They are afraid that if the English settle down in their country they will spoil it."⁶⁵⁸

Research on this subject matter revealed that the Dagaaba felt that adopting the British way of life meant erasing what their ancestors had developed and therefore opposed the British. Therefore, British colonial agents began to give negative reports on people who resisted British policies, thus, a pretext to attack and subdue natives. One report described the Lobi and the Dagaaba, two major ethnic groups, as "exceedingly a turbulent lot and would not recognise any authority."⁶⁵⁹ These remarks were exaggerations on the part of Moutray-Read. In fact, under a situation of political insecurity any ethnic people like the Lobi or Dagaaba would adopt ways to protect and defend its independence.

The reaction of hitherto independent communities to European domination in their respective habitats was, as Mahama notes, "not out of xenophobia and turbulence but largely dictated by the desire to protect their independence."⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁶PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/432, Annual Report Northern Territories, 1908

⁶⁵⁷Ibid.

⁶⁵⁸PRAAD, Accra ADM 56/1/267, Report by Donald Mackworth, Director of Military Intelligence to Coal Office (London), In Enclosure 1, June 1898.

⁶⁵⁹ PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/27, Report By Captain B. Moutray-Read's, Acting Commissioner (Black Volta District) to Lieutenant- Colonel A. E. Watherson, Chief Commissioner (Tamale), 1913.

⁶⁶⁰Iddrisu Mahama, *Wa Under British Colonial Rule*; p.47

Similarly, Adu Boahen asserts that, "an overwhelming majority of African authorities and leaders were vehemently opposed to this change and expressed their determination to maintain the status quo; and above all to retain their sovereignty and independence, an issue on which virtually all of them were not in any way prepared to compromise."⁶⁶¹ Adu Boahen gave the example of the Asante under Prempeh I (1881) who lamented about the British offer of protection and said that his "kingdom, Asante will never commit itself to any such policy."⁶⁶²

Pieces of information, reports or remarks such as the above made the British appoint military officers to administer the Black Volta District. The military officers would help maintain peace and prevent disturbances: looting, marauding, raiding, etc; and by that peace and order would be restored and maintained throughout the region. Two District Commissioners, Captain Boyd and Captain Digon, were specifically instructed to subdue sections of inhabitants living in the district described as the wild parts and this referred to the Lobi, who were described as "a queer race and who showed signs of trouble at intervals."⁶⁶³

Military rule was adopted to force all self-independent communities under one single political authority. To achieve these aims the British had to apply very effective measures to maintain peace and order and prepare the people gradually towards the type of administration envisaged. Maintaining peace in the area

⁶⁶¹A. Adu Boahen, "Africa and the Colonial Challenge," In *UNESCO : General History of Africa*, Volume 1, California, University of California Press, 1985, p.3

⁶⁶²Ibid.

⁶⁶³PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/432, Annual Report, Northern Territories.

invariably was "to ensure that the trade routes were safe."⁶⁶⁴ This was paramount because Europeans came to Africa "to trade."⁶⁶⁵

Wa, being an ancient commercial centre and connected to several towns: Daboya, Buipe, Wenchi (in Ghana), Bouna, Bontouku (in Cote d'Ivoire), Gao (in Mali) and Wagadugu (in Burkina Faso), was found to be the better town to base British colonial government in the Northern Territories. Therefore, from early 1898 Wa became the capital and seat of the District Commissioner of the Black Volta District. The choice of Wa was in line with the policy of British Colonial Government which, according to Bening was "to locate capitals only at places through which trade caravan passed to other places."⁶⁶⁶ The selection of Wa as capital was also reasonable because its position would make it possible for colonial administrators to collect enough transit dues from the many traders who trooped in and out of the town through the many trade routes.

The Head of administration of the district was the District Commissioner, who was responsible to the Chief Commissioner based in Tamale and who took instructions from the British Governor in Accra. This meant British colonial policies or schemes had to pass from the British foreign office (London) through the Governor in Accra to the Chief Commissioner in Tamale and then to the District Commissioner in Wa to implement. This hierarchy of authority, in other words, simply meant the Chief Commissioner often issued instructions, directives and suggested measures or methods to the District Commissioner, whose effort

⁶⁶⁴PRAAD, Accra, MFA 4/21, African West No.538, Notes taken: Minutes from the Office of the Governor (Accra), 1910

⁶⁶⁵F. K. Buah, *A History of Ghana*, Macmillan, 1980, p.65

⁶⁶⁶Bening, "Evolution of Administrative Boundaries in Northern Ghana, 1898-1965," PhD Dissertation, Oxford University Press 1971, London:pp.105, 138 & 145.

was to ensure that the policies and schemes directed were implemented. Later, the District Commissioner would report his findings concerning every single directive or policy and assign reasons for each measure, decision or strategy considered back to the Chief Commissioner.

The objectives of the British, from the discussion so far, included subjugating the local people and preparing them in the manner that would allow for the establishment of British rule in the area. To achieve this goal, Commissioners were advised to consider strategies that ensured British influence was felt in every corner of their district. Using the example of Anlo, an ethnic group in Southeast Ghana, Amenumey indicates that, "soldiers and police were stationed to continue the policy of keeping the actuality of the government existence continually before the eyes of the people."⁶⁶⁷ In Wa, the Hausa were responsible for keeping order. In addition, British officers and agents frequently went on education inspection tours so that the local people would begin to appreciate and enjoy the benefits to be derived from accepting the 'White man's' rule."⁶⁶⁸ These benefits were not clearly explained for public consumption.

However, from the contents of treaty documents the local people signed with the British 'the White man's benefits were summed up as the 'protection' offered to the local people which Governor Hodgson said was "never free but had cost to be borne by the local people."⁶⁶⁹ The cost element understood

⁶⁶⁷D. E. K. Amenumey, "The Extension of British rule in Anlo (South East Ghana) 1850-1890," *The Journal of African History*, Vol. IX, No.1 (1968), p.16.

⁶⁶⁸I. Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial rule*, p.49

⁶⁶⁹*Ibid.*

comprised the provision of basic food needs (cattle, sheep, goat, grains or legumes) and military equipment to the British.

This policy was enacted when Sir Frederick Hodgson (the Governor) earlier declared: "I would not at present spend on the Northern Territories a single penny more than is absolutely necessary for their suitable administration and the encouragement of the transit trade."⁶⁷⁰ As Martin Staniland notes, Hodgson "concentrated his resources on Asante and the Coastal regions" because of the economic advantages found there.⁶⁷¹ This policy led British commissioners and other colonial staff assigned at the various levels of administration to resort to varied measures to finance administration. Chiefs and their people were urged to supply basic needs of the British-appointed officials, a measure highly considered to "strengthen existing kingdoms and unite the states which comprised them."⁶⁷² In other words, British policy was "to maintain any Paramount Chief that exists and gradually absorb under these any small communities scattered about."⁶⁷³

Furthermore, the policy was to increase the size of specific territories the British earmarked to 'strengthen' and bring them up to the standard preferred to enable them function effectively under the new dispensation. This affected parts of the Sissala and Dagaaba territory which became the Wa District. The district was grouped into fifteen divisions or subordinate areas headed by '*namine*'

⁶⁷⁰David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana, 1858-1928*, London, 1963, pp. 553-554.

⁶⁷¹Martin Staniland, "The Lions of Dagbon," p.39.

⁶⁷²PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/54, Native Administration, General Legislation, 1927.

⁶⁷³PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District, Political Organisation, 1898.

(chiefs) who had jurisdiction over specific communities which were previously not part of their area of control.⁶⁷⁴ Fourteen of the divisions were (See overleaf):

<u>Capital Town</u>	<u>Communities</u>
Busa	Ducie, Sɔgla, Katuɔ, Bulenge, Chagu and Manwe
Sing	Boli, Loggu, Chansa, Jeyiri and Chassia
Kperisi	Yaru, Jonga, Yibile, Nasa, Chegli and Sakai
Gulli	Konjehe, Duori, Dobile, Kpongo and Fongo
Bulenga	Motigu, Kanbong, Tuosaa, Dussie and Donsaa
Dorimon	Guo, Ase, Pase & Ego
Wechiau	Duong, Jinpəsi, Kankelagbasi and Chale
Issa	Tabiasi, Wogu, Samanbo and Sɔje
Kaleo	Takpo, Sankana, Loho, Kanyine, Duong, Naro, Seripere & Goli
Nadoli	Cherikpong, Tangase, Yiziri, Kalsera, Dapuori, Damba & Gbero
Daffiama	Dakpaa, Moyiri, Dache and Toyenpari
Bussie	Tuori, Fiean, Owlo, Cheba and Pulba
Funsi	Kulun, Yaala, Buffiama, Jumo, Du and Sawobe
Kundugu	Suonbisi, Bantala, Chawili, Belekpong and Konyibie ⁶⁷⁵

The fifteenth Division (Subordinate Area) was made up of "seven communities near Wa town: Nakori, Chansa, Kpongo, Tanina, Bamaho and Zongo, which were administered by the *Wa-naa* because their origin was linked to the princely class."⁶⁷⁶ The administrative structure was to be implemented as soon as Colonial Officers and Agents were sure of local support and cooperation. Therefore, the first half of 1899 was devoted to testing the schemes planned

⁶⁷⁴PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/464 Annual Report, Northern Territories, 1912.

⁶⁷⁵Dougah, *Wa and Its People*, pp.112-113.

⁶⁷⁶Conversation with Naa G. S. Momori, aged 85, Chief of Chansa, Wa, May 10, 1998.

before their actual implementation. Since the aim of the British Colonial Administration was "to repair the damage of the past by welding together parts of the same tribe in order to build up large states which would allow for the establishment of local government," the system was tested through further inspection tours.⁶⁷⁷ The inspection results were positive and therefore, the colonial political arrangement was implemented and named Civilian Administration. This is discussed below.

The Civilian Administration

From June 1899, the Wa District was made up of 15 'Subordinate Areas' and each was headed by a chief who had under him a number of village chiefs and clan headmen. These chiefs and headmen would operate under their own laws, and custom but would report to a subordinate area Chief (Divisional Chief) who was oriented towards the system of administration introduced. This meant the Divisional Areas were to be the pillars of local administration and the traditional authorities were the implementors of policies. In other words, as much as practicable, the agents of administration were now civilians and no longer military personnel. So, that period of administration came to be known as the 'Civilian Administration'.

The type of local government the British envisaged was governing the inhabitants through their own hereditary chiefs. These chiefs were rather re-constituted into what has been pointed out as Subordinate Areas, whereby a

⁶⁷⁷PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/46, Northern Territories Administration Re-organisation, 1932-1934.

number of chiefs, hitherto ruling their own areas of jurisdiction, were placed under a British-appointed or recognised chief and who, as Adu Boahen notes, "had no right to such posts."⁶⁷⁸ The reason for adopting this type of system, was according to Watherson (Chief Commissioner based in Tamale), was because "many of the Chiefs were weak and incapable of any sustained effort. And that the moral and executive support of the Government will gradually increase their influence and administrative ability."⁶⁷⁹

Thus, every 'Subordinate Area Chief' was understood to be 'the person selected and installed in accordance with 'Native (Customary) Law' and who was subordinated directly to a Paramount Chief, who headed the District. The Subordinate Area was the portion of the District under the supervision of a Subordinate (Divisional) Chief who headed a number of Tribal (Village) Chiefs. The Village chief was the person selected or installed in accordance with Customary Law as head of his area and was the title holder known or referred to as chief (*naa*).⁶⁸⁰

Waala oral traditions indicate that as a result of the political re-organisation, the kingdom (district) contained two categories of chiefs described as 'natural' and 'artificial'. The 'natural chiefs' represented those who existed before the advent of the British, namely, the chief of Busa, Kperisi, Sing and Gulli and their sub-chiefs. The 'artificial chiefs' were the chiefs of Kaleo, Nadoli,

⁶⁷⁸Boahen, "Colonialism in Africa: Its Impact and Significance," In *UNESCO General History of Africa*, Vol.1, p.787.

⁶⁷⁹PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/432 Statement by Colonel A. E. Watherson, Chief Commissioner Northern Territories, 1901.

⁶⁸⁰PRAAD, Accra, NRG/8/2/4, Memorandum on the proposed Northern Territories Native Administration Ordinance, 1906.

Daffiama, Bussie, Issa, Kajokperi, Dorimo, Wechiau, Kundugu and Funsu towns and their possessions.⁶⁸¹

However, from an in-depth study of chieftaincy in the area, the issue of 'natural' and 'artificial' chief does not apply to the chiefs of the Waala Kingdom. Existing chiefs among the Waala and their communities were grouped into two political units as the B. S. P. G. Council and '*Tenbilii*' Local Council. The acronym B.S.P.G. was applied to represent four Waala divisional chiefs: Busa, Sing, Perisi (Kperisi) and Gulli respectively (thus, B.S.P.G. Council) and their chiefs were referred to as 'natural chiefs' because their ancestors originated from the Mamprugu kingdom.

