

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE TWIFO: A POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY, 1600-

1987

BY

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Doctor of Philosophy Degree in History.

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DECLARATION

Candidate's 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.

Candidate's Signature: Date:
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Supervisors' Declaration

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

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ABSTRACT

Using extensively oral sources through interviews and archival materials, this study examines the origins, migrations and settlements of one of the major Akan states, the Twifo, between the periods 1600 and 1987. Also examined is the Twifo factor in the political dispensation of the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in the 19th century as well as the economic impact the arrival of the Twifo had on the Central region and the economy of the Gold Coast as a whole. The aim is to bring to light the part the Twifo played in the political, social and economic evolution of the Gold Coast. As one of the Asante's formidable allies in the Asante's many wars of expansion, the Twifo contributed to the making of the Asante kingdom. In the same manner, their secession from the Asante kingdom and joining forces with the British, the Twifo contributed to the destruction of the Asante power in 1826. It was after the defeat of the Asante in that year that the process to settle the Twifo at their current location began. As a people basically engaged in the primary occupation of farming, a special interest was developed for the land-mass, and this in addition to their military prowess became the major factors for the domination of the lands around the River Pra area.

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DEDICATION

To my children:
Yaw Owusu Duah
&
Nana Nketsia Duah Osei

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background to the Study	1
Statement of Problem	6
Literature Review	7
Methodology	18
Organization of the Study	22
Significance of the Study	24
CHAPTER TWO: TWIFO TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY	
The Denkyira Perspective	25
The Mokwaa Account	28
The Hemang Version	31
From the Horse's Own Mouth	35
Twifo-Asante Connection	41
19 th Century Twifo Migration	56
Subjugation of the States around the Pra by the Twifo Immigrants	63

CHAPTER THREE: THE TWIFO/DENKYIRA/ASANTE AND THE	
BRITISH, 1818-1831	
The Nsamankow War	66
Twifo/Denkyira in the Nsamankow War	76
The Akatamanso War of 1826	80
The Search for Peace, 1826-1831	82
CHAPTER FOUR: FROM MIGRANTS TO SOVEREIGNTY:	
TWIFO, HEMANG, MOKWA RELATIONS	
UP TO 1925	
Mokwaa-Twifo Relations	92
Hemang-Twifo Relations	93
The Triple Alliance	95
Reorganization and Turmoil, 1925-1987	99
Secession of Hemang	105
Mokwaa's Quest for Independence	109
Chief Kwabena Sarko's Renewal of Mokwaa Protest	113
Mokwaa's Final Petition & Independence	119
CHAPTER FIVE: TWIFO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	
Geology and Soil	130
Founding of Twifo Praso	134
Finding Food	139
Farming	142
Oil Palm	144
Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP)	150
Akpeteshie Distillation	155

Palm Wine	155
Soap Making	156
Cocoa Production	157
Fishing	161
Part-Time Occupations	161
Mining	162
Trade	164
CHAPTER SIX: TWIFO POLITICAL ORGANIZATION & TRADITIONAL POLITICS UP TO 1987	
Emergence of Two Gates in Twifo Politics	172
Destoolment of Appiah Nuamah I	176
Appiah Nuamah's Second Destoolment	183
Twifo Political Organization	185
Installation of Omanhene	186
Creation and Redistribution of Divisions: 1925 up to Date	196
CHAPTER SEVEN: TWIFO FESTIVALS AND OTHER SOCIAL CUSTOMS	
Origin of Odwira Festival	214
Twifo Guakro Odwira Festival	216
Main Features of Twifo Guakro Festival	218
Monday-Visit to Apagyahina	220
Tuesday-Visit to River Obuo	221
Wednesday-Period of relaxation	222
Thursday-Visitation to Bosomkese	222
Friday-Yellow Friday	223

Saturday-Grand Durbar	224
Sunday-Thanksgiving (Aseda):	227
Other Festivals	230
The Twifo Bosomkese	234
Other Twifo Social customs	237
Childbirth & Naming Ceremony	238
Initiation/Puberty Rites	240
Marriage	243
Death & Funeral	245
CHAPTER EIGHT	
CONCLUSION	249
BIBLIOGRAPHY	256
APPENDIX A	273
APPENDIX B	274
APPENDIX C	275

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ARPS - Aborigines Rights Protection Society
- CRHC - Central Region House of Chiefs
- DC - District Commissioner
- DCO - District Commissioner's Office
- DNA - Denkyira Native Affairs
- DWIC - Dutch West Indian Company
- KEEA - Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem
- LCD - Legislative Council Debates
- MSA - Mokwaa State Affairs
- NAO - Native Administrative Ordinance
- NJO - Native Jurisdiction Ordinance
- NRC - National Redemption Council
- PRAAD - Public Records and Archive Administration Department
- TNA - Twifo Native Affairs
- TOD - Traditions of Denkyira
- TOH - Traditions of Hemang
- TOPP - Twifo Oil Palm Plantations
- TSA - Twifo State Affairs
- TT - Twifo Traditions

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

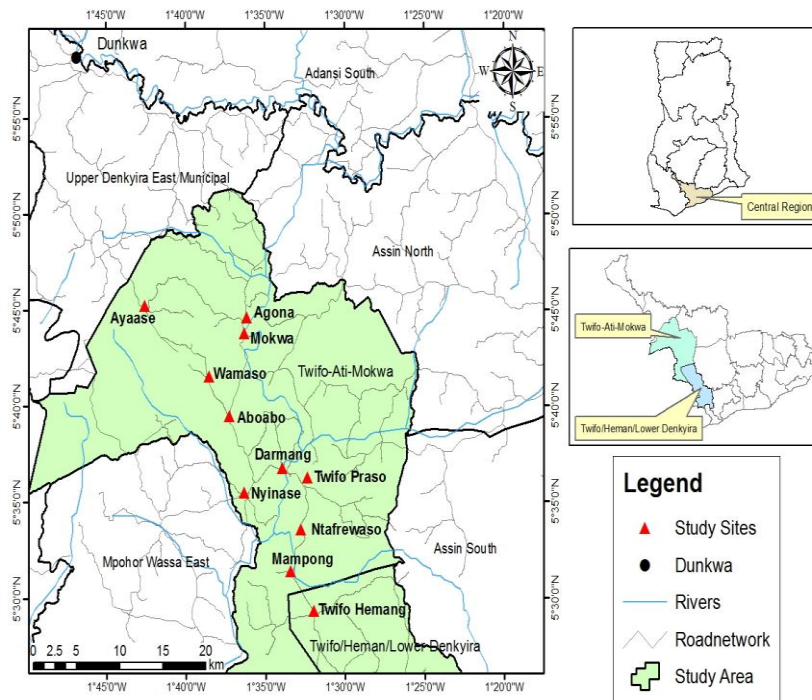
The Twifo Traditional State is currently in the Central Region of Ghana. It roughly runs south to Mampong (the seat of the Twifo Omanhene) while the left hand branch runs northwest to the town of Buabin and the right hand branch runs parallel to River Pra until it reaches the Asante frontier. On the south, the Twifo state is bounded by Hemang, on the west by Wassaw Amenfi, on the north by the Abuakwa Division of Denkyira and on the east by Assin Attandanso.¹ Prior to 2012, the Twifo state was part of the Twifo/Hemang Lower Denkyira District Assembly with its administrative capital at Twifo Praso. However, in 2012, the District was split into two: Twifo/Atti-Mokwa and Twifo/Hemang/Lower Denkyira Districts, under the decentralization policy of the governments. The area under study is under the Twifo/Atti-Mokwaa District with the district capital still at Twifo Praso. The District is made up of the Twifo and Morkwa ethnic groups with the Twifo in the majority. The District is bounded on the north by the Upper Denkyira East Municipal Assembly, on the south by Hemang Lower Denkyira District, Cape Coast and Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem (KEEA), on the west by the Mpohor Wassa East District and on the east by the Assin North and Assin South Districts.² According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the district has a population of 61, 743, representing about 2.9% of the population of the Central Region.³

¹See ADM/23/1/367. PRAAD, Cape Coast. A General Administrative Survey of the Twifo State

² Ibid.

³ 2010 Population & Housing Census, National Analytical Report from the Ghana Statistical Service, May, 2013.

However, it has been difficult to determine the exact population of the Twifo. At some points the population of the Twifo, Denkyira and Hemang were lumped together and in recent times, they have been considered in terms of districts.



The figure above is a map showing the spatial distribution of Twifo Towns. These towns are known to constitute the Twifo kingdom. These towns are found within the Twifo-Ati-Mokwa District Area and Twifo/Heman/Lower Denkyira District Area. From the south to the north are Twifo Hemang, Mampong, Ntafrewaso, Nyinase, Twifo Praso, Darmang, Aboabo, Wamaso Mokwa and Agona. To the north-west is Ayaase. To the north-east of the map is Dunkwa, capital of Upper Denkyira. It is shown on the map to prove that, the Twifo State developed southward.

The Twifo are an Akan ethnic group. The Akan are twi-speaking peoples in the forest and savannah regions of Ghana.⁴ Cartographical information confirms this

⁴ D.E.K. Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History from Pre-Colonial Times to the 20th Century*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2008, p.15. See also Kwasi Konadu, "The Calendrical Factor in Akan History" in *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 45, No.2, 2012, pp.217-246

claim for most of the societies, particularly, the Akan states between the Tano and Volta rivers and from the coast to the forest fringe of Ghana. In 1702, William Bosman, who had served the Dutch West Indian Company (DWIC) in Elmina for years, described the Twifo as one of the Akan states in Adanse.⁵ The Twifo are also members of a subset of the Akan called the Agona/Annona clan, with the parrot as their totem, symbolizing eloquence.⁶ Quoting Kwesi Yankah, “the eloquence of the parrot is equivalent to the might of a multitude”.⁷

Like most Akan groups, the social and political organization of the Twifo is based on the matrilineal system where inheritance and succession follow the maternal blood line.⁸ The Ohene/Omanhene (the highest political office in Akan) for instance, is succeeded by his nephews or sister’s sons and not his own son.

According to the people, their name is Twifo and the simplest and most obvious etymology of the name is its reference to the Akan language, Twi. Thus, the name Twifo is very descriptive; it comes from the words: ‘Twi’ – an Akan dialect and ‘fo’ – people. Hence, the name Twifo, simply means the speakers of the

⁵ William Bosman, *A New Description of the Coast of Guinea*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1702, pp.520-521. Bosman’s work is an early example of the travel-writing genre by European traders and administrator. The book is therefore a collection of letters written by Bosman to his official in the Netherlands and it describes the geography and political situation in the Gold Coast in the 18th century.

⁶ All Agona members see themselves as one people and the response to their greetings is, *yaa ago nana*.

⁷ See Kwesi Yankah, *Speaking for the Chief: Okyeame and the Politics of Akan Royal Oratory*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995, p.49. The prime ancestor of the clan was on a journey long ago when he met a murderer who stopped him, and asked whether he was alone or in company. He replied he had a following behind him. Each word spoken by the ancestor was further boosted by its echo from a parrot, giving the illusion that more clansmen followed and would seek revenge if the ancestor was killed. In fear, the murderer abandoned his scheme, and the progenitor of the agona/anona went scot free, saved by the eloquence of the parrot.

⁸ Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History*, pp.16-17.

Two language which confirms the Akan origin of the Twifo. This etymology of the name Twifo was corroborated by Meyerowitz when she noted that the name refers to 'Twi', a language that spread right through the forest region by the Twi people. Due perhaps to their inability to pronounce the word 'Twifo', Europeans pronounced the word variously as, *Tufel, Juffer, Tshiforo, Teufel, Kwiforo* etc..⁹

The language spoken by the Twifo people, however, appears to be a composite of Asante and Fante dialects, despite the fact that the Asante element predominates. It could be argued that the language of the Twifo people is an Asante dialect modified by contiguity to Fante-speaking peoples. Significantly, this cross-fertilization of the Twifo and Fante is not evenly spread in the area. My own field experience was that the Fante language is more noticeable in southern Twifo towns where there are many Fante residents. Nonetheless, the Asante dialect predominates in the Twifo.

In the 1830s, the Twifo state was a loose confederacy of four Akan states, the Twifo, Hemang, Mokwaa and Anyinabi (Hemanso). This occurred following the Twifo secession from Asante and subsequent migration across the Pra River. Within the confederacy, the Twifo, the most powerful group was the pivot of the state in local and national politics. However, the confederacy disintegrated following the secession of Hemang in 1927 and Mokwaa in 1987. Thus, the Twifo state in its current form is predominantly made of the Twifo, members of the Agona

⁹ Eva Meyerowitz, *The Akan of Ghana: Their Ancient Beliefs*, London: Faber & Faber Ltd, pp.103-105. Among members of the anona/agona clan, the associated saying, "when you see a lone bird, do not throw a stone; it may belong to a multitude". To the clan, the eloquence of the parrot is equivalent to the might of a multitude. Underlying this is the belief in the supremacy of the spoken word over physical power.

clan and a few other clans, notable among whom is (Oyoko who have been inculcated into the Twifo state).

According to Twifo tradition which is corroborated by that of Denkyira, the Twifo played active roles in the history of the Gold Coast particularly, in the 19th century. Twifo tradition asserts that the Nsamankow War of 1824 was an offshoot of the problems between Asante, Twifo and Denkyira. Indeed, the Twifo and Denkyira featured prominently in both the 1824 and 1826 wars between Asante and the British. Metcalfe described the two states as the “greatest supporters/allies of the British” in the two wars. The Twifo were also strongly involved in the search for peace between Asante, the southern states and the British in the post-Akatamanso War era. The Twifohene, Owusu Koko was a signatory to the 1831 Peace Treaty and the Bond of 1844.

However, the Twifo are one of the Akan states yet to be researched, despite their important role in the socio-political development of the Gold Coast. This leaves a lacuna in the history of the Gold Coast which must be filled.

This research, explores the history of the Twifo people through oral traditions and archival materials. The research questions below were used to guide the work:

- *who are the Twifo?*
- what is the origin of the Twifo?
- what is the relations between the Twifo and Asante?
- what are the relations between the Twifo and their neighbours?
- what was the role of the Twifo in the economy of the Gold Coast?
- what political development occurred with the arrival of the Twifo?
- what are Twifo festivals and social customs?

The research begins from the 17th century mainly because, as a member of the Agona clan, just as other Akan groups that migrated to Adanse, the states that they built began to take shape in the 17th century. It was during this period that the rise of the state brought Denkyira, a member of the Agona clan and its destabilizing effect on the other Akan states in Adanse. Many of the states moved out of Adanse to find peaceful settlements elsewhere. The Twifo and Akyem were among the states that migrated from Adanse around the period.¹⁰ This makes the 17th century very crucial to the history of not only the Twifo, but many other Akan states. Therefore, using the 17th century as a commencement date enabled this researcher to critically examine the beginnings of the Twifo in Adanse to their permanent settlement in the Pra River basin, where they built a new state in union with Hemang, Mokwaa and Anyinabi. However, the terminal period of the research is 1987 because it was the year Mokwaa seceded from the Twifo state, bringing the union to an end. Thus, the year 1987 was epochal in the history of the Twifo. The terminal period, therefore, enabled the researcher to examine why and how the Twifo state is what it is today.

Statement of Problem

The Twifo have played an important role in the history of the Gold Coast. The Twifo featured prominently in the dynamics of power among the Akan states such as Denkyira and Asante in the 17th century. In the early 19th century, the Twifo were active in the political affairs of the Gold Coast, particularly, the issues between

¹⁰ See Kofi Affrifa, *The Akyem Factor in Ghana' History, 1700-1875*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2000, pp.6-10

Asante, the Southern states and the British. During this period, the sour relations between the Asante and the Fante on one hand and between the Asante and the British on the other, was very crucial to the politics of the Gold Coast. These issues, to a large extent, drove the policies of European authorities in the Gold Coast (i.e. the British, the Dutch and the Danes). One of the landmarks in the period was the Nsamankow War between Asante and the British, and according to oral traditions of Twifo, the war occurred as a result of the problems between the Twifo, Denkyira and Asante. The Twifo dispute the assertion that the war was caused by the Anomabo sergeant issue between Asante and the British merchants. This claim deserves to be critically investigated. This is because if the claim is accurate, then the Twifo can provide a perspective from which the history of the Gold Coast in the nineteenth century can be examined. Because the Twifo factor has not been explored, there is lack of reliable written records on the part the Twifo. This creates a huge gap in the history of the Gold Coast which needs to be filled. Therefore, the history of the Twifo begs a comprehensive academic study to fill a huge vacuum in the history of the Gold Coast.

Literature Review

Most of the books on the Akans of Ghana are general works. Apart from A.B. Ellis' book titled: *The Tshi-Speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, which deals with all the Twi-speaking people of Ghana, there is no major work on the history of the Twifo. In most of the general works too, the Twifo are mentioned casually. Therefore, the review below is mostly on some of the general books on the Akan groups of Ghana.

A.B. Ellis' book is the earliest, and perhaps the only literature on the Twi speaking people of the Akan in a generic manner. However, the author made very negative assertions about all the Twi-speaking people in the Gold Coast. In the opening chapter of the book, the author described the whole forest area inhabited by the Twi-speaking people as "insignificant villages and hamlets, built in small clearings in the forest".¹¹ He noted further that "there is no pure native assemblage of buildings worthy of the name of town", and concluded that the Twi-speaking people were low in the scale of civilization and were much in the same condition, both socially and morally, as they were at the time of the Portuguese discoveries in the 15th centuries.¹² The author re-echoes the use of climatic factors to explain the so-called cultural differences between Africans and the West and explains the state of the Twi-speaking people in the forest from an environmental perspective. According to the author, "A hot climate renders physical, and still more mental, labour difficult", and that the climate of the area leads to "inertness of mind and body, its unhealthiness, which besides enfeebling both these prevents Europeans settling in the country, or even opening up the interior, so that the influence of a race more advanced in civilization can reach the tribes".¹³ He continued that,

If this be the case with Europeans, who have in their own country been accustomed to mental labour, and who are, perhaps, only exposed to the enervating influences of tropical climates for comparatively short periods, what must be the effect produced upon races who have been subjected to these influences for ages, and who have never been taught to exercise or develop the mental capacity?¹⁴

¹¹ A.B., Ellis, *The Tshi-Speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa: their Religion, Manners, Customs, Law, Language*, etc. London: Chapman and Hall Ltd, 1887, pp.3-5

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid. p.23

¹⁴ Ibid, pp.4-5

The book could be categorized as one of the literary works that sought to promote Western culture and denigrate non-Western cultures, particularly, that of the African. Apart from the general description of the Twi-speaking people, the author also made some comments about the the religiosity of the people which appear to be skewed. The author asserts that the Twi-speaking people did not know God before their contact with Europeans. He claims that the people only got to know the deity called Nana Nyankopon after some years of intercourse with the Europeans. Generally, the book appears to be an epitome of 'Social Darwinism'.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the arguments about the religion of the Twi-speaking people provided some background information for the study.

In "The Forest and the Twis", Ivor Wilks contradicts the views of A.B. Ellis in terms of his general and negative description of the Twi-speaking people of the Gold Coast. Wilks quoted Eric Wolf's assertion that:

Thus Africa south of the Sahara was not the isolated, backward area of European imagination...when the Europeans would enter West Africa from the coast, they would be setting foot in a country already dense with towns and settlements, and caught up in networks of exchange that far transcended the narrow enclaves of the European euphoria on the coast.¹⁶

Wilks also explored the religion of the Twi-speaking people and disputed the claim that the Akan did not know God before their contact with the Europeans.

¹⁵ Social Darwinism is term that was popularized in the 19th century and was applied to the evolutionary concept of natural selection to human society. It was used to explain the mental capabilities of poor and colonized societies.

¹⁶ Ivor Wilks, "The Forest and the Twis" in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Ne Series, No.8, 2004, pp.1

Rather he asserted that the belief in 'Odomankoma' predated the arrival of the Europeans and further noted that the Akan veneration of 'Odomankoma', the spirit of creation, was a mythopoeic representation of the forest that transformed the society, economy and culture in the forest zone. This article also provided some background understanding of the Twi-speakers in the forest zone of the Gold Coast.

J.B. Danquah's: *The Akan Doctrine of God* is one of the invaluable works on the belief system of the Akan and the writer approaches the Akan religious system from an African perspective. The book could be described as an apologia which projects the rich belief systems of the Akan by refuting comments by some Western writers and missionaries such as those made by A.B. Ellis.¹⁷ The claims by these Western writers that before their arrival Africans were superstitious and fetish worshippers were strongly disputed by Danquah. Danquah asserts that the Akan uniquely have their own perception of God which is the same as Western perception of God, and that there is no basis for the West to feel any sense of superiority. Danquah expounds the Akan thought in such a way that makes it comprehensive to Western thinkers and to demonstrate that it is comparable to their system. Further, Danquah refutes the assertions by the West that the Akan religion, just as other West African societies, is 'fetish' cult. The author strongly, though controversially, rejects that view and claim that, the Akan religious doctrine knows only one God, and everything else found in the land, in the form of religion, is nothing but superstition. Nonetheless, Danquah did not substantiate many of the assertions about the beliefs of the Akan, particularly, his view that the Akan

¹⁷ Westermann and Rattray made similar comments about the religion of the Akan.

religiosity knew only one god, ignoring the existence of the 'lesser gods'. This notwithstanding, the book provided a good background for a deeper research into the complex religious systems of the Akan of which the Twifo people are part.

K. Y. Daaku's works on the Akan states, particularly *Oral Traditions of Denkyira* and *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo* provided useful insight for my work. The two works are collections of the traditions of Denkyira, Assin and the Twifo. From Daaku's *Oral Traditions of Denkyira*, the Twifo were described as a subject of Denkyira before the destruction of Denkyira power by Asante in 1701. The tradition also indicated that by the 1680s Denkyira concentrated her efforts at subjugating the states of the south and the south-west which brought major states such as Adanse, Asante, Assin, Sefwi, Twifo, Wassa, under the authority of Denkyira.¹⁸ This work, since it is entirely based on oral tradition, is relevant to this study in terms of its background reading and structuring interview questions.

The *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo* is a transcript of the traditions of the Assin states and Twifo. For Daaku, the Twifo, Assin, Adanse and Denkyira are of great significance in any studies on the Akan. From this work, the Twifo, Assin, Adanse and Denkyira were described as the cradle of the Akan, from where many of the rulers of the forest states traced their origin.¹⁹ These areas were the centers of diffusion of Akan cultural and political institutions throughout the forest states.²⁰

However, Daaku's work is lopsided, as it concentrated much on the traditions of the Assin states. Only the tradition of Mampong was recorded in the

¹⁸ K.Y. Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Denkyira*.....

¹⁹ See K.Y. Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo*, Accra: Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1969.

²⁰ Ibid.

work in about eight pages out of the entire book. Nonetheless, the traditions in the book were very useful in understanding the Twifo traditions of origin.

The Akwamu, Asante and their Neighbours by Basil Davidson²¹ highlights the commercial and political struggles between major Akan states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly, between the powerful states in the forest and coastland of modern Ghana, Akwamu and Denkyira. From the sixteenth century to the eighteenth centuries, these powerful Akan states competed to take control over the coastal trade with the Europeans whilst trying to expand territorially through conquest of militarily weaker states. Using Akwamu oral tradition, Davidson indicates that the Akwamu previously lived at Hemang and prospered from the gold trade around Birim River at the beginning of the seventeenth century under one of their great kings Ansa Sasraku. However, Denkyira and the Akyem state and allies provided stiff challenge to Akwamu's interest; blocking Akwamu's expansion northwards or eastwards. Thus, Akwamu turned its expansive attention to the south and west where states like Aburi and Buni provided less resistance to Akwamu's quest for direct access to and control of the trade with Europeans who were located in the coastal states of the Ga and Fante.²² It was from these markets that Akwamu had purchased guns, ammunition and other foreign goods and so to ensure the safety and survival of Akwamu in the future, there was the need to break through to the coast, subdue the Ga towns,

²¹ Basil Davidson, "Akwamu, Asante and their Neighbours" *A History of West Africa, 1000 – 1800*, Essex: Longman Publishers, 1965, pp.86-95

²² Ibid.

especially Great Accra, and establish a direct trading partnership with the English, the Dutch and the Danes. In a series of struggles that emerged, the Akwamu won decisively under Ansa Sasraku.

To the south-west also lay Denkyira and each of these states within the period sought allies in order to overcome the other. The Akyem were generally allied to Denkyira, while Asante, which was still small then was allied to Akwamu. Denkyira were able to successfully block Akwamu and her allies on the west. Akwamu and her allies had no option than to re-route to the west through the Volta River basin. This was the reason for the Akwamu occupation of states of the Dahomey coast such as Whydah. The rise of Asante as a powerful kingdom around 1700 changed the dynamics of power among the Akan states. The Asante wars with Denkyira and efforts by Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye, and later Asante chiefs, to build the Asante Confederacy have been well recorded in many history books and need not be repeated here. Though Basil Davidson's work does not directly deal with the Twifo, it throws light on state formation among major Akan groups which helped provide background information for this study.

Dennis Warren's: *The Akan of Ghana: An Overview of Ethnographic Literature*²³ highlights six major cultural domains of the Akan of Ghana, i.e. their life cycle, their family system and social structure, their religion, their form of indigenous government, law and their art forms. The basic Akan groups discussed in the book are the Asante, Fante, Akyem, Akuapim, Denkyira, Bono, Twifo, Wassa Adansi and Akwamu. The author gives a general survey of Akan culture in

²³ Dennis Warren, *The Akan of Ghana: An Overview of Ethnographic Literature*, Pointer: 1973

a simplistic style even though many of the cultural practices he highlights are no more held whilst some of them were just beliefs.²⁴ Generally, the book does not provide any new factual information on the cultural practices of the Akan. The book is a rehash of pieces of information in other secondary sources on the Akan. However, it aided the research by providing some information about the belief systems of the Akan.

Eva L. R. Meyerowitz in *The Akan of Ghana*²⁵ examines aspects of the Akan history in a concise manner. In the book, the author puts the spotlight on the civilization and culture of the Akan with special emphasis on their belief systems. The author explains the connection between the heavenly bodies such as the moon and the sun and the Akan cosmological view. The author establishes links between the institutions of the queen mother in the Akan with the moon. The author uses some words in the Akan language to support this view. For example, *sraanee* – heavenly bodies, *nsoroma* – stars, plane – literally meaning the wandering (moon), children of the space, *sraman* – lightening. Then also words like *owia* – meaning the sun, *ewiase* – under the vault of the heaven, is the visible world.²⁶ The author explains that *wie* or *owie* in the Akan language means completion, termination, and she believes that the sun may be connected with it because of the Akan belief that the sun was the last heavenly body which the moon brought forth. She explains that the firmament certainly must have come into being first since the 24 hour day of the Akan starts with the night.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Eva Meyerowitz, *The Akan of Ghana*....

²⁶ Ibid.

Her main interests were in the cultural beliefs of the Akan, a belief system which helped them to build a very rich and formidable civilization. She shows that the moon, worshipped as a supreme deity, was personified as a Mother-goddess and believed to have brought forth the heavenly bodies by parthenogenesis.²⁷ The moon was seen as the life-giver to men and all living things on earth by implanting her kra (soul) in them. The author demonstrates why the moon is venerated as the ruler of the sky, the earth and the underworld. The author goes further to highlight many other important beliefs of the Akan, especially beliefs in the heavenly bodies and the Akan view of the connection between them and events on earth. The title of the book is quite deceptive; the author used only the Bono as case study to draw generalization about the Akan groups. Nonetheless, the general information about the Akan was very useful for this research.

James Anquandah's *Rediscovering Ghana's Past*²⁸ sought to make a case for Archaeology as a discipline to be given recognition in African universities. Thus, the author attempts to reinterpret the history of Ghana through archaeological evidence and oral tradition.

In the work, the author discusses the specific case of the Akan origin which some scholars have linked to Egyptians, Western Asians, Libyans, Maghrebian or Mauritians.²⁹ Anquandah asserted that Akan civilization evolved from the Akanland and not from outside. In his view the core of the Akan culture is unique

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ James Anquandah, *Rediscovering Ghana's Past*, London: Longman, 1982, pp.85-112

²⁹ Authors such as Adu Boahen, J.B. Danquah, Eva Meyerowitz etc have all done some works on the origin of the Akan

to the Akan. He noted that Adanse was traditionally the 'garden of Eden' of all the Akan.³⁰ He explained that the name Adanse means the foundation or founders of nuclear settlements where Adanse was described as the first Akan state and stands at the head of the entire Akan nation.

For the state of Bono, Anquandah was of the view that their ancestors emerged from a hole in the ground at Bonoso near Wenkyi. They claim that it was at Bonoso that they established their nuclear settlements before moving to their first capital site at Ahwene Koko (Old Wenkyi). The Assin oral tradition attributes the foundation of the Akan nuclear settlement to Annor, Bosomadwe, Abakrampa and Abease to the Assin-Etsi. The indications of all these assertions are that the Akan cradle possibly straddled the geographical area between Bono, Adanse and Assin especially since the Bono dialect is known to exhibit some of the most archaic traits of the Akan language.

Anquandah used tradition as well as archaeology to highlight the Akan civilization, its origin and elements. Nonetheless, the issue of origin of the Akan still remains a contested area. For instance, J.B. Danquah and Eva Meyerowitz, mentioned above, supported the Ethiopian connection. According to the two, it was from Ethiopia that they later moved to Egypt and then came to settle in the ancient Ghana Empire of the Western Sudan. Historians like Adu Boahen and Harry Johnston claim that the Akan lived in Yorubaland in modern Nigeria. For them, it was from there that they crossed the Mono and Volta rivers and entered the Afram Plains. The Akan later traveled northwards but turned again southwards to settle in

³⁰ Anquandah, *Rediscovering Ghana's Past*.

the Pra-Offin basin. From this region, each Akan group migrated to settle in their present location. Anquandah appears to have introduced a new theory using archaeology and oral tradition. The author shows his African-centeredness; he could have provided more evidence to buttress his claims. Apart from that, the work is a very good historical research based on archaeology and oral tradition. It is therefore highly useful to this research because it may help to critically examine the claim of *etsi* (meaning *they are autochthonous and not immigrants*) by some Akan states.

Ivor Wilks' in "The Mossi and Akan States 1500 – 1800"³¹ examines major developments in the Mossi and Akan states between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries. In the article, he highlights the rise of these states and the changes as well as the commercial activities of the states. Notably, the period between 1500 and 1800 was marked in particular by the emergence and consolidation of such southern Akan forest states as those of the Denkyira, Akwamu, Fante and perhaps the most powerful of all, Asante. The author attempts to establish connections between the states in the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries.³²The author asserts that whilst these Akan forest states were rising within the period, there were other states to the north of the forest in the savanna that stretch away to the middle of Niger also rising within the same period. These were the kingdoms of Mossi comprising Mamprusi, Dagomba and Nanumba in the south as well as Tenkodogo, Wagadugu, Yatenga and Fada N'Gurma in the north. The

³¹ Ivor Wilks, "The Mossi and Akan States, 1500-1800" in *History of West Africa*. Vol.1, London: Longman Group Ltd, 1971.

³²

author erroneously refers to these states as ‘stateless’ societies, merely because they did not have rulers. The author explains that whilst the military southern Akan forest states rested on their possession of foot soldiers because the environmental conditions of the forest did not support the breeding of horses, the power of the Mossi kingdoms was based largely on their possession of the horse and their knowledge of the techniques of cavalry warfare.³³

Jan G. Platvoet’s work, “The Akan Believer and his Religions”³⁴ looks at the impact of Western religions on traditional Akan beliefs and practices. The author argues that the impact of Western Christian missions has been one of destruction of the Akan traditional religion through condemnation of the religious practices of the Akan, giving them all sorts of negative connotations. Most of the religious practices were described as barbaric, demoralizing, idolatrous, etc. Kumasi was described by Thomas Birch Freeman, a mulato missionary, as “the stronghold of Satan and a dark abode of cruelty”. The article, though very concise, throws more light on the religion of the Akan which also provided a strong background to this study.

Methodology

The study is analytical and interpretive in nature, hence the qualitative historical design was adopted for the work. Archival materials were extensively utilized in the work. There was a thorough search through the documents from the Native Affairs Department of the Gold Coast, Twifo Native Affairs (TNA) as well

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Jan G. Platvoet, “The Akan Believer and his Religion” in Pieter Hendrik Vrijhof & Waardenburg (eds.), *Official and Popular Religion: Analysis of a Theme for Religious Studies*.

as the Denkyira Native Affairs (DNA) at the Public Records and Archive Administration Department (PRAAD) in Cape Coast. The documents were very relevant in establishing the origin of the Twifo and their involvement in the affairs of the Gold Coast in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Besides, the Native Affairs documents of Morkwa, Hemang and Asante were helpful in understanding the origin of the Twifo. These archival documents were used to fill some of the gaps in the oral traditions.

The work also made extensive use of oral tradition and oral history through interviews. On the use of oral tradition as a source of historical reconstruction, Vansina's epoch-making book, *Oral Traditions as History*³⁵ provided insightful guidelines which were of tremendous benefit for this research. Also, Paul Thompson's essential guidelines for successful interviews were employed. According to Thompson, an interviewer must possess: an interest and respect for people as individuals, and flexibility in responses to them, an ability to show understanding and sympathy from their point of view and above all, a willingness to sit quietly and listen.³⁶ The guidelines provided by the two authors helped the researcher to successfully gather traditions from the Twifo states, Morkwa, Hemang and Denkyira.

³⁵ See Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, Oxford: James Carrey, 1985

³⁶ See Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral Tradition*. London: Oxford University Press, 1978, p.165.

Paul Thompson is regarded as one of the pioneers of oral history as a research methodology in the Arts and

Social Sciences. In 1971 he founded the Oral History Society and the Journal of Oral History in Britain.

Further, the purposeful approach was adopted in the interviews, including, the snow ball approach. The interviews were generally conversational and interactive with a range of questions beginning from the names of the informants, their ages, status, reasons for migrations, settlement centers, alliances, wars, socio-cultural systems, meanings and significance of appellations and oaths, political system, land tenure system, religious beliefs and rituals etc. In most cases, elders of the various Twifo communities were identified and interview appointments were booked before they were visited. On few occasions too, some informants directed the researcher to others who were believed to be more knowledgeable on some subjects. In such cases, informants were visited without prior notification. Generally, the informants were allowed to narrate whatever they knew about the history of their people before aspects of the traditions were questioned or previous knowledge and information from some documents were made known to further solicit more information.

It was observed that the Twifo people took great delight in their history being researched and documented, especially by a non-indigene. Hence, many of the chiefs and elders of the communities attached great importance to sharing their history, particularly, for academic purposes. Further, language was never a hindrance because the people spoke Twi, which was intelligible to the researcher, and thus, there was no need for interpreters. For these reasons, the researcher had smooth interview sessions. The only problem encountered in the interviews concerned towns and villages where there were on-going disputes especially, areas which had dispute with Mokwaa. In such areas, informants asked about my identity

and motives for researching on them even before they provided any useful information. Sometimes, a contending party perceived me as agent from the other side. In such areas, informants spoke with emotions and usually embellished information about some events in their history. Also, on chieftaincy issues, especially, those involving the two ‘gates’ in Mampong, Ampontin Fi and Akotonwu (Appiah Nuamah) Houses, informants were unwilling to provide detailed information. These problems were offset by conducting interviews from several other sources and also support from archival documents.

Some traditions were also obtained from well-known published and unpublished traditions by some authors such as K.Y. Daaku and Ivor Willks. Particular reference in this connection must be made to the K.Y. Daaku’s compilation of Denkyira traditions in his *Traditions of Denkyira*. Although unpublished, the work provided much information on Denkyira from the 17th century to the 19th century. This aided in tracking the connection between the Twifo and Denkyira. Further, Daaku’s *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo*, published in 1969, provided information on the eastern neighbours of the Twifo, who were the Assin, a people with whom the Twifo had much trading connections due to the establishment of Assin Fosu and Manso as trading centers. Apart from that, the work also aided the researcher in understanding the social customs of the Twifo.

Tape recorders were used in recording the interviews which were transcribed at the end of each day. Also during the interviews notes were taken on note pads. These notations helped in deciding follow-up questions on areas that needed further explanation when the narration was over.

The researcher made use of court cases, court rulings, proceedings and reports of commissions of enquiries, minutes of traditional council meetings on land disputes with special regard to the disputes between the Twifo and Mokwaa and between the Twifo and Hemang. The proceedings and report of the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Regional House of Chiefs (CRHC) into the Mokwaa Stool Affairs was of tremendous relevance in understanding the factors that led to the secession of Mokwaa from the Twifo. It also aided the researcher in understanding why Mokwaa was granted a paramount status. However, these documents were used with caution as testimonies were likely to be embellished which could lead to biases and prejudices.

The above-stated sources formed the main body of primary sources for this researcher in bringing out the history of the Twifo. Beyond these sources, some European accounts, particularly the Dutch and English sources were also consulted. The traveler's accounts of some European administrators and traders contributed significantly. Apart from that, the work made use of the scraps of secondary material available especially some of the books mentioned earlier.

Organization of the Study

The work is divided into eight chapters, with introductory and concluding chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and it is made up of the background information, statement of the problem, literature review, methodology, and the objectives of the study.

Chapter two examines the traditions of the origin of the Twifo. The various versions of Twifo origin are established in the chapter, particularly, the accounts of neighbours that have had some dealings with the Twifo. These include that of Denkyira, Mokwaa, and Hemang. There are also the traditions of the Twifo themselves and how they came to settle at their location.

Chapter three explores the relations between the Twifo, Denkyira, Asante and the British in the 19th century. It studies the twists and turns of the Twifo migration from Asante, the events leading to the first two major wars between Asante and the British and the role the Twifo played.

Chapter four analyses the beginning of the Twifo state around the Pra basin in the 19th century especially their relations with their neighbours/host states. It attempts to explain how the Twifo immigrants transformed into a dominant sovereign state in the area.

Chapter five examines the economy of the Twifo state and how it helped the Twifo to transform the area around the Pra Rivers. It analyses the part played by the economic activities in their spread and domination of the area.

Chapter six also explores the political organization of the Twifo as well as some major political developments that occurred upon their settlement at the Pra River basin. It establishes the factors that caused Hemang and Mokwaa to break away from the Twifo and its consequence.

Chapter seven is on Twifo festivals and other socio-cultural activities. The Twifo Odwira Guakro as well as other minor festivals are examined. The chapter also studies some socio-cultural practices of the Twifo

Chapter eight is the conclusion. This presents the major findings of the work.

Significance of the Study

As already indicated, there is no major written work on the Twifo. This study is, therefore, significant in the following ways:

The study has constructed the history of the Twifo, highlighting their origins, migrations, and their social customs.

The study has also established the role the Twifo played in the the social and political development of the Gold Coast, particularly, in the nineteenth century. In addition, the work contributes to the historiography of the Akan of Ghana.

In exploring the history of the Twifo through their traditions, the study throws more light on the use of oral tradition and oral history in historical reconstruction, especially for societies akin to the Twifo. Further, the study provides a basis for a more comprehensive framework for later historical works on other traditional societies whose histories have not been studied.

CHAPTER TWO

TWIFO TRADITIONS OF ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

The origin of the Twifo is traced in their oral traditions. However, there are many traditions about their origin just as in many other Akan states. This has arisen as a result of the different perspectives provided by some states that had strong relations with the Twifo, particular, Denkyira, Mokwaa and Hemang. On the part of the Twifo themselves, even though they do not dispute the assertion that they are immigrants in their current jurisdiction, there are two contrasting traditions about their origin and settlement within the Pra River basin. This makes the origin of the Twifo an intricate one which appears to be a 'maze within a maze'. This chapter, therefore, attempts to decipher the origin of the Twifo, by reviewing the various traditions, particularly, the tradition of Denkyira, Hemang, Mokwa and those of the Twifo themselves. The traditions are summarized at some length and then discussed in an attempt to establish their authenticity and reliability as a tradition of Twifo origin. The traditions are also cross-checked to find correlations and corroborations and this is supported by archival information, accounts of some European traders in the Gold Coast and scraps of information from secondary materials. The chapter also examines the early phases of the Twifo history prior to their settlement at Pra basin.

The Denkyira Perspective

Although Denkyira was not part of the Twifo state, Denkyira had strong connections with the Twifo. As Akan states founded by members of the same Agona family, the historical accounts of Denkyira are essential in the reconstruction

of the origin and migrations of the Twifo. The traditions of both Denkyira and Twifo confirm their common descent. The two states, therefore, share many historical experiences which make the traditions of Denkyira very relevant in the study of the history of the Twifo.³⁷ Geographically, the two Denkyira states of Upper and Lower Denkyira are separated by the Twifo state. Thus, the Twifo state lies in-between the two Denkyira states of Upper and Lower Denkyira. This proximity between the Twifo state and Denkyira strengthened interaction and interpersonal relations between the two states. Further, by mid 17th century, Denkyira had developed into a powerful and rich kingdom which dominated the southwestern part of the Gold Coast. This rapid rise of Denkyira and subsequent subjugation of states in Adanse had a lot of impact on many Akan states in the area. Thus, Denkyira is indispensable in the history of not only the Twifo, but most of the Akan states.³⁸

According to the tradition of Denkyira, prior to the destruction of the power of Denkyira by the Asante at the Battle of Feyiase, the Twifo were subordinate to or a vassal of Denkyira and they immigrated together with their 'vassal' (Twifo) after the Feyiase War to the Central region where the Twifo settled on Apagyahina lands between the present villages of Imbraim (Ibrim) and Ayiase.³⁹ The account continues that following the fall of Denkyira the two states (Denkyira and Twifo) migrated across the River Pra to Jukwa. However, the Twifo subsequently moved

³⁷ See ADM/1/189. Denkyira State Affairs, PRAAD, Cape Coast.

³⁸ K.Y. Daaku, "Oral Traditions of Denkyira" (unpublished), Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon, 1970.

³⁹ Interview with Odeefuo Boa Amponsem III Denkyirahene, 78yrs, interviewed at Jukwa, 13th September, 2015

further inland to settle around the Pra since the lands around the Pra were very fertile and unoccupied.⁴⁰ The account seems to suggest that the migration of both Denkyira and Twifo took place in the early part of the 18th century. It partly corroborates K.Y. Daaku's view about the Feyiase War and its impact. According to Daaku, the defeat of Denkyira led to the dispersal of the members of the Agona to many parts of Ghana. He continued that the war marked a new era for members of the Agona clan as it marked the nadir of their political fortunes.⁴¹ There is no doubt that Denkyira defeat at Feyiase led to the independence of many of their vassals, and subsequent dispersion of some of the states. Nonetheless, the sequence of events in connection with the migration to their current jurisdiction is inconsistent with historical events in the Gold Coast in the 19th century. The Feyiase War occurred between 1699 and 1701 and there is no evidence that both Denkyira and the Twifo migrated to their present location immediately after the war. Further, the account appears to be at variance with aspects of Denkyira history which are highlighted in the subsequent pages.

There is no doubt that the defeat of Denkyira had a destabilizing effect on many Agona groups and other states that were under Denkyira influence. It is also well established that Denkyira became an Asante vassal from 1702 following Denkyira defeat to Asante at the Battle of Feyiase. Denkyira was to remain Asante vassal until Asante's defeat at the Akatamanso Battle in 1826. Besides, aspects of Denkyira traditions do not support a Denkyira migration across the Pra in the early

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ K.Y. Daaku, "History in the Oral Traditions of the Akan", in *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. 8, No. 2/3, Special Issue: Folklore and Traditional History, 1971, pp. 114-126

18th century. The traditions of Asante, Twifo and Denkyira all confirm that the Denkyirahene, Kwadwo Tibo, fought gallantly for the Asantehene in the Asante-Gyaaman War.⁴² Daaku confirms that it was after that war that Denkyira left Asante.⁴³ Interestingly, the Twifo led by their chief, Atta Amuah, also participated in this same war as an Asante ally.⁴⁴ This raises doubts about the Denkyira traditions that seem to suggest a Denkyira migration across the Pra immediately after the Feyiase War. This also makes it difficult to accept the Denkyira account of the Twifo origin entirely. Further, Denkyira claim of supremacy over the Twifo and their migration in the 18th century presents more questions than answers. For instance, that account does not indicate when and how the Twifo became vassal of Denkyira; was it through conquest or diplomacy? These pertinent issues create loopholes in the Denkyira account about the origin of the Twifo.

The Mokwaa Account

Until 1987 when Mokwaa was declared independent and granted paramount status, Mokwaa was part of the Twifo state and held a divisional status within the state. However, Mokwa tradition claims they are aboriginals of the lands around the Pra.⁴⁵ They are generally referred to as Ati-Mokwa, where ‘Ati’ literally implies

⁴² Interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo, 81 years, former curator of the Manhyia Museum, interviewed at his residence, 13th March 2015. This is also confirmed by some aspects of Denkyira traditions.

⁴³ K.Y. Daaku, “Oral Traditions of Denkyira”. Daaku quotes that in welcoming the troops back from Gyaaman at a durbar in Kumasi, the Asantehene was said to have greeted the Denkyirahene in the following words, “kwadwo mo, wokoma po ni na wokofa” literally meaning, well done Kwadwo, if this is how you fight for an ally, how would you fight your own war?

⁴⁴ Account of Nana Ampontin Fi to the commission of enquiry to Mokwa-Twifo stool affairs

⁴⁵ See Nana Kenin III petition to the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs into the Mokwaa Stool affairs, 1980. PRAAD, Cape Coast.

10. Ibid.

that they are not migrants.⁴⁶ The Mokwa tradition also makes reference to Hemang and Anyinabi (Hemanso) as the neighbours of Mokwa and the three states formed an association known as “*Mbukyia-Miensa*” (the Triple Alliance). *Mbukyia-Miensa* was a loose association primarily for the security and defense of the three states.⁴⁷ According to the account, the alliance was meant to provide protection for the three states against invasion from powerful neighbours such as Wassa.⁴⁸ Further, the association was to provide a concerted effort for the benefit of members in pertinent issues that were of common interest.⁴⁹

On the origin of the Twifo, oral tradition of Mokwa also asserts that after the Amankwatia War, the Twifo emigrated from Asante to the Pra-Offin basin where they came to meet the Mokwa already settled on the land. The only point of departure with the Denkyira version is on the period of migration. Mokwa tradition traced the period of immigration of the Twifo to the era of the Amankwatia War in 1874.⁵⁰ The Mokwahene Kobina Kenin III summarized Mokwaa’s perspective of the Twifo origin as follows:

These Twifus comprised Nana Owusu Panin from Nsaadweso in Asante Mampong State and Nana Atta Fua of Kotoku who was later to move farther away to settle in Akim Abuakwa on the Birim River. Both and their subjects were Agonas. Nana Owusu met as his host Nana Krom Banti, then the Mokwaahene, and having crossed the Offin River, Nana Mokwaahene at the request of the said Nana Owusu and Nana Atta Fua showed them a place to settle; a place

⁴⁷ Ibid. This was confirmed by all respondents in Mokwa

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid. The Sagranti War of 1874 is sometimes called the Amankwatia War because Asante army was led by the Bantamahene, Baffour Amankwatia.

called Mokwaa-ye-dom, which literally means, by the grace of the Mokwaa, now corrupted to “Dom-Mokwaa”.⁵¹

The Mokwaa account further indicate that, because the retinue of Nana Owusu was very large, he later asked for more lands for settlement and Nana Krom Banti responded positively by offering them lands on which the Twifo founded towns such as Gyase, Bepoben, Amanpona, Moseaso, Aboabo, Nyinase, Daaman, Ntafrewaso, Tufoi and Agona.⁵²

Realizing that the lands were still not enough, Nana Owusu Koko and his subjects moved further inland to a place called Ankaase which was under the dominion of Hemang. Here, the Twifo founded Mampong which became the seat of the paramount chief of Twifo.⁵³

With the exception of the period of migration, the account of the Mokwa appears persuasive, owing to the fact that many Twifo towns are established on lands that are claimed to be Mokwa Stool lands. In fact, as indicated already, apart from Mampong which was founded on Hemang stool land, Mokwa claims almost all Twifo towns were established on Mokwa stool lands.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, the claim that the Twifo migrated to the Pra basin after the Amankwatia War of 1874 seems far-fetched. This is because available evidence shows that the Twifo were settled in this part of the region many years before the Amankwatia War. For instance, in the latter part of the 1820s, the Twifo were very active in the politics in the Gold

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Interview with Mokwaahene.

Coast, particularly, the post-Akatamanso War era. The defeat of Asante and the lack of peace between Asante and the British on one hand and Asante and the southern states that joined the British led alliance against Asante made the latter part of the 1820s very turbulent and crucial for Gold Coast politics. It must be noted that it was this situation that forced the British to withdraw from the Gold Coast in 1828.⁵⁵ The Twifohene, Owusu Koko, was among the chiefs who negotiated peace terms between the Asantehene and the Southern chiefs. In fact, Owusu Koko was a signatory to the 1831 Tripartite Treaty which was masterminded by George Maclean.⁵⁶ Owusu Koko was also signatory to the Bond of 1844 as the Twifohene.⁵⁷ This shows that the Twifo must have settled in their present settlement much earlier than the period suggested by the Mokwaa tradition. More information to support this point is provided in subsequent discussions.

