

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

ISLAM AND THE DAGAABA OF THE UPPER WEST
REGION OF GHANA, C. E. 1400 - 2008

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MAY, 2013

DECLARATION

Candidates' Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work 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 Cost.

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ABSTRACT

Dagaaba converted to Christianity in great numbers but resisted Islam when it came. The study seeks to investigate the factors that accounted for Dagaaba acceptance of and resistance to Islam. It also intends to collect and document the oral history of Islam in Dagaabaland in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

A qualitative method of data collection and analysis was employed. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions guide (FGD) and participant observation were applied as research instruments for the data collection. The descriptive research design was also used to interpret the collected primary data.

The author found out that Islam was established in Dagaabaland by non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims. The non-indigenous Muslims, mostly Mande-Yeri, entered Dagaabaland in the sixteenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The indigenous Muslims consisted of Southern Ghana Dagaaba migrant converts, liberated ex-slaves and converts in Dagaabaland. These people were converted to Islam towards the end of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century.

The author discovered that the non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims established Islam through various means and succeeded in converting some Dagaaba to Islam. However, the author also found out that the greatest obstacle to the spread of Islam and the conversion of Dagaaba was the resilience of the Dagaaba traditional religion. The people and the traditional religious authorities remained committed to the ancestral veneration and refused to convert to Islam.

Though Islam failed to create an impact on the Dagaaba, it influenced Dagaaba society culturally.



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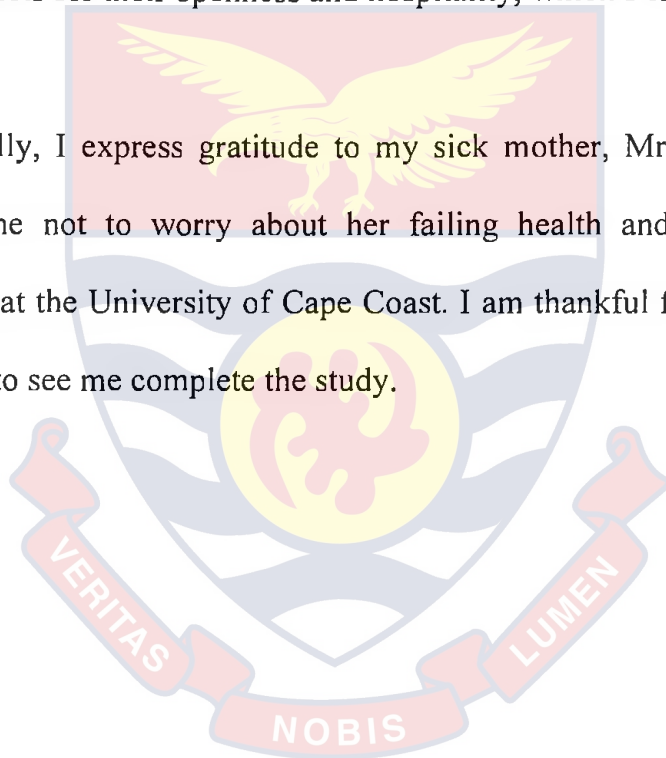
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DEDICATION

In memory of °Abdullāh Kang-e-song

My grandfather and first convert

Of Jirapa-Tampoe to Sunnī Islam



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SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC WORDS AND NAMES

ARABIC CHARACTERS LEFT - ROMAN CHARACTERS RIGHT

ا	a	ط	ṭ
ء	’	ظ	ẓ
ى ا	ā	ع	‘
ب	b	غ	gh
ت	t	ف	f
ث	th	ق	q
ج	j	ك	k
ح	ḥ	ل	l
خ	kh	م	m
د	d	ن	n
ذ	dh	ه ة	h
ر	r	و	w
ز	z	و	ū
س	s	و	au
ش	sh	ى	y
ص	ṣ	ى	ī
ض	ḍ	ى	ay

Adopted from M. I. Al-Kaysi, page 8.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

There are seven ethnic groups in the Upper West Region of Ghana: the Lobi, Birifor, Wille (LoWiile), Waala, Dagaaba, Chakali and Sissala (Kuubuor, 2009; Bin Salih, 2008; Songsore and Denkabe, 1995; Kuukure, 1985; Goody, 1967). Most Dagaaba live in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra districts. It was toward the end of the nineteenth century that the Dagaaba began to embrace Islam. Until then they were Dagaaba traditional religionists. Christianity arrived in Dagaabaland in 1929 and mass conversion of Dagaaba to Christianity started in 1932 (McCoy, 1988).

According to Kpiebaya (1973), in 1960, the Upper West Region had a total population of 400,000 inhabitants out of which 360,000 were Dagaaba (Kpiebaya, 1973). This meant that the Dagaaba formed 90 per cent of the population of the Upper West Region. Of this number 280,000 (70 per cent) were Dagaaba traditional religionists. The Catholics were 85,366 (21.3 per cent) and the Protestants 3,000 (0.8 per cent). The Muslims formed 35,000 (8.8 per cent) (Kpiebaya, 1973). It is obvious that the majority of the Dagaaba were traditional religionists in 1960.

According to the 2000 National Population and Housing Census Report, the total population of the Upper Region was 576,583. Out of this population Dagaaba formed 59.4 per cent, the Waala 16.3 per cent, Grunsi 2.4 per cent, Sissala 16.0 per cent, Akan 3.2 per cent and other ethnic groups collectively constituted 5.0 per cent (Modern Ghana, 2000).

In terms of religious affiliation, on the regional level, there were 185,899 Muslims (32.2 per cent), 204,729 Christians (35.5 per cent), 168,921 African traditional religionists (29.3 per cent), and 13,378 people without religion (2.3 per cent) (Modern Ghana, 2000). At the districts level: Lawra District had 56.4 per cent of Christians, 34.1 per cent of Dagaaba traditional religionists, 9.5 per cent Muslims; Nadawli District: 58.5 per cent Christians, 25.0 per cent Dagaaba traditional religionists and 16.5 per cent Muslims; and Jirapa-Lambussie District had: 42.5 per cent Christians, 44.8 per cent Dagaaba traditional religionists and 12.7 per cent were Muslims. In the Wa District the Muslims formed 44.4 per cent; Christians represented 24.7 per cent and traditional religionists constituted 27.1 per cent (Government of Ghana Official Portal, 2012). The percentage of Dagaaba Muslims in the Nadawli, Jirapa-Lambussie and Lawra Districts was 38.7 per cent (Ministry of Food & Agriculture, 2011).

This statistical survey shows that 149,912 (26.0 per cent) of Dagaaba in the Lawra and Nadawli Districts were Muslims in 2000 excluding the Dagaaba Muslims in the Jirapa-Lambussie District. The statistics also indicate that the Muslim population in the Upper West Region increased from 35,000 (8.8 per cent) in 1960 to 185,899 (32.3 per cent) in 2000. There was therefore, an increase of 150,899 (23.5 per cent). The Lambussie District was carved out of the Jirapa District in 2007 and inaugurated in 2008. In 2000, the population of Jirapa-Lambussie was 96,834 and this formed about 55.8 per cent of the Regional population. The number of Dagaaba in the Jirapa-Lambussie District was 58,601 (60.5 per cent), while the Sissala formed 38,233 (39.5 per cent) (Ministry of Food & Agriculture, 2011).

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It is not possible to determine separately the percentage of Dagaaba and Sissala Muslims in the Jirapa-Lambussie District as at 2000. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are Muslims (12.7 per cent) in the Jirapa-Lambussie District, in the Nadawli District (16.5 per cent), and in the Lawra District (9.5 per cent). It is against this background that the author seeks to study the establishment of Islam among the Dagaaba in the Nadawli, Jirapa, and Lawra Districts of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

The Mande-*Yeri* arrived in the Wa region in the fifteenth (Der, 1999) and in the sixteenth century (Clarke, 1982). In their migration to the Wa region, some of them passed through Dagaabaland. This means that Islam entered Dagaabaland in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Thus the fifteenth century is the start-period of the study. The start-period is backed by a document entitled, “*Ibtidā’ Dīn Wa fī ‘Am 875 ilā ‘Am 1382* [‘The Beginning of Religion in Wa in the year 875 ([1470/1 A.D) to the year 1382 (1962/3 A.D.)]” (Wilks, 1989, p. 73). The document was written in 1963 by the Friday Limam Siddīq b. ‘Abd-al-Mu’min. According to this document, Islam entered the Wa region in the fifteen century.

In 2008, the Muslims of the Nadawli District formed the “Association of Nadawli District Imāms and Muslims” (ANDIM) to support Dagaaba Muslims to be self-administering, self-supporting and self-propagating. The formation of ANDIM in 2008 was a sign of the growth of Islam in Dagaabaland and Dagaaba Muslims’ desire to be self-reliant. The year 2008, therefore, limits the time-frame of the study. Also in 2008, Lambussie was inaugurated as a separate district from the Jirapa District and for this reason the study is restricted to the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra Districts of the

Dagaabaland. Hence, the time-span of the study is from C.E. 1400 – 2008. In 2012, the Lawra District was divided into the Lawra and Nandom Districts, and the Nadawli District into the Nadawli and Daffiama-Bussie-Issa Districts. In spite of these recent divisions, the study will focus on the old Lawra and Nadawli Districts.

1.2. Problem statement

The Muslims in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra Districts form a minority. Secondly, Christianity which arrived in Dagaabaland in 1929 after Islam, which came in the 1400s, won many converts among the Dagaaba (McCoy, 1988). This study investigates why the Dagaaba converted to Christianity in great numbers but resisted Islam. In other words, the study investigates the factors that accounted for Dagaaba's acceptance of and resistance to Islam.

In addition, there is no conscious and comprehensive study of Sunnī Islam among the Dagaaba in the Upper West Region. Hence knowledge of Sunnī Islam among the Dagaaba is difficult to obtain. It is for this reason that the author collected and documented the oral history of Islam in Dagaabaland for the sake of publicity and posterity.

Furthermore, some academic works have been done on the Dagaaba and their culture: (Lentz 2006), Tengan (1994), Goody (1967, 1955), (Rattray (1932). Works on the history of the Dagaaba have also been undertaken by scholars such as Der (1999, 1989, 1989ms, 1983), McCoy (1988), Naameh (1986), Tuurey (1982), Nobabaare (1978), Dasah (1974). Dagaaba Christian scholars have also written on Dagaaba traditional religion and Christianity:

Mwinlaa (2005), Suon Dery (2005), Kpisi (1996), Baky (1991), Kuukure (1985) and Kpiebaya (1973). These scholars brought to light the importance of Dagaaba and Christian traditions in the life of the people of Northwestern Ghana. However, little empirical study has been conducted on the Islamic tradition in Dagaabaland. The author, therefore, seeks to identify the agents for the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland, the trade routes through which Islam entered Dagaabaland, the reasons for the acceptance and rejection of Islam and the interplay between Dagaaba traditional religion and Islam.

1.3.0. Objectives of the study

- 1.3.1. The main objective of the research was to collect and document the oral history of Islam in Dagaabaland.
- 1.3.2. Investigate the means for the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland.
- 1.3.3. Identify the agents in the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland.
- 1.3.4. Look at the challenges the agents faced in the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland.
- 1.3.5. Assess the factors that influenced Dagaaba to accept or resist Islam.
- 1.3.6. Examine the aftermath of the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland.

1.4. Significance of the study

Lewis (1966), in *Islam in Tropical Africa* recommends that in Islamic studies, the final plea must be for more intensive field research on actual

Muslim @ University of Cape Coast <https://study.eduhq.com> The significance of this study is the fact that it is a case study of the Dagaaba Muslim community in the Upper West Region of Ghana in order to add knowledge to the history of Islam in the Upper West Region.

First, the documentation of the history of Islam among the Dagaaba prevents it from disappearing into oblivion after the demise of the older generation of Dagaaba Muslims. Second, the documentation is a source of historical knowledge for the Dagaaba youth and future literate generations. Third, it also stimulates interest in further research in the history of Islam among other ethnic groups in the Upper West Region and in Ghana in general. Fourth, the study serves as a source material for authors, students of history, students of comparative study of religion, missionaries and the general reader. Fifth, it also creates awareness among Christians, Muslims and Dagaaba Traditionalists of the need to promote inter-religious dialogue in their communities. Sixth, it dispels the misconception that Christianity is for the Dagaaba while Islam is a religion only for the Waala. Seventh, the study also has relevance to the politician. The politician comes to terms with the fact that among the Dagaaba there are three religious traditions, the indigenous, Christian and Islamic traditions. He is inclusive and integrative in his policy-making and implementation of his development projects, and circumspective in his campaign strategies. Finally, the study contributes to the knowledge of Islamic history in Ghana.

1.5. Theoretical framework

Religion has always been a subject of social enquiry or a field of study. Consequently, one finds all kinds of people in diverse types of scientific

disciplines, [University of Cape Town](https://www.unisa.ac.za/), who <https://www.unisa.ac.za/> is involved in the study of religion.

One advantage of such inter-disciplinary and multi-interest approach to the study of religion, according to Assimeng (1989), is that religion is now studied by “scholars from different approaches, different suppositions, and different research assumptions, faiths, and perspectives” (Assimeng, 1989, p. 2). Such diverse studies lead to accumulated diverse research results and this enables students of religion to obtain more information about religion, which might not be possible if the study of religion were the prerogative of a few specialists. The outcome of diverse research results obtained by the different scholars is due to the fact that authors adopt different theoretical frameworks and methods.

The disadvantage of the multi-disciplinary and multi-interest approach means that different scholars will study religion with different aims or objectives, and this obviously will lead to divergent interpretations which may confuse the student of religion. To overcome this problem, the study of religion must aim at “empathetic neutrality” (Agyemang, 2010, p. 23), which distinguishes the author from the believer. The author must guard against the danger of crossing from the border of being an author into the domain of becoming a convert.

It is for this reason that the author adopted the phenomenology of religion as the theoretical framework for this study. Religion is a phenomenon, that is, it is empirical or observable. As a phenomenon, it is religious, historical and universal. As a religious phenomenon, it is a human experience that is “supra-empirical”. It is a historical phenomenon because it is concerned with factors and institutions which shape religion in a given area. Hence, the understanding of the religious phenomenon will always come about in relation

to history. The manifestation of the “sacred” takes place in some historical situation. Even the most personal and transcendent mystical experiences are affected by the age in which they occur. But religious history goes beyond the historical facts to the meaning of the facts. Thus this study is not just about the history of Islam among the Dagaaba but the religious history of Islam among the Dagaaba. It is universal since it is found in all societies.

The phenomenology of religion is adopted because according to Agyemang, the discipline of the study of religion must be scientific. By this he implies that the method the author uses to collect and analyze data must be empirical, impartial or objective, verifiable, and it must not be based on value-judgment (Agyemang, 2010). But the question one may ask is whether an objective and scientific study of religion is really possible seeing that religion is a subjective affair. Agyemang is positive and says that an objective study of religion is possible since religion expresses itself in tangible forms, and the phenomenon of religion is the aspect of religion that is observable (Agyemang, 2010). To ensure a scientific and objective study of religion, Agyemang advocates the use of a multi-disciplinary approach. In other words, disciplines like sociology, psychology and anthropology should be employed in doing phenomenological study of religion. However, the author is of the view that a scientific study of religion is achievable through the use of proper methods but an objective study may still betray some underlying biases.

The phenomenological approach to the study of religion, according to James (1995), first owes its conceptualization and development to Pierre Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye in 1887. For James, the phenomenology of religion is concerned with the experiential aspect of religion; it describes the

religious phenomena consistent with the orientation of the worshippers; it views religion as being made up of different components, and studies these components across religious traditions so that an understanding of them can be gained (James, 1995). Echoing the view of de la Saussaye, James says that it is the task of the phenomenology of religion to interpret the various ways in which the “sacred” appears to human beings in the world, and the ways in which humans understand and care for that which is revealed to them. Employing the terminology of Hegel, de la Saussaye divided his science of religion into two areas of investigation, “essence” and “manifestations”, which are approached through investigations in philosophy and history respectively. For de la Saussaye, it is thus the task of phenomenology to prepare historical data for philosophical analysis through “a collection, a grouping, an arrangement, and a classifying of the principal groups of religious conceptions” (James, 1995, p. 66).

Like de la Saussaye, W. B. Kristensen argues that phenomenology of religion seeks the “meaning” of religious phenomena, that is, the meaning that the religious phenomena has for the believers themselves. Furthermore, Kristensen argues that phenomenology is not complete in grouping or classifying the phenomena according to their meaning, but also in the act of understanding them. For him, “phenomenology has as its objects to come as far as possible into contact with, and to understand, the extremely varied and divergent religious data” (James, 1995, p. 66).

Gerardus van der Leeuw, on the other hand, says that the task of phenomenology is to discern the nature of religion as a profound reflection on the human condition, the ability to transform and be transformed cross-

information of University of Cape Coast to <https://uicent.org/> confirms the existence of Islam in the Upper West Region in general, and in the Dagaabaland in particular. Levtzion (1969) writing three years later spoke of an increase in the Muslim population in the North and in the South of Ghana during the first-half of the twentieth-century. He attributed the reason for the increase in the number of Muslims in Southern Ghana to the seasonal migrations of northerners to the south. Levtzion, however, did not give the cause for the increase in the Muslim population in Northern Ghana during the colonial period.

The increase certainly did not come through the conversion of the indigenous people because Levtzion admitted that “though the number of Moslems in the North increased during the colonial period, the majority of the population in northern Ghana are not Muslems” (Levtzion, 1969, p. 310). Even the minority who were Muslims were confined to the courts of the native chiefs where Islam was “integrated into the traditional political and social” (Levtzion, 1969, p. 310) system. The increase might have been due to the influx of West African Muslim migrants from the north of Northern Ghana on transit to the cocoa farms and mining towns in Southern Ghana. This further explains the reason for the increase of the Muslim population in Southern Ghana. The connection between increase in Muslim population and the seasonal migrations of northerners to Southern Ghana is of prime importance to the author. Is there any relation between Dagaaba migration to Southern Ghana and the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland? The author addresses this question in the study. The author also investigates why the minority Muslim population influenced the political and social system of the indigenous states

but failed to convert the majority population in the North to Islam during the colonial period. On the other side of the coin, the author likewise examines why the “majority of the population in northern Ghana” (Levtzion, 1969, p. 310), especially the Dagaaba, remained non-Muslim for a long time.

Hiskett (1984) underlined the fact that autochthonous people living between the area north of the Wa, Dagomba, and Mamprusi states and south of the Mossi state were never islamized until the nineteenth century. This is surprising since the Mande-*Yeri* Muslims also known as *Kantosi* migrated from the east of Wa and settled in this area, which Levtzion called the “Grunshiland” (Levtzion, 1980, p. 147). One would have expected that the *Kantosi* would have converted the indigenes to Islam but they did not. On the contrary, Hiskett says that their impact on the local population was counterproductive since some of them abandoned the faith and converted to the religion of the local people. Others remained Muslims but did not see the need to propagate Islam among the local population.

Why did the autochthonous people remain un-islamized for a long time? What could have been the factors which accounted for the aloofness of the *Kantosi* Muslims as regards proselytism? How come that the autochthonous people of the Grunshiland rather converted some of the *Kantosi* to the traditional religion? Hiskett advanced three reasons for this curious situation. First, he thought that the political organization of the autochthonous people lacked a chiefly class which could attract Muslims to their society. Secondly, that these people were short-distance traders and their country did not fall within the main trade routes and, consequently, their contact with Muslim traders was minimal. Finally, Hiskett said that the *jihād* of Al-Hājj Maḥmūd

and the [University of Cape Coast](https://www.ucc.ac.za/) the first and second highest of the nineteenth century respectively, created a hostile environment which did not favour the conversion of the autochthonous people to Islam (Hiskett, 1984).

The political factors which Hiskett presented as causes for the non-islamization of the autochthonous people of the Grunshiland are unsatisfactory. Lewis (1966) categorically stated that the distinction between centralized and uncentralized states cannot be the criterion for the diffusion of Islam. The facts on the ground proved otherwise. Lewis gave examples of the Arab Bedouin, the Berbers, and Somali, and other Hamites who had no centralized political system, yet converted to Islam. Lewis further stated that the autochthonous people such as the Somali found it easier to adopt the minimal criteria of the Muslim identity, such as the five pillars of faith than to accept the “detailed prescriptions of the Islamic law” (Lewis, 1966, p.34). Hence the view of Hiskett that people of centralized states are more prone to Islam than autochthonous people is untenable.

The same argument was advanced by Trimingham (1959) to explain the late spread of Islam into the Central Sudan region between Kanem and Nilotic Sudan. Trimingham thought that the lack of “state systems” in this region was the reason why Islam could not penetrate into those societies. Similarly, he thought that the inability of Islam to make inroads among the Ibo of South eastern Nigeria was because there were no “towns and ruling classes to realize the advantages of Islam” (Trimingham, 1969, p.27). Goody (1967) also blamed the lack of Mande-*Yeri* missionary activities among the Dagaaba as due to lack of any indigenous political system. According to Goody, the “segmentary systems in the north-west gave little opportunities of successful entry” to the

Mande-Yeri (University of Cape Coast) Further Doc said that the Mande-Yeri using the *top-to-bottom approach* concentrated all missionary efforts on the ruling classes and so had no impact on the Dagaaba outside the ruling estate. But were there other reasons beside the lack of centralized political system which explained why the Dagaaba were not brought under the influence of the “Mande-Yeri missionaries’ activities”? The author investigates why the Mande-Yeri in the Wa state did not spread Islam in Dagaabaland.

The economic factor as advanced by Hiskett as the second reason for the lack of islamization among the autochthonous people is well supported by other scholars. Wilks (1989), Clarke (1982) and Levtzion (1968) testify that Islam is connected with trade and cities, and Trimingham (1959) emphatically stated that “Islam spreads easily among towns people”...and “makes immediate appeal to the urban mind, individualistic and wide-visioned” (Trimingham, 1959, p.25). In Trimingham’s view, this means that people in the cities are more open to new ideas like Islam. Hence these scholars and Hiskett connect the spread of Islam with towns and trade. On the basis of this argument, one can say that if the people of the Grunshiland lived out of the way of the major trade routes, this might explain why they remained non-Muslims for a long time. However, Der (1998) said that the lack of trade routes as an excuse for the absence of Islam among autochthonous societies cannot be said of the Dagaaba of the Upper West Region. According to Der, there was a trade route that ran from Ouagadougou to Bobo Dioulasso, and across the Black Volta River to Lawra, and then to Wa. As far as trade and commerce were concerned, Der is convinced that the area now covered by the Upper West Region was crisscrossed by a network of trade routes. This had the potential to

attract Muslims to Cape Coast and the Wa region through the Dagaabaland. On this evidence, the author thinks that there must be other reasons beside economic factors, which accounted for the non-islamization of the autochthonous people, such as the Dagaaba.

Concerning *jihād* and slave raids as factors for the lack of the spread of Islam among autochthonous societies as advocated by Hiskett, one must admit that they can have both negative and positive consequences. Der (1998) shows that some of the Sissala of the Upper West Region became Muslims as a result of Babatu's slave raiding. Young men and boys who were forcibly conscripted into the army or who were captured as slaves later converted to Islam. *Jihād* and slave raiding can, therefore, be deterrents to conversion to Islam as Hiskett postulated, but they can also be means to force people to convert to Islam as was demonstrated by the activities of the nineteenth century *jihād* movement (Trimingham, 1959). The author has investigated if the Zabarima raids in the second half of the nineteenth century were some of the reasons why the Dagaaba were not inclined to Islam for a long time. Or could the resilience of Dagaaba Traditional Religion be the reason why the Dagaaba were not inclined to Islam? These are questions that the author sought to answer in this study.

Trimingham (1959) writing on the progress of Islam in Northern Ghana claimed that Islam gained a hold over the Dagomba ruling classes and had penetrated some Mamprusi groups. He went on to say that Islam had claimed all the Waala and "has influenced Dagati [Dagaaba] and Lobe [Lobi]" (Trimingham, 1959, p.19). Trimingham does not say to what extent Islam had influenced the "Dagati" and the "Lobe" in Dagaabaland. The author looks at

the establishment of Islam in Dagaaba and find out if it has any influence on the Dagaaba as claimed by Trimingham.

Rattray (1932) studied the social, political and historical structure of the tribes of Northern Ghana, and as a historical anthropologist he also brought out the important role Muslims played in the establishment of the Wa kingdom. Also, the part played by Muslims in the state ceremonies of the Mamprusi and Dagomba as well as the influence of Islam on their funeral performances. However, Rattray did not make a comprehensive study of Islam among the autochthonous societies of the Northern Territories such as the Dagaaba. It is in this regard that the author examines Islam among the Dagaaba of the Upper West Region.

Bin Salih (2008) states that the various Mande princes, traders and clerics entered the Wa region and settled briefly in some Dagaaba villages before proceeding to the east of Wa. This information is very crucial to the author. The question now is: Did these migrant Mande Muslims who made stops-over among the Dagaaba en route to the Wa area propagate Islam among the local people? The *Tagara* and *Şalīfu Ziiri* who stayed back at Jirapa, what happened to their Islamic faith since there were no practising Muslims in Jirapa before the nineteenth century? The answers to these questions are very vital to the author and they are examined in this study.

Abobo (1994) traces how the various clans came to settle in the present Jirapa Traditional area. What is important in his work is the arrival of the Mande-*Yeri* at Jirapa. According to Abobo, the Mande-*Yeri* were late-comers into Northwestern Ghana. They intermarried with the indigenous Mole-Dagbane-Dagaare speaking people and adopted their customs, language,

farming process and religion. Abobo seems to indicate that Mande-Yeri were also Muslims but they were more interested in trading rather than in the spread of Islam among the Dagaaba. This view and explanation of Abobo is supported by Der (1989), Wilks (1989) and Kuukure (1985) and elucidate why the Mande migrants of Jirapa ceased to become Muslims while their compatriots in Wa are Muslims till today. The author examines the Islam of the Mande-Yeri of Jirapa.

Bari (2009) also traces the arrival of the different batches of Mande and Hausa traders, warriors and clerics to Wa and how they integrated with the *tengdaaba* (Custodians of the earth shrine and owners of the land) and the *nabiiri* (princes) to form the Muslim community of Wa. Bari also talks of the spread of Islam among the Sissala. He explained that Islam spread among the Sissala through the influence of a chief, a head of a clan who first converted to Islam or through the influence of a Muslim relative. He acknowledges the presence of the different Islamic theological sects, the *Tijāniyya*, *Ahlu-Sunna wal-Jamā'a* and the *Aḥmadiyya* Muslim Mission among the Sissala, and how these sects exist in peaceful co-existence with the Sissala traditional religionists. Bari, however, believes that the main factor which accounted for the conversion of many Sissala to Islam is the ability of Islam to accommodate Sissala traditions and cultural practices. Though Bari wrote about Islam among the Waala and Sissala of the Upper West Region, he said nothing about Islam among the Dagaaba. This is the reason why the author documents the oral history of Islam among the Dagaaba. In addition, if Sissala traditional religion was instrumental in the conversion of the Sissala, what is the role of Dagaaba

traditional religion in Dagaaba's acceptance or rejection of Islam? The author considers this question.

Before the Dagaaba Muslims became Muslims they adhered to the Dagaaba traditional religion. A brief survey of the Dagaaba traditional religion helps to assert the degree of Dagaaba Muslims' conversion to Islam and the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion on their Islamic beliefs and practices. Bekye (1991) asserts that the Dagaaba traditional religion was a preparation for the Dagaaba Christians' reception of the Gospel. He does not mention anything about the presence of Islam among the Dagaaba. His work, however, helps in understanding the religion of the pre-Dagaaba Muslims. It was the interest of the author to find out if Dagaaba traditional religion was also a "divine preparation" for the Dagaaba Muslims' reception of the Qur'ān or a stumbling rock in the way of Islam.

McCoy (1988) declares the flexibility and openness of the Dagaaba to the reception of new ideas and new spiritual "powers". For him the Dagaaba embraced Christianity because the 'Christian God' proved himself to be a "God of Rain" and a "healing God" (McCoy, 1988, pp. 117, 121), and this was the reason why some of the Dagaaba renounced their traditional religion and embraced Christianity. Although McCoy did not study the presence of Islam among the Dagaaba, his work gives the author the chance to compare the conversion of Dagaaba Christians with the conversion of the Dagaaba Muslims. Why did many Dagaaba convert to Christianity and not to Islam, considering the fact that Islam came to Northwestern Ghana in the fifteenth century (Wilks, 1989), while Christianity came as late as 1929? Furthermore, the British colonial administration, according to McCoy, had declared Wa a

reserved zone for Islam, and at first, resisted any missionary work among the Waala. The author examines why, despite this amicable colonial policy toward Islam, the Mande-*Yeri* of the Wa kingdom never capitalized on this opportunity to propagate Islam in the Dagaabaland.

Abdul-Hamid (2002), Vikor (2000) Ryan (1978) and Wilks (1966) attest to the relation between the *Karamo* (Qur'ān teacher) and the practice of divination and the making of amulets. Abdul-Hamid traced the origin of the practice of divination and amulet making to the *Karamos* of the Mali and Songhay empires. It was in these empires that the *Karamos* acquired the art of divination and amulet making and spread it to the Voltaic region. In this study the role of amulets as a means of propagating Islam in Dagaabaland is examined.

Owusu-Ansah (2000) placed the origin of divination and amulet making within the context of the cosmological world view of the African. For Owusu-Ansah, the demand for divination and amulet making arose from the need for protective and curative devices (2000). This necessarily led to the need or the emergence of specialists who would mediate between the visible and invisible domains and to protect society from spiritual pollution (2000). Thus, the indigenous practitioner or medicine man or soothsayer became indispensable in society. According to Owusu-Ansah, the arrival of Islam in West Africa created a dichotomy between the traditional medicine man on the one hand, and the *Karamo* on the other; and in other areas, to an accommodation of both modes of redressing imbalance in society (2000). The ability of the Muslim *Karamos* to make amulets made them very influential in the chiefs' courts and in society. Through the services of amulets and charms

they islamized certain elements of the chieftaincy institution and won the common people to Islam. The author looks at the relation between *Karamamine* (a Dagaare word for Qur'ānic teachers and Muslim supernatural practitioners) and the Dagaaba chiefs, and the influence of amulets in winning them and their subjects to Islam.

Islam did not spread into the middle Volta Basin only through the channels of trade in gold and kola, the chiefly class, Muslim traders and *Karamos* but also through slaves (Wilks, 1989, Hiskett, 1984, Clarke, 1982, Levtzion, 1968). Ryan (1978) underlined the important role Muslim Hausa slaves of non-Yoruba descent also played in spreading Islam among the Yoruba during the eighteenth century. The role of slaves as propagators of Islam is pertinent to the study. For example, Azumah (2000) says that the contact of the coastal areas of the Gold Coast with Islam was with freed slaves from the West Indies who were resettled there in the 1830s. These resettled freed slaves spread Islam through the witness of faith. The local people saw their good way of living and became attracted to Islam. They also married the indigenous women and gave birth to Muslim children.

Among the Dagaaba, the impact of slaves raiding in the spread of Islam may be important. According to Der (1998), the effects of the activities of Babatu and Sarantieni Mori on the Dagaaba were traumatic and unforgettable. Economically, the Zabarima's raids for slaves both stimulated the demand for more slaves in the slave markets and the growth of the caravan trade to Northern Ghana, particularly from Mossi and Hausaland. Slave markets like Walewale, Gambaga, Daboya, Yendi, Salaga, Bole and Wa grew in importance. Muslim traders settled in these markets for the purpose of the slave

trade (Der 1998). Religiously, the Zabarima raids on the other hand, helped to spread Islam among the Grunshi, especially the Sissala. Many of the Sissala who joined the Zabarima armies learned to pray and were converted to Islam. Traditionalists who were captured by the Zabarima and retained as slaves also converted to Islam. This explains why many Muslims are found among the Sissala, apart from the Waala, in the Upper West Region of Ghana (Der, 1998). The author examines the role of ex-slaves of Babatu and Sarantieni Mori in the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland.

1.7. Research methodology

The qualitative methods were employed in the research. Qualitative method tries “to elicit sensitive information on determinants of behaviour such as attitudes and social norms, as well as the cultural context in which these behaviours take place” (Helitzer-Allen et al., 1994, p. 75). Qualitative method is all about exploring issues, understanding phenomena, and asking questions. The historical, descriptive, interpretative approach was employed to analyze the data collected to come out with the research findings. The historical research method allows one to discuss past and present events in the context of the present condition, and to reflect and provide possible answers to current issues and problems. Through the historical approach the data was collected, grouped and arranged. This gave the author the chance to appreciate the form of Islam practised among the Dagaaba without any pre-conceived ideas or prejudices on the part of the author.

The qualitative method was also used because it is a case study of Islam among the Dagaaba in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra districts of the Upper

West Region. The method is also comparative for it enabled the author to compare certain aspects of the Dagaaba religious culture with Islam and to draw out certain similarities and dissimilarities. It is analytical since it analyzed the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion on the acceptance or rejection of Islam among the Dagaaba.

1.8. Research design

The exploratory research design was adopted for the study. This design is suitable when there is little or no information on the subject of study. This approach allowed for interviewees to be asked about their first contact with Islam, their motivation for conversion, their beliefs and practices, the value of Islam in their lives, and their relation with other believers. The interviewees were willing to share their knowledge, experiences and ideas with the author.

1.9. Target population

The research was carried out among Muslim individuals, families and communities in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra districts of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Muslims living among other ethnic groups, such as the Waala, the Sissala and the Lobi are not part of this study. The author spent 2009 and 2010 surveying a number of Muslim communities in Dagaabaland, and 2011 for data collection in the field, and 2012-2013 for the write-up of the thesis.

The research instrument used for the data collection included participant observation, which is “a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place” (Kumar, 1999, p. 105). The participant observation approach is very useful in the study of largely non-literate communities. This approach helped the author to elicit the meaning of religious beliefs and practices through empathic or sympathetic understanding.

There is fear that an author’s ability to understand the experiences of a culture may be inhibited if he observes without participating. But there are three reasons which critics may advance against the author using participant observation. First, as a Catholic priest the interviewees may have had doubts about the honesty of the author participating in certain religious activities of Muslims. Second, participant observation method requires the author to take part in the activities of the religious group at the same time as he records his observations, and this can distract his full attention and participation. Third, there is danger in the withdrawal process for one never emerges quite the same person that entered the process. In other words, there is the danger of a dramatic and profound experience which can lead to conversion to the other religion. This is what Friday M. Mbon, calls the “Theory of reflexive effect” (personal communication conversation, September 29, 2010 at University of Cape Coast). The “Theory of reflexive effect” has negative and positive effects. Negatively, it can make the author throw away his faith or change his religion. This danger has kept some scholars away from undertaking purely

secular religious studies. Positively, it can harden the author, it can strengthen his faith or make him firmer in his faith.

Despite the above fears or dangers, the author used participant observation in which he observed, watched and listened to Muslims during three “shaving of the head of the new baby ceremonies”, one wedding ceremony, two funeral performances and one fortieth-day funeral performance. The observations of these Muslim activities were carried out under natural conditions without using “controlled observation” (Kumar, 1999, p. 107).

Interviews were also used as methods of collecting data from Muslim individuals, families and communities. The author employed both in-depth interviews with key informants (KIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). Using these tools the author had the freedom to formulate questions spontaneously during interviews. These approaches also allowed the interviewer flexibility in what he asked respondents. This was an asset as it elicited extremely rich information. In-depth interview is necessary to elicit good data on actual knowledge and experience (Helitzer-Allen et al., 1994). The interviewees of the in-depth interviews were residents believed to be able to provide valuable insights. The duration of interviews lasted between one and two hours in the local language (Dagaare) because most of the interviewees were not able to speak English.

The focus group discussions were conducted outdoors, and in average, each took about two and a half hours in length. Focus group discussions can be used to elicit more socially correct answers and to produce good data on social norms though it may not produce good data on deviations from these norms (Helitzer-Allen et al., 1994). Focus group discussions are also appropriate for

© University of Cape Coast <https://uicc.edu.gh/vmlj> facilitating the discussion of unfamiliar topics because the elderly members of the group often set the ball rolling and in this way, encouraged the active participation of shyer members. A checklist of thematic topics (semi-structured open-ended questions) guided the focus group discussions. The checklist probed participants about several different topics related to the study objectives. The checklist was designed to be flexible; new questions were added as necessary during the data collection process. The narrative form of recording was employed. One advantage of narrative recording is that it provides a deeper insight into the phenomenon or the interaction under observation. However, there is the danger of the author being biased in his observation and, obviously, the interpretations and conclusions drawn from the observation may also be biased.

The author tape-recorded all interviews and stored them in folders, video-taped selected activities, and took snap-shots of symbols, dresses and mosques. In conducting the interviews, the privacy and sentiments of interviewees were duly respected. Interviewees were also told of the desire to record the information for purely academic purposes. There was no resistance or protest from them because Dagaaba believe in the power of the written word. They say: "Book no lie!" They were eager and willing to have their words written down or recorded. Some of them were too glad to hear their own voice on the play-back.

1.11. Sample size

The purposive sampling method was used to select some key interviewees because of their active participation in the Islamic tradition for

some time. The interviewed included community elders who are conversant with family and community oral Muslim history. Such Muslims included the Imāms, Muslim-Chiefs, Muslim family heads, *Karamamine* (Qur'ān teachers), and Muslim women leaders. The chiefs and the *Tengdaaba* (Custodians of the earth-shrine and owners of the land) in some Dagaaba villages were also interviewed. The *Tengdaana* usually belongs to the family that first settled in an area, and as such he has reliable information about Muslims' presence and activities in his area. The chief is a "chief" for all peoples in his jurisdiction. He has good knowledge about the activities of Muslims in his land. Moreover, some of the Chiefs and the *tengdaaba* who are non-Dagaaba Muslims will know better the relations between the Dagaaba Muslims and the Dagaaba traditional religionists.

In the focus group discussion, five Muslim elders from Loho, Kaleo, Takpo, Sankana, Yiziri, Ombo and Zangbogu were interviewed; six women of Bu: two Muslims, two traditional religionists and two Christians were interviewed; five members of the "Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Ghana" (FOMWAG) at Jirapa and Lawra were interviewed; five Muslim women leaders of Boo, Sombo and three Muslim women at Ullo; the *Tengdaana* and five elders of Duong, Daffiama and Ping were also interviewed. Five traditional elders were also interviewed at Kyang. In the in-depth interview, the author interviewed forty imāms, two Fulani, two Hausa, eight Muslim women leaders, two Muslim chiefs, two traditional chiefs, two *tengdaaba*, two Wangara-Zongo chiefs, and two Mossi-Zongo Chiefs.

The data collected were translated into English. The transcripts from both the focus group discussions and interviews were analyzed manually by thematic content analysis and guided by the research objectives.

1.13. Delimitation

The study is limited to settlements with Dagaaba Muslims in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra districts. Dagaaba in the Wa kingdom and in the Sissalaland did not form part of the study. Arabic words are transliterated and the meaning given in bracket. Some Arabic names are transliterated as much as possible according to the Arabic form, while others according to the way indigenous Muslim pronounced them.

1.14. Limitations

The author did not study the percentage of Muslims, Christians and traditional religionists in Dagaabaland since the qualitative method was used. The worst time to conduct interviews in a village was to arrive there on Wa market day. This is the day for villagers to go to Wa market to buy their provisions for the week and to sell their farm products. The evening time was not suitable for the women since that is the time for them to prepare the evening meal. The author also discovered that it was not appropriate to hold focus group discussion with men and women. The women felt shy to speak and culturally, women in the presence of men are to hear and not to be heard. This hindered women's active participation in the mixed focus group discussion. Consequently, the focus group discussions were conducted separately for the

women. Few Dagaaba Muslim women were interviewed as key informants. This is due to the fact that women were converted to Islam through marriage. Their husbands converted them to Islam and also act as their educators. As a result some women converts do not know much about Islamic history in the village or in the other villages and so could not give much information on Islam in Dagaabaland.

During the men's focus group discussions, it was also observed that people never spoke without the permission of the most senior person in the group or when the most senior gave his views no one was willing to add anything or to contradict him. What the most senior person of the group said was considered the collective voice and the unanimous view. Thus respect for authority which came out in the research findings as one of the reasons which hindered the acceptance of Islam among Dagaaba young men also militated against the active participation of Muslim youth in focus group discussions that involved elders and young men. However, this did not affect the results of the research findings since the author foresaw this problem and encouraged the young ones to ask and answer questions freely without fear.

Another limitation was the dating of events. Dagaaba like other people in Northern Ghana have a six-day week and follow the lunar calendar which is shorter than the solar calendar. Consequently, someone may say that he is eighty years old while in reality he is sixty years old. Moreover, time is reckoned according to events. These factors made it difficult to find out the exact time when someone converted to Islam or when Islam came to a village. Thus the study was short of dates of events because it was basically oral history

and so no dates were available. Finally, the ages of people interviewed were not recorded.

1.15. Data and sources

The primary data for the study were gathered from focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, unstructured interviews, participant observations, photographs and video-recordings and personal communications. Secondary data were gathered from the internet, books, documents, journals, dissertations, theses, newspapers and documents.

1.16. Organization of the study

The work is organized in six chapters: Chapter One is the introduction, which includes the background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, literature review, methodology, research design, target population, research instrument, sample size, data analysis, delimitations, limitations and data sources. Chapter Two focuses on the introduction of Islam in Northern and Southern Ghana with stress on the means and agents of the spread of Islam. Chapter Three is concerned with Dagaaba locality, identity, origins, language, organizations and traditional religion. Chapter Four is a presentation of the research findings on the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland and the challenges from Dagaaba traditional religion. Chapter Five investigates the aftermath after the establishment Islam in Dagaabaland. The general Conclusion shows how the research objectives were achieved.

INTRODUCTION OF ISLAM IN GHANA

2.1. Introduction

This Chapter has two sections: in the first section, “Introduction of Islam in Northern Ghana”, the author shows how Muslim traders, scholars and warriors penetrated the Volta Basin because of trade and spread Islam and Islamic scholarship, and founded states. Some of the Mande and Hausa traders who migrated to the Middle Volta Basin later penetrated Dagaabaland where they settled among the Dagaaba. This section thus forms the background to Chapter Four, which deals with the role of non-indigenous Muslims in the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland. The second section, “Introduction of Islam in Southern Ghana” investigates the factors and conditions which favoured the migrations of the various Muslim ethnic groups into Southern Ghana. It also examines the migration of Dagaaba in particular and other West African nationals in general, to Southern Ghana in search of better life and business. Some of the Dagaaba immigrants in Southern Ghana would convert and return to Dagaabaland to propagate Islam. Hence the study of the second section of this chapter is significant to understanding Chapter Four.

2.2.0. Introduction of Islam in Northern Ghana

This subsection looks at the identity of the Mande Muslims and their role in the spread of Islam in Northern Ghana. It also examines trade and the role of chiefs in the propagation of Islam in Northern Ghana. Finally, the

subsection shows how the “spirituality” of Al Hajj Salim Suwari inspired the trading and missionary activities of the Mande Muslims in Northern Ghana.

2.2.1. The Mande

The “Mande” of the Mali Empire became Muslims through trading contacts with the Muslim Soninke of ancient Ghana, and the Berber and Arab Muslim traders of North Africa (Kenny, 2000b). They were originally farmers and believers in spirits and the ancestors. Seeing how Muslim traders were successful they wanted to have the same status like the Muslim traders. So they abandoned their traditional religions and became Muslims, though the Mande belief-system continued to influence their life (Green, 1984). In the thirteenth century, they developed a network of trade routes between the Niger Bend in the north and the forest region to the south, from the Atlantic in the west to the Songhay country in the Middle Niger, and to Kanem in the east (Tapiero, 1969). They formed a specialized trading class known as “Juula” (trader) (Wilks, 2000; Green, 1984). The word “Juula” according to Green, also refers to a Muslim trader who speaks the Manding language as his first language. The word also designates the “Juula” as a distinct Mande ethnic group different from other Manding groups. In the course of time, the word “Juula” became synonymous with “Muslim” as most “Juula” traders were Muslims (Green, 1984; see also Trimingham, 1969).

Today the “Juula” live in several West African countries: Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso and Ghana (Ryan, 1998; Levtzion, 1968). The people of the Gambia and Guinea Bissau called the “Juula” in particular and the Mandinka in general as “Ligby” (Bravmann,

1974; Levtzion, 1968). In Upper Niger, the people called them *Diakhante* or *Jahanke* (Hunwick, 2003, p.2). The people of Ivory Coast and the French colonialists referred to the “Juula” as “Dioula”, while the English colonialists referred to them as “Dyula” (Wilks, Levtzion & Haight, 1986). Arab writers used variants of the same word to designate the Manding-speaking “traders”, such as “Wangara”, “Wankara”, “Wanghara”, “Wangaara”, “Wangaraata” and even “Amjara” (Devisse & Labib, 1984, p.635). The Mole-Dagbani speaking people of the Volta Basin refer to the “Juula” as *Yarse*, or *Yeri*, or *Yari*. The Dagaaba who belong to the Mole-Dagbani speaking group also call them *Yeri* or *Yari* (sing. *Yera* or *Yara*). The people of Ghana in general refer to the “Juula” as “Wangara”. All these words mean “trader” and demonstrate the intensity, the extent and diversity of the commercial activities of the “Mande-Juula”. The name Mande-*Yeri* (plural) or Mande-*Yera* (singular) is used throughout this study to designate the “Mande-Juula” who was not only a trader but also a “missionary” and a traveller.

It must be noted that not all Mande were traders. Some were rulers, warriors, farmers, hunters, leather workers, weavers, blacksmiths, praise-singers and slaves (Wilks, 2000; Finnegan, 1984b; Wright, 1984a). In the course of time, three main classes of Mande-speaking professionals emerged in the Mali Empire: the merchants (*Juula/Dyula/Yeri*), warriors (*tuntigi* or *sanankui*) (Green, 1984) and the scholars and teachers (*karamos* or *Karamokos*) (Samwini, 2006). Green (1984) observes that historically and culturally, the warriors (*tuntigi*) strove always after political control, while the traders (*Yeri*) believed in non-violence and had an aversion for active political involvement but remained generally obedient to any political authority, even to non-Muslim

political authority. This is one reason why the Mande-*Yeri* served the indigenous chiefs of Northern Ghana and the Asantehene of Kumasi as secretaries and advisers. No wonder too that it was the Mande-warriors (*tuntigi*) who established the Gonja state towards the end of the sixteenth century as explained in section 2.2.6.2.

Although the Soninke of ancient Ghana and the Mande-*Yeri* of Mali did not convert to the *Ibādite* form of Islam, they came under the influence of *Khārijī* Muslims of the *Ibādī* tradition early in the history of Islam south of the Sahara. The *Ibādīs* were tolerant Muslims while the *Khawārij* (pl.) were militant extremists. From the *Ibādīs*, the Mande-*Yeri* seemed to have derived a *de facto* tolerance for the faith of non-Muslim trading partners that served them well in their forays for gold into the West African forest zone (Ryan, 1998).

The cultural characteristics of the Mande-*Yeri* and the influence of *Ibādite* Islam explain why they avoided active proselytism among the autochthonous peoples of the Volta Basin. They were tolerant to the religions and practices of these people, and they avoided any active political interference in the affairs of the “centralized states” among whom they settled (Wilks, 2000; Ryan, 1998; Levtzion, 1968). Levtzion (1968) also explains that these cultural traits of the Mande-*Yeri* are the reason why the Hausa *Mallams* (teachers) overshadowed the Mande *Yar-nas* (chiefs of the Muslims) as regards political impact in the Dagomba kingdom in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and in Kumasi in the nineteenth century. The Hausa *Mallams* were more involved in the political affairs of these states than the Mande *Yar-nas*.

One factor that made the Mande-speaking people so mobile in their migrations was slavery, which was very important in pre-colonial Mande

society. Slaves according to Green (1984) served in the army of the warriors (*tuntigi*) and took part in their conquests. Some of the slaves even rose to positions in the army. The ruling class naturally did not farm though they had farms. It was the warriors who recruited the slaves in the army and captured the slaves who worked in the farms of the ruling class. Slaves also freed the scholars (*Karamos*) from farming and allowed them to devote their time to study and travel. They also permitted the traders (*Mande-Yeri*) to devote full time to their commercial enterprises. Mostly, *Mande-Yeri* employed slaves in their farms while they traded. The slaves also carried the goods of the *Mande-Yeri* in their travels to the gold fields in the south and on their returns to the trading ports of Jenne and Timbuktu (Green, 1984).

Another feature of the Mande people is their division into different patrilineal clans such as the *Tuuray*, *Kuribari*, *Tarawiri* (Green 1984), *Bamba*, *Jabaghatay*, *Kamaghatay*, *Wattara* (Wilks, 2000) and the *Ligby* (Bravmann, 1974) and the *Sissay* (Wilks, 2000). In the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland, the *Kunatay* (Kantosi), *Tuuray* (Ture), the *Tarawiri* (Tagara), the *Kulibali* and the *Sissay* (Sisse) featured greatly (see 4.3.1.). Thus, in their dispersions into the savannah and forest countries, the *Mande-Yeri* moved in different clans, at different times and in different directions. This section has so far considered the origins of the *Mande-Yeri*, how they have been known in history, and their socio-cultural characteristics. In order to understand a bit of the complex patterns of *Mande-Yeri* dispersion, it is important to examine their role in the trade network as well.

As observed in the previous section, the Mande-*Yeri* had developed well ordered hierarchical society. It is possible to imagine a stable culture and security with prosperous settlements. Yet for reasons to be discussed below, mainly trade, the Mande-*Yeri* would be dispersed throughout the region, reaching into the savannah areas in the south. The desire for gold and kola nuts resulted in the dispersion of the Mande-*Yeri* to the savannah and forest zones, the creation of a network of trade routes throughout West Africa, and the establishment of commercial towns. Thus one of the means through which Islam entered Northern Ghana was trade. How trade served as one most significant factor for the dispersion of the Mande-*Yeri* is discussed in the sections that follow.

2.2.3. Dispersion of the Mande-*Yeri*

Gold and the gold trade contributed to the growth and prosperity of the empires of ancient Ghana and Mali. The Bambuk gold mines in the upper Senegal were in the kingdom of Ghana and this made ancient Ghana rich and prosperous. But it was the Mande-*Yeri* who controlled the Bambuk gold production (Kenny, 2000b). The islamized Soninke of Ghana who were eager to buy gold and slaves settled in the midst of the Mande-*Yeri*. As a result, some Mande-*Yeri* became Muslims. The fortunes of Mali and the Mande-*Yeri* took a turn when they developed the Bure gold fields on the Niger, “deep within their territory” (Kenny, 2000b, p. 99). The gold fields of Bambuk in the upper Senegal and Bure on the upper Niger (that is, Guinea Conakry) made gold the

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most valued commodity of trade in the Western Sudan, and Mali, one of the richest Sudanese states in its time.

The other gold producing areas were Upper Volta in present day Burkina Faso, the Lobi gold fields in the Buna and Wa regions and the Bono-Manso gold fields in the present-day Brong Ahafo region (Wilks, 2000; Der, 1999; Clarke, 1982; Bravmann, 1974). The rich gold fields in the areas of the upper Senegal, upper Niger and upper Volta were called by Arab writers as *Wangarawa*, that is, gold producing regions (Hiskett, 1984; Falola & Adediran, 1983). This explains why the Mande-*Yeri*, who gained the monopoly of the trans-Saharan trade were referred to as *Wangara* by the Arabs.

The desire to control the gold trade made the Mande-*Yeri* to migrate into the gold producing areas. This reached momentum in the thirteenth century when Jenne and Timbuktu became important learning centres and termini (Tapiéro, 1969) for the caravans of the trans-Saharan trade and ports for the gold trade with the Akan forest. It is not exactly clear when the Mande-*Yeri* began their penetration into the savannah region and the forests of Ivory Coast and Ghana (Bravmann, 1974). Azumah suggests that the Mande-*Yeri* were in modern Ghana and involved in trade by the fourteenth century (Azumah, 2000). Wilks thinks that by the early fifteenth century the Mande-*Yeri* had developed a highly lucrative trade between the people of the Niger Bend and the Akan forest in what is now the Republic of Ghana (Wilks, 2000). The reason advanced by Wilks for this view is that at this time the Malian empire had reached its apogee and the Mande-*Yeri* in order to monopolize the gold trade began to establish “Diasporas” along the trade routes and close to the gold fields of West Africa (Wilks, 2000; see also Bohannan & Curtin,

1988; Bravmann, 1974). Thus the desire for gold prompted the Mande-*Yeri* to penetrate deeper and deeper into the forest zones of the Ivory Coast and Ghana. The Mande-*Yeri* penetration southward was further accelerated by the trade in slaves and fire-arms along the Gulf of Guinea such that by the sixteenth century they were already trading in Elmina (Wilks, 2000).

Besides migrating into the savannah and forest areas, some of the Mande-*Yeri* moved into the Songhay Empire on the Middle Niger so that by 1590 C.E. Mande-*Yeri* had acquired full citizenship of the Songhay Empire and were speaking *Songhay*, the language of the Songhay Empire (Hiskett, 1984). Other Mande-*Yeri* moved westwards to upper Niger and upper Senegal perhaps to control the Bure and Bambuk gold fields and also to participate in the *Maghrīb* salt trade with Sijilmasa via Takrūr on the Atlantic (Tapiéro, 1969) (In Figure 1, p. 40, Takrūr is to the west of Senegal). Another group of Mande-*Yeri* moved eastwards to Hausaland such that towards the end of the fourteenth century Mande-*Yeri* had arrived in Kano, and by the middle of the fifteenth century they were in Katsina (Hunwick, 2003; Hiskett, 1984; Tapiéro, 1969)(see Figure 1, p. 40). Through the Hausa states the Mande-*Yeri* of Mali could do business with the kingdom of Kanem in the Lake Chad area, and through Kanem with Tripolitania in North Africa and Egypt in the Middle East, and with the Darfur area to the west-east (Tapiéro, 1969).

From Hausaland the Mande-*Yeri* made their way into the Middle Volta Basin in search of trade. They became instrumental in the development of the northeast trade route from the Hausaland to the Middle Volta Basin. The existence of this trade route is confirmed by Der who says that the Middle Volta Basin was linked to the northeast trade by the mid-fifteenth century (Der,

1998; see also Hiskett, 1984). Relying on the “Kano Chronicle” Der is of the view that the king of Kano, Abdullahi Burja who reigned from 1438 to 1452 had opened a trade route from Bornu to “Gwanja” and that traders from “Gwanja” had begun moving into Katsina during the reign of king Yakubu (1452 – 1463). Further, Der is convinced that the “Gwanja” mentioned in the “Kano Chronicle” was, no doubt, a reference to the Gonjaland but not to the Gonja state, since the Gonja state was founded only towards the end of the sixteenth century. The traders too, according to Der, who were involved in the trade as mentioned in the “Chronicle” were not Hausa nor Bornu but Mande-*Yeri*, the Tuareg, Kanuri and other traders resident in Hausaland (Der, 1998; see also Ryan, 1996a; Boahen, 1992; Levtzion, 1968). The presence of Mande-*Yeri* communities in the Volta Basin at this stage is also confirmed by the mid-seventeenth-century Kano works “*Aṣl-al-Wanghariyyīn*” in which Gonja is listed among those lands of the West settled by the Mande-*Yeri* (Wilks, Levtzion & Haight, 1986). Some of the villages in the Middle Volta Basin which were inhabited by the Mande-*Yeri* of Hausa and Bornu origin before the end of the sixteenth century were Buipe, Mpaha and Kafaba (Levtzion, 1968). These were Mande-*Yeri* communities before the invasion of Gonja by the Mande warriors from Segou (Levtzion, 1968).

The Mande-*Yeri* who moved from Mali into the upper Volta region (Burkina Faso) settled at Dafing and Marka among the autochthonous Bobo and Ko people. There the Mande-*Yeri* created the town of Bobo-Dioulasso (Wilks, 2000; Levtzion, 1968). Others settled at Safane, Boromo (which was renamed *Dārus-salām* after it was conquered by Al-Hājj Mahmūd in the first half of the nineteenth century), and M’peheom (which was also renamed

attracted by the salt mines at Daboya in western Dagomba migrated and settled there. Excavations at “Yendi-Dabari” (the Old Capital of Dagomba) showed evidence of Mande-Yeri settlements before the conquests of Gonja (Ryan 1996a; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968). It is reported that the conquests of Gonja in the seventeenth century forced the Mande-Yeri of western Dagomba to relocate to the valley of the Oti River in the east of present-day Yendi (Levtzion, 1968).

Levtzion is also of the opinion that there were Muslim traders of Mande origin who settled in the Mamprusi kingdom before the end of the sixteenth century. One group was the *Kamara* Muslims whose long stay in Mamprusi helped them to adopt the indigenous language before migrating further southwest to settle at Larabanga and Dokrupe (Levtzion, 1968). Their migration to Larabanga and Dokrupe preceded the Gonja invasions at the end of the sixteenth century. This is why the Islam of Larabanga and Dokrupe in the view of Levtzion, is different from the Islam of Gonja, and why the *Kamara* Muslims of Larabanga speak a different language from the Gonja (Levtzion, 1968).

The dispersion of the Mande-Yeri to the upper Senegal did not end there. In the fifteenth century, Levtzion says, that Mande-*Ligby* from the upper Niger region moved southward towards the region where the modern frontiers of Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Liberia meet (Levtzion, 1968). From there they moved eastwards along the fringes of the forest to Beghu where they settled (In Figure 1, p. 40, the three routes converged at Beghu in the west corner of the Brong Ahafo Region). Levtzion is certain that the prospects of the kola nuts of

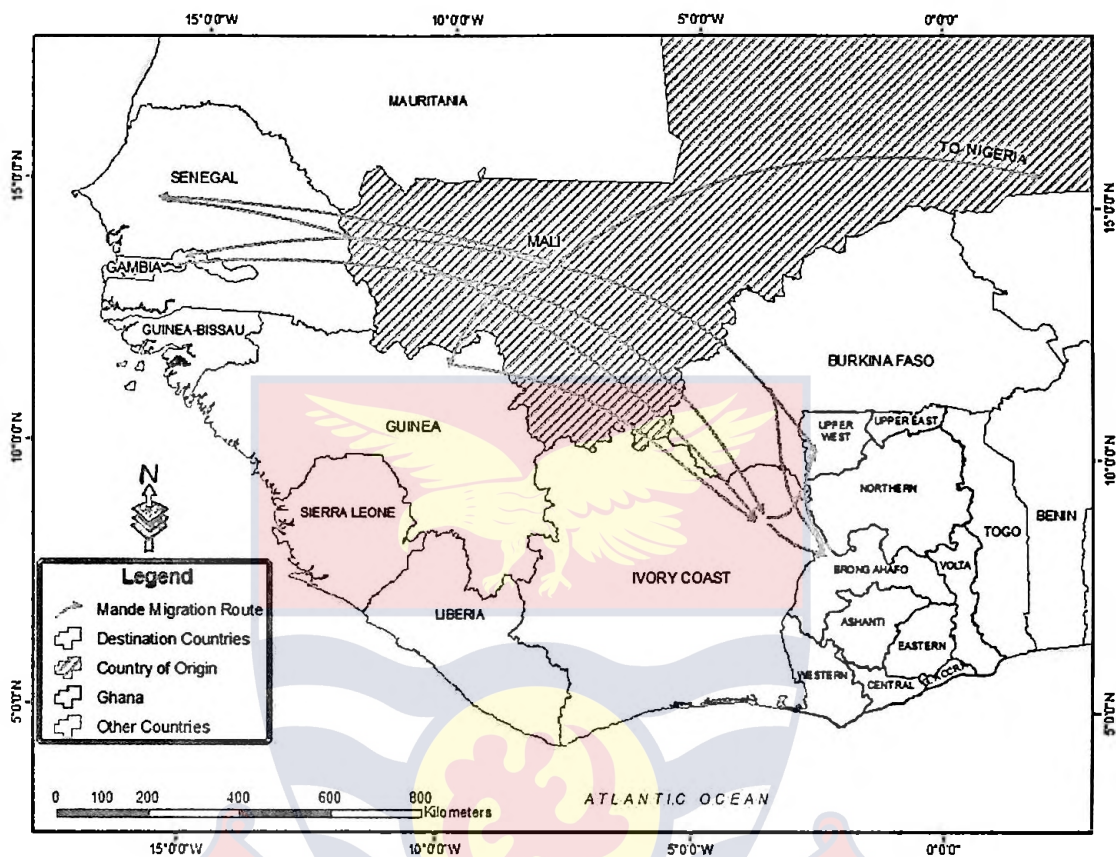


FIGURE 1: Mande-Yeri migrations into Ghana

Source: Remote Sensing and Cartographic Unit, University of Cape Coast, 2011.

the Akan forests and the gold around the Banda region attracted them to Beghu which became an important trading centre between the forest and the savannah.

The Mande-*Ligby* of Beghu were soon joined by the Mande-*Yeri* who came there through the northwest trade route. Some of the upper Senegal migrants settled at Kong and Bonduku in the Ivory Coast. Other groups moved north to Buna (Ivory Coast) and crossed the Black Volta River to the Wa region where they established the trading towns of Kandeia, Vise and Kpalwagho (Bin Salih, 2008; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968). They were attracted to the Wa region by the riches of the Lobi gold mines (Der, 1999). The emigrants who settled in the east of Wa belonged to the *Kunatay*, the *Sissay*, the *Tuuray* and the *Kulibali* Mande patronymic groups. The *Sissay* and the *Tuuray* groups moved further to Walembelle where some settled and the rest took residence in the Mamprusi kingdom (Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968).

In the course of the sixteenth century, the Mande-*Yeri* around Bobo-Dioulasso and Safane moved into the Mossiland and took up residence in Wagadugu (Ouagadougou) as peaceful traders (Levtzion, 1968). About the same period, various groups left Bobo-Dioulasso and moved south along the west of the Black Volta River. Some groups attracted by the Lobi gold mines crossed the Black Volta River in the Lawra area and migrated to Jirapa where one group stayed back and the rest continued to the east of Wa where they joined the *Kunatay*, *Sissay*, *Tuuray* and *Kulibali* and established the towns of Naha, Vise and Kpalwoghu (Bin Salih, 2008; Wilks, Hunwick & Sey, 2003; Der, 1996; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968). The group that remained at Jirapa and the one that settled in the east of Wa belonged to the *Tarawiri* clan. The other groups from Bobo-Dioulasso continued to move down to Buna, Kong

and Beghu (Levtzion, 1968). These later arrivals in Beghu were Mande-*Yeri* and they joined the Mande-*Ligby* there and together they developed Beghu into a prosperous trading centre.

The dispersions of the Mande-*Yeri* as shown in Figure 1, p, 40, illustrate the ways by which Islam was introduced in the Hausaland, Mossiland and the Middle Volta Basin from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. From this historical survey, it is obvious that Islam was introduced in Northern Ghana by various Mande-*Yeri* groups, at different times and through divergent routes. The motivation for their dispersions was the desire for gold and kola nuts. The routes of the Mande-*Yeri* migrations into the Volta Basin are next investigated in detail.

2.2.4. The trade routes

The dispersions of the Mande-*Yeri* would have been impossible without the existence of trade routes. In their dispersions, they followed the existing trade routes of the medieval empires and established new trade routes throughout the Volta Basin (See Figure 2, p. 43). Scholars speak of three major routes which converged in the Middle Volta Basin. One began from the city of Jenne in the Niger Bend). It was a centre of Islamic learning and trade (Clarke, 1982; Levtzion, 1968). From there it went southward to Bobo-Dioulasso, Buna, Kong, Bonduku, Beghu and Kumasi (Wilks, 1989).

