

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN EWEDOME, BRITISH TRUST TERRITORY OF  
TOGOLAND (GHANA), 1922-1974

BY

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the development of local government in the Ewedome region of present-day Ghana and explores the transition from the Native Authority system to a 'modern' system of local government within the context of colonization and decolonization. The decolonization process and the transition to local councils in the region from the 1950s brought in its wake a change in power relations, as individuals and groups at the local level began a struggle over status and political space within the new local government structure. As the decolonization process necessitated a change in the trusteeship status of the region, the development of local government suffered a severe jolt, as local councils became battlegrounds for the fight for and against the integration of the trust territory into independent Ghana. The thesis argues that while the Native Authorities of the colonial period were inefficient and incapable of advancing the development of a modern society, the successor local councils proved to be far more inept and corrupt than the bodies they came to replace. Excessive politicisation of local government structures alienated many citizens to the extent that local councils failed to follow in the tradition of serving as a focal point for harnessing the enthusiasm and energy of rural folk in the region.

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Figure 1: A MAP OF VOLTA REGION SHOWING THE PRINCIPAL TOWNS IN THE STUDY AREA

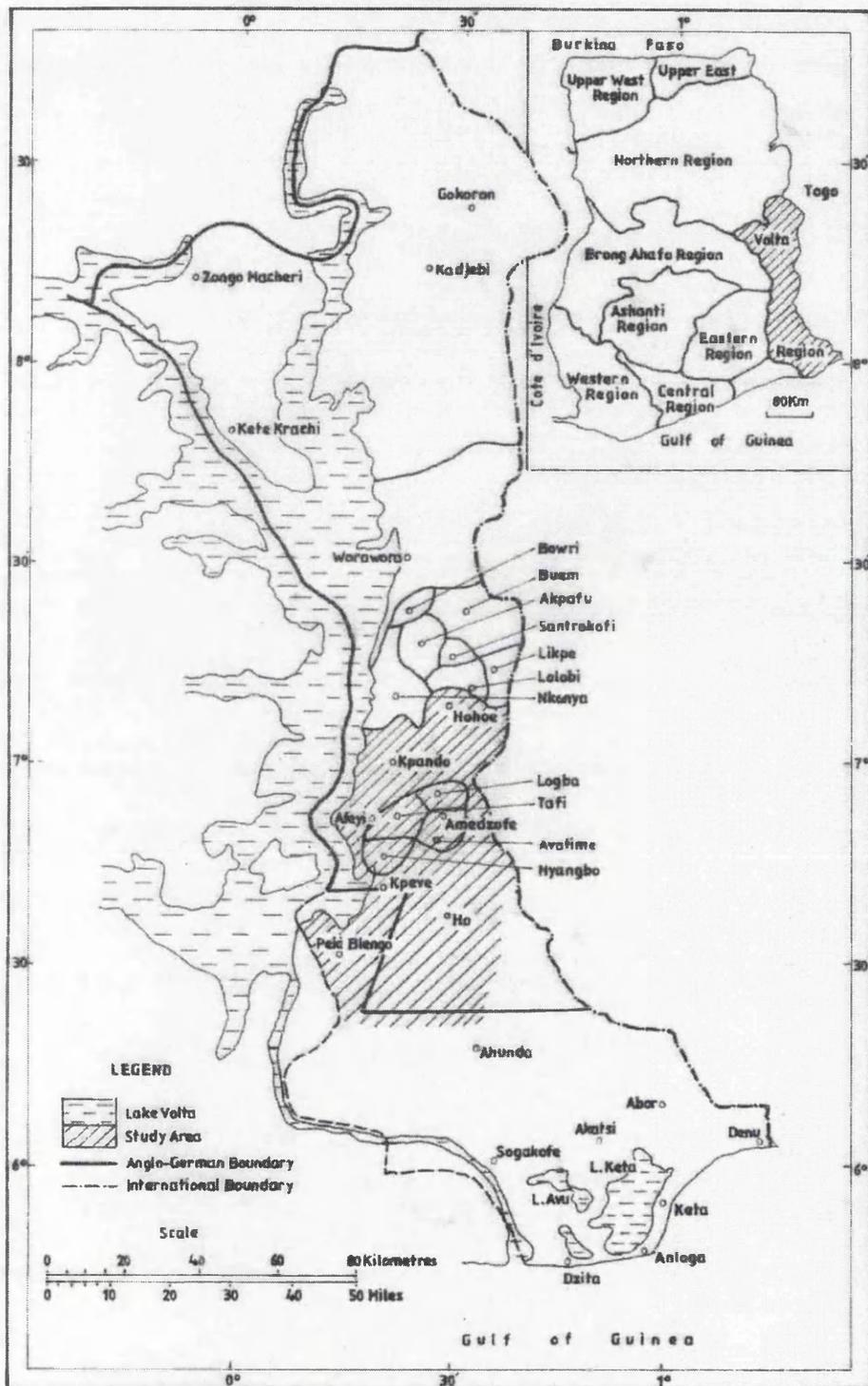
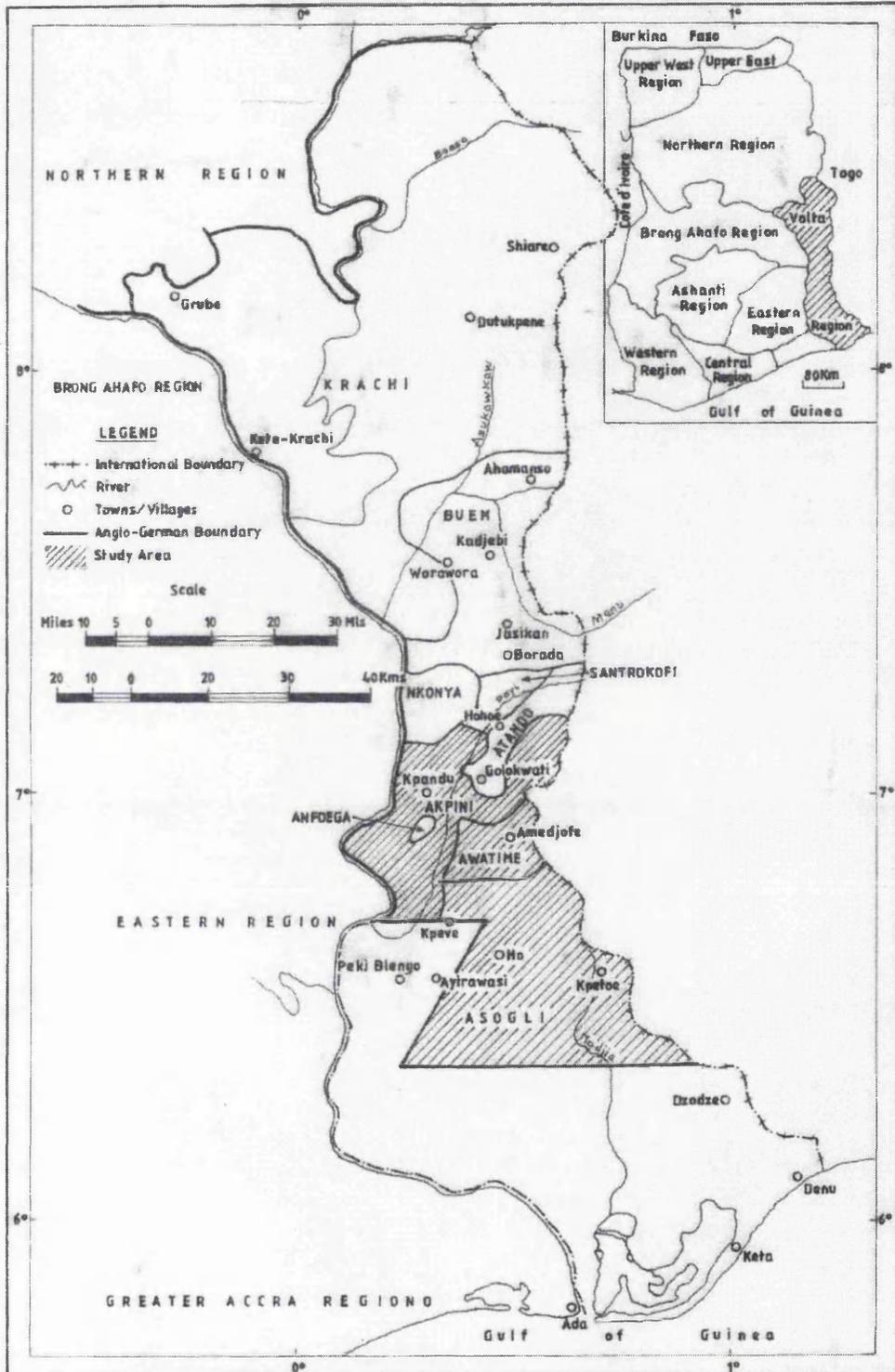
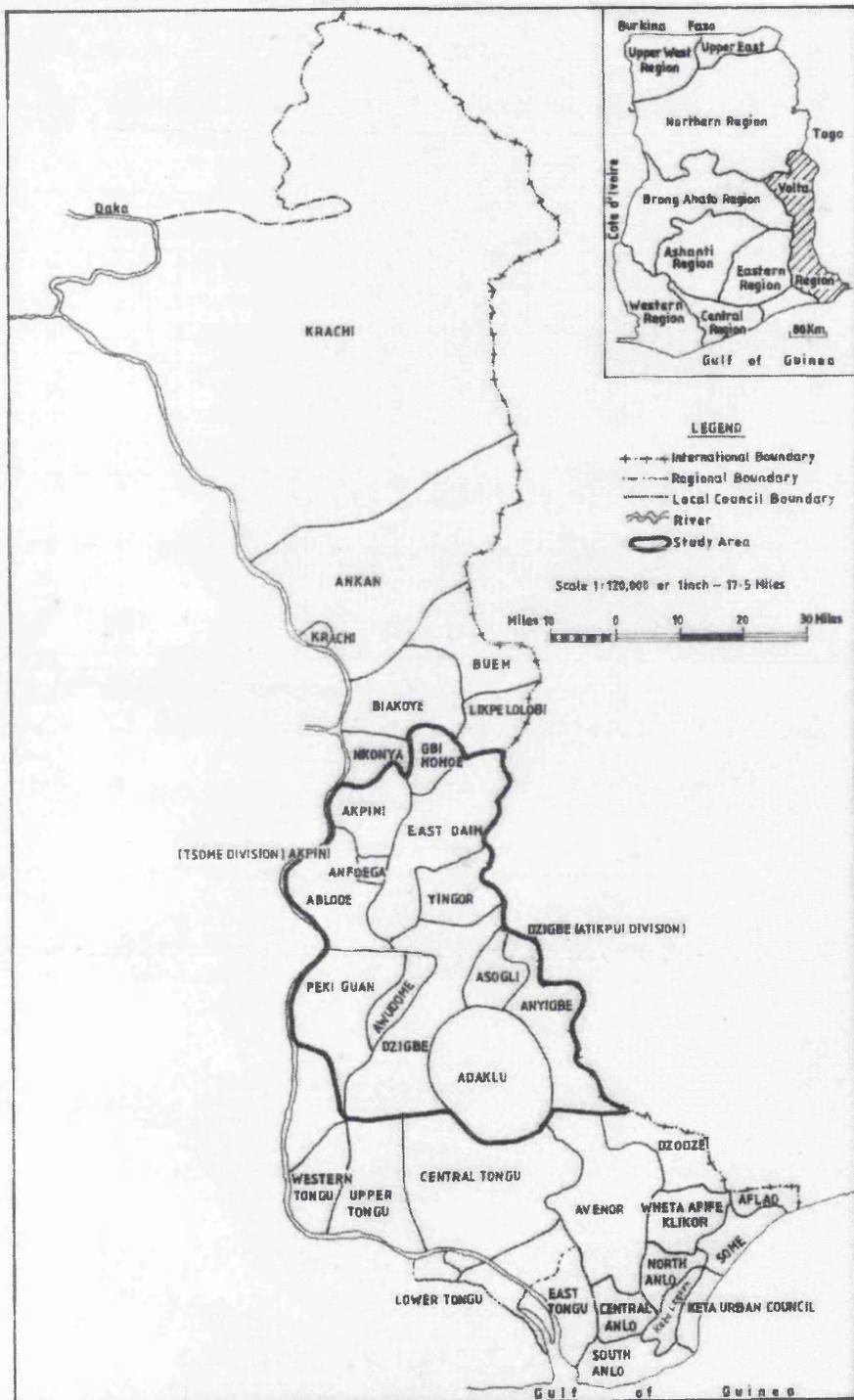


FIGURE 2: THE AMALGAMATED STATES IN EWEDOME



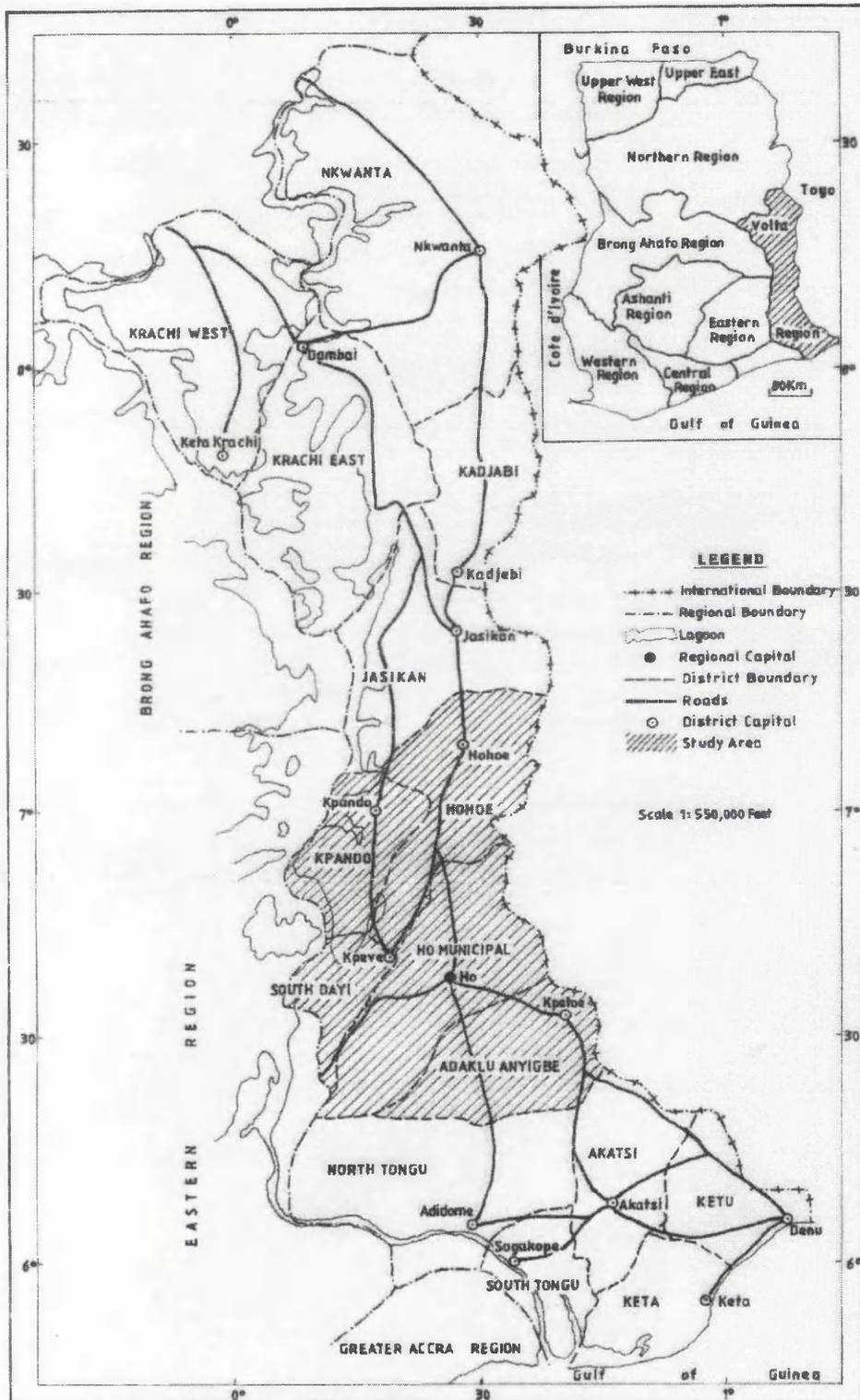
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FIGURE 3: A MAP OF VOLTA REGION SHOWING LOCAL COUNCILS IN 1955



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FIGURE 4: A MAP OF VOLTA REGION SHOWING DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES IN EWEDOME IN 2006



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I owe a great deal of gratitude to Dr John Parker, whose meticulous supervision gave this work its final shape. He drew my attention to relevant literature and on countless occasions made his own books available for my use. His interest in the topic was a source of encouragement that urged me on. His affability and preparedness to engage me in discussions at any time and anywhere was incredible. Above all, he inculcated in me the importance of paying attention to details in my quest to become a successful academic.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	All-Ewe Conference
CCC	Chief Commissioner of the Colony
DC	District Commissioner
JPC	Joint Provincial Council
JTC	Joint Togoland Council
NA	Native Authority
NAO	Native Authority Ordinance
NRS	Natural Rulers Society
PMC	Permanent Mandate Commission
SDC	Senior District Commissioner
TU	Togoland Union
TC	Togoland Congress
TVT	Trans-Volta Togoland

## GLOSSARY OF EWE TERMS

- ablode** freedom
- agblekofe** farm hut/hamlet
- atamkayi** linguist's sword
- du** (pl. *duwo*) town
- duko** (pl. *dukowo*) state
- dusimefia** right-wing chief
- fia** chief
- fiaga** paramount chief
- fome** family
- hotsui** cowrie shell
- Mawu** God
- megbefia** rear-guard chief
- miamefia** left-wing chief
- ngogbefia** advance-guard chief
- omanhene** (Akan) paramount chief
- sa** lineage
- togbe** chief or an old man
- tro** lesser god
- tronua** (pl. *tronuawo*) traditional priest
- tsami** linguist
- twafohene** (Akan) vanguard chief

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother, Cecilia Afua Edofe Aborbor, who died on 22 July 2009.

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the development of the Native Authority system of British colonial administration in the Ewedome region of Ghana and its transition to a 'modern' system of local government in the post-colonial period, from the 1920s to the 1970s. From the 1880s to 1914, Ewedome formed part of German Togo, and after the First World War, it became part of the League of Nations Mandated Trust Territory of Togoland under British colonial rule. This chronological span was chosen because formal British occupation of Ewedome started in 1922 and the study traces the history of local government up to 1974, when local councils were completely abolished. The scope of the study, however, expands a little beyond what the title suggests. It begins with the pre-colonial period to help the reader understand the nature of the traditional political organization before analysing the transformation that followed in the colonial and immediate post-colonial periods. Similarly, the concluding section briefly extends the narrative up to the 1990s in order to give an overview of local government to the present.

I refer to the Native Authority (NA) system as local government because it represented what Mahmood Mamdani has called a 'decentralised arm of the colonial state', although the type of local government conceived and implemented at the time was limited in its composition to the chiefly enclave and lacked the credentials of a 'modern' democratic type of local government.<sup>1</sup> In his recent *Local Government in Ghana*, Massing traces the origin

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<sup>1</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, 1996), p. 52.

of local government to the inception of indirect rule.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the Warrant Chief system instituted in Iboland in southeastern Nigeria in the 1890s 'came into being as a definite instrument of local administration'.<sup>3</sup> The NA system thus granted traditional rulers a wide range of executive and judicial powers compatible to a more advanced system of local government. Parker sees the creation of NAs in Accra as an attempt to shore up the power and authority of chiefs within a structure of colonial rule, giving practical meaning to the ideology of indirect rule.<sup>4</sup> According to Rathbone, chiefs in the Gold Coast Colony were expected to construct and maintain roads, 'ensure the tidiness and sanitary respectability of their towns and villages, pay for the labour for these tasks, act as licensing authorities for market traders, letter writers, purveyors of medicine' and the like.<sup>5</sup> These are essentially local government functions. He asserted that 'until 1940, Ghanaians were governed by a dual system - central government and local government - which was called Native Administration'.<sup>6</sup> To talk about indirect rule or the NA system of administration in colonial Africa, therefore, is to talk about local government.

In the era of the slave trade in West Africa, Europeans called the region between the Volta River and the Bight of Benin the Slave Coast, and Ewedome formed part of its interior hinterland.<sup>7</sup> Ewedome thus occupied an ambiguous frontier between the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast, forming part of the Volta basin economy. From the first half of the

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<sup>2</sup> Andreas W. Massing, *Local Government Reform in Ghana: Democratic Renewal or Autocratic Revival?* (Saarbrücken, 1994), p. vii.

<sup>3</sup> A. E. Afigbo, *The Warrant Chiefs: Indirect Rule in Southeastern Nigeria, 1891-1929* (London, 1972), p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> John Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Portsmouth, NH, 2000), p. 226.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana, 1951-60* (Oxford, 2000), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-Speaking People of the Slave Coast of West Africa: Their Religion, Manners, Customs, Law and Language* (London, 1890), p. 1; Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa 1550-1750: The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on an African Society* (Oxford, 1991), p. 14.

nineteenth century, the area began to appear in European sources as Krepi or Crepee.<sup>8</sup> The term 'Krepiland' is unsatisfactory because it is a corruption of the name Peki by the Danes, the first Europeans to establish trading contact with the area. Until about 1850, Peki was the most influential political unit in this region. But 'Krepiland' was more than just the state of Peki, the exact delimitation of which historians find difficult. Wilks refers to Krepi at one point as 'the Ewe country' and at another as a group of towns and states east of the Volta.<sup>9</sup> Law's description of Krepiland includes Anlo and the coastal town of Keta.<sup>10</sup> Akyeampong refers to Krepi as the 'northern Eweland'.<sup>11</sup> Recent researchers prefer the name Ewedome, which is more accurate when one wants to narrow the focus on the northern Ewe. In fact, the Ewe-speaking people call the area occupied by the northern Ewe, 'Ewedome' and the people who occupy the area are called *Ewedometowo* - literally meaning 'occupants of the valley'. The area began to appear in British administrative documents from 1850, when Britain took over trading activities from the Danes.

Mountains known as the Togo-Atakora ranges succeed one another from south-east to north-west in the region. The Volta River forms the western boundary of the area, separating Ewedome from the Gold Coast. The area is highly heterogeneous and witnessed a complex migration of people from all directions throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. It is made up of Ewes, Guans and the so-called Togo remnant

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<sup>8</sup> G. E. Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana: Documents of Ghana History, 1807-1957* (London, 1964), p. 441.

<sup>9</sup> Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 57 and 772.

<sup>10</sup> Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 14-15.

<sup>11</sup> Emmanuel Akyeampong, *Between the Lagoon and the Sea: An Eco-Social History of the Anlo of Southeastern Ghana: c. 1850 to Recent Times* (Athen, OH, 2001), p. 41. Collier intimated that the inability of earlier sources 'to clearly define Krepi could be interpreted as an indication of its lack of relative significance'. See Katharine Alexandria Collier, 'Ablode: Networks, Ideas and Performance in Togoland Politics, 1950-2001', PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham (2002), p. 4. The exact extent of Krepiland was an issue of contention between Britain and Germany in the 1880s. See Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana*, p. 441.

groups, the Ewes being the dominant ethnic group. Therefore, in the context of this particular work, Ewedome includes those non-Ewe states found within the area.

The region has a complex historical past. Although the British on the Gold Coast had contact with Ewedome from the 1850s, it was not until 1886 that they began to take steps to assert their political control over the area. In that year, the Gold Coast government brought 56 chiefs from Ewedome and beyond to Peki and made them sign an agreement, known as the Krepí Bond, to recognise the chief of Peki, Diega, as 'head chief' of Krepí.<sup>12</sup> All the chiefs who appended their signatures were given British flags, a move designed to forestall possible German expansion from the coast.<sup>13</sup> British influence over Ewedome through Peki from 1886 to 1890 was vague, but it provided grounds for making claims over the territory. The Anglo-German partition in 1890, however, ceded a greater part of Ewedome to the Germans.<sup>14</sup> The area of Ewedome which went to the British was integrated into the Gold Coast colony while the greater portion became part of German Togo. Following the First World War, the partition between Britain and France in 1922 saw the southern-western part of German Togo becoming part of a British mandated territory under the League of Nations and was officially known as the Southern Section of British Mandated Togoland. It later, in 1947, became a Trust Territory under the United Nations. According to Bourret, the population of this area in 1948 was 170,000, about half of the population of the whole of

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<sup>12</sup> For the full list of the chiefs who signed the bond, see A. K Asem, *History of Awudome* (Tema, 1982), p. 40-43.

<sup>13</sup> See Madeline Manoukian, *The Ewe-Speaking People of Togoland and the Gold Coast* (London, 1952), p. 30.

<sup>14</sup> For details about the concession made by Britain to Germany, see Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana*, p. 445.

British Togoland.<sup>15</sup> The development of local government started with the formal British occupation of the area in 1922, with the move to effect important political changes.<sup>16</sup>

Ewedome has not received much attention from historians, who are only now beginning to fill this void in the history of Ghana. Recent scholarly works by Benjamin Lawrance and Paul Nugent have dealt with the issue of the so-called 'amalgamation' of native states under British colonial rule and the disputes that this engendered in Ewedome.<sup>17</sup> The focus of Nugent's book is on the Ghana-Togo border, but it extends into the issue of amalgamation in the southern section of British Togoland. Lawrance also discusses amalgamation and its related chieftaincy disputes in Asogli state. Yet amalgamation has not been traced systematically to its logical conclusion: the evolution of local government. The success or otherwise of the policy of amalgamation needs to be analysed within the broader context of the development of local government in the area. Important questions remain unanswered.

For example, how exactly did the NAs work? How did they perform their executive, judicial and legislative functions? Did the NAs function only as agents of the colonial state, pandering only to the whims of their colonial masters? Alternatively, did they also act as agents of development by mobilizing the inhabitants to undertake important communal projects? What specific ordinances were applied to the territory and what was the philosophy behind those ordinances? How did indigenous laws, traditions and values accommodate and/or conflict with new legislation and the changing roles of the traditional authorities? What impact did the NAs make on the overall socio-economic and political

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<sup>15</sup> F. M. Bourret, *Ghana: The Road to Independence, 1919-1957* (Oxford, 1960), p. 243.

<sup>16</sup> Michael D. Callahan, *Mandates and Empires: The League of Nations and Africa, 1914-1931* (London, 1999), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Paul Nugent, *Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier: The Lie of the Borderlands since 1914* (Athens, OH, 2002); Benjamin N. Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome: Traditions and Petitions in the Ho-Asogli Amalgamation, British Mandated Togoland, 1919-39', *Journal of African History*, 46 (2005), p. 243-267.

development of the territory? Finally, what was the nature of the transition to local councils in the post-colonial period? It is important to know how local council areas were created; bearing in mind the protests that greeted the creation of amalgamated states. Finally, the working of the new local councils from 1951 to their abolition in 1974 is relevant in exploring change and continuity in the development of local government in Ewedome. It is the attempt to provide answers to these questions that sets this study apart from earlier works on Ewedome. The study goes deep into the nitty-gritty of local government in the region.

The existing literature on local government in Ghana makes very scanty or no reference to Ewedome. Since 1964, the only authoritative book on the history of local government in Ghana was by J. K. Nsarkoh and it reads as though Ewedome and the broader southern Togoland did not exist at all.<sup>18</sup> The book traced the history of local government from 1859, when the Municipal Ordinance for Cape Coast was passed, up to the enactment of the 1951 local government ordinance. However, it made no reference whatsoever to the contribution of Ewedome or the southern section of British Togoland to the history of local government in Ghana. Andreas Massing's work on local government in Ghana published in 1994 focused mainly on the Northern Territories.<sup>19</sup> Part of the introduction to the book reads: 'until independence Ghana was itself a federation: of Gold Coast Colony (since the 1830's), Ashanti Colony (since 1874) and the Northern Territories (since 1891), each unit comprising several ethnic groups'.<sup>20</sup> Conspicuously missing is the fact that British Togoland was integrated into the Gold Coast in the 1950s. It is not surprising therefore that the book paid no attention to the development of local government in the Ewedome region.

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<sup>18</sup> J. K. Nsarkoh, *Local Government in Ghana* (Accra, 1964).

<sup>19</sup> Massing, *Local Government*, 1994.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. vii.

The most recent work on local government, Amposah and Bofo-Arthur's edited collection *Local Government in Ghana*, has been written by social scientists with a focus on the 2002 local elections. The book studied twelve selected districts out of the one hundred and ten districts in Ghana and only Kpando District in the present-day Volta Region was included in the study.<sup>21</sup> The history of local government in Ewedome did not feature in this book. This obvious neglect of Ewedome and the southern section of British Togoland in the narratives on the development of local government in Ghana epitomises what Nugent describes as 'entrenched marginality of the region within Ghanaian studies'.<sup>22</sup> Skinner also observed that Dennis Austin's work on political developments in Ashanti and northern areas were 'more detailed and more convincing than that of Ewe and Togoland politics'.<sup>23</sup> The antecedents of the German period made the creation of NAs and the transition to a 'modern' local government in the area novel. Until 1949, local government laws which operated in the territory were different from those applied to the rest of the colony. It was only in that year that an attempt was made to bring the ordinances operating in the territory in line with those in the Gold Coast. Even with the coming into being of single local government legislation in 1951, the actual processes of developing local councils in the Trust Territory were different from what pertained in the Gold Coast because of the differential historical contexts.

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<sup>21</sup> For the most recent collection of essays on local government in Ghana, see Nicholas Amposah and Kwame Bofo-Arthur (eds.), *Local Government in Ghana: Grassroots Participation in the 2002 Local Government Elections* (Accra, 2003). In the general political history of Ghana, passing references are made to the southern section of British Togoland in the discussion of local government, particularly in David Apter, *Ghana in Transition* (Princeton, 1963); Dennis Austin, *Politics in Ghana 1946-1960* (Oxford, 1964); and Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*.

<sup>22</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 50.

<sup>23</sup> Kate Skinner, 'Agency and Analogy in African History: The Contribution of Extra-Mural Studies in Ghana', *History in Africa*, 34 (2007), p. 292.

Historians, moreover, have often treated local government as a peripheral issue that should be the concern of political scientists. The apparent apathy towards local government is summed up in Rathbone's statement that 'local government appears to lack the drama of the politics of the national arena and its actors are much less frequently well-known names; moreover, dealing with it requires mastering reams of sleep-inducing legislation and command of its pettifogging particularities'.<sup>24</sup> No wonder that historical research on decolonisation is limited largely to national institutions and on such themes as national liberation and political party activities.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, the systematic study of the evolution of 'modern' form of local government, an essential part of the decolonization process at the local level, has been obscured and, at times, completely ignored by historians. Yet, local government was a direct product of indirect rule. It is one of the enduring legacies of colonialism, particularly in former British colonies. It passed from the colonial era into the independence period without much question. Similarly, the overall impact of decolonization on rural communities remained relatively unexplored, for the focus has been on urban centres and the national level. What my study does is to explore the transition from colonial indirect rule through 'Native Authorities' to post-colonial 'local government'.

Also neglected has been the specific role that the United Nations Trusteeship Council and its Visiting Missions played in the decolonization effort and the transition to a 'modern' form of local government in the Trust Territories. In Ewedome, the role of the

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<sup>24</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> The point that 'local political developments do take on a different complexion when viewed from the local rather than from the national perspective', is made in Barbara J. Callaway, 'Traditional Local Politics: Tradition in Local Government Elections in Aba, Nigeria; Keta, Ghana', *African Studies Review*, 3 (1972), p. 406.

<sup>25</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 8.

Trusteeship Council has been seen only in terms of the integration of the territory into the Gold Coast, and then Ghana. By so doing, the very important role of the council in decolonization at the local level became shrouded in the Ewe unification problem. Yet, the council was instrumental in the transformations that took place in Ewedome from 1946 to independence in 1957. The demand by the council for the democratization of the NA system was an essential part of the process of decolonization.

In line with the overall policy of indirect rule, the British government introduced the policy of amalgamation in the 1920s-30s. The principles of the policy as espoused by Lugard were based on the recognition only of big states. It meant therefore that all smaller chiefdoms should merge to form larger entities.<sup>26</sup> In other words, 'indirect rule was premised on culturally homogeneous territorial "tribes" ruled by chiefs'.<sup>27</sup> After the First World War, British colonial thought swung towards a closer embrace of African cultural values and institutions. It was this change of attitude that led to the conception of the idea of indirect rule.<sup>28</sup> The call was for what Gold Coast colonial anthropologist, R. S. Rattray, described as 'the retention of all that was best in Africa's own past culture'.<sup>29</sup> It is important to note that Rattray was talking here specifically about Akan culture, especially Asante, and it was an Akan model that provided the template for colonial administrators in their application of the NA system to other places like Ewedome. Economic historians trace

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<sup>26</sup> Raymond Bangulo Bening, *Ghana: Regional Boundaries and National Integration* (Accra, 1999), p. 258; Massing, *Local Government Reform*, p. 5; Carola Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana* (Edinburgh 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa', *Journal of African History*, 44 (2003), p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> For an analysis of the anatomy of indirect rule, see Prosser Gifford, 'Indirect Rule: Touchstone or Tombstone for Colonial Policy?', in Prosser Gifford and W. A. Roger Louis (eds.), *Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule* (New Haven, 1967), p. 351-391. For the specific area of Ewedome, see Togoland Report of 1936, p. 6.

<sup>29</sup> The background to the conception of the idea of indirect rule is covered in R. S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution* (Oxford, 1929), p. vii.

the extension of the idea of indirect rule to the depression of the late 1930s, which led to a cut in colonial expenditure, and the Geneva Convention of 1930, which outlawed forced labour. All this made indirect rule very important in facilitating the raising of revenue locally through traditional authorities thereby offloading some of the effects of the depression.<sup>30</sup>

Recent research by historians such as Spear, Allman and Parker, and Lentz have, however, demonstrated how important local leaders and other intermediaries or brokers have been in determining how the processes of introducing indirect rule unfolded in British colonial Africa.<sup>31</sup> Colonial authorities often depended on local authorities to implement such a policy not only because they wanted to legitimise their rule but, most importantly, customs and traditions of the people were seen to form its bedrock. Local leaders, in turn, used their incorporation into the indirect rule system as a means to strengthen their position. This thesis shows that in the Ewedome region, the historical relationship that certain dominant local leaders had with first the Germans and then the British had an impact on shaping amalgamated states. The influential leaders saw the policy of amalgamation as an opportunity for mobilizing connections to consolidate their own political positions. In his 1977 thesis, for example, Brown demonstrates how the chief of Kpando spearheaded the formation of Akpini NA in 1928 and got officials to endorse it.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 18.