The Wa '*Tenbilii*' (small towns) Council comprised communities hitherto not under Wa royals named as *Ma-ngo*, *Kambali*, *Charia*, *Sambo*, *Aaheyao*, *Gbehero*, *Kpongo*, *Loho*, *Jingu* and *Nambere*.⁶⁸² These communities under the new dispensation were coordinated through *Tendaanas* or Headmen, through the *Wa-naa* and to the District Commissioner. These communities, as pointed out in Chapter Two, were '*tendaalong*' settlements managed by '*tendaanas*' but later brought under the *Wa-naa* by the British. The British thought that the '*tendaalong*' settlements would be better managed under the *Wa-naa* but coordinated and supervised by the colonial administration. This was wishful thinking.

At the top of the Civilian regime was the District Commissioner, who supervised and coordinated the activities of chiefs, particularly the *Wa-naa*. This

⁶⁸¹ Information from Naa Alexander Widaana II, aged 85, Chief of Takpo, Takpo, January 2, 2015.

⁶⁸² PRAAD, Accra, NRG 8/3/185 Development, Report on local Authority, Wa District Councils, 1938/39.

political plan was gradually employed until after 1900 when the system became operational.⁶⁸³ The District Commissioner at Wa had to develop strategies to successfully administer the district because of Governor Watherson's earlier remark that "until the Colony and Asante were thoroughly opened up and developed, the Northern Territories must be content to await their turn."⁶⁸⁴

One institution immediately set up to support the implementation of the colonial schemes was the 'Northern Territories Constabulary', which was a sort of police system and "an attempt to get at the younger generations of Natives by forming boys brigades for daily physical drill and instruction in English in all administration centres with the view of drafting the most intelligent boys into the Government school yet to be started in 1909 at Tamale."⁶⁸⁵

The origins of the Constabulary, according to Der, was a story "told of how Amadu Samba [identified as a native of Issa], the son of the Armoured [Sergeant] in the Northern Territories Constabulary in Tamale, organised his fellow boys into a kind of band which did military drill in imitation of their fathers which aroused the interest of the Chief Commissioner, Lieutenant Colonel A.E Watherson, to appoint a constable clerk (E. J. Afireng) to teach them reading and arithmetic."⁶⁸⁶ The Constabulary band began like "the '*asafo*' found among all the Akan peoples of Coastal Ghana and some inland people, and was a type of

⁶⁸³Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, p.59.

⁶⁸⁴PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/464, Annual Report on Northern Territories, Captain C. H. Armitage to Colonial Office (Accra), 14th June, 1913.

⁶⁸⁵PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/432, Annual Report on Northern Territories, 1908.

⁶⁸⁶B. G. Der, 'The Development of Education in Northern Ghana during the Colonial Era', *Journal of Institute of Education*, Vol.3, No.1 (1994), p.100.

military band organised to operate as a police force and ensure society was cleansed."⁶⁸⁷

The Constabulary performed duties which included the maintenance of law and order, protection of property, investigation of public complaints and bringing up minor offences to the local authority, guarding of palaces of chiefs and acting as orderlies to chiefs.⁶⁸⁸ The Constabulary, due to its functions was grouped into two: one section was under the British Colonial Administration and the second category was responsible to the *Wa-naa*", known literally as '*naalong polisi*', which meant 'police of the chief'.⁶⁸⁹

Trained and armed with modern military equipment, the Constabulary was used to enforce the implementation of colonial policies to improve socio-economic conditions of people. In Wa and its environs the Constabulary moved about in the villages ensuring that people were not involved in criminal activities and reported their findings to the *Wa-naa* who in turn submitted his report to the District Commissioner stationed at Wa, and who also reported to the Chief Commissioner in Tamale for his input.

Social Developments under British Colonial Rule

Roads were constructed to connect Wa to important commercial towns. According to Staniland, road-building was by "compulsory (forced) labour"⁶⁹⁰. When a road was to be cleared from one community to the next, chiefs provided

⁶⁸⁷ Ansu K. Datta and K. Porter, 'The Asafo System in Historical Perspective', *In Journal of African History, Vol. Xii*, 1971, p. 279.

⁶⁸⁸ PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/95, Native Administration Police, 1927.

⁶⁸⁹ PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/95, Native Administration Police

⁶⁹⁰ Staniland, "The Lions of Dagbon," p.45.

the Gold Coast Colony."⁶⁹⁶ Under the *Wa-naa*, the pre-British Judicial Council members of the Waala court were the "*Widaana, Foriko, Salanga, Yijisidaanaa, Yari-na, Tandaga-naa, Saambadaanaa* and *Kuoridaana*" [who headed portfolios in the administration in each level- Village, Division and Paramonut].⁶⁹⁷

For the efficient and effective dealing in judicial cases specific fines were approved to be charged at the various levels of Local and Colonial courts. The Provincial Commissioner heard and determined all criminal offences and the culprit was fined not exceeding 100 pounds or twelve months imprisonment; the District Commissioners charged not exceeding 50pounds or six months imprisonment service and the Local Chief charged a fine not exceeding 12 shillings (*'pie naa yi'* in *Waale*), with no imprisonment and in addition the offender was caned if prescribed by the customary law.⁶⁹⁸ Examples of cases tried were murder, looting, robbery, slave-dealing, theft, contempt of court and resisting lawful authority and to check on the potency of the judicial service, a report indicated that "on civil cases the 'natives' came freely into Wa to have their cases heard."⁶⁹⁹

To improve the perennial water shortage peculiar to the area, 43 wells were drilled under the 'Colonial Development Plan' in populated communities of good commercial standing as follows: *Tenbilibi (5), B.P.S.G (6), Dolimo (7), Kaleo (5), Nadoli (8), Kajokperi (3), Wechiau (5) and Funsi-Kundugu (4)*.⁷⁰⁰ Hitherto,

⁶⁹⁶ PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/464 Annual Report, Northern Territories, 1912

⁶⁹⁷ This has been the tradition of inhabitants before contact with the British.

⁶⁹⁸ Conversation with Naa Mumuni Seidu, Chief, aged 75, Wa, 20th May, 1998.

⁶⁹⁹ PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/185, Development Report on Local Authority; Wa District Council Area Wells, 1938/39.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid

the inhabitants depended on water obtained from ponds, dams and the valleys of small rivers, which often dried up from November to April. Sanitation was also improved in communities. Under this scheme trained youth, especially boys, serving as Village Overseers thoroughly cleaned up communities of dirt. They also dug pit latrines and constructed incinerators hitherto not provided by the local people.⁷⁰¹

The projects were constructed through forced labour (already explained) and which was often resisted by the local people. Their reason was that, before the advent of the British local people freely did things through mediation and without any form of obligation. With British interference the people lost their independence. The loss of independence was not only witnessed when it came to the introduction of social facilities but also with the economic and political measures the British adopted with the hope of improving the total well-being of the Waala.

Economic Developments under British Colonial Rule

Two economic measures - tribute payment or the form of taxation and the 'nickel coin' - were introduced by the British. The taxes introduced and imposed on the local people were maintenance, caravan, slaughter house, market tolls, court and sanitary fines.⁷⁰² The reason for the imposition of taxes was found in Sir Frederick Hodgson's (Governor) earlier statement that, "the British Government (earlier referred to) 'would not at present spend upon the Northern Territories a

⁷⁰¹Mahama, *Wa Under British Colonial Rule*, p.53.

⁷⁰²Ibid.

single penny more than absolutely necessary for their suitable administration'. Due to this statement, British administrators and agents had to adopt strategies to encourage the local people pay for the cost of administration.

To achieve this, "traditional authorities came to be involved in working out modalities regarding taxation. How much tax was to be collected on 'caravan, maintenance, abattoir, sanitary and market tolls" were discussed and decisions implemented by chiefs at various administration levels or authorities."⁷⁰³ The chiefs ensured that the method(s) employed in the collection of the taxes would not disturb the peaceful atmosphere the area enjoyed. In fact, the taxes prescribed were reasonable based on two counts. The revenue accrued was used to "prepare and accord the traditional administrators regular source(s) of finance and to discipline the inhabitants."⁷⁰⁴ The 'sanitary fee', for instance, ensured that people no longer defecated about but used the toilet facilities now being provided.

In furtherance of economic life was the introduction of 'money' in the form of the 'nickel coin', which served as the medium of exchange and replaced 'cowries' which were previously commonly used by the local people.⁷⁰⁵ With 'nickel coin' "people no longer sold less food stuffs for a penny than they would for 100 cowries."⁷⁰⁶ Similarly, Adu Boahen asserts that, "the effects of this shift were very significant: An introduction which was based not only on the number

⁷⁰³Conversation with Naa Alexander Widaana II, Chief of Takpo, aged 85, Takpo, May 2, 2015.

⁷⁰⁴PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/185, Development Report on Local Authority; Wa District. 1939

⁷⁰⁵PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/424: Introduction of the 'Nickel Coin', 1913.

⁷⁰⁶Ibid.

of sheep or cows or yams one possessed but on actual cash."⁷⁰⁷ The usage of 'nickel coins' also enhanced the development of internal and long-distance trade. According to Samir Amin, "the introduction of 'nickel coin' brought, into contact societies unknown to one another. That is, it involved the exchange of products for which each is unaware of the other's cost of production and 'rare' goods for which there are no substitutes in the importing country."⁷⁰⁸

Furthermore, it was through long-distance trade that Hausa, Malinke, Yoruba, and Mossi traders came to Wa, and lived in settlements known as *Jengbeyiri*, *Tagrayiri-Limanyiri* and *Zongo*.⁷⁰⁹ Their trading activities led to growth in petty trading in the sale of European manufactures which, according to Pedler, "encouraged little girls who carried head-tray of kola nuts, cigarettes and matches managed by market women and were selling all over market centres."⁷¹⁰ From the development of the discussion so far, it was pointed out that the aim of the British was to inject a pattern of life into the Waala to emulate. The results of British influence on the Waala are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

Impact of British Colonial Rule on the Waala

Generally, scholars variously discussed the effects (positive and negative) of colonial administrations on any territory that was directly under the British

⁷⁰⁷A. Adu Boahen, "Colonialism in Africa: Its Impact and Significance," In *UNESCO General History of Africa*, Vol.1, p.791.

⁷⁰⁸Samir Amin, "Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: Origins and Contemporary forms," *The Journal of Modern African studies*, (1972), p.508.

⁷⁰⁹Conversation with 20 Muslim Leaders includin;

> Alexander Widaana II Chief of Takpo, aged 80, Takpo, May 2, 2015;

> Naa Sohengminye Danaa II, Chief of Dolimo, aged 80, Dolimo, February 10, 2014.

⁷¹⁰F. J. Pedler, *Economic Geography of West Africa*, London: Longmans Green and Co, 1956, pp.141-142.

Colonial rule. In other words, wherever a colonial administration was based, for instance Wa and her 15 subordinate towns, there were some effects. As Lentz notes, "since the establishment of colonial rule in 1898 North-West Ghana (where the Waala inhabits) became increasingly incorporated into large economic and political networks."⁷¹¹ The paragraphs following examine the effects of the Waala and the British contact in three thematic areas: political, economic and social.

Political Effects of British Control

One important political gain "was the establishment of a greater degree of continuous peace and stability in the area."⁷¹² The inhabitants of Wa before 1898, from available colonial reports examined, had been subjected to series of conflicts and it was remarked that "all tribes were sick and tired of continuous fighting and squabbling among themselves and their neighbours. They were all glad to be offered protection from the British."⁷¹³ The establishment of British rule in Wa also led to changes in the political organisation of the Waala Kingdom and the neighboring communities in the region. Wa became the seat of colonial administration for Northwest Ghana and the capital of what was now known as Wa district.⁷¹⁴ This disrupted the traditional or local political system Waala had evolved.

⁷¹¹Carola Lentz, 'The Dagaaba rebellion against Dagomba rule. Contested Stories of Origin in North-West Ghana', *Journal of African History*, Cambridge University Press, 1994, p.460.

⁷¹²A. Adu Boahen, "Colonialism in Africa," p.784.

⁷¹³PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/10, Annual Report, Appendix 'C'; Relations between the Wa and Dagarti tribe.

⁷¹⁴PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Native Affairs, p.9

Commenting generally on this, Adu Boahen noted that, "such practice weakened the indigenous systems of government and also turned chiefs into administrative officers because their activities were largely colonial directives."⁷¹⁵ This happened to chiefs and other traditional authorities in Wa district but who never sat aloof to taking colonial orders. When the British recognised one Nufinti as Head of Lobis settled on Wechiau land, Wechiau Naa resisted. Similarly, most Subordinate Area Chiefs resisted being subordinated to *Wa-naa*.⁷¹⁶ To change the attitude of chiefs and their people, Colonial Officers and Agents intensified inspection and education tours explaining to people the essence of the peace and order restored. This was found to be effective because, later reports described the situation in the district as generally peaceful.

However, to ensure the reports were credible, colonial officers verified through further inspection tours which indicated that "all Dagartis (Dagaaba) recognise the Waala (Waala) as the Head Chief of the Waala and also probably as the Superior Chief in the area."⁷¹⁷ Though "the Head Chiefs did not have very much intercourse with each other but when called to Wa by the Commissioner they obeyed."⁷¹⁸ R. B. Bening asserts that, "the aim of the British was to repair the past by welding together states."⁷¹⁹ An important step taken in this direction was demarcating the Northwest into districts and divisions or subordinate areas.