Another route started in Jenne and passed through Safane, Boromo, Daboya and Buipe to Kumasi (Der, 1998). The third major trade route connected the economic centres of Kano, Katsina and Bornu in northern

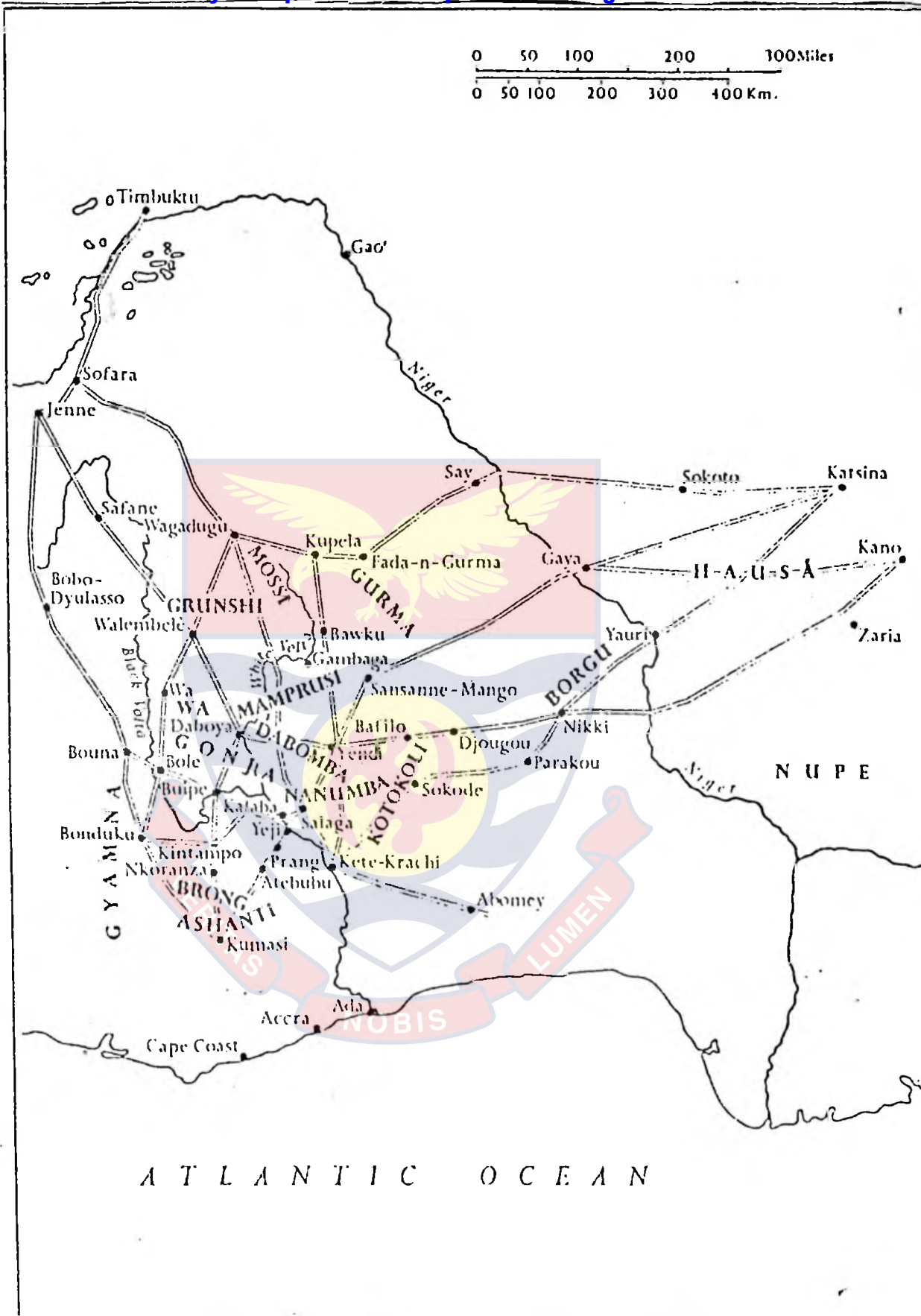


FIGURE 2: ROUTES TO THE VOLTA BASIN

Source: Levtzion, 1968 p.2

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Nigeria with the Middle Volta Basin towns such as Buipe, Mpana, and Kafaba on the northern bank of the Black Volta River. It crossed the Black Volta River and linked with Bono-Manso, the first Akan state, established in the fifteenth century (Finnegan, 1984a; Levtzion, 1968). These major trade routes were linked to each other by smaller trade routes with the end result that by the eighteenth century the Mande-*Yeri* and Hausa Muslim traders were scattered throughout the West African savannah trading in gold, kola nuts and slaves (Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1969, 1968).

Levtzion also confirms the existence of a trade route from Jenne to Bobo-Dioulasso which passed through Wa and Bole to Banda and was extended to Beghu. This trade route turned Bole into a trading town before the Gonja invasion in the last half of the sixteenth century. Levtzion is of the opinion that the Mande-*Ligby* who settled in Bole were the traders who used the Bole-Wa-Jenne route (Levtzion, 1968). He further says that Bole as a central trading centre linked Bonduku, Buna and Kong “with Daboya and Dagomba” (Levtzion, 1968, p. 65), and with Dokrupe, Buipe, Tuluwe, Kpembe, Kafaba, and Salaga.

Daboya also became an important trading centre famous for its alluvial salt and woven cloths. Its centrality in the trade is affirmed by Levtzion who says it was on the crossing of two important trade routes. The route from Kumasi passed through Nkoranza, Kintampo, and Buipe to Daboya, and from there through Yagaba, Boromo, and Safane to Jenne (Clarke, 1982; Levtzion, 1968). “This route was crossed by another, which went from Buna over Bole to Daboya and from Daboya to Yendi where it joined the great Hausa route” (Levtzion, 1968, pp. 70, 71).

By the eighteenth century, the volume of the northeast kola trade had increased considerably and had drawn into it the Hausa, Bornu and Mossi. The Hausa and Mossi traders brought textiles, livestock, leather goods, dried onions and sold them in the terminal markets of Buipe, Kafaba, and Salaga and took back kola nuts from Kumasi, and salt from Daboya (Der, 1998).

The importance of the establishment of the complicated network of major and minor trade routes is the fact that first, they linked the people of the Volta Basin to one another, and to the people of Hausaland to the northeast, the Mande to the northwest and to the Barbary states and the Middle East (Levtzion, 1968). Secondly, the network of trade routes integrated the economy of the Volta Basin into that of the Mande-Hausa-Muslim world (Boahen, 1992). The currency of exchange at this time was the heavy cowry (*Cyprea annulus*) and the light cowry (*Cyprea moneta*) (Izard, 1984). The cowries became not only the accounting unit for the Dagaaba in their trade and everyday business but also the means for the payment of the bride wealth (See section 3.7.2. of this study).

Thirdly, they introduced Islam, the art of cotton spinning, cloth weaving, metal-working and refining (Izard & Ki-zerbo, 1992) in the region, and certain mining techniques such as deep-mining of gold among the Akan (Boahen, 1992). The network of trade routes also introduced new building types like the large flat-roofed rectangular building and storied building found in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra Districts (Dickson & Benneh, 1988), and a “particular mosque architectural style, characterized by sun-dried mud-bricks and numerous projecting supporting timbers” (Green, 1984, p. 245) in the Middle Volta Basin such as Larabanga, Banda Nkwanta, Maluwe and Nakori.

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They also brought salt to the Volta Basin and introduced horses which were much needed for state-formation in the Volta Basin (Finnegan, 1984a; Green, 1984). It is without doubt that through the trade routes Muslim traders brought Islam and new techniques and ideas to Northern Ghana. These new techniques and ideas certainly influenced the way of life of the people of modern Ghana. The next section deals with commercial towns along the trade routes and the role of these towns in the propagation of Islam in the Volta Basin.

2.2.5. Commercial towns

As the Mande-*Yeri* engaged in the long distance trade throughout West Africa, they established trade centres, “*Diasporas*” (Bohannon & Curtin, 1988, p. 175), such as, Bobo Dioulasso, Kong, Bonduku, Buna, Beghu on the north-west trade route; and Salaga, Yendi to the northeast (Levtzion & Pouwels, 2002; Clarke, 1982). Consequently, Jenne and Beghu, the main entrepôts of the northwest trade, and Katsina and Salaga of the northeast trade became extremely wealthy during the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively.

Other Mande-*Yeri* “*Diasporas*” which were established were, Namasa, Banda, Mengye, Nkoronza in Southern Ghana; Naha (Nasa), Vise, Kpalwoghu and Walembele in the Wa region; Daboya in Dagbon; and Bole, Larabanga, Buipe, Mpaha, and Kafaba in Gonjaland on the northern bank of the Volta River (Bin Salih, 2008; Nurudin, 1998; Wilks, 1989; Wilks, Levtzion., & Haight 1986; Levtzion, 1968). These trading centres especially, Beghu, Larabanga, Daboya and Kpalwoghu contributed to the spread of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin.

The Mande-*Ligby* in Beghu succeeded in islamizing the Hwela indigenous people and the Hwela even adopted the language of the Mande-*Ligby* (Bravmann, 1974). The indigenous Brong of Beghu on the other, refused to convert to Islam because their matrilineal system of inheritance hindered their conversion (see Ryan, 1996a). This, however, does not imply that people with a patrilineal system are more susceptible to islamization than people in a matrilineal society. The people of Benin have a patriclan system but they resisted conversion to Islam, while the patrilineal Yoruba converted to Islam (Levtzion, 1969). The Muslims of Beghu were so integrated into the social life of the Hwela that the indigenes called them “Bighu Juula” (Wilks, Levtzion & Haight, 1986, p. 7).

Unfortunately, towards the second half of the seventeenth century, Beghu declined in its commercial activities and prosperity. The decline was due to both internal and external factors. According to Boahen (1992) there was an internal dispute between the Muslims and the indigenous people which resulted in the withdrawal of the Muslims from the commercial town. The indigenes resented the interference of Muslims in their political life. An external reason, he said, was the Moroccan conquest of Songhay, which created an atmosphere of chaos and disorder on the middle Niger. This disrupted the trade to the savannah and forest regions, and obviously affected commercial activities in Beghu.

The most important external reason, according to Clarke (1982), was the rise of Asante as an imperial power and its control of the trade with the coastal people which deprived Beghu of its commercial function. Beside these reasons one must also take into account the impact of the European presence

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on the coast. The Trans-Saharan trade never ceased to operate but it declined as the direction of the gold trade to the north shifted to the coast. The middle-men who carried the gold from the Akan forest to Jenne through Beghu now traded with the Europeans on the coast where gold was in great demand and of great supply. This change of events obviously deprived Beghu of its lucrative central role in the gold trade. All these factors contributed to the decline of Beghu as a trading town.

With the decline of Beghu the Mande-*Ligby* moved to Banda where they became involved in the kola and slave trade (Bravmann, 1974). They did not enjoy peace in Banda for long. In 1882 Banda was devastated by Gyaman forces. Consequently some of the Mande-*Ligby* moved and settled at Wenchi and Kintampo. Others took refuge across the Black Volta River and settled at Teselima and Banda-Nkwanta (Bravmann, 1974). Other groups migrated to Yendi, Salaga and Sansanne-Mango (Levtzion, 1968).

The Mande-*Yeri* of Beghu on the other hand, migrated into Ivory Coast to join their compatriots in Bonduku, Kong and Buna towards the end of the seventeenth century (Bravmann, 1974; Levtzion, 1968). The fate of Beghu was finally sealed when Asante overran the town in the eighteenth century in its drive to gain control over the northern trade in the north (Bravmann, 1974). With the conquest of Beghu, the remaining Muslims moved northward to join co-religionists in other communities while some moved southward and settled in Kumasi. It is therefore obvious that the Mande-*Ligby* and Mande-*Yeri* of Beghu were instrumental in the spread of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin and the area west of the Black Volta River in the seventeenth century (Levtzion, 1968).

Larabanga also played a role in the spread of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin. As a commercial centre, the *Kamara* Muslims of the *Kawntay* patronymic clan attracted by its trade benefits settled there. They speak a Mole-Dagbane dialect, which according to Levtzion (1968), they might have adopted during their stay in the Mamprusi state before they settled at Larabanga and Dokrupe in Gonja. It was the *Kamara* Muslims who spread Islam among the Dagomba, especially in eastern Dagomba in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century (Samwini, 2006; Levtzion, 1968). According to Bin Salih the Muslims of Tanina (near Wa) and Kabanye in Wa originally came from Larabanga (Bin Salih, 2008). Unlike the *Sakpare* Muslims of Gonja the *Kamara* Muslims of Larabanga contributed to the spread of Islam wherever they settled. This was possible because they lived and interacted with the indigenous population.

Daboya as a commercial town was noted for salt mining and attracted many Muslim traders. These Muslims developed Daboya into an important Muslim Community in west Gonja. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Daboya was beset by a series of civil wars which resulted in its decline and eventual destruction in 1898 (Levtzion, 1968). The fall of Daboya caused some of the Muslims to escape to Salaga in Gonja, to Yendi and Kumbungu in Dagomba and to Wa (Levtzion, 1968). Thus the commercial town of Daboya was also instrumental in the spread of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin. The commercial town of Kpalwoghu also played a role in the dispersion of Muslims to the Mamprusi and Dagomba states, to Southwestern Burkina Faso, to the Sissala, Balsa and Dagaaba lands. But this is discussed in detail in section 4.4.

the melting pot for traders from the Niger Bend and the Hausaland (Levtzion, 1968). Until the end of the seventeenth century, the northwest trade was more important than the northeast trade. One reason which accounted for this was the fact that kola nuts became at this period the most export product of the forest to the north. Gold was still an important commodity but the activities of the Europeans on the Guinea coast greatly interfered with its supply to the north. The kola nut as the main commodity of export to the north intensified the northwest trade.

However, the situation changed towards the end of the sixteenth century. The fall of the Songhay Empire with its consequent chaos due to the Moroccan invasion (Stamer, 1995), and the decline of security in the Western Sahara (Boahen, 1992) led to the transfer of the political and economic centre of gravity from Jenne, Timbuktu and Gao to Hausaland and Bornu (Levtzion, 1968). The result was that the trans-Saharan routes moved eastward, and the main thrust of trade from the Middle Volta Basin turned to the northeast. This change of events made Katsina and Salaga the entrepôt of the northeast trade, and Salaga became an important commercial town at the beginning of the nineteenth century as a result. The principal market of Gonja which until now was at Kafaba was transferred to Salaga and this turned Salaga into a cosmopolitan town (Bari, 2009; Wilks, 1989).

But the fate that befell Daboya also fell on Salaga. Towards the end of the nineteenth century chieftaincy succession disputes over the Kpembe “skins” and civil wars in Salaga (Levtzion, 1968) forced the Salaga Muslims to flee to Kintampo, Yeji, Prang, Atebubu and Kete-Krachi. As long as Asante

controlled Dagomba and Gonja states peace and order prevailed. But with the conquest of Asante in 1874 by the British individual states and greedy princes began to assert their independence. Hence the events that led to the decline of Salaga were indirect consequences of the fall of Asante. Once again, Salaga like the commercial towns of Beghu, Larabanga, and Daboya contributed to the spread of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin.

Conflict can have positive and negative effects. The conflicts in Beghu, Daboya, and Salaga led to the spread of Islam to other areas of the Middle Volta Basin. It was also from the commercial towns that the *Mālikī* School of Law (Kenny, 2000b), the Suwarian pacifist tradition (Wilks, 2000), the *Qādiriyya Sūfī Order* (Samwini, 2006; Schildkrout, 1978) and the *Tijāniyya Sūfī Order* (Ryan, 1996a) spread to other parts of the Middle Volta region. As shown in Chapter Four, it was commercial towns, which also attracted non-indigenous Muslim traders to settle among the Dagaaba.

2.2.6.0. Activities of Chiefs in the Spread of Islam

Trade was not the only means by which Islam spread into Northern Ghana. Neither were traders the only agents of the propagation of Islam. This section shows how the activities of chiefs contributed to the spread of Islam in Northern Ghana. Warriors from the Niger Bend and Northern Nigeria followed the trade routes and entered the Volta Basin and there they introduced state government to the Mamprusi, Mossi, Dagomba, Nanumba and Gonja (Finnegan, 1984a). The formation of these states coincided, in the fifteenth century, with the dispersion of the Mande-*Yeri* into the savannah and forest zones (Wilks, 1989). This was because the security of the trade routes was

guaranteed by these states and this made the Mandé-*1271* migrations southward possible and opportune. The growth and prosperity of these states depended also on trade, and trade obviously was linked with Islam. Islam provided the technology of writing which “allowed superior record keeping” and “communication by letter” (Finnegan, 1984a, p. 538; see also Lewis, 1966). Arabic was the only international language of West Africa until the introduction of Portuguese on the coast in the fifteenth century and French and English in the nineteenth century. Thus written Arabic made it possible to order goods from a distant country and sustain a system of banking or credit (Kenny, 2000b).

In addition, Islam as a universal religion and with its legal framework “made easier the ongoing commerce between distant and diverse peoples” (Finnegan, 1984a, p. 538). Thirdly, the collaborators in the consolidation of the states were itinerant Muslim scholars (*Karamos and Mallams*). The Muslim scholars empowered by Arabic literacy became the only ones who had the capacity to serve as imāms, secretaries, judicial and administrative advisors to the chiefs (Kenny, 2000), and “to make protective amulets” (Wright, 1984b, p. 490; see also Wilks, 1966) for the chiefs and their subjects. The role of chiefs in the spread of Islam into Northern Ghana is discussed next.

2.2.6.1. Mossi states

Although the Mossi states do not fall within the subject matter of the study, it is important to say a word about the Mossi states because of the role Mossi Muslims would play in the Dagomba state and in Dagaabaland. In the view of Clarke (1982), the people of the kingdoms of Yatenga and Wagadugu

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(Ouagadougou) had been in contact with Malian Islam since the fourteenth century. Skinner (1966) relying on the two manuscripts, *Ta'rikh us-Sūdān* by ʿAbdur-Rahmān as-Saʿdī (1898-1900) and *Ta'rikh ul-Fattāsh* of Mahmūd Kāfī (1913), also tells how the Mossi of Yatenga attacked and sacked Timbuktu after the death of Mansa Musa in the fourteenth century. Similarly, Finnegan (1984b) and Tuurey (1982) report that the Mossi in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries threatened the kingdom of Songhay when its leaders tried to force them to adopt Islam through conquests. This hostility with the Mali Empire and the forceful attempts of the Songhay rulers to convert them to Islam in the fifteenth century made the Mossi resistant to Islam and hateful of Muslim states (Clarke 1982; see also Wilks, 1989; Hiskett, 1984; Levtzion, 1968). The result of this hostile relationship was that Islam made no headway among the Mossi of these states. The conversion of the Mossi to Islam came about only as a result of the peaceful settlements of Mande-*Yeri* from the upper Niger region in the Wagadugu and Yatenga states (Clarke, 1982).

The settlements of the Mande-*Yeri* in Mossiland according to Levtzion, took place during the reign of the fifth Mossi king, Naba Kundume, at the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century (Levtzion, 1969; 1968). The Mande-*Yeri* adopted the language of the Mossi but retained their Islamic religion and in this way, they preserved their Islamic identity. The social and cultural rights of the Mande-*Yeri* were given a further boost when in 1780 C.E. Mogho-Naba Zombre, whose mother was a Mande-*Yara*, granted the *Yeri* immigrants the right to settle throughout his kingdom (Finnegan, 1984b). But these early Mande-*Yeri* settlers did not have any influence on the ordinary Mossi and on the Mossi royal families as a whole. Things changed, however,

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during the reign of Naba Dulugu (1796-1825 C. E.). He was the first Mogho-Naba to convert to Islam (Finnegan, 1984b). He built the first mosque in Ouagadougou and appointed an *Imām-al-balad* (“Imām of the city”) as one of the top dignitaries at his court. The association of Muslims with the political elite was a common practice in the Volta Basin (Levtzion, 1968). The political alliance led to a “marriage” between Mossi traditional religion and Islam. What this meant for the Mogho Naba and the other chiefs and dignitaries as Izard and Ki-zerbo observed, was that they did not see any inconsistency in the practice of Islam with the observance of the Mossi traditional religion (Izard & Ki-zerbo, 1992). This was a kind of compromise that the medieval Sudanese emperors and the Voltaic chiefs adopted when confronted with Islam (Ben Salih, 2008; Samwini, 2006; Wilks, 1989; Bravmann, 1974; Levtzion, 1968). They adopted Islam according to their own cultural taste. The Dagaaba chiefs on the contrary, as the research findings have revealed (Cf. Chapter Four), rejected this *modus Vivendi*.

The conversion of the Mossi royal family encouraged the ordinary Mossi to embrace Islam. Within a short time converted Mossi joined the trading profession of the Mande-Yeri. As the northeast trade grew in briskness and volume during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Mossi Muslim traders who were engaged in the kola trade began to arrive in the Mamprusi and Dagomba states (Samwini, 2006; Levtzion, 1968). Some of the Mossi settled in the court of the *Ya-Na* (Paramount Chief of Yendi) and were given official appointments. An example was the *yidan-mole* who was the master of ceremonies at the national festivals and in the final funeral rites of a *Ya-Na* (Levtzion, 1968). The influx of Mossi Muslims into the Middle Volta Basin

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increased in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was during this period that Mossi Muslim traders from Ouagadougou on their way to Kumasi settled in the Dagaabaland. It was the Mossi Muslim traders who introduced cotton spinning and the donkey as a beast of burden and transport among the Dagaaba.

Other Mossi Muslim traders passed on to Kumasi to work in the cocoa farms and eventually established Mossi Muslim communities there. It was also from the Mossi states that some Mande-*Karamos* moved into the Middle Volta Basin. For example, *Karamo* Sulaymān b. °Abdallāh Baghayogho came to Sabali in Dagombaland from Yatenga and there his descendants became the local chiefs of the area and were known as Sabali *yarnas*, that is, heads of Sabali Muslims (Samwini, 2006; see also Wilks, 2000). Also *Karamo*, °Abū Bakr b. °Alī Kunatay came to Vise in the east of Wa from Kudugu in Ouagadougou and there he established the *Kunatay* imāmate and later, other *Kunatay* imāmates in the Wa state (Wilks, 2000). One can, therefore, conclude that through the activities of chiefs Muslims from the Mossi states settled in Northern and Southern Ghana and spread Islam in these areas. The role of Mossi Muslims in the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland is discussed under section 4.4.1.).

2.2.6.2. Gonja state

In order to ensure a continuous supply of gold from the Akan forest, Wilks narrates how Ndewura Japka Lanta, a Malian commander, was sent towards the end of the sixteenth century with a band of warriors to occupy the important commercial town of Beghu (Wilks, 1989). Unable to conquer Beghu

because of the strong resistance he encountered there, he took the occasion and moved northward with his followers, crossed the Black Volta River, and created by conquest, the Gonja state between the Black and White Volta Rivers with Buipe as its capital (Wilks, 2000). Der, however, has proved from recent research that it was not Ndwura Jakpa Lanta who actually founded the Gonja state. He says it was Wadi Naba who invaded western Gonja in about the mid-sixteenth century and laid the foundation of the state. Ndwura Jakpa Lanta's main function was the consolidation of the state of Gonja from about 1622 – 1667 C.E. (Der, 1998).

As stated above (2.2.3; 2.2.5.), there were Mande-*Yeri* who had migrated to the Gonja area from Beghu, Hausaland and Bornu long before the invasion of the Mande warriors (Clarke, 1982; Levtzion, 1968). Furthermore, these “pagan” invaders were well acquainted with Islam and Muslims in the Mali and Songhay Empires before their expeditions southward. It is obvious that they knew about the important role Muslims played in the imperial courts of Mali and Songhay as “advisers to the rulers and as masters of some supernatural power, through their prayers and amulets” (Levtzion, 1969, p. 303). It is not surprising therefore, that the founders of the Gonja state recruited Muslim scholars to assist them in their conquests and in the administration of the new state (Wilks, 2000).

According to Wilks, Ndwura Jakpa was assisted in his wars of consolidation by a *Kamaghatay Karamo* from Beghu, Muḥammad al-Abyad who prayed for his victory and made charms and amulets for him so that he would triumph over his enemies (Wilks, 2000; see also Levtzion, 1968). The success chalked through the intervention of *Karamo* Muḥammad al-Abyad

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convinced Ndewura Jakpa and his followers of the superiority of Islam and they converted to Islam (Wilks, 2000; Levtzion, 1968). Wilks, however, relying on evidence from “Kitāb Gbanja”, is of the opinion that the conversion of the Gonja royal family to Islam occurred only in the time of Ndewura Jakpa’s successor, Manwura (Wilks, 2000). On the basis of this evidence, one can say that the rulers of the Gonja state were the first to accept Islam in the Middle Voltaic Basin. It was also *Karamo* al-Abyad who became the first imām of the new Gonja state and who created the Gonja imāmate. In the course of time, his descendants, the *Sakpare* as they came to be known founded other imāmates in the various divisions and sub-divisional towns of the Gonja state (Wilks, 2000).

The Muslims (*Sakpare*) were well integrated into the political and social system of the Gonja state. The chief Imām of the Gonja state became the *imām al-balad* (the Imām of the city). His main function was to pray and fast for the chief, a role which led the chiefs of Gonja to believe, even till today, that chiefs do not have to pray, fast, or practice Islam. The Imāms are there to pray for them and to fast on their behalf. Levtzion reports that in the Gonja divisional seat of Kpembe the duty of the *Sapkare* Deputy Imām (*Nā'ib*) was “to wash the bodies of dead chiefs” (Levtzion, 1968). Considering the fact that the chiefs were non-Muslims (Levtzion, 1968), it is remarkable that the *Sakpare* Muslims were so accommodating to Gonja traditional practices.

Through the chiefs Islam spread to the divisional and sub-divisional towns. Each divisional and sub-divisional chief had an imām to pray for him. In their association with the chiefs, the Muslims infused Islamic elements into the customs and practices of the Gonja people, especially the celebration of

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their traditional festivals (Hiskett, 1984). However, the association of the Muslims with the political elite of Gonja prevented them from converting the peasants at the grassroots to Islam. There were three distinct social classes in Gonja – the princes (descendants of the founders of the state), the Muslims (*Sakpare* – descendants of Al-Abyad), and the commoners. Membership of each class was by birth. There was no hope of progressing from one class to the other. This strict social stratification “walled” the *Sakpare* Muslims within the royal courts of Gonja and prevented them from interacting with the commoners. In this way, they lost the opportunity to bring the commoners of the Gonja state under the “*salām ul-Islāmī*” (“the peace of Islam”).

2.2.6.3. Mamprusi state

Around the thirteenth century, a band of warriors from northern Nigeria or the Lake Chad area followed the trade routes and settled at Fade-n-Gurma (Saaka, 2001). From there they were led to Pusiga in Mamprugu (Boahen, 1992; Rattray, 1932) by the great warrior, Na Bawa (known as such by the Mamprusi) or Na Gbewa (called so by the Dagomba). There they consolidated their hold on the local population in the fifteenth century.

Mamprugu became the centre for the dispersions of the Mole-Dagbane people. After the death of Na Gbewa, a dispute over who would succeed him ensued between his children. His oldest son, Tohago, fled to Gambaga where he established the Mamprusi state. Another son, Na Sitobo migrated southward and founded the Dagomba state. A third son, Ngmantabo founded the Nanumba state with its capital at Bimbila (Saaka, 2001). A daughter of Na Gbewa, Santauri, ran away from Pusiga and went north and married a Mossi

hunter, [© University of Cape Coast https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui](https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui) Ouédraogo, and they founded the Mossi dynasty and state at Ouagadougou (Saaka, 2001). The formation of the Mole-Dagbane states “offered security to the trade, and the benefit their rulers derived from controlling the routes helped them in consolidating their authority” (Levtzion, 1968, pp. 5, 6). Security of trade in turn drew Muslims traders and scholars into the Mole-Dagbane states.

As discussed in Chapter Four (see 4.4.1.), an internal dispute at Kpalwoghu in the east of Wa led to the dispersions of the *Kantosi* (Kunatay) to other areas in the Volta Basin. One group of *Kantosi* of the *Kulibali* clan migrated into the Mamprusi state. There they were involved not only in trade but also in the political affairs of the state. For example, Wuni, one of the *Kantosi* was made *Vise-Naba* (i.e. Vise-chief) of all the *Kantosi* in Mamprusi by the *Nayiri*, Paramount Chief of Mamprusi (Levtzion, 1968; see also Gadzekpo, 2005; Wilks, 1989). Also, two *Kulibali* sisters were appointed “*magajia*” (“Women leaders”) in Walewale and Gambaga concurrently in the seventeenth century (Levtzion, 1968).

The *Kulibali* Muslims unfortunately, were not involved in proselytism and so made no attempt to convert the Mamprusi royal house. Real influence of Muslims on the Mamprusi royal house came with the passage of the Hausa Muslim traders through the Mamprusi state in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. The Mamprusi state became very wealthy through their intermediary role in the rich kola trade between Asante and the Hausa states in Northern Nigeria (Buah, 1998). To draw maximum benefits from the trade, to be linked with higher Islamic civilization, and to attract more Muslims into the

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state, the ruler of Mamprusi, Na Atabia (d. 1741/2) took stringent measures to safeguard the trade routes that passed through Mamprusi.

He appointed a Muslim of the *Taraore* clan who had come to Mamprusi from the east of Wa or from Hausa or Bornu as toll-collector over the traders (Levtzion, 1968). The Muslim toll-collector became the intermediary between the chief and Muslim traders. He also became the host to the traders who passed through Mamprusi. He used to serve his guests with food in a wooden bowl called *akushi* (in Hausa). Because of this he was known as *Mai-Akushi* (Owner of the wooden bowl) and his descendants came to be called *Mangoshi* or *Magaji Akushi* (“descendants of the Owner of the wooden bowl”) (Levtzion, 1968; see also Samwini, 2006). He and his descendants and the *Kulibali* represented the first Muslim groups in the Mamprusi state before the seventeenth century.

The Hausa Muslim traders who arrived in Mamprusi from the Hausaland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries started to proselytize. They spread Islam among the children of the royal house. A Qur’ān school (*makaranta*) was opened at the chief’s palace at Gambaga where the chief’s children were taught the Qur’ān. Na Atabia took interest in the Muslims and appointed a Hausa Muslim as *imām* at the court (Hiskett, 1984). Although the chiefs of Mamprusi admired and willed the economic and educational services of the Hausa Muslims, they never became Muslims (Rattray, 1932). Bari (2009) gives the impression that Na Atabia was the first Mamprusi Chief to become a Muslim. On the contrary, the Chief became suspicious of the Muslims. As the Dagaaba proverb says, “If trees are not too close to each other, they would not rub against one another”. Counselling by the wisdom of

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this African saying the Chief of Mamprusi, Na Atabia moved his capital to Nalerigu as his political administrative capital, and left Gambaga as the economic and learning centre for the Hausa Muslims (Levtzion, 1968).

The only way by which the Hausa Muslims could islamize completely the Mamprusi political institution was to take over the political authority. The Chief of Mamprusi instinctively sensed the danger and decided to separate politics from religion by moving away from Gambaga to Nalerigu. This is also the reason why when the Muslim scholars wanted to go beyond their religious domain of providing intellectual, moral and religious services to climb the political ladder in Asante, the people reacted and had the “fifth Asantehene, Osei Kwame deposed through the instrumentality of the queen mother, Konadu Yaadam” (Ryan, 1998, p. 152; see also Wilks, 2000). That might also be the reason why Ndewura Japka, when he was sharing the kingdom among his sons did not include the family of Muhammad al-Abyad. For the chiefs of the Middle Volta Basin, there must be separation between “Mosque and State”. This was rightly observed by Clarke: “Muslims in Mamprusi were regarded by the chiefs as men of learning and prayer and ordered to keep out of politics” (Clarke, 1982, p. 95). The distinction between “Mosque and State” is demonstrated by the separate chiefly and Muslim towns in Mamprusi – “Nalerigu [political] and Gambaga [religious], Wungu [political] and Walewale [religious]” (Levtzion, 1968, p. 191).

It is important to note that it was from Mamprusi that Muslims of the *Kamara* clan migrated to Larabanga and Dokrupe, and there they became agents in the spread of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin in the eighteenth century. Likewise, some of the Hausa Muslims of Mamprusi migrated to Wa in

Muslims in establishing a strong Muslim community in Wa (Bin Salih, 2008; Samwini, 2006; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968). In the light of the above, one can say that the formation of the Mamprusi state attracted Muslims to the kingdom and some of them migrated to other areas such as Larabanga, Dokrupe and Wa to establish Islam there.

2.2.6.4. Dagomba state

The prosperity of the Dagomba state depended on trade. To promote the growth of trade and to ward off competitors and enemies such as Gonja, Dagomba chiefs invited Muslim traders and scholars into the kingdom. One of those scholars who was invited to Dagbon was *Karamo* Sulaymān b. °Abdallāh Baghayogho from Timbuktu. It was Na Luro (d. 1660) who invited *Karamo* Sulaymān b. °Abdallāh Baghayogho to Dagomba in the seventeenth century, and hosted him at Sabali (Sabari) in the Oti Valley (Wilks, 2000). There he built a mosque and opened a *madrassa* (Qur'ān school) for the propagation of Dyula Islam and learning in the Dagomba state. In appreciation for his services *Karamo* Sulaymān b. °Abdallāh Baghayogho was made the *Yar-na*, “Chief of the Muslims” of Sabali (Levtzion, 1968).

When *Karamo* °Abdullāh b. Sulaymān Baghayogho died around 1660, his son Ya°umuru succeeded him as imām and *Yar-na* (Wilks, 2000). It is said that Na Muḥammad Zangina, the first Muslim Chief of Dagomba state, was once a student of Imām Ya°umuru. Dagomba tradition holds that it was Na Muḥammad Zangina who introduced Islam into the royal family around 1700 C.E. as an “attempt to fend off Gonja, whose leaders said that one of the

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reasons for their success against the Dagomba was that they had the support and prayers of their Muslim followers” (Clarke, 1982, p. 95). In addition, Na Muḥammad Zangina opened up his kingdom to trade by encouraging the migration of Hausa Muslim traders to Dagbon (Wilks, 2000). It was one of such invitations that brought Muḥammad al-Katsināwī from the Hausaland to Kamshegu in the eighteenth century. He developed Kamshegu into a learning centre by opening a *makaranta*, and from there he propagated Hausa Islam among the Dagomba (Wilks, Hunwich & Sey, 2003). Muḥammad al-Katsināwī’s relations with Na Muḥammad Zangina were so edifying that he gave him and his descendants “the chieftaincy over Kamshe [Kamshegu]” (Samwini, 2006, p. 29) and they came to be known as *Kamshe-Nas* (chiefs of Kamshe).

The invitation of Hausa Muslims into Dagbon by Na Muḥammad Zangina also brought about the migrations of Hausa Muslim traders into the Gonja state in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The influx of Hausa traders and *Mallams* into eastern Gonja and Dagbon reached its climax with the rise of Salaga to replace Kafaba as the leading commercial town in the nineteenth century (Levtzion, 1968). Among the *Mallams* who came to Salaga in the nineteenth century was al-Hājj ʿUmar ibn Abī Bakr ibn ʿUthmān al-Kabbawī al-Kanawī al-Salaghawī (Wilks, 1989). He opened a *makaranta* at Salaga. When Salaga declined in the 1890s because of civil wars he moved to Kete-Krachi where he opened another *makaranta*. Both the Qur’ān schools of Salaga and Kete-Krachi promoted Arabic and Islamic education in Ghana. Many of the prominent educated Muslim personalities in Ghana today are

believed to have graduated from one of these *makarantas* (Samwini, 2006, Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968)

Other *Mallams* such as *Mallam* Bature and *Mallam* Chediya also moved into Salaga and together with al-Hājj ʿUmar ibn Abī Bakr ibn ʿUthmān al-Kabbawī al-Kanawī al-Salaghawī contributed immensely to turning Salaga into a renowned centre of Islamic learning in the nineteenth century (Levtzion, 1968). One is right to conclude that it was al-Hājj ʿUmar ibn Abī Bakr ibn ʿUthmān al-Kabbawī al-Kanawī al-Salaghawī who introduced Hausa Islam and Hausa as a literary language “in much of the Greater Voltaic Region” (Wilks, Hunwich & Sey 2003, p. 541). It was also through him and other Hausa Muslims that ideas of the Fulani *jihād movement* entered into Ghana (Ryan, 1998, Levtzion, 1968).

In 1720 C.E., a treaty or agreement ended the wars between the Gonja and Dagomba. However, in 1744-5 C.E., the Asantehene Opoku Ware I (1720-1750 C.E.), attacked the Dagomba state. Na Gariba was captured and as he was being transported to Kumasi, the Dagomba intervened and agreed to pay a debt of 2,000 slaves to the Asantehene for his release (Izard & Ki-zerbo, 1992; see also Rattray, 1932). This debt was bequeathed to all subsequent Dagomba chiefs. It was to pay the debt in slaves to Asante that the chiefs of Dagomba hired the services of the Zabarima mercenaries to raid the Grunsi, Sissala and Dagaaba for slaves in the second half of the nineteenth century. The raiding activities of the Zabarima led to the spread of Islam among the Sissala, the Grunsi (2009; Der, 1998; Tuurey, 1982) and the Dagaaba as demonstrated in Chapter Four (see sections 4.5.2. and 4.5.6.)

Salaga as a commercial town in the 1890s, Hausa Muslims from Dagomba and Gonja moved into Kumasi and superseded the Mande-*Yeri* and other Muslim groups in Kumasi. There they established vibrant “*zongo*” communities alongside the *qabilas* (wards) of the Mande-*Yeri*. Because of the active commercial activities of the Hausa Muslims, Hausa came to replace *Juula* as the commercial language in Kumasi (Levtzion, 1968). From this survey, it is evident that the activities of chiefs and the conditions created under the state contributed to the spread of Mande and Hausa Islam in the Dagomba kingdom.

2.2.6.5. Wa state

The position of Wa gave it two advantages which contributed to its development as a commercial town. First of all, Wa as Hiskett explains, was situated on the trade route that ran along the east bank of the Black Volta into Mossiland. Secondly, Hiskett says that Wa was located to the east of the Lobi gold fields (Hiskett, 1984). These two factors attracted Mande-*Yeri* to migrate from the upper Niger through Buna and Bole to the east of Wa (perhaps in the fifteenth century) where they established three trading villages - Kande, Vise and Kpalwoghu (Interview with the Imām of Nandaw-Waala 15/03/11; see also Nurudeen, 1998; Wilks, 1989; Bravmann, 1974; Levtzion, 1968). This first group of Muslims of the *Kunatay* clan was joined by Mande warriors and traders who came to the east of Wa (probably in the sixteenth century) through Bobo-Dioulasso, Lawra and Jirapa and established three Mande states – Naha, Vise, and Kpalwoghu (Wilks, Hunwick & Sey, 2003). This second group of Mande-*Yeri* belonged to the *Tarawiri* clan and their leader became the *Yeri-Na*

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(Chief of the Muslims) of Naha. According to Abobo (1994) and Wilks (1989), some of the Mande-*Yeri* of the second group stayed back at Jirapa where they became known as the *Tagara* (Tarawiri).

In the mid-seventeenth century Dagomba and Mamprusi horsemen arrived in the Wa region and founded the state of Wa (Bin Salih, 2008; Hiskett, 1984; Clarke, 1982). Levtzion explained that it was the prospects of the Lobi gold-fields that lured the Dagomba and Mamprusi princes and warriors to the Wa region (Levtzion, 1968). The Dagomba and Mamprusi warriors also created three small states in the Wa region: Yaro, Chegili, and Gbetore (Bin Salih, 2008; Nurudeen, 1998; Wilks, 1989).

In the founding of the Wa state the Dagomba and Mamprusi princes solicited the collaboration of Mande-*Karamos*. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Mande-*Karamos* began arriving in the Middle Volta Basin from Timbuktu. Wilks said that *Karamo* Abū Bakr °Alī Kunatay was one of the earliest scholars to introduce Islamic learning into the Wa region. He came from Timbuktu through the Mossi country and settled at Vise sometime in the seventeenth century. His descendants according to Wilks established small *Kanatay* (*Kantosi*) imāmates (Wilks, 1989) through which Islam spread throughout the Wa state.

The next celebrated *Karamo* who arrived in Wa was *Karamo* Ya°umaru Mūsā Tarawiri who entered the Wa region through Jirapa. He arrived in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century from Ja (Dia) in Jenne and settled at Naha among the *Tarawiri* clan of the *Yeri-Na* (Wilks, 2000). In the version of Bin Salih, Ya°umaru entered Dagaabaland with his brother Şalfu Ziiri and stopped over at Jirapa. Later Ya°umaru continued to Naha while his brother

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Şalīfu Ziiri stayed back in Jirapa (Bin Salih, 2008). This formed the second group of Mande Muslims to have settled in Jirapa: the first group, the *Tagara* (*Tarawiri*) who came with Sidi °Umaru in the sixteenth century were kinsmen to the *Tagarayire* of Wa (Bin Salih, 2008; Wilks, 1989); the second group headed by Şalīfu Ziiri that came in the seventeenth century are related to the *Limamyire* ward of Wa (Bin Salih, 2008). The *Tagara* and Şalīfu Ziiri and his group are the earliest Muslims to have settled in the Jirapa area.

According to Wa traditions, Ya°umaru Mūsā Tarawiri arrived in the Wa region in the reign of the third Wa-Naa Pelpuo, son of Sorliya (Wilks, 1989). Being a learned man Ya°umaru was appointed imām of the Muslim community of Naha. Before his arrival, however, Yūsuf Lanfiera was the imām of Naha (Nurudeen, 1998). In addition, Na Pelpuo made Ya°umaru Mūsā Tarawiri his *imām ul-balad* (Nurudeen, 1998; Wilks, 1989). His main function was to pray for the chief and the state. When the Dagomba and Mamprusi princes moved from the east of Wa into Wa to found the Wa State they invited the *Yeri-Na* of Naha and Ya°umaru Tarawiri to join them in Wa. The *Yeri-Na* group that moved from Naha established the *Tarawiriyiri* (Tagarayiri) ward at Wa, while Ya°umaru Mūsā Tarawiri established the *Limanyiri* ward and the Wa imāmate. Today the *Limanyire* ward provides the *imām al-balad* (“Imām of the city”) and the *imām al-Jumu’a* (“Friday Imām”) for Wa (Nurudin, 1998; Wilks, 1989).

The Naha *Yeri-Na* was represented in the new state of Wa by the newly appointed Wa *Yeri-Na* (from the *Tarawiriyiri* ward), that is, “chief of the Mande-*Yeri* Muslims in Wa” (*Shaykh-al-Wangarawī*) (Wilks, 1989). In the course of time, the Wa *Yeri-Na* eclipsed the Naha *Yeri-Na* and became “the

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Commander of the Believers” (*Amir-al-Mu'minin*) (Wilks, 1989). He was also the *liaison-officer* between the Wa chief and the Muslims in the state. Whereas the *imām-ul-balad* of Wa was appointed by the Chief of Wa, the Wa *Yeri-Na* owed his authority to the *Yeri-Na* of Naha.

The next group of Muslims who were drawn to the commercial town of Wa were the Hausa, and they entered Wa in three groups (Nurudeen, 1998) in the eighteenth century. They founded the *Dzangbeyiri* ward in Wa. Wilks suggests that this group first settled in the Mamprusi state before moving to Wa (Wilks, 1989). Der made an interesting observation that the Hausa *Mallams* of Wa, unlike the Hausa *Mallams* of Dagbon, never seriously challenged the *Yeri-Nas* of Wa (Der, 1999) and consequently, the *Yeri-Nas* have always dominated the Hausa *Mallams* in Wa.

The commercial activities of the Waala Muslims attracted other Muslims to Wa. Bin Salih (2008) reports that two separate groups of Muslims from Safane (Burkina Faso) also migrated to Wa where they settled among the Hausa in *Dzangbeyiri* ward. Unlike the Mande-*Yeri* who were not keen to proselytize, the Hausa Muslims are said to have married the local non-Muslim women and in this way helped to spread Islam in Wa kingdom (Der, 1999). All the various Muslim groups co-existed, intermarried, and built-up Wa as a strong commercial and Islamic town. Islam was, however, largely restricted to Wa and the Wa state. Even in Wa itself, not all the Waala were Muslims (Bin Salih, 2008; Der, 1999).

Through the Wa chieftaincy institution Muslims were able to influence the customs and practices of the Waala. Some of the chiefs became Muslims but only in name (Bin Salih, 2008). The appointment of *imāms* to the

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divisional and sub-divisional towns of Wa stimulated the spread of Islam to these areas in the Wa state. The celebrations of the state festivals such as *Domba* (“The Great Dance”), became channels for the conversion of the indigenous people of the state to Islam. A serious influence of Islam on the chiefs of Wa began only in the second-half of the nineteenth century when Waala chiefs started to convert to Islam (Bin Salih, 2008; Nurudeen, 1998; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968). Like the Gonja and the Mole-Dagbane chiefs (Mossi, Mamprusi and Dagomba), the Waala chiefs accepted Islam on their own terms – embracing Islam in addition to the practice of ancestral veneration. The study of the Wa state showed that, though the Mande-*Yeri* arrived in the Wa region before the foundation of Wa, the Dagomba and Mamprusi princes enlisted the support of the Mande scholars in the founding of the Wa state. This political alliance had two religious ramifications: in working for the Wa chiefs the Mande Muslims “allowed Islam to be adapted to a very considerable degree to the local culture” (Clarke, 1982, p. 96; see also Bin Salih, 2008; Buah, 1998). The chiefs of Wa on the other hand, by accepting Islam nominally, were able to integrate “the Muslims in the political and social system” (Levtzion & Pouwels, 2002, p. 3) of the Wa state.

2.2.7. Suwarian Spirituality

The distinguished Mande-*Karamos* mentioned above, Muḥammad al-Abyad Kamaghatay of Gonja, ʿAbdullāh b. Sulaymān Baghayogho of Dagomba, and Abū Bakr b. ʿAlī Kunatay and Yaʿumarū Tarawiri of Wa were disciples of Al-Ḥājj Salīm Sūwarī Sissay (Sisse) (Wilks, 2000), a fifteenth-century Mande-*Karamo* of Mali (Bravmann, 1984). It was these scholars who

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introduced the spirituality of Al-Ḥājj Sālīm Sūwārī into the Middle Volta Basin. To understand the behaviour and attitude of the Mande-*Yeri* in the Middle Volta Basin (“the land of unbelief”) and the relation between their trading and missionary activities, it is important to discuss briefly the spirituality of Al-Ḥājj Sālīm Sūwārī.

Al-Ḥājj Sālīm Sūwārī adapted the teaching of the Qur’ān to the Mande culture. He laid down practical theological principles for the promotion of inter-religious dialogue in West Africa. His theological thoughts were based on three sources, Mande culture (see 2.2.1), *Ibādite* theology and the writings of Muslim jurists of Qayrawān and Egypt (Wilks, 2000). From the above (2.2.1.) the Mande-*Yeri* believed in “non-violence” and “had an aversion to political involvement” (Green, 1984, p. 247) unlike the Mande-*Tuntigi* (warriors). Like most Africans the Mande-*Yeri* also believed that religious conversion is a personal matter. This is why Sudanese kings who converted to Islam did not impose their faith on their subjects (Finnegan, 1984b). Though they did not convert to *Ibādite* Islam, the Mande-*Yeri* were certainly influenced by *Ibādite* theology as mentioned above (2.2.1.) which preached religious tolerance, especially to African traditional religions.

Embracing the *Ibādite* theology of religious tolerance and adopting the Mande-*Yeri* cultural values of personal conversion and non-violence, Al-Ḥājj Sālīm Sūwārī articulated a synthesized theological insight which this study believes is both Islamic and African. According to him, the Mande-*Yeri* in their *as-safar* (travel) must respect the language and religion of the local people. They should be obedient to non-Muslim government leaders and be ready to render administrative and spiritual services to them as long as they are not

obstacles to the progress of their faith and trade. Non-Muslim government in his view is better than no government at all because it is the state that provides the peace and security necessary for trade (Wilks, 2000). Finally, whereas the jurists of Qayrawān and the *Almoravids* proclaimed *jihād* as an instrument for political and social change, Al-Ḥājj Sālim Sūwarī preached non-active proselytism among autochthonous peoples (Samwini, 2006; Wilks, 2000; Bravmann, 1974). In his opinion, conversion of the unbeliever is the work of God at his own time, and a matter of personal choice. All that the Islamized Mande-*Yeri* and *Karamos* should do in their *as-safar* is to live a life of sincere witness so that non-Muslims impressed by their life style may convert to Islam with the permission of God (Wilks, 2000). Through this theological insight Al-Ḥājj Sālim Sūwarī “formulated a praxis of co-existence such as to enable the Juula to operate within lands of unbelief without prejudice to their distinctive Muslim identity, allowing them access to the material resources of this world without foregoing salvation in the next” (Wilks, 2000, p. 98).

The theological ideas of Al-Ḥājj Sālim Sūwarī were among the items in the baggage of the Mande-*Yeri* and Mande-*Karamos* as they embarked on their travels (*as-safar*) into the Middle Volta Basin. His theology and spirituality, as shown in section 4.4.1. of this study, was the motivation for the non-indigenous Muslims’ lack of active proselytism in the Dagaabaland in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. His spirituality also justified the *Kanatay* (Kantosi) inability to propagate Islam in Grunsiland (Levtzion, 1068), and the failure of the *Tagara* (*Tarawiri*) and Ṣalīfu Ziiri of Jirapa to convert the indigenes to Islam (Bin Salih, 2008; Wilks, 1989). Equipped with the Sūwarian spirituality the Islamized Mande-*Yeri* and Mande-*karamos* contributed greatly to the

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development of long-distance commerce, Islamic scholarship and religious tolerance in the Volta Basin. Hence one can agree with Wilks that the spirituality of Al-Hājj Sālim Sūwarī Sissay formed the bedrock for peace which was needed for the peaceful expansion of trade and Islam in the Volta Basin (Wilks, 2000).

2.3.0. Introduction of Islam in Southern Ghana

In the first section of this Chapter, it was shown how Islam entered Northern Ghana through the activities of Muslim traders, scholars and chiefs. The second section of the Chapter examines some factors which facilitated the spread of Islam into Southern Ghana. These are the activities of Asante, slave raiding and slavery, and colonialism.

2.3.1. Political and economic activities of Asante

The Asante kingdom grew powerful because of trade with the Europeans on the Guinea Coast. In the eighteenth century however, Asante extended its political influence northward. The purpose was to control the northwestern and northeastern trade routes and to make Kumasi the meeting-point of the two major trade routes. As a result of these political and economic activities the Asante kingdom secured the trade routes and opened Kumasi to the Muslims of the Niger Bend and Savannah zone.

2.3.2. Northward conquests of Asante

The establishment of Islam among the Dagaaba of the Upper West Region demands knowledge of how Islam spread to Southern Ghana. This

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background knowledge explains one of the routes through which Islam entered Dagaabaland. Islam spread to Kumasi through trade and the expansion of the Asante kingdom. As mentioned above (2.2.4.), the trade route that commenced from Jenne through Safane, Daboya and Buipe crossed the Black Volta to Bono-Manso, which controlled the sources of gold and kola (Clarke, 1982). According to Wilks (1989), Bravmann (1974), Levtzion (1968), Bono-Manso was probably founded at about the same time as the Mossi-Dagomba states. It was the capital of the state of Bono and as a result attracted Muslim traders who went there for business (Davidson, 1977). To the northwest of Bono-Manso there was a Mande Muslim community at Beghu (Ryan, 1998).

The two commercial towns, Bono-Manso and Beghu, were important for trade and commerce. Their importance lay in the fact that Bono-Manso was the producer of gold and Beghu the distributor (Bravmann, 1974). Bono-Manso and Beghu then became the southern termini for the important Mande trade route connecting Jenne, Bobo-Dioulasso, Buna and Kong with the forest zone of Asante (Levtzion, 1969). It was in view of tapping the benefits of the northwest trade that the Asante expanded northward and conquered Bono-Manso in 1723 C.E. and made it part of the Asante Empire (Bravmann, 1974). In 1725 C.E. the Asante moved further north and conquered the gold distributing town of Beghu. After the fall of Bono-Manso and Beghu some of the Mande-*Yeri* and Mande-*Karamos* moved into Kumasi.

The Asante did not halt their northern expansion with the conquest of Bono-Manso and Beghu. In 1732 C.E. the Asante moved farther north and conquered parts of the Gonja state and made it a tribute-paying state, and in 1745 C.E. they invaded the Dagomba kingdom and it became a debt-paying

state (Levtzion, 1968). The possession of fire-arms gave the Asante a decisive superiority over the horsemen of the savannah. The northern expansion brought Asante into contact with the Islamic influenced states of Gonja, Mamprusi and Dagomba, and with the Mossi states. It also opened the way for Muslims from the commercial centres in the upper and middle Niger region, and even from North Africa to move into Asante, attracted there by its gold and kola (Clarke, 1982). The Muslims who travelled south from these states and settled in Kumasi came to represent their own commercial and political interests and those of their states. The conquest of Bono-Manso and Beghu did not only cause the Mande-*Yeri* to move to Kumasi but forced others to move north into the Gonja and Dagomba states (Bravmann, 1974; Levtzion, 1968).

By the nineteenth century, the Muslim community in Kumasi was made up of *karamos* (scholars), *mallams* (teachers), *shurafā'* (descendants of the Qur'ānic Prophet) and merchants (Bari, 2009; Wilks, 2000; Clarke, 1982; Wilks, 1966). Mossi Muslim traders were believed to be already present in Kumasi by 1839 (Schildkrout, 1978). The expertise of these *Karamos and Mallams* as supernatural practitioners was quickly recognized by the Asantehene and his chiefs. Samwini (1996) and Buah (1998) report that the Asantehene and his chiefs asked for the amulets and charms that these *Mallams* used to make for their northern chiefs.

Hence the greatest influence of the Muslims at the court of Asante came from the fact that they rendered religious services to the Asantehene (Levtzion, 1968; Wilks, 1966). Although the kings of Asante demanded the prayers and amulets of the Muslims, they acquired these spiritual powers only to supplement traditional Asante rituals (Levtzion, 1968). By courtesy the

Muslims were expected to attend the royal ceremonies, which at times included human sacrifice. The Muslims did not like this custom and tried to replace it by giving the example of sacrificing sheep (Levtzion, 1968) but the Asantehene refused this innovation because sheep sacrifice had no value compared to human sacrifice in Asante worldview.

Administratively, the Muslims being literate also served as advisers and secretaries to the Asante rulers on important matters of state. Politically, the Muslims in Kumasi, especially those from the north, represented the political interests of the northern chiefs. Gonja being a tribute-paying state and Dagomba, a debt-paying state of Asante were represented at the court of the Asantehene by northern Muslims (Levtzion, 1968; Wilks, 1966). These Muslims sustained constant communications between the Asantehene and the Mole-Dagomba states. Similarly, the northern Muslims were the intermediaries between the Asantehene and the imāms of Gambaga, Buipe, Kpembe and the Kamashe-Na of Kamashe (Kamashegu). These imāms guided the Muslims at the court of the Asantehene as regards the types of charms to be made for the Asantehene (Wilks, Levtzion & Haight, 1986; Levtzion, 1968, Wilks 1966).

Economically, the Asantehene encouraged northern Muslim traders to come down to Kumasi to do business with Asante. These resident Muslims rendered important service to traders in the north “both in representing them before the Asantehene and in reporting economic and political conditions” in Kumasi (Levtzion, 1968, p. 182). More importantly, the Muslims of Kumasi came to control the distributive trade in gold, kola, salt and slaves, and had the monopoly over the cattle industry (Wilks, 1966). Consequently, “they wielded

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considerable economic and political power” (Clarke, 1982, p. 107; see also
Bari, 2009; Samwini, 1996; Wilks, 1966).

The Muslims of Kumasi also played an important role in the wars of Asante. For example, in preparation for the invasion of the kingdom of Gyaman in 1818, the Muslims went every morning to the palace of the Asantehene to offer prayer and sheep sacrifice, and to prepare amulets and charms for the Asantehene (Levtzion, 1968). In the preparation, the Asantehene looked out for the most powerful Muslim charm-maker. For instance, he invited an itinerant holy man, *Sharīf Ibrāhīm* to his palace to pray and make sheep sacrifice for the success of the war (Levtzion, 1968, Samwini, 2006), even though *Sharīf Ibrāhīm* loathed doing business with non-Muslim rulers (Wilks, 1966). Similarly, Levtzion reported that *Karamo Tia*, a renowned charm-maker was brought from Daboya to Kumasi by the Asantehene Kwaku-Dua I (1834-67 C.E.) to assist him spiritually in his wars (Levtzion, 1968). For this reason *Karamo Tia* was made the personal imām of the king, and in the course of time, he and his descendants came to be known as “Asante Nkramo” (Levtzion, 1968, p. 186; see also Levtzion, 2000), that is to say, “Asante Muslims”. The term originally referred to non-Asante Muslims or Muslims of mixed-Asante descent or Muslims of other origins resident in Kumasi, but today, the term denotes indigenous Asante who have converted to Islam. Thus we have “Asante Nkramo”, “Fante Nkramo” as against Muslims of northern origin or other nationalities resident in Ghana (Bari 2009; Samwini, 1996).

The Muslims of Kumasi on their part were prepared to collaborate with the kings of Asante in the interest of trade and security. It is not surprising

therefore that in the 1870s, the Muslims of Kumasi invited all Muslims to the capital to support the non-Muslim ruler, the Asantehene Kofi Karikari, in the war against the Christians (the British). This summon brought to Kumasi Muslim *karamos* such as Aḥmad Batunbuce of Timbuktu, Binafi al-Hawsawī the Hausa, and Sulaymān b. °Alī Kanatay from Daḥin (Wilks, 2000).

The direct involvement of the Muslims in the socio-economic life in a non-Muslim kingdom like Asante meant that they had to make some compromises. An example of such a compromise in the opinion of Ryan (1998) was the fact that the Muslims could not engage in active proselytization of the Asante people, especially of the royal family. The prudent method of proselytization was to adopt non-Muslims into their homes and bring them up as Muslims (Wilks, 1966). The seriousness of the issue is shown in the fact that in 1798, the Asantehene, Osei Tutu Kwame was destooled because the royal family was afraid he would become a Muslim (Wilks, 2000). The conversion of Osei Tutu Kwame would have endangered the social and cultural system of Asante which is based on matrilineal descent and inheritance (Ryan, 1998).

The Muslims of Kumasi also tolerated some cultural practices of the Asante, such as matrilineal inheritance, un-circumcision, eating meat of animals not ritually slaughtered and the occasional offering of human sacrifice (Ryan, 1998, Wilks, 1966). Nevertheless, the Muslims, the Mande-*Yeri* in particular, introduced Mande technology and culture among the Asante, such as weaving, carving, metal work, mosque building, and “the seven-day week” (Ryan, 1998, p. 151), Islam and Arabic literacy. Thus it was the benefit of the trade that prompted Asante to expand northward and Kumasi being a

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commercial city also attracted Muslims from the Niger Bend and the savannah zone to Asante.

2.3.3. Asante and the northeast trade

The northeast trade route was the other way through which Islam spread into Southern Ghana. In the fifteenth century, the Mande-*Yeri* from Mali had moved into Hausaland and established commercial settlements in Kebbi, Kano and Katsina (Wilks, Hunwicz & Sey, 2003). The Mande-*Yeri* of the Hausaland were already trading with the people of the Volta Basin in the fifteenth century (Der, 1989). The Hausa themselves were not involved in the gold trade at this period. It was only when the northeast trade increased in volume in the kola trade in the eighteenth century that many Hausa Muslim traders came in their numbers into the Middle Volta Basin (Boahen, 1992; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968).

There were two waves of Muslims of Hausa origin into the Middle Volta Basin. One group, which migrated during the eighteenth century, apparently came from Katsina, while the other group that arrived in the nineteenth century came from Kano, Sokoto, Nupe and other commercial centres after the Fulani *jihād* (Levtzion, 1968). It is interesting that the Muslims who came in the eighteenth century settled under the patronage of the chiefs and built up the Muslim communities of Dagomba, Mamprusi and Wa, whereas Muslims who came in the nineteenth century stayed mainly in trading towns, such as Salaga, Walewale, Gambaga and Bawku. The latter arrivals were certainly influenced by the Fulani *jihād* movement. The Muslims of the towns under the influence of the Fulani *jihād* movement tended to settle apart

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from the local inhabitants in order not to be contaminated by non-Islamic elements (Levtzion, 1968). The Hausa Muslim communities of the towns later developed into the *zongos* (strangers' quarters) of modern Ghana in the twentieth century.

The northeast trade to the Middle Volta Basin reached its peak in the nineteenth century. Levtzion explains that at the beginning of the nineteenth century Asante lost an important source of income by the abolition of the slave trade, and it had to pay in gold for transaction with the coast. It became more convenient for Asante to buy clothing and other manufactured goods from the north where they could pay in kola (Levtzion, 1968). This new development led to the emergence of Salaga as the southern entrepôt for the flourishing northeast kola trade in the nineteenth century (Levtzion, 1968). Within a short period Salaga attracted traders from Hausaland, Bornu, Macina, Djougou and the Central Sudanic region, who flocked there to establish businesses, build houses, mosques and Qur'ān schools (Wilks, Hunwich & Sey, 2003).

This made Salaga the melting-pot for Muslim traders from the Mande and Hausa lands in the nineteenth century (Levtzion, 1969). It also became the gateway for Hausa Muslim penetration into the Asante Empire. This, however, was not possible as Levtzion explains, as long as Asante had monopoly of the northeast trade in kola nuts. The Asante did not allow the Hausa to go beyond Salaga to Kumasi. It was only when the British defeated the Asante in 1874 C.E. that Salaga began to decline and the Hausa trading community there started to disperse slowly to Southern Ghana. In the process, they helped to develop towns like Kintampo, Kete-Krachi, Yeji, Atebubu, Prang and Kumasi (Bar, 2009; Samwini, 2006; Levtzion, 1969).

The British had blocked all routes from Salaga to Kumasi after the conquest of 1874 C.E. to cut off all commercial dealings with Asante. But the Chief of Nkoranza, who was a relative of the Asantehene allowed the Asante to trade in his territory. Consequently, Kintampo developed into a commercial town and attracted Muslims from Salaga and Kete-Krachi. As the Hausa Muslims moved southwards, they took along with them “their proud, bookish and uncompromising version of Islam” (Wilks, Hunwich & Sey, 2003, p. 541). Though the Muslim traders from Hausaland came to Salaga with militant Islamic ideas, they found it appropriate for the sake of trade to shelve their jihadist sentiments. They imitated instead the “older conservative traditions” (Wilks, Hunwich & Sey, 2003, p. 541) of the Kumasi Muslims who preferred peaceful co-existence, and business with non-Muslim rulers than to embark on *jihād*, which could jeopardize their trade and commercial interests (Wilks, Hunwich & Sey, 2003). Hence the security established by Asante and the control of the northeast trade opened the way for the influx of northern Muslims to Kumasi.

2.3.4. Slave Raiding and Slavery

The study of the spread of Islam to other parts of Southern Ghana must be viewed within the context of the events of 1700-1890 C.E. This period witnessed a series of raids, attacks, enslavement of people and expansion of territories (Boahen, 1992). Within this period, only a few states or kingdoms had long standing peace and development. And so only the powerful people could move from one place to another. But in many cases the purpose for such

movements was either to hunt for captives as slaves, expansion of one's territory or to seek commerce (Boahen, 1992).

It is in the context of these raids and movements that one must situate the arrival of Islam in Nzemaland. According to Gyamfi (1989) and Bari (2009), Islam was first introduced into Nzemaland by Nana Akrouo Ababio I (alias Nana Kramo Dauda) in 1901, and that it was consolidated by the hard work of a scholar from Salaga, *Mallam Ṭahīru*. But the author thinks that Islam must have reached Nzema earlier than the twentieth century. This is supported by the account of Nathan Samwini on how Islam was introduced to Nzema. According to Samwini (1996), around 1760 C.E. an Nzema man, Abaka Kanga went up north looking for captives. He returned with captives some of whom were Muslims. He separated them from the indigenous Nzema for whom Islam was an unknown religion. The section where they settled became known as *Kangbule* which means 'a secluded area' (Samwini, 1996: p. 7). This was the first encounter of the Nzema with Islam.

In about 1780 C.E., the immediate successor to Abaka Kanga also went up north, and on his return brought many more captives whom he added to the previous group. The new King himself later became a Muslim. Today, *Kangbule* as Samwini points out stands out as a well known Muslim town in the entire Nzemaland. The remnant of the captives was later freed and they intermarried with the Nzema converts to Islam and with time took over the chieftaincy of the town. This explains why only *Kangbule* among the Nzema follow patrilineal succession and inheritance (Samwini, 1996). Hence Islam was first brought to Nzema by slaves.

the Atlantic slave trade was abolished in 1807 C.E., the Asante could no longer export their slaves through the European forts on the coast. The slaves that were in their possession were re-absorbed into the Asante society as labourers and domestic servants (Debrunner, 1967). Some of these slaves were Muslims. Furthermore, Debrunner reports that the Basel Mission opened a station at Kumasi in 1896 C.E. The main task of the mission was to take care of the slaves liberated by the British columns from the troops of Samori Toure and Babatu. The mission station then became the “home for slaves” (Debrunner, 1967, p. 211). In addition, a “Salaga market” in Accra which was probably established in the late eighteenth or in the early years of the nineteenth century was meant to dispose of slaves from Salaga brought directly down to Accra through the Afram Plains (Der, 1998). Some of these slaves who were Muslims established Muslim settlements in Accra.

M. Sey said that in 1836 C.E., a group of ex-slaves were repatriated from Brazil and settled at Dutch Accra. They were called *Tabons* and the place of their residence was named *Tabon Manteshe*. The *Tabons* were the first Muslims to settle on the Coast and they certainly introduced Islam in Accra (M. Sey, March 23, 2010, at University of Cape Coast). The assertion of M. Sey is confirmed by Azumah (2000), Bari (2009), Debrunner (1967), and Levtzion (1969). These facts show that slave raiding and the slave trade led to the dispersion of Muslim slaves to Southern Ghana who in turn spread Islam there.