The Hemang Version

The Hemang have always described their town as an independent ancient town and that all her neighbours notably; Mokwa and Twifo came to meet them already settled within the Pra-Offin basin.⁵⁸ The tradition of Hemang also confirms that Denkyira and Twifo migrated together and that it was the Hemanghene who directed the Denkyirahene, Nana Boa Amponsem, and Twifohene, Amponteng Fi

⁵⁵ Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*

⁵⁶ See W.W. Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1964, pp.409-411. The Twifohene Owusu Koko was spelt 'Osso Koo', King of Tufel. In many other European records, reference is made to Osso Koo as the king of Tufel. The Tripartite Treaty was between Asante, the Southern states and the British.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p.453

⁵⁸ Interview with Hemanghene, Nana Amoia Sasraku, at his palace, Hemang, 19th February, 2015.

to settle at Jukwa.⁵⁹ The tradition, however, alleges that not too long after settling at Jukwa, rivalry evolved between the Twifo and Denkyira. Though the tradition falls short of explaining the cause of the rivalry and how severe it was, it attributes the Twifo's migration further inland towards the Pra to this rivalry:⁶⁰ The Hemanghene, Nana Kyei Baffour, is on record to have said:

Later after settling at Jukwa rivalry developed between Amponsem and Amponteng Fi so Amponteng Fi and his group known as the Twifus left in search of a place to settle and finally came to Hemang; since then the Hemang and the Twifus have been co-existing independently to-date as separate traditional entities.⁶¹

Similarly, the Hemang tradition asserts that the Mokwa came to meet Hemang already settled on the land. The Mokwa, according to the tradition of Hemang, migrated from Abura to Hemang first before proceeding to settle further inland. The tradition indicates that the Mokwa were led by a woman by name Maame Adowa who was alleged to have entered into an amorous relationship with the then chief of Hemang, Nana Kyerea-Amfour, and a son by name Abogyinadu was born out of that relationship.⁶² Unfortunately, the tradition does not provide much information about Abogyinadu and the role he played in the history of the two states. Nonetheless, the account seems to suggest that Hemang were the pioneers within the Pra-Offin basin. This was stressed in an interview with the chief of Hemang, Nana Amo Sasraku; "Hemang are the 'Ati' and that both the Twifo

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ See evidence of Nana Kyei Barfour, the Hemanghene in the Special committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs, Cape Coast, 1st March, 1979

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

and Mokwa came to meet the Hemang already settled.”⁶³ It must be emphasized that Mokwa disputes Hemang’s claim that Mokwa migrated from Abura to their present settlement, which seeks to counter Mokwa’s claim of being an autochthonous or ‘ati’.

The tradition corroborates Denkyira assertion that Denkyira and Twifo migrated across the Pra to the Central region together. Further, the reference to Boa Amponsem seems to suggest that Denkyira and Twifo migration across the Pra to the Central region occurred during the time of Odeefuo Boa Amponsem. This remains unsubstantiated due to the fact that Odeefuo Boa Amponsem I reigned between 1637 and 1695.⁶⁴ At the time of his death in 1695, Denkyira was without doubt, the most powerful of all the Akan forest states. Therefore, Twifo and Denkyira migration under Boa Amponsem as claimed in the Hemang tradition seems highly implausible.

It is worthy of note that there has been longstanding land dispute between the Twifo and Hemang on one hand and between the Twifo and Mokwa on another; therefore, it is possible some of these traditions have been embellished. Nonetheless, to offset this problem with oral tradition, however, there is the necessity to consult other sources. In this case, some European accounts may be very useful. Reindorf, for instance, indicated that before their movement to Jukwa, now the capital of Lower Denkyira, the Denkyira were living in Wassa where they

⁶³ Interview with Nana Ansa Sasraku II, the Hemanghene, interviewed at his residence at Hemang, 13th July, 2015

⁶⁴ See K.Y Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Denkyira*, Vii.

planned to establish a permanent settlement against which the Wassa vehemently protested. It was from Wassa that Kojo Tibo joined the McCarthy led alliance against Asante in the Nsamankow and Akatamanso Wars of 1824 and 1826 respectively. The Wassa-Denkyira issue was among the issues that disturbed the peace in Southern Gold Coast that the British Traders Council sought to settle in the post-Akatamanso War era.⁶⁵ The final settlement on that issue is very significant. Reindorf further indicated that after brokering peace between the two states, Tibo and his subjects abandoned the plan to establish a permanent home in the Wassa state. They appealed to the Traders Council to help them settle at Jukwa, which was successfully done. This may explain Denkyira occupation of Jukwa, a place Denkyira found very peaceful, hence the name Jukwa (literally translated as ‘edwo kwa’) meaning ‘peaceful place’.⁶⁶ This account is corroborated by K.Y. Daaku. Daaku records the Denkyirahene, Boa Amponsem III as saying:

While coming from Abankeseeso, however, we passed through the Wassa Area. We crossed the Offin to Wassa Amenfi, then we passed through Fiase to Mpoho. Actually, the present Mpoho was founded by the people we left behind. Mpoho derives its name from the fact that it is situated between two hills from Amanfi to Fiase. From Mpoho we came to Cape Coast.⁶⁷

Even though Daaku does not indicate the exact period of Denkyira sojourn in Wassa, Reindorf’s account gives a clue. Reindorf’s account suggests that Denkyira must have migrated to Jukwa in the latter part of the 1820s, considering

⁶⁵ C.C. Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, London: University Microfilms, 1895. The British Traders Council in the post Akatamanso War was under the leadership of John Jackson. The council’s major aim was to broker peace between Asante and the Southern States.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ K.Y. Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Denkyira*, p.3

the fact that Maclean began his work in the Gold Coast in 1830 and the Tripartite Treaty was signed in 1831. These developments occurred before the signing of that treaty. It appears, there is lack of consistency in the traditions of Denkyira. However, the 19th century migration through Wassa seems more plausible. The continuation of the account of K.Y. Daaku reinforces this view. The account continues that:

Here (Cape Coast) the Governor instructed us to go and settle at Kakumdo. But we didn't go...Moreover we are forest dwellers, and we needed good farm-lands. But before then we had fought the people of Jukwa and had discovered that the land here was good for settlement. So we came here.⁶⁸

Thus, Denkyira could not have migrated under Boa Amponsem I and by extension, Twifo migration to their present settlement could not have occurred in the 17th century.

From the Horse's Own Mouth

Twifo traditions provide two main conflicting accounts about their origin and migration across the Pra River to their present jurisdiction.

The account which is the widely held tradition of the Twifo avers that their ancestors were part of the Agona clan that migrated from Begho around the 16th century.⁶⁹ According to the Twifo, the Agona clan was made up of a family of three brothers and sisters. The Adawufo (Denkyira) were descendants of the most senior

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin, 72yrs, Chief of Buabin and Adontenhene of the Twifo Traditional Area, Buabin, 17th October, 2018.

among the brothers. The Twifo traditions explain further that, upon reaching Kyiraa (Chiraa), the Adawufo decided to remain there with their priest, Okomfo Kyenekye.⁷⁰ They remained in Chiraa for a long time and became much influenced by the lifestyle of the people of Chiraa. Thus, they earned the name “Dan-Kyiraafo (literary translated as the people who have turned into Chiraa people). This was later corrupted to Denkyira and it was from Chiraa that Denkyira further migrated to Abankeseso.⁷¹ Twifo traditions continue that the other brothers and sisters continued southward to settle briefly at a place called Manhyia, and subsequently moved to a nearby settlement called Domakai (Domakwa) within the Offin-Pra River basin.⁷² The tradition describes Domakwa as a big settlement which had about seven different Agona who were all descendants of the same Agona brothers and sisters who migrated from Begho. The groups were Twifo, Oda, Bodwesango, Swedru, Kayereku, Buabin and Mampoma.⁷³

In the latter part of the 16th century, Denkyira led by Ayekraa also migrated to Akrokyere (Akrokeri) in Adanse, and subsequently, to Abankeseso, about 15 miles west of Adanse in the Offin-Pra River basin. This is corroborated by McCaskie who recounted the Denkyirahene, Owusu Bore II as saying that his ancestors fled from the Adanse at Akokyere to settle 10 miles away to the west.

⁷⁰ This was confirmed in an interview with Odeefuo Boa Amponsem III. The Denkyirahene explained that their ancestors migrated from ‘north’ and were led by their queen mother, Ayekra Adobea and her husband Yaw Awire. In their southward movement, they passed through Northern Ghana to Bono Manso where they settled among the people of Nkiraa(Chiraa) and absorbed the ways and life of the people of Nkyiraa, which earned them the name Dan-Chiraafo (which was later corrupted to Denkyira)

⁷¹ Ibid. this corroborated by the late Denkyirahene, Odeefuo Boa Amponsem in an interview with the researcher at the palace of the Denkyirahene, Jukwa.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

There, “on the western border of the Adansis, we founded the famous capital of Abankesiesu”.⁷⁴ Certain conclusions can be made from this narrative. Firstly, the settlement of the other Agona brothers and sisters within the Offin-Pra River basin may have attracted Denkyira to move from Chiraa in Bono Manso to Adanse. With the arrival of Denkyira, the area virtually became a congregation center for the descendants of the Agona family. It is also noteworthy that Offin-Pra Basin had become common grounds for not only the Agona, but other Akan groups. As Reindorf rightly asserted, the “Offin basin was an important center of Akan culture and staterdoms”⁷⁵ This is confirmed by Rattray who also opined that “the Agona who are classified as brother to the Bretuo lived together in the Offin basin before further migrations in the 17 century...”.⁷⁶ This is further strengthened by Adanse cosmogony that, Adanse was the traditional ‘garden of Eden’ of all the Akan and that at Adanse ‘the Creator established seven clans at the beginning of time’.⁷⁷

Secondly, one could argue that the Agona states that were formed within the Offin-Pra River basin provided a foundation for the establishment and power of the kingdom of Denkyira at Abankesieso. This is based on the fact that, as

⁷⁴ See T.C. McCaskie, Denkyira in the Making of Asante, 1660-1720, in *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 2007, pp. 1-25. Abankesieso was a large settlement as the name suggested. The name implied a large, strong building, sometimes made of stone like the European forts at Elmina and Cape Coast, and like them connoting the power and authority incarnated in an imposing central place and government.

⁷⁵ The traditions of Adanse, Akyem all share this view. See C.C. Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*. Akan groups such as Twifo, Agona, Akyem Abuakwa, Akyem Kotoku, Akwamu etc. all trace their origin to Adanse. The name Adanse means foundation or founders of, nuclear settlements.

⁷⁶ Rattray, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*

⁷⁷ See C.C. Reindorf, *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1966, pp.48-50. According to Reindorf Adanse was the first seat of the Akan nation. They are the most enlightened tribe among the Twi nation from whom the others acquired knowledge and wisdom.

descendants of the most senior member of the Agona family, Denkyira found it easier to exert some influence over the states. In other words, all the Agona states came under the authority of their elder brother, Denkyira. The tradition of Denkyira attests to this by indicating that, at a point, the Denkyirahene was referred to as Agonahene (chief of all the Agona).⁷⁸ Denkyira also prospered from the gold 'from the Offin River', and was able to vanquish Adanse, after which Abankeseso became larger than any other town in the area.⁷⁹ By the second half of the 17th century, Denkyira had established a kingdom at Abankeseso and wielded dominance over all the Agona states.

Twifo tradition goes on to say that the Agona settlement at Domakwa could not survive for long. By mid-17th century, Domakwa had collapsed as a result of dispersion of the states.⁸⁰ The rising power of Denkyira was a major contributory factor. Denkyira was accumulating resources at the expense of her less powerful peers. The states were also uncomfortable with Denkyira attempt to super impose her authority over them. The tradition of Twifo recounts an incident to confirm the attitude of the Denkyirahene towards the Agona states. According to the account, the Denkyirahene Boa Amponsem once demanded the tail of an elephant killed by a hunter by name Oko, who was a subject of Oda. The Odahene refused the request of the Denkyira and this angered Boa Amponsem because he saw the attitude of the Odahene as an insubordination.⁸¹ The situation led to a conflict between the

⁷⁸ Interview with the late Odeefuo Boa Amponsem III.

⁷⁹ T.C. McCaskie, Denkyira in the Making of Asante.

⁸⁰ Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin,

⁸¹ According to traditions of Denkyira, Boa Amponsem reigned between 1637 and 1695

Denkyirahene and the Odahene. Some of the Agona states who felt the Denkyirahene was overstepping his authority supported the Odahene and the conflict degenerated into a major one which compelled some of the states to leave Adanse.⁸² McCaskie corroborated this point when he noted that the ruthlessness of Boa Amponsem was not only against his neighbours, but members of his own kingdom. He quoted aspects of tradition of Nyinawunsu (Efuonhumaso) to support this:

King Boa Ponsem had a desire for gold to make his kingdom strong. He sent to tell all the people saying, "I am the Great king and I command you fetch me all your gold". It was done but when Boa Ponsem saw it he said, "It is not sufficient" so he sent to fetch more. We (the people of Nyinawunsu) could not bring it and so Boa Ponsem became highly angry. He said "off with their heads" and it was done and the headless trunks were thrown away into Ahumana (a stream that empties into the Offin). From then Boa Ponsem hardened his heart so whenever gold was lacking he cut off heads and the remains were cast off into the bush.⁸³

The account confirms the assertion that Denkyira had become a threat to the survival of all the states in Adanse and the Offin-Pra River basin. The effect of this was that it destabilized the states that were formed in Adanse. All the states began to migrate elsewhere in order to escape Denkyira threats. On the part of the Twifo, their tradition, indicates that the branch of the Agona that formed Twifo migrated from Offin-Pra basin to Nkawie before subsequent migration to Asante. The tradition of Akyem recounted by Affrifa corroborates the migration of states from Adanse as a result of the threats of Denkyira. Affrifa, in tracing the emergence of

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ See ADM 11/824, Testimony of the head of Agona at Nyinawunsu, Osei Nkansah. PRAAD, Cape Coast. see also T.C. McCaskie, "Denkyira in the Making of Asante 1660-1720", *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 2007, pp.1-25. Boa Ponsem as used here referred to the Denkyirahene Odeefuo Boa Amponsem.

Abuakwa and Kotoku corroborated this aspect of the Twifo tradition. Affrifa noted that:

The mid-seventeenth century Denkyira hegemony which had forced the Asona and Agona clan lineages out of Adanse had equally sent Oyoko clan groups hurtling into the upper reaches of the Offin River. Here they pooled their resources and exploited their clan solidarity to conquer the country, and in the last years of the century formed the Asante Union or Confederacy.⁸⁴

Affrifa further remarked that “the rise of Denkyira as the dominant power in the basin had a centrifugal effect on several of the various communities in the district. Many of them were obliged to emigrate in order to seek peace and security elsewhere”.⁸⁵ Affrifa continued that:

Among emigrants were some of the Adanse themselves who left for Akyem but later returned to settle permanently on the mountains of Kwisa (Kusa). Others were the Asona clan lineage of Kokobiante and groups of Agona abusua from Atoam, who later became known as the Akyem Kotoku.⁸⁶

Thus, the dispersion of the Akan states in the Offin River basin to other parts of the Gold Coast in the 17th century was motivated by activities of the Denkyira. The

⁸⁴ Kofi Affrifa, *The Akyem Factor in Ghana's History 1700-1875*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2000, pp.17-18. Same Denkyirahene's 'harsh' attitude towards Asante led to the Feyiase War. Ntim Gyakari is said to have inherited Boa Amponsem's viciousness, but not his military skills. Asante tradition recounts Ntim Gyakari's reaction to Asante when he accused Osei Tutu of waging a war against Dormaa, his fellow subordinate state without his (Ntim Gyakari) permission and also offering protection to one Oduro Agyensamoo, a fugitive of Denkyira. For these offenses, Ntim Gyakari demanded the following from Asante: i. Osei Tutu to fill to the brim a brass pan brought by messengers of Denkyira, with pure gold. ii. To send to the Denkyirahene a long necklace of beads worn by Osei Tutu's wives as a sign of submission. iii. That Osei Tutu and each of his provincial chiefs delivers his favorite wife to the Denkyirahene in marriage. iv. That Osei Tutu and each of his provincial chiefs must deliver his beloved child to be sent to the King of Denkyira. Osei Tutu's rejection of these demands prepared the grounds for the Feyiase War, also referred to as Asante War of Independence.

⁸⁵ Kofi Affrifa, *The Akyem Factor in Ghana's History*, p.9

⁸⁶ Ibid. the chief of Kotobiante, a stool in Adanse serving Denkyira, is said to have offended the Denkyirahene and to escape the penalty, fled with a handful of his followers to Nyanao where he threw himself on the protection of the King of Akwamu.

Twifo and other members of the Agona clan left the Offin basin for Nkawie and subsequently, migrated to other parts of the Gold Coast. The Twifo tradition, however, does not provide any detailed account about their stay in Nkawie. Nonetheless, it was from Nkawie that the relations between the Twifo and Asante began.

Twifo-Asante Connection

Among the Akan, blood ties always acted as a magnet that brought members of a clan together. Therefore, according to Twifo tradition, to stay further away from Denkyira threats, they felt it reasonable for them to go to Asante because they would be welcomed by their kinsmen there. It must be noted that it was one of the Agona families that left Adanse for Tafo in Kwaaman (later Kumase).⁸⁷ According to Baffour Akoto, the Agona people in Tafo became the first settlers of modern Kumase and because of that, they control large portion of Kumase lands. When Kumase was burnt down, it was the Tafohene who offered a piece of land for construction of a new palace at Manhyia.⁸⁸

In Asante, the Twifo were an integral part of the Asante military and they contributed immensely in many of Asante wars in the 18th and 19th centuries, including the infamous Gyaaman War. The Twifo-Asante relations were strengthened by a marriage between a Twifo royal by name Amakyewah and the

⁸⁷See Baffour Akoto, *The Akan and their various Abusua*. According to Baffour Akoto, the Agona people were very powerful in terms of statesmanship and governance. Baffour Osei Akoto was described as Senior Linguist of the Asantehene and a founding member of the National Liberation Movement (NLM).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Asantehene, Nana Osei Yaw.⁸⁹ The tradition went further to indicate that the Asantehene had children with Amakyewah, though the tradition does not readily provide the exact number of children and their names.⁹⁰ As in-laws of the Asantehene, the Twifo were warmly welcomed and integrated into Asante and were settled at Mampong. The Twifo also reciprocated by fighting for the Asante in many of the wars Asante fought before the departure of the Twifo from Asante in the 19th century.⁹¹ It is in the light of this that the Twifo participation in the Asante-Gyaaman War which led to the migration of the Twifo from Asante can be explained.

Thus, it is certain that the Twifo lived in Asante Mampong until the period after the Asante-Gyaaman War that they migrated to the Pra basin. When the Twifo finally settled at the Pra basin, they named the capital they founded as Twifo Mampong, most probably, in memory of their stay in Mampong. Further, the appellation of one of the revered chiefs of Twifo, Nana Appiah Nuamah I, could be used as a confirmation of their connection with Mampong. The appellation goes like:

“Appiah Nuamah, Appiah Nuamah, Appiah Nuamah,
Amaniampong Nana, Ono na wode Akorabo gye no tataa, Twifo
Guakuro, boha bone a sekan pa hye mu”⁹²

⁸⁹ Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin, Chief of Buabin and Adontenhene of the Twifo traditional Area, interviewed at his residence, Buabin, 18th October, 2018.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Interview with Okyeame Anane, 65yrs, Chief Linguist of the Twifo Omanhene, at the palace of the Omanhene, 08/10/17

⁹² See submission of Opanin G.K. Acquah in support of the Nana Appiah Nuamah I in the Mokwaa Stool Affair sitting on Wednesday, 18th April, 1979, at Conference Hall of the House of chiefs, Cape Coast.

This is translated as: *Appiah Nuamah, the royal from Amamiampong, the one who is always led with pellets, a very sharp machete in a weak sack*. The reference to Amamiampong, the stool name for Asante Mampong, is very indicative for it strengthens the Twifo links with Mampong. Interestingly, the phrase ‘Amamiampong Nana’ is also found in the appellation of the Kotokuhene and that of the Kwahuhene. That of the Kwahuhene reads; “*Amamiampong Nana, Osono (elephant) aa Wotia (steps) Afidie (trap) soaa Enhwan (uncaught)*”.⁹³ To wit, “the elephant which defies the ensnarement of a trap but”. It is, therefore, highly possible that all the members of the Agona clan, at one point, settled in Asante. This is because of the reference to Amamiampong in their traditions.⁹⁴

Twifo tradition corroborated by the tradition of Denkyira compiled by K.Y. Daaku indicates that the Twifo and Denkyira always fought as Asante allies in most of Asante wars in the 18th and 19th centuries.⁹⁵ Because of their bravery and fighting spirit, the Asante never went to war without them. But it was in the aftermath of one of the wars that the Twifo severed their relations with Asante and subsequently migrated from Asante. This was the Asante-Gyaman War which the Asante decisively won.⁹⁶ However, the Twifo were allegedly angered by the Asantehene’s

⁹³ Interview with Nana Kwasi Gyan, Gyaasehene of Asante Mampong, at his residence at Mampong, 20th May, 2016.

⁹⁴ Interview with Op. J. B. Crayner, 91yrs, researcher and an author of histories of the Fante states, at his residence in Mankessim, 27/09/17

⁹⁵ See Nana Amponten Fi in a petition to the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs into the Mokwaa Stool affairs, 10th April, 1979, PRAAD, Cape Coast

⁹⁶ ADM 3/2/2. PRAAD, Sunyani. In the war, Asante suffered some initial setbacks but they were able to reorganize and recruited soldiers from Kotoku, Bosome, and Akuapim to beef up the Asante army which was led by Amankwati. Adinkra was finally defeated in 1818. Ntonsu traditions confirm that it was from Adinkra’s body which was sent to the court of the Asantehene that the famous ‘Adinkra symbols’ or designs emerged.

refusal to allow them to retain prisoners they captured in that war for their own profit, but were ordered to hand the captives over to the Asantehene, although they had borne a full share in a very heavy fighting and had suffered severe losses. For the Twifo, therefore, the Asantehene was being authoritative and 'wicked'. The Twifo were not the only Asante vassal that felt embittered by the Asantehene's post-Gyaaman War decisions. The Assin state of Apemanim expressed similar feelings. In recounting the reasons for the migration of the Assin from Asante, the traditions of Assin Apemanin noted that:

Our fathers went to the Gyaman War and when they came back a certain messenger of the Asantehene, one Appia, was sent round collecting dues in the form of each warrior's booty, hence the term Appia-too (Appia's dues). When Appia came round the Apemanim chief would (sic) not pay up, claiming that he had led the armies into war and had won and so if dues were to be collected at all we should not be asked to pay any. Because of this we were put in the black books of the Asantehene so we had to move out before being subjected to a war.⁹⁷

The account of Assin Apemanim corroborates the Twifo version about the Asantehene's decisions after the Gyaaman War and its impact on their relations with Asante. From a sentimental perspective, the views of the Twifo and other Asante vassals were understandable, however, that practice was not peculiar to the Asantehene. Perhaps, it was an expression of the 'superiority' of rulers of major states at the peak of their power. In fact, before her defeat at the Battle of Feyiase, the Denkyirahene was accused of similar practices by the other Akan states within

⁹⁷ K.Y., Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo*, Accra: Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1969. See Assin Apemanin Traditional Area, Assin-Manso, p.2.

Adanse. Nonetheless, it was from this issue that one can attribute the breakdown of the relations between Asante, the Twifo and Denkyira in the 19th century.⁹⁸

According to Twifo tradition, their Great Oath '*Twifo Yawada*' (which literally means Twifo Thursday) was as a result of the heavy casualties they suffered in that war on that fateful day. Tradition has it that in welcoming the Twifo men from the battlefield, the Asantehene greeted the Twifohene in the following words: '*Mo, wokoma mpo ni na wokofa*, literally meaning, 'well done, if this is how you fight for an ally, how would you fight your own war'?'⁹⁹ The Asantehene is alleged to have said the same words to Kwadwo Tibo, the Denkyirahene. Certainly, those heartwarming words from the Asantehene were an acknowledgement of the role the Twifo and by extension, Denkyira must have played in the victory of Asante over Gyaaman. The bravery and fighting prowess of the Twifo is echoed in a Twifo drum appellation which goes like: *Kyere Twifo, Kyere Twifo, Kyere Twifo*, (which literally means all except Twifo, all except Twifo, all except Twifo). The explanation is that they are the only people that neither Asante nor any other people were able to conquer.¹⁰⁰ The Asantehene's congratulatory message to some extent confirms the bravery and fighting prowess of the Twifo. It also affirms the commitment of the Twifo to fighting for the Asantehene.

⁹⁸ Interview with Op. Osei Kwadwo, 82yrs, former Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum, at his residence in Kumasi, 30/09/15.

⁹⁹ Ibid. See also K.Y. Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Denkyira* (unpublished), University of Ghana, Legon, 1970.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Opanain Bofu Agyei, 68years, Member of the Twifo Traditional Council

For these reasons, the Twifo saw the Asantehene's refusal to allow them keep their captives as a great betrayal and an exhibition of the cruelty of the Asantehene. Angered by the decision of the Asantehene, Nana Osei Bonsu, the Twifo allegedly announced the abrogation of whatever relations they had with the Asante and subsequently migrated first to Cape Coast and declared their allegiance to the British and further asked for British protection against Asante.¹⁰¹ From Cape Coast, they moved further inland to establish Mampong. According to the Twifo's own account, their movement further inland was to stay far from the reach of Asante because they felt Cape Coast was too near for the Asante to reach them. Interestingly, the Twifo assert that one of the immediate consequences of their secession from Asante was the Nsamankow War in 1824. They allege that it was their departure and Asante desperate pursuit of them and the British determination to protect them that triggered the war and not the Anomabo Sargeant affairs as claimed by some historians.¹⁰² See chapter three for a detailed account of the Twifo-Asante controversy and its connection with the 1824 Asante-British War.

Nonetheless, the Twifo participation in the Adinkra War and the events after the war are very crucial in establishing the migration of the Twifo to their present location around the Pra in the Central region. From the account of K. A. Britwum, the Asante-Gyaaman War which led to the secession of the Twifo from Asante occurred around 1818 during the era of Nana Osei Bonsu and Nana Kwadwo

¹⁰¹See Statement of Defense by Nana Amponteng Fi, Omanhene of Twifo in the Central Regional house of Chiefs Committee of Inquiry, Twifu Mokwa Stool Affairs.

¹⁰² Ibid. The Nsamankow War was the first major war between the British led by McCarthy and Asante.

Adinkra as Asantehene and Gyaamanhene respectively. Britwum provides enough evidence to support the claim that the Twifo participated in the war on the side of Asante. Britwum's account further asserts that although the war came to an end with the death of Adinkra in 1818, some events after his death compelled the Asantehene and his army to stay on the battlefield for another year. He explains that even after the death of Adinkra, the rest of the Gyaaman army and people who had taken refuge in Kong returned to the field with auxiliary troops from Kong to attack the Asante army. The Asantehene had to remain in Gyaaman until August 1819 when the situation had normalized before returning to Kumasi.¹⁰³ It could be safely assumed that the Twifo-Asantehene disagreement began after August 1819. Therefore, the Twifo must have left Asante and crossed the Pra River around the early 1820s.

In fact, the immediate post Gyaaman War period coincided with the arrival of Joseph Dupuis as the British Consul to the Kingdom of Asante in January 1819. Dupuis went to Kumase with the aim of promoting peace between Asante and the British. In March 1820, Dupuis is reported to have mentioned the problems between Asante and her allies as some of the issues which had the potential of disrupting peace in the Gold Coast, and needed to be resolved amicably. The issue Dupuis commented about could not be any other than the misunderstanding between Asante, Denkira and Twifo. Subsequently, in the same year, Asante sent an

¹⁰³ K. A. Britwum; "Kwadwo Adinkra of Gyaaman: A Study of the Relations Between the Brong Kingdom of Gyaaman and Asante From 1800-1818", in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vo.5 No.2, December 1974, pp.229-239. The Gyaaman after that war remained a vassal of Asante until she asserted her independence after the 1874 Asante defeat at the Garnet Worsely War.

ambassador to Cape Coast to settle some of the differences that arose out of the war between the Asantehene on one hand and the British and the authorities of Cape Coast, on the other hand.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, the Twifo migration to the Pra basin in the 19th century could be attributed to the post-Adinkra Wars problems between the Twifo and Asante.

This notwithstanding, an examination of events within the Asante kingdom before the war seems to suggest that the problems after the Adinkra war could just be the immediate factor as there were some burning issues between the Asante and her vassals even before the war, which must have provided a remote factor. By 1817, relations between Asante and some of her tributary states were being altered by certain reforms introduced by the Asantehene Osei Bonsu. The reforms were aimed at increasing the authority of the Asantehene in the tributary states at the expense of their chiefs. In each state, for instance, the ruler was placed under a Kumasi chief through whom the former transacted business with the Asante Court.¹⁰⁵ It was the Kumasi Chief who was now mandated to receive the annual tribute due to Asante from the tributary state. Again, the Kumasi chief was to be responsible for the good behavior of the ruler of that state. In the case of Denkyira, one Kwakye Kofi, the Kumasi Akwamuhene, was responsible for the Denkyirahene. In addition, each major town had a resident official who reported

¹⁰⁴See J. Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee*. London: Henry Colburn, 1824. It comprises notes and researches relative to the Gold Coast and the interior of western Africa by Joseph Dupuis. He was appointed as Consul and Vice Consul for the British Government between 1811 and 1842 and worked in various parts of British West Africa including the Gold Coast.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. this was corroborated in an interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo, former curator of the Manhyia museum.

to Kumasi on the affairs of the town. The reforms virtually diminished the powers of the rulers of Asante subject states and this must have irritated Kwadwo Tsibo and other rulers who felt the Asante were only interested in exploiting the subject states for their selfish interest. Tsibo, in particular, felt the Asantehene was becoming a despot.¹⁰⁶ One can, therefore, safely say that, prior to the Adinkra War, there was a burning issue between Asante and her subject states which was waiting to explode and the post-war issue must have provided the trigger for an open confrontation between Asante and her major subject states.

This tradition seems more credible as it is corroborated by traditions of other Agona states such as Denkyira and Akyem Oda. The accounts of some European administrators and traders who operated in the Gold Coast also support aspects of this tradition.

Yet, the Twifo have a second tradition, which could be described as a minority view because few people shared this view which contradicts the earlier tradition in terms of their origin and migration. According to this account, the Twifo migrated from nowhere to their present location. For the few who uphold this tradition, their “founding fathers came from the ground”.¹⁰⁷ This, according to F.K Buah, took place in the Apagyahina forest, about twenty kilometers south of the Denkyira town of Dunkwa.¹⁰⁸ Thus, the tradition does not consider the Twifo as migrants in their jurisdiction. The account claims that their great ancestor by

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ F.K. Buah, *A History of Ghana*, London: Macmillan education, 1980, p.13

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

name Mfotei Amoah and Obaapanin Kesewa just found themselves at Pampabi in the Twifo traditional Area. Upon the death of Mfotei Amoah, his nephew, Domakwa-Amoah, succeeded.¹⁰⁹ On their Asante origin, this account avers that it was rather a woman from the royal family of Twifo called Amakyewa who went to reside in Asante and later got married to Nana Osei Yaw, the then Asantehene. The account continues that their marriage was blessed with children who became part of Asante. According to this tradition, it was these children who used to go on visit to and from Asante and that was what was misinterpreted to mean the Twifo migrated from Asante.¹¹⁰ The account goes on to claim that when the Amankwatia War broke out, the then Asantehene, Osei Yaw, sent a message inviting the Twifo, Denkyira and others to help Asante. When they were returning from the Amankwatia War, they first arrived at Hemang where the chief of Hemang settled them at Ankaase.

Later, they decided to move to Apagyahina to see those they left behind when going to the war only to find the Mokwa on their land. The immediate reaction of the Twifo was to kill their leaders, Abogyinadu and Amo-Kwaw; however, Abogyinadu pleaded for mercy since they were royals from Asebu who had come to settle there. The tradition further claims that Abogyinadu succumbed to the Twifo and promised to give his sister in marriage to the Twifohene. The Twifo then decided not to harm the two but asked them to follow the Twifo wherever they went. So when the Twifo were going to Mampong, they allocated places of abode to their sub-chiefs, including the Mokwaa. Subsequently, under Nana Owusu Koko

¹⁰⁹ See sittings of Special Committee of the Central Region House of Chiefs on Mokwaa Stool Affairs: Cape Coast. 10th April, 1979. pp. 67-72. According to the tradition, Domakwa-Amoah was named after the town Domakwa.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

I, the Twifo created positions for all the sub-chiefs where Mokwaa was made the Benkumhene.¹¹¹ On the name Mampong, the seat of the Omanhene, the tradition explained that:

When our ancestor first migrated from the ground, they settled at a place where there were no other people. They then prayed that “oman no ntu mpon” (the nation grow to be strong) which became “Oman pon ntuo” and hence Mampon.¹¹²

This tradition appears doubtful. The etymology of the name Mampong as provided by the tradition does not sound convincing. The impression that the Twifo appeared from the ground as claimed by some so-called ‘Eti or Ati’ Akan states has not been sufficiently substantiated. Just as in the case of Mokwaa and Hemang, this claim has been difficult to prove. In the case of the Twifo, the upholders of this tradition attempt to portray their state as an ancient one and the citizens as autochthones. This claim will be further examined subsequently. Also, it is difficult to prove the Twifo participation in the ‘Amankwatia War’ on the side of Asante. In fact, the Twifo were part of the processes that led to the formation of the Fante Confederacy, anti-Asante movement.¹¹³ According to Adu Boahen, at the meeting held by the Fante chiefs in January 1868 following the bombardment of Komenda over their rebellion against the Anglo-Dutch exchange of forts, there were delegates from Denkyira, Wassa, Twifo and Assin. It was at this meeting that the Fante

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² K.Y. Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo*, Accra: Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1969. See Twifo-Mampon, p.1

¹¹³ The Fante Confederacy was an alliance of some Fante and non-Fante states in the southern part of the Gold Coast from 1868 to 1872. The Confederacy is seen as one of the earliest movements for self-government in Gold Coast and perhaps, Africa. The Confederacy had its own constitution and an executive and judicial arms. The main aim of the Confederacy was provided a united front against Asante and also prepare themselves for self-rule.

Confederacy was born.¹¹⁴ Thus, by the time of the Amankwatia War, the Twifo and Asante were not on friendly terms. Therefore, even though the Confederacy had collapsed by 1873 when the war began, it would be highly improbable for the Twifo to have fought for Asante, bearing in mind that one of the major reasons for the formation of the Confederacy was to protect themselves against Asante, who was seen as a perennial enemy of the Fante and coastal states. These weaknesses in addition to some inconsistencies make the second Twifo tradition of origin unsubstantiated if not concocted. This tradition appears to be a classic example of an ‘invented tradition’.¹¹⁵

Generally, all the traditions concur that the Twifo are immigrants in the Pra River basin in the Central region. The traditions also generally give the impression of a bloc movement of the Twifo – a bloc whose identity had pre-existed before their migration across the Pra River. However, their migration does not appear to have taken place in one swoop: some possibly occurred much earlier than the post Asante-Gyaaman War era. Although the Twifo traditions are not able to give an in-depth account of their history before the nineteenth century migration, there is sufficient circumstantial evidence to suggest confidently that there were Twifo

¹¹⁴ See Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the 19th & 20th Centuries*, Accra: Sankofa Educational Publisher Ltd., 2000, p.50. It was at the said meeting that series of resolutions to support and protect themselves regardless of British interest or patronage, and to form a government which would be headed by themselves.

¹¹⁵ See Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition*, London: Cambridge University Press, 2012. According to Hobsbawm, many of the traditions which we think of as very ancient were not in fact sanctioned by long usage over the centuries, but were invented comparatively recently. The author explores examples of this process of invention—the creation Welsh and scotish ‘national culture’; the elaboration of British royal rituals in the 19th and 20th centuries, the origins of imperial rituals in British India and Africa; and the attempts by radical movements to develop counter-traditions of their own.

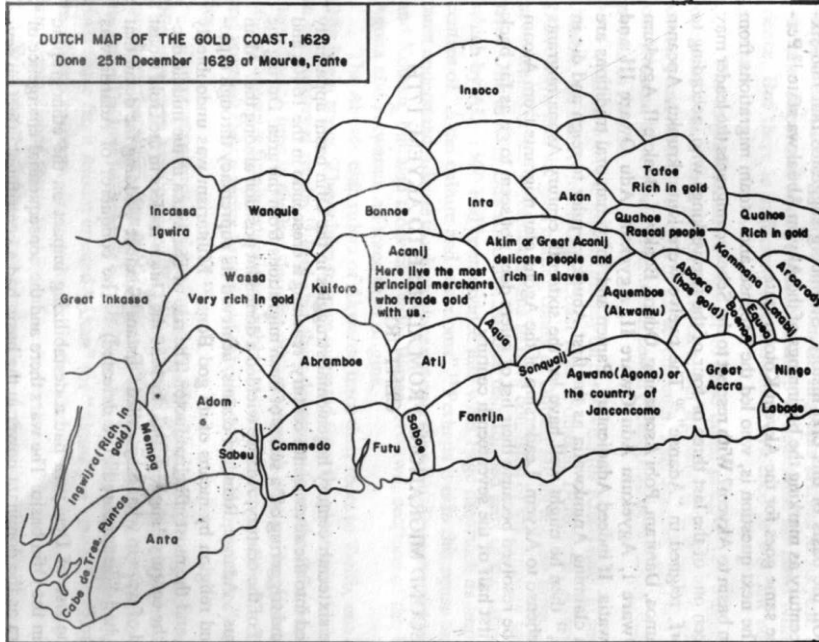
residents around the Offin basin and built a formidable state before the close of the 17th century. This assertion is based largely on European accounts in relation to the Gold Coast.¹¹⁶ The assertion that the Twifo were firmly established before the close of the 17th century or even before is supported by Dutch accounts of the Gold Coast. Considering the fact that the Dutch began operating in the Gold Coast around 1598, one can confidently avow that by the end of the 1650s, they had had a fair knowledge of the interior of the Gold Coast.¹¹⁷ Although some have questioned their sources of information, nonetheless, information which it affords helps to know more about the inland states. In 1629, the Dutch traders in the Gold Coast based in Moree drew a map of the Gold Coast which portrays pre-nineteenth century Gold Coast.¹¹⁸ On this map, several kingdoms are indicated both in the coastal area, the coastal hinterland, the far interior and even the transitional savannah zone immediately north of the forest belt. Significantly, the kingdoms of Denkyira and Asante, however, were not indicated. This has correctly been explained to mean that many Akan states in the interior were subsumed under the nebulous term *Acany* (Akani).¹¹⁹ Among the states that were covered by the term were the Twifo.

¹¹⁶ See Ivor Wilks, "A Note on Twifo Akwamu" in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* (THSG), Vol. III, 1959.

¹¹⁷ The Dutch made their first contact with the Gold Coast around 1598 when some Dutch adventurers arrived and set up small trading posts close to the Portuguese forts where they subjected the Portuguese to attacks. By 1637 they have been able to capture the Portuguese fort of Elmina and that of Axim in 1642, a situation which compelled the Portuguese to depart the Gold Coast very early.

¹¹⁸ See 1629 Dutch Map of the Gold Coast.

¹¹⁹ See Kofi Darkwah, "Antecedents of Asante Culture" in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 3, pp. 57-79, 1999.



A Dutch Map of the Gold Coast in 1629

Source: Fynn, J. K., 1971. *Asonte and Its Neighbours, 1700-1807*, NUP, Longman Group Ltd., London.

In addition, notes from Dutch and English records on the Gold Coast between 1701 and 1744 show that there were trade connections between these European traders and the Twifo. In fact, the sources confirm that the Twifo crossed the Pra to the coast to participate in the trading activities with the Europeans.¹²⁰ The account of some European administrators and traders, particularly, the British and the Dutch shows a serious trade politics in the 17th and 18th centuries between the Twifo, Wassa and Fante. For instance, Valkenburg reported in 1658 on the long drawn out war between the Twifo, Adanse and other inland states, which in his

¹²⁰ Dutch and English sources.

view contributed to the fall in gold supply.¹²¹ Further, in March 1708, Sir Dalby Thomas reported about some of these wars. He reported as part of his letters to the Dutch at Elmina Castle that “the Juffer traders who had been there lately, on their return to their country, had been attacked by the Fetu, who had killed most of them, and carried off their purchased goods”. He also reported on March 7, 1708 about the Twifo reaction to the attacks from Fetu (Cape Coast). “In the afternoon we got information that more than 3000 armed Juffer Negroes had come about small Commany to demand by force from Jan Caves satisfaction for the plundered traders of their country”.¹²²

These accounts strengthen the assertion that the Twifo established themselves firmly in the Offin-Pra basin before their movement to Asante and a later migration in the 19th century.

From the traditions, it can be established that the nineteenth century migration to the Central region was not the first migration in the history of the Twifo. Nonetheless, it appears to be the most important migration in their history as they found a permanent settlement after that migration-and a migration that brought them more power and fame as the superior authority in their new settlement around the Pra River.¹²³

¹²¹ R.R. O.W.I.C. 58, Letter from Valkenburg to the XIX, 10th July 1658, Records obtained from the Rijksarchief, The Hague.

¹²² See T70/5, Letters from C.C.C. January – March, 1707

¹²³ See Affrifa, *The Akyem Factor*. This also confirmed by Akwamu and Twifo traditions

19th Century Twifo Migration

Twifo tradition of origin asserts that when they were migrating from Asante, they were led by their chief, Mfotei Amuah, and Obaapanin Kesewa together with the Denkyira also led by their chief, Kwadwo Tibo. The traditions of both the Twifo and Denkyira agree that their departure from Asante occurred around August 1823. Denkyira traditions, in particular, describe how Kwadwo Tibo masterminded their escape from Asante without the awareness of the Asantehene.¹²⁴ Tibo is said to have organized drumming and dancing in the court of the Asantehene for three days, something that diverted attention and suspicion of the clandestine moves of the two Agona states. The tradition continues that at midnight when everybody was asleep, the two chiefs and their people left Asante. It was in the morning of the following day that the Asante discovered that Tibo and his people had left and immediately Asante troops were dispatched to capture them and bring them back to Asante.¹²⁵ The two states crossed the Pra and headed towards the coast. It was in Cape Coast that the Twifo and Denkyira allegedly pledged their allegiance to the British and further requested for British protection.¹²⁶

From Cape Coast, the two states subsequently moved to Jukwaiam (now Jukwa). At Jukwaiam, the Denkyira always felt threatened by the increasing number of the Twifo and this led to frequent petty conflicts between the two. The Twifo then migrated further to a place called Pampabi within the Twifo traditional area. Twifo traditions indicate that they stayed at Pampabi for a long period.

¹²⁴ Interview with Odeefuo Boa Amponsem III, the Denkyirahene.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Nana Ampontin Fi

(Pampabi was a hill-top, hence the name Pampabiso, meaning- Mountain top). Mfotei Amoah is said to have died at Pampabiso and was succeeded by Nana Domakwa Amoah.¹²⁷

Population increase still compelled the Twifo to move further to Ankaase which was part of Hemang stool lands. The traditions state that the Twifohehene, Nana Amponteng Fi, requested for land for settlement from the Hemanghene who willingly obliged. However, the Twifo still felt that Ankaase was too small for them. It was for this reason that Nana Amponteng Fi moved further to establish Twifo Mampong which was also on the stool lands of Hemang.¹²⁸ Mampong was made the Traditional Headquarters of the Twifo and the seat of the Twifo paramount chief. Apart from Mampong, many other towns were built around the Pra basin by the Twifo immigrants. Some of the towns were Darmang, Moseaso, Aboabo, Ntaferewaso, Agona, Nyenasi, Tufoi,¹²⁹ and many others. In all, the Twifo founded about 44 towns in the Pra basin in addition to those in the Offin basin. This tradition about the Twifo migration from Adanse to Agona in Asante Mampong and later to the territories around the River Pra in the 19th century may well explain why the Twifo state is geographically spread across the Pra and Offin basin.

It would also not be out of place to assert that in as far as the territories around the River Pra are concerned, the Twifo came to meet Hemang and Mokwa already settled in the basin. However, the Hemang and Mokwa claim of being 'Ati'/'etsi' or 'eti' implying that they did not migrate from anywhere should be

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid. this was corroborated by Nana Ansa Sasraku, the paramount Chief of Hemang.

¹²⁹ Interview with Okyeame Anane.

taken with a pinch of salt. This is based on the fact that they are part of a broader group, the Akan whose traditions of origin do not seem to support such a claim.¹³⁰

Many theories have been put forward about the origin of the Akan and a cursory look at a few of them will suffice. Notable among them are the theories of T. B. Bowdich, Dupuis, Eva Meyerowitz, J. B. Danquah and Adu Boahen. Bowdich, after comparing the laws and customs of the Abyssinians and ancient Egyptians, concluded that most of the Akan “descended from eastern Ethiopians who had been improved by an intercourse with the Egyptian emigrants and colonists”.¹³¹

Dupuis, on his part, traced the origin of the Akan to only northern Ghana from where, according to him, they were driven southwards by Muslims.¹³² Dupuis’ account is in harmony with aspects of Twifo tradition that their ancestors migrated to Adanse from the north. Dupuis’ account was also supported by two European authors on the history of the Gold Coast, i.e Beechem and Cruickshank. The two sided with Dupuis that the Akan originated from the north. Another school of thought led by Eva Meyerowitz and J. B. Danquah traces the Akan even further north-eastwards or eastward. Meyerowitz concluded that the Akan culture is not “Negro-African in origin but could be classed, on the whole, as Libyo-Berber, more precisely as Libyo-Phoenician or Carthaginian, a civilization which owed almost everything to the Near East and Egypt”.¹³³ Thus, Meyerowitz was convinced that

¹³⁰ The term ‘Etsi’ or ‘ati’ in many Akan traditions is interpreted to mean that the people were sent there by the Creator, ‘Odomankoma’ and that they belong to antiquity.

¹³¹ T.B Bowdich

¹³² Dupuis

¹³³ E. L.A. Meyerowitz: *Akan Tradition of Origin*, 1952

the ancestors of the Akan were descendants of Dia or Za (who originated from Abyssinia or Southern Arabia), Libyan Berbers and the Gara of the oasis of Djado in the Tibesti region who emigrated when the Arabs conquered North Africa and found the Dia Kingdom on the Niger between Djenne and Timbuktu.¹³⁴ Danquah, on his part, traced the Akan not to eastern Sahara or Egypt or even Abyssinia, but further east still, to the valley of Tigris and Euphrates. Adu Boahen quotes from a radio talk by Danquah in which he asserted that the Akan as well as the Ewe, Ga, Gonja and the Bantu are part of the Turanian people of Summer and Akkad.¹³⁵ A more recent theory about the origin of the Akan was developed by Adu Boahen. He was also of the view that the ancestors of the Akan, like those of the Kwa-speaking peoples, evolved from Dahomey. According to him, Dahomey was geographically central to the Kwa family of languages to which the Akan belongs and had been pointed as possible centre of diffusion for the whole family.¹³⁶ Adu Boahen's conclusion captured below is very indicative:

The Akan are an integral part of the negroes of west Africa, that their ancestors originated somewhere in the Benue-Chad region and moved south-westwards, westwards and finally southwards into the region of Asante where they developed those institutions and cultural traits with which they are now exclusively identified.¹³⁷

The conclusion that can be drawn from these theories are that they are very controversial and debatable as well. However, they all seem to suggest that the

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Danquah radio talk from Adu Boahen.

¹³⁶ Adu Boahen: Seminar papers read at Legon in 1965

¹³⁷ Ibid.

Akan migrated from somewhere to their present geographical locations and that none of them evolved from the ground or where they are now. Therefore, the claim by the Mokwa, Hemang and the second Twifo tradition that they evolved from their present geographical location could be far-fetched if not 'invented traditions'.

Twifo and Asante traditions show in no uncertain terms that the present Twifo in the Pra basin were the 19th century migrants from Asante. The traditions supported by some European accounts confirm that the migration occurred after the Asante War with Adinkra of Gyaaman.

As has been indicated earlier, the 19th century Twifo migration was led by Nana Mfotei Amuah. It must be noted that Twifo oral traditions point to Mfotei Amuah as the first chief of the Twifo. This seems to suggest that the Twifo stool was created in the 19th century. However, considering their migration history before their final migration to Pra basin in the 19th century, it would be reasonable to presume that more chiefs sat on the Twifo stool before Mfotei Amuah. Notwithstanding, Mfotei Amuah led the nineteenth century migrants from Asante but died on the way. He is memorialized in Twifo tradition as 'the Moses of the Twifo'. He was succeeded by Nana Owusu Koko I. Owusu Koko is credited with the completion of their settlement around the River Pra basin. He is also credited with laying the foundation of the political structures of the Twifo state around the river Pra. The superior status that the Twifo migrants enjoyed over their hosts, in this case, Mokwa and Hemang, began under the reign of Owusu Koko I. In fact, he represented the Twifo at the negotiations for peace in the Gold Coast after the Akatamanso War and he was a signatory to the 1831 Maclean's peace treaty. He

also signed the Bond(s) of 1844 supervised by Commander Hill.¹³⁸ On that basis, it would not be far-fetched to suggest that the real foundation of the current Twifo within the Pra basin was laid by Owusu Koko I.