<sup>31</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 3-27; Jean Allman and John Parker, *Tongnaab: The History of a West African God* (Bloomington, 2005), p. 194-205; Carol Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana* (Edinburgh, 2006), p. 86. See also, Benjamin N. Lawrance, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L. Roberts (eds.), *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa* (Wisconsin, 2006), p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> David Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area of Ghana, 1925 to 1969: A Study of the Influence of Central Government and National Politics upon Local Factional Competition', PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1977, p. 33-34.

In Ewedome, Togoland identity and politics fits into the broader debate on how colonialism created nations and new identities. In the pre-colonial era, the notion of identity in Ewedome appeared to be flexible because of the heterogenous nature of the region. Each ethnic group, both Ewe and non-Ewe alike, maintained their distinct cultural identity. Following the standardization and promotion of Ewe language through the church and the school system, Ewe identity was promoted above others in Ewedome. Subsequent British occupation and the creation of NAs led to a further reification of Ewe identity. Minority ethnic groups were incorporated into the amalgamated states thereby making the notion of Ewe identity more static and less flexible.<sup>33</sup>

Present-day scholars have critically examined the nature and dynamics of indirect rule in Africa and have found it to be riddled with contradictions and ambiguities. NAs were thus seen as colonial inventions that 'often lacked traditional legitimacy'.<sup>34</sup> Mamdani's major problem with indirect rule was that it left the NAs without any democratic checks and balances on the authority of the chiefs.<sup>35</sup> While Meyer, for instance, sees the operation of the NA system of administration in the face of the emergence of educated citizens in Ewedome as contradictory, Berman described the whole system as 'the grassroots foundations of colonial domination'.<sup>36</sup>

To Spear, these criticisms of the use of chiefly power by the colonial officers are attributable to the failure by historians to engage with 'the historical development and the

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<sup>33</sup> On the specific case of how colonial policies created the notion of Ewe identity over a wider geographical area, see Benjamin N. Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation": Periurban Colonialism in Togo's Eweland, 1900-1960* (Rochester, 2007), p. 26. For the wider African experience on how colonialism made the notion of ethnicity and identity more fixed and real, see Erik Gilbert and Jonathan T. Reynolds, *Africa in World History* (New Jersey, 2008), p. 328.

<sup>34</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p.3.

<sup>35</sup> Mamdani, *Citizens and Subjects*, p. 54.

<sup>36</sup> Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* (Edinburgh, 1999), p.15; Bruce J. Berman, 'Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism', *African Affairs*, 97 (1998), p. 315.

complexity of the interpretative process involved'.<sup>37</sup> He notes further that the contradictions identified with indirect rule 'were rarely without local historical precedents'.<sup>38</sup> In his view, colonial political structures were often 'developed in response to local conditions'.<sup>39</sup> The use of NAs was only a means of securing acceptability of the institutions on which the colonial officers placed their reliance. That, in the words of Hailey, was an important consideration which applied 'not only to the initial recognition of NAs, but to their subsequent adaptation to the more advanced requirement of modern rule'.<sup>40</sup> As Rathbone puts it, at the time, 'chiefly power was the best and, almost certainly, the only guarantee of what the British deemed to be law and order'.<sup>41</sup> He considers NA administration to be of pragmatic importance, and the best system to be adopted during the inter-war period, though 'it was not perceived as optimally efficient'.<sup>42</sup> Even in municipal towns such as Accra and Cape Coast, earlier experiments in 'modern' forms of local government in the early 1900s, as noted by Rathbone, proved to be unsuccessful and a vindication of the reliance on NAs.<sup>43</sup>

This thesis argues that in Ewedome until the late 1940s, when sufficient literate members were forthcoming, it seemed to the administrative officers that no practical alternative existed to the system of indirect rule based on the existing indigenous political structures.<sup>44</sup> Writing about NA authorities in Tanganyika in the 1920s, Iliffe notes that

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<sup>37</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, Lord Hailey, Report on Native Administration and Political Development in British Africa, 1940-42. p. 14-15.

<sup>41</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

<sup>44</sup> Skinner notes how Ewedome region lagged behind French Togoland and the Gold Coast in terms of education. She observes that while leaders of political groups in the French Togoland and the Colony were graduates from Western universities, those of Ewedome were only graduates from teacher training colleges.

opposition to chiefs came only from areas with 'exceptional education and wealth'.<sup>45</sup> It was after 1949, when anti-colonial sentiments were crystalising into a movement against the established order in the Colony, that the NAs in Ewedome became subjects of anti-colonial attack. It was then that it became apparent that the NAs were unsuitable to meet the escalating developmental problems of the post-war world. In other words, it was the inability of the colonial state to tackle spiralling post-war development and welfare problems that drove on the transfer of power to African nationalists.<sup>46</sup>

In Ewedome, the political trajectory of decolonisation became complicated with the intensification of Togoland politics from 1949-50. Togoland politics here refers to the increasing awareness among the different ethnic groups in Togoland of their shared colonial experience and, for that matter, a common identity. In other words, Togoland politics was a discourse that sought to mobilise the collective identity of the inhabitants of the former German colony as a basis for promoting Togoland nationalism. This phenomenon, which started in the 1930s, reached new heights by the 1940s as the Gold Coast began to witness tumultuous political developments. Attempts to salvage local government from the ravages of anti-colonialist attack led to series of reforms which culminated eventually in the demise of NAs in 1951.

However, as this thesis argues, the new local councils proved to be no more democratic than the NAs that they replaced. Attempts by the nationalist Convention People's Party (CPP) and succeeding governments to control local government units led to the packing of councils in Ewedome with party functionaries. Divide and rule tactics made the

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See Kate Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies: The Politics of "Freedom" in Southern British Togoland, 1953-1956', *Journal of African History*, 48 (2007), p. 141.

<sup>45</sup> John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 328.

<sup>46</sup> This point is well articulated in Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 20-37.

proliferation of local councils a disturbing feature of local government in Ewedome. This coupled with excessive centralisation, corruption and ineptitude rendered local councils inefficient, thereby dashing the hopes of the youth who had been the driving force behind the change from the old NA system. The abolition of local councils in 1974 made the local government units in Ewedome remote from the citizens.

Research for this thesis involved the collection of primary sources from archives in Accra, Ho and, Koforidua, all in Ghana, the National Archives in London, and from the Rhodes House Library, Oxford, UK. These were combined with the collection of oral history and personal reminiscences in the study area. According to Prins, personal reminiscence is oral evidence which is specific to the informant, and such evidence brings freshness and a wealth of detail which is often not documented.<sup>47</sup> Oral history and personal reminiscences were even more important for this research because in the fit of anti-Nkrumahist enthusiasm following the 1966 coup, many documents were burnt in the study area in an attempt to obliterate the memories of CPP rule. I found Henige's model of validating oral history very useful as a way of minimising distortions and exaggerations.<sup>48</sup> My interviewees were mostly chiefs, elders and those who were eyewitnesses to some of the historical processes. The selection of the interviewee was not based on statistical norms. In other words, the guiding principle was the role which the interviewees played in historical events.

Among the difficulties encountered in the collection of primary data, research at the archive in Ho was the most problematic. At Ho, one encountered loose sheets of papers,

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<sup>47</sup> Gwyn Prins, 'Oral History' in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 139.

<sup>48</sup> For details about the three ways of showing the independence of oral tradition, see David Henige, 'Oral Tradition as a Means of Reconstructing the Past', in John Edward Philips (ed.), *Writing African History* (Rochester, 2005), p. 185.

most of which were not filed. This made it extremely difficult to state the title and file numbers in the citation of documents. Yet, these loose papers contained valuable material which were crucial for this study. This, coupled with poor ventilation and inadequate facilities, made research at the archive a difficult task. Some of the interviews were conducted in 2000 when I was involved in the collection of stool histories in the Volta Region of Ghana for Institute of African Studies (IAS), University of Ghana. The transcripts and recordings can be accessed at the IAS by future researchers.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides some brief historical background in an attempt to show the cultural heterogeneity and political fragmentation of the region and the transformative impact of nineteenth-century conflicts in creating Ewedome. This is important in understanding the subsequent history of colonial rule, the reshaping of the political landscape and the development of local government. Chapter 2 examines the creation of NAs from the 1920s up to the political watershed of 1948; the starting point of decolonization. It examines the negotiations over the Togo mandate up to its final settlement in 1923. The chapter details a sequence of research carried out by colonial officials and anthropologists and demonstrates how the findings informed the formulation of colonial policy in the region. It shows the relevance of local agents in the move to implement the findings of those reports and in shaping amalgamated states in the region.

Chapter 3 examines how the NAs performed their judicial, executive and legislative functions. It argues that the NAs, despite their inefficiencies, laid the foundation for the development of a 'modern' system of local government in Ewedome. They set the tone for mobilizing the inhabitants for local development projects, the promotion of education and

the design of a system of rate collection. Their financial records, administrative procedures and rudimentary judicial system were important in facilitating a transition to the new local councils in 1951.

Chapter 4 examines the gradual decline of NAs in Ewedome. It looks at how social and political change in Ewedome from the 1940s exposed their weaknesses and led to the rise of anti-chief and anti-NA sentiments in the region. The chapter shows that the activities of the Ewe Presbyterian Church, the increase in the number of educated youth (with its concomitant generational divide), the presence of UN Visiting Missions from 1949, the emergence of Ewe nationalism and Togoland politics as well as the spill-over effect of CPP activism in the Gold Coast proper were some of the factors that weakened the NA system. Post-war challenges thus called for a complete change of the system of governance at the local level.

Chapter 5 looks at the surge in 'Ewe nationalism' and the fight for and against the integration of British Togoland into the Gold Coast in the 1950s. Specifically, the chapter examines the interaction between Ewe/Togoland politics with local government, including the articulation of national politics with local-level politics and their adverse effects on the development of local government in Ewedome. The chapter argues that the Togoland unification issue sowed the seed for the excessive politicization of local councils that became a feature of local government system in Ewedome in the first decade of independence. The chapter demonstrates how the unification problem brought the machinery of local government in the region to a virtual standstill in 1951-1956.

The final chapter focuses on local government in the post-independence era. The chapter brings the Ghana-wide story of local government up to date and shows how that unfolded

in Ewedome. It examines attempts by the CPP to marginalize chiefs through direct persecutions and the introduction of reforms that sought to destroy the authority and power of traditional leaders. This led to the proliferation of small, unwieldy local councils. It shows how the material on CPP-chief antagonism in Ewedome fits into and extends Rathbone's analysis in his *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, which focuses on the Colony and Asante. It argues that excessive politicization by successive governments rendered local councils ineffective and led to their eventual demise in 1974. The chapter ends with an overview of the present state of local government in Ewedome, following the introduction of District Assemblies in 1989.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **EWEDOME IN THE PRE-COLONIAL AND GERMAN COLONIAL PERIODS**

The pre-colonial history of Ewedome is largely the history of a number of different small independent political units or chiefdoms rather than the history of a geographical area. Its chequered history is shaped by the migration of different ethnic groups, particularly the dominant Ewe, to the area, Akan contact from the eighteenth century, the missionary encounter and colonial conquest. From the eighteenth century, this heterogeneous region was subjected to transformational forces of all kinds. This chapter attempts to paint a brief picture of what Ewedome looked like on the eve of British colonisation. It reviews migration histories and proceeds with an examination of the nature of the pre-colonial political structure. It then analyses the impact of Akan contact and the transformation brought about by missionary activities, including the super-imposition of Ewe culture on autochthonous groups. The chapter concludes with an overview of the first European contact and the brief German colonial period from the 1880s to 1914.

#### **Review of Migration History**

The history of the migration of the Ewes to their present homes came down to us through oral tradition. Oral traditions relating to origin of ethnic groups are full of embellishment. Many ethnic groups tend to shroud their origin in myth in order to enhance their status among other groups or to legitimise their claim to territory. For example, when the early colonial official, Captain C.C. Lilley, was collecting oral histories in the southern section of British Togoland in the 1920s, the people of Akpafu told him that they came

from heaven.<sup>1</sup> We have similar story about of the first King of Accra who was said to have come from the sea.<sup>2</sup> Others link their origin to ancient Egypt, Ethiopia and the like in their bid to bask in the glories of those ancient civilizations as a means of legitimising their authority.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the process of reconstructing the history of such people becomes a tortuous one.

The Ewes of Ewedome, like the other Ewes to the south, trace their origin to Ketu in Yorubaland in present-day south-western Nigeria. From Ketu, they moved in two directions, with one group settling at Tado on the Mano River and then migrating to Notsie, now in the Republic of Togo.<sup>4</sup> The other group went south-west and found a settlement known as Dogbonyigbo.<sup>5</sup> This second group, made up of Anlos and Behs, later joined their kinsfolk at Notsie.<sup>6</sup> With time, the Notsie settlement grew in size and population under their king, Agokoli. It is difficult to posit a precise date for these historical events but some writers suggest they must have taken place between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>7</sup>

The popular view that resonates through the traditions of all Ewe states in the Volta Region of Ghana is that a 'mass migration' from Notsie was occasioned by the cruelty of Agokoli, coupled with the mysterious disappearances of people within the walled city of Notsie.<sup>8</sup> One popular story which typifies the often trumpeted cruelty of Agokoli involved

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<sup>1</sup> C.C. Lilley, 'A Short History of Nkonya Division in the Ho District', *Gold Coast Review*, 1 (1923), p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Carl Christian Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast and Asante* (Basel, 1895), p. 4

<sup>3</sup> For an analysis of the origin of the Ga, see Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Some stretched the tradition to a place they called Amedzofe in the easternmost point of the Niger. See Manoukian, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 12. A brief account of the migration story is also found in National Archives, Kew, London CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Sphere of Togoland 1922-21, p. 42. All CO papers cited in this thesis are at the National Archives, Kew, London. [Hereafter, NA].

<sup>5</sup> NA CO 96/724/2, Annual Report, p. 42.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ewe Newsletter*, 31 May 1945, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Ansah K. Asamoah, *The Ewe of South-Eastern Ghana and Togo on the Eve of Colonialism* (Tema, 1986), p. 7-8. Festivals are celebrated throughout Eweland to recount the 'mass exodus'. The tradition of Ho states that it was the people of Bankoe who led the exodus from Notsie and that the dagger which their leader used to lead all the Ewes from Notsie is still in the possession of the people of Ho-Bankoe. See PRAAD/A ADM

the demand he made to the people to make clay rope and to use their feet to mash the clay in which thorns had been inserted.<sup>9</sup> The Bremen missionaries and other writers such as Ellis first recorded these migration traditions in the nineteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Also, in the early decades of the twentieth century, colonial officials such as Rattray, Le Lievee and Lilley also collected oral traditions in the territory, many of which were replete with the Notsie migration traditions.<sup>11</sup> Later writers have all used these original written accounts and interpreted them in different ways. It is, however, simplistic to assume that there was a 'mass migration' and that all the people that identify themselves today as Ewes in Ewedome migrated from Notsie. Even more interesting is the claim by some Guan people in Ewedome that they too migrated from Notsie. This brings the validity of the whole migration story into question, in view particularly of Debrunner's comment that the claim by some ethnic groups that they migrated from Notsie emanated from the wish to have sprung from the legendary Notsie which was being used as a unifying myth by the Ewes.<sup>12</sup>

In recent years, the interpretations of African migration traditions have shifted, as can be seen from Nugent's works on the Ewes, Parker's analysis of the migration traditions of the

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39/1/54, Ho Native Affairs, 14 March to 26 November 1943. Debrunner quotes the nineteenth-century Bremen Missionary Spieth as saying that the defeat of Akwamu in 1833 was due partly to the raising of this dagger of the Hos against Akwamu as a curse. See H. Debrunner, *A Church between Colonial Powers* (London, 1965), p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> D. E. K. Amenumey, *The Ewe in Pre-colonial Times* (Accra, 1986), p.3; Dennis Laumann, 'The History of the Ewe of Togo and Benin from Pre-Colonial to Post-Colonial Times' in Benjamin N. Lawrance and Francis Agbodeka (eds.), *The Ewe of Togo and Benin* (Accra, 2005), p. 16; Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 27. Remnants of the walls of Notsie (which are now tourist attractions) are living relics of its historical past.

<sup>10</sup> For details, see Ellis, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 1-13.

<sup>11</sup> For recorded oral traditions of the states in Ewedome, see RAG/H RAO2073, R. S. Rattray, *A History of the Tribal Divisions of the District of Misahohe and of the Sub-District of Ho and of Kpando*, 1915; PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, P. D. Le Lievee, *An Essay on Tribal History of the Kpando Division*, 19 April 1924; Lilley, 'A Short History of the Nkonya Division', p.108.

<sup>12</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 41.

Ga and Law's work on the Slave Coast.<sup>13</sup> Most often, population movements are inscribed in local oral traditions as discrete historical events and linear movements often triggered by specific political circumstances, such as 'the cruelty of Agokorli', and recalled using mnemonic devices such as the story of the thorns in the clay. These traditions, which were later written down as such by missionaries, early colonial officials, and local literates are still interpreted literally by most local people and by some scholars. These traditions, however, need not be interpreted in such a literal way. Instead, they should be seen more as ways of remembering what in fact were probably broader and longer-term population shifts, social changes and political struggles.<sup>14</sup> According to Nugent, for example, the Ewes did not migrate from Notsie *en masse* as most of the accounts seek to portray. Nugent uses their repeated relocation during the course of their migration to buttress his argument that the movement of people into Ewedome region and beyond was a likely part of a more gradual population shift spanning at least two centuries.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, the reality is that not all the Ewe-speaking states presently inhabiting Ewedome were part of the Ewe stock that migrated from the east. In 1915, when Rattray was collecting oral traditions in Eweland, the people of Matse told him that they were originally Twi-speaking people. They said they helped the Akwamus in fighting the Ewes because they, the people of Matse, and the people of Akwamu belong to the same race. It is also on record that the people of Matse did not fight against the Asantes in 1869 for the

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<sup>13</sup> Paul Nugent, 'A Regional Melting Pot: The Ewe and their Neighbours in the Ghana-Togo Borderlands', in Lawrance and Agbodeka (eds.), *The Ewe of Togo and Benin* (Accra, 2005). See also Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 8; Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> Nugent attributes the popularization and superimposition of the Notsie story on the traditions of non-Ewe states in Ewedome to the handiwork of the Bremen missionaries. See Nugent, 'Regional Melting Pot', p. 34. For details about the degree of assimilation of the Guans into the Ewe culture, see Amenumey, *The Ewe*, p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> For an analysis of the Ewe migration story and population movements in Ewedome, see Nugent, 'Regional Melting Pot', p. 38; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 16-18.

same reason.<sup>16</sup> Some families in Matse were said to have moved away as a result of a dispute and founded Wusuta in the present day Kpando District of the Volta Region. A minute of the Akpini State Council meeting in 1945 indicates that these original Wusuta settlers were in fact matrilineal and that they had strong Akan connections.<sup>17</sup> In a report submitted to the PMC in Geneva in 1939, it was stated that people of Have came from Asini on the Gold Coast and are today to be found among the Ewe. They lost their original language altogether and now speak the former.<sup>18</sup>

Writing to the Acting Commissioner of Eastern Province on 13 December 1945, the District Commissioner of Ho intimated that during the Asante invasion of Ewedome in 1869, Wusuta was for three years the headquarters of the Akwamu army.<sup>19</sup> In the same vein, the people of Tokokoe (another Ewe state) in Ho District told Rattray that they came from Aburi in the Gold Coast. This story was reaffirmed by a petition which the people of Tokokoe sent to the Governor of the Gold Coast in 1934 concerning stool disputes in Tokokoe. In the said petition, they traced their origin to Aburi in Akwapim and said they arrived in Ewedome before the coming of the Germans.<sup>20</sup> It follows, therefore, that from about the fifteenth century to the seventeenth century, the region referred to as Krepiland (of which Ewedome is a part) witnessed the influx of people from the west and east to the extent that the area became what Nugent refers to as 'a regional melting pot'.<sup>21</sup> The arrival of the Ewes by the late seventeenth century and the people of Agotime (an Adangme

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<sup>16</sup> RAG/H RAO/2073, Rattray, Tribal Divisions.

<sup>17</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/285, Akpini Native Affairs, Minutes of State Council Meeting, 10 December 1945.

<sup>18</sup> NA CO96/746/7, Report to the PMC in Geneva, October 1938.

<sup>19</sup> RAG/H Case No. 48/2, Amalgamation of Divisions in Togoland 1945; Collier, 'Ablode', p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/286, Ho Native Affairs, Petition from the Division of Tokokoe, 12 April 1934.

<sup>21</sup> Nugent, 'Regional Melting Pot', p. 29. Collier also attributed the 'ethnographic complexity of the region to the wars that took place between neighbouring African states in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries'. Collier, 'Ablode', p. 2.

people) by about the 1680s made the area highly heterogeneous.<sup>22</sup> Awatime, Logba, Nyangbo and Tafi are non-Ewe states located right within the heart of Ewedome. This demonstrates that the Ewes could not completely conquer the former; neither were they able completely to assimilate them.<sup>23</sup>

From Notsie, the Ewes began to move westwards and started peopling their present homes. Just as the date for the beginning of the migration of the Ewes remains obscure, so also is the date for their arrival in their present locations a contentious issue among historians. It was first intimated that the Ewe began to occupy their present home by the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>24</sup> In 1997, Amenumey revised this date and suggested later sixteenth or early seventeenth century as probable dates.<sup>25</sup> Law challenged the putative mid-seventeenth century dating and suggested early fifteenth century. He based his assertion on his analysis of the genealogies and king-lists recorded in the Whydah tradition, which he describes as 'simplified and foreshortened'.<sup>26</sup> He further argued that 'the indigenous societies and polities which had to cope with the impact of the growth of European trade on the coast from mid-sixteenth century onwards were therefore more probably of considerable antiquity and solidarity than of recent establishment'.<sup>27</sup> Writing later in 2001, Akyeampong disagreed with Law and stood by the mid-seventeenth century

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<sup>22</sup> Ellis, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 8. The people of Agotime are of Ga stock and they emigrated after the destruction of the old kingdom of Accra by the Akwamu in 1680. See M. B. K. Darkoh, 'Note on the Peopling of the Forest Hills of the Volta Region of Ghana', *Ghana Notes and Queries*, 11 (1970), p. 9. The Adangme were refugees from Akwamu wars of expansion in the 1680s. See Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 226; Sandra E. Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Change on the Upper Slave Coast: A History of the Anlo-Ewe* (London, 1996), p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> W. K. Yayoh, 'Krepi States in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 2 (2002), p. 69. Each Guan state and Togo remnant group within Ewedome and indeed within the whole of present-day Volta Region has a dialect and traditions peculiar to it.

<sup>24</sup> See Amenumey, *The Ewe*, p. 7; Asamoah, *Ewe of South-Eastern Ghana and Togo*, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup> D. E. K. Amenumey, 'A Brief History' in Francis Agbodeka (ed.), *The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana*, Vol.1 (Accra, 1997), p. 16.

<sup>26</sup> Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 31.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

dating.<sup>28</sup> This was followed by Lawrance, who is emphatic about the mid-seventeenth century dating in his recent work on the Ewe in the urban and rural areas under French colonialism.<sup>29</sup> This shows that research on the migration tradition of the Ewes is inconclusive and largely speculative.

The Ewes who occupied Ewedome came through the northern and central routes.<sup>30</sup> The settlement of the Ewes in Ewedome, their present localities, was not achieved without a fight from the autochthons, referred to by linguists as speakers of 'Togo-remnant languages'.<sup>31</sup> Research based on linguistic evidence has shown that these autochthons are of Guan extraction. Painter's glottochronology of the Kwa group of languages shows Guan as 'a group of closely related languages spoken by people living in Ghana'.<sup>32</sup> The movement of these Guan people was as a result of a series of attacks by the Akans from the sixteenth century. The traditions of the Ewes are unanimous on the fact that when they arrived in the territory, they met some autochthons and had to push them away from the area. The people of Peki claim they met the people of Akpafu and Lolobi and drove them away. Similarly, Awudome also claimed that on their arrival from Notsie they met, fought and drove the people of Akpafu and Lolobi from their present homes.<sup>33</sup> The people of Kpando were said to have met a man called Kperi at the place the former now occupy and drove him and his people away. The place was then named 'Kperi-fe-do' (the deserted

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<sup>28</sup> Akyeampong, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon*, p. 27.

<sup>29</sup> Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed description of the routes of migration by the Ewes, see Manoukian, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 12; Asamoah, *Ewe of South-Eastern Ghana and Togo*, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> Laumann, 'The History of the Ewe', p. 17. Interviews with *Togbe* Delume VII, Ve Deme, 10 August 2007, *Togbe* Akom, Gbefi, 9 August 2000.

<sup>32</sup> See C. Painter, 'The Guan and West Africa Historical Reconstruction', *Ghana Notes and Queries*, 9 (1966), p. 58.

<sup>33</sup> Asem, *History of Awudome*, p. 2.

place of Kperi). It was the corruption of the name 'Kperi-fe-do' that gave Kpando its present name.<sup>34</sup>

Although the Notsie tradition cannot be taken as wholly true, it is still relevant in the reconstruction of the history of the Ewe people. Law is right when he states that traditions of migration are at best 'metaphor expressing ...various forms of cultural and political influences [and that they] do suggest the existence of a sense of common identity and shared historical experience of subjugation to the power of successive dominant states', such as Akwamu and Asante.<sup>35</sup> One can conclude that since the autochthonous groups lived in the midst of Ewe states, they acquired this tradition about coming from Notsie. Missionary activities coupled with colonial policies set in motion a process of Ewe cultural diffusion which saw the Ewe language dominating the languages of the autochthons. What is sure is that by the mid-seventeenth century, the Ewe-speaking people of Ewedome had emerged as a distinct 'cultural and linguistic entity' in the region vaguely referred to as Krepiland.<sup>36</sup> The migration story is important in accounting for the cultural heterogeneity and political fragmentation of the region. This will in turn illuminate our understanding of subsequent history of colonial rule and the particularity of the development of local government in Ewedome.

### **Society and Economy**

The early settlements of the Ewes in Ewedome were very few and scattered. Each lineage led by its religious leader founded a *du* (settlement or town). It is therefore common

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<sup>34</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/42, Le Lievee, Essay on the Tribal History of the Kpando Division. p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 30.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p. 21-22.

to find some of the *duwo* (towns) named after the leaders who founded them. In some cases, the names of the *duwo* had their roots in some miraculous feat that those religious leaders were said to have performed in the course of their journey to their present locations.<sup>37</sup> Others were named in relation to something peculiar to that settlement or town. With time, an off-shoot of the original *du* developed as some of its inhabitants moved to establish new settlements due either to internal squabbles or for want of better land.<sup>38</sup> The original settlement then became the *fiadu* (capital town). There were some original settlements which were able to hold together and no off-shoots developed out of them. This explains why in Ewedome, some pre-colonial states (*dukowo*) are made up of only one *du* whereas others are made of two or three *duwo*.

Cultural peculiarities and the degree of political autonomy tended to be more pronounced in those areas where the off-shoots developed further away from the *fiadu*. For example, during the later part of the nineteenth century, the people of Fodome moved from Abutia, their parent settlement in the Ho district, and got separated from the latter not only by the distance between them, but also by the Togo-Atakora ranges.<sup>39</sup> In contrast, some off-shoots developed quite close to the original *du* thereby forming a cluster of settlements, such as Gbi-Nyigbe (Peki), Gbi-Dzigbe (Hohoe), Kpando and Ho. In those close settlements, the various component *duwo* maintained close connection with the *fiadu* even though each *du* had some degree of political autonomy.

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<sup>37</sup> For a survey of such cases in Ewedome, see Yayoh, 'Krepi States', p. 70.

<sup>38</sup> For a detailed account on how towns developed in Ewedome, see Manoukian, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 31.

<sup>39</sup> This event is marked by the celebration of *Yorveawo* festival by the people of Abutia and Fodome. Abutia and Fodome *dukowo* are now made up of five and eight towns respectively. Interviews conducted with Togbe Gbedegbleme III, paramount chief of Fodome and Togbe Kottoh IV, chief of Fodome Woe, 7 December 2007.

Each Ewe *duko* (state) showed very interesting variations in the Ewe language. The dialect of each *duko* differed considerably in both 'tonally and segmentally interesting ways'.<sup>40</sup>

Gilbert Ansre attempted some classification of the Ewe language in which he identified seven of what he referred to as dialects clusters.<sup>41</sup> From Ansre's analysis we get a picture of the rather dramatic linguistic transformations that occurred among the Ewes since their arrival in their present homes. Even within a cluster so identified, lexical and phonological variations were highly noticeable. The variations were so remarkable that each *duko* was easily identifiable by the dialect of the Ewe language peculiar to it. The distances, topography and cultural peculiarities then became barriers to cooperation among the various states. At the time of the British contact in 1850, there were as many as 40 independent *dukowo* 'comprising 116 towns' in Ewedome.<sup>42</sup>

Initially, the administration of the *du* was in the hands of *tronuawo* (priests) who were believed to be appointed by *Mawu* (the creator God) through *trowo* (the lower gods). The chief-priests, according to the traditions of the Ewes, took decisions based on the interpretation of the outcome of rituals that they performed. Though there is no evidence to substantiate the process by which chief-priests were elected, oral traditions suggest that prior to the 1870s, the Ewes of Ewedome developed politico-religious institutions in which the office of the chief was held by a priest.<sup>43</sup> According to the early colonial official, F.

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<sup>40</sup> Herbert Frederic Walker, 'Topics in Ewe Phonology', PhD Thesis, University of California (1971), p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> For details on this classification see Gilbert Ansre, 'The Ewe Language' in Kojo Gavua and Francis Agbodeka (eds.), *A Handbook of Eweland*, Vol. 2 (Accra, 2000), p. 24. Among the more centralized Ewes of southeastern Ghana, five dialects of the Ewe language were identified in F. K. Atakpa, 'The Ewe Language' in F. K. Agbodeka (ed.), *A Handbook of Eweland*, Vol. 1 (Accra, 1997), p. 28. The number of small independent *dukowo* varies from time to time and different documents have different figures.

<sup>42</sup> Amenumey, *The Ewe*, p. 81.

<sup>43</sup> E.Y. Eduamah, *Ewe Traditions* (Legon, 1965), p.1-16; Interviews conducted with *Togbe* Buame, Chief of Hohoe Bla; the elders of *Togbe* Hodo of Anfoega; *Togbe* Dagadu, paramount chief of Kpando all in 2000.

Crowther, 'there is cause to believe that the office of the *fia* (chief) among the Ewes was originally held by a fetish priest'.<sup>44</sup> He went further to allude to the tradition of Notsie which indicates that the king of Notsie where the Ewes claimed to have come from was the head priest of the Notsie fetish.<sup>45</sup>

The people of Ewedome were not culturally homogeneous. Custom and rituals varied from one state to another. However, certain similarities make it possible to give a general picture of the social organisation. At the base of the social structure was the nuclear family made up of a man, his wife (or wives) and children. Then, there was the extended family made up of a number of closely related nuclear families who traced descent to one paternal ancestor. These closely related patrilineal families formed a *fome* (lineage) and a number of lineages formed a *sa* (clan). A number of clans formed a *du*.<sup>46</sup> The head of a family was responsible for the wellbeing of the members of the family and he was answerable to the lineage head. The lineage head served as a link between the living and the dead. He controlled all lineage property and consulted all the family heads before taking any major decisions on behalf of the lineage. The Ewes are generally patrilineal, but they did not discount matrilineal ties completely. Matrilineal ties were duly acknowledged and accommodated within the patrilineal structures. Maternal relatives could have access to land and enjoy other benefits (*nyrienu*) with the permission of family and lineage heads.<sup>47</sup>

The dominant economic activity of Ewedome was farming. The various *duwo* (towns) started as an *agblekofe* (farming village) and developed gradually into larger settlements.

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*Togbe Adom IX, Agate, 5 July, 2000. The much publicized Danyibakaka festival of the people of Kpando, which recounts the role played by chief-priests who led them to their present homes, attests to this assertion.*

<sup>44</sup> F. G. Crowther, 'The Ewe Speaking People', *Gold Coast Review*, 2 (1927), p. 11.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* We shall return to this topic later.

<sup>46</sup> Ansa Asamoah, 'Social Institutions', in Gavua and Agbodeka (eds.), *Handbook*, Vol. 2, p. 48.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

Farming was mainly subsistence and the focus was on food crop production, such as yam, rice, vegetables, plantain, cotton and palm oil. Among the crops, yam was the most honoured. Rituals and other social activities heralding the harvest of fresh yam remain big celebrations in some states of Ewedome today. Cotton production for domestic markets predated colonialism.<sup>48</sup> That the region exported some cotton from the 1860s is well enough known.<sup>49</sup> To these were added maize, cassava, sweet potatoes and other American crops introduced from the seventeenth century by Europeans.<sup>50</sup> Fishing was a lucrative business among states living along the Volta River. Hunting was also a very important economic activity in pre-colonial and early colonial times. Wild animals such as elephants and bush pigs were very common in the area. Hunting was done on a group basis. Hunters came together to organise hunting expeditions from December to April, during which time dry conditions made it easier to hunt the animals. Apart from hunting, it was common to find each family keeping domestic animals such as fowls, goats, sheep and rabbits.

The traditional economic activities were primarily farming, fishing and hunting, but some states emerged along trade routes and developed into commercial centres. An important trade route that developed through the territory was from Salaga in the northern savana zone through Krachi, Kpando and on to Ada and Accra on the coast.<sup>51</sup> Another linked Ho to Keta, the port on the Anlo coast.<sup>52</sup> Goods on these routes were conveyed to the marketing centres by portage.<sup>53</sup> Handicraft activities such as basketry, blacksmithing and pottery were common. Kpando, for example, was famous for its pottery production. The

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<sup>48</sup> Donna J. E. Maier, 'Persistence of Precolonial Patterns of Production: Cotton in German Togoland, 1800-1914' in Allen Isaacman and Richard Roberts (eds.), *Cotton, Colonialism, and Social History in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Portsmouth, 1995), p. 76 & 78.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76.

<sup>50</sup> Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 45.

<sup>51</sup> Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry and Krepi Politics', p. 201.

<sup>52</sup> Anlo refers to the Ewe-speaking people occupying the coastal littoral to the south of Ewedome.

<sup>53</sup> Domestic slaves and pawns served as porters on long distance commercial routes.

medium of exchange in pre-colonial times was the barter system. With the coming of Europeans and the commercialization of trade, the use of *hotsui* (cowry shells) as currency became widespread.<sup>54</sup>

The Danes were the first Europeans to have contact with Ewedome.<sup>55</sup> As noted in the Introduction, it was the Danes who in the early eighteenth century gave the name Krepi to the area occupied by the northern Ewes. Debrunner noted that Peki was placed under the protection of the Danish government because of the expansion of Akwamu and Dahomey.<sup>56</sup> At the time Dagadu I of Kpando ascended the throne in the 1830s, the Danes had already had a long tradition of trade contacts with Ewedome.<sup>57</sup> The coming of the Danes increased trading activities in the hinterland of Ewedome. Danish merchants travelled upstream on the Volta to states such as Aveme and Kpando to exchange goods such as guns, gunpowder and beads for rubber, salt and palm oil.<sup>58</sup> Kea also noted that before 1750, a lot of ivory was exported from Krepiland through the Danish fort at Keta.<sup>59</sup> Johnson pointed out that slaves, cotton, palm oil and pottery were brought down the river Volta to the coast at Ada and Accra in large quantities from states such as Kpando, Aveme and Torkor in the late nineteenth century.<sup>60</sup> Ewedome thus made a significant contribution to the lower Volta basin economy of in pre-colonial times.