The infrastructural developments brought by the British colonial administration and certain colonial policies also facilitated the spread of Islam in Southern Ghana. In the first place, Debrunner (1967) says that the British authorities based in Cape Coast and Accra brought Hausa Muslim soldiers and policemen into the Gold Coast in 1872 C.E. to enhance their military effort to put down the power of Asante. They were settled at Elmina, Accra and Keta. The colonial administration gave them land to build mosques and the Imāms of these towns were given monthly allowance (Debrunner, 1967). The evidence of Debrunner is supported by Ryan (1998, 1996a), Samwini (1996), Hiskett (1984), and Levtzion (1969). Abdul-Hamid mentioned some of these Hausa soldiers' settlements in Accra as "Nima, Adabraka, Cowlane, Sukula [Sukura], Sabon Zongo" (Abdul-Hamid, 2002, p. 1).

An important consequence of the presence of these Hausa troops in Ghana was the conversion of Benjamin Sam, a Methodist catechist and trader at Ekroful to Sunnī Islam. Sam swapped over to Sunnī Islam with his congregation and spread Islam in Gomoa (Debrunner, 1967). However, the Sunnī Fante Muslim community of Ekroful invited the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Mission, a Missionary Organization in Islam to Ghana in 1921. The Aḥmadiyya Muslims responded and opened a mission station at Saltpond. Within a short period, most of the Fante of Gomoa and Ekroful converted to the Aḥmadiyya Islam. From Saltpond the movement spread to Kumasi, Wa and other parts of Ghana (Debrunner, 1967). Today the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission is a strong partner with the government of Ghana in providing education and health services. Bari (2009), however, thinks that there was a

Hausa community in Elmina long before the arrival of the Hausa policemen from Nigeria. This came about as a result of the Dutch who used to buy slaves from Asante and send them to Java in Indonesia to serve as soldiers. Some of these were returned and settled on Java Hill in Elmina. These early Hausa Muslim slaves, he says, prepared the ground for the arrival of the Hausa soldiers from Nigeria in 1872 C.E. (Bari, 2009).

Secondly, the high demand for labour for the gold mining centres of Tarkwa, Prestea, and later Obuasi, and other colonial industries, and the increased safety on sea travel enabled the Hausa to sail from Nigeria to Accra. Added to this was the safety in the trade routes through the north and the east of the country. This gave rise to Muslim migrations from several parts in the sub-region to converge at these centres as labourers or traders, especially, from Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Togo and Cameroon from the early 1900s up to the late 1960s (Anarfi et al., 2003; Levtzion, 1969). Even those who came to Ghana as non-Muslims later became Muslims because of the ready support offered them by the communities of the *zongos* and “common identity” (Levtzion, 1969, p. 309) groups. These immigrants settled away from the indigenous people.

Another phenomenon that contributed to the spread of Islam in Southern Ghana was the labour migration policy of the colonial administration in Northern Ghana (Saaka, 2001). There was the dire need for manpower, first of all, for the southern mines. The problem came about because the Akan mine labourers loathed underground work. Moreover, they believed that underground mining was linked with evil spirits. In addition, they viewed underground mining as the work of slaves and it was degrading for an Akan to

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become a mine labourer. Furthermore, the Akan could subsist on cultivation of food crops, hunting and fishing. As a result, there was no need for them to sell their labour to Europeans in order to make a living (Anarfi et al., 2003). This prompted the colonial administration to recruit Northerners for the southern mines.

Also the railway construction and the cocoa plantations (Tanle, 2010; Lentz, 2006), and the need for recruits for the Gold Coast Regiment during the First World War campaigns in Togoland, the Cameroons and East Africa led to the migration of Northerners, some of them Muslims, to the south of Ghana between 1919 C.E. and 1924 C.E. (Tanle, 2010; Iddrisu, 2005). Chiefs of the north were instrumental in providing labour quotas and recruitments in this regard (Tanle, 2010; McCoy, 1988). In addition, from 1942-43 C.E. the need to conscript soldiers for World War II increased the demand for military manpower for campaigns (Lentz, 2006). Many of those who were recruited for the army and who were not Muslims became Muslims through their contact with the Hausa soldiers from Nigeria. Others too took Muslim names for mere prestige. It was prestigious to have a Muslim name or to speak Hausa (Cardinall, 1969; Levtzion, 1969).

The events of nature also contributed to the spread of Islam in Southern Ghana. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was severe Sahelian drought (Skinner, 1996). This forced many Fulani from Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Nigeria to migrate and settle in various areas in Northern Ghana (Levtzion, 1969). Some of the Fulani immigrants later moved into Southern Ghana to participate in the commerce and trade. They established their own “colonies” or settled among other foreign immigrant communities (Bari, 2009). In studying of the intro-

duction of Islam in Southern Ghana, one cannot ignore the presence of the youth from the neighbouring West African countries, who came to Ghana as carriers, maidservants, petty traders, and apprentices in search of greener pastures. Some of them married non-Muslim Ghanaian girls and raised up Muslim families. The economic progress also attracted immigrants from the Middle East (Lebanese, Syrians) and India to come to Ghana as merchants (McCoy, 1988). Their presence in Ghana increased the number of Muslims in the country.

Since independence, many Islamic countries have established diplomatic relations with Ghana, especially Egypt and Saudi Arabia. These Muslim embassies in no small way have supported and contributed to the cause of Islam and the interests of Muslims in Ghana. Since the 1990s the Saudi and Iranian governments have both competed for supporters among the Muslims of the Sakasaka Road Mosque of the late Alfa Ajura and the Central Mosque community in Tamale respectively (Ryan, 1996). The presence of Islamic NGOs and financial institutions (Ammah, 2007) has also helped to propagate Islam in Southern Ghana through their development projects.

2.4. Conclusion

The study of the introduction of Islam in Ghana indicates that Islam was brought to Northern Ghana generally by Mande and Hausa Muslim traders and scholars. The traders came to trade in gold and kola nuts and established trading centres. The scholars on the other hand, followed the traders into Northern Ghana and in collaboration with the rulers of the Voltaic states established Islam in the royal courts. Their presence in the courts helped them

to influence some customs and practices of the chieftaincy institution. However, the majority of the subjects of these states remained untouched by Islam. The main reason was that the Muslims were more interested in trade (See Levtzion, 1968) than in proselytization.

From the savannah zone of Northern Ghana Islam penetrated into Southern Ghana. The southward flow of Islam was facilitated by the military and economic activities of the Asante kingdom and the British colonial administration. The conquests of Asante opened Kumasi to the Niger Bend and savannah zone. This prompted the Muslims from these areas to move into Kumasi. The colonial government also in its development programmes was in dire need of man power in the mines, cocoa farms, and the road and rail construction and in the army. Consequently, there were migrations of Northerners and other West African nationals, some of whom were Muslims into Southern Ghana to work in the mines and cocoa farms or to be recruited into the army. From the above, one can, therefore conclude that it was the Muslim traders and scholars from the Niger Bend and the savannah zone, and the immigrants from Northern Ghana and other countries that contributed to the spread of Islam in Kumasi and Southern Ghana. The study examines in Chapter Four how some of the Dagaaba immigrants would convert to Islam in Southern Ghana returned to Dagaabaland to establish Islam. But before examining the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland, it is necessary to study the identity of the Dagaaba, their history, social and political institutions and the Dagaaba traditional religion before the advent of Islam. This puts one in a better position to understand the response of Dagaaba to the arrival of Islam in Dagaabaland.

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THE SOCIO-RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION OF THE DAGAABA

3.1. Introduction

The study of the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland demands knowledge of the area, the Dagaaba people, their migrations, settlements and language. In other words, it is important to know the factors that contributed to the formation of the ethnic identity of the Dagaaba among whom Islam was established. The Chapter also looks at certain elements of the Dagaaba culture that affected the acceptance of Islam or had an impact on the spread of Islam among them.

3.2. The locality of the Dagaaba

The Dagaaba live on both sides of the Black Volta River, which forms the boundary between the Republics of Ivory Coast, Ghana and Burkina Faso. Consequently, there are Dagaaba in southwestern Burkina Faso (Naameh, 1986; Tuurey, 1982), in Ghana and a small number in Ivory Coast (Bekye, 1991). This study focuses on the Dagaaba in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The Upper West Region lies in the Northwestern corner of Ghana. It borders the Republic of Burkina Faso to the North and West, the Upper East Region to the East, and the Northern Region to the South. The Upper West Region until 2012 was divided into nine administrative and political districts made up of the Wa Central, Wa West, Wa East, Nadawli, Jirapa, Lawra, Lambussie, Sissala West and Sissala East district Assemblies. The regional capital is Wa. The majority of Dagaaba live in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra districts. These

districts lie roughly between longitude NW 2° 56' 0" W and latitude 11° 2' 0" N, and longitude SW 2° 48' 0" W and latitude 10° 10' 0" N, and longitude NE 2° 0' 0" W and latitude 11° 2' 0" N, and longitude SE 2° 0' 0" W and latitude 10° 14' 0" N of the Equator (Remote Sensing and Cartographic Unit, University of Cape Coast, 21/6/11). Traditionally, the study area includes the Kaleo, Isa, Nadawli, Jirapa, Lawra and Nandom paramountcies.

Historical geographers are of the view that the resources and character of an area depend largely on its vegetation and that man's survival also relies greatly on vegetation (Dickson & Benneh, 1988). This is because man depends on vegetation for materials for his shelter, food, clothing and the necessities of life. The area in which the Dagaaba live has characteristics that are common with the rest of the Upper West Region savannah vegetation, low grass and low trees. This type of vegetation certainly has an influence on the lifestyle of the Dagaaba. It is therefore important to examine the factors which account for this type of vegetation and their impact on the culture of the people.

The first factor is the climatic annual rainfall pattern. The low grass, the thorn bushes and the serious water deficiency are the result of the low annual rainfall (Dickson & Benneh, 1988), which is one of the contributory factors to the intense poverty of the area. The cause of the savannah vegetation is not due merely to the climatic conditions, but the greater cause is to be blamed on the activities of the Dagaaba who in the past have destroyed the forest through bush fires (Van der Geest, 2011). Hence the Dagaaba themselves are responsible for the creation of the grassland type of vegetation. It is true that man has no control over nature or the climate but he can overcome the climatic

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challenges by taking strategic measures through science and technology to reduce “climate-change” and prevent environmental degradation.

The consequences of the low climatic rainfall pattern on the lifestyle of the Dagaaba are manifold. First of all, it determines the seasons and life cycle of the Dagaaba. The area has two seasons, the dry season, which runs from October to March, and the rainy season, from April to September (Saaka, 2001). The two seasons determine the framework of the Dagaaba concept of the year and life. The year moves from the dry season to the rainy season and back to the dry season. Life then becomes a cycle from death to life (dry season to rainy season) and life to death (rainy season to dry season). Death therefore becomes the focus in the cultural life of the Dagaaba. This explains why many local names among the Dagaaba are connected with death such as *Kuuwulong* (“Death’s problem”), *Kuukure* (“Death is killing”), and why the Dagaaba invest a lot of resources in the preparation and celebration of death.

Secondly, the sharp climatic differentiation into rainy and dry seasons also imposes a pattern of activity and style of life on the Dagaaba (Naameh, 1986). In the rainy season, farming which is the main occupation of the people takes a greater part of their time. Men and women work in their own farms or as members of cooperative work groups which assist each other in cultivating, weeding, harvesting and threshing. In the dry season, marketing, marriages, final funeral rite performances, festivals, communal hunting, and fishing are the social and cultural activities that take place. It is also the time for repairing the houses and rethatching roofs. The women on their part engage themselves in the dry season in pottery, weaving, brewing *pito* (local beer brewed from

sorghum), and making cakes for sale in the markets and at funerals, burning charcoal and gathering vegetables and firewood from the bush.

The beginning of the dry season which also marks the end of the rainy season is a time of thanksgiving to the ancestors for a good harvest, and the beginning of the rainy season which marks the end of the dry season is also a period of “purifying the earth” and soliciting the help of the *tengan* (earth-spirit) to ensure good rains, good harvest and the general well-being of the community. These times are therefore occasions for individuals and communities to offer sacrifices and prayers to the *tengan* (earth-spirit) and the *kpime* (ancestors) for good rains, good harvest, peace and good health.

The savannah vegetation conditioned the occupation of the Dagaaba as subsistence farmers. The success of farming depends on good rains which are the blessings of the *tengan* (earth-spirit) and *kpime* (ancestors). The *tengdaana* (earth-priest) intervenes every year by offering sacrifices to the *tengan* (earth-spirit) through the *kpime* (ancestors) for a good rainy season. Without the intervention of the *tengdaana* there will not be a good harvest. This factor which came out in the study is one reason for Dagaaba resistance to Islam. Conversion to Islam entailed the rejection of offering sacrifices to the *tengan* and *kpime* and that would be injurious to their farming occupation. The Dagaaba believed the *tengan* and the *kpime* would be angry and punish the community with drought and famine for abandoning them.

The second factor which accounts for the poor grassy land vegetation in Dagaabaland is soil erosion. Good soil provides water and nutrients for plant to grow and it also provides an anchorage for their roots. When the soil has the capacity to hold water and is fertile then it can support the development of

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plant life (Dickson & Benneh, 1988). But the hard laterite soil in some areas in Dagaabaland does not support the growth of plant life. Consequently, annually, there is the disastrous up-rooting of trees and houses by heavy wind storms at the beginning of the rainy season in March and April.

The third factor that accounts for the grassland vegetation of the area is the unscrupulous activities of some Dagaaba such as the felling of trees, the clearing of land for farming, seasonal burning of grass and the grazing of livestock. These activities have caused great changes in the savannah vegetation of the area. Dickson and Benneh (1988) suggest that the remaining little patches of forest or groves used as *tengama* (earth-shrines) bear witness to the fact that years ago the area was rich in numerous trees and forest. If today Dagaaba complain of poor savannah vegetation it is the result of continued regular burning, cultivation, and grazing by livestock. Fortunately, the regular burning, the grazing of livestock and cultivation have resulted in the survival of few trees such as the baobab, the dawadawa, acacias, and the shea tree which have adapted to the environment (Songsore & Denkabe, 1995; Dickson & Benneh, 1988) and are a source of livelihood for the Dagaaba.

In the face of these challenges caused by the climate, soil and man, what have been the responses of the Dagaaba over the years in terms of survival? The kind of crops that the Dagaaba sow is determined by the savannah vegetation. Naturally, the savannah climate does not support growth of cocoa, coffee or banana. The vegetation favours crops like millet, rice, groundnuts, yam, and beans. However, it is a fact that the type of crops cultivated does not depend solely on the vegetation but also on the capabilities

and wishes of the people. For example, most Dagaaba farmers would cultivate groundnuts instead of cotton because it is a cash crop and more profitable.

The type of farming that the Dagaaba employ is also determined by the vegetation. The savannah vegetation explains why the Dagaaba use the hoe, and why some practice bush fallowing and crop rotation (Dickson & Benneh, 1988). Again it must be said that the successful use of the land does not only depend very much on the physical environment but more on the methods of farming and the technology employed. If today Dagaaba are experiencing dire poverty it is not due solely to the savannah vegetation but it has more to do with the unscientific use of land by the Dagaaba.

The overall effect of the sporadic rainfall, the decrease in the fertility of the land, coupled with population increase is that many Dagaaba are forced to migrate to other regions, especially to Southern Ghana for farming land and other works. Others migrate to the south to work in the mines, in cocoa farms or as security agents (Lentz, 2006; Kuuire, 1996; McCoy, 1988; Kuukure, 1985). Consequently, today, the majority of Dagaaba live outside the Upper West Region (Van der Geest, 2011; Songsore, 2001). Secondly, the non-active population which consists of children, old men and women are left behind in the villages during the dry season because they are too young or too old to travel for employment. Some of these people suffer and die because there is no responsible person in the family to take care of them. Thirdly, Dagaaba immigrants in Southern Ghana were exposed to Islam and some of them would be converted and go back to convert their brothers and sisters to Islam (See section 4.5.1.). Thus Southern Ghana as shown in Chapter Four is one source of the spread of Islam to Dagaabaland.

The savannah vegetation is not only fertile for crops like millet, guinea corn, groundnuts, and yam but also supports animal husbandry. Sheep, goats and fowls are reared in almost every village in Dagaabaland, but by far the most important are the cattle. Pigs which are the common source of daily meat are also reared in almost every village in Dagaabaland. Although cattle were not reared for sale and for meat, most Dagaaba farmers invested their wealth in cattle and the extent of a person's wealth was determined by the number of cattle he owned. Cattle were regarded as an outward sign of wealth and social standing and were often used as bride wealth, especially in the Lawra District. To possess large herds for the Dagaaba meant security, wealth, and consequently, prestige in the community (Songsore, 2001; Goody, 1967).

It is strange that even though Dagaaba put a high premium on cattle rearing, they entrust them to the care of children (Kpiebaya, 1973), and during the dry season they allow them to graze about freely without any monitoring. The frequent stealing of cattle and the compulsory education system of the Ghana Education Service, which demands that every child must go to school, have forced Dagaaba to take more serious care of their cattle. Some Dagaaba now entrust their animals to the care of Fulani herdsmen who regard cattle keeping as their way of life. Hence we find many Fulani in the Nadawli and Jirapa districts, taking care of the cattle of Dagaaba rich farmers, chiefs, and wealthy *Waala al-Hājjis*. The rest of the Dagaaba who do not trust the Fulani with their cattle keep them in a yard of the compound house during the night. The Fulani who come from Western Sudan introduced the white Fulani bull in Dagaabaland (Dickson & Benneh, 1988).

The study of the area has shown that climatic factors have influenced the economic, social and religious life of the Dagaaba. The savannah grassland, with low annual rainfall, lacks forest products and as a result, it does not attract foreign investments. In the past, the colonial administration ignorantly declared that the area had no mineral resources. On this basis, colonial and post-independent governments have always marginalized the North in terms of economic development (Tanle, 2010; Songsore & Denkabe, 1995). This is the main reason why Northern Ghana today lags so far behind the rest of the country in economic development. For Dagaaba Muslims, the intense poverty of the area has an adverse effect on the spread of Islam. According to Al-Hājj Ḥafīz Nyovor Bodire of Duori, poverty is the main reason for the slow spread of Islam in Dagaabaland. Because of poverty Dagaaba Muslims cannot give further Islamic education to their children, they cannot go on pilgrimage to Makkah, and they cannot build mosques and build *darisas* (Qur'ān schools) in the villages (Interview with Al-Hājj Ḥafīz Nyovor Bodire 24/3/11). Al-Hājj Ḥafīz and his co-religionists have a point, but poverty cannot be the sole cause for the slow spread of Islam in Dagaabaland. Section 4.4.3 of this study shows that Dagaaba traditional religion was the main obstacle to the spread of Islam.

3.3. The Dagaaba People

The focus here is not to give an anthropological or ethnological treatise of the Dagaaba. Such a study can be found in the writings of Kuukure (1985) and Goody (1967), and the French ethnologists L. Tauxier and M. Delafosse (Kuuire, 1996; Bekye, 1991). The attention here is on the ethnic identity of the Dagaaba who form the subject matter of this study. When two groups of

different origins - cultural or otherwise – meet, there is usually a display of in-group versus out-group bias. This phenomenon usually leads to stereotypes and counter-stereotypes. For example, the people of the Nadawli District call the people of the Lawra District “Loor” (“Those who speak bad-Dagaare”) and the people of the Lawra District call the inhabitants of Nadawli “Degabe” (“Those who speak broken-Dagaare”) with a derogatory humour. This phenomenon of bias and social categorizations took place in the course of the Islamization of the Voltaic Basin.

In Chapter Two (2.2.3.), it was indicated that the Volta Basin and west of the Black Volta River were Islamized by Mande-*Yeri*, Mande-*Karamos* and Mande-Warriors. Some scholars are of the view that terms such as “Senufo”, “Grunsi”, “Lobi” and “Dagao” were applied to the “autochthonous peoples” of these areas by Mande Muslims who lived among them. These terms imply the dichotomy between “Believers” (*Mu'minūn*) and “Unbelievers” (*Kāfirūn*) from the perspective of the Mande Muslim traders. In this regard, Holmes says that it was the Mande-*Yeri* who attached the term “Senufo” to the cluster of people living in Northern Ivory Coast and Southwestern Burkina Faso (Holmes, 1984). The exact meaning of the Mande term “Senufo” is not clear but Holmes says it has a religious dimension, and hence the term means *kāfir* (unbeliever). Similarly, Rattray and Lentz opine that it was the Zabarima troops who introduced the term “Grunsi”, “Grusi”, “Gurunsi” or “Gurunshi” (sing. *Gurunga*) to designate the autochthonous peoples living between the north of Wa, Dagomba and Mamprusi states and south of the Mossi states and that the term means “fetish worshipper” (Lentz, 2006; Rattray, 1932). Hence this area became known in the colonial period as “Grunshi land”. In the same vein,

Lentz thinks that the term “Lobi” was used by “Dyula merchants for those gold-mining populations along the Black Volta” (Lentz, 2006, p. 23) with a pejorative meaning. According to Bin Salih (2008), the term “Dagao” (pl. Dagaaba) was first coined and applied to the “chiefless people” of the Wa area to distinguish these “Unbelievers” from the “Muslims”. Thus “Lobi” and “Dagao” from the religious point of view imply the dichotomy between “Muslims” and “Unbelievers”.

In the political and economic spheres these terms assume the meaning of “uncivilized” people. The rulers of Dagomba, Mamprusi and Mossi regarded the *Grunsi* as “uncivilized people” (Finnegan, 1984a; Tuurey, 1982), the rulers of Kong also looked down on the *Lobi* as “uncivilized people” (Lentz, 2006), and the Waala princes of Wa regarded and still regard the *Dagaaba* as “uncivilized” (Levtzion, 1968). The terms are, therefore, used by centralized states to designate “un-centralized people” in order to demonstrate the contrast in political organization. The French and British colonial administrations also adopted these terms and described all autochthonous people as “anarchic and lawless” (Bekye, 1991, p. 116).

But the real meaning of these terms must go beyond the religious and political contexts and be grounded in the linguistic context. The term “Grusi” according to the Mossi sociologist, Immanuel Sagadougou of Ouagadougou, was attached by the Mossi to the peoples south of the Mossi kingdom especially, the Liele, Nuuni and Kasena to designate peoples whose languages they did not understand. This is proved by the fact that even Mossi who stay away from home for many years and come back unable to speak Moore correctly or normally are called “Grusi”, meaning that their language is not

understandable or they speak a “strange language” (personal communication, June 26, 2011 at Tamale). The linguistic context of understanding the above terms is supported by information from the Nandom area.

The traditional religionists of Nandom call the Mande-Yeri *Ninbulli*, an expression which has come to designate “Muslims”. But *Ninbulli* (sing. *Ninbulla*) does not in reality mean “Muslims”. Linguistically, it means “those who babble”, in other words, “those who spoke in a way that the indigenes did not understand.” Similarly, the term “Grusi” does not mean people who are “stateless” or who are “unbelievers” but linguistically, it referred to a group of people who spoke a “strange language” which was not understandable to the Mossi. In south Burkina Faso, one finds the Liele, Nunuma, Ko, Sissala or Kasena but no “Grusi” (Immanuel Sagadougou, personal communication). There is no group calling itself “Grusi”. It was the French colonial administrators who without serious study of the people south of Burkina Faso wrongly applied the term “Grusi” to them and put it in official documents and it has come to stay.

It is in the same linguistic context that we are to understand the Mande term “Senufo”. It has no religious undertone. It should be understood within the context of linguistics. The Mande-Yeri bestowed the term “Senufo” to these eclectic groups to signify that these people spoke a language which was incomprehensible to them, and they did not mean to designate a distinct religious group. It is within the linguistic context that we are also to understand the appellation of the term “Dagao” or “Dagau”. The term “Dagao” comes from *Dagara* and was originally known as “Degabr”. It was used to refer to the Manse-Yeri who had come into the area and could not speak *Dagara* properly.

Gradually, the term was corrupted into “Degabe” and finally into “Dagara” and “Dagaaba”. Hence the term *Dagao* does not have any religious connotation and certainly does not mean *kāfir* (unbeliever) as advocated by Bin Salih (2008), Wilks (1989) and Levtzion (1968). More importantly, the term was not given to the indigenous people by the Mande-*Yeri*. Historically it was a term, which the indigenous people used to refer to themselves to signify their ethnic and cultural identity (Der, 1989; Naameh, 1986).

In Nandom, the Dagaaba, and the Dagaaba who migrated to Burkina Faso in the 1750s call themselves “Dagara” and their language also “Dagara” (Bekye, 1991). The appellation “Dagara” comes from the Dagomba word *Dagaar*, i.e. “to go wild”. It was applied by the indigenous Dagomba to those Dagomba who rebelled against the invading band of warriors and migrated from Dagbon to Northwestern Ghana. Gradually, it became “Dagara” and “Dagaaba”. The people of the Nadawli and Jirapa districts on the other hand, refer to themselves as “Dagaaba”. Whether the people of Dagaabaland call themselves “Dagaaba” (in the Nadawli and Jirapa Districts) or “Dagara” in the Lawra district), the tendency in Ghana today is to use the expressions “Dagaaba” and “Dagara”, which are in common use and in written documents (Bekye, 1991), for all the inhabitants of the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra districts despite the customary and dialect differences. The expressions “Dagaaba” and “Dagara” therefore, always refer to the same people. The differences, as Bekye explains “are most probably due to reasons of movement and settlement” (Bekye, 1991, p. 96).

One important negative consequence of the political and religious interpretations of the above terms was the inability of the Northern states and

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One important negative consequence of the political and religious interpretations of the above terms was the inability of the Northern states and

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Mande-*Yeri* to integrate and to spread Islam among the autochthonous peoples.

The superior attitude of these states and their tendency to label others created a dichotomy as explained above, between “civilized” and “bush”. Consequently they failed to integrate the autochthonous peoples into their political system. This was an opportunity lost. Their exclusive attitude prevented them from bringing the autochthonous peoples under their influence and the influence of Islam. This is a weakness that one finds not only among the Northern states but also among Western Sudanese empires. The empires of Ghana and Mali failed to integrate the peasants in their empires into the political system (Wilks, 2000, 1989). This explains why when these empires were falling they fell absolutely because the peasants were not active members of the empires and so could not sustain the survival of these empires. The views of Wilks (1989), Hisskett (1984), Clarke (1982) and Levtzion (1968) that the “chiefless societies” remained un-Islamized for a long time because they had no chiefs among them to attract Muslims to their societies does not hold for the people of Northern Ghana. They remained un-Islamized because the Northern States failed to integrate them into their political system and consequently, failed to bring them under the influence of Islam.

Similarly, the dichotomy between “Muslims and Unbelievers” prevented the Muslims of these states from going out of their way to spread Islam among the autochthonous peoples and this explained why they remained un-Islamized for a long time. The Muslims of the states, because of their fictional marriage relationship (Levtzion, 1968) with the chiefs failed to reach out to the autochthonous societies. Hence, the Dagaaba did not convert to Islam for a long time because the Muslims of Wa state failed to reach out to them and

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to spread Islam among them and not because no trade routes passed through Dagaabaland. The next section explains how the people in Northwestern Ghana came to settle there and their tribal composition. It also illustrates that in their migrations to the Northwest, some clanic groups followed the trade routes.

3.4. Migrations and Settlements

This section shows that the Dagaaba living in the Nadawli, Jirapa and Lawra Districts were not indigenes but immigrants. It is a bit misleading to speak of the Dagaaba as a tribe or ethnic group. These terms insinuate a cultural homogeneity which is not the case among the Dagaaba since there are cultural differences among them. The Dagaaba do not have a common descent in the sense that they did not originate from a common ancestor. Culturally therefore, and by descent the Dagaaba are of diverse groups. The point of unity in the midst of their cultural diversity and similarity is the fact that the various groups speak the Dagaare language or dialects of the Dagaare language. How did this come about? The answer is to be found in their migrations and settlements patterns.

From traditional sources, most of the inhabitants of the Upper West Region are immigrants. The original inhabitants were Lobi, Dyan, Sissala, Phuo, and Bwaba (Lentz, 2006; Der, 1983). The migrations of Dagaaba into the Upper West Region were caused by a number of factors. First, the migrations must be seen within the context of states consolidation. The Dagaaba migrated into Northwestern Ghana from Dagbon and Mamprugu (McCoy, 1988). Their migrations were triggered off by the conquests of the Dagomba chief, Na Nyagse (1476 – 1492 C.E.)(Der, 1989; Tuurey, 1982). In

his wars of expansion and consolidation, Na Nyagse tried to impose his rule over the Mole-speaking aborigines of Dagbon. Some of them resisted and migrated westwards to the south of Wa and then northwards where they settled in the open and empty space lying between the Lobi settlements along the east of the Black Volta River and the Sissala settlements to the north-east (Lentz, 2006; Abobo, 1994; Der, 1989; Tuurey, 1982). These emigrants became known as “Black Dagomba” and in the course of time came to be known as *Dagaaba*. Their migrations into Northwestern Ghana lasted several generations and occurred at different historical periods, and through different entry points and in different clan groups. For instance, some of the Dagaaba claimed that they entered Dagaabaland from the direction of Daboya. Others such as the *Guombo* of Bussie, Owlo, Korin-yiri and Kyeba said that they originally came from Konkomba land (Tuurey, 1982). Still others like the people of Ullo, the *Dantielle* trace their origins to Bimbilla (Abobo, 1994)

There is an interesting pattern in the migrations of the “Black Dagomba” into Northwestern Ghana. They did not settle in unpopulated territory. Instead they settled close to the original inhabitants, the Lobi, Dyan, Sissala, Phuo and Bwaba. Eventually they forced the Lobi, the Dyan, the Phuo and Bwaba to move to the west of the Black Volta River and north, and the Sissala to the north-east (Lentz, 2006; Der, 1989; Tuurey, 1982). Secondly, Dagaaba migrants settled to the east of the Black Volta River because this area was fertile for farming. Thus there are dense settlements of Dagaaba of Dagomba origin along the eastern bank of the Black Volta River. This also explains why some of the Dagaaba later crossed the Black Volta River to settle in southern Burkina Faso because of the need for farming land. Thirdly, as they

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migrated into Northwestern Ghana, they followed the trade routes in their movements from the south of Wa to the north in the direction of Lawra and Nandom areas.

A second group of immigrants into Northwestern Ghana as a result of political reasons were the Mossi from Ouagadougou. They fled from Ouagadougou due to a dispute over chieftaincy succession. They settled among the Black Dagomba immigrants in the Kaleo (Tuurey 1982; Kpiebaya; 1973) and Hain areas (Abobo, 1994; Rattray, 1932). The third group whose migrations should be situated within the political context is the Gonja of Issa. They claim that their ancestors came from Kong in Gonja “where they lost a civil war over chiefship and had to emigrate” (Tuurey, 1982, p. 32; see also Wilks, Levtzion., & Haight, 1986) to Dagaabaland where they settled at Issa and the surrounding areas.

The next groups of immigrants to enter Northwestern Ghana were motivated by both political and economic factors. The Mande immigrants from Mali came to Dagaabaland through the northwest trade route. They were traders and warriors led by their leader Sidi ʿUmar. They came there lured by the Lobi gold fields and also to found small states in the east of Wa. From Mali they came to Bobo-Dioulasso and from there they entered Dagaabaland. Some of them stayed back in the Jirapa area where they are known as *Yeri* (Abobo, 1994; Der, 1989); others moved to Sankana area (Naameh, 1986) and another group passed on to the east of Wa (Bin Salih, 2008). Interviews with the Muslims of Jirapa show that the people of Jirapa known as *Yeri* or *Tagara* are the same people as the *Tagarayire* of Wa (Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari on 6/4/11 at Jirapa). The clansmen of the *Yeri* of Jirapa are believed to be the

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Hayoro, the Batane, the Bataale and Nyuole in other areas of Dagaabaland
(Tengan, 1994).

If the *Yeri* of Jirapa are the same people as the *Tagarayire* of Wa, the question one may ask is, what happened to the Islam of these groups of Mande-*Yeri* who settled at Jirapa? Various scholars have tried to explain why the *Yeri* of Wa are Muslims and those of Jirapa area are not. According to Wilks (1989) the *Yeri* of Jirapa apostatized and abandoned Islam. The Qur'ān was buried under a pot and turned into a *tiibu* (shrine) to be sacrificed to for spiritual help. Der, (1989) on the other hand, explains that the *Yeri* of Jirapa lost their Islamic faith as a result of the process of assimilation. The *Yeri*, he says, adopted the language of the indigenous people and abandoned their trading activities and settled down as farmers. Furthermore, they intermarried with the indigenous Dagaaba women who pressurized their *Yeri* husbands “to abandon the practice of circumcision and to make sacrifices in the manner of the Dagara [Dagaaba] for the health of their children” (Der, 1989, p. 20; cf. Naameh, 1986; Kuukure, 1985). In this way they were assimilated into the indigenous inhabitants in language and religion but survived as a *Yeri* clan distinct from the other Dagaaba clans but related to them through marriages.

Another evidence of the assimilation of the *Yeri* of Jirapa to the local culture is their clan name *Manluore*. Their kinsmen at Wa *Tagarayir* have no clan name but those at Jirapa who lived among people with a clan system adopted the clan name *Manluore* (Bin Salih, 2008; Abobo, 1994). The adoption and assimilation of the Dagaare culture by the Mande-*Yeri* of Jirapa was at times not very smooth. Oral tradition of Jirapa-Tampoe relates the unsuccessful adoption of the *bagre* initiation (Goody, 1967) by the *Yeri* of Jirapa. The literal

interpretation of the “ritual killing of the neophytes” during the *bagre* initiation made them incapable of reviving them back to life. The initiation ceremony instead of ending in a happy festival celebration of the triumph of “life over death”, “light over darkness” climaxed in a sad note of the actual death of the neophytes and a funeral performance. Since then the *Yeri* of Jirapa vowed never ever to celebrate the *bagre* festival. This is the reason why the Mande-*Yeri* of Jirapa do not practice the *bagre* initiation still today (Elders of Jirapa-Tampoe, personal communication, December 6, 2009).

The above explanations have put into doubt the assertion by some scholars that Islam has gained many converts in Africa because of the efficacy of the Qur’ān and Muslim prayers, and the accommodating spirit of Islam to African Traditional Religion (Bari, 2009; Hiskett, 1984; Levtzion, 1968; Lewis, 1966; Trimingham, 1959). The story of the Mande-*Yeri* emigrants in the Jirapa area and the explanations provided in section 4.3.1. prove the contrary. Through the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion, the Qur’ān was buried and turned into an “idol” to be worshipped. Secondly, the Mande-*Yeri* could not cure the sick children of the indigenous women who were married to them. It was rather the indigenous women who prevailed on their Mande-*Yeri* husbands to sacrifice to the ancestors to solicit healing for their sick children. The Mande-*Yeri* of Jirapa area failed to demonstrate the power of Islam to cure the sick children of their indigenous wives and this forced the women to turn to the ancestors and spirits for healing, and in turn converted their *Yeri* husbands to Dagaaba traditional religion.

So far the survey has indicated that the migrants to Dagaabaland came from Dagbon and Mampurugu, Mossiland, Gonja and Mali. There are other

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migrants, for example, the people of Ping area, who claim origin from the Sissala land. Once in Dagaabaland they lost their Sissala language and culture and became assimilated to the local people (Tuurey, 1982; Rattray, 1932). The people of Konyukuo in the Lawra district say that they migrated southward to their present settlement from Sawal in southern Burkina Faso through Wa and Nadawli (Interview with Chief of Konyukuo and elders on 24/3/11 at Konyukuo). The cause for the Sissala and Burkina Faso migrants was the search for arable and fertile land and hunting expeditions.

One can therefore, conclude that the period of migrations of the Dagaaba into Northwestern Ghana occurred from 1476 – 1500 C.E. and that by the eighteenth century most of the Dagaaba had taken permanent homes in Dagaabaland (Der, 1989). The Dagaaba of the Upper West Region as we know them today, are the descendants of the Lobi, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Konkomba, Mossi, Mande, Sissala, and Gonja (Bin Salih, 2008; Tuurey, 1982; Rattray, 1932). These different groups came to be constituted as a people as a result of a mixture in the same area of different groups of people coming originally from different environments (Naameh, 1986). They came from different historical backgrounds but they formed one linguistic, ethnic group, as a result of assimilation through intermarriages between members of the different clans. Der summed it all up when he said that “in spite of their different backgrounds or origins there is one underlying factor which unites them: the clan system” (Der, 1989, p. 20). In this system, one is related to the other either through the paternal clan relations or the maternal clan relations. Villages may be distanced from one another yet they are blood relations through the clan-system - either the patriclan or the matriclan. Besides the clan system, which integrates the

Dagaaba, language also unites the Dagaaba as a tribe and distinguishes them from other tribes in the Upper West Region. The language of the Dagaaba is considered in the next section.

3.5. Language

In Chapter Two, the historical and commercial links between the people of Ghana and the Western and Central Sudan were discussed. Linguistically and culturally, the people of Northern Ghana are related to the people of the Niger Bend. Most Northern Ghanaian languages belong to the Gur language family or Voltaic sub-family of the Niger-Congo (Finnegan, 1984b; Boahen, 1966). Culturally the Voltaic culture area includes parts of Burkina Faso, Northern Ghana, Northern Togo and adjacent small areas of Ivory Coast, Mali and Benin (Finnegan, 1984b). Linguists divide the Gur language speaking people into the Oti-Volta languages and the Grunsi group (Saaka, 2001). The Oti-Volta language group includes the Mole-(Moore) Dagbane and Gurma. The Mole-Dagbane languages are the Dagbane-Mamprusi-Nanuni, Hanga, Dagaare-Waali-Safalba-Birifor, Gurenne-Nabit-Talni-Kusaal, and Buli-Konni (Saaka, 2001). *Dagaare* then belongs to the family of the Mole-Dagbane languages and those who speak *Dagaare* as their mother tongue are called *Dagaaba* or *Dagara*, while *Dagawie* refers to the tribal territory.

There are variant dialects of the *Dagaare* language such as Waali, Lobi, Birifo, Wiili but the major ones are *dagaare* and *dagara*. The *dagaare* dialect is spoken by the people (the *Dagaaba*) in the Nadawli and Jirapa districts while the *dagara* dialect is spoken by the inhabitants (the *Dagara*) of the Lawra district. In fact, in the Nandom area the name *dagara*, as mentioned earlier, is

used to designate the people both in the singular and the plural and also their dialect (Bekye, 1991; Der, 1989; Naameh, 1986). In this study, the word *Dagaaba* is the name for all the people (Dagaaba and Dagara), while *Dagaare* is the name of the language, and *Dagawie* the name of the tribal territory (Dagaabaland). *Dagaaba* are not only united by a common territorial area and history but also by language. Before an investigation into how Islam was established among the Dagaaba, an examination of the political organization of the Dagaaba is crucial in understanding the reaction of Dagaaba to the arrival of Islam.

3.6.0. Political Organization of Dagaaba

There has never been a society or people without leaders in one form or another. The question of whether or not Dagaaba had leaders before the advent of the colonial administration is debatable and so scholars are divided (Saaka, 2001; Der, 1998; Hiskett, 1984; Goody, 1967; Rattray, 1932). It depends on what one means by leaders. The Dagaaba never had “centralized leadership” under one head reaching beyond the village or *tengan parish* (Goody, 1967) but they had leaders. This section shows that the Dagaaba in their political system and organization had leaders and this leadership was tied to the *tengdaalong* (Lordship of the earth-shrine) which did not go beyond a particular “parish”.

3.6.1. Tengdaana

The Dagaaba like other autochthonous societies in Northern Ghana had their own traditional system of political authority in the pre-colonial period

which was both political and religious. In the African mind there is no separation between the sacred and the profane. The centre of unity of the political and religious authority was the *Tengdaana* (“The Lord of the Land”). Various unacceptable terms have been used by anthropologists and historians to describe the political system of the indigenous inhabitants of Northern Ghana in the pre-colonial period such as - “non-centralized states”, “stateless societies” (Saaka, 2001; Wilks, 1989; Levtzion, 1968; Goody, 1967). These terms are used because anthropologists lacked a better term to describe the people of Northern Ghana. Secondly, these terms do not take into account the political system that prevailed among the aborigines of Northern Ghana before the advent of the invading warriors from Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, Der said that if social anthropologists and historians mean that the “stateless societies” had “no rulers” or “political authority”, then the Dagaaba and most tribes of Northern Ghana can neither be classified as “stateless” or “acephalous” (Der, 2001, p. 37). The Dagaaba like other northern tribes are autochthonous people but it does not mean that they did not have leaders. They did not have a central government before the colonial era but they had a traditional system of governance (Der, 2001).

Before the coming of the invading band of warriors from Zamfara in Hausaland into Northern Ghana, the indigenous inhabitants were ruled by the *tengdaaba* (Levtzion, 1968; Rattray, 1932), who exercised both political and religious authority over their people. According to Rattray, the chief of Hain told him that in the olden days the *tengdaana* “had all the powers” (Rattray, 1932, p. 408) that is to say, territorial and spiritual power. It is important to mention that the invading warriors did not contribute anything to the local

language. On the contrary, they adopted the language of the indigenous people. Secondly, they did not contribute anything new to the religion of the local people. It is most likely that the invading warriors were Muslims or came under the influence of Islam in their home country. But once they arrived they abandoned Islam and adopted the religious beliefs of the indigenes (Rattray, 1932). The contribution of the invaders was the introduction of new administrative machinery which brought groups of people into a loose form of federation. The invading warriors with greater military strength and advanced political and social institutions imposed their dominion on the indigenous people of the land (Buah, 1998). They were assimilated into the indigenous population and as a result a new political structure grew out of this assimilation. The new rulers became the political leaders and the *tengdaaba* the spiritual leaders (Buah, 1998).

The process of assimilation took two forms. According to one source, the head of the new ruler married the daughter of the *tengdaana* and through this union the *tengdaana* relinquished his political power to the new ruler while he retained the spiritual power (Levtzion, 1968). In another version, the new rulers killed the *tengdaaba* wherever they conquered and usurped political authority (Cardinall, 1969). According to Buah, the new rulers were ruthless in their conquests of expansion. He relates how Na Nyagse and his grandson, Na Zangina adopted the policy of killing off the ruling dynasty of the conquered states, and of installing members of their own family in place of the royal lineage (Buah, 1998). Until recently the new *Ya-Na* (Paramount Chief) of Yendi was invested with the “insignia” of “Nyobo” the *tengdaana* of Binn whom Na Kpogonumbo killed and took over power (Rattray, 1932, p. 583).

The above evidence suggests that before the arrival of the invaders from Hausaland in the thirteenth century, the indigenes of Northern Ghana were not people without rulers. They had *tengdaaba* who exercised both political and spiritual authority. Whether the appropriation of political power was through peaceful or violent means, the end result was the emergence of a dual system of authority, the invading band of warriors becoming political leaders (*nabiiri*) and the *tengdaaba* the spiritual leaders. This dual system of political power also came into force in Wa in the middle of the seventeenth century. The Kpaha tradition in Wa has the chieftaincy passing from the *tengdaana* of Wa to the Mamprusi and Dagomba princes through marriage (Wilks, 1989). The warrior-princes did not conquer the indigenes of Wa and take over power. The *tengdaana* of Wa who exercised both political and spiritual powers bequeathed his political power to Sorliya, the leader of the Dagomba and Mamprusi princes, and kept for himself the spiritual authority by virtue of his marriage to his daughter.

Evidence which shows that the *tengdaana* was both a political and spiritual leader is the appointment of the *tengdaga-naa* (regent) after the death of a chief. When a chief dies the *tengdaana* immediately appoints a *tengdaga-naa* from the *tengdaana* family. The royal regalia are kept by the *tengdaga-naa* until a new chief is installed and out-doored. The appointment of *tengdaga-naa* is a reminder to the princes that the chieftaincy belongs to the *tengdaana* and was bestowed to the *nabiiri* (princes). The Kpaha tradition confirms the fact that before the arrival of the Mamprusi and Dagomba princes the people of Wa were ruled by a *tengdaana* who exercised both political and spiritual power. It

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also endorses the dual-power system in Wa and legitimizes the Kpaha gate as the “fourth-skin gate” of the Wa chieftaincy institution (Wilks, 1989).

There was an evolution of the concept of the power of the *tengdaana* (Abobo, 1994) in Dagaabaland. In some settlements, the *tengdaana* exercised both political and spiritual authority. In other villages he exercised only spiritual power (Saaka, 2001). When the Mossi (sing. *Moaga*) princes arrived from the Mossiland they settled among the *Bawala* clan of Kaleo and introduced the dual-system. They became the chiefly class (*nabiiri*) and the *Bawala* the “earth-priests” (*tengdaaba*) (Tuurey, 1982; Interview with Al-Ḥājj Ṣalīfu An-ganngmen, Yeri-Naa of Kaleo, Shaḥību Ngmenbakora, Deputy Imām of Kaleo and Salyamānī Duneenir, an Elder of Kaleo on 23/1/11). At Hain the chief and elders say that the *Kansaaba* clan is both the chiefly class (*nabiiri*) and “earth-priests class” (*tengdaaba*) (Interview with Ullo Naa, Al-Ḥājj Saḥīdu Amadu (Aḥmad) and elders on 15/3/11 at Ullo). At Issa the *Mon-yarla* princes from Gonja became *nabiiri* (chiefs) while the indigenes became *tengdaaba* (Tuurey, 1982). There were two other groups who did not migrate from “centralized states” but who practiced the dual-power system in the pre-colonial period. Naa Bayong (Boyong) of the *Dantielle* clan established the chieftaincy of Ullo towards the end of the nineteenth century (Dasah, 1974). His mother was a Sissala hence the Sissala name “Bayong”. He and his descendants became the *nabiiri* (princes) of Ullo and the *Nandawiyire* clan of the Sissala) the *tengdaaba* (Dasah, 1974). Also Der (1989) affirms that Naa Kyiir who belonged to the *Bekuone* clan became chief of Nandom before the introduction of Indirect Rule by the British colonial administration while the *Dikpielle* were the *tengdaaba*.

The above survey proves that in the colonial period and before the arrival of migrant princes from “centralized states” the Dagaaba were ruled by *tengdaaba* who exercised both political and spiritual power. In the words of Suom-Dery, “originally, the functions of the *tengdaana*, while remaining fundamentally religious, were all-embracing, including political leadership. It provided a political leadership structure in a context where there was no centralized political leadership and administration covering the whole clan or tribe” (Suom-Dery, 2008, p. 29). This is further collaborated by Kuubuor (2009), who said that the *tengdaaba* were not only “high priests and custodians of land but also were territorially based and whose sanctions were physical rather than spiritual” (p. 208). In the light of the above, one can say that it was the migrant princes who introduced the dual-system of political organization among the Dagaaba. Chieftaincy was therefore known and practiced among the Dagaaba before the coming of the British colonial administration. Contrary to the views of (Bin Salih, 2008; Lentz, 2006; Bekye, 1991; McCoy, 1988; Kpiebaya, 1973; Goody, 1967) it was not the British who introduced chieftaincy into Dagaabaland in order to facilitate the in-direct rule system of governance in 1913.

It would, therefore be inappropriate to call the Dagaaba of the Upper West Region as “stateless people” in the sense that they had no leaders. Der affirms that the Dagaaba “were not people without rulers, for the institution of chieftaincy was wide spread among them in the pre-colonial period” (Der, 2001, p. 37). Relying on evidence from the colonial archives of the Northern Territories between 1898 to 1910 C.E., Der concludes that it was not the British colonial administration that appointed chiefs for the Dagaaba, but that

chieftaincy was indigenous to the Dagaaba (Der, 2001). The only thing the British colonial administration did, as Der goes on to say, was “to establish a hierarchy for the chiefs, which did not exist previously in many of these non-centralized areas” (Der, 2001, p. 60) and to appoint chiefs for those villages which did not have chiefs. In other villages, the *tengdaaba* were very powerful but the British administration refused to recognize their authority and went ahead to appoint chiefs and governed exclusively through them (McCoy, 1988).

By the end of January 1897 C.E. the various chiefdoms throughout Dagaabaland were brought under the British by treaties (Tuurey, 1982), and thus inaugurated the era of *Pax Britannica*. The consolidation of colonial rule opened a new era in the process of the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland. As early as 1906, the colonial government recognized the distinction between the chief and the *tengdaana* in the political system of the Dagaaba (Der, 1999). In this political organization, there were the chiefs, the custodians of the earth shrines, the lineage heads, the compound heads, the village elders and the diviners. Decisions were taken through community deliberation and consensus.

3.6.2. The role of the *Tengdaana*

The office of the *naalong* (chiefship) and the office of *tengdaalong* (custodianship of the earth Shrine and lordship of the Land) were distinct but complemented each other (Der, 2001). It was the princes who nominated from among themselves the candidate for the chieftaincy but it was the *tengdaana* who after consultation with the *tengan* (earth-spirit) and ancestors (*Kpime*) confirmed his nomination. It was also the *tengdaana* who “enskinned” or

“enstooled” and “out-doored” the new chief. The main function of the *tengdaana* was to maintain good relations between the *tengan* (earth-spirit) and the chief and his people, and to ensure peace and harmony through rituals and sacrifices. The *tengan* tabooed spilling of human blood, having sex in the bush, burying the dead with an arrow (iron) in the body or a dead pregnant woman without extracting the unborn baby from the womb (Baghr, 1988; see also Sarpong, 1974). Such anti-social acts defile the earth and must be expiated by extraordinary sacrifices (Suom-Dery, 2008; Bekye, 1991; Kpiebaya, 1973). Even human birth in the bush or field is a defilement of the earth and demands a sacrifice of purification. However, miscarriage which is considered a misfortune caused by evil spirits does not pollute the earth (Baghr, 1988). Hence in Dagaaba society anyone who killed a person whether in a fight or war must undergo the ritual of “eating the *zie baa*” (“eating of the blood of the dog”). This is a ritual in which a dog is killed and the blood drained to prepare a special meal for the murderer to eat in order to immunize him against insanity which is considered the punishment by the *tengan* for spilling human blood (Interview with *Tengdaana*, Logdaa on 7/3/11 at Sabuli).

The peace and harmony of the land and security of the chieftaincy (*naalong*) depended on the pacification of the earth-spirit by the *tengdaana*. Any behaviour or acts that would lead to irreverence of the *tengan* must be avoided lest the *tengan* retaliate with punishments such as drought and famine (Suom-Dery, 2000). The fear of the curses and sanctions of the *tengdaana* were the reasons why both the chiefs and people respected the authority of the *tengdaana* and obeyed his word. This is the reason why in 1929, Naa Binne (1927-1934), the Chief of Lawra and his elders refused to allow the

missionaries (White Fathers) to settle in Lawra because they were afraid of the mystical curse of the *tengdaana* and the divine punishment by the *tengan* (earth-spirit) (Interview with Chief of Konyukuo and five elders on 24/3/11 at Konyukuo). In order not to anger the *tengan* since the Missionaries were preaching renunciation of “idol worship” and ancestral veneration, the Chief and his elders did not welcome the missionaries to Lawra (McCoy, 1988).

The reason why the Chief of Lawra and his elders rejected Islam in the 1900s was the same reason why they rejected Christianity in 1929. Their dedication and commitment to the *tengan* and the *tengdaana* made them uncompromising to Islam. The security of the “stool” and the assurance of peace and harmony of the society depended on the constant pacification of the *tengan* (earth-spirit) by the *tengdaana*. Conversion to Islam which officially condemns traditional African religions would have been injurious to the Dagaaba chieftaincy (*naalong*) and earth-custodianship (*tengdaalong*) institutions, and as a result they rejected conversion to Islam (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Ḥafīz Nyovor Bodire, a prince of Duori royal family, resident at Lawra on 24/3/11 at Lawra).

One can conclude with the observation by Suom-Dery that “the leadership function of the *tengdaana* is primarily religious, but it extends by virtue of his religious connection to the Earth-spirit to other departments of socio-cultural, political, economic, agricultural and ethical life” (Suom-Dery, 2008, p. 31).

3.7.0. Social Organization of the Dagaaba

In this section, the social organization of the Dagaaba is examined. Certain social-cultural elements that facilitated or hindered the spread of Islam are brought to light to show the influence of the social organization on the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland.

3.7.1. The clan

For the African the focus of life is the family. All activities converge on the family and all social and religious institutions exist because of the family (Mbiti, 1970). It is therefore important to understand the Dagaaba concept of the family and its impact on the acceptance of Islam among Dagaaba. An important feature of the social organization of the Dagaaba is the clan system. Among the Dagaaba the word “Yir” has three meanings. It designates the physical building “house” or “compound”. It can mean “family” as a social unit and it can also mean “hometown” or “settlement”. It is the presence of children born to a man and his wife that makes people call the physical building a “family” (yir). Furthermore the concept of “Yir” as a family has three meanings – the nuclear family, the extended family or patrilineage and the clan or patriclan. For the Dagaaba “Yir” (family), therefore, means “the nuclear family, “the extended family” and “the clan” (Der, 1999; Kuuire, 1996; Bekye, 1991; Kuukure, 1985; Kpiebaya, 1973). It is not easy to distinguish the lineage or extended family from the clan. The extended family is always part of the clan but the clan is not confined just to the extended family (Kuuire, 1996). The lineage or extended family is thus a branch of a still larger kinship unit, the exogamous clan. A clan can be conceived paternally (“the patriclan”) or

maternally (“the matriclan”) (Kuuire, 1996). Members of the patriclan, both men and women, trace their descent (*yirung*) in the male line to a common male ancestor while members of the female line trace their descent to a common female ancestor.

Among the Dagaaba a person belongs to a patriclan and a matriclan at the same time (Kuukure, 1985). However, succession to office and inheritance of property usually depend on whether one belongs to a patriclan or matriclan. Among some Dagaaba of the Lawra District matriclan is significant since they practise matrilineal system of inheritance (Bekye, 1991). For the majority of the Dagaaba the patriclan is important (Kuuire, 1996; Bekye, 1991), since the system of relationship is patrilineal and inheritance is within the patriclan (Kuukure, 1985).

The patriclan, of which all members are considered “brothers” and “sisters” trace their descent (*yirung*) to a common male ancestor “whose name may even be lost by the surviving members” (Bekye, 1991, p. 110). How can one determine the clan of a man or differentiate one clan from another? According to Rattray (1932), a man’s clan can be known through his “clan-avoidance” (*kyiirɔng*). The “clan-avoidance” is usually an animal or a creature which had saved the ancestor of the clan from some difficult situation. Some of the clan “taboos” or “avoidances” are connected with food, leaves or white cloth (Der, 1999; Kpiebaya, 1973; Rattray, 1932). In recognition of this liberation and as an act of gratitude, the ancestor declared the animal or creature “sacred” to him and to all his descendants after him. In remembrance of this saving event and in obedience to the command of the ancestor of the clan, all the lineages descending from this ancestor are bound to respect this

animal or creature which saved not only their ancestor but the entire clan (Kuuire, 1996; Bekye, 1991; Rattray, 1932). The “clan-avoidance” establishes consanguinity between the ancestor, his clansmen and the animal. Such an animal or creature becomes a totem (*duma*) and a “blood relative” to the clan members, who must not kill, maltreat or eat the meat of their totem (*duma*) which is also called the “spirit-guardian” (Kuukure, 1985, p. 68). When a clan person finds a dead totem he or she must bury it as a sign of honour.

The clan “prohibitions”, “avoidances”, “taboos” remind the members of their common ancestral origins, their sense of belongingness and of their mutual co-responsibility in every aspect of their life. The fact that the word “Yiri” is used to designate both the clan or patriclan (*yirung*) and the extended family or patrilineage underlines this fundamental element of belongingness. This sense of belongingness in the view of Kuuire “binds the clan together and makes every individual member see the destiny of the others as his own destiny, and his own destiny as theirs” (Kuuire, 1991, p. 160).

In addition to the clan taboos, families and individuals may also acquire their own taboos usually from the medicine shrines (*tibe*) (Kpiebaya, 1973). These are called shrine-taboos. A man is not under obligation to observe his wife’s or children’s avoidances. A child may acquire personal taboos when he is put under the protection of a shrine against sickness. A girl who has been put under the protection of a shrine (*tiibu*) must be redeemed by the family of the bridegroom at the time of her marriage (Kpiebaya, 1973). From the research findings this aspect is a bone of contention between Dagaaba traditional religionists and Dagaaba Muslims. Muslims who want to marry traditional women placed under the protection of a shrine must redeem them by paying

the necessary animals and chickens (Interview with Hudī Ibrāhīm, Latīf Anfaarabaalanaa Waalo and Idrīsu on 9/3/11 at Takpo). Some Dagaaba Muslims refused and cancelled the marriage on the ground that it is unbelief (*kufur*) since it involves sacrifice to “idols”.

The uncompromising attitude of this group of Muslims creates problems for the Muslim young men in the villages. First of all, since they are not ready to give in to certain customary marriage demands of the traditionalists, they forfeit the chance of marrying traditional women and converting them to Islam, and giving birth to Muslim children. This obviously affects the growth of the Muslim community. Secondly, living in an environment that is dominated by Christians and traditionalists, the Muslim young men would have to go outside the village to look for wives among other Muslim communities. Other Muslims say it is not against Islam since they do not personally participate in the sacrifice and so it is permissible to give the animals to the parents of the bride for the necessary rituals (Interview with Imām °Abdullāh Kompuori on 20th February, 2011 at Norong). This group of Muslims has good relations with traditional believers and some of them have converted their traditional wives to Islam (Interview with Imām Sumaila Sa°idu of 7th March, 2011 at Balienia).

The head of the lineage is usually the oldest man or the most senior male member who exercises political authority (Der, 1999). He is the custodian of the ancestral shrines and offers sacrifices at the family shrines. The head of the lineage household uses his authority to settle quarrels among members of the family. He arranges the marriage expenses of its younger members and settles their debts if they are unable to do so. He controls the common property

of the family and all matters that concern its welfare. The responsibility for distribution of food in farming group comes under his control (Gadzekpo, 2005; Der, 1999). The decisions concerning the welfare of the family are taken by the adult males through discussion and consultations. The family members on their part owe him respect and obedience. A deep sense of kinship, therefore, prevails within the family group and kinship governs the social relationships in the family system (Der, 1999).

The clan system of the Dagaaba has an effect on the form of Islam found among the Dagaaba. From the research findings there exist in one family Christians, Muslims and traditional religionists. Further in a nuclear family, there are Christian and Muslim children. Why is this so? The answer in the view of the author lies in the Dagaaba clan system. It is the clan rather than religion which constitutes the basis of social unit and so religious tolerance reigns. Kinship unites but religion divides. In ethnic groups that are totally islamized, especially the Fulani of northern Nigeria, it is religion rather than the clan which builds social unity, and so in such islamized ethnic groups conversion to other religions is very difficult and religious intolerance sways (Orji, 2007).

The kinship system has imbued in the Dagaaba a deep sense of respect for elders and parents (Gregoire, 1979). Because of the value of respect for elders most Dagaaba young men would not disobey the elders. From the research findings many Dagaaba young men could not accept Islam without the consent of the elders and their parents. Change in values or the system can only be brought about by the elders or with their consent. Thus it is understandable why Porekuu, the father of the late Cardinal Peter Porekuu Dery of blessed

memory had first to consult his senior brother, Ngmankuurinaa, who was also the family head (Gregoire, 1979) for permission to embrace Christianity.

The value of respect for authority is based on African communalism, which according to Assimeng (1989), is characterized by collective cooperation and ownership by members of the community. In this context, religion in traditional communities embraces all members of the communities, and “religious diversity and controversy is relatively unknown in such communities” (Assimeng, 1989, p. 122). The function of religion in these communities is to express and preserve the collectivistic and solidaritic mechanisms of the communities. This does not mean that all the members of the communities share the same beliefs or take part in the same religious practices but what it means is that the differences that exist among them are seen as complementary in nature rather than contradictory (Assimeng, 1989). In the spirit of African communalism, no man can stand or should stand alone.

In this value system, it would be anti-social for one to step out of the community and profess another religion. African communalism was therefore, an obstacle to individual conversion to Islam. This is the reason why Dagaaba young men as indicated in 4.3.8 found it hard to embrace Islam. This was also the reason why the Senufo of Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso resisted islamization and remained traditionalists in their religious practices until contemporary times (Holmes, 1984). African communalism affects not only conversion to Islam but also to Christianity. In 1981, Fr. Roland Tremblay told a story in class at St. Victor’s Major Seminary, Tamale, about a missionary who catechized people in a village in Africa for baptism for five years. At the end of the course, he selected those who were worthy of baptism and left the

rest. The Chief of the village opposed this exclusive attitude and told the missionary in the face: “Either you baptize all or you baptize none”. Islam and Christianity are exclusive religions but religion in tribal communities is inclusive and the idea of individual conversion to another religion was unknown and was regarded as anti-social. Today religious pluralism and travels have made it possible for young people of tribal societies not only to choose their religion but also their style of life.

Like Porekuu, young Dagaaba men of today need to gain their freedom from the elders and the power of their sanctions and curses in order to embrace Islam. The curse of the head of the household was feared by the members since it could bring untold misfortune and even death. Porekuu was a trader and so economically he could stand on his own without the support of the family head. From the study most Dagaaba young men gained their religious freedom and economic independence when they migrated to Southern Ghana where the ancestors became irrelevant and their influence ineffective. That gave them the opportunity to convert to Islam in Southern Ghana as seen in section 4.5.7.

3.7.2. Birth

The purpose of marriage for the Dagaaba like other Africans is to have offspring. Unlike in the Catholic Church where sexual intercourse is regarded as the consummation of marriage, the Dagaaba regard the birth of a child as the “consummation of marriage” (Kpiebaya, n.d., p. 3). Why is this so? Sons and daughters are the glory of marriage. But sons are more preferred because they perpetuate the clan of the father. Daughters on the other hand are tolerated because through them one enters into new relationships with people outside the

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lineage and the more a man has these external relationships the greater his social prestige.

With procreation as the objective of marriage it is understandable why barrenness is frowned upon among the Dagaaba and by many Africans. Barrenness is first of all, a threat to the survival of the clan. Secondly, it brings shame and insults on the woman. The woman is always the victim. Thirdly, a childless woman is non-existent (Kuukure, 1985). This explains why a woman who is considered barren must leave the husband and marry someone else or the husband takes a second wife to salvage the first marriage. Married men who are barren face fewer problems. Cousins within the lineage are arranged to have sexual relationship with the wife to raise up children in order to save the face of the husband and to give glory to the family. Also since procreation is the objective of marriage the Islamic type of marriage called *mut'a* (marriage of pleasure) is strange to Dagaaba traditionalists and rejected by Dagaaba Muslims.

The birth of a child therefore is an occasion of joy and happiness. In the past female children were circumcised but male circumcision was unknown among the Dagaaba. Today male children born in hospital are circumcised but those born at home are not circumcised. Dagaaba Muslims on the other hand circumcise male children on the seventh day ceremony during which the head of the baby is shaved. The seventh day ceremony (*zu-pomo*) is the official admission of the child into the Muslim community and the public acceptance of the child by the father. The Dagaaba give names to children at birth. But the time for the naming differs from one Dagaaba community to another. In some communities the child is named at any time. In other places the child is named

three months after the birth of a boy and four months after the birth of a girl. In other places, the naming ceremony takes place six days after the birth (Kpiebaya, 1973).

Dagaaba names are given according to the circumstances in which the child was born; according to the place of birth; according to physical appearance; to express their philosophy of life or theological thought. Names like *Ngmenbangme* (“God knows me”); *Ngmen la bangna* (“God is the Knower”); *Ngmen boara* (“God’s will”); *Vengkongmen* (“Leave it to God”) express the faith of Dagaaba in God who is the “Controller of everything”. Names such as *Kyemaalo* (the full name is - *Ninsaavela ba kye maalo*) (“The human being is always ungrateful”); *Songliedong* (“Goodness is repaid with evil”) express the mystery of life and the unpredictable character of the human person (Kuukure, 1985; Kpiebaya, 1973). Children are also named after the dead as a way of remembering or honouring them. It is also done with the hope that such children would grow up to emulate the good character of the dead (see also Sarpong, 1974). Dagaaba Muslims in the Nadawli district give mostly Arabic names to their children on the seventh day after birth (Interview with Imām °Abdullāh Kompuori on 20/2/11 at Norong). Those in Jirapa and Lawra districts add a traditional name to the Arabic name to show that though they are Muslims they are Dagaaba by culture (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo on 29/3/11 at Nandom).

Children who are born in Southern Ghana are given Akan names or Arabic names correlated to the day of the week on which they are born. Hence Dagaaba children born in the South bear names like “Kofi” (Friday-born boy), “Ama” (Saturday-born girl). Children who are born in Southern Ghana in a

Muslim community are also given Arabic names like "Ladi" (Sunday-born girl), "Tɛni" (Monday-born girl), and "Talata" (Tuesday-born girl). Dagaaba young men who travel to Kumasi also come back with *Kumasi-yuoe* ("Kumasi-names") to express their new philosophy of life or to portray their new social status and prestige. Names such as *Yinye* ("Go out and see"), *Yobonzie* ("Travel and know places") are common among the Dagaaba of the Jirapa District (P. Kogyir, personal communication, October 12, 2010 at Jirapa-Piiyir). The father of the late Honourable Member of Parliament of the Jirapa constituency went to Kumasi and came home with the Arabic name "Salia". All his children bear "Salia" as a surname (Interview with Imām Al-Hājj Shaḥību Adama Kunatay, 15/3/11 at Chapuri). The study also shows that some Dagaaba bear Arabic names though they are not Muslims. The names were given to them by a Muslim relative or that they adopted them during their stay in Southern Ghana. Others also voluntarily took Arabic names for the sake of prestige.