⁷¹⁵Boahen, "Colonialism in Africa," p.787.

⁷¹⁶PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/10.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid

⁷¹⁸ PRAAD, Tamale, ADM 56/1/483, Quarterly Report, S. D. Nash, Acting Provincial Commissioner, North-West Province, 1923.

⁷¹⁹ R.B. Bening, *Universitas*, Vol.1, 1995, p.122.

To maintain the divisions created and the political status quo, colonial administrators enforced the operations of the 'Constabulary', a kind of police system which ensured that the people obeyed instructions and directives of the colonial administration. With the support of the Constabulary some chiefs adopted measures including caning, de-skinment and imprisonment of subordinate chiefs and citizens who would not honour British policies. For example, it was reported that "two chiefs of Nator (Nato) who disobeyed orders given to them by myself (Moutray-Read) and their Head Chiefs were detained as prisoners in the fort (at Wa) for the month but not dealt with as criminal prisoners."⁷²⁰

Such methods employed frightened the local people and marred the relations between chiefs and their subjects. The Chakaleε, Dagaaba and Sissala communities were highly hit by this political arrangement because most of their communities were incorporated into the Waala kingdom under *Wa-naa*. The *Wa-naa* began to place Wa princes as chiefs in Soglaa, Katoa and Dussie, three Chakale towns against the will of the people. The reason for this is not very clear.⁷²¹

By re-organising the Northwest into political units, a "new" Wa District was created and as a result the Waala kingdom became four times its pre-British colonial size. This development called for changes in the status, functions and importance of Wa (the capital town) and *Wa-naa* (the Paramount chief). The *Wa-naa*, by virtue of the new dispensation became the Paramount Chief not only for

⁷²⁰PRAAD, Tamale, ADM 56/1/416, Monthly Report, Black Volta District, By Moutray-Read, District Commissioner, 1905.

⁷²¹Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, p.121

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⁷²⁰PRAAD, Tamale, ADM 56/1/416, Monthly Report, Black Volta District, By Moutray-Read, District Commissioner, 1905.

⁷²¹Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, p.121

the Waala divisions but also Dagaaba and Sissala divisions. As a result, *Wa-naa* and Divisional (Subordinate) Chiefs "exercised authority over peoples and territories which hitherto, operated like 'Federal States' and were ruled by their own traditional or customary chiefs."⁷²²

The traditional rule, "*tendaalanship*", was also disrupted. Given the new area of jurisdiction, reports indicated that the *Wa-naa* often publicly remarked that, "his territory extended as far as to Nadoli, Wechiau, Dolimo, Bulenge and as far as to the Kulpawn River in the east."⁷²³ This remark was unacceptable to the Dagaaba, Sissala and Chakalæ who vehemently showed their disapproval by continuously stirring up trouble in the area.

Generally, the British colonial political arrangement caused skirmishes in some parts of Northern Ghana. The Frafra, an ethnic group found in the Upper East Region of Ghana resisted British colonial rule and, according to Michael Anafu, "from 1898 to 1911 Frafra country became the object of military expeditions by the British who aimed at subduing them (the Frafra)."⁷²⁴ Similarly, the ruling houses in both Tumu and Lawra are offsprings of Mossi and Kantonsi warrior groups, who were employed by the British to subdue Dagaaba and Sissala peoples respectively.⁷²⁵ The Waala were also not exempted from cases of maltreatment by the British. In 1897 the *Wa-naa*, Seidu Takora, because the *Wa-naa*, Seidu Takora, endorsed a Treaty of Protection with the French was deposed

⁷²²Ibid, p.56.

⁷²³Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*,: pp.8-10.

⁷²⁴Michael Anafu, "The impact of Colonial Rule on Tallensi Political Institutions, 1898-1967," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. XIV. I (June 1973), p.18.

⁷²⁵General opinion of Dagaaba and Sissala interviewed during field trips, January 1 to February 20, 2015.

(deskins) when Wa came under the British. For a year Wa had no 'naa' and the Wa skin remained vacant until in 1898, when one Tangile was enskins Wa-naa under British supervision and approval.⁷²⁶

By this, Central Government came to be involved in the nomination and installation of Wa-naa. Generally, and as Steve Tonah asserts, "since the period of colonial rule when the hitherto independent traditional polities were amalgamated into the nation-states, chiefs and other traditional rulers in Ghana lost most of their powers to the National Government."⁷²⁷ [Most traditional authorities, therefore, no longer took decisions or implemented their own projects without alerting or seeking approval from the central government].

Economic Effects of British Control

Two positive economic effects manifested during the two-year period of colonial rule. First, trade was developed. This has been pointed out many times in the study. It has also been mentioned that before the British occupied Wa, a local market was conducted at *Ma-ngo*, a settlement two kilometres in the west. As Abdul-Salam Salimata points out, "colonial attempt to increase social unity had the effect of centralising internal trade in Wa...and in 1897 Captain Cleland (British Military Officer) ordered the removal of the market at Ma-ngo to a more centralised site [where presently is located the '*Societ  General  Ghana* (S.S.G.)

⁷²⁶Dougah, *Wa and Its People: List of Chiefs*, p.115

⁷²⁷Steve Tonah, "Competition for Chiefship and the Impoverishment of the Royal Elite in Mamprugu, Northern Ghana," *University of Ghana Inter-Faculty Journal*, Accra-Ghana: Assemblies of God Literature Centre Ltd, 2010, p.11.

Bank]."⁷²⁸ As a result of growth in trade, Wa became an entrepôt and was connected to trading centres in Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria which led to the development of 'long-distance trade' in the region.

The 'long-distance trade' brought both positive and negative results. According to Samir Amin, this trade made possible "the transfer of a fraction of the surplus of one society to another. For the societies of tropical Africa (which include Wa) this trade became the basis of their organisation."⁷²⁹ Long-distance trade actually gave states "the opportunity to establish and strengthen their social and political power by the acquisition of horses...and weapons."⁷³⁰ In the case of Wa, trading activities accounted for the influx of immigrant groups or traders from other parts of present-day Ghana and Africa as a whole.

The growth of trade also advantaged women. Women were gainfully employed as food vendors and also sold drinking water to traders or visitors. Women also worked as attendants in 'Rest Houses' or 'Stops' built in trade centres.⁷³¹ Local initiatives in the processing or manufacturing of types of food ingredients and "natural spices" such as dawadawa (*kpale*), shea butter (*kpaang*) and baobab malt (*kɔntɔn*) are gradually disappearing and are being replaced with "artificial spices" such as 'maggi' and 'onga'.

Cloth-weaving in Wa, pottery in Charia, basketry and carving of drums of all shapes, mortars, bows and arrows as well as spears in parts of the region have

⁷²⁸Abdul-Salam Salimata, *The History of Wa*, B.A. Thesis, University of Ghana, 1982, p.27.

⁷²⁹Samir Amin, 'Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa: p.508.

⁷³⁰Ibid, p.509.

⁷³¹Mahama, *Wa under British Colonial Rule*, p.131.

disappeared as European manufactures entered the local markets.⁷³² Thus, the economic life of the local people now depended largely on foreign or European products, and the strong youth hitherto the agriculturalist, weavers and smelters assumed the position as 'distributors' in the commercial business instead of 'providers' in the agricultural sector.

The fortunes of farmers dropped when, according to Der, "it was assumed by one Director of Agriculture (A. S. Aseagu) that no export crop could be grown profitably in the North and that the Government's efforts should be directed towards making the Northern Territories the source of food supply for the Southern area. In other words, Asante and the Colony were to be encouraged to grow export crops whilst the Northern Territories concentrate in the production of food crops for domestic consumption."⁷³³

The economic policies discussed above affected industrial growth in the Northern Territories to the extent that its people had no rewarding jobs to do and they, therefore, described themselves as 'drawers of water and hewers of wood'.⁷³⁴ In line with the discussion above, Abdul-Salam Salimata suggests that "under colonial rule the traditional system of agriculture saw little change Colonial administration failed to introduce innovations into agriculture."⁷³⁵ Adu Boahen concludes that, "what ever economic growth that was achieved during the colonial

⁷³²Naa Alexander Widaana II, aged 85, Takpo, May 2, 2015.

⁷³³B. D. Der, "Agriculture Policy in Northern Ghana during the Colonial Era," *An Inter-Faculty Journal*, ND, NPeriod, p.10

⁷³⁴Naa Alexander Widaana II, aged 85, Takpo, May 2, 2015

⁷³⁵Abdul-Salim Salimata, *The History of Wa*, p.28.

period was done at a phenomenal and unjustifiable cost to the African (Waala included)."⁷³⁶

Social Effects of British Control

When the British arrived one of their major tasks was to study about the African society: its customs and traditions. The anthropological studies conducted were shaped by the perceived imperatives of colonialism. Their main concern was, according to Lance, "to understand better the subject populations in order to more effectively rule them."⁷³⁷ These ideas were the reasons behind the imposition of colonial administration on the Waala. Various works on ethnic groups examined give views of the social effects of colonial rule. For instance, Wilks indicates that, "the name Dagarti (Dagaaba) appears to have been coined by the first Europeans who visited the region from the vernacular root '*dagaa*'. Correctly, Dagarti (Dagaare) is the name of the language, Dagaaba or Dagara that of the people and Dagaw (Dagao) or Dagawie that of their land."⁷³⁸

I have a different opinion on the terms '*Dagarti*', '*Dagaba*' and '*Dagaare*'. The term '*Dagaare*' is the name of the language of the *Dagaaba* (people) which earlier anthropologists wrongly replaced with the word '*Dagarti*'. The assertion that the term *Dagaaba* was probably 'coined by the first European' is incorrect because the people called '*dagaaba*' existed before the Europeans arrived in Wa.

⁷³⁶A. Adu Boahen, "Colonialism in Africa: Its Impact and Significance," p.795.

⁷³⁷James M. Lance, "*Colonial Law, Customary Law and Mamprugu Litigants*," In *Institute of African Studies Research Review, New Series, Vol. 3, No.1*, University of Ghana, Legon, January 1987, p. 65.

⁷³⁸Wilks, *Wa and the Waala*, p.15.

Similarly, Wilks asserts that the title '*Waala*' is, "the name of a tribe and is in reality considered as nothing more than an arbitrary title derived from the name of the capital town, Wa, and it is applied to the heterogeneous peoples who have nominally been brought under the jurisdiction of the *Naa* (Chief) of Wa."⁷³⁹ In other words, independent states before the advent of British rule were "forcefully" brought under the authority of the *Wa-naa*. This, I envisage, would be the root of persistent conflicts among the different ethnic people in the region in future. The reason for this assertion is that during my field trips for data some non-*Waala* interviewed revealed that they were in the past not ruled by the *Wa-naa* or any of his Divisional Chiefs and condemned expressions such as 'the Dagaaba were under the *Wa-naa*' and assert that "their divisional chiefs were paramount chiefs just as the *Wa-naa*'.

Furthermore, "Wa had a well-established system of chieftaincy even before the advent of the British."⁷⁴⁰ This political initiative was partially hindered by the British Colonial rule in the sense that, the *Wa-naa*, Seidu Takora, in 1897, was deposed which was against the *Waala* tradition and therefore affected the authority and strength of the next *Wa-naas* in administering since they had to refer issues, hitherto dealt with, to the District Commissioner. The re-organisation of places and people under subordinate areas brought about the mixing of people. It was, for instance, reported that, "Kudjoperi (Kajokperi) is a very mixed division consisting *Waala*, Dargatis (Dagaaba) and Issalas (Sissala)."⁷⁴¹ Before British

⁷³⁹Ibid, p. 16.

⁷⁴⁰PRAADTamale, NRG 8/3/10, Annual Report, Wa District Affairs, Appendix 'D', Rules and Rights in succession to the Nalumship of Wa, 1932.

⁷⁴¹Ibid.

Colonial rule (1898) the composition of Kajokperi was not as reported, but "when all the different people came to live in Kajokperi they intermarried and mixing up for two years it is now impossible to distinguish between them."⁷⁴²

Similarly, in most communities British Colonial reporters indicated that "Mohammedans were scattered throughout the dependency and were mixing with the local peopl. This led to the adoption of new words (vocabulary) from Arabic, Wangara, and Hausa into *Waale*. For example, the word '*kabila*' in *Waale* meaning a section or clan "is a straight-forward borrowing from the Arabic word '*qabila*' meaning a tribe in the sense of kin or ethnic group."⁷⁴³ Words such as '*kitaabu*' (book) and '*Waalaa*' (slate) applied by the Waala are also from Arabic. The terms '*furi*' (a marriage agreement) and '*walima*' (wedding feast) are borrowed from Hausa into *Waale*.⁷⁴⁴

The mixing up of people also opened people to new ideas, ideals and values and into cross-marriages between different ethnic groups. Islam continued to play significant roles in the social development of the Waala. Available records indicate that the early Muslim migrants were itinerant Muslims who were keen in spreading the Islamic faith and succeeded in the conversion of many Waala into Islam. These Muslim scholars, as Abdul-Salam Salimata suggests, "played important roles in the court of chiefs and also influenced the architecture of the people".⁷⁴⁵ The common rectangular flat earth-roofed type of house, illustrated in

⁷⁴²PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55, Wa District Native Affairs: Political Organisation, 1934.