Owusu Koko I was succeeded by his younger brother, Kojo Offie. Nana Offie's reign is considered uneventful because he did not seem to have been engaged in national issues like Owusu Koko I. However, on the local front, some remarkable events happened under Offie. At a point during his reign, the Hemang stool became vacant as a result of a succession dispute and the stool was brought to Mampong for safekeeping. This showed the stature of Kojo Offie and that of the Twifo Omanhene within the Pra basin¹³⁹ (See chapter four for a detailed discussion of Hemang). The Hemang stool is said to have been in the custody of Offie until his death. Offie was succeeded by his younger brother, Ampontsin. After many unsuccessful attempts to resolve the Hemang succession problems, Nana Ampontsin is said to have personally chosen one Obeng Ayeh as the chief of Hemang.¹⁴⁰

Ampontin Fi was succeeded by his nephew, Kwesi Baidu I. Under him, the Hemang stool was once again engulfed with problems. This time, it was the chief Kobina Otu I, the Hemanghene who had a dispute with the ruling family, the Abradzi family, and so he abdicated, leaving the Hemang stool once again vacant. The stool, for the second time, was sent to Mampong; however, the Twifohehene refused to keep the Hemang stool, but sent the stool to one woman who was

¹³⁸ Interview with Obrempong Appiah Nuamah II, Twifo Omanhene,

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

considered as the mother of the Abradzi family in Hemang, Adwoa Amba, for safe keeping. Ampontin was succeeded by his nephew, Kwaku Kumi. He, however, remained on the stool for only two uneventful years and was succeeded by Owusu Koko II.¹⁴¹

Owusu Koko II's reign coincided with the SAGRANTI War (sometimes called the Prempeh War) and the British appealed to the Twifo for military support. However, in the account of the Twifo, they only agreed to send men who would only act as carriers for the British and not to engage in direct fighting.¹⁴² But the account further explains that by the time the Twifo men reached Cape Coast enroute to Kumasi, news broke that Prempeh had been captured and that the war was over and so the Twifo men returned home. Owusu Koko II was succeeded by Kweku Badu whose tenure also coincided with the Yaa Asantewaa War. Once again, the British appealed for Twifo military support which the Twifo obliged. However, just like the SAGRANTI War, on reaching Assin Praso, the war was over and the Twifo men returned home in their own words 'with their powder unburned'.¹⁴³

After Kwesi Badu, his nephew, Owusu Koko III, occupied the stool but died after only three years on the stool. He was also succeeded by Appiah Nuamah I. The current Twifo Omanhene was named after him as Appiah Nuamah IV.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ F. K., Buah, "An Essay on the History of the Twifo: Prefatory Note", unpublished work, obtained from the palace of the Twifo Omanhene.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Obrempong Appiah Nuamah II, Twifo Omanhene, 62yrs, interviewed at his palace at Mampong, 18th August, 2015.

As it is well established that the Twifo were immigrants at the Pra basin, it is also important to state that the Pra basin was not an empty territory before the arrival of the Twifo immigrants. Hemang, Mokwaa and Anyinabi were firmly established there before the Twifo. However, the immigrants were able to bring these states under their authority within a short period which, therefore, begs the question, how the immigrants were able to hegemonize the so-called etsi/ati states around the Pra basin.

Subjugation of the States around the Pra by the Twifo Immigrants

By mid-19th century, the Twifo immigrants were in superior position in their new settlement around the Pra River basin. The states that had settled in the area prior to the arrival of the Twifo such as Hemang, Mokwaa and Anyinabi, had been subsumed under the authority of the Twifo. The Twifo held the position of Omanhene while the Mokwa held the post of 'Bosompediahene', with the Hemang as the Nifahene of the Twifo Traditional area.¹⁴⁵ On several occasions, the Hemang stool was kept in Mampong whenever there was a succession dispute. Further, there were occasions that the Twifohene allegedly masterminded the destoolment of some Mokwa chiefs. There is no evidence to suggest that the Twifo immigrants achieved this through conquest. However, there is some circumstantial evidence to help provide some explanation. Fragmentation and numerical weakness on the part of the states, and the fear of the military and numerical strength of the Twifo immigrants aided the Twifo to exert their authority over the states. Nonetheless,

¹⁴⁵ See the Report of the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs into the Mokwaa Stool affairs, 1980. PRAAD, Cape Coast.

there was peace and harmony among the states until 1925 when tension began to brew among them, which led to a near disintegration of the Twifo state. (See chapter four for a detailed discussion of the relationship between the Twifo immigrants, Mokwa and Hemang).

From the traditions, it can be concluded that, although the Twifo migrated from Asante to their present settlement in the Central region, they were not Asante citizens per se, but members of the Agona of the Akan. Prior to their movement from Asante in the 19th century, the Twifo were under Asante although this occurred not through conquest. Like the case of the Assin states, it can be suggested that the Twifo came under Asante through diplomacy. This occurred as a result of the moves to escape Denkyira threats in the 17th century.

In addition, like other Akan forest states, the Twifo trace their beginnings from Adanse, although the traditions of origin of the broader Akan people suggest that the Akan did not originate from Adanse even though state formation of most of the Akan states took shape in Adanse. Thus, Adanse was very important to the Akan. As indicated, in the 16th and 17th centuries, Adanse seems to have comprised the territory between river Offin and its Oda tributary. Adanse, thus, formed part of the Offin basin which by AD 1500 had been described by Fage as important centers of “Akan culture and statedoms”. Perhaps, it is in this sense that one may understand Adanse to which place not only the Twifo but others like Abuakwa, Kotoku, Wassa, Agona, Kwahu, Akwamu, and many more, all trace their origin.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TWIFO/DENKYIRA/ASANTE AND THE BRITISH, 1818-1831

It was in the first three decades of the 19th century that the impact of the Twifo on the political events in the Gold Coast occurred. The period was one of the crucial moments in the political history of the Gold Coast. It was the immediate period after the Asante wars with some Fante states in 1806/7. That war could be described as the ‘most revolutionary’ event in the Gold Coast during the first decade of the 19th century. After the war, the history of what was then the southern half of the Gold Coast was virtually the story of Asante’s relationships with the people of the south and with the British interfering in favour of the southern states. Within Asante too, there was the problem of secession and internal conflicts. Also within the period, there were two major wars between Asante and the British: the Nsamankow War (McCarthy War) which Asante won and the Akatamanso War which the British-led forces won. These events made the period up to 1831 a watershed in the political history of the Gold Coast. This makes the Twifo secession from Asante around the period and the subsequent immigration to the Pra basin worth studying. Interestingly, Denkyira also broke away from Asante at the same time. The chapter, therefore, examines the Twifo and Denkyira departure from Asante and its impact on the political events in the Gold Coast. The part the two states played in the Nsamankow and Akatamanso wars as well as the search for peace between Asante and the Southern states up to 1831 are also examined.

The Nsamankow War

Perhaps, the most sensitive event in the first half of the 19th century Gold Coast was the McCarthy War, also referred to as the Nsamankow War between Asante and the British in 1824. Much has been written about the war and its impact on the Gold Coast; what has not been highlighted is the role that the two Agona brothers, Twifo and Denkyira, played in that war. According to the tradition of Twifo, the McCarthy War which was the first battle between the British and Asante was caused by their 19th century migration from Asante. The tradition noted that the war was caused by the desire of Asante to pursue the Twifo and have them brought back under the authority of Asante, and the attempt by the British to defend the Twifo. For the Twifo, therefore, the war was an offshoot of their migration from Asante and not the Anomabo Sargent issue which is widely believed by some historians to have caused the war.¹⁴⁶

This aspect of the Twifo tradition was corroborated by Denkyira tradition compiled by K.Y. Daaku. Daaku explained that Denkyira also migrated across the River Pra to the Central region after the Asante-Gyaaman War. The traditions of Denkyira, whilst confirming the fact that both Denkyira and Twifo broke their relations with Asante after the Asante-Gyaaman War, add more information about the reasons for their departure from Asante. It would be recalled the Asantehene's welcome address to Mfotei Amoa and Kwadwo Tibo, the chiefs of Twifo and

¹⁴⁶ W.E. F. Ward explained that in May 1822, an Asante trader at Anomabo fell foul of a policeman and the wrangle that ensued, the Asante trader abused the Governor, whereas the policeman abused the Asantehene. In November, the policeman was 'kidnapped' and taken to Dunkwa, where he was to wait for the Asantehene's decision. In February the following year, the policeman was executed. McCarthy, who had just arrived as the new governor decided to revenge the execution of the policeman and began preparation for war with Asante.

Denkyira respectively upon their arrival from the Gyaaman War: *Kwadwo mo, wokoma mpo ni na woko fa* (well done Kwadwo, if this is how you fight for an ally, how will you fight your own war?). Even though this message was to show gratitude to the Asante allies, Denkyira saw it as an innuendo. Denkyira executioners exclaimed that “one day the white lion will turn black”¹⁴⁷ implying that if Denkyira continued to fight for Asante, she would one day be in extinction.

This fear caused Denkyira to rethink their relations with Asante. On the part of Asante, even though Asantehene openly commended Denkyira after the war, traditions of Denkyira assert that the bravery exhibited by the Denkyira and the Twifo in the war caused some fear in the Asantehene.¹⁴⁸ The Asantehene felt that if the chiefs of these two states were not held in check, they together with their people could one day overpower the Asante. The fear of the Asantehene was heightened by an event which was alleged to have taken place after the war. According to the traditions of Denkyira, immediately after the defeat of Adinkra, the chiefs of Denkyira, Wassa and Twifo who had fought as allies of Asante drank some concoctions, which was one of the traditional modes of rendering an oath of binding among the Akan, and swore to restore the Denkyirahene to the power of his ancestors.¹⁴⁹ Subsequently, a Denkyira Court Crier was alleged to have stated that “one day, the white tiger will catch a red tiger” signifying a future overthrow of Asante by Denkyira.¹⁵⁰ This incident was reported to the Asantehene and it

¹⁴⁷ See K.Y. Daaku, “Oral Traditions of Denkyira”, unpublished, Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon, 1970.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Odeefou Boa Amponsem III.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

fueled his suspicion that Kwadwo Tsibo was nurturing a rebellion against him and also regarded the alleged alliance between Tsibo and the rulers of Wassa and Twifo as a threat to Asante. Consequently, the Asantehene got Tsibo detained in Kumase.¹⁵¹ The traditions do not provide information about the reaction of the Twifo and Wassa to the detention of Tsibo. But that event must have increased the desire of the Twifo and Denkyira to migrate from Asante. According to the traditions of the two states, even before the Asante-Gyaaman War, there was much discontent among the Twifo and Denkyira over some decisions of the Asantehene. There was, thus, a frosty relation between the two states and Asante, which was like a time bomb waiting to explode. Some European officials, particularly, Joseph Dupuis after his mission to Asante mentioned problems between the Asantehene and Asante vassals which needed to be resolved.¹⁵² The Twifo/Denkyira misunderstanding with the Asantehene could possibly be one of the problems Dupuis talked about. The Gyaaman War, therefore, may have worsened the relations between the two Agona states and Asante to the point that breaking the ties with Asante seemed the best option for them.

From the traditions of both Twifo and Denkyira, it would not be wrong to assert that both states migrated across the Pra in the 19th century as 'secessionists' from Asante whose actions were influenced by what they perceived to be unfair and unjust treatment from the Asantehene. It is also reasonable, considering the political situation in the Gold Coast at the time, to expect the Asante to pursue the

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Joseph Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Asante*, 2nd edition, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1966, pp. 200-259

two states. This is because apart from the fact that the secession of the two states would weaken the Asante army, failure to subdue the rebel states could encourage other 'subject states' to do the same. The Asantehene Osei Bonsu was also concerned that the two states could go to the coast and with relative ease buy arms and ammunitions from the British to attack Asante.¹⁵³ Besides, the two were known to be very militarily strong and played significant roles in many of Asante victories in the early part of the 19th century. According to the tradition of Denkyira, in the 1806-1807 Asante wars with the Fante states, the conquest of Kormantin (Kormantsi) and Egyaa in June 1807 was credited to the Denkyirahene, Kwadwo Tibo.¹⁵⁴ This was affirmed by two European officials: Meredith and Dupuis. In 1812, Henry Meredith who was part of the British officials at the Anomabo fort, noted that the Commander of the Asante army that destroyed Kormantin and captured the Dutch fort there was the chief of Denkyira, Kwadwo Tibo.¹⁵⁵ Again in 1820, during his mission to Kumasi, Joseph Dupuis, the British Consul to Kumasi, recorded that the Asantehene informed him that it was Kwadwo Tibo who led the invasion of Kormantin.¹⁵⁶ In fact, Tibo was described as the finest of the commanding officials for the Asante invading force to reach the Dutch fort Amsterdam at Kormantin.¹⁵⁷ Also, as indicated earlier, the contribution of the two

¹⁵³ Interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo, 82yrs, former curator at the Manhyia Palace Museum, at his residence, Kumasi, 18th August, 2015.

¹⁵⁴ C.C. Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1895, pp.190-200.

¹⁵⁵ See Henry Meredith, *An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1812, p. 139.

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashante*, 2nd Edition, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1966, pp.258-259.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

states in the Asante-Gyaaman War was acknowledged by the Asantehene himself when welcoming them from the battlefield. In fact, according to the traditions of both Twifo and Denkyira, in the Gyaaman War, the two states fought and captured Apau, the captain of the Gyaaman army who was also the nephew of Adinkra (the chief of Gyaaman) alive.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, the Asantehene was not expected to remain unconcerned in such a serious matter.

Moreover, there was an economic perspective to the secession and departure of the Twifo and Denkyira which the Asantehene found very repulsive and dreaded its occurrence. The Asantehene felt that the success of the Twifo and Denkyira could spell an economic disaster for Asante because the two states could easily team up with the southern states and bring about a complete return of the old times when the southern states were always blockading with pleasure Asante access to the lucrative coastal trade.¹⁵⁹ The Asantehene was mindful of a similar situation in the 1780s, where the Fante allied with the Wassa who were then in revolt against Asante to block Asante from all trade routes leading to the Ahanta Fante coast. A similar situation happened in 1806/7 when the Fante at the coast offered assistance

¹⁵⁸ K.Y. Daaku, *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo*, Accra: Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1969. See Twifo-Mampong, p.2. From the account, the capture of Apau was embarrassing to the Asantehene for which reason the Asantehene decided to have a firm grip of the two states. This reflected in the decisions the Asantehene made after the war.

¹⁵⁹ The Asante continually accused the Fante of interference in the Asante economic interest in the south. This took the form of Fante blockade against Asante of the trade routes leading to the European trade on the Fante coast where there was a concentration of European forts, castles, lodges and European traders. As far back as 1778 the British traders in Cape Coast noted that all the presents and pleadings in the world would not persuade the Fante to allow the Asante direct access to the trade on their coast. The blockade was still in place in some areas in the 1800s. For in October 1800 the British in Cape Coast again observed that the trade routes leading to the Fante coast had for many years been shut up by a misunderstanding between the Fante and the Asante.

to Assin Tanoso in the Tibo and Aputae conflict with the Asantehene that triggered a war between Asante and some Fante states in 1807.

The route of migration of the Twifo and Denkyira from Asante in the 19th century and some events that happened before the outbreak of the war seem to support their claim of being the cause of the war. First of all, the encounter that began the war was between the Twifo, Denkyira and Asante. This, according to Ward, occurred in August 1823 around the lower Pra valley and it was an attempt by the Asante to subdue Denkyira. Ward indicated that the Asante were surprised to find themselves fighting with the British.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ W.E.F., Ward, *A History of Ghana*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1967, pp. 177-180



The figure above is a map illustrating the Nsamankow War in 1824. As at 1824, the communities along the coast from the west were Sekondi, Shama, Komenda, Elmina, Cape Coast and Anamabo. Inland were Towns such as Nsamankow, Deraboasi, Heman, Benu, Dompim, Efutu, Beula, Jukwa, Dunkwa, Ampensasu and Yankumasi Fanti. The prominent rivers present at the time were River Pra and Sweet River.

It was in March 1824 that the main Asante army entered the war and succeeded in killing McCarthy and several British soldiers at Nsamankow.¹⁶¹ This suggests that the issue was initially about the secession of the two Agona states

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

from Asante. Secondly, the activities of McCarthy since he arrived in the Gold Coast in 1822 were very indicative. McCarthy began mobilizing the coastal states against Asante. Militias were mobilized from Cape Coast, Anomabo, Dixcove and Accra into what became known as the Royal African Colonial Corps. McCarthy further encouraged Fante chiefs to convince other states into the British-led alliance against Asante. It is, therefore, highly possible that British and their Fante allies contacted the Twifo and Denkyira even before their departure from Asante. The departure of the two states was good news for the British in two ways: first, it had the potential of weakening the Asante army, considering the stature of the two states. Secondly, their inclusion in the British-led alliance was going to boost their front against Asante. It is also highly possible that the two states seceded from Asante based on the motivation and promise of protection from the British.¹⁶²

Moreover, at the time of the outbreak of the war, the Asantehene was known to be unhealthy and this raised questions as to how and why the Asante would embark upon a war at a time that their leader was unwell. Osei Bonsu, the Asantehene, died during the war and was succeeded by his brother, Osei Yaw.¹⁶³ On the side of the British, the reasons that have been provided for their defeat are also suggestive. Claridge explained that the defeat of the British at the Nsamankow War was partly due to the unpreparedness of the British.¹⁶⁴ Brodie Cruikshank's account resonates with that of Claridge when he noted that McCarthy "had with

¹⁶² In the 1870s, similar situation occurred when there were problems between Asante and Dwaben. When the Dwabenhene, Asafo Agyei decided to break away from Asante, he was supported by the British and it was through the intervention of the

¹⁶³ Ward, *A History of Ghana*, p.183

¹⁶⁴ See W.W. Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1964, pp.234-255

him only about 500 men, composed of the Cape Coast militia and native auxiliaries".¹⁶⁵ Reindorf, on his part, provided the following statistics about the numerical strength of McCarthy's army: the Royal African Colonial Corps- 80, Cape Coast militia – 300, unorganized Fante -1,200.¹⁶⁶ If these explanations are anything to go by, then, it is highly possible that McCarthy's decision to involve the British in a war with Asante at the time was an impulsive one. In other words, these views suggest that the events that precipitated the war could have been spontaneous and it supports the claim of the Twifo that the war was caused by their departure.

However, a study of the political events in the Gold Coast from the beginning of the century does not entirely support claims of the Twifo. One of the major issues was the relations between the British and Asante. By the beginning of the 19th century the British were not consistent with their policy towards Asante; the British seemed to have been torn between collaboration and confrontation as far as Asante was concerned. In 1807, Torrane went for collaboration during the 1807 Asante-Fante War.¹⁶⁷ However, his successor, John Hope Smith, opted for confrontation with a determination to quell Asante threats. Hope Smith's attitude towards the payment of ground rents for the Cape Coast and Anomabo forts to the Asantehene and Asante allegation of British interference in Asante political affairs

¹⁶⁵ Brodie Cruikshank, *Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast of Africa: including an Account of the Native Tribes and their Intercourse with Europeans*, Vol.1, London: Hurst & Blackett Publishers, 1853, pp. 145-150

¹⁶⁶ C.C., Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante: Based on Traditions and Historical Facts Comprising a Period of More Than Three centuries from about 1500 to 1860*, London: Basel Mission Book Depot, 1959, pp. 180-190.

¹⁶⁷ Claridge, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*,

worsened the relations between the two. It was to resolve the strained relations between Asante and the British that Bowdich and Dupuis were sent to the Gold Coast by the British government. The failure of the Bowdich and Dupuis missions to resolve the Asante-British problems made it obvious that war between the two was inevitable.¹⁶⁸

The British decision to confront Asante and destroy Asante was taken to higher level by Charles McCarthy. McCarthy was known to have urged the British home government to use all possible resources to transform the people of the Gold Coast into Christians who would spread Christianity and European civilization throughout the West Africa region. He described the Asantehene, Osei Bonsu, as a despot who had been extorting unjustified tribute and taxes from the vassals of the kingdom of Asante¹⁶⁹. More uncomplimentary adjectives were used to describe the Asantehene, Osei Bonsu, by the British traders and administrators in the Gold Coast. For example, he was described as a black monster, tyrant and a great barbarian.¹⁶⁹ The Asantehene was, thus, seen as the greatest obstacle to the so-called civilizing mission of the Europeans in the Gold Coast.¹⁷⁰

Thus, the Twifo-Denkyira-Asante issue cannot be said to have entirely caused the Nsamankow War of 1824. To trace the origin of the war solely to that issue may be too simplistic and superficial. Nonetheless, it is clear from the turn of events that Asante internal political issues had taken a national dimension with the alleged links between the Twifo/Denkyira and the British. Perhaps, it was the

¹⁶⁸ Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee*.

¹⁶⁹ Those unfortunate remarks about the Asantehene were made by Charles McCarthy

¹⁷⁰ Cruikshank, *Eighteen Years in the Gold Coast*

Asante desire to deal with 'recalcitrant' Twifo and Denkyira that drew the Asante army to the south in pursuit of the two states and the British saw it as an opportunity to launch an attack on Asante. After all, the British and the Twifo and Denkyira appeared to have had a common interest and a common enemy when it came to Asante. For the British authority in the Gold Coast, Asante was a threat to their interest. On the part of the Twifo and Denkyira, Asante had become a threat to their sovereignty for which reasons destroying Asante power was a common goal for both the British and the two states.¹⁷¹

Twifo/Denkyira in the Nsamankow War

The traditions of both Twifo and Denkyira confirm that Kwadwo Tibo and Owusu Koko I joined the Anglo-Fante alliance against Asante.¹⁷² Even though the Asante won the war, the traditions show the distinguished contribution of the two states in the war. The initial skirmishes that occurred at the lower Offin basin were between the Asante and a joint force of Twifo and Denkyira with the support of Wassa. In that encounter, the Twifo/Denkyira forces came close to defeating the Asante army. According to oral tradition of Denkyira, about 300 Asante were taken prisoners who were all executed by Tibo, whilst about 11 Asante soldiers captured were dispatched to Cape Coast to confirm to the British their victory.¹⁷³ This got McCarthy to delude himself by believing that the expedition had been successful

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Twifo traditions indicate that Nana Mfotei Amodia died on their way from Asante and he was succeeded by Owusu Koko I. Twifo army during the Nsamankow War was therefore, led by Owusu Koko. He also led the Twifo in the Akatamanso War of 1826 and the search for peace in the between the British, Asante, and the southern states in the post-1826 war up to 1831.

¹⁷³ Interview with Odeefuo Boa Amponsem III, Denkyirahene.

and Asante had been defeated. Obviously, this initial announcement of Asante defeat confirmed his own perceptions about the African. McCarthy had indicated that he could not credit any black African with high degree of statecraft that could organize a meaningful army unless they were led and directed by Europeans.¹⁷⁴ Asante traditions, whilst confirming their initial setbacks in the war, explain however that that period coincided with the mourning of the Asantehene Osei Bonsu and so there was lack of leadership and concentration on the war. Further, there was a succession struggle to the Golden Stool and that it was after the period of mourning and the installation of a new Asantehene, Osei Yaw Akoto that the Asante were able to concentrate on the war. Asante, in early November, dispatched a stronger army to fight the forces of Twifo and Denkyira and Wassa.¹⁷⁵

By the end of November, the tide of the war had begun to change against the Twifo and Denkyira. Denkyira and the Twifo began to retreat and they made passionate calls for reinforcement from the British.¹⁷⁶ By December, the allies were still at the receiving end and they withdrew entirely from the battlefield and headed towards the coast, while Asante kept pursuing them. Apparently, they were drawing the Asante army gradually towards the coast. Until the end of December, the British had not actively taken part in the war. Perhaps McCarthy had counted on the Denkyira, the Wassa and Twifo to contain the Asante armies. But as things

¹⁷⁴ See Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975, pp.166-170

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo.

¹⁷⁶ See M.A., Renahan, "Denkyira and the British: A Successful Effort by an African Group to Gain an Inclusion in the Protectorate of the Gold Coast", unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1977, pp.420-424

unfolded, McCarthy had to send troops to reinforce the Twifo/Denkyira/ and Wassa forces. In their retreat, the Twifo and Denkyira army halted at the village of Bonsaso, some 20 miles away from Nsamankow, where they met McCarthy-led forces. According to the account of Reindorf, the Twifo/Denkyira allies led by Tibo, were delighted at the arrival of an army under a British officer to assist them; however, they expressed their reservations about the capacity of McCarthy's forces that were to face the Asante attacking army.¹⁷⁷

Kwadwo Tibo, in particular, informed McCarthy that his force was too small to withstand the Asante army. He therefore advised McCarthy to retreat a few miles in order to concentrate all the available forces before facing the attacking Asante forces.¹⁷⁸ McCarthy ignored the advice because he underestimated the capabilities of the Asante army and believed in the ability of the force under his command. When McCarthy ignored the advice, Tibo is said to have turned round and said to his people: "I am quite sure that the Fantes cannot stand; the whole charge will fall upon the Governor and his small force and the consequence will be the ruin of Denkyira".¹⁷⁹ The traditions of both Twifo and Denkyira indicate that whilst the meeting was still underway at Bonsaso, the Asante army in search of the Denkyira and Twifo approached and launched an attack on the allied forces. Both European sources and Twifo/Denkyira traditions concur that the allied forces were defeated within a short period. In fact, the battle at Bonsaso proved that the Twifo/Denkyira camp led by Tibo were more accurate in their estimation of the

¹⁷⁷ See C.C., Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, p. 191

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

strength and capabilities of the McCarthy's forces against the Asante army. McCarthy himself and several other British soldiers were killed in the war.¹⁸⁰ Further, several other British soldiers were badly wounded.¹⁸¹ Ward sought to suggest in his analysis of the encounter between the Asante army and the McCarthy-led allies that the defeat of the allies was as a result of shortage of ammunitions. He explained that at about four o'clock that day, the British ammunition was exhausted and the officer in charge of the ammunition column who had been ordered to bring in extra supplies was not used to the trekking in the bush and so they could not make supplies ready for use by the British-led army.¹⁸² Be that as it may, it does not negate the fact that the advice from the Twifo and Denkyira to McCarthy about the inadequacy of the army of allies was apt. Twifo and Denkyira retreated and headed towards Cape Coast in the face of a continued pursuit by the Asante army. In Cape Coast, the two states joined forces with the Fante to build a strong force in an anticipation of Asante attacks.

Despite the defeat of the British-led forces, the Twifo and Denkyira earned the admiration of the British officials in Cape Coast. They became the staunchest ally of the British and that propelled them to play active roles in the subsequent war between Asante and the British and other crucial political issues in the Gold Coast up to 1831.

¹⁸⁰ Joseph Dupuis, *Journal of the Residence in Ashantee*, London: Henry Colburn, 1824, p.218. Dupuis provided a list of some notable British officials who were killed: McCarthy himself, Messrs Buckle, Wetherill, Robertson, Dr. Tedlie, Mr. Jones, Brandon, Wilheims, Keddle.

¹⁸¹ According to Ward's account, McCarthy was badly wounded and to avoid being captured by the Asante army he decided to kill himself. See W.E.F., Ward, *A History of Ghana*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1967, p.179

¹⁸² W.E.F. Ward, *A History of Ghana*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1967, p.179

The Akatamanso War of 1826

The victory of Asante at Nsamankow did not bring a resolution to the issues that triggered the war. For the British, their defeat to Asante was a total humiliation which brought an unrepairable damage to their reputation in the Gold Coast. Therefore, a revenge to redeem their image was seriously considered. The intentions of the British were confirmed by the strenuous effort by Lt. Col. Purdon, the commander of the southern alliance, to bring more states from the southern and eastern sectors of the Gold Coast into the alliance. Akuapem, Akyem, Krobo, Adangbe and the Ga were some of the states that were persuaded to join the alliance.¹⁸³ As for the Twifo and Denkyira, the battle at Bonsaso had been very disastrous as they suffered a lot of casualties and so a revenge was non-negotiable.¹⁸⁴

On the part of Asante, the resubjugation of Twifo and Denkyira still remained their prime objective after the war. Indeed, an Asante delegation had indicated at a post-war meeting, initiated by the Dutch Governor at Elmina Castle, between the British and the Asante, that the Asante army had been sent not to fight white men but to capture Owusu Koko, the king of Twifo, Enimil Kwao, the king of Western Wassa and Kwadwo Tibo, the Denkyirahene. As for Tibo and Owusu Koko, the Asante delegates made it clear that they had been given special instructions to bring them to Kumasi dead or alive.¹⁸⁵ The Asante delegates further

¹⁸³ See Adu Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, London: Longman Publishers, 1979.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo, 85yrs, former curator at the Manhyia Palace Museum, 13th July, 2016.

¹⁸⁵ Ward, *A History of Ghana*, p.182

indicated that the Asante army would withdraw from the coast on only one condition, and that was if the British delivered up Tibo to them. However, Major Ricketts who represented the British in the negotiations was not prepared to give up Kwadwo Tsibo and the two other kings to the Asante army. According to Twifo and Denkyira traditions, the states were also determined never to go back to Asante and were prepared to fight with the last drop of their blood.¹⁸⁶ Thus, whether from the point of view of the Asante or the British and their two major African allies, the 1824 war was an unfinished business which was only waiting for a trigger.

The occasion for a war occurred in 1826 when the chief of Akyem Kotoku and a section of his people migrated from their base in Asante Akyem to Akyem Abuakwa.¹⁸⁷ It was from their new base that they joined the British led southern alliance against Asante. The Asante resolved to punish the latest 'secessionist' and if possible, get them to return to their ancestral home.¹⁸⁸

By June 1826, the Asante army had taken to the field and was heading towards the east, obviously to deal with the Akyem. The Asante army fought and defeated the Abuakwa and Akuapem in several battles, forcing them to retreat southwards in order to join the main army of the British led southern alliance. On

¹⁸⁶ Traditions of Twifo and Denkyira. See also, Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, p.194

¹⁸⁷ The Akyem secession from the Asante kingdom started in 1823 continued to 1825. For instance Bosome migrated from base in the Lake Bosomtwe neighborhood southward to join their kinsmen in Bosome in Akyem Bosome. By 1826, of all the Asante southern subject states, only Kwahu remained loyal to Asante.

¹⁸⁸ Kofi Affrifa, *The Akyem Factor in Ghana's History 1700-1875*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2000, p.121. According to Affrifa, Akyem Abuakwa and Akyem Kotoku were the first to face the Asante army. They fought several battles and the Akyem states suffered several defeats which forced them to retreat first into Akuapem before joining the allies.

this occasion, the British-led alliance was made up of four divisions: Denkyira, Twifo, Akyem, Fante and Assin were placed on the left flank under the leadership of Kwadwo Tsibo; on the right were the Akwamu led by the Akwamuhene, the Cape Coast militia, Anomabo and Accra were placed at the Centre and led by British merchants; Jackson, Hutchison, Richter and Bannerman. Lt Col Purdon, the overall commander of the allied forces took care of the rear.

In August 1826, the AKatamanso War was fought near Dodowa and Asante was overwhelmingly defeated by the allied forces. According to Twifo and Denkyira traditions, the two states contributed immensely towards the victory of the British-led forces. Reindorf corroborated this by stressing that the allies benefited immensely from the advice of Tibo.¹⁸⁹ Thus, this time around, the allies were not taken unawares on the morning of the battle largely because Kwadwo Tsibo had warned them of the Asante attack.¹⁹⁰ Generally, the defeat of Asante was a big relief for the Twifo and Denkyira. If for nothing at all, it offered them an opportunity to find a permanent settlement.

The Search for Peace, 1826-1831

The British wanted peace to be immediately established between Asante and the southern states on one hand and between Asante and the British on the other. However, the search for peace protracted because in the euphoria that

¹⁸⁹ C.C., Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*

¹⁹⁰ According to Denkyira tradition Tibo had heard the special war drums of the Asante and understood the messages from the drum because his earlier close association with the Asante army. Each time the war drums was beaten, he alerted the leaders of the allied forces for them to be ready.

characterized the victory over Asante, the African members of the allied forces refused to enter into any peace negotiation with Asante. The Twifo and Denkyira were part of the orchestration of the turmoil that occurred in the south after the war. Tibo and Owusu Koko I extended their bitterness for Asante to the southern states that did not contribute to the war. They attacked Wassa and Elmina and extorted money from their chiefs. The Twifo and Denkyira also created a blockade at Wassa, to prevent Asante access to the coast through the western side of the Gold Coast. Tibo and Owusu Koko sent a message to the Dutch at Elmina that they had defeated Asante; therefore, the Dutch should now pay the ground rent for the Elmina Castle to Denkyira. Definitely, the two were revisiting history, because prior to the Feyiase War, Denkyira were the beneficiaries of the ground rent for the Elmina castle.

As for the people of Elmina, Tibo and Owusu Koko harboured very strong bitterness for them due to the fact that during the Nsamankow War, the people of Elmina supported the Asante. This they did by supplying the Asante army with guns and gunpowder they had acquired from the Dutch in Elmina. Consul Dupuis corroborated this by indicating that as soon as the war began, the people of Elmina started attacking and seizing British citizens in the town.¹⁹¹

Therefore, to back their demand on the Dutch as well as punish the people of Elmina, the Twifo and Denkyira led by their chiefs, Tibo and Owusu Koko, closely blockaded all trade routes leading to Elmina. So effective was the closure that the people of Elmina could not obtain food supplies by land nor could Asante

¹⁹¹ See Joseph Dupuis, *Journal of the Residence in Asahntee*. Dupuis also mentioned Shama, another Dutch settlement where the people went further to shoot at the British officials in the town at the onset of the war.

citizens resident at Elmina get out of the town.¹⁹² In 1828, Tibo and Owusu Koko escalated their vengeance on Elmina by launching an attack on the town which took the Dutch at the Elmina castle with their artillery to defend the town from being overrun by these two chiefs. The actions of Tibo and Owusu Koko created a tense atmosphere which was a major source of worry for the British. For instance, the blockade of trade routes, the siege of Elmina between 1826 and 1828 by the two chiefs did not provide a conducive environment for trade to thrive and therefore, for the British, these acts must not be allowed to continue.

The Akyem and the Ga were doing similar things in the east. It was as a result of such acts that got Neil Campbell, the new Governor-in-chief of British establishments in West Africa to comment that the defeat of the Asante “has removed one tyrant (the Asantehene)... and raised up several others who are more barbarous and less amenable to any system....”¹⁹³

In September 1826, Neil Campbell convened a meeting of the western sector chiefs at Cape Coast Castle and among the chiefs who were present were Kwadwo Tibo of Denkyira, Owusu Koko of Twifo and Aduku of Fante. Others were chiefs Amonu and Baffoe of Anomabo and the chief of Cape Coast. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the chiefs about the moves for peace negotiations with Asante, but the chiefs emphatically objected to this. They also blocked any effort on the part of Campbell to send messengers to Asante to discuss

¹⁹² Apart from supplying Asante army with ammunitions the people of Elmina were accused of harboring one Akyeamong, the Asantehene’s representative and other Asante in Elmina who fed the Asantehene with information from the coast.

¹⁹³ Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*

peace. The states were not prepared to come to peace terms without wreaking vengeance of some sort to square the ills that they had suffered from Asante for decades.¹⁹⁴ In November, Campbell left the Gold Coast for Sierra Leone much frustrated.

The search for peace after the Akatamanso War was delayed due to, among others, the demands of the chiefs of Twifo and Denkyira on the Dutch, Asante and the vengeance of the people of Elmina. These frustrations forced the British government to withdraw from the Gold Coast, handing over the forts and castles to the Committee of Merchants to administer.

The era of the Council of merchants was very important for the Twifo and Denkyira. Since they migrated from Asante in 1823, they had not found a permanent settlement. It was the President of the Council, John Jackson, who took up the issue of finding a permanent settlement for the two states. According to the tradition of Denkyira, Tibo requested to be settled at Jukwa and Jackson is said to have informed the Council at a meeting over the choice of Denkyira and accordingly, the Council entered into negotiations on behalf of Denkyira.¹⁹⁵ Soon after the completion of negotiations, the two states led by their chiefs moved to Jukwa, from where the Twifo moved further inland to settle at their present location. Twifo tradition indicates that in Jukwa, Denkyira saw the ever increasing population of the Twifo as a threat and to avoid conflict, the Twifo left Jukwa to

¹⁹⁴ Kofi Affrifa, *The Akyem Factor in Ghana's History*, p. 122. According to Affrifa, the Akyem on their part were demanding that Asante prisoner of war and hostages, including Akyaa, the daughter of the Asantehene be handed over to them before they would come to the negotiating table for peace talks.

¹⁹⁵ See M.A., Renehan, "Denkyira and the British" pp.420-424

find their own settlement.¹⁹⁶ For the Twifo, moving further inland was more advantageous in the sense that they had settled far from the reach of Asante. What is not clear from the traditions of both states is the role of the British in the Twifo acquisition of lands to settle around the Pra. However, the tradition of Twifo, Denkyira and Hemang all concur that Tibo played a leading role in acquiring lands from Hemang for the Twifo.

Generally, finding a permanent settlement was a big relief for the two states following the problems that arose after their initial plan to settle at Wassa which the latter declined.¹⁹⁷ Beyond that, finding permanent settlement for the two states was a big step towards finding peace between the southern states that allied with the British and Asante.

Barely two years after finding permanent settlements for the Twifo and Denkyira a peace agreement concluded between the allies and Asante. Much of the final leg of the peace negotiations was credited to the last President of the Merchants' Council, Captain George Maclean.¹⁹⁸ In February 1830, Maclean arrived at Cape Coast as President of the Council and immediately continued the peace processes. He had served as a secretary to Lt Col Lumley when he visited the Gold Coast in 1827 and perhaps he was much aware of the intricacies of the

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Nana Nkwantabisa, chief of Nyinase and Krontihene of the Twifo Traditional Area, interviewed at his residence in Nyinase, 13th April, 2017.

¹⁹⁷ Following the defeat of the McCarthy-led forces at Nsamankow in 1824, the Twifo and Denkyira took a temporal refuge in Wassa and later, Tibo expressed interest in settling his people permanently in Wassa but the Wassa refused. Tibo became furious over the refusal of Wassa and threatened to invade Wassa. It took the intervention of the British to halt Tibo's planned invasion of Wassa.

¹⁹⁸ Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, pp.190-195

situation and the pragmatic ways to deal with it.¹⁹⁹ According to Twifo tradition, Maclean met each aggrieved state separately and addressed their major grievance immediately he assumed duty. On the Twifo/Denkyira demand for payment of ground rents for the Elmina castle, Maclean decreed that it was no longer necessary for any local chief to continue to receive rents on lands on which European fortifications stood following the defeat of Asante at Akatamanso. In the long run, Maclean abolished entirely the payment of ground rents.

By 1831, a peace settlement had taken place between Asante and the South states in the presence of the chiefs of the Twifo, Denkyira, Wassa, Asikuma, etc. There were several articles in the terms of the treaty but the one that had more relevance for the Twifo, Denkyira and other southern states was the one that concerned the freedom of the states. That article read:

As the king of Asante has renounced all right to any tribute or homage from the king of Denkyira, Asen and others formerly his subjects, so on the other hand, these parties are strictly prohibited from insulting, by improper speaking, or in any other way, their former master; such being calculated to produce quarrels and war.²⁰⁰

Thus, by the terms of the treaty, Asante was made to renounce its authority over all the southern states that allied with the British in war. In other words, The Twifo, Denkyira and the other states formally won their independence from Asante. The year 1831 was, therefore, a major turning point in the history of the Twifo and Denkyira from vassalage to sovereignty. With a permanent place of settlement and freedom from Asante domination and threats, the Twifo and Denkyira were offered a new lease of life to reorganize and develop their states after years of subjugation

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ See C.C., *Reindorf, A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, p.260

under Asante. The Twifo and Denkyira gradually spread to the surrounding areas until the land Denkyira occupied adjoined that of Twifo, making the Denkyira-Twifo lands contiguous from the Offin River to Jukwa. The Twifo also spread far and wide around the Pra River basin, due largely to lack of any resistance from the states that had earlier settled on those lands.

It can be concluded that the period 1818-1831 was crucial for the Twifo in terms of their search for sovereignty which was a long standing desire. The Twifo left Adanse in the 17th century to avoid Denkyira threats and dominance which landed them under the control of Asante. The Asante defeat of Denkyira at Feyiase seems to have brought the two Agona brothers together again, this time as subjects of Asante. From that period, the two states appear to have had a shared destiny. The two became vassals of Asante and fought gallantly for Asante until the 1820. The two also rebelled against Asante at the same time and migrated together to their current settlements. Thus, it can be concluded that the Twifo became very active in the politics of the Gold Coast as a result of their pursuit of sovereignty in the 19th century. The Twifo continued to be active in national politics till the close of the century.²⁰¹ The Twifo and the British kept their friendly relations till the departure of the British from the Gold Coast. It was based on this relation between the two that the British called for the support of the Twifo in the SAGRANTI War of 1874, although the Twifo never actively fought in the war before the capture of Prempeh,

²⁰¹ The two states were actively involved in the events leading to the Bond of 1844 which the chiefs, Tibo and Owusu Koko were signatories. The Twifo and Denkyira were also active in the resistance to some policies of the British in the 1850s, particularly, the Poll Tax Ordinance of 1852. The two were part of the movement to quell Asante threats against the southern states in the 1860s. These activities led to the formation of the first nationalist movement, the Fante Confederacy.

the Asantehene. Similarly, during the British war with Asante in 1901 (Yaa Asantewaa War), the British once again requested for the support of the Twifo which the Twifo obliged, although according to their tradition, the Twifo never actively fought in the war.²⁰²

It must be reiterated that it was from 1831, after Maclean's Treaty of Peace, that the Twifo could concentrate on internal issues, particularly, the organization of the state around the Pra River basin. In the process of organizing the state, however, one of the important issues that they had to contend with was their relations with their new neighbours, particularly, Hemang and Mokwaa, which are discussed in the next chapter.

²⁰² F. K., Buah, "An Essay on the History of Twifo: A prefatory Note". Unpublished document obtained from the Palace of the Twifo Omanhene.

CHAPTER FOUR

FROM MIGRANTS TO SOVEREIGNTY:

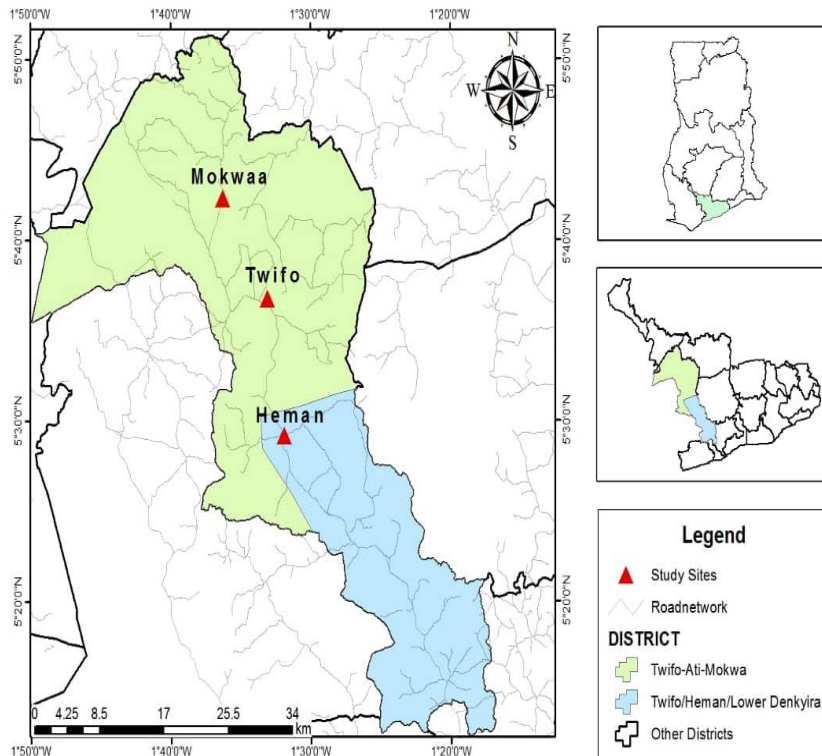
TWIFO, HEMANG, MOKWAA RELATIONS UP TO 1925

The immediate impact of the arrival of the Twifo in the Pra basin was the formation of the Twifo State which was made up of the Twifo immigrants and the host states of Hemang, Mokwaa and Hemanso. This was the culmination of a defensive and offensive alliance formed between the immigrants and the host states upon the arrival of the Twifo immigrants. Generally, Twifo traditions, supported by European records, indicate that, in the scheme of things within the state, the Twifo immigrants held superior authority.²⁰³ Thus, the host states succumbed to the might of the immigrants and remained subordinate to the immigrants until the mid-1920s. The records further show that until 1925 there was peace and harmony and collaboration within the state. However, from 1925 onwards, hostility and insubordination, generally, characterized the relations between the immigrants and the two dominant host states which were Hemang and Mokwaa. The chapter, therefore, examines briefly the states in the Twifo area before the arrival of the Twifo migrants and how the arrival of the migrants affected those states. The chapter also explores the relations between the Twifo immigrants, Hemang and Mokwaa, from 1925 to the present.

In an era characterized by movement of many Akan states in search for new lands and escape threats from more powerful states, the leaders of the Twifo,

²⁰³ The Twifo traditions strongly assert that they held superior authority in the Twifo state. This is corroborated by correspondence between the colonial governor and the Twifo State. The Governor consistently refused any letter from Hemang and Mokwaa which was not channeled through the Omanhene.

following their fallout with Asante, found the lands in the Pra-Offin basin in the Central region, a more suitable environment. To their



Map showing the various states that formed the Twifo state.

advantage, they found their host states and neighbours numerically and militarily weak due to wars with their neighbours, particularly, Wassa.²⁰⁴

As indicated earlier, the Twifo met Mokwa, Hemang and Hemanso (also known as Anyinabi) already settled around the Pra.²⁰⁵ Geographically, Mokwa

²⁰⁴ Mokwaahene, Kenin

²⁰⁵ Interview with the Mokwaahene

occupied an area lying in the thick of the equatorial forest covering an approximate area of about 400 square miles. It is bounded on the extreme north by the Adanse stool lands, on the north-west by Assin Attandanso, Assin Apimanim lands, and on the south, still within the Twifo Traditional Area, by Wamaso/Mampoma stool lands. Mokwaa is further bounded on the south by Wassa-Fiase stool lands.²⁰⁶

Mokwaa-Twifo Relations

The traditions of Mokwa assert that their contact with the Twifo immigrants began under their chief, Krom Banti.²⁰⁷ The Mokwaahene is alleged to have had cordial relations with the Twifohene, Nana Owusu Koko and settled the immigrants at Domakwaa before their migration to Mbraim and subsequently to Adawoman. The relations between Mokwaa and the Twifo was further strengthened when the Mokwaahene gave his sister, Amoanima's hand in marriage to the Twifohene, Owusu Koko.²⁰⁸ Under the Mokwaahene, Nana Apotoe, more lands were given to the Twifo.²⁰⁹ Mokwaa tradition alleges that the Twifo migrants, upon their arrival, also requested for a place to re-settle their tutelary deity, 'Bosomkese' and the Mokwaa once again offered a place called Apagyahina, where the 'Bosomkese' is still located.²¹⁰ It must be noted that many of these areas of which the Mokwaa claimed ownership were virgin lands which were unoccupied prior to the Twifo arrival. It is not clear whether the Twifo paid rent to Mokwaa as their landlord.

²⁰⁶ Ibid

²⁰⁷ Ibid

²⁰⁸ Nana Kwasi Kenin III, Evidence in-Chief at the sittings of the Central Region House of Chiefs, on the Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1978-1980. His account is corroborated by many Mokwaa indigenes interviewed

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

From the Mokwaa tradition, it does not appear that the relations between the Mokwaa and Twifo were purely that of a landlord and tenant where tenants were obliged to pay rents. Perhaps, the Mokwa and Twifo must have lived cordially as members of the same Akan fraternity which was cemented by a royal marriage between Amoanima, a royal of Mokwaa and the Twifohene, Owusu Koko I. That gesture speaks volumes about the relations between the two states, for it shows that the Twifo migrants must have been very special to their host as later events showed that there was more to it than the Akan ties.

Hemang-Twifo Relations

Hemang shares borders with Mokwaa and Mampong, and comprises Abonteng, Apenkro and some few villages.²¹¹ Hemang tradition suggests that Hemang was one of the early Akan states to have settled around the Pra. Also, it appears from both tradition and some European sources that Hemang, just like many Akan states lived in Adanse at a point but migrated very early across the River Pra to their current settlement. Duarte Pacheco Pereira suggest that, “Hemang was one of the Akan states in Adanse who migrated to settle on the other side of the Pra River and established themselves socially, politically, economically and militarily”.²¹² He further states that it was as a result of the presence of Hemang in the area around the Pra that various Akan states later came to settle around the Pra.²¹³ Akwamu tradition of origin, for instance, confirms that Akwamu, on their

²¹¹ Interview with Hemanghene, Nana Amoa Sakyi, 72, at his residence, 18th July 2014

²¹² Duate Pacheco Pereira, *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*. Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1892. See also J.D. Fage, *A Commentary on Duate Pacheco Pereira's Account of the Lower Guines Coastlands*. Pereira was a Captain-Major of Portuguese Gold Coast from 1519-1522

²¹³ Ibid.

way to Nyanawase, first went to the Pra area to live with Hemang for many years until the 1620s that they departed Hemang.²¹⁴ In fact, some writers even trace the origin of Akwamu to Hemang. One of such writers is Ivor Wilks, who asserted that prior to creation of Akwamu state, Akwamu belonged to Hemang. According to Wilks, Akwamu royal clan originated from Hemang and Akwamu were then known as 'Okwi'. Wilks further opined that it was a section of the royal Abrade clan of Akwamu (i.e. the Okwi, which later became Twi) that left Hemang to establish a new dynasty at Asamankese, and they carried with them, among other things, the tribal name Okwi, by which the new state of Akwamu was still known in the 17th century.²¹⁵

From these narratives, one may not be wrong to state that Hemang which was among the earliest settlers of the area must have lived in the area for many years before the migration of the Twifo from Asante. For Hemang to have hosted a mighty ancient state such as Akwamu for many years before the rise of Akwamu, confirms that Hemang was among the pioneer settlers in the area. It also appears to suggest that the area around the Pra River had become a very safe zone for many of the Akan states from Adanse. The Twifo migrants, therefore, may have been attracted to the area because there were other Akans already living in the area. Also, and more importantly, as indicated in their tradition, the Twifo migrants found the area very far from the reach of Asante.