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<sup>54</sup> Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 49.

<sup>55</sup> This is contrary to the view expressed by Gavua that 'interaction between the Northern Ewes [Ewes of Ewedome] and Europeans was initiated by Germans in the nineteenth century'. See Kojo Gavua, 'A Brief History' in Gavua and Agbodeka (eds.), *Handbook*, Vol. 2, p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 68.

<sup>57</sup> Date taken from the Funeral Brochure for the late Dagadu VII, April 2007, p. 42.

<sup>58</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, Le Lievre, 'The Kpando', p. 23.

<sup>59</sup> R. A. Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations, c. 1750-1813', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 10 (1969), p. 60.

<sup>60</sup> Marion Johnson, 'Asanti East of the Volta', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 8 (1965), p. 48.

### Ewedome from 1733 to 1890

From 1733 to 1874, external events brought about considerable transformations in the political institutions of Ewedome. Akwamu dominance of Ewedome from 1733 to 1833, followed by Asante invasion from 1869 to 1874, had a profound impact on the region.<sup>61</sup> Akwamu emerged as the most powerful Akan state in the hinterland of the eastern Gold Coast in the second half of the seventeenth century.<sup>62</sup> Wilks notes that Asantehene Osei Tutu I learned about war and statecraft from Akwamu and Denkyira in the the seventeenth century.<sup>63</sup> Akwamu conquered the kingdom of Accra and the coast down to the Volta in 1677-80 and dominated that region until it in turn was defeated and driven across the Volta by the Akyem kingdoms and others in 1730.<sup>64</sup> By relocating east of the Volta in 1730, Akwamu became the first Akan state to come into direct contact with Ewedome.<sup>65</sup> Being warlike and powerful, they reorganised themselves and began a series of attacks on Ewedome from 1733. Peki bore the brunt of the Akwamu onslaught because they and Awudome were contiguous to the area occupied by Akwamu. In the process, Peki was completely absorbed into Akwamu to the extent that the chief of Peki became the *Twafohene* (vanguard) of the Akwamu military order, which accounted for Peki's role in the Akwamu contingent at the famous battle of Katamanso in 1826.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> On how the shift in the balance of power among the Akan states in the Gold Coast in the first half of the eighteenth century affected Ewedome, see Collier, '*Ablode*', p. 5-18.

<sup>62</sup> Details about Akwamu's position as a major regional power are noted in Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 25-26.

<sup>63</sup> Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 110.

<sup>64</sup> Crowther, 'Ewe Speaking People', p. 16; Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 26.

<sup>65</sup> For an account on Akwamu-Krepi relations, see Asem, *History of Awudome*, p. 4-8.

<sup>66</sup> C. W. Welman, *The Native States of the Gold Coast: History and Constitution, I, Peki* (London, 1924), p. 8. Peki's role in Akwamu's military establishment is also recorded in Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 2; Johnson, 'Ashanti East of the Volta', p. 36.

By 1760, Akwamu had established control over Ewedome and went further to expand to areas such as Agu in present-day Togo.<sup>67</sup> The segmentation of the Ewes was a major limitation to any concerted effort to thwart Akwamu's expansionist designs. Peki's absorption into Akwamu's politico-military set up made it possible for the latter to use Peki as an instrument of overrule in Ewedome.<sup>68</sup> Every state of Ewedome was made to pay annual tribute in men or cash of twelve shillings.<sup>69</sup> Ewedome was drawn into the Atlantic slave trade after the Dutch, the English, the Danes and the French began to compete with the Portuguese on the West African coast in the mid seventeenth century. This was the period when the coastline from the Volta eastwards to Dahomey became known as the Slave Coast.<sup>70</sup> From the eighteenth century, Ewedome became a major source of slave supply because of Akwamu invasion and the increase in the demand for slaves by Europeans slave dealers.<sup>71</sup> Fynn noted how 'extremely important' the area east of the Volta up to Krepiland was to the slave trade as a result of Akwamu's exploitation.<sup>72</sup> Rodney also showed how Akwamu's expansion to the east of the Volta served to stimulate the trans-Atlantic slave trade.<sup>73</sup>

Akwamu's decision to invade Ewedome was motivated by a shift of interest away from gold to slaves in the early part of the eighteenth century, a period that saw a further increase

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<sup>67</sup> Akwamu residents were said to have been established at Agu. See Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 52. According to J. D. Fage, Akwamu's power extended further to Whydah in 1702. See Fage, *Ghana: A Historical Interpretation* (Madison, 1961), p. 53.

<sup>68</sup> Welman, *Peki*, p. 13.

<sup>69</sup> R.A. Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations', p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 21.

<sup>71</sup> Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 2; Akyeampong, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon*, p. 43.

<sup>72</sup> J. K. Fynn, *Asante and Its Neighbours, 1700-1807* (London, 1971), p. 127.

<sup>73</sup> Walter Rodney, 'Gold and Slaves on the Gold Coast', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. 10 (1969), p. 15. See also Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 28

in slaving activities in Ewedome.<sup>74</sup> The increase in the number of slaves supplied by Akwamu from Ewedome to the Danes made the latter re-open their lodge at Keta in 1748.<sup>75</sup> The period also saw the influx of Portuguese and Brazilian slave traders to the Anlo coast.<sup>76</sup> The Anlos, who served as intermediaries in this trade, bought slaves from Akwamu and sold them to the Danes.<sup>77</sup> Kea stated that Akwamu's invasion of Ewedome was beneficial 'to the mercantile interest of the Danes and the coastal middlemen like the Anlo'.<sup>78</sup> Other intermediaries exchanged salt and European goods in high demand in Ewedome for slaves.<sup>79</sup> As the profit from the trade in slaves from Ewedome region increased, the Danes opened another lodge at We and transformed their lodge at Keta into a fort in 1784.<sup>80</sup>

Brydon notes that Dzokpe in the heart of Ewedome was a 'centre of slave trade'.<sup>81</sup> Kea cited the Danish factor, Kioege as saying in 1774 that the slaves from Crepe were the very best on the whole Guinea coast.<sup>82</sup> When Britain outlawed the slave trade in 1807, the trade in fact increased in Ewedome region because most of the slave dealers found Britain's anti-slavery campaign in Accra and its environs inimical to their business.<sup>83</sup> Consequently, the slave traders relocated 'to communities on the Upper Slave Coast'.<sup>84</sup> Some of the slaves captured in Ewedome were camped at Peki Adzakoe and given a ritual bath before being

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<sup>74</sup> See Walter Rodney, 'The Guinea Coast' in R. Gray (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Africa 1600-1700*, Vol. IV (Cambridge, 1975), p. 318-319; Rodney, 'Gold and Slaves', p. 15.

<sup>75</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 26-27.

<sup>76</sup> Akyeampong, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon*, p. 52.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations', p. 56.

<sup>79</sup> Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Change*, p. 127.

<sup>80</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 28.

<sup>81</sup> Lynne Brydon, 'Constructing Awatime: Questions of Identity in a West African Polity, c.1690s to the Twentieth Century', *Journal of African History*, 1 (2008), p. 28.

<sup>82</sup> Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations', p. 56; Fynn, *Asante and Its Neighbours*, p. 127; Collier, 'Ablode', p. 4.

<sup>83</sup> Details about British anti-slavery activities in the region of Accra from 1807 are recorded in Reindorf, *History*, p. 153.

<sup>84</sup> Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change*, p. 93; Akyeampong, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon*, p. 54.

transported to the coast at Ada or Keta.<sup>85</sup> Debrunner quoted Reindorf as stating that in 1822-3, thousands of Krepes were captured and sold as slaves. A boy of 10 years was sold for 25 strings of cowries and an adult for 'one head and 25 strings'.<sup>86</sup> Akwamu also embarked on ruthless plundering of Ewedome. Persistent kidnapping and seizure of wares from traders ravaged the area. In fact, the trade in slaves from Ewedome in large numbers subsided only after Asante had surrendered its influence east of the Volta to the British in 1874.

In 1829, the states of Ewedome began to take steps to throw off the Akwamu yoke. But this first attempt was met with reprisal.<sup>87</sup> The suppression of the rebellion was made possible partly because of the support which Akwamu received from Peki and other allies such as Accra, Akwapim and Akyem.<sup>88</sup> Peki earned the displeasure of other Ewes states in Ewedome for her role as a tax collector for Akwamu.<sup>89</sup> In 1833, the opportunity came for the fragmented states in Ewedome to forge an alliance to confront Akwamu. In that year, Akwamu, aided by Accra, attacked the Ewedome state of Nyive for refusing to pay tribute. During the course of the attack, the chief of Peki withdrew from the battlefield to attend to family matters.<sup>90</sup> Akoto, Omanhene of Akwamu, considered this behaviour as a sign of disloyalty. Consequently, Akoto sent twelve corns to the chief of Peki and asked the later to pay £100 for each grain of the corn or risk an attack.<sup>91</sup> This outrageous demand forced Peki to seek help from other states in Ewedome to attack Akwamu. In the ensuing battle of

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<sup>85</sup> The site where the slaves were camped at Peki is now a shrine. Interview conducted with the elders and the priest at Peki Adzokoe, 8 June 2006.

<sup>86</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 16.

<sup>87</sup> Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 211.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> By 1874, Peki became the richest state in Ewedome because of the wealth it derived from taxes. See Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 2.

<sup>90</sup> Welman, *Peki*, p. 8-13.

<sup>91</sup> Asem, *Awudome*, p. 7.

Bame in 1833, a coalition of Ewedome states led by Peki defeated Akwamu. The war was significant in the sense that it marked the first time that all Ewedome states came together in alliance under the leadership of Peki to defeat a common enemy. All the same, the defeat of Akwamu in 1833 did not at once bring total peace to Ewedome. A series of internal wars followed during which Akwamu tried to restore its superiority over Ewedome.

It was in this period of uncertainty and turmoil that in 1847, the Bremen missionaries (Norddeutsche Missionsgesellschaft) began their first contact with Ewedome.<sup>92</sup> One of the reasons why they decided to operate in Ewedome was that the region had not yet been brought under any European political control and missionary activities in the Gold Coast since the 1830s had not been extended into Ewedome.<sup>93</sup> The Basel Mission had opened a station in 1864 at Anum, on the western boundary with Ewedome.<sup>94</sup> Led by one Lorenze Wolf, the Bremen missionaries opened a station at Peki in 1847 but high death rate among the missionaries thwarted their initial efforts at evangelization. In 1853, rumours about an imminent Asante invasion of Ewedome forced the missionaries to relocate to Keta from where they began to reach out to other areas of Ewedome.<sup>95</sup> From Peki, other stations were opened at Ho in 1859 and Waya in 1855.<sup>96</sup> Thus, before 1869, a steady progress had been made in the missionary efforts to win converts to the Christian faith.

The defeat of Akwamu, however, was followed by the large-scale Asante invasion of Ewedome from 1869 to 1874. The Asante invasion was triggered in part by alarm over the exchange of territory on the Gold Coast between the British and the Dutch in 1868. The

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<sup>92</sup> See Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 5.

<sup>93</sup> The Bremen Mission was founded in 1836 and it grew quickly to become one of the most important Protestant missionary societies in Germany. See Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 66.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63. See also Johnson, 'Ashanti East of the Volta', p. 42.

<sup>95</sup> Reindorf, *History*, p. 248; Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 68.

<sup>96</sup> Reindorf, *History*, p. 249. Debrunner puts the date for the opening of Waya station at 1855. See Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 78 and 109.

status of Elmina as a trade outlet to the sea was crucial to Asante interests. British control over Elmina coupled with attempts to prevent arms from reaching Asante through the Volta provoked the latter into action.<sup>97</sup> The Anlo-Ada war of 1865 presented Asante with a perfect opportunity to invade Ewedome and to re-impose access to the Volta route. Asante took advantage of its alliance with Anlo since the 1790s to enter the war on the side of the latter.<sup>98</sup> The Ewe of Ewedome were angered by the role played by the Anlo Ewe first in promoting Akwamu's slaving activities in the region and their support for the Asante invasion.<sup>99</sup> From 1869-1873, Asante waged relentless war in the Ewedome region.<sup>100</sup> Many Ewes were taken as slaves to Asante during the period of the invasion.<sup>101</sup> The Bremen Mission was not spared the vandalism of the invading Asante army. The gradual expansion of their mission station in the 1850s and 60s had been truncated by the Asante invasion of 1869, as was the case with Basel Mission stations in the region such as Anum, from where Ramseyer and Kuhne were captured and marched to Kumasi.<sup>102</sup> The missionaries had to re-establish themselves in the late 1870s to 1880s. Asante also suffered some reverses.<sup>103</sup> But the devastation that the invasion left behind continue to linger on in the minds of the people of Ewedome to this day.

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<sup>97</sup> Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 235.

<sup>98</sup> For an account on the long history of collaboration of Anlo with Asante and Akwamu, see Ibid, p. 57 and 224; Akyeampong, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon*, p. 45.

<sup>99</sup> This was the root cause of enmity between the Ewe of Ewedome and the Anlo Ewe, which continued into the immediate-post independence era. J. S. Colman, 'Togoland', *International Conciliation*, 509 (September, 1956), p. 35.

<sup>100</sup> Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 225.

<sup>101</sup> For a discussion of slavery and the economy of Asante during the nineteenth century, see Gareth Austin, *Labour, Land and Capital in Ghana: From Slavery to Free Labour in Asante, 1807-1956* (Rochester, 2005), p. 116-229.

<sup>102</sup> Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra, 1967), p. 209; Johnson, 'Ashanti East of the Volta', p. 45; Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 225.

<sup>103</sup> Asante's heaviest defeat was at the foot of Mountain Gemi in Awatime where rocks were rolled down the mountain to crush the Asante army. See Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 17. The point is also made in Austin, *Labour*, p. 58.

Relief finally came to the people of Ewedome in 1874 when the British defeat of Asante led to the collapse of Asante power along the Volta region and paved the way for the expansion of British influence in the Ewedome region.<sup>104</sup> The Anglo-Danish agreement of 1850, that transferred Danish coastal forts to the British, also provided the basis for Britain's growing influence in Ewedome. Oral tradition indicates that during the period of Asante dominance Ewedome states paid an annual tribute of two men each to Asante.<sup>105</sup> During the period, Akwamu, Asante and Anlo all acquired slaves from the Ewedome region.

Again, the end of Asante hegemony over Ewedome did not bring absolute peace in the territory. On the contrary, the invasion simply prepared the ground for one Ewedome state to be drawn into conflict with another. Therefore, the history of Ewedome from 1874 to 1900 was strewn with internal wars that continued to divide the region. A case in point was an attack on Ziavi by Taviefe in 1887 for the former's alleged support of Asante. Taviefe was said to have seized seven children from Ziavi and pounded them to death in mortars. An Assistant Inspector, Dalrymple, who was sent by the British government to arrest the Taviefe chief and his accomplices, was killed in an ambush by the people of Taviefe. It took reinforcements from Accra to force Taviefe to sue for peace and to pay a fine of £200.<sup>106</sup>

Akwamu's suzerainty over Ewedome states for some hundred years followed by Asante occupation 1869-1873 had a profound impact on the region. It seems likely that the adoption of the Akan chieftaincy system by the Ewes of Ewedome was in consequence of

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<sup>104</sup> Johnson, 'Asante', p. 37.

<sup>105</sup> Akwamu was said to have taken responsibility for the collection of tribute from states in the territory. This is confirmed in Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 74.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, p. 396-399. See also PRAAD/A ADM 39/5/73, Ho District Record Book.

the long period of Akwamu's occupation of the region. The period marked the transition from priest-led political organisation to the institution of Akan-style chieftaincy system. Some historians such as Amenumey and Mamattah, however, disagree and argue that if there was any borrowing, then it must have come from the experience of the Ewes in Ketu and Notsie, and not from the Akans. Though Mamattah agrees that the Ewes initially served under *tronuawo*, he asserts that any claim that the Ewes borrowed the institution from their Akan neighbours 'should be discounted as a fallacy'.<sup>107</sup> Evidence from oral traditions, as well as some secondary sources, however, suggests a borrowing of the institutions of chieftaincy from the Akans. In a letter to the Governor of the Gold Coast in 1931, the paramount chief of Anfoega, *Togbe Hodo V*, and his senior linguist stated that they the people of Anfoega 'learnt the art of chiefship and the science of war from king Akoto of Akwamu'.<sup>108</sup> He went on to say that the first chief of Anfoega stayed with Akwamuhene when he was a minor to learn the art of chiefship. In addition, he indicated in the letter that Hodo I was the one who taught the people of Kpando the art of chiefship and enstooled the first chief of Kpando in 1860.<sup>109</sup>

Oral tradition as well as recorded history of Kpando shows that the people of Kpando were led to their present home by priests: Asianu, Adedze and Eko. The *Danyibakaka* festival is celebrated by the people of Kpando to recount this history and to honour those priests. Oral traditions that I collected from the elders and paramount chiefs of Hohoe, Peki,

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<sup>107</sup> Charles M. K. Mamattah, *The Ewes of West Africa* Vol. 1 (Accra, 1979), p. 39 and 40; Amenumey, *Ewes*, p.13-14.

<sup>108</sup> RAG/H, Hodo V to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 6 January 1931 (Not filed). K. Baku, 'Asafo in Two Ewe States', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 2 (1998) p. 27-28.

<sup>109</sup> Le Lievee, however puts the date for the enstoolment of Dagadu I at 1850. See PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/42, Le Lievee, *The Kpando Division*, p.3; Baku, 'The Asafo in Two Ewe States', 27-28. The people of Kpando put the date for the enstoolment of Dagadu I at 1836. See the funeral brochure for the late Dagadu VII, 30 April 2008, p. 41. This 1836 dating is interesting in view of Lawrance's claim that 'in the Kpando region probably most of the western portion of Eweland, Chieftaincy as it exists today was first introduced at the highest level, that of *duo*, in the 1830s and forties'. Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 30.

Kpando and Anfoega support the view that stools associated with Akan system of chieftaincy were unknown in Ewedome before the Akwamu invasion.<sup>110</sup> According to a recorded history of Kpando, 'for a long time during their migration and later settlement, many Ewe communities were led by fetish priests and priestesses'.<sup>111</sup> The tradition attributed the founding of the paramount stool of Kpando to one Bisi Kodzo, also known as Kodzo Dra in 1806.<sup>112</sup> Dra was said to have stayed at the camp of Asante during the 1869-74 invasion of Ewedome where he studied Asante chieftaincy institutions and military organisation.<sup>113</sup> He then returned to Kpando to replicate what he had learnt.<sup>114</sup> In the words of Crowther, 'there is cause for the belief that the office of Fia was originally held by a fetish priest'.<sup>115</sup> Collier also notes that 'the period of Akwamu dominance over Krepi from the 1740s through to the 1830s may have witnessed a dissemination of Akwamu politico-military organization'.<sup>116</sup> The tradition of Peki shows that Ofori Tutu who led the people of Peki to their present home did not have a stool. It was the successor of Ofori Tutu, Asamoah, who founded the paramount stool of Peki.<sup>117</sup> According to Kea, Westerman recorded a tradition which stated that Awatime and Ewe people obtained kingship from the Akwamu through Odam, an Akwamu and first Awatime chief.<sup>118</sup> This assertion was contained in the works of anthropologists such as Brydon and Verdon who worked in

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<sup>110</sup> Interviews with *Togbe* Deiga, paramount chief of Peki, 7 August 2000. *Togbe* Gabusu, paramount chief of Gbi (Hohoe), 6 June 2006; *Togbe* Hodo VII, 17 June 2006; *Togbe* Dagadu VII, paramount chief of Anfoega, 16 June 2006. The view is further supported by PRAAD/A ADM 39/5/73 Ho District Record Book, p. 10b.

<sup>111</sup> This information is contained in the funeral brochure of the late paramount chief of Kpando, Dagadu VII, 30 April 2008, p. 40.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40-41.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> See funeral brochure of the late Dgadu VII, 30 April 2008, p. 40-41.

<sup>115</sup> Crowther, 'The Ewe Speaking People', p. 14.

<sup>116</sup> Collier, 'Ablode', p. 10.

<sup>117</sup> Interview conducted with Deigah, the paramount chief of Peki, 7 August 2000.

<sup>118</sup> Odam was said to have been sent to govern Awatime and the neighbouring states by Akwamu sovereign just after the mid-eighteenth century. For details of this story, see Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo relations', p. 32; Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change*, p. 32-35.

Ewedome in the 1970s and the 1980s respectively. Brydon notes that 'there is considerable evidence from "Ewe-Dome" groups that chiefs were a nineteenth-century innovation, effectively the aftermath of the adoption of Asante military formation and its offices'.<sup>119</sup> Verdon, on the other hand, postulated that chieftaincy institution in Ewedome 'seems to have been borrowed in the late 1860s or early 1870s' and it is only from 1890 that one can truly talk about what he called a league of sovereign villages.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, Debrunner asserts that after the Akwamu-Asante contacts 'more and more Togo and Ewe tribes adopted from the Akwamu and Asante a proper system of chiefship'.<sup>121</sup>

It is important to note that there is no record which shows that Ewes of Ewedome brought ancestral stools with them from Notsie. As we have seen, the migration story spoke of various lineages being led by priests and not chiefs. Rituals and other cultural practices as well as offices associated with the institution of chieftaincy in Ewedome were of Akan derivation. For example, the talking drum, an important state instrument, is called *atumpani* and the one who beats the drum is known as *Atsrima*. These and many other Akan terms came to dominate the institution of chieftaincy in Ewedome to this day, which is an ample proof of a heavy borrowing from the Akan states. It would appear that many Ewes of Ewedome saw the Akan-style statecraft and military organization to be better suited, indeed perhaps necessary, to survive in the highly competitive and conflict ridden world in which they found themselves. The emerging Ewedome states found themselves wedged between the warlike Akan kingdoms of Akwamu and Asante in the immediate hinterland of the Gold Coast and the powerful Dahomey on the Slave Coast in the eighteenth and nineteenth

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<sup>119</sup> Brydon, 'Constructing Awatime', p. 29.

<sup>120</sup> Michael Verdon, *The Abutia Ewe of West Africa: A Chiefdom that Never Was* (Berlin, 1983), p. 101.

<sup>121</sup> The adoption, according to Debrunner, happened first in Peki then spread to Kpando and Ho areas. See Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 56. See also, Collier, 'Ablode', p. 10.

centuries. Akwamu's influence on the political, military and, to a lesser degree, on the cultural practices of Ewedome was not an isolated case.

From the late seventeenth to the early eighteenth centuries, Akwamu influenced the socio-political transformation of many states in the Gold Coast and beyond.<sup>122</sup> Even the Anlo-Ewe states on the coast became more centralised after their long interaction with Akwamu through trade and administrative contacts during which period institutional borrowing from Akwamu might have taken place. Akyeampong notes the presence of Akwamu administrators in Anlo as part of Anlo-Akwamu alliance that lasted well into the nineteenth century.<sup>123</sup> This view was supported by Lawrance's claim that the rapid development of 'paramountcy tradition' among the Anlo was due to the Anlo-Akwamu contact from the seventeenth century.<sup>124</sup> According to Parker, the process of decoupling secular kingship from priest-kings among the Ga was accelerated after Great Accra was ravaged by Akwamu from 1677 to 1681.<sup>125</sup> Ewedome states also adopted Akan military organisation. Lievee observed that, before the Asante invasion, Kpando went to 'battle in a confused body with an advance guard and a rearguard only'.<sup>126</sup> With the constant invasions, however, it became necessary for Ewe states of Ewedome to adopt the Akan system in order to avert heavy casualties being inflicted on their territory. Consequently, all *duwo* within a *duko* were constituted into a wing of the state military organization, with each wing headed by the chief of the oldest village or town. Thus, there was the advance guard

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<sup>122</sup> Baku, 'Asafo' p. 21. For Akwamu's dominance over the region, see Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations', p. 32; Law, *Slave Coast*, p. 229 and 248.

<sup>123</sup> Akyeampong, *Between the Sea and the Lagoon*, p. 41. See also Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 61; Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations', p. 29

<sup>124</sup> Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 27.

<sup>125</sup> See Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 9-10.

<sup>126</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/42, Le Lievee, Essay on Tribal History of the Kpando Division, p. 4.

led by the *Ngogbe Fia*, the main body led by *Dome Fia*, the left wing led by *Miame Fia* and the right wing led by *Dusime Fia* and the rear guard headed by *Megbe Fia*.<sup>127</sup>

Akwamu influence was not limited to the political and military spheres. In the social facets of life, Ewedome culture was highly influenced by Akan culture. In fact, Ewedome culture is so flexible that as Meyer succinctly states, 'it is inappropriate to conceptualise traditional Ewe culture as a fixed state and closed system'.<sup>128</sup> The adoption of Akan names became fashionable and widespread. Names such as Dompkeh, Asamoah, Obimpeh, Osie, Tutu, Adom, Aniabre, were but some of the many Akan names common among the Ewes of Ewedome. Greene recounts how the exercise of administrative and judicial control over Anlo by Akwamu from 1702-1730 led to the infusion of Akan culture into that of Anlo.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, Ewe culture retained an awful lot of continuities from the past, in the religious sphere for example. Rituals associated with deities remained essentially Ewe in origin and practice. In the words of Ellis, 'it is in their religious development that the superiority of the Ewe-speaking over the Tshi-speaking people is most apparent'.<sup>130</sup>

Although the people of Ewedome adopted the Akan chieftaincy system, the region was not characterised by the creation of large centralised states. Every town, no matter how small, had a *fia* (chief). The *fiaga* (paramount/head chief) who resides in the *fiadu* (capital town) had no control over the day-to-day administration of the other towns. It was customary, however, for a newly enstooled *fia* to be introduced to the *fiaga*.<sup>131</sup> The court of the *fiaga* served as the court of appeal within the state.<sup>132</sup> The stools so instituted became

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<sup>127</sup> For a description of Akan military organization, see Crowther, 'Ewe Speaking People', p. 16.

<sup>128</sup> See Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 3.

<sup>129</sup> Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change*, p. 32-35.

<sup>130</sup> Ellis, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 13.

<sup>131</sup> The introduction was done amidst elaborate ritual performances during which the new *fia* swore the oath of allegiance to the *fiaga* and the latter reciprocated by promising his support.

<sup>132</sup> For details, see Manoukian, *Ewe-Speaking People*, p. 30.

the embodiments of the beliefs and values of the Ewes as well as the pivot around which all activities of the state revolved. Chiefs assumed positions of reverence by virtue of the sacrifices that they performed to their predecessors on behalf of the state. The various *duwo* were welded together into a political unit due to their common allegiance to the chief. In essence, each state became politically sovereign. The chiefs then became constitutional heads who sat in council.

The relevance of Akwamu and Asante invasions and their transformational effects on Ewedome to this study lies in the way in which chiefs such as Adzatekpor of Awatime, Dagadu of Kpando/Akpini and Howusu of Asogli distinguished themselves in those wars and became important leaders in the region. We noted that the Asante army suffered a heavy loss at the hands of the people of Awatime on Gemi mountain in 1869. During the invasion, many states looked to Awatime to give them protection on the Awatime mountains.<sup>133</sup> Asogli state, led by Howusu, also mounted strong resistance to Akwamu and Asante in Ho.<sup>134</sup> Similarly, Dagadu was instrumental in organising the war against Akwamu in 1833 and later against the Asante army at Wusuta. The resistance on the part of those states to first Akwamu and then Asante militarism led to an accumulation of status and authority on the part of those states and their leaders. Thus, the turmoil of the nineteenth century reshaped political power in Ewedome and led to the configuration of regional politics that confronted the incoming Germans from the 1880s-90s.

Those chiefs did not only use their roles in the Akwamu and Asante wars as a bargaining chip in gaining recognition from the German and later, British officials, but they also became active collaborators and local agents in the design and implementation of

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<sup>133</sup> NA CO96/746/7, Report to the PMC, Geneva, 24-25 October, 1938.

<sup>134</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1285, Petition from *Fia Afede* of Ho-Bankoe to the the Governor, 7 July 1931.

British colonial policy of local government in Ewedome in the early decades of the twentieth century. Also of great importance was the effect of the role of the Anlo Ewe in aiding the Asante invasion. This had the effect of drawing a wedge between the northern Ewes and the Anlo on the coast and reshaping Ewedome identity. This development would become a stumbling block in the quest of the British to integrate the region into the Gold Coast in the closing stages of the colonial period.

### **The Colonial Conquest**

Though Britain took over Danish forts along the coast in 1850, the British administration had neither the willingness nor the ability to occupy Ewedome, which was a distant hinterland across the Volta and therefore beyond the recognised extent of the Gold Coast itself.<sup>135</sup> After the Gold Coast Colony was established in 1874, the colonial partition of the region began to escalate in the 1880s with the arrival of the Germans. Consequently, British attitudes began to change in respect of Ewedome. In 1886, Britain invited all states in Ewedome to Peki to sign a treaty, which could best be described as an Ewedome version of the Fante Bond of 1844. This treaty sought to forestall possible German expansion from the coast.<sup>136</sup> On 7 December 1886, the British government wrote a letter to Bismarck in which it was stated that 'the territory of Aquamoo and Crepe were among those which formerly recognised the authority of the Danish crown and that they were included in the purchase of rights and possessions of Denmark by Great Britain in 1850'.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> According to M. Johnson, Britain did not express interest in colonizing the Ewedome region 'so far as no other European power was showing interest in the area'. Johnson, 'Ashanti East of the Volta', p. 56.

<sup>136</sup> Arthur J. Knoll, *Togo Under Imperial Germany, 1884-1914* (Stanford, 1978), p. 28.

<sup>137</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/20, Anglo-German Boundary Agreement, 7 December 1886; Colonial Office List, 1910, p. 211.

The presence of Dr Gustav Nachtigal, the German-Consul General, on the coast in 1884 and the French presence to the west and in the Sudanese zone posed a major threat to British interests in the Gold Coast hinterland. German merchant activities along the coast created conditions that were invigorating for smuggling activities.<sup>138</sup> German traders were interested in the dry Togoland coast because the area was outside the British custom zone where a custom duty of 4 percent on imports was in force from 1874.<sup>139</sup> The Germans sought to win over local traders by introducing cheap but inferior products into the market.<sup>140</sup> Such activities were inimical to British trade east of the Volta.<sup>141</sup> Meanwhile, long before Nachtigal arrived on the coast, the natives made repeated calls on Britain to annex the area and bring it under British protection, but to no avail.<sup>142</sup> The intended benefits which Britain sought to gain from the 1886 treaty with states in Ewedome failed to materialise. Apart from the British flag, which of course, the states were happy to keep, no effective measures were taken to ensure that the chief of Peki really had an effective control over the other states in the region.<sup>143</sup> Far from limiting their activities to the coastal enclave, in 1886 Germany began to expand into the interior as far as Agotime, one of the Adangme states near Ho.<sup>144</sup> This degenerated into a diplomatic row between Germany and Britain. The bone of contention here was Kpando's position as a big market centre in Ewedome

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<sup>138</sup> Gordon Le Sueur, *Germany's Vanishing Colonies* (New York, 1915), p. 110-111.

<sup>139</sup> Knoll, *Togo*, p. 10; W. O. Henderson, *The German Colonial Empire 1884-1919* (London, 1993), p. 49. In 1904, the Germans went ahead to increase their export duties to 10 percent, far more than the 4 percent imposed by the British in the Gold Coast. See Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Change*, p. 141.

<sup>140</sup> Le Sueur, *Germany's Vanishing Colonies*, p.110.

<sup>141</sup> It was to check the smuggling along that part of the coast that in 1886 the boundary between British and German territories was for the first time fixed so that the Gold Coast police could enforce the rules along the border. See PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/20, Anglo-German Boundary, 1986.

<sup>142</sup> Le Sueur, *Germany's*, p. 111.

<sup>143</sup> According to the paramount chief of Peki, the treaty was simply ineffective. Interview conducted in August, 2000. Details of Kpando-Peki rivalry is recorded in Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 201.

<sup>144</sup> Germany's enthusiasm for the acquisition of Ewedome had already being fired towards the acquisition of Ewedome largely by the reports which missionaries wrote about the economic viability of the interior.

where the major Salaga trade route converged with other smaller routes.<sup>145</sup> The revitalization of the route following the withdrawal of Asante in 1874 changed the geopolitical position of Kpando considerably.<sup>146</sup>

As the diplomatic wrangling between Britain and Germany continued, the Bremen Mission was being firmly established throughout Ewedome. The Mission, which had returned to the territory after 1874, re-opened stations at Ho and the mountainous town of Amedzofe in 1876 and 1890 respectively.<sup>147</sup> In order to win the confidence and support of the traditional authorities and appeal to the ordinary people, the missionaries steered away, as much as possible, from local politics. In furtherance of this policy, most villages or towns where the Bremen missionaries operated had a section exclusively reserved for new converts, a religious segregation known as *Kpodzi*.<sup>148</sup> Converts who lived in those secluded places were absolved from the laws regarding the observance of taboos and other traditional observances which the missionaries considered 'fetish'.

One area where the missionaries were successful was the promotion of the Ewe language as a unifying force through church and school programmes. On arrival, they realised much to their dismay that the existence of various variants of the Ewe language, coupled with the many Guan dialects and Togo remnant languages, was a major hindrance to their proselytizing and education programmes. To get over this problem, the missionaries decided to develop what came to be known as 'standard Ewe' in an attempt to harmonise the various variants of the Ewe language.<sup>149</sup> It became the only vernacular taught in schools

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<sup>145</sup> Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 203.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Reindorf, *History*, p. 248.

<sup>148</sup> Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 8.