⁷⁴³ F. G. Berg, "The Swahili Community of Mombasa, 1500-1900," *J.D. Fage, J. R. Greg & R. A. Oliver's. Journal of African History*, Vol. IX, No.1 (1968), p.41

⁷⁴⁴ Conversation with 20 Muslim Scholars and Zongo Hausa leadres

⁷⁴⁵ Abdul-Salam Salimata, *History of Wa*, p.27.

Chapter One, is an example of the style and type of building Muslims introduced into the Waala kingdom. Several social amenities such as roads, rest houses, pit latrines, incinerators, bridges and culverts were colonial innovation.

The provision of social facilities encouraged and empowered chiefs to support in their implementation. Reports revealed that, even the chief of Wa often "cleaned the white European area and the town once a year as his bit to improve the sanitation conditions in the town."⁷⁴⁶ To further enhance sanitation, the administration embarked on "the training of illiterate boys as village overseers who saw that the villages were thoroughly cleaned up."⁷⁴⁷ Illustrating with colonial provision of transport and communication, Walter Rodney comments that, "the form of roads, rail, et cetera, were a prelude to conquest."⁷⁴⁸

Other reports examined rather indicated that Ghana's economy had begun to grow and that was reflected in the life of the people causing Ghanaians and other West African people to migrate to parts of Ghana. First, people migrated from the Northern Territories to the South of Ghana to work in cocoa farms, mining areas and railway construction points. Huge migrations of people came from the French controlled territories, especially Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, into Ghana. Colonial Reports indicated that, "these men came down to earn enough money to pay for their taxes and return home when they have accomplished this."⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁶PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/2/55 Chapter IV, Native Races and their Rulers.

⁷⁴⁷PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/5/1, Minutes of Political Conference.

⁷⁴⁸Walter Rodney, "The colonial economy," In UNESCO *General History of Africa: Africa under Colonial Domination, 1880-1935*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, University of California Press, 1985, p.332.

⁷⁴⁹PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/9 Annual Report Wa District; Migrations.

The numbers of migrants during the year under review (1900) were "874 from the Protectorate (Northern Territories) and 48,070 from the French territories (Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso)" to the South of Ghana.⁷⁵⁰ Some countries lost and others gained from the movement of this huge labour force as a result of colonial schemes introduced and this was critical because it, as Walter Rodney indicates, "was composed of able-bodied young men and women, aged 15 to 35 years and the most-healthy age."⁷⁵¹

Conclusion

This chapter discussed how the British established their authority and imposed colonial administration on the Waala. The British sought to restore peace and order in the area which was disturbed by continuous ethnic conflicts and activities of raiders. By 1898, peace and order had, to a large extent, been restored and the British introduced a form of colonial rule. Under this system, there were positive innovations such as the provision of good drinking water, sanitation facilities, and the development of roads. The system also had disadvantages on the indigenes; interference in the governing system of the Waala and the subordination of some *tendaalong* communities which hitherto were independent communities. Generally, people interviewed indicated that the British colonial rule was good.

⁷⁵⁰Ibid

⁷⁵¹Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, p.110

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

The work has established that like other inhabitants of the Northern Territories, the inhabitants in the Waala kingdom comprise of two main groups - *tenbihi*, who are the indigenous or early settlers, and *saamba*, who are considered as the immigrants. Thus, the work has delineated the various lineages into their respective groupings, autochthonous and immigrant origins to which these groups belonged.

The work has dealt with the misrepresentations by earlier scholars with regard to the founding of Wa and the size of the Waala kingdom. Accordingly, the work relying on oral traditions, archival data, relevant information as well as relevant secondary sources, has established that the formation of the Waala kingdom was started by the Lobi people. The Mamprusi royals are credited with its expansion and development to the status of a kingdom. Finally, the findings agreed with Basil Davidson that the Dyula rulers of Mali developed it into a trading centre thereby adding to the already existing trading centres of the North including Salaga and Daboya.

Some people erroneously believe that the Wa-naa, the leader of the Waala kingdom, had authority over the entire present day Upper West Region. This was also the opinion of A. J. Cutfield and Moutray Read, two British anthropologists, in their respective reports on the region. These opinions were highly contested by sections of people purported to be part of the Waala kingdom and were under the territory and jurisdiction of the Wa-naa. The immediate neighbours of the Waaala,

especially the Dagaaba, indicated strongly that they were independent of the Waala kingdom. Indeed the evidence gathered so far in this study indicates contrary and has put up the exact size and extent of the Waala kingdom in the light of oral traditions and secondary documents of the people. From this perspective therefore, the study has also resolved the controversy surrounding the size and boundary of the Waala kingdom.

Working within the objectives of the study, the analysis and conclusion in the first and second chapters, the misrepresentation in reports by European agents and authors, as well as assertions by some African writers, have been corrected. Furthermore, the assertion of European anthropologists that the Waala formed part of the Dagaaba ethnic group has also been clarified. Indeed, the study identified the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Wangara, Hausa and some Gonja as the people who make up the Waala kingdom.

The study has also brought to light the effects the kingdom experienced as a result of the exchanges with the external world, particularly with the Europeans and the Muslims. The remarkable effect, in terms of politics, was that the British successfully weakened the indigenous systems of government (*Tendaalong* and *Naalong*) through the introduction of the system of Indirect Rule. This system turned local chiefs into administrative officers as they no longer developed independent ideas about how to govern themselves but largely followed colonial directives.

On economic developments, the study has pointed out the trade developments that followed the immigration of foreigners including Europeans

into the Wa area. The development and growth of trade made Wa a commercial hub as it was connected to many trading centres in Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Nigeria. The study has also unearthed the significant role played by Islam in the social life of the Waala. The Muslim migrants succeeded in converting many of the people into the Islamic faith. Their influence was also observed in the architectural style of the people as many of the indigenous people appropriated the construction of the rectangular flat earth-roofed type of house.

The study discussed the history of the Waala, a word used in the generic sense to include many ethnic groups from parts of the Northern Region of Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria. These people variously contributed to the growth and development of Wa, which came to the limelight in the early sixteenth century. The study set out to examine the following: to re-construct the history of Wa and its people; to do an in-depth study of the Waala in the pre-colonial time so as to establish the fact on issues such as the acephalous or non- acephalous nature of societies, the settlement pattern of the Waala which may have some historical origins, importance, meaning attached; the extent of influence, impact of external traditions and cultures, particularly Islam, on the Waala.

Therefore, this work looked at the history of Wa from the pre-colonial to the colonial era and, by that its objectives enumerated above, were largely achieved. Relying largely on oral, archival (primary) and secondary sources, the work chronologically was re-constructed from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century; that is, from 1500 to 1900. Again, the study, to some extent, confirmed what some earlier scholars: Dougah, Wilks and Bin Salih have written about the

Waala. However, significant aspects of the history: who are the Waala, their origins and polity were not satisfactorily dealt with by the scholars mentioned above.

The Waala are a multi-ethnic people and each group originated from somewhere to Wa. These and similar important aspects about the Waala were mixed up or not clearly stated by Dougah, Wilks and Bin Salih. Other works by Basil Davidson, Peter Clarke, and Ladouceur, make references to Wa but not in detail. The few existing works, therefore, provided very little knowledge about Wa which this study has provided. In fact, the existing historiography on Wa largely focused on Muslims and *Nabiihe* (princely class) with little or no serious discussion on the *Tendamba* (the indigenes). This is one of the gaps this study has filled.

From the discussion so far, it is imperative to mention that the study has largely enhanced our knowledge about the history of Wa. It is now clear that the Waala are a mixed group and originated from parts of West Africa. It has also been unearthed that the type of festivals and other ceremonies the Waala celebrate are not indigenous to them. Islam is the main religion of the Waala and its impact on their lives has been explained vividly. Until this study was carried out the history of the Waala and for that matter Wa was not complete. Though the study has clarified many aspects of the history of the Waala there are other areas which need in-depth studies in the future.

The existing historiography focused on Muslims with no serious discussion on the indigenes which in future should be investigated. The Waala

had an elaborate system of local government but it was more problematic when it came to the participation of women in governance. Women played the role of queen mothers among the Asante or *wurikyes* among the Gonja but the *maakaajias* among the Waala were and are not politically noticed actively directing and advising on administrative issues and decisions by chiefs. A good comparative study of the social institutions, traditions and customs of the Waala, will therefore largely be helpful in this direction.

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Mumuni, S. Kpaonaa. Honorary Chief, aged 80, Wa, 2nd April 1998 & 23rd
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2014.

Osman, Ahmed. Proprietor of Kabanye Arabic School, aged 80, Wa, 1st April, 1998.

Piengyenge, Dumba. Care-taker of clan regalia, aged 85, Kambali, 20th January, 2015

Rose-Mary, Raymond. Director of Special Education in Ghana, aged 59, Accra, 8th October, 2013.

Sangmine, Wuuri. Chief of Man-go, aged 110, Man-go, 14th July, 1998

Senchi, Yengparee, Chief of Papu, aged 70, Papu, 19th November, 2014.

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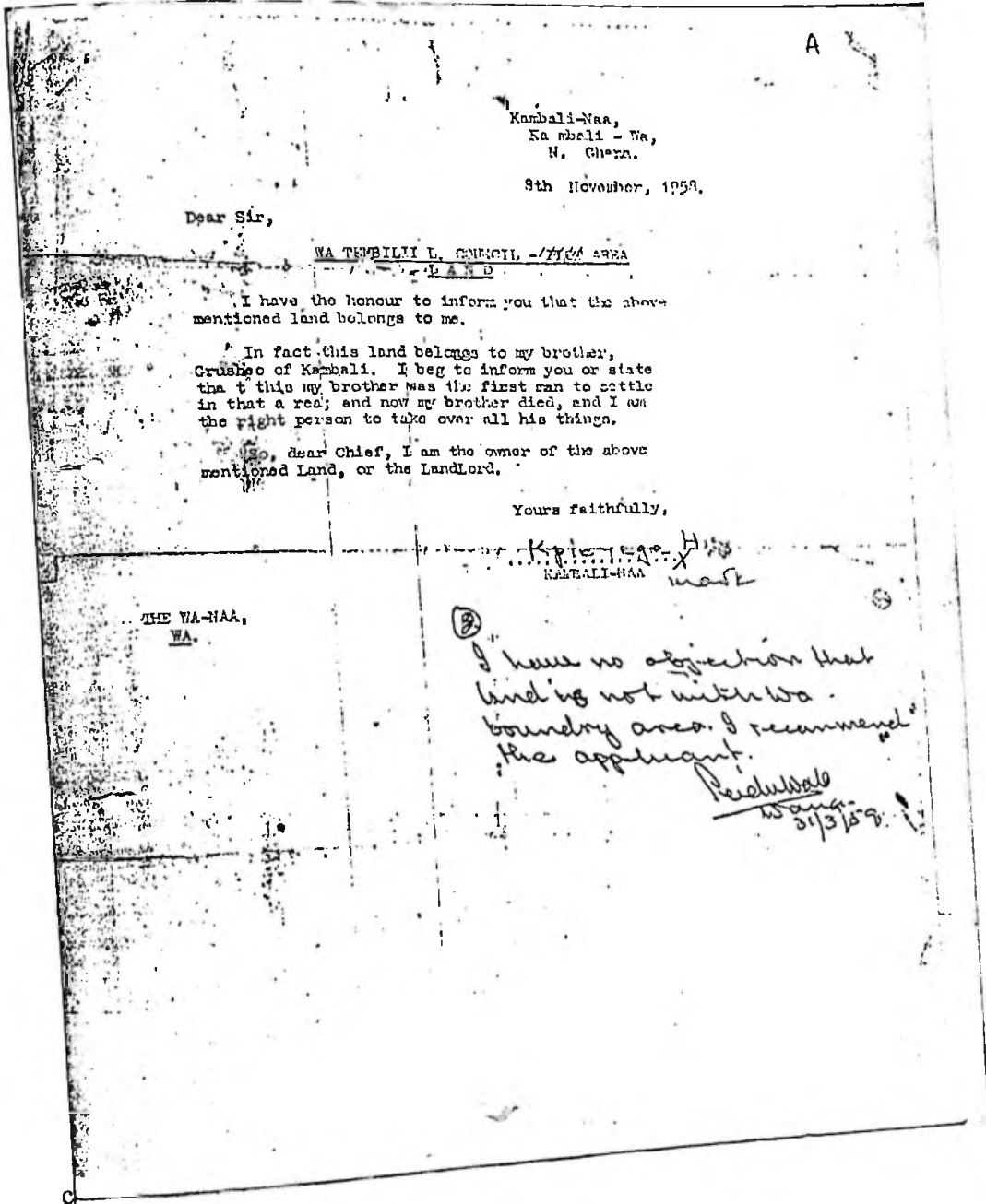
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APPENDICES