The Dagaaba believe that each patrician and each individual has a *sigra* ("the spirit guardian") whose function is to guide the clan and the individual. After birth the family head would consult the diviner to reveal the nature of the child's *sigra*, its prohibitions and the demands of occasional sacrifices to be made at its shrine. After the appropriate ceremonies the child may be called by the name of the *sigra* (Kuukure, 1985). The *sigra* can be an object or the spirit of the dead. This belief and practice explain the background of the name of the present Chief of Ullo, Naa Amadu Saḥīdu II. The second Chief of Ullo was called "Saḥīdu" (though he was not a Muslim) and so the present Chief was named "Saḥīdu" after his grandfather who is believed to have become his *sigra* ("spirit guardian"). The name often chosen as a *sigra-name* may be the name of

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one of the ancestors of the lineage (as in the case of Ullo Naa) or of a clan
medicine shrine (*tiibu*).

3.7.3. Marriage

Dagaaba clans are not only totemic but also exogamous. This means that a man must marry outside his patriline. Sexual intercourse between two members of the same clan is incest and in the past both offenders could be ostracized (Tuurey, 1982). Marriage is the means to perpetuate and enlarge the clan. Sons and daughters are born into the clan through marriage and new relationships with other clans and villages are established through marriage (Kuukure, 1985). Children and relationships in the eyes of the Dagaaba are the greatest values of life. The importance of these values is accentuated by Kpiebaya (1973) as follows:

A man or woman who knows that at his or her old age there will be sons and daughters, grand-sons and grand-daughters to relieve him or her from work; that his or her funeral will be crowded...through the concourse of the numerous relations established in life, leaves nothing more to desire. A man who knows that there is posterity to keep his house standing, that after he has joined his forebears in the land of the dead, his children will keep his memory alive by honouring him as an ancestor, feels very great indeed. Such a man has achieved salvation. (p. 21)

In the light of the above, marriage is a cultural obligation for the Dagaaba. A young man or woman who refuses to marry becomes an object of disdain

and shame in the community. It is worse if he or she dies unmarried. Such people are given a disgraceful funeral performance and a shameful burial. This is because to die unmarried or without an issue is a curse and a disservice to the clan (Kuukure, 1985).

By the rule of exogamy, marriage is never a private arrangement between the boy and the girl. It is a social event which creates a series of new relationships between members of the clan of the boy and members of the clan of the girl. Because of this communal nature of marriage a woman is considered married to the clan of the husband (Kuukure, 1985). This means that the services and duties of the wife are directed not only to the husband but also to members of the husband's clan. Similarly, members of the clan of the husband have special duties towards the family members of the wife (Dery, 2003).

The communal or corporate concept of marriage as “an alliance of friendship between the two respective clans” (Kuukure, 1985, p. 30) is not found in the *Shari'a*. From the point of view of the *Shari'a* marriage essentially is a “voluntary contract between individual spouses” (Lewis, 1966, p. 15; see also Sujimon, 1999; Ali, 1983). In this legal contract, the main elements are the agreement or consent of the bride and her acceptance of the personal “marriage gift” (*mahr/Sadāqa*) proposed by the groom. This, of course, must take place in a public ceremony in the presence of witnesses and the imām, who officiates at the ceremony (Lewis, 1966). But the bride is not present at the marriage ceremony to give her consent or to receive the nuptial gift. Her matrimonial guardian (*wali*) gives her consent and receives the marriage or nuptial gift on

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her behalf. Also the role of the family members of the groom and the bride is very minimal.

In Dagaaba marriage, the guardianship of the bride is transferred to the clan of the groom which has the legal right to discipline her. The good behaviour of the bride depends on the responsibility of the clan members of the groom. In the *Shari'ah* on the other hand, "the husband is not necessarily fully answerable at law for the legal person of his wife" (Lewis, 1966, p. 53). Consequently, if the husband is not happy with the behaviour of the wife he can divorce her conditionally or finally according to the *Shari'ah* procedures (Anderson, 1954). Since marriage is a "voluntary contract" between the spouses, divorce (*talāq*) in principle, is easier for the husband. By virtue of the marriage the woman who was formerly under the authority of her father and brothers is now under the authority of the husband (Lewis, 1966) and he can arbitrarily divorce the wife on any pretext.

In the Dagaaba traditional marriage, divorce is hard to execute because the bride is married to the husband and to the members of the clan. Just as marriage is never a private affair in Dagaaba customary marriage so divorce too is never a personal engagement. Provisional separations between husband and wife, however, are more common among the Dagaaba than divorce. In Islam, however, a wife can divorce her husband on two grounds: in principle through the purchase of her freedom for a sum agreed upon by both of them (*khul'*) after he had twice pronounced divorce against her (Qur'ān 2:229) and when both of them being non-Muslims, the wife embraces Islam and her husband fails to be converted with her (Levy, 1971). The right of Muslim women to divorce is one contribution of Islam towards the emancipation of

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women. But Dagaaba Muslim women cannot practice *khul^c* because of the corporate nature of the customary marriage.

The core of Dagaaba marriage is the giving of the *kyarɔ* or *kyor* (“the bride wealth”), which is required for the validity of the marriage. Once again, the corporate nature of Dagaaba marriage is brought to the forefront. Before the bride wealth is sent to the family of the woman, the family head of the man takes three hundred and sixty cowries, known as “head-money” (*libizu*) to the ancestral shrine to inform the ancestors that they are about to bring a “stranger” into the family. This ritual is an invocation of the ancestors to give fertility to the “would-be-wife”. But more importantly, it is a surrendering of her fertility exclusively to the husband. Any infidelity on her part would be a crime against her husband. If she prepares food for him to eat in the state of adultery, the husband will die. The woman too must confess her infidelity and undergo the purification rites otherwise, she will also die. This ritual also explains the significance of the widowhood rites among the Dagaaba. Although the widowhood rites are meant to ritually separate the widow from her deceased husband to enable her to re-marry, the main motive of the rites is to purify the widow of all acts of infidelity that she might have committed against the husband when he was alive (Dery, 2003).

The elders of the groom-to-be after the consultation with the ancestors and the performance of the necessary sacrifices send the *kyarɔ* (the bride wealth payment) to the parents of the bride-to-be. The brothers and cousins of the bride-to-be also participate in the marriage arrangements by giving their consent (Kuukure, 1985). Like the Islamic marriage the consent of the woman is important but only in principle. The confirmation and formalization of the

woman's consent according to Kuukure, consists in the bride-to-be "counting of the first five of the cowries which form part of the [bride-wealth]" (Kuukure, 1985, p. 30). The counting of the cowries by the bride-to-be is significant in two aspects. First, it is a sign that she has accepted the marriage proposal of the man, and secondly, she has agreed to the collective will of the members of the clan to marry the man. This then gives her family the green light to accept the bride wealth (Dery, 2003).

The giving of the *kyarɔ* is important because it is the sign, the guarantee and witness of the marriage. The man's clan gives the *kyarɔ* ("bride wealth") and receives the woman, and the woman's clan gives their daughter and receives the bride wealth. As soon as the dowry is given to the parents of the woman, she automatically becomes a member of the clan of the husband. But she is still bound to her clan and can be called back at any time, especially if the in-laws fail to carry out their social obligations (Kpiebaya, n.d.). The "bride wealth" in Dagaaba marriage is given to the parents of the bride and in Islam the "nuptial gift" (*mahr/sadāqa*) is given to the bride. However, the significance of the "bride wealth" in the understanding of the Dagaaba and the "nuptial gift" in the understanding of Dagaaba Muslims is the same. The "nuptial gift" "confers upon the husband full rights over his spouse as a sexual and domestic partner, and entitles him to claim as his own all children born to his wife during their union" (Lewis, 1966, p. 53). These same rights in Islamic marriage are also applicable in Dagaaba marriage. Giving of "the bride wealth makes the marriage agreement legal thus giving uxorial and genetical rights to the husband and his lineage over the girl" (Kpiebaya, n.d., p. 10).

wealth of the first wife of his son. If the son wants to marry a second wife he must work and earn the bride wealth himself. Even if the son is rich, it is the duty of the household head to give the mandate to marry as well as the bride wealth. The dowry must be given before the woman leaves her parents' house for her new abode in her husband's house. If the dowry is not given, then the children of such a marriage belong to the mother's clan (Kuukure, 1985). In some places, the bride wealth is given in cowries while in other places it is in both cowries and cows. This is a cultural influence of Mande-*Yeri* on the Dagaaba. It was the Mande-*Yeri* who introduced cowries into the Volta Basin which has now become the means of bride wealth and exchange for goods. Cowries are also used by women as ornaments, and by both traditional medicine men and *karamamine* (Muslim supernatural practitioners) for medicine, divination and for making amulets and talismans.

There is one important element about Dagaaba marriage that has an effect on Dagaaba young men who want to convert to Islam. Marriage is a social obligation and every boy and girl should get married. As said before, it is the responsibility of the father to dowry the first wife for his son. If the son disobeys the elders and converts to Islam against their will, members of the lineage will turn against him and withdraw their support for him. In this case, he will not be able to raise enough cowries by himself to dowry a wife. For this reason many young men in the past were forced to comply with the wishes of the elders in order not to jeopardize their chance of marriage by converting to Islam (Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari, 6/4/11 at Jirapa). Secondly, in the Lawra District where the bride wealth is given in cowries and cattle (Songsore

& Denkabe, 1995; Kpiebaya, n.d.), it would be hard for a young man to acquire the cattle by himself to dowry a wife. The cattle is communal property and those who dare to disobey the elders and convert to Islam would forfeit the use of the family cattle to dowry a wife. This in the opinion of Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo, is the reason why young Dagaaba men could not go behind traditional authority and convert to Islam (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo, 29/3/11 at Nandom).

Although it is the bride wealth that gives legal validity to the marriage, it is the attitude of the boy and girl towards each other and towards their respective families that sustains the marriage. That is why the husband even after giving the bride wealth, is still obliged to visit the sick members of his wife's family and attend their funerals. Similarly, the wife has to render services to the members of her husband's family. Refusal to accept these responsibilities can lead to the breakdown of the marriage or divorce, despite the bride wealth. These marital responsibilities explain why Waala Muslims who marry Dagaaba women or Dagaaba Muslims who marry traditional women have to attend traditional funerals and sometimes spend the nights at the funeral ground. They also explain why wives of Muslim men have to attend almost every funeral at their parents' house and take part in the traditional mourning. The Muslim interviewees informed the author that they have to execute these marital responsibilities towards their in-laws in order to hold the marriage together and also because it is a socio-cultural demand.

Dagaaba marriage is virilocal in the sense that the woman leaves her lineage family and lives with the lineage family of the husband (Goody, 1967). Dagaaba marriage is also monogamous but is open to polygamy (Kuukure,

1985; Kpiebaya, 1973). In the above (3.1.), it was emphasized that the Dagaaba are subsistent farmers. This is one of the reasons why some Dagaaba married many wives so that they can have many hands in the farm work. There are some women who also pressurize their husband to marry a second wife so that they can help them in the house chores. Children especially sons, as mentioned above, are the glory of every Dagaaba. This is another reason for marrying many wives and many wives in turn guarantee many children. Levirate marriage or widow inheritance is also a factor for polygamy among the Dagaaba. According to the custom, a man is allowed to inherit the widow of his dead brother. In the *Shari'ah*, widow inheritance entails contracting a new marriage in which the "marriage gift" is given to the woman. For the Dagaaba there is no giving of the "bride wealth" since the marital rights over her at the time of the marriage are vested in the husband's lineage as a whole (Kuukure, 1985). Levirate marriage as discussed in Chapter Five (5.5.3.3.) is a serious source of conflict between Dagaaba traditional religionists and Dagaaba Muslims in some of the lineage families. Can traditionalists inherit the widows of their deceased Muslim brothers? This is discussed in Chapter Five of the study.

Polygamy among the Dagaaba is for the rich and wealthy. Hence chiefs among the Dagaaba, according to custom, must have more than one wife. Most of the chiefs in the 1920s had about thirty to fifty wives (McCoy, 1988; Goody, 1967). The interviewees reported polygamy was one of the obstacles that hindered the conversion of the Dagaaba chiefs to Islam. Islam by limiting polygamy to four wives infringed on the cultural rights of the Dagaaba chiefs and as a result they refused to convert to Islam.

3.8. Dagaaba Traditional Religion

This section explains Dagaaba traditional religion before the advent of Islam and how traditional religious beliefs and practices affect the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland. The Dagaaba, like most African peoples, conceive the universe as “one dynamic organic universe” (Nkurunziza, 2007, p. 21). It has, however, two dimensions: the invisible and the visible. The two dimensions are structured in a hierarchical order. At the apex of this deistic order is *Naangmen*, that is, “The Chief-Spirit” or “The Vital-Power” (Der, 1999). He is also called *Saazungmen* meaning “The Spirit of the heavens above” (Kpiebaya, 1973) or *Naabilengmen* referring to “God of the child of man” (Gregoire, 1979). He is the source of all power, all life, all holiness and all blessings. This means that all other deities or spirits derive their powers from him and are under his control. In Dagaaba worldview, *Naangmen* is not the cause of evil in the world, though he allows evil to occur. He is worshipped mostly through intermediaries (Kpiebaya, 1973) since these control the needs of every day. Prayers are offered to *Naagmen* only when Dagaaba are directly threatened by a danger from the sky or when they feel the need for him.

Next in the descending order comes *tengan* (Earth-spirit), the *kpime* (ancestors), the *ngmeme* (nature spirits) or deities such as *saa* (rain-spirit), and *baa* (river-spirit), *wie* (bush-spirit). Other deities may inhabit trees, stones, and hills. Suom-Dery (2008) in the hierarchy of divine beings placed the *kpime* (ancestors) immediately under *Naangmen*. This makes sense because the ancestors through death and the final funeral rites have fully transcended the cosmic-spiritual world and are nearest to *Naangmen*. In this state they can commute between the spiritual world and the physical world to converse with

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For this reason sacrifices are offered to *Naangmen* through the ancestors. However, the *tengdaana* of Sabuli places *tengan* under *Naangmen* on the ladder of spiritual ontology. According to him, during the cult of worship, sacrifices are given to the deities to pass them to the *kpime* (ancestors) who give them to *Naangmen* through the *tengan* (earth-spirit). In his view, the *tengan* stands higher above the *kpime* because the *kpime* at the end of the day are buried in the *tenge* (Interview with *Tengdaana*, Logdaa on 7/3/11 at Sabuli). There are other deities like the *Bagr-ngmen*, the spirit or deity of the initiates, *sigra*, tutelary and guardian spirits and *kontonne*, “beings of the wild” (Suom-Dery, 2008; Kuukure, 1985).

There are also minor deities who derive their power from the *ngmeme* (deities), and when personalized in the form of talismans or charms worn on the body are believed to give protection and help to the wearers. The *saa* (rain-spirit) is the male-principle of fecundity and the *tenge* (earth) is its female partner (Kuukure, 1985; Goody, 1967). The *kontoma* (pl. *kontonne*) is the cultural teacher of the Dagaaba in all aspects of human existence (Baghr, 1988; Kuukure, 1985). He taught them the science of herbal medicine, cultivation of the land, how to make iron and use it, how to shoot with bow and arrows and the art of *pito* brewing (Suom-Dery, 2008; Baghr, 1988), he is also the revealer of esoteric knowledge and the agent of divination (Kuukure, 1985). The ancestors (*kpime*) are the senior members of the clan or lineage or ethnic group and influence the life of the living in a number of ways (Suom-Dery, 2008; Ronlang, 2005; Baghr, 1988; Kuukure, 1985). An ancestor is an adult who was married and had children. He led an exemplary life and was not a drunkard, a murderer or a thief. His death was natural not by accident or suicide or due to

unclean diseases such as leprosy and lunacy. He must be a man who was involved in the affairs that affected the welfare of the lineage (Roland, 2005; Baghr, 1988). It is the supreme wish of every *Dagao* that “he would live well and die well, in order to qualify to join the venerable ancestors” (Assimeng, 1989, p. 58). Thus, the veneration of the ancestors (*kpime*) lies at the central focus of Dagaaba traditional religious system. Because they are the intermediaries between *Naangmen* and human beings, they are regularly consulted, offerings are given to them, libations offered to them and their guidance and protection sought in all important family and personal matters (Suom-Dery, 2008).

Within the visible dimension of this organic universe are humans, animals, plants and other inanimate objects (Suom-Dery, 2008). All the actions of *Naangmen* (God), the *tengan* (earth-spirit), *kpime* (ancestors), *tengame* (earth-shrines), the *ngmeme* (nature spirits) and *kontonne* (Beings of the Wild) are directed towards the promotion of human life, the sustenance and well-being of humans (Mwinlaaro, 2005), and the maintenance of harmony and peace in society and in the world. Things and events occur through the benevolence of God, the ancestors, the spirits and deities for the good of human beings, or as warnings or as punishments for sin. Consequently, every event has a spiritual meaning. The *bag-buurɔ* (diviner) is consulted to decipher the hidden meanings of such events (Suom-Dery, 2008; Mwinlaaro, 2005).

In addition, everything is arranged in an orderly manner according to the will and wisdom of God: day and night, dry season and rainy season, the rhythms of life, waxing and waning of the moon, and rain and drought. The goodness of God’s creation is the harmony of creation. Human beings, being at

1988). The [©] **University of Cape Coast** <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui> purpose of ritual, as Bohannan and Curtin explain, is to bring the client or the patient or the representative of the family and community into communion with God or His representative (Bohannan & Curtin, 1988). In other words, through rituals contact is made with the invisible power. Also through rituals the duality between the invisible and the visible, the spiritual and material, the sacred and the secular is overcome (Nkurunziza, 2007), and the harmony and equilibrium are restored.

Rituals are not only the means of bringing man into contact with the spiritual world, but also the means, especially the rites of passage to celebrate the transition of human life from one stage to another. This is clearly explained by Ray (1976) who says that through the rites of passage human beings are metaphysically and sociologically re-born into new creatures with new social responsibilities in the community. Thus through the naming ceremony new born infants now become human beings; through initiation children become adults; through marriage men and women become husband and wife; through the final funeral rites the dead become revered ancestors; and through “enstoolment” rites princes become chiefs. The cycle of nature is also marked and celebrated with rituals: the old year is ritually made into the New Year and the dry season is made into the rainy season.

There are also rituals for herding, hunting, handicraft and for building new homes. Each spirit has its own rituals, including the choice objects of sacrifice, time of day, week, month, or year to make the required sacrifice. Bohannan and Curtin (1988) summarized it all in these words: “the world must be constantly renewed by the ritual activities of people, so that humanity may prosper as the world prospers” (p. 194).

because they want to maintain a harmonious relationship with the ancestors in order to win their favours and blessings (Mwinlaaro, 2005). Sacrifices are also offered to expiate sins committed, to express gratitude for blessings received and to ask for permission before undertaking an enterprise or a journey (Mwinlaaro, 2005). Sacrifice involves the shedding of blood and the sacrificial animal must be a domestic animal and without any defilement. Stolen animals cannot be used for sacrifice because the ancestors and the earth-spirit taboo stolen animals. The blood of the sacrificial animal is smeared on the emblems of the family shrine (*kpime*). The sacrificial animal is cooked and consumed by all the participants who have benefited from the ritual. The sharing in the ritual animal redoubles the solidarity of the community of the living and the dead (Mwinlaaro, 2005; Bohannan & Curtin, 1988).

Besides ritual which supplies the motive force for the universe and which is one way by which the cosmic harmony and equilibrium must be maintained or restored, another way is through the right and generous living of man to avoid anti-social and anti-cosmic situations that can bring about catastrophe (Mwinlaaro, 2005; Bohannan & Curtin, 1988). Rituals and good moral life thus become the means of maintaining peace and harmony in the community and in the universe.

As mentioned above, rituals are carried out through the making of sacrifices. In the Dagaaba view, the *kpime* (ancestors) are the intermediaries between *Naangmen* and the people. Sacrifices are therefore, offered to Him through the ancestors. In sacrifice, the ancestors are invoked but are usually asked to take the offerings to *Naangmen* who is the ultimate receiver of the

sacrificial victims and prayers. According to Der, in all sacrifices, “God was invoked as the final or ultimate receiver of the sacrifice and people resorted to Him through the ancestors for peace” (Der, 1999, p. 3). Ancestral veneration through sacrifices unites the families, households and village communities.

Commitment to ancestral veneration was one of the reasons why the Mossi rejected Islam for many years until the colonial period. This is confirmed by Naameh in these words: “when Mansa Musa, emperor of Mali (1312-1323 C.E.) sent his ambassador to the king of Yatenga asking him to convert to Islam, the latter answered that he would have to consult his ancestors before” (Naameh, 1986, p. 7). The king of Yatenga could not convert to Islam without first consulting the ancestors. Most importantly, he and his people could not abandon their ancestral worship and customs and embrace Islam. The research findings in Chapter Four show that ancestral veneration was the main reason why Dagaaba resisted conversion to Islam.

In Dagaaba traditional religion, the ancestors through death and the performance of the final funeral rites are “nearest to God” and so are believed to be empowered with “vital powers or forces” to assist the living. The main focus of the Dagaaba is the solicitation of benevolent ancestral intervention in their affairs by means of prayers and sacrifices. But official Islam denies the power of the dead to assist the living. Dagaaba belief in ancestors and ancestral veneration prevented them from converting to Islam. They have a “profound sense of worship which they consider a duty towards the ancestors and the ‘Naabilengmen’, ‘a god of the child of man’” (Gregoire, 1979, p. 6), and this deters them from accepting Islam.

The belief in the veneration of the ancestors was also the reason why the Dagaaba initially rejected conversion to Christianity (McCoy, 1988). This is supported by the conversion of Porekuu to Christianity as narrated by Gregoire (1979). Porekuu first, informed Ngmankuurinaa the head of the family about his intention to convert to Christianity. Ngmankuurinaa himself would not give an answer without first consulting the ancestors. In the consultation of the ancestors Ngmankuurinaa called on the *tengame* (nature-spirits), the *kulle* (river spirits), the *tanne* (hill spirits) and then the *kpime* (ancestors) before killing the chicken. Even when the will of the ancestors was solicited and the approval given, Ngmankuurinaa, the elder brother of Porekuu, still refused to accept the will of the ancestors, and disowned his own brother. He saw Porekuu as a betrayer of the ancestors and the family tradition and custom by converting to Christianity (Gregoire, 1979). Gregoire further reported that “as more people abandoned their traditional way of worship and embraced the ‘new faith’ persecution arose. The traditional rulers and their elders becoming alarmed began to harass the leaders of the ‘*puor-paala*’ [new-prayer]” (Gregoire, 1979, p. 10). The evidence illustrates the importance chiefs, *tengdaaba* and lineage heads attached to ancestral veneration and their determination to maintain and preserve their religion.

Another reason why the Dagaaba offer sacrifice to the ancestors is that it is a channel of education of the young ones. According to the Chief of Konyukuo and elders, the Dagaaba had no other forum where they could teach their children the history and the traditions of the ancestors. Offering of libation and making sacrifices were occasions to recount the history of migrations of the clan. The names of ancestors involved in the process of

migrations from their original home till today are remembered during sacrifices. The present ancestors are now asked to take the offering and give it to the next generation of ancestors, whose names are mentioned; they in turn are asked to pass it on to the next generation of ancestors. This process of rallying the sacrificial animal continues till the epical ancestors who are asked to accept it and give it to *Naangmen*. The young who participate regularly in sacrifices are taught the genealogy, the traditions, and the history of the clan. The conversion to Islam will mean abandoning this important channel of teaching and educating the youth on the history and traditions of the Dagaaba. This is another reason, as explained by the Chief of Konyukuo why Dagaaba rejected Islam because it condemns traditional sacrifice as “idol” worship (Interview with Konyukuo Naa and Elders on 24/3/11 at Konyukuo).

The Dagaaba believe in evil spirits and beneficial spirits as well as in good and bad *kontonne* (Tlhagale, 2006; Kuukure, 1985; Tuurey, 1982). Further, the Dagaaba believe that everything has a spirit indwelling it (Baghr, 1988). Nothing is dormant. Everything is potentially powerful and has only to be activated through ritual for benefits or for misfortune (Cardinall, 1969). The spirit forces are also the agents of witchcraft, sorcery and magic. In this belief system humankind is at the mercy of the spirits. Every evil and every blessing is caused by the spirits (Baghr, 1988). Disease for the Dagaaba cannot be an accidental happening. It is believed to be caused by other human beings or ancestors or evil agents but not by *Naangmen*. The cause therefore is always some person, living or dead (Tlhagale, 2006). Sacrifices to the spirits are therefore, the means to ward off a potential danger (Cardinall, 1969). One sad effect of the belief in evil spirits is that when people put the cause of their

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problem on somebody else, then they are not prepared to take responsibility for finding ways to solving it. From the study Dagaaba Muslims see Allāh as the cause of good and evil, and will not blame anybody for their misfortune. They resort to the Qur'ān as the most “powerful medicine” against evil spirits by writing verses of the Qur'ān on the threshold of their door or by reciting certain *sūrahs* or *ayāt* of the Qur'ān before retiring to bed (Interview with *Karama Mālik Andoro* 9/3/12 at Nanvilli).

Dagaaba traditional religion has a pluralistic conception of the human person. The human person has a body (*enge* or *engane*, that is, “body-skin”), *yang* (reason or spirit), *vɔɔɔɔɔɔɔɔ* or *nyɔɔɔɔɔɔɔɔ* (“breath” or “breath of the nose”, that is, the vital force that animates the body or life), *sie* (soul), *dasuulong* (shadow), and *degre* (“dirt”, “impurity”) (Kuukure, 1985, pp. 83, 84). The human person as, Kuukure rightly remarks, “is not a loose confederation of these parts, but a unity, a person, a conscious responsible self capable of communicating and relating to others” (Kuukure, 1985, p. 83).

At death the person with his soul leaves the body and lives around the neighbourhood as a ghost (*daparo*). After the final funeral rites are performed he passes to the land of the ancestors (*kpimateng*), the place of rest and enjoyment with one's own ancestors and kin (Tengan, 2005; Kuukure, 1985; Kpiebaya, 1973). Goody calls it the “Country of God” (Goody, 1967, pp. 52-54) while Kuuire terms it “Land of the Ancestral spirits” (Kuuire, 1996, p. 239). This is the ultimate aim of life for the Dagaaba, communion with one's ancestors in the land of the living-dead. Death in the eyes of the Dagaaba is therefore “going home to our Father's House” (Kuukure, 1985, p. 124) or “going back to the land of the ancestors” (Kuuire, 1996, p. 239). When an

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infant dies it is said that “he returned or gone back” (Kuuire, 1996, p. 239).

These expressions mean that for the Dagaaba the “human person survives and persists after death” (Kuukure, 1985, p. 124) and that the dead’s “closeness to God (‘they converse intimately with God’) makes them most suitable and powerful intercessors for their own kin” (Kuukure, 1985, p. 123).

To convert to Islam within the context of Dagaaba beliefs system is not only to abandon the ancestral worship but also to cut oneself from the supernatural source of protection and the ultimate aim of life, namely, “the Land of the Ancestral Spirits”. Admission into the “Land of the Ancestral Spirits” depends not only on the performance of the final funeral rites but especially, on the good will of the ancestors. The ancestors will receive the “newcomer” into their company or reject him depending on whether he “resembles” or does not “resemble” them (Kuuire, 1996, p. 240). The research findings illustrate that this was the core reason why many Dagaaba resisted conversion to Islam, the fear of being excluded from the company of the ancestors after death.

Despite the similarity of belief in the way life continues after death, Dagaaba traditionalists still resist conversion to Islam. The belief that one is going to live much the same type of life as one lived here, explains the variety of the items offered for the deceased to take along. This explains the symbolic objects and actions used during the funeral performances (Ntreh, 2008; Kuukure, 1985). For example, the bow and arrow, the millet, and basket are symbols of manhood or womanhood as the case may be, and the status or function the person plays in life (Tengan, 2005). Islam also teaches that the life here will be the same as in *al-Āhkirah* (“The Last Life”). This is evident from

the Qur'ānic monistic concept of the human person (Watt, 1968) as inferred from the Arabic word *nafs*, which means “soul” or “person”. The treatment given to the body in the recess of the grave by Dagaaba Muslims also demonstrates this monistic concept of man (See 5.5.2.). The dead person is capable of enduring pain and care must be taken to ease his pain. Yet this belief in the continuity of the same life on earth after death did not attract the Dagaaba to Islam. The ultimate goal of life might be the same but the only means to achieve it is, according to Dagaaba traditionalists, the performance of the traditional funeral rites.

Furthermore, Dagaaba Muslims like traditionalists visualize the enjoyments of the after-life only in bodily terms. In other words, physical enjoyments and pains are transposed to the state of life after death. The only distinction is that for the traditionalists the dead person can still influence the lives of the living and share very much in the emotions and interests of the living (Tengan, 2005). The Dagaaba Muslims due to their Islamic faith do not believe in the power of the ancestors to punish or to save a person after death. This is the reason why the Muslim young men of Tabiesi and Takpo refused to perform or participate in the traditional final funeral rites when their fathers die (Interview with Imām Hamīd Abdullāh, 4/3/11 at Tabiesi and Hudī Ibrāhīm, the Mu'adhdhin of Takpo, Latīf Anfaarabaalanaa Waalo and Idrīsu on 9/3/11 at Takpo).

In summary, rituals and sacrifices are important in Dagaaba traditional religion. At death they are meant to give a final burial to the remains of the dead. They also ensure the successful transition of the soul of the deceased to the land of the ancestors. They also have importance for the living. They are

meant to free the living, especially the widows, from their mourning and obligations and permit them to return to normal social life (Ntreh, 2008; Tengan, 2005; Kuukure, 1985). This is the reason why Tengan insists that death for the Dagaaba demands “ritual time” (Tengan, 2005, p. 5), that is to say, enough time must be given for the ritual to be performed, for the symbolic actions to be acted out and for all significant relations and actors in the ritual to be present (Tengan, 2005). It is not surprising, therefore, when some interviewees said emphatically that Dagaaba do not want to convert to Islam because of the hurried way in which Muslims bury their dead. Funeral is the time to celebrate relationships, to renew relationships and to create new relationships. Therefore “the ritual time” for the mourning and burial of the deceased in the mind of the Dagaao traditional religionist, is very significant and imperative.

3.9. Conclusion

This Chapter has illustrated how the Dagaaba came to be constituted as a “cultural-ethnic group” united by territory, language, history, political and social organizations and religion. It showed that Dagaaba religious and political organizations were centred round the *tengdaana* (Custodian of the earth-shrine) and *tengan* (earth-spirit) and because of this the spirits play a dominant role in their lives than *Naangmen* (The Supreme Spirit). In their social organization, the clan system is the basis of all relationships. In this system, respect for authority was valued as the means to maintain harmony and peace in the family and society. Any insubordination to authority was likely to invoke the punitive curse of the ancestors. The Chapter also highlighted some

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Dagaaba cultural and religious elements that facilitated the rejection of Islam among the Dagaaba, such as, the value of animal sacrifice, ancestral veneration and respect for traditional authority. Chapter Four examines how Islam was established among the Dagaaba and the reaction of Dagaaba traditional religionists to the advent of Islam.



ESTABLISHMENT OF ISLAM IN DAGAABALAND

4.1. Introduction

The results of the research are organized around two main themes: the establishment of Islam and the aftermath of the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland. Chapter Five discusses the aftermath after the establishment of Islam among the Dagaaba. This Chapter deals with the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland: villages and towns with Muslim enclaves, the agents of the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland and the challenges that they encountered in the process, the means by which Islam was established among the Dagaaba and the reasons that favoured their acceptance or rejection of Islam.

4.2. Villages and Towns with Muslims in Dagaabaland

The following villages and towns with Sunnī Muslim enclaves were identified according to districts, as shown in Figure 3, p. 152. Nadawli District has the following villages and towns with Muslim enclaves: Loho, Kaleo, Tibani, Zang, Norong, Fian, Tabiesi, Kajukperi, Issa, Wogu, Bussie, Sankana, Takpo, Yiziri and Nadawli. Jirapa District: Jirapa, Ullo, Chapuri, Hain and Nandaw-Waala. Lawra District: Babile, Konyukuo-Zongo, Lawra, Dikpe, and Nandom. The above villages and towns are mentioned because of the presence of Muslim enclaves within them and also because there is a “Central Mosque” (*Masjid-ul-Jāmiʿ*) in each of them. A “Central Mosque” is where the Muslims

assemble for the *ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah* (the Friday Congregational Prayer) on Friday.

According to Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang, a village or town is qualified to have a “Central Mosque” (*jāmiʿ*) if it has about forty or more Muslim men. Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang studied in Saudi Arabia. He became a Muslim at Tutuka in Obuasi. He has come to Samatigu, his village to build a mosque (*masjid*) and to convert his people to Islam (Interview with Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang on 28/1/11). Based on the explanation of Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang, one can assume that there are forty or more Muslim men in each of the above Dagaaba villages and towns. The author also discovered that Konyukuo-Zongo is the only village in Dagaabaland with two Sunnī *Masjidān-ul-Jāmiʿ* (“two Central Mosques”) - one for Dagaaba Muslims (indigene Muslims) and the other for *Saaba-Muslims* (non-indigenous Muslims).

What accounted for the presence of the two “Central Mosques” in Konyukuo-Zongo? The village is called Konyukuo but the section of the Muslim enclave is known as “Konyukuo-Zongo”. Historically, the village acquired its name because of the brutal activities of the slave raiders. The raidings forced the inhabitants to cross and re-cross the Black Volta frequently to escape capture. Fed up with the recurrent raidings the inhabitants complained that these “slave raiders would not allow us to drink water” (*Ba kong sage ka te nyu ku*). Hence the settlement came to be called *Konnyukuo*. The Imām of the Dagaaba “Central Mosque” of Konyukuo-Zongo said that the *Saaba-Muslims* used Hausa as means of announcements and information in the Mosque to the exclusion of Dagaare, which the Dagaaba resented. As a result the Dagaaba Muslims decided to build their own “Central Mosque”. The socio-

economic languages of Konyukuo-Zongo are Hausa and Dagaare. Hence it is understandable why Dagaaba Muslims resented the use of only Hausa in the Mosque. The reason given by the Dagaaba Muslim Imām for the building of a separate “Central Mosque” may not be the only one. The Imām of the *Saaba-Muslims*’ “Central Mosque” on the other hand, told the author that the Dagaaba Muslim population increased and so the Dagaaba felt the need to build their own “Central Mosque”. Hence the reason given by the *Saaba-Muslims*’ Imām for the building of a separate Central Mosque for Dagaaba Muslims is understandable. Nevertheless, there is a tendency among Muslims in Ghana to build mosques along ethnic lines – Hausa mosque, Mossi mosque, Fulani mosque or indigene mosque and non-indigene mosque (Nurudeen, 1998; Samwini, 1996). This ethnocentric tendency indirectly, could be a motivation for Dagaaba Muslims to build their own Central Mosque. “Zongo”, probably derived from the Hausa word *zango* (camp or quarters or from the Arabic *sūq* (market) is the quarters or section for strangers (Goody, 1967). Hence “Konuykuo-Zongo” is the dwelling place of “Strangers” (*Saaba*) distinct from “Konyukuo village” where the indigenes dwell.

The question is why are there today Dagaaba converts with their separate Central Mosque in Konyukuo-Zongo? Zakariyyā’ ʿĪsā, one of the first converts from Tankyara (near Konyukuo) and, whose son is the imām of the Dagaaba “Central Mosque” of Konyukuo-Zongo, said that the Dagaaba converts of Konyukuo-Zongo are not the indigenes of Konyukuo. The converts came from Tankyara and Koro. They converted to Islam because of their encounter with Muslims through trading activities in Konyukuo-Zongo and Babile.

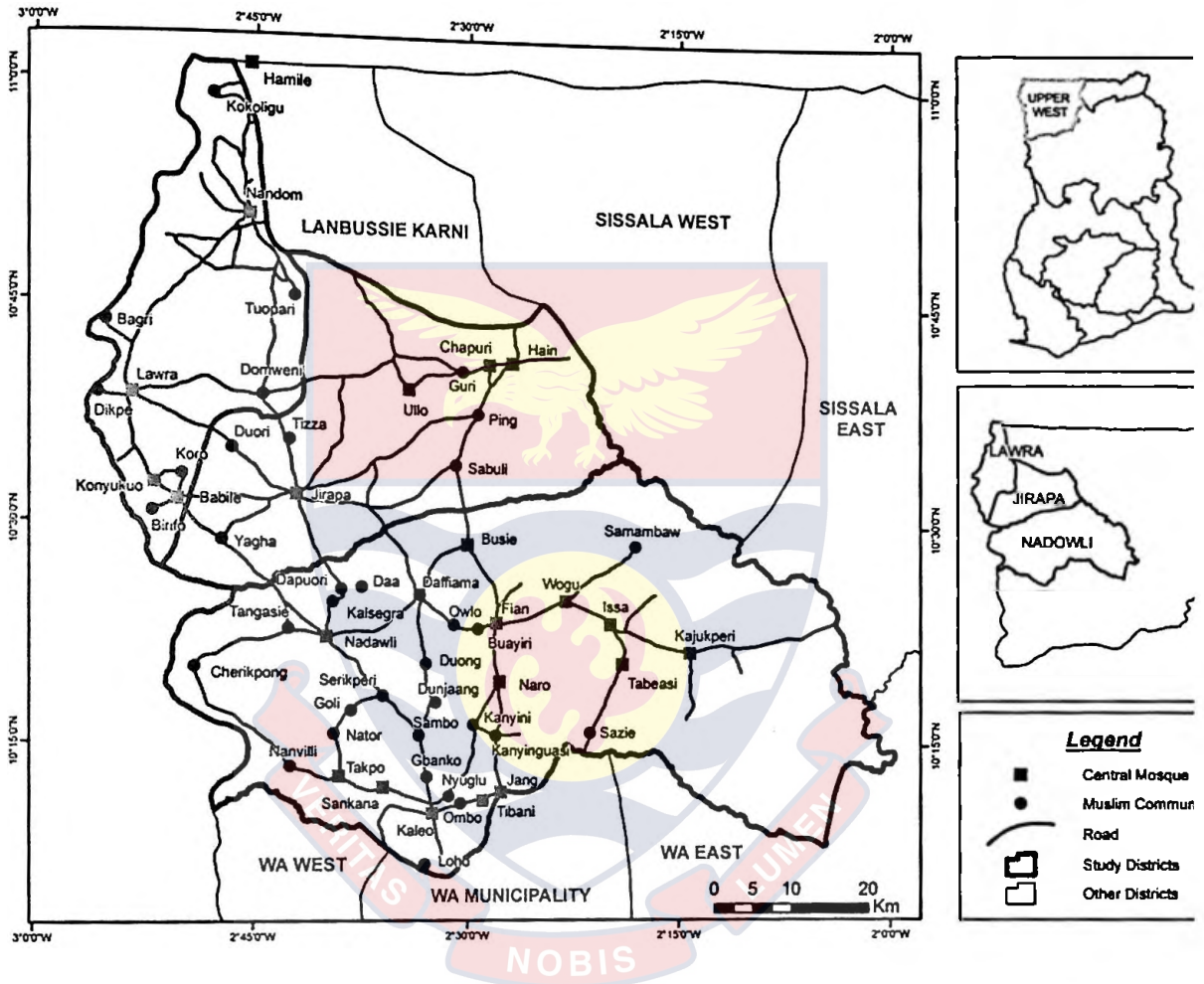


FIGURE 3: Muslim communities in Dagaabaland

Source: Remote Sensing and Cartographic Unit, University of Cape Coast, 2011.

The interview with Zakariyyā' ʿIsā explains how and why there are Dagaaba Muslims in Konyukuo-Zongo and supports the reason advanced by the *Saaba Muslims*' Imām as to why Dagaaba Muslims had to build a separate "Central Mosque" in Konyukuo-Zongo. The report of Zakariyyā' ʿIsā also confirms the claims made by some interviewees at Duong and Tizza that there are many Dagaaba converts in Southern Ghana (when Dagaaba speak of Kumasi or Southern Ghana they mean all the area from Bamboi downward) but that they are afraid to come home to their villages for fear of encountering the hostility of the traditional authorities, and that Dagaaba, who convert to Islam in Dagaabaland usually take up residence in the towns as safe-havens to avoid the negative influence of Dagaaba traditional religion and cultural practices.

The author also discovered that in some Muslim enclaves there exists only indigene Muslims, while in others there are both indigene and non-indigene Muslims. The non-indigene Muslims are: *Wangara* (Yeri), *Hausa*, *Mossi*, *Kantosi* (Kunatay), *Fulani*, *Yoruba* and *Wala*. They are mostly located

in Babile, Konyukuo-Zongo, Lawra, Nandom, Bussie and Nandaw-Waala.

They settled in these towns because these were the main market centres in Dagaabaland. This confirms the observation in Chapter Two (2.2.4.; 2.2.5.) that the Mande-Yeri came into the Volta Basin because of trade and that usually they settled in market centres or they created new market centres.

There are twenty-two “Central Mosques” in Dagaabaland. Some of the Mosques were built by the Dagaaba Muslims with their own funding. Others were built with the assistance of Islamic Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) through the mediation of the *Wa Jam'iyat* (“Association for Islamic Guidance”). A look at the distribution of the Central Mosques in the three districts indicates that Nadawli District has the highest concentration of Mosques (thirteen Mosques, while Jirapa has four and Lawra five). One explanation is that the Dagaaba Muslims of the Nadawli District are more exposed to Islam by their proximity to Wa and they obtained more support from the *Wa Jam'iyat* than the Dagaaba Muslims in the other districts.

Interviewees from the Nadawli District told the author that the *Wa Jam'iyat* assisted them more in the building of their Mosques than in the Jirapa and Lawra Districts. A second explanation is that there are many migrations to Southern Ghana from Nadawli District than from the two other districts (Songsore & Denkebe, 1999; Tanle, 2010). These immigrants as explained in 4.5.1 converted to Islam in Southern Ghana and went back to Dagaabaland to spread their religion. The greatest sign of Islamic presence in a village, according to the southern migrant converts is a mosque. As a result southern migrant converts built mosques in their villages. Secondly, a mosque in a village is one means, in the opinion of Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymān Naa-uree of

Karama (Dagaare variant of *Karamo*) Mālik Andoro of Nanvilli (both of them southern converts), of warding off evil spirits and witches from a village (Interviews with Imām Al-Hājj Sulaymān Naa-uree on 12/3/11 and *Karama* Mālik Andoro on 9/3/11). For this reason southern migrant converts built mosques in the villages of the Nadawli District. The Dagaaba Muslims in the Jirapa District lacked the financial ability to build mosques. For example, beside the Hain and Chapuri mosques, the Mosques at Nandaw-Waala, Uilo and Jirapa were built with external help. The Mosques in the Lawra District were built by the *Saaba-Muslims* and they are within the *Zongos*. It must be remarked that Mosques are not the only signs of Islamic presence in these villages and towns. Both non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims built *darisas* (Arabic) and *makarantas* (Hausa), that is, Qur'ān schools, for the Islamic education of children. This is treated in detail in section 4.5.4.6.

4.3. Agents of the Establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland

The *Saaba-Muslims* (non-indigenous Muslims) and the Dagaaba Muslims (indigenous Muslims) were the agents who established Islam in Dagaabaland. The *Saaba-Muslims* were Mande-Yeri, Hausa, Mossi, Fulani, Yoruba and Waala and the Dagaaba Muslims were Southern Ghana migrant converts, ex-slave converts and Dagaaba who converted to Islam in Dagaabaland. This section deals first, with the identity of the *Saaba-Muslims*, their establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland and the challenges they encountered. From section 4.5, the study considers the identity of Dagaaba Muslims, their role in the establishment of Islam, the Muslim enclaves founded by Dagaaba Muslims, and the challenges they faced in the spread of Islam.

The non-indigenous Muslims are: the *Yeri* (that is, the Wangara, the *Kunatay* or Kantosi), the *Mossi*, the *Hausa*, the *Yoruba*, the *Fulani* and the *Waala*. Chapter Two of the study explained how the Mande-*Yeri* entered the Middle Volta Basin and settled in the east of Wa. Chapter two also recalled that as Mande-*Yeri* were attracted to the east of Wa by the Lobi gold fields. They entered Dagaabaland through Lawra and Konyukuo areas. One group settled at Konyukuo because it was on the trade route from Jenne through Bobo-Dioulasso to Wa, Bole and Kumasi (Der, 1999, Hiskett, 1984). Another group settled at Tankyara and Koro because the land east of the Black Volta River was fertile for farming. The word *Koro* is a Mande word and it means “elder brother”. The leader of the Mande-*Yeri* who settled at Tankyara was younger to the one at Koro. Anytime he visited his elder brother he would say: “I am going to visit my *koro*” (that is to say, my elder brother). Eventually this became the name of the village (Interview with Zakariyyā’ ʿIsā on 24/3/11).

From Konyukuo the Mande-*Yeri* of the *Tarawiri* or *Tagara* clan migrated to the east of Wa. On their way one group settled in the Jirapa area (Interview with Zakariyyā’ ʿIsā on 24/3/11). The interview with Zakariyyā’ ʿIsā indicates that the people of Tankyara, Koro, Jirapa and the *Tagara* of Wa belong to the same Mande clan. Bin Salih (2008), Abobo (1994) and Wilks (1989) do not speak about the people of Tankyara and Koro in their works but confirm that the *Tagara* of Jirapa and the *Tagara* of Wa are Mande-*Yeri* (see also 2.2.6.5). Zakariyyā’ ʿIsā is convinced that there is a historical link between the people of Tankyara and the *Tagara* or *Tarawiri* of Wa. “Anytime a chief of Tankyara died”, he said, “the *Yeri-Naa* of Wa sent a white shroud for the burial

of the chief [©] [University of Cape Coast](https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui) <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui> (Interview with Zakariyyā' ʿĪsā on 24/3/11). Konyukuo was obviously, the gateway of Mande-Yeri to the Dagaabaland and the Wa region.

Another gate of entry of Mande-Yeri into Dagaabaland was Nandaw-Waala. According to Bin Salih (2008), Nurudeen (1998), Wilks (1989) and Levtzion (1968), an internal dispute arose among the Muslims of Kpalwoghu in the east of Wa. The occurrence of this internal dispute is supported by the report from interviews with Zakariyyā' at Konyukuo-Zongo, Al-Ḥājj Mūsā Siddīque Saamunu at Hamile-Zongo and Al-Ḥājj ʿAqīlu with Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm at Nandaw-Waala. As a result of this internal dispute, some of the Muslims migrated into the Wa state, others dispersed to the Mamprusi and Dagomba states, while some migrated and settled among the Sissala and Balsa. Another group migrated to south-western Burkina Faso and settled at places like To, Toho, Wahabu and Boromo. One group, however, moved to Nandaw-Waala in Dagaabaland (Interview with the Imām of Nandaw-Waala, Al-Ḥājj ʿAqīlu Ibrāhīm and Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm on 15/3/11 at Nandaw-Waala and with Al-Ḥājj Mūsā Siddīque Saamunu of Hamile-Zongo on 30/3/11 at Hamile). Like Beghu, Larabanga and Daboya, Kpalwoghu was instrumental in the dispersion of Islam to other areas of the Volta Basin (See 2.2.5.)

The *Kulibali clan* that migrated into the Mamprusi and Dagomba states was attracted there by the economic prosperity of these states (Levtzion, 1968). Those that settled among the Sissala, Balsa (the *Dagara-Juula*) and in south-western Burkina Faso (*Kantosi*) wanted to benefit from the trade route from Jenne to Safane, and through Walembele to Daboya (Levtzion, 1968). The group (*Kantosi*) that settled at Nandaw-Waala was attracted there by the arable

farm land (Interview with Al-Hājj °Aqīlu Ibrāhīm and Imām Al- Hājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm on 15/3/11; see also Levtzion, 1968). Levtzion (1968) says that the *Kantosi* migrated from Kpalwoghu to Nandaw-Waala. Imām Al- Hājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm on the other hand, said that the *Kantosi* migrated first, to To, Toho, Wahabu and Boromo in south-western Burkina Faso, and then moved southward to settle at Nandaw-Waala. His version is more credible since Imām Al- Hājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm is a descendant of the *Kantosi* of Nandaw-Waala and the Imām of Nandaw-Waala. In addition, Mamudu °Abdullāh Sarko, head of the Sarko community in Babile and Al-Hājj Mūsā Siddīque, an elder of the *Saamunu* family in Hamile in separate interviews, gave the same account.

The *Kantosi* group at Nandaw-Waala consisted of: the *Kunatay*, *Sissay* (Sisse) and *Kandea* (Interview with Al- Hājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm on 15/3/11 at Nandaw Waala). From Nandaw-Waala the *Kunatay* clan moved and settled at Chapuri while the *Sissay* migrated to Tizza all in search of arable land. The *Kantosi* community at Nandaw-Waala attracted other Muslim groups like the *Tuuray* (Ture) clan from Wa (their migration to Nandaw was instigated by the invasion of Wa by Babatu in the 1890s), and the *Sarko* clan from Safane. It was the *Sarko* Muslims from Safane who introduced the art of making charms and talismans to the Muslims of Nandaw-Waala (Interview with Imām Al- Hājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm 15/3/11; see also Bin Salih, 2008). From Nandaw-Waala the *Kunatay* and *Sissay* migrated to other Dagaaba villages. Nandaw-Waala was therefore, a gateway to non-indigenous Muslims to Dagaabaland.

The next group of non-indigenous Muslims that entered Dagaabaland came from south-western Burkina Faso. Some of the *Kantosi* Muslims that

migrated from Kpalwoghu to To, Toho, Wahabu and Boromo in south-western Burkina Faso later migrated to Babile, Konyukuo-Zongo and Hamile. The security provided by the British colonial administration stimulated trade and this attracted the *Kantosi* of south-western Burkina Faso to migrate into Dagaabaland. The next group of Mande-*Yeri* in Dagaabaland to be mentioned are the *Wangara* of Nandom. The Mande Muslim traders of Nandom called themselves *Wangara* while those in the Jirapa area are known as *Yeri*. In the interviews, the *Wangara* of Nandom said that they came to Nandom from Mali, Guinea Conakry and Bobo-Dioulasso during the reign of Naa Kyiir of Nandom (1903/1905-1908)(See also Lentz, 2006). The group that came from Guinea Conakry said that they came to Nandom through Kpalwoghu in the east of Wa. Like their compatriots of Konyukuo-Zongo, the *Wangara* of Nandom came to Nandom to trade and they traded in kola nuts, shea butter, cattle and cloth. When they arrived the Chief of Nandom in accordance with Dagaaba hospitality, welcomed them to his palace (Interview with *Karama Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko* (he studied in Saudi Arabia and is a teacher at the Nandom English/Arabic Primary School), the *Wangara* Naa of Nandom and *Al-Hājj °Uthmān Wule* (an elder) on 29/3/11 at Nandom).

The next ethnic group of non-indigenous Muslims in Dagaabaland are the Mossi. They are found in Lawra and Sombo. The Mossi used to travel from Safane to Kumasi through Lawra for commerce. The Chief of Lawra, Naa Binne (1927-1934) gave them land where they rested before moving on. Eventually some of them stayed back in Lawra and developed the place into Mossi-Zongo. According to *Al-Hājj °Umaru Karbo*, a retired teacher and the first convert to Islam from the Lawra chief's palace, the Mossi in Lawra were

joined by the [©] [University of Cape Coast](https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui) <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui> *Wangara* from Bobo-Dioulasso and the Hausa from Tuopare (Interview with Al-Ḥājj ʿUmaru Karbo on 24/3/11 at Lawra).

The next village with Mossi Muslims is Sombo (sometimes called “Daga-Sombo” to distinguish it from “Wa-Sombo”). A Mossi called Mūsā, came to Sombo with his family as security to the Public Works Department quarters at Sombo. After his retirement he stayed back at Sombo and was given a piece of land to settle on. He was a cobbler and rendered good services to the community. This was one reason why he stayed back in Sombo instead of returning to Wa, and also why the community easily gave him land to settle on. The house of Mūsā became a rest-stop for other Mossi travelling from Burkina Faso to Kumasi or from Kumasi to Ouagadougou (Interview with Imām ʿAbdul-Muʿmin Mūsā, son of Mūsā and with Deputy Imām Ibrāhīm Baloo, the first convert to Islam from Sombo on 23/2/11 at Sombo). The descendants of Mūsā and a few converted Dagaaba Muslims form the Muslim community of Sombo.

The Hausa in Bussie is just the family of Al-Ḥājj Inūsa (Yūnus) who relocated to Bussie from Wa. Al-Ḥājj Inūsa told the author that he came to Bussie with his family because it had a market. Thus the purpose of his coming to Bussie was to promote his trading business and not to propagate Islam (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Inūsa on 7/3/11 at Bussie). It was the same reason that motivated the Hausa of Katsina to migrate to Tuopare. Tuopare was a slave trading market which flourished in the 1890s. The trading opportunities attracted the Hausa there. When Tuopare market declined as a result of the abolition of the slave trade and the enforcement of the law by the British colonial administration in Northwestern Ghana, the Hausa departed from Tuopare to Lawra, Konyukuo-Zongo and Nandom (Interview with *Karama Al-*

Hājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko, the Wangara Naa of Nandom and Al-Hājj °Uthmān Wule on 29/3/11 at Nandom). There is something revealing about the route through which the Hausa entered Tuopare. *Mallam Zakariyyā'* Amadu of Ullo said that the Hausa came to Tuopare from Katsina through Macina in Mali (Interview with *Mallam Zakariyyaw* Amadu on 15th April, 2011 at Ullo).

Mallam Zakariyyā' Amadu's information is reliable because Al-Hājj °Abdullāh Muḥammad, son of the late *Mallam Hārūna* of Nandom and a resident of Babile testified that his grandparents migrated to Tuopare from Macina. Later on they moved to Lawra and to Konyukuo-Zongo. It was from Konyukuo-Zongo that Al-Hājj °Abdullāh Muḥammad and his family moved to Babile for better trading opportunities (Interview with Al-Hājj °Abdullāh Muḥammad (a Hausa) on 24/3/11 at Babile). The dispersion of the Hausa to Tuopare supports the view of Levtzion (1968) that the north-western and north-eastern trade routes were patronized by Hausa of Northern Nigeria from the eighteenth century onwards. This means that from the eighteenth century onwards the north-western trade route ceased to be the monopoly of the Mande-*Yeri* alone. At this time Hausa from Northern Nigeria were trading in Macina in the Niger Bend and from there participated in the north-western trade southward. Thus the secondary sources indicate that the Hausa of Wa came there through the north-eastern trade route (See 2.2.6.5.) while the research findings show that the Hausa of Tuopare came through the north-western trade route from Macina in Mali (Interview with *Mallam Zakariyyā'* Amadu on 15th April, 2011 at Ullo and Al-Hājj °Abdullāh Muḥammad, a Hausa on 24/3/11 at Babile).

Yoruba. A Yoruba at Konyukuo-Zongo and another at Hamile-Zongo told the author during discussions that their ancestors migrated into Dagaabaland from Lagos. The claim is supported by the fact that the Yoruba in Dagaabaland were called “Lugor” (sing. “Lugoba), that is, “People from Lagos”. The Yoruba came into Dagaabaland in the 1930s and 1940s (B.G. Der, personal conversation on June, 30 2012 at University of Cape Coast). They settled mostly in the commercial towns, such as, Jirapa, Babile, Konyukuo-Zongo, Lawra and Nandom (with Yoruba at Konyukuo-Zongo and Hamile-Zongo, March 20, 2011).

The last major group of non-indigenous Muslims the author investigated were the Fulani. The Fulani the author encountered in the Lawra District are mainly Muslims and traders and they entered the Dagaabaland from Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso, they are concentrated in Babile, Konyukuo-Zongo and Lawra. Those whom the author encountered in the Jirapa and Nadawli Districts (Nandaw-Waala, Ping, Bussie, Zanguasi, Bu and Loho), are cattle tenders, who tend the cattle of rich Dagaaba and Waala Muslims. A few of them are petty farmers. The pastoral Fulani are Muslims but some of them are not practising Muslims (Interview with Sānī Al-Ḥasan, Imām of Bussie on 7/3/11 at Bussie and Mallam Muhaydin Tuubo, Imām of Zanguasi on 20/2/11 at Zanguasi). This finding confirms the view of Lentz (2006) that by 1921 there were Mossi, Hausa, Waala and other “foreigners” in the towns of Babile, Lawra, Nandom and Hamile. The role of non-indigenous Muslims in the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland is examined in the next section.

Some people have the impression that Islam spread in Africa mostly through wars. The study in section 2.2.2. showed that Islam spread into the Volta Basin through trade. The research findings have proved that non-indigenous Muslims migrated into Dagaabaland also to trade and for farming and to look for pasture for their animals. The reason for their migration determined the place of settlement in Dagaabaland. The traders settled in the market towns while those who had interest in farming and pasturing settled in the villages. Even though some of the interviewees said that the Mande-Yeri came to Dagaabaland solely for trade and commerce, the author thinks otherwise. Such an impression is a misconception of the Mande-Yeri. The Mande Muslim traders were at the same time missionaries of Islam. It is not possible to draw a dichotomy between their occupation and faith. The first duty of a Muslim as *‘abdullāh* (slave of Allāh) is to summon the people of the world to Islam. Hence the non-indigene Muslims tried to establish Islam wherever they settled.

In Chapter Two, it was indicated that the Mande-Yeri brought into the Volta Basin not only goods but also Islam and new ideas (See 2.2.3.). One of the ideas the Mande-Yeri brought into the Dagaabaland was the spirituality of Al-Ḥājj Sālim Sūwarī Sissay (See 2.2.7.). Influenced by his spirituality they did not see the need to engage in active proselytism among Dagaaba. Their concern was to live among the people peacefully, respecting their traditional religion, speaking their language and being witnesses so that the indigenes would see their good deeds and be inspired to convert to Islam. This was what transpired at the Nandom Chief's palace.

The *Wangara* at the Nandom Chief's palace was a cobbler who made horse-shoes for the Chief. He named Kyiir, the Chief of Nandom, *Che Moghou* that is, *Ninpkε* ("Big Person"). The descendants of Naa Kyiir adopted this title *Che Moghou* as a surname till today. It was also this *Wangara* who gave the Arabic name *Imoro* (°Umaru) to the father of the present Chief of Nandom when he was born. The same *Wangara* also presented a Qur'ān (written by hand) and an Imām staff to Naa Kyiir which are still present in the Nandom Chief's palace to this day (Interview with *Karama Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko*, Arabic teacher on 29/3/11 at Nandom). The presence of this *Wangara* at the Nandom Chief's palace and his life witness inspired the following people to become Muslims: Al-Ḥasan Yuor, Adama Naafaakuu, Al-Hājj Awudu Dzang. Tokor and Saalong (whose Arabic names my interviewee could not remember) were the *landani* ("Callers to Prayer")(Interview with Al-Hājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo on 29/3/11 at Nandom). Thus witness of life was one way the Mande-Yeri adopted to establish Islam in Nandom. This method was effective but the Mande-Yeri were confined to the Chief's palace and Nandom-Zongo and did not extend their presence among the ordinary people of Nandom.

Another element of the spirituality of Al-Hājj Sālim Sūwarī which influenced the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland was Qur'ān education. Al-Hājj Sālim Sūwarī insisted that the Mande-Yeri in the "Diasporas" must preserve their Islamic identity by building mosque and *darisa* (Qur'ān school) in each community (Wilks, 2000). On the basis of his recommendation, the non-indigenous Muslims built *musiri* (mosques) and *darisas* in Dagaabaland. Hence Adama Kunatay, who came to Chapuri from Nandaw-Waala built a *darisa* at Chapuri where Muslim children were taught the recitation of the Qur'ān

(Interview with Imam Al-Hājj Shaṭbu Adama Kunatay on 15/3/11 at Chapuri).
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Similarly, Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko reported that Amadu ʿĀ'isha (a Fulani), Mallam Shaṭbu (a Wangara), Mallam Kantosi and Mallam Mukhtār (a Mossi) built *darisas* and *makarantas* at Nandom in the 1960s (Interview with Karama Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko on 29/3/11 at Nandom). A *darisa* was also opened at Lawra by Al-Hājj Ṣalīfu (Ṣalīhu) ʿUmar Kunatay from Wa Kabanye (Interview with Al-Hājj ʿUmaru Karbo on 24/3/11 at Lawra) and another by Idrīsu Saaka Sissay at Jirapa whose father came to Jirapa from Nandaw-Waala (Interview with Idrīsu Saaka Sissay 12/4/11 at Jirapa). It must be admitted that the Qur'ān education system was merely a means to strengthen Islam in non-indigenous Muslim enclaves but it did not help to spread Islam among the local population. By neglecting to enrol children of Dagaaba traditional religion and Christians in the *darisas* and *makarantas* the non-indigenous Muslims lost a golden opportunity to convert the Dagaaba. Enrolled traditional and Christian children in the *darisas* or *makarantas* would have understood Islam better and perhaps converted to Islam.

A final trait of the spirituality of Al-Hājj Sālim Sūwarī which influenced Mande-*Yeri* in the establishment of Islam among Dagaaba was “the top-bottom approach” towards Dagaaba chiefs. Whereas the jurists of Qayrawān and the *Almoravids* taught that Muslims should not serve under non-Muslim rulers and that *jihād* should be used as an instrument for social change (See 2.2.7.), Al-Hājj Sālim Sūwarī preached peace and advocated that Mande-*Yeri* should not engage in active politics but should put their spiritual, intellectual and technical skills at the service of non-Muslim chiefs to maintain peace for the interest of trade. Consequently, Mande-*Yeri* allied themselves

with the chiefs wherever they went. In this way they hoped that the conversion of the chief would lead automatically to the conversion of the subjects. This “top-to-bottom approach” was adopted by the Mande-*Yeri* in Dagaabaland. The Muslims of Nandaw-Waala were regular guests at the chiefs’ palaces of Ullo, Sigri and Jirapa (Interviews with Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydin Ibrāhīm (Imām of Nandaw-Waala) on 15/3/11 at Nandaw-Waala; Al-Ḥājj Saʿīdu Amadu (Chief of Ullo) on 15/3/11; Imām Qasīm Saʿīdu (Imām of Jirapa) on 30/3/11). Similarly, the Muslims of Konyukuo-Zongo, Lawra, and Nandom were regular guests at the palaces of the chiefs of Duori, Lawra and Nandom (Interviews with Al-Ḥājj ʿUmaru Karbo on 24/3/11 at Lawra, Al-Ḥājj Ḥafīz Nyovor Bodire on 24/3/11 at Lawra, and Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo on 29/3/11 at Nandom).

These encounters were opportunities for the Muslims to convert the chiefs, and for the chiefs to benefit from the trade, the knowledge and skills of the Muslims. Unfortunately, the Mande-*Yeri* at the chiefs’ palaces were more concerned with making *mina* (the water used to wash the ink from a writing board on which has been written verses of the Qur’ān and mixed with herbs) for the chiefs to drink and to bathe so as to fortify themselves against evil spirits and the evil intentions of their enemies. The chiefs were aware of the value of the *karama* (teacher and supernatural practitioner) in producing talismans and charms for protection against human and spiritual enemies. Stories of the powers of the kings of Wa, Mamprusi, Dagomba and Gonja were attributed to the Qur’ān as the source and these reached them in Dagaabaland (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo on 29/3/11 at Nandom).

Furthermore, their travels to Tamale and Kumasi for durbars of chiefs (Lentz, 2006) must have impressed upon them the need to have a *karama* in the

palace. In addition, the need for spiritual powers was more urgent during the colonial system of indirect rule. Any chief who did not meet the expectations of the colonial administration was “destooled” and another chosen to take his place. On the other hand, those chiefs who were tyrants in their demands for forced-labour and higher taxes (McCoy, 1988) were likely to face a revolt from their subjects and their eventual “destoolment”. Consequently, the chiefs were torn between pleasing the colonial authorities and their subjects. Moreover, there were other “capable and wealthy men” who were envious of the chief and the “stool” and were ready to employ any means to eliminate the chief and sit on the “stool”. In the midst of this insecurity most chiefs resorted to both the medicines of the traditional medicine man and the *karama*.