²¹⁴ Interview with Prof. Rupert Kofi Tuffour, Historian and an a researcher on Akan states and their history.

²¹⁵ Ivor Wilks, "A Note on Twifo Akwamu" in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. III, 1959. Some European writers at a point referred to Hemang as Twifo, whilst the name Twifo Hemang was also frequently used until Hemang broke away from the Twifo State.

The Triple Alliance

Traditions of Hemang and Mokwaa concur that prior to the arrival of the Twifo from Asante in the 1820s, the two states, in addition to Hemanso were living in the forest zone around the Pra River in the Central region.²¹⁶ However, due to tribal and inter-state wars with the Wassa and other neighboring states, their population had been decimated and militarily weakened. The three states, therefore, formed a sort of association called 'Mmukyia Miensa' (The Triple Alliance). Mokwaa tradition confirms that this union was basically for purposes of resisting any probable outside foe.²¹⁷

In fact, the traditions of Hemang and Mokwaa portray a picture of vulnerability on the part of the three states at the point of arrival of the Twifo immigrants. Therefore, the arrival of the Twifo to the area at that moment must have brought some relief to these distressed states. In other words, the arrival of the Twifo, who were militarily strong, must have been a welcome news to these host states. Besides, the migrants seem to have been politically well organized with their paramount stool. Therefore, the host states asked for protection from the migrants and offered more lands to the migrants to settle in anticipation of the expected benefit from the migrants in the form of protection and defense which was a major concern to the host states.²¹⁸

²¹⁶ This is confirmed by the traditions of Hemang and Mokwaa.

²¹⁷ Evidence in-Chief of Nana Kenin III, at the sittings of the Central Region House of Chiefs on Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1978-1980

²¹⁸ Ibid.

In another sense, the tradition shows that the numerical and military strength of the Twifo migrants was a source of worry to the host states for they feared being invaded or conquered by the migrants. Possibly, the marriage between Amoanimaa and the Twifohene, Owusu Koko I, was arranged to forestall this situation in the future. In other words, there would not be any motivation on the part of the Twifo to invade their own in-laws.²¹⁹ As it was done in other parts of the world, particularly, in medieval Europe, this pact was a strategic diplomatic move to protect the interest of states.²²⁰ The intentions of Mokwaa were confirmed in a statement attributed to the Mokwaahene, Nana Kenin II. The Mokwaahene was quoted as saying;

My ancestors arranged this sort of dynastic marriage, so that if the populous Twifos have been joined to us by marriage, than (sic) they would not be tempted to invade/conquer the Mokwaas who were few but would rather heartily protect them.²²¹

Thus, the relations between the migrant and the host states began through diplomacy, which was supposed to bring mutual benefit to both parties. This appears to be the relations between the Twifo migrants and the host states at the beginning when the Twifo migrants arrived in the 1820s. However, by 1830, the Twifo had been able to exploit this relationship to their advantage where they enjoyed a superior status within the area.²²² In the scheme of things the

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ In Europe, dynastic marriage was prevalent in the medieval age, but evidence of intermarriage between royal dynasties in other parts of the world can be found in the late Bronze Age. Marriage between royal families served to initiate, reinforce or guarantee peace between nations. It was also meant to secure alliance between dynasties and states.

²²¹ Nana Kenin III at sittings of the Central region House of Chiefs on the Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1978-1980.

²²² ADM/23/1/3228. Twifu State Affairs (TSA) PRAAD, Cape Coast.

Twifohehene, Owusu Koko I, held the status of a paramount chief whilst the host states held the position of divisional chiefs. The process leading to the Twifo superiority of the host states was almost similar to the Asante-Assin relations. It would be recalled that the Assin states of Atandanso, Apemanin and Tanoso came under Asante through similar diplomatic moves. The Assin states requested for Asante protection against their powerful neighbours and ended up being Asante vassals until Asante defeat at the Akatamanso War.²²³

By 1830, Owusu Koko I, had been able to politically organize all the states in the area into a kind of new union where the migrants were in a superior status whilst the host states occupied subordinate positions. Twifohehene was the paramount chief; the Mokwaahene was made the Abosompediehehene; whilst until 1925, Hemang and Hemanso did not hold any specific position but the records show that they were all subordinate to the Twifo. ²²⁴ For Hemang, not being assigned any subordinate position implied that Hemang was independent of the authority of the Twifohehene.²²⁵

As indicated earlier, Mokwaa subordination to the Twifo was not in doubt. The Abosompediehehene position was held by the chief of Mokwaa until 1925. The Abosompediehehene was considered as a senior divisional chief who was second in

²²³ See Claridge, A History of the Gold Coast and Asante. Part of the reasons for the 1807 War between Asante and Fante was the alleged Fante meddling in Asante imperial affairs. And this was alleged Fante interference in the affairs of the Assin states which the Asantehene felt was under his jurisdiction.

²²⁴ ADM/23/1/3228

²²⁵ Interview with Nana Amoa Sasraku II, Paramount Chief of Hemang.

rank to the Omanhene in the hierarchy of the Twifo Traditional set-up.²²⁶ By modern interpretation, the Abosompediehene was equal to an Omankrado or Krontihene as the case may be. In all customary rituals and functions, the Abosompediehene was the one who poured libation to invoke the gods and ancestral spirits.²²⁷

For Hemang and Hemanso the traditions are not clear why they were not given any divisional positions in the Twifo Traditional organization up to 1925. As indicated already, the Twifo migrants on their arrival were politically well organized with a paramount chief and they seem to have imposed their authority on the host states. It is not too clear from the traditions why Mokwaa was the only state among the host states to have been given a position. Perhaps, this was because of the Mokwaa claim to be owner of much of the lands in the area. It must, be emphasized, that with the exception of Twifo Mampong which is on Hemang land, Mokwaa claims ownership of most of the lands on which Twifo townships including the administrative capital, Twifo Praso were founded.²²⁸ It must be noted though that this claim has been a subject of litigation between Mokwaa and Twifo for many years. Nonetheless, one can safely suggest that for Mokwaa to be the only state among the host states to be given a position by the powerful Twifo shows that there must have been strong relations between Mokwaa and the Twifo. In any case, the traditions indicate that there was peace,

²²⁶ Interview with Kyeame Anane, Chief linguist of the Twifo Omanhene, interviewed at the Palace of the Omanhene, Twifo Mampong, 16th January, 2018.

²²⁷ Interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo, 82years, former curator of Manhyia Museum, at his residence in Kumasi, 23rd August, 2016.

²²⁸ Nana Kenin III at sittings of the Central region House of Chiefs on the Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1978-1980

harmony and stability between the states until 1925 when attempts were made to effect some changes to the existing order²²⁹

Reorganization and Turmoil, 1925-1987

Before 1925, there were only two divisional chiefs within the Twifo Traditional area, namely; Abosompediehene and Adontenhene. In 1925, the Twifohene Nana Appiah Nuamah I, began some sort of reorganization and creation of sub-chiefs in line with the normal Akan traditional political structure. Hemang was now made the Kyidomhene while Mokwaa's status was changed from Abosompediehene to Benkumhene. Hemanso was made the Nifahene, Buabeng was given the Adonten division, Adugyaa headed the Twafu division, and Darmang was put in-charge of the Gyase division, etc.²³⁰ (See Chapter four for a detailed discussion on the creation of new divisional chiefs and changes to the political structure of the Twifo).

Although traditions of all the states are not explicit on the motivating factors for this reorganization, one could establish possible reasons by relying on some inferences. There appear to be internal and external factors for this reorganization. Internally, the tradition seems to suggest that the Omanhene wanted to put up a political structure that was in line with the typical Akan traditional battle formation out of which the titles of the divisional chiefs we have today were derived. This consisted of the *Adonten* (main body), *Kyidom* (rear guard), *Twafu* (vanguard or

²²⁹ It is to the 1925 reshuffle or reorganization that one may trace all the problems between the Twifo and Hemang on one hand and between the Twifo and Mokwa on the other.

²³⁰ Nana Amponteng Fi II, Twifo Omanhene, at the Sitting of the Committee probing the Twifo-Mokwaa land dispute, 18th April, 1979.

advance party), *Nifa* (right) and *Benkum* (left) wings. In Asante, for instance, each village or town in Asante, *Oman* (component state) was assigned a place in one of the wings and each wing was placed under a divisional or wing commander.²³¹ Thus the *Adonten* was headed by the *Adontenhene*, the *Kyidom* by the *Kyidomhene*, *Nifa* by *Nifahene* and *Benkum* by *Benkumhene*.²³² Each wing played specific roles to ensure the safety of its integral towns and villages and victory in times of wars. It was thus a sound military strategy for any Omanhene to assign people he could trust to be in charge of the various wings.²³³ Although the Omanhene was creating a formal traditional political structure within the Twifo State, one cannot rule out the attempt to consolidate the position of the Omanhene.

Nonetheless, a cursory review of the politics in the Gold Coast around the period shows that there were external factors behind the Twifo Omanhene's reorganization. This had to do with the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (NJO). In 1925 the Colonial Government welcomed proposals on Native Administration Ordinance (NAO) the Amanhene themselves. The Ordinance sought to make the position of the paramount chiefs powerful and more influential in the colonial system. This was based on the British recognition that without the acquiescence and participation of the traditional political system in some aspect of government, however nominal and inconsequential in the power equation, running the Gold

²³¹ See Alachaher Fazilet, "The Ashanti's Political, Military, Judicial and Economic Organization: evolution and Change (1750-1824)", unpublished thesis submitted to the Department of Anglo-saxon Languages, University of Oran, 2011/2012, pp. 1-15. Considering the strong links between the Twifo and Asante, the Twifo may have provided a replica of the Asante system in their new settlement.

²³² Ibid. This was also confirmed in an interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo, former curator, Manhyia Palace.

²³³ Ibid.

Coast was going to be more burdensome and difficult than they had imagined.²³⁴ Thus, the Ordinance, amongst other things, defined the powers of the Oman (Council) in the management of affairs connected with the state. It also regulated the powers and jurisdictions of the tribunals in their order of precedence and within their territorial limits with necessary powers for enforcing their judgements and verdicts. The ordinance also constituted the provincial councils for administration and judicial purposes, the decisions of the council being subject to the ratification of the executive and the judiciary.²³⁵

More importantly, the Ordinance contained some provisions which were clearly intended to increase the powers of paramount chiefs at the expense of lesser chiefs and subjects.²³⁶ Section 128 of the Ordinance, for instance, specified that “anybody who committed any act with the intent to undermine the authority of a paramount chief would, on conviction by the Oman Council, be sentenced to six months imprisonment and a fine of £100. An accessory after the fact was punishable by three months’ imprisonment and a fine of £50.”²³⁷ The bill which metamorphosed to the 1927 Native Jurisdiction Ordinance clearly defined the relationship between paramount chiefs and sub-chiefs where sub-chiefs were to be subordinated to paramount chiefs. The background to this situation was the allegation that paramount chiefs were being subverted by their subjects and sub-

²³⁴ See Kofi Awoonor, *Ghana: A Political History From Pre-European To Modern Times*, Accra: Sedco Publishing Ltd & Woeli Publishing Services, 1990, pp. 99-101

²³⁵ See Legislative Council Debates (LCD), February, 1925.

²³⁶ See David Kimble, *A political History of Ghana: The rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963, pp.457-505. See also Sammy Tenkorang, “The Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society, 1897-1933”, unpublished thesis submitted to the University of London for a Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1975

²³⁷ Ibid.

chiefs. In fact, this was evident when the bill was being introduced at the Legislative Council. Nana Ofori Atta spoke about the practice of “undermining and usurping the authority and position of paramount chiefs”.²³⁸ He bemoaned further that, “it is certainly no credit to the country to have positions of trust defied and disrespected when there are no legitimate grounds for it.”²³⁹

It must be noted that the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance did not exist in isolation. Together with the Chiefs Ordinance of 1904 and the Associated Stool Property detention Ordinance, among others, they were designed by the colonial government to centralize authority over the ‘native institutions’ to use chiefs in furtherance of colonial interests.²⁴⁰ The Chiefs were made to perform certain functions such as the responsibility for the maintenance of roads and telegraph lines and by the provisions the Compulsory Labour Ordinance of 1895 to provide workers on demand by the Colonial Government.²⁴¹ It must be stressed, however, that the British did not resort to this strategy because they were convinced of the existence of any virtue in the traditional political institutions, but as it was later revealed, it was just for political expediency and convenience.²⁴² Nonetheless, rather than raising the authority of paramount chiefs, these legislations deepened the volatile relations between chiefs and the educated elites and the youth in the Gold Coast. Thus the situation created a perception in young men and African

²³⁸ See LCD, 1925-1927. Nana Ofori Atta I, the Okyenhene, was a member of the Legislative Council from 1916 to 1943.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ See Kofi Frimpong, The Joint Provincial Council of Paramount Chiefs and the Politics of Independence, 1946-58, in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol.14, No. 10, pp.79-91, 1973.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid.

educated elite that the Chiefs were agents of the colonial government who worked in the interest of the colonial government to the detriment of the interest of their communities. Kobina Sekyi, one of the Gold Coast intelligentsia and a member of the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS), is alleged to have ridiculed the Chiefs in the following words: “Our natural rulers are dancing to the Whiteman’s fiddle, earning allowances by attending meetings of statutory bodies while the Gold Coast was being ruined”.²⁴³ The consequence was rampant destoolment of chiefs in the Gold Coast. Kimble provides a brief statistics of the destoolment in the Gold Coast between 1900 and 1924:

1904-1908- 7

1909-1913- 23

1914-1918 – 38

1919-1924 -41²⁴⁴

Besides, there was a growing tendency among sub-chiefs to break off their allegiance to their paramount chiefs. The situation became so prevalent that Nene Sir Emmanuel Mate Korle made a complaint about it at the Legislative Council. Nene Mate Korle is on record to have lamented that:

The position of the natural rulers is becoming a shadow...in the days of our fathers and fore-fathers it was not customary for any sub-chief or any subject to refuse summons of his Paramount Chiefs...These days the Paramount Chief’s power is threatened by evil minded persons...²⁴⁵

²⁴³ See David Kimble, A Political History of Ghana, 1850-1928

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ See the Legislative Council Debates, 1925, p.129

The Native Administration Ordinance and the issues surrounding its introduction appear to have strongly motivated the 1925 reorganization by the Omanhene of Twifo. In the 1920s, the records show that Mokwa chiefs had shown some element of insubordination to the Omanhene, which led to destoolment of some Mokwa chiefs.²⁴⁶ In 1923 Chief Kojo Afarko was destooled as the Mokwaahene and the reasons for the destoolment, among others was his insubordination to the Omanhene.²⁴⁷ This insubordination continued from the 1920s until the declaration of Mokwa independence in the 1980s.²⁴⁸ The statement of Nene Mate Korle, generally summarizes the feelings of paramount chiefs at the time.

The policies of the Colonial Government in the period, generally, led to some weird developments in the chieftaincy institution. The chiefs in the colony remained increasingly anxious about their relationship with the colonial government, on one hand, and their subjects, on the other. Many chiefs also made efforts to consolidate their authority and one of the means was through the reorganization of sub-chiefs in their jurisdiction. Beyond that, the 1925 Constitution sought to make chiefs less vulnerable to the machinations of the young men and the educated elite and strengthen the authority of the chiefs through the establishment of Provincial Councils and later the Joint Provincial

²⁴⁶ ADM/23/1/662. Mokwa State Affairs (MSA). No. 1137/23/M.29/1921- correspondence between the Twifo and the District Commissioners Office, 16th Novemeber, 1923.

²⁴⁷ Ibid. on several occasions the Mokwahene attempted to deals directly with the Governor without the Omanhene. On each occasion the Governor refused to deal with him directly.

²⁴⁸ Other Mokwa chiefs who were destooled included Nana Kwesi Kenin and Nana Saiko.

Council.²⁴⁹ The Provincial Councils, according to Guggisberg, were to discharge “functions that may be allotted to them by legislation”,²⁵⁰ apart from giving Paramount Chiefs the opportunity of advising government on any proposed legislation affecting the people, and the qualification to be a member of the Provincial Council was to be a Paramount Chief.²⁵¹

Nana Appiah Nuamah I, the Twifo Omanhene, sought to strengthen his position as a Paramount Chief by not only reconstituting the sub-chiefs but also creating other division as pertained in the Akan traditional political structure. However, this reorganization marked the beginning of confusion, disharmony, instability and a break-up of the union which had been formed in the 1830s under Nana Owusu Koko I. The immediate consequence of the reorganization was the secession of Hemang and Mokwaa and the subsequent elevation of the two states to the status of paramountcy.

Secession of Hemang

The Kyidom Division plays a very important role in the Akan traditional political setting. The typical Akan traditional battle formation consisted of the *Adonten* (main body), *Kyidom* (rear guard), *Twafu* (vanguard or advance party), *Nifa* (right) and *Benkum* (left) wings. Each village or town and in Asante, *Oman*

²⁴⁹ See Emmanuel Akyeampong, “Chiefs and Socio-Political Change in the Gold Coast, 1919-1934” in Irene Odotei & K. Awodoba (eds.) *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006, pp.309-324. The Provincial Councils combined into the Joint Provincial Council and it was considered the second most important body after the Legislative Council.

²⁵⁰ See Sir Andrew Jones, ‘Provincial Commissioner in the Gold Coast Civil Service, 1913-1933’, quoted in Martin Wight, *The Gold Coast Legislative Council*, London: Faber & Faber, 1946, p.46

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

(component state) was assigned a place in one of the wings and each wing was placed under a divisional or wing commander.²⁵²

The term *Kyidom* is composed of two word: *kyi* (condensed from *akyi* back and *dom*-contingent). “*Kyidomfo*”, provided the rear support or covered the *Adonten* from behind. In a royal procession, their position was the very rear of the *Omanhene* and in Council seating arrangement, they sat on the left of the *Omanhene*, farther from the *Adontenhene*, who sat on the nearer left, the *Ohemaa*, queenmother, being the nearest to the *Omanhene*. A reflection of the strategic position of the *Kyidom* position in the Asante setup shows that the *Akyempemhene*, the *Asantehene*’s son belongs to the *Kyidom* division. The position of *Akyempemhene* has always been held by a very close relative of the *Asantehene* or any *Omanhene*.²⁵³

Apart from a son of the *Omanhene*, the position may also be given to his grandson or brother’s son, and the main duty of the *Akyempem* chief in the *Kyidom* division was to protect the rear of the chief. The *Asantehene*, as the Commander-in-chief of the Asante army, had to be very securely protected and it was believed that a son or grandson would be more faithful than any distant relative in executing the protection of his father or grandfather.²⁵⁴ As hinted earlier, the position of *Kyidom* in the Akan political set-up signifies the vital role of the *Kyidom* military division in the olden days when warfare was a common feature of inter-state

²⁵² Interview with Opanin Osei kwadwo, 78yrs, Former Curator of Manhyia Museum, Kumasi, 20th

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid. The Twifo set-up is virtually a replica of the Asante set-up.

relations.²⁵⁵ Thus, for the Twifohehene to make Hemang his Kyidom division signifies the relations between the Omanhene and the chief of Hemang as well as the profundity of the faith and trust he had in the Hemang. It must be reiterated that the land on which Mampong, the seat of the Twifo Omanhene, was founded was provided by Hemang. Hemang, therefore, must have been very dear to the Twifohehene which may have motivated him to confer on the chief of Hemang such a position of trust as the Kyidomhene.

However, for Hemang, that reorganization exercise simply implied an attempt to annex Hemang and make Hemang subservient to the Twifohehene. In other words, Hemang saw the reorganization as an attempt to take away the independence they claim to have enjoyed from time immemorial.²⁵⁶ Hemang was not entirely wrong in this perception. The non-inclusion of Hemang in the Divisional Chiefs of the Twifo Traditional area prior to 1925 could be a valid proof of Hemang's independence.²⁵⁷

Nonetheless, the 1925 reorganization brought the issue of the real status of Hemang within the Twifo Traditional Area to the fore. Nana Kobina Otu II, the chief of Hemang vehemently protested this move by the Twifohehene and in furtherance of it, he petitioned the District Commissioner for the Central Province in Cape Coast on 11th August, 1926 for the declaration of Hemang's independence and also asked for Hemang to be accorded a paramount status.²⁵⁸ The issue was

²⁵⁵ Interview with Opanin Osei Kwadwo.

²⁵⁶ See ADM 23/1/662. Case No. 972/26/M.29/1921. Titled: Hemang's Claim to Independence, dated 11th August, 1926. The District Commissioner then was J.R. Dukinson.

²⁵⁷ ADM 23/1/662

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

subsequently referred to the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs at Abura Dunkwa for arbitration and proceedings began on 15th November, 1926. Below is the membership of the Council that sat on the issue:

Nana Otu Ababio II	-	Omanhene of Abura – President
Nana Essandoh III	-	Omanhene of Nkusukum
Nana Aduku III	-	Omanhene of Mankessim
Nana Nkyi Ababio	-	Omanhene of Assin Apimanim
Nana Okwan III	-	Ohene Anyan Maim
Nana Idan Edu	-	Ohene of Kwaman
Nana Abutakyi II	-	Omanhene Eguafu
Nana Amanfi III	-	Omanhene of Asebu
Nana Ansa Fua	-	Omanhene of Gomoa Ejumako

Representing the Omanhene of Akyem Bosome and Akyem Kotoku were Chief Kobina Essubonteng and Elder Kofi Adom respectively.²⁵⁹

Hemang's statement of claim was simple that Hemang had been independent from time immemorial and that the Twifo came to meet Hemang and it was Hemang that provided the Twifo immigrants a place to settle. In the view of Hemang, therefore, the Twifohene did not have any right to make the Hemanghene a sub-chief of the Twifohene. However, the defense of the Twifohene was quite revealing. According to the Twifohene, Hemang came under the Twifo as a result of the indebtedness of Hemang; "My ancestor Offi paid your ancestor Atta Amuah's debt of thirty seven Penguans plus Essuanu (300 pounds)

²⁵⁹ See Report of the Enquiry on the claim of Hemang for independence from Twifo, by the Provincial Council of Chiefs of the Central Province, 1926.

hence your stool became a subordinate to me”²⁶⁰ Thus, the Hemang owed Twifo an amount of 337 pounds. This claim was corroborated by the Mokwaahene who appeared before the Council as a witness.²⁶¹ This claim was strongly disputed by Hemang. Notwithstanding, the judgment of the Council was in favour of Hemang. Not only was Hemang declared independent of Twifo but she was also accorded a paramount status.²⁶²

Following the secession of Hemang from the Twifo traditional area, the Kyidom division was given to Kayeraku. In 1956, the Twifo Omanhene made what appears to be another reorganization by taking the Adonten division from Anyinase to Buabeng and Anyinase was made the Krontihene of the Twifo Traditional Area.²⁶³ It is not clear from the tradition what occasioned this new reorganization.

Mokwaa’s Quest for Independence

Mokwaa appeared to be the most affected state in the 1925 reorganization when her status in the Twifo paramountcy was changed from the position of Abosompediehene to Benkumhene. As indicated earlier, the Abosompediehene was a senior Divisional Chief and in the structure of the Twifo Traditional set-up it was ranked next to the Omanhene. That position was given to a family or state based on their unique status within a paramountcy. According to Mokwaa

²⁶⁰ Ibid. p.4. According to the Twifohene the loan was given to the Hemanghene in the presence of his brother Ewul and his son Kobina Otu.

²⁶¹ Ibid.,

²⁶² Ibid, pp.34-35

²⁶³ ADM/23/1/455. Twifo State Affairs, PRAAD, Cape Coast.

tradition, the position of Abosompediehene was conferred on them because they were the landlord of the Twifo.

In the Twifo Traditional set-up, the Abosompediehene, among other functions, poured libation at all customary rituals to invoke the gods and ancestral spirits, since it was believed that he was the one whose voice the gods and spirits heard.²⁶⁴ In modern terms, the Abosompediehene may be equivalent to the Chief Priest. Apart from that, he was in charge of all land cases, acquisition of concessions and matters of delicate historical issues were always referred to him.²⁶⁵

On the other hand, in the Akan traditional political structure, the Nifahene and Benkumhene represent the right and left wings of the traditional military organization. The Nifahene administers the right quarters of the traditional area on behalf of the Omanhene. He is also the Chief in charge of the right wing of the army. In the same manner, the Benkumhene administers the left quarters of the traditional area on behalf of the Omanhene and is also responsible for the left wing of the army.²⁶⁶ This implies that the Nifahene and Benkumhene were called to duty only in times of war and they were important in the era when there were frequent tribal and inter-state wars. In some societies, sub-chiefs who head the two wings functioned at the behest of the Omanhene.²⁶⁷ It is obvious that the

²⁶⁴ Interview with Opanin Boafo Agyei.

²⁶⁵ Opanin Kwame Nkrumah, 85yrs, member of the Mokwaa Traditional Council, 24th July, 2015, Praso.

²⁶⁶ See Awuah Nyamekye, *Managing the Environmental Crisis in Ghana: The Role of African Traditional Religion and Culture with special Reference to the Berekum Traditional Area*. Newcastle: Cambridge scholars Publishing, 2014, p.34

²⁶⁷ Interview with Nana Kwasi Gyan, Gyaasehene of Asante Mampong, at his residence at Mampong, 20th May, 2016.

position of Abosompediehene was above that of the Benkumhene in the Twifo Traditional set-up. The sources do not provide the exact reasons why the Twifo Omanhene removed Mokwaa from Abosompediehene to Benkumhene. However, it may not be wrong to suggest that the Twifohene wanted to secure his authority as the Paramount Chief. Why should he equip the Mokwaahene who saw himself as landlord with more power by conferring on him that powerful position to better equip him to challenge his authority? It should not be a surprise that in the 1925 reorganization, that position of Abosompediehene seemed to have been abolished as no state was conferred with that status.²⁶⁸

Expectedly, Mokwaa, under their Chief, Kojo Affarku, strongly protested his new status within the Twifo Traditional set-up and asked for a reconfirmation on them the position of Abosompediehene.²⁶⁹ The assertion of Nana Kenin III at the hearing of the Central Region House of Chiefs (CRHC) on the Twifo – Mokwaa issue on the reorganization was very revealing:

My ancestors never as from 1925 accepted this new post. My ancestor who was then on the stool was Nana Kwadwo Afako. He so hated to hear of this new status of Mokwaa to such an extent that even when he was rightly counselled to document his well-known independence, he furiously rejected the suggestion and said he had never and would never be under anybody, therefore, documentation of Mokwaa's independence was out of place.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ ADM 23/1/3856. Twifu State Affairs.

²⁶⁹ See ADM/23/1/662. Mokwa State Affairs, PRAAD, Cape Coast. N.B. Chief Kojo Affarku was destool later as the Mokwaahene.

²⁷⁰ See Statement of Claim of Petitioner in the Central Region House of Chiefs Committee of Enquiry into Twifo- Mokwaa dispute, 2nd May, 1980. Petitioner in this case was Mokwaahene and Twifohene was the respondent

Clearly, Mokwaa, led by their chief, objected to this 1925 reorganization and the new position conferred on Mokwaa. They saw their new status as a demotion and a show of disrespect on the part of the Twifohehene.²⁷¹ More importantly, Mokwaa saw the 1925 reorganization as an attempt to subvert the independence of Mokwaa.²⁷² This notwithstanding, the Twifohehene on his part strongly rejected Mokwaa claim for a reversal of their status from Benkumhene to Abosompediehehene. This was the beginning of the strained relations between the Twifo and Mokwaa.

Chief Affarko's protest against Mokwaa's loss of the Abosompedie position and the rejection of the position of Benkumhene, however, was short-lived due to the sudden demise of the Chief, Affarko, in 1926. His death, however, did not bring an end to controversy but appear to have worsened the situation. This arose out of the Mokwaa's suspicion of the Twifohehene's complicity in the death of Chief Affarko. At the hearing of the Twifo-Mokwaa dispute at the CRHC in 1980, Nana Kenin III re-echoed this suspicion:

The status of Mokwaa was changed in 1925, and while my predecessor was warring over the issue with the then Twifohehene, my ancestor was killed by means of juju. When he died Nana Kobena Sarko ascended our stool between 1926 and 1927 and refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the Twifu paramount stool which action sparked off a big trouble.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Per the account of Mokwaa, there are the land owners in the Twifo Traditional Area and the Twifo were immigrants.

²⁷³ See Hearing of the Central region House of Chiefs into the Twifo – Mokwaa dispute, 1980.

This allegation by Mokwaa was not substantiated and it remained a matter of spirituality, which, to a large extent, involves alleged immaterial reality. The issue further sowed seeds of mistrust between the two states which was evident in the reign of Chief Affarko's successor.

Chief Kwabena Sarko's Renewal of Mokwaa Protest

Chief Affarko was succeeded by Nana Kwabena Sarko when he was selected over one Kofi Oppong in May 1927.²⁷⁴ Tradition has it that the Omanhene was in support of the candidature of Kwabena Sarko and so upon his enstoolment, the Omanhene expected the relations between the two states to return to normality but the turnout of events showed the opposite. In August 1927, the Omanhene requested the new Mokwaahene to come to Mampong to swear an oath of allegiance, as required by Native Custom. This would have confirmed the subservience of the Mokwaahene to the Omanhene of Twifo. However, the response of the Kwabena Sarko appeared shrewd and a bit mischievous. He is on record to have messaged the Twifohene that:

All my people are away living and working on their farms and as soon as they return back I would gather my Chiefs and Elders together and proceed to Mampong and swear the oath of allegiance.²⁷⁵

Twifo traditions indicate that the Mokwaahene did not abide by this; perhaps, on the lighter side, his people never returned from their farms. This was a surprise for

²⁷⁴ See ADM 23/1/3228. Twifo State Affairs (Mokwaa Affairs) see also ADM 23/1/3856. Twifo State Affairs

²⁷⁵ See hearing of the Provincial Council of Chiefs, Central Province, on the *Political Differences between Chief kobina Sarko of Mokwaa and Nana Appiah Nuamah, Omanhene of Twifo*, 18th February, 1930. PRAAD, Cape Coast.

it was obvious from his message to the Omanhene that he was being evasive. That incident, however, marked the resumption of the Twifo-Mokwaa problems.

In September 1927, the secretary for the District Commissioner (DC) wrote to the Omanhene requesting him to get the Mokwaahene to apply through him (Omanhene) for the confirmation of his (Mokwaahene) election by the Governor. According to the Secretary, Bannerman Martin, the Mokwaahene was asked to submit his application only through the Omanhene.²⁷⁶ However, the Mokwaahene ignored all the directives from District Commissioner's office and submitted his application directly to the DC's office without passing it through the Omanhene. But in a swift reaction, the application was returned to the Mokwaa, with a caution that no application without the agency of the Omanhene will be tolerated.²⁷⁷

Clearly, the DC's action showed that they considered Mokwaa to be subservient to the Twifo Omanhene and they wanted it to remain as such. One must, however, not lose sight of the fact that the issue of government confirmation before recognition itself was one of the ways the colonial government used to control chiefs. Thus chiefs who openly defied the authority of the colonial government, often referred to as "uncooperative chiefs" lost recognition of the Government. Perhaps, the current practice whereby chiefs have to be gazetted is an offshoot of that alien practice.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ See No. 21/28/T.S.2/22. District Commissioner's Office, Central Province.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Augustine Osei "Incarceration of Chiefs: A Colonial and Postcolonial Tool for the Destruction of the Sanctity of the Chieftaincy Institution?" in *Abibisen Journal*, Vol.14, 2013

These were undoubtedly interesting times in the history of the Twifo and Mokwaa. After some weeks, the Mokwaahene resent his application to the Omanhene for his recommendation and forwarding to the DC. But that was an opportunity for the Omanhene to also flex his muscles over the Mokwaahene in what appeared to be an attempt to teach him where power lay. The Omanhene refused to forward the Mokwaahene's application until he came first to Mampong to swear allegiance to the Omanhene's stool.²⁷⁹ This infuriated the Mokwaahene and in sharp response, he wrote a letter to the Omanhene in what seemed to have marked the final showdown between the two Chiefs. In that letter dated 17th October, 1927, the Mokwaahene stated; "that the majority of the Oman of Mokwaa claim their independence and henceforth there is no more friendship between us"²⁸⁰; this was the last straw that broke the camel's back. In furtherance of this, on 28th November, 1927 when the Mokwaahene was expected to accompany the Omanhene to meet the Colonial Governor at Hemang, the Mokwaahene refused. Instead, he indicated his readiness to go and meet the Governor as an independent Chief.

Hence, immediately after the meeting between the Omanhene and the Governor, the Mokwaahene also requested a meeting with the Governor. The Mokwaahene was refused the opportunity to meet the Governor as an independent chief with the caution that he could only meet the Governor in the company of the Omanhene.²⁸¹

²⁷⁹ No. 21/28/T.s.2/22. Letter from the District Commissioner's Office.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

Following the failed attempts by the Mokwaahene to get recognition from the District Commissioner and Colonial Governor as an independent Chief, he proceeded with a formal petition to the District Commissioner for the Central Province in January 1928 for the declaration of the independence of Mokwaa from the Twifo.²⁸²

The Mokwaahene's grounds for independence in his petition were almost the same as those put forward by Hemang in their claim for independence. The Mokwaahene indicated that Mokwaa had been independent before and after the arrival of the Twifo immigrants from Asante but the Omanhene had shown a tendency to make Mokwaa subservient to the Twifo through a reorganization in 1925 where Mokwaa was removed from the position of Abosompédiehene to Benkumhene. He, therefore, prayed the DC to declare Mokwaa independent of the Twifo. The DC, subsequently, forwarded the petition to the Provincial Council of Chiefs for their advice as pertained in section 115 and 116 of the Native Administration Ordinance.²⁸³

The response of the D C was swift and decisive. The DC shot down the petition and reiterated that there was no justification in the claim of the Mokwaahene. Below is an excerpt from the judgment of the DC:

All things considered, I am of the opinion that the Ohene's claim to independence is rather a weak and belated one, and personally doubt if he would have ever attempted to put forth this claim only that he was encouraged by the success which attended the Omanhene of

²⁸² Letter from the District Commissioner's Office, Central Province, Cape Coast, 11th January, 1928. NO. 21/28/T.S.2/22. Titled: Ohene of Mokwaa – Claim to Independence of Twifo.

²⁸³ Section 115 and 116 demanded that the DC reported such matters to the provincial Council for their advice.

Hemang's claim to independence. He appears to have taken the attitude that his rights are equally if not greater than Hemang's, his subjects ever so more numerous, and his possessions in land by far and away greater, that they are both of the same tribe and occupied similar positions as Ohene to the Twifo Stool, so if Hemang has been granted his independence, why shouldn't my claim, which is very much on a par with Hemang's, also be granted.²⁸⁴

From the ruling of the DC, it appears the Colonial Government was convinced that Mokwaa was subservient to the Twifo Stool, according to their knowledge of the historical relations between the states. In 1922, the Governor instructed every Assistant District commissioner to write essays on tribal histories and customs of all states in their jurisdiction. By 1923, much had been done on the Central Province and it was being extended to the Eastern Province.²⁸⁵ Perhaps, that project may have exposed to the Colonial Government more information about the relations between the Twifo and Mokwaa; thus, it is possible the decision of the DC was based on the revelations from the project in the Central Province. It must be noted, however, that in the judgment, the DC did not substantiate his assertion. Perhaps, the DC was very much sympathetic to the position of the Omanhene rather than tradition and custom. In his ruling, he indicated that:

My sympathy is very much with the Omanhene who cannot help but feel his position. His division is by no means a large one and loss of Hemang has been a serious blow to him in more ways than one. The deflection of another Ohene such as Mokwa would be the last straw and would leave him with only one to carry on. As an Omanhene this is bound to result in the lowering of his prestige, authority and power, all of which he has lately had some difficulty in retaining. I am not sure whether the Ohene's claim is one that can be considered

²⁸⁴ Letter from the District Commissioner's Office (DCO), Central Province, Cape Coast, 11th January, 1928. NO. 21/28/T.S.2/22. Titled: Ohene of Mokwaa – Claim to Independence of Twifo.

²⁸⁵ See AD 23/1/662. NO.336/S.N.A.9/1923. From Colonial Secretary's Office, on Essays on Tribal History.

by Government, seeing that the confirmation of his election has not been recommended by the Omanhene or confirmed by His Excellency the Governor.²⁸⁶

The action of the Colonial Government shattered Mokwaa's ambition of seceding from the Twifo to become independent and perhaps aim for a paramount status. However, it did not resolve in anyway the strained relations between the two states as it could not stop Mokwaa from yearning and scheming for her independence. At some points, the Mokwaahene, Chief Sarko engaged in acts that despised the Omanhene. For instance, at an Empire day celebration in 1930, the Mokwaahene was asked to remove his headgear in order to great the Omanhene; the Mokwaahene refused and is alleged to have said, "since we are all equal, I do not see any reason why I should do that"²⁸⁷.

Between the years 1925 and the 1980s, the relations between the Twifo and Mokwaa was marked by mistrust, suspicion, land and boundry disputes and Mokwaa looking for the slightest opportunity to get her independence. In 1952, the successor of Kwabena Sarko, Nana Kenin II, submitted another petition to the DC in Dunkwa for the independence of Mokwaa.²⁸⁸ On this occasion, the DC refused to take any action and even did not acknowledge receipt of the petition. Mokwaa efforts at gaining independence failed to see the light of day under the Colonial Regime. The Colonial Government appeared consistent on its stand on the historical relations between the Twifo and Mokwaa and it also held onto its

²⁸⁶ NO. 21/28/T.S.2/22. , Decision of the DC, Central Province on the issue between Chief Kobina sarko and Nana Appiah Nuamah, 11th January, 1928.

²⁸⁷ See Nana Kenin III Statement of Claim at the Hearing of the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs into the Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1980. See Report of the Committee, p.8

²⁸⁸ Ibid. Nana Kenin II was also known as Nana Kwadwo Afako.

perception that granting Mokwaa a paramount status would have dire consequence for the unity and development in the Twifo Traditional Area.

Mokwaa's Final Petition & Independence

Mokwaa's incessant quest for independence from Twifo was carried into the post-colonial era. In 1964, Nana Kenin II petitioned the Government of the First Republic led by Kwame Nkrumah.²⁸⁹ Unfortunately for Mokwaa, however, they did not appear to be in the good books of the Nkrumah Government and so that petition did not receive the attention of the government. It must be indicated that the nature of the independence struggle and certain events that characterized the struggle led to the Nkrumah Government also portraying a hostile attitude towards some chiefs, especially those who openly supported the opposition United Party (UP). This attitude of the Government was confirmed by the obviously threatening statement Nkrumah reportedly made in the *Evening News*, of which he was, himself the publisher, that; *Those of our chiefs who are with us... we do honour ... those... who join forces with the imperialists... there shall come a time when they will run away fast and leave their sandal behind them.*²⁹⁰ According Mokwaa traditions, the Mokwaahene was one of the chiefs who supported the opposition party and many of such chiefs did not find favour with the government.²⁹¹ As if by coincidence or telepathy, the same year that the Mokwaahene petitioned the Government for independence, destoolment charges were brought up against him by some Mokwaa

²⁸⁹ ADM 23/1/662

²⁹⁰ See editorial of the *Evening News* of 5th January, 1950

²⁹¹ Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana, 1951-1960*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000, pp. 112-116. Nana Ofori Atta II, the Okyenhene and Baffour Akoto were victims of destoolment attempts.

youth. The youth petitioned the Twifo Traditional Authority and the Central Region House of Chiefs for the destoolment of Nana Kenin II.²⁹² The effect was that the Mokwaahene who petitioned the Government for his independence was himself under destoolment charges and so his petition seems to have been shelved as there was no official government response to the petition. Mokwaa's second and perhaps, most desperate attempt at independence occurred under the Gen. Acheampong's regime and it was masterminded by Nana Kenin III, who succeeded Nana Kenin II in 1970.²⁹³

The National Redemption Council (NRC) administration in 1972 created the position of a Commissioner Responsible for Chieftaincy Affairs, to deal with issues happening within the Chieftaincy institution. The then Mokwaahene, Nana Kenin III saw in this an opportunity to deal with the Twifo-Mokwaa issues. The Mokwaa submitted a fresh and stronger petition for the independence of Mokwaa to the Chairman of the NRC, Gen. Acheampong, through the Commissioner for Chieftaincy Affairs.²⁹⁴ In the new petition, the Mokwaa provided about 35 strong arguments, ranging from the historical relations between the Twifo and Mokwaa, natural resources on Mokwaa land, the population of Mokwaa etc. in what appears to be a more determined effort for the case of Mokwaa to be considered. The conclusion of the petition summarizes the aims and expectations of the Mokwaahene: (see appendix for the full petition).

²⁹² See ADM 23/1/662. Mokwaa Native Affairs (Twifo State)

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ See Mokwaahene's Petition submitted on his behalf by his solicitor (Sgd) K. Ofosu-Asante (Akyem Chambers), 12th February, 1974.

That Your humble Petitioner, his elders, Councilors and subjects feel that they are more than competent to manage their own affairs independent of the Mamponghe, and there is adequate revenue to pay the said Wing chiefs, clerical staff and all without much ado...That in view of the reasons provided, your Humble petitioner respectfully prays that it may please His Excellency the Gallant Chairman of the National Redemption Council and the Government to recognize the Mokwaa Division as a separate constitutional unit in the country, to wit: that your Humble Petitioner be recognized as the Omanhene of the Mokwaa Traditional Area.²⁹⁵

So passionate was the Mokwaahene in his quest for independence. In a thirty-five points petition, Mokwaa, made very strong arguments for the declaration of the independence of Mokwaa. The thirty-second point appears to be a rehash of Kwame Nkrumah's epoch-making statement that the 'Black man is capable of managing his own affairs'. The Mokwaahene asserted in that part of the petition that:

That Your Humble Petitioner, his Elders, Councilors and Subjects feel that they are more than competent to manage their own affairs independent of the Mamponghe, and there is adequate revenue to pay the said Wing Chiefs, clerical staff and all without much ado.²⁹⁶

It is clear from the petition that for the Mokwaahene, the independence of Mokwaa from the Twifo was non-negotiable and they felt they were adequately prepared for it. Fortunately for them, the petition caught the attention of the NRC Government and a committee was appointed by the Government through the Central Region House of Chiefs to look into Mokwaa Stool Affairs. The Committee was made up of the following:

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

Nana Kwame Nkyi XII - Chairman
Nana Kodwo Mbra V - Member
Nana Wyetey Agyemang - Member
S.S. Saarkwah - Secretary²⁹⁷

The Committee was charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Investigating the historic relationship between the Mokwaa Stool and that of Twifo.
2. Whether the land on which Twifo is lying and situated actually belongs to Mokwaa.
3. If so, what is the Mokwaahene's roll and position in the present Twifo Traditional Area set-up?
4. In terms of these findings, is it advisable to grant Mokwaa a separate Traditional status, taking into consideration the geographical position of it, population and other factors, e.g. financial resources etc.
5. Any other matters which, in the opinion of the Committee, is worth looking into as far as the petition is concerned.²⁹⁸

The Committee had its inaugural sitting on 21st February, 1978 and sat for almost two years with its final report submitted in 1980.

From the petition and the terms of reference of the Committee, it was clear that the issue was not only about the change of Mokwaa's status and the historical relations between the two but more important issue concerning land ownership.

²⁹⁷ See Report of the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs into Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1980. PRAAD, Cape Coast.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

Land disputes between the two states began in the 1930s and it was an offshoot of the 1925 disagreement which could not be satisfactorily resolved by the District Commissioner. The Mokwaahene began to lay claims to most lands in the Twifo Traditional Area in what seemed to be an attempt to show the Omanhene that they (Mokwaa) were the landlords.²⁹⁹ Under the reign of Nana Kenin II as Mokwaahene, the Omanhene attempted to move his traditional headquarters from Mampong to Praso in what appears to be an attempt to express his authority and rights over every land in his jurisdiction as the Omanhene. But this was also strongly resisted by the Mokwaahene and the Omanhene was made to retain his seat at Mampong. Further, in 1977, the Omanhene intended to hold his festival at Praso and this was also strongly resisted by the Mokwaahene to the extent that it almost degenerated into violence.³⁰⁰

The distress of the Mokwaahene over land was clear in his evidence in-chief at the sittings of the CRHC on the Mokwaa Stool Land Affairs:

Nananom, about 2/3 of land in the Twifo Traditional Area are Mokwaa lands. Nananom, I must emphasize that all Twifo lands described so far are in fact Mokwaa lands. Accordingly, any reference to Twifo lands is, in effect, about Mokwaa lands.³⁰¹

In his response, the Omanhene sought to dispute the claims made by the Mokwaahene. Aspects of the Twifohene's response were very consistent with the historical relationship between the Twifo and Mokwaa which has been established earlier in the work. According to the Twifohene:

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³⁰⁰ Sitting of the CRHC on Mokwaa Stool Land issues.

³⁰¹ See evidence in-chief of the Mokwaahene,

The Mokwaas are very few in number and most of their own lands are all occupied by the populous Twifo. They are regarded as natural sons of the Twifos and are therefore indivisible part of the Traditional Area. Unlike the Hemangs who have a distinct history, culture and People, the Mokwaas are floating within the mercy and protection of the Twifos.³⁰²

After sitting for almost two years, the committee upheld Mokwaa's petition for independence. However, the Committee rejected Mokwaa claim of been 'Eti' or 'Ati'. The Committee was convinced that even though customarily Mokwaa was under the Twifo Paramount Chief, they do have and observed their own taboos and customs. They also have their own customary laws and usages in their own right. The Committee also agreed with Mokwaa on their status within the Twifo Traditional Area. It found as unacceptable the change of Mokwaa's status from Abosompiedehene to Benkumhene and wished that the status quo prior to 1925 was restored. But the Committee felt that the relations between the two states had gone beyond reconciliation and that the only way to restore peace was to give Mokwaa a separate traditional area.

Throughout our sittings we easily detected that there can be no reconciliation between the two sides, and that the only solution to the problem is to restore Mokwaa to her traditional hereditary independence prior to the arrival of the Twifus to this part of the country by elevating the Mokwaa Division to paramountcy status and creating that Division a separate traditional independent of the present Twifu traditional Area, for we feel this will result in perpetual peace and progress plus stability in the area, as this will enhance development...We, therefore, finally say that Mokwaa circumspectedly (sic) is more than ripe for elevation to the status of paramountcy and we so recommend.³⁰³

³⁰² See Report of the Committee of Enquiry of the CRHC into the Mokwaa Stool Affairs, 1980. PRAAD, Cape Coast.

³⁰³ Ibid.

Some of the decisions of the Committee were unclear as they did not sufficiently explain how Mokwaa was independent and still customarily under the authority of the Twifo Omanhene. From the tradition of Mokwaa, it is clear that they traded their independence for Twifo military defence and protection. Possibly, Mokwaa insubordination to the Twifo Omanhene could have been motivated by the power and privileges that the Native Administrative Ordinances conferred on paramount chiefs. In addition, European quest and demand for natural resources may have led to the attempt by some sub-chiefs to assert their authority in order to lay claim to lands that possessed some vital resources. A classic example was the conflict between Nana Ofori Atta I of Akyem Abuakwa and Kwaku Amoah of Asamankese from the 1920s to about 1938.³⁰⁴ The major source of that conflict was the controversy over the diamond concessions in Akwatia. Asamankese under Kwaku Amoah began attempts to break away from Akyem Abuakwa following the dispute over the mining concessions in Akwatia.³⁰⁵ In the case of Twifo, the Omanhene did not violate any custom by creating divisions and reorganizing the divisions from time to time.

The granting of independence of Mokwaa by the CRHC was to ensure peace between the Twifo and Mokwaa and a general peace in the area. However, that is yet to happen as there still exist unfriendly relations between the two states.³⁰⁶ There is also dispute over land in many parts of the area. The Committee could not

³⁰⁴ See Emmanuel Ababio Ofori-Mensah, "Mining and Conflict in the Akyem Abuakwa Kingdom in the Eastern Region of Ghana, 1919-1938", in (The Extractive Industries and Society). 2015, pp.480-483. www.elsevier.com.

³⁰⁵ Ibid. The Asamankese crisis was also recorded by Addo Fening and Kofi Affrifa.

³⁰⁶ Interview with Nana Gyamera Akoto, Chief of Ntafrewaso

indicate the boundaries between the two states. Apart from Twifo Praso, there are many other areas where there are serious litigation between the two states. For instance, there is controversy over the land on which Twifo states of Ntrafrewaso, Moseaso, Tofoi, Abodom, Anyinase and many more were founded, as Mokwaa continue to claim ownership of those lands.

One can conclude that by the 1980 decision of the CRHC, the Twifo State no longer includes Hemang and Mokwaa. The two states are now paramountcies on their own. The Twifo State now comprises of the states from Mampong to Praso and some other towns beyond the Pra River.