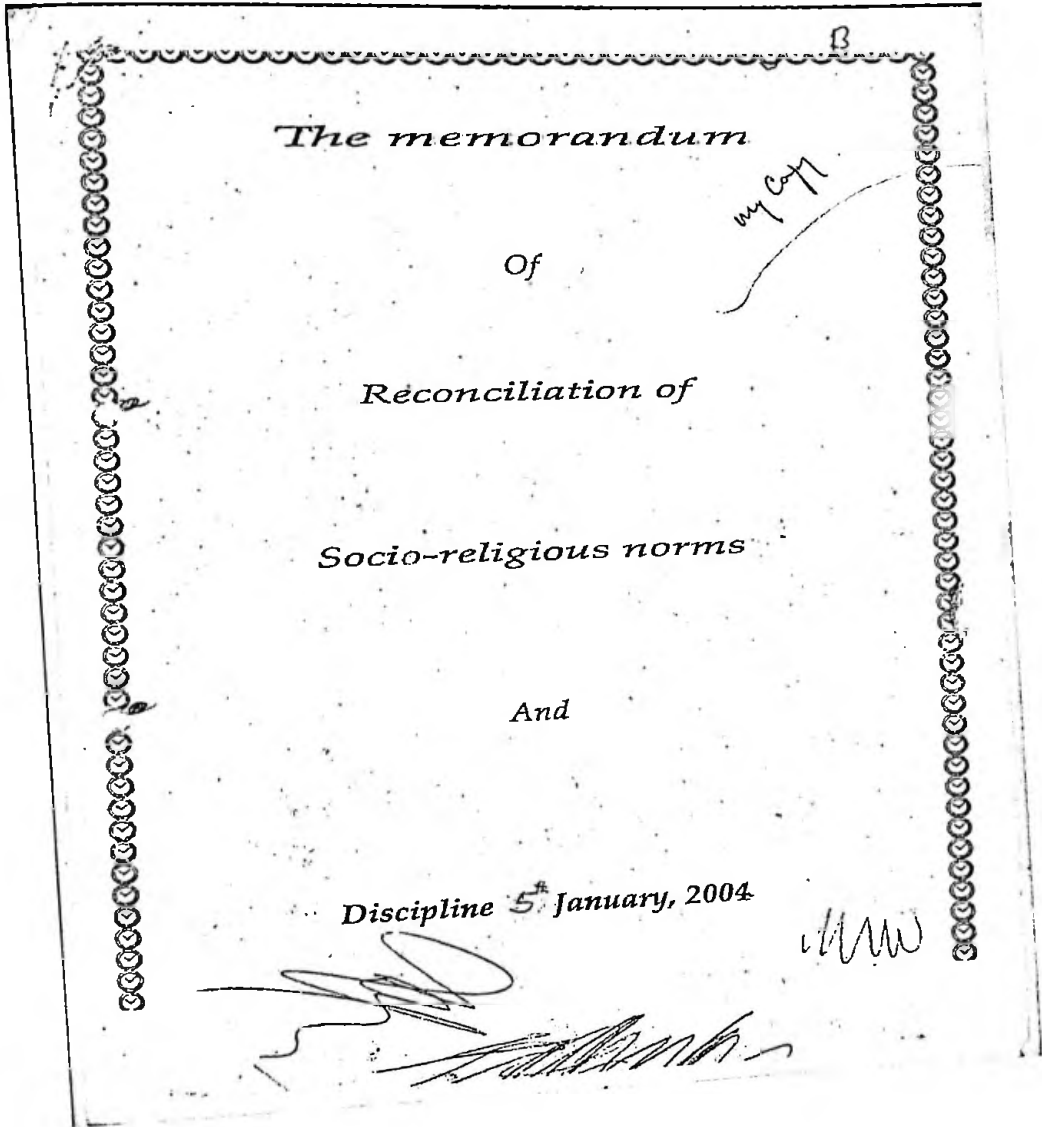
APPENDIX A

Document: Letter by Kieyeye (Kpienyenge), Kambali-naa, concerning the ownership of Kambali Land to Seidu Wala, Wa-naa, dated 8th November, 1958.



APPENDIX B

Document: The Memorandum of Reconciliation of Socio-religious Norms and
Discipline, 5th January, 2004.



In The Name of Allah, Most Gracious, The most Merciful.

THE OFFICE OF CHIEF IMAM,
POST OFFICE BOX 189
WA UPPER WEST REGION
5th JANUARY 2004

MEMORANDUM

1. PREAMBLES:-

It is not my intention to trace the history and origin of the Wala community. However, one aspect interests me most. It is vital to our youth today and the traditional or social behaviour of the community. This is the question of the Imamate or Muslim leadership in Wa.

If one is to trace the history of Islam in the wala community, it will undoubtedly be seen that Islam in Wa could be as old as wala community itself. It is true that Nabisis are among the early settlers and also the traditional rulers of the community since its institution till now.

Initially, the traditional and customary spiritual position was vested in the Tendambas as there had existed no Imams. Islam was either unknown or very little known and practiced by a hidden few.

In late 17th and early 18th centuries, a breath of new life was brought to the early settlers when the Nabisis and their leaders brought the 1st grandfather of the present Imam- Yaa Umoru into their mist - the chief Na Djiare of Yaro. This to the chief and his people was highly necessary for they were confronted with major issues. They were in desperate need of help most appropriate, spiritual.

Based on this, Yaa Umoru a Muslim scholar and spiritualist was charged first with three major issues as follows:

1. To win tribal wars and superiority over their enemies as well as repel any aggression around and beyond.
2. Consolidation of the position of the Nabisis (as long as the institution and community last) around and beyond.
3. Expansion of Wa; the (settlement) community.

Consequently, He accepted the challenge and, the Nabisis and the chief (Wanaa) concluded Yaa-Umoru be retained and given the position of Imam, spiritual consultant and director. This was conferred on Yaa-Umoru after the chief and the Nabisis had within the shortest possible time realized their goal.

This marked the start of Imamates in Wa. It had from that time traveled with the propagation of Islam to date under the leadership and guidance of Yaa-Umoru's descendants and other scholars of Islam irrespective of tribe. The present Imam is the 32nd, starting from Yaa-Umoru (see: Wa and Wala, African Studies series '63'. By Ivor Wilkes. Cambridge University press 1st edition in 1989. ISBN 0-521-36210-5. Page 59-60, 84,85).

Literally, Islam means peace. Theologically, it means total submission of oneself to the will of Allah and His messengers as well as believing in all Prophets from Adam to Muhammad and also believing in the Holy Books. Islam enjoins Muslims to obey their Imams and to unite. It is through complete submission and obedience of the divine teachings and commandments that Islam is effectuated. In unity, peace and stability, Islam wins the challenge over the worldly conglomerated teachings and principles.

Having recognized the need for Islamic unity in Wa and the Upper West Region in general, the office of the Chief Imam shall take over all aspects of Muslim administration with other eminent Islamic scholars and, in the name of Allah do hereby pledge themselves to the objectives rules and regulations of the high office as follows:

OBJECTIVES.

- To reconcile the traditional socio-religious norms.
- To enforce discipline in administration procedures of Islamic affairs.
- To promote Islamic and secular education in Muslim communities.
- To build mosques and organize all matters concerning mosques within the region.
- To embark upon preaching as a means of educating and enlightening the Muslim communities particularly the youth on how to solve problems and general propagation of Islam.
- To try to organize Islamic marriages in accordance with the Holy Qur'an and Hadith.

- To discourage and avoid divorces as Islam demands.
- Shall control and monitor all affairs of pilgrimage to the Holy city of Mecca among Muslims within the region.
- To promote peace and unity among Muslims.

OFFICERS

The affairs of the Muslim community shall be headed by the following officers:-

1. **The Chief Imam** - **Chairman/President** (Spiritual-Cum-Secular leader)

(a) Rules of succession

- (i) Patrilineal descendents of Imam Ya'maru The 1st
- (ii) Seniority-Nearness to Ya'maru - As a key to wisdom and baraka - blessing
- (iii) Personal suitability, capability and industrialization
- (iv) piety
- (v) Advanced learning & scholarship
- (vi) Physical perfection.
- (vii) Oscillation is the rule.

(b) Emergence and development of the Friday Imamate

Clearly as it is mentioned above, as rules of succession; where seniority is of preference to education as well as piety. It happened that one of the chief Imams was not well educated to perform the full duties and responsibilities of the chief Imam, hence appointment of the 1st Friday Imam. (NB; Same Gate should not host the two Imamates)

2. **The Principal Imam** (Central mosque Friday Imam) - **Vice/ Deputy**

(a) Rules of succession-

- (i) Patrilineal descendents of Imam Ya'maru the 1st
- (ii) Advanced learning & scholarship
- (iii) Personal suitability and capability
- (iv) Piety
- (v) Physical perfection - free from blindness etc
- (vi) Seniority
- (vii) Rotation among the gates of Imamate is mandatory for as the conditions and rules of succession are applicable, otherwise it passes to the next Gate in succession.

The seven Gates of Imamate had been consensually resolved to the following format as far as Friday Imamate is concerned.

Centre No.....Candidate's Name.....

Candidates No.....

Title of Paper.....

Write on both sides of the paper
(To be fastened securely but loosely at the back of your answer booklet)

Do not write
in either
margin

Question No.....

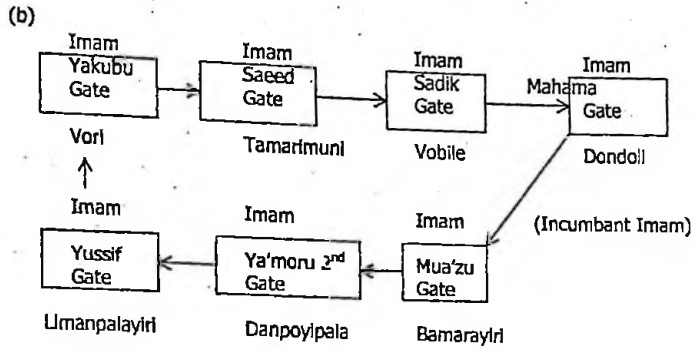
1 - 7 notes



7 notes



7 notes	Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes
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FORMAT OF ROTATION OF THE FRIDAY IMMAMATE AMONG THE SEVEN GATES OF LINANYIRI SECTION

3. Council of Elder and Eminent Islamic scholars Advicers/ Counselors
4. General Secretary
Assistant Secretary
5. Organising Secretary
Assistant Organising Secretary
6. Finance Secretary
Treasurer
7. Education Secretary
Assistant Education Secretary
8. Committee may be established as the need arises example:
 - Preaching committee
 - Social Welfare
 - Justice/ Culture

DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

The executive board shall see to the general day-to-day administration of the office.

1. *Chief Imam:*
 - Shall be the supreme head of Muslims in the region
 - Shall be in-charge of all Regional, National and International affairs of the Region.
 - Shall be the ceremonial head of Muslim communities in the Region.

2. *Principal Imam*
(Friday Central Mosque Imam)
 - a. Shall assist the chief Imam
 - b. Shall lead Friday, Eid and other Religious prayers.
 - c. Shall control and monitor all preachings and announcement in the central Mosque.
 - d. All Friday sermons must seek his consent and approval.
 - e. All Islamic conference and gatherings must receive his recognition and approval before being effected.
 - f. The principal Imam shall be the head Imam of all sectional mosques' Imams in and around Wa.
 - g. Shall Control collections made on Fridays
 - h. Shall be the Director General of Islamic affairs in the Region.

3. *Council Of Elders And Eminent Islamic Scholars*
(Sectional heads and scholars of approved characters)
 - Shall be the Advisory board to the Imams,

4. *General Secretary*
 - Shall be the general co-ordinator
 - Shall carry out instructions from the Imams
 - Shall serve as the link between communities and Imams as well as Imams and other bodies.
 - Shall be responsible for general correspondence and muniting all meetings.

5. *Organising Secretary*
Shall organize all meetings and gatherings

6. *Finance Secretary*

- Shall be in-charge of all collections made on Fridays in the central mosque.
- Shall be in-charge all contribution received from other sources.
- Shall be answerable to the Imams and Elders.
- Shall see to the generation of new resources.

7. *Education Secretary*

- Shall be in-charge of Islamic education
- Shall organize workshops seminars and fora.

8. *Preaching Committee.*

- Shall be in-charge of all preachings, moral and ethical education or otherwise as may be directed by the Imams.
- Shall travel to other parts of the Region for preaching etc.

9. *Social Welfare Committee:*

Shall be in-charge of:

- Public relations
- Welfare of Muslim residents and strangers
- Distribution of inheritance
- Disaster relief.

10. *Justice and Culture committee:*

- Shall be responsible for solving issues affecting and or facing the Muslim communities and providing sound and possible solutions to them.
- Advice the Imams and their Muslim communities on legal issues that may arise.

11. *Election of Officers*

Simple majority shall elect the officers out of the sectional representatives into office.

12. TERM OF OFFICE.

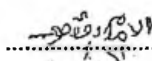

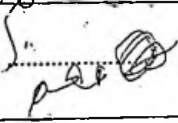

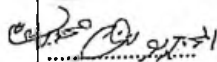
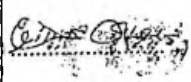


Imams and Elders enjoy life in office.