<sup>149</sup> According to some experts, 'standard Ewe' derives some linguistic features from Ewe dialects of Keta, Peki and Lome. See Edoh Togah, 'Hands Off my Ewe', *Cahiers du Cerleshs* (Ouagadougou, 2001), p. 20.

within the region. It was also used in the liturgy and the preaching of sermons.<sup>150</sup> Diligent missionary research into local ethnology and linguistics led to the publication of many books in Ewe. By 1914, the first copy of the Bible translated in Ewe through the coordinating efforts of missionary Jacob Spieth was published and circulated among congregations in Eweland.<sup>151</sup> In a way, Ewe became a prestige language. This practice of standardizing and promoting one variant of a language by missionaries was not peculiar to Ewedome. It was very much the tool for the construction of 'African custom and identity'.<sup>152</sup>

German missionary activities were not confined to proselytization alone. They sought to give the converts some degree of economic security by training them in handicrafts and laying out experimental farms. At face value, the activities of the German missionaries looked innocuous to British interests. The missionaries promoted the teaching and learning of English in their schools and they showed no tendency to impose German culture. All this was in the interest of Britain. But the German missionaries inadvertently paved the way for Germany's audacious challenge to Britain in Ewedome. In fact, in 1888, the presence of the Bremen missionaries in Ewedome facilitated the penetration of the hinterland by Hauptmann von Francois, a German government official. Hauptmann von Francois traversed Ewedome to Krachi and Salaga and having acquainted himself with the economic potential of the area, he made attempts to persuade the inhabitants to accept the German flag.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> This was in line with the policy of the missionaries to provide what they called 'indigenous education'. Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 59.

<sup>151</sup> Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 59. It is important to note also that Bernhard Schlegel published the first Ewe grammar in 1856 while Diedrich Westermann published an Ewe dictionary in 1856. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 15.

<sup>152</sup> Quote taken from Berman, 'Ethnicity', p. 322.

<sup>153</sup> A.W. Cardinal, 'The Story of the German Occupation of Togoland', *Gold Coast Review*, 2 (1927), p. 196.

In 1890, Britain gave in to Germany's persistent desire to occupy Ewedome.<sup>154</sup> Following the Heligoland Treaty in that year, Britain ceded the greater part of Ewedome to Germany, retaining control over the Peki and Awudome areas only.<sup>155</sup> It is important to note that the colonization of Togoland by Germany was in response to demands by German traders for protection against 'arbitrary custom duties levied by the native chiefs'.<sup>156</sup> Therefore, Dr Nachtigal's coming to Lome in 1884 was initially meant to solve the problem between the local chief and the German traders.<sup>157</sup> This seemingly innocuous move eventually resulted in placing the coastal enclave under German protection.

### **German Rule, 1890-1914**

At the time Germany assumed administrative control over Togo, Ewedome had become used to dealing with British officials. Some chiefs had learned the English language and the spectre of having to learn German haunted them. Besides, the support which the people of Ewedome received from the British in subduing Akwamu and Asante endeared Britain to the hearts of many in Ewedome. In addition, the people of Ewedome wanted to preserve the revitalization of their commercial links with the Gold Coast since the defeat of the Asantes in 1874.<sup>158</sup> The news about the 1890 Anglo-German partition of Ewedome generated a great resentment and shock throughout the territory. Even F. M. Zahn, the missionary director from 1862 to 1900, was very unhappy about the partition.<sup>159</sup> The Ewes in the

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<sup>154</sup> See 'Togo-land, The German Protectorate on the Slave Coast.' *Proceedings of the Royal Geography Society and Monthly Record of Geography*, 9 (June 1885), p. 377.

<sup>155</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/174, Anglo-German Boundary, 1904-1908. The Ewe states that came under the British became part of the Volta River District under the Eastern Province of the Gold Coast Colony.

<sup>156</sup> 'Togoland, 'The German Protectorate on the Slave Coast', p. 377.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Accra and Ada had served as major trading centres for goods from Krepiland. See Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p.209.

<sup>159</sup> Knoll, *Togo*, p. 34.

hinterland were aware of Germany's harsh policies in Southern Togo such as flogging and forced unpaid labour. In 1891, chiefs and their elders from Vakpo, Tsrukpe, Have, Tafi Nyagbo, Awate, Aveme, Botoku and Wusuta met at Anfoega to elect Hodo III, chief of Anfoega, to lead them to the British Colonial Governor in the Gold Coast to plead for British intervention in preventing German occupation of their states.<sup>160</sup>

In 1894, Lieut. Klose led a German police force (*polizeitruppe*) to Kpando and Anfoega and forced the people to receive German flags and to surrender the Union Jack.<sup>161</sup> From Anfoega, the Germans rushed to Awatime, another area where pro-British sentiments were strong. The people of Tafi had averred that they were being attacked by Awatime for accepting a German flag. To avert an imminent German reprisal, the people of Awatime managed to secure a German flag overnight and hoisted it before the Germans had arrived.<sup>162</sup> The Germans succeeded in cowing the people into submission partly because of the sudden shift of Kpando's loyalty to Germany. Apparently, Kpando felt that since the Anglo-German boundary placed Peki squarely in the Gold Coast, it would end whatever claim Peki continued to make over Kpando and other Ewedome states.<sup>163</sup>

German administration in Ewedome and indeed the whole of German Togo has been described as unimpressive.<sup>164</sup> The period of German colonial administration in Ewedome was relatively short; shorter than it was in the south.<sup>165</sup> Even though Germany on paper

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<sup>160</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/174.

<sup>161</sup> Cardinall, 'German Occupation', p. 206; Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 211.

<sup>162</sup> Cardinall, 'German Occupation', p. 206. Debrunner gave the credit to the Bremen missionaries in Amedzofe for their role in preventing bloodshed when Awatime refused to accept German authority. See Debrunner, *History of Christianity*, p. 209.

<sup>163</sup> Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 208-209.

<sup>164</sup> D. E. K. Amenumey, 'German Administration in Southern Togo', *Journal of African History*, 4 (1969), p. 624.

<sup>165</sup> According to Fage, the period from 1884 to 1914 could best be described as the bare laying of the foundations of German rule in Africa, which had hardly been established before it was liquidated. See J. D.

took over Ewedome in 1890, it was not until 1897 and 1899 that it built its first outposts in Kpando and Ho respectively.<sup>166</sup> Therefore, tangible German colonization of Ewedome can be said to have started from 1899. In the words of Knoll, the German colonies were lost just as they 'began to reach a level of maximal efficiency'.<sup>167</sup> For this reason, Knoll postulated that 'we would have had a better perspective of German rule if it had been possible to juxtapose the time of mature colonization in the German African empire with a similar period in the British and French empire'.<sup>168</sup> Nevertheless, Togoland, according to Crabtree, was acquired by Germany primarily for the purpose of exploiting the resources of the region and not to colonise it, while Henderson was of the view that Germany had wanted to use the region as a corridor to penetrate to the Niger.<sup>169</sup>

From 1898, Ewedome was governed from the German administrative district of Misahohe.<sup>170</sup> Germany's colonial rule was dictated by a policy of decentralisation which based local administration on village units.<sup>171</sup> Views diverge on whether or not the German system of direct rule caused the disintegration of larger political units in Ewedome. While Knoll stated that the Germans did not purposely fragment traditional polities, Collier argues that by basing their rule on village units, 'the Germans had perhaps been more realistic about the acephalous organization of Ewe-speakers and other people of southern

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Fage, 'British and German Colonial Rule: a Synthesis and Summary' in Proser Gifford and W. M. Roger Louis (eds.), *Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule* (Yale, 1967), p. 701.

<sup>166</sup> Amenumey, 'German Administration', p. 625.

<sup>167</sup> Knoll, *Togo*, p. 4. It was only by 1910 that agricultural projects were beginning to yield results. See W. A. Crabtree, 'Togoland', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 54 (January, 1915), p. 172.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> W. A. Crabtree, 'The Germans in East and West Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 57 (1915), p. 361; Henderson, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 50.

<sup>170</sup> The whole of German Togo was divided into seven administrative districts: NA CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Togoland, 1920-21.

<sup>171</sup> Verdon, *Abutia Ewe*, p. 77.

Togoland'.<sup>172</sup> Though one could acknowledge the fact that Ewedome had at all times been disintegrated and disunited, it is equally true that German colonial policy entrenched the fragmentation of the region. The aim was to break down states such as Kpando, Awatime, Anfoega and Asogli which were developing into large centralised states. In this way, the Germans hoped to prevent any concerted action against their administration. This was no different from what pertained in Tanganyika where the colonial policy of Germany was 'to weaken tribal cohesion and to break down tribal government'.<sup>173</sup>

In furtherance of this policy, even subordinate chiefs were given recognition as independent or paramount chiefs (*Oberhauptling*) instead of chiefs (*Hauptling*) in their divisions. Each village chief who went to Misahohe came back with a German badge and a hat.<sup>174</sup> As a result, each village became what Verdon referred to as a sovereign political group.<sup>175</sup> A similar situation occurred in Buem state, made up of Akan and autochthonous people, as late as in 1907. In that year, the German governor, Graft Zech, told the head chief of Buem that his enstoolment would be recognised only if the political independence of Akpafu, Likpe, Santrokofi and Tapa was guaranteed. Consequently, those hitherto subordinate divisions broke out of the Buem state.<sup>176</sup>

Though traditional authorities continued to rule their people, their powers were restricted, particularly in judicial matters.<sup>177</sup> They had to receive regular instructions from

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<sup>172</sup> Knoll, *Togo*, p. 49.

<sup>173</sup> Illife, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 323.

<sup>174</sup> The hat was a steel helmet bearing the German crown. For the curtailment of the judicial powers of chiefs, see NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Togoland, 1920-21, p. 21.

<sup>175</sup> Verdon, *Abutia Ewe*, p. 77.

<sup>176</sup> NA CO96/746/7, Report by C. C. Lilley, Accredited Representative to Geneva, 24 to 25 October 1938; Togoland Report 1937, p. 4.

<sup>177</sup> The introduction of tribunals and the way they operated was foreign to traditional judicial procedures. Family and clan heads no longer had the responsibility to settle even minor cases. All cases were to be sent to the tribunal of the head chief or that of the sub-chief. PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, Le Lievre, Kpando Division, p. 5-6.

German officials regarding judicial procedures. As part of the measures to streamline the courts, chiefs were ordered to limit their court summon fees to six shillings (6 marks).<sup>178</sup> The district was headed by a political officer (*Bezirksamtmann*) who had unlimited jurisdiction excepted that in theory, he had to seek confirmation from the governor in the German capital of Lome before carrying out sentences which carried a penalty exceeding 300 marks or imprisonment over three months.<sup>179</sup> In practical terms, the situation was different in the hinterland where the district officer 'could proclaim a martial law, and with a minimum of two assessors, hear a capital charge summarily, and have the death penalty carried out without receiving the governor's sanction'.<sup>180</sup> Chiefs were also used to enforce forced labour, particularly in the production of palm kernels.

The Bremen missionaries did not hide their opposition to German colonisation of the territory. Some were said to have instigated the natives against the German colonial officers. Missionary Franz Michael was said to be an ardent critic of imperialism. He felt acquisition of colonies could not be justified on moral grounds.<sup>181</sup> Missionaries and anthropologists were on record to have raised concerns about German overrule in Africa on the floor of the *Reichstag*.<sup>182</sup> Accusations of German officials by missionaries led to the trial of Carl Peters in 1897 and the withdrawal of Governor Eduard von Liebert from the Kilimanjaro district of German East Africa in 1899.<sup>183</sup> In Ewedome, the harsh colonial rule, especially in 1902-1904, became a clear embarrassment for the missionaries because it compromised their political neutrality and hindered the missionary efforts at converting

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<sup>178</sup> RAG/H Case No. 48/20, Amalgamation of Divisions in Togoland.

<sup>179</sup> NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Sphere of Togoland, 1920-21, p. 21

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> For details on the encounter between the missionaries and the German officials, see Debrunner, *A History*, p. 208; Cyprus C. Adams, 'The African Colonies of Germany and the War' *Geographical Review*, 1 (January, 1916), p. 452-453.

<sup>182</sup> W. A. Crabtree, 'German Colonies in Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 3 (1914), p. 12.

<sup>183</sup> Henderson, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 84.

more natives.<sup>184</sup> Jacob Spieth, a Bremen missionary, served as a lawyer for the people of Ewedome by presenting their grievances to the German government.<sup>185</sup>

No sooner had the Germans taken over than the relationship between them and Kpando became strained because of the imposition and enforcement of border restrictions. The border restrictions and the diversion of trade to Lome affected trading activities in Kpando and Krepiland as a whole.<sup>186</sup> Matters became worse when in 1913 the German colonial government decided to inoculate people against an alleged outbreak of sleeping sickness. Dagadu Anku (Dagadu III), the head chief of Kpando was suspicious of the exercise and opposed the planned inoculation.<sup>187</sup> Consequently, Dagadu III was deported to Cameroon in 1913.<sup>188</sup> According to the diary of a German officer who was captured in Togo in 1914 and sent to Kpando, two other charges were framed against Dagadu III. First, he was accused of having written to the Kaiser abusing the German colonial government in Togo. Second, he was charged with writing to the Governor of the Gold Coast asking to be brought under British Rule.<sup>189</sup> It came therefore as no surprise that when the First World War broke out, Kpando alone contributed 200 men to serve Britain in the Cameroon and

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<sup>184</sup> Dates taken from Knoll, *Togo*, p. 55.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*, p. 56.

<sup>186</sup> This explains why there was a fierce resistance to German occupation of Krepiland in Tove. Eventually, the town was ravaged by the Germans. These restrictions notwithstanding, British merchants continued to have a fair share of the trade in Ewedome. It is said that 'the British had better landing facilities at Ada and Keta than the Germans possessed at Lome'. So Keta and Ada still attracted goods down the River Volta. The value of British trade in Togoland in 1910 was said to have amounted to £100,000. See Henderson, 'British Economic Activity in the German Colonies', p. 60.

<sup>187</sup> The inoculation was not the only concern of Dagadu. People who were suspected of being infected with the sleeping sickness were sent to an isolation camp in Kluto in present-day Republic of Togo and very few of them came back to Ewedome. See Le Lievee, 'The Kpando Division', p. 34. Some of the patients also lost their sight because of the use of the drug atoxyl. See Knoll, *Togo*, p. 89.

<sup>188</sup> A Brochure on *Danyiba Kaka* Festival, 1974. Chief Dagadu was brought back to Kpando by the British in 1915. See NA CO96/672/5, Togoland Report, 1927.

<sup>189</sup> These accusations against Chief Dagadu were indicative of the growing resentment against German rule. See PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/603, The Return of Dagadu from Cameroon, 18 January 1915.

East Africa campaigns. In addition, Kpando contributed £500 to the fund of the Red Cross Society during the war.<sup>190</sup>

To facilitate the easy enforcement of custom barriers, chiefs were tasked to keep the boundary between Germany and the Gold Coast clearly marked, and from 1909 were to be paid 5/- per mile for doing so.<sup>191</sup> Every chief was issued a 'Road Notice' which detailed those chiefs who were responsible for clearing the boundary. People needed a pass from the Germans to cross the border. Those who violated this directive were punished severely by the German officials. On 22 May 1910, for instance, the son of the chief of British Kpeve went to German Kpeve to tap rubber and he was arrested and fined £10. The chief was unable to pay the fine so his son died in prison at Kpando.<sup>192</sup> In reality, neither the general policy of repression which the German administration adopted towards the people of Ewedome nor the flogging by German officials caused anything like the anger that was occasioned by the exaction by the German government of direct tax. Apart from the six marks payable annually by all males, or work not more than 12 days in a year or products corresponding in value to that amount, there were all sorts of other taxes imposed by the Germans. This included rubber, animal and emigration taxes<sup>193</sup> The inhabitants reacted variously to this high-handedness of the Germans.<sup>194</sup> Right from 1892, people in German

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<sup>190</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/25 and ADM11/1/603.

<sup>191</sup> Hitherto, compulsory, unpaid labour was used by the Germans to construct roads. See K.B. Dickson, 'The Development of Road Transport in Southern Ghana and Ashanti since about 1850', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 5 (1961), p. 38.

<sup>192</sup> PRAAD/A ADM/39/1/20, Petition by Chief Kobla of British Kpeve to the District Commissioner, Volta River District, Ada 1920. Kpeve town was divided into two by the Anglo-German boundary.

<sup>193</sup> Emigration taxes required people who went into foreign country, with exception of the Cameroons, for a period of over three months, to pay ten marks per person. See NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report of British Mandated Sphere of Togoland, 1920-21, p. 53. Some adjustments were made to the annual tax from 1909. For details, see Knoll, *Togo*, p. 74.

<sup>194</sup> The brutalities meted out to natives particularly in East Africa by German colonial officers caught the attention of some sympathizers in Germany leading to the formation of the German Society for the Protection of Natives. This society used the paper *Koloniale Rundschau* to sensitise the German populace about German overrule in Africa. See Crabtree, 'German Colonies', p. 12.

territory migrated in droves to settle in British territory.<sup>195</sup> Most of them settled in and around Mampong and Somanya.<sup>196</sup>

The German colonial government was supportive of missionary efforts to promote formal education in the area. This cooperation was important because the early German officials needed the services of the missionaries as advisors and interpreters.<sup>197</sup> At Amedzofe, a seminary for the training of mission teachers and a residential senior school for boys and girls were established in 1890.<sup>198</sup> The enviable place of Amedzofe in the history of education in the region can not be glossed over. Amedzofe became the centre of education throughout the colonial period, drawing students from far and near. Indeed, in many respects, the fortunes of education in Trans-Volta Togoland were closely tied up to the pioneering works of the Germans in Amedzofe. Other schools were opened at Ho for infants. In 1914, there were 47 Bremen Mission schools in Ewedome while enrolment in schools stood at 1,673.<sup>199</sup> In essence, the presence of German colonizers helped to advance missionary programmes which had hitherto been disrupted by the Asante invasion of 1869.<sup>200</sup> Similarly, wars among the various states in the region following the Asante invasion subsided because of the German presence. This provided the impetus for economic activities.<sup>201</sup>

The German period also saw the development of the exchange economy with the introduction of cash crops such as coffee, palm products and an increase in cotton

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<sup>195</sup> This phenomenon of emigration from Togo to the Gold Coast became a regular occurrence from 1900. Barbara Ward, 'Some Notes on Migration from Togoland', *African Affairs*, 49 (1950), p. 129. Knoll noted that from 1902-1904 some people in Ewedome flee into the bush or Peki and other parts of the Gold Coast in the face of German harsh policies: *Togo*, p. 55-56.

<sup>196</sup> See PRAAD/A ADM39/1/20, Anglo-German Boundary.

<sup>197</sup> The point is also made in Henderson, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 75.

<sup>198</sup> Togoland Report 1926.

<sup>199</sup> NA CO96/724/2, Togoland Report 1920-21, p. 29-30.

<sup>200</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 120.

<sup>201</sup> White, 'Awatime', p. 35; Crabtree, 'The Germans', p. 365.

production.<sup>202</sup> Of these crops, palm kernel and coffee production were the ones which drew most attention from the German government. Cotton production actually went down from 1902 when the inhabitants realised that palm products were becoming more profitable.<sup>203</sup> The formation of *Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee* (Colonial Agricultural Board) in 1896 in Germany facilitated the intensification of agricultural activities in German colonies in Africa as a whole.<sup>204</sup> British colonial documents noted that 'great pains were taken by the Germans to stimulate native enterprise, especially in demonstrating improved methods of cultivation' of cash crops.<sup>205</sup> From 1900, the German government stepped up cotton production in the area. This led to increase in export of cotton to an average of about 500-550 tons a year.<sup>206</sup> The period also coincided with the rubber boom starting from the 1890s.<sup>207</sup>

Cocoa cultivation on a large scale did not start in German Togoland until after 1902, though the crop had been introduced earlier in Ewedome by inhabitants who went to the Gold Coast and came back with cocoa seeds. Initially, the German officials did not allow the cultivation of cocoa because they wanted to preserve the forest.<sup>208</sup> Afforestation was one important project on the agenda of the Germans but cocoa cultivation involved the clearing of the forest and there was great effort by German officials to induce the inhabitants to preserve the forest. Later, German officials distributed cocoa seeds from Cameroon in Togoland such that by 1904, Togo began exporting a substantial quantity of

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<sup>202</sup> Details about the increase in cotton during the German period is found in Maier, 'Persistence of Precolonial Patterns of Production', p. 71-95.

<sup>203</sup> Maier, 'Persistence of Precolonial Patterns of Production', p. 89.

<sup>204</sup> C.T. Hagberg Write, 'German Methods of Development in Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society* (September, 1964), p. 32.

<sup>205</sup> NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report of Togoland, 1920-21, p. 22.

<sup>206</sup> German industries also depended exclusively on the importation of raw materials. See Le Sueur, *Germany's*, p.26.

<sup>207</sup> Crabtree, 'Togoland', p. 178-179; Debrunner, *A History*, p. 209.

<sup>208</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 116.

cocoa.<sup>209</sup> According to Crabtree, there was an increase in the export of cocoa in German Togo from 1 ton in 1903 to 283 in 1912; while Nugent recorded an export of 335 tons from 1906-1913.<sup>210</sup>

To facilitate the transportation of these crops to market centres, the German government decided to open up the area by the construction of feeder roads, especially linking up Ho. The Germans used forced labour and the threat of severe punishment and fines to force the people to construct roads using the crudest of implements.<sup>211</sup> In 1914, British officials described the system of communication in German Togo as 'admirably adequate for the needs of Togoland as it existed'.<sup>212</sup> By 1904, Ewedome and German Togo as a whole, due largely to the imposition of direct tax and forced labour, became economically viable to the extent that Germany no longer found it necessary to expend grant-in-aid.<sup>213</sup>

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 sent waves of jubilation throughout the territory. Many of the people of Ewedome identified themselves with the war to get rid of the Germans. Consequently, the natives made generous contributions towards the war efforts.<sup>214</sup> When British soldiers entered Lome in 1914, German soldiers surrendered without any resistance because at the time, the latter had a more important responsibility of defending Kamina, the big German wireless station.<sup>215</sup> The Anglo-French operations

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<sup>209</sup> Knoll, *Togo*, p. 152-153.

<sup>210</sup> Crabtree, 'Togoland', p. 183; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 51.

<sup>211</sup> Dickson, 'The Development of Road Transport in Southern Ghana', p. 37.

<sup>212</sup> NA CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Togoland, 1920-1921, 14 November 1922, p. 20

<sup>213</sup> Crabtree, 'German Colonies', p. 9. It is also said that after 1907, a large proportion of German Togo's revenue came from Direct Taxation. See Arthur J. Knoll, 'Taxation in the Gold Coast Colony and in Togo: A Study in Early Administration' in Gifford and Louis (eds.), *Britain and Germany in Africa*, p. 449.

<sup>214</sup> David Killingray, 'Repercussions of World War 1 in the Gold Coast,' *Journal of African History*, 19 (1978), p. 40. Anfoega, for example, contributed £165. Other states supplied numerous carriers for the Cameroon through E.T. Mansfield at Misahohe. PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/216, Anfoega Native Affairs. Togbe Hodo V to the DC, 1915.

<sup>215</sup> NA CO96/742/20, Capture of Togoland in 1914; W. A. Crabtree, 'The conquest of Togoland', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 56 (July, 1915), p. 390. The Germans also wanted to prevent the destruction of Lome with its beautiful buildings and mission stations. PRAAD/A ADM11/1/603, Account of a German

against the Germans in Togoland were therefore a success, for it turned out to be 'the only easy conquest that the English and French had made in their assaults upon the German colonies.'<sup>216</sup> Apart from the burning down of offices by German officials in Ho, Ewedome did not suffer much physical damage.<sup>217</sup> The few German property left in the British sphere of Togoland were sold by auction as 'enemy properties'.<sup>218</sup> Most farmers, however, suffered as prices of their produce fell due to the war. Palm kernel producers bore the brunt. In 1913, the price was 6/6 per load of 60lbs, which fell to 3/- by 1914.<sup>219</sup> More excruciating was the fact that the partition left the railways in Togo under French control thereby leaving Ewedome 'without any trade outlet to the sea'.<sup>220</sup>

Despite the German policy of divide and rule in the region, missionary activities coupled with German colonialism inadvertently led to the elevation of Awatime, Kpando and Ho above other *dukowo* in Ewedome. We noted that the German missionaries had turned Amedzofe, the mountainous town of Awatime, into a citadel of education from 1894 when a teacher training college was established there and from where educational programmes radiated to other parts of the region and beyond.<sup>221</sup> In addition to the seminary for the training of teachers, Amedzofe had, before 1914, a senior residential school for boys.<sup>222</sup> Similarly, Kpando became an important administrative centre since a sub-district

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Prisoner of War Captured by British Soldiers in 1914. This was the very opposite of what the Germans did in Ho. Immediately on the outbreak of the war, the office buildings were burnt down by the Germans before they left.

<sup>216</sup> Cyrus C. Adams, 'The African Colonies of Germany and the War', *Geographical Review*, 1 (January, 1916), p. 453.

<sup>217</sup> For the conduct of the war, see G. M. Wrigley, 'The Military Campaigns against Germany's African Colonies', *Geographical Review*, 1 (January, 1918), p. 47.

<sup>218</sup> NA CO 96/724/1, Acting Governor to the Right Honourable, Viscount Milner, 28 July 1920.

<sup>219</sup> RAG/H No. 0043, Palm Oil Control 1915.

<sup>220</sup> Dickson, 'The Development of Road Transport', p. 39.

<sup>221</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 125.

<sup>222</sup> NA CO96/672/5, Togoland Report 1926, x4233. Kpando became the sub-district of Misahohe. See NA CO96/724/2, Togoland Report 1920-21, p. 27.

headquarters was built there by the Germans in 1894.<sup>223</sup> From 1895 to 1901, there were collaborations between the German officials and Dagadu of Kpando in quelling opposition to German authority in Tove and Anfoega.<sup>224</sup> In return for Kpando's collaboration with the Germans during the period, Brown noted that 'the Germans recognised Kpando as being one of the most important inland Ewe chiefdoms and the Kpando chief was seen to have political influence over much of the northern Krepi area'.<sup>225</sup> In much the same way, Ho was one of the earliest Bremen Mission stations. It had a senior residential school for boys and girls as well as a market centre and the chief acquired a certain amount of importance and prestige.<sup>226</sup> The German officials also had offices in Ho. Thus, the German period in turn reshaped the political landscape by elevating Awatime, Ho and Kpando above other *dukowo*. The reputation of these towns proved very important when the British took over from the Germans in 1914 and wanted to introduce the policy of amalgamation in the early 1930s. On the international level, the transfer to British rule brought Ewedome and all former German colonies onto the international stage and led to a change in their status as colonies to that of Trust Territories.

## Conclusion

Ewedome witnessed migrations from both the east and the west from the fifteenth century, which gave the population a heterogeneous character. Following the Akwamu occupation from the 1730s to the early 1830s, Ewedome adopted the Akan-style chiefship. In effect, each town or village in Ewedome, no matter its size and population, became a

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<sup>223</sup> Date taken from Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 213.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> NA CO96/746/7, Report to the PMC, Geneva, 24-25 October 1938.

chiefdom of a sort. This further served to deepen segmentation and made the number of independent political units stupendous. But the activities of the missionaries from 1874 promoted the Ewe language as a lingua franca and led to the spread of Ewe migration traditions among non-Ewe speaking states in the region.

The processes towards formal colonisation of Ewedome started from 1884 in response to the demand by German traders on the coast for official German government protection. Germany's colonial rule in Ewedome was characterised by harsh and inflexible policies and flogging as a widespread form of punishment. The period saw the monetisation of the economy, the promotion of cash crops for exports, the introduction of direct taxation, the construction of some roads to open up the region and support for education. Though missionaries were initially opposed to colonial acquisition of the territory, the coming of colonial rule provided a peaceful atmosphere for the advancement of the evangelizing mission which had been disrupted by the Asante invasion of 1869-1874.<sup>227</sup> Wars among the various ethnic groups subsided because of the presence of German soldiers and officials in the region. However, the German policy of making the village unit the basis of colonial rule entrenched tendency towards small-scale political units. The fragmentation was so pervasive that by the time Britain took over the administration of the territory, there were numerous small independent chiefdoms. But so far as the in-coming British officials were concerned, the unintended elevation of Awatime, Ho and Kpando during the German period meant that the crystallization of states around those three *dukowo* for the purpose of local government was feasible in the midst of the numerous chiefdoms scattered all over Ewedome.

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<sup>227</sup> See details in Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 120.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE MANDATE AND THE CREATION OF NATIVE AUTHORITIES, 1914-1949

In recent scholarly works on the southern section of British Mandated Togoland, the issue of amalgamation has featured prominently in the discourse on ethnic identity and chieftaincy disputes.<sup>1</sup> In this chapter, amalgamation is discussed in relation to the development of local government in Ewedome. The chapter evaluates the mandate system and its relevance to the political re-organisation of Ewedome from 1914 right up to the political watershed of 1948 and the formation of Atando Native Authority in 1949. It then examines the 1932 Native Administration Ordinance and its impact on established political structures, and explores the principles that guided the creation of large states for the purpose of local government. It examines the relevance of local agents in the processes leading to the creation of amalgamated states. Finally, it examines the reactions to the policy by the local inhabitants and the responses of the administrative officers.

#### **Mandate and Political Reorganization in British Togoland**

The defeat of Germany in 1914 and her subsequent expulsion from her African colonies engendered a surge by Britain and France to occupy German Togoland in a manner that is described by Callahan as 'a new scramble for Africa'.<sup>2</sup> The issue as to who should take over which part of Togoland as well as Germany's other African colonies soon brought the fate of the former German empire to the attention of the international community. Britain

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<sup>1</sup> See Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 126-46; Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 243-267.

<sup>2</sup> Michael D. Callahan, *Mandate and Empires: The League of Nations and Africa, 1914-1931* (London, 1999), p. 9.

had to spend a lot of time from 1918 in 1920 in justifying her occupation of Togoland.<sup>3</sup> In August 1914, the inhabitants were told that British occupation of the territory was provisional and that the boundaries could not be determined until the war had been fought to a finish.<sup>4</sup> The doggedness of American President Woodrow Wilson and other anti-imperialist elements in Europe in ensuring that colonialism was refined led to the placing of all former German colonies under the League of Nations.<sup>5</sup> This led to the creation of what came to be known as Mandates.

The mandate itself took so long to become operational due largely to the difficulty in defining the boundary between British and French spheres. The difficulty arose out of the vested interest of Britain and France, for each of them already administered a colony on either side of Togoland. Although both powers contributed forces to subdue the Germans, it was the British who first occupied the colonial capital of Lome on 26 August 1914, where 200 Germans and 1,000 Africans surrendered.<sup>6</sup> This appeared to have informed the initial decision of the Supreme Council of Allied Nations to allow Lome to be part of the British mandate in the Anglo-French boundary demarcation of 10 September 1914.<sup>7</sup> But Lome had grown into a thriving seaport as a result of German rule. It came therefore as no surprise that France rejected this initial demarcation, culminating in protracted diplomatic manoeuvres.

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<sup>3</sup> According to the London *Times* Togoland had never really settled down after their transfer to the German flag, and it has always been their genuine wish to see Britain back again: *Times*, 22 November 1937.

<sup>4</sup> NA CAB 29/1, The German Colonies at the Peace Conference, Correspondence Relating to the Wishes of the Natives of the German Colonies, Enclosure IV, 12, November 1918.

<sup>5</sup> Callahan, *Mandate*, p.3.

<sup>6</sup> NA CO 96/742/20, Capture of Togoland in 1914.

<sup>7</sup> RAG/H, Togoland Report of 1926, Enclosure 'A', p. 6-7.

The dispute over Lome was not settled until 30 September 1920 by a convention which ceded the city to France.<sup>8</sup> A tentative definition of the boundary between Britain and France was made possible following the work of the Anglo-French Boundary Commission and the issuance of a Boundary Protocol in 1929.<sup>9</sup> It is however important to note that final demarcation of the boundary was not done until years after the coming into force of the mandate system.<sup>10</sup> As far as Ewedome was concerned, the southern and western boundaries remained unchanged; these having been defined by the Anglo-German Convention of 1 July 1890 and 16 February 1900.<sup>11</sup> Britain thus had to content itself with a narrow portion of German Togo of 40 miles wide and about 320 miles long. The area was landlocked, beginning about 30 miles from the coast.

Until 1932, the 1924 Administrative Ordinance, the first ordinance enacted by Britain in the southern section of British Togoland, allowed German laws to be in force and the direct rule system in practice during the German period was not revoked.<sup>12</sup> Some local inhabitants of Ewedome were affronted by this delay in introducing a purely British system of administration. Apparently, there had been optimism that the British occupation would reunite them with their kith and kin in the Gold Coast. A petition from the chief of Kpeve to the District Commissioner at Ho in 1921 asking that British Kpeve and German Kpeve be united was reflective of the people's anxiety.<sup>13</sup> This demand could not be met at the time

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<sup>8</sup> RAG/H, Togoland Report of 1926, Enclosure 'A', p. 6-7.

<sup>9</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> RAG/Ho ACC No.221, Togoland Unification Problem, Press Release by Government Agent Office, 6 January 1955.

<sup>11</sup> NA CO 96/790/2, Draft Togoland Report of 1947, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> RAG/H, Native Administration Ordinance of 1924 (Not Filed). See also Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 256.

<sup>13</sup> The town of Kpeve had been divided into two by the Anglo-German partition of 1890. PRAAD/A ADM11/1/1217, Kpeve (British) Petition from Chief, 1921. The people of the British sphere of occupation always feared the possibility of Britain eventually restoring Togoland to Germany: PRO CAB 291/1, Wishes of the Natives of the German Colonies, Enclosure 1V, November 1910. That the delay in coming into force of

on the grounds that the mandate had not yet been decided. Inhabitants of the territory and their families in the Gold Coast were, therefore, under different jurisdictions and would have to remain so until the future status of the mandated territory was decided.<sup>14</sup>

One of the arguments put forward by Britain in seeking the mandate to administer a portion of Togoland was the desirability of uniting people of the same ethnic origin.<sup>15</sup> The mandate, in a way, provided a window of opportunity for the problem created by the Anglo-German boundary to be rectified. However, an attempt to form an ethnically coherent boundary between British and French spheres of Togoland resulted in unifying only the Dagomba kingdom in the northern sector. In Southern Togoland, of which Ewedome was a part, no such unification was achieved. In spite of the problems created by the boundary demarcation, the League of Nations went ahead in October 1921 to approve the boundary arrangements between Britain and France. This paved the way for the terms of the mandate system to be defined and confirmed on the 20 July 1922.<sup>16</sup>

The British sphere was administered under the provisions of the Togoland under British Mandate Order-in-Council which was signed on 11 October 1923 by the governor of the Gold Coast.<sup>17</sup> As mandatory powers, Britain and France had to administer the territories within a framework of international supervision and responsibility by a Permanent Mandate Commission (PMC). The mandatory powers had to report annually and send accredited representatives to the PMC. According to the terms, the inhabitants of the mandated

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the Mandate System 'generated unrest in [the] newly acquired territories over the continuing uncertainty concerning their future status' is noted in Andrew J. Crozier, 'The Establishment of the Mandates System, 1919-25: Some Problems Created by the Paris Peace Conference', *Journal of Contemporary History*, July (1979), p. 486.

<sup>14</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1217, Anglo-French Partition 1915.