It must also be established that among the states that formed the Twifo State in the 1830s, it is only Hemanso (Anyinabi) that is still part of the Twifo State and it is the head of the Nifa Division. It is also curious to note that Hemanso was the only host state that did not protest the 1925 reorganization. The Chief of Hemanso is still the Nifahene of the Twifo Omanhene. However, the traditions of origin of Hemanso provide a possible reason. Unlike Hemang and Mokwaa, Hemanso do not claim to be 'Eti'. According to Hemanso oral traditions, their ancestors immigrated from Asante Bodwase near Kokofu to settle in that part of Central region.³⁰⁷ Although the traditions do not provide the exact period of their immigration to the area, they are certain that they settled in the area much earlier than the Twifo.³⁰⁸ It is, therefore, possible that Hemanso felt more comfortable living under the Twifo because they trace their root to the same source. Further, Hemanso was almost

³⁰⁷ Interview with Opanin Kwame Oppong, Abusuapanin of Hemanso ruling family, at his family house, 22nd August, 2015. There is still land disputes between Hemanso and Wassa

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

deserted and ruined due to conflicts with Wassa over land. The stool of Hemanso was allegedly captured by Wassa and kept in Wassa Brofoyedru for many years. Hemanso, living under the Twifo, therefore, must have been for reasons of protection and defense.

CHAPTER FIVE

TWIFO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The arrival of the Twifo migrants led to an economic transformation of the Pra basin. This transformation was derived mainly from agriculture and trade. The Twifo migrants immediately, upon their settlement, took advantage of the vast fertile lands around the Pra River to pursue vigorous agricultural activities. Beginning with crop farming with the cultivation of maize, yam, plantain, cassava, and many others, by the 20th century, the production of cash crops such as cocoa and oil palm was well underway in the Twifo area. These agricultural products, in addition to the other mineral products from the Twifo, turned Twifo Praso into one big market which attracted both Europeans and local traders to the area. Agricultural activities allowed the immigrant Twifo to spread far and wide around the Pra River. One can strongly contend that the agricultural pursuits of the Twifo was the main reason for the Twifo occupation of much more lands in the area than the host states; Hemang and Mokwa. By the close of the 19th century, the Twifo area had virtually become the bread basket for the Central region whilst the Twifo Praso market became a major trading center for traders from the Central, Asante and Western regions of Ghana.

This chapter examines the Twifo economic activities around the Pra and how they impacted on the Pra basin, the Central region and the country as a whole. It also examines how the Twifo economic activities contributed to their domination of the Pra basin. But first, one must sketch the basis for this economic revolution.

The sociologist Max Weber emphasized economic basis of state formation and political expansion when he wrote that:

One might be inclined to believe that the formation as well as the expansion of Great Power Structures is always and primarily determined economically. The assumption that trade, especially if it is intensive, and if it already exists in an area, is the normal prerequisite and the reason for its political unification might be readily generalized. In individual cases this assumption does actually hold.³⁰⁹

The Twifo military prowess may have aided their subjugation of the host states upon their arrival; however, their dominance in the subsequent years was spurred by their economic activities in the area. To some extent, it was also in the economic sense that the Twifo became prominent in the Central region and Gold Coast from the 19th to the 20th centuries.

Geographical and climatic factors played a crucial role in the Twifo economic pursuits. The Twifo terrain falls within the semi equatorial climatic zone which is marked by double maximal rainfall with a total annual mean rainfall between 1,200mm and 2,000mm. The first rainy season spans May to June, with the heaviest in June, while the second rainy season is from September to October³¹⁰. This favourable climatic condition in addition to the fertile soil aided intensive agriculture. The Twifo are surrounded by thickly forested lands with huge forest reserves, i.e. the Bempong Forest Reserve and the Minta Forest Reserve.³¹¹ There were clumps of forest dotted all over the Twifo area with some reserved for only

³⁰⁹ Marx Weber, *Economy and Society*, Los Angeles: California University Press, 1968.

³¹⁰ See the 2010 census report of Ghana.

³¹¹ Interview with Okyeame Anane

religious purposes. Apagyahina, which is the abode of the Twifo 'Bosomkese' is a sacred place and the public was prohibited from entering. No one was permitted to cut down trees in such areas or cultivate the land for farming.³¹²

The Twifo produced abundant foodstuffs to become the major suppliers to trading centers such as Assin Fosu, Assin Manso, Nyankumasi, Cape Coast and Elmina. Food production must have also been the major factor for the movement of people from within and beyond the Central region to the Twifo area. The fundamental factor, however, in the Twifo spread and dominance in the area was land. Land was the most important instrument of production.

Geology and Soil

As the backbone of people's existence, land is theoretically the basis of a man's definition of his relations.³¹³ The Twifo were blessed with vast fertile lands around the Pra. According the 2010 Census Report of the Twifo/Atti/Mokwa District, the Twifo area has about five different types of soil, which are as follows;

- i. The Nsaba-Swedru Compound: These are soils developed over granite that are well drained and respond well to phosphorus fertilizer application. They can be found in areas such as Mampoma, Mampong, Agona and Nkwankyemaso. This type of soil is excellent for the cultivation of tree crops such as cocoa, oil palm, citrus, and coffee, and food crops such as plantain, cocoyam, banana, and cassava.

³¹² Ibid. ordinary citizens were not allowed to enter such forests, not even to gather firewood.

³¹³ K.B. Maison,

- ii. The Nta-Offin Associates: These soils are developed over rocks which are poorly drained. They are found around Brofoyedur and Bukruso. They are generally suitable for the cultivation of tree crops such as citrus, cola and oil palm. In addition to the tree crops, these soils tend to support semi-perennial food crops, dry season vegetables, sugarcane, and rice.
- iii. Asuanzi Kumasi Associates: These are soils developed over Tarkwaian rocks, which are moderately drained and are good for the cultivation of tree crops such as cocoa and forest products. These soils are found in areas like Mampong, Ntafrewaso. They also support food crops such as plantain, cocoyam, maize, cassava and banana.
- iv. Bekwai-Nzema-Oda Compound: They are found around Bepobeng, Moseaso and Nyinase. These soils are suitable for the cultivation of perennial tree crops such as cocoa, oil palm, coconut, coffee and food crops such as maize, cassava, and cocoyam.
- v. Juaso-Manso-Kyekyewere-Kakum Compound: They can be found around Mafi, Bonsaho, Mbraem Afiaso Mampoma and Wawase areas. These soils support perennial tree crops such as cocoa, oil palm, coconut, coffee and food crops including maize, cassava, and plantain.³¹⁴

³¹⁴ See 2010 Population and Housing Census, District Analytical Report, Twifo/Atti Morkwa District. From the Ghana Statistical Service, 2014. www.statsghana.gov.gh

What this meant was that there were favourable climatic conditions and the geographical characteristics of the area supported intensive crop farming. In addition, there was the availability of arable lands which supported the high crop production in the area, which the Twifo migrants cleverly exploited to their advantage. Fortunately for the migrants, the host states, as has been mentioned earlier, were decimated in terms of population and therefore they met vast lands unoccupied. The traditions show that, prior to the 1920s, there was virtually no impediments or resistance to the Twifo occupation of lands in the area. The immigrants moved in groups to farm on these lands and this led to the development of farming communities. Thus, most of the Twifo towns developed out of this process. It is important to state that as the Twifo immigrants moved to these lands to settle and farm, they began to stake claims to these lands. Certainly, the Twifo must have added more economic value to land in the area and therefore the control of land brought an economic and monetary advantage, and so competition to control it began. It should, therefore, not be surprising that there are long standing land disputes between the Twifo and the states that were settled in the area before the arrival of the Twifo immigrants, particularly, the Mokwaa and Wassa.³¹⁵ Therefore, the Twifo leaders put in place measures to guide land acquisition and use in the Twifo State. Just like in other Akan communities, land was owned by the

³¹⁵ Interview with Opanin Kofi Tih, 72yrs, farmer at Wamaso, interviewed at his residence at Wamaso, 5th June, 2018. It must be noted that the rate at which the Twifo occupation of lands occurred was part of the problems between the Twifo and Mokwaa in the 1920s. The Mokwaa at a point felt the immigrants were taking over all their lands. On Twifo-Wassa conflict, in 2005, there was a memorandum of understanding between the Twifo states of Mampoma and Kayereku on one hand and Wassa Amenfi on the other to end a land dispute which had dragged for over a century. This was captured in the 15th June, 2005 edition of the Daily Graphic.

community. The head of the community allocated it to families who requested for it. Thus, everyone in the community had an inalienable right to it. Each family in turn reallocated its family land to each member according to his/her needs. The head of the community only stood as the trustee of land since he did not own it, and so he could not appropriate the land.³¹⁶

Generally, one can observe about five ways of acquiring land in the Twifo state. One of the ways was direct allocation by the Omanhene or chiefs of the various towns.³¹⁷ The other means were allocation by family heads, lease, inheritance and hiring. There were no elaborate processes involved in land acquisition at all levels. There were other practices such as the land tenure arrangements which are in two forms; owner occupancy and share tenancy. The owner occupancy is where the farmer is the owner of the land on which he farms and provides all the necessary inputs for production and owns every produce from the farm. On the other hand, shared occupancy is where the owner of the land engages a farmer to work on his land and the proceeds are shared between the owner and the farmer.³¹⁸

There was nothing like a landless class in the Twifo setting. The division of the Twifo society into extended families and households made it easier for every member of the community to be entitled to land. Further, land in the Twifo did not have market value in the sense that it could neither be bought nor sold, as in many

³¹⁶ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau, 68yrs, chief of Tofoi, interviewed at his residence at Tofoi, 8th June, 2018.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

other indigenous African societies.³¹⁹ Land, therefore, was a very crucial factor in the Twifo economic setting. It was the basis of the development of most of the Twifo towns. A classic example was Twifo Praso, the second most important Twifo town after Mampong.

Twifo Praso, is now a cosmopolitan town with non-Twifo inhabitants dominating. Fante, Wassa, Asante, Akyem, Ewe etc are in the majority in the settler communities in Praso.³²⁰ Thus, the emergence of Twifo Praso as the administrative capital and the second most important Twifo town had more to do with the concentration of agricultural and commercial activities in the area.

Founding of Twifo Praso

By the end of the second decade of the 20th century, Twifo Praso was founded just around the River Pra. The name of the town comes from two words; *Twifo* (the Twi people) and *Praso* (on the Pra River). Thus, the name simply means the Twi people living on the River Pra. Praso is the administrative capital of the Twifo traditional area and also the capital of the Twifo/Mokwaa District Assembly. Prior to the founding of Praso, important Twifo towns were Mampong, Aduabeng, Ntafrewaso, Anyinase and Hemang.³²¹ However, with the founding of Praso, all major activities were shifted to Praso and it is now the center of both economic and political activities in the Twifo area, even though Mampong continues to be the

³¹⁹ Interview with Okyeame Anane, Chief linguist of the Omanhene of Twifo, at the Omanhene's Palace, Twifo Mampong.

³²⁰ Interview with Jude Acquah, 40years, cocoa farmer and cocoa purchaser, Twifo Praso, 20th February, 2018.

³²¹ Interview with Nana Gyamera Akoto, Chief of Twifo Ntafrewaso, at his residence at Ntafrewaso.

traditional capital and the seat of the Omanhene. Impliedly, the name Twifo Praso seems to suggest that the town was founded solely by the Twifo. However, the traditions of Praso assert that the founding of Praso was the work of the Twifo and non-Twifo migrants. Two major factors influenced the founding of the town; agriculture and the construction of railway line from Tarkwa stretching into the then Central Province between 1923 and 1928.³²²

Agriculture was the remote factor in the founding of Twifo Praso. The area was endowed with vast fertile lands that promoted extensive agricultural activities and this attracted people from far and near to settle in the area to take advantage of the opportunities in the area. Besides, one cannot discuss the founding of Twifo Praso without mentioning the role of the River Pra. Just as River Nile was seen as an important source of life for the ancient Egyptians, River Pra played an extremely important role in the development of Twifo Praso and the economy of the Twifo state as a whole.³²³ The River Pra is largest of the three principal rivers that drain the area south of the Volta divide. Rising in the Kwahu Plateau near Kwahu Mpraeso and flowing southward for 240 km through rich cocoa and farming areas and valuable forests in the Akan lowlands, Pra enters the Gulf of Guinea. The main tributaries of Pra are the Ofin, Anum and Birem rivers.³²⁴ The River Pra, apart from serving as a source of drinking water, and aiding agriculture, provided a means of transportation and communication for the Twifo. Further, the bed of River Pra was

³²² Ibid.

³²³ This was confirmed in an interview with both Nana Gyamera Akoto, Chief of Ntafrewaso and Nana Sisri Apau, Chief of Tofoi.

³²⁴ By the 19th century, River Pra was serving as the border between the Asante Confederacy and the Gold Coast. and by the 20th century, Pra was used extensively to float timber and other primary resources to the coast for export to Europe.

known to have contained alluvial gold deposits which generated small scale mining activities in the area. Small scale mining, particularly, what became known in the local parlance as ‘galamsey’ became common in the area in the 20th century. Generally, galamsey activities have had a negative impact on the Pra River; nonetheless, the presence of mineral deposits on the bed of the Pra River was among the key factors that attracted many non-Twifo to the Pra basin, particularly, Twifo Praso.³²⁵ Immediately upon their arrival, the Twifo immigrants learned how to control the river to their advantage in all spheres of their life.³²⁶ According to Twifo oral tradition, it was on the Pra River that Twifo snipers and sharpshooters hiding in the dense tree line around the Pra shot and killed the Asantehene, Osei Tutu.³²⁷



Bridge over the River Pra. It was constructed as a rail bridge during the construction of the Sekondi-Accra railway line.

³²⁵ The water colour of Pra, at the time of gathering this data, had become brownish with some oil substances on the surface

³²⁶ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau.

³²⁷ The Twifo strongly claim they shot and killed Osei Tutu whilst he was in a canoe crossing the River Pra to fight Akyem in 1717. Twifo traditions indicate that it was Tofoi, a part of the Twifo who migrated to the Pra basin long before the arrival of the bulk Twifo in the 19th century, who killed Osei Tutu.

The Pra attracted many people, most of them non-Twifo to the basin, mostly to engage in agricultural activities. Perhaps, no other river in Ghana can show a continued series of towns and villages along its banks. Places like Akutuase, Aboso, Nuamakrom, Kenkuase, Afosua, Ayooba Krom, Abodwese, and many others, all of which are suburbs of Praso, are important farming communities dominated by non-Twifo residents.³²⁸

Apart from land and its agricultural uses which drew people to the banks of the Pra River, the development of Praso appears to have been facilitated by the railway revolution in the Gold Coast from the latter part of the 19th century to the second decade of the 20th century.³²⁹ The traditions of Twifo assert that the development of Praso occurred in the late 1920s as a result of the construction of railway line from Sekondi to Accra which passed through the Twifo area.³³⁰ The construction of the railway line led to the concentration of workers, some of whom were Europeans. People from other parts of the Gold Coast, particularly, Akyem, Wassa, Assin, Asante, Ahanta, Ewe, with the Fante being in the majority, began to move to the area to cash in on the opportunities offered by the railway workers by selling food and other items.³³¹

Consequently, Praso appears to be a cosmopolitan town and this is reflected in the linguistic situation in the town. Apart from indigenes of Twifo who constitute about 30% of the population, the majority of the population are migrants from

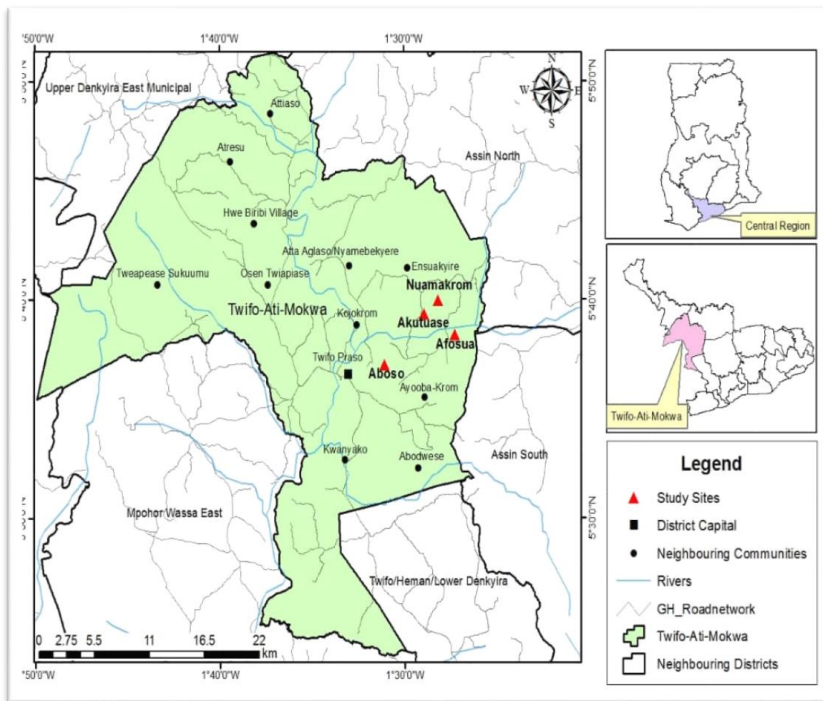
³²⁸ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau.

³²⁹ Interview with Nana Gyamera Akoto.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Ibid.

Denkyira, Wassa, Assin, Akyem, Ewe, with Asante and Fante dominating. A classic manifestation of this is the linguistic pattern in the town. The language spoken in the area could be described as a kind of composite of Asante and Fante dialects, notwithstanding the fact that the Asante element predominates. It could be also argued that the language spoken in Twifo Praso is an Asante dialect modified by contiguity to Fante-speaking peoples. Thus, Twifo Praso might be regarded as a complex town where the Asante and Fante tongues shade off and merge one into the other.³³²



Map showing Twifo Praso and surrounding communities

³³² Ibid. This was confirmed in an interview with Nana Sisri Apau.

Clearly, the influx of the Twifo migrants into the Pra basin in the early part of the 19th century led to an economic revolution in the area. This revolution began by the mid-19th century and took shape with the founding of Twifo Praso in the 1920s. Nonetheless, before examining the nature of this economic revolution, it is pertinent to peep into how the Twifo survived before serious agriculture began.

Finding Food

Twifo traditions indicate that prior to the 20th century, gathering, hunting, trapping and fishing were the major economic activities. Although the traditions do not readily provide information about the situation in the area before the arrival of the Twifo immigrants, it is highly possible that the Twifo borrowed these practices from the host states who settled in the area before their arrival. However, the arrival of the Twifo immigrants must have intensified these practices in the area.

Food products usually gathered included green leaves, vegetables, fruits and roots such as cassava. Also gathered were snails, crabs, mushrooms, fish as well as honey.³³³ From the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, gathered products formed an essential part of the economy of the Twifo. It is clear from the narratives that gathering was not done haphazardly. People left their villages to camp in the forest at the height of the fruiting season and then again in the dry season, with the latter being the best time for large scale gathering.³³⁴ There were, however, areas in the forest that people were forbidden to search. For instance,

³³³ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau. This was confirmed by other informants in Twifo Praso, Mampoma and Buabin.

³³⁴ Ibid.

people were forbidden to enter the Apagyahina forest and other areas.³³⁵ The attitude and methods employed by the people showed their deep knowledge about their environment and the need to preserve it. It also revealed their relation with their habitat.

Hunting was another key economic activity in pre-20th century Twifo. Hunting in the forest was predominantly a male affair, with virtually every man in a village getting involved one way or the other. In the villages, boys usually spent large amounts of time with their fathers and other men learning the skills needed to be a successful hunter. They had to learn killing techniques, the animal migrations, etc. There were individual hunting and hunting in small groups. Individual hunters normally targeted small animals such as rabbits and grass cutters, whilst group hunters targeted big animals such as the deer and antelope. Tools for hunting were made by the people's ingenuity.³³⁶ The tools ranged from flat and double-curved bows and spears. While the flat bow could be made from a variety of species (e.g. cedar, willow, ash, or juniper), the double-curved bow was made from red cedar wood. Straight yew trees were also used for arrows, with bones and rocks being carved into arrowheads of all sizes. Mostly, the arrowheads were finished with a fine, sharp cutting edge but some were left blunt for hunting birds.³³⁷ Hunting was also done by trapping. The people believed that certain crops attracted certain animals: antelopes and grass cutters loved vegetable leaves. And so they monitored the movement of animals and set their traps at vantage points in the forest.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Ibid.

Fishing in the Pra River was also an important economic activity of the early Twifo immigrants. Per the narratives of the people, fishing in the Pra River was one of the sources of livelihood of the earlier settlers in the Pra basin and the Twifo, upon their arrival, were attracted to it. There were a variety of fish in the Pra. In fact, research by Mongabay ecosystem in the Pra revealed that there were about 75 different species of fish in the Pra. Common among them were *tilapia guineensis*, *tilapia discolor*, *tilapia busumana*, *barbus walkeri*, *barbus ablades*, *barbus subinensis*, *barbus trispilos*, *barbus wurtzi*, *brycinus brevis*, *brycinus imberis*, *brycinus congipinnis*, *brycinus macrolepidotus*, *brycinus nurse*, etc.³³⁸ Usually, fishing in the Pra River was done through trapping which was a collective activity for women and children. Besides trapping there were other complex techniques used by the people to fish in the Pra River. These included damming and the use of scoops. Much of the fish from the Pra was for home consumption whilst the surplus was sent to the market to be sold.

Generally, by the beginning of the 20th century, gathering and hunting still played an essential part in the economic activities of the Twifo. Farming began when it became evident that they could not survive on gathering economy as more and more Twifo migrants continued to the Pra basin. Gathering and hunting continued to supplement whatever was obtained from the grown produce and together they provided a very strong economic basis for the Twifo.

³³⁸ A project to provide indexing and links for all known species as the baseline database for studies of global biodiversity. See www.fishbase.org

Farming

By the the 2nd decade of the 20th century, farming had become the centerpiece of the Twifo society. As indicated earlier, farming was greatly aided by the availability of arable lands and its easy accessibility of it, in addition to the favourable climatic conditions in the area.

The common method of farming in the Twifo area was the slash-stump and burn method. This was done to make lands ready for cropping. This was done early enough in the main dry season to allow the debris to dry out. Then the men built a strong fence around the field, which was provided with traps to keep wild animals out, whereupon both men and women did the planting of crops. The association of several crops on one plot or what was referred to as mixed farming was a major feature of the Twifo agriculture. This implied that whilst the farmers cultivated food and tree crops, livestock and poultry were also, in many cases, kept as a supplementary source of food and income. The selection of crops was entirely based on the choice of the farmer. In many cases, the farmer(s) took into consideration crops that supported each other's growth and in some cases the crop combination was done with regard to nutrition.³³⁹

There were two main farming systems in Twifo. These were permanent cultivation and rotation cultivation.

³³⁹ Interview with Op. Kwasi Dankwa, 68yrs, farmer and a resident of Nuamakrom, interview at the Twifo new market, Praso, 3rd June, 2018.

i. Permanent cultivation:

This was where the farmer engaged in the cultivation of perennial crops such as cocoa, oil palm, plantain and citrus among others. Under this system, the farmer remained on the piece of land under cultivation for many years with the same crops. Oil palm and cocoa farming are discussed in details in the subsequent pages.

ii. Rotation cultivation

Most of the arable crops are grown under this system. Maize, cassava, vegetables were the crops that were associated with this system. They were either grown as a sole crop (monocrop) or mixed-crops where a combination of more than one crop is cultivated on the piece of land for a season and then shifted to another to enable a period of fallow. The fallow period was to allow the fields to regain their fertility. This system was the most widely practiced by the Twifo and the crops cultivated under the system constituted the main diets of the Twifo. They were, however, supplemented with bush meat and fish from the River Pra. The tools generally used were simple tools; hoes for land tillage and cutlasses for clearing.

Besides their main farms, many Twifo households had what could be described as kitchen gardens, next to their homes. These were run mostly by women and were fertilized with detritus of all kinds. Crop rotation was practiced here too. One or few specimens of useful plants such peppers, greens, and medicinal plants were grown there. According to oral tradition, these kitchen gardens were quite important because they served as experimental stations to test new plants. Here, new crops and new varieties of old crops were tested for natural requirements and

yields.³⁴⁰ Although agriculture in Twifo was predominantly subsistence in nature, two crops became very important and continues to be key in agricultural activities of the Twifo till date. These crops were oil palm and cocoa.³⁴¹

Oil Palm

Generally, the preparation of palm oil for export became important in the Gold Coast around 1820. Starting from the wild palm harvesting, oil palm evolved into an agricultural crop and plantations were established in the Gold Coast by 1850. By the close of the century, palm oil had virtually replaced the slave trade as the principal item of trade and accounted for about 75% of the country's export revenue.³⁴² Palm oil was prepared from the pericarp (a red fleshy fibrous outer layer covering a nut within which is a seed or the kernel). The palm kernels were obtained by cracking the nuts open. The motivation for the organization of oil palm into strong domestic industry lay in the economic development of Western Europe. In the industrial revolution that swept through Europe from the end of the 18th century into the 19th century, palm oil was needed in soap and candle industries, as well as in the manufacture of tin plate. In the Gold Coast and other parts of British West Africa generally, it became necessary to increase the production of palm oil in order to cater for local consumption and the huge European demand.³⁴³

³⁴⁰ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau.

³⁴¹ Ibid

³⁴² See Brief on the oil palm sector in Ghana by Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Republic of Ghana. www.mofa.gov.gh

³⁴³ Ibid. By the 20th century, the krobo seemed to be the leading producer of palm oil in the Gold Coast with an annual production of about two million tons

Furthermore, towards the end of the 19th century, palm kernel was found to provide feed cakes for cattle. It helped to increase butterfat when given to milking cows, and palm kernel was also found to be of high value in the making of nut butter.³⁴⁴ The export trade in oil palm produce was the dawn of a new phase in West African economic history because “it was to become the first of several agricultural commodities upon which trade relations with the west were to be sustained”.³⁴⁵ Apart from benefits of the oil palm tree enumerated above, in indigenous Africa, it was used for some sacred purpose which was quite unique and perhaps, the most important use of the oil palm tree. Mensah Sarbah explained this in the following words:

It is a tree of great antiquity, for in the most expensive method of embalming the dead the ancient Egyptian used the sap of the tree (that is palm wine) for rinsing the abdomen after the intestines had been extracted through an incision, five inches long, made in the left side of the body.³⁴⁶

The Twifo terrane is very rich in oil palm trees. The trees grew wild in the area, but by the beginning of the 20th century, when the people realized the commercial value of the tree and its by-products, many farmers diverted to the cultivation of oil palm trees. It is highly possible that the Twifo migrants were already familiar with this tree as it was generally known to have served the taste of many Akans in several ways in precolonial times. In fact, beyond providing food and drink, the pre-colonial Akan had many other important uses of the oil palm tree

³⁴⁴ See John Mensah Sarbah, “The Oil-Palm and its Uses” published in *African Affairs*, Vol. VIII, Issue XXXI, April 1909, pp. 232-250

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

which included its use for clothing, timber for building, fuel, drugs, materials for roofing huts and making baskets, mats, fishing nets, broom and ropes.³⁴⁷

The demand for oil palm produce led to the crop becoming one of the major strands in the Twifo economic fabric, especially the palm oil derived from the palm fruit that became the prop of the Twifo economy. Apart the wide domestic consumption of oil palm products in the Twifo area, it provided numerous employment opportunities for the people. The plantation, harvesting, production and marketing provided a source of livelihood for many Twifo residents. Between Mampong and Praso, one can identify many small scale or local palm oil processing sites, where indigenous methods are predominantly used in the production of palm oil.³⁴⁸ The traditional method, though simple, shows the ingenuity of the people in palm oil production. Here is a brief description of the traditional method used in palm oil production in the Twifo area. The fresh fruit bunches together with the loose fruits were carried by women to the processing sites.³⁴⁹ It must be noted that these days' tricycles are usually hired to do this job. The oil palm bunches were first quartered into spikelets (this is mainly done by men with cutlasses or hoes), after which the spikelets are kept on the floor and covered with palm leaves.³⁵⁰ This practice aided in the loosening of the fruits more easily. The loosened fruits are then heaped and stored on the floor of a shed for a period ranging from 1 to 4 weeks. Women then carried stored fruits to a cooking place. The fruits are cooked by

³⁴⁷ Interview with Nana Gyamera Akoto, chief of Ntafrewaso

³⁴⁸ Interview with

³⁴⁹ Interview with Mad. Emma Plange (aka Panin), 52yrs, Mad. Ama Pepra, Antie Ama Foriwaa, Akwasi Aboagye (operator of a digester at one of the sites at Mampong), palm oil producers at Twifo Mampong, interviewed at their production site, Mampong, 6th January, 2018.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

boiling them in big metal containers and the hours for boiling depended on the amount of fruits. Usually, cooking is done overnight (on an open fire) using spent worn-out car tyres, and firewood, fruit bunches. In most cases, the cooking is done overnight and so they made sure the fire kept burning during the night even when unattended to. The cooked fruits are then collected and pounded mostly by men in big locally made mortars. It must be noted here that, in recent times, some form of mechanized digesters have been acquired to aid the pounding of the cooked fruits. The pounded fruits are mixed with water and cooked for hours until the palm oil emerges on the surface which was then scooped. Every local palm oil production site employed not less than 10 workers, with women in the majority.³⁵¹

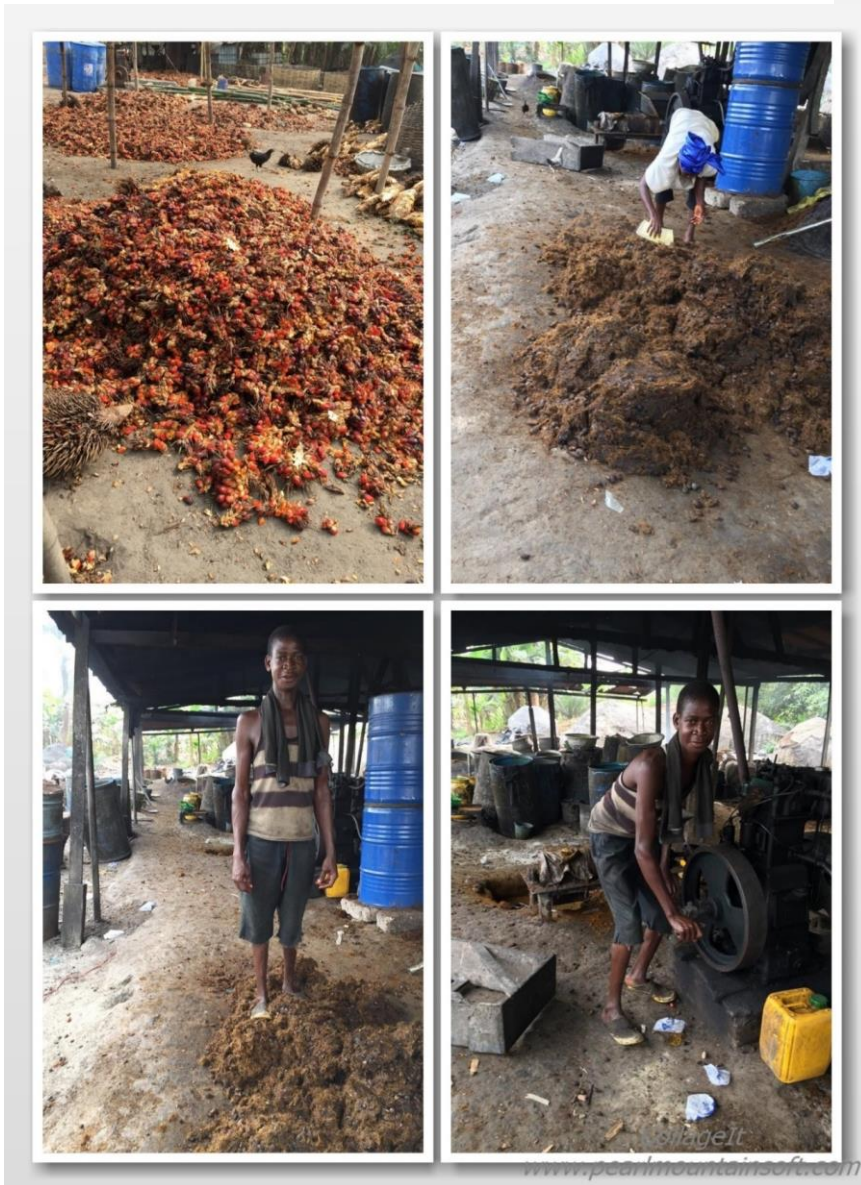
These local palm oil producers have clients from many parts of Ghana and West Africa who buy the palm oil in drums from the site.³⁵² Palm oil, without doubt, is now the underpinner of the economy of the Twifo state and by extension, the economy of Ghana. But this was not without challenges. According to the players in the palm oil business, the major problem they have had was the lack of access to remunerative markets. Due to this challenge, buyers of their produce, particularly those from outside Ghana virtually determined the prices, which were in many cases, to the disadvantage of the producers. Further, lack of effective storage facilities at their sites was a huge problem for the producers. Some had to sell their produce at cheaper prices due to lack of storage facilities. There were, therefore, calls on the central government to intervene. The response of the central

³⁵¹Ibid.

³⁵² Interview with Mad. Emma Plange et al. From Ghana, much of the buyers came from Tachiman. Also much of the buyers from outside Ghana came from Benin and Nigeria.

government to the importance of the oil palm business in the Twifo area was the establishment of an oil palm company, Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP).³⁵³

³⁵³ Interview with Nana Gyamera Akoto, Chief of Twifo Ntafrewaso.



Local Palm Oil Production site at Mampong

Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP)

Established as a special government project on oil palm in 1977 at Twifo Ntafrewaso, TOPP provided a major boost to the oil palm business in the Twifo area. TOPP was jointly established and owned by the Government of Ghana and Uniliver Ghana Limited with the Government owning 40% whilst Uniliver Ghana owned 60%. Funding for the establishment of the company was from a loan facility from the EU, CDC, FMO and the Dutch Government. In 1984, the company's activities in the oil palm sector were complemented with construction of an oil palm mill which was commissioned in May 1987.³⁵⁴ Established with the aim of providing sustainable agro production and processing in the oil palm business, TOPP became one of the largest producers and exporters of palm oil in Ghana, with an annual production of about 20.00 metric tons of palm oil and about 5000 metric tons of palm kernel. The company has large nuclei farms at Ntafrewaso, Buabin and other places in the Twifo area. The farms provide employment opportunities for people in the Twifo area; currently, TOPP nuclei farms have over 355 workers who perform various activities ranging from planting to harvesting. According to management of the company, the company farms provide about 51% of the raw material used for production.³⁵⁵ The company also developed a smallholder project in 1983 which was funded by the Central Region Development Corporation (CEREDEC) and the European Union (EU). By 1999, the project had expanded to

³⁵⁴ Interview with Mr. Emmanuel Ahiabre, 65yrs, retired managing Director of TOPP, interviewed at his residence in Accra, 13th June, 2017.

³⁵⁵ Interaction with management of TOPP, at the premises of the company, 20th May, 2017. Management indicated that the company has about 3,381 hectares (8,453 acres) of mature oil palm which were planted between 1979 and 1980. It was also indicated that the average yield of fresh fruit bunches (FFB) from the company's farms is about 16 metric tons.

cover about 2,832 hectares (1,626 acres). The project continues to provide alternative farming opportunities to farm families displaced by the acquisition of land for the company.³⁵⁶ In addition, TOPP provides a more direct economic impact on the Twifo area by serving as a source of ready markets for oil palm fruits. This has more to do with the out-growers. TOPP engages about 1,016 out-growers to supply palm fruit to the company. Thus, about 49% of the company's raw materials are supplied by out-growers, who are mostly private farmers from the Twifo area and other parts of the Central region.³⁵⁷

It is pertinent to explain that in the Twifo area, the term out-grower seems to have had a wider meaning. For them, an out-grower was any farmer outside TOPP's nucleus plantation who had interest in cultivating oil palm plant and had the land but lacked the initial capital resources for cultivation.³⁵⁸ The out-growers were indirectly employed by the company and they produced for the company until whatever agreement between the two parties expired. These out-growers supplied the company with the needed raw materials whilst the company in turn provided a ready market for their produce as well as the initial seed money for the land preparation.³⁵⁹ Apart from that, TOPP provides assistance to out-growers through extension services and also advises them on good and innovative agricultural

³⁵⁶ Ibid. the project provides support services to both the company and individual farmers as well.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Interview with the Management of TOPP, TOPP Premises, Ntafrewaso. This was corroborated in an interview with Nana Gyamera Akoto, Chief of Ntafrewaso and Ankobeahene of Twifo Traditional Area.

³⁵⁹ Ibid. this was confirmed in interviews with Nana Gyamera Akoto. Generally, an out-grower scheme is also known as contract farming where there is a binding arrangement through which a firm ensures its supply of agricultural products by individual or group farms.

practices. In fact, the rationale for this extensive out-grower scheme was provided as;

The main objective of the out-grower concept was to help the farmers in the Twifo area and nearby communities to be innovative in the agricultural activities, have employable opportunities which will lead to poverty reduction in the Twifo and the Central region at large.³⁶⁰

In furtherance of this, management of the company has ensured that the processes to become part of the scheme do not pose any obstacle to farmers. To become part, farmers only had to approach management or any member of the management of TOPP and express interest in the scheme. This could be done verbally without any official documentations. Management will then follow up with a team to inspect the farm lands of prospective out-growers. Once management was satisfied of the suitability of the farm lands, the prospective out-growers were assembled and the terms of the contractual agreement read to them. When there is mutual agreement on both parties, the seed money is then provided to the farmers for the preparation of the land. Then also seedlings are given out to the farmers who are subsequently given guidelines on how to obtain good yield.³⁶¹ These guidelines concern planting techniques, palm management techniques, fertilizer application skills as well as good harvesting skills. In an interview with some of the farmers, they indicated their appreciation of the impact of the out-grower scheme on them, their families and the Twifo communities at large. In particular, they expressed delight in aspects of the agreement that allowed them to interplant the oil palm with

³⁶⁰ Interaction with management of TOPP

³⁶¹ This processes were confirmed in interviews with some farmers as well as interaction with management of TOPP.

other food crops such as cassava, plantain, maize, and many others on which they depend until the palm trees start fruiting.

Indeed, oil palm business has virtually become the mainstay of the economy of the Twifo and their immediate communities. Beyond the direct economic opportunities that TOPP offers the people, one should not be oblivious to the diverse social services that the company provides to the community. TOPP has a school and a health center which are opened to the community.

Apart from the direct benefits of the oil palm tree to the Twifo, there are other by-products of the oil palm tree which, though they have not been rated highly, continue to provide economic opportunities to many Twifo residents. Among the major by-products are local alcohol distillation (Akpateshie), palm wine production and soap making



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Akpeteshie Distillation

One of the main locally produced alcoholic drinks in the Twifo area is akpeteshie. Akpeteshie is either produced from fresh palm wine, sugar cane, fruits, or grains (i.e. sugar or starch). In Twifo, however, the palm wine type which is tapped and brewed from palm trees is the most common.³⁶² The distilleries are located in Twifo Praso, Agona, Nuamakrom, Mampong, Wamaso, Kenkuase and many other places within the Pra basin. Averagely, every distillery site employs about five people. Apart from that, palm fruit farmers, palm wine tappers also benefit from these local distilleries in diverse ways. The Twifo local distillers are the major suppliers of akpeteshie to the Central, Western and Ashanti regions of Ghana. There are also market clients from Afloa and Lome who often come to the Twifo distillers to buy local drinks to these areas.³⁶³

A typical local Akpeteshie brewery site at Twifo Praso

Palm Wine

Palm wine production is also rife in the Twifo area. One could virtually identify palm wine production sites in all Twifo towns and villages. Palm wine is produced from palm trees. The Juice is obtained by tapping the tree either at the base of an immature male inflorescence or the base of the topmost frond. A white liquid, with a sweetish taste, oozes out of these trees. Bossman has an apt description of how palm wine was obtained. He remarked that:

To obtain and draw off (palm wine), when the tress are old enough to be cut, they are bereft of all their branches, and rendered entirely

³⁶² Interview with Akpeteshie distillers in Wamaso.

³⁶³ Ibid.

bare; in which condition having remained a few days, a little hole is bored in the thickest part of the trunk, into which is inserted a small reeden pipe; and through that the palm wine drops into a pot set under to receive it, but it distils so slowly that in twenty-four hours scarce a bottle of wine issues from one tree. In this manner, propotionable to the goodness of the ground in which the tree is planted, it yields wine for twenty, thirty, or sometimes more days; and when it hath almost run its last, they kindle a fire at bottom, in order to draw more wine with the greater force...³⁶⁴

When consumed fresh, this juice has no or little intoxicating effect. This liquid is collected and allowed to ferment. At times, yeast is added to hasten the process. The fermented juice has an alcohol content of approximately 5-10 per cent.³⁶⁵

Soap Making

Soap making was another important indigenous industry which helped the economy of the Twifo. Generally, soap was said to have been produced for the first time in the forest areas of Ghana. It, therefore, became the occupation of most Akan women.³⁶⁶ The indigenous soap was made by burning plantain peels into ashes. After that the ashes were boiled in palm oil whilst some other ingredients were added. With the introduction of cocoa, its pods were used in the same process. Soap produced by this method was known to have contained very rich chemicals and so it was used as detergents and also used to treat various skin diseases. The Twifo were among the major producers of soap, due primarily to the availability of palm oil. Currently, the production of soap is concentrated at Twifo Praso and Mampong.

³⁶⁴ Bosman,

³⁶⁵ Interview with some palm wine tappers at Twifo Praso

³⁶⁶ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau, Chief of Tofoi.

Soap making provided employment opportunities and a means of livelihood to many people in the Twifo area.³⁶⁷

It is clear from the above that, due to the multifarious uses to which parts of the oil palm tree could be put, its production became very popular in the Twifo which has made it the backbone of the Twifo economy.

Cocoa Production

Next to the oil palm, the crop that helped sustain the economy of the Twifo, the Central region and the country as a whole was cocoa production. In fact, Cocoa (*Theobroma cacao* Lineus) has remained a valuable crop and major foreign exchange earner among other agricultural commodity export of the Ghanaian economy.³⁶⁸ It is also the country's second important foreign exchange earner after gold. The share of cocoa in Ghana's GDP is 8.2% and about 23% of foreign exchange earnings. In fact, the 2013 World Bank report on Ghana aptly captured the value of cocoa to the country:

Cocoa is by far Ghana's most important crop. It dominates the agricultural sector and is a major source of income for approximately 800,000 farmers and many others engaged in trade, transportation, and processing of cocoa. Cocoa holds a unique position in Ghana's economy. It has long played a crucial role in Ghana's economic development and remains an important source of rural employment. It also remains the country's most important agricultural export crop.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ Interaction with soap producers at Mampong and Praso

³⁶⁸ See Jacqueline Cobbina, "Technical efficiency of Cocoa Production in Ghana: A Case Study of Upper Denkyira East Municipality". (Unpublished) MPhil Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, KNUST, October, 2014

³⁶⁹ See World Bank, Ghana-Cocoa Supply Chain Risk Assessment, Washington D.C., 2013. document.worldbank.org

The Twifo area was among the areas in Ghana where cocoa production began very early. Once again, this was aided by the fertile soil and favourable climate. Cocoa production is huge in the Twifo and its impact on the Twifo is equally huge. Cocoa production motivated intense migration of people from far and near to the Twifo area, particular around Praso where cocoa production was much centered. Cocoa production, in addition to other agricultural products in the area must have also contributed to the construction of the railway line through Twifo Praso. As has been rightly asserted, the main object for the construction of railway lines by the colonial governments in Africa was to connect the areas where there was the availability of raw materials needed by the colonial government to the coast for onward shipment to Europe.³⁷⁰

The construction of railway lines in the Gold Coast clearly confirms this assertion. First, in 1873 the government proposed a Cape Coast–Kumasi line to link the then capital of Cape Coast to Kumasi, to ease sending troops to fight the Asante. This project was dropped probably because the war came to an end in 1874. However, Governor Griffith wanted a central line from Saltpond to Kumasi (1893), in order to tap the palm oil areas and link the coast to Kumasi. When he retired in 1895, he was replaced by Governor Maxwell, who gave in to the gold-mining lobbies and instead built the Western Line, which connected European interests to the coast. For the third and fourth proposed routes, Maxwell thought that a second

³⁷⁰ Walter Rodney, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment of Africa*

line was needed, and projects were suggested with two different sets of termini: Apam–Kumasi and Accra–Kumasi.³⁷¹

It should be fairly obvious that farming was and is the predominant occupation of the Twifo. In fact, data from the Statistical Service Department of Ghana on the Twifo confirms this assertion. Below is an extract from the 2010 Census Report on the Twifo:

It is observed that about 72 percent of households are engaged in agriculture. Nearly nine out of every ten households (85.7) in the rural areas as compared with about 14.3 percent of households in the urban areas are engaged in agriculture. Majority of these farmers (86.6) are involved in crop farming³⁷².

The 2010 Population and Housing Census puts the total working force in the Twifo –Ati-Morkwaa District at 26,636. The labour force comprises people from 15years and above. The total number of people who are employed in agriculture related activities is 14,726 which represents 57.44%. TOPP was captured as the main source of employment for the teaming population in the whole district.³⁷³

In fact, agriculture was the basis for the spread and occupation of much of the lands within the Pra and Offin basin. The establishment of many Twifo towns and villages, particularly, villages around Twifo Praso, are basically farming communities. Twifo villages of Akutuoase, Aboso, Nuamakrom, Kenkuase,

³⁷¹ Remi Jedwab, et al. "How Colonial Railroads defined Africa's Economic Geography". In *The Long Economic and Political shadow of History*, Vox e-book, Vol,2, 2017

³⁷² See www.statsghana.gov.gh 2010 Population & Housing Census: District Analytical Report, Twifo Atti Morkwa District. Released in October, 2014.

³⁷³ See www.statsghana.gov.gh 2010 Population & Housing Census: District Analytical Report, Twifo Atti Morkwa District. Released in October, 2014.

Afosua, Ayooba Krom, Abodwese, Bankyease, Kadadwin and many others are standing memorials to the farming activities of the Twifo. These towns are huge cocoa production centers in the Twifo state. As indicated already, these towns are enormous Twifo villages built by migrants who had come to the Twifo area to engage in agricultural activities. Remarkably, one finds impressive buildings in some of these villages, particularly, the major cocoa producing areas, which is a reflection of the positive impact of cocoa production on the inhabitants of these areas. This was confirmed by the exclamation of a cocoa farmer at Wamaso:

Cocoa production has been very beneficial to me and my family. When we harvest our cocoa, we send it to Twifo Praso where cocoa marketing companies are stationed. For example, we have Akafo Adamfo, Abrabo Pa, Kuapa, Olam and many others which provide ready market for our cocoa beans. I have been able to build my own house and I was also able to send all my children to school. Even though they have gone to school, I always admonish them to consider going into farming. In fact, my whole life depends on cocoa.³⁷⁴

Beyond the direct benefit of cocoa production to the inhabitants of Twifo, cocoa may have been the basis for the provision of projects in the area. Cocoa was the leading raw material from the area to the Takoradi harbour for onward shipment to Europe from the early 1930s. Thus, the railway line was channeled through Praso to facilitate the transformation of cocoa and other raw materials to the Takoradi harbour.³⁷⁵

³⁷⁴ Interview with Op. Kofi Tih,

³⁷⁵

Fishing

Apart from the produce of the land, the Pra River was used for fishing, aside from serving as water for domestic purposes. Even though fishing was not a major occupation compared to cocoa and oil palm, it was a special occupation for those living on the banks of the Pra River. As indicated already, there were a variety of fish in the Pra River and this attracted migrants, particularly, Fantes from the coast who were in all likelihood acquainted with the fishing culture. Hence, it must be reiterated that fishing in the Pra was one of the motivating factors for the influx of migrants to Praso. The continued flow of people to Praso led to some developing permanent roots in the communities and others, who came and went.³⁷⁶ Fish from the Pra was basically for home consumption although a little quantity was brought to the market for sale or to be exchanged for items needed by the fishermen.³⁷⁷

Part-Time Occupations

Beside the Twifo preoccupation with farming, families usually kept livestock to meet their domestic social needs. Livestock rearing was, thus, the most important part-time occupation in the Twifo area. The animals that were mostly bred were sheep and poultry. Goats appear to be one of the most common livestock in many communities in Ghana. Nonetheless, goats were rarely found in Twifo. Twifo oral traditions explain that their tutelary deity, 'Bosomkese,' abhorred goats. For this reason, goat rearing was abominable in the Twifo area. In fact, for the Twifo, goat rearing and the consumption of goat meat was a taboo.³⁷⁸ Traditions of

³⁷⁶ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau, Chief of Tofoi.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau

Twifo confirm this with a story of a woman who was a migrant in Tofoi but decided to defy this Twifo custom by keeping goats in a room in her house. According to the tradition, the woman was found dead one morning together with her goats in the room where the goats were kept. It was strongly believed by the Twifo that she was struck dead by 'Bosomkese' for defying the customs that prohibited goat rearing in Twifo.³⁷⁹ Mokwaa, whilst confirming this, added that the Twifo at a point attempted to impose this custom on goat rearing on Mokwaa, which Mokwaa resisted.³⁸⁰ For this reason sheep and poultry were the main livestock in Twifo, although occasionally dogs were also bred mainly for hunting purposes. Livestock farming in Twifo, generally, was a non-specialized, part-time occupation.

Mining

Small scale mining was also a significant economic activity in Twifo; gold, diamond, bauxite and manganese were the major minerals mined in the area. In an era where the control of gold and gold producing areas was an important economic factor, gold mining, although on small scale basis, must have attracted much attention to the area. By the close of the 19th century, gold prospecting was well underway in the Twifo area. Individuals could dig up for gold, but the Omanhene took a third of whatever was dug up. However, the major prospecting was done in the Amofo Gold Dredging Concession, Prah River & Offin River Dredging Concession and Kwatakye Dredging. It must be indicated that detailed information on gold mining by these concessionaires is not readily available.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ See Nana Kenin III petition to the Committee of Enquiry of the Central Region House of Chiefs into the Mokwaa Stool affairs, 1980. PRAAD, Cape Coast.