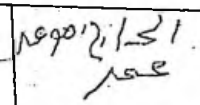

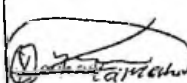

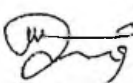

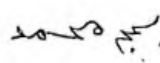

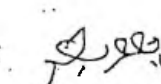

Other executive members shall be in office for a period of four (4) years. However, an executive member shall or can be re-elected into office if he is found competent. In the case of mis-conduct and incompetence, an executive member shall be removed from office and replaced before the stipulated period of four (4) years.

QUORUM.

- o An executive meeting can be held if two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the members are present.
- o An executive meeting shall be held on the first Sunday of every month.
- o General meetings shall be held on the second Sunday of every month.
- o An emergency executive meeting can be called on when the need arises.

In the name of Allah, we the undersigned, are committed to this consensus resolution to promote justice, peace, unity and development of our Muslim Community as well as the whole nation, and we hope that, the implementation of this all important document takes place immediately after its endorsement.

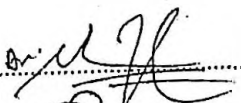
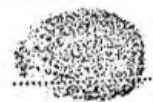
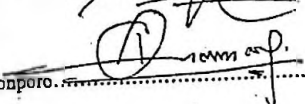

NAME/POSITION	SIGNATURE	RIGHT THUMB PRINT
The incumbent Regional Chief Imam Name: <u>YAKUBU ISSA HAQUE</u>		
The incumbent Friday Imam Name: <u>MOHAMMAD TASHI MA</u>		
Head of Imam Mahama Gate Name: <u>Alhaji Yusuff Jamani</u>		
Head of Imam Muszu Gate Name: <u>ALHAJI AHAMADU SEPHA</u>		

Head of Imam Yamoru 2 nd Gate Name: <u>Umaru Mumuni</u>		
Head of Imam Yussif Gate Name: <u>Yahaya Maku</u>		
Head of Imam Yakubu Gate Name: <u>Muhammad Halidu Yahaya</u>		
Head of Imam Saeed Gate Name: <u>A. Mohammed Nuhu Bululac</u>		
Head of Imam Sodik Gate Name: <u>Yakubu Balomkani</u>		

We resolved that this document has been thoroughly read and explained in the Wala language to the perfect understanding and approval by the gates of the Limanyeri clan to serve as the major guide to all frictions removal in respect of successions to the Wala Imamate now and the years ahead before appending their signatures and thumbprints to it.

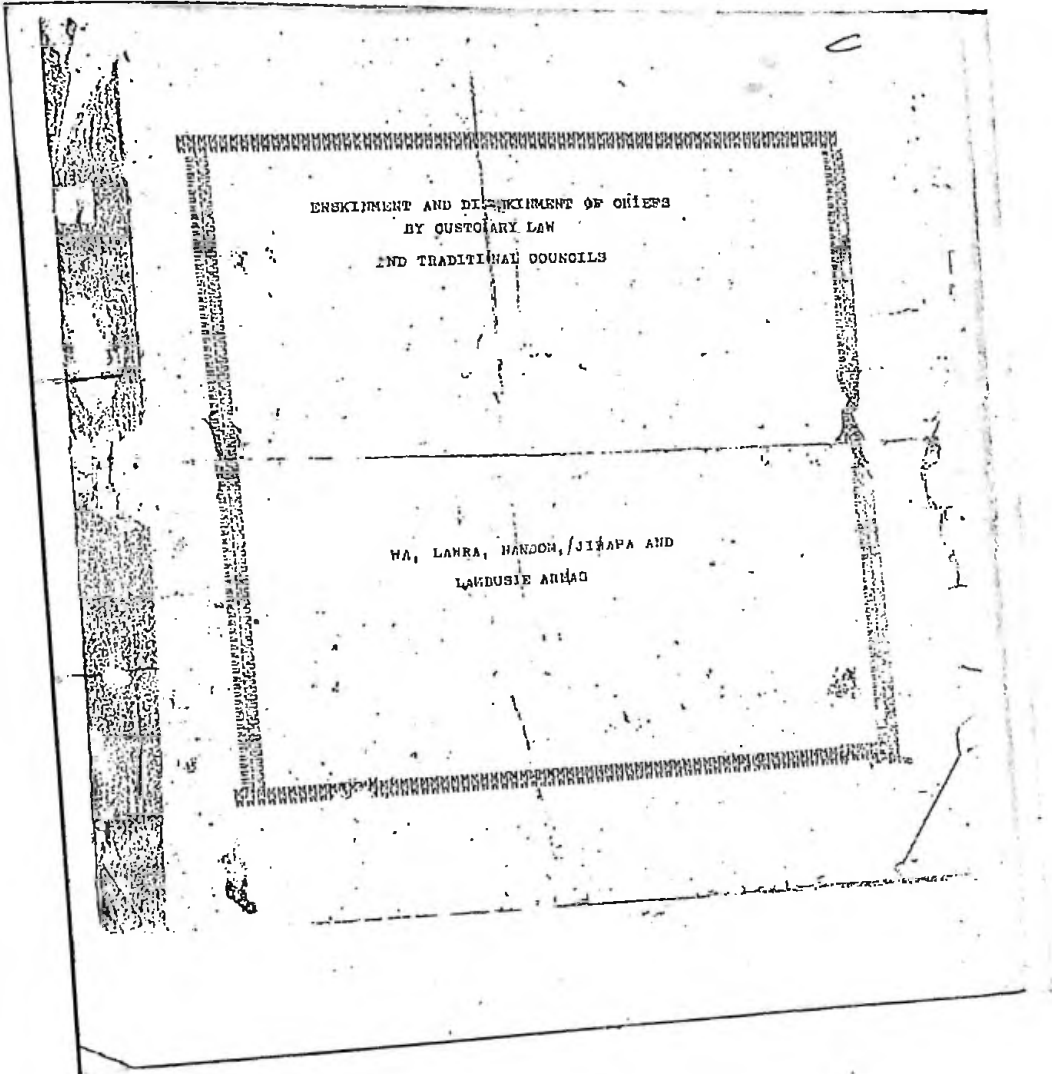
Now and the years ahead, all who belong to the Limanyeri clan by birth but have accepted and adopted other Islamic factions, sects and other religions not related to what has been the tradition of our founding great grand fathers, cease their qualification to the succession line.

Witness this day the 25th of JANUARY 2005

NAME	SIGNATURE	RIGHT THUMB PRINT
1. Suleman Mahama Bakuri.....		
2. Ahamed Osman Kontonporo.....		

APPENDIX C

Document: Enskinment and Deskinment of Chiefs by Customary Law and Traditional Councils in Wa, Lawra, Nandom, Jirapa and Lambussie Areas.



CUSTOMARY LAW AND USAGE AS IT APPLIES TO
THE QUESTION OF ENSKINMENT AND DIS-ENSKINMENT
IN THE WALA TRADITIONAL AREA

I. SHORT STORY

Status and area of authority:

The Yana is a paramount chief with jurisdiction over 14 Divisional Council Areas. All the 14 Divisional chiefs are responsible to him; similarly, each Divisional chief has a number of sub-chiefs within his area of authority and all the sub-chiefs in turn are responsible to him.

By virtue of his position, the Yana, undisputedly is the life president of the Traditional Council. He presides over Traditional Council meetings.

President and Vice President:

The Vice president of the Wala Traditional Council, whose duty it is to act as chairman and to preside over meetings of the council in the absence of the Ya-na (President), shall be elected from among the 14 Divisional Chiefs of the Wala Traditional Council. "The 14 Divisional Chiefs are equal in status with equal rights of being elected to the vice-Presidency." *Ibid.*, Item 3 of minutes of the Wala Traditional Council meeting of 11th September, 1973.

The Customary Law as applied until 1933:

Until 1933, when new customary declarations were formerly promulgated; succession to the Wa skins used to be based on a system of 'Guided Primogeniture.' This is taken to mean succession by seniority. The term Primogeniture as used in this context, means claim by the next senior person (senior by birth) of the three ruling families Yijeese, Najero and Jon-nyuosa.

Yijeola, Najere and Jon-nyuola are the Nabisis of Wa and are the only three ruling families, who have claim to the Wa skins. They have their seats at Busa, Parisi and Sing respectively and the Chiefs in those royal villages are Divisional chiefs. Customarily, the order of seniority is - Yijeese, Najero and Jon-nyuosa.

The 1933 Declaration abolished the old system of "Guided Primogeniture" and ushered in succession by rotation among the ruling gates, namely :-

2....

1. Yijese

GUSA gate.

2

2. Najere

Perisi gate

3. Jon-nyusse

Sing gate

These gates succeed to the skins by turns in order of seniority - Yijese, Najere and Jon-nyusse. The signatories to this historical document which became law and has since been the accepted customary law were:-

- (a) Wana Palipuo
- (b) Bukari - Buang na
- (c) Haridu - Perisi na
- (d) Abudu - For Singna Nagra

The Nakpasas' claim to be Mahasia and in 1951 demanded to be considered as partners to the law of succession. This was resisted by the three Royal gates - Buna, Perisi and Sing, and the matter therefore is still unsolved.

The State Council in 1951, presided over by Wana Mumuni Keray at its meeting, ruled that in view of the importance of the functions of the Kpasas gate, the gate should be accorded Divisional Status. The Kpasas lineage which used to be under the jurisdiction of Perisi Divisional Council, consequently assumed autonomous status; and Guile has since become the seat of its Divisional Council.

The following are the important functions that the Kpasas play in chiefly matters.

1. They are the custodians of the Nabisia (Priests) wgs fetish.
2. The widow of a deceased Wana used to be looked after by this lineage until the funeral was performed.
3. The firing of muskets, which is an important funeral performance of the deceased Wana is done at Fongu - the section of Wa where the Kpasas live.
4. They are the custodians of the Tombs or graves of deceased Wanas.

APPROVED MEMBERSHIP OF THE TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

The approved membership comprises the Wana and all the 14 Divisional Chiefs. These are permanent members. In addition to the permanent members, the Wana appoints two members and each Divisional chief appoints one sub-chief as a member. Those so appointed are not permanent members.

The total membership is :-

Wana and two members appointed by him (Wana)	3
14 Divisional chiefs and one other member appointed by each	<u>28</u>
	<u>31</u>

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The permanent members are as follows:

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|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| A. 1. Wana | 8. Fuñsi Koro | B. 11. Kalee na |
| 2. Busana | 9. Kojoperi Koro | 12. Dafiama na |
| 3. Perisina | 10. Kundugu Koro | 13. Issa na |
| 4. Sing na | | 14. Busie na |
| 5. Guile na | | 15. Nadawli na |
| 6. Dorimó na | | |
| 7. Wechisu na | | |

A. List 2-10 are the left wing chiefs who in fact sit to the left of the Wana at Durbars and in other state functions like Damea.

B. 11-15 sit on the right hand side of the Wana and are therefore his right hand chiefs.

The non-permanent members are as follows:

Those appointed by the Wana	2
Those appointed by Divisional Chiefs	14

Total	16
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3. LIST OF PERSONS OR OFFICE HOLDERS ENTITLED BY CUSTOM TO TAKE PART IN THE MATTER OF DIS-SKINMENT

Customarily it is unusual to dis-skin a paramount chief because he is expected to live above reproach. However if he violates an important customary usage and practice considered to be a serious offence, or if he falls a victim to a criminal offence resulting in imprisonment, the following traditional office holders have to take action against him, which action can demand his removal from the skins, depending on the seriousness of the offence:-

1. The Busa na
2. The Perisi na
3. The Sing na
4. The Tendans
5. The Yarina:

Notwithstanding their right to prefer charges, the Traditional Council is summoned to a meeting to endorse the charges before proceedings for his removal are commenced by the Judicial Committee of the Regional House of Chiefs, or by any other appropriate body empowered by the Government to act.

B. For charges against a Divisional Chief and other Chiefs.

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<u>Divisional Chiefs</u>	<u>List of office holders to entitled to prefer charges.</u>
Busa, Ferisil Sing Gullo	The sub-chiefs of each Division Mabisi The Tandana The Wana
Wachiau & Dorimon	The sub-chiefs of each Division The Tandana The Yarina Elderly Princes
Kojoperi Fumsi and Kundungu	The sub-chiefs of each Division Betina Elderly Princes
Kaleo, Daffiama Issa, Busie and Nadawli	The Sub-chiefs The Tandamba Elderly Princes.

C. CHARGES SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY DEPOSITION

1. Cowardly running away from battle field or abandoning his people in any cause where his leadership is a matter of course..
2. Seducing or unlawful adopting as wives, the wives of his subjects.
3. Criminal indictment either of a felony or a misdemeanour for which he has been found guilty by a competent court of law and sentenced to a term of imprisonment.
4. The acquisition of property by unlawful means.
5. Selling or giving part of any land secretly to any person within or outside his jurisdiction without the consent of his subjects.
6. Failing to honour or to perform any customary duty or intentionally abolishing any custom without the consent of his subjects.
7. Other charges which do fall into the above categories are punishable by a fine and the slaughter of a sheep. That is £1.20 maximum fine. All this applies to Divisional and other chiefs too.

Judicial notice must be taken of charge 2 above "Seducing or unlawfully adopting as wives the lawful wives of his subjects."

There are known instance where a girl may refuse to marry the man chosen for her by her parents but wishes to marry a man of her own choice. This sometimes results into a grim controversy between the girl and her parents and more often than not the parents hand her over to the paramount chief or the Divisional chief as a wife. This cannot therefore be interpreted as unlawfully marrying the wife of his subject.