<sup>15</sup> NA CO 96/702/4, Governor of the Gold Coast to Sir Philip Cunliffe, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 23 January 1932.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Trusteeship Council Report, 1947.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

territories were not the subjects of the mandatory powers, for the mandatory powers were not granted with sovereign authority over the mandated territories.<sup>18</sup> In principle, the mandate sought to define the relationship between the colonial government and the inhabitants of the mandated territories. They had a different status to the subjects of the British and French empires. This position was reflected in the objection raised by the Chairman of the PMC to the use of the name “British Togoland” in reference to the mandated territory. “Togoland under British Mandate” was therefore chosen as a preferred description of the area.<sup>19</sup>

These provisions of the mandate were, however, rather nebulous. In the words of Callahan, ‘the mandate system was a complex and often contradictory blend of theory and practice’.<sup>20</sup> It is quite difficult to state in what ways the status of the inhabitants of the mandated territory and those of the colony differed in practical terms. The only distinction noticeable was that Togoland could not be conscripted into the army or other military services.<sup>21</sup> Of course, they would also be described specifically as Togoland in their passports but the practical effect of that description on their status remained negligible. It is clear that the British and the French did not see the mandates as any different from the other possessions that they had. This might have arisen out of the obvious ambiguity in the terms of the mandate. Moreover, the United States, which was instrumental in creating the mandate system, did not join the League of Nations so it could not do much to enforce the terms of the mandate. In reality, Britain and France could implement the mandate according

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<sup>18</sup> Crozier, ‘The Establishment of the Mandates System’, p. 489.

<sup>19</sup> NA CO 96/689/1, Downing Street to H.S. Newlands, 22 October 1928. We see also in German East Africa that several names were proposed until Tanganyika was finally agreed on. See Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 247.

<sup>20</sup> A detailed analysis of the mandate system is found in Callahan, *Mandates and Empire*, p. 189.

<sup>21</sup> League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission, Provincial Minutes, 26 October 1928. But as we shall see, many of the inhabitants were recruited to fight in the Second World War.

to their whims and imperatives. Nevertheless, the mandate signified the changing nature of European imperialism, for by the regulations of the Permanent Mandate Commission, citizens of the mandated territories had the right to send petitions to the commission.<sup>22</sup> Iliffe thus sees the mandate as 'safe-guards against colonial abuse'<sup>23</sup>

Besides the boundary disputes and the delay in confirming the mandate, there were some generic problems that the British colonial government had to contend with. The most hydra-headed was the fragmentation of the region into small chiefdoms. This was particularly problematic because of long stretches of uninhabited land between the various units.<sup>24</sup> Hilton's analysis of the population in Ewedome, comprising Ho and Kpando areas in 1931, indicated a density of population of 51 persons per square mile.<sup>25</sup> The sparse population coupled with the relatively poor infrastructure made socio-economic development of the area an onerous task.

Of equal importance was the question of whether to re-draw the German Togoland map defining the boundaries between each division.<sup>26</sup> During the case between Awatime-Dzokpe and Tafi-Atome, it emerged that the German map was not drawn based on proper surveys.<sup>27</sup> In fact, they were drawn either based primarily on observations made by the German political officers during their tours through the country, or fixed as and when land

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<sup>22</sup> NA CO96/710/6, Gold Coast Confidential Despatch, Downing Street to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 13 April 1933; Callahan, *Mandates and Empire*, p. 103; Crozier, 'The Establishment of the Mandates System', p. 485.

<sup>23</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 247.

<sup>24</sup> Bourret, *Ghana*, p.109.

<sup>25</sup> This low figure could be due to the practice among the people of avoiding census for fear of paying a head or hut tax that had been imposed by the Germans. See T. E. Hilton, 'The Distribution and Density of Population in the Gold Coast and Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship', PhD Thesis, University of London (1955), p. 58.

<sup>26</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/216, Ho-Kpando District Native Affairs, Case number 1455/21, 1922.

<sup>27</sup> The people of Awatime-Dzokpe and Tafi- Atome were engaged in a violent conflict over land following the departure of the Germans. See PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/258, Dzokpe and Tafi Atome Disturbances, October 1929. On how boundaries between divisions were fixed arbitrarily by the Germans, see Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 63.

disputes arose between *dukowo* and their accuracy left much to be desired.<sup>28</sup> The problem became worse when Britain took over the territory and agricultural activities were rejuvenated and there was a high demand for land to undertake government projects. Obviously, the British colonial government had to be circumspect in drawing a new map to avert inducement of land litigation.

Furthermore, there was the problem of how to revitalise trade in the territory. The Anglo-French boundary deprived the people of the right to free trade with their counterparts in the French zone.<sup>29</sup> We noted that the railway from Kpalime to the port of Lome was the obvious outlet for the exportable produce of a large part of Southern Togoland but the Anglo-French partition placed the railway and the port of Lome under French control. This necessarily dislocated the system and deprived the inhabitants of the British sphere of Togoland from free access to Lome. Many Ewes in Ewedome wanted to trade with Lome instead of with Accra.<sup>30</sup> Even the British colonial government felt the brunt of this boundary demarcation. In 1922, the Governor of the Gold Coast noted that 'it costs £1.38 more per ton to ship produce from Ho to Addah in the Colony than to Lome, now in the French zone'.<sup>31</sup> An agreement had to be reached with the French government for a portion of the cocoa grown in British Togoland to be exported through the port in Lome.<sup>32</sup> These debilitating factors made for the delay in the smooth take-off of British rule in the territory.

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<sup>28</sup> Nugent described the manner in which the Germans fixed the boundaries between *dukowo* as 'extremely arbitrary', p. 63. See also, Togoland Report of 1926, p. 20.

<sup>29</sup> See RAG/H 0192/23, Petition by Adjatekpor V, 13 June 1922.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> NA CO96/724/2, Governor to the Duke of Devonshire, K.G., 14 November 1922.

<sup>32</sup> NA CO96/780/4 Sir Alan Burns to G. H. Creasy, 9 December 1944.

Fortunately, the situation was not entirely hopeless. As we have seen, German officials and missionaries had built schools that turned out the first generation of literate indigenes that could be worthy partners in the developmental effort. The cash economy was relatively developed through the production and export of cotton, palm oil, coffee and later cocoa. In 1920, the British press noted that 'Togoland already pays its way and its prosperity seems assured'.<sup>33</sup> It is trite to read economic meaning into every colonial policy. Lawrance, for example intimated that the creation of Akan-like paramount stools gave chiefs the power to control stool land and to benefit from cocoa cultivation.<sup>34</sup> This might be true in Buem and other Akan areas to the north of Ewedome where Lawrance shows how economic and social change brought by cocoa cultivation led to disputes that taxed the energies of both the French and British governments from the 1920s.<sup>35</sup> In those areas, the need to regulate cocoa cultivation and control border traffic could be a possible motivating force behind the creation of Buem NA.

In Ewedome, cocoa was not a factor in the creation of NAs. It has already been pointed out that the Germans did not promote the cultivation of cocoa until the later part of their stay in the region. It was after the British took over that cocoa became the main export crop from the southern section of British Togoland in the early 1920s.<sup>36</sup> Even so, the bulk of the cocoa was produced in Buem, Kadjebi, Ahamansu, Papase and Ampeyeo areas to the north of Ewedome. Nugent presents a classification of cocoa growing areas in the southern section of British Togoland which gives an accurate picture of how insignificant Ewedome

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<sup>33</sup> The *Times*, London, 21 January 1920, p. 11.

<sup>34</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 246.

<sup>35</sup> See details in Benjamin N. Lawrance, "'En Proie à la Fièvre du Cacao'": Land and Resource Conflict on an Ewe Frontier, 1922-1939', *African Economic History*, 31 (2003), p.135-181.

<sup>36</sup> NA CO96/672/5, Togoland Report 1926; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 51. Unlike the Southern Section of British Togoland, the first batch of cocoa was recorded in the Colony in 1885. On the history of cocoa export from the Gold Coast, see Polly Hill, *The Gold Coast Farmer* (London, 1956), p. 103-105; David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928* (Oxford, 1963), p. 13.

was to the cocoa industry.<sup>37</sup> Most of the land in Ewedome areas such as Anfoega, Gbefi, Ho, Hohoe and Kpando was simply unsuitable for cocoa cultivation. Le Lievee wondered, for example, why the people of Kpando decided to settle on an 'open grassy orchard country studded with small hills [for which reason they were] unable to grow commercial produce'.<sup>38</sup> The only area in Ewedome where cocoa was grown in some appreciable quantity was the mountainous areas of Awatime and Honuta near Kpedze. For this reason, many people from Ewedome who were interested in cultivating large cocoa farms had to migrate to the Akan and Buem areas to the north of Ewedome while others went to the Colony to become part of 'the backbone of the cocoa labour force'.<sup>39</sup>

Brown outlined three main reasons for the creation of NAs in the region.<sup>40</sup> The first was to establish mechanisms for settling 'land and other disputes between the numerous petty chiefdoms'.<sup>41</sup> Second, to revive trade which had been dislocated in the region and to minimise the migration of the youth from the region. According to Brown, the removal of border restrictions which had been imposed by the Germans between the territory and the Gold Coast 'facilitated the migrations of large numbers of youngmen across the River Volta'.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, the British officials wanted to use the NAs to mobilize the inhabitants to improve the economic development of the territory by building market centres and constructing roads.<sup>43</sup> In this way, the number of youngmen moving into the Gold Coast could be reduced. Third, the British government wanted to establish its authority in the region by eliciting the loyalty of the inhabitants. According to Brown, British officials were

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<sup>37</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 55.

<sup>38</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, Le Lievee, Tribal History of Kpando Division, 1924 p. 1.

<sup>39</sup> Hill, *The Gold Coast Cocoa Farmer*, p. 24.

<sup>40</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 16-18.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*.

aware of the desire of some German-educated Togolanders who would like to see the Germans return to the territory. This was evident from the activities of the *Deutsch Togo Bund*, a German Togolanders Association.<sup>44</sup> Brown concluded that it was the pursuance of these three goals which led to the appointment of DCs and the creation of NAs with powers to control local affairs.<sup>45</sup> The point here is that, by creating NAs, the British officers sought to redirect the commitment of the inhabitants from the *Bund* to the colonial administration and its institutions. In addition, as Brown noted, the creation of NAs would reduce the influence of the German and other missionaries in the region.<sup>46</sup>

The fragmentation of the people notwithstanding, the mere existence of chiefs meant the existence of recognised leaders in the various political units who could be used as focal points for implementing important colonial policies. In addition, the gradual supplanting of Guan and Togo remnant languages in the area by 'standard Ewe' made it possible to envisage a fairly easy task of disseminating information about the colonial government's policies. Equally important was 'the virility, cheerfulness and adaptability of the people'; qualities that allowed officials to be optimistic about the future of the territory.<sup>47</sup>

In 1924, the British divided the mandated territory into southern and northern sections. The northern section was administered as part of the Northern Territories Protectorate of the Gold Coast. The southern section, of which Ewedome was a part, was further divided into three administrative areas. The most southerly was administered from Ho, the central part from Kpando and the northern area from Krachi.<sup>48</sup> An important step taken by the

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<sup>44</sup> Details of this association follows in the chapter 4.

<sup>45</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 18.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>47</sup> *Togoland Report 1933*, p. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Krachi was initially included in the Northern Section but it was later transferred to the Southern Section in December 1950.

British colonial government was to place the southern section of the mandated territory under the aegis of the Commissioner of the Eastern Province (CEP) with its headquarters at Koforidua. Thus, the territory remained formally distinct, but an effective 'merger' came about through the extension of the authority of the CEP. To cement this merger, Nana Ofori Atta, Omanhene of Akyem Abuakwa and a leading member of the Gold Coast Legislative Council as well as the President of the Provincial Council of Chiefs of the Eastern Province, toured the southern section of British Togoland in 1926.<sup>49</sup> The supreme court of the Gold Coast exercised jurisdiction in the Southern Section where civil courts operated under the presidency of political officers seconded from the Gold Coast.<sup>50</sup>

Even though Colony laws applied to Ewedome, there were special laws that dealt with native administration, native courts and the alienation of land.<sup>51</sup> In all this, the British government had envisioned the development of local government in the area, and the officials were well aware that the people of Ewedome had many things in common with other Ewes of the adjoining areas of the Gold Coast colony.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, the merger was seen as much in the interest of the inhabitants as it was a matter of administrative convenience. A successful development of local government in the area was contingent on having people with some important community of interest. In addition, Ewedome and the whole of the southern section of British Togoland would learn from the experiences of the Eastern Province in the art of local governance.

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<sup>49</sup> NA CO96/672/5, Report to the Council of the League of Nations, 1927.

<sup>50</sup> 'In the absence of a local criminal code, that of the Gold Coast was introduced as a basis of procedure'. See NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Sphere of Togoland 1920-21.

<sup>51</sup> NA CO 96/780/4, File No. 31458/6, Native Administration, 1924.

<sup>52</sup> The idea of introducing local government into the British Togoland was formulated as far back as 1924. See Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 27. Also Lord Hailey, *An African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of the Sahara* (London, 1938), p. 479; NA CO96/790/2, Draft Togoland Report, 1947, p. 9.

Moreover, the level of development in Ewedome in the mid 1920s was still below expectation. This was in contrast with the situation in the Gold Coast Colony where the governorship of F. G. Guggisberg from 1919 to 1927 was celebrated as progressive in terms of political reforms and infrastructural development. The idea of introducing local government into British Togoland became more urgent due to the depression of the 1930s which resulted in retrenchment, conservatism and the extension of indirect rule. It was in the light of this that the creation of NAs in Ewedome was seen as crucial for the administration of the territory, and not necessarily for the control of cocoa economy.

### **Early Ethnographic Research**

The difficulty in creating NAs in Ewedome was how to find agreement as to which chief should be the paramount in a newly created state.<sup>53</sup> It required some delicate balancing acts. First, government had to be careful in determining the actual seats of traditional authority within the area that would be designated as new NAs. Second, government had to avoid repeating mistakes committed in areas such as south-eastern Nigeria to ensure that whoever was to be a paramount chief commanded some degree of acceptability before granting those powerful statutory instruments. In appointing Warrant Chiefs in Iboland in the 1890s, the officials did not 'ensure that those chosen for the job were in fact the right men'.<sup>54</sup> The formulation and implementation of British colonial policy in Ewedome was therefore based on various studies carried out in the region.

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<sup>53</sup> Togoland Report of 1933 p. 6.

<sup>54</sup> Afigbo, *The Warrant Chiefs*, p. 60.

As early as 1915, R. S. Rattray was commissioned to undertake ethnographic research in the territory.<sup>55</sup> Rattray's research had three main objectives. First, 'to ascertain as far as possible what connection racially, linguistically, or by reason of conquest, or suzerainty, nominal or real, the tribes in the region (Togoland) have with the inhabitants of the Gold Coast Colony.'<sup>56</sup> Second, to find out 'what racial or linguistic connection exists between the different elements that go to form this portion of Togoland'.<sup>57</sup> Third, to determine the basis for Peki's claim of suzerainty over Ewedome area.<sup>58</sup> Rattray was upbeat about how valuable such a history or traditions collected directly from the native raconteurs were to the local colonial officers:

a collection of traditions such as these help the administrative officer to get in close touch with the people whom he lives among, and the knowledge that their ancient history is shared by the European who governs them serves to give that bond of mutual understanding without which the administration of the blackman by the white must be a rule based on suspicion, aloofness or fear. An understanding of past-linked-histories of these tribal divisions may sometimes help the administrators to know where trouble is to be expected.<sup>59</sup>

The above statement summed up the relevance and the motive behind the task assigned to Rattray. He interviewed chiefs and elders of over 234 villages stretching from the district of Misahohe in present-day Togo to the district of Kpando and Ho in Ewedome. His

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<sup>55</sup> For details, see RAG/H RAO 2073, R. S. Rattray, A History of the Tribal Divisions of the District of Misahohe and the Sub-District of Ho and Kpando, 19 April 1915.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

approach was to 'compile verbatim as much of the history as oral tradition has preserved'.<sup>60</sup> His findings established the point that the inhabitants were one people with strong linkage with the inhabitants of the Gold Coast and that their disintegration into smaller chiefdoms was fostered by the Germans. All this, according to Rattray, made 'a case for British right, politically and morally, to take over that part of German Togo'.<sup>61</sup> Based on these findings, Rattray concluded that it 'would not be a difficult task to unite under more powerful heads units that still remember their past history and traditions'.<sup>62</sup> On 14 January 1918, before the formal partition of German Togo, J. T. Furley, the Gold Coast Secretary for Native Affairs, was commissioned to 'undertake the task of finding out the wishes of the people of the British sphere of occupation in Togoland with regard to the future administration of their country'.<sup>63</sup> Given the German highhandedness, very little hesitation was evinced by the inhabitants in expressing a strong aversion to German rule and an equally strong preference for British rule.<sup>64</sup>

In 1924, P. D. Le Lievee, Assistant DC at Kpando, conducted a research into the tribal history of Kpando.<sup>65</sup> Lievee's research focused on Kpando and its surrounding divisions and covered aspects such as the history, administration of native law, religion and custom. Key to the work of the local colonial officers was Lievee's findings that Kpando was the most important political division in the Ewedome area of the British Mandated Territory.<sup>66</sup> He observed that before 1903, 'many units were at one time or another either subservient or

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> NA CAB/29/2, Correspondence Relating to the Wishes of the Natives of the German Colonies, Enclosure 1v, November 1918.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, An Essay on Tribal History of Kpando Division, by P. D. Le Lievee, 1924. Le Lievee served in Kpando before C. C. Lilley. See PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, Case No. 373/186/26, Kpando Affairs, 2 March 1926; Brown, 'Politics in Kpando Area', p. 103.

<sup>66</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, An Essay on Tribal History of Kpando Division, p.1.

at least under the influence of Kpando'.<sup>67</sup> It was in that year that the Germans dealt a blow to the power and prestige of Kpando by setting up those units as independent.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, a detailed understanding of the history and culture of Kpando, according to Lievee, was 'the key to a knowledge of the inhabitants of a comparatively wide stretch of country'.<sup>69</sup>

Similar research was conducted by Captain C. C. Lilley in the early 1920s, although on a smaller scale.<sup>70</sup> Lilley was appointed to the area in 1920 and was given the task of superintending the implementation of the policy of amalgamation and the introduction of the NA system of local government in the territory. He was born in 1889 and was educated in Cheltenham College, after which he joined the British army. He rose to become a Captain in the Worcestershire Regiment and fought in the First World War, during which he lost his right arm. On 25 August 1920, he was appointed Assistant District Commissioner to Kpando sub-District. In 1930, he was awarded an OBE.<sup>71</sup> Lilley initially worked under Captain E. T. Mansfield. Appointed DC at Ho in 1921, Lilley brought his military discipline to bear on the execution of colonial policies in the area.<sup>72</sup>

Lilley's work was not just a compilation of oral history. He engaged with some analysis of 'the various emigrations which took place, [particularly from the west] and which resulted in populating the country known as Togoland'.<sup>73</sup> Lilley went on to become a member of the Anglo-French Boundary Commission which demarcated the frontier between British Togo and French Togo in 1929. He used his knowledge of the ethnography

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Lilley's account 'A Short History of Nkonya' published in the *Gold Coast Review* in 1925, provided detailed ethnographic history of not only Nkonya, but also on aspects of the history of Ewedome during the Asante invasion.

<sup>71</sup> NA Colonial Office Lists, 1921, 1926 and 1938; NA CO96/724/2, Despatches No. 358, 12 April 1921.

<sup>72</sup> NA CO96/724/2, Despatches No. 358, 12 April 1921.

<sup>73</sup> Lilley, 'Short History', p. 125.

of the area, in the words of Nugent, 'to ensure that the line did not cut across divisions where this could be avoided'.<sup>74</sup>

In 1924, follow-up research was undertaken by Captain Mansfield to ascertain which chiefs could be made the head of the amalgamated states. It emerged from his findings that Kpando, Awatime and Ho were the most influential states in the Ewedome region. It can be concluded, therefore, that these findings were the basis for the merger of the southern section of British Togoland with the Eastern Province of the Gold Coast in 1924 and important factors in formulating the policy of amalgamation in Ewedome. Rattray, the author of the 1915 report, went on to greater fame with his huge body of research on Asante and the Northern Territories in the 1920s. His anthropological findings on Asante provided crucial information for the design of the scheme of native administration not only in that region but in southern Togoland and the Northern Territories.<sup>75</sup> Lentz has noted Rattray's admiration for Akan political structures and constitution, which he viewed as 'the prototype for the planned reform of native administration'.<sup>76</sup> As the head of the Anthropology Department of the Gold Coast, Rattray's ideas largely influenced the creation of large states with strong chiefs in Ewedome.

Lawrance alluded to some investigations that were conducted into native traditions and structures from 1924 upon which the colonial government endorsed the policy of creating larger states in the territory.<sup>77</sup> He also intimated that Lilley, by virtue of his research and long stay in the region, 'was becoming somewhat of an expert on Ewe custom'.<sup>78</sup> Indeed,

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<sup>74</sup> For details about the work of the Boundary Commission in shaping the Ghana-Togo border, see Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 35-38.

<sup>75</sup> Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, (Oxford, 1929), p. v.

<sup>76</sup> Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History*, p. 95.

<sup>77</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 256-257.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, p. 259.

the main legislative framework applied to the territory was specifically intended to take into account social and political groupings and custom. This was evident, as we shall soon see, in the extension of the jurisdiction of the tribunals to cover almost every aspect of 'customary law', and that the interpretation of those laws were actually devolved to the native tribunals.<sup>79</sup> Lentz notes how important this research was 'in the British production of ethnographic knowledge'.<sup>80</sup>

It was after similar research into native 'constitutions' that we see, by the early 1930s, the extension of indirect rule into the Northern Territories and of course the start of the move towards the restoration of the Asante Confederation, a process which became complete on 31 January 1935. Thus, the policy of amalgamation was not peculiar to the southern section of British Togoland; similar projects of formalizing and extending the NA system were also underway elsewhere in the Gold Coast. But of more comparative relevance to Ewedome was the Northern Territories, where small-scale 'stateless' people were also being amalgamated into larger and supposedly more administratively 'rational' units, with treasuries and courts based on the findings of anthropologists such as Meyer Fortes.<sup>81</sup>

The British colonial government had since the 1930s demonstrated its willingness to use research in shaping colonial policy in Africa. We learn from Allman and Parker's work that Fortes's research on Taleland from 1934-35 was important in the design of indirect rule in that territory. In the introduction of direct taxation, specific reference was made to the relevance of Fortes' research on the 'organisation and delegation of responsibility among

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<sup>79</sup> NA CO 96/790/2, Draft Togoland Report of 1947, p. 22. Details on the definition, nature and usage of 'customary law' follow in the next chapter.

<sup>80</sup> Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History*, p. 73.

<sup>81</sup> Allman and Parker, *Tongnaab*, p. 204-205.

the tribes which comprised the Mamprusi Division'.<sup>82</sup> Fortes was accredited for drawing the framework for indirect rule among the Talensi people, just as Lilley was instrumental in drafting the 1932 Ordinance for the southern section of British Togoland.<sup>83</sup> Another comparison can be drawn from the Tanganyika case, where the Germans had destroyed 'tribal cohesion' [and] 'tribal government'.<sup>84</sup> This necessitated the merging of small chiefdoms by the British into large ones in attempt to create united 'tribes' by 'reconstructing the institutions existing before the disaster of German rule'.<sup>85</sup> This called for 'a true appreciation of the existing conditions and forms of government immediately prior to German occupation'.<sup>86</sup>

It was observed by colonial officials that the various 'tribes' in Africa had genealogical connections and that, 'small tribes were offshoots of big ones and might therefore be reunited'.<sup>87</sup> Iliffe quotes a British official as saying that 'native administration was as much a historical as a political exercise, its outcome depended heavily on the historical view current among administrators or plausibly advocated by interested Africans'.<sup>88</sup> It was these ideas emanating from the various research that led to the crystallization of the concept of amalgamation in British colonies from the 1920s. This policy, which involved the creation of states large enough for the purpose of local government necessitated 'the subordination of smaller chiefdoms'.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid, p. 204.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, p. 205.

<sup>84</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 323

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p. 322.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p. 324.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p. 323.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, p. 330

### **Formulation of the Amalgamation policy**

From 1932, the British government began to take steps to establish effective administration in Ewedome. Consequently, a special Native Administration (Southern Section of British Togoland) Ordinance of 1932 was passed. This replaced the 1924 ordinance which had allowed the continued application of the German system of direct rule in the territory. Specifically, the ordinance was to provide for the appointment of NAs and to prescribe their powers and duties. There were to be constituted divisional and state councils as well as native tribunals with well defined powers and jurisdiction.<sup>90</sup> These councils would then complement efforts by the colonial government in matters such as the formulation of laws and administration of justice in the territory. The ordinance sought to place the native administration of southern Togoland on a proper statutory basis analogous to that which had been provided in other territories such as Tanganyika, the Gold Coast and Nigeria.

As pointed out by Hailey, the native administration policy put in place in the Gold Coast and later introduced in Ewedome was based on the Nigerian model.<sup>91</sup> The principle that the right of jurisdiction flowed from the Crown through the Governor and his officials, but was not inherent in the chiefs by virtue of their enstoolment, was very much enshrined in the ordinance. Therefore, the emphasis here, so far as the 1932 Ordinance was concerned, was more on the judicial function of chiefs rather than on their executive authority and responsibility.<sup>92</sup> It was typical of the British colonial government to vary some details of its colonial policy from colony to colony. For example, the degree to which chiefs and NAs

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<sup>90</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/559, Native Administration Ordinance to Togoland, Case No.2/35/31 (1932).

<sup>91</sup> For an overview of the introduction of native administration policy into British sphere of Togoland, see Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 477- 480.

<sup>92</sup> Native Administration (Southern Section) Ordinance of 1932.

were used in administering any British colony varied according to the peculiarities of each colony.

As we have seen, the social and political organization of Ewedome was of far greater complexity than in many other regions. There was a conspicuous absence of 'big chiefs' as compared to much of the Gold Coast.<sup>93</sup> What exacerbated the problem was the grant of a tribunal to every chief and sub-chief by the Germans.<sup>94</sup> The net result was the multiplicity of divisions with stupendous number of tribunals: 243 were recorded in 1920.<sup>95</sup> Apparently, if the Britain colonial government was to be successful in implementing the 1932 ordinance in Ewedome in tune with the dictate of indirect rule and local government, then she had to go the full hog to undertake some restructuring of the fragmented region. Consequently, the government decided to introduce the policy of amalgamation which would culminate in the creation of large states with 'big chiefs' who could assume status comparable to paramount chiefs in the Gold Coast.<sup>96</sup>

Admittedly, it was simply impossible to give every head chief or *Fiaga* of every division in Ewedome much the same powers as were given to a Paramount Chief in the Gold Coast. Consequently, the term 'state', which hitherto applied loosely to all divisions, could no longer be used. The British government insisted that the term 'state' could only be applied, in the real sense of the word, to amalgamated areas. Therefore, states that had existed prior to amalgamation in Ewedome were designated as divisions and their divisions became sub-divisions. Large political units, it was envisaged, might be able to direct a well-

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<sup>93</sup> RAG/H RAO 134/2, Statement by Governor A. Ransford Slater to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission October 1928. NA CO 746/7, Annual Report to the Permanent Mandate Commission 24-25 October 1938.

<sup>94</sup> Any head of family who had left the parent village and founded a new one was allowed by the Germans to style himself a sub-chief. See CO96/746/7.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v Dome', p. 251-253.

defined policy for the mutual benefit of all divisions in the territory. In addition, as Hailey pointed out, the purpose of amalgamation of the small chiefdoms was to create states of sufficient size and population which would allow for the establishment of local government on a proper basis.<sup>97</sup> The idea of introducing the policy of amalgamation was conceived by the colonial government much earlier but the actual process of achieving this objective was set in motion in 1929.<sup>98</sup>

One of the benefits of amalgamation to the natives was that the Paramount Chief's tribunal was given greater powers to hear cases which hitherto went to the District Commissioner. Treasuries were also to be established so that the NAs would be empowered to act as agents of development in the provision of such facilities as clinics, schools and roads. Since the increased powers would be given to amalgamated divisions it followed therefore that those divisions which did not amalgamate would lose whatever powers they already had.<sup>99</sup> Divisions which agreed to amalgamate were to be given a British flag, not only to commemorate their amalgamation but also to serve as a symbol of authority.<sup>100</sup> By 1932, it became obvious that the colonial government had envisaged the creation of three amalgamated states in Ewedome. Lilley was said to have gone through the German archives and discovered a German document which had pencilled the Awatime, Ho, Kpando, Hohoe and Buem chiefs as the seniors in the southern section of British Togoland.<sup>101</sup> Hohoe was, however, less significant in the pre-colonial history of Ewedome

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<sup>97</sup> Hailey, *African Survey*, p. 479.

<sup>98</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/545, Memorandum on Amalgamation in Southern Togoland, 1946; PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1285, Amalgamation of Divisions Around Ho, 2 March 1931; PRAAD/A ADME39/1/286, Amalgamation of Divisions (Southern Section) Togoland, Asogli State, 1932-1945; Brown, 'Politics in Kpando Area', p. 27.

<sup>99</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/25, Amalgamation of Divisions, 23 October 1931.

<sup>100</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/216, Ho-Kpando District Affairs, Case No. 154/32, Petition by Togbe Delume III, 14 July 1932.

<sup>101</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v Dome', p. 256-257.

and did not feature prominently in the early research conducted by colonial officials. It was in the 1920s that Hohoe assumed significant importance in Ewedome because of its position as a cocoa marketing centre, though the cocoa did not come from Hohoe itself.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, a clear picture had emerged by the 1920s as to how many NAs should be created in Ewedome.

### **The Amalgamated States**

The 1932 ordinance gave legal backing to the creation of amalgamated states in the territory. The choice of Awatime, Asogli and Akpini as the seats of the amalgamated states was based on the pre-colonial history of the chiefdoms in Ewedome. In the words of Debrunner, 'the kings of Ho, and Kpando had distinguished themselves particularly in the resistance against Asante and now exercised a kind of leadership based on the reputation they had won'.<sup>103</sup> As we shall soon see, even before the proclamation of the policy of amalgamation, there were intriguing manoeuvres by Dagadu IV of Kpando, Adjatekpor V of Awatime, Kwadzo Dei of Peki and Howusu of Ho to reassert their influence over smaller chiefs to whom the Germans had granted independent tribunals.<sup>104</sup> Peki's move was untenable because it was outside the mandated territory. Thus, there were local collaborators who stood to benefit from the policy and whose support was a crucial factor in creating amalgamated states in Ewedome. We shall consider the creation of the three amalgamated states in turn.

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<sup>102</sup> Interviews with C.F.Y. Dekavie, a retired educationalist, Hohoe, May 2007 and Mr Tsetse, Tutor, St. Teresa's Training College, Hohoe, May 2007. The point is also made in Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 53.

<sup>103</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 19. It is important to note that Debrunner's work was based on oral traditions that he collected in the territory from 1959 to 1960.

<sup>104</sup> PRO CO 96/706/2, Reports on Provinces, Volta River District, 17 August 1932. The role of Howusu in pushing for amalgamation in Asogli state is recorded in Lawrance, 'Bankoe v Dome', p. 252.

### *Akpini (Kpando) State*

Lilley referred to Kpando as the most important political division in the British mandated territory.<sup>105</sup> It was no surprise that, according to Brown, Kpando was 'the head of the first amalgamated state in British southern Togoland' in 1928.<sup>106</sup> Kpando was made up of fifteen towns with Kpando-Gabi being the *fiadu*. Lilley considered as outstanding the personality of the head chief, Anku Dagadu III, who ascended the stool on 3 May 1898 and died in 1925.<sup>107</sup> According to the Togoland Report of 1926, 'never had a suzerain a more loyal and devoted servant than this government had in Dagadu Anku'.<sup>108</sup> Le Lievee's ethnography of Kpando also shows that Sovie and Awate formed the rear guard of Kpando's military organization in pre-colonial times.<sup>109</sup> Various colonial documents stated that until 1930, there were political units or divisions which were subservient to the stool of Kpando and that it was the German government who caused the disintegration of Dagadu's empire 'by setting up as independent a number of tribes formerly subservient to the stool of Kpando'.<sup>110</sup> Brown observed that the deportation of Dagadu III to Cameroon by the Germans in 1913 inadvertently shored up Kpando's prestige within Krepiland.<sup>111</sup> We also recalled how Dagadu III mobilised other Ewe states to oppose the inoculation of people against sleeping sickness. Even before the German presence in the area, the British

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<sup>105</sup> Togoland Report, 1926, p. 4.

<sup>106</sup> Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 213.

<sup>107</sup> Dates taken from NA CO96/672/5, Togoland Report 1927; Funeral brochure for the late Dgadu VII, 2007, p. 42.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/42, Le Lievee, Kpando Division, p. 4.

<sup>110</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/25 No. 48/20, Rattray and Captain Mansfield to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 1921.

<sup>111</sup> David Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 213.

government had acknowledged the seniority of Kpando over the other states, including Nkonya.<sup>112</sup>

Again, Kpando was 'decidedly the largest and most important commercial town in the whole of the Krepi country'.<sup>113</sup> As we noted, it was Kpando's commercial importance that attracted the Germans to Ewedome in the 1890s and it had been the desire of 'the chief of Kpando and his elders to see their economic importance translated into a correspondingly improved political position'.<sup>114</sup> To the Germans, Kpando was 'more important than its neighbours in Krepi' and the chief was said to have exercised political authority over much of the territory.<sup>115</sup> It came therefore as no surprise that Kpando became one of the district capitals in German Togo. Akpini state was the first to start the process of amalgamation in the southern section of Togoland in January 1927, when the first group of 12 previously independent chiefs came together at the instance of Dagadu IV to oppose a gun-tax of £1 introduced by the British government.<sup>116</sup>

The success in opposing the gun-tax led to the convening of a second meeting on 21 November 1929, this time by Dagadu IV who ascended the stool in 1926 and ruled until 1948.<sup>117</sup> It was at that second meeting that the name Akpini was adopted by all the chiefs and Dagadu IV elected as president.<sup>118</sup> This then was 'the original and indigenous attempt

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid, p. 205.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, p. 202.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. p. 212. Dagadu was one of the few chiefs who was paid a salary by the Germans in recognition of his importance.

<sup>116</sup> See RAG/H RAO 1/1932, Report on the Native Administration Ordinance of British Sphere of Togoland, 1932. The 12 hitherto independent divisions were Agate, Awate, Gbefi, Fodome, Have, Leklebi, Liate, Kpeve, Sovie, Vakpo and Tsyome. See the preamble to *Danyigba Kaka* festival brochure, 1 July 1974. Interviews with Dagadu VII Kpando, 5 February 2005 and Mr Vanance Kyekye, a retired Kpando Local Council worker, Kpando, 3 July 2007.

<sup>117</sup> Preamble to *Danyigba Kaka* festival brochure, 1 July 1974.