Prospect for diamond was also very high. In 1920, Sebreso Diamond prospecting by Manley & Co. commenced in the Twifo area. In the same year, Messrs Nicholas & Sekyi also began prospecting for diamond in the Bempong Forest Reserve and Anyinase.³⁸¹ Further, in 1938, prospecting for manganese by Talley & Co. began in the area. Although the Twifo traditions and the European records do not provide detailed information about mining in the area and its impact on the Twifo and the economy of the Gold Coast, mining and the desire to control those vital commodities may have contributed to the determination of Mokwaa to break away from Twifo and gain sovereignty in the area.³⁸²

In the Mokwaa petition for their independence, they emphasized that there were traces of gold, diamond and bauxite in their division, which the Mokwaahene believed could generate revenue through the payment of royalties to make Mokwaa financially sufficient if they were declared independent. The Mokwaahene argued that considering the human and material resources at their disposal, it was expedient to grant them independence from Twifo, an elevation to the status of Paramount chief and the creation of a Mokwaa Traditional Council, as explained in chapter two.³⁸³ It is pertinent to add that the Omanhene, by the fact of his position, exercised jurisdiction over all lands in Twifo, including those areas where the mineral deposits were found. It must also be indicated that there are running disputes between the Twifo and Mokwaa over ownership of some of these lands.

³⁸¹ Ibid. see Appendix C

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Nana Kenin III Petition

With the presence of agricultural and mineral commodities as well as other natural products in Twifo, trading activities were expected to thrive in the area. In other words, it was obvious for an exchange of commodities in the area for the derivation of utmost satisfaction of basic needs.

Trade

European records show clearly that some sort of trading existed in the area well before the arrival of the Twifo immigrants. From the Furley Collection of Dutch, English and Danish Records, one may surmise that trade in the area prior to the arrival of the Twifo involved predominantly such necessities as farm produce, metal objects, salt, fish, pottery, and palm oil. Hemang was the center of most of the trading activities in the area.³⁸⁴ Yet, Twifo and Hemang traditions agree that due to the de-population in the area before the arrival of the Twifo, trading was very low.³⁸⁵

However, trading was given a major boost with the arrival of the Twifo immigrants. With the settling down of the Twifo migrants and the development of permanent settlements, local trading patterns expanded and became consolidated by the Twifo. The impression from the oral traditions of Twifo is that, prior to the establishment of Praso which became a new Twifo market center, Twifo traders conducted their trading activities at markets such as Assin Manso, Assin Fosu, Dunkwa, Cape Coast and Jukwa. The traditions show that Assin Manso, Assin Fosu and Dunkwa were the leading trading centers for the Twifo who were known to

³⁸⁴ Furley Collection of Dutch, English & Danish Records, E.F.C. Notebook, Gold Coast.

³⁸⁵ Traditions of the two states confirm that prior to the advent of the Twifo in the Pra basin, the host states had been weakened militarily and in terms of population due to their wars with Wassala.

have supplied much of the trading commodities in these markets.³⁸⁶ Significantly, the development of the trade route from Twifo Praso to Assin Fosu led to the establishment of some Twifo towns and villages. The most important of these towns are Adiembra, Nuamakrom, Aqweikrom, Dompemkrom, and many. Traditions about the founding of some of these towns paint a picture of the 'big man' syndrome which happened in some parts of indigenous Africa.³⁸⁷ These 'big men' upon seeing the lucrative opportunities on the route migrated to found settlements there which gradually developed to towns. These towns began by producing food to feed traders as well as travelers on the route. This may well explain why food production is very intensive in these towns.³⁸⁸

There was also an internal village to village trade which generally involved agricultural products which were abundant in the various villages. The barter system of trade which involved the exchange of one commodity for another was the usual practice in the internal trade.³⁸⁹

Fused with the local trading network was an external trade with the Europeans. The Furley Collections shows that the Twifo became one of the major inland states with which the Europeans, particularly, the British had serious trade. The items of trade between the Twifo and the Europeans were gold, slaves, and

³⁸⁶ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau, chief of Tofoi.

³⁸⁷ Vansina has argued that precolonial West African societies were based on the House as the main social unit. He continued that every House was governed by a big man whose political power was not inherited but rather achieved by virtue of his own personal abilities, charisma, and ritual knowledge. Big men are usually pioneer settlers of an area and more often than not his family become the ruling family.

³⁸⁸ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

European goods such as guns and gunpowder, cloth and alcoholic drinks. Twifo traditions confirm that the Twifo were among the major suppliers of gold and other minerals to the Europeans. For this reason, the Twifo were deeply involved in the politics and conflicts in the Gold Coast. This was strongly supported by Sir Dalby Thomas who is on record to have reported to the Royal African Company that “the Cufferoes (Twifo) with the Wassaws and Arkanians (Assin) were at war with the Denkiras’ over trade issues with the Europeans.”³⁹⁰ The Furley Collection confirms this with an account of series of conflicts between the Twifo and Fetu (Cape Coast) over the latter’s determination to play the middleman role in the trade between the inland states and the Europeans at the coast. It was for this reason that, the Fante occasionally blocked all inland states from trading directly with the Europeans, which often led to conflict, particularly between Asante and Fante. Significantly, this attitude of the Fante was one of the factors for the conflicts between the Fante and Asante in the 18th and 19th centuries, a situation that culminated in a war in 1807 between Fante and Asante.³⁹¹ Beside the minerals, the Twifo area was known to have supplied the Europeans with ivory – ivory is a hard, white material from the tusks of elephants that was used in art or manufacturing.³⁹²

Twifo traditions show that most of the internal and the external trading activities were done by women. Most of the crops taken to the market centers were determined by women. Because of their role in catering for the households, women

³⁹⁰ Furley Collection.

³⁹¹ Ibid. N.B. although the immediate cause of the 1807 war was the Tsibu and Aputae issues, the Fante blockade of Asante to the coast, was effecting Asante economically that a war was imminent between the two states. The Tsibu/Aputae issue only provided a trigger.

³⁹² George Preston Nelson, *Twifo-Hemang and the Art-Leadership Complex of the Akan*. Phd Thesis submitted to the University of Columbia, 1973.

knew how much surplus stock a family had and the quantity to be sent to the market. They also knew more about the trends and which products were in high demand at the markets where the Twifo traded.³⁹³

Slave-trading was a significant economic factor in the Gold Coast and the Twifo cannot be isolated from discussions on the slave trade in the Gold Coast. This is due to the proximity between Twifo and a major slave trading market – the Assin Manso market, which the Twifo also frequented. Then also Twifo Praso itself was situated along the two main roads connecting Kumasi and the principal slave-trading centers on the coast. For these reasons, one expected slave-trading activities to feature in the Twifo. Yet, the traditions of Twifo do not provide any significant information on the Twifo participation in the trade and its impact. Perhaps, this is because by the time of the Twifo arrival, all the remaining European nations in the Gold Coast; Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands, had declared the slave trade abolished. This may explain why even the records of the Europeans are silent on slave-trading in the Twifo in the 19th century when the Twifo arrived. Nonetheless, prior to the arrival of the Twifo, the area featured in the slave-trading activities in the Gold Coast. The geographical location of the Twifo and Assin Manso – their presence along the roads connecting Asante and the slave-trading centers on the coast got them involved in the slave trade.³⁹⁴ The Furley Collection cited the Agent-General of the Royal African Company at Cape Coast, Sir Dalby Thomas

³⁹³ Interview with Nana Sisri Apau

³⁹⁴ Rebecca Shumway, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New York: University of Rochester Press, 2011, pp.107-108

confirming European traders dealing in slaves in the area.³⁹⁵ It was this trade with the Europeans that got the states in the area involved in the anti-Asante activities of the Fante in the 18th and 19th centuries. Fante anti-Asante activities in the period crystalized into the formation of the Coastal Coalition which was aimed at destroying Asante fortunes in the coast. Shumway's remarks on that issue was very illuminating:

The Coastal Coalition established diplomatic and military alliance with the three inland polities to its immediate north- Twifo, Wassa, and Akyem – in an effort to defend the borders it shared with these kingdoms and to maintain control of the trade paths that joined them with the coast.³⁹⁶

From the forgoing reconstruction of the economy of the Twifo, it is fairly obvious that the influx of people (this case labour), made possible massive forest clearances, such that a society in which the dominant mode of production was hunting and gathering was transformed into a dominant producer of food crops. It is also well established that, as small scale producers, with simple and indigenous technology, often relying primarily for their subsistence on what they themselves produced, the early Twifo immigrants, like peasantry everywhere in pre-colonial Africa, developed a strong attachment to the land. This land was the primary means of livelihood. Agriculture was the basis for the establishment of most Twifo towns within the Pra and Offin basin. Thus, even though the military prowess and strength of the Twifo was the major reason for their superiority over the host states, it was

³⁹⁵ See Furley Collection of Dutch, English & Danish Records, E.F.C Notebook pages, Gold Coast. p.43

³⁹⁶ Ibid. the Coastal Coalition was a kind of union of the Fante states at the coast to, among others, control the north-south intermediary trade between Asante and the coast

from the economic perspective that one could explain the Twifo expansion and domination of the area around the Pra River. The Twifo attachment to the environment was transmitted to subsequent generations and with the establishment of the Praso market, greater interaction took place between communities around the Pra and with outside communities. Though there cannot be any doubt about the participation of the Twifo in the slave trade, nonetheless, it is difficult to measure the extent and organization of the Twifo landmass's involvement in the Atlantic slave trade.

Food production and trading activities have always given a profound insight into how diverse people from different geographical areas, with different languages, beliefs and traditions were made to interact and share ideas in the quest to improve each other's material well-being. The Twifo do not differ from this broad observation. It is therefore plausible to contend that the economic pursuits of the Twifo were major contributory factor for their supremacy in the Pra basin and the creation of the Twifo identity in the Central region and the country as a whole. The Twifo economic pursuit also helped in the consolidation of their political and social systems, which will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER SIX

TWIFO POLITICAL ORGANIZATION & TRADITIONAL POLITICS UP TO 1987

In all Akan societies, just like many other precolonial African states, institutions and offices were established to help members conform to norms and values, and generally to ensure peace and order. The Twifo immigrants, upon their settlement within the Pra basin, put up a government structure which was to see to the day to day administration of the new Twifo state that was formed with the host states of Mokwaa and Hemang. The government was also to ensure order in trading and agricultural activities within the Twifo area.

It is, however, worth noting that it was in the political sphere that the Twifo clearly exhibited their hegemony in the area as the immigrants held the superior position of Omanhene, who was the head of the Oman or state, with the host states holding subordinate positions. Mokwaa was the head of Abosompedie division, whilst Hemang did not have any divisional status until 1925. This chapter is therefore, an attempt to describe and analyze, within a historical framework, the political organization of the Twifo and how this has shaped the Twifo in the Pra basin. The chapter also examines the twists and turns of the Twifo politics up to the 20th century.

As indicted, the Twifo became the superiors in the new Twifo State that was created within the Pra River basin. From the traditions of the Twifo, Hemang and Mokwa, the Twifo earned the superior status as a result of their military prowess, their numerical strength and more importantly, the stage of Twifo political

development. Twifo traditions indicate that the Twifo had an Omanhene stool, the highest rank in the Akan hierarchy before their migration to the Pra basin. Significantly, prior to the arrival of the Twifo none of the host states in the area had a paramount stool or an Omanhene.³⁹⁷ Therefore, the Twifo Omanhene could not have come under any of the chiefs of the host states- Hemang, Mokwaa and Hemanso. It was only in the 20th century that both Hemang and Mokwaa obtained paramount status, whilst Hemanso is still under the Twifo as the head of the Nifa division of the Twifo Traditional area.³⁹⁸ It therefore seems probable that prior to their arrival at the Pra basin, the Twifo immigrants were better organized politically than the host states of Hemang and Mokwaa. This may have given the Twifo an edge over the host states. In other words, the Twifo political organization must have made it easier for the chiefs of the host states to be subsumed under the umbrella of the Twifo paramountcy. The traditions further explained that in addition to the stool of the Omanhene were few sub-divisions; the Nifa, Benkum, Kyidom divisions which also confirmed the Akan origin of the Twifo.³⁹⁹

The traditions further indicate that prior to the beginning of the 20th century, there was only one ruling family which provided all the paramount chiefs (Amanhene) of Twifo. This was the Agona family at Mampong. However, certain developments in their new settlement led to the emergence of another ruling family which was also an Agona family. This situation virtually created what could be

³⁹⁷ See ADM 11/1/708, Mampong native Affairs (Cape Coast district), PRAAD, Cape Coast.

³⁹⁸ Interview with Obrimpong Appiah Nuamah, Omanhene of Twifo Traditional Area

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

described as a two gate system in the Twifo traditional politics. There emerged what became known as the Ampontin Fi and Appiah Nuamah houses.⁴⁰⁰

Emergence of Two Gates in Twifo Politics

Twifo Mampong traditions indicate that up to the death of Owusu Koko III in 1906, there was only one ruling Agona dynasty. This was the line of their earliest known chief, Mfotei Amoa, and in fact, all Twifo paramount chiefs up to Owusu Koko III descended from this family. This family later became known as the Ampontsin Fi House, to distinguish it from another Agona ruling family that emerged upon their settlement at the Pra basin.⁴⁰¹

The traditions continue that following the death of Owusu Koko III, the Agona family of Mampong was hit by a succession crisis which culminated in the creation of another ruling family. The crisis was not about a struggle to ascend the throne, but the inability of the ruling family to find an eligible heir to succeed Owusu Koko III. The paramount stool then became vacant for a brief moment. To avert a situation of a prolonged vacancy, the stool was then given to one Ekua Mansa who was in the direct female line of descent. She sat on the stool for about three years but abdicated in favour of her cousin by name Asantifi, who was then living in Togoland but was recalled home. Unfortunately, he died barely five years after his enstoolment. By the time of his death, however, Owusu Koko, who was a uterine brother of Ekua Mansa's mother, was old enough to ascend the throne. Owusu Koko was, therefore, enstooled as the Omanhene and reigned for about ten

⁴⁰⁰ Twifo Native Affairs

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

years. The heir apparent after Owusu Koko was one Kojo Nkufonin, who was Ekua Mansa's brother. However, Kojo Nkufonin declined to be enstooled as the Omanhene. Traditions do not provide the reasons for his refusal to ascend the stool, but that decision led to a resurgence of the succession challenges of the Agona ruling family at Mampong. The traditions continue that the family was compelled to fall on the younger brother of Nkufonin, Kwame Brafo as the Omanhene. However, Kwame Brafo's era was short-lived as he was destooled just one year after his enstoolment.⁴⁰² The sources point to immaturity as the main reason for his destoolment. After Kwame Brafo, there was no one left in the direct line of succession apart from Ekua Mansa and her sister, Abena Amoah. Neither of them, however, had a male child to ascend the throne.⁴⁰³ The family, therefore, had to take measures to offset the succession crisis that hit the family. These measures, nonetheless, had far and lasting effects on Twifo chieftaincy.

In their effort to salvage the situation, it became necessary for the kingmakers to approach another Agona family whose family head at that time was called Birekuran to get an occupant to the stool. The origin of this second Agona family is not too certain. Nonetheless, Twifo traditions seem to suggest that they were remnants of the Agona from Adanse.⁴⁰⁴ According to Twifo oral tradition, this Agona family was part of the bigger Agona family that migrated from Begho to Adanse. But when the Agona subsequently immigrated to Adanse, some of them chose to remain in Adanse. However, when they realized that their kinsmen were

⁴⁰² Kwame Brafo was the first Twifo Omanhene to be destooled.

⁴⁰³ Twifo Native Affairs

⁴⁰⁴ Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin

well established around the River Pra basin, they also joined them. According to the traditions, these Agona remnants, during their migration to the Pra basin, were led by one Akoto. When they arrived at Mampong, their kinsmen warmly received them and referred to them as Akotonwu family, after their leader, Akoto.⁴⁰⁵ Subsequently the Abakamdwa stool was created for them as it is done in many Akan states.⁴⁰⁶ With the creation of the Abakamdwa for the new Agona immigrants, they became firmly integrated into the Agona family of Mampong. Nonetheless, there is a strong perception that the Abakamdwa stool was created for the newcomers to prevent them from developing any interest in the paramount stool. This assertion appears to be more convincing as it is in line with the factors for the creation of such stools in many traditional Akan societies. Within the Twifo Traditional Area, there were examples. For instance, in Buaben, one of the pioneer Agona groups that immigrated to the area, an Abakamdwa was created for persons who were very close to the main stool. Occupants of Buaben Abakamdwa were often 'pampered' or treated with extreme care and attention and the motive was to prevent any interest in the main stool.⁴⁰⁷

It was this Akotonwu family that the main Agona family fell upon for a solution to the succession crisis that befell the ruling dynasty. (See Appendix B).

Kweku Birekuran, the then head of the Akotonwu family, was deemed to be the one to ascend the stool. However, he was rejected by the State Council

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ In Akan, the Abakamdwa stool was a stool often created for persons who were very close to the paramount stool. At some point it was created for the son of the Omanhene.

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with Nana Agyemang Okofrobour, 62yrs, Abakamhene of Twifo Buaben, interviewed at the 'ahenfie' of Buaben, 13th October, 2018.

because of his character and past behavior. The choice, therefore, fell on Appiah Nuamah who was installed as Omanhene in December, 1906 as Appiah Nuamah I, the tenth paramount chief of the Twifo. Correspondence from the Commissioner of the Central Province to the Colonial Secretary confirmed the installation of Appiah Nuamah which was deemed to have been done in accordance with native customs and traditions.⁴⁰⁸ He remained on the stool until his destoolment on 29th June, 1918.

The traditions do not provide details of the arrangement between the old and new Agona families. It is not clear whether the arrangement to choose an Omanhene from the new Agona family was a temporary or a permanent one. This notwithstanding, Appiah Nuamah's enstoolment saved the Twifo State from what could have been a long interregnum. But this happened at a huge cost to the internal politics of Twifo. First of all, it left a bitter taste in the mouths of many people within the first Agona family of Mampong who felt the choice of Appiah Nuamah was 'unconstitutional' and ultra vires. The event, therefore, marked the beginning of a kind of division in the royal family of Twifo which has prevailed till date. Furthermore, Appiah Nuamah's enstoolment and the developments that followed made the first half of the 20th century very significant in the internal politics of the Twifo.

⁴⁰⁸ See ADM 11/1/708 NO. 6/06. Letter from Commissioner to Central Province to Colonial Secretary, 21st January, 1907. Appiah applied for confirmation of his election from the Governor and was supported by the Commissioner. Appiah Nuamah was duly confirmed as Omanhene on 5th February, 1907

Destoolment of Appiah Nuamah I

Appiah Nuamah's enstoolment could not provide a lasting solution to the near succession crisis that erupted many years before his enstoolment. Although his installation was strategically done to avert an undesirable situation, that decision did not seem to have gone down well with some members of the main ruling family, the Agona House. Therefore, there were strong disaffections for Appiah Nuamah from sections of the Mampong community who were strongly attached to the first Agona Family. Opposition to him grew by the day and by 1918, there were serious agitations for his destoolment.

Consequently, a destoolment party was formed and was led by Kofi Buabin, chief of Mbraem.⁴⁰⁹ Charges for destoolment were preferred against Appiah Nuamah and on 16th July, 1918, a public enquiry was held at Mampong in connection with his destoolment. The charges included the following. He was accused of:

1. Cutting down a cotton tree planted by Owusu Koko. The tree was believed to have contained some spirits which protected the Twifo.
2. Invoking curses on a member of the first royal family, Ekuu Mansa.
3. Conniving with his uncle Birekuran to sell Twifo stool properties.
4. Squandering Twifo contributions towards the British war effort, i.e. the First World War. His conduct was deemed to have brought the image of the Twifo to disrepute.

⁴⁰⁹ In the Twifo traditional setting, the chief of Mbraim was the caretaker of all stool lands.

5. Conspiring with a youngman from Cape Coast to sell gunpowder which was provided by the colonial government.
6. Having sold the seven gold swords and one gold necklace which was the property of the stool.⁴¹⁰

Accounts of the proceedings of the public enquiry indicate clearly that there was no opposition to the destoolment and Appiah Nuamah also made no attempt to defend himself. He is reported to have said “it seems nobody wants me so it’s better to stay away...”⁴¹¹ He reportedly left the Omanhene’s palace quietly to his private home in Mampong. Consequently he was declared duly destooled as Omanhene of Twifo in August 1918 whilst Kweku Nkwantabisa, chief of Anyinase and Adontenhene of Twifo was made a regent until 1919 when Kwesi Baidoo was installed as the substantive Omanhene.⁴¹²

But the destoolment of Appiah Nuamah did not end the succession problems in Twifo. Between 1918 and 1921, the Omanhene stool remained vacant whilst the regency continued.⁴¹³ The reasons for this situation were not different from the factors that led to the installation of Appiah Nuamah. By the time of Appiah Nuamah’s destoolment, two of his sisters from the first Agona family, Ekua Mansa and Abena Amoah, had given birth to a daughter by name Effua Ntiawa and a boy Kwasi Baidoo respectively.⁴¹⁴ The young girl was selected to be installed as the

⁴¹⁰ See correspondence between Mampong and the District Commissioner’s Office, Cape Coast, 24th July, 1918. ADM 11/1/708, case

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid. whenever the stool was vacant, the chief of Darmang, who was the Gyaasehene of Twifo became the custodian of the stool.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

Omanhene, but the process of her installation was truncated along the line. Reasons for the termination of the processes were not explicitly provided by the tradition. However, the records indicate that the colonial governor rejected the choice of Effua Ntiawa as the successor of Appiah Nuamah and threatened not to grant her confirmation.⁴¹⁵ Perhaps the Oman were moved by the threat of the governor to truncate the process of installing the young girl as the Omanhene.

Following the truncation of Effua Ntiawa's installation, the only option left was the young Kwasi Baidoo who was subsequently nominated as the successor of the destooled Appiah Nuamah. Kwasi Baidoo was installed as the Twifo Omanhene on 21st November, 1919 and he became Kwasi Baidoo III.⁴¹⁶ But Kwasi Baidoo's reign was short and quite a stormy one. He reigned for barely two years as he abdicated in September, 1921. The records do not provide the reasons for his abdication; nonetheless, the sequence of events at the time seems to suggest that his abdication was the result of persistent agitations by sections of the community and some divisional chiefs against him. Twifo traditions indicate that he exhibited immaturity and lack of state-craft as a young boy and so agitations for his destoolment began barely one year into his reign. Therefore, his abdication was possibly to avert the destoolment fate that befell his predecessor. In his place, one Kwaku Abrokwa was nominated as a regent.⁴¹⁷ Unfortunately, Kwaku Abrokwa was also dismissed shortly for mismanaging stool affairs and contracting a debt of

⁴¹⁵ See extracts from D.C. Cape Coast, Quarterly Report for the quarter ended 30th June, 1920 (C.S.M.P. 16537/1920)

⁴¹⁶ Ibid. Kwasi Baidoo was installed at age 13. Following his abdication, the Oman decided to send him to Cape Coast to go to school as the heir apparent.

⁴¹⁷ See correspondence, Central Province on Native Affairs Dept. No.618/C.6/1919. 20th October, 1919.

over £400.⁴¹⁸ According to Twifo traditions, finding another regent following the dismissal of Kwaku Abrokwa became a very huge challenge and a long period of vacancy was imminent. Interestingly, there was yearning, which deepened by the day, for the re-ensoolment of Appiah Nuamah. By the beginning of 1923, all the sub-chiefs of Twifo with the exception of Yaw Ntsiamoah, chief of Kayereku had declared their support for Appiah Nuamah's reinstallation.⁴¹⁹ An enquiry into the affairs of Mampong by the Acting Provincial Commissioner for the Central Province confirmed that a majority of the divisional chiefs and the public favoured Appiah Nuamah's re-installation. In fact, the Commissioner reported that "the whole division is solidly in favour of re-ensooling Appiah Nuamah, whose destoolment was carried out in 1918 and confirmed by letter No.52/1918 of 23rd August 1918..." Appiah Nuamah was subsequently re-ensooled as the Twifo Omanhene in April 1923 and remained on the stool till 1931.

The re-ensoolment of Appiah Nuamah and the unanimity of support it received presupposes that he was cleared from the charges for his destoolment.⁴²⁰ An enquiry into his destoolment by the Secretary for Native Affairs, J.T. Furley in September, 1918 revealed that some of the charges were vague and were only added to inflate the number of charges. The first and second charges were reported to have arisen out of issues between Appiah Nuamah and some members of the 'rival'

⁴¹⁸ Kwaku Abrokwa committed suicide barely two weeks after his dismissal.

⁴¹⁹ Correspondence, Central Province on Native Affairs Dept. No.618/C.6/1919. 20th October, 1919.

⁴²⁰ According to Nana Akua Amoah, Queenmother of Tuobododom, a destooled chief could be re-installed. But she indicated that this happens only if the charges for his destoolment were not so grievous for which he could be pardoned. Nana Nketsia V, Omanhene of Essikado, confirms this by adding that titles like Ababio (literally meaning to come again) emerged when destooled chiefs were re-installed.

Agona family which could have been easily settled. For charges 3,4,5,6, they were deemed to be very serious for which the destoolment party petitioned the Provincial Commissioner to consider criminal prosecution, particularly the allegation about his arrangement with a certain young man in Cape Coast to sell gun powders which had been provided by the colonial government and his alleged attempt to sell stool properties. However, the sources do not provide evidence of the reaction of the government on any of the charges, not even the alleged embezzlement of the Twifo contribution towards the British war fund.⁴²¹ Perhaps those charges were to catch the eye of the colonial government to support the destoolment. It would appear from the inaction of the colonial government that no seriousness was attached to those charges. Nonetheless, the government acceptance or rejection of whoever was installed Omanhene represented an interference of the colonial authority, and clearly, a sign of the negative intrusion of an alien power into traditional politics.

Although internal factors played a role in the emergence of all the political problems in Twifo from the latter part of 19th century to the second decade of the 20th century, one cannot also be oblivious to the unsettled situation of traditional politics in the Gold Coast resulting from the imposition of British colonial rule. Thus the political situation in Twifo and many other traditional areas, particularly,

⁴²¹ The Twifo were not the only state to have contributed towards the British war effort. Several other states also contributed. However the classic examples were the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) and Casely Hayford. At the onset of the war, the ARPS mobilized contributions towards the war. Casely Hayford is also on record to have launched his own fund in Sekondi. This degenerated into a conflict between Casely Hayford and ARPS over who was more qualified to contribute money and who contributed higher amounts. This act of contributing monies towards the British war effort by Africans has been roundly condemned by some writers. Nana Nketsia V, believes it portrayed the psychological effects of colonialism on the African. AWOonor in a sarcastic way described that gesture as, the African "kissing the boots that kicked them".

in southern part of the Gold Coast, was the manifestation of the negative effects of colonial rule on traditional politics. The establishment of British rule and its growing power over the local authorities served as a cause of the instability, conflict and confusion in traditional politics in the Gold Coast. The Indirect Rule system, particularly, undermined the authority of the local traditional rulers by turning them more and more into instruments of alien rule, in the eyes of their people, whilst at the same time it gave them more power over their people than they had by custom exercised before. This undermining of traditional power exercised in their relations with their own people underlay the frequency of defiance and in many cases conflict that characterized traditional politics in the first half of the twentieth century in the Gold Coast.⁴²²

The situation appear to have been worsened by the introduction of the Native Administration Ordinance.⁴²³ In chapter two, an attempt was made to bring to the fore how the Native Administration Ordinances generated problems in many traditional areas of Gold Coast, resulting in the destoolment of chiefs. In Denkyira, virtually similar situations occurred around the period.⁴²⁴ Following the death of Denkyirahene Nkwantabisa I in 1910, all successive Denkyira chiefs suffered the problem of having destoolment charges preferred against them resulting in long-

⁴²² See David Kimble, *Political History of Ghana, 1850-1928*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, p.458. Kimble corroborates this by asserting that the institution chieftaincy became closely interwoven with the pattern of British authority in the Gold Coast as result of the policies of the Government.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Denkyira had been divided into those who supported Nana Nkwantabisa II and those who opposed him. About 28 charges were leveled against Nkwantabisa II amid agitations for his destoolment. Here too the Secretary for Native Affairs was commissioned to look in the problems in Denkyira and make recommendations.

drawn conflicts in the Denkyira state. Between 1910 and 1930, about three chiefs of Denkyira were destooled.⁴²⁵ In the Akyem Abuakwa paramountcy similar cases of destoolment occurred around the same period. The most common cause of the destoolments was the suspicion of the people of Abuakwa that their chiefs were exploiting their offices for their personal gain, through secret sales of land and financial irregularities.⁴²⁶ Between 1915 and 1918, however, the situation worsened when in November 1918, a mob action against the Okyehene took place, in an attempt to destool him. What triggered the situation was allegations of some financial manipulations against the Okyehene. The Okyehene was alleged to have mortgaged the 'Ofori Stool' to the Colonial Bank for business purposes.⁴²⁷ These destoolments led to chaos in the Akyem Abuakwa paramountcy. The District Commissioner described the situation as "an epidemic of discontent and unrest" and interpreted it as "the growth of a revolutionary spirit which through the introduction of mob law tend to undermine the existing system of Government"⁴²⁸ Within the same period, also a number of destoolment/abdication of paramount chiefs occurred in the Agona Traditional area.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁵ The destooled Denkyira chiefs within the period were Akwasi Kyei, Nkwantabisa II, and Kwadwo Tibo II.

⁴²⁶ Jarle Simensen "Commoners, Chiefs and Colonial Government: British policy and Local Politics in the akim Abuakwa, Ghana, under Colonial rule", Vol. 1, A PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of History, NTNU, Trondheim, 1975.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid. According to Simensen, the background to this problem was a plan worked out by Ofori Atta to ease the cocoa export problems of the war years by chartering a steamer for direct shipment of cocoa to Europe. In this connection, he negotiated with the Colonial Bank for a loan, and together with other paramount chiefs he had pledged himself and his people as responsible for the loan. Before doing so, however, the Okyehene secured the consent of the State Council.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

Francis Agbodeka for instance, has shown how widespread the problem was between 1910 and 1924. He cited the lamentation of Governor Guggisburg over the incidence of destoolment of ninety-four (94) paramount chiefs between January 1910 and March 1924 alone.⁴³⁰ The colonial government became so uneasy about the wave of deposition of chiefs during the period and consequently liaised with the Aborigines Rights Protection Society to establish the causes of that unfortunate situation that the chieftaincy institution found itself in. The ARPS welcomed the move by the colonial government. Consequently, some chiefs in the Society such as Nana Amoonu V, Omanhene of Anomabo and Nana Otu V Omanhene of Abura, were known to have provided answers which were published in the gazette by the colonial government.⁴³¹

Appiah Nuamah's Second Destoolment

In Twifo, Appiah Nuamah's reinstatement could not bring a lasting solution to the near political crisis that beset the Twifo in the early part of the 20th century. Further, Appiah Nuamah's reinstatement did not end the internal opposition to his reign and so machination for his destoolment persisted into the 1930s.⁴³² In fact, by 1931, agitation for his second destoolment had reached its peak which virtually created a chaotic scene at Mampong. This began in March, 1931 when a public enquiry was held for Appiah Nuamah to respond to allegations of violation of some customs and traditions. Although the records do not mention the exact offences of Appiah Nuamah, he was found guilty and he was asked to pay £100 as pacification

⁴³⁰ Francis Agbodeka, *African Politics and British Policy*

⁴³¹ *Government Gazette*, No.10, January 1925.

⁴³² ADM 11/1/708, Mampong Native Affairs.

for those violations.⁴³³ It appears six months later Appiah Nuamah had not been able to pay the amount. Consequently, in the morning of 6th November 1931, a large crowd gathered in front of the Omanhene's palace at Mampong, in an attempt to destool the Omanhene. The Omanhene in the company of the head of the stool family, Kweku Bikkuran, the chief of Ntafrewaso and the Omanhene's linguist were forced to meet the crowd outside. Also present were the Adontenhene and the chiefs of Mbraim, Mampoma, Kayereku, Kyebi and Moseaso.⁴³⁴

The Adontenhene opened the encounter by declaring that the meeting was convened to demand an explanation from the Omanhene why he had failed to pay the £100 pacification fine imposed on him in March. The head of the stool family, Kweku Bikkuran spoke on behalf of Appiah Nuamah and affirmed their willingness to pay. He explained that every effort was being made to raise a loan to pay and asked for a grace period of just four days.⁴³⁵ The appeal by the head of stool family was quite appealing to the chief of Kyebi, who also begged for leniency. However, this had very little effect on the chief of Imbraim, Kofi Buabin and the Adontenhene. In fact, Kofi Buabin, immediately rose and denounced the Omanhene in very strong terms. The Adontenhene and Kofi Buabin declared publicly that they would not serve Kweku Appiah Nuamah anymore. This open declaration immediately led to a kind of concerted rush towards the Omanhene who had a good sense of judgement to leave the scene. As soon as the Omanhene left,

⁴³³ See Correspondence from District Commissioner's Office, Central Province, NO. 1/Trav.1931

⁴³⁴ See Correspondence from District Commissioner's Office, Central Province, NO. 1/Trav.1931, 18th November, 1931.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

crowd led by the Adontenhene and Kofi Buabin siezed the state umbrella and the stool on which the Omanhene was seated. The two items were taken away and exhibited through town as a sign of destoolment.⁴³⁶ Subsequently in February 1932, Appiah Nuamah himself abdicated the stool and notified the District Commissioner in Cape Coast for a publication in the gazette to that effect.⁴³⁷

It was very difficult to appreciate any constructive and coherent charges for the second destoolment of Appiah Nuamah I. It may not be far-fetched to assert that the Appiah Nuamah episode was quite sensational and a manifestation of the deep succession feud between the two Agona families at Mampong. It was not until the installation of Ampontsin Fi, from the first Agona family, that some relative peace and stability was restored in Mampong.

Generally, the political problems that beset the Twifo at the beginning of the 20th century brought far-reaching and lasting consequences. The most important consequence was the creation of a kind of two gate system; the Appiah Nuamah Fie and Ampontin Fie. For some time, the position of Omanhene was rotated between the two families with the current Omanhene coming from the Appiah Nuamah line.

Twifo Political Organization

The Twifo political structure follows the Akan pattern but with some variations. Prior to 1925, the Twifo state was organized into four main divisions;

⁴³⁶ Ibid

⁴³⁷ See Correspondence from District Commissioner's Office, Provincial Commissioner's Office, Central Province. No. 326/32/C.P. 214/21. 22nd February 1932

Amputifo, Apegya, Abusumpedia and Gyase.⁴³⁸ Although little information exists on the early chiefs of Twifo, they are generally remembered in the traditions as great military leaders who possessed great organizational skills. This structure was created by Owusu Koko I and continued by subsequent chiefs until Appiah Nuamah I effected changes in 1925.⁴³⁹ The structure was a military organization of the state, as was common with many Akan states. At the head of the Twifo political structure was the Omanhene (Paramount Chief). In him was vested the highest traditional authority, and he was the supreme ruler of the traditional area. He was seen as the earthly representative of the ancestors and therefore, as in many indigenous African societies, his office was a sacred one. For this reason, spirituality played a major in the installation of the Twifo Omanhene. Below is a highlight of the process of installation:

Installation of Omanhene

When the Twifo Paramount Stool becomes vacant, as result of death or destoolment of the Omanhene, the Gyasehene immediately takes custody of the stool.⁴⁴⁰ The stool mother (who is also the queen mother) is then informed about the vacancy. It is the responsibility of the stool mother to select a candidate and communicate her choice to the Gyasehene. Consideration is always given to seniority in the royal family; nonetheless, an elder candidate could be passed over

⁴³⁸ See ADM 11/1/708. Mampong Native Affairs, PRAAD, Cape Coast

⁴³⁹ Interview with Obrempong Appiah Nuamah II, Omanhene of the Twifo traditional Area, at his residence at Mampong, 31st July, 2018.

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with Nana Okofo Buaben, Chief of Buaben and Adontenhene of the Twifo Traditional Area, interviewed at his residence in Buaben, 30th October, 2018.

in favour of a younger and a more qualified one.⁴⁴¹ If the Oman finds the candidate presented not suitable, the candidate would be given an opportunity to pacify those who objected to his nomination. If the candidate fails to take advantage of this opportunity or is unable to pacify those who objected to his nomination, it is the duty of the family to present another candidate.

Once a nominee gets the initial endorsement, the Gyasehene then goes to Bosomkeseso to present the name of the nominee for the approval of Bosomkese. Here a lot of rituals are performed to ascertain the suitability or otherwise of the nominee. The deliberation at the Bosomkese lasts for at least four hours. It is considered a very crucial point in the installation of an Omanhene of Twifo, because it is only upon a positive response from the Bosomkese that a green light is given for the formal installation process to proceed.⁴⁴² If the response is positive, the Gyasehene then returns to an assembly of the Oman at the Dadua tree at Mampong. The prospective Omanhene is then presented to the Oman for their endorsement.⁴⁴³ The endorsement usually took the form of clapping, singing, drumming and dancing. The new Omanhene is then placed on the stool in the presence of the Adontenhene, Gyasehene, the Kyidomhene, in addition to the stool carriers and attendants. The presence of the Adontenhene and the Gyasehene is very necessary to validate the enstoolment process. The Adontenhene is the one who

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Ibid. this was corroborated by Nana Baduo, the Werempehene. He is in-charge of the Apagyahina land where the Bosomkese is located and he leads the rituals that are performed at the Bosomkese.

⁴⁴³ In the Twifo setting, the Oman here is an assembly of all the divisional chiefs, family heads, and elders of the state. The entire public is also invited to be part.

places the proposed Omanhene on the stool.⁴⁴⁴ A sheep is slaughtered and its blood is sprinkled on the stool. Immediately after this process, the candidate is confined in a room with the stool upon which he is placed for one week. The confinement completes the first phase of the election and installation process.

On his release from confinement, the Omanhene elect is paraded through the Mampong town. He is led by a procession which starts from Asokwa through Akonfori to the Dadua tree where the everyday stool awaits him.⁴⁴⁵

Under the Dadua tree, oaths are taken. The new Omanhene must swear the oath of office before the elders and the public, pledging to respect the ancient rights of Twifo, observe the laws and customs of the state and answer any call from his people in the day or night. The oath is taken in the presence of the Gyasehene, Adontenhene and all other heads of divisions or representatives of all other divisions. However, in the Twifo setting, the Twafohene must be the first to swear an oath of allegiance to the new Omanhene before the new Omanhene follows with his oath of office.⁴⁴⁶

Oath by Twafohene: *Me... (name of Twafohene) a owo Twifo Oman yi mu sua ma wo (...name of Omanhene) se wofree me aandwo o, anaa awia o, na se m'angye so a mato Yawoada ntam*⁴⁴⁷— This translated as; I (...name of Twafohene) of Twifo swear to you (...name of Omanhene) that if you call me either by day or night and I fail to answer, I violate the Thursday Oath (Oman's Oath). The

⁴⁴⁴ Interview with Nana Okofo Buaben.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

Twafohene is followed by the Adontenhene, Gyasehene, Asafohene and the Ankobeahene, who all take turns to swear oath of allegiance to the new Omanhene.⁴⁴⁸ Then comes the oath of office of the new Omanhene.

Oath by Omanhene: *Me (...name) owo Twifo Oman yi mu, sua ma wo Twafohene (name of Twofohene) ne Oman no se, se m'andi mbra mpaninfou ahyehye ato ho ama Oman no a, na se mebu mbra so a, me to Yawoada ntam.*⁴⁴⁹

This is translated as: I (...Name of Omanhene) of Twifo swear to you Twafohene and the state that if I go against the lawful wishes of the elders in the administration of the state, I violate the state' oath (*Yawoada ntam*).

The oath taking completes the process of installation of a new Omanhene, after which tradition requires that the new Omanhene pays an allegiance fee to the Gyasehene and Adontenhene. The fee is also seen as a form of thanksgiving to the elector. An acceptance of the allegiance fee implies that the new Omanhene is fully accepted.

The Omanhene is followed by the Paramount Queen Mother (Ohemmaa). She is seen as the royal stool mother. Usually, she was the most senior woman in the royal family and she preserved the stools of her royal family.⁴⁵⁰ The history of the Twifo royal family traces the root of their genealogy to a female who was the royal stool mother. For that reason the Paramount Chief is determined through her

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Interview with Nana Baduo, Werempehene. In practice, the Omanhene is fully in charge of the traditional area, the Queen Mother appear to be eclipsed by the Omanhene.

decent.⁴⁵¹ This makes the position of the Twifo paramount Queen Mother, a prominent one. Nana Kesewa is considered the first queen mother. She is noted to have migrated from Asante with Mfotei Amoah.⁴⁵² Traditions of Twifo also mention one Nana Nyarmaah Boni, who later installed as Omanhene when the stool became vacant.⁴⁵³ It must be noted, however, that the tradition do not provide any details about her.

The Omanhene was also assisted by a state council composed of about 28 members.⁴⁵⁴ These were the chiefs of the important Twifo towns. The normal wing titles such as Benkumhene and Nifahene were in existence but practically insignificant as far as the administration of the state was concerned. The table below shows the four divisions in Twifo prior to the 1925 reorganization.

⁴⁵¹ See ADM 11/1/207. Mampong Native Affairs.

⁴⁵² K.Y. Daaky, *Oral Traditions of Assin-Twifo*, Accra: Institute of African Studies, 1969.

⁴⁵³ This was corroborated in an interview with Nana Baduo, Werempehene.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Pre-1925 Twifo Political Division

AMPUTIFO	APEGYA	ABUSUMPEDIA	GYASE
Nyenase	Edugya	Mokwa	Mampong
Bepoben	Tufoi	Kaireku	Darmang
Insima	Odumase	Abodom	Nyamebekyere
		Mampomma	Eduabeng
		Imbraim	Ayaase
		Buabin	Aboabo
		Kyebi	Mansiso
		Womaso	Esaman
		Kotokyi	
		Poedea	
		Kyedru	
		Bremang	
		Mobeaso	
		Badua	
		Twifu	
		Foso	
		Agona	
		Himansu	
		Asinwia	
		Sibinsa	

The normal wings titles such as Benkumhene and Nifahene and others were only held by important chiefs within the Twifo state, but with the exception of the Gyase, all the others existed as mere titles. In practice, they were of no significance as far as the political divisions of the state was concerned. For instance, the Nifa division was held by Hemanso which made the chief of Hemanso, the Nifahene. However, in practice, the Hemanso town was subsumed in the Abusumpedia Division, which was headed by Mokwaa before 1925. There were others such as Adonten of Nyinase (Adonten division was relocated to Buabin in 1956, whilst Anyinase was made the Kronti division. Thus the chief of Nyinase became the

Krontihene whilst the chief of Buabin became the Adontenhene), Twafo at Edugya, Gyase at Darmang etc.⁴⁵⁵

These divisions did not regulate their affairs, neither were they able to exercise any direct civil authority within them. They all served the Omanhene directly except in cases where a stool was subordinate to a 'parent' stool. A classic example could be found in the Abusumpedia Division where the villages of Pewodie, Baaduwa, Kotokyi, Bremang, Asinwa, Kyedru, and Sibinsu personally subordinate to Mokwaa, in which case they served the Omanhene through the Mokwaahene.⁴⁵⁶ This implied that those villages owed direct allegiance to the Mokwaahene and indirectly to the Omanhene. Perhaps, this was one of the reasons why the Mokwaahene rejected his new status as Benkumhene, a title which appeared to have merely existed in nomenclature in the Twifo political set up at the time. Further, Mokwaa's status as one of the few sub-divisions in the Twifo with several subordinate towns may have provided motivations for her to press for independence from the Twifo following the 1925 reorganization. This is because the arrangement made Mokwaa appear like a state within a state. Nonetheless, in reality, the Abusumpedia was a division of Twifo which by extension implied that as the Abusumpediahene, the Mokwaahene was a divisional chief of Twifo, in contrast to Mokwaa claim of being independent of Twifo.⁴⁵⁷ In fact, in 1928, the

⁴⁵⁵ Twifo Native Affairs

⁴⁵⁶ The traditions confirm that those states which were directly under Mokwaa, the Omanhene made no attempt to interfere in their internal affairs.

⁴⁵⁷ Mokwaa strongly claims that she has been independent from time immemorial. This claim is buttressed by a popular Mokwaa saying that; "*Taasemeni Mokwaa, Yensombi yennan obi, yete yenho ase*" which is literally translated as: *Age old Mokwaa we serve no one, we depend on no one, yet we are our own*. This implied that Mokwaa was wholly independent state.

colonial government provided what could be described as the clarification on the controversy of Mokwaa's status within the Twifo state. This was contained in a letter from the Commissioner for the Central province through the District Commissioner to the Mokwaa. Excerpts of the letter read;

I have the honour to request the District Commissioner to inform the Ohene of Mokwaa that no claim such as is put forward by him will be considered by Government until it has been put forward through the channels now adjudged to be correct i.e. by way of the Native Administration Ordinance. In Schedule II to this Ordinance, Mokwaa is shown as a Divisional Chief serving the Omanhene of Twifo, and this position has been accepted without demur up to the present. Sections 33 and 34 should be read to the Ohene of Mokwaa, whose attention should also be drawn to section 46 sub sections (h) (i) and (k) of the Ordinance.⁴⁵⁸

Thus, in the view of the colonial government, the Mokwaahene was subordinate to the Twifo Omanhene and this was supported by the arrangement under the Native Administration Ordinance. Perhaps, this explains why the colonial government refused to entertain Mokwaa's petitions for independence and a paramount status.

It must also be noted, however, that Mokwaa was not the only division under the Twifo that served as a 'parent' stool with subordinate stools. Actually Twifo Buabin, Mampoma and Kayereku, all have subordinate states with stools that serve the Omanhene through them. In this regard, Buabin appears to be the division with the most subordinate stools that serve the Omanhene through the Buabinhene (Adontenhene of Twifo). In fact, one could count about twenty sub-states of Buabin, with the major ones being Ibraem, Denyase, Subiriso, Hiamankyene,

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Kontorkrom, Abudukrom, Bekwai, Bona, Robberkrom etc. This situation has made Buabin one of the major states within the Twifo paramountcy⁴⁵⁹.

It was in 1925 that Appiah Nuamah I began redistributing, reorganizing and creating of divisions in the Twifo state in line with modern Akan political organization. As indicated earlier, there were internal and external factors behind the 1925 reorganization which need not be repeated here. It must, however, be added that given the political events preceding the 1925 reorganization, one cannot rule out attempt by the Omanhene to secure his position, i.e. the position of the Omanhene. In other words, the spate of destoolment of Twifo chiefs, including Appiah Nuamah himself may have been a contributory factor for the creation and redistribution of divisions and offices in the Twifo state. Thus, certain key divisional positions were now given to persons of trust, perhaps to ensure an unfettered loyalty and commitment from the divisions. It may also not be wrong to postulate that Appiah Nuamah wanted to strengthen the power of the Omanhene whilst weakening those of the wing chiefs, particularly, Mokwaa.

It must be reiterated that the circumstances that compelled Appiah Nuamah to effect that reorganization cannot be discussed in isolation. As happened in many other traditional areas, external factors were responsible for that situation. Some policies of the colonial government, particularly, the new arrangements in the chieftaincy institution ushered by the Native Jurisdiction Ordinance (NJO), was a

⁴⁵⁹ Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin, 68yrs, Chief of Twifo Buabin, interviewed at his palace, Buabin, 13th October, 2018. It is interesting to note that, just as Mokwaa used the existence of these sub-states as one of the justification for their quest for paramountcy, Buabin has also at the moment petitioned the Omanhene to consider granting Buabin a paramount status with the existing of several sub-states as one of their justifications

major cause of the problem. The NJO had rudely shaken the traditional patterns to the extent that, each was trying to preserve whatever power and sources of wealth he had and even expand on them if possible.⁴⁶⁰ Mokwaa may have felt that, with the new arrangement, it was not in her interest, to continue to be a divisional chief of the Twifo Omanhene, with all the resources within her jurisdiction.⁴⁶¹ Thus, Mokwaa's 'insubordinate' tendency towards the Omanhene which got to its crescendo with the allegations that the Abosompédiehene (Mokwaahene) attempted to kill the Omanhene, could have been motivated by the desire on the part of the Mokwaahene to assert his independence in order to enjoy whatever benefits and privileges that the NJO offered to an Omanhene. This, however, brought tension between the Twifo and Mokwaa which continued to date.⁴⁶² From that period up to date, the relationship between the Twifo and Mokwaa has been characterized by mutual suspicion, mistrust and occasional violent clashes between the two states.

From the sequence of events, it is also clear that the Omanhene could not allow the Mokwaa to continue to hold a position that made the Mokwaahene feel so powerful to pose a threat to the Omanhene. In 1925, following the reorganization, the Abosompédie division was totally scrapped from the Twifo

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⁴⁶¹ Mokwaa strongly claims that about 2/3 of Twifo lands are Mokwaa lands. These lands according to Mokwaa are thickly forested, rich and fertile in its products and yields cocoa, bananas, oranges, foodstuffs and many other cash crops. Besides, Mokwaa claims that most of the mineral rich areas are in their domain. They make mention of the Bempong and Minta forest reserves with their diamond, bauxite and gold deposits as belonging to Mokwaa.

⁴⁶² See Provincial Council Telegram No. 29, No. P.C. /121/C.P., 1930, Titled: Political differences between Chief Kobina Saiku of Mokwaa and Nana Appiah Nuamah, Omanhin of Twifur.

political set up. This appeared to give some credence to the speculation that the existence of the Abosompodie division was a thorn in the flesh of the Omanhene.⁴⁶³

Creation and Redistribution of Divisions: 1925 up to Date.