5. LIST OF NAMES AND CUSTOMARY POSTS OF ENTITLED PERSONS 5
IN MATTERS OF ENSKINMENT.

OFFICE HOLDERS: Who by custom can nominate a candidate for appointment as Wana are:-

1. The Busana
2. The Perisina
3. The Sing na
4. The Tendana
5. The Yarina
6. The Elderly Princes of the Ruling gates.

This body, before the 1933 customary declaration, had full right on deciding who must be the Wana.

This 1933 declaration confirmed that Busana of Yijoese, Perisina of Najere and Sing na of Jon-nyuose should come into the skin by turns in order of seniority - Yijoese, Naj re and Jon-nyu se. If, however the Busana or Perisina or Singna of the day, whose turn it is to succeed the Wa Skins, is disqualified by any of the reasons listed below, or if he expresses his intention to abstain, then another candidate is nominated from the same gate and presented to the Kingmakers for confirmation. This other candidate must be a chief of the gate concerned. No person is to be appointed Wana or Divisional Chief or any other chief if he is:-

- a. Blind, deaf or disabled man
- b. A slave or slave descendant
- c. A bastard or his descendant

Notwithstanding (a) above, if a person becomes blind, deaf or disabled while he is a chief, a Regent is appointed to act for him; while he still remains chief. The Regency, in this case, rotates among the Busana, Perisina and Singna in turn for a duration not exceeding three months each or notwithstanding (b) above a son born of a slave woman lawfully married to a Prince is not a slave and is therefore not disqualified.

NOMINATION OF A DIVISIONAL CHIEF

The body responsible for nominating a candidate for appointment as a Divisional Chief comprises:-

Kingmakers For Divisional Chiefs:

1. The Sub-chiefs
2. The Tendumba
3. The Nabisi
4. The Wana.

Kingmakers For Lesser Chiefs

For chiefs other than Divisional chiefs the responsible body is made up of:-

1. The Divisional Chiefs
2. The Nabisi
3. The Wana

In normal circumstances, the Wana, unless there is a serious dispute, does not take part in the nomination of a Divisional chief that is to say, if the vacant skins are not contested then his function will be to appoint the candidate presented to him by the Kingmakers. But where the contestants are more than one the Wana takes part in deciding who is the rightful candidate by interpreting the customary law regulating the order of succession.

C. FINAL APPROVAL IN THE ENSKINMENT OF THE
PARAMOUNT CHIEF

Final Approval: As stated in 5(a) above, when the Royal Gate concerned and six king-makers are unanimous in their choice of candidate, the Traditional Council is summoned to a meeting for the purpose of according formal recognition to the Wa-na elect. The role of the Traditional Council is a formality because they cannot challenge the decision of the King-makers.

D. FINAL APPROVAL IN THE ENSKINMENT OF A DIVISIONAL
CHIEF OR OTHER CHIEFS

The Wa-na gives final approval for the enskinment of Divisional or other chiefs.

REGENCY

(a) If the Wa-na becomes blind, deaf or physically or mentally incapacitated in any way, the chiefs of Bua, Perisi and Sing act as regents in order of rotation, each acting for the Wana for a period not exceeding three months.

(b) On the death of the Wa-na the Tandaga-na acts as regent pending the appointment and installation of the new Wa-na.

(c) REGENCY FOR OTHER CATEGORIES OF CHIEFS

It is the brother of the Divisional or other chiefs or if he has no brother his elder son, acts as regent.

7. (a) The Salanga is the Custodian of the skin property while he (the Wa-na) is alive.
 (b) When the Wa-na dies, the Tandaga-na takes charge of the Palace and all skin property pending the appointment of a new Wa-na.
 (c) For Divisional and other chiefs, the brother or elder son is the custodian of the skin property after the death of a Divisional chief or any other category of chief.

APPENDIX 'A'
WA-NA'S ELDERS & THEIR FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

7

It is historically important in Walo custom that every Ruling Paramount, Divisional and lesser chief, have elders who assist them in the day to day affairs of his areas of Jurisdiction.

The Wa-na's Elders are :-

1. The Widaana
2. The Yarina (representative)
3. The Yijimi dana
4. The Tandaga na
5. The Salanga
6. The Foroko
7. Samba Daana

THE WIDAANA

The Widaana who is the representative of the Tondana of Wa performs the following duties:-

1. He is the intermediary between the Wa-na and the Tondamba.
2. He advises the Wa-na on matters of fetish and land purification; and also makes sacrifices, when necessary.
3. He announces the death of the Wa-na after the performance of the necessary funeral rituals.
4. He advises the Wa-na on land affairs, indicating which land is sacred or which is a fetish land, or fetish groves that must not be interfered with.
5. In times of draught he advises the Wa-na on what to do to interact it, including invoking rains.
6. He advises the Wa-na when the gods, the rain and other deities are provoked by trespassers.
7. He is a King-makers.

THE TANDAGANA

1. On the death of the Wa-na, acts as a regent of the Palace until a new Wa-na is installed but he cannot be a Wa-na.
2. The Widows of the deceased Wa-na are sent to his compound to be cleansed.
3. He is the care-taker of the graves of deceased Wa-nas.

THE FOROKO

1. Is responsible for the ceremonial crowning of the Wa-na, by :
 1. Conducting him to sit on the appropriate skins.
 2. Reciting the customary rituals and
 3. Putting the gown on him and pronouncing him Wa-na from that day.

5

7

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THE YARINA

8

1. Is the intermediary between the Wa-na and the Muslim community.
2. Advises the Wa-na on the appointment of a Liman.
3. Advises Wa-na on Religious affairs especially prayers connected with the blessings of the State.
4. He is one of the King-makers.

THE YIJIHI-DANA

1. He represents the Nabisi and chiefs.
2. He makes appointment for Divisional chiefs and other chiefs as well as Princes who wish to have private audience with the Wa-na.
3. Divisional chiefs who come to the Palace and wish to leave any permission through him.
4. He informs Wa-na about the views of the Nabisi on any matter and conversely he informs the Nabisi about views of the Wa-na on any matter.

THE SALANGA

The Salanga assumes responsibility for the defence and maintenance of the Palace. For this reason he is the only elder that lives in the Palace, except of course the Tandaga na who is also required by customary law to live in the Palace only after the death of the Wa-na and until a new Wa-na is installed.

1. Informs the Nabisi of any impending dangers facing the Wa-na.
2. Is therefore responsible for security and has power to arrest offenders within the Palace.
3. Is responsible for seeing to it that intruders or evil-minded persons do not enter the Palace with the intention to poison the food of the Wa-na.
4. Is the custodian of the skin property while the Wa-na is alive. On the death of the Chief, custodianship shifts to the Tandaga-Na.
5. Is responsible for general maintenance of the Palace and constructional works.
6. Notwithstanding five (5) above, cannot make any alteration in the Palace without the approval of the Wa-na, Busa na, Perisi na and Sing na.

N.B: 1. No King-maker or elder who is not a Prince cannot succeed to the Wa-na skins or claim to be a chief of any category.

2. The Foroko who is responsible for crowning a Wa-na cannot crown any person other than the one appointed by the King-makers.

3. The ruling Wa-na can dismiss any elder, whom he finds him wanting and ask the head concerned to replace him with another representative.

**LAWRA TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
DECLARATION OF CUSTOMARY LAW IN
RELATION TO CHIEFTAINCY, MARRIAGE,
LAND, INHERITANCE, FUNERAL AND TABOOS.**

9

TITLE:- Customary Declaration. This declaration shall be known as the Lawra Confederacy Traditional Council Area Enskimment/Deakimment abdication of chiefs/elders and the enforcement of marriage, funeral, acquisition of land, inheritance and taboos customary laws in relation to chieftaincy.

INTRODUCTION:- There are four (4) main divisions making up the Lawra Chiefs-in Confederacy Traditional Council Area namely:- (1) Lawra (2) Jirapa (3) Mandom (4) Labussie.

CUSTOMARY TITLE:- The occupants of the skins of Lawra, Jirapa, Mandom and all their subordinate chiefs take the title "Mac". Whereas the occupant of the Labussie skin and his other chiefs take the title "Kuoro". The heads of these 4 main divisions are all paramount chiefs. All paramount, divisional and canton chiefs ascend their skins patrilaterally.

COMPOSITION OF MEMBERSHIP:- Every division is headed by one paramount chief and assisted by 8 divisional subchiefs. Membership of the Traditional Council is fixed but the council increase or decrease in more members should the need arise in the future.

APPOINTMENT OF PROXIES:- All paramount, divisional and sub-chiefs can appoint proxies to act for them in case of old age, sickness, or physical handicap.

PRESIDENCY:- Life Presidency is being practised in this Traditional Council area which rotates from division to division through seniority in enskimment. The basis of chieftaincy seniority is determined by the ancient Traditional set up of the dynasty of the 4 divisions. This practice of life presidency may however be subject to any changes in the future, should the need arise.

CUSTOM:- Apart from the Labussie Division that has a slight variation in custom, the other three share almost the same customs. However, the procedure of nomination, election and installation of a chief differ slightly from division to division. A good example of such variation is that in the Labussie division a would-be-kuoro must automatically come from the Tootina or Tindana's family. Whereas in the other three divisions, persons from the Tindana's family are by custom not allowed to become chiefs. However, the entire procedure of installation of a chief rest on the Tindana or Tootina. Owing to the slight variation in custom as regards to the nomination, election and installation of a chief, we therefore take each Divisional

area and describe the procedure adopted by the ancestors to effect the smooth running of this customary law as specified below:

Gate System: There are 4 main family gates within the Lawra paramountcy skin: (1) Chal-yir (2) Suokole-yir (3) Vaa-yir (4) Yoo-yir. The Lawra paramountcy skin is only opened to all male descendants of the Kusulo clan within the 4 family gates mentioned above.

Qualification of Candidate: All brothers and sons of the late chief being members of the royal family from any of the 4 family gates who are Kusules by clan are qualified and shall be eligible for election as chief on the occurrence of a vacancy. However, a candidate who has been convicted of a crime involving stealing, dishonesty and other social vices within the past 5 years in this context is disqualified from being a chief. Also any person of unsound mind and physically handicapped persons are also disqualified.

Process of Election: When the skin of Lawra is to be filled on the occurrence of a vacancy the below procedure is adopted:-

(a) The Tingasob and elders from the 4 family gates mentioned above meet, propose and elect the candidate.

(b) At times the ruling chief before his death nominate his successor to occupy the skin, and this never rejected whatsoever the case may be by the elders of the 4 family gates.

(NABINDE) Kingsmakers: The Kingsmakers of Lawra paramountcy skin are made up of the Tingasob and elders from the 4 family gates. These people are empowered by custom to nominate, elect and install the Lawra Naa.

TINGASOB: The Tingasob is a fetish priest. He was the first person to have settled in a particular town or village. Due to much work on his part in making sacrifices to the Gods and fetishes of his locality for ever-lasting peace, unity and co-operation among the people, he elected certain persons to perform other duties who are now chiefs of today.

Installation:- The Tingansob, in consultation with elders from the 4 family gates perform the installation ceremony. However, the entire customary performances rest on the Tingansob who is entitled and qualified by custom to wear the new chief his clothes. After all ritual performances have been executed by the Tingansob, the Kingmakers and elders of the 4 family gates, a day is appointed by them and announced to the people. All other chiefs from the Traditional Council area are invited to witness the installation ceremony. When all is ready on the installation day, the new chief is then dressed up in full traditional attire by the Tingansob, assisted by elders of the royal family. He is then escorted out by them to the installation ground amid firing of musketry, cheering and singing words of praise to men, women and children.

Pouring of Libation :- When the new chief is seated, libation is then poured by the Tingansob assisted by a few elders asking for God's blessing in honour of the new chief.

Oath:- The Lawra Naa swears his God and pronounces his intention of good services to all manner of people.

Outdooing Ceremony:- There is usually traditional drumming and dancing in honour of the new chief at the out-dooing ceremony.

Taboos:- The Lawra Naa does not walk outside bare footed.

(2) He does not walk outside bare headed.

(3) He does not walk without his scepter.

LAMBUSSIE DIVISION

Gate System:- The Yakadi Gyaa is the only gate as regards to the Lambussie paramountcy skin.

Kingmakers: The Kingmakers of Lambussie paramountcy, Divisional and sub-skins are the Tootina (Tindana) and the Kumbebe. These two people are empowered to appoint proxies to act for them in the case of old age, sickness or when the Kuero becomes physically handicapped.

Enskinning Process:- The entire enskinment of the Lambussie Kuero rest with the Tootina and the Kumbebe. After this process there is a secret customary performance by the Tootina. The candidate is then introduced to the 8 Divisional chiefs, and after a week's time, the installation is performed.

Installation Ceremony:— On the installation day the Tootina takes the new chief by his dress and he being seated on a skin. The Tootina then wears him a fez. After this he pronounces solemn words asking for God's blessing in honour of the new chief. Immediately these words are pronounced, all subjects are strictly warned not to call the new chief by his private name any longer, but give him the correct vocative (Kuoro). Jubilation ends up the installation ceremony.