<sup>118</sup> Therefore, Akpini refers to the amalgamated state under the leadership of Kpando. See Preamble to *Danyigba Kaka* festival brochure, 1 July 1974.

of the people for an amalgamation'.<sup>119</sup> According to Brown, Lilley had wanted to abandon the plan to form amalgamated states by August 1928 and to create a loose federation because of unpopularity of Dagadu IV coupled with strong opposition from Anfoega, Ve and Gbi to coming under the presidency of Kpando.<sup>120</sup> Dagadu vehemently opposed Lilley's plan to scrap the amalgamation policy and petitioned the Governor.<sup>121</sup> When Lilley went to the UK on a six-month leave, Dagadu took advantage of the former's absence to form the Akpini amalgamated state and got the CEP's endorsement before Lilley returned to the territory in May 1929.<sup>122</sup>

#### *Awatime State*

Awatime, with its capital at Vane, was also one of the more prosperous states in Ewedome. Awatime, in spite of its small size, wielded some political influence in the nineteenth century.<sup>123</sup> In pre-colonial times, the oath of Adzatekpor, the paramount chief of Awatime, was resorted to by Ewe states in settling inter-personal and inter-state disputes. Adzatekpor's court commanded respect and reverence among Ewe states as far as Agu in Togo because of an alleged potency of Adzatekpor's oath, *Adzatekpor Wanbi*. The oath had its origin in one of the wars which Awatime was said to have fought with Logba and Tafi on a mountain known as Wanbi in the late nineteenth century.<sup>124</sup> Feuding factions in Ewe-speaking states swore the oath in order to seek redress in the court of Adzatekpor.

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 33.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, p. 36.

<sup>123</sup> Brydon, 'Constructing Awatime', p. 29.

<sup>124</sup> Interviews conducted with Mr Lawson Osen, Asafoatse of Awatime Gbadzeme and a retired educationalist, 4 December 2007.

In addition, the popularity of Adzatekpor soared higher among Ewes because of the defeat that Asante suffered in the hands of Awatime people in 1869.<sup>125</sup> There was also the obvious fact that by the end of the German period, Awatime had developed and became the most prosperous of all the states which later formed Awatime Native Authority in 1932. Adzatekpor IV had a long tradition of working with Europeans since the Bremen Mission Station was opened in Amedzofe in 1890. We have already seen how the establishment of educational institutions in Amedzofe by the German missionaries gave prominence to Awatime. Furthermore, Adjatekpor V, who succeeded the throne in 1917 and ruled until 1954, was equally a great leader whose ability to speak both English and German made him a dependable partner of the colonial officers.<sup>126</sup> For his able leadership, Adzatekpor V was awarded the KBE in 1949.<sup>127</sup>

Although Adzatekpor was popular in the area, there were obvious problems in attempting to make him the paramount chief over Ewe-speaking states. Awatime people were not part of the Ewe-speaking group. If claim by Awatime, as reported by Brydon, that they left Ningo in the Ga-Adangbe area in the wake of Akwamu invasion in 1679 is anything to go by, then one can conclude that the peopling of Ewedome by Ewes preceded the arrival of Awatime people.<sup>128</sup> Geographically, Awatime occupied the greater part of the mountainous area of Ewedome and it had seven towns or divisions: Amedzofe, Biakpa, Dzogbefeme, Dzokpe, Fume, Gbadzeme and Vane. The paramount chief of Awatime, Adzatekpor, resided in Vane, the capital town. In the south-east and south-west parts of

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<sup>125</sup> This view is supported by Brydon, 'Constructing Awatime', p. 29. See also NA CO 96/746/7, General statement by C.C. Lilley to the 35<sup>th</sup> session of the PMC at Geneva, 24 to 25 October 1938

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Adzatekpor VI, Former President of the National House of Chiefs, 8 June 2002.

<sup>127</sup> Interview with Mr Lawson Osen, Asafoatse of Awatime Gbadzeme, 4 December 2007.

<sup>128</sup> Brydon, 'Constructing Awatime', p. 28. The assertion that Awatime people were from Ahanta in the south-western Gold Coast and that they arrived in Ewedome after the Ewes had settled in the region is also found in White, 'Awatime', p. 35.

Awatime were Ewe states such as Akome, Dodome, Dzolo, Hoe, Honuta, Klave, Kpedze, Kpoeta and Saviofe. By the policy of amalgamation, these Ewe states were expected to join Awatime to form an enlarged Awatime state and to recognise Adzatekpor as their paramount chief.

Apart from the historical and linguistic differences between the people of Awatime and their Ewe neighbours, there were cultural peculiarities that set the two ethnic groups apart. For example, circumcision was a taboo among Awatime people, while the Ewes as a whole practised circumcision.<sup>129</sup> This cultural prohibition inhibited intermarriage between the people of Awatime and their Ewe neighbours. In addition, marriage customs and other forms of traditional practices of Awatime were based on Akan laws and customs which were fundamentally different from the customary laws and traditional practices of the Ewe-speaking people.<sup>130</sup> These differences had relevance to the determination and promotion of the aspirations of Awatime people on the one hand and their Ewe neighbours on the other. An awful lot more effort had to be expended by Lilley and other officers to persuade these two ethnic groups to cooperate in a common local government administration.

#### *Asogli (Ho) State*

The formation of Asogli NA is well covered by Lawrance. It is, however, important to recount how Ho came to be chosen as the seat of Asogli State. Ho was also one of the earliest Bremen Mission stations and the local chiefs had acquired some degree of importance and prestige due to the development of a thriving market in the town.<sup>131</sup> It was made up of seven towns or divisions with Bankoe being the first settlement. In his

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

examination of periurban Ewe identity, Benjamin identified Ho and Kpando as some of the towns having 'historical roots as powerful centres'.<sup>132</sup> The formation of Asogli state was the most protracted. The divisional chief of Ho-Dome, Constantin Komla Howusu, presented himself to British officials 'as the only literate chief' in the Asogli area.<sup>133</sup> Consequently, Howusu became the obvious choice as paramount chief of Asogli State, which was to be composed of divisions outside Ho territorial area.<sup>134</sup>

There is, however, another version to the reason for the choice of Howusu, instead of Afede, the head chief of Ho-Bankoe. According to the Agyemang Badu Commission Report on the chieftaincy disputes in Ho in 1958, the choice of Howusu of Dome instead of Afede of Bankoe was due to the latter's refusal to shake hands with Lilley.<sup>135</sup> Lilley had lost his right arm in the First World War and on meeting Afede, he offered his left hand but Afede refused on the ground that it was a taboo to shake hands with the left hand. This annoyed Lilley and he decided not to have anything to do with Afede any more. While the outside divisions resented the loss of their independence, disagreement over the choice of Howusu rendered Ho division itself incapable of leading the amalgamated state. The other divisions of Ho objected to the choice of Howusu Komla because Afede of Ho-Dome was considered the head chief of Ho. Meanwhile, in a petition to the governor in 1931, Afede of Ho-Bankoe recalled the gallantry displayed by Ho-Dome in the Akwamu invasion.<sup>136</sup> There is no doubt that the historical relationship that the three dominant local leaders –

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<sup>132</sup> Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 26.

<sup>133</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v Dome', p. 250

<sup>134</sup> The ceremony of installation of Howusu is recorded in PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1285, The Unification of Native States of Togoland, Notes by Captain Mothersill of a Meeting of Chiefs held at Ho, 24 February 1931.

<sup>135</sup> RAG/ H, RAO144. Agyman Badu Commission of Enquiry into the Chieftaincy Disputes in Ho, 31 January to 16 May 1958. The controversy between Afede Asor I and Lilley is contained in PRAAD/A ADM39/1/456, Quarterly Reports, Ho District, 1932. See also Babara Callaway, 'Local Politics in Ho and Aba', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 4 (1970), p. 134-145.

<sup>136</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1285, Unification of Native States Togoland, Ho-Asogli, Petition of Fia Afede of Ho Bankoe to Sir Alexander Rensford Slater, 7 July 1931.

Adzatekpor, Dagadu and Howusu - had first with the Germans and then the British had an impact on shaping the amalgamated states. Their emergence as new paramount chiefs represented, to some extent, a return to the regional status quo of the late nineteenth century where the three chiefs became dominant local leaders after the Akwamu and Asante invasions by creating a culture of 'progressive chieftainship'.<sup>137</sup>

The implementation of policies of this nature, Spear argues, could not have been possible without some local historical precedents.<sup>138</sup> This assertion corroborated the point made in Iliffe's work on Tanganyika that NAs, 'must obviously be a normal evolution of whatever form of tribal government [had] existed'.<sup>139</sup> He noted further that the establishment of NAs 'was as much a historical as a political exercise, its outcome depended heavily on the historical views current among administrators or plausibly advocated by interested Africans'.<sup>140</sup> It must also be borne in mind that the whole idea of NAs was not just about using chiefs to mobilise labour, impose taxes and raise revenue, but also to introduce a system of government at the local level using traditional leaders. The amalgamated states as well as the paramount chiefs needed some degree of local legitimacy to be effective partners in the scheme of indirect rule, which of course limited the ability of colonial officers to simply invent and imposed such a policy on the indigenes.<sup>141</sup> What was happening in Ewedome with regard to this policy exemplified the dynamics at play during

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<sup>137</sup> According to Iliffe, 'progressive chiefs' such as Mgeni, Abdiel Shangali and Gabriel Ruhumbika were 'key figures in indirect rule' in Tanganyika in the 1920s. Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 327.

<sup>138</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 4.

<sup>139</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 322.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, p. 323.

<sup>141</sup> A detailed and broader picture of these dynamics and their influence on the reconstruction of new identities in colonial Africa is presented in Spear's critique of the concepts of 'invented tradition', 'making of customary law' and the 'creation of tribalism'. See Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 3-27. Lentz also argues that 'it was not only European views that fed into this discourse about tribal characteristics, history and ethnicity; African knowledge and ideas, introduced by chiefs, also played their part'. See Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History*, p. 86.

the colonial era in Africa, where colonial officials created larger units, with the assistance of indigenous actors in areas where chiefdoms were seen as too small and fragmented to be of practical use. The fact was that various chiefdoms in Ewedome, just as in other parts of Africa, started experiencing tremendous economic, social and political transformations since the contact with the missionaries. Local parochial interests, according to the officials, had to give way to the interest of a larger community in order to meet the demands of modernity. Spear is right in stating that the colonial state itself had to change in order to adapt to local conditions and meet its own set objectives.<sup>142</sup> Thus, the colonial policy of centralisation in Ewedome created a platform for the three 'more determined Ewe chiefs to attain regional hegemony'.<sup>143</sup>

### **Reactions to the Political Reorganisation**

Criticism of the 1932 ordinance was severe in the Gold Coast press.<sup>144</sup> A government report quoted the press as having regarded the ordinance as a sinister move to impose direct taxation using chiefs.<sup>145</sup> Section 3 of the ordinance, which gave the Governor power to constitute any administrative area or appoint any chief to be a NA, received the severest attack. The contention was that the ordinance gave the colonial government unfettered powers to effectively control the NAs. Specific reference was made to the provision allowing the governor to regulate orders issued or issuable by the NAs which in the view of the press would reduce chiefs to the status of government appointees.<sup>146</sup> Even among the

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<sup>142</sup> NA CO 96/705/8, Report on an Ordinance of the British Sphere of Togoland (Southern Section) Amendment Ordinance 1932, 29 June 1932.

<sup>143</sup> Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 34.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> Section 36 of the ordinance proposed the introduction of a Native Revenue Administration Ordinance.

<sup>146</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/653, Acting Attorney General's Report, 1932.

administrative officers themselves, there was some scepticism. De Hart, the acting Attorney General, questioned the feasibility of introducing such a highly complex and technical legislative instrument in a territory composed largely of an illiterate population.<sup>147</sup> Arguably, it was one thing being successful, as a chief, in exercising jurisdiction and administering justice under native custom, but it was quite another making written bye-laws in accordance with the tenets of an ordinance whose language and technicality a chief could not comprehend.

In Ewedome itself, protest against the policy was spontaneous, particularly from divisions that were to amalgamate with the so called 'Paramount Chiefs.' Interestingly, the protests were not against the policy per se. The main contention of the smaller divisions was that the definitions of terms such as 'sub-Divisional Chief', 'Paramount Chief', and 'State', as well as the interpretations of those terms in the text of the ordinance which implied and postulated subordination of one independent stool or division to another stool or division. For example, there seemed to be some confusion with regard to the definition of the term 'Paramount Chief' and *Fiaga*.<sup>148</sup> *Fiaga* which is the Ewe equivalent of an Akan 'Paramount Chief' or *Omanhene* had existed long before amalgamation. The only difference was that the territorial area of jurisdiction of the *Fiaga* was relatively small. Again, 'a state' in the traditional sense referred to a *duko* in Ewedome. However, as we observed earlier, so far as the ordinance was recognised, 'a state' was a number of *dukowo* coming together and owing allegiance to one central paramount authority. This obvious problem of terminology persisted throughout the period of NAs and constituted a major source of disagreement well into the post-independence period.

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Report of Agyman-Badu Committee of Enquiry into Chieftaincy Affairs in the Volta Region, 5 December, 1973.

Opponents of the policy further argued that the subordination of a stool's territorial independence was not needed to achieve the political and administrative reconstruction of the territory.<sup>149</sup> It was contended by the divisional chiefs, sometimes referred to as 'smaller chiefs', that the position of the paramount chief of a state should be that of *primus inter pares*.<sup>150</sup> In other words, they wanted a formula under which all chiefs could co-operate in forming a political or administrative state without the constituent divisions necessarily having to sacrifice their sovereign independence and territorial or stool integrity. Mass meetings were held throughout the smaller divisions to elicit the views of the people regarding the ordinance, after which 23 *Fiagawo* and *Fiawo* met to petition the Secretary of State for the Colonies.<sup>151</sup> The government noted that the purpose of this particular provision was to define the executive functions of the NAs. Another ground of protest was the fact that the tribunals established under the ordinance would be subject to the supervision of administrative officers as well as liable to closure if they were found to have abused their powers or to be incapable of administering justice impartially.<sup>152</sup> The fact that the NAs were new and were required to administer a complex legal regime made the need for supervision necessary. The lack of such supervision in the Gold Coast Colony accounted for the growing unpopularity of the 1927 Native Administration Ordinance among the common people.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> A similar situation occurred amongst the Ga people of Accra when the Native Authority Ordinance of 1927 was introduced. See Parker, *Making the Town*, p. 227.

<sup>150</sup> The main argument against the policy of amalgamation was that the position of paramount chief was not made rotational. See Collier, '*Ablode*', p. 24; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 126-146.

<sup>151</sup> NA CO 96/705/8, Petition from *Fiawo*, 25 September 1932.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> NA CO 96/705/8, Petition, 25 September 1932.

The real difficulty was that the authority of some chiefs was seen as being enhanced, while others feared that their status was being reduced.<sup>154</sup> A close examination of the ordinance, however, shows clearly that the chiefs generally had greater freedom and power in exercising their judicial functions under the 1932 ordinance than they had under the Germans. In the German period, no authority was conferred on chiefs to enforce judgements, such enforcements were permissible only with the approval of a political officer who had absolute discretion in the matter.<sup>155</sup> The 1932 ordinance, on the other hand, enhanced the status of the chiefs by substituting the right of effective jurisdiction for the arbitration powers which they had possessed under the Germans.<sup>156</sup> This was however not enough to placate the divisional chiefs who were determined to hold their own against the policy.

Another source of protest was in relation to section 32(2) of the 1932 ordinance, part of which read:

any native proved to be in possession of stool property who, after being ordered by the state council to deliver up the stool property, fails to do so shall be guilty of an offence, and shall, on conviction by a State Council, on which the necessary jurisdiction is hereby conferred, be liable to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for any term not exceeding six months...and the one would be ordered to deliver the said property within one month from the date of such order and on failure to comply with such order his private property may be

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<sup>154</sup> Togoland Native Administration Ordinance, 1932. Sections 19 and 41.

<sup>155</sup> NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Togoland 1920-21, p. 21.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid. Part IV.

attached and sold to recover such value.<sup>157</sup>

On the face of it, this clause looked innocuous, but an understanding of the events which informed its insertion explains why it generated so much indignation. From the beginning of British control over the area, the institution of chieftaincy began to witness a gradual change towards greater authority and power. This was in sharp contrast to the German period when the institution was not altogether an enviable one so people did not see the need to contest the stools. The coming of the British appeared to trigger an increase in chieftaincy disputes.<sup>158</sup> In some cases, people decided to hide stool property in order to prevent the enstoolment of a chief whose selection they had opposed.

A typical example was in Ho-Dome where a dispute arose as to the right of succession to the stool in 1930. The stoolfather (*Zikpuitor*), being dissatisfied with the decision of the elders, hid the stool.<sup>159</sup> When all efforts to locate the stool proved futile, a new stool had to be consecrated for the newly elected chief.<sup>160</sup> A similar incident occurred at Kpedze in 1932 where the original stool was removed by those who had custody of it because they objected to the chief elected.<sup>161</sup> This trend provided the basis for the necessity of inserting section 32(2) into the ordinance. It was the intention of the British government not to interfere in any way with the choice of a chief, if the choice was unanimous. At the same time, when there was a considerable dissension among the divisions as to who to elect as a

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<sup>157</sup> The Native Administration (Southern Section) Ordinance of 1932, p. 13.

<sup>158</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/285, Amalgamation of Divisions, Case no. 2184/32, Chieftaincy Dispute in Alavanyo, 1944.

<sup>159</sup> The Stoolfather or *Zipkuitor* is the head of the family which produces the chief and he is the custodian of the stool. The proximity of the stoolfather to the stool made him a very powerful person in the chieftaincy set-up. See Verdom, *Abutia Ewe*, p. 92.

<sup>160</sup> See detail of this incident in PRAAD/A ADM39/1/281, The Asogli State, Case no. 194/1932.

<sup>161</sup> PRO CO 96/705/8, Togoland Native Administration Ordinance, 1932, Official Government Despatch, No. 867, 8 December, 1932.

chief, the government was bound to intervene to some extent in the interest of law and order.

Apart from protests emanating from the provisions of the ordinance, the 'smaller chiefs' took strong exception to the principles that were to govern the formation of large states. One such provision was that government would not give legal recognition to the amalgamation of a division with a state unless the said division was unanimously in favour of amalgamation.<sup>162</sup> If a head chief of a division wished to amalgamate with another division, he first of all had to obtain the consent of all the chiefs, elders, and people within his division. He then had to be accompanied by his subordinate chiefs and elders or their representatives to the paramount chief whose state he wanted to amalgamate with for the swearing of oath of allegiance.<sup>163</sup>

To achieve unanimity on the issue of amalgamation in Ewedome proved to be very difficult because many of the divisions were disturbed by internal strife emanating from the policy. Factions emerged within divisions as a result of struggles for political power. There were also disagreements over which particular state divisions should amalgamate with.<sup>164</sup> In 1931, for instance, the chief of Goviefe, Sasraku VII, petitioned Captain Lilley against the decision of the chief of Woadze to amalgamate with Dagadu of Kpando. Apparently, Sasraku, who claimed to be the paramount chief over Have and Woadze divisions, wanted all divisions under him to amalgamate with the Ve division.<sup>165</sup> Therefore the decision of the

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<sup>162</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/338, Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1946.

<sup>163</sup> RAG/H RAO 0014, Confidential Correspondence, Appendix B, Unamalgamated Divisions 8 September 1932. Details about the commonalities in the amalgamation ceremonies are found in Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 261-263.

<sup>164</sup> RAG/H No. 48/21, Address by Captain Lilley to the Chiefs of Ho Division, 28 October, 1931.

<sup>165</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/338 Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1932.

chief of Woadze to go contrary to the wish of the chief of Goviefe generated tension between the two divisions.

Similarly, in 1932, the chiefs, elders and people of the various divisions of Wli state sent a petition to Lilley at Kpando in which they expressed their objection to the decision of their paramount chief to amalgamate with Gbi (Hohoe). The people of Wli claimed that traditionally, they had had a long relationship with Dagadu of Kpando and that it was their wish to amalgamate with Akpini state under the paramountcy of Dagadu. They went further to destool their paramount chief and enstooled another person. This generated chieftaincy disputes in Wli traditional area.<sup>166</sup> In the same vein, the paramount chief of Ve was dsstooled in 1932 for amalgamating with Dagadu because some divisions in Ve objected to amalgamation with Kpando.<sup>167</sup> Again, the decision of the paramount chief of Adaklu to amalgamate with Ho instead of Peki created tension between the paramount chief of Adaklu and his subjects. In Aveme area, while some of the citizens cited proximity as one of the reasons why they preferred to join Kpando (Akpini) others objected to it vehemently. Those who opposed the idea made reference to a land dispute between Kpando and Aveme which led to conflict between the two states in 1926.<sup>168</sup>

In addition, some divisions had chieftaincy disputes which made unanimity unachievable. A typical example was Asogli state. As stated earlier, chieftaincy disputes in Ho division had its origin in 1930 when Lilley made the sub-divisional chief of Ho Dome, Howusu, the paramount chief of Asogli state. Consequently, Togbe Afede of Ho-Bankoe

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/338, Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1946.

<sup>168</sup> PRAAD/A ADM, Amalgamation of Divisions, Aveme Native Affairs, 1937.

lost his position as the head chief of Ho division from 1930 to 1958.<sup>169</sup> The Ho incident became one of the contentious issues which made amalgamation of other divisions with Asogli very difficult to achieve. As we noted, Howusu himself was having serious problems as when he was enstooled in May 1930 the stoolfather refused to give him the stool because he (the stoolfather) did not recognise his right to be a chief. Consequently, a new stool had to be made for Howusu.<sup>170</sup> It therefore came as no surprise when in October 1930, thirteen head chiefs agreed at a meeting in Tanyigbe to elect Togbe Afede as their paramount chief of Asogli state, in defiance of Lilley's directive.<sup>171</sup>

Initially, divisions were allowed to amalgamate as they pleased, provided the state was of sufficient size to warrant recognition as a state.<sup>172</sup> As things turned out, this principle also became a recipe for chaos as divisions began to amalgamate haphazardly. It was no surprise that kinship ties between the various divisions became the basis for amalgamation. An example was the decision by the people of Adaklu to amalgamate with Peki instead of Ho. Adaklu alluded to a long standing pre-colonial bond of friendship between them and Peki; forgetting that the ordinance was not in any way applicable to the Gold Coast Colony, of which Peki was a part.<sup>173</sup> It was based on the same principle that the people of Akome, Aveme, Dedome, Dzolo, Kpeve, Honuta and Kpale decided in 1931 to amalgamate under Ve, even though these divisions were not geographically coterminous thus making a mockery of the objective of the policy of amalgamation.<sup>174</sup> This was followed by the chief

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<sup>169</sup> In 1958, following the findings of a Commission of inquiry into the dispute, the paramountcy was given back to Ho-Bankoe and Afede has since been the head of Asogli State. See Inquiry into the Chieftaincy Dispute in Ho in 1958. For details on the origin of the dispute, see PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/456, Quarterly Reports, Ho District. This incident was also recounted in Callaway, 'Local Politics in Ho and Aba', p. 135.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid

<sup>171</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/025, Report on the Ordinance of 1932, 17 May 1932.

<sup>172</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/216, Ho-Kpando District Native Affairs, Case No. 1455/21, 1931.

<sup>173</sup> Togoland Report of 1947, p.9.

<sup>174</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/25, Report on Amalgamation of Divisions in Togoland, 1931.

of Taviefe who in 1932 opted to join Togbe Sri of Anlo far away on the coast in the Gold Coast Colony because he did not want to serve under any division in Ewedome.<sup>175</sup>

One principle which generated great controversy and protest was that 'amalgamation was recognised only if native custom of a particularly binding nature had been performed by the divisions concerned.'<sup>176</sup> Before the advent of colonialism, no customary observance of a binding nature had ever existed among the various independent divisions (*dukowo*). It was not a common practice for any chief within a *duko* to contemplate performing a custom that would bind him and his *du* or the whole *duko* to a chief of another division. However, considering the importance which the inhabitants attached to oath the colonial officials found it expedient to use it as an important instrument for forming and cementing large states for the purpose of local government.

### **Oaths and the Creation of Native Authorities**

Generally, there were two types of oaths among the Ewes, the chief's oath and the so-called fetish oath.<sup>177</sup> In the context of the creation of NAs, the focus will be on a chief's oath, the discussion of which will illuminate our understanding of why the use of oath to enforce amalgamation became highly contentious. A chief's oath can be described as an act of making reference to some disaster or tragedy that befell a particular ethnic group, a state, a town or even a chief. The disaster could take the form of a defeat of a state in war, the tragic death of a chief either through a strange illness or through assassination. In most cases, the day on which the disaster occurred became a taboo. A chief's oath could also

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<sup>175</sup> RAG/H RAO 133, Meeting of Captain C.C. Lilley and the Chiefs of Taviefe, 26 May, 1932.

<sup>176</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/545, Memorandum on Amalgamation in British Togoland, 1946.

<sup>177</sup> The word 'fetish' is a complex word, incorporated into the local usage from the Portuguese word *feitico* and commonly used to refer to anything to do with the African spiritual realm, but still retaining problematic and sometimes derogatory overtones.

originate from the ritual performances involved in instituting a stool. A stool could therefore have one or more oaths.<sup>178</sup> Any reference made to those disasters was tantamount to swearing an oath which had very serious implications for the one who swore the oath, the state, and the chief whose oath was sworn. In the traditional Ewe worldview, veneration of ancestral spirits was an essential feature. Swearing of a chief's oath was therefore a very serious matter because it had the potential of evoking the wrath of the spirits of the ancestor(s) involved in the said disaster.

Under very strenuous circumstances, however, people could resort to the oath in order to save their lives, institute an action or prove their innocence. For example, if someone had been wronged or someone accused someone else of an offence, then swearing an oath underlined the seriousness of the accusation, forcing the accused to respond (often by swearing an oath) or to concede their guilt or culpability. Therefore, if anybody who was accused of a crime said, '*meka Hoawo fe fie*', literally meaning 'I swear by the evening of Ho', or '*meka Dagadu fe Kwasida*', 'I swear by Dagadu's Sunday', 'he/she was making a very solemn declaration of his/her innocence'.<sup>179</sup> The chief was then obliged to investigate the allegation. In the same vein, if two people were involved in a quarrel and one of them felt his or her life was in danger, he or she could swear the oath of any stool.<sup>180</sup> Once the oath was sworn, the quarrel had to stop immediately because the swearing of oath introduced a new dimension into the dispute. The matter at stake ceased to be a mere quarrel between the two individuals, instead it assumed significant importance at the state

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<sup>178</sup> Welman, *Native States*, p. 49.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. The evening of Ho refers to the eve of Asante invasion of Ho and Dagadu's Sunday is in reference to the day Dagadu III lost his two sons in a blazing fire.

<sup>180</sup> People could swear the oath of a stool outside their town if they felt that they would not get a fair hearing in their own town or if they had any reason to believe that the oath in their town was not potent enough.

level. Both parties had to present themselves to the chief whose oath was sworn for the matter to be investigated.

A chief could also swear oath for two main reasons. First, he could use the oath of his stool as instrument of enforcing his orders which under normal circumstances could be disobeyed by his subjects. Second, a chief could swear an oath pledging his allegiance to his superior chief. This happened particularly within a traditional area where sub-chiefs in-charge of villages swore an oath of allegiance to the chief of their parent settlement (*fiadu*). In such a case, the swearing of oath was preceded with elaborate ritual performances. Normally, the subordinate chief would swear the oath of the superior chief to pledge his loyalty to the senior chief. The senior chief would reciprocate the gesture by swearing his own oath to affirm his commitment to protecting the subordinate chief. Chiefs could not swear oath without holding and stretching out the 'oath-sword' (*atamkayi*), the most visible symbols of authority of a chief.<sup>181</sup>

The swearing of an oath of allegiance by Delume, the paramount chief of Ve, to Dagadu IV, the paramount chief of Kpando, to mark the entry of Ve into the amalgamated Akpini state, vividly illustrates the seriousness attached to a chief's oath and its relevance in cementing the formation of large states in Ewedome. On 24 July 1946, after Delume had failed to form his own amalgamated state, he finally decided to join Akpini state.<sup>182</sup> Before Delume swore Dagadu's oath to pledge his allegiance, a sheep was slaughtered and Delume dipped his left foot and his linguist stick into the blood of the sheep. This ritual signified the admission of Delume into Akpini state. Both chiefs then drank palm wine from the

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<sup>181</sup> The stool itself was not to be seen in public. In fact, in some localities, even chiefs were not allowed to see the stool.

<sup>182</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/338, Amalgamation of Chiefs, 13 July 1946.

same calabash as a sign of unity. Dagadu then dipped his finger into the blood of the sheep and touched the tongue of Delume with the blood.

The significance of the ritual was that it reminded Delume of the need to remain truthful to whatever he would say. It was also meant to serve as a seal of the whole transaction. Delume then held the oath sword in his hand, stretched it towards Dagadu and proceeded to swear the oath of allegiance thus: 'If Dagadu called me either by day or night and I failed to respond to his duties or I disobeyed him, then I shall be guilty of Dagadu's Sunday (*Dagadu fe Kwasida*)'.<sup>183</sup> Dagadu also got up, took the oath-sword and assured Delume of his resolve to protect Ve traditional area at all times.<sup>184</sup> Again, the chiefs who met at Vane to seal the amalgamation of Awatime state in 1931 swore Adzatekpor's oath, *Adjatekpor Wanbi*, to the effect that if they broke away from the amalgamated state, the oath should kill them.<sup>185</sup>

It is important to observe that by swearing the oath of Dagadu, Delume was in fact subordinating himself, all stools in Ve area as well as the people of Ve to Dagadu and his stool. While there was nothing in the Native Administration 1932 ordinance by which the territorial rights of a particular stool were conveyed to another stool, the swearing of oaths of allegiance and the rituals associated with it tended to subordinate one stool to the other. The swearing of oath, together with the definition of "State" as contained in the ordinance, sought to confer on the so called big chiefs greater powers of *principe principium* over 'smaller chiefs'. In the traditional sense, such greater powers could only be exercised by the 'big chiefs' if they had acquired the territories of the smaller divisions either by right of conquest or through cessation. Therefore, the explanations given by Lilley and other

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> See Togoland Report of 1931, p.12.

administrative officers that the oath of allegiance conferred no right on the paramount chiefs of amalgamated states over the lands of the stools subordinated to them was difficult for the smaller chiefs to fathom.<sup>186</sup>

By 1932, it became apparent that amalgamation was not going to be achieved easily, and that the government could not rely on the good will of the people to achieve total amalgamation. For instance, 15,000 and 13,000 were the total population of Asogli and Awatime states respectively, while the population of Akpini was 28,000. Akpini had nineteen divisions, Awatime ten and Asogli thirteen.<sup>187</sup> Yet, there were still fourteen divisions in Ewedome which refused to join any of those states. The total population of unamalgamated states at the time was 32,534.<sup>188</sup> Meanwhile, the delay in the full implementation of the policy slowed down the development of the territory. In 1937, for example, the colonial government was accused of doing little to improve amenities in the Togoland mandated area.<sup>189</sup> It was reported that in 1937, it took almost as long to get a reply from Ho to a letter posted at Accra as it did to one despatched to London.<sup>190</sup> Kpando had no telegraphic or telephonic communications with the outside world. Mails were sent from Accra to Ho and Kpando through Adidome by runners on foot.<sup>191</sup> There was no hospital in the area.<sup>192</sup> The plan was that, when established, the NAs could be empowered to begin the process of addressing the developmental needs of the territory.

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> It is important to note here that the process of amalgamation started long before amalgamation was given legislative form in the NAO of 1932. See RAG/H, RAO 1/1932, Report on the Native Administration Ordinance of British Sphere of Togoland, 1932.

<sup>188</sup> Figure computed from the 1931 census.

<sup>189</sup> *The West African Review*, No. 120 September, 1937, p. 39.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> NA CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Togoland 1920-21, p. 33.

<sup>192</sup> *The West African Review*, No. 120 September 1937, p. 39

## Government's Reaction to Protests

Initially, the government decided to go ahead with the implementation of the policy despite the protests with the view that its implementation would alleviate the disquiet among the chiefs and those who had already agreed to amalgamate. Meanwhile, the policy received support from the members of the Permanent Mandate Commission.<sup>193</sup> As protests against the policy grew, government was forced to re-examine the ordinance and the principles under which amalgamation was to proceed. This led to the postponement of the formal application of the ordinance from July to October 1932.<sup>194</sup> There seems to be a clear case of misunderstanding of some terms in the ordinance itself due largely to language limitations. Linguistic difficulties had always been a problem for colonial officials in the region. Often, one comes across many shades and gradations of the English language which had no exact counterpart in the local language. We already noted the people's conception of 'state' as against its interpretation in the ordinance. This created some confusion in the minds of the inhabitants.<sup>195</sup>

It was also realised that mere persuasion was not enough to achieve total amalgamation in Ewedome.<sup>196</sup> This was not due to any weakness in the persuasive power of the administrative officers. Rather, it was partly as a result of the extraordinarily fierce local patriotism. It was clear that the *dukowo* were resolutely protective of their age-old loyalties and were not in any mood to brook any interference in their domestic affairs. In Britain, the concept of local government and its workings emanated from centuries of political,

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<sup>193</sup> See NA CO 96/705/8, Notes on the Petition from Natural Rulers Society. 25 September 1932.

<sup>194</sup> NA CO 96/705/8, From the Acting Governor of the Gold Coast to Secretary of State of the Colonies, 8 November, 1932.

<sup>195</sup> RAG/H RAO 755/155/124, Dispatch from the DC, Kpando to the Commissioner of the Eastern Province, Koforidua, 1932.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

constitutional and legal developments. Yet, the nature of the political change expected from the people was so dramatic, considering the huge contrast between the levels of advancement of the territory to that of Britain at the time. It was therefore erroneous to proceed from the assumption that the inhabitants could be persuaded to accept the policy simply because the officers considered the policy to be good for them.

Some degree of force or coercion was necessary if the policy was to be effective. As a first step, an amendment to the ordinance was effected in 1936. One of the key issues in the amendment was the enforcement of amalgamation.<sup>197</sup> It was aimed at forcing 'stubborn' divisions to amalgamate. It gave a further boost to the power of the chiefs by making it possible for anybody who refused a directive to appear before a NA, Provincial Commissioner or Administration Officer to be arrested.<sup>198</sup> In addition, unanimity would no longer be required before giving legal recognition to amalgamated states. Once there was a definite majority in support of amalgamation in a division, the process could be allowed to go on. This particular amendment proved quite successful as it lessened the tension on divisions in which the people were divided on the issue of which particular state they should join. We observed that some divisions were unable to amalgamate because a minority was apparently opposed to the policy.<sup>199</sup> Consequently, Aveme was allowed to join Akpini state in 1941 even though only two-thirds of the population were clearly in favour.<sup>200</sup> Also because of this new directive, only ten divisions remained unamalgamated by 1941. A further step was taken to abandon the principle of voluntary amalgamation. In

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<sup>197</sup> NA CO 96/728/9, Togoland Native Administration Legislation, Amendment to 1932 Ordinance, 22 August 1936; RAG/H, Supplement to the Gold Coast Government Gazette, 10 July 1936. (Not Filed).