In 1925, changes were made to the existing divisional positions whilst new divisional rulers were also created. There were no strict rules guiding the selection of the heads of the divisions. The selection of divisional heads was the prerogative of the Omanhene. There were no compelling reasons for the allocation of which divisional position to which state. Nonetheless, some consideration was given to the type of family/clan and to some extent their contribution to the Omanhene's family. As indicate earlier, these changes did not happen without problems, particularly, the changes that affected Mokwaa and Hemang. Mokwaa was shifted from being the head of Abosompodie to the Benkum division whereas Hemang was made the head Nkyidom. Thus, the Mokwaahene and the Hemanghene became the first Benkumhene and Nkyidomhene of the Twifo state respectively. It must be reiterated, however, that it was to this move by the Omanhene in 1925 that all the troubles between the Twifo and Mokwaa on one side and Twifo and Hemang could be traced. When Hemang finally seceded from the Twifo state, the Kyidom division was given to Kayereku.

The Nkyidom, division is very important in the Akan political set up. The Kyidom served as the rear guard of the moving army. Thus, they provided protection for the Omanhene from behind. Therefore, qualities such as trust,

⁴⁶³ Since 1925 no Omanhene has attempted to reintroduce the Abosompodie division even with the departure of Mokwaa from the Twifo Traditional Area.

confidence and loyalty were key considerations for that position. Kayereku was one of the early states to be founded by the Twifo immigrants and more importantly, it was founded by the Agona clan. Thus, clan affinity and the status of Kayereku may have been the major motivating factors for the headship of the Kyidom division.

Similarly, when Mokwaa also broke away from the Twifo state, the head of the Benkum division was relocated to Mampoma. The Benkum division formed the left wing of the Twifo army during war. It appears the Benkum division was given to Mampoma as a reward for their loyalty to the Twifo. Twifo traditions explain that the towns of Mampoma and Womaso were closely aligned with Mokwaa because of the proximity between the two towns and Mokwaa. When Mokwaa broke away from the Twifo and became a paramountcy, Womaso opted to join Mokwaa and was rewarded with the head of Kronti division of Mokwaa paramountcy.⁴⁶⁴ It must, be pointed out, however, that Womaso's decision to join Mokwaa is currently one of the controversies between the Twifo, Womaso and Mokwaa. The Twifo claims that the Womaso land belongs to the Twifo and for that reason, the chief of Womaso cannot take Twifo land to Mokwaa. According to the Twifo, therefore, the chief of Womaso is free to join Mokwaa but he should vacate the Womaso land for the Twifo to reclaim their land. On the other hand, Mokwaa also claims the land of Womaso belongs to Mokwaa and directly under the

⁴⁶⁴ Wamaso is now considered one of the major towns under Mokwaa and the chief of Wamaso who is also the Krontihene for the Mokwaa Paramountcy is the next in rank after the Mokwaahene.

jurisdiction of the Mokwaahene. The issue of Womaso is still being litigated by the Twifo and Mokwaa in court.⁴⁶⁵

Mampoma, however, remained with the Twifo. It is, thus, highly possible that the headship of the Benkum division which was hitherto held by Mokwaa, was given to Mampoma not only as a reward for the loyalty of Mampoma to the Twifo state, but due to the fact that, Mampoma was one of the towns founded by members of the same Agona clan that migrated to the River Pra basin.⁴⁶⁶

The Nifa division was also created and Hemanso was made the head of that division. The division is also a very important division in the Akan military set up. The Nifahene is the chief in charge of the right wing of the army during war. The choice of Hemanso should not be a surprise. Hemanso was one of the early states around the Pra to have joined the Twifo state upon the arrival of the Twifo immigrants. Formerly called Anyinabi, Hemanso was not founded by the Twifo immigrants but was one of the states that joined the Twifo to enjoy the protection of the Twifo. It was only natural for the Twifo to reward pioneers of the Twifo state. It also seems that among the early states that formed the Twifo state, i.e., Mokwaa and Hemang, it was only Hemanso that accepted her position in the 1925 reorganization without complaints at a time when Hemang and Mokwaa were seriously protesting their new positions.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ Interview with Nana Kwame Baduo, chief of Kayereku and Kyidomhene of Twifo, 82yrs, interviewed at Mampong during the Twifo Guakro festival, 13th December, 2018.

⁴⁶⁶ Twifo traditions allege that Mokwaa tried to lure Mampoma to join Mokwaa but Mampoma refused

⁴⁶⁷ The records show that Hemanso welcomed her position as head of the Nifa division without reservation. Twifo traditions confirm this by asserting that Hemanso is among the few states that has never had confrontation with the Twifo.

Apart from rewarding loyalists with these stools, it is also clear that several other factors were considered in the creation and distribution of divisions. The security of the Omanhene and the paramount stool, for instance, was a key factor. Besides, clan ties were never relegated. A classic example was the position of Gyaase which was given to Darmang, a town founded by members of the same Agona clan. In the Akan political and military set up, the Gyaase division is often reserved for the blood relatives of the chief including his sisters, his children and grandchildren. It should, therefore, not be surprising that the Gyaase position was given to an Agona family; for the Gyaasehene is an important personality among the 'king makers' who choose or install the Omanhene in any Akan society.⁴⁶⁸ In war, he and his contingent and that of the Ankobeahene provided immediate protection to the Omanhene. In Twifo, just like any other Akan state, the Gyaasehene becomes the regent upon the death or destoolment of the Omanhene until a new Omanhene is duly installed. Therefore, it is obvious that the Gyaase stool was given to people who could be depended upon in terms of the security of the Omanhene. Thus, clan ties appear to have played a role in making Darmang head of the Gyaase division.

Then there was the recreation of the Adonten division, which before 1956 was headed by the chief of Nyinase. Nyinase was one of the towns which was founded by members of the Agona family and it is one of the principal towns in the Twifo state. The status of Nyinase in the area may have qualified the town to be the

⁴⁶⁸ In Twifo, the Gyaasehene was very instrumental in the destoolment of chiefs in the early part of the 20th century, including the destoolment and re-entoolment of Appiah Nuamah. In most cases the Gyaasehene acted as the regent before a substantive chief was installed.

head of the Adonten division. In the current Twifo political structure, the Adontenhene is the fourth in command after the Omanhene, Krontihene and the Gyaasehene. However, before 1956, there was no Kronti division in the Twifo political structure which presupposes that the Adontenhene was the third in command. In 1956, however, the Kronti division was created by Ampontsi Fi, the then Omanhene, as part of the Twifo political structure for the first time. Twifo traditions are not too explicit on the reasons for the creation of that division. Nonetheless, the traditions clearly indicate that the Kronti division was copied from Asante. In Asante, the Kronti division, with a silver stool was created for the Mamponhene. This was in recognition of the status of Mampong within the Asante confederacy and also a reward for the services of the Mamponhene in the Feyiase War (1699-1701).⁴⁶⁹ When the Kronti division was created with a silver stool, it was made second in command to the occupant of the Golden Stool, the Asantehene. Thus, the Mamponhene acts in the absence of the Asantehene.⁴⁷⁰

Similarly, when the Kronti division was created by the Twifo under Appiah Nuamah I, it was made the second in command after the Omanhene and in the wisdom of Nana Ampontsi Fi, Nyinase was best qualified for that division. Thus, Nyinase was made head of the Kronti division of the Twifo Traditional Area. Subsequently, the Adonten division was then moved to Buabin, making the chief of Buabin the Adontenhene of the Twifo Traditional Area.⁴⁷¹ In the Twifo political

⁴⁶⁹ Oral traditions of Asante clearly confirm that the Asante war front at the Feyiase War was led by the Mamponghene Boahen Anantuo. The silver stool (Dwete Dwa) was created for him after the war.

⁴⁷⁰ Interview with Nana Kwasi Gyan, Gyaasehene of Mampong Traditional

⁴⁷¹ See ADM 23/1/3856. Twifo State Affairs vol.4

and military set up, the Adonten division plays a very important role as the leader of the army during war. The Adonten division of Twifo is the largest part of the Twifo army in times of war.⁴⁷² It consisted of the Adonten Proper or the main body of the army under an Adontenhene, and the Twafo or advance guard under a Twafohene. The Adontenhene was the commander of the whole Twifo army.⁴⁷³ Thus, the Adonten led the main body of the army whilst the Benkum and Nifa covered the left and right flanks respectively. In addition to these three main divisions of the army, there were the Gyase or the body guard of the Omanhene, commanded by the Gyasehene and the Kyidom or rear-guard under a Kyidomhene. In war or on the battlefield, these divisions took charge of the Omanhene.⁴⁷⁴

Because of the important role the Adonten play in the Akan set up, the Adonten division was always given to towns or states with good standing in any Akan state. Besides, the Adontenhene must be a person of trust, courage and bold. This begs the question; did Buabin deserve to be awarded such an important and sensitive division?

Before this 1956 brief reshuffle, Buabin was one of the towns under the Abosompodie division.⁴⁷⁵ However, the choice of Buabin as the head of the Adonten division could not have been an error. Buabin has an interesting history of its own which may be appropriate to briefly comment on.

⁴⁷² Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin III, Adontenhene of Twifo Traditional Area

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Interview with Nana Kofi Buabin

Oral tradition of Buabin asserts strongly that they were part of the larger Agona groups that allegedly migrated from Begho to Chiraa in the 15th century.⁴⁷⁶ From the account, the first dispersion occurred between them in Chiraa (Kyiraa) where the majority of the Agona people led by Denkyira subsequently moved to Adansi whilst the others moved to a place called Domakwa. The Buabin were part of the group that settled at Domakwa.⁴⁷⁷ Buabin tradition also assert that other Agona groups that settled at Domakwa included Anyinase, Kayereku and Mampoma.⁴⁷⁸ When the Twifo later became well established around the Pra basin, the various Agona groups such as Buabin, Anyinase, Mampoma, Darmang and Kayereku chose to reunite with them. For that reason, when the Omanhene was creating and distributing divisions, Buabin was considered as an integral part of the Agona that deserved a very respectable division within the Twifo paramountcy. It was the then chief of Buabin Nana Bugyei II who fought strenuously for the position of Adontenhene of Twifo and he became the first Adontenhene of the Twifo Traditional area.⁴⁷⁹

Clearly, the Buabin account, explains why the Adonten stool, whose occupant is the fourth center chief in the Twifo state after the Omanhene, Krontihene and Gyaasehene, was moved to Buabin. The account further explains why major divisional chiefs in the Twifo traditional area – Krontihene, Gyaasehene, Adontenhene, Benkumhene and Kyidomhene, Twafohene are allocated where they

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid

⁴⁷⁸ This is confirmed by oral traditions of Anyinase, Kayereku and Mampoma

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with Nana Kofi Buabin,

are. All these major positions are held by members of the Agona clan.⁴⁸⁰ Thus clan affinity played a major role in the creation and distribution of the major offices in the Twifo state; with the exception of the Nifa division, which is headed by Hemanso, an Oyoko clan and Apegya division headed by all the other major divisional positions in the Twifo state is occupied by an Agona family. It must, however, be noted that other factors such as reward for loyalty, and security of the Omanhene had a role to play in the distribution of offices in the Twifo state.⁴⁸¹

The creation and distribution of stools and divisions has been a continuous process. Among the recently created divisions is the Werempem division with its head at Bepobeng. The Werempe are made up of the Abosiabo family who predominantly belong to the Oyoko clan.⁴⁸² Like Hemanso, they were originally not part of the Twifo but seem to have joined the Twifo around the 17th century. The present Werempehene, Nana Kwame Baduo Ababio II, informed the researcher in an interview that their ancestors always allied with the Twifo in their wars.⁴⁸³ He mentioned the infamous Asante-Gyaaman War as one of the wars the Abosiabo family joined the Twifo to fight for Asante. Reminiscent of that war, the Werempe have a saying which goes like; “Me Gyaaman Kwan so” which is translated literally as ‘my Gyaaman journey’.⁴⁸⁴ That statement reminded the

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

⁴⁸² Interview with Nana Kwame Baduo Ababio II, 50yrs, Werempehene of the Twifo Traditional Area. Interviewed at the UCC Senior Club House, 20th April 2018. N.B. Most of the Union states of Asante belonged to the Oyoko clan of the Akan blood relations. Further, they lived in Adanse with the other clans of the Akan.

⁴⁸³ Interview with Nana Kwame Baduo, chief of Bepoben.

⁴⁸⁴ Interview with Nana Baduo Ababio, chief of Bepoben and Werempehene of Twifo. Bepoben traditions assert that one of the Abosiabo brothers by name Op. Aboagye died in the Gyaaman War.

Abosiabo family of their members who died in that war with Adinkra.⁴⁸⁵ Thus when the Twifo became firmly established in the Pra basin, the Abosiabo family were Apegyahina. The town they established was named 'Bepokokoso' (meaning Red Mountain). The name was later changed to Bepoben, which also translated as 'Red Mountain'. Subsequently they were made caretakers of all properties of the Twifo including the Apegyahena lands which housed the Twifo 'Bosomkese'. To further show appreciation for the contribution of the Abosiabo family to the Twifo, Omanhene Kwaku Appiah Nuamah began moves to create a major division for them. Unfortunately, his destoolment truncated the process. Nonetheless, the process was continued by the Okogyeman Amponti Fi III, who in 1965, offered the Abosiabo family the title of 'Bosomkesehene', a division that comprised Aboabo, Moseaso and the Abosiabo family.⁴⁸⁶ The 'Bosomkesehene' remained the only divisional chief, whom the Omanhene had to remove his slippers before.⁴⁸⁷ The major duty of the Werempene is to keep the black stool whenever it becomes vacant. He also laisses with the Krontihene and the Abusuapene in searching for a rightful occupant to the stool.⁴⁸⁸

Three chiefs sat on the Bosomkesehene stool. However, following the death of the third chief, Nana Abosiabo III, the family petitioned the Omanhene Obrempong Appiah Nuamah, for a higher divisional status. The Omanhene consequently created the Werempem division for the Abosiabo family and it was

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid. The Omanhene removing his slippers before the Bosomkesehene is a sign of reverence to the Bosomkese and who ever represents him.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

made one of the main Twifo divisions.⁴⁸⁹ Clearly this was a reward for the loyalty of the Abosiabo family to the Twifo. The Werempehene is in charge of all the gods of the Twifo, particularly the Bosomkese and he makes sure all the rituals and sacrifices to the gods are duly performed.⁴⁹⁰

With the creation of the Werempe division, the Twifo paramountcy had nine divisions-Kronti, Gyaase, Adonten, Nifa, Benkum, Kyidom, Twafo, Apegya and Werempe. Like other Akan states, these divisions are generally a military organization of the Twifo and they work to support the Omanhene.⁴⁹¹

The military structural basis of the Twifo state implied that everybody was a potential soldier. In times of war therefore, the head of the various divisions called up their men who took up arms to fight for the state. The Twifo did not have a standing army but there could be a “leve en masse” on the outbreak of a war.⁴⁹² In times of peace, the divisions were the political units of the state which served the Omanhene and the state in various ways. Besides, the Omanhene had the prerogative to assign some duties to any of them at any time.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Interview with Nana Kwame Baduo.

⁴⁹² “Leve en ‘masse” is a French term that emerged during the French Revolution, which was used to describe the policy of mass national conscription in the face of invasion.

⁴⁹³ Interview with Nana Kofi Buabin, Adontenhene of Twifo.

The table below shows the current Twifo divisions and their subordinate towns:

NAMES OF CHIEFS	DIVISIONAL STATUS	CLAN & TOWN	SUBORDINATE TOWNS
NANA NKWANTABISA III	HEAD OF KONTIRE DIVISION (KRONTIHENE)	AGONA – NYINASE	AKWAMUHEN – BEPOBEN, KYEBI, NSAMA – NTAFRIWASO
NANA ASIEDU KUFFOUR III	HEAD OF GYAASE DIVISION (GYAASEHENE)	AGONA – DAAMANG	ANKOBEA – NTAFRIWASO, TUAGYA – KOTOKYE, AKOMFODE – MAMPONG
NANA OKOFO BUABENG III	HEAD OF ADONTEN DIVISION (ADONTENHENE)	AGONA – BUABENG	TWIFO DENYASE, AYAASE, KWAKUDUM AND OTHER BUABENG COMMUNITIES.
NANA ADUTWIABBAM IV	HEAD OF NIFA DIVISION(NIFAHENE)	OYOKO) – HEMANSO	HEMANSO, ABODOM
NANA BOAKYEHENE II	BENKUMHENE	AGONA – MAMPOMA	
NANA KWAME BAIDOO II	HEAD OF KYIDOM DIVISION (KYIDOMHENE)	AGONA – KAYIREKU	KAYIREKU, ASHIRE, OSENEAGYA, MAMPONKUMA.
NANA AMOASI KWADWO II	TWAFOHENE	AGONA – ADUGYAA	
NANA KWAME BADUO ABABIO II	HEAD OF WEREMPE DIVISION (WEREMPEHENE)	OYOKO) – BEPOBENG	ABOABO, MOSEASO, BEPONBENG
NANA OBENG MIREKU II	ADEGYAHENE HEAD	ADUANA – ADUGYAA	TOFOE, ABAMU – MBRAIM, MAMPONG ASOKWA

Each of the Ahen (chiefs) had under him a number of villages headed by Adikro (Odikro) who dealt with, or administered their villages. Perhaps, with the creation and distribution of divisions in the major towns, the Twifo Omanhene found it expedient to create these lower divisions in the smaller towns to help better

administer the state at the village level. The existence of lower divisions is not peculiar to the Twifo. In most Akan states, the position of Odikro is mostly created as the head of a smaller town or a village. The Odikro, in many cases did not have a stool but served the Omanhene through a divisional chief. Occasionally, a village could be upgraded to a divisional status. This is a common feature in Twifo. Villages such as Denyase, Kwakudum, Mbraim, Nuamakrom, Ayaase, Bepobeng, Aboabo, Moseaso etc, were all in the lower division headed by an Odikro, but have been elevated to a divisional status but they are still under some divisional chiefs.⁴⁹⁴

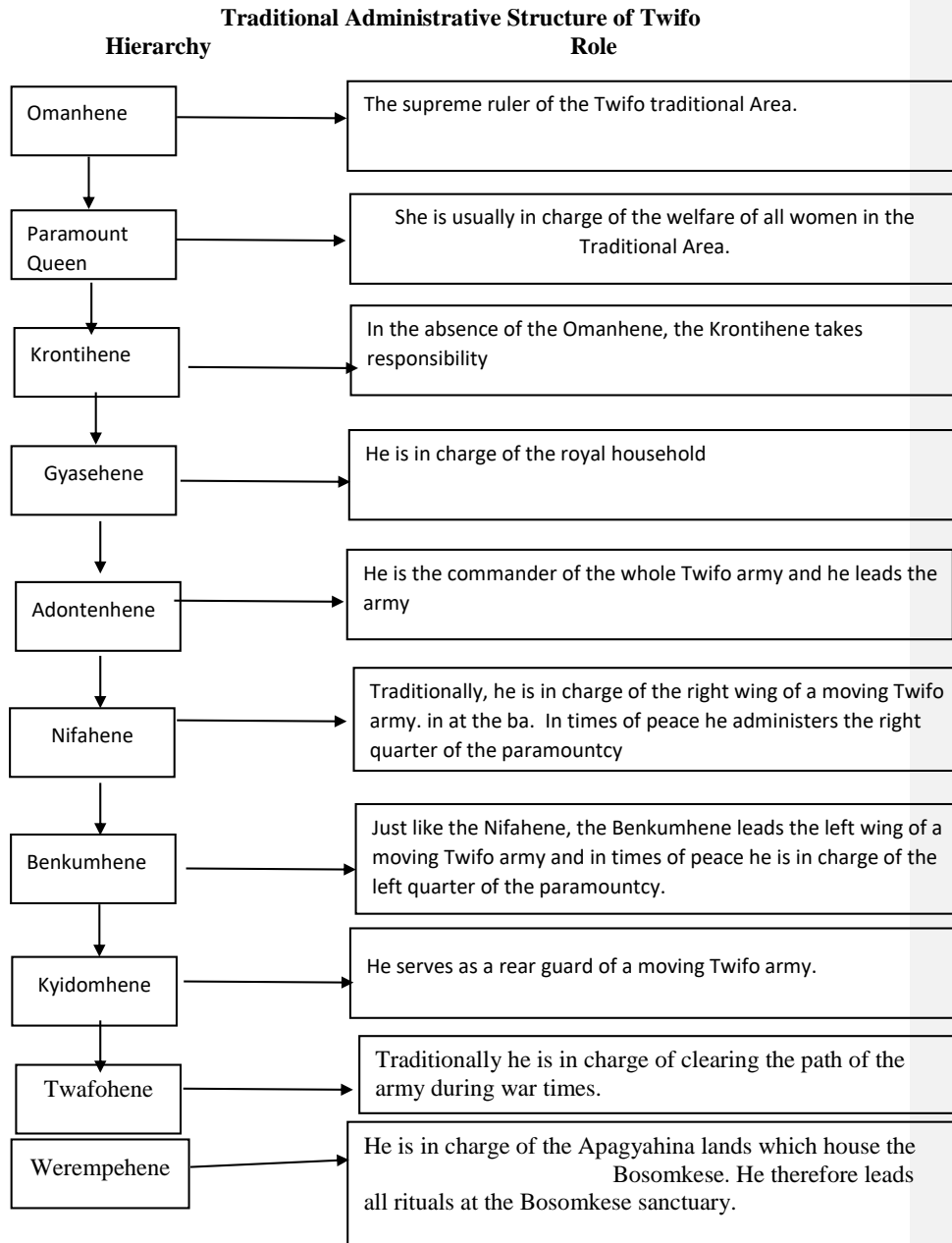
Below is a list of centers run by an Odikro

Ankobehene – Ntafrewaso
Akwarehene _ Bepoben
Dabehene - Tofoe
Tufohene - Nyinase
Abamuhene - Tofoe
Nsafoahene - Mampong
Nkonwasofohene – Mampong
Ahinmahene - Ntafrewaso
Tuagyaahene - Kotokye
Kokonwedehehene - Agona
Akyeamehene - Moseaso
Abakomahene - Mampong.

Generally, the reorganization in 1925 did not bring any drastic change in the political structure of Twifo. It was still a military organization but de-

⁴⁹⁴ Interview with Nana Baduo Ababio, Werempehene.

compartmentalized. The functions of the Amputifo, Apegya, Abosompedie and Gyase were only transferred into Benkum, Nifa, Adonten and Kyidom respectively. These divisions now play an active role in the administration of the state unlike the pre-1925 era. Below is the hierarchy of the Twifo organization and summary of their roles:



Source: From researcher's field work

The above structure is also replicated in all the towns and villages where there are divisional chiefs. Most of the divisional chiefs have the same structure that helps them to administer their jurisdictions.

From the narrative, one can conclude that the Twifo dominance over the states around the Pra basin was not achieved only by the military prowess. The Twifo superior political organization with a paramount stool made it easier for the states around the Pra to be subsumed under the authority of the Twifo. Upon their settlement at the Pra basin, the early chiefs of the immigrant Twifo cleverly devised a kind of arrangement that ensured harmony between them and the host states. Mokwaa, was made the head of the Abosompodie which was divisional status, yet made Mokwaa feel prominent within their union with the Twifo. As a result, there was peace and harmony between the host states and the Twifo immigrants for over a century. It was in 1925, that Appiah Nuamah I effected changes to the Twifo political structure. By the 1925 reorganization, the Twifo began to assert their authority within the Pra basin. From then on, all major divisions were headed by people who were related to the Omanhene through clan ties and trusted followers of the Twifo. Thus, from 1925, the Twifo political structure changed from what it used to be when the Twifo state was a union of Hemang, Mokwaa and the Twifo immigrants. Nonetheless, the 1925 reorganization indirectly marked the beginning of the disintegration of the union of the Twifo immigrants, Hemang and Mokwaa. With the secession of Hemang in 1927 and Mokwaa in 1987, the Twifo became a distinct group of people in the Pra basin with all their divisions headed by Twifo people. Also, the Twifo put in place a structure that was in line with what was

pertaining in other major Akan states such as Asante, Denkyira, Akyem and Akwamu. Nonetheless, the reorganization of 1925 led the Twifo into a kind a crossroads for many years. For more than half a century after 1925, the Twifo were engulfed in protracted litigation with states such as Hemang and Mokwaa. Notwithstanding, the Twifo political structure and politics have evolved.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TWIFO FESTIVALS AND OTHER SOCIAL CUSTOMS

Festivals form an integral component of all traditional societies in Ghana.⁴⁹⁵

It helps strengthen the identity of societies as belonging to a group or a place. It also provides opportunity for community's development of consciousness and pride⁴⁹⁶. Festivals are predominantly a religious exercise because it appears to be the only means apart from worship "whereby man has sought from time immemorial, to express his awareness of a transcendental being outside himself".⁴⁹⁷ This is because man has always believed that there are certain cosmic forces which manifest themselves in deities or gods in material form.⁴⁹⁸ Nonetheless, festivals have political functions as well because the two are not mutually exclusive. Odotei confirms the religious and political functions of festivals by asserting that, in the performance of rituals during festivals, "the head of the community (the chief) has a responsibility to ensure that he has the blessing of the gods and the ancestors to rule. His authority is delegated by the gods, the living and the dead".⁴⁹⁹

The Twifo people have festivals and customs which are very fascinating, with complex and highly developed features, functions and meanings. As one of the early Akan states with culturally rich traditions and values, the Twifo and their

⁴⁹⁵ See Irene Odotei, "Festivals in Ghana: Continuity, Transformation and Politicization of Tradition", in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New series, No.6, 2002, pp.17-34. See also Kari Jaeger & R. Mykletun, "Festivals, Identities, and Belonging", in *Event Management*, Vol.17, pp.213-226.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ See Eric O. Ayisi, *Introduction to the Study of African Culture*, 2nd Edition, London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1972, p.82. These deities or supernatural beings are said to control the world through certain ineluctable laws, the infractions of which could cause misfortune.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

big brothers Denkyira claim to be the source of many of the institutions, customs and festivals made famous by the Asante. Asante, for many years, was under the influence of the Agona people, (Denkyira to be specific) before coming into their own in the early years of the eighteenth century, and no doubt took a lot from these Agona cultural and other social patterns. The 'Adaye kese' festival, for instance, which is considered the most important ancestral custom of the Asante, is without doubt magnified Adaye rituals. The 'Adaye kese' is known to have been instituted and first celebrated in the immediate period after the Feyiase War (1699-1702) between Asante and Denkyira (a war which Asante described as the Asante Independence War).⁵⁰⁰ This tends to give some credence to the assertion of the Twifo and Denkyira that they are the original source of the Adaye festival which is celebrated by many Akan states including the Asante.⁵⁰¹

The chapter examines the Twifo festivals and some of their social customs, with emphasis on the Twifo Guakro Odwira festival. The chapter studies the origin of the festival and the role it plays in the history of Twifo. The chapter also examines some social customs of the Twifo, their functions and meaning for the people.

⁵⁰⁰ The 'Adaye kese' (Grand Adaye) is the final 'Akwasidae' which is widely celebrated. Opanin Osei Kwadwo confirmed in an interview that the 'Adaye kese' was introduced to mark the attainment of statehood by the Asante following their victory over Denkyira.

⁵⁰¹ The Omanhene of the Twifo strongly asserts that the Twifo are the original source of many Akan traditions. It has been the contention of the Twifo that the Asante copied many of their traditions from Twifo.

Origin of Odwira Festival

Generally, Odwira is a festival celebrated by many of the Akan groups in Ghana. Odwira was an occasion for ritual cleansing and purification aimed at establishing a seamless unity between the living, the ancestors and the gods. It was usually celebrated between September and October but on different days of the year based on the Akan general conceptualization of time and calendrical construct.⁵⁰² Thus, the Odwira festival was also used to mark time and its passage in many traditional Akan societies.

The traditions of Twifo and Denkyira concur that the Odwira festivals began with them. The two Agona states have asserted that Odwira was original to the Agona clan, and Denkyira was the first state to celebrate it. The traditions of Denkyira assert that the name Odwira originated in reference to the Denkyira paramount stool called “Bankam” (also known as Abankwadwa).⁵⁰³ The traditions have it that one day after a heavy downpour, their priestess called Ayekra Adeboe discovered the stool made with precious beads and gold. According to Denkyira tradition, the stool descended from heaven and it contained the spirit of Denkyira.⁵⁰⁴ It was so sacred that no one could see and touch it except the priestess and members of the royal family. Ayekra became the first king of Denkyira and the people coined the term “ebedwiri” from which the name Odwira originated.⁵⁰⁵ It was celebrated every year to mark the sanctity and supremacy of the paramount stool of Denkyira.

⁵⁰² The Akan calendar was based on a concurrent counting of a six-day cycle (Nnanson) with seven-day cycle(Nnanwotwe) which results in 42days (adaduanan)

⁵⁰³ Interview with Odeefou Boa Amponsem, Denkyirahene, at his Place at Jukwa, 2015.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

Odwira was therefore a purely religious celebration but later the Odwira period was used for the purification of the stool after wars.⁵⁰⁶

According to Denkyira tradition, Ayekraa reigned as Denkyirahene between 1587 and 1602 at Abankeseso after leading the Adawufo, as the ancestors of Denkyira were known, from the north to the south. J.K. Kumah, however, believes Ayekraa's reign span the period 1572 to 1587.⁵⁰⁷ Notwithstanding the discrepancy over the exact date, Odwira must have been introduced and celebrated before the beginning of the 17th century. At the peak of Denkyira power, political connotation was attached to Odwira, as it became an occasion when all vassals of Denkyira assembled at the capital at Abankeseso for the celebration, during which all the vassals renewed their oath of loyalty and allegiance to the Denkyirahene.⁵⁰⁸ Thus, Odwira came to assume some political connotation, which was a re-enactment of political power, identity and unity of the state. The account gives some credence to the assertion of the Twifo and Denkyira that most of the Akan states, including Asante copied Odwira from the Agona clan. The traditions of both states indicate that major states within the Agona stock were Denkyira, their senior brother, Twifo, Oda and few others. Odwira is celebrated by all the Agona members to honor their ancestors and renew their family bonds.⁵⁰⁹ The Twifo, therefore, were one of the pioneer celebrants of the Odwira festival.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁷ J. K., Kumah, "Denkyira:1600-1730 AD", Unpublished M.A. Thesis submitted to the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, 1965.

⁵⁰⁸ Interview with Odeefou Boa Amponsem. See also F.K. Buah, *A History of Ghana*, Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1980, p.11

⁵⁰⁹ Traditions of both Denkyira and Twifo confirm that they migrated together from Asante. The Twifo settled with Denkyira briefly before migrating further inland to the area around the Pra.

Odwira was instituted in Asante, predominantly for political purposes. Coming on the heels of Asante liberation from Denkyira, and subsequent Asante aggrandisement through military conquest, Odwira came to serve as an annual forum for the “affirmation and renewal of personal allegiance by subjugated or otherwise constituent office holders”.⁵¹⁰ McCaskie aptly described Asante Odwira as an “ideological structuration of knowledge in that it observed and celebrated the triumphalist history and essential rectitude of the state in the collective person(s) of successive Asantehenes”.⁵¹¹ It was in the 19th century that a religious dimension was added where on every Odwira, sacrifices and other ceremonies were made to the deceased Asante kings. The Asante Odwira must have been copied from Denkyira by Okomfo Anokye, just as the myth about the Asante ‘Golden Stool’.

When the Twifo finally settled around the Pra basin, they continued to celebrate Odwira festival. The name was later changed to Twifo Guakro Odwira, under Obrempong Appiah Nuamah II.

Twifo Guakro Odwira Festival

The Twifo State has one main festival which one may call ‘national’ festival- Odwira, which is celebrated by all chiefs and people within the Twifo traditional area. Odwira was celebrated towards the end of the year, usually in the first week of November. Like that of Denkyira, the name Odwira was a symbolic terminology for the purification and washing of stools in the Twifo state. It was a

⁵¹⁰ See T.C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp.144-145.

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*

time for offering sacrifices to the gods (Bosomkese), and also an occasion for remembering their ancestors.⁵¹²

Upon the enstoolment of Obrempong Appiah Nuamah II, the term ‘Guakro’ was added to the name of the festival which is now ‘Twifo Guakro Odwira Festival’. The term ‘Guakro’ is not entirely new to the Twifo lexicon. ‘Guakro’ was a term carved out of the migration experience of the Twifo. In the local parlance, ‘Gu’ means ‘to break’ and ‘akro’ (plural of nkro) means ‘towns’.⁵¹³ Thus, ‘Guakro’ is literally translated as *Twifo, the breaker/destroyer of towns*. It is a commemoration of the military prowess and might of the Twifo which led to the crumbling of all towns that they had encountered during their migration.⁵¹⁴ In fact, the term was part of the appellation of Appiah Nuamah I. The appellation went like: *Nana Appiah Nuamah, Amaniampong Nana, Ono na wode Akorabo gye no tataa, Twifo Guakro, Boha bone a sekan pa hye mu*’.⁵¹⁵

Essentially, the Guakro Odwira is not different from the Odwira that was celebrated by the pioneers of the Twifo. It appears that it was only nomenclature that changed. Twifo Guakro Odwira festival has religious, social and political significance. Religiously, Guakro is a ritual which renews the covenant of the living with the gods and their ancestors. It is the renewing of the bonds with their past that

⁵¹² Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin, 72yrs, Chief of Buabin and Adontenhene of the Twifo Traditional Area, interviewed at his residence in Buabin, 28th December, 2018.

⁵¹³ Explanation by Obrempong Appiah Nuamah about the meaning of the term Guakro at deliberations of the Twifo Traditional Council, Praso, 31st July, 2018. According to Twifo tradition, not even the mighty Asante dared to fight the Twifo. This was what led to the expression “kyere Twifo, Kyere Twifo, Kyere Twifo” (which is translated as, all except the Twifo) implying that they were the only people Asante never dared to fight.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ ADM 11/1/708 Mampong Native Affairs, PRAAD, Cape Coast.

portrays their commitment to the future with the values bequeathed to them and powered by their traditions and value system.⁵¹⁶ In other words, the celebration is a time for feeding the ancestral stools and the gods, a time for remembering the ancestors, a time of re-unions and homecoming for all Twifo citizens 'home and abroad', and also a time for a rich display of Twifo traditions, and merry-making.⁵¹⁷ Politically, it is an occasion for the divisional chiefs to renew their allegiance to the Omanhene and a time to install sub-chiefs.⁵¹⁸

In this festival, like the previous Odwira, the main celebrant is the Twifo Omanhene who leads all the activities. Unlike the previous Odwira which was on the eighth Aday of the year, which usually happened on the second or third Sunday of November, the Guakro Odwira is celebrated in the second week of December, and no substantive official reasons have been provided for the change. Nonetheless, Twifo Guakro Odwira has a lot to offer in terms of displaying the culture of Agona and Akan people in its original forms.

Main Features of Twifo Guakro Festival

'Koomye' (ban on noise making):

Like many other festivals in Ghana, Twifo Guakro Odwira begins with a ban on loud noise-making, funeral and other ceremonies throughout the Twifo Traditional Area about a week to the festival. According to traditions of Twifo, the "silence" is to provide the ancestors and gods the right atmosphere to prepare for

⁵¹⁶ Interview with Nana Baduo, the Werempehene.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

the festival. Thus, the ban gives some signals about the impending celebration. Further, the imminence of Guakro Odwira is prompted by the sound of the Twifo Atumpan (talking drums).⁵¹⁹ The drums are brought out in front of the Omanhene's palace and it is only the sound of the drums that is permitted during the period. The drums usually tell the story of the military prowess and bravery of their ancestors. The Twifo saying, "kyere Twifo, kyere Twifo, Kyere Twifo" translated as "all except the Twifo, all except Twifo, all except Twifo" is usually sounded from the Atumpan drums.⁵²⁰

Below is an appellation from the Atumpan drums during the period of the festival:

Obrempong a otwa tire twa poma koko,

Nana wo ye katakyie, woye barima,

Okum nipa di atopre,

(Brave warrior who beheads his enemy and takes to war his linguist staffs. Nana, you are brave, you are fearless, and you execute people and torture others).⁵²¹

These appellations re-echoe the military might of Twifo and their assertion that they were the only people the Asante never defeated. The sounds of the Atumpan during the period also bind the people of Twifo to a shared divine purpose to listen to the voice of their ancestors, acknowledge their origins, give thanks to Odomankoma for manifold blessings and also ask for a better year ahead. In fact, in the indigenous Akan set up, drummers were among the most privileged, and also

⁵¹⁹ Ibid. this is corroborated in an interview with Okyeame Anane, Omanhene's linguist.

⁵²⁰ Interview with Okyeame Anane. The researcher was also an eye-witness of the event during the 2018 Guakro Odwira celebration at Mampong

⁵²¹ Interview with Okyeame Anane.

among the most knowledgeable persons with regard to the traditional history. Their accolade, *Odomankoma Kyerema*, the Divine or Creator's drummer, was in recognition of their knowledge of traditions.⁵²² The principal drummer, as Daaku viewed him, "may be very well described as the chief historian of the state".⁵²³ In Twifo, one group of people whose services are indispensable to the successful celebration of the Twifo Guakro Odwira festival are state drummers. Every major activity during the festival is preceded or accompanied by the sound of the drums.⁵²⁴

Whilst making spiritual preparations for the festivities, sight is not lost of the physical preparation. Cleanliness, they say, is next to godliness; therefore, on the last Saturday before Guakro, there is a general community clean-up exercise as the Atumpan drums are brought into the midst of the Mampong community. The community clean-up exercise takes place in all towns and villages in the traditional area. To ensure total participation in the exercise, on that day, all activities including farming and trading are suspended until the exercise is over.

Monday-Visit to Apagyahina:

In the early hours of Monday, the Omanhene sends a delegation led by the Werempehene to the Apagyahina, the sanctuary of Bosomkese. Among the

⁵²² K.Y. Daaku, "History in the Oral Traditions of the Akan", in *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. 8, No. 2/3, Special Issue: Folklore and Traditional History, 1971, pp. 114-126. The drummer was believed to be one of the earliest functions at the court of the king.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁴ The drums are used in mourning and feasting. Different types of dances performed during the festival are guided by the sounds from the drums. The drums are used to give appellations to the Omanhene.

delegation are the Gyasehene, Akyeamehene and other senior divisional chiefs that the Omanhene may select.⁵²⁵ The purpose of the visit is to have consultations with Bosomkese and the ancestral spirits over the Guakro Odwira celebrations and to seek their approval and support. At Apagyahina, the Werempehene offers libation to invoke the gods and ancestral spirits. Other rituals are performed to seek the blessings of Bosomkese.⁵²⁶ The delegation returns to Mampong amidst drumming and dancing to music from the various state drums and musical group. In the evening, there is a film show on sanitation and how to preserve the environment.⁵²⁷ This in line with Twifo appreciation of the vitality of the ecology which sustains and preserves them.

Tuesday-Visit to River Obuo:

On Tuesday morning, there is a visit to the Obuo River. The purpose is to have consultations with the deity and seek the blessings and support of the deity during the celebrations. Twifo traditions recount the immense contribution of River Obuo to the establishment of Mampong, the traditional capital of Twifo and seat of the Omanhene. The river was known to have provided a constant source of water to the forefathers of the Twifo. In fact, the traditions assert that the river made them believe that nature was benign to them. They believed that they owed a lot to the river in terms of their survival at Mampong. Therefore, on every Tuesday of Odwira, libation is offered at the river to also thank the deity for its support and continued protection. From the Obuo River, the rest of the day is dedicated to seeing

⁵²⁵ Interview with Nana Baduo, Werempehene of Twifo

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ See programme outline for Twifo Guakro Odwira Festival, 2018.

the health concerns of the people. In recent times there is a health walk right in the morning and a free medical screening for all resident in Mampong. A team of medical experts are brought to the community for this exercise. The day ends with entertainment in a bid to help relief the people from stress.

Wednesday-Period of relaxation.

No state rituals or official ceremonies are scheduled. The day is devoted for entertainment, merry- making and general relaxation. All sorts of fun games are organized on the day. There are football games between the communities, food bazaar and a variety night.

Thursday-Visitation to Bosomkese.

Thursdays are sacred days for the Twifo. The ‘Great Oath of Twifo’ is Thursday (“Twifo Yawoada”) Therefore, Thursday is the day on which rituals, sacrifices and many other ceremonies are performed at Bosomkeseso. The rituals and ceremonies are led by the Omanhene and the Werempemhene. All the divisional chiefs are also required to participate. Before the creation of the Werempe Division, there was the Bosomkesehene who was in charge of the Bosomkese shrine and he performed all rituals at the shrine. When the Werempe Division was created, those functions were transferred to the Werempehene.⁵²⁸ At the Apagyahina sacred grove, a ram or a bull is slaughtered and the blood sprinkled around the grove. Part of the meat is also thrown around the grove. Then a piece of

⁵²⁸ Interview with Nana Kwame Baduo Ababio, Werempehene of the Twifo Traditional Area, Mampong, December, 2018.

white calico that has been smeared with the blood of the slaughtered animal is used to cover the entire grove. After that, libation is offered to the gods to ask for peace and prosperity for the state as well as abundant harvest in the subsequent years. In fact, the Omanhene and his sub-chiefs spend the greater part of the day at the Apagyahina which underscores the importance of that event in the festival. In the afternoon, the Omanhene and his retinue return to the Omanhene's palace where major domestic issues are addressed. All disputes, differences and quarrels within the community are resolved during the period. On that same day, newly installed sub-chiefs also swear their oath of allegiance to the Omanhene.

Friday-Yellow Friday:

Friday is generally considered a day for the youth in the afahye week. The entire Twifo area is draped in yellow, to signify the abundance of rich mineral resources that the Twifo Traditional Area is endowed with.⁵²⁹ The youth embark on procession from Praso to Mampong amidst brass band music. The procession ends in Mampong where virtually the streets are taken over by the youth with a variety of activities. Previously, organized entertainers of drum orchestras such as Bosoe and singing groups from different places came to Mampong to entertain the crowds. In recent times, sound systems with huge loud speakers are often used, whilst football matches and other forms of modern-day entertainments have also been added. Alongside the fun, there is traditional food exhibition on the streets of Mampong. Special women are selected to prepare various traditional dishes. The

⁵²⁹ Interview with Kyeame Anane. According him, the Twifo is endowed with gold, diamond, bauxite and many other natural mineral resources.

essence is to teach the youth how to prepare traditional dishes in order to preserve them. Friday is just a day of fun which has been designed to help the people express their joy and gratitude to the gods and ancestors for seeing them through to another Odwira. All this is in anticipation of the great day – Saturday grand durbar.

Saturday-Grand Durbar:

The durbar on Saturday is the crowning event for the Guakro Odwira festival. It is a day of pomp and pageantry, but filled with ceremonies which not only the citizens of Twifo actively patronize, but also non-Twifo residents in Praso and nearby states. The occasion is usually patronized by people from Cape Coast, Jukwa, Wassa, Assin Fosu and other nearby states to witness the rich cultural displays on the day.⁵³⁰ The day begins with the sounds of the talking drums (Atumpan) in the morning to call the attention of all that the great day has come and people should be prepared for it. The drumming continues till late morning to usher in the major event of the day which is a procession of chiefs to the durbar grounds. The richly adorned Omanhene and the Queen mother ride in their palanquins, and they are joined by all the chiefs of the state in the procession through the principal street of Mampong to the durbar grounds with their drumming and singing retinues. The *Atumpan*, *fontomfrom* and *mpintin* drums feature prominently in the procession. The procession is also led by blowing of horns, recitation of poems and appellations by state executioners, all in honour of the

⁵³⁰ Interview with Okyeame Anane, Omanhene's linguist

Omanhene, portraying him as a very powerful chief who is the embodiment of the Twifo state.⁵³¹

One of the sounds from the horns goes like: *Obrempong wope koo, onsuru kokokoko* (Brave chief, you enjoy war, you are fearless).

The Omanhene occasionally dances to the sounds of the traditional ensembles from the drums amidst cheers and hails from the people.

At the durbar grounds, the Omanhene sits in state as his people pay homage to him. Invited guest also join queue to shake hands with the Omanhene to congratulate him for ensuring peace and survival of the state. They also congratulate him for the sacrifices he performed to Bosomkese at Apagyahina to ask for peace and prosperity for all in the coming years. The Omanhene also renews his pledge to defend and protect his people and to reign according to the customs and traditions bequeathed by their ancestors, while the people also re-affirm their allegiance to him.⁵³² The Omanhene then addresses the gathering. His address often touches on patriotism, loyalty and the need for citizens to be responsible and place the development of the state first. He announces development projects that the people yearn for and calls for support from the government and industries within the Traditional Area and individuals. The Omanhene also receives a lot of

Commented [F1]: I was thinking there needed to be some form of description for each of these images you have here.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² Ibid. This was corroborated in an interview with Nana Kyidomhene



donations from people, most especially, specially invited guests.⁵³³ The donations include gold dust (in the olden days), cash, sheep, foodstuffs, firewood, and many other items. Apart from the Omanhene, some distinguished guests are invited to address the gathering on pertinent issues that affect the Twifo state. Patrons at the ceremony are then entertained by live band music and various cultural music troops. The merry-making continues till nightfall and through Sunday when everything ends officially with a thanksgiving service.

Sunday-Thanksgiving (Aseda):

In the past, this was not part of the celebration; however, in recent years, this has been instituted purposely for the community to make “a joyful noise unto the Lord.” The Twifo believe in the existence of Odomankoma (Supreme Being), the creator of the universe, and from whom all things emanate. Therefore, the Omanhene and his sub-chiefs go to church to give thanks to God for a peaceful and successful ceremony. The entire community is invited to this thanksgiving service. It is after the church service that the festival is official brought to an end and those who travelled from far and near depart for their various destinations.

Generally, Twifo Guakro Odwira is a spiritual experience which reminds the people of their dependence on divine forces. As in many other traditional

⁵³³ See Irene Odotei, “Festivals in Ghana: Continuity, Transformation and politicization of Tradition”, in *Transactions of Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No.6, 2002, pp.17-32. According to Odotei, during festivals, politician exploit the occasion to buy influence through gifts. This is seen as a legitimate traditional transaction. Also government supporters and political party members within the community also use festivals to enhance the agenda of their group.

festivals, it is a period to thank the gods and the ancestors for their preservation of the state and its inhabitants, and also to ask for their protection and guidance in the coming year. It is also a kind of consciousness that draws the Twifo community close to their ancestors and the spirits around them. Beyond that, it is a period for the community to pause and directly reflect on the way the people relate to one another and the natural environment within an ingrained understanding that the survival of the natural environment is their own survival. Twifo Guakro Odwira celebration is also about endogenous development, community strengthening and enhancement. It is about community self-assessment, monitoring, governance and harmony. The festival focuses on the cultural basis of the socio-economic and political transformation of the Twifo community and their communal identity. It brings a formal introspection over the community's present as the confluence between its own past and its own future.

In many Akan states, yam plays a central role in Odwira celebration. In fact, many consider Odwira as a harvest festival dedicated to the first ritual consumption of the new-season yam.⁵³⁴ The yam season played a key role in determining the period of Odwira celebration, usually, around the time of the second rains (August, September, October), based on the ripening, harvesting and the storing of the main yam crop.⁵³⁵ McCaskie had some interesting explanation about yam and why it featured prominently in Odwira festival:

It was central to, and the most esteemed component in, that crop association of high-yielding bulk foodstuffs that formed, as we have

⁵³⁴ T.C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre-Colonial Asante*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p.144.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.* p.145

seen, the basis of all Asante peasant agriculture. Beyond its nutritional importance, yam was the preferred vegetable foodstuff in sacrificial offerings.⁵³⁶

Thus, apart from ritual cleansing and purification, Odwira was an occasion to thank the gods and ancestors for the harvest, and offer them first fruits to symbolize and underscore the concept of unity between the living, the dead and the gods. In Denkyira, the yam offering plays a key role in their Odwira celebration. On the Friday of the Odwira week, which is also the climax of the festival, a special ceremonial food prepared with yam and eggs is used to feed the ancestors and the god before final sacrifice is performed.⁵³⁷ This is led by the Denkyirahene himself and it is considered as one of the most important events in the Denkyira Odwira festival celebration. The sacrifices take place in two places – at the sacred river Surowi and at Apaho – a special place for sacrifices to the real ancestors in Jukwa.⁵³⁸

Although the yam offering does not feature in the Twifo Guakro Odwira, its essence is not lost on the Twifo. In Twifo, the feeding of the ancestors and god with mashed yam and eggs is done on Adae and it happens three times a year.⁵³⁹ The feeding of the ancestors with yam occurs on Akwasidae, which falls on Sunday and Awukudae, which falls on Wednesday based on the Akan calendar calculations. The final feeding of yam takes place on the last Akwasidae of the Akan year.⁵⁴⁰ No

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

⁵³⁷ At Apaho, the Denkyirahene offers a sacrifice of sheep and sprinkles mashed yam with boiled eggs to the gods and the ancestors.