Oath: The Lambussie Kuoro wears the (Buscio Kabiri) Land God including rivers and hills.

NANDOM DIVISION

Gate System:— There are 4 main family gates in respect of the Nandom Paramountcy skin i.e. Chiir-yir (2) Dange-yir (3) Bore (4) Konkun.

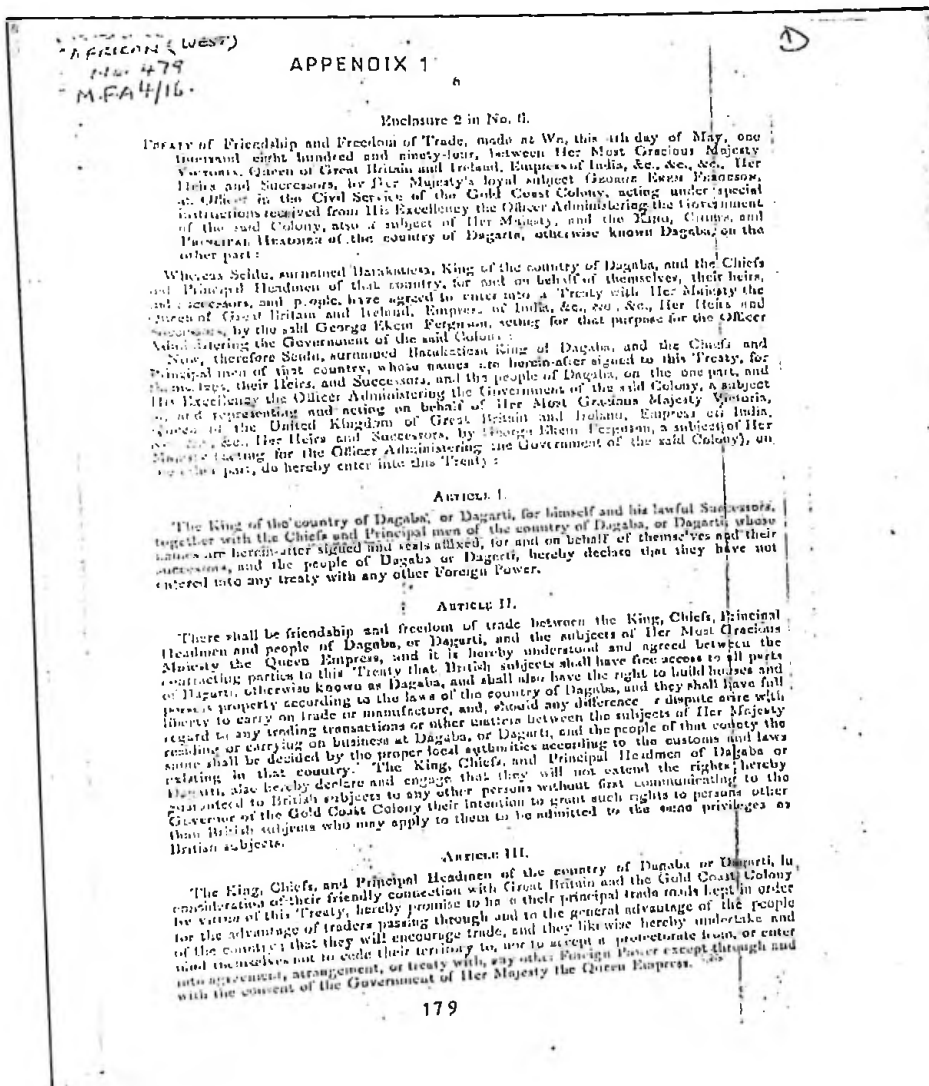
Kingmakers:— The Kingmakers of Nandom are made up of elders from the 4 family gates mentioned above. They are empowered to elect the candidate and present him to the Tingansob for approval. The Tingansob questions the elders 3 times whether the candidate before him is by custom fit to occupy the vacant skin.

Installation Ceremony:— On the installation day the most senior among the kingmakers who is father by relation to the family does the installation.

Oath: The Nandom Naa swears his land Gods.

APPENDIX D

Document: Ferguson's; Treaty of Friendship and Freedom of Trade, made at Wa,
 ,this 4th dy of May, one thousand, eight hundred and ninety-four between Her
 Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empreror
 of India, &c,&c ...Government of the said Colony, Now, therefore Seidu,
 surnamed, Batakarikesi, King of Dagaaba: In, *African West, No. 479, MFA 4/15,*
in Enclosure 2 No.6, 1894, pp.1-2



ARTICLE IV.

This Treaty shall come into force the date hereof, but power is hereby expressly reserved to Her Majesty the Queen Empress to refuse to approve and ratify the same within eighteen months from the date hereof. In witness whereof, the parties to this Treaty have hereunto set their hands and affixed their respective seal.

Done at Wa, in the county of Dagaba or Dagarti, this 4th day of May in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four.

Name and Signature.	Rank.	Mark.	Seal.
Seidu Datsakissa	King	X	(Seal.)
Allmani Gansu	Chief Priest	X	(Seal.)
Tenas	Chief of Wa	X	(Seal.)
Jembugu	Chief Dagala	X	(Seal.)
Kobitigi	Chief of Wa	X	(Seal.)
Kumbilana		X	(Seal.)
Adama	Linguist	X	(Seal.)
Yergbeiri	Prince	X	(Seal.)

GEORGE E. FERGUSON,

An Officer in the Civil Service of the Gold Coast Colony, for and on behalf of his Excellency Frederic Mitchell Hodgson, administering the Government of the Gold Coast Colony.

Signed sealed and delivered in our presence, the same having been first read over and interpreted to the King, Chiefs, and people who seemed to understand perfectly the meaning, conditions, and scope of the foregoing Treaty.

MAMA GIMALAH,

Sergeant-Major, Gold Coast Constabulary.

HUSSAMOV GAUSATI,

L.C., Gold Coast Constabulary.

APPENDIX E

Document: Treaty of Friendship and Protection made at Kaleo: In PRAAD,
ADM 56/1/201, Wa District Affairs, 1897, [pp.181- 185]

REFERENCE: APPENDIX F
ADM 56/1/201
WA DISTRICT AFFAIRS

E

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND PROTECTION

made at KALEU This tenth day of December One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety-Seven between Her Most Gracious Majesty VICTORIA, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, &c., &c., Her heirs and successors by Her subject Herbert John Collet Leland, an officer in The Civil Service of The Gold Coast Colony acting under instructions received from His Excellency Sir William Edward Maxwell, Knight Commander of the most distinguished order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and commander-in-chief of The Gold Coast Colony, on the one part; and the King, Chiefs, and Principal Headmen of the country of DAGARTI on the other part.

Whereas BASSEY, King of the country of DAGARTI and the Chiefs and Principal Headmen of that country, for and on behalf of themselves, their heirs, successors and people have presented to the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony a request that their country should be placed under the protection of Great Britain and have agreed to enter into a Treaty with Her Majesty, The Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India &c. &c., Her heirs and successors by the said Herbert John Collett Leland acting for that purpose for the said Governor.

Now therefore BASSEY, King of DAGARTI and the Chiefs and Principal men of that country whose names are herein after signed to this Treaty, for themselves, their heirs and successors and the people of DAGARTI on the one part and His Excellency Sir William Maxwell, Knight commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-In-Chief of the Gold Coast Colony, a subject of and representing Her Most Gracious Majesty VICTORIA,

VICTORIA, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India &c., &c., Her heirs and successors, by Herbert John Collett Laland a subject of Her Majesty (acting for the Governor) on the other part, do hereby enter into this Treaty containing the following articles:-

ARTICLE I.

The King of the country of DAGARTI for himself and his lawful successors together with the Chiefs and Principal men of the country of DAGARTI whose names are hereinafter signed and seals affixed, for and on behalf of themselves and their successors and people of DAGARTI hereby place themselves under the protection of Great Britain declaring that they have not entered into any Treaty with any other foreign power.

ARTICLE II.

Her Majesty's subject, the Governor the Gold Coast Colony, for and on behalf of Her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, &c., &c., Her heirs and successors hereby take the country of DAGARTI under the protection of Great Britain.

ARTICLE III.

It is hereby agreed that the King, Chiefs, and Principal men, together with the other people of DAGARTI will not enter into any war or commit any act of aggression on any of the chiefs bordering on their country, by which the trade of the country shall be interrupted, or the safety and property of the subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of England and Empress of India shall be lost, compromised, or endangered, and that the said King, chiefs, and principal men of DAGARTI hereby undertake to refer to the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony acting on behalf of Her Majesty, for

3.

friendly arbitration, any trade or other quarrels in which they may become involved before actually entering upon hostilities.

ARTICLE IV.

Should any difference or dispute accidentally arise between the King of DAGARTI and any of his chiefs and Principal Headmen, or between any of the chiefs and Principal Headmen, it shall be referred to the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony, or to the nearest British authority for the time being, whose decision shall be final and binding upon all parties concerned.

ARTICLE V.

British subjects shall have free access to all parts of DAGARTI and shall have the right to build houses and possess property according to the law in force in the Gold Coast Colony; and they shall have full liberty to carry on such trade or manufacture as may be approved by any officer appointed for the purpose by Her Majesty's Government, and should any difference arise between the aforesaid British subjects and the King, chiefs or Principal Headmen of the country of DAGARTI as to the duties or customs to be paid to the said King, chiefs, or Principal Headmen of the towns in that country by such British subjects, or as to any other matter, that the dispute shall be referred to the officer mentioned in ARTICLE IV, whose decision in the matter shall be binding and final, and that the King, chiefs and Principal Headmen of DAGARTI will not extend the rights hereby ~~granted~~ guaranteed to British subjects to any other persons without the knowledge and consent of such officer.

ARTICLE VI.

In consideration of the protection guaranteed on the part of Great Britain to the King, Chiefs, and principal Headmen and people of DAGARTI, they hereby bind themselves, their heirs, and successors to keep their main roads in good order, that they will encourage trade and give facilities to traders; and will not cede their territory to, or accept a protectorate from, or enter into any agreement, arrangement or treaty with any other foreign Power except through and with the consent of the Government of Her Majesty the Queen Empress.

ARTICLE VII.

The Government of Her Majesty the Queen Empress will not prevent the King of DAGARTI or his chiefs and principal Headmen, and their lawful successors from levying customary revenues appertaining to them according to the laws and customs of their country, nor in the administration thereof; and Her Majesty's Government will respect the habits and customs of the country, but will not permit human sacrifices; and slave dealing when brought to the notice of the Government will be punished according to the laws of the Gold Coast Colony.

ARTICLE VIII.

This Treaty shall come into force from the date hereof, but power is expressly reserved to Her Majesty the Queen Empress to refuse to approve and ratify the same within one year from the date hereof. In witness whereof the parties to this Treaty have hereunto set their hands and affixed their respective seals.

Done in triplicate at KALEU in the country of DAGARTI this tenth day of December in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety seven in the sixty first year of the reign of Her Majesty the Queen Empress.

Names of Signatories	Rank or Title	Their Marks and Seals.
BASSEY	King of Dagarti	x
BANALLI	HEIR APPARENT	x
KIBIEY	Chief of Charrey	x
BAGA	King of Sanzana	x
BORA	King of Zung	x
SAMBOR	Chief of Sambo	x
NYAGTA	Chief of Papoo	x
NATIA	Chief of Kartua	x

(Sgd) Herbert J.C.Leland an officer in the civil service
 Asst. Insptr. of the Gold Coast Colony; for
 Gold Coast Constabulary and on behalf of William Edward
 Maxwell, Governor of the Gold
 Coast Colony.

Signed, sealed and delivered
 in our presence. The same
 having been first read over
 and interpreted to the King,
 Chiefs, and people who seemed
 perfectly to understand the
 meaning, conditions, and scope
 of the foregoing Treaty.

(Sgd) Eric Oleadon Stone?
 A.C.S.
 " ? G.M. Grunchi (1) ?
 " Diechuu Dagarti ?

The Dagarti peope not being
 Mahomedans, This Treaty is
 only made out in English, and
 not in Arabic as well.

(Sgd) Herbert J.C.Leland
 A.I. G.C.C.

Vita

Iddrisu Mahama was born in Wa (Ghana) on 18 January 1955. After completing Middle School he graduated at Tumu Kanton Teachers College in 1974, where Kofi Yankson (his History Tutor) shaped his interest in history. He passed his General Certificate Examinations (G.C.E) Ordinary and Advanced levels, in 1974 and 1978 respectively, and was admitted to the University of Cape Coast in 1986. He obtained a B. A (Hons) Degree in history and a Diploma in Education in 1990 and later worked in various capacities with the Ghana Education Service up to 1996. He enrolled and completed his Master of Philosophy degree in History at the University of Cape Coast in 1999 and returned to the Ghana Education Service. From 2003 to 2005, he was appointed lecturer in the African Studies and Secretariat Department of Wa Polytechnic. In 2005 he was appointed Director of Education and due to his interest in history, got admitted into the Doctor of Philosophy programme at the University of Cape Coast in the 2011/2012 academic year.

His email address: iddrisu mahama 718 @ yahoo.com.