For example, Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydin Ibrāḥīm told the author that he spent fifteen years as a young man in the palace of Naa Ganaa of Jirapa, who is documented to have ruled from 1907-1938 (Lentz, 2006). There he assisted *karamamine* (sing. *Karama*) from Nandaw-Waala to prepare *mina* for the chief (Interview with Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydin Ibrāḥīm on 15/3/11). Also *Mallam Mai-feridochi* (he used to ride a white horse so they nicknamed him “Mai-feridochi”) of Konyukuo was in-charge of preparing *mina* for the Chiefs of Lawra (Interview with Al-Ḥājj ʿUmaru Karbo on 24/3/11 at Lawra). The provision of spiritual services to Dagaaba chiefs was not in vain. The chief of Sigri was converted to Islam with the Arabic name Ṣalīfu Kognaa by Muslims from Nandaw-Waala. Itinerant Muslims of Nandaw-Waala, on their way to Jirapa, were entertained at the Sigri Naa’s palace. In appreciation, the Muslims provided him with *mina*. The end result of these visits and services was that the Chief of Sigri converted to Islam (Interviews with Qasīm Saʿīdu, Imām of

Jirapa and an indigenous of Sigi and Dawūd Yeng, an elder on 30/3/11; J. Bayor, personal communication, June 21, 2011). The aftermath of his conversion to Islam is discussed in 4.5.6.

However, the influence of the *karamamine* on the Chiefs of Ullo, Jirapa, Duori, Nandom and Lawra was not effective. The Chiefs remained loyal to their ancestral veneration and resorted to both the *Karama* and traditional medicine man for spiritual help. The prosperity of the “stool” (chieftaincy) and the harmony of the community depended on constant sacrifices to the ancestors and for this reason the Chiefs did not want to arouse the anger of the ancestors or jeopardize the security of the “stool” and the community by renouncing the ancestral veneration and embracing Islam.

Although Dagaaba chiefs in general did not convert to Islam, they cooperated in the interest of Islam. Naa Binne of Lawra gave land to itinerant Mossi Muslims to settle which they developed into Mossi-Zongo (Interview with Al-Ḥājj °Umaru Karbo on 24/3/11). In the same way, Naa Konkoo of Nandom who ruled from 1931 to 1940 (Lentz, 2006) created the Nandom-Zongo by bringing Muslims from Hamile to settle on a piece of land he allocated to them (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo on 29/3/11). This was in reaction to Zingmuopare which was becoming popular because of the presence of the missionaries (“White fathers”) there. The presence of Muslims, in his view, would give honor to Nandom. Similarly, Naa Karbo I who ruled from 1935 to 1967 (McCoy, 1988) allowed the Muslims to use stones from his kraal at Karni when they were building the first mosque at Lawra. Naa Karbo I and his elders refused to embrace Islam but they allowed Al-Ḥājj Ṣalīfu °Umaru to convert their children to Islam. One of such children was Al-Ḥājj

A similar situation prevailed in Nandom and Ullo. Naa Kyiir whose reign lasted from 1903/1905 to-1908 and Naa Boro from 1918 to 1930 (Lentz, 2006) in Nandom refused the call to become Muslims but permitted people of the palace to embrace Islam if they wanted to. Consequently, a few of them became Muslims as mentioned earlier on (See 4.4.1.). Naa Boyong (Bayong) of Ullo (d. 1897) (Dasah, 1974) because of his wars with Babatu in the 1890s resented Islam but one of his sons, Wire became sympathetic to Islam and adopted the Arabic name Sa'īdu though he was not a Muslim. Perhaps Wire Sa'īdu was inclined to Islam, in the view of one of the interviewees, due to his travels to Safane for trade.

A *Karama* from Safane, who was a friend and a frequent visitor of Naa Wire Sa'īdu persuaded the chief to allow his son, Babuoronongnie to become a Muslim. He was given the Arabic name Amadu (Aḥmad). The Chief and his elders allowed the *Karama* to convert prince Babuoronongnie to Islam because he was a child and not an elder. Thus prince Aḥmad Babuoronongnie became the first Muslim in the royal family. Aḥmad Babuoronongnie grew up and married a traditional woman and gave birth to Sa'īdu, Zakariyyā', Ibrāhīm, Ismā'ila, Ḥasan, and Yahyā. When Chief Wire Sa'īdu died his son Aḥmad

current chief of Ullo, Naa Amadu Sa'udu II is the son of Ahmad Babuoronongnie and another son, Karama Zakariyyā' Babuoronongnie is the Imām of Ullo and Arabic teacher of the Ullo English/Arabic Primary School. Though the Chief of Ullo, Boyong, and kingmakers refused to embrace Islam, yet by allowing a prince to become a Muslim, they laid the foundation of Islam in Ullo. The Imām takes part in the installation ceremony of a new Ullo chief by praying for him and vesting him with the royal garment and hat. It must, however, be remarked that Islam entered the Ullo royal family not through the agency of the Nandaw-Waala Muslims but through the initiative of an itinerant *Karama* from Safane. Secondly, Islam entered the Ullo royal family gradually. This supports the theory of Ryan (1998) that Islam entered West African through a gradual process.

There were other ways through which the non-indigenous Muslims spread Islam in Dagaabaland, such as trade and business partnership. Some of the Dagaaba who abandoned farming and became traders or businessmen converted to Islam. Trade and business brought them into personal contact with the non-indigenous Muslim traders and to improve their trading opportunities they converted to Islam. An example is Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie of Jirapa-Doo. He was a trader and a driver at Babile and to make himself acceptable among the Muslim drivers he converted to Islam in 1951 (Interview with Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie on 24/3/11 at Babile).

Marriage with Dagaaba women was also a means of spreading Islam. Saaka (Ishāq) Sulaymān Sissay who came to Jirapa from Nandaw-Waala via Tizza married Āmīnah from Yipaala and gave birth to twelve children. Two of

them died but they are still alive (Interview with Idrisu Saaka Sissay on 12/4/11). This certainly increased the Muslim population in Jirapa. The late Al-Ḥājj °Uthmān Jagaaji, a Fulani, whose mother was a Daga from Jirapa-Kuukyene also contributed to the increase of Muslims in Bussie. He married fifteen Dagaaba women and gave birth to over forty Muslim children (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Inūsa, a Hausa resident in Bussie on 7/3/11 at Bussie). Al-Ḥājj °Uthmān Jagaaji was a farmer and he needed many hands to work on his farms and in the home. This is the reason why he married many wives contrary to the injunction of the *Shari'ah*.

Connected with marriage is the issue of matriclan, that is, one's mother's home village. In Chapter Three (3.7.1) it was indicated that every Daga has a patriclan and a matriclan. In times of crisis or need one can take refuge in one's matriclan. This was the case with Adamazie (Adamakpong) Kunatay of Chapuri. He relocated to Chapuri from Nandaw-Waala in search of arable land and also because Chapuri was his uncle's village (matriclan). Later on he sent for his brother-in-law, Adama (Adamabile) Kunatay to join him in Chapuri. The people of Chapuri welcomed Adamakpong Kunatay in their midst as their nephew and on the basis of this relationship some also welcomed Islam. The people, especially those from his maternal household, converted to Islam out of solidarity with their nephew (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Sha'ibu Adama Kunatay, Imām of Chapuri on 15/3/11 at Chapuri). If Adamakpong Kunatay failed to convert the Dagaaba of Nandaw-Waala to Islam, he succeeded in Chapuri by converting his uncles. It can therefore be said that due to the influence of the spirituality of Al-Ḥājj Sālim Sūwarī the non-indigenous Muslims spread Islam peacefully through witness of life, trade, personal

marriage and matrician. Though they failed to convert the chiefs they converted some of their sons to Islam.

4.4.2. The Challenges Non-Indigenous Muslims Encountered

As mentioned above, the non-indigenous Muslims lived their Islamic faith among the people and tried to establish Islam in their settlements. Some of them however, stayed among the indigenes for years but they did not convert the people to Islam because of the challenges they faced. The greatest challenge the non-indigenous Muslims encountered in the establishment of Islam was the Dagaaba traditional religion. In section 3.8. of this study, it was indicated that ancestral veneration is the source of peace, harmony and material and spiritual prosperity. The fertility of the wives, daughters, animals; the fertility of the land, the progress of business and the peace of the “stool” (chieftaincy) depended on constant communion with the ancestors. The communication with the ancestors was maintained and renewed through the offering of sacrifice. The Dagaaba would not do anything without consulting the ancestors to discern their will, nor would they do anything that would arouse the anger and punishment of the ancestors.

It was the fear of the ancestors that prevented the chiefs (*namine*), the custodians of the earth-shrines (*tengdaaba*) and the household heads (*nibere*) from converting to Islam. It was not only the fear of reprisal in this world from the ancestors that deterred the Dagaaba and traditional authorities from converting to Islam but the fear of being rejected by the ancestors after death. Failure to maintain or follow the traditions and customs of the ancestors during one's earthly existence automatically excluded one from the company of the

ancestors after death. This is considered “eternal damnation” in the religious-cultural view of the Dagaaba. It is the hope of every Dagao that when he died he would be admitted into the company of the ancestors in *Dapare* (see 3.8.).

It was for this reason that the royal family of Nandom gave full traditional funeral burial rites to Kpeb Mamadu when he died. After the death of Naa Boro the Dagaaba in Nandom began to disdain Dagaaba Muslims who refused to drink *pito* on the ground that they were Muslims. Consequently, the converts from the royal family renounced Islam except Kpeb Mamadu who migrated to Tamale in order to save his faith from the unfavourable environment that emerged at the Nandom Chief's palace. However, when he died the body was brought to Nandom and given full traditional burial so that he would not be alienated from the company of the ancestors. The refusal to give him a Muslim burial discouraged the widow and children who refused to stay in Nandom after the final funeral rites and went back to live in Tamale (Interview with Al-Hājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo, 29/3/11 at Nandom). Hence Dagaaba traditional religion was a challenge to conversion to Islam.

Dagaaba traditional religion also challenged the Islamic faith of some chiefs. The Chief of Sigri, Naa Ṣalīfu Kognaa was converted to Islam by the itinerant Muslims of Nandaw-Waala. But he died shortly afterwards and the cause of his death was attributed to his conversion to Islam (Interview with Qasīm Saʿīdu, Imām of Jirapa and indigene of Sigri, on 30/3/11 at Jirapa). Consequently, the kingmakers demanded that ʿAlī Dakorah renounced Islam before he could be enstooled as the next chief of Sigri. He had converted to Islam while in Southern Ghana. What is strange is that the kingmakers were ready to accept Naa ʿAlī Dakorah if he became a Christian but not a Muslim.

Naa °Alī Dakorah divorced one of his wives (he had taken a second wife since a chief cannot have one wife) and was baptised as a Christian with the name Naa Peter Dakorah.

The Islamic faith of the children of Naa Ṣalīfu Kognaa also came under attack. The elders demanded that they perform the traditional final funeral rites of their late father which they refused. Because of pressure the sons of Ṣalīfu Kognaa migrated to Southern Ghana. One of them at first studied the Qur’ān at Nandom, and later went for further Islamic studies at Sokoto. On his return, instead of going to Sigri, he settled down at Ejura where he currently runs his own *makaranta* (Interview with Imām Qasīm Sa‘īdu and Dāwūd Yeng, on 30/3/11).

The negative attitude of the kingmakers of Sigri towards Islam was collaborated by the personal experience of the Imām of Jirapa, Qasīm Sa‘īdu who was born into Islam at Sigri. He said the change of events in Sigri after the death of Naa Ṣalīfu Kognaa forced him and his father to move to Kumasi-Aboabu where he studied the Qur’ān under a Mossi *karama*. He joined the Ghana Water and Sewerage Company and worked there until he retired in 1981. He came home but instead of going to Sigri, he stayed at Jirapa in order to revive the Muslim community there as the imām (Interview with Imām Qasīm Sa‘īdu and Dāwūd Yeng, 30/3/11). The reason why Qasīm Sa‘īdu stayed in Jirapa instead of going to Sigri was to safe-guard his Islamic faith against any further interference from the elders of Sigri. The conversion of Naa °Alī Dakorah, the new chief of Sigri to Christianity and the migration of the children of the deceased Naa Ṣalīfu Kognaa to Kumasi brought to an end the presence of the Nandaw-Waala form of Islam in Sigri. The cause was the

of the traditional elders to Islam and their preference for Christianity.

Dagaaba traditional religion was not only an obstacle to Dagaaba conversion to Islam but it led to the conversion of the Mande-*Yeri* of Tankyara, Koro and Jirapa to Dagaaba traditional religion. Reference has already been made to the fact that some of the Mande-*Yeri* settled at Tankyara, Koro and in the Jirapa area (see 4.4.) The early Mande-*Yeri* of Tankyara abandoned their Islam due to the influence of the local population who demanded that they sacrifice to the *tengan* (earth shrine) before they could build a house, make a farm or bury the dead (Interview with Zakariyyā' ʿIsā on 24/3/11). Zakariyyā' ʿIsā said that it was the customary demands by the Dagaaba traditional authorities that forced him and his family to move to Konyukuo-Zongo in order to find a safe-haven for his Islamic faith after his conversion to Islam. According to Zakariyyā' ʿIsā, it was also the pressure from Dagaaba traditional religion that caused the Mande-*Yeri* of Jirapa to abandon Islam and to become traditional believers. The wives of the Mande-*Yeri* forced their husbands to sacrifice to the spirits in order to secure healing for their sick children. As time went on the Mande-*Yeri* abandoned circumcision, Islam and converted to Dagaaba traditional religion. The evidence of Zakariyyā' ʿIsā is supported by the works of (1994), Bin Salih (2008), Abobo (1994), Der (1989) and Wilks (1989) as explained on pp. 105-106. Thus the Mande-*Yeri* of Tankyara, Koro, and Jirapa as a minority group living among traditional believers eventually lost their language (Mande), their profession (trade) and their religion (Islam) due to pressure from the Dagaaba traditional religion.

The suppression of Tuopare and Sabuli "Zongos" was also due to the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion. Tuopare had a slave-market and this attracted Muslims there who created the "Tuopare-Zongo". Despite the presence of Muslims in Tuopare, the indigenes never converted to Islam. They thought that Islam was the "religion of Strangers (*Saaba*)" and as a result, they remained loyal and committed to their ancestral veneration (Interview with Tuopare Naa, Naa Boma Dery III, 30/3/11 at Tuopare). After the suppression of the slave trade the slave-market eventually died out and as a result the "non-indigenous Muslims" deserted Tuopare. Their departure could also be economic. Since the business prospect declined they did not see the need to remain at Tuopare anymore. This is one example which makes some people to say that the Mande-*Yeri* entered the Volta Basin mainly for trade. But the main reason for their departure was that they had no "sheep" at Tuopare to stay back to "shepherd". If they had established an indigenous Muslim community, the trading would have continued on the local level and Tuopare-Zongo would have survived. But Dagaaba traditional religion deterred conversion to Islam and so no converts were made.

The "Sabuli-Zongo" met a similar fate. Sabuli was a transit-point for Muslim traders going from Wa to Tumu and Ouagadougou or from Tumu, Nandaw to Wa. The Chief of Sabuli as the author was told allotted land for the Muslim traders to rest while on transit, which they developed into the "Sabuli-Zongo". The Chief also appointed a superintendent for the "Sabuli-Zongo" who was called *Saaba-naa* ("chief of the Strangers"). His task was to provide security for the *Saaba* ("Strangers") and to supply them with water and food (Interview with *Tengdaana*, Logdaa, 7/3/11 at Sabuli). But the Chief and his

people were not interested to engage in active trade since they were farmers. In addition, the people saw the Muslims as “Strangers” and they did not trust them and their religion. In the face of these problems, the Muslims abandoned “Sabuli-Zongo” and moved to the prosperous markets of Wa and Kumasi (Interview with *Tengdaana*, Logdaa, 7/3/11 at Sabuli).

The evidence from Tuopare and Sabuli do not entirely agree with the views of Wilks (1989) and Levtzion (1968) that the Mande-*Yeri* who entered the Middle Volta Basin were interested more in trade than proselytism. In Dagaabaland the Mande-*Yeri* tried to convert the indigenes but Dagaaba traditional religion was the stumbling block. Secondly, the evidence disproved the view of Hiskett (1984) that autochthonous people in the Volta Basin remained un-islamized for a long time because no trade routes passed through their territories. Tuopare had a market and a *Zongo* and yet the indigenes never converted to Islam. The main reason why the people of Tuopare and Sabuli did not adopt Islam was their commitment to the Dagaaba traditional religion and not because no trade routes passed through their lands (Interview with *Tengdaana*, Logdaa, 7/3/11 at Sabuli). Also Bari (2009), said that the similarities between the Sissala traditional religion and Islam influenced the Sissala to adopt Islam. This, however, cannot be said of the Dagaaba. Dagaaba traditional religion in the case of Tuopare and Sabuli was a stumbling block rather than an asset to conversion to Islam.

Another insight that came out during the interviews with the Chief of Tuopare and the *tengdaana* of Sabuli was the inability of the Muslims to lure Dagaaba to Islam through the provision of charms and talismans. Muslims in Sabuli and Tuopare *Zongos* made charms and talismans for sale in order to

University of the Indigenes. The Dagaaba patronized both the Muslim medicines and the traditional medicines. They needed spiritual help and anywhere they could find it they readily turned to the source. Their desire for Muslim medicines did not warrant that they abandon their trust in traditional medicines or that they renounce their ancestral veneration and embrace Islam. This also calls into question the views of Abdul-Hamid (2002), Owusuh-Ansah (2000), Levtzion (1968), Lewis (1966) and Wilks (1966) that the spiritual services provided by Muslims in the form of charms, amulets and talismans were causes for West Africans' conversion to Islam. This argument is not applicable in the case of the Dagaaba.

4.5. Dagaaba Muslims

Islam was established in Dagaabaland by non-indigenous Muslims and indigenous Muslims. In the above, the role of non-indigenous Muslims in the establishment of Islam and the challenges they faced were examined. This section of the study looks at the part Dagaaba Muslims played in the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland. These are returnee Dagaaba converts from Southern Ghana, returned ex-slaves of Babatu and Samori Toure, who converted to Islam, liberated domestic slaves, who were converted to Islam by their masters and Dagaaba who converted to Islam in Dagaabaland. The section also outlines the Muslim enclaves founded by Dagaaba Muslims, and examines the challenges Dagaaba Muslims faced in the establishment of Islam and the reasons for Dagaaba acceptance of Islam.

In section 2.3.5. of the study, it was pointed out that the labour policy and development projects of the colonial administration lured many Dagaaba to migrate to Southern Ghana. This section now discusses the destinations of Dagaaba migrants to Southern Ghana, and why some of the immigrants who came face to face with Islam and Muslims in Southern Ghana converted to Islam and how they returned to Dagaabaland to spread it.

4.5.1.1. Destinations of Dagaaba migrants

The Dagaaba who migrated to other regions and Southern Ghana were motivated by the desire to find work. The common places to find work and become rich were the gold mine towns such as Obuasi, Prestea and Tarkwa. Their stay in the mine towns attracted relatives and other Dagaaba to join them there. Some of the emigrants were not interested in gold mining because they said it was too risky. They travelled to the farming areas like Kintampo, “Santeman Council” (in Mim area), Techiman, Nkawkaw, Ejura, Donkorkrom and Atebubu. They hired themselves out to rich cocoa farmers for daily wages or they made their own farms. Some of these farmers would buy their needs with the money earned and returned home for the next farming season. Others stayed there permanently and once in a while sent foodstuffs and money back home to their relatives. Other Dagaaba immigrants worked in Accra, Kumasi, Sefwi-Wiawso, and Koforidua in professions such as the armed forces, the police service, road construction, night security, driving, trading, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Whether in the mining or farming areas, or as skilled-

workers, Dagaaba immigrants encountered Muslims of various ethnic groups and nationality and through their influence were converted to Islam.

4.5.1.2. Reasons for conversion to Islam in Southern Ghana

The Dagaaba emigrants interviewed gave various reasons why they converted to Islam while in Southern Ghana. Those who were recruits in the armed forces and the police service attributed their conversion to their friendship with Hausa Muslim soldiers or policemen. Those who worked as drivers, contractors or security men also said that they were influenced by their co-workers who were either Hausa or Wangara. Dagaaba emigrants who worked in the farms at Atebubu, Ejura, Techiman and Kintampo told the author of their encounters with Dagomba, Gonja and Mamprusi Muslim co-emigrants who also went there to farm. It was these Muslim emigrants of northern origin who convinced them to become Muslims. Other emigrant farmers became Muslims through the influence of their Hausa or Wangara landlords or through the influence of co-tenants who were Muslims. Their life of solidarity and brotherhood impressed them and they decided to become Muslims. The influence of relatives was also a cause for conversion. Mallam Muhaydin of Zanguasi and Ṣalīfu Baneē of Kyang attributed their conversion to their stay with Muslim relatives in Southern Ghana who persuaded them to become Muslims.

The influence of women in the conversion of their husbands to Islam also came out during the field study. Al-Hājj Samba Baaladong, an agricultural worker at Koforidua, used to spend his salary on drinks to the annoyance of the wife. The wife threatened to divorce him if he did not stop the bad habit of

drinking. As a way out she persuaded the landlord, Ma'ama Sānī, a Grunsi, to persuade her husband to stop drinking and become a Muslim. In the end the wife prevailed and he and the entire family converted to Islam (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Adamu Samba Baaladong 19/3/11 at Kaluuri). Similarly, Sulaymān Bartholomew Balinge became a Muslim at the instigation of his wife. He became sick at Obuasi where he worked as a miner. The medical treatment at Obuasi hospital could not help him. The Imām of the Waala Muslim community at Obuasi, Al-Ḥājj Abū Bakar, from Wa Dondoli visited him at the hospital and assured him that he could cure him if only he would become a Muslim after the cure. He refused the offer because he was a Catholic and had married in Church. But the pleadings and threats of the wife to divorce him eventually compelled him to give in to the demands of Al-Ḥājj Abū Bakar. He was cured and consequently, he embraced Islam together with the wife and children (Interview with Sulaymān Bartholomew Balinge at Owlo 22/2/11). All these Southern emigrants converted to Islam because of the influence of friends, relatives or co-workers. It was not so much the orthodoxy of Islam but the life-style of Muslims that convinced them to convert to Islam.

4.5.1.3. Aftermath of conversion

What was the outcome of the Dagaaba immigrants who became Muslims in Southern Ghana? Ibrāhīm Sam in an interview confirmed that there are many Dagaaba Muslims in Obuasi, Kumasi, Takoradi, Prestea, Tarkwa, Ejura and Accra. He said they visit home when there is a funeral, when a relation is sick, or to bring financial aid or food to the family. Some of them, he further explained, cannot go home because of their work and others have built

houses in Southern Ghana and Cape Coast are staying there permanently (Interview on 11/2/11 at Zang). Others too like °Abdullai Dongsieong, Mu'mūnī Naaziga and Ṣalīfu Bapiele came home after their retirement from the mines or the army. Al-Ḥājj Sulaymān Naa-uuree of Serekpere said he went home because it was his turn to become the household head. The majority such as Lansan Dakorah of Gbanko, Abū Harūna Duogu of Bu, Mālik Marre of Zang, Mallam Muhaydin of Zanguasi, Al-Ḥājj °Abdullāh of Sankana and Muḥammad Sutinge of Tuopare went back to Dagaabaland with the aim to share their Islamic faith with their traditional brothers and sisters. Unlike the non-indigenous Muslims, converted immigrant Dagaaba went back with the purpose to spread Islam. Since Islam first came to Northern Ghana through non-indigenous Muslims, people in Southern Ghana often think that all northerners are Muslims. This section has shown that this impression is wrong and that the second wave of Islam into Dagaabaland actually came from Southern Ghana. Southern Ghana therefore is the cradle of Dagaaba Islam.

4.5.2. Ex-slaves of Babatu and Samori Toure

The next group of Dagaaba Muslims as agents of Islam were converted ex-slaves. The period of slave-raiding, which is known among Dagaaba as the time of the *Bong* ("The Horse and Donkey") took place from about 1880 to 1898. This period is significant to Dagaaba. First of all, the stories concerning the foundation of most Dagaaba clans, the relationships between the different clans and the origins of their *kyiire* (taboos) emerged from this period (see 3.7.1.). Secondly, it was during this period that militant Islam entered Dagaabaland. The Dagomba and Gonja chiefs in order to pay the annual debt

and tribute in slaves to the Ashanti (See section 2.2.6.4.) hired the services of Zabarima mercenaries to raid the "Grunshiland" for slaves from 1876 to 1896 (Der, 1998). In reaction, some Dagaaba villages organized resistance against the Muslim raiders; others became their followers and took part in the raids; some were recruited by force by the raiders to join in the raiding; and others paid tribute of cowries, cattle and slaves to avert further Zabarima attacks or to ransom captured sons. Dagaaba who were recruited into the army of Babatu as slave raiders learnt how to perform the *ṣalāt* (the Muslim ritual prayer) and were converted to Islam. Others who were captured by Babatu and retained as slaves also converted to Islam. After the defeat of Babatu by the combined efforts of the French and British colonial administrations (Tuurey, 1982; Der, 1998) in 1897 the retained slaves were freed and some of them returned home to their families after 1900. These ex-slaves helped to establish Islam in Dagaabaland.

Furthermore in 1896, Samori Toure's indigenous forces (*sofas*) at Buna crossed the Black Volta River at Intereso and attacked Bole (Der, 1998). This was prompted by the *Kungwura* (Kongwura), Abudulai Jamani, who invited him to come over and assist him to obtain the *Yagbonwuraship* (Der, 1998). At the approach of Sarantieni Mori, Samori's son, some of the people of Bole fled to Sawla, Tuna and Wa. Others went eastwards and took refuge in Debre and Tuluwe. The Chief of Bole (*Bolewura*) and his elders withdrew to Nyanga and to Jentilipe (Der, 1998). Sarantieni Mori and his forces pursued the retreating Gonja to Tuna and then to Wa. When Wa Naa, Seidu Takora refused to surrender the Bole refugees, he attacked and occupied Wa. Sarantieni Mori then entered into alliance with the Waala and mounted an attack on the

Dagaaba (Der, 1998). At the Cape Coast <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui> the battle of Sankana the Waala and the forces of Sarantieni Mori were defeated in December 1896 (Der, 1998) and they retreated back to Wa (Tuurey, 1982). From Wa he withdrew with his *sofas* to Buna (Der, 1998). A Dagao young man who was captured by Sarantieni Mori and carried into Ivory Coast returned after his liberation to Goli to establish Islam there.

4.5.3. Liberated Domestic Slaves

The third agents for the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland are liberated domestic slaves. The slave raids of Babatu initiated a new institution in Dagaabaland which hitherto was unknown, namely, slavery and slave trade (Der, 1998). The Dagaaba began to acquire slaves for domestic use, and notorious criminals were sold out as slaves. Two of such slaves, Moghtari-kpong and Moghtari-bile were bought by Muslims of the Wa *Limanyiri* (Liman's ward) and later gained their freedom. They migrated to Jirapa and Babile and there they established Islam or helped to consolidate Islam. The role of southern Dagaaba returnee Muslims, converted ex-slaves, liberated slaves and Dagaaba who converted to Islam in Dagaabaland in the establishment of Islam is considered in the following section.

4.5.4.0. Dagaaba Muslims and the Establishment of Islam

When one speaks about the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland it does not mean that Dagaaba Muslims went from village to village to spread Islam. They simply lived their faith in the family and tried to persuade their relatives, friends and neighbours to convert to Islam through dreams, healing,

personal contacts, marriage of Cape Coast. <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui>
© University of Cape Coast's Village, Islamic education and mosques building. This explains why the indigenous Muslims were more successful in the establishment of Islam than the non-indigenous Muslims.

4.5.4.1. Dreams

Some Dagaaba became Muslims through the influence of dreams and in turn converted others to Islam. The dream indicated that the source of conversion to Islam was from the spiritual world. For example, Tibaninaa Ma'ama Muonyige of Loho narrated that he saw himself in a dream as a Muslim. As a result of the dream he adopted the Arabic name Ma'ama (Muhammad). He went further and consulted a Mossi Muslim in Wa, first of all because the Mossi was his clansman, and secondly, for an interpretation of the dream. His kinsman, the Mossi Muslim told him that it was "Allāh" who was calling him through the dream to become a Muslim. On the advice and persuasion of the Mossi Muslim he converted to Islam. The *tengdaana* and the heads of the households of Loho believed in the spiritual allusion of his conversion and did not chastise him. Further, the follow-up of the Mossi Muslim to Loho to visit Ma'ama and to introduce himself to the people of Loho as a Mossi pre-empted any opposition to his conversion (Interview with Tibaninaa Ma'ama Muonyige, 19/1/11 at Loho). Ma'ama in turn converted his brothers and their children to Islam. When the young men of Loho saw that the elders did not oppose the conversion of Ma'ama some of them embraced Islam. This was how Ma'ama introduced Islam in Loho.

The dream at times gave a household elder the moral courage to abandon the family shrines and to embrace Islam. In this way he is immune

from the anger of the ancestors and the curse of the elders because of the spiritual allusion made. This was what happened to ʿAbd-ul-Hamīdu Volsuuri, the head of a household in Samatigu. He told the author that he had a dream in which he saw himself as a Muslim. The following day he informed the family members of the dream and of his intention to obey the dream by becoming a Muslim. There was no opposition from the family members. Consequently, he went to Sankana to see his relative, Imām ʿAbdullāh, who in the company of Ishmā'il Zingtag from Takpo and Al-Hajj Sena from Wa-Kabanye *tūbī* ("gave him the ritual bath") him together with his three wives and children. Because he was the household head and yet embarked on this "new path", young men such as, Ambuiyi Adams, Nūhu and Adams Gbani were encouraged and also converted to Islam with their wives and children. ʿAbd-ul-Hamīdu is proud that he brought Islam to Samatigu (Interview with ʿAbd-ul-Hamīdu Volsuuri 28/1/11 at Samatigu). But the Islam in Samatigu is confined to the family of ʿAbd-ul-Hamīdu Volsuuri, his relatives, friends and a few neighbours. The rest of the indigenes are still traditional religionists.

Sometimes the dream was backed by what was interpreted as divine manifestations, first, to convince the dreamer that he was on the right path, and secondly, to warn others against opposing the dreamer. The story of Adama Dapila of Kpazie confirmed this fact. Adama Dapila in an interview said that as a cattle tender he dreamt a number of times and saw himself "praying" like a Muslim. Anytime he told his father about the dream he would tell him not to make it public. One day he boldly told his father that he wanted to become a Muslim and his father did not argue with him but directed him to a maternal uncle, Nūhu Dakorah at Tangasie who instructed him and *tūbī* him. When

Adama Dapila came back to Kpaziε after his conversion, the *tengdaana* was angry and cursed him for bringing a “new prayer” (*puor-paala*) to Kpaziε. The *tengdaana* gave him three weeks of grace to repent and renounce Islam or face the consequences. To the amazement of everyone in the village the *tengdaana* rather died after the three weeks. This was interpreted as a vindication of Adama Dapila and the power of Islam (Interview with Imām Adama Dapila 11/3/11 at Kpaziε).

Young men who returned from Southern Ghana for the new farming season saw this as liberation from the anger of the ancestors and the curse of the traditional leaders. Some of them took the occasion and converted to Islam at the hands of Nūhu Dakorah (Interview with Imām Adama Dapila 11/3/11 at Kpaziε). The young men in their stay in Southern Ghana were more exposed to Islam than their co-traditionalists and this was the reason they easily converted to Islam. Even though the father of Adama Dapila was aware of the dream and gave his consent, yet he remained a traditional believer. Adama Dapila built a mosque (*musiri*) at Kpaziε and roofed it with grass. This is where the young community meets to pray five times a day but on Friday they go to Yiziri for the congregational prayer. The death of the *tengdaana* paved the way for the establishment of Islam in Kpaziε.

It can therefore, be said that dream was a means of establishing Islam in Loho, Samatigu and Kpaziε. Islam did not spread to other villages from these villages, but the new converts managed to convert their wives, children and relatives to Islam, and today there are Muslim enclaves in these villages. The fact that Loho has a Central Mosque is a sign of the growth of the Muslim community there. The traditional authorities certainly would have opposed the

first converts, but because of the spiritual allusion made, they were cautious and adopted “a watch-and-see-attitude”. This gave the green light to the youth who decided to follow the steps of the first converts and embraced Islam.

4.5.4.2. Healing

A few Dagaaba who were healed by *karamamine* also became Muslims and spread Islam in their villages. The conversion of *Mallam* Adama of Fian (Interview with Imām Salīfu Katuole of Fian on 28/2/11 at Fian) and Nūhu Dakorah of Tangasie (Interview with Muhammad Dakorah on 11/3/11 at Tangasie) came about as a result of healing by a *karama*. Both of them were mentally disturbed and were sent to a *karama* who demanded that they become Muslim after their cure. The father of Nūhu Dakorah knew that mental disturbance was a sign that the *kontoma* (“beings of the wilds”) was calling a person to install a shrine for the spirit of the *kontoma* for the purpose of sacrifice and worship. He demanded that his son follow the traditional way of redressing the situation but Nūhu Dakorah believed in the diagnosis of a Hausa *Karama*, Al-Hājj Nandou, who settled in Tangasie to farm, that his sickness was caused by a *jinn* (an Islamic demon) and that he had the power to cast it out (Interview with Muhammad Dakorah, son of Nūhu Dakorah at Tangasie). One observes that the *kontoma* of the Dagaaba is substituted for the *jinn* of Islam as the cause of mental sickness.

The author also learned during the interviews with Imām Ṣalīfu Kantuole and Muhammad Dakorah that the *Karamamine* claimed that the power of the herbs and roots used in the healing ceremony came from “Allāh” and not from the spirits of the herbs or roots as believed by Dagaaba traditional

first converts, but because of the spiritual allusion made, they were cautious and adopted “a watch-and-see-attitude”. This gave the green light to the youth who decided to follow the steps of the first converts and embraced Islam.

4.5.4.2. Healing

A few Dagaaba who were healed by *karamamine* also became Muslims and spread Islam in their villages. The conversion of *Mallam* Adama of Fian (Interview with Imām Salīfu Katuole of Fian on 28/2/11 at Fian) and Nūhu Dakorah of Tangasie (Interview with Muhammad Dakorah on 11/3/11 at Tangasie) came about as a result of healing by a *karama*. Both of them were mentally disturbed and were sent to a *karama* who demanded that they become Muslim after their cure. The father of Nūhu Dakorah knew that mental disturbance was a sign that the *kontoma* (“beings of the wilds”) was calling a person to install a shrine for the spirit of the *kontoma* for the purpose of sacrifice and worship. He demanded that his son follow the traditional way of redressing the situation but Nūhu Dakorah believed in the diagnosis of a Hausa *Karama*, Al-Hājj Nandou, who settled in Tangasie to farm, that his sickness was caused by a *jinn* (an Islamic demon) and that he had the power to cast it out (Interview with Muhammad Dakorah, son of Nūhu Dakorah at Tangasie). One observes that the *kontoma* of the Dagaaba is substituted for the *jinn* of Islam as the cause of mental sickness.

The author also learned during the interviews with Imām Ṣalīfu Kantuole and Muhammad Dakorah that the *Karamamine* claimed that the power of the herbs and roots used in the healing ceremony came from “Allāh” and not from the spirits of the herbs or roots as believed by Dagaaba traditional

medicine and surgery they were healed by the power of "Allāh" it became imperative that they abandon their old life of "service" to the spirits and live a transformed life of "worship and service" (*ʿibādāt*) to "Allāh". This is the reason why the *Karama* at Papu who cured *Mallam* Adama of Fian and Al-Hājj Nandou who healed Nūhu Dakorah of Tangasie demanded that they embrace Islam after the healing. *Mallam* Adama and Nūhu Dakorah became the first converts to Islam in Fian and Tangasie respectively. The healing of *Mallam* Adama of Fian and Nūhu Dakorah of Tangasie proved that Islam is a pragmatic religion. But these healings were private and did not go far enough to convince the indigenes of Fian and Tangasie to convert to Islam in great numbers. The "rain" and "locusts" miracles of 1932 affected all Dagaabaland and through them Dagaaba believed in the power of Christianity (See section 4.6). This led to mass conversions of Dagaaba to Christianity.

The healings of Fian and Tangasie on the other hand, did not transform the said-communities as a whole and did not lead to the conversion of the indigenes of the said villages. Many of them like the father of Nūhu Dakorah stilled remained loyal to their traditional religion. Nevertheless, unlike the first converts of Loho, Samatigu and Kpazie, *Mallam* Adama of Fian revived Islam in Norong and Nūhu Dakorah introduced Islam in Kpazie, Yiziri and Charikpong as discussed in section 4.5.4.3.

4.5.4.3. Personal contacts

Dagaaba Muslims also resorted to personal contacts as a means of spreading Islam. The first converts were usually relatives. This is evident from the fact that the Sunnī Muslims of Goli are members of the family of Kyilaato

Saazoore, an ex-slave of <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui> University of Cape Coast. Ture who founded Islam in Goli (Interview with Kamenta Puordeme, head of a household in Goli on 1/3/11). The same is true of the early converts of Hain. Some of them came from the family of Muḥammad Dakorah, an ex-slave of Babatu, who brought Islam to Hain (Interview with Fusayni Issahaqu Bakyeri (Imām of Hain) on 15/3/11 at Hain). The Muslims of Kpazie (Interview with Imoro Saaka, an elder on 11/3/11 at Kpazie), Yiziri (Interview with ʿIsā Yuonsong, Imām of Yiziri on 11/3/11 at Yiziri), Charikpong (Interview with Abū Inūsa, an elder of Cherikpong 11/3/11 at Yiziri) likewise testified that they were converted by their uncle, Nūhu Dakorah of Tangasie. The sisters of Nūhu Dakorah married in these villages and when he became a Muslim, he converted his nephews to Islam.

The Muslims of Norong also asserted that their uncle, *Mallam Adama* of Fian converted them to Islam (Interview with ʿAbdullāh Kompuori, Imām of Norong on 20/2/11 at Norong). The Dagaaba clan system in which what you have is mine and what I have is yours or your glory is our glory and your down fall is our fall fosters common interest and common destiny. This made it easier for Dagaaba agents of Islam to contact and convert relatives to Islam than to convert people of other villages. The importance of using relationships through contacts to spread Islam is further demonstrated in the case of Al-Ḥājj ʿUmar from Wa. He was a Hausa but because he was aware of the importance Dagaaba attached to relations, he told Naa Karbo I (1935-1967) (Lentz, 2006) of Lawra that he belonged to the *Kusielle* clan. On that basis Naa Karbo I as a *Kusiellu* himself welcomed him into his palace and even allowed him to convert his two sons to Islam (Interview with Al-Ḥājj ʿUmaru Karbo on 24/3/11 at Lawra). ʿAbdullāh Noorbong did not convert people to Islam in

Kalsegra when he came to Cape Coast after his conversion in Techiman, but he succeeded to convert his brothers °Uthmān Noorbong, Karīm Maaladong and their wives to Islam (Interview with °Abdullāh Noorbong on 11/3/11 at Kalsegra). He has built a miniature mosque in Kalsegra for the family daily prayers. At Jirapa-Doo Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie (resident in Babile) converted some of his brothers, his nephews and his sister who was the wife of the late Chief of Yagga to Islam (Interview with Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie on 24/3/011 at Babile).

The author observed that daughters of people at Jirapa-Tampoe were married to the sons and brothers of Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie at Babile. The reason is that traditional girls from Jirapa-Tampoe who went to Babile market became guests at the residence of Al-Hājj Poyie. Obviously people who travelled to market towns would go to the house of a relative to drink water, to store their goods or to stay overnight. It was through such encounters that Al-Hājj Poyie married the daughters of his relatives at Jirapa-Tampoe to his brothers and sons who converted them to Islam (Interview with Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie 24/3/11 at Babile). The parents of these girls did not mind their daughters converting to Islam because their father-in-law and sons-in-laws were their relatives. Moreover, a woman has no religion in the view of some Dagaaba (Interview with Chief of Konyukuo and elders 24/3/11 at Konyukuo) and so the conversion of daughters to Islam would not upset the spiritual equilibrium of the family. This is the reason why elders of households were not worried when the Yoruba in the *Zongos* enticed young girls to Islam through material gifts.

It can be said that because of the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion and cultural practices Dagaaba Muslims found it hard to spread Islam.

The method they therefore, adopted to spread Islam was through contacts with relatives. One can exert an influence on a relation more so than on an outsider. The respect and love Dagaaba have for relations is very advantageous through this method. Moreover, the fear or shame of disappointing a relation can lead one to give in to the persuasion of a Muslim relative. Furthermore, one is convinced that a Muslim relative would not deceive them to embrace a “bad religion”. Finally, “charity begins at home”, although it does not stop there. It was therefore convenient and appropriate for Dagaaba Muslims to begin to propagate Islam within their families and among their relations.

4.5.4.4. Marriage

Converts, who returned from the south and ex-slaves who became Muslims propagated Islam through marriage. The marriage took two directions. First, Dagaaba Muslims married Muslim women and gave birth to Muslim children thus enlarging the family and the Muslim community, and secondly, by marrying traditional women and converting them and their children to Islam. The second form of marriage is the most common. This is due to the fact that the Dagaaba Muslims in the villages are a minority. Hence it is difficult for Muslim young men to find Muslim girls to marry. The girls available for marriage are the traditional and Christian girls. Thus marriage with traditional girls became a means to spread Islam. For example, Šalīfu Bapiele of Sabuli married four wives and gave birth to forty children (Interview with Tengdaana, Logdaa 7/3/11 at Sabuli). Also Ma’ama Duogo of Bussie at the end of his life had twenty-eight children (Interview with Sānī Al-Hasan (Imām of Bussie) on 7/3/11 at Bussie). The reason is that Ma’ama

Duogo married more than the legal four wives and even inherited widows of his late traditional brothers.

There were also occasions when a Muslim gave his daughter to a new convert to strengthen and encourage him in the Islamic faith. Sulaymān Moghtari of Jirapa gave his daughter, Faḍīlah to Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala of Jirapa-Piiyir to marry. But Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala gave the woman to his younger brother, Laṭīf, to marry since he already had a wife (Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari 6/4/11 at Jirapa and with Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala 6/4/11 at Jirapa-Piiyir). In the same vein, the mentor of Zakariyaw Amadu of Ullo, Mallam Harūna, gave his daughter, °Ubaydah to him in marriage after his graduation from the study of the Qur'ān at Nandom (Interview with °Ubaydah, wife of Mallam Zakariyaw, 15/4/11 at Ullo). The first convert to Islam in Chapuri was Amadu Tuoyir and as sign of appreciation and love *Karama* Adamabile Kunatay gave him his daughter in marriage (Interview with Imām Al-Hājj Sha°Ibu Adama Kunatay, 15/3/11 at Chapuri). Thus marriage was a means for the spread and growth of Islam in Dagaabaland.

One benefit of marriage with traditional women was that it created in-law ships between the Muslims and the traditional believers and this minimized the dangers of religious tensions and conflicts. However, there were occasions when such marriages were counter-productive. For example, the four wives of Mu'mūni Naaziga were taken away by his in-laws and married to traditional believers when he went home to Kaha after his conversion to Islam in Southern Ghana (Interview with Imām Yakubu Yendau, 7/2/11 at Kaha). His in-laws were angry that he converted their daughters to Islam. They thought that once they became Muslims they would not come and mourn at their funeral when

they died. Likewise, Muonywa and Daker-Waala, the ex-slaves who returned to Norong after their freedom had difficulties in getting women to marry because of their Islamic faith. Their fathers-in-law demanded that they renounced Islam before they could marry their daughters. They also requested that they offer chickens and goats to be sacrificed to the *sigra* (guardian spirit) of their wives-to-be before they could marry them. Girls placed under the protection of a *sigra* would have to be redeemed by the future husband who must present fowls and goats to the in-laws. These are then sacrificed to their *sigra*. Because of pressure from the fathers-in-law they relapsed into Dagaaba traditional religion. Hence Dagaaba Muslims who married traditional women but not well versed in the faith risked losing their faith through pressure from their traditional wives or fathers-in-law. It was however, observed that some of the traditional and Christian women who married Muslims refused to convert to Islam though their children became Muslims or have Arabic names. They remained traditional or Christian because their husbands were unable to convert them.

The marriages of Dagaaba Muslims have some similarities and dissimilarities with the marriages of Muḥammad. In all Muḥammad married thirteen wives. Seven of his wives were widowed women and one a divorced woman. One of the widowed women, a Jew and another Jewish woman together with an Arab woman were converted to Islam. All of them were captives of war. The marriage with the Arab woman Juwayriya, the daughter of the king of Muṣṭaliq led to the conversion of the whole tribe in 627 C.E. He also married a Christian slave-girl from Egypt and converted her to Islam. This marriage also had political implication. It established an alliance between the

governor of Egypt and the Muslim state of Medina. One of the wives, Maymūna voluntarily gave herself in marriage to Muḥammad in 629 C.E., and he married one when she was six years old in 619. Like Dagaaba Muslim men, Muḥammad used marriage not only as a means for religious but also for political interest.

4.5.4.5. Uncle's village

Every Dagaao belongs to two clans: his patriclan and matriclan. In the Dagaaba custom one can take refuge in his uncle's village (matriclan) if things are not working out well for him in his father's house (patriclan). The uncle's village also played a role in the establishment of Islam. There is an African saying that "blood is thicker than water" and a Dagaare proverb too says "No one ever points his left hand towards his uncle's village". The first saying teaches the value of blood relation over friendship and the second proverb is a reminder that an uncle's village is always the last resort for refuge. The significance of these wise sayings is well illustrated in the stories of how Islam came to Bussie and Tabiesi.

Ma'ama (Muhammad) Duogu was a soldier in Babatu's army. He became a Muslim while serving Babatu in his slave raids. When he was freed he came to his home village at Mwankuuri. But his people did not accept him because he came with the "religion of foreigners and slave raiders". Not accepted in his paternal home Ma'ama Duogu migrated to his uncle's village at Bussie (Interviews with Imām Sānī Al-Ḥasan 7/3/11 at Bussie and with Al-Ḥājj Inūsa 7/3/11 at Bussie). His uncles accepted him because of relationship and not because he came with Islam. His uncles gave him women to marry and he

converted these to Islam (Interview with Imām Sani Al-Ḥasan). They also gave him land to build a house and a mosque. The first Muslims of Bussie were his wives and children and a few of his uncles who in solidarity with their nephew converted to Islam (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Inūsa). The current Imām of Bussie is the grandson of Ma'ama Duogu. If the mission of Ma'ama Duogu failed in Mwankuuri, it succeeded somehow in his uncle's village at Bussie.

Islam too was introduced in Tabiesi through the activities of a nephew. A *Kantosi* of Nandaw-Waala married a traditional woman from Tabiesi and converted her to Islam with the Arabic name Salamata. She gave birth to a son who was called °Abdullāh. Unfortunately, the husband died and his family accused her of killing the husband through witchcraft. As a result she was driven out of the husband's home. With nowhere to go she brought °Abdullāh to his uncle's village at Tabiesi and raised him up as a Muslim in the midst of traditional believers (Interview with Imām Hamīdu °Abdullāh 4/3/11 at Tabiesi). Salamata never remarried after the death of her husband. When °Abdullāh grew up his uncles gave him a woman to marry and she gave birth to Sa°idu and Hamīdu. With the support of his mother °Abdullāh prevailed upon his uncles to become Muslims and some of them converted to Islam.

Today Tabiesi has a Central Mosque and a *darisa* where children are taught the Qur'ān (Interview with Imām Hamīdu °Abdullāh 4/3/11). When °Abdullāh died his son Sa°idu °Abdullāh succeeded him as the imām. The present imām is Hamīdu °Abdullāh. If Salamata had not brought °Abdullāh to his uncle's village the people of Tabiesi would have remained without Islam. The history of Islam in Tabiesi on the other hand, shows the important role of mothers in transmitting their faith to their children. The legacy of every mother

does not depend on what she leaves for her children but on what she leaves in them. Salamata kept the faith of her son burning and when he grew up she fanned it into flames by getting him a wife. She and her son through persuasion converted the uncles, and today Islam is gradually growing in Tabiesi.

The uncle's village, however, cannot be classified as a general means of spreading Islam. It was a means dictated by historical circumstances. Nevertheless, it was one of the ways through which Islam was established in Bussie and Tabiesi. It shows the role of Dagaaba Muslim nephews as founders of Islam. The story at Mwankuuri indicates that Islam was rejected there because it was regarded as a religion of "slave raiders". This shows that the activities of Babatu and Samori Toure also had a negative effect on the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland. This section demonstrates that Muslim men alone were not the founders of Islam in Dagaabaland. Salamata, a widow, is a clear example of the role of women in the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland.

4.5.4.6. Islamic education and mosque building

One common element used by both non-indigenous and Dagaaba Muslims to spread Islam in Dagaabaland was the building of *darisas* and *makarantas*. It is in this area that the author investigated the role of Waala Muslims in the consolidation of Islam in Dagaabaland. Nurudeen (1998) praised the Wa "Association for Islamic Guidance (*Jam'iyat*)" which was founded in 1949 for its achievements in the spread of Islam among the Dagaaba. One of the objectives of the Wa *Jam'iyat* was to spread Islam in Dagaabaland. Thus Nurudeen is right in his observation that for a long time "a very negligible number" (p. 49) of Dagaaba actually converted to Islam. The

problem was not with the Dagaaba but with the Waala Muslims. It is a fact that the Waala Muslims for a long time were not engaged in active proselytism among the Dagaaba. This was the complaint made against them by Al-Hājj Yūsuf Anpira of Owlo (Interview with Imām Al-Hājj Yūsuf Anpira of Owlo 28/2/11 at Owlo) and Al-Hājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo 29/3/11 at Nandom). However, his assertion that “the Dagaaba started embracing Islam en masse” (p. 49) is misleading. There is nowhere in the Dagaabaland up to 1998 when a whole family or village embraced Islam “en masse”. The study shows that individual Dagaaba began to embrace Islam sporadically and that the majority of Dagaaba converts to Islam were returnees from Southern Ghana.

There were many occasions of encounter between the Waala Muslims and the Dagaaba but these were business-like occasions and were never utilized in the interest of Islam. Waala Muslim traders increased markets among the Dagaaba and turned small markets into big ones. The markets opened up the villages to Wa town. On market days people wait for the Waala lorries to arrive so that they can board them to Wa or to Kumasi. The village markets also opened up the way for Waala Muslim traders to go to the villages to buy cows, foodstuffs and other commodities. The Waala women especially, would go to the villages during the harvest season to buy food at cheap prices and to sell it back to the Dagaaba at a higher price in the lean season of June and July (Interview with Fātima Nūhu Moghtari, Sawda Nūhu Moghtari and Jahīnatu Kuupaala (women leaders) on 6/3/11 at Jirapa).

Some Waala Muslims even developed intimate friendships with Dagaaba. Waala Muslim women would give salt and smoked fish to Dagaaba women on terms that they sell their foodstuff only to them or buy only from

them. A Waala Muslim would give commission to Dagaaba hunters to hunt game for him in return for a commission or he gives capital to a Dagaaba to farm yam and at harvest time sell the yam to the same Muslim at his determined price (Interview with Al-Hājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo 29/3/11 at Nandom; and with Al-Hājj Hafīz Nyovor Bodire 24/3/11 at Lawra). It is possible that some Dagaaba converted to Islam through such commercial encounters and friendships but only on a small scale.

The success of the Waala Muslims in general and the Wa *Jam'iyat* in particular lies in the supply of Islamic teachers to the *darisas* and *makarantas* and the building of mosques in Dagaabaland as pointed out by Nurudeen (1998). The Wa *Jam'iyat* never built many schools as claimed by Nurudeen. The Qur'ān schools (*darisas*) were built either by individual Dagaaba for the education of their children or by the community for public use. The method of the Wa *Jam'iyat* was to supply teachers to these Qur'ān schools and to build modern mosques in the villages to foster community prayer. The grants for the mosque building project came from Islamic NGOs and Embassies of Islamic countries in Accra. One of these NGOs, the "Islamic Council for Development and Humanitarian Services (ICODEHS)" in collaboration with the Wa *Jam'iyat* has built mosques in Tabiesi, Isa, Fian, Ullo, Nadawli, Sankana, and Nandaw-Waala (Interview with *Karama Sulaymān Zeiy* 23/1/11 at Kaleo; with *Dāwūda Faara* and *Al-Hājj Sa'īdu Dakorah* 21/2/11 at Gbanko; with *Imām 'Abd-ul-Karīm* 4/3/11 at Kajukperi). The attempts of the Wa *Jam'iyat* to build mosques in Catholic second cycle institutions, such as, Queen of Peace Senior High School (Nadawli) and Nandom Senior High School have met with strong opposition from the administrations. The argument of the authorities is that

these are Catholic institutions and they have not built chapels there. Why should they allow Muslims to build mosques in these institutions. The Waala Muslims on the other hand, say that there is the need to build the mosques so that Muslim students can have a place to worship God. The issue of building mosques in Catholic schools is a source of constant tension and conflict between the Catholic Church and the Sunnī Community in the Upper West Region.

Today there are Qur'ān teachers from Wa Limanyiri who are resident imāms at Nadawli and Babile and deputy imāms at Tabiesi. Jirapa and Zang have *karamamine* from Wa who go there every Friday to participate in the congregational prayer and to instruct the faithful in Islamic knowledge. The present Chief Imām of Wa, Al-Ḥājj Yaḥyā Issahaque, was sent by the Wa *Jam'iyat* to consolidate Islam in Sankana, Takpo and Nadawli as *Dā'iyat* (propagandist) in the 1990s (Nurudeen, 1998). The supply of Islamic teachers to Dagaabaland was not always without challenges. For instance, the imām at Jirapa was not happy that the community arranged for a *Karama* from Wa Limanyir to come to Jirapa every Friday to help out as imām. The community complained that he was not an expert in Arabic (Interview with Imām Qasīm Sa'īdu and Dāwūd Yeng 30/3/11 at Jirapa). The Imām on the other hand, saw it as a sabotage of his authority.

It is not only the mosques in the Dagaabaland that are manned by *Karamamine* from Wa Limamyir but also some of the English-Arabic Primary Schools. The English-Arabic Primary Schools of Tabiesi, Ullo, Sankana and Nadawli are headed by *Karamamine* from Wa Limanyir. The greatest challenge, however, facing the Dagaaba communities is the upkeep of these

karamamine who are sent into the Coast. <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui>
© University of Cape Coast Dagaabaland as imāms and teachers. The community is to accommodate and maintain them but some of them have withdrawn their services and returned to Wa because of the inability of the community to sustain them (Interviews with Imām °Abdullāh Kompuori 20/2/11 at Norong; with Imām Sānī Al-Ḥasan 7/3/11 at Bussie; with Al-Ḥājj °Aqīlu Ibrāhīm and Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydīn Ibrāhīm 15/3/11 at Nandaw-Waala). In the light of the above, it is clear that Dagaaba Muslims established Islam and the Wa *Jam'iyat* contributed to its consolidation through the supply of imām to the Mosques and Qur'ān teachers to the *darisas* and *makarantas*.

4.5.5. Muslim Enclaves Founded by Dagaaba Muslims

The activities of southern Dagaaba and ex-slave converts resulted in the establishment of Muslim enclaves in Dagaabaland. The villages in which enclaves were established and those who introduced Islam there as illustrated in Figure 3, p. 152 are Loho (by Tibaninaa Ma'ama Muo-ngige), Gbanko (by Al-Lansan Dakorah), Ombo (by Mallam Bukari Issahaku and °Abdullai Dongsieong), Serekperi (by Al-Ḥājj Sulaymān Naa-uuree), Bu (by Abū Bukari Duogu), Kaha (by Mu'mūniī Naaziga), Kanyingua (by Jambodi), Zanguasi (by Mallam Muhaydin Tuubo), Swazi (by Usuman Karama), Sabuli (by Ṣalifu Bapiele), Kaluuri (by Al-Ḥājj Adama Samba Baaladong), Dapuori (by Mallam Ya'qubu Maalsong) and Tuopare (by Muhammad Sutinge). In these villages, the *Adhān* ("the Call to Prayer") is heard five times a day summoning Dagaaba Muslims to prayer and non-Muslims to Islam. On Friday the Muslims of these villages go to the towns where there are *Masjid-ul-Jāmi'ah* (a Central Mosque)

to join the imām and other Muslims for the *ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah* (Friday Congregational Prayer) and to manifest their unity and solidarity.

The ex-slaves of Babatu and Samori Toure, on their return, also established Muslim communities in Hain, Fian and Goli. Dakorah from Hain had joined Babatu in his raids in southern Burkina Faso and while there he converted to Islam with the Arabic name Ma'ama (Muḥammad). After his liberation he returned to Hain with a Mossi Muslim woman called Maryam. Later on he married a Kasena woman, Kaduwa and converted her to Islam. The present Chief of Hain, Naa Al-Hājj Ṣalīfu, is a fruit of the marriage with the Kasena woman (Interview with Fusayni Issahaqu Bakyeri (Imām of Hain and grandson of Dakorah Muḥammad) 15/3/11 at Hain). Maryam gave birth to four sons, Ṣaliya, Muḥammad, Braimah (Ibrāhīm), and ʿAlī. Dakorah Muḥammad and his family constituted the first Muslim family of Hain. Through persuasion and personal contacts, five members of the extended family converted to Islam. Today Islam is well established in Hain. The community has a mosque and a *darisa*. The current Imām is a grandson of Muhammad Dakorah. Although Muḥammad Dakorah was the first Muslim chief of Hain he did not impose his Islamic faith on his family or subjects (Interview with Imām Fusayni Issahaqu Bakyeri).

The first person who brought Islam to Fian was an ex-slave of Babatu popularly remembered as *Selmanja* (Sergeant). He became a Muslim while in the service of Babatu and even rose to the rank of a Sergeant (Interview with Ṣalīfu Katuole (Imām of Fian) on 28/2/11 at Fian). The Muslims of Fian neither remember his Dagaare name nor his Arabic name. Selmanja apparently did little to establish Islam in Fian. It is not surprising therefore, that his Arabic

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name and his Islamic legacy in Fian. <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui>
© University of Cape Coast with him. The real founder of Islam
in Fian was *Mallam* Adama who became a Muslim after he was cured by a
Karama at Papu. He went to Kumasi after his conversion and there he learned
the Qur'ān and became a *Mallam*. He returned to Fian and opened a *darisa*
where he taught children the Qur'ān. The present *Jāmi'ah Imām* of Fian,
Adama Mu'mūni and the *Jumu'ah Imām*, Salifu Katuole were his former
students. It was also *Mallam* Adama who established Islam in his uncle's
village at Norong. He used to spend two weeks preaching in Norong before
returning to Fian. It was through his missionary work that 'Abdullāh Kompuori
the present Imām of Norong, became a Muslim (Interview with 'Abdullāh
Kompuori (Imām of Norong) on 20/2/11 at Norong).

The next village where Islam was established through an ex-slave was
Goli. An elder of Goli, Kamenta Puordeme said during an interview that
Kyilaato Saazoore was captured by the *sofas* of Sarantieni Mori during his
campaigns against Sankana, and sent to Ivory Coast (Interview with Kamenta
Puordeme, head of the household on 1/3/11 at Goli). When the French colonial
administration eventually conquered Samori Toure, Kyilaato Saazoore was set
free and he stayed back in Ivory Coast where he became a trader. Meanwhile
he had converted to Islam during his captivity. He later returned to Goli with a
Wangara wife and a baby girl (Interview with Kamenta Puordeme on 1/3/11).

It was Kyilaato Saazoore who introduced Sunnī Islam in Goli. Kamenta
said that Kyilaato Saazoore tried to convince his uncles and brothers to become
Muslims but they were not ready to abandon the religion of their ancestors and
embrace “the religion of the riders of the horse”. However, they allowed their
sons to follow the *puoru* (“prayer” i.e. Islam) of Kyilaato Saazoore. This gave

Kyilaato Saazoore the opportunity to convert some of the children of the household to Sunnī Islam. Another way through which Kyilaato Saazoore established Islam in Goli was marriage. He married two Dagaaba women in addition to his Wangara wife and converted them to Islam. He built a small family mosque near the compound house for the five daily prayers but the Muslims go to Nadawli for the Friday Prayer.

One can therefore, say that the indigenous Muslims established Muslim enclaves in the villages. These enclaves grew in numbers through the conversion of relations. Migrant Southern Ghana converts who returned home also augmented the Muslim population in these villages. The next group of Dagaaba Muslims who created an impact in the establishment of Islam were liberated domestic slaves. They contributed to the growth of the Muslim communities of Jirapa and Babile.

4.5.5.1. Jirapa

Chapter Two and Chapter Three of the study examined how the Mande-*Yeri* came through Dagaabaland to settle in the east of Wa. The first group of traders and warriors was led by Sidi ^oUmar and the second group of scholars was led by Ṣāliḥu Doozie (Ṣāliḥu Zie) and Ya^oumarū Tarawiri. In the first group, some of the traders stayed back at Jirapa while the rest led by Sidi ^oUmar passed on to the east of Wa where they settled at Naha (Nasa) in the sixteenth century. In the second group Ṣāliḥu Doozie stayed back at Jirapa while Ya^oumarū moved on to join his kinsmen at Naha in the late seventeenth century or early eighteenth century. The Islam of these early Muslims at Jirapa did not survive. The *Yeri* abandoned their trade profession and became farmers;

they also adopted the language and culture of the indigenous people, and through the pressure of the indigenous women they married they discarded circumcision of their children and Islam (See 3.4.).

Oral tradition of Jirapa confirmed that effective spread of Islam in Jirapa began with Moghtari Kuu-ire, a liberated slave from Wa Limanyiri. According to Sulaymān Moghtari, two brothers from Tantuo of the *Kusielle* clan were sold into slavery. They were not captives of war but criminals who were sold into slavery as punishment. They were bought by Waala Muslims of the Limanyiri ward in Wa and given the *Wangara* name *Moghou ti Allāh ye* (“Human beings are not God”) which was corrupted to *Moghtari* and mistaken by some to be the Arabic name *Mukhtāri*. One was called *Moghtari-kpong* (Big Moghtari) and the other *Moghtari-bile* (Small Moghtari). Moghtari Kuu-ire (Moghtari-Kpong) went to Jirapa after gaining his freedom at the invitation of Naa Ganaa of Jirapa (1907-1938). Because of his stout-nature Naa Ganaa made him his personal body guard. Criminals who refused to answer the summons of Naa Ganaa were forcefully brought to the Chief’s palace by Moghtari Kuu-ire. Moghtari was also put in-charge of the horses of Naa Ganaa. Through marriage Moghtari laid the foundation of the Sunnī Islam community in Jirapa (Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari, son of Moghtari Kuu-ire on 6/4/11 at Jirapa).

The people of Jirapa did not convert to Islam. There were many factors that accounted for their lack of interest in Islam. The fact that Moghtari Kuu-ire was the personal policeman of Naa Ganaa and his constant harassments of people dissuaded them from being sympathetic to Islam. Also his background gave people the impression that Islam was the religion of slaves. In the third

place, the well-being of the “stool” (chiefdom) depended on sacrifice to the ancestors which was incompatible with Islam. A fourth reason was that the popularity of Christianity at the time, especially after the “rain miracle” of 1932 (McCoy, 1988), made Islam less attractive to the indigenes of the Jirapa area.

The third stage in the establishment of Islam in Jirapa is linked with the *Kantosi* of Nandaw-Waala. Saaka (Ishāq) Sulaymān Sissay (half-brother of Imām Braimah Saʿīdu of Tizza) came to Jirapa from Nandaw-Waala via Tizza. Like Moghtari Kuu-ire Saaka Sulaymān used marriage as a means to spread Islam. He married Āmīna from Yipaala and gave birth to twelve children. The family of Saaka Sulaymān teamed up with the family of Moghtari Kuu-ire and together they laid the foundation of the Sunnī Muslim community in Jirapa (Interview with Idrīsu Saaka Sissay (son of Saaka Sulaymān Sissay) on 12/4/11 at Jirapa).

The next stage of Sunnī Islam in Jirapa came with the arrival of ʿUmar Ziema Dapila from Kumasi. According to Muḥammad ʿUmar, ʿUmar Ziema Dapila, popularly known as “Dapil-Waalo (“Dapila, the Muslim”) came from Tizza. On his way to Kumasi he met ʿUthmān Da-lirr, a Muslim of Wa Kabanye ward (but resident with his uncles at Wa Limanyiri) at Wa who converted him to Islam with the Arabic name ʿUmar. He also gave him his daughter in marriage (Interview with Muḥammad ʿUmar (son of ʿUmar Ziema Dapila) 12/4/11 at Jirapa). After a few years in Kumasi ʿUmar Ziema Dapila came home and wanted to stay in Tizza but Naa Ganaa asked him to stay in Jirapa and “be praying for him” (Interview with Muḥammad ʿUmar on

12/4/11). He agreed and built his house near the Chief's palace thus making the third Muslim family in Jirapa.