⁵³⁸

⁵³⁹ Interview with Kyeame Anane. This corroborated in an interview with Nana Baduo, Wirempehene of Twifo.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

elaborate preparations are done on these occasions like the Guakro Odwira. Nonetheless, on the evening before every Akwasidae and Awukudae, the Atumpan drums in the Omanhene's palace are beaten to remind the Mampong community of the ceremonies the following day. The sounds of the drums are repeated in the morning of each day, signifying that those days were not 'ordinary' days.⁵⁴¹ All major divisional chiefs visit the Omanhene in the morning and they all proceed to the stool room. The Omanhene usually wears his ancestral war smock while the divisional chiefs and queens clad in black (birisi), in memory of their ancestors. At the stool room, libation is offered first before mashed yam and eggs are offered to the ancestors and the gods.⁵⁴² From the stool room, they also proceed to Bosomkeseo where a similar ritual is performed. After the rituals, the Omanhene and his chiefs retire to the palace. There is a mourning mood generally in the major towns whilst individual families also use the occasion to remember their departed relatives. Similar events occur on the last Akwasidae of the Akan calendar year. These events are used as preparations for the national celebration which is the Twifo Guakro Odwira.⁵⁴³

Other Festivals

As indicated earlier, the Twifo Guakro Odwira is the one major state-wide festival that the Twifo celebrate. However, there are other festivals which are celebrated by some of the major towns within the Twifo state. In other words, these

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

⁵⁴² Generally, the Akan believe that blackened stools in the stool room are saturated with spirits of the individual chiefs. Hence, they are regarded as abodes of the spirit of the ancestors. Therefore, on every Aday festival, the ancestral stools are offered food and drinks.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

festivals take place at the local rather than state-wide level. In these local festivals, the religious aspect dominates. They are mostly used to remind the people of the support of the local deities in establishing the towns and also to draw the communities closer to the deities. They provide the communities a basis of the functional spirituality of the community that emerges out of a reality deeper than community-self. Consequently, the chiefs and the fetish priests or priestesses of local shrines play the leading role in those festivals.

Prominent among the chiefs is the Buabinhene, who is also the head of the Adonten division in the Twifo Traditional Area. As one of the early Agona families that migrated to the Pra basin, the people of Buabin celebrate 'Adae kese' festival, which happens on the final Adae in the Akan calendar year.⁵⁴⁴ The Buabin Adae kese follows the same rituals as the final Adae of Mampong, however, the scope of celebration in Buabin is extensive. The chief of Buabin and his sub-chiefs use the period to purify the ancestral stools of Buabin by sacrificing a sheep at the ancestral stool room.⁵⁴⁵ Sacrifices are also performed at the *Soboro* River. The Soboro River deity receives much reverence from the people of Buabin. Because of past exploits ascribed to the deity, people of Buabin still show great faith in the deity; and its shrine is one of the few that is still active in the Twifo Traditional area. The traditions of Buabin suggest that the deity protected the town and the people against enemies on many occasions in the past (for instance, in their conflict with the Wassas).⁵⁴⁶ Thus, the yearly celebration of the Adaekese provides an occasion for

⁵⁴⁴ Interview with Nana Okofo Buabin, chief of Buabin and Adontenhene of Twifo Traditional Area, at Buabin, 18th October, 2018.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

the community to express their devotion to the deity and also seek its favour for another year. Since the period coincides with the new season, the new yam is also offered to the gods and ancestors to thank them for a good harvest.⁵⁴⁷

Generally, the local festivals are viewed as rehearsals and preparations at the local level for the national celebration (Twifo Guakro Odwira). Every town which has a divisional chief is required to contribute some amount of money and resources based on the stature and capacity of the town towards the celebration of the national festival. Beyond that, the local festivals are modes for self-assessment and introspection for the individual towns which are aimed at strengthening and enhancing the development of the individual communities.

It is worthy of note that the rituals and major ceremonies that are performed in Twifo festivals are not done in a vacuum. These rituals and ceremonies are manifestations of the worldview of the Twifo, which is in line with the general Akan worldview.⁵⁴⁸ Worldview, according Awuah Nyamekye quoting Kraft, is a set of “culturally structured assumptions, values and commitments/ allegations underlying people’s perception of reality and their responses to those perceptions”, whilst Elikin defined worldview as “a view of nature and life, of the universe and man, which unites them with nature’s activities and species in a bond of ‘mutual life-giving’”.⁵⁴⁹ In other words, the worldview of a people encompasses their

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁸ According to Obrempong Appiah Nuamah, Twifo Omanhene, the worldview of Twifo is the sum total of their beliefs about the universe and their role within it

⁵⁴⁹ See Samuel Awuah Nyamekye, *Managing Environmental Crisis in Ghana: The Role of African Traditional Religion and Culture with Special Reference to the Berekum Traditional Area*. London: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014. Pp.59-60

knowledge about the universe, philosophy of life, and their values. Thus, the worldview of a people is coterminous with their culture. The Akan indigenous cultural pattern is influenced by their worldviews which serve as a reservoir of knowledge. They are stored in myths, proverbs and folklores.⁵⁵⁰ The core constituents of the traditional Akan worldview include the belief in Nana Nyame/Nyankopon, (the creator god), Asaase Yaa (the goddess of the earth), cults associated with various divinities, nature spirits, rituals, ancestral spirits. From the traditional Akan worldview, there is a strong belief in the existence of two worlds; the physical and the spiritual, which are not mutually exclusive of the other. In other words, humans and the spirits are not independent of the other. This is clearly captured by Larbi, who opines that:

To the Akan, just like other African peoples, whatever happens to the human being has a religious interpretation. To them, behind the physical is the spiritual; behind the seen is the unseen. Every event here on earth is traceable to a supernatural source in the spirit realm. From the same source, therefore, lies the ultimate succour.⁵⁵¹

Although the Twifo, like other Akan groups, believe in the inseparability of the two, they acknowledge the superiority of the spiritual world and human 'aweness' of the gods. They believe the gods and ancestors have the power to influence the life of humans. Nana Onyankopon refers to the supremacy of God. He is seen as the creator of the universe. Asaase Yaa, is seen as next to Onyankopon

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁵¹ E.K. Larbi, "The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of Ghanaian Pentecostal Concept of Salvation in African Cosmology". Available at: <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj10/larbi.html>. Accessed on 28/02/2019.

and is responsible for fertility.⁵⁵² Next to AsaaseYaa are the Nananom Nsamanfo (ancestral spirits), literally described as the “living dead”. Though they are the departed members of the community, they are still considered to be living, as they are still believed to influence the lives of the living.⁵⁵³

There are also the gods and goddesses who are the central element in religious thought. These deities are believed to reside in natural phenomenas such as rivers, trees, mountains, caves and some cases, animals.⁵⁵⁴ Among the Twifo, there are two types of deities: the national deity (Bosomkese) and local deities in the towns and villages.⁵⁵⁵

The Twifo Bosomkese

The tutelary deity, Bosomkese, whose sanctuary is located at Apagyahina at Ayaase, is considered the national deity of the Twifo. It is the most revered deity in the Twifo Traditional Area.⁵⁵⁶ The traditions of Twifo indicate that their ancestors were greatly aided by “Bosomkese’ throughout their migrations. Recounting their migration experiences, the Twifo always felt that they were not the masters of their own destinies. They felt that there must be forces outside their control and comprehension which brought the victory in war, good health or bad health. This got the Twifo strongly attached to the ‘Bosomkese’ deity. The Twifo

⁵⁵² The Akan generally believe that the earth is a goddess and the name Yaa, is a name for Akan female born on Thursday. Thus, the Akan believe that the natal day of the earth is Thursday, and therefore, the day is designated as her sacred day.

⁵⁵³ Samuel Awuah-Nyamekye, “Salvaging Nature: Akan Religio-Cultural Perspective. *Worldview: Global Religions, Culture and Ecology*”, 2009, pp. 251-282.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Interview with Okyeame Anane, Linguist of Twifo Omanhene.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

carried their 'Bosomkese' along in their migrations and wherever they have settled, a site was allocated for the god and a priest or priestesses to take charge of the site. When they migrated to the Pra basin, the deity was first placed at 'Ankase' before it was finally brought to its present location at Apagyahina in Ayaase.

The ancient Pot at the Bosomkese sanctuary at Apahgyehina

To continue to receive favours from the 'Bosomkese', sacrifices of animals were offered to the deity and this was done by the priest/priestess for the state. In fact, much of the religious activities at the cult was conducted on behalf of the whole community, and not on individual basis. In times of war, the Twifo warriors believed they were protected by Bosomkese, which made them not vulnerable to even gun powder and pellets. According to oral tradition, during wars, Twifo warriors could disappear from their enemies when they found themselves in dangerous situations and the 'Bosomkese' sometimes allegedly turned into bees and stung enemies to death at the battlefield. The Twifo strongly believed that it was with the help of the 'Bosomkese' deity that the warrior Adinkra of Gyaaman was defeated in the Asante-Gyaaman War. For the Twifo, Asante could not continue to prosecute their numerous wars of conquest without their support.⁵⁵⁷ For the Twifo, the efficacy of the deity was so stunning that even the mighty Asante crumbled under the power of the deity.⁵⁵⁸ The Twifo have a legend which goes that during their migration from Asante, they carried along the ancient pot of 'Bosomkese', which was filled with water.⁵⁵⁹ When they felt exhausted, they sipped

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁸ Interview with Okyeame Anane.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

water from the pot and they were rejuvenated. It is said that the Asante army which was in pursuit of the Twifo thought it was ordinary water and so they also sipped water from the pot and immediately bees descended on the Asante soldiers, to the extent that they had to beat a retreat.⁵⁶⁰

Apart from 'Bosomkese' which is the national god of the Twifo, individual towns and villages in the Twifo Traditional Area have their local deities to whom sacrifices and rituals are performed. Some are rivers in the area which are believed to be deities, and thus, they have been designated as shrines where similar rituals and sacrifices are performed periodically. These deities, according to traditions, played key roles in the establishment of the towns and continue to offer protection to the towns and their people. They played a leading role in times of emergency, for instance, when there was a declaration of war by a neighboring town. In such instances, directions were sought from the deities and also to receive protection. Further, the inhabitants of each town acknowledge the influence of its deity over life and death. On every Akwasidae, sacrifices are offered to the deities to thank them for preserving the towns and their inhabitants. Apart from that, in each town or village, there were special days every year when sacrifices were offered to the deities. Individuals also sought protection and other forms of help from their local deities in times of need. These local deities have their shrines located in the respective towns and villages. The table below lists some of the deities:

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

Name of Town	Name of Deity	Status
Mampong	Obuo(river Deity)	Active
Nyinase	Tigare	Dormant
Buabin	Soboro	Active
Mampoma	Buapia (river deity)	Active
Kayireku	Obrigyapon (river deity)	Active
Ntafrewaso	River Ntafrewa, Kwesi Denkyi, Obuo(river deities)	Dormant
Wamaso	Wamaso (river deity)	
Darmang	Brekune	Dormant
Hemanso	Ananeakoso & Kwabena Fuo (river deities)	Dormant
Kyebi		
Tofoi		
Bepoben	Nitinifo & Nana Kwame Baduo Bunu	Both Dormant

Other Twifo Social customs

Twifo culture, just like that of many Akan in general, can be constructed around the events of their life cycle; thus, events from birth to death. In Akan, this is generally referred to as Rites of Passage. In the subsequent paragraphs, an attempt is made to examine some of the important social customs of the Twifo. Areas discussed include childbirth and outdooring, puberty rites, marriage, death and funeral.

Childbirth & Naming Ceremony

As indigenous Akan, Childbirth was very important to the Twifo. It was the only means to ensure survival through procreation.⁵⁶¹ In other words, the indigenous Akan was very conscious of the need to have children to carry on the family tree and honour the ancestral shrines. For this reason, childbirth was very crucial, not only for couples but their families as a whole. In fact, in pre-colonial Twifo, barrenness was seen as a tragedy and marriages without a child were viewed with disdain.⁵⁶² Therefore, the birth of a child brought joy and pride to the couple and the extended family.

After a child is born, both mother and child are kept indoors until the “outdoorings” (the formal welcoming of the child) takes place on the eighth day after his birth. The Akans generally believe that within the first week, the child is not a full human being yet and the child could die. Therefore, when the child survives the first seven days, the outdoorings is organized immediately on the eighth day. The outdoorings/naming ceremony is performed by the family in the morning. The child and the mother are usually clad in white for the occasion as they step out or come out of the room for the first time. First, there is a short welcome message from a family member of the child’s father, usually, the sister of the father on behalf of the family. This is to welcome the child into the family, made up of the living and the dead, who are all called upon to be part of the ceremony. The child is then placed on the laps of the person he is named after or his/her representative (such a person

⁵⁶¹ Interview with Okyeame Anane, linguist of the Twifo Omanhene. This was corroborated in an interview with Nana Nkwantabisa II, Chief of Nyinase and Kronthene of Twifo Traditional area.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

is usually an older member of the child's father's family or a relative who has led a very decent life, whether alive or dead). The ceremony begins with the offering of libation to the Supreme Being, the ancestral spirits and the gods, requesting for blessing, good health, long life, and many children for the child and family. The libation is offered by the head of the family (Abusuapanin) and he is the one who pronounces the name of the child. First, he dips a finger into a glass of drink (gin or schnapps) and puts a drop on the tongue of the baby three times saying, (name of child), "if you see drink, say it is a drink". Same is done with water. Then follows an exhortation to the child to always stand firm, act honestly and distinguish between truth and falsehood just as it has been shown with the difference between alcohol and water. The given name of the child is then publicly announced to all present who receive it with joy and delight. The person whom the child is named after (often referred to as 'grandfather or grandmother of the child), makes a presentation (usually money) to the child. Others at the ceremony follow with their own gifts to the child and the mother. The family is expected to use part of the money to buy a hen or sheep for the parents to raise on behalf of the child. The rationale behind this is to raise some capital with which the child, on coming of age, can use to start a farm or any other business. When the presentation of gifts is over, the father of the child presents to the gathering pots of palm wine or some other refreshments. The drinks are shared among all present, and in the joy and happiness of the occasion, there are conversations and even sharing of jokes. After that, the ceremony comes to an end and everybody departs. However, the joy of the occasion continues in the house of the couple throughout the day. A fowl is killed

and used to prepare a delicious meal for the mother and the child. For the mother, it is to show appreciation for the pain she endured in adding to the number of the family. On the part of the child, part of the soup is dipped on his tongue. In the Twifo setting, just like many other Akan societies, this has two significances: first, it is for the child to be expressive as the cock is. Secondly, just as the soup is made of both pepper and salt, it is to tell the child to be prepared for both sweet and bitter or good and bad in life.

Outdooring of a child and the processes among the Twifo, like many indigenous societies, has a profound significance. The drops of water and alcohol on the tongue of the child are to admonish him/her to be truthful at all time. It is only the father of the child that has the prerogative of giving the child a name, because the Akan believe that it is the father that provides the soul (*okra*) of the child, which determines the character and his person.⁵⁶³ Beyond that, every newborn child belongs not only to the couple, but the extended family and the community at large. Therefore, the upbringing of any child in the Twifo community is the responsibility of the extended family and the community.⁵⁶⁴

Initiation/Puberty Rites

The Twifo do not have any clear cut traditional initiation rite for boys. In other words, there is no distinct rite to delineate the transition of boys from

⁵⁶³ The Akans believe, the mother provides the blood (*mogya*) as the substance of the family (*abusua*) and it provides the child with a lineage. Thus, the Akan trace their lineage from the mother's descent, and they practice matrilineal system of inheritance. Every Akan, therefore, belongs to the mother's lineage and not the father's.

⁵⁶⁴ Interview with Okyeame Anane.

childhood to adulthood. Nonetheless, boys are to be guided by their parents, the family and the community from infancy till they become mature men, well prepared to marry and raise a family. Young boys are required to follow their fathers and learn the customs and traditions of the land.

However, the Twifo have a traditional initiation ceremony for girls (Bragoro). This takes place immediately girls experienced their first menstrual cycles and this ceremony is to usher them into womanhood. On the occurrence of a girl's first menses, the mother of the girl was required to notify the paramount queen mother, in the case of Mampong, and in the other towns, the queen mothers or an older woman of the community. Menstrual blood was considered unclean, and so the girl was confined for a week, after which the menstrual cycle was expected to be over. In some cases, the father offered libation to ask for fertility, guidance, and protection for the soon to be adult member of the family. During the period, the mother and other older women took turns to instruct her about the prohibitions and taboos about menstruation, marriage and motherhood and societal responsibilities. After the period of confinement, the mother was then required to take the girl to the riverside early in the morning to give her a 'ritual wash'. In Mampong, the Obuo River was often used, whilst the Pra served the Twifo communities around Praso. The girl was expected to have her pubic hairs shaved and her nails cut. She returns home, well dressed and her body carefully treated with sheabutter ointment. She is seated in the open of the home; people bring gifts and congratulate her on reaching puberty without any disgrace. The next day, the girl, accompanied by her mother, goes round from house to house to show

appreciation to members of the community for their support. (According to the Queen mother of Twifo, the house to house visitations is also done for the young woman to show herself to prospective young men in the community).⁵⁶⁵

According to Nana Abena Antwiwaa III, the rituals were to instill chastity in girls in the Twifo community. It was an abomination and an offence against the community, the gods and ancestors for any girl to engage in premarital sex, and become pregnant without going through the puberty rites. Such a girl was seen as a disgrace to her family and the entire community. Fines in the form of schnapps, and in some cases, sheep were imposed on her family. The schnapps were used to offer libation to ask for pardon from the gods and the ancestors. The sheep was also slaughtered to pacify the gods and purify the stools. Some of the blood is put on the head of the girl and the boy involved. The two of them are sent away from the town to a village or cottage in the bush where they remained until the girl had delivered. After delivery, the family had to provide more drinks and a sheep for more sacrifices to be performed before the girl, the boy and the baby were allowed back to the community.⁵⁶⁶ The initiation rites were, therefore, aimed at properly preparing girls for adulthood and marriage. Awuah Nyamekye aptly described 'Bragoro' as having two dimensions: initiation and separation. In his view, 'Bragoro' rituals simultaneously separate girls from the domain of childhood and introduce them into adulthood.⁵⁶⁷ Thus, 'Bragoro' was a formal way of introducing

⁵⁶⁵ Interview with Nana Abena Antwiwaa, Paramount Queen Mother of the Twifo Traditional Area, 14th December, 2018, Mampong

⁵⁶⁶ Interview with Paramount Queen Mother of Twifo

⁵⁶⁷ See Samuel Awuah Nyamekye, *Managing Environmental Crisis in Ghana: The Role of African Traditional Religion and Culture with Special Reference to the Berekum Traditional Area*. London: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014

girls into the customs and traditions of their societies. This view was corroborated in an interview with Nana Abena Antwiwaa II, Paramount Queen mother of Twifo. From that moment, the young woman is deemed ready for marriage.

It must be noted that these rites are no more strictly practiced, mainly due to western cultural influences.

Marriage

Traditionally, after the initiation/puberty rites stage, the next stage in the life of a person was marriage. In pre-colonial Twifo, as in other Akan states, marriage was not simply an arrangement between two people. It was essentially a matter involving two extended families. It was invariably a union of two families. It was the responsibility of a father to find a suitable wife for his son. When a young man was ready for marriage, his father made inquiries about prospective partners in the community. When he found a suitable young woman, he approached her father to inquire about the possibility of his daughter becoming the wife of the enquirer's son. This is usually followed by a period of waiting during which the prospective wife's family made its own investigation to ensure that the young man comes from a family with no criminal record or history of a serious physical or mental illness. When satisfied, the boy's family is contacted and a day is fixed for the necessary customs to begin. It must be noted that it was the boy, through his family, that proposed to a woman, and not vice versa.

There were two main stages in contracting marriage: the knocking (kokooko), and Sre (begging). The knocking stage is a meeting between representatives of the two families. Usually, the boy's family goes to the young

woman's house and presents what is termed as "knocking" drinks, (schnapps or a pot of palm wine). Acceptance of the drinks implied that the green light was given for family of the young man to go ahead with the other marriage processes. Part of the drinks is used to offer libation to the gods and ancestors to ask for their blessings on the marriage. The young man's family requests for a list of items required from the woman's family. When the man's family is ready, representatives of the two families meet again and fix a date for the final marriage ceremony. At the final ceremony, the family of the young man presents drinks (two bottle schnapps and some money as the tiri nsa (head drink). It is at this point that the consent of the young woman is sought by her father publicly. If the answer is 'yes', then her father formally accepts the 'tiri nsa'.⁷ Then follows the presenting of other gifts to the girl (a trunk, some two or three pieces of cloth), some money to the mother, and the brothers of the girl (ankonta sekan). The money is referred to as 'tri adee' (head money). According to Twifo traditions, the rationale for the payment of 'tri adee' was to use part of the money to defray any debt the young woman's family might have owed, to avoid any kind of embarrassment to the new couple and their families. Beyond that, it was a way of strengthening bonds between the two families. From that day, any problem that confronts each of the families, be it debt, funeral, sickness, etc. becomes the concern and responsibility of the two families. That money is, however, refundable to the boy's family if the woman decides to opt out of the marriage. After this convention, the marriage was deemed traditionally valid.

In the evening of the day of the ceremony, the bride is escorted to her husband's home by her mother, few friends and relatives. For about two days, the bride, assisted by her mother and few others, cook very nutritious dishes for the husband, his family and even friends. The mother and the others depart on the third day, leaving the bride in her matrimonial home.

This in reality constituted marriage in the indigenous Twifo society.

Death & Funeral

Death and funeral are among the most important cultural events in the Akan society in general, which the Twifo is no exception. The basis of Twifo customs with regards to death and funerals is firmly grounded in the traditional Akan belief in life after death and the ancestral world (Asamando). For the Akan, death is not terminal to existence of man. It only ends life here on earth. After death, the soul or spirit (saman) goes to continue his existence in 'asamando'. At 'asamando', he lives much the same lifestyle as he led on earth. This is tied to the Akan belief in the continuing link between the living and the dead.⁵⁶⁸ The Akan believe that the spirit can influence the living either in a good or a bad way, hence their indulgence in ancestral incantation. Death and funeral are, therefore, part of the ancestral veneration and it is based on these beliefs that several rituals have been instituted traditionally, to aid the dead to have an easy passage to the 'asamando'. Mbiti observed that:

⁵⁶⁸ There is the belief that the ancestors act to punish wrong-doers, sometimes with death, as a measure of keeping the society morally pure. They can also reward good deeds with riches and good life.

The manner of funeral rituals expresses feeling of sorrow and loss as well as emphasize the belief that death was not the end of the person's existence. The spirit of the deceased will continue to influence the lives of his living relatives with blessings or curses depending on how he was treated by the living.⁵⁶⁹

Among the Twifo, it is the responsibility of the bereaved family to fix a date for the funeral ceremony of the dead and every member of the community is expected to participate in the funeral ceremony of a dead member. Every member of the community is also enjoined to help the bereaved family meet their expenses; donations and other gifts are presented to the family as a whole as well as to individual members.

Towards the evening of the funeral day, custom requires that a successor be named and presented to the gathering. The family head is required to meet all older members of the family and select the successor before-hand. The successor must be presented to the whole gathering and he/she must pay a special fee to the community in recognition of his/her new position. This practice is key in the funeral ceremony of the indigenous Akan and it underscores their belief in the eternity of relationships, responsibilities, duties and obligation. Therefore, death should not bring a break to the performance of their functions in the family and the community. Also, for the memory of the deceased, close relations: widows, children and the family, etc. are by custom and tradition expected to wear black, red or brown clothing most of the time for a whole year.

⁵⁶⁹ J. S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1992, p.119

Traditions require every family to organize a proper funeral ceremony for any member who dies, except in cases where the cause of the death is considered unnatural. Among the Twifo and Akans generally, death by accident is regarded as 'unnatural' and customs demand that such deaths be given unusual treatment. Death by drowning, death by being trapped by a falling tree, death in a shooting incident, in a motor accident, suicide and even in child- birth all fall within this category. In such cases, the normal burial and funeral customs are set aside.

In suicide cases, the body of the deceased is regarded as cursed and receives no decent burial or funeral rites. In fact, where the suicide took place in the bush, customs require that the body should not be brought home. Libations and some sacrifices are performed to pacify the gods after which the body was buried in the bush.

The chapter has examined the national and local festivals in the Twifo Traditional Area. It has also examined some of the major socio-cultural practices of the Twifo. The Twifo were one of the people who exhibited pure Akan customs and practices. It was observed that the worldview of the Akan, of which the Twifo are part, comprised a set of assumptions that they hold about the universe which enabled them to interpret the nature of reality and to express this through their culture. However, the introduction of foreign religions such as Christianity and Islam and western education have become be a threat to the traditions and culture of the Twifo. As a result, the observance and practice of some of the indigenous customs of the Twifo have reduced. In some of the towns and villages, the shrines of the deities appear virtually abandoned. Nonetheless, the influence of deities

continues to affect the lives of the people. In many of the towns and villages, there were days set aside for the deities, where nobody was expected to go to farm. There was the fear of serious repercussions for violating such norms. Some of these norms are still being upheld in many Twifo communities. The Bosomkese is thought to abhor goats, and till date no Twifo rear or eat goat meat. Thus, Twifo culture has shown some resilience in the face of strong challenges from foreign religion and western education.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Any study of history is an excursion into man as an entity and hence a positive contribution which helps man to discover more of himself. As made evident by this study for example, historical inquiry into relatively 'fresh areas' like Twifo is not only revealing in the informational knowledge or detail about man's effort to make a home for himself on this fragment of the unlimited universe, but also helps to shift the frontiers of self-knowledge.

The work examined the origin of the Twifo, their migrations and occupation of the lands around the Pra River basin. It can be concluded that, as far as the Twifo are concerned, Adanse was the place where their foundation as a recognized Akan group took place. Adanse was their first settlement and from their tradition, it was in Adanse that the name Twifo – meaning the speakers of Twi, was applied to them. Thus, just as other Agona members and many other Akan groups, the foundation of the current Twifo as identified Akan group began in Adanse. Rattray corroborated this view when he noted that: "the Agona who are classified as brothers of the Bretuo live together in Adanse and as result of expansion, some members left to settle at other places...."⁵⁷⁰ Reindorf, in a general sense, also noted that, "Adanse in the Offin basin was an important center of Akan culture and staterdoms".⁵⁷¹ The Twifo account strengthens Adanse cosmogony that Adanse was

⁵⁷⁰ See R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923, pp. 220-225

⁵⁷¹ C.C., Reindorf, *A History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Triibner & Co., 1961.

the traditional 'garden of Eden' of all the Akan, and that it was in Adanse where the foundations of most Akan states began.⁵⁷²

The work has established that as a member of the Agona clan, much of the Twifo migration and much of her history was tied to that of a bigger Agona member, Denkyira. The impact of Denkyira authority was not only on the Twifo, but other Agona states such as the Akyem states of Oda, Kotoku and many other Akan states. Denkyira hegemony was one of the major reasons for the migration of many Akan states from Adanse to other parts of the Gold Coast. These Akan states wanted to avoid being swallowed up by the ambitious Denkyira which was becoming inordinately powerful in the 17th century. Thus, it was through the activities of Denkyira that the Twifo came under the authority of Asante. In fact, one can generally assert that the major reason for the situation today where the Agona states are found in different parts of the country is the result of the Denkyira threat in the early part of the 17th century.⁵⁷³ It must, however, be reiterated that the Twifo came under Asante authority not through conquest but through diplomacy. Thus, the insecurity of the second half of the 17th century induced the Twifo to form a kind of alliance with a more powerful state, Asante, a situation that led to the Twifo moving to Asante. Before 1823, the Twifo became an integral part of the Asante army and contributed immensely to Asante victory in many of the wars of expansion. It was from Asante that the Twifo migrated to their current settlement.

⁵⁷² See James Anquandah, *Rediscovering Ghana's Past*, Accra & Essex: Sedco Publishing Ltd & Longman, 1982, p.86

⁵⁷³ From the account of Affrifa, the Akeym groups such as Kotoku and Abuakwa immigrated from Adanse as result of the same Denkyira activities.

However, the Twifo are not Asante as they have been perceived by their major neighbours, Hemang and Morkwa. The Twifo are members of Agona clan who became sojourners in Asante as a result of their effort to assert their independence by escaping Denkyira subjugation in the 17th century.

It was the post-Adinkra War problems with Asante that forced the Twifo and by extension Denkyira to sever their relations with Asante. They had to migrate from Asante with an uncertainty of a permanent destination and settlement. Between 1823 and 1829 the Twifo became glorified ‘refugees’ in Wassa and later Cape Coast. They also had to fight two bloody wars with the Asante before finding a permanent settlement around the Pra River basin. So far, the greatest challenges that the Twifo encountered in all their migrations occurred in this final one from Asante. Their migration from Asante in a bid to re-establish their sovereignty brought them into alliance with the British. The cooperation between the Twifo and the British which began in the 1820s continued into the 20th century. It can be asserted that the backing that the Twifo enjoyed from the British in the conflicts that erupted between the Twifo and Mokwaa from 1925 was a manifestation of the friendship between the Twifo and the British. In other words, the Twifo were reaping the benefits of supporting the British to fight a common enemy, Asante. Nonetheless, it was this final migration that brought the Twifo more fame, power and dominance. The Twifo are now an undisputed dominant group within the Pra River basin in the Central Region of Ghana.

It was from the 1830s that Twifo immigrants settled and began developing their new state around the Pra River basin. Much of the work on building and

expanding the new state was done by Owusu Koko I. It was through his negotiations with Hemang that the Twifo secured lands for the establishment of Mampong, the traditional capital of the Twifo state. The cordial relations Owusu Koko built with the major neighbours of the Twifo such as Hemang and Mokwaa aided the Twifo to continue to expand around the Pra basin, which culminated in their domination of the area. However, the union began to disintegrate from 1925 as a result of the reorganization of Appiah Nuamah I, the Twifohene. Hemang began agitating and succeeded in breaking away from the union in 1927. Mokwaa did same and finally broke away in 1987. From 1987, then, the Twifo state was made up of predominantly the Twifo immigrants. The impact of the secession of the two has been enormous. The obvious major impact has been a shrinking of the size of the Twifo state. Mokwaa, for instance, had under them several villages and towns, therefore leaving the Twifo state had a geographical and numerical impact on the current Twifo state. Mokwaa now claims much of the lands that were previously Twifo lands.

There are no clear cut boundaries delimiting the territories of the Twifo and Mokwaa, not even after Mokwaa was separated from the Twifo as a distinct paramountcy. Therefore, the two states have been engulfed in an unending land and boundary disputes which have worsened the relations between the two states. Besides, there are several land disputes between individual Twifo towns and Mokwaa which have been dragging for decades. For instance, there has been long standing dispute between the chiefs of Kayereku and Mampoma against the chief of Mokwaa over the lands of Agyimpoma near Opon Valley, beginning from the

1930s. This generated occasional violent clashes between the states. There is also a long standing land dispute between Kayereku and Mokwaa over the lands between the states which also appear to be the lands that determine the boundaries between the jurisdiction of the Twifo Omanhene and the Omanhene of Mokwaa. Buabin is also in boundary dispute with Mokwaa over the Apagyahina lands. There is also very serious dispute between the Twifo town of Tofoi and Mokwaa over the immediate lands on which the Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP) was established. The two have been having dispute over who benefits from royalties from the company. This has generated tension between the inhabitants of Tofoi and Mokwaa to the extent that occasionally, violent clashes occur between the two. In fact, that dispute has almost degenerated into a dispute between the Twifo and Mokwaa, which is disrupting peace between the Twifo and Mokwaa.

Beside the land and boundary disputes, some towns have become objects of litigation between the Twifo and Mokwaa. A case in point is a tussle over Wamaso. Whilst the Twifo Omanhene claims that the town is a Twifo town with a stool which was under the Nifa division, Mokwaa on the other hand claims the Wamaso land belongs to Mokwaa, and therefore the town is in Mokwaa jurisdiction. The issue has degenerated into a situation where the chief of Wamaso is now the Krontihene of the Mokwaa Paramountcy, whilst many of the citizens claim to be Twifo. The Wamaso town also shares boundary with two major Twifo towns; Kayereku and Mampoma. The two towns are only separated from Wamaso by the Abrewa Woraa River, and so a boundary dispute has also developed between the two Twifo towns and Wamaso. Apart from Wamaso, Praso, the district capital and several villages

in Praso, are objects of litigation between the Twifo and Mokwaa with each of them claiming jurisdictional right over those areas. In December, 1977, the then Mokwaahene obstructed the attempt by the Twifo Omanhene to celebrate Odwira festival in Praso which took the timely intervention of the police to stop the violent clashes that erupted between citizens of the two states. Similarly, in the 1970s, the Twifo Omanhene attempted to move his seat from Mampong to Praso and this was also obstructed by the Mokwaahene. These developments are all offshoots of the reorganization that took place in 1925.

Between the Twifo and Hemang, however, even though the secession of Hemang did not generate serious disputes between the states, there is no cooperation between the two states and their paramount chiefs. Interestingly, however, the name Twifo is still attached to Hemang i.e. the name Twifo Hemang is still used, although unofficially. The name was attached to Hemang following the arrival of the Twifo and the intercourse between the two states.

It can also be concluded that the settlement of the Twifo around the Pra River basin paved the way for other Akan groups to also move to the area. Some members of the Oyoko clan joined the Twifo and settled in places such as Ntafrewaso, Darmang, Bepoben and Abodom. In these towns, there are Agona people, however, the stools in the towns are occupied by the Oyoko family, with some occupying divisional status within the Twifo Traditional Area. Ntafrewaso is the head of Ankobea, Darmang is the head of the Gyaase, and Abodom, the head of the Nifa division. By this the Twifo integrated them into the Twifo state. It seems,

therefore, that the area around the Pra River became a safe haven for many Akan clans.

Last but not the least, the study extensively made use of traditions to attempt to write the history of the Twifo. This illustrates the relevance of Akan traditions in writing the history of the Akan. In 1923, Rattray, who seemed to have had a fair knowledge of Asante and the Akan commented on the traditions of the Akan in what he referred to as the 'unwritten history' of the Akan. Rattray asserted that, it was only on matters of political office or stools that 'unwritten history' of the Akan cover.⁵⁷⁴ In essence, Rattray contended that the 'unwritten history' of the Akan captured only their chiefly or dynastic affairs. Rattray may have been misled into this conclusion by his preconceptions as this study invalidates Rattray's assertion. This study shows that there is scarcely any Akan state which does not have historical knowledge or account of its origin, nor lineage of the circumstances of its inception. As indicated by Wilks, traditions of the Akan states and their matriclans, all have much the same time reference as those of the origin of their stools.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷⁴ See R.S., Rattray, Ashanti, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923, pp.220-225

⁵⁷⁵ Ivor Wilks, "The State of the Akan and the Akan states: A Discussion", in *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, Vol. 22, Cahiers 87/88, 1982, pp.231-249

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Nana Amo Sasraku, Omanhene of Twifo Hemang, 75years, Hemang, 13th June, 2015.

Nana Amoanimaa II, Ohemaa of Twifo Anyinase, 31st December, 2017.

Nana Amoasi Kwadwo III, 65 years, Twafohene of Twifo Traditional area, 3st July, 2018.

Nana Amoasi Kwadwo, 65yrs, Twafohene, of Twifo, Mampong, 30th December, 2017.

Nana Bimbira III, 60yrs, Queenmother of Twifo-Kyebi, 31st July, 2018.

Nana Boa, Bamkyiehene, son of Boa Amponsem III, Jukwa, 20th May, 2016

Nana Boakyehehene, 72yrs, Chief of Twifo Mampoma, and Benkumhene of Twifo Traditional Area, Twifo Praso, 8th August, 2018.

Nana Bombo, 60+ years, Ohemaa of Twifo Moseaso, 10th August, 2018.

Nana Gyamera Akoto, 45years, Chief of Twifo Ntafrewaso and Ankobeahene of the Twifo Traditional Area, 22nd September, 2016

Nana Kusi Boadum, 58yrs, Nifahene of Abodom, Twifo Praso, 31st July, 2018

Nana Kwadwo Danso II, 66yrs, Benkumhene of Ntafrewaso, 9th August, 2016.

Nana Kwaku Bofa, 72yrs, Ex-Chief of Twifo Buabin, Mampong, 22nd June 2017.

Nana Kwaku Donkor, 62yrs, Gyaasehene of Ntafrewaso, Twifo Praso, 9th August, 2016.

Nana Kwame Baduo Ababio II, 55yrs, Werempehene of Twifo Traditional Area, 20th June, 2018

Nana Kwame Baduo, 82yrs, Chief of Kayereku, and Kyidomhene of Twifo Traditional Area.

Nana Kwame Ketewa I, 50yrs, Kyidomhene of Ntafrewaso, 9th August, 2016.

Nana Kwame Manu, 60yrs, Agona Abusuapanin, Kayireku, 10th September, 2018.

Nana Kwame Moosi, 63yrs, Member of Traditional Council, Nyenase, 11th September, 2018.

Nana Kwamina Amissah, 68yrs, Agona Abusuahene of Twifo, 20th August, 2017

Nana Kwamoanohene, 60years, Twifo Hemang, 22nd June 2016.

Nana Kwasi Gyan, Gyaasehene of Asante Mampong Traditional Area, Asante Mampong, 21st August, 2018.

Nana Nkwantabisa, 65years, Chief of Anyinase and Krontihene of the Twifo State, Anyinase, 20th July 2016.

Nana Okofo Kofi Buabin III, 70years, Adontenhene of Twifo Traditional Area, Chief's palace, Buabin, 13th October, 2018.

Nana Ankumah Manu, 72yrs, Head of family (Abusuapanin) of Buabin stool family, Buabin, 13th October, 2018.

Nana Okofrobour Agyemang, 62yrs, Abakamdwahene of Buabin, Chief's palace, Buabin, 13th October, 2018.

Nana Sisri Apau, 68yrs, Chief of Tofoi, 8th June, 2018.

Nana Yaw Waddie, Linquist of the Chief of Womaso, Womaso, 31st August, 2018.

Nicholas, special assistant to the Twifo Omanhene.

Obaapanin Abena Nyamah, 67yrs, palace of the Chief of Darmang, 28th August, 2018.

Obrimpon Appiah Nuamah II, 62years, Twifo Omanhene, Twifo Mampong, 18th August, 2015.

Okyeame Anane, 60years, Linquist of the Twifo Omanhene, Mampong, 15th August, 2016

Op. Charles Graham, 60yrs, family member of the chief of Twifo-Kyebi, Twifo Praso, 31st July, 2018.

- Op. Elliot Owusu Ankoma, 65yrs, Former Assembly Member for Mampong, Mampong 3rd August, 2018.
- Op. Kingsford Abbo, Kyeame of Benkumhene, Mampoma, Twifo Praso, 31st July, 2018.
- Op. Kofi Darko, 52yrs, Nephew of the chief of Kayireku and Kyidomhene of Twifo Traditional Area, 13th December, 2018.
- Op. Kofi Nyamekye, 65yrs, Uncle of the Twifo Omanhene, 22nd July, 2017.
- Op. Kofi Tih, 60yrs, cocoa farmer and a resident of Wamaso, 13th July, 2018.
- Op. Kwabena Moosi, 60yrs, one of the elders at the palace of Chief of Nyenasi, 27th August, 2018.
- Op. Kwabena Nsiah, 75yrs, farmer and resident of Twifo Praso, 20th May, 2016.
- Op. Kwame Asare, 60yrs, brother of the chief of Tofoi, Tofoi, 8th June, 2018.
- Op. Kwame Kyei, 62yrs, cocoa farmer, Twifo Praso, Praso, 13th August, 2017.
- Op. Kwame Manu, 62yrs, Nephew of Chief of Kayireku, 27th August, 2018.
- Op. Kwamina Amissah, 65yrs, Agona Abusuahene, Mampong, 31st July, 2018.
- Op. Kwasi Badu, 76, farmer, and a resident of Twifo Praso, 30th July, 2018.
- Op. Kwasi Oppong, Abusuapanin of Twifo-Tofoi Oyokuo family, 14th July, 2017.
- Op. Osei Kwadwo, 82yrs, Former Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum, August, 2015.
- Opanin Ata Kwaku, Former Abusuapanin of the Ankobea at Ntafrewaso and Community Secretary of Ntafrewaso, 9th August, 2016.
- Opanin Bofu Agyei, 68years, Member of Twifo Traditional Council, 10th March 2016

Pastor Obed Quayson, 58yrs, Deeper Life Bible Church, Praso. 30th December, 2017

Samuel Oppong, 40yrs, a resident of Twifo Mampng, 13th December, 2018.

T.O. Donkor, 58yrs, son of the late Twifohehene, Nana Ampontin Fi, Ex-Manager of Aboadze Thermal Plant, 29th December, 2017.

T.T. More, 54yrs, Asst. Director, Panel Member, District Magistrate Court, Twifo Praso, 29th December, 2017.

Yaw Nti (Father Omuuru), 48+yrs, Unit Committee Secretary, Twifo Mampong, 29th December, 2017.

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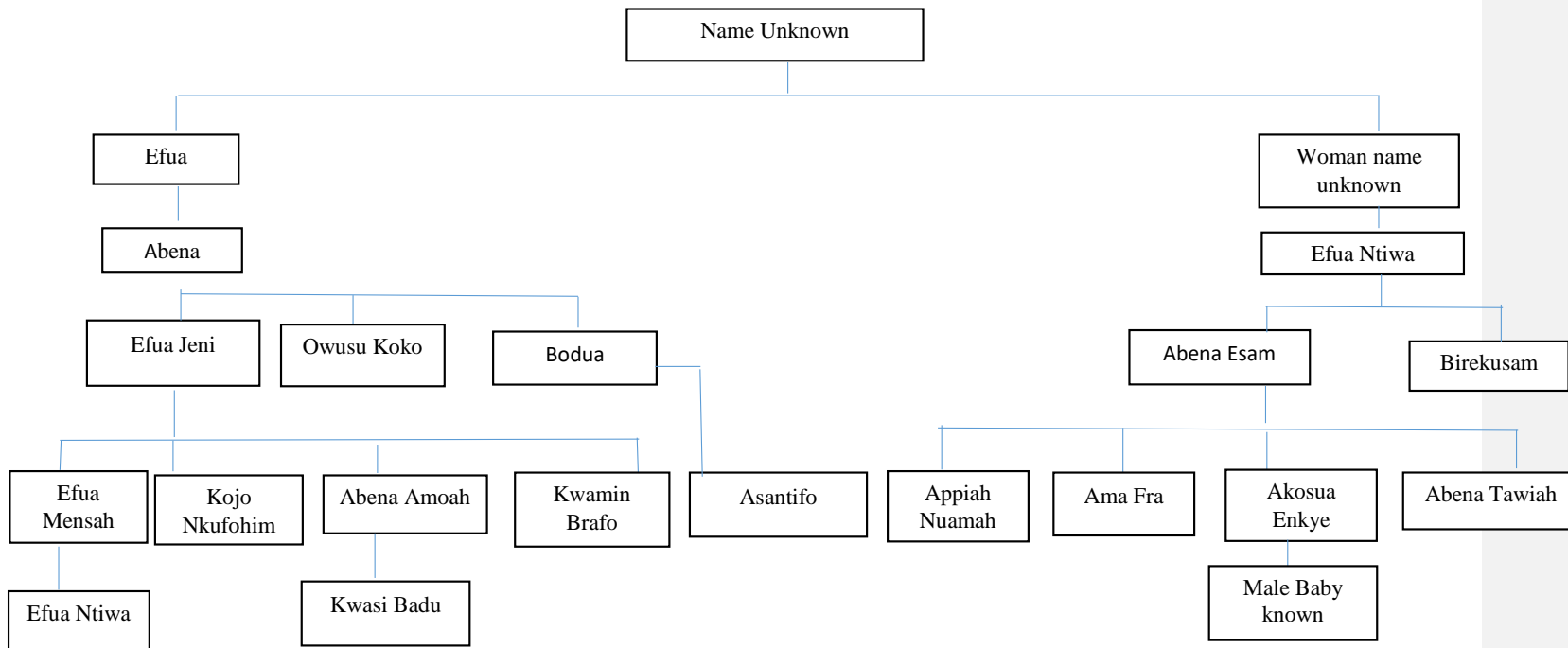
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APPENDIX A

List of towns/villages in the Twifo Traditional Area

1. Mampong
2. Twifo Praso
3. Moseaso
4. Bepobeng
5. Nuamakrom
6. Darmang
7. Ntafrewaso
8. Eduabeng
9. Ayaase
10. Aboabo
11. Anyinase
12. Kyebi
13. Abodom
14. Buabin
15. Imbraim
16. Agona
17. Kayereku
18. Mampoma
19. Sebenso
20. Tofoi
21. Datano
22. Hemanso
23. Akei-krom
24. Nsuaem
25. Kwaku Dum-krom
26. Akrofuom
27. Breman
28. Gyaman
29. Gyaman
30. Kotokyi No. 1
31. Kotokyi No. 2
32. Kotokyi No. 3

APPENDIX B
TWIFO MAMPONG
GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY



APPENDIX C

Our Ref: KOA/AC/PET.74/38

Solicitor & Advocates
Akyem Chambers,
P. O. Box 1522,
Accra.

12th February, 1974.

His Excellency,
The Chairman of the National Redemption
Council & Commissioner Responsible for
Chieftaincy Affairs,
The Castle,
Osu - Accra.

Your Excellency,

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF NANA KENIN III

I respectfully beg to forward herewith the
attached Petition of my client for your sympathetic
consideration and prompt action.

Yours obediently

(Sgd) K. OFOSU-ASANTE
SOLICITOR FOR NANA KENIN III.
(MOKWAAHENE)

cc:

The Commissioner Responsible for
Chieftaincy Affairs,
The Castle,
Osu - Accra.

The Regional Commissioner,
Regional Organisation,
Central Region,
Cape Coast.

-2-

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF NANA KENIN III, MOKWAAHENE IN
THE TWIFU DIVISION OF THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

TO:- HIS EXCELLENCY,
THE GALLANT CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL REDEMPTION
COUNCIL, HEAD OF STATE & COMMISSIONER RESPONSIBLE
FOR CHIEFTAINCY AFFAIRS,
THE CASTLE, OSU - ACCRA.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF NANA KENIN III, MOKWAAHENE IN
THE TWIFU DIVISION OF THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA
SHEWETH:-

1. That your Humble Petitioner is the Ohene of Mokwaa, an area lying in the thick of the equatorial forest covering an approximate area of 400 square miles and situated on latitude $5^{\circ}32'$ and longitude $2^{\circ}28'$ in the Central Region of Ghana. Your Humble Petitioner's land is bounded on one side by the land of the Paramount Chief of Hemang and it is bounded by the River Obuo and then on one side by the River Abohyensu which flows to Assin Bosomadwe and from then to Assin Nyankumase. It is bounded by the Asuafo River which flows to the Subri River and then to the Obuobiri River to Kwansaba and is enclosed from this spot by the Nkuta-Antwi River which flows to join the Suben River. On one side from the boundary of Denkyira Bubugya it is enclosed by the Esuasu River which flows to join the River Offin. On one side your Humble Petitioner's land is bounded by the land of the Wassawhene and the River Subiri. The River Subiri which is the natural boundary from this end flows to join the River Osin which flows to join the River Pra.
2. That your Humble Petitioner has over 15,000 people under his sway as his subjects.
3. That your Humble Petitioner has all the four wing or Divisional Chiefs to wit: Twafohene, Adontenhene, Benkumhene, Nifahene, Gyasehene, Ankobeahene, Mponuahene, and their many sub-chiefs necessary to form a State (or which are integral to the status of an Omanhene; Paramount Chief) under him in Mokwaa. (Your Humble Petitioner craves leave to refer you to Appendix "A").
4. That your Humble Petitioner and his people settled in this part of the Central Region from time immemorial, and as history has it they are the original indigenous settlers - "ATI", that is they have never migrated.
5. That the original settlers in Mokwaa had two other allies to wit: The Hemangs and the Anyinabis and all three people, each having a Paramount Chief ruling in his own right over his domain, formed a Tripple Alliance called "Mbukyia-Miens", and lived in this part of the Central Region in harmony.

INQUIRY OF THE CHAIR OF HEMANG TO BE RECOGNISED A
HEAD CHIEF HEMANG THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AT
ABURA BURKWA ON WEDNESDAY THE 15TH DAY OF NOVEMBER,
1986 AT 10 A.M.

Coram :-

Hon: Nana Otu Ababio II, Omanhene of Abura -President
Nana Essandoh III, Omanhene of Mawulam
Nana Adoku III, Omanhene of Mankessim
Nana Nkyi Ababio, Omanhene of Assin Appimanim
Nana Okwan III, Chene of Anyan Main
Nana Idan Edu, Chene of Kwaman
Nana Abutakyi II, Omanhene of Eguafu
Nana Amanfi III, Omanhene of Assebu
Nana Ansa Dua, Omanhene of Gomoa Ejumaku.
Chief Kobinah Esubontsin, representing the Omanhene
of Akim Busum.
Elder Kofi Adom, representing the Omanhene of Akim
Kotoku.

The Omanhene of Twifur was present but according to custom
his statements were delivered by Kwaku Obirikunan.

Kwaku Obirikunan, representing the Omanhene of Twifur Nana
Appiah Numa, S.A.R.E. and states I know that late Atta Amuah
of Hemang was a Subordinate Chief to my ancestor Offi, Oman-
hene of Twifur Mumpom. Ewul succeeded Atta Amuah and was
again a Subordinate Chief to Argontsin who succeeded Offi. I
know that Atta Amuah accompanied Offi to Akma war. Argontsin
died and was succeeded by Kwesi Baidu. Ewul of Hemang died
and there was no successor. Kwesi Baidu placed a man
(Obinayeh) as a Regent on the stool of Hemang. Obinayeh was
Kwesi Baidu's son. Kobinah Otu I, the lawful heir grew wine
and was entooled permanently on Hemang Stool by my ancestor
Kwesi Baidu. When going to Malina war Kobina Otu accompanied
Kwesi Baidu with 20 guns. During the Marikari war Kobina Otu