<sup>198</sup> NA CO 96/728/9, Togoland Native Administration Legislation. Amendment to 1932 Ordinance, 22 August 1936.

<sup>199</sup> RAG/H RAO 221/3, Amalgamation of Chiefs-British Togoland, 1936.

<sup>200</sup> RAG/H RAO 33/45, Akpini State Affairs, 1933.

1936, divisions which refused to amalgamate were debarred from exercising jurisdiction over their own subjects by means of a tribunal until those divisions became members of a state. Cases that arose in those divisions had to go directly to the District Commissioner.<sup>201</sup> Indeed, Taviefe finally succumbed to amalgamating with Asogli state in 1941 as a result of this directive.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, Adaklu, which refused to amalgamate with Ho, was forced to join Asorgli state in 1945 for want of a tribunal.<sup>203</sup>

Apart from the grant of tribunals, colonial officers also resorted to the use of resource allocation as an instrument to coerce 'recalcitrant' divisions to amalgamate. For instance, divisions such as Anfoega, Gbi, Have, Kpedze, Tsrukpe and Ve which refused to amalgamate were denied the supply of gun-powder and social amenities such as water, clinics and grants for education.<sup>204</sup> Another case in point was the decision taken by Lilley in 1936 to stop the construction of a bridge between Have and Vakpo.<sup>205</sup> This was in reaction to Have's refusal to amalgamate with Kpando. The bridge was to be built across River Dayi. But when the people of Have insisted that they would not join Kpando to form Akpini state because of a long standing dispute between the two states, Lilley called for works on the bridge to stop. All materials were removed from the site, forcing the people to amalgamate with Kpando.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/76, Eastern Province Political Conference, Appendix C, June 1936.

<sup>202</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/280, No. 475/2185/32, Agotime Native Affairs, Amalgamation of Taviefe with Asogli State at Agotime Kpetoe, 8 March 1943..

<sup>203</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/74, Report on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1945.

<sup>204</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/662, Joint Welcome Address by the Independent States to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 15 October 1949.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid. PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/74, Report on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1945

<sup>206</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/74 Report on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1945.

## Formation of Atando State

In 1938, Abutia, Adaklu, Anfoega, Gbi, Goviefe, Tsrukpe and Ve together with non-Ewe states such as Likpe, Nkonya and Santrokofi formed what they called the Natural Rulers' Society (NRS). This group had its origin in 1932 when 25 divisions met to protest against the ordinance. Since then, the number dwindled in size to only ten, following the amendment of the ordinance in 1936. The NRS intensified their protest from 1936 in apparent reaction to the decision by the colonial officers to close down tribunals of divisions which had not amalgamated. Another of their objectives was to protest against Lilley's return to the district in 1938.<sup>207</sup>

The group was of the view that the use of the names such as 'Akpini', Asogli' and 'Awatime' for the states created the impression, erroneously though, in the minds of the new paramount chiefs that their territorial boundaries had been extended to cover the divisions which amalgamated with them. The 'smaller chiefs' feared that the so-called paramount chiefs would use their elevation to dominate the other divisions in their respective amalgamated states. A case in point was the attitude of Dagadu IV to arrogate to himself the powers of 'paramount chief proper'.<sup>208</sup> The administration was therefore compelled to remind him of his true position as *primus inter pares*.<sup>209</sup> Dagadu IV had a style of rule which was a far cry from that of his predecessors. In a recent publication, he was remembered as 'quite autocratic and unapproachable'.<sup>210</sup> In Awatime State, the Ewe divisions had never been happy with the name 'Awatime'. It was no surprise therefore that

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<sup>207</sup> Captain Lilley had gone to England for treatment and was due to return to the district in 1938. RAG/H RAO 048/ 20, Native Affairs, Ho District, 25 September 1938.

<sup>208</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/463 Akpini State Native Affairs, 1938.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Funeral Brochure for Dagadu VII, April 2007, p. 48.

in 1951 they fought to have the name changed.<sup>211</sup> To the NRS, there seemed to be much that was obscure in the procedure being adopted by the administrative officers.

Consequently, in 1940, the NRS decided to petition the Acting CEP by stating that more progress could have been made if they had been allowed to form federations instead of amalgamated states.<sup>212</sup> It was felt that federation, where the presidency would be rotational, would uphold the sacred right of self-government which would leave every division perfectly free to regulate its internal affairs, but subject to the constitution of the federation. Coincidentally, the petition was sent at the time when there was serious opposition to the workings of Buem NA to the north of Ewedome. Buem was a conglomeration of different ethnic groups. The original inhabitants called Lefanas formed one-third of the population and they provided the paramount chief and divisional chiefs. Within this geographical area were some Akan migrants, who were not represented on the state councils because they had no divisional chiefs. These Akan groups were demanding their own separate division within the Buem state.<sup>213</sup>

In 1941, the Commissioner, fearing that the disturbances in Buem could spill over into Ewedome in view of the petition sent by the NRS, called for a review of the policy of amalgamation. He advocated the breaking up of amalgamated states altogether in the whole of the southern section of British Togoland. To the other officials, particularly those working in the territory, it was not in the interest of the colonial government to show any sign of weakness in administering the mandated territory. Moreover, contrary to the situation in Buem, all divisions in Ewedome which agreed to amalgamate were duly

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<sup>211</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/549, Petition to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 21 February 1953.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid..

<sup>213</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of Togoland. 1946; PRAAD/AADM 39/1/416, Development by Native Authorities, Buem Disturbances, 1944.

represented in their respective NAs. The officers therefore insisted the grant of the proposal of NRS would negate the government's intention of fostering state consciousness among the Ewe states. Worst yet, the proposal by the NRS for a confederacy instead of a centralised state would mean that those divisions which would form the confederacy would have a constitution fundamentally different from other states in the whole of the Southern Section of British Togoland.

Two problems confronted the officers. First, there was the problem of how to protect the newly formed states from breaking up and secondly, how to deal with the unamalgamated divisions. There were two options that the officers could explore. First, they could wait with the hope that the unamalgamated divisions would change their mind and join one of the states. In this way, the officers would not be forced into making any changes to the policy towards any particular group of divisions within the same territory. Besides, if the three existing states proved to be viable NAs which delivered material benefits to the people, they might have an impact on the attitude of the diehards. The obvious disadvantage of this option was the likelihood that the officers could wait in vain.

Second, the officers could allow the unamalgamated divisions to form a state of their own, in default of a better solution. This second option was in itself a difficult one in view of the differences that existed among the members of the NRS. The group was heterogeneous, with different laws, customs and languages which made any attempt at affecting a sympathetic union between them a difficult proposition. It did not look likely that the non-Ewe states in the NRS such as Nkonya, Santrokofi and Likpe would want to cooperate with Ve, Gbi, and Anfoega. Even among the Ewe states, Ve wanted to be seat of such a state, something Gbi and Anfoega opposed. Anfoega was situated very close to

Kpando but it refused to join Akpini state because Dagadu II had orchestrated the German attack on Anfoega in 1901.<sup>214</sup> Anfoega also felt that by virtue of its contribution to the British war effort in 1914, its head chief should be considered as a paramount chief.

Nkonya, a Guan state, had no affinity with the Ewes. They believed they had occupied their present homes long before most of the Ewe inhabitants of the mandated area arrived. According to Lilley, the Nkonyas were part of the Effutu ethnic group originally from Oguaa in the present-day Central Region of Ghana. Lilley refers to them as 'the proper aboriginal tribe of the Gold Coast'.<sup>215</sup> Based on this, Nkonya always considered itself as superior to the Ewe states and never showed any inclination towards forming a NA with any Ewe state.<sup>216</sup> Similarly, Santrokofi used to serve the paramount chief of Buem until the Germans came and put a stop to Buem's control over Santrokofi.<sup>217</sup> Therefore, the general feeling among the people of Santrokofi was to join Buem.<sup>218</sup> In a memorandum drawn up in Likpe in 1951, it was claimed that the people of Likpe were originally Akans.<sup>219</sup> They, like the people of Awatime, abhorred circumcision and they had a language peculiar to themselves. They therefore resisted any attempt to force them to join any Ewe state because of the obvious linguistic and cultural differences.<sup>220</sup> Eventually, the officers decided initially to go by the first option and concentrate their energies on improving the workings of the already established NAs. The independent divisions were left on their own. Their chiefs had certain duties as NAs but they did not have legal means of exerting their

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<sup>214</sup> For details on the German attack on Anfoega, see Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 212.

<sup>215</sup> Lilley, 'Short History of the Nkonya Division', p. 108.

<sup>216</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of Togoland, 1946.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid, Appendix B.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum by the Likpe Grand Council to the President, Southern Togoland Council, 27 March 1951.

<sup>220</sup> RAG/H, RAO 011, Petitions-General, Petition by the Grand Council of Likpe. Likpe Native Affairs. 1 August 1951.

authority because their tribunals were closed down. The situation remained unchanged until 1949, when the government agreed to allow Ve, Gbi, Likpe and Santrokofi to form Atando Native Authority. The hope was that Anfoega would also change its mind and join the new state.<sup>221</sup>

Atando NA was a confederacy in its structure and operations. The members rejected the term 'paramount chief.' No division was made to swear allegiance to any other division. Instead, they elected a president among themselves to preside over the state. The president had no suzerain power but that of *primus inter pares*.<sup>222</sup> In this case, there was no subordination of one division to another. The president would hold office for three years, after which he would be eligible for re-election. Federal meetings were to be held quarterly, but the president could call an emergency meeting at any place within the federal divisions. The formation of Atando in 1949 finally brought the process of amalgamation in Ewedome to a close.<sup>223</sup> It must, however, be noted that total amalgamation was still not achieved because Anfoega division refused to join any of the states right up to when the NAs were abolished in 1951.<sup>224</sup>

Four main factors accounted for the colonial government's decision to recognise Atando state. First, Sir Alan Burns, who took over as governor of the Gold Coast in 1941 was dissatisfied with the policy of amalgamation. In his words 'the policy as regard Native

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<sup>221</sup> Buem Native Authority in the north of Ewedome was also created under the NAO of 1932, making four NAs in the southern section of British Togoland.

<sup>222</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/545, Petition from Independent Divisions to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 19 October, 1945.

<sup>223</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/93, Federation of Divisions in Togoland under UN Trusteeship. Formation of Atando Native Authority, 1947.

<sup>224</sup> For the intransigence of Anfoega, she was denied government grants throughout the period of the existence of the NAs. See Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 131.

Authorities had gone astray.<sup>225</sup> He noted similarity between institutions among the Ewe and those of Iboland in Nigeria and came to the conclusion that the administrative officers were making the same mistake in Togoland that they had made in Iboland by trying to impose upon the territory a native administration which was not native to the area. Burns therefore became sympathetic towards the NRS. Second, from 1945, the government decided formally to integrate the whole of southern section of Togoland into the Gold Coast. This meant that some paramount chiefs would be elected to sit on the Joint Provincial Council with other paramount chiefs of the Gold Coast. This was not going to be possible if some states continued to remain in splendid isolation. Third, it was observed that the combined population of Gbi, Likpe, Santrokofi, Ve at the 1931 census was 17,521. This figure was considerably more than the number considered sufficient for Awatime state to be recognised. There was therefore no need to prevent the above states from forming a NA. Fourth, the idea of setting up a committee following the 1948 disturbances in the Gold Coast to investigate into constitutional matters and to make recommendations for implementation made the pursuit of amalgamation in Ewedome a less important issue in the political scheme of things.

The British officials were sincere in their bid to follow pre-colonial political organization and affiliations in creating NA areas in Ewedome. Their research into the history and ethnography of the region did lead to a reasonable understanding of local realities. Nevertheless, as things turned out, it became obvious that it was one thing for the chiefdoms to develop loyalties of their own and quite another to force them to form states with binding legislations they did not have a hand in formulating. Lentz notes that though

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<sup>225</sup> PRO CO 96/780/4, Native Administration, Allan Burns to G.H. Creasy, 9 December 1944. See also Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 128.

the officials were sincere in their attempt to formulate their policies on their knowledge of the societies, 'a gap existed between ethnographic knowledge and colonial practice'.<sup>226</sup> From the protests against the policy, one is inclined to state that if the seat of the paramount chief had been rotational, the policy would have met less resistance. The point was that tribunals were eagerly sought after by every chief because they enhanced the status and power of chiefs and their elders, not to mention the financial inducement that the tribunals offered. As the narrative has shown, colonial rule and amalgamation was responsible for the shifting notion of Ewe identity in the 1920s and the 1930s. Amalgamation policy caused many communities to start probing into their local histories and figuring out how they could evaluate previous relationships/alliances against this new pressure to join in larger amalgamated units.<sup>227</sup> This goes to support Iliffe's analysis of how colonialism made ethnic identities and loyalties in Africa not only important but also more complex.<sup>228</sup>

## Conclusion

The multitude of small independent units in Ewedome generated tension and protests when the amalgamation policy of the British colonial government came into operation in 1932. It is clear that the first step to be taken was 'to shift the political trajectory towards strong, centralised chieftaincies'.<sup>229</sup> In the process, British administrative officers became deeply involved in local politics, more so in chieftaincy issues. Such involvement pitched the British officials and some chiefs on a collision course right from the 1920s.

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<sup>226</sup> Lentz, *Ethnicity and the Making of History*, p. 74.

<sup>227</sup> A typical example of how the people of Likpe used their cultural and historical peculiarities to fight against their inclusion in Atando is demonstrated in Paul Nugent, 'A Few Lesser People': the Central Togo Minorities and their Ewe Neighbours', in Carola Lentz and Paul Nugent (eds.), *Ethnicity in Ghana: The Limits of Invention* (London, 2000), p. 169-173.

<sup>228</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 318.

<sup>229</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 244.

The policy encountered difficulties because the concept of 'indirect rule was premised on the existence of culturally homogeneous' ethnic group with a central authority.<sup>230</sup> The cultural heterogeneity of Ewedome, even among the Ewes, accounted for the conflicting interest and tensions that characterised the policy. The curtailment of the political sovereignty of divisions then became a feature of amalgamation in Ewedome. The process in many cases divided divisions along anti-amalgamation and pro-amalgamation lines. Evidently, conflicts at the chief-subject level undermined the otherwise good chief-subject relations in many divisions leading to high incidence of destoolments. The process undermined the position and authority of many divisional and sub-divisional chiefs.

Be that as it may, the policy cannot be dismissed as a failure. Such outright condemnation of amalgamation/indirect rule policy only serves to evoke the writings of the first-generation African historians whose nationalist agenda was to condemn every British colonial policy in their bid to project the African personality. In recent times, we see a return to this kind of approach to colonial historiography on Africa as demonstrated by Mamdani's theory of 'decentralised despotism'.<sup>231</sup> To this day in Ewedome, as in the whole of the Volta Region, amalgamation endures as a viable policy option. Several divisions amalgamate to operate one divisional council. Despite the problems evinced by the implementation of the policy, the relative success laid the structure for socio-economic development that were to follow in the territory, and signified the nature of British colonial government's contribution to the development of the area. The delay in completing the

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<sup>230</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 16.

<sup>231</sup> Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*.

process was inevitable, for the British administrative officials 'had to lead and the people to follow, often reluctantly'.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of British Togoland, 1946 (Not Filed).

## CHAPTER THREE

### NATIVE AUTHORITY IN PRACTICE, 1939-1950

Having achieved some level of success in creating Native Authority structures in Ewedome, the British administrative officers had to turn the new states into working political entities. This was a formidable task, considering the complexities of the traditional political set-up and the depth of divisional feelings and local patriotism among the people of Ewedome. Quite clearly, the task of the officers since the creation of the NAs was how to persuade the local inhabitants to transfer some of their traditional loyalty to the new states and institutions. The task was made more complex for the reason that the NAs in Ewedome were just about taking shape when the very foundation of colonialism was being shaken. The star of rule through chiefs was on the wane throughout colonial Africa following the Second World War.

The focus of this chapter is to examine the working of the NA system, as its success or otherwise can best be assessed by the way it operated in practice and what it actually achieved. The chapter begins by examining the structure and power relations within the NA system as it operated in the territory and explores its role in spearheading the execution of self-help projects. It then goes on to evaluate the effects of the Second World War on the work of the NAs. The chapter concludes by appraising the changes that the trusteeship system and post-war developments introduced into the NA system in Ewedome.

## **The Structure of Native Authorities**

The three newly created Native Authorities of Asogli, Akpini and Awatime comprised state and divisional councils as well as tribunals. The highest authority in each state was the paramount chief. Paramount chiefs of the newly created states were technically appointed by the governor, but in actual practice the composition of NA institutions was determined by the people themselves. The paramount chief presided over the state council which was made up of all divisional chiefs within the state. The divisional chief also presided over a council which was made up of all sub-chiefs within the division. A quorum in the divisional and state councils was obtained by more than half the number of members. By 1939, the whole NA structure had taken shape, with the exception of the independent states which would later form the irregular Atando State.

All political disputes inside the division went first of all to the divisional council. The state council was given the powers of an appeal court from divisional councils and it had the powers to enquire into all constitutional disputes which could not be settled within the division.<sup>1</sup> In addition, it also acted as an appeal tribunal from divisional tribunals and as a court of first instance in political matters and land disputes between two divisions.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the state council could act either in the first instance when the divisional council could not function or on appeal from divisional council.<sup>3</sup> A serious snag that arose, however, was how to educate the local inhabitants and members of NAs to come to grips with the blend of customary executive and judicial powers of chiefs, on the one hand, and the new powers of the NAs as enshrined in the 1932 ordinance, on the other.

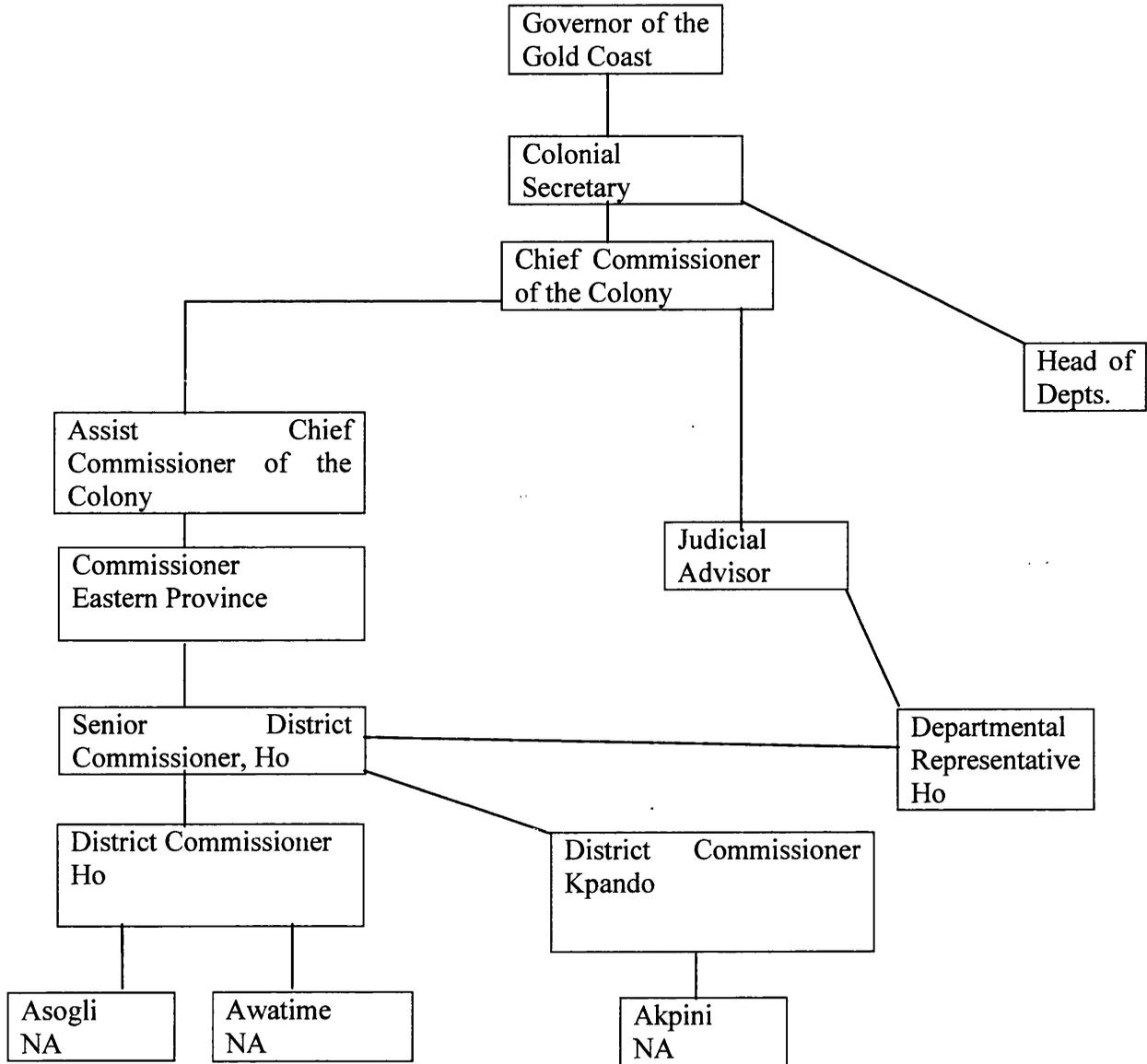
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<sup>1</sup> Togoland Report of 1931, p. 14-15.

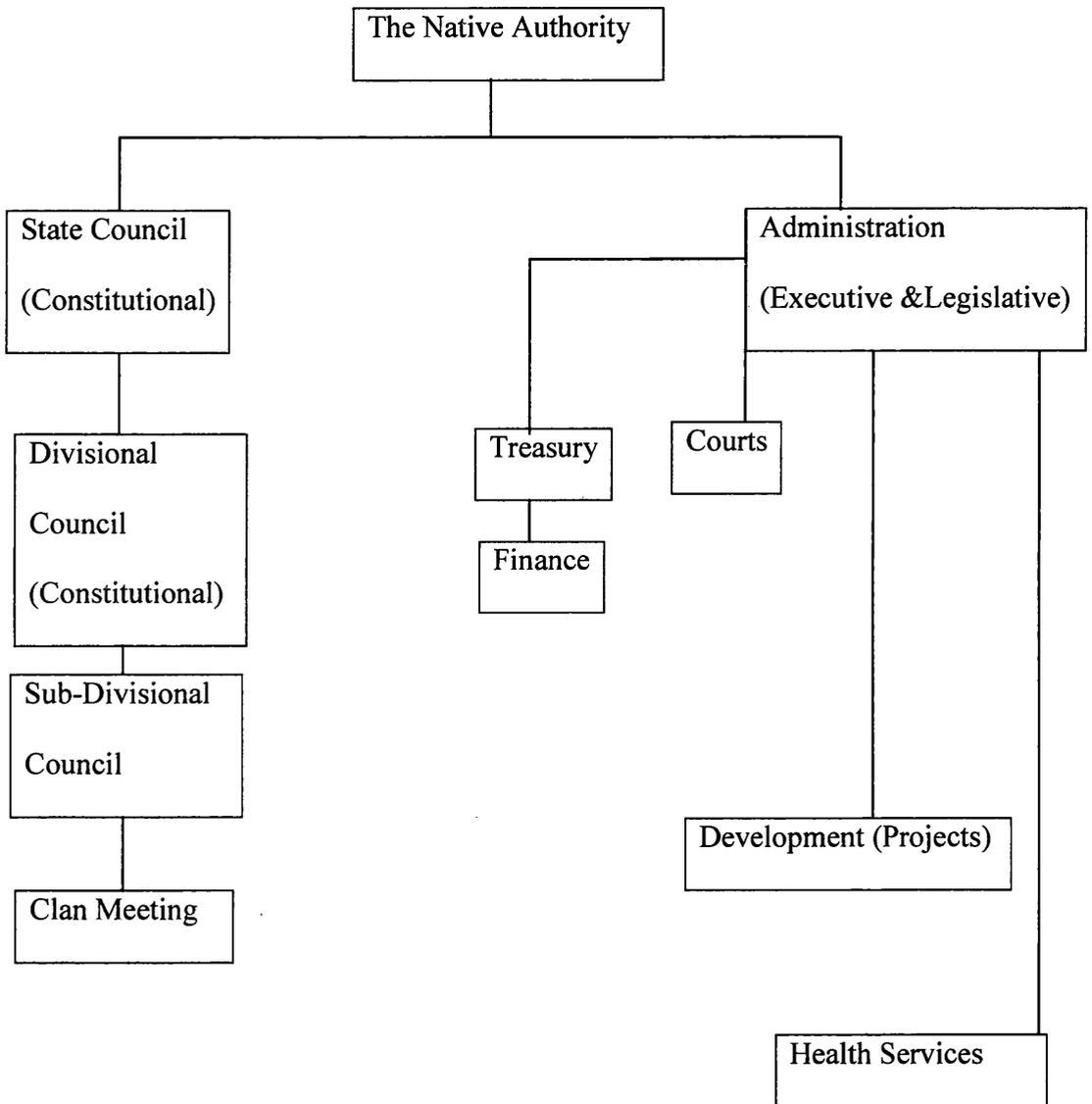
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/277, Notes on the Ordinance by Captain Lilley, 1932.

### Colonial Administrative Structure



## Native Authority Structure and Functions in Ewedome



The foundation of the whole NA structure was the state council, that is to say all the divisional chiefs sitting together, but efforts were made to preserve the separate entities of

each division. This certainly explains why for creating and establishing divisional councils and tribunals which empowered divisional chiefs to deal with all matters of a political and civil nature arising within their divisions. In addition, divisional tribunals were created to take cognisance of the social fabric of the communities at every level of the judicial system. The jurisdiction of the tribunals thus covered almost every facet of customary law, especially those concerned with social custom.<sup>4</sup> Customary law is difficult to define, for it varies in nature and interpretation from society to society. From the British Official point of view, customary law meant:

a rule or a body of rules regulating rights and imposing correlative duties, being a rule or body of rules which obtains and is fortified by established local usage and which is appropriate and applicable to any particular cause, action, suit, matter, dispute, issue or question, and includes also customary law recorded or modified by a traditional authority under and in accordance with the provisions of any ordinance for the time being in force relating to such traditional authority.<sup>5</sup>

Even though the officials were clear as to what constituted customary law, its interpretation was devolved to the tribunals.<sup>6</sup>

In Ewedome, the composition of the tribunal reflected the traditional notion of a court, for although the governor had discretion in deciding on the composition of the tribunals, the members were always recommended by local leaders.<sup>7</sup> The tribunals were normally

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<sup>4</sup> NA CO 96/790/2, Togoland Report of 1947, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> NA CO 96/822/2, Comments by Colonial Office on Coussey Report, 1949; NA CO 96/824/4, Constitutional Matters Affecting Chiefs, 1951.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> RAG/H RAO C.144/2, DC to Governor, June 1941.

composed of the chief, the linguist and four or five elders or councillors.<sup>8</sup> In other words, membership of the tribunals was dependent upon constitutional position within the state. Of the councillors, some were elected by virtue of their occupancy of a certain office or position in the state.<sup>9</sup> In addition to those who usually formed the majority, the people could choose any member of the community who was specifically distinguished by his wisdom, his influential position or his services to the *duko*, to be a councillor.<sup>10</sup>

Traditionally, the *tsami* (linguist from the Akan Okyeame) of any *duko* was selected by the king-makers, much the same way that a chief was selected. Linguists expressed the views of the chiefs; therefore they were expected to be tactful and eloquent.<sup>11</sup> The list of those chosen were sent to the Assistant Commissioner. He in turn made his recommendations to the Governor, who formally constituted the tribunals.<sup>12</sup> The rationale behind this arrangement was to ensure that the composition of the court was not left entirely to the discretion of the chiefs. Otherwise, there was the possibility of the chiefs packing the courts with people they considered to be of the same mind set as they the chiefs. Normally, the number of panel members of the tribunals was ten.<sup>13</sup>

### **Native Authorities as Agents of Development**

One important area where NAs functioned prominently as agents of development was in the realm of the administration of justice. Administration of justice was inextricably linked to development because the numerous disputes between the chiefdoms in the 1920s were

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<sup>8</sup> British Togoland Report of 1927.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Togbe Kwadzo Dei XI, paramount chief of Peki, 3 July 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Togbe Kwadzo Dei XI, 3 July 2007.

<sup>12</sup> NA CO 96/746/7, Report to the PMC, Thirty-Fifth Session, Geneva, 24-25 October 1938.

<sup>13</sup> NA CO 96/790/2, Togoland Report of 1947, p. 27.

detrimental to development. Therefore, the philosophy behind the creation of native tribunals was to establish 'institutionalised and authoritative procedures for settling disputes'.<sup>14</sup> Without native tribunals, the district courts presided over by the DCs would have been overwhelmed by the numerous litigations emanating from various parts of the territory. In 1936, there were 1,978 cases tried in the native tribunals in Southern Togoland.<sup>15</sup> It was found that recourse to colonial district courts for the settlement of every petty case and the solvent action of western ideas on native institutions generally could weaken the vigour of the traditional system and lower the authority of the chiefs.<sup>16</sup> It was in this regard that native tribunals became very important to British officials and the right to hold tribunals was jealously guarded by the chiefs. The first batch of revenue that came into the various treasuries in Ewedome was from fines and fees from the tribunals. From 1946 to 1957, native tribunals in the southern section of British Togoland heard 983 civil cases and 1,213 criminal cases giving a total of 2,196 cases. The NAs derived revenue to the tune of £3,183 and expenditure amounted to £1,971.<sup>17</sup>

In 1946, there were a total of 58 tribunals and 12 registrars in Ewedome.<sup>18</sup> Most of these registrars were young Standard Seven graduates from the Ewe territory of the Gold Coast Colony. The Technical Department of the Gold Coast assisted the NAs in training their prospective candidates for their administration. Normally, the basic qualification for

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<sup>14</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 16.

<sup>15</sup> Figure compiled from Togoland Report of 1936, p. 34-35.

<sup>16</sup> It was in recognition of the traditional judicial system that the Gold Coast Native Jurisdiction Ordinance of 1883 was enacted and it subsequently became a model for the development of native courts in Asante, Ewedome and so on. See PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts in the Gold Coast, 1951.

<sup>17</sup> Expenditure was in respect of salaries of registrars and allowances to tribunal members as well as other administrative costs.

<sup>18</sup> The table does not include independent states, some of which later formed Atando state. Figures compiled from RAG/H RAO C 214, DC, Ho, to the CEP, Koforidua, 2 May 1946. For the population figures, see Togoland Report of 1936, p. 5.

training was the Primary School Leaving Certificate, but a further period of training was given in the case of entrants to the teaching, medical, health, agricultural, veterinary, and forestry branches of the NAs.<sup>19</sup>

#### Tribunals in Ewedome in 1946

State	Population	No. of Tribunals	No. of Registrars
Akpini	28,238	22	5
Asogli	20,666	26	4
Awatime	13,285	10	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>62,187</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>12</b>

Undoubtedly, the number of tribunals appears excessive as far as the mere administration of justice and the population served were concerned. In the Gold Coast Colony, when it was realised that some states were too small to operate a tribunal, a number of them were combined with their neighbours to form federal native courts.<sup>20</sup> Similar arrangements were made in the so called 'stateless' areas in the Northern Territories, while in Asante there were 'area courts'.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the general principles that guided the establishment of courts in other areas under British control were that an area should have a minimum population of 10,000 and a minimum of 200 cases heard annually to warrant the establishment of a tribunal.<sup>22</sup> In Ewedome, historical and political factors did not make for the application of those principles. It will be recalled that when the policy of amalgamation

<sup>19</sup> Togoland Report, 1950, p. 30.

<sup>20</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts in the Gold Coast, 1951, p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

was instituted each divisional chief who agreed to amalgamate with others into one state was promised a tribunal, irrespective of the size or population of his division. In reality, many of the separately constituted tribunals were little more than local panels. Yet, any attempt to constitute fewer courts could be construed as a theoretical breach of the promise at the time of creating the NAs.

Nevertheless, while the administrative officers went as far as possible to retain the theoretical judicial independence of the divisions, they also tried to reduce costs. Although each division had a tribunal, it did not mean that each tribunal maintained a full separate staff of a registrar, bailiff and so on. A registrar travelled on a circuit devised so that he reached each tribunal roughly once a week.<sup>23</sup> Parties wishing to institute proceedings would await the registrar's arrival or would apply to the president of the tribunal who in turn notified the registrar.<sup>24</sup> Under the treasury system in vogue in the territory, cash receipts were kept at the tribunal headquarters and were taken at the end of each month with the cash book to the central state treasury by an 'elder' of the tribunal.<sup>25</sup> The state registrars were paid from state funds, for the state retained one-third of revenues received from the divisions.<sup>26</sup> It was the responsibility of the NAs to provide buildings to house the tribunals and pay members' allowances.

The district magistrate, who was stationed across the Volta at Akuse in the Gold Coast Colony, visited Ho and Kpando each fortnight and heard all criminal cases and inquests as well as all appeals from tribunals.<sup>27</sup> In practice then, the circuit system in Ewedome meant

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<sup>23</sup> RAG/H RAO C.214, DC, Ho to CEP, Koforidua, 2 May 1946.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Some of the registrars were stationed at the district headquarters while a few lived within the Native Authority area.

<sup>25</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1544, Native Administration Policy, Native Tribunal Committee of Enquiry, 12 February 1943.

<sup>26</sup> RAG/H RAO C. 214, DC to CEP, 2 May 1946.

<sup>27</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/594, Togoland Mandated Area-A Report to the League of Nations, 1945.

that the operation of tribunals was not dissimilar to the system in vogue in Asante, the Colony, and the Northern Territories, where court panels included names of people from a number of towns in the state enabling the tribunal to sit in various towns. Since there were no NA prisons in Togoland at the time, all persons convicted were sent to the government prisons at Ho and Kpando.

The decision to maintain the divisional tribunals and to operate them under a circuit system was based on the complex political landscape of Ewedome. One should not lose sight of the non-Ewe speaking divisions: Awatime, Logba, Nyangbo and Tafi, located within the territory. In dealing with the question of native tribunals, one of the first considerations should be the relation between the theory and practice of administration. The two essential elements could not be divorced. Both elements had to be weighed by anyone who was considering the problems of multiplicity of tribunals and the heterogeneity of the area under review.