The three groups of Muslim families in Jirapa never converted the indigenes to Islam. However, a breakthrough came in 2007. Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala of Jirapa-Piiyir and his wife, Priscila were first traditionalists and converted to Catholicism (Interview with Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala on 6/4/11). But not finding fulfilment in the Church he and his wife returned again to Dagaaba traditional religion. He became a soothsayer and built many shrines (*tibe*) around the house. Things changed when his younger brother, Laṭīf, a convert to Islam in Southern Ghana, came home and convinced Abel Kuupaala to abandon the shrines (*tibe*) and embrace Islam. Abel invited the Muslims of *Wa Jam^ciyat* and the Muslim community of Jirapa to his house at Jirapa-Piiyir and there he and his wife and seven children *tūbī* and became Muslims. He took the Arabic name Ibrāhīm while his wife was named Jahīnatu. The shrines and idols were collected and buried (Interview with Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala on 6/4/11 at Jirapa-Piiyir; Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari 6/4/11 at Jirapa).

The conversion of Ibrāhīm Kuupaala created an impact on the young men of Jirapa-Piiyir. Within a short time six young men from Jirapa-Piiyir followed his example and converted to Islam. Ten of his relatives in Jirapa-Seeri also converted to Islam (Interview with Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala on 6/4/11). Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala has built a mosque at his house and has donated a piece of land to the Muslim community of Jirapa towards the building of a *darisa* at Jirapa-Piiyir since there is no available land in Jirapa town to build on it (Interview with Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala 6/4/11 at Jirapa-Piiyir). During the month of Ramaḍān the Imām of Jirapa sends a Muslim to

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Jirapa-Piiyir to assist the young community in the prayers and with *tafsīr* (commentary on the Qur'ān). For the first time, Islam moved out of Jirapa town to a village, Piiyir.

4.5.5.2. Babile

If Moghtari-kpong revived Islam in Jirapa, it was Moghtari-bile who brought Islam to Babile. The head of the *Sarko* community in Babile, Mamudu °Abdullāh Sarko said that Moghtari-bile came to Babile after his liberation because Babile was his uncle's village. Since it was the people of Tantuo who sold him into slavery he did not think it wise to return to Tantuo (Interview with Mamudu °Abdullāh Sarko 24/3/11 at Babile). Sooka, the *tengdaana* of Babile, gave Moghtari-bile a farm to settle on and this settlement developed into the "Babile-Zongo". Once again, it should be noted that the *tengdaana* accepted Moghtari-bile because he was his nephew and not because he had interest in Islam. Moghtari-bile was joined by the *Kantosi* family of Ibrāhīm °Alī who came to Babile from Wahabu in south-western Burkina Faso. The two families lived Islam through fasting, praying the five daily prayers and abstaining from alcohol. They built a mosque in-between their houses and since Ibrāhīm °Alī was a *karama* he was chosen as the Imām (Interview with Ṭahīru °Alī Saamunu (son of Ibrāhīm °Alī) on 24/3/11 at Babile). A third Muslim family that came to Babile was led by Bawa °Uthmān Bitog, a *Wangara* who came to Konyukuo-Zongo from Safane. He later relocated to Babile because of the market and there established the *Wangara* community (Interview with Mamudu °Abdullāh Sarko, head of the *Sarko* community of Babile, on 24/3/11 at Babile).

Wa – the *Limanyire*, *Tagarayire* and the *Sarko* of Jangbayiri. In the course of time the *Limanyire* took over the Imāmate from the family of Ibrāhīm ʿAlī because they were more learned (Interview with Muḥsin Ma’ama, Imām of Babile, on 24/3/11 at Babile). The Muslim community of Babile was further augmented by the over-flow of Hausa and Mossi Muslim traders from *Konyukuo-Zongo* (Interview with al-Ḥājj ʿAbdullāh Muhammad, a Hausa trader, on 24/3/11 at Babile) because of its market potentials.

For a long time the Muslim community of Babile had been dominated by non-indigenous Muslims. The *status quo*, however, changed in the 1950s with the conversion of Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie, from Doo on the Babile-Jirapa road and Al-Ḥasan Namaa from Birifo. Both of them became Muslims because of trade in Babile. Al-Ḥasan Namaa was the “Caller to the hour of prayer” (*mu’adzdzin*) of the Babile Central Mosque and his son Mallam Ṭahīru Al-Ḥasan Namaa opened a *darisa* at Babile. Currently Mallam Ṭahīru Al-Ḥasan Namaa is one of the Imāms at Abura in Cape Coast (Interviews with *Karama Sānī Ibrāhīm Poyie*, Arabic teacher and Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie, business man and Imām of his private mosque on 24/3/11 at Babile).

Like most Dagaaba Muslims who believe in marriage as a means to spread Islam, Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie married a Dagao, Hausa, Waala and Gonja women. He educated all his children in the knowledge of the Qur’ān. One son, Sānī Ibrāhīm Poyie, is an Arabic teacher of the *darisa* at his residence in Babile. Another son studied at Bondoukou (Ivory Coast), Libya and Mauritania. Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie converted his brothers, Mu’mūni Frie, Saʿīdu and Inūsā to Islam. He tried to convert his sister and her husband, the

Chief of Yagga, but failed. However, when the chief of Yagga died Ibrāhīm took the opportunity and converted his sister and her son, Idrīsu to Islam. Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm was afraid that if he allowed Idrīsu and his mother to remain at Yagga they might revert to the traditional religion. Hence he settled them at Babile.

Another sister of Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie married the Chief of Duori and gave birth to Nyovor. Ibrāhīm also succeeded in converting Nyovor and his wives and children to Islam. Both Idrīsu of Yagga and Ḥafīẓ Nyovor of Duori have made the pilgrimage to Makkah (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie). Through personal contacts Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Poyie converted about twenty people from Dɔɔ but most of them relocated to Babile town and Kumasi. They might have migrated to these towns to try their luck in trade. But the main reason was the fear that if they stayed back in Dɔɔ, the strong influence of Dagaaba traditional religion and the pressure from traditional authorities might lead them to lose their Islamic faith or to relapse to traditional religion (Interview with Bawa Bitog, elder son of the first *Wangara* migrant to Babile, on 24/3/11 at Babile). The converts from Birifo, Yagga and Dɔɔ formed the Dagaaba Muslim community of Babile. This community together with the other ethnic Muslim families, *Moghtari*, *Kantosi*, *Sarko*, *Limanyire*, *Tagarayire*, *Hausa*, *Mossi* and *Bitog*, forms the Muslim community of Babile. Thus the Islam in Babile ceased to be the prerogative of non-indigenous Muslims.

4.5.6. Challenges in the Establishment of Islam

Dagaaba Muslims, who constitute convert-migrants from Southern Ghana, ex-slave-converts and Dagaaba who converted in Dagaabaland faced a number of challenges in the establishment of Islam. Like the non-indigenous Muslims, their major challenge was the resilience of the Dagaaba traditional religion. Other challenges were persecutions and threats from the traditional authorities and the mockery and teasing by family members and neighbours. For example, Al-Ḥasan Yuor of Nandom Chief's palace renounced Islam when Chief Boro in a drinking company of his guest, Porekuu, the father of the late Cardinal Peter Porekuu Dery and some of his traditional elders, directed that Al-Ḥasan Yuor should not be served *pito* on the grounds that he was a Muslim. This caused a roar of laughter and teasing of Al-Ḥasan Yuor. He felt ashamed. Consequently, he renounced his Islamic faith (B.G. Der, personal communication, March 16, 2011 at University of Cape Coast). Fear of shame and mockery from family members also accounted for the renunciation of Islam by some young men from Kokoligu, Kandemegaun and Muoteng who had converted to Islam at Hamile-Zongo. (Interview with Amīnu Al-Ḥājj Liman, Hamile Wangara Chief, on 30/3/11 at Hamile).

An example of the opposition of traditional authorities to the spread of Islam occurred at Dapuori. *Mallam* Ya^cqubu Maalsong went home to Dapuori after his conversion at Nkawkaw. Through personal contacts he persuaded four young men and two young girls to convert to Islam. The young men and girls were instructed at Dapuori and sent to Wa Central Mosque where they *tūbī* and became Muslims. However, back in Dapuori the four young men stopped going for the five daily prayers at the mosque at the residence of *Mallam*

Ya^qubu Maalsong. The parents were against their abandoning the religion of the ancestors and converting to Islam. They threatened to denounce them if they did not renounce their new faith. As for the two girls, their parents gave them in marriage to traditional believers and that ended their Islamic faith. Their new husbands forbade them from “praying” and dressing like Muslims (Interview with Mallam Ya^qubu Maalsong and Janaybu (wife) 11/3/11 at Dapuori). At the moment Mallam Ya^qubu Maalsong, his wife, Janaybu, and children pray at the mosque he built by his house during the day, and on Friday, they go to Nadawli for the congregational prayer.

To what extent was Dagaaba traditional religion a challenge to Dagaaba converts? The answer is illustrated with the story of Soufu Issifu of Domwine. His father converted to Islam in Kintampo and gave birth to him in Islam. When his father died he brought the funeral home to Domwine and after the final funeral rites the elders of the family made Soufu Issifu the head of the household. As head of the family he had to offer sacrifices to the ancestors for the well-being of the family, a function that is incompatible with his Islamic faith. For example, at the beginning of the farming season, as head of the household he had to sacrifice a chicken on the family shrine to the ancestors, telling them that the sowing period had come and request them to let the rain fall abundantly so that there will be a good harvest.

After the harvest, he again sacrificed to the ancestors to thank them for the good harvest. Because of the demands of traditional religion on him as head of the household, he and his wife abandoned Islam and are now ancestral venerators. Meanwhile his sons in Kintampo are still Muslims, and one of them, Bashīru Issifu, the narrator of this account, is the current Imām of

Domwine miniature mosque (Interview with Imam Bashīru Issifu 29/3/11 at Domwine).

Dagaaba traditional religion was equally a challenge to the converted ex-slaves. When Muḥammad Dakorah came back to Hain after the wars the family performed the ritual of eating the *zie-baa* (Interview with Fusayni Issahaqu Bakyeri, Imām of Hain, on 15/3/11). This is a ritual that anyone who sheds human blood even in a just war must undergo. The Dagaaba believe that unless this ritual was performed, the culprit would most likely become insane. The dog is the closest friend of the human person and the Dagaaba believe that only the blood of the dog can expiate the sin of murder or man slaughter (see 3.6.2.). Dakorah Muḥammad might not have killed anybody in the raids but the family did not want to take any chances, irrespective of the demands of his new found faith. This is an example of the influence of the authority of family elders on Dagaaba Muslims and their demands on Muslims to comply with certain customary practices for the unity and well-being of the family.

The communal nature of Dagaaba society also discouraged individual initiative in changing the value system. The family head, the village elders and the *tengdaana* (earth-priest) are the only ones who can initiate change in consultation with the ancestors. The individual lives in a community and is under the authority of the elders and so to go against the *nuɔr* (“mouth”: i.e. the words) of the elders is to invite their disaster upon oneself. Hence the fear of being cursed by the elders is another reason why Dagaaba young men were not prepared to convert to Islam since the elders were against conversion to Islam (Interview with Imām of Nator-Duori 9/3/11 at Sankana). It also explains why some Dagaaba who converted to Islam in Dagaabaland migrated to the *zongos*,

Christianity. Muslims did not demonstrate the power of Islam and hence the Dagaaba rejected Islam and kept to their traditional religion. But Did Dagaaba traditional religion discourage complete conversion to Islam? Was work of Dagaaba agents of Islam in Dagaaland a total failure? The answers to these questions are examined in the next section.

4.5.7. Reasons for Dagaaba conversion to Islam

Chapter Two (see 2.2.3.) of the study showed the role slaves played in the propagation of Islam in Southern Ghana and the reasons for the migration of Dagaaba to southern Ghana. The research findings in turn illustrated the role of ex-slaves in the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland and how Dagaaba immigrants in Southern Ghana, who converted to Islam established Islam in Dagaabaland. Their effort to establish Islam was not a complete failure. Some Dagaaba accepted Islam and these are the reasons which some of the interviewees gave for embracing Islam.

The Muslims' sense of solidarity and brotherhood encouraged them to convert to Islam. In their travels, they found that those who are Muslims easily find hospitality in Muslim communities and this made them to embrace Islam in order to be part of that universal brotherhood. Some converts from Birifo at Babile said that the donation of cash to the widow instead of alcoholic drinks at funerals by Muslims for the maintenance of the orphans impressed them and prompted them to become Muslims. Although some Dagaaba said they would not become Muslims because Islam forbids drinking of alcohol, yet others said they converted to Islam to escape from addiction to alcoholism. They used to

drink a lot and misbehave. Hence they decided to convert to Islam as a way out.

There are Christians who have also converted to Islam. The Imām of Nanvilli, Mālik John Andoro, for example, said he converted to Islam in the Western Region because he witnessed Christians visiting the *kamos* in moments of crisis. This convinced him that Islam has the answer to human suffering. Hence he embraced Islam. Other Christian interviewees had problems with Church authorities and in anger they left the Church and embraced Islam. Christian women on the other hand, said they converted to Islam because they were disappointed by Christian men and the fear of not getting a Christian to marry drove them to risk marrying a Muslim as a second or third wife, or they married Muslim men but due to pressure from the families of their husbands they converted to Islam. A few traditional converts said they converted to Islam when they were young girls. They were either baby-sitter or house-help to a Muslim sister or aunt who converted them to Islam. It must be remarked that it is difficult for a married Daga woman to convert to Islam without the consent of the husband and the head of the household.

The Mossi Naa of Hamile-Zongo also explained why some Dagaaba became Muslims. He recounted that in the 1990s the Catholic Bishop of Wa (an indigene of Hamile) preached to the people at Hamile to renounce the worship of idols and either convert to Christianity or Islam. According to him, young men from Kokoligu converted to Islam at Hamile-Zongo encouraged by the recommendation of the Catholic Bishop. Unfortunately, when they went

back home to Kokoligu the family members who are Catholics mocked them and in shame they renounced their Islamic faith.

Finally, the interviewees said that one reason why Dagaaba who lived in cities converted to Islam is the inability of the Dagaaba traditional religion to satisfy their aspirations and spiritual needs in an urban environment. Immigrants in cities could not enter into communion with their ancestors through sacrifice and as a result, they had no way of satisfying their spiritual hunger and thirst. Far from home and their ancestral shrines they resorted to a universal religion like Islam.

Immigrants found that Islam served them better culturally and economically in the cities. In addition, they were no longer under the control of their parents, elders and *tengdaaba* who could curse them or harm them spiritually if they disobeyed their will and went ahead to embrace Islam. Now in a religiously pluralistic environment of choices of different life styles they had the freedom to choose their own religion and style of life and so some of them adopted Islam. Moreover, in such an environment they felt more at home with Islam than Christianity.

There are a number of reasons why Dagaaba immigrants in Southern Ghana felt at home with Islam. First of all, they lived in Muslim communities and most of their co-emigrants were of northern extraction and this made them inclined to Islam. Secondly, they complained that Christianity of Southern Ghana was sophisticated, bureaucratic and aloof to emigrants. The mission houses were walled and this deterred “strangers” from getting access to the priests and pastors. Further, they explained that the pastors and priests of Southern Ghana hardly gave any pastoral care to immigrants from the North.

The Muslims of Southern Coast Ghana, however, were hospitable and their communities were open to “strangers”. Consequently, Dagaaba emigrants through conversion found a new religion in Islam and a new home in these Muslim communities. According to the interviewees, these are some reasons why some Dagaaba immigrants in Southern Ghana converted to Islam rather than to Christianity. From the reasons, one deduces that as Dagaaba moved outside their territory to the urban areas, universalistic religions like Islam offered them many advantages. Also urban life encourages nuclear families in which a man, his wives and children form a social and economic unit. This kind of system favours individualism and weakens traditional family and religious authority. Hence, in their view, urban or town life freed Dagaaba young men from the control of traditional authorities and made them more easily susceptible to the adoption of a universal religion like Islam. The impressions of Dagaaba Muslim converts from southern Ghana should not give one the feeling that Islam is inclined to the nuclear family.

4.6. Conclusion

The research findings have shown that Islam was established in Dagaabaland by non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims. Through their activities they converted some Dagaaba to Islam but the majority of the people resisted conversion because of the strength of Dagaaba traditional religion. But why was Dagaaba traditional religion an obstacle to conversion to Islam? To answer this question it is important to compare the conversion of Dagaaba to Christianity with their conversion to Islam. Why is it that the Missionaries of Africa (popularly known as “White Fathers”) who entered Dagaabaland

succeeded in winning many souls to Christianity but the agents of Islam did not succeed much? The Missionaries of Africa also experienced much opposition from Dagaaba traditional religion when they arrived in Jirapa in 1929 (McCoy, 1988; Der, 1983). Because of their recent experience of the devastations caused by Babatu and Samori through the raids the Dagaaba were scared and suspicious of all foreigners whether they were white or black (McCoy, 1988). Consequently, they thought the “White Fathers” were *Zabog* people (slave raiders) who had come to enslave their young men and women or that they were slave traders in disguise (McCoy, 1988). When Naa Ganaa of Jirapa and his elders learned that the “White Fathers” were bringing a *puor-paala* (“new religion”) they were curious to know how different this *puor-paala* was from their own *puoru* (“religion”, i.e. Dagaaba traditional religion) or from the *Yer-puoru* (the religion of the Muslims, i.e. Islam). All that the Dagaaba knew about Islam was that it summoned people to pray five times a day and to abstain from drinking *pito*. They therefore wanted to know what was so special about this “new religion”.

Naa Ganaa and his people were willing to welcome the “White Fathers” to Jirapa but as a test of the power of their “new religion” they gave them a piece of land that was haunted by evil spirits to build the mission house. When the “White Fathers” survived the test and were not killed by the evil spirits the Chief and his people were amazed (McCoy, 1988). They realized that the “God of the White Fathers” was a “Strong Protector”, who had protected them from the harm of the evil spirits. But the success of this ordeal was not strong enough to convince the Dagaaba to embrace the “new religion of the White Man”.

The Dagaaba were afflicted by diseases such as “yaws, guinea worm, dysentery, conjunctivitis, malaria, sleeping sickness and leprosy” (McCoy, 1988, p. 55). After they had consulted the *tii-soha* (the local medicine man) and failed to get healing they approached the “White Fathers” for scientific treatment. The ability of the missionaries to cure them of their sicknesses still did not convince the Dagaaba to renounce their traditional religion and embrace Christianity.

The decision to break away from loyalty to the ancestors came during a draught in 1932 which affected all the people in Dagaabaland. After the people had made sacrifices to the earth-spirit and the ancestors for rain in vain, Naa Ganaa and his elders went to Fr. McCoy, the parish priest of Jirapa and asked him to pray to his “God” for rain on their behalf. Fr. McCoy told them that if they wanted rain they must pray to “God”. He took Naa Ganaa and his elders into the Church. It was their first time of entering the Church. In the Church, Fr. McCoy and the Chief and elders prayed together to God through Jesus Christ. When they came out of the Church it rained heavily that night only in Jirapa (McCoy, 1988). This came to be known as the “rain-miracle” of Fr. McCoy (Der, 1983). The people of Jirapa had seen it for themselves and they believed that the “God of the Whiteman” was more powerful than the ancestors and the spirits. As a result the people of Jirapa embraced Christianity *en masse*, in their view, to escape from the hostility of the ancestors and spirits to enjoy the favours of the “Whiteman’s God of rain”. When the other villages heard that Fr. McCoy was a “rain-maker” they sent delegations to Jirapa to ask Fr. McCoy to pray for rain for their villages. Their prayers were answered and the rain came only in the villages of the people that went to Jirapa to pray to the

“God of Fr. McCoy” The “rain-miracle” marked the beginning and climax of the evangelization of Dagaabaland. The “rain-miracle” of Jirapa might have influenced the kingmakers of Sigri, who demanded that the chief-elect abandon his Islamic faith in preference to Christianity (See section 4.4.2.).

Even though Naa Ganaa and his elders saw that the ancestors and the spirits were powerless in saving them from the drought and famine and that the “God of the Whiteman” was the one who provides all blessings, they still refused to convert to Christianity. They still held on to the veneration of the ancestors. The people on the other hand, lost faith in the Chief, the elders and their “gods” after the “rain-miracle”. Their life was oriented towards the “mission house” and their faith centred on the “God of the Whiteman”.

To the ordinary Dagaaba the Christian God has proved that He was Superior. He answered the prayer of the Dagaaba for rain and so they abandoned their spirits and believed in the Chief Spirit (God). The Mande-Yeri in Dagaabaland on the other hand, did not manifest the power of Islam to the Dagaaba. A few healings took place at Fian and Tangasie (See 4.5.4.2.) but these were not convincing enough. Dagaaba traditional healers also cured the insane through the assistance of *Kontonne* (Beings of the Wild). So the indigenes of these villages never converted to Islam in spite of the healings. They did not see why they should abandon their religion and convert to Islam.

The “locusts-miracle” of Daffiama in 1932 (McCoy, 1988) is an evidence of the failure of Muslims to save the Dagaaba from trouble and to demonstrate the superiority of Islam. In late October of 1932, a *Mallam* discovered a hole swarming with newly-hatched locusts. This was just the time when the millet in the fields was maturing for the harvest. The *Mallam* reported

the matter to the Chief of Daffiama and his elders and went home. The chief and some of the elders to ward off the disaster sacrificed to the spirits while the Christian prayed to God. The Christians from their catechism at Jirapa after the "rain-miracle" had learned to trust the "Whiteman's God" for their needs. The locusts spared the millet and corn of the Christians who trusted in God but destroyed the crops of those who had sacrificed to the spirits (McCoy, 1988). The "locusts-miracle" made the people of Daffiama and its suburbs to believe that the "the God of the Christians" was stronger than the earth-spirit, the ancestors and the spirits. Many of the people of Daffiama and the surrounding villages went to Jirapa to receive baptism on account of the "locusts-miracle".

The *Mallam* had respect for the Chief of Daffiama but he had no influence on him; he believed in Allāh as *rabb ul-^cālamīn* ("Lord of the worlds") but he did not manifest that Allāh is "Lord of the locusts". He lost an important opportunity to convert the Dagaaba of Daffiama to Islam. It is no wonder that the *Mallam* and his Islam disappeared all together from Daffiama. To the Dagaaba, the "rain-miracle" and the "locusts-miracle" of 1932 were proofs that Christianity was a superior religion and that the earth-spirit, the ancestors and the spirits were incompetent in helping them in moments of difficulties.

However, it must be pointed out that miracles do not necessarily lead to faith. This is proved by the fact that some of the people who came to Jirapa after the "rain miracle" refused to convert to Christianity when they were told to renounce their other wives and choose only one in order to be baptized into the Church. The demand of monogamy according to interviewees, discouraged many people from converting to Christianity. Others, however, who were

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married to ten or more wives. The rest and were baptized into the Church with one wife. Thus some Dagaaba made sacrifices for the “new religion” because after the “rain and locusts miracles” they came to believe that the “Whiteman’s God” was the true God and that the ancestors and spirits were no longer relevant in their life.

The fact that Islam was established by non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims shows that Islam in Dagaabaland is not monolithic. One cannot speak of one Islamic tradition in Dagaabaland. Ryan (1998) concluded that the Wangara tradition, the Hausa tradition and the assorted Middle-Eastern and South Asian traditions have contributed to the growth of Islam in Ghana and its unique character, and that by this virtue, have produced “a minority Muslim community of considerable vitality” (p. 149). Contrary to this view, the Mande-*Yeri* tradition, the Mossi tradition, the Yoruba tradition, and the Fulani tradition have all combined with indigenous cultural and historical elements to produce in a Dagaaba traditional environment a minority Muslim community of little significance”. Chapter Five further explains this point.

AFTERMATH OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ISLAM

5.1. Introduction

The research findings in Chapter Four showed that Dagaaba traditional religion and some cultural practices are the main obstacles to the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland. Despite the challenges from the traditional religion and culture some Dagaaba converted to Islam and in turn converted others to Islam. The other main theme that emerged from the research is the aftermath of the establishment of Islam among the Dagaaba. Dagaaba traditional religion continues to influence Dagaaba Muslims' beliefs and practices. Chapter Five, therefore discusses the resilience of Dagaaba traditional religion and certain cultural practices on Dagaaba Muslims. The Chapter looks at the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion on Dagaaba Muslims especially, on the celebration of Islamic transitional rites. The Chapter also considers how certain Dagaaba cultural practices influence the attitudes and behaviour of Dagaaba Muslims in their relations to other believers. Furthermore, it shows how Islam on the other hand, also influenced some Dagaaba religious beliefs and material culture. Finally, it investigates how Dagaaba Muslim men and women, in the face of these challenges attempt to make their communities self-supporting.

5.2.0. Birth

Dagaaba Muslims try to live their Islamic faith according to the dictates of the *Shari'ah* (Islamic Law). One of the ways in which their Islamic faith is manifested is the celebration of the birth. It is also in the celebration of birth

that Dagaaba cultural practices and beliefs are fused together. This interplay is particularly visible in the need for spiritual protection for the child, the paternity of the child, the naming of the child. This section examines these elements to demonstrate the interplay between Dagaaba traditional religion and Islam. The section also touches on birth control because of its relation to the numerical growth of Islam in Dagaabaland.

5.2.1. Spiritual protection

Birth is a stage in life through which a man becomes a father and a woman becomes a mother. The celebration of birth in Islam among Dagaaba Muslims involves the participation of members of the extended family. In some families, this would involve Muslims, traditionalists and Christians. The traditional view is that it is a socio-religious event and should involve all family members especially, the head of the household. For this reason the Muslims are not given the free hand to celebrate the birth of a child in an Islamic way. At times certain cultural practices are imposed on the Muslims against their will or without them knowing it.

Secondly, Islam does not have elaborate rites to mark the birth of a child. Consequently, Dagaaba Muslims still follow certain traditional practices and beliefs which are connected with birth. For example, in the Nadawli District, a traditional woman will dip a finger into the after-birth blood of the mother and put it in the mouth of the new born child. The first thing the child tastes after birth therefore is the blood of the mother. The practice is meant to instil in the child deep respect and reverence for the mother when he grows up. Most Dagaaba Muslims still live within the traditional family and are subject to

the authority of the traditional leaders. Consequently, Dagaaba Muslim women in the Nadawli district who give birth at home are subjected to this practice by the traditional birth-attendants. This certainly is un-Islamic but because it is the custom they compromise with the practice and the belief. Secondly, for fear of confrontation with the traditional authority they forfeit their religious rights. Thirdly, Islam has no ritual to replace the traditional custom which guarantees the loyalty of the child to the mother through out his life.

Another cultural practice which Dagaaba Muslims accept is the burying of the placenta or after-birth. The placenta is usually buried at the back of the common bathroom under the outlet where the bath-water flows out. The flow of the bathwater through the outlet of the bath signifies life and fertility. Burying the placenta under the outlet is meant to prevent the child from blocking the fertility of the mother. The child should not be the last of the mother's children. If the placenta is not ritually buried it can bring misfortune to the mother in the future. Here again Islam has no ritual for the burial of the placenta. In the absence of any ritual, Dagaaba Muslim women who give birth in the traditional home buried the placenta under the bath outlet to ensure continuous fertility.

Usually a virgin girl or a barren woman carries the placenta from the birth-room to the outlet of the bathroom for burial. The ritual is meant to fertilize the womb of the virgin girl and give fertility to the barren woman. This belief and practice is also accepted by some Dagaaba Muslim women. The use of herbs and roots to bathe new born children to strengthen them physically and to fortify them spiritually against evil spirits is common among Dagaaba and Muslim women. The fear of evil spirits and their capacity to do harm to

new born babies who are exposed outside is strong among both traditional and Muslim women. One sure way to ensure the peace and safety of the child is to fortify it spiritually with herbal baths and amulets.

A Dagao woman and her child seclude themselves for a market-week (that is, six days) after the birth of a child. On the other hand, a Dagao Muslim woman, in accordance with the *Sunna* of the Prophet, secludes herself and her child for seven days. Traditionally, the motive of both the traditional and Muslim woman for the seclusion is to screen or veil mother and child from the harm of evil spirits and evil people (Interview with *tengdaana*, Logdaa 7/3/11 at Sabuli and with Samata Takaazine, 15/3/11 at Ping). Once more, the fear of evil spirits and evil people dominates the life of the Dagao traditional woman and Muslim. The above practices and beliefs illustrate that Islam does not demand radical change from Dagaaba Muslims and as a result they do not see any inconsistency with the observance of Dagaaba traditional religion.

5.2.2. Paternity of the child

Although Dagaaba Muslims compromised with certain Dagaaba practices and beliefs in the celebration of birth, there is an area in which they live according to the *Sunna* of the Prophet. Muslims believe that all children born to a woman in marriage legally belong to the husband (Al-Qaradawi, 1414/1993). Section 3.7.2. of the study shows that the same concept of paternity existed among Dagaaba traditional religionists. Once the bride wealth has been given and accepted all children born of the wife whether by the husband or by another man belong to the husband. Thus Islam and Dagaaba traditional religion both place high value on paternity. In the first

place, the birth of a child is the extension of his father and after the death of the father the child becomes the embodiment of his immortality and continues his existence on earth (Al-Qaradawi, 1414/1993).

In Islam, paternity is also important as regards the rights of guardianship, maintenance and inheritance (Sujimon, 1999). In Dagaaba culture, the son inherits his father but the girl-child has no inheritance from the father. In Islam, the son and the daughter can inherit from their parents. Thus Islam has introduced something new in Dagaabaland that a girl-child can inherit from her parents. However, it is the father who gives paternity or legitimacy to a child by accepting the child as his child. Similarly, it is the father who determines which child should inherit him and this is guaranteed in his right to grant paternity to the child. However, this brings a social problem in Dagaaba society. If a Muslim refuses to recognize a child as his child, the child becomes illegitimate. Hence in Islam, every child has a mother but not every child has a father. In Dagaaba society, there is no illegitimate child. Every child born in marriage has a father. To avoid illegitimate children Dagaaba encourage early child marriage since delay in marriage can lead to fornication and illegitimate children. That is why when a man impregnates a girl outside marriage he is pressurized to marry her.

The concrete way to grant paternity to a child is for the father to “shave the head of the new-born baby” through the ceremony known among Dagaaba Muslims as *zu-pomo* (“head-shaving”) which takes place on the seventh day after birth. Dagaaba traditionalists do not have any specific ceremony to mark the shaving of the head of the new-born child (See 3.7.3.). The *zu-pomo* ceremony is new to Dagaaba traditionalists. Dagaaba Muslims perform the *zu-*

pomo because it is *Sumo* (that is, in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet). The *zu-pomo* ceremony is composed of six elements: circumcision, shaving of the head of the child, slaughtering of the ram, a sermon, *du'ā'* (intercessions), sharing of a meal and distribution of hacks and kola nuts. The meal is usually rice, prepared with the meat of the slaughtered ram. The distribution of hacks is a recently introduced element. A Muslim elder remarked jokingly that today's children are disobedient because their head was "shaved with hacks instead of kola nuts". This is to emphasize that the use of hacks at the *zu-pomo* ceremony is an innovation and has an effect on the character of the child.

The slaughtering of the ram takes place in the early hours of dawn. Unlike Dagaaba traditional religion the ram is not sacrificed to the ancestors. It is slaughtered in the name of God and the meat is not eaten in communion with the ancestors but as an expression of joy for the gift of the child. The meat is divided into three parts - one part is cooked for the participants to eat after the ceremony, the second part is shared out to relatives and neighbours as witnesses to the fact that the head of the new born child has been shaved. The third part is distributed to the poor as alms to gain blessing for the child and its parents. The skin of the ram is used as a *muṣallā* (praying mat). The sharing of the meat portrays the Muslims' solidarity with the poor in the community. Secondly, there is no discrimination. The meat is given to heads of household and to non-Muslims. Thirdly, it shows that the Muslims' concept of *Jamā'ah* (community) goes beyond the community where the child is born. Participants from other mosques send their share of the meat and kola nuts home to share with the *imām* (prayer and community leader) and his people. This expresses

solidarity with the other communities and is a public announcement that a new member has been borne into the Muslim community. Hence Islam is not based on kinship relations but on faith. The Dagaaba Muslim concept of brotherhood therefore goes beyond the clan system.

“Circumcision” (*khitān*) is not mentioned in the Qur’ān (Al-Kaysi, 1420/1999) and there is no authentic *hadīth* which testifies to the fact that the Prophet Muhammad was ever circumcised (Hughes, 1885). Circumcision among Muslims of the Mālikī School of Law is therefore held to be “*sunnah* for males and optional for females” (Karim, 1994, *Mishkat*, Vol. 1, Ch. 7, section 15, No. 218, p. 718). According to the Shāfi’ī legal system, circumcision is obligatory (*wājib*) for males and females. In the case of adults who convert to Islam from another religion, circumcision may not be enforced, although it is recommended (*mustahabb*) that all new converts to Islam be circumcised (Hughes 1885). Dagaaba Muslims like other Muslims of West Africa circumcise all adult converts to Islam. This is understandable since most West African Muslims follow the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd which stipulates that circumcision is *wājib*, that is, compulsory (Kenny, 1992; Trimmingham; 1959). However, because Dagaaba male children are born in the hospital and are circumcised there the ritual of circumcision does not feature on the day of the *zu-pomo*. Although circumcision is not part of the *Sharī’ah* requirement it is regarded by both traditionalists and Muslims as a sign of being a Muslim. It must be noted that male circumcision was unknown among the Dagaaba. The sermon (*khuṭbah*), the prayers, both in Arabic (*Ṣallī*) and in the local language (*Du’ā*) gives the *zu-pomo* ceremony an authentic Islamic character.

the *zu-pomo* ceremony there are a few details that are not carried out. For example, according to the tradition of the Prophet, two rams or two goats are slaughtered for a male new-born child and one ram or goat for a female new-born. It is also recommended that the shaved-hair of the infant should be weighed and the equivalent in cash given to the mother as reward for giving birth to the child or to the poor as alms as an invocation of blessing for the child (Karim, 1994, Vol. 2, Ch. 11, Section 9, No. 792, p. 164). These recommendation, however, are not observed by Dagaaba Muslims. This is due to the fact that the Dagaaba Muslims follow the *Mālikī* School of law instead of the *Shāfiʿī* School of law (Cf., Rahimuddin, 1985/1406, pp. 459 – 461)

The *zu-pomo* (noun) ceremony is an Islamic ritual but in its celebration one observes signs of Dagaaba traditional beliefs. After the prayers the father will go to the room where the mother and baby are waiting and to make the *Adhān* (“the call to prayer”) into the right ear of the child and the *Iqāma* (“the call to start the prayer”) into the left ear. This ritual is a way of casting out evil spirits from the child. This calls to mind Dagaaba belief in evil spirits to harm a new-born child. In addition, Dagaaba refer to “the shaving of the head” as *degree iru*, that is, “removing impurity”. Dagaaba Muslims also maintain this notion and refer to the *zu-pomo* ceremony (“head shaving”) and circumcision as *degre iru*. This means that male and female circumcision purify the new born baby of all “impurities” so that he/she can worship his Creator in cleanliness and purity. For this reason, circumcision is also called “purification” (*tahāra*). Furthermore, the donations in cash given to a new born male child during the *zu-pomo* (adjective) ceremony are used to buy a goat or

the animal becomes his property. This is another instance of the assimilation of Dagaaba tradition and custom. Besides, both Muslims and traditional religionists maintain the practice of piercing the ears of female babies to enable them to wear earrings in life. The practice is usually carried out by the most senior woman of the household who in many households is a traditional woman. Hence the “piercing of the ears of female Muslim babies” in most cases is done by a traditional woman. This also illustrates the interference of traditional authority in Dagaaba Muslim birth celebration. One can therefore conclude that Dagaaba Muslims perform the birth celebration in accordance with the *Sunna* of the Prophet but these rites are coloured by a few Dagaaba traditional beliefs and practices.

5.2.3. Naming

An event in which Dagaaba Muslims clearly manifest their desire to live their Islamic faith is the naming of the child. In the Dagaaba traditional culture, a name is given to a child as a recognition that it is now a human being. Before the giving of the name it was considered a *bong kang* (“a thing”), a *saana* (“a stranger”). The name is given by the head of the household, father, aunt or an important guest in the house. Among Dagaaba Muslims on the other hand, the Imām selects the name for a child born of Dagaaba Muslim parents. By so doing the Imām assumes the role of the head of the traditional household in the “new family of Islam”.

Usually, the Imām selects two or three Arabic names which are given to the father and mother to choose one for the child. The parents normally will

choose an Arabic name that they can pronounce or easily remember. This is important because some of the Arabic names of children are so distorted in pronunciation by the indigenes that they differ from the actual ones recorded in the birth-register of the Imām. Dagaaba traditional household head does not keep register of births. Birth registration is an innovation of Islam in Dagaaba society. Muslims believe in *baraka* (blessing). Charitable acts bring blessings. So the parents will choose a name that will bring blessings upon the child. After choosing the name the father will call the name first into the right ear and then into the left ear of the child. This ritual is an invocation that when the child grows up he will willingly answer the call to his name. The paper with the name written on it is then placed under the pillow of the child till the seventh day when it is announced publicly to all during the prayer (*Ṣallāh*). The significance is that the name (usually an attribute of God) should bring blessing on the child (Personal communication with officiating Imām at *Zu-pomo* ceremony at Charikpong-Wikyimananga 17/3/11).

In section 3.7.2. of the study, it was shown that Dagaaba name newborn children according to the circumstances in which the child is born. Dagaaba Muslims on the other hand, give Arabic names to their children. They take pride in the Arabic name. It gives them a sense of identity and belonging to a Muslim community in a “pagan environment”. The sources of Arabic names from which the Imāms choose the name for a child are varied. First, the Imāms have a book which contains male and female Arabic names according to the days of the week. The child is given the name of day on which he or she is born. Secondly, there are the ninety-nine names of God (*al-asmā` al-husnā`*: the “Beautiful Names of Allah”) which are also chosen for children. When

such names, however, are given to human beings, the prefix, *‘abd* (servant) is added to differentiate the human name from the divine name. The attributes of God given to human beings prefixed by *‘abd* such as *‘Abdullāh*, *‘Abdul-Karīm* or *‘Abdus-Ṣabūr* concretely express the Muslim concept of man. Before God, man is merely a “servant” and his function in life is to render devotion (*‘ibāda*) to God. Man cannot share in the attributes or life of God and for this reason he cannot consider himself as “son” or “friend” of God. In prayer, he can only address God as “Creator” or “Lord” but never as “Father”. Since Islam is very jealous about the “oneness” and “uniqueness” of God, human beings cannot be named with the attributes of God prefaced by *Abū*. Thus names like *Abū-Hakam* (“Father of the Just”), *Abū l-Awwāl* (“Father of the First”) are not allowed, for no one is “Just” or “First” except God (Karim, 1994, Vol. 1, Ch. 5. Section 11, no. 499, no. 100, p. 598). As for adults who convert to Islam, they either choose a name of their likeness, the name of their mentor or any name from the Qur’ān and *Sunna*.

Thirdly, children can be named Muḥammad but to distinguish the name of the Prophet from ordinary names, one Imām explained that the title *Sayyidina* (“Our Lord”) or the prayer “*salla Allāhu alayhi wa sallama*” (May Allāh pray for him and grant him peace”) must be added whenever the name of the Prophet is mentioned (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Muḥammad ‘Abdullāh Kindo 14/1/11).

In child naming, Dagaaba Muslims portray their Islamic identity. There are signs of Dagaaba cultural interference. In Dagaaba culture, a man can name the new-born child of his brother. In this context, Muslims give Arabic names to children of their brothers or sisters even though such children are not

University of Dagaaba believe that a child belongs to the entire family and the fact that a Muslim can name the child of relative implies that socially, such a child belongs to him and he is morally responsible for his upbringing.

Another influence of Dagaaba culture on Dagaaba Muslims is the fact that a Muslim can take traditional children of his brothers or sisters into his house for their upbringing. Traditional brothers or uncles on the other hand, can also take Muslim children of their relatives into their home to bring them up. This gives the opportunity to some Muslims to convert such children to Islam. Other Muslims respect the religious freedom of such children and bring them as non-Muslims (Interview with Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang on 28/1/11 at Samatigu). An occasion that shows the interplay of Islam and Dagaaba culture is the presentation of the *bi-piɛ* (the baby's cradle or basket) and shea-butter oil by the mother to the daughter after her first delivery, and the donation of millet and guinea fowl by a son-in-law to the mother-in-law as expressions of courtesy, happiness and gratitude. The climax of the presentation is the sacrifice of a chicken to the "spirit" of the *bi-piɛ* and the laying of the baby for the first time in the *bi-piɛ* by the mother-in-law.

The idea of Muslims sacrificing to the "spirit of the cradle" and laying the baby in the cradle is repugnant to Muslim sensibility. Some Muslims will accept the shea-butter oil offering but reject the *bi-piɛ* and its accompanying ritual (Interview with Hudī Ibrāhīm, the Mu'adhhdhin of Takpo, Latīf Anfaarabaalanaa Waalo and Idrīsu 9/3/11 at Takpo). One will recall that in sections 3.4. of the study, Mande-Yeri gave in to such cultural demands from their indigenous wives and eventually abandoned Islam and became traditionalists. Dagaaba Muslims accept the shea-butter oil out of respect but

kufir (unbelief). But this stand obviously brings them into conflict with their mothers-in-law who regard the refusal as an infringement on their cultural rights. This is an instance where Dagaaba culture infringes not only on Muslims religious freedom but is also a cause for tension and conflict. Thus the giving of an Arabic name to a new-born child is one way of Dagaaba Muslims expressing their Islamic identity and of welcoming the child into the Muslim community. In this process, they have to struggle with the interference of Dagaaba traditional practices and beliefs.

5.2.4. Birth control

In the above sections, one observes how Dagaaba Muslims try to live their Islamic faith according to the *Sunna* of the Prophet and how Dagaaba custom poses obstacles on their way. This section brings out the similarities of practices and beliefs between Dagaaba traditional religion and Islam and the relation between birth control and the growth of Islam. Procreation as explained in section 3.7.2. of the study, is the main purpose of marriage among the Dagaaba. In their world view, childlessness is seen as a threat to the lineage and a shame on the couple, especially the wife. This concept of marriage also explains why the Dagaaba see child birth as the consummation of marriage. Dagaaba Muslims also see child-birth as imperative and as one way of increasing the Muslim population in the community. In an area where Christianity and Dagaaba traditional religion are dominant, conversion to Islam is difficult so child bearing became the only way of increasing the numerical strength of Muslims in Dagaabaland. It is therefore not surprising that some

Islam as one can imagine is not against birth-control. It permits preventing pregnancy for valid reasons. These include, when there is fear that the pregnancy or delivery might endanger the life or health of the mother, and when the pregnancy is due to rape or incest (Sachedina, 2001). However, once pregnancy occurs and the foetus is completely formed and given a soul, abortion is “*harām*” (forbidden).

According to the Traditions of the Prophet and Muslim jurists, it is believed that after one hundred and twenty days the angel of destiny has finished writing the destiny of the child as regards his life span, the amount of food he will eat on earth, his profession, his character and the day of his death. Therefore, after one hundred and twenty days abortion is not permissible since it is regarded as interfering in the work of God (Sachedina, 2001). Similarly, a pregnant woman is not to be disturbed in her sleep as this might interfere in the work of the angel of destiny. The Mālikī law school, however, prohibits abortion at any time on the grounds that once conception has taken place the foetus was destined for liveliness (Sachedina, 2001).

Contraception as a method of birth control that was practised by the companions of the Prophet Muhammad was *coitus interruptus* (*‘azl*) that is, the “withdrawal of penis from the vagina just before ejaculation, thus preventing the entrance of semen” (Matraji, 2006: *Sahīh al-Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Book 67, Ch. 97, p. 113; see also Al-Qaradawi, 1414/1993, p. 198). This method of contraception is not used by Dagaaba Muslims and Dagaaba traditionalists do not also follow it. According to some of the Muslim women who were

interviewed, spilling of sperm is an act which is against the will of God. These women are certainly ignorant of the above Prophetic tradition. From the interviews it was clear that both Dagaaba traditionalists and Muslims use the “Billing Method” (Spacing Method) as the acceptable means of contraception. Thus when it comes to contraceptives Dagaaba Muslims do not follow the *Sunna* of the Prophet but Dagaaba traditional practice.

5.3.0. Marriage

Marriage is the second stage in life through which a man becomes a husband and a woman a wife. The study shows that it is an area where Dagaaba traditional religion has little influence on the faith of Dagaaba Muslims. An examination of the important aspects of marriage, such as, consent, bride wealth, polygamy and women shows that Dagaaba Muslim marriage celebration is a novelty in Dagaaba society and a challenge to the Dagaaba traditional marriage system. This section also brings out the similarities and dissimilarities between Muslim and traditional marriage.

In Dagaaba traditional religion, marriage is the union between members of the lineage group of the man and the lineage group of the woman. In short, marriage is the union between the family of the man and the family of the woman (see 3.7.2.). In this concept, marriage is never a private arrangement between a man and a woman. It is a communal affair which involves two clans. For this reason a woman is married to the whole clan of the man and her services and duties are to be directed not only to the husband but to the members of the entire clan. Likewise, members of the man’s clan also have certain duties towards the members of the clan of the wife.

the bridegroom and the *walī* of the bride (Karim, 1994, Vol. 2, Ch. 27, Section 1, No. 1296, p. 629). Hence marriage in Islam is a private affair between man and woman, and the husband is entitled exclusively to her services. In this context it is easier for a husband to divorce his wife in Islam than in Dagaaba traditional religion. In fact Islam allows divorce (Qur’ān 2:226, 227; 33:28) though “the thing which is lawful but disliked by Allāh is divorce” (Al-Qaradawi 1414/1993, p. 207; Hughes, 1885, p. 87). The only deterrent against divorce is for the guardian of the woman to insist at the time of the marriage contract on a larger dowry, part of which is to be paid down, while the remainder must be paid if she is divorced or if her husband dies. This stipulation can discourage divorce among the rich and affluent, but obviously it will have little effect among poor farmers.

In Dagaaba custom, a man cannot on his own divorce his wife without the consent of members of the family (see 3.7.2.). The family members will always try to maintain and sustain the marriage by all means because they do not want to strain the relationships with their in-laws. Secondly, the woman’s family once they have received the bride wealth is not ready to return it should the marriage break down. It is therefore in their interest to maintain the marriage (Kpiebaya, n.d.). Thus marriage is first a union between clans and not just between the man and woman. For these reasons divorce among Dagaaba Muslims is rare and this is due to the influence of Dagaaba culture rather than to the teachings of the Qur’ān and the *Sunna* of the Prophet (Interview with Shaykh ‘Uthmān Naa-gang on 28/1/11 at Samatigu).

and his family have social obligations towards the family of the wife. This explains why Dagaaba Muslim men attend funerals of dead traditional in-laws and even pay the funeral dirge-singers or sleep at the funeral ground over night (3.7.2.). The participation of Dagaaba Muslims at traditional funerals and Muslim women mourning at traditional funerals are cultural requirements (Interview with Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang on 28/1/11 at Samatigu). This again is an instance where Dagaaba traditional religion and culture influence Dagaaba Muslim social life.

5.3.1. Consent

The union between the clan of the husband and the clan of the wife is made possible through the mutual agreement between the kinship groups of the husband and wife (Sarpong, 1974). Because marriage is a communal affair the explicit consent of the husband and the wife is not necessary in Dagaaba marriage. The consent of the man and woman is contained in the consent of the two families (See 3.7.2.).

In Islam, however, the civil contract is based on the mutual consent of the bridegroom and bride. The consent between the two parties is called *ijāb* (“declaration”) and *qabūl* (“acceptance”) (Hughes, 1885). The consent, the presence of two witnesses and the Imām, and the donation of the “nuptial gift” (*sadāqa*) are the essential elements of an Islamic marriage ceremony (Qadri, 1986; Lewis, 1966; Anderson, 1954). However, Dagaaba traditionalists and Muslims give out their daughters in marriage without their explicit consent. The traditionalists feel that the implicit consent of the girl is implied in the

The exception Al-Qayrawānī makes is that the consent of a girl who has been married before (*thayyib*) for over a year must be sought before being given in marriage (Kenny, 1992). Apart from this “a father may give [his daughter] in marriage even before puberty [like ‘A’isha]” (Kenny, 2000b, p. 68). The author agrees with Sey (1996) who says that Ghanaians in general follow the Mālikī Law School which is based on the teaching of Al-Qayrawānī and so force their virgin girls (*bikr*) into marriage. But this practice is not right because the following *Ḥadīth* explains the necessity of the bride’s consent: “A matron [*thayyib*: ‘one who had had conjugal relations with a man’] should not be given in marriage except after her permission; and a virgin [*bikr*] should not be given in marriage except after her permission. The people asked: ‘O Allāh’s Apostle! How can we know that she agreed?’ He said: ‘Her silence [indicates her approval]’” (Matraji 2006: *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Book 67, Ch. 42, No.

Dagaaba Muslims, like other Ghanaian Muslims, do not take into consideration the injunction of this *Hadīth* but in obedience to the teaching of al-Qayrawānī force their daughters into marriage (cf. Rahimuddin, 1406/1985; Karim, 1994, Vol. 2, Ch. 27, Section 7, No. 8322, p. 651; Sey, 1996).

Another reason why Dagaaba Muslims and traditionalist give their daughters in marriage without their consent is to avoid the occurrence of fornication. Early marriage will forestall fornication. Furthermore, the implementation of early marriage system renders the consent of the daughter unnecessary and superfluous. In principle, Dagaaba Muslims should consult their virgin daughters before giving them out in marriage but the situation is different on the ground because of the cultural influence.

5.3.2. Bride wealth

The bride wealth or dowry is “defined as the goods the boy’s family pays to the girl’s family at marriage” (Kpiebaya, n.d., p. 10). The marriage union or agreement in Dagaaba traditional religion becomes legal with the giving of the bride wealth. The legality or significance of the presentation of the bride wealth is that it gives “uxorial and genetical rights to the husband and his lineage over the girl” (Kpiebaya, n.d., p. 10). It seals the union between the two families and gives social status to the husband and wife. Traditionally, it is immoral to sleep with a woman for whom the bride wealth has not been given, and children born in such a union do not belong to the family of the man but to the family of the woman.

girl” as personal property and by that virtue they can treat the wife the way they like. This is a misconception because even after the giving of the bride wealth the girl’s parents still have the right to call her back to her natal family if the husband is not able to maintain her or maltreats her. Thus it means that the giving of the bride wealth does not imply buying the girl. Nevertheless, Dagaaba see the payment of the bride wealth as a kind of reward to the girl’s family for the loss of a member who could have contributed towards the well-being of the girl’s family (Kpiebaya, n.d.). For this reason the bride wealth traditionally is meant to procure a wife for a male member of the girl’s family. It was never spent on anything outside this purpose (Interview with the Chief of Konyukuo and five elders 24/3/11 at Konyukuo).

In Islam, the bride wealth is the nuptial gift given by the husband to his wife at the time of the marriage. The giving of the bride wealth is essential for the validity of the marriage contract: “O Prophet! Verily, We have made lawful to you your wives, to whom you have paid their dowries [*mahr*]” (Qur’ān 33:50). Thus it appears that the bride wealth is compulsory in marriage (See also Qur’ān 60:10). As in the traditional religion sex is only lawful in marriage and after the giving of the bride wealth gives the husband rights over the fertility of the wife and the children out of this marriage (See 3.7.3). The connection between bride wealth and marital intercourse is clearly brought out in Qur’ān 4:21, 24. Qur’ān 2:236 states that the full amount of bride wealth has to be given after the consummation of the marriage. Hence as in the case of the Dagaaba traditional religion, sex outside marriage in Islam is immoral and a

crime (Qur'ān 25: 68: 17-39) Coast <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui>
(Qur'ān 24:2), which merits the severest punishments of God

Similarly, the presentation of the bride wealth in Islam is a reward (*ajr*) as in the Dagaaba traditional religion. But in Islam it is a reward not for the loss of a potentially productive member of a clan but a reward for permitting the husband to have sexual intercourse with the wife (Qur'ān 4:24). And because it is a reward (*ajr*) it is not given to the clan of the wife like in Dagaaba marriage. Rather it is given to the bride. It becomes her personal property and it is not meant for the procurement of a wife for a male member of the girl's family. This is an innovation that Islam has brought to Dagaaba society.

Dagaaba Muslims give two kinds of bride wealth. In a marriage between a Muslim man and Muslim woman, which is called *fur* (marriage), the bride wealth (*sadāqi* in Dagaare) is given to the bride by the bridegroom. This is in accordance with Islamic law. However, in a marriage between a Muslim man and a woman of traditional religion the bride wealth (*kyor* or *kyaru*) is given to the parents of the bride. Sometimes the traditional in-laws demand chickens and goats in addition, to sacrifice to the ancestors or to the "guardian spirit" (*sigra*) of the bride in order to redeem her (See 4.5.4.4.). Although this is against their Islamic faith, Dagaaba Muslims satisfy these customary demands and give the chickens and goats or the equivalent in cash for the sake of peaceful co-existence. The safeguard is that the Muslims do not participate in these sacrifices themselves and this is in line with Islamic doctrine.

In the Qur'ān, the terms *mahr* (bride wealth) and *ṣadāqa* (nuptial gift) are used interchangeably. What accounted for this? Before the time of

the bridegroom paid a sum of money (*mahr*) to the father or nearest kinsman of the bride, and another sum (*ṣadāqa*) to the bride herself. There was no definite amount fixed for both the *mahr* and *ṣadāqa*, but the amount could be higher depending on whether the girl was a virgin, a divorced woman or a widow (Levy, 1971). Muhammad, however, changed this system slightly from its original form. Instead of the bridegroom making the payment to the father, it was given to the bride only. This explains why *mahr* and *ṣadāqa* become interchangeable terms in the Qur'ān (Qur'ān 4:4; 60:10).

Another influence besides Dagaaba traditional culture on Dagaaba Muslims is the Mande-*Yeri* culture. Imām Ya^cqubu Yendau of Kaha (Nadawli District) told the author that the use of kola nuts in Dagaaba Muslim marriage ceremony is the legacy of Mande-*Yeri*. In the marriage ceremony, the guardian of the bridegroom hands over twelve kola nuts tied in a small polythene bag to the Imām who in turn gives it to the father of the girl. The number twelve represents the twelve prophets in Islam who had successful marriages and the presentation is an invocation of their blessing on the couple-to-be (Interview with Imām Yakubu Yendau 7/2/11 at Kaha). The father of the bride is not to untie the polythene bag and remove the kola nuts. To do so would be “untying the *fur*” (the marriage), that is, “breaking the marriage”. He has to tear a hole under the polythene bag to remove the nuts. In this way, the stability of the marriage is guaranteed. The practice and the belief are not Islamic. It is an influence of Mande culture.

A second portion of kola nuts, usually given together with hacks, consists of one hundred kola nuts (*gu-mgnan*). These are meant for the

5.3.3. Polygamy

Although polygamy is permitted in Islam (Qur’ān 4:3) on the condition that the husband treats his wives equally (Qur’ān 4:128), some Dagaaba Muslim young men interviewees said that they prefer to have one wife. According to Ibrāhīm Sam and Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymānī Singnaa of Zang, it is impossible to treat all the wives with perfect equality as attested by the Qur’ān (Qur’ān 4:3). When asked why it was not possible to treat the wives equally, they said that the equality is more than economic equality. It is not just the question of providing lodging, food and clothing. In their view it has more to do with giving sexual attention equally to each wife in the same night and this they think is impossible (Interviews with Ibrāhīm Sam and Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymānī Singnaa at Zang on 11/2/11). They maintained that the Prophet could do it because he was endowed with special favours by God. But, for an ordinary Muslim, it is impossible. The views of Ibrāhīm Sam and Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymānī on the impossibility of giving impartial justice to all the wives is in line with Muḥammad ‘Abduh’s interpretation of Qur’ān 4:128. According

to him, it is difficult for a husband to treat all his wives with impartiality, and he even upheld that the Prophet, in reality, recommended monogamy (Levy, 1971), a view also accepted by Ali (1983).

In addition, Ibrāhīm Sam and Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymān said that polygamy gives the husband a divided mind and creates problems in the family. For these reasons, they say Dagaaba Muslims approach polygamy cautiously. Further, they said that the poverty of the area, the high bride wealth, the cost of secular education and access to orthodox health care services today discourage polygamy among Dagaaba Muslims. It must be added that Islam limits polygamy to four wives at one time but the Qur'ān puts no limits on the number of concubines a Muslim may acquire (Q 4:3; 33:50; 70:30). The expression "those that your right hands possess" (Qur'ān 4:3) is a reference to "non-Muslims captured in jihād" (Kenny, 2000b, p. 69) who a Muslim can own and have sexual intercourse with. Thus concubines by Islamic law do not have the status of consorts (Trimingham, 1959).

Concubinage is also founded in the example of Muhammad who took Raḥānah the Jewess as his concubine after the defeat of the Banū Qurayzah. Similarly, Maryam the Copt was sent to him as a slave by the governor of Egypt (Hughes, 1885). The Ḥanafī School of law, however, forbids "a (free) man to marry his own or his son's female slaves and a (free) woman to marry her male slave" (Levy, 1971, p. 105). But the Ḥanafites permit the possession of Jewish or Christian slaves as concubines and even allows marriage with them on condition that the Muslim man is not married to a free woman (Levy, 1971). Nevertheless, in Nigeria it is the custom to give girls as concubines to Muslim chiefs (Kenny, 2000b). Dagaaba marriage as in Islam is open to

polygamy and in the past which married up to fifty wives (McCoy, 1988). But concubinage as a form of marriage life is not allowed in Dagaaba culture and as a result, Dagaaba Muslims spurn it. The basis is not on Islamic Law but on the influence of Dagaaba culture. There is no room for illegitimate children in Dagaaba culture (See 5.2.2).

5.3.4. Women

Islamic marriage has given the Dagaaba Muslim woman more legal rights than the traditional Dagaaba woman. In the spiritual field, men and women are equal in the eyes of God and have similar religious duties (Qur'ān 33:35). For example, men and women are admonished to believe in God and do good works in order to enter *Al-Jannah* (The Garden) (Qur'ān 16:97; 40:40). Both men and women are required to give alms (Qur'ān 57:17). Like men, believing and righteous women will go to *Al-Jannah* (Qur'ān 36: 55, 56; 43:70) while the wrong-doers will suffer in *An-Nār* (The Fire) (Qur'ān 37:22). However, in these verses, it appears the fate of women in the afterlife (*Al-Ākhīrah*) is linked with that of their husbands. If their husbands are good they will both go to *Al-Jannah* but if their husbands are evil they all enter *An Nār*.

Legally, women have rights but as regards divorce, the right of men to reconcile with the divorced wife are higher than that of women (Qur'ān 2:228). In other words, according to the Qur'ān, reconciliation with the divorced wife before the end of the three menstrual periods is the prerogative of men. The conditions of a divorced woman in Islam are better than those of a divorced woman in Dagaaba society. A divorced woman must wait three menstrual cycles (Qur'ān 2:228) before she can remarry. During that period she is to

remain in the husband's Cape Coast <https://ir.ucc.edu.gh/xmlui> University of Cape Coast and he must support her (Qur'ān 65:6). This is a privilege that a Dagao woman does not enjoy. When a Dagao woman is sent away by the husband she goes back to her natal home and is free to remarry, though legally she remains his wife. Divorce occurred when the bride wealth has been returned to her family. During this period of separation she is not entitled to any maintenance from the husband.

Economically, women in the Islamic tradition can inherit, but their portion is usually half of the share of a man of the same degree of kinship. Daughters, for example, inherit half as much as sons, sisters half of brothers' portion, and mother half the inheritance of fathers. Women inherit from their husbands and husbands from their wives, but again according to the rule of half a share (Qur'ān 4: 7-20, 175). Women too have the right to own their own property and to make a will (Qur'ān 4:12). In Dagaaba culture, a woman in the past could neither inherit from her father nor from her husband, and a woman could not make a will. Hence in the area of inheritance the Muslim woman is more privileged than the traditional Dagao woman.

Socially, however, Muslim women are subject to men because of the law of veiling, seclusion and the separation of sexes. The social subjection of women to men is endorsed by Qur'ān 4:34. Bayḍāwī in the interpretation of this verse gives the following reasons why women should be subjected to men: prophecy, religious leadership, sainthood, pilgrimage rites, the giving of evidence in the law-courts, the duties of the holy war, worship in the mosque on the day of assembly (Friday), and the electing of chiefs are all exclusively reserved to men (Levy, 1971) and on this account, women should be subjected to men. Muslim feminists obviously will not accept this interpretation today.

under the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion enjoy more social mobility than the Muslim woman of the *Shari'ah*. Dagaaba Muslim women can farm, go to the bush to fetch firewood, and go from market to market to sell things and buy soup ingredients. They can attend traditional funerals and even sleep at the funeral ground, and attend weddings, naming ceremonies of relatives and friends without hindrance such as “lowering their gazes” (Qur’ān 24:31) or going out without a male guardian. They can stay in the company of men who are not their close relatives without breaking the *Shari'a*.

But there are areas where the Dagaaba Muslim woman is more empowered than the traditional Dagaaba woman. For example, in conversations with Muslim women at Tabiesi, Sankana and Jirapa it was asserted that Islam has given more economic rights to them than their traditional sisters. In Islam the *sadāqi* (nuptial gift) is given to the bride and if the woman is business minded the *sadāqi* can be used as capital for investment. Furthermore, traditional Dagaaba women use the profit from shea nuts extraction, pito brewery, cake making, and sale of fire wood, to prepare soup to feed the family. Culturally, the man provides the foodstuff and the woman provides the soup ingredients. Dagaaba Muslim men on the other hand, give the woman “market money” (*daa-libir*) or soup-ingredient money (*zier-libir*) to buy the soup ingredients on the market day to prepare food for the family for the week. Strictly speaking, the women said that there is no “bed” for the man if he refuses to provide the “market money”, since the wife whose duty it is to cook for the family that day or that week is entitled to the bed of the husband.

5.4.0. Death

Death is the final stage of one's transition from this life to the afterlife. This section examines Dagaaba Muslims' funeral performances at death and after death. The aim again is to demonstrate how Dagaaba Muslims try to live their Islamic faith in accordance with the *sunna* of the Prophet and the role of Dagaaba traditional authorities in Muslim funeral performances according to custom. The interplay of Islam and Dagaaba practices and beliefs will be looked into to prove that Dagaaba traditional religion remains an obstacle even after Dagaaba's conversion to Islam.

© University of Cape Coast. In Islam, death is not the end of life. According to Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang, it is the end of the appointed period (*ajal*) decreed by God to conclude the period of man's testing in the world (Interview with Shaykh ʿUthmān Naa-gang 28/1/11 at Samatigu). For this reason, death is termed *wafāt* that is, the fulfilment or accomplishment of a man's term of life. This is confirmed in the Qur'ān. After the disobedience of Adam and Hawwa in the Garden, God expelled them to earth as a "dwelling place" and as a "source of provision for a time" (Qur'ān 2:36). The words "for a time" refer to the period of expiration of the terms of their lives (Abdul-Rauf, 1982; ʿAzzām, 1979). Human existence, therefore, is seen as an extension to eternity and so death becomes merely a transitional phase during which the soul (*nafs*) temporarily remains apart from the decomposing body and to be reunited with it again at the resurrection (Rahimuddin, 1406/1985). In Qur'ān 57:2, it is God who "gives life and causes death". But if God created death, is death a positive or a negative reality? One is inclined to believe that Muslims belief in predestination makes death a positive reality.

Dagaaba traditional religion adherents also believe that human beings are created for eternity and that death is "going home to the land of the ancestors" (see 3.8.). But they do not believe that it is God who causes death or that it is God alone who determines when and how a person should die. Hence the Dagaaba traditional believer who wants to know the cause of death through divination or "carrying of the corpse to indicate the human agent" (Kuukure, 1985, p. 111) fails to understand that it is God, who alone causes death according to Dagaaba Muslims' belief. Again, the attribution of the cause of death to witchcraft or sorcery is also seen by Dagaaba Muslims as lack of faith

in the absolute power of God. Dagaaba Muslims believe that death whether due to old age, sickness, and drowning, lightning, thunder or by accident is an act of God and not caused by the ancestors or evil spirits. It is therefore clear that Dagaaba Muslims' belief in the absolute power of God leaves no room for the notion of "bad death", such as death by drowning or lightning, which according to the traditional religionists, are punishments by the spirits.

5.4.1. The soul

In Islam and Dagaaba traditional religion death cannot be defined simply as the "separation of body and soul". Death is the transition of the whole person, body and soul to the next life. According to Dagaaba, at death the breath or soul (*vɔɔrɔng*) cuts itself from the body; the shadow (*dasuulong*) disappears; the body (*eangan*) decomposes (see 3.8.). But these modes of the soul's being are reintegrated into the soul in its new state. Thus after death it is the person, body and soul, in a new state who journeys to the land of the ancestors (Kuukure, 1985). Hence the dead person can feel pain, thirst, and hunger and can also enjoy food and drink. In this light, Muslims, who believe that souls are created by God, joined to the body at birth, taken from the body at death and reunited with the body on the resurrection day is not Qur'anic because the accounts of creation and resurrection in the Qur'ān 7:189; 31:28) do not state that the *nafs* is a soul that joins or enters the body.

On the contrary, in the Qur'ān it is the entire person in all his physical, spiritual and emotional capacities that is created, who dies and will be recreated on judgment day. Thus the Qur'ān says: "Your creation and resurrection are but like that of a single person (*nafs*)" (Q 31:28); "Every

person (*nafs*) is held accountable for what he earned (Q 74:38), or “[On a day] when a person (*nafs*) will know what he sent forward and what he left behind” (Q 82:5).

It is this concept of the dead as a person (body and soul) that determines Dagaaba funeral performances and burial rites. The rites are carried out so that the “dead-person” will journey to the land of the ancestors without enduring pain, suffering and cleansed of all impurities. It also determines the Dagaaba description of *Dapare* (Heaven) as a place of enjoyment. The concept of the dead as a “person” also explains as shown below, why traditional Dagaaba interfere in the funeral performances of Dagaaba Muslims. The Qur’anic concept of the dead as *nafs* also explains the motivation of Dagaaba Muslims’ offering of *sarka* (Arabic: *ṣadaqa*: ritual alms) for the dead and the attentive burial rites which are meant to avoid giving pain to the dead person.

5.4.2. Funeral performances before burial

This section deals with the preparation Dagaaba Muslims make to usher the dead person (*nafs*) into eternity in accordance with Islamic burial rituals (*janā'iz*). The burial rites include the washing of the body, shrouding, funeral prayers, transportation of the body to the cemetery, and burial with the face towards Makkah. In these rites, the interplay of Dagaaba culture and Islam is illustrated.

The head of the household, the *tengdaana* and elders are masters of ceremonies at every death among the Dagaaba. Their task is to make sure that custom is followed whether the dead person is a traditionalist, Muslim or Christian. Custom demands that the corpse be laid on stage, public mourning,

Muslims on the other hand, do not accept this traditional way of mourning the dead. They prefer to bury the dead person in the Muslim way. The body is bathed and shrouded. It is then laid on a special woven local mat with the face turned towards Makkah in a room with women sitting around chanting the *kalimat ut-tawhīd* (See also Karim, 1994, Vol. 3, Book 3, Ch. 30. Section 2, No. 1445, No. 19) The chanting of the *kalimat ut-tawhīd* (“Proclamation of the Oneness and Unity of God), according to the traditions of the Prophet, has the efficacy of tranquilizing the soul (*nafs*) as it struggles to transit from this life to the next life. Just as birth is a moment of pain, likewise, death is also a moment of struggle. It is also believed that a dying person who recites the *kalimat ut-tawhīd* is sure to enter Paradise even if he committed illegal sexual intercourse (adultery) and theft (Matraji, 2006: *Sahīh al-Bukhari*, Vol. 2, Book 23, Ch. 1. No. 1237, p. 241). Furthermore, the *kalimat ut-tawhīd* professed by the lips of the dying person purifies him of grave sins and liberates him from “the punishment in the grave”, “the punishment in the Hell-fire” and “the afflictions of the antichrist” (Matraji, 2006: *Sahīh al-Bukhari*, Vol. 2, Book 23, Ch. 87, No. 1376, p. 331).

Outside the room where the shrouded body is laid are the *Karamamine* (Qur’ān teachers), who are seated on mats chanting Qur’ān 36 or 13 in obedience to the Messenger of Allāh who commanded, “Read the chapter ‘Yasin’ over your dying man” (Karim, 1994, Vol. 3, Book 3, Ch. 30. Section 2, No. 1445, No. 20, p. 19). Meanwhile to avoid confrontation, the traditionalists who insist on the traditional way are on the family funeral ground where the mourning and the playing of the xylophones take place. But confrontation is

After the body is washed and shrouded, the Muslim leaders inform the traditional elders, who give them the go-ahead to bury the dead person in the Muslim way. This process again shows the strength of Dagaaba traditional authority on Dagaaba Muslims when it comes to funeral performances. Like traditional believers, care is taken that anything that comes into contact with the corpse during the bath such as the sponge, hair, blade, and blood, are not accessible to anybody. Even the water that runs out of the bath is collected so that people cannot have access to it. It is believed that such materials can be used to make “medicine” (*tii*) to harm one’s enemy (Interview with Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymān Naa-Uree and Nūhu Kyegone 1/3/11 & 24/3/11 at Serekperi). It must be noted that Dagaaba Muslims do not allow their traditional or Christian brothers and sisters to touch the corpse after the *janāba* (ritual bath) and shrouding. The shrouding termed *sutrah* (covering) in Dagaaba Muslims’ view is a prayer that God may “cover” the evil deeds and personal fallings of the

dead person (*nafs*). A man is fully dressed in seven cloths and a woman in five. Muslims believe in odd numbers and do things according to odd numbers because "Allāh is *Witr* [One] and loves the *witr*" (i.e. odd numbers)(Matraji, 2006: *Sahīh al-Bukhari*, Vol. 8, Book 80, Ch. 68, No. 6410, p. 291).

The dead person is carried out to an open space for the *Ṣalāt al-janāza* (prayer for the dead). The coffin is put on the ground with the face facing the *Ka'ba*. The Muslims form rows (*sufuf*) in odd numbers of three, five or seven behind the coffin. If the dead person is a man, the Imām stands by the waist to pray for him. If she is a woman he stands near her shoulder to say the prayer. The prayer for the dead is significant. It shows that man's salvation does not depend on good deeds but on appeal for divine mercy. The Imām pronounces the *niyya* (intention) and utters four *takbīrāt* (the magnifying of the Lord: Qur'ān 17:111). At the first *takbīra* he recites the *Fātiha*. At the second he utters the eulogy on the Prophet Muhammad, and at the third, he pronounces the *du'ā'* for the dead person. At the fourth for those who take part in the service. The prayer ends with the two *taslimāt* (saying: "peace be with you"). The pronouncement of the *takbīrāt* is declaring the person dead. The body is then carried to the grave for burial. The traditionalists bury a dead man in the grave (*boḡ-suule*) lying on his right arm with the face directed towards the east and a woman on her left side with the face orientated towards the west. Dagaaba Muslims bury both in the recess in the eastern side of the grave called *lahd* with the face facing Makkah. The floor of the recess (*lahd*) is lined with soft sand.

An elder of the household of the deceased goes into the grave to make sure that the dead person is properly laid, and that his arms or legs are not

twisted under it. The people believe that the dead person is conscious of pain, and the household elder makes sure that no pressure is exerted upon the body. The belief that the dead experience pain even in death is common to both Muslims and traditionalists. The elder of the household also makes sure that no living thing, not even an ant is allowed in the grave. The belief among Dagaaba is that people who are shocked at the death of a loved one can turn into an ant to be buried with the deceased person. If it is not removed but buried with the dead person, that person would also die (Interview with Karama Sulaymān Zeiy on 23/1/11 at Kaleo). This belief is not shared by Dagaaba Muslims but because of respect for the elders and for the sake of peaceful co-existence the Muslims allow the performance of this ritual.

The entrance of the recess is sealed with dried-mud bricks or cement blocks. The one sealing the recess recites Qur'ān 20:55 over three balls of mud. One ball is laid by the head of the dead person with the words "*minhā khalaqnākum*" ("We created you from it (the earth)"); the second ball by the waist while saying "*wa fihā nu'īdukum*" ("and to it we shall restore you"); the third ball is laid by the feet with the words "*wa minhā nukhrijukum tāratān 'ukhrā*" ("and from it we shall bring you forth yet a second time") (Interview with Shaykh °Uthmān Naa-gang 28/1/11 at Samatigu). The rest of the recess is sealed with mud-bricks and the grave filled with earth. The imām then invites all to pray for the dead person so that he may meet good angels on his way. Each person places his right hand on the grave or points his right hand toward it and says, "*Allahumma, Ighfir lahu wa Irhamhu*" ("O God! Forgive him and have mercy on him"). The undertakers and the rest return to the mosque or to

the family house of the deceased where a *du'ā'* is said for the repose of the soul of the dead person.

The following day in the morning, members of the family and relatives sit outside the family house for the *ansoma* (greetings of sympathy and condolences by friends, relations and sympathizers). This is the occasion for Muslims, Christians and traditional religionists to meet together and express their solidarity with the family of the deceased through words of condolence and contributions in cash or in kind. The burial rites are followed by the funeral rites (*sarka*). The funeral and burial rites in this section demonstrates once again, the influence of Dagaaba practices and beliefs on Dagaaba Muslims and the impact of traditional leadership on Muslims' affairs.

5.4.3. Funeral performance after the burial

Dagaaba Muslims believe in the performance of “funeral rites” which cleanse the dead person of sin and grant him the mercy of God. The “funeral rites” for the dead among Dagaaba Muslims are called *sarka* (“offering of arms on behalf of the dead”: Arabic, *ṣadaqa*). The period of mourning for a dead Muslim is forty days during which prayers (*du'ā'*) are said for the dead, food is prepared and given to people as alms (*sarka*) on behalf of the dead, and at the end of the mourning period the whole Qur'ān is recited (*khatma*) to bring forgiveness to the dead (Interview with Shaykh ^cUthmān Naa-gang 28/1/11 at Samatigu).

The offering of *sarka* on behalf of the dead is not practised by all Muslims. The *Aḥmadīs* and *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah* consider it an innovation and so condemn it. However, Dagaaba Muslims like the majority

University of Cape Coast find the basis for its celebration in the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* literature. Sūrah 71:28 and 9:114 allude to the Prophets Noah and Abraham praying for the forgiveness of their dead parents. These verses indicate that believers can intercede for dead believing men and women. Furthermore, in Sūrah 11:115 it is said that good deeds wipe away sins. This means that good deeds performed on behalf of the dead can wipe away their sins. Also, according to the traditions of the Prophet, it is the duty of every Muslim to pray for the dead and to give alms on their behalf. It is narrated by ʿĀ'isha that a man came to Muḥammad and said: "My mother died suddenly and I think that if she had lived she would have given charity. So, if I give charity now on her behalf, will she get the reward? The Prophet said: 'yes'" (Matraji 2006: *Saḥīḥ Bukhari*, Vol. 2, Book 23, Ch. 95, No. 1388, p. 339). From the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* literature, therefore, interceding for the dead through prayer (*duʿā'*), recitation of the Qur'ān and offering *sarka* (alms) are Islamic and meritorious. The offering of *sarka* begins on the third day after burial and continues on the seventh, twelfth, and fortieth day. The mourning of the dead person ends after the fortieth day *sarka* offering but Muslims are encouraged to pray for the dead at all times.

For Dagaaba Muslims, death does not separate the dead person from the family. In the interviews conducted in the Nadawli District, there is the belief that on the third day after burial the dead person comes back to the family on visit. It is good that when he comes he sees the family praying for him, that is, offering *sarka* for him. On the seventh and twelfth day, the dead person will ask permission from God to come again to visit the family. The same visit to earth will take place on the fortieth day and one year after death. Any time the

dead person visits and his family "praying for him" ("a er'o hiina"), it shows that they still remember him. Moreover, it is said that on the third, seventh, twelfth and fortieth day the angels come to the grave to interrogate the dead person and the merits of offering the *sarka* help to reduce the pain and embarrassment of the interrogation (Interview with Imām Al-Hājj Sulaymāni Singnaa 11/2/11 at Zang).

It is also said that on the third day after burial, the dead person begins to experience some *tuola* ("hardships"). The *maasa* (millet cakes) that is made and distributed to the funeral guests and the poor bring *hiina* (relief or comfort) to the dead person. On the seventh day, the body begins to swell. Again the making of the *maasa* and sharing it out, the *du'ā'*, and the recitation of the Qur'ān are meant to ask God to give *hiina* to the dead person. On the twelfth day the dead person in the grave undergoes intense pain. To release him of the pain, the living again offer *sarka* (Interview with Jāmi^c Imām 'Umar Abū Bakari, 8/2/11 at Tibani).

On the fortieth day, the head of the dead person breaks away from the rest of the body in the recess of the grave. Once again, they prepare *maasa* or rice, offer prayers and recite the Qur'ān so that God may give him *hiina*. After a year the body begins to disintegrate. The left side of the body beginning from the neck to the waist breaks off, and the left leg also breaks away from the right leg. This process again is a moment of intense suffering for the dead person. The offering of *saabo* (*tuozarfi*) to the poor, the recitation of the Qur'ān and the intercessions are believed to relieve him of pain (Interview with Jāmi^c Imām 'Umar Abū Bakari, 8/2/11 at Tibani). The mourning of the dead Muslim comes to an end with the fortieth day *sarka* offering. In these ceremonies, the

emphasis is on sin and mercy. The ceremonies are meant to cleanse the dead person of sin and that God may show him his mercy. This shows that in Islam, salvation does not depend on good deeds but on the mercy of God. One is therefore right to say that Dagaaba Muslim belief about the transition of the soul (*nafs*) falls within the worldview of Dagaaba. Dagaaba see in the practice of their religion a supernatural means to control their surroundings, to have protection against evil spirits, to have prosperity, a means to ensure the purification of the souls so that it can enter the land of the ancestors after death.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that death in Dagaaba society, is an event that involves all members of the family. This has certain repercussions for Dagaaba Muslims. First of all, the head of household sees it as his cultural duty to make sure that the performance of the pre-burial and post-burial rites are carried out in accordance with custom. Secondly, the traditional authorities believe that if the dead person is not buried culturally, he or she will not gain admittance in the land of the ancestors. Because of this conflict of interest death is often an occasion of tension between traditional religionists and Muslims. The Muslims want to follow their Islamic ritual and the traditionalists want things done in the traditional way. It is not that Dagaaba Muslims accommodate to traditional practices willingly but it is the cultural and social pressure that leads them to tolerate some traditional practices. Nevertheless, Dagaaba Muslims, as minorities in a traditional environment faithfully try to perform the funeral rites in accordance with the tenets of Islam so that the dead person can lie in peace in the grave while awaiting the Day of Judgement (*yam-ud-dīn*).

Widow-inheritance is another area of reference in which Dagaaba traditional religion interferes with the faith of Dagaaba Muslims. The fortieth-day offering of *sarka* is the final funeral rite for the dead person after which the widower can re-marry. A Muslim widower has no purification rites to undergo. The widow mourns her dead husband for four months and ten days (*‘iddah*) in accordance with the *Shari‘a*. The widow can express her grief by weeping but she is not allowed to wail and shout because “the dead person is punished by the weeping of his relatives” (Matraji, 2006, *Sahīh Al-Bukhārī*, Vol, 2, Book 23, Ch. 32, No. 1287, p. 271). During the mourning period she is not permitted to beautify herself or to re-marry. The prohibition on re-marriage is to ensure that she does not re-marry with the pregnancy of the deceased husband. When the period of waiting and mourning (*‘iddah*) is over, she performs the *janāba* (ritual bath) and is now free to re-marry. If she has children, it is recommended that she re-marries someone from the husband’s family so that she can stay back to take care of the children. A new marriage is contracted to show that the woman is no longer the wife of the dead husband and that her children by the new husband are not the children of the deceased (Interview with Shaykh ‘Uthmān Naa-gang 28/1/11 at Samatigu). The new husband gives her the marriage gift (*sadāqi*) since in Islam the bride wealth gives the man sexual rights over the woman.

Widow marriage is one of the challenges facing Dagaaba Muslims. Dagaaba traditional religionists attempt to marry Muslim widows and this leads to conflicts in the extended family. In Dagaaba culture a younger brother can inherit the widow of his elder brother. Islam, however, forbids levirate

marriage and widow inheritance (Qur'an 4:19). Although levirate marriage is against the *Shari'ah*, Dagaaba Muslims encourage the widow to re-marry within the family of the deceased because of the care of the children. But what is worrying for Dagaaba Muslims is the younger traditional religionist who wants to inherit the wife of an elder Muslim brother. This is customarily permissible but un-Islamic. This cultural practice impedes Dagaaba Muslims in the practice of their Islamic faith in Dagaabaland.

5.5.0. Dagaaba Traditional Religion, Muslims and Other Believers

The study so far has proved that Dagaaba traditional religion was not only an obstacle to Dagaaba conversion but continues to influence Dagaaba Muslims after conversion. This section demonstrates that Dagaaba traditional religion also determines the attitude of Dagaaba Muslims to other believers. Generally, there are cordial relations between Dagaaba Muslims, Christians and traditional religionists. An analysis of the following elements of traditional life, such as, Dagaaba religious philosophy of life, the idea of conversion, obedience to the taboos of the land, and the principle of "We are all one" will bring out the reasons that account for the peaceful co-existence between Dagaaba Muslims and other believers in Dagaabaland.

5.5.1. Dagaaba religious philosophy of life

In the past, a Dagao never went to the farm, hunting or travel without carrying a bow and arrows and an axe. The significance of this custom was that in the event of an encounter with an enemy, one might shoot all his arrows in self-defence and become handicapped. But with the possession of an axe in

custom underlines the religious philosophy of life of Dagaaba. Dagaaba do not see things or events in terms of “this” or “that” (“bow” or “axe”) as in the Western mentality. The Dagaaba sees life in terms of “this-and-that” (“bow-and-axe”). This is what Azumah (2000) succinctly expressed in the saying, “Too much meat does not spoil the soup”. This is not a reference to adding plenty of one kind of meat to the soup pot. It refers to adding different kinds of meat to the soup pot, goat *and* beef *and* fish *and* snails. Thus while the Westerner says: “The fewer the merrier”, the Dagaaba would say: “The more the merrier”. With this background one understands why Sundiata, the founder of the Mali Empire, and Sonni ^oAlī, the founder of Songhay Empire, were both Muslims yet turned to traditional religion for spiritual support in their wars against their enemies (Levtzion, 2000). They went to wars armed with the “power of Islam *and* the power of traditional religion”.

Similarly, one understands why the Asantehene of Kumasi fortified themselves spiritually with herbs, roots and rings by the traditional medicine man still turned to the *Karamos* for charms, amulets, talismans in their military expeditions (Wilks, 1966). It is not surprising, therefore, that Dagaaba traditional chiefs solicited the spiritual services of both the *Karama* and the traditional medicine man (*tii-soba*). Culturally, it is impolite to ask a Dagaaba at a party what he would drink. This implies that he has the choice of drinking guinness or beer. But it is not a matter of choosing “guinness” *or* “beer” but drinking “guinness *and* beer”. Under the influence of this philosophy of ambivalence in life, Dagaaba Muslims regard themselves as “Muslims and Dagaaba”. Hence they do not see the traditional adherents as “unbelievers” but

believer is still his father, mother, brother and sister. The philosophy of "this-and-that" forms the basis for peaceful co-existence between the various believers in Dagaabaland and syncretism. Hence Dagaaba Muslims like other West African Muslims are willing to accept Islam and drinking of alcohol, the Qur'ān and talismans, the *Shari'a* and polygamy, Islamic festivals and traditional festivals and *Imām* with the *tengdaana* (Cf. Trimmingham, 1962).

5.5.2. Conversion

Religion in African traditional society is about communion, relationship with the gods, with the ancestors, with the spiritual world (Assimeng, 1989). This is what the Dagaaba called *maarong* or *engmaarong* (peace). One is born in the particular society in order to participate in the religious peace of the people (Mbiti, 1970). In this context a person cannot be converted from one tribal religion to another. Hence for the African in general and Dagaaba in particular, conversion does not demand change of affinity or tribe. Religion does not divide families. Dagaaba believe in the unity of the family and in diversity of beliefs. Influenced by this concept of conversion, Dagaaba Muslims still live in the traditional family with Christians and traditional believers. They participate in all social aspects of the family life, common meals, communal farming, weddings, and funerals to show that although they have converted to Islam they are still part of the family.

In sections 3.6.1. and 3.6.2. of the study, it was explained that each Dagaaba settlement has a *tengdaana* who is the custodian of the *tengan* (earth-shrine) and owner of the land. One of his functions was to maintain peace and harmony in the community by ensuring that all settlers obey the taboos of the land. Some of the taboos of the land are the shedding of human blood, having sexual intercourse in the bush, bringing medicine into the village that is injurious to human-life and burying a dead pregnant woman without extracting the unborn baby from the womb. Murder and sex defile the earth and demand purification through sacrifice. It is believed that anybody who brings medicine into the village that is harmful and can kill human beings will become mad through the curse of the earth-spirit (Interview with Ping *tengdaana*, Ping Naa Yirwer and Elders 15/3/11 at Ping). These taboos are not incompatible with the Islamic faith and both traditional believers and Muslims observe these taboos but for different intentions. The Muslims out of respect for the *tengdaana* and the traditionalists as an act of faith and devotion. The observance of the taboos of the land by all inhabitants guarantees peaceful co-existence in Dagaaba society.

5.5.4. “We are all one”

The social organization of the Dagaaba is based on kinship. This succinctly is expressed in the maxim that: *Te zaa bon yen* (“We are all one”). All in the family are one; all in the clan are one. The sacred basis of this “oneness” is the totem. The members of the clan or tribe are one because they share a common totem. The Muslim community has replaced the older kinships

and tribal communities organized along blood relationships in West Africa with faith in "Allāh". Yet Muslims in West Africa believe that the Muslim community is a "clan" among the clans of West Africa. This is illustrated by the story that the Qur'ānic Prophet during his flight from Makkah to Madina was thirsty and a pig guided him to an oasis of fresh water. He was saved from dying of thirst by the pig and because of that he ordered all his followers to treat the pig with respect (Trimingham, 1959). This story is well known in West Africa and 'Abdullāh Kang-e-song of Jirapa-Tampoe, in a personal communication (May 18, 2009) narrated the same story. Explaining the story Kang-E-song said that Muḥammad is the "ancestor" of the Muslims and the pig is their "totem". Consequently, they do not eat pork or maltreat the pig because it is their totem, and all Muslims are *mabiiri* ("children of the same mother") because they have one "totem", the pig. This assimilation shows the influence of Dagaaba totemic beliefs on the attitudes and behaviour of Dagaaba Muslims.

Although Dagaaba Muslims are one because they have a common "totem" (the pig), they are one with their Dagaaba traditional religionists by virtue of being "Dagaaba". As a result Dagaaba and Muslims say, *Te zaa bon yen* ("We are all one"). Influenced by the principle of *Te zaa bon yen* Dagaaba Muslims feel obliged to be tolerant towards their Dagaaba brothers and sisters. For example, in Sankana the Mosque is sandwiched by a drinking bar to the south and another to the east. There is conflict of interest when the market day falls on Friday. The Muslims abhor the presence of drinking bars near the Mosque but because the owners of the bars are Dagaaba and because of the principle *Te zaa bon yen* they tolerate the situation and tolerate their Dagaaba

brothers and sisters who frequent the bars (Interview with Imām Sha^cbu 9/3/11 at Sankana).

A similar scenario persists in Jirapa. The Mosque is surrounded by a drinking bar to the north, kiosks to the east and pig pens to the south-west. This is a situation of constant tension and conflict, especially on the market day which falls every Sunday. But here again the Muslims are handicapped because the owners of the bar, kiosks and pig pens are Dagaaba (Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari and Nūhu Moghtari 6/4/11 at Jirapa). The Waala Muslims who visit Sankana on the market day and Jirapa on Sunday condemn the situation and demand that the Muslims of the two communities demolish these structures. For the Waala Muslims, the owners of these structures are “unbelievers” but to the Dagaaba Muslims they are their brothers and sisters and so they are all one (*Te zaa bon yen*). No radical action should be taken against them. Furthermore, on the basis of *Te zaa bon yen* Dagaaba Muslims can take children of traditional relatives into their homes to bring them up and likewise, traditional relatives can take in Muslim children to raise them up without changing their religion. Hence Dagaaba traditional religion and cultural practices provide the values for peaceful co-existence between Dagaaba Muslims and other believers in Dagaabaland.

5.6.0. Influence of Islam on Dagaaba

5.6.1. Influence of Islam on Dagaaba beliefs

It is not only Dagaaba traditional religion which has an influence on Dagaaba Muslims but Islam has also influenced Dagaaba beliefs and material

This section examines the influence of Islam on Dagaaba beliefs and material culture. From the study some Dagaaba became Muslims not because they were attracted by the doctrine of Islam but more by the social and cultural aspects of Islam. Their conversion to Islam did not demand any theological knowledge of Islam. All that was required of them was the acknowledgement of the fundamental doctrine of the *kalimat ush-shahāda* ("Witness of Faith) and its public confession, "There is no god but Allāh, and Muḥammad is His Apostle" (Interview with 'Abdullai Dongsieong, Yahya Dongsieong and Issahaku Ombonaa 7/2/11 at Ombo; Interview with Imām Muhammad Sutige 30/3/11 at Tuopare). They were then taught the ritual injunctions and related prayers. Once they became Muslims, their fundamental task was to make their Islamic faith meaningful by appropriating and assimilating Dagaaba traditional religious ideas and practices and at the same time to make their Islamic faith distinct from the Dagaaba traditional religion by living according to the teachings of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

An important achievement in the process of assimilation is the acceptance and transformation of the concept of the "being" and "doings" of *Ngmen* (God). The traditionalists call God "Naangmen" which implies that "Naangmen" is the "Chief Spirit" or "Supreme Spirit". "Naangmen", therefore is the "Chief" of all spirits, all divinities, all deities, in short, of all spiritual beings. The name implies the existence of "other spirits". The Dagaaba Muslims on the other hand, do not use "Naangmen" when speaking of God. They simply call him *Ngmen* (God/Spirit) to proclaim clearly that *Ngmen* is "The only One" and there is no other. Their concept of *Ngmen* becomes clearer in the translation of the *kalimat ut-Tawhīd* into Dagaare: "*daana zaa ba kyebe,*

ka Ngmen nagna” (“There is no other lord but Ngmen”). This means that Ngmen is the only “Lord” and there is no other lord which exists.

The translation of the *kalimat ut-Tawhīd* is a rejection of the existence and efficacy of the *kpime* (ancestors), *tengan* (earth-spirit), *tengama* (earth-shrines), *baa* (the river-spirit), *saa* (the rain-god) and other spirits. For the Dagaaba Muslims Ngmen is one in His being and in His actions, and as such He is the only One worthy of prayer and worship. “To worship God” or “to pray to God” Dagaaba Muslims use the expression *a puor Ngmen*. To invite someone to prayer or to the worship of God they say, “*Ka te puor Ngmen*” (“Let us pray or worship God”). Those who do not worship the One God are classified as “*Ba ba puoro Ngmen*” (that is, “They do not pray God”) an expression that has come to refer to the Dagaaba traditional religionists. Hence they call them *Ngmen ba puorba* (“Those who do not pray God”).

Ngmen is the only One who is worthy of “prayer” and to “pray” anything other than *Ngmen* is to become an unbeliever. Also, whereas the traditionalists call “sacrifice” *bagre* the Muslims refer to all “idols” as *baga* and “idol worship” as *bagre*. Hence instead of using *bagre* (sacrifice) they use *sarka* (*sadaqa*), which refers to the slaughtering of an animal, not to a god but in the name of *Ngmen* and the meat of which is distributed to the poor as alms. The one who provides the animal for the *sarka* offering (“sacrifice”) does not eat the meat as a sign of self-denial

For Dagaaba Muslims, *sarka* means “alms” and “sacrifice” and it has come to replace the traditional word *bagre* (sacrifice). It has also acquired a new orientation. Dagaaba traditional religionists sacrifice to the *kpime* (ancestors). Dagaaba Muslims on their part slaughter an animal (*sarka*) in the

offerings (*sarka*) to the poor for the blessings (*baraka*) of *Ngmen*.

In Dagaaba traditional religion, sacrifices were seldom offered directly to *Naangmen*, although Der (1999; see also Bekye, 2009), is of the view that occasionally, sacrifices were offered to Him directly. Generally, *Naangmen* was worshipped in conjunction with the ancestors and the other divinities (Kpiebaya, 1991; 1973). For Dagaaba Muslims, *Ngmen* is worshipped directly and is the only one worthy of *puoru* (worship) and *sarka* (sacrifice). Although Dagaaba Muslims do not worship *Ngmen* through the ancestors they pray for the dead (*kpime*) that *Ngmen* may have mercy on them and forgive them their sins. They also believe that the dead visit the family members during the forty days of mourning (See 5.4.3.). This is the reason for the *sarka* offerings for the dead during the forty-day mourning period.

God is not only one in being and worthy of worship but also one in His activities. In Dagaaba religion, God does not play a major role in the day-to-day affairs of the Dagaaba. The traditionalists believe that evil does not come from *Naangmen* but from the ancestors, evil spirits or bad human beings. The Dagaaba Muslims have a new understanding of God's doings in the world. All happenings, good and bad, come from *Ngmen*. Nothing happens without His permission and knowledge. Everything is commanded by His will, protected by His will and guided by His will. Hence Dagaaba Muslims commit their future endeavours to the will of *Ngmen* with hope, *In shā' Allah* ("If *Ngmen* wills it"). They surrender their misfortune to the will of *Ngmen* with faith, *Ma shā' Allah* ("It is what *Ngmen* has decreed or commanded"). In the face of suffering or

death their attitude is one of complete trust in God (*tawwakkul*) no matter what happens.

In the belief of Dagaaba Muslims, morality is not based on the will of the ancestors but on the will of *Ngmen*, and the will of *Ngmen* is known not through oracles or divination but through the Qur'ān; and submission to *Ngmen* is not obeying taboos but the *sharī'ah* (the Divine Law). The life of the individual is not under the control of the will of the ancestors but the individual must direct his life in accordance with the will of *Ngmen*, and surrender himself to the will of *Ngmen* in good times and bad times. He must surrender his time five times in a day (*ṣalāt*) to *Ngmen*, one day of the week (Friday *Ṣalāt*) to *Ngmen*, one month of the year (The Fast of *Ramaḍān*) to *Ngmen* and his talents as alms (*zakāt*) to *Ngmen*, and finally, in death, he surrenders his soul (*nafs*) to *Ngmen* in faith saying: "*Innā lillāhi wa-innā ilayhi rāji'ūn*" ("We belong to God, and to Him we do return", Qur'ān 2:156).

Dagaaba Muslims believe that recitation of the Qur'ān is a powerful means of warding off disasters and protection from evil spirits. The belief in the power of the Qur'ān to protect from evil spirits is demonstrated, as the author observed, by the use of Qur'ānic verses written on door-posts or thresholds of rooms or houses of Muslims. According to Mālik Andoro of Nanvilli, the Qur'ān has power over witches and evil spirits. It is a weapon against all forms of evil spirits. He mentioned *Sūra Yāsin* (Qur'ān 36) and *Āyat ul-Kursiyyūn* (Qur'ān 2: 255) as the most appropriate portions of the Qur'ān to protect oneself against evil spirits. "Whoever recites *Sūra Yāsin* before he gets up in the morning will be granted a day without difficulties until night fall", he told the author. He added that "whoever recites it at night, will be granted a

will protect one from thieves and burglars if recited once before retiring for the night. It is also efficacious in exorcising evil spirits and ghosts. Mālik Andoro recommends that anyone troubled with nightmares in sleep should recite it three times before going to bed (Interview with Mālik Andoro 9/3/11 at Nanvilli).

On account of the belief in the power of the Qur'ān to protect and save from evil spirits, Dagaaba Muslims are of the opinion that the Qur'ān should be translated into the Dagaare language so that ordinary Muslims can access the spiritual *baraka* (power) of the Qur'ān for daily living and improve their prayer life (Interview with Al-Ḥajj Yūsuf Benie Botuo 29/3/11). Al-Ḥajj Sulaymān Naa-uure and Al-Ḥajj Ibrāhīm Poyie on their part, think that another way to drive out evil spirits in a village is to build a Mosque, "the House of Allāh". This is the reason why each of them has attached a mosque to his residence. Though the Qur'ān denies witchcraft most Dagaaba Muslims believe that the power of the Qur'ān and the mosque with the permission of God is powerful weapon against evil spirits and witchcraft. This is the reason why some traditionalists and Christians wear amulets made of certain Qur'ānic verses under their clothes for protection.

5.6.2. Influence of Islam on Dagaaba material culture

Islam also had an impact on Dagaaba material culture. It was Muslims who introduced the donkey as a beast of transport and burden, and the horse as the beast of war *par excellence* and a royal identity in Dagaabaland. The rectangular style of house-building was also introduced by Muslims (Dickson

It is not unusual to find traditionalists and Christians saying *as-salāmu alaykum* to mean “agoo” (“excuse”) before entering a house or a room. The prayer kettle (*buuta*) which Muslims use for ablution has been adopted by ordinary people in the Kaleo area as a drinking container, for washing of the hands before and after meals, and the washing of the face in the morning.

The greatest cultural impact of Islam is in the areas of marriage and funerals. Traditionally, as explained earlier, the bride wealth is given to the parents of the bride. Dagaaba Muslims give a “nuptial gift” (*ṣadāqi*) to the bride. This means that Dagaaba Muslims have indirectly abolished the dowry system. The idea is an innovation in Dagaaba society, that a Dagaaba (Muslim) can give out his daughter in marriage without receiving the bride wealth and without incurring the punishment of the ancestors. In the 1970s the late Cardinal Peter Porekuu Dery, tried to abolish the dowry system among the Dagaaba but failed. He tried to persuade the Christian parents to marry out their daughters without collecting the bride wealth. The chiefs and the elders vehemently opposed the idea. Some of the Christian women who married without the presentation of the bride wealth later demanded that their parents accept the bride wealth from the family of their husbands in order to give them social recognition and prestige as married women. Culturally, such marriages were considered invalid (Rev. Monsignor L. Kyemaalo, personal communication, September 8, 2006). Dagaaba Muslim men, however, give their daughters out in marriage without request for the bride wealth. This is an innovation in Dagaaba society.

As has been already shown, the Saaba Muslims came to Dagaabaland through trade. The main Muslim groups were the Mande and Hausa in the Zongo communities. Linguistically, the Mande and Hausa have introduced some foreign words into the Dagaare language. The influence of Hausa on the Dagaare language is evident from the use of words such as *gogo* (hour) from Hausa *agogo*, *banza* (worthless) from Hausa *banza*, *tuure* (Abroad) from Hausa *tuure*, *bangira* (toilet) from Hausa *bayan gida*, *fintila* (lamp) from Hausa *fitila*, *girma* (respect) from Hausa *grima*, *karta* (paper) from Hausa *takarda* (Interview with Al-Ḥājj Inūsa, a Hausa, 7/3/11 at Bussie). The Dagaare language is also indebted to the Mande language for the following words and expressions: *karamo* (*Karamoko*) or *karama* from Arabic “*qara'a*” (recite) and Mande “*moro*” (person), thus meaning a “person who can recite or read” (a scholar-jurist, a teacher); *dumba* (great dance) from Wangara “*domba*”; *sunkare* (fasting) from Wangara “*sunkula*”; *fur* (to tie a knot, that is, to marry) from the Wangara “*furu*” (Interview with al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko at Nandom 29/3/11).

The trading activities of the Muslims and other interactions have also led to the borrowing of Arabic words by the Dagaare language: *marfa* (gun) from Arabic “*madfa'a*”; *gafara* (sorry, excuse) from “*ghafara*”; *taama* (shea fruits) from “*tamar*” (dates); *qora* (village) from “*qurā*”; *alabarka* (thank you! May God bless you) from “*Allāh tabāarakaka*” which in the commercial circles has come to mean, “Please, I beg you reduce the price”; *dunie* (the world, crowd) from “*dunyā*”; *jara* (dash, gift, reward) from “*ajra*”; *munāfik* (hypocrite) from “*munāfiq*”; *gyma* (the crowd) from “*jam'*”; *tubi* (to become a Muslim by under-going the ritual bath) from “*tūba*”; *musiri* (mosque) from

“masjīd” (mosque) from “muṣallan”; *naasaala* (White man) from “nasārā”; *zutala* (veil/headgear) from “sutra”; and *barka* (thank you!) from “baraka” (Interview with al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko at Nandom 29/3/11). The cultural influence, however, is due more to the impact of non-indigenous Muslims’ socio-economic life than that of the values of Islam on the Dagaaba.

5.7.0. Dagaaba Muslims and Self-support

If Islam has an influence on Dagaaba beliefs and material culture, what are Dagaaba Muslims doing to consolidate their Islamic faith in a traditional environment? Dagaaba Muslim interviewees expressed the desire to make their communities self-supporting in the face of the challenges of Dagaaba traditional religion and cultural practices. Educationally, they want to contribute money to build their own Qur’ān schools and mosques. Religiously, they want Dagaaba imāms to officiate at birth, marriage and death ceremonies. They also desire to train their own *karamamine* (teachers) who will teach children the recitation of the Qur’ān and propagate Islam to the Dagaaba. This section, therefore, investigates the attempt of Dagaaba Muslims to make their communities self-supporting, self-administering and self-propagating in a traditional religious and cultural environment. They believe that if their communities are self-supporting they can overcome the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion and their dependence on the Waala Muslims.

Wa is the political administrative capital of the Upper West Region and the religious centre of Islam. The Muslims of Wa as indicated in Chapter Four (see 4.5.4.6.) played an important role in the consolidation of Islam in Dagaabaland. The consolidation began in 1949 with the formation of *Jam'iyat-ul-hidāyat-islāmiyyatī* ("Association for Islamic Guidance"). Since then the Wa *Jam'iyat* has supported the course of Islam in Dagaabaland. It sends out Muslims to Dagaaba villages and towns to act as Imāms of the mosques and Arabic teachers in the *darisas*. It also seeks funding from Islamic NGOs and Islamic Embassies in Accra for the building of mosques in Dagaabaland (interview with Imām Sha'bu of Sankana, Karama Ahmad, and the Imām of Nator-Duori 9/3/11 at Sankana). Since the 1990s the Muslims of Wa share with Dagaaba Muslims the sugar and rice that they received from the NDC and NPP governments to support them in their fasting (Interview with Imām Abd ul-Karim 4/3/11 at Kajukperi; Interview with Al-Hājj Inūsa 7/3/11 at Bussie; Interview with Imām Muhammad Garbah and Regent Imoro Garba 7/3/11 at Sabuli).

Despite the spiritual, intellectual, moral and material support, some Dagaaba Muslims, especially those of the Nadawli District, are not happy with their dependence on the Wa *Jam'iyat* and the Waala Muslims. Some of the communities rely on Muslims to come from Wa to lead them in *tafsīr* during Ramaḍān, to officiate at *zu-pomo*, *fur*, and funeral performances. The help from Wa did not come without problems. The up-keep of the imāms and *Karamamine* from Wa became a burden on some communities. Other reasons put forth as the need for self-support induced the fact that children sent to Wa

Children never received any education. Children of Waala Muslims graduated first, while Dagaaba children ended up in the streets “pushing torokos” (carts). Scholarships from Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries were given only to children of Waala Muslims. Donations made by Islamic countries or by important visitors to Wa never reached Dagaaba Muslims, though they contributed towards the accommodation and entertainment of such visitors. Dagaaba Muslim communities sent the contributions of every third Friday of the month to the *Wa Jam^etyat* for development but for many years Dagaaba Muslims never benefited from these contributions. These reasons and the need to establish vibrant Muslim communities in a Dagaaba traditional environment prompted the Muslims of the Nadawli District to form the “Association of Nadawli District Imams/Muslims” (ANDIM) in 2008 (Interview with Idrīsu Yaḥyā 23/1/11 at Kaleo; Interview with Imām ^cAbdullah Kompuori 20/2/11 at Norong).

The annual meeting of ANDIM rotates from community to community. The executive meets every month at Norong. The chairman of ANDIM is from Kajukperi, the vice-chairman from Kaleo and the secretary is from Samatigu. ANDIM has an office at Nadawli and a Bank Account. The following Muslim communities are represented at ANDIM: Kaleo, Zang, Norong, Fian, Wogu, Issa, Tabiesi, Kajukperi, Gbanko, Sankana, Tibane, Nadawli, Yiziri, Bussie and Takpo. ANDIM was, therefore, formed to nurture Dagaaba Muslims and boost the growth of Islam in Dagaabaland. ANDIM encourages Dagaaba imāms to offer their services to communities without imāms in the areas of *zupomo*, *fur* and funeral performances. For example, the Imām of Yiziiri officiates at all celebrations at Kpazie, Tangasie and Charikpong.

Dagaaba Muslims in the Lawra District are also trying to gain their independence from Wa and to make their communities self-reliant. Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie of Babile and Al-Hājj °Umaru Karbo of Lawra have sourced for funds independently of the Wa *Jam^cīyat* from the Libyan Embassy in Accra to sponsor pilgrimages of Dagaaba Muslims and to build Mosques in the district (Interview with Al-Hājj Ibrāhīm Poyie, 24/3/11 at Babile; Interview with Al-Hājj °Umaru Karbo, 24/3/11 at Lawra). To ensure that Dagaaba communities trained their own sons as imāms and *Karamamine*, Qur'ān schools have been built by individuals or by communities for the education of Muslim children.

An important sign of the drive toward self-support is the setting up of a committee by ANDIM to create a *Zakāt* Fund which will see to the collection and disbursement of *Zakāt*. So far the disbursement of *Zakāt* is to the poor, the aged or physically challenged relatives at the discretion of a Muslim. These are some measures taken up by Dagaaba Muslim men to make the Muslim communities self-reliant in order to stand up to the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion and to wean themselves from over-dependence on the Wa *Jam^cīyat* and the Waala Muslims.

5.7.2. Dagaaba Muslim women and self-support

Like the Dagaaba Muslim men who saw the drive towards self-support in the formation of an association, Dagaaba Muslim women sought their quest for self-reliance by forming women's groups. But instead of forming separate Dagaaba Muslim women associations, they joined other Muslim women organizations already existing in the Upper West Region. Through participation in the meetings and conferences of these organizations, Dagaaba

Muslims are exposed to Muslims of other towns and regions in the country. They come back from these conferences with new ideas on Islam and other ways of doing things. They hope that the acquisition of knowledge and new ideas, and putting them into practice will empower Muslim women to better develop their communities. One of such women organizations is the "Federation of Muslim Women's Association of Ghana" (FOMWAG). The origin of the Association goes back to Northern Nigeria and since Nigeria has a federal system the Ghana Muslim women must have borrowed the idea of the movement and the name without any conscious adaptation (Samwini, 2006). FOMWAG has branches at the national, regional and district levels throughout the country. The organization came into the Upper West Region in the 1990s. It has a branch at the regional level and branches in the Jirapa and Lawra Districts.

The current regional *Amīrah* (President) of FOMWAG is the wife of a Daga Muslim from Ullo but resident in Lawra. (Interview with FOMWAG Regional *Amīrah*, Hājīja Bintu Al-Ḥasan on 2/5/11 at Lawra). FOMWAG in the Jirapa and Lawra Districts is interested in the Islamic education of the Muslim-woman. Taking advantage of the promotion of non-formal education in the country by the government, FOMWAG has integrated the teaching of Arabic and the Qur'ān to Muslim women as part of the non-formal education project. To achieve this objective, FOMWAG has put in place week-end classes for women in Qur'ānic studies in the communities. Knowledge of the Qur'ān now makes it possible for Dagaaba Muslim women to say the ritual prayer meaningfully and intelligibly. FOMWAG also organizes training-of-trainers sessions for women on HIV/AIDS, female genital mutilation, teenage

Economically, FOMWAG members pay dues at their monthly meetings. Such dues are given as loans to women to invest in trading and businesses and at the end of the day they pay back the capital and keep the profit for personal use. In the Lawra District, FOMWAG has a bank account and with the bank savings, it raises loans for members to engage in business. To help women engage in income generating ventures, FOMWAG organizes workshops and seminars for women on how to make soap for domestic consumption and also for sale. Socially, FOMWAG members in Lawra town prepare food for young Dagaaba Muslim men in the environs during Ramaḍān. The evening meal is the main meal in most Dagaaba homes.

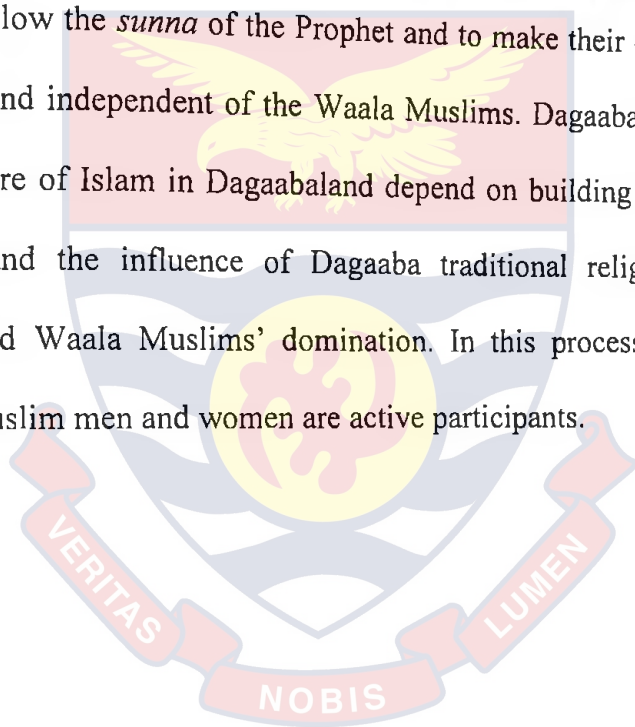
During Ramaḍān, Dagaaba Muslim men who are not married find it hard to get food to eat before they begin the fast at dawn and to break the fast in the evening. To support these young men FOMWAG members of Lawra prepare *sahūr* (last meal before day break during Ramaḍān) and *kookoo* (local millet porridge) as *Iftār* (first meal after sunset during Ramaḍān) for them at the residence of Al-Ḥājj °Umaru Karbo. In Islam, the day begins in the evening of the previous night. The night becomes day and the day becomes night during Ramaḍān. Thus the *sahūr* is the supper and the *Iftār* is the breakfast during Ramaḍān. The *sahūr* and *Iftār* are meant to encourage unmarried young men to remain in Islam and to entice others to embrace Islam (Interview with FOMWAG Regional Amīrah, Hājjia Bintu Al-Ḥasan and Lawra FOMWAG District Secretary, Rabi^catu Mūsā, 2/4/11 at Lawra).

Members of FOMWAG in the Jirapa and Lawra Districts embark on outreach programmes. They visit villages where there are no Muslims and spend some days there cleaning the environment, visiting the sick and the aged during the day, and spending the nights in recitation of the Qur'ān. They also distribute second-hand clothings to the needy. Through these outreach-activities, they hope to convert Dagaaba women to Islam. However, Hājjia Bintu Al-Ḥasan lamented over the fact that it is difficult to convert a married Dagaaba traditional woman to Islam because of the challenges of the culture. A married Dagaaba woman cannot convert to Islam without the mandate of the husband or head of the household. These are some of the activities that FOMWAG branches in Dagaabaland are undertaking to enhance Dagaaba Muslim women empowerment and to make the communities self-supporting, self-ministering and self-propagating.

5.8. Conclusion

In this Chapter, the aftermath of Dagaaba Muslims' conversion to Islam in Dagaabaland has been examined. The study showed the importance of the ritual dimension of Islam. This is evident in the *fur*, *zu-pomo* and funeral performances. For this reason, it is understandable why the external rituals of Islam, prayer, fasting, and pilgrimages are attractive to Dagaaba Muslims. However, the influence of Islam on inheritance where land, cattle and houses are involved is negligible. These are matters governed by custom (*adat*) of joined-family-ownership. The great attention to rituals together with abstention from pork and alcohol, and circumcision, has become to a certain extent the criteria of Islam for both Dagaaba Muslims and traditionalists. Similarly,

although the veiling and seclusion of women in Islam is not based upon revelation but rather is borrowed from non-Islamic sources (Watt, 1961), the practice has become so embedded in Islamic tradition that veiling has come to be viewed by Dagaaba Muslim as integral to Islam. The study also proved that Islam is influenced by Dagaaba traditional beliefs and cultural practices. Nevertheless, Islam also had an impact on certain Dagaaba religious beliefs and material culture. Dagaaba Muslims, notwithstanding the resilience of Dagaaba traditional religion and cultural practices, are making conscious efforts to follow the *sunna* of the Prophet and to make their communities self-supporting and independent of the Waala Muslims. Dagaaba Muslims believe that the future of Islam in Dagaabaland depend on building communities that will withstand the influence of Dagaaba traditional religion and cultural practices and Waala Muslims' domination. In this process of Islamization, Dagaaba Muslim men and women are active participants.



The study set out to collect and document the oral history of Islam in Dagaabaland. Specifically, the study was to investigate the means for the establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland, identify the agents in the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland, look at the challenges the agents faced in the spread of Islam in Dagaabaland, assess the factors that influenced the Dagaaba to embrace or resist Islam, and examine the aftermath of the establishment Islam in Dagaabaland. The study showed that Sunnī Islam was established in Dagaabaland by non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims. The non-indigenous Muslims were the Mande-Yeri, Mossi, Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba and Waala. The Mande-Yeri were of different clans, the Yeri (*Wangara*), *Kunatay* (Kantosi), *Sissay*, *Sarko* and *Kandea*.

The Mande-Yeri, as illustrated in Chapter Two, migrated from the Niger Bend to the upper Niger and upper Senegal areas for trade in gold and sea salt. From there they moved south towards the fringes of Guinea Conakry and Ivory Coast. Some groups settled at Kankan in Guinea Conakry, Buna, Kong and Bondougou in Ivory Coast and Beghu in Ghana. From Buna other clans crossed the Volta River to the east of Wa attracted there by the Lobi gold fields. In the Wa region, they set up three states and trading centres: Naha, Vise and Kpalwoghu. This happened in the fifteenth century. In Chapter Four of the study, it was shown that from Kpalwoghu the Mande-Yeri moved into the Dagaabaland and settled at Nandaw-Waala. Other clans migrated up north to southern Burkina Faso and settled at To, Wahabu, Boromo and Koho. In the twentieth century, the Mande-Yeri in southwestern Burkina Faso migrated to

Muslim ethnic groups such as the Mossi from Ouagadougou, the Hausa from Macina, Wa, Southern Ghana, the Fulani from Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, the Yoruba from south-west Nigeria and the Waala also migrated to Dagaabaland to take advantage of the trade promoted by the British colonial administration.

Further, in Chapter Two, it was shown that in the fifteenth century, other groups of Mande-*Yeri* also went from Jenne in the Niger Bend and settled in Safane and among the Boro in Burkina Faso. There they established the trading and learning centre of Bobo-Dioulasso. From Bobo-Dioulasso they moved southwards along the west of the Black Volta River to Buna, Kong and to the gold producing town of Beghu. In the Lawra area, some groups, as also indicated in Chapter Four, crossed the Volta River and settled in Konyukuo, Tankyara, Koro, Jirapa and other villages in Dagaabaland in the sixteenth century. From Konyukuo some moved into Babile, while some of those at Tankyara and Jirapa (the *Tagara*) moved into the Wa region in the sixteenth century where they settled among their kinsmen at Naha. Konyukuo was a trading centre and was on the trade route from Jenne through Wa, Bole and to Kumasi. This attracted the Mande-*Yeri* to settle there. The settlers at Tankyara, Koro and Jirapa were attracted by the fertile arable land and hence they settled there to farm. Their motivation for staying back at Jirapa was also occasioned by the “stalk-river” from which derived the name of the town, “Gir-baa”, which was corrupted into “Jirapa”, which supplied the area with fresh drinking water. Furthermore, it was shown in Chapter Three that in the eighteenth century, a group of Mande scholars from Jenne entered the Jirapa area on their

way to the east of Wa. Some stayed back with their kinsmen of the *Tagara* clan at Jirapa while the rest moved on to Naha where they settled among the *Tarawiri (Tagara)* clan of Naha.

It can, therefore, be said that the non-indigenous Muslims were motivated to migrate to Dagaabaland for trade, farming and grazing lands. They helped to create and develop markets, villages and towns especially, in the twentieth century. It was not Dagaaba chiefs who caused the migrations of the non-indigenous Muslims into Dagaabaland. It was the trading towns that lured them there. There was a trade route from Ouagadougou to Leo, Tumu, Walebele, Wa, Bole, Buipe and Kafaba. There was another route from Bobo-Dioulasso to Lawra, Wa, Bole, Buipe and Kafaba. Hence the view of scholars such as Hiskett (1984) that the absence of trade routes in autochthonous societies explained the lack of penetration of Muslims in these societies cannot be applied to the Dagaaba. However, the study confirmed the observation of Levtzion (1968; 1969), Trimmingham (1959; 1962) and others that Islam is a religion of the town and the research findings also showed that the Mande and Hausa Muslims did not only Islamize the Middle Volta Basin but also established Islam in Dagaabaland.

The indigenous Muslims were Dagaaba who migrated to Southern Ghana and there converted to Islam, returned ex-slaves who converted to Islam in their captivity and Dagaaba who converted to Islam in Dagaabaland through the activities of non-indigenous Muslims. Both the non-indigenous and indigenous Muslims attempted to spread Islam in Dagaabaland. The returned Dagaaba ex-slave converts and their establishment of Islam in Dagaabaland is in line with the views of Der (1998) and Ryan (1978) that slaves have

influenced by the Suwarian spirituality did not make explicit effort to spread Islam in Dagaabaland. Secondly, for fear of being overcome by the resilience of Dagaaba traditional religion, some of the non-indigenous Muslims settled in separate quarters and did not have much impact on the indigenes. However, they lived good exemplary lives which impressed some Dagaaba and they converted to Islam. They also tried to convert Dagaaba chiefs through the provisions of spiritual medicines but with little success. Thus the view of some scholars that the cultural affinity between African Traditional Religion and Islam makes Africans susceptible to conversion to Islam (Bravmann, 1983) does not apply to the Dagaaba. Nevertheless, non-Indigenous Muslims converted sons of chiefs, especially in Lawra and Ullo to Islam. One would have expected that the mission of these agents of Islam, being West Africans and Dagaaba, would have been accepted with enthusiasm by the Dagaaba but that was not the case. Hence the impression that Islam spread fast in West Africa because the propagators were Africans (Levtzion, 1969) does not apply in the case of the Dagaaba. According to Holt (1970), Islam spread south of the Sahara through three stages – resident of foreign missionaries, conversion of chiefs and conversion through *jihād*. In the case of the Dagaaba, the chiefs never became Muslims and so could not like *Mansa* Musa of Mali or *Askia* Muhammad of Songhay convert their subjects through *jihād*,

The main factors for the slow response of Dagaaba to Islam or for their resistance to Islam were the resilience of the Dagaaba traditional religion, certain cultural practices, the persecutions and threats by traditional authorities and the mockery by extended family members of converts to Islam. Dagaaba

traditional authority. It was respect for the ancestors, the chiefs, *tengdaaba* and heads of households which prevented Dagaaba young men from taking the initiative to stand outside the extended family and embrace Islam. It was also the fear of the ancestors which deterred Dagaaba chiefs, *tengdaaba*, and heads of households from embracing Islam and from allowing Dagaaba to convert to Islam. In addition, Islam forbids drinking of alcohol and demands the immediate burial of the dead. These rules are at variance with Dagaaba cultural practices and consequently, they deterred Dagaaba from converting to Islam.

Even Dagaaba who converted to Islam outside the Region, especially in Southern Ghana, refused to return to Dagaabaland for fear of reprisals by the ancestors and traditional religious authorities. Similarly, some of those who converted to Islam in the villages had to migrate to Wa east, to the towns and to Southern Ghana to escape punishment from the ancestors and traditional religious authorities and to find a safe-haven for their new-found-faith. Hence the majority of the Dagaaba rejected Islam because of their commitment and loyalty to the Dagaaba traditional religion. The minority who converted to Islam did so either because they had asserted their economic independence from the extended family or while in Southern Ghana they were no longer under the control of the traditional authorities, and hence they had the freedom to convert to Islam. Others also became Muslims because they were influenced by matriclan or patriclan Muslim relatives.

Those Dagaaba who embraced Islam had still to face the influence of Dagaaba cultural practices on the celebrations of their Islamic transitional rites. Dagaaba culture also influenced the attitudes and behaviour of Dagaaba

and love in Dagaabaland. The influence was not one-sided. Islam also had an impact on Dagaaba belief system and culture, especially, in style of building houses. In the face of all the challenges and difficulties, Dagaaba Muslims are responding by building Muslim communities that are to be self-supporting, self-administering and self-propagating.

Dagaaba traditional religion is, therefore, one of the main reasons why Dagaaba are not converting to Islam. In Dagaaba cosmology, spirituality is not choosing “this” or “that”. Spirituality is choosing “this-and-that”. Pragmatically, what this means is that, the Dagaaba are willing to accept the worship of “Allāh” and the veneration of the “*Kpime*” (ancestors). Since Islam is uncompromising in its monotheism many Dagaaba are committed to the ancestral veneration and are not ready to embrace Islam. Similarly, Dagaaba, as most Africans also believe in the relevance of religion for living, and so conversion is not leaving one “god” for “another god” but rather adding the power of one “god” to the power of “another god” or adding the worship of one “spirit” to the worship of “another spirit”. Thus Dagaaba traditional religion is pluralistic and as a result, resisted all monotheistic religions like Islam.

The Dagaaba equally resisted conversion to Christianity when it arrived in 1929. The people were not ready to renounce their ancestral veneration and worship the “Whiteman’s God”. But the “miracle-rain” of Jirapa and the “locusts-miracle” of Daffiama in 1932 demonstrated that the “Whiteman’s God” is more powerful and caring than the spirits and ancestors. Consequently, the Dagaaba began to embrace Christianity. Even then many Dagaaba still

example, the Chief of Daffiama continued to sacrifice to the ancestors and the spirits even after he had witnessed the “locusts-miracle”. Others who were prepared to convert to Christianity after “these great things that took place” in 1932 abandoned the idea because of Christianity’s demand of monogamy as a condition for baptism.

Hence the opinion of Bari (2009) that African traditional religion, especially the Sissala traditional religion, was responsible for the conversion of the Sissala to Islam is not applicable to the Dagaaba. Likewise, the observation of Abdul-Hamid (2002), Owusu-Ansah (2000), Lewis (1966) and Wilks (1966) that the expertism of Muslim medicine men to provide charms and amulets for West African Chiefs and their subjects enticed them to convert to Islam does not hold as regards the Dagaaba. Dagaaba chiefs patronized both Muslim and traditional medicines for spiritual power but that was no reason for them to abandon their religion and embrace Islam.

Dagaaba traditional religion was not only an obstacle to Dagaaba conversion to Islam but continues to influence the life of Dagaaba converts to Islam. Dagaaba Muslims live in the traditional households and consequently, they are under the influence of certain Dagaaba tradition and customary practices. Traditional authorities interfere in the celebration of Dagaaba Muslims’ transitional rites. This issue is a source of religious tension between Muslims and traditional authorities in some villages and as a result, pressurizes Dagaaba Muslims to compromise with some customary practices. Another issue of contention between traditional authorities, especially the *tengdaaba*, is

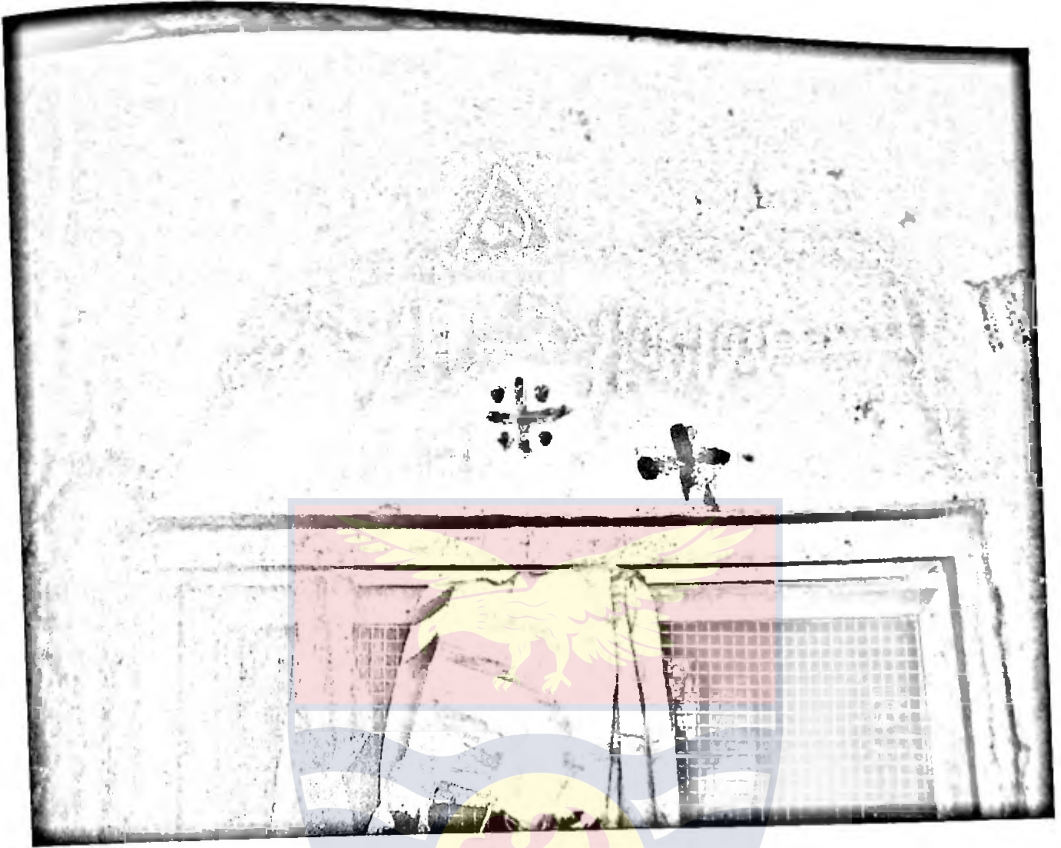
Some Dagaaba do not understand why Muslims can marry their women while traditional believers cannot marry Muslim women.

Despite these challenges, there is cordial relationship between Muslims, traditional Religionists and Christians in the households, villages and towns. The Dagaaba kinship system unites them as brothers and sisters. Hence religion is not a cause for division. The greatest co-operation between Muslims and other believers is in the celebration of life. Muslims are invited to slaughter animals for celebrations that involve Muslims, traditional religionists and Christians, and for sale in the market. While Dagaaba Muslims live in peaceful co-existence with other believers there are attempts to make their communities self-reliant, self-administering and self-propagating in order to overcome interference from Dagaaba traditional authorities. To achieve this objective, both Dagaaba Muslim men and women are engaged in the education of children, men and women in the recitation of the Qur'ān. They believe that ignorance of the Qur'ān is ignorance of Islam. One cannot worship God without knowledge of Him.

Islam also had an influence on Dagaare language. However, this impact is neither extensive nor intensive. Thus the categorization of Northern Ghana (including Dagaabaland) by J. Kritzack, and W. H. Lewis, (1969), as an area "with significant Muslim minority" and the classification of Northwestern Ghana by I. M. Lewis, (1966) as an "islamized area" are not applicable to the Dagaabaland. The Dagaaba form the biggest ethnic group in the Upper West Region. Christians are the majority in the three districts of the Dagaabaland followed by traditional believers and the Muslims. However, Muslims are influential in the meat and cattle industry and in the transportation network.

They also control the markets. On account of this one might say that they are a “significant minority” but this does not make the Upper West Region or Dagaabaland “an Islamized area”. In the same vein, the assertion of Trimingham (1959) that Islam had penetrated and influenced “Dagarti and lobe” (sic) (p. 19) is far from the truth. In the case of the Dagaaba, it is evident that the non-indigenous Muslims failed to impress upon them that “Allāh is the Lord of the worlds”. Islam therefore made inroads into Dagaabaland but has little impact on the Dagaaba due to the pressure of the traditional religion and cultural practices.

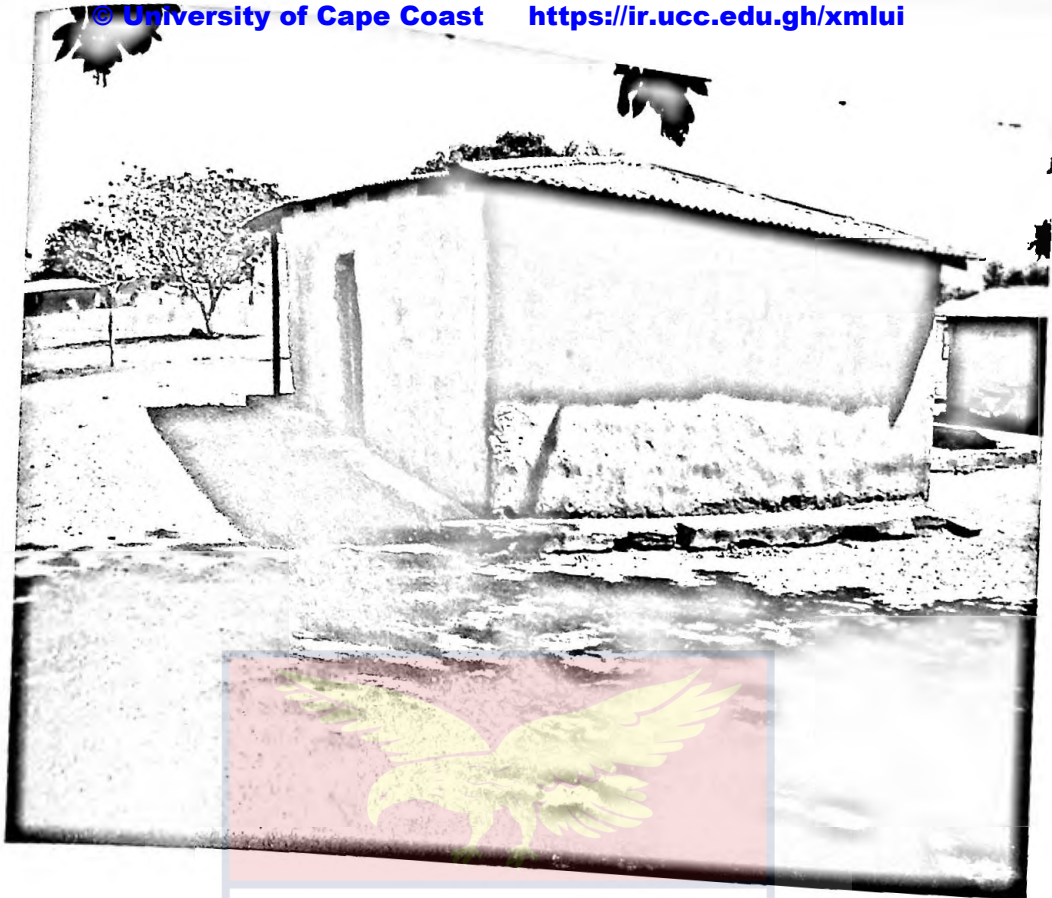




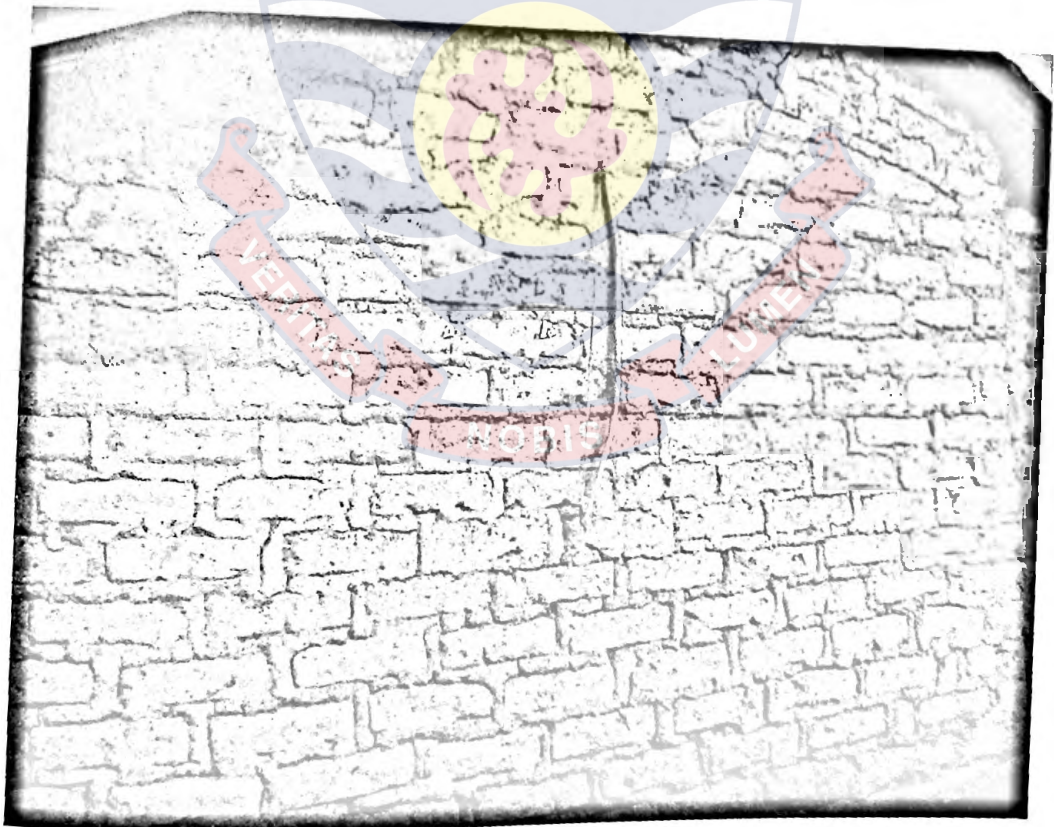
Al-Fātihah with traditional symbols above a door at Sombo



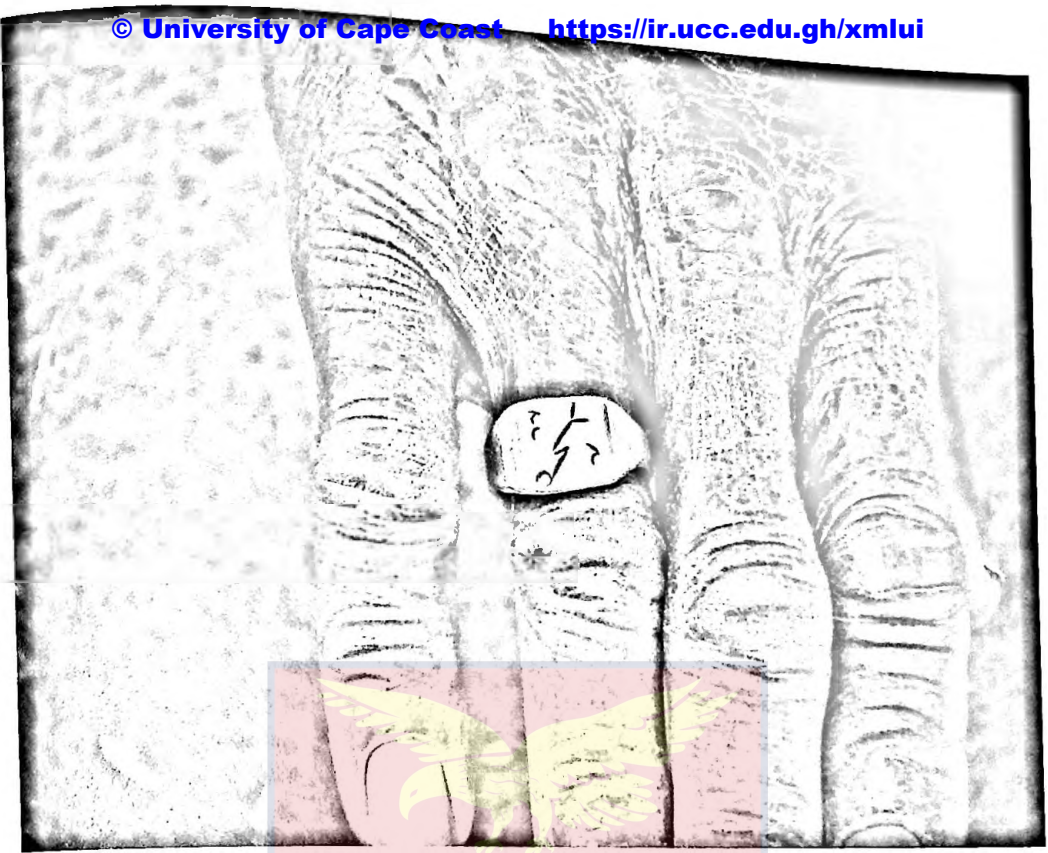
A Mosque at Zang
Digitized by Sam Jonah Library



Mosque at Samatigu



Front wall of a Muslim residence at Bɔɔ where the corpse is staged for traditional public mourning. The bow turned up-side-down is a sign that a man recently died and was mourned and buried.



A Muslim at Ombo wearing a ring with “Muhammad” stamped on it



The Old Mosque at Tibani



The new Mosque at Tiabani. Imām standing in front of the grave of the owner of the Mosque



A family Mosque built by an Obuasi Convert at his house in Zang



Brother of the Obuasi Convert and Imām of the Mosque with his mother



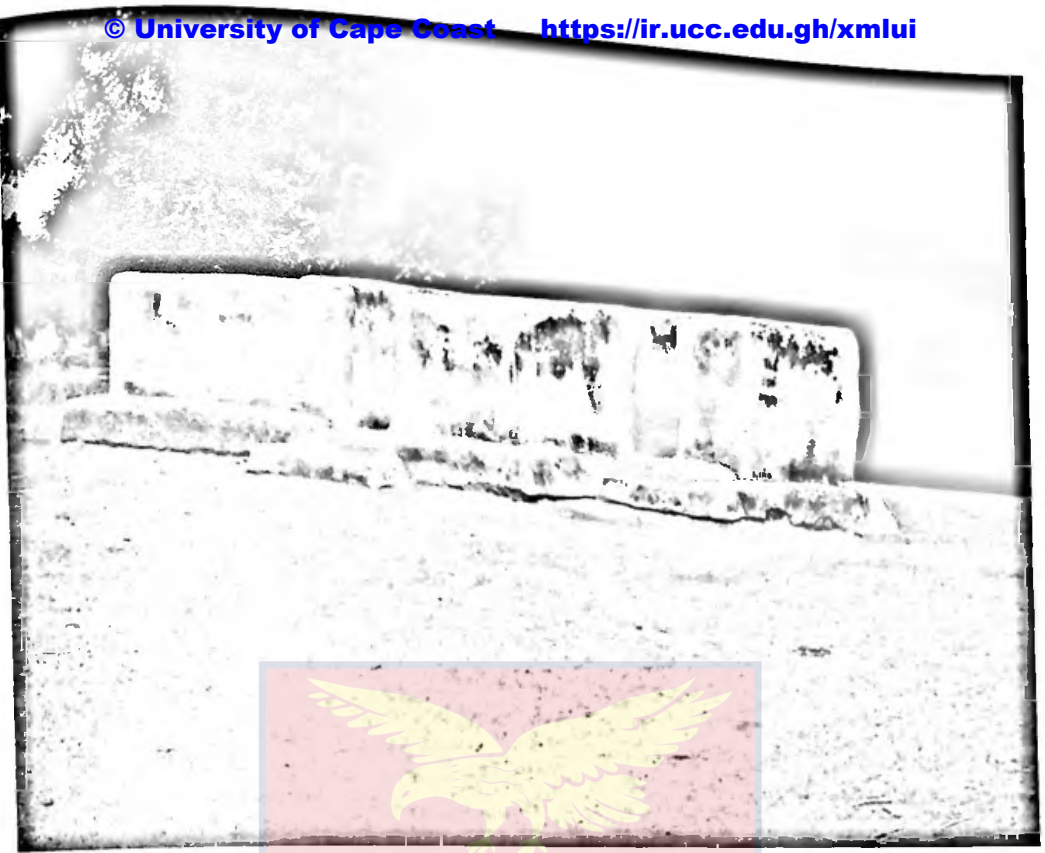
Mosque at Norong



Mosque at Zanguasi



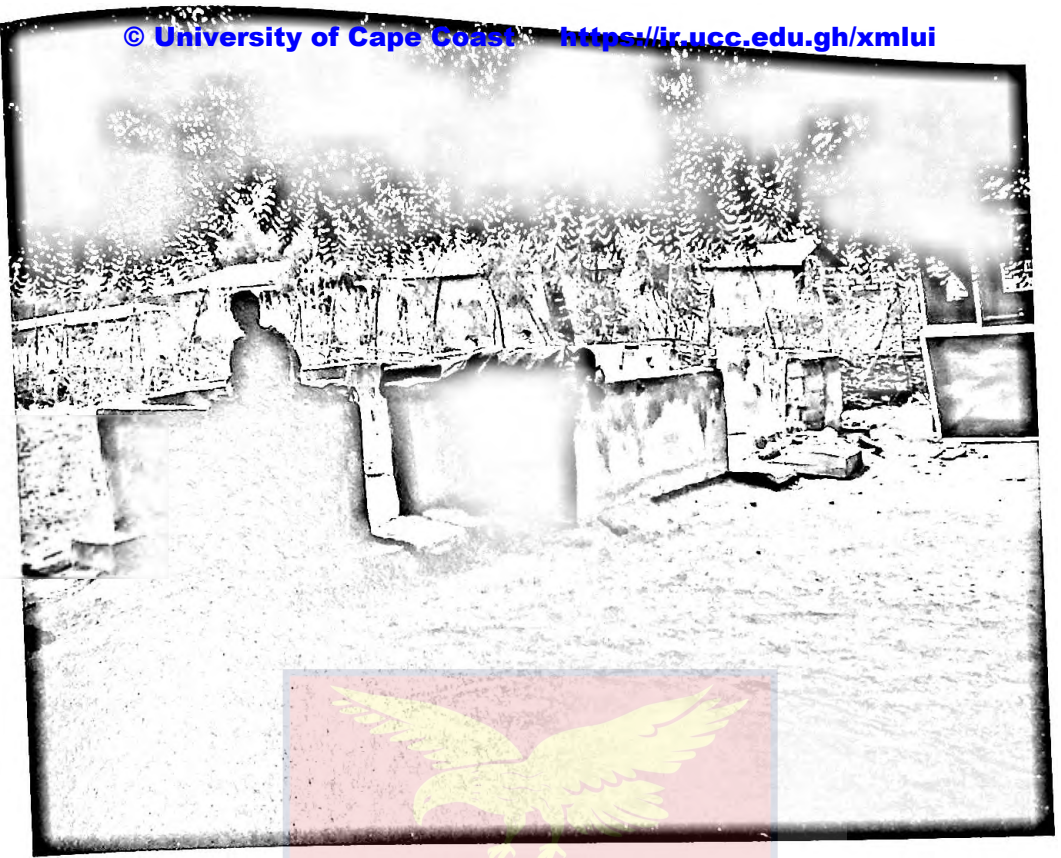
Mosque at Fian



A family Mosque at Serekperi



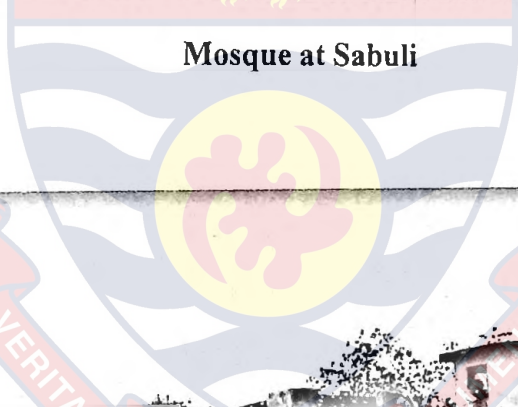
A Muslim house at Sombo



A Mosque at Serekperi market



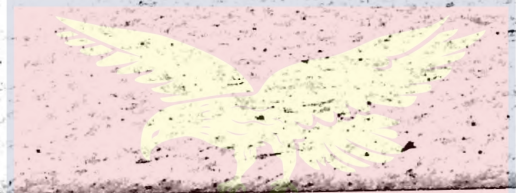
A modern mosque at Bussie



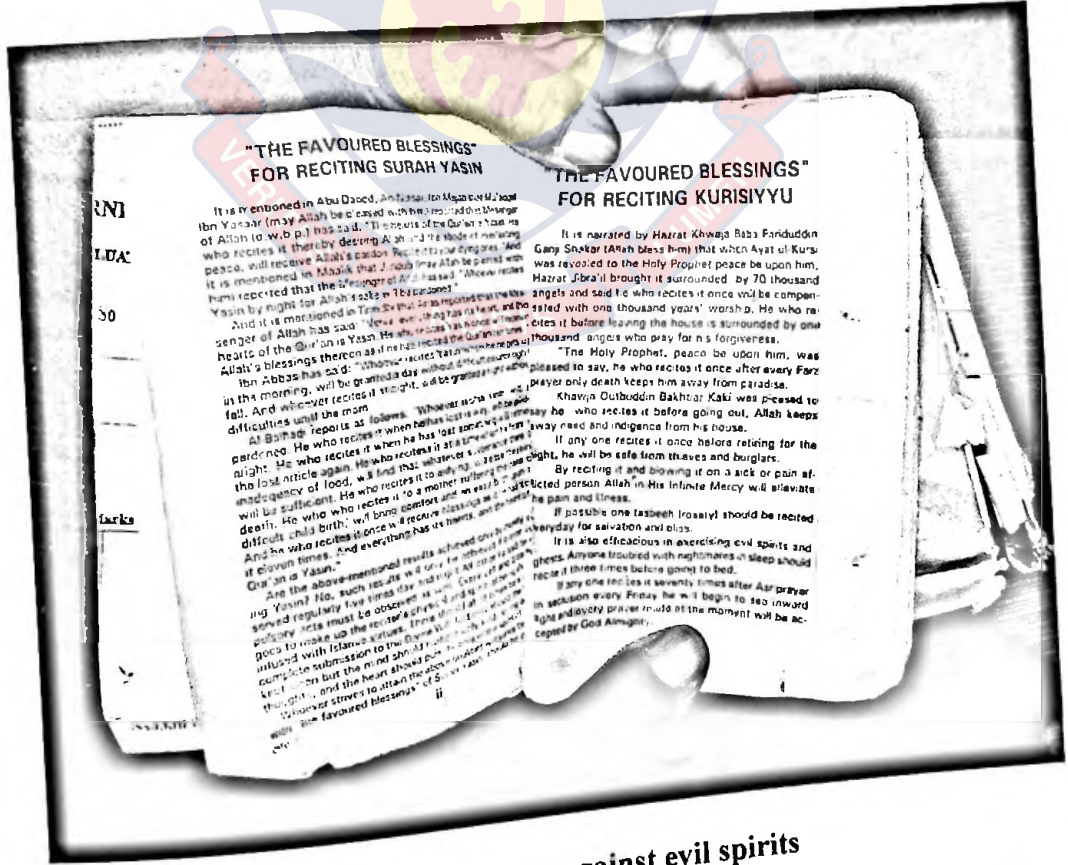
Mosque at Sabuli



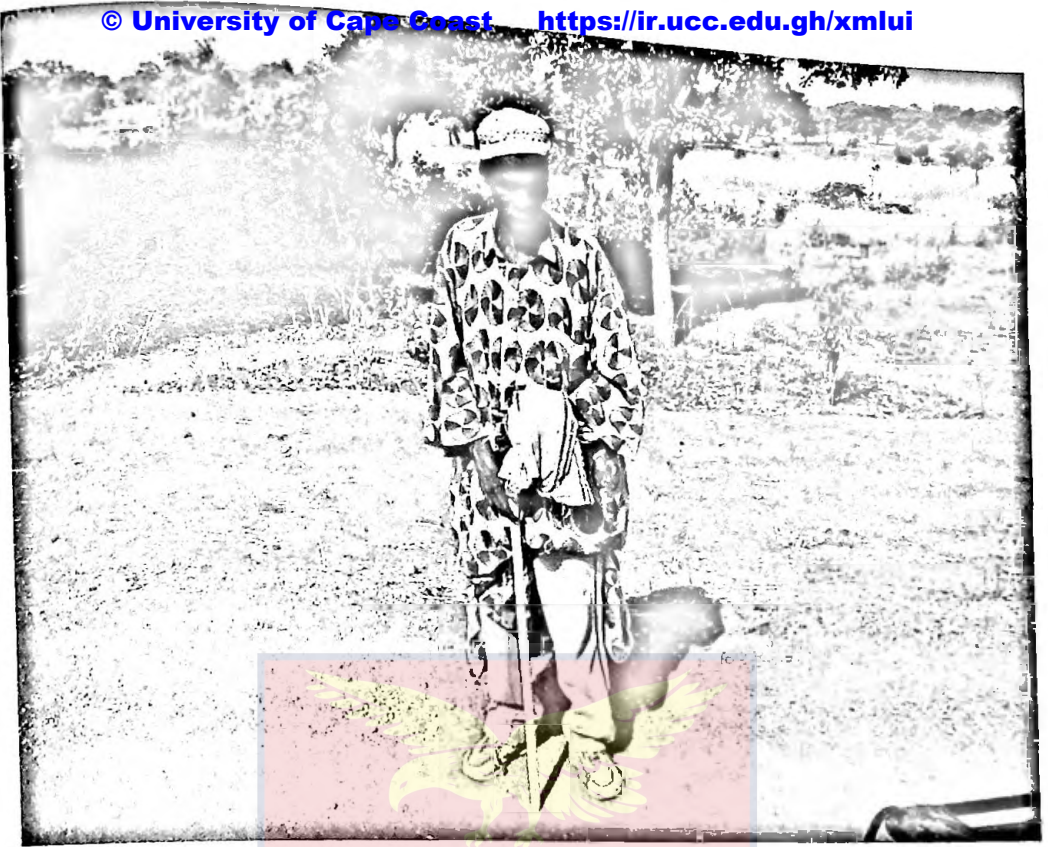
Central Mosque at Sankana



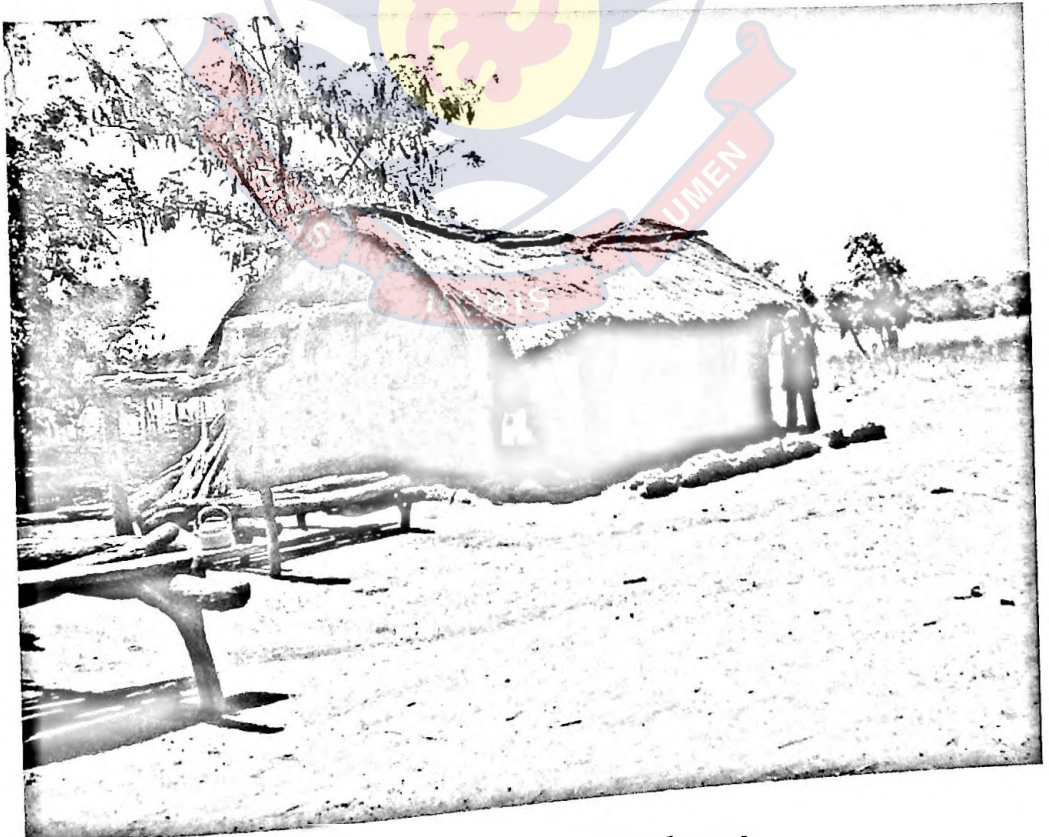
Mosque at Takpo



Book of prayers against evil spirits



A blind Muslim walking five kilometres from Dapuori to Nadawli for the
Friday Prayer



Imām of Kpaziε at his Mosque



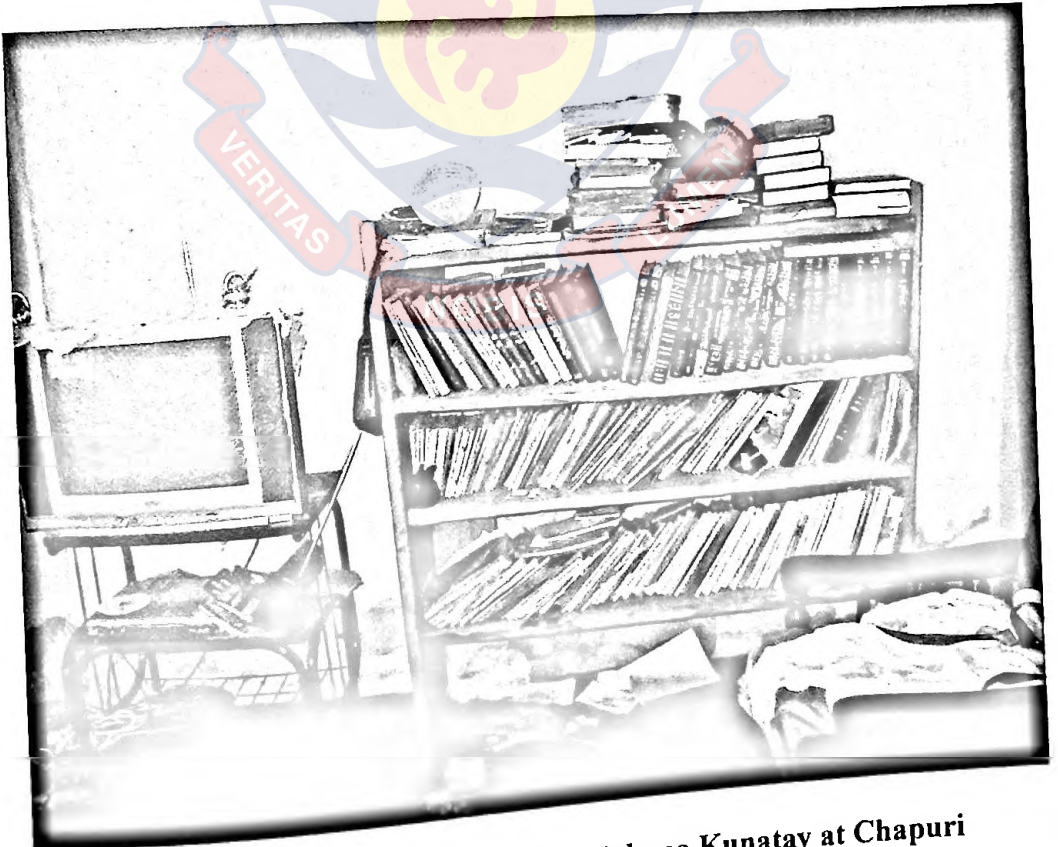
Imām of Yiziri and his elders after the Friday Prayer



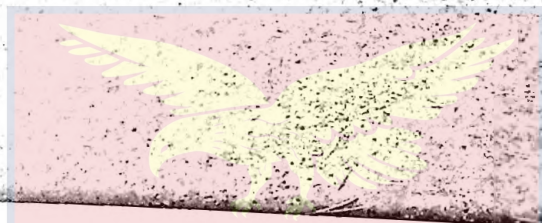
Mosque at Tangasie



Nadawli Central Mosque



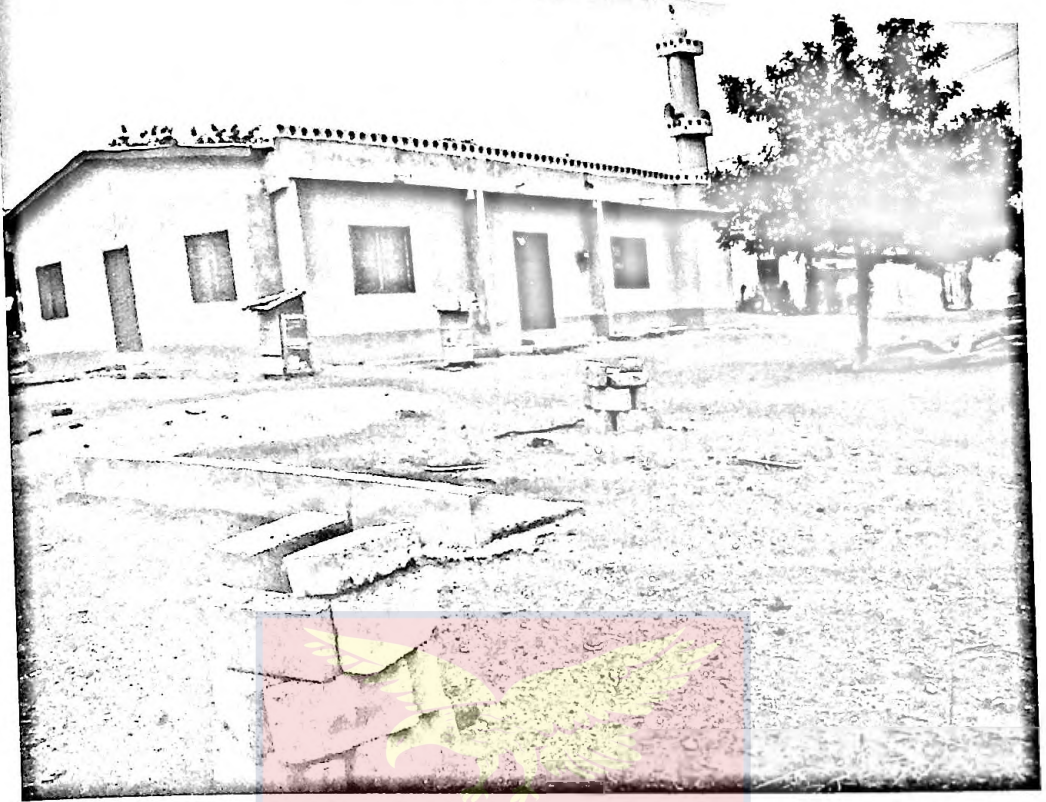
Library of Imām Al-Hājj Sha‘ību Adama Kunatay at Chapuri



A family Mosque at Dapuri



Materials use to write the Qur'ān by hand in Chapuri



Central Mosque at Chapuri built by the community without external aid



Mosque at Ullo Dantie



Central Mosque at Nandaw-Waala



Central Mosque at Hain



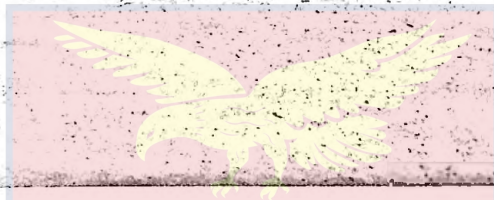
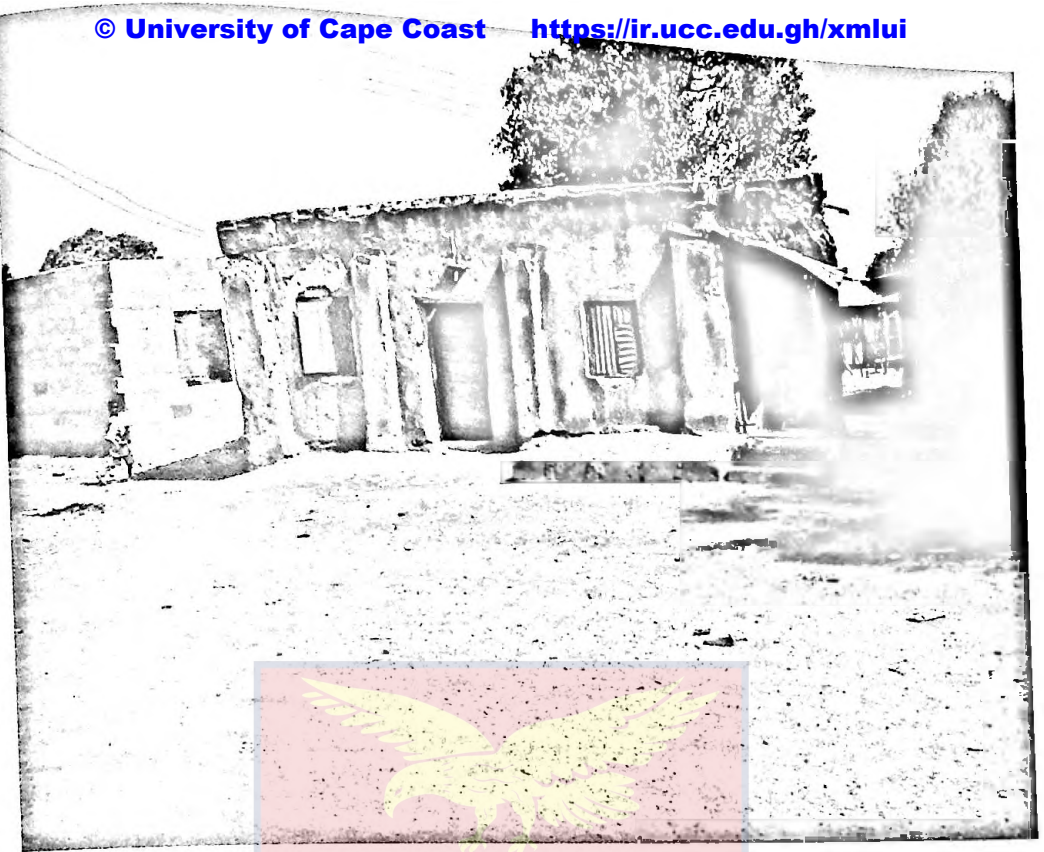
After a *Zu-po* ceremony at Cherikpong. The child's head is not shaved

because she is a girl



Imāms at a *Zu-pomo* ceremony at Cherikpong

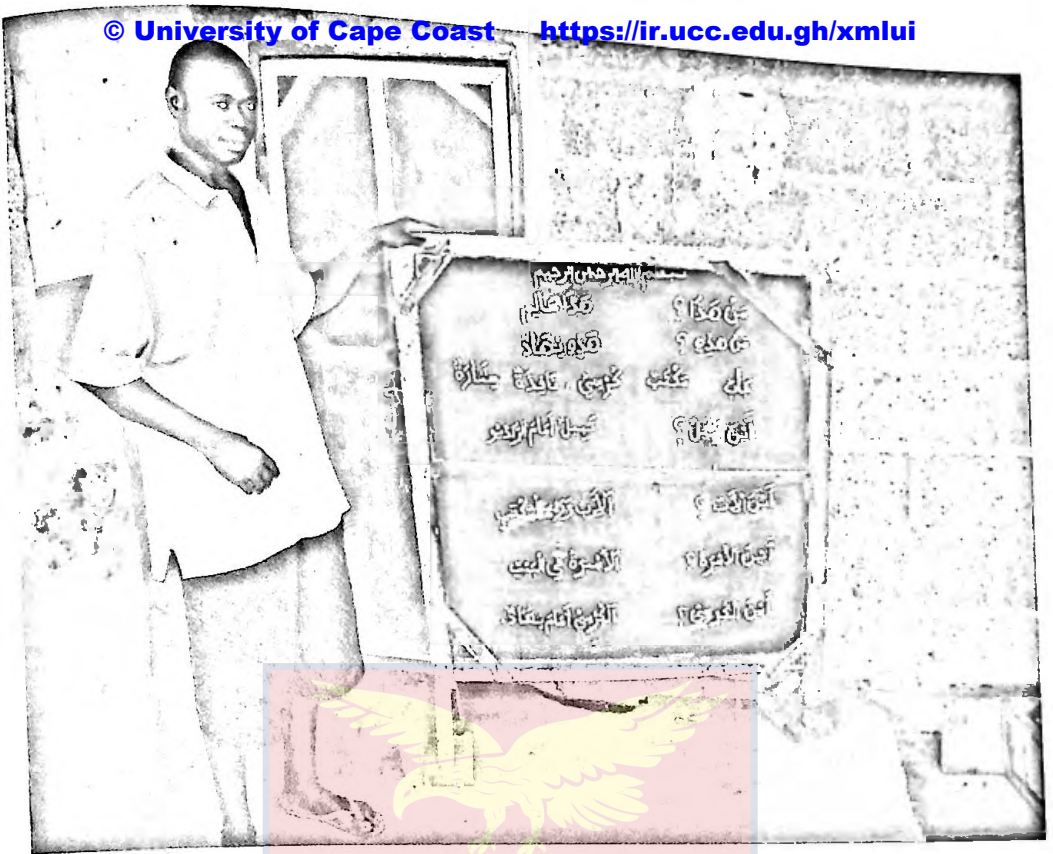
Digitized by Sam Jonah Library



The First Mosque at Babile



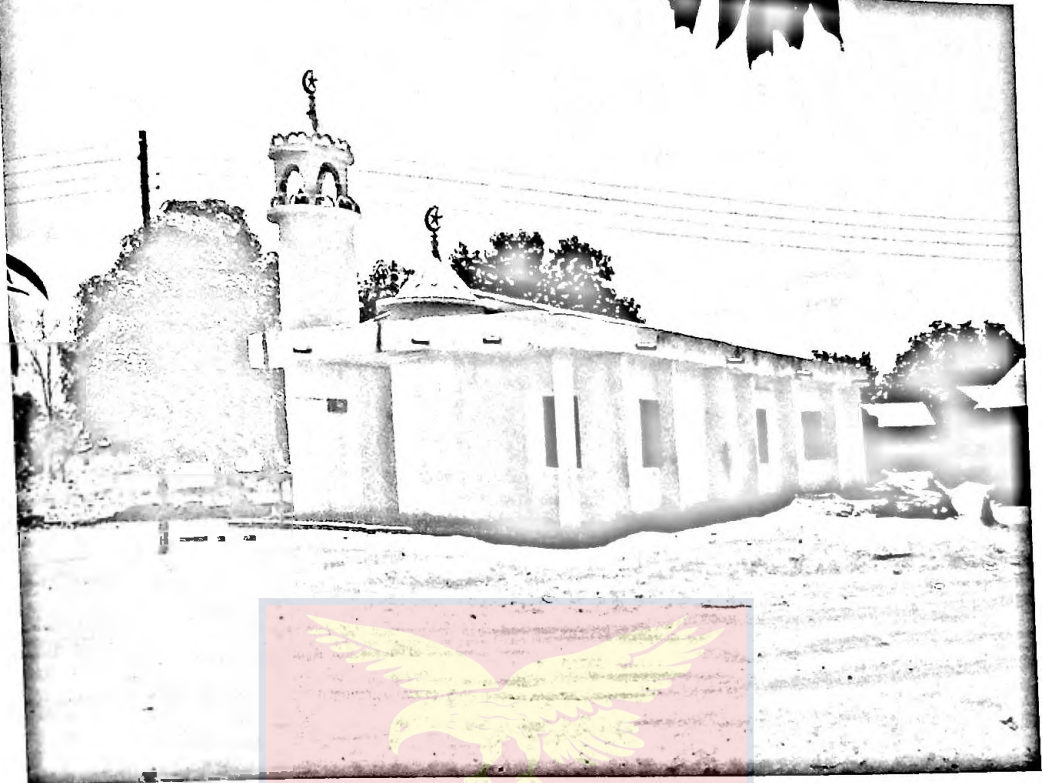
The new Mosque at Babile



A *Karama* giving a lesson at a *Darisa* at Babile



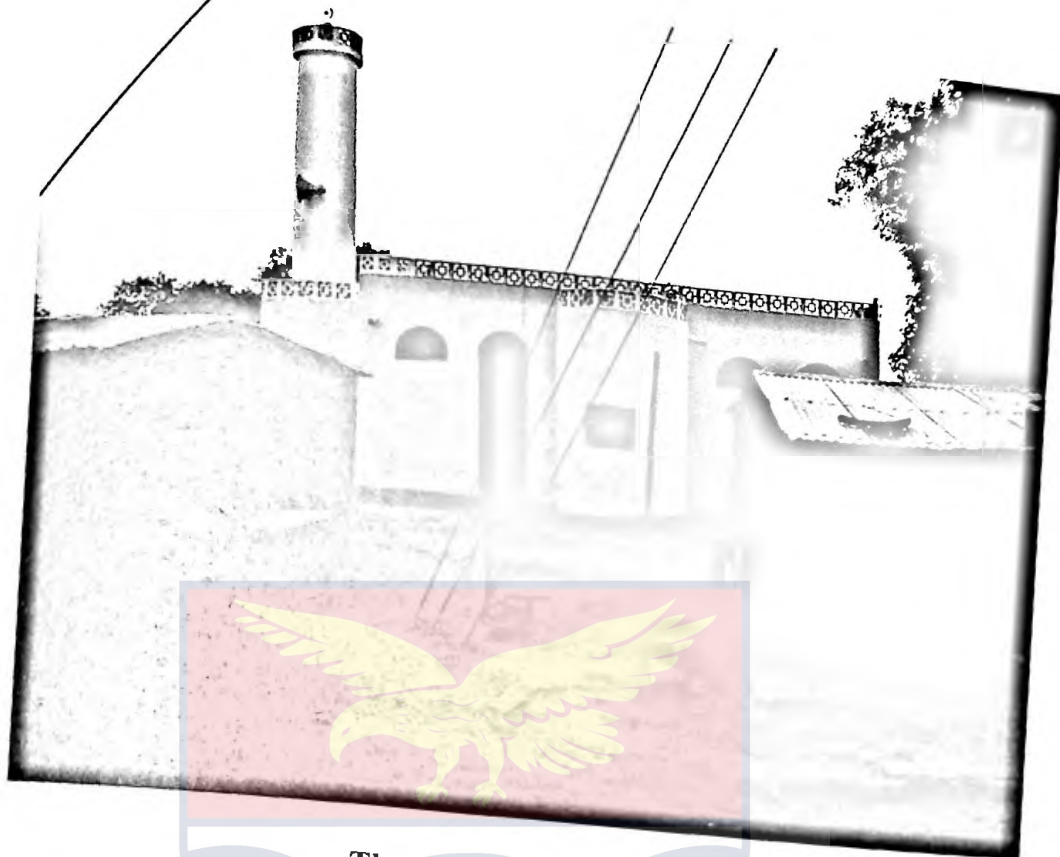
Central Mosque at Lawra



Dagaaba Muslims' Mosque at Konyukuo-Zongo



Dilapidated Yoruba Mosque at Jirapa



Imām and his wife by their uncompleted mosque at Piiyir at Jirapa. The mother who refused to convert to Islam is seated in front of them

Adhān	The “call” to <i>Ṣalāt</i> (“worship”), uttered by the <i>mu’adhdhin</i> .
Aḥmadiyya	Aḥmadiyya Muslim Mission: an offshoot of Islam founded by Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad, who died in 1908. A member is called <i>Aḥmadī</i>
Āhkirah	The Next world, the Hereafter
Ajal	Destined life span on earth
Ajr	Reward
Akushi (Hausa)	Wooden bowl
Amīr-al-Mu’minīn	Commander of the Believers
Amīrah	(Masculine: <i>Amīr</i>) Commander, leader
Al-Asmā’ al-Ḥusnā	The ninety-nine “Most Beautiful Names” of God.
‘Abd	Slave, Servant; ‘Abd Allāh means “Slave of God.”
‘Ādat	Custom
‘Aqd	Marriage contract
Bagre	Sacrifice
Baraka (Hausa/Arabic)	Blessing; spiritual power inherent in a Holy man
Bikr	An unmarried daughter; a virgin
Che Moghou (Mande)	Big Man
Coitus interruptus	The withdrawal of the penis from the vagina just before ejaculation
Dā‘iyat	Propagandist

Dārus-salām

Land of the Living-dead; Heaven

“Abode of Islam,” meaning those territories under Muslim control. The rest of the world is known as *Dār ul-harb*, “The Abode of Warfare,” because it has not “surrendered” to God and come to enjoy the benefits of *Shari‘a* rule.

Domba (Waali)

The Great Dance; the Prophet’s birthday celebration

Du‘ā’

Supplication: a non-ritual individual spontaneous prayer

Duma

Totem

Fur (Hausa/Mande)

Marriage

Hadīth

Tradition: Reports of the words, actions and precedence of the Prophet Muḥammad second only to the Qur’ān as an authority for Muslims

Ḥajj

Pilgrimage to Mecca during the 12th month (*Dhū l-Hijja*)

Ḥajjī

One who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca: *Hājji* or *Al-Hājj* (masculine), *Hājja* or *Hājja* (feminine)

Ibāḍite

A moderate Islamic sect of the *Khārijite* community

‘Ibāda

(Pl., ‘*Ibādāt*) Worship and service

ʿIddah	A period after divorce or death of a husband during which the wife must wait before re-marrying
Iftār	Breaking the fast (First meal after sunset during Ramaḍān)
Ijāb	Declaration
Imām	(Pl., <i>a'imma</i>) Muslim religious or political leader; leader of the Congregational Prayer in a Mosque; among Shi'īs, a successor of Prophet Muḥammad, descendant of ʿAlī, who governs as divinely inspired religio-political leader. Locally known as <i>Limam</i>
Imām-ul-balad	Islamic religious leader of the city
Imām ul-Jumu'a	Friday Imām
Imāmate	Succession to the office of the Imām from father to son or confined to one clan
Iqāma	The prayer before the beginning of <i>Ṣalāt</i>
Jabr	The right of the guardian to force a daughter to marry
Janā'iz	Burial rituals
Janāba	Major ritual impurity requiring <i>ghusl</i> (bath): seminal emission, orgasm, intercourse, menstruation and childbirth
Jannah	Garden, Paradise
Jamā'ah	Muslim community; group prayer

Jami	Friday Mosque; University Association
Jam'iyat	Association
Jihād	Striving, exertion or holy war
Jinn	Inhabitants of heaven and earth either helpful or harmful, who are usually invisible
Jumu'ah	A day of gathering (Friday). Before Islam Friday was called 'Arūba
Juula (Mande)	Trader
Kāfir	(Pl., <i>Kāfirūn</i> or <i>Kuffār</i>) One who rejects Allāh and His Messenger
Kalimat ush-shahāda	Witness or profession of the Islamic Faith
Kalimat ut-tawhīd	Profession of the Unity of God
Karama/Karamo (Mande)	(Pl., <i>Karamamine</i>) Teacher, scholar, Muslim esoteric practitioner
Kitāb	Writing, book, scripture
Kpime	(Sing. <i>Kpima</i>): ancestors; the living-dead
Kufr	Unbelief
Khārijī	(Pl., <i>Khawārij</i>) Seceder: the strict sect of early Islamic history.
Khatma	Recital of the entire Qur'ān
Khitān	Circumcision
Khul'	A form of divorce initiated by the wife from her husband by giving him a certain compensation, or by returning back the <i>mahr</i> which he gave her.
Khuṭbah	Sermon preached at the Friday Congregational

Prayer

Kontoma	
Kpimateng	(Pl., <i>Kontonne</i>): Beings of the wilds; dwarfs
Kyarɔ or kyor	Land of the ancestors
Kyiirɔng	Bride wealth
Lahd	Avoidance; taboo
Libizu	A hollowed-out side of a grave where the corpse reposes in a Muslim burial. It is on the <i>qibla</i> side
Magajia (Hausa)	Head-money
Mahr or Ṣadāqa	A female leader
Makaranta (Hausa)	The dowry that the groom gives to his wife at the time of marriage
Mallam (Hausa)	Qur'ān school in Hausa, <i>darisa</i> in Waale, <i>madrasa</i> in Arabic
Masjid	(Arabic: <i>Mu'allim</i>) Teacher, esoteric Islamic practitioner
Masjid-ul-Jāmi'	(Pl., <i>masājid</i>) A place of prostration, a Mosque
Mu'adhdhin	Central Mosque
Muṣallan	A Caller to <i>Ṣalāt</i> by means of the <i>Adhān</i>
Musiri/Musir (Hausa)	Praying mat; a place for praying
Mustahabb	Mosque
Mut'a	Something recommended
Naa	Temporary marriage which is forbidden in Sunnī Islam but allowed in Shi'ī Islam
Naalong	Chief
	Chieftaincy

Nabi	Deputy
Naba	Chief; king
Nabiiri	Princes and princesses
Nafs	Soul; person
Nār	The fire of Hell
Nayiri	Chief-palace; royal family
Nibera	Elders
Ninbulli	(Sing. <i>Ninbulla</i>): Muslims
Niyya	Intention
Pito	Local beer brewed from sorghum
Puor-paala	New Religion
Qabla	Ward; section
Qabul	Acceptance
Qādiriyya	A mystical Order (<i>tarīqa</i>) in Islam
Rabb ul- ^ʿ ālamīn	Lord of the worlds
Risāla	Message, treatise, letter
Saaba	Foreigners; strangers
Şadāqa	Nuptial gift
Safar	Travel
Şahūr or suhūr	Early morning meal taken before the first light when fasting
Salām ul-Islāmī	Islamic security or safety
Şalāt	Ritual prayer performed five times a day; one of the pillars of Islām
Şalāt-ul-Jumu ^ʿ ah	The Friday Congregational Prayer

Ṣalāt ul-janāza	Prayer for the dead
Ṣallī	Arabic prayer
Sarka (Hausa)	(Arabic: <i>ṣadaqa</i>) Charity; offering of food, money or sacrificing an animal for expiation
Sayyidina	Our Lord (A reference to the Prophet Muḥammad out of respect)
Selmanja (Dagaare)	Sergeant
Shāfiʿī	One of the four major Islamic schools of law (<i>fiqh</i>) predominant in East Africa, southern Arabia, and Southeast Asia. The others are Mālīkī (dominant in North, Central and West Africa); Ḥanafī (dominant in the Arab Middle East and South Asia) and Hanbalī (dominant in Saudi Arabia).
Shahīdān	The two witnesses during a marriage contract
Sharīʿa	Literally, the “Way to the oasis”. It came to mean Islamic Law based on the Qur’ān and the Sunna
Shaykh-ul-Wangarawī	Chief of the Wangara
Shurafā	(Sing. <i>Sharīf</i>): Nobles, descendants of the Prophet
Sigra	The spirit-guardian
Sofa (Mande)	Soldier
Ṣūfi	Wearer of wool; a Muslim mystic
Sufuf	(Sing. <i>Saff</i>) Rows formed during <i>Ṣalāt</i>

Sunna	Custom, especially of Muḥammad. It is also a legal term that means “recommended”.
Sunnī	The majority of Muslims technically known as <i>Ahlus-Sunna wa'l-Jamā'a</i> (“The People of the [established] Custom and Community”).
Sūq	Market
Ta'riḫ	History
Tabon	Repatriated ex slaves from Brazil
Tafsīr	Exegesis of the Qur'ān
Ṭahāra	Purification; circumcision
Takbīrāt	Manifestations of God in prayer
Ṭalaq	Repudiation, divorce
Taslimāt	(Sing., <i>taslima</i>) Greetings of peace
Tawwakkul	Trust in God
Tengan	(Pl., <i>tenegama</i>) Earth-spirit
Tengdaaba	(Sing. <i>Tengdaana</i>) Custodians of the earth shrine and owners of the land)
Tengdaalong	Land ownership
Tengdaga-Naa	Regent
Thayyib	A widow or divorced woman who wants to re-marry
Tii	Medicine, herbs
Tiibu	(Pl., <i>tibe</i>): shrine; idol
Tijāniyya	Mystical Order (<i>tarīqa</i>) in Islam
Wafāt	Death

Wājib	A necessary duty
Walī	(Pl., <i>awliyā'</i>) The matrimonial guardian, a relative, a friend, a “saint”.
Walīma	A feast accompanying a wedding
Witr	Prayer, odd number, a <i>rak'at</i> which makes the number of <i>sunna</i> prayers uneven
Yam-ud-dīn	Day of Judgement
Ya-Na	Paramount Chief of Yendi
Yeri-Nas or Yar-Nas	Chiefs of the Muslims
Yeri (Mole-Dagbane)	(Sing. <i>Yara</i>): traders; Muslims; Mande
Yir	House; family
Yiree	Household members
Yirung or Yirong	Descent by Blood
Zabog	Slave raider
Ziε baa	Ritual meal prepared with the blood of a dog
Zongo (Hausa)	Strangers' quarters (Muslim Community)
Zu-po or Zu-pomo	Ceremony of shaving the head on the seventh day after birth of a Muslim child (Arabic: <i>‘aqīqa</i>)

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- Interview with Al-Ḥājj Muḥammad °Abdullāh Kindo, facilitator of the Loho community, on 14/1/11 at Dokpong: FOLDER A 2.
- Interview with five Muslim elders at Loho, on 19/1/11: FOLDER A 3.
- Interview with Tibaninaa Ma'ama (Muḥammad) Muo-nyige, first convert to Islam in Loho, on 19/1/11 at Loho.
- Interview with Al-Ḥājj Ṣalīfu An-ganngmen (*Yeri-Naa*), Shaṭbu Ngmenbakora (Deputy Imām), and three Muslim elders, on 23/1/11 at Kaleo: FOLDER A 4.
- Interview with Idrīsu Yaḥya, Vice-Chairman of ANDIM, on 23/1/11 at Kaleo: FOLDER A 5 and FOLDER A 6.
- Interview with *Karama* Sulaymān Zeiy, proprietor of a *darisa*, on 23/1/11 at Kaleo: FOLDER A 7.
- Interview with Amadu (Aḥmad), °Uthmān, a Fulani herdsman, on 25/1/11 at Loho-Junction.
- Interview with Qāsim Amura, Imām of Loho, on 28/1/11 at Loho.
- Interview with Shaykh °Uthmān Naa-gang, on 28/1/11 at Samatigu: FOLDER A 8.
- Interview with °Abd-ul-Ḥamīdu Volsuuri, first convert of Samatigu to Islam, on 28/1/11 at Samatigu: FOLDER A 9.
- Interview with Michael Dasah, convert from Islam to Christianity, on 1/2/11 at Loho-Junction.

Interview with five elders: Abū Bukari Kaatah, Salia Kaatah, Ḥamidu Sibiri Zangu, Hārūna Duogu and an elder, on 4/2/11 at Bu: FOLDER A 10.

Interview with Comfort °Ubaydah, a Christian who married a Muslim and became a Muslim. She divorced the husband and came back to Christianity, on 5/2/11 at Loho-Junction.

Interview with six women of the Bu Women Association: two Muslims, two traditional religionists and two Christians, on 7/2/11 at Bu.

Interview with five Muslim women, on 7/2/11 at Bu.

Interview with five Muslims: °Abdullai Dongsieong, Yahya Dongsieong, Issahaku Ombonaa and two elders, on 7/2/11 at Ombo: FOLDER A 11.

Interview with Ya°qubu Yendau, Imām of Kaha, on 7/2/11 at Kaha: FOLDER A 12.

Interview with Jāmi° Imām of Tibani, °Umar Abū Bakari, on 8/2/11: FOLDER A 13.

Interview with Ibrāhīm, Imām of Tibani, on 8/2/11 at Tibani: FOLDER A 14.

Interview with five Muslim elders: °Alī Ngmen, °Uthmān Faara, Sulaymān Salia, and Al-Ḥasan Tangunaa, on 8/2/11 at Zangbogu: Folder A 15.

Interview with Ibrāhīm Sam, on 11/2/11 at Zang: FOLDER A 17.

Interview with Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymāni Singnaa and a Catholic Catechist on, 11/2/11 at Zang: FOLDER A 18.

Interview with Mamuda (Muḥammad) Saanyigee, on 20/2/11 at Kanyingua: FOLDER A 19.

Interview with Imām °Abdullāh Kompuori, on 20/2/11 at Norong: FOLDER A 20.

Interview with *Mallam* Muhaydin Tuubo, on 20/2/11 at Zanguasi: FOLDER A 21.

Interview with Imām Dāwūda Faara, on 21/2/11 at Gbanko: FOLDER A 22.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj Saʿīdu Dakorah, on 21/2/11 at Gbanko: FOLDER A 22.

Interview with Imām ʿAbd-ul-Muʿmin Mūsā, son of the founder of Islam in Sombo and with Deputy Imām Ibrāhīm Baloo, on 23/2/11 at Sombo: FOLDER A 23.

Interview with Lahīnatu Baloo, Salamatu Baloo and three Muslim young girls on, 23/2/11 at Sombo: FOLDER A 23.

Interview with Sulaymān Bartholomew Balinge, a Catholic who converted to Islam, on 22/2/11 at Owlo.

Interview with five traditional elders of Kyang, on 26/2/11 at Kyang.

Interview with Imām Sulaymān Dunneenie, on 27/2/11 at Nyuglu: FOLDER A 24.

Interview with Regent of Nyuglu, Yūsuf ʿAlī, on 27/2/11 at Nyuglu: FOLDER A 25.

Interview with Imām Yaʿqubu Nūhu, on 27/2/11 at Kanynie of the *Tengdaana* family: FOLDER A 26.

Interview with Abū Yūsuf and wife, on 28/2/11 at Dungyengu: FOLDER A 27.

Interview with *Tengdaana* and five elders of Duong, on 28/2/11 at Duong.

Interview with *Tengdaana* and five elders of Daffiama, on 28/2/11 at Daffiama: FOLDER A 28.

Interview with Imām Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Anpira, on 28/2/11 at Owlo: FOLDER A 29.

- Interview with Jakalee (Zakariyyā') Kangnyir Ngmen-Nuo, on 28/2/11 at Buoyir: FOLDER A 30.
- Interview with Imām Ṣalīfu Katuole and four elders, on 28/2/11 at Fian: FOLDER A 31.
- Interview with Imām Al-Ḥājj Sulaymān Naa-Uree and Nūhu Kyegone, on 1/3/11 and 24/3/11 at Serekperi.
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- Interview with Kamenta Puordeme, household head of the family of the founder of Sunni Islam in Goli, on 1/3/11 at Goli.
- Interview with *Karama* Usuman, on 4/3/11 at Sazie: FOLDER A 33.
- Interview with Imām Ḥamīd °Abdullāh, on 4/3/11 at Tabiesi: FOLDER A 34.
- Interview with Imām °Abd-ul-Karīm, on 4/3/11 at Kajukperi: FOLDER A 35.
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- Interview with Al-Ḥājj Inūsa, a Hausa, on 7/3/11 at Bussie: FOLDER A 37.
- Interview with Imām Sānī Al-Ḥasan, on 7/3/11 at Bussie.
- Interview with Imām Sumaila Sa°idu, on 7/3/11 at Balienia: FOLDER A 38.
- Interview with Imām Muḥammad Garbah and Sabuli Regent, Imoro Garbah, on 7/3/11 at Sabuli: FOLDER A 39.
- Interview with *Tengdaana*, Logdaa, on 7/3/11 at Sabuli: FOLDER A 40.
- Interview with Imām Al-Ḥājj Adamu Samba Baaladong, on 9/3/11 at Kaluri: FOLDER A 41.
- Interview with Adama Fusayni and wife, on 9/3/11 at Kaluri: FOLDER A 42.
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Interview with Hūdī Ibrāhīm (*Mu'adhhdhin* of Takpo), Latīf Anfaarabaalanaa Waalo, Idrīsu and two elders, on 9/3/11 at Takpo: FOLDER A 45.

Interview with *Mallam* Ya^ḥqubu Maalsong and his wife Janaybu, on 11/3/11 at Dapuori: FOLDER A 49.

Interview with Imām Adama Dapila, on 11/3/11 at Kpazie: FOLDER A 50

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Interview with ʿAbdullāh Noorbong, on 11/3/11 at Kalsegra: FOLDER A 53.

Interview with *Landani* Abū Bakari Seryi, 11/3/11 at Nadawli: FOLDER A 54.

Interview with Ping *Tengdaana*, Ping Naa Yirwer and five Elders, on 15/3/11 at Ping: FOLDER A 55.

Interview with Samata Takaazine of Ping, on 15/3/11 at Ping.

Interview with Imām Al-Ḥājj Sha^ḥbu Adama Kunatay, on 15/3/11 at Chapuri: FOLDER A 56.

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Interview with Imām Fusayni Issahaqu Bakyeri, on 15/3/11 at Hain: FOLDER A 59.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj °Aqīlu and Imām Al- Ḥājj Muhaydīn Ibrāhīm, on 15/3/11 at Nandaw-Waala: FOLDER A 60.

Interview with Hain Naa, Al-Ḥājj Ṣalīfu Dakorah and elders, on 15/3/11 at Hain: FOLDER A 61.

Participation observation at *zu-pomo* ceremony at Charikpong-Wikyimananga, on 17/3/11: FOLDER B 1 (see Video coverage).

Interview with Imām Muḥsin Ma'ama (Muḥammad), on 24/3/11 at Babile: FOLDER B 2.

Interview with Mamudu °Abdullāh Sarko, head of the Sarko community, on 24/3/11 at Babile: FOLDER B 3.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj °Abdullāh Muḥammad, a Hausa from Konyukuo-Zongo resident at Babile, on 24/3/11: FOLDER B 4.

Interview with Ṭahīru °Alī Saamunu, son of the first Imām of Babile, on 24/3/11: FOLDER B 5.

Interview with Bawa Bitog (Wangara), senior son of the first Wangara emigrant to Babile, on 24/3/11: FOLDER B 6.

Interview with *Karama* Sānī Poyie, on 24/3/11 at Babile: FOLDER B 7.

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Interview with Chief of Konyukuo and five elders, on 24/3/11 at Konyukuo.

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Interview with Imām Bashīru Issifu, on 29/3/11 at Domwini: FOLDER B 14.

Interview with *Karama* Al-Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Tijānī Sarko, the Wangara Naa and Al-Ḥājj ʿUthmān Wule, 29/3/11 at Nandom: FOLDER B 15.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj Yūsuf Benie Botuo, a prince from Nandom royal family, on 29/3/11 at Nandom: FOLDER B 16.

Interview with Deputy Imām Zakariyyāʾ Yūsuf, on 29/3/11 at Hamile: FOLDER B 17.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj Adama Muḥammad, a Wangara and his wife, Dagao traditional convert, on 30/3/11 at Hamile: FOLDER B 18.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj ʿAlī Saʿīdu, Mossi, Mūsā ʿAbdullāh, Mossi-Zongo Naa, Ṭahīru Mossi, Muʾmūni Karbo and a Yoruba, on 30/3/11 at Hamile: FOLDER B 19.

Interview with Amīnu Al-Ḥājj Liman, Hamile Wangara-Naa, on 30/3/11 at Hamile.

Interview with Al-Ḥājj Mūsā Siddīque, Saamunu, on 30/3/11 at Hamile: FOLDER B 20.

Interview with Imām Muḥammad Sutige and wife, and Muḥammad, a new convert, on 30/3/11 at Tuopare: FOLDER B 21.

Interview with Tuopare Naa, Naa Boma Dery III, on 30/3/11 at Tuopare: FOLDER B 22.

Interview with Imām Qasīm Saʿīdu and Dāwūd Yeng, on 30/3/11 at Jirapa: FOLDER B 23.

Interview with Zenge Yūsuf, a Catholic catechist who converted to Islam, on 29/3/11 & 30/3/11 and on 1/4/11 from Zimuopare, now resident at Hamile: FOLDER B 24.

Interview with Sulaymān Moghtari, on 6/4/11 at Jirapa: FOLDER B 25.

Interview with Deputy Imām of Jirapa, Nūhu Moghtari, on 6/4/11 at Jirapa: FOLDER B 26.

Interview with Fātima, Sawdā and Jahīnatu Kuupaala and three others (Jirapa FOMWAG members), on 6/4/11 at Jirapa.

Interview with Ibrāhīm Abel Kuupaala and traditional mother, on 6/4/11 at Jirapa-Piiyir: FOLDER B 27.

Interview with Muḥammad ʿUmar, son of Dapi-Waalo, on 12/4/11 at Jirapa: FOLDER B 30.

Interview with Idrīsu Saaka Sissay, on 12/4/11 at Jirapa.

Interview with *Amīrah* ar-Rahīmana Jirapa FOMWAG organizer and wife of Jirapa Imām, on 12/4/11 at Jirapa: FOLDER B 31.

Interview with *Mallam* Zakariyyā' Amadu, son of the third Chief of Ullo and brother of the present chief of Ullo, on 15/4/11 at Ullo: FOLDER B 32.

Interview with ʿUbaydah, wife of Mallam Zakariyyā' Amadu of Ullo, Salamatu, wife of Naa Saʿīdu Aḥmad of Ullo and ʿAlīma, wife of Naa Babuoronongnie Aḥmad, third chief of Ullo, on 15/4/11 at Ullo.

Interview with a Christian couple who converted to Islam at Hamile, on 30/3/11 at Hamile.

Interview with a Catholic girl from Duong married to a Muslim and converted to Islam, on 1/4/11 at Wa.

Interview with FOMWAG Regional Amīrah, Ḥājjia Bintu Al-Ḥasan, a Wangara married to a Dagao and Lawra FOMWAG District Secretary, Rabīʿatu Mūsā and four members, on 2/5/11 at Lawra: FOLDER B 33.

Personal communications

A Yoruba, March 20, 2011 at Konyukuo-Zongo and Hamile-Zongo

ʿAbdullāh Kang-e-song, May 18, 2009 at Jirapa

Bayor John, June 21, 2011 at Sigri

Der B.G., March 16, 2011 at University of Cape Coast

Elders of Jirapa-Tampoe, December 6, 2009

Imām, March 17, 2011 at Charikpong-Wikyimananga

Kogyir Paul, October 12, 2010 at Jirapa-Piiyir

Kyemaalo Lawrence, September 8, 2006 at Jirapa

Mbon Friday M., September 29, 2010 at University of Cape Coast

Sagadougou Immanuel, June 26, 2011 at Tamale

Sey Mark, March 23, 2010 at University of Cape Coast

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