The theory of administration of law through the native tribunals had to relate to the conditions in which that theory was made to work. The heterogeneous nature of Ewedome meant that divisions differed according to custom and tradition. Therefore, allowance had to be made for the varying social conditions of the different communities. Indeed, the legislative framework applied to the territory in 1932 was specifically intended to take into account social groupings and customs. The bewilderment which 'local people were said to have had when they appeared before British courts' would be the same when people from non-Ewe divisions had to appear in a court in an Ewe division where the procedure was dictated by a strange custom.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, allowing each division to have a tribunal afforded the non-Ewe divisions the opportunity to dispense justice based on their peculiar

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<sup>28</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, p. 29.

customs and traditions. Some chiefs who were local actors in the whole policy of amalgamation supported these arrangements but there were those who opposed them.<sup>29</sup> In 1942, 97 sub-divisional chiefs sent a petition to the governor in which they asked that their tribunals should be reopened.<sup>30</sup> They premised their demand on what they termed 'insufficient tribunals in Ewedome'.<sup>31</sup>

One could understand the frustration of the sub-divisional chiefs. Nevertheless, as expected, the Commissioner for the Eastern Province (CEP) observed that some of the sub-divisional chiefs were at the time captains of quarters where the population of their subjects did not go beyond 300 people. To grant the request would mean that divisions such as Dedome with a population of 1,200 would have five tribunals; Hoe with a population less than 400 people would have two tribunals; Akoviofe with a population of 120 people would also have its own tribunal. Certainly, that number of tribunals would have been unnecessary and it would have been impossible to obtain competent registrars for them. The petitioners continued to grumble until 1946 when most of them, with pressure from their own subjects, grudgingly joined the divisional tribunals.<sup>32</sup>

A second snag that arose was that in Ewedome customary law made no distinction between civil and criminal cases. The basis of punishment prior to the inception of colonial rule was the maintenance of the balance of power between family and family as well as clan and clan. Moreover, what could be considered a criminal offence under English law might not be criminal under customary law. To find a common ground between English

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<sup>29</sup> PRAAD/A ADM11/1/1544, Native Tribunal Committee of Enquiry, 12 February 1943.

<sup>30</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1048, District Quarterly Reports, Eastern Province, CEP to the Governor, 1 December 1942.

<sup>31</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1048, Petition by Sub-Divisional Chiefs to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 17 October 1942.

<sup>32</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/456, Handing over Report, 1949.

law and customary law, the officials came out with 22 petty offences whose contravention was to be tried by the tribunals.<sup>33</sup> Out of this number, eight were offences which would not be criminal by English law but were criminal by custom. This included 'putting persons into fetish', ignoring the oath, frivolously swearing the oath, sexual relations with a pregnant woman and having sex with a woman in an open place.<sup>34</sup>

One interesting case in which the incongruity of native customary law and English law was exposed was the manner of the destoolment of Adzatekpor V, the paramount chief of Awatime Native Authority in 1937. When the youngmen and some aggrieved elders of Awatime division in conjunction with the stool father decided to destool the paramount chief on the charge that he was trying to introduce a Poll Tax in disguise, they did so in accordance with custom.<sup>35</sup> In Awatime division, the destoolment of a chief involved the removal of his sandals and the rubbing of those very sandals on his head. Once this ritual was performed, the chief was deemed to have been destooled. And this was exactly what the stoolfather did. However, the government refused to recognise the destoolment.<sup>36</sup>

Consequently, a Gold Coast police force was sent to Awatime and arrested the stoolfather, his elders and some of the youth and arraigned them before the magistrate's court at Kpando. At the court, they were found guilty of assault.<sup>37</sup> The submission of the stoolfather that the rubbing of the chief's head with his sandals was a ritual of purely customary nature was rejected by the magistrate. The magistrate indicated that 'even pointing one's finger at another man meant an assault in the police law', and that he would not accept the rubbing of the paramount chief's head with his sandals as a performance of a

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<sup>33</sup> NA CO 96/790/2, Togoland Report of 1947, p.27.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> RAG/H DA/D 142/32, Protest against Direct Tax by Awatime State, 13 August 1937.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

custom. In the end, all the youth were sentenced to terms of imprisonment.<sup>38</sup> The stoolfather and his elders were asked to pacify the paramount chief with 'fifty-five pounds and a live sheep'.<sup>39</sup> The stoolfather and his collaborators were never happy with the charge of assault of which they were convicted. In their view, the conviction was an affront to their custom.

Indeed, the procedure of the native tribunals was more familiar to the people than the British court system operated by colonial officials at the district headquarters. The fact that the DC and his officials did not interfere directly in the procedure of the native tribunals made the local people feel that they were actually in control of their own affairs.<sup>40</sup> The only officials who were directly involved in the tribunal system were the registrars whose duty it was to explain the procedure and the provisions of the ordinances to the illiterate members of the tribunals.<sup>41</sup> By and large, NAs altered the relations among the chiefs of the various divisions and the people in general. The chiefs met frequently without formality; they often dined together when they attended state council meetings.<sup>42</sup> This provided an opportunity for informal discussions between divisional chiefs.

In the area of education, the NAs worked in tandem with the Ewe Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Mission in promoting education in Ewedome.<sup>43</sup> In 1950, for instance, NAs were responsible for the payment of 10 percent of teachers' salaries in infant schools.<sup>44</sup> This was later reduced to 5 percent. They also provided an equipment grant of

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<sup>38</sup> The records are silent on the length of the sentence.

<sup>39</sup> RAG/H DA/D 142/32, Protest against Direct Tax by Awatime State, 13 August 1937; PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/47, Awatime Criminal Records, 1937-1940.

<sup>40</sup> The control exercised by officials was through the various ordinances that were enacted since 1924.

<sup>41</sup> Togoland Report of 1936, p. 34.

<sup>42</sup> NA CO 96/746/7, General Statement by the Accredited Representative to the P.M.C., 24-25 October 1938.

<sup>43</sup> The processes by which an indigenous Ewe Presbyterian Church emerged in the 1920s to take the place of the Bremen Mission is discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>44</sup> RAG/H DA/D, Publicity Campaign, Your Council and Your Schools in TVT, 1952.

£10 per teacher from standard IV to VII teachers and £6 for an infant school teacher in addition to a maintenance grant of £5 to every teacher.<sup>45</sup> Some of the schools which later became mission schools were once managed by NAs. For example, in 1935, Saviofe division in Awatime state took over the management of the famous Saviofe National School from the First Century Gospel Mission until it was placed under the auspices of the Ewe Presbyterian Church in 1936.<sup>46</sup> Liati, Fodome and Wli divisions of Akpini state presented another success story of NAs' contribution to the promotion of education in Ewedome. The divisions were responsible for running of a total of eight infant and junior schools from 1937 to 1951.<sup>47</sup> There was a compulsory levy of 6/- a male and 4/- a female a year in the three divisions from which teachers of the schools were paid 30/- a month.<sup>48</sup>

The establishment of District Education Committees in 1942 gave a further boost to the work of the NAs in the promotion of basic education in Ewedome. The committee's work was mainly to 'advise on the local application of educational policy and on the choice of schools for grant-in-aid from funds administered by the NAs.'<sup>49</sup> Various colonial records show that even mission schools received some financial support from NAs.<sup>50</sup> All the NAs spent a greater portion of their revenue on education. In 1949-50, for example, Akpini state spent £1,315 on education, Asogli state spent £2,284, Atando spent £509 and Awatime spent £1,953.<sup>51</sup> The period also witnessed an increase in enrolment with a corresponding increase in the number of schools. Enrolment in schools rose from 3,529 in 1930 to 29,509

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<sup>45</sup> Infant schools and standard IV to VII schools became Primary and Middle schools respectively from 1951. See RAG/H ACC/497, Education in trans-Volta Togoland, 1954, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Togoland Report of 1936, p.52.

<sup>47</sup> RAG/H ACC 226, Petition of the People of Liati, Fodome and Wli to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 25 September, 1945.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Togoland Report of 1948,

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> NA CO 96, Summary of Togoland Report of 190, p. 18.

in 1950 while the total number of schools increased from 68 in 1930 to 312 in 1950 in southern British Togoland as a whole.<sup>52</sup> Even though most of the schools were owned by the missions, the contribution of the NAs to the increase was not in doubt.

Native Authorities had enthusiastically constructed and maintained feeder roads 'at very little cost to the government'.<sup>53</sup> Iliffe describes transportation as a major innovation of the colonial era.<sup>54</sup> Until 1936, all roads in Ewedome were constructed and maintained by the NAs with logistical support from the government. It was from 1936 that the Public Works Department eventually took over the maintenance of most of the major roads.<sup>55</sup> By 1936, Lilley had led the NAs to construct the Golokwati-Hohoe-Jasikan road, Have-Kpando-Kwamikrom road and from Dzolokpuita to Vane road.<sup>56</sup> One of the most difficult roads was constructed by Awatime NA with assistance from government in 1943. This was the three-mile stretch of road between Awatime-Vane and the hill station of Awatime-Amedzofe, a height of 2500 feet above sea level.<sup>57</sup> That road was needed to convey warping and winding machinery required by the Awatime weaving industry at Amedzofe.<sup>58</sup> In 1944, the road through Vane to Fume, a very difficult hilly area, was completed by Awatime state.<sup>59</sup> One of the major roads constructed by Asogli state was from Ho through Taviefe and Matse to Kpedze.<sup>60</sup> Awatime State assisted by completing the section from Dzolopkuita to Dzologbogame.<sup>61</sup> These roads were able to open up the remote areas

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>53</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Sir Ransford Slater on Native Revenue Proposal, 1931

<sup>54</sup> John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 219.

<sup>55</sup> RAG/H ACC/No.282, Feeder Roads in TVT, p.1.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Section of Togoland, 1943.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> NA CO 96/772/9, Togoland Report of 1941, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

bringing them closer to Ho. Transportation of foodstuffs to the market centres was greatly enhanced.

Similar roads were constructed by other NAs to the extent that by the time the NAs handed over to local councils in 1952, works on feeder roads linking every village in Ewedome to the major trunk roads had reached various stages of completion. In 1943, for example, Asogli state devoted its entire revenue to schools, roads and water supplies.<sup>62</sup> The local people provided communal labour while the officials provided equipment for the construction of the culverts. Each division worked on the roads on rotational basis so that the local people would not spend all their time constructing roads at the expense of their farms or other needs. From 1949, other agencies worked in tandem with the NAs in the construction and maintenance of roads. These agencies were Local Development Committee, Central Government, The National Food Board and The Cocoa Marketing Board.<sup>63</sup> The table below shows the amount of work done on feeder roads by NAs in Ewedome in 1951.<sup>64</sup>

In 1949 alone, Asogli and Awatime states were able to construct water supply, latrines, drains, market sheds, dispensary, slaughter houses, and lorry parks for a number of communities.<sup>65</sup> Another impressive project was the construction of the bridge on the road to Honuta in 1937.<sup>66</sup> The quality of the roads in Ewedome drew the attention of the administration officers. Captain Lilley received commendation for his supervisory role. It was recorded that all the bridges supervised by Lilley in Ewedome were made of permanent

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<sup>62</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of British Togoland, 1943.

<sup>63</sup> RAG/H ACC/No.282 Feeder Roads in Trans-Volta Togoland, 1951, p. 2-4.

<sup>64</sup> Togoland Report of 1950.

<sup>65</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 38/1/416, Development by Native Authorities, Asogli and Awatime states, 1949.

<sup>66</sup> Togoland Report of 1937, p.6.

steel and concrete.<sup>67</sup> In 1943, when the first class road between Accra and Ada became unfit for traffic, military convoys used the Bame-Honuta-Kpalime road that passed through Ewedome.<sup>68</sup>

#### NATIVE AUTHORITY PROJECTS IN EWEDOME IN 1951

PROJECT	FUNDS ALLOCATED	PERCENTAGE COMPLETED
Three span at Shia	£500	30
Lume-Ave-Shia road	£50	50
Ziavi-Anfoeta road	£150	20
Goviefe-Kpeve road	£25	90
Agotime-Kpetoe-Adidome road	£20	60
Waya-Aboadi road	£820	75
Amedzofe-Kpedze Road	£20	25
Ashanti Kpoeta-Honuta Road	£250	25
Shia-Klave-Hoe Road	£150	10
Dzolo Gbogame-Kpedze Road	£45	10

The NAs could have even done more in terms of development but for the problem of land acquisition and the delay in introducing direct taxation. In Ewedome, before the introduction of cash crops, land was communally owned by families and clans. Sale of land was rare and was only resorted to in times of dire distress or when the whole family was indebted and could not raise money through other means. In that case, the sale must be effected with the consent of all members of the family. The family would be considered as

<sup>67</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on Southern Section of Togoland, 1943.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

possessing a right of redemption when favourable opportunity arose. In effect, there was no need for private ownership of land. All this changed with the introduction of cash crops into the region coupled with increase in population. Cash crop farming such as coffee, cocoa and palm trees, banana and plantain involved long-term investment, which meant that individuals had to hold on to a plot of land for a considerable number of years. This encouraged the sale of land, which in turn introduced land litigation.<sup>69</sup> We also noted that land acquisition for public works often generated a lot of controversy.

Even more remarkable was their performance in the absence of treasuries. From 1936, NAs were prohibited from using forced communal labour in undertaking development projects. Labour on such projects was to be voluntary, or paid for.<sup>70</sup> The NAs had to find ways of increasing their revenue, in the absence of direct taxation, in order to meet the cost of development projects. As of 1936, it was only in Akpini state that direct taxation was introduced by the NA, not by the central government.<sup>71</sup> Native Authorities, as of 1941, continued to raise revenue through tribunals and ad hoc contributions to particular projects.<sup>72</sup> In spite of the obvious constraints, individual divisions, through the medium of the NAs, inspired local enthusiasm for self-help projects. They were able to lay down the basic infrastructure that served the agricultural economy. British officials acknowledged the works of the NAs when they reported to the Mandate Commission in 1936 that: 'thanks to the efforts of the NAs more money is being spent on medical and sanitary services and the improvement of water supplies and village layouts'.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> It is noted that the sale of land as a result of the growth of the cocoa industry was 'inconsistent with native custom'. See also Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 214-215. For the general situation in the Gold Coast and the quotation, see Hill, *Gold Coast Cocoa Farmer*, p. 9.

<sup>70</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on Southern Section of Togoland, 1943.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, p.21.

<sup>72</sup> Togoland Report of 1941, p 3.

<sup>73</sup> Togoland Report of 1936, p. 41.

## The Outbreak of the Second World War

Analysis of the effects of the Second World War on Africa has so far focussed on regions rather than on specific societies. In this section, we will examine the effects of the war on the NAs in Ewedome. The rather steady progress in the development of Ewedome was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. The war did not only delay development backwards, but it also provided a real test of the loyalty and support of the inhabitants to the British cause. Since the German occupation of Czechoslovakia and the subsequent signing of the Munich agreement in the early part of 1939, rumours had been rife in Kpando and Hohoe about the imminence of war between Britain and Germany.<sup>74</sup> This fear was heightened by the fall of France in June 1940 with speculation that Germany would repossess her former African colonies as part of a negotiation for a truce with France.<sup>75</sup> Patently, there was tension throughout Ewedome when news about the war was received via wireless at Kpando. Many started moving into the Gold Coast for fear of a possible German attack on Togoland.<sup>76</sup> It took the dexterity of the paramount chiefs to avert mass migration from the territory. State council meetings were organised by the paramount chiefs where resolutions were passed declaring loyalty and support to the British Crown.

The contribution of the NAs in Ewedome to the war effort was considerable. One week each May during the war years was declared 'Mosquito Bombers War Week' and everybody was required by government to contribute to the prosecution of the war as the

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<sup>74</sup> Togoland Report of 1937, p. 21.

<sup>75</sup> Nancy Ellen Lawler, *Soldiers, Spies, and Whisperers: The Gold Coast in World War II* (Athens, OH, 2002), p. 3.

<sup>76</sup> Interview conducted with G. N. K. Yayo, elder of Akome Agate, July 2006. See also Togoland Report of 1940, p. 20; Mr Adolf Adorsu, a retired civil servant, Logba Vuita, 2 January, 2000.

amount to be realised was to be used in the purchase of Mosquito Bombers planes to bomb Berlin. In 1944 over £1000 was collected.<sup>77</sup> The people were also informed that 'the British government needed palm kernel and food stuffs to fight the war.'<sup>78</sup> Recruitment into the army was carried out throughout Ewedome with over 1,600 allotments drawn every year.<sup>79</sup> The most successful recruiting campaign was held in January and February 1942 where over 800 volunteers presented themselves.<sup>80</sup> Out of this number, 420 were declared fit for military service. Further recruitments were made throughout 1942. Financial contributions from the people of Ewedome towards the prosecuting of the war were further demonstration of the loyalty of the local inhabitants to the British crown. It was recorded that during a week's contributions in aid of the Gold Coast Spitfires Fund in May 1942, the inhabitants raised £1,400 with Gbi division alone contributing £252.<sup>81</sup> This was rated as the single most outstanding contribution in proportion to the numbers and wealth of any state or division in the whole Gold Coast and the mandated territories combined.<sup>82</sup> At the same time, the overall development and efficient functioning of the NAs suffered a severe jolt as a result of the war.

In October 1939, the headquarters of the southern section of British Togoland was shifted from Kpando to Ho, with Kpando becoming a sub-district office. Due to staff shortages during the war, both Ho and Kpando were run by one administrative officer.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/99, Memorandum on the Southern Section of Togoland, 1944.

<sup>78</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/286, Amalgamation on Divisions Togoland-Asogli State, Case No. 2185/1932.

<sup>79</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/99, Memorandum, 1944.

<sup>80</sup> The recruitments were in complete contravention of the mandate which barred the mandatory powers from recruiting the inhabitants into military service. It appears the PMC itself became moribund as a result of the war.

<sup>81</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/99, Memorandum, 1944.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/594, Togoland Mandated Area- Report to the League of Nations, 1945.

The exigencies of the war imposed additional responsibility on the officers who had not had the time or the staff to devote themselves to the ordinary task of native administration.<sup>84</sup> It retarded progress somewhat with delays in getting responses to petitions and letters.<sup>85</sup> Since Lilley left the region at the end of his duty in 1938, the administration lacked continuity. Three assistant district commissioners served in turn in the whole southern section of British Togoland between 1938 and 1942, and none of them served for more than five months, hardly enough to acquire any personal knowledge of the problems of the territory.<sup>86</sup> This was in contrast to Lilley's pedigree as an expert in the history and custom of Ewedome, a quality that enabled him to see the NAO of 1932 through its gestation period from the 1920s to the 1930s.

Welch and Nugent show how general economic conditions in the territory were affected by the war.<sup>87</sup> From the fall of France in June 1940 until 1942, the French mandate across the border was enemy territory under Vichy rule, which scared many British Togoland and limited movement of people across the border. The problem was exacerbated by the French official policy to close the border with British Togoland.<sup>88</sup> Shops closed down many selling points, particularly in 1941. Consequently, the Commonwealth Youth Trust closed down all their stores in the whole of Southern British Togoland in 1942 and the Syrian traders who had offered opportunity for a profitable trade in textiles had withdrawn from the territory since the outbreak of the war.<sup>89</sup> The director of supplies of cement had placed

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<sup>84</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/545, Memorandum on Amalgamation of Divisions, 1942.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Claude Welch Emerson, *Dream of Unity: Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa* (Ithaca, 1966); Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 93. For a broader picture on the dislocation of Africa's economy caused by the war, see Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 31-35.

<sup>88</sup> Detailed analysis of how the closure of the border caused indignation among the Ewe people and led to the development of Ewe nationalism is found in Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 65-74.

<sup>89</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/76, Political Conference, Southern Section of British Togoland, 1943.

restrictions on issues of cement in 1943.<sup>90</sup> In effect, goods such as cement, iron sheets and kerosene became very scarce while sugar, gunpowder and cigarettes became the most fruitful commodities of speculation in the black market.<sup>91</sup> The problem of transportation also became very serious during the war. The rationing of petrol led to a reduction in the volume of motor traffic.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, the war and the resultant changes in the economy substantially retarded the material development of the territory. Nonetheless, the people were said to have tried to adjust themselves to the war-time economic conditions by recourse to the use of traditional products.<sup>93</sup> The production of traditional soap, for example, was rejuvenated to meet the shortage of imported soap.<sup>94</sup>

No doubt, the Second World War had debilitating effects but there were some positives as well. In Britain, the concept of a welfare state, which was born out of the Second World War, placed emphasis on the need for the state to lend support to less privileged communities. This idea had a profound influence on the formulation of colonial policies after the war. There emerged a paradigm shift in development policy. Hitherto, the philosophy was that the role of the state was to 'keep the ring' and to promote private enterprise.<sup>95</sup> All this changed and people began to advocate direct state involvement in the provision of social services and improvement in the general standard of living in deprived regions.<sup>96</sup> Reid shows how Britain pursued a number of interventionist policies to mitigate the economic impact of the Second World War on West African peasants.<sup>97</sup> Consequently,

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> NA CO 96/772/9, Togoland Report of 1941, p. 7.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, p. 34.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, Report on Native Administration and Political Development in British Africa, 1940-42.

<sup>96</sup> Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p.31.

<sup>97</sup> Richard Reid, *A History of Modern Africa, 1800 to the Present* (Oxford, 2009), p. 252-253.

the economic and social wellbeing of British colonies became essential components of colonial policy. In Ewedome, these new ideas could only find expression in indirect rule if the NAs were well positioned and empowered to deliver good services and provide the basis for the development of local government. It was in the light of this that new policies were introduced after the Second World War with the aim of strengthening the capacity of NAs in Ewedome.

### **The Introduction of Direct Taxation**

Until 1942, Native Authorities had considerable difficulty in executing development projects because of delay in introducing direct taxation in Ewedome in particular and southern Togoland in general. Yet, direct taxation was crucial, without which the whole policy of indirect rule was doomed to fail. It was for this reason that provision was made for the establishment of stool treasuries in section six of Ordinance 23 of 1931 in the Gold Coast.<sup>98</sup> One of the reasons advanced for establishing NAs was that the local inhabitants would be more willing to submit to a more or less direct taxation at the bidding of their chiefs rather than colonial officials. Therefore, British policy was clear from the onset that direct taxation would not be imposed by the central government but by the NAs acting in accordance with powers delegated to them by the governor, and with the government's approval. A caveat to this provision, however, was that the governor could impose a tax and arrange for its assessment and collection in the event of a NA in a particular state refusing to exercise the power conferred on it.<sup>99</sup> Despite this policy objective, the British officials

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<sup>98</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Colonial Despatch, 1931.

<sup>99</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Proposed Native Revenue Ordinance.

decided to shelve the introduction of direct taxation in the territory. Several reasons can be adduced to explain why.

An important feature of the colonial economy of Ewedome was that the entire revenue of the territory before the creation of NAs was derived from indirect taxation such as import duty, the export tax on cocoa, tax on cover cloths, drinks, gun licences, among others.<sup>100</sup> The option of raising revenue through the introduction of either an income tax or a capitation tax was not considered feasible in an area deemed to be so poor.<sup>101</sup> The desire of the officials was to continue raising revenue through indirect taxation until such a time that the economic condition of the territory was strong enough for direct taxation.

It was also observed that direct taxation had never been immediately acceptable in British West Africa, except in Northern Nigeria where the inhabitants had had a long tradition of paying taxes authorised by the Koran. In other British colonies of West Africa, introduction of direct taxation had not been smooth sailing. The poll tax of 1852 in the Gold Coast had to be abandoned nine years later, due to strong opposition to its introduction. Eight years later, it was argued in the Gold Coast press that the proposed direct taxation was an attempt to re-introduce a Poll Tax in disguise.<sup>102</sup> This was followed by the rejection of income tax in the Gold Coast in 1931.<sup>103</sup> The hut tax in Sierra Leone in the 1890s provoked a serious uprising.<sup>104</sup> The history of the Aba disturbances in the Igbo region of southeastern Nigeria in 1929 was well known. Moreover, British officials also noted that in 1914 the people of Ewedome spontaneously surrendered the large number of muskets with which the German government had armed them, because they were happy

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<sup>100</sup> NA CO 96/746/7, General Statement by the Accredited Representative to the P.M.C., 24-25 October 1938.

<sup>101</sup> League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission, Provincial Minutes, 26 October 1928.

<sup>102</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Governor of the Gold Coast to the Colonial Office, London, 16 August 1931.

<sup>103</sup> NA CO96/704/6, Income Tax Bill, Gazette No. 71/1931.

<sup>104</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Colonial Dispatch, 1931.

about getting rid of the Germans who had imposed a head tax on them.<sup>105</sup> As soon as the British took over from the Germans, they abolished the head tax and introduced indirect taxation which sat well with the inhabitants.<sup>106</sup> Therefore, some precautions had to be taken before government openly threw its support behind state treasuries.<sup>107</sup>

A far more important reason why British officials adopted a cautious approach was the difficulties which the French government was experiencing in collecting direct taxes in French mandated Togoland. There had always been on the Anglo-French boundary a fluctuating population which drifted backwards and forwards. However, the drift from the French controlled area to the British sphere became alarming from 1929 as a result of the introduction of direct taxation by the French.<sup>108</sup> To prevent people from moving into the British sphere of Togoland, the French government had sought the assistance of the British government to rigidly control movement across the border.<sup>109</sup> The British government rejected the French proposal because it observed that there was only a negligible migration from the Gold Coast and the British sphere of Togoland, while the migration into British territory was significant.<sup>110</sup> It therefore became obvious to the British officials that the French made the proposal because of the difficulties they were experiencing in collecting direct taxes.<sup>111</sup>

A further attempt by the French to increase taxes and to prevent movement into British territory led to serious disturbances in Lome in 1933 where there were rioting and looting

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Bourret, *Gold Coast*, p. 107.

<sup>107</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, Report on Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa, 1940-42, p.6.

<sup>108</sup> NA CO 96/691/10, Control of Migration between Togoland and the Gold Coast, French Government to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 26 October 1929.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. NA CO 96/691/10, Governor of the Gold Coast to Lord Passfield, 26 October 1929.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

of shops by a mob of local inhabitants.<sup>112</sup> Although nobody was reported killed, considerable damage was done to property and even the lives of the staff of the British Consulate in Lome were threatened by the rioters.<sup>113</sup> Clearly, the British officials could not be oblivious to the likelihood of such protests having resonance in Ewedome and British Togoland as a whole. In view of this, it was important to give the people of Ewedome time to adjust themselves within the framework of the new administration.

Nonetheless, direct taxation was seen to have numerous advantages. First, it could relieve the local inhabitants from communal work on such projects as schools, dispensaries, wells and road construction. Such development projects could be executed with the portion of the tax which would be retained locally. The Native Revenue Bill introduced in the Gold Coast in place of the income tax in 1931 was to enhance the capacity of the Native States established to build and maintain 'schools, hospitals, post offices, roads, drains, latrines and water supply'.<sup>114</sup> Second, direct taxation would provide chiefs with proper remuneration for their work. It was observed that it was highly desirable that chiefs should receive a regular salary instead of being dependent on court fees and other pickings, a system which, in the Gold Coast Colony, was said to have led to some perversion of justice and to gross abuse of power by certain chiefs.<sup>115</sup>

Third, direct taxation could stimulate in the NAs a sense of their responsibilities to the communities entrusted to their charge. Government grants alone without taxation tended to encourage the belief that it was the duty of government to provide the necessary funds for local development projects and thus discouraged local endeavours. NAs could only exercise

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<sup>112</sup> NA CO 96/710/6, British vice Consulate in Lome to British Consul-General, Dakar, 28 January 1933.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid; CO 96 710/6, Petition, Leaders of Deutsch Togoland to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 16 February 1933.

<sup>114</sup> NA CO96/704/6, Income Tax Bill, Gazette No. 71/1931.

<sup>115</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Colonial Despatch, Proposed Native Revenue Ordinance, 1935.

their financial responsibilities fully if the duty of raising revenue locally through direct taxation as well as of disbursing it was entrusted to them. Fourth, it would enable the NAs to carry out the functions of local government in a manner most appropriate to local needs and custom.<sup>116</sup> There was no doubt that the absence of direct taxation was holding back development.<sup>117</sup> The underlying factor in all this was the depression of the 1930s, which put severe strain on colonial governments' resources and made direct taxation a necessary policy.<sup>118</sup>

The existing sources of revenue were clearly spelt out in the 1932 ordinance. Such sources included profits derived from the cultivation of farms controlled by NAs or the stool of a paramount chief, all fees and fines payable in respect of proceedings in native tribunals, market rents, dues, slaughter-house, and hunters' fees, palm-wine tapers' fees, and fishing fees, among others.<sup>119</sup> This idea of a treasury and direct taxation was readily embraced by the paramount chiefs. In 1935, when the NA areas began to take shape, Akpini and Asogli states took advantage of section 35 of the Administration Ordinance to pass state treasury bye-laws even before the coming into force of any laws establishing and regulating treasuries by the government.<sup>120</sup>

Enthused by these developments, Lilley wrote to the CEP requesting that a form of financial assistance should be granted by government to those divisions in which state treasuries had been established.<sup>121</sup> Yet, Akpini and Asogli treasuries could not be considered to have been established on a sound enough basis to warrant official

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<sup>116</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Memorandum on the Introduction of Direct Taxation in the Gold Coast Colony and British Togoland, 1940.

<sup>117</sup> RAG/H, Togoland Report of 1940, Appendix A.

<sup>118</sup> Reid, *History of Modern Africa*, p. 254.

<sup>119</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/559, Native Administration Ordinance to Togoland, Sources of Revenue for Native Authorities, 1932.

<sup>120</sup> Togoland Report of 1940, p.13.

<sup>121</sup> RAG/H C 229/36, State (Stool) Treasury Subsidies, C.E. P., to Governor, Accra, 26 September 1936.

recognition. Presumably, Lilley wanted to be in a position to offer certain specific advantages to Asogli and Awatime states, which had taken the initiative in order to encourage the establishment of treasuries by other divisions. But the proposal was rejected by the governor on the grounds that the grant of such concessions to native treasuries in Togoland would lay government open to a demand for similar concessions to such treasuries in the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, if government was to provide grants to NAs, it would be necessary to establish very definite measures of governmental control over such treasuries. The CEP was even more emphatic when he stated that:

no form of Government subsidy should be given to any Native Treasury until such time as the Treasury is well established and has been working satisfactorily for a period of years, in other words when it has been shown that the native authority can be trusted to administer its funds for the good of State, or Division, as a whole, and the principle is understood, appreciated and supported by the local population.<sup>123</sup>

By 1938, the prospects of the NAs starting a treasury looked feasible, for they made deposits with the district treasury.<sup>124</sup> Akpini state for instance made a deposit of £32/6, while Awatime state deposited £22/6.<sup>125</sup> These deposits consisted of money that accrued from tribunal fees and fines. The most intriguing development was the establishment of a treasury in Kpando by a group known as the 'Kpando Asafo Union' in December 1938. This particular group, made up of educated elites and the sub-chiefs of Kpando, collected

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. CEP, to the DC, Kpando, October, 1936.

<sup>124</sup> NA CO 96/746/7, Statement by Accredited Representative to the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the PMC in Geneva, 25 October 1938.

<sup>125</sup> Togoland Report of 1940, p.15.

market and lorry park fees and deposited them with the district treasury.<sup>126</sup> Within ten months, the group collected a total of £259.15.<sup>127</sup> But the *Fiaga* of Kpando stopped the activities of the Asafo Union and took over the collection of the market fees.<sup>128</sup> A similar situation occurred in Ashanti. The control of the finances of NAs was first mooted in Ashanti in 1923 when it was realised how mistrust, destoolments and so forth were caused by the misapplication and maladministration of stool revenue.<sup>129</sup> Therefore, this acquisitiveness on the part of the chiefs in Ewedome put government under considerable pressure to start propaganda about direct taxation and to educate the people in the understanding of the value of a properly organised fiscal system.

Coincidentally, wartime conditions in Britain made it imperative for British officials to consider seriously the issue of direct taxation. Britain's economy was in a shambles as a result of its high indebtedness to the US and the horrible destruction visited on her industries by Germany.<sup>130</sup> Consequently, for the NAs to continue to render essential services and promote local government there was the need for the chiefs to realise their responsibility for managing the financial affairs of their states honestly and in the best interest of their people. In addition, the responsibility of all the citizens to contribute financially to the material progress of their divisions had to be institutionalised, a responsibility which could best be discharged through the payment of direct taxation. Many of the treasuries in the Gold Coast got a big chunk of their revenue from rents and royalties

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, p.17.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

<sup>129</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/73, Control of Native Administration Finance, 1940.

<sup>130</sup> Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p.36.

drawn from mines and stool lands.<sup>131</sup> The absence of any such sources of revenue in Ewedome made a form of direct taxation even more imperative.

Some officials learning from the failure of the 1852 Poll Tax experiment in the Gold Coast averred that an increase in import duties was an alternative to direct taxation.<sup>132</sup> But such a traditional course of increasing revenue could be an anathema to producers and importers and might not yield the expected revenue. For one thing, the low purchasing power of the people of Ewedome might make recourse to increasing import duties a flop. Already, in 1921, the imposition of full Gold Coast Custom Import Duties in British Togoland led to a decline in trade in the territory.<sup>133</sup> The European firms which operated in the territory at the start of the mandate had been forced to close down on account of high import and export taxes which they had to pay in addition to charges at Lome port. Goods at Ho were reported to be expensive as a result.<sup>134</sup> It is also on record that an increase in the import duty on spirits in the Gold Coast in the late 1920s led to a complete cessation of the purchase of gin and other spirits.<sup>135</sup>

An analysis of the Poll Tax experiment shows that the failure was ascribable, at least partly, to mistakes in the manner of imposing and collecting the tax. Chiefs were not directly involved in its collection, which was one shilling per man, woman and child.<sup>136</sup> Instead, the collection was entrusted to agents employed and paid by government.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, no benefit was derived from the impost; the tax produced very little revenue and

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<sup>131</sup> Togoland Report of 1937, p.7.

<sup>132</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Governor of the Gold Coast to Sir R. Slater, 31 October 1931.

<sup>133</sup> NA CO 724/2, Governor of the Gold Coast to the Duke of Devonshire, K.G., 14 November 1922.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, *Gezette* No.69 of 1932.

<sup>136</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Sir Ramsford on Native Revenue Proposal, 1931.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

had to be abolished in 1861.<sup>138</sup> The Poll Tax was expected to yield £20,000 per annum but for the nine years it was in force, only £30,286 was collected.<sup>139</sup> Even that was realised at a cost of an expedition into the Krobo areas and the naval bombardment of Christiansborg and Labadi.

Finally, when the officials decided to introduce direct taxation they were confronted with a more formidable obstacle of a technical nature. The administrative officers were divided on the issue of whether the system of controlled finances should be applied within the framework of the 1932 ordinance or whether the provisions of the Native Administration Ordinance of 1939, which was operating in the colony should be extended to the southern section of British Togoland.<sup>140</sup> After some debate, the 1932 ordinance was amended to ensure that treasuries were established in the territory on a sound basis. The amendment became part of the ordinance and referred to as 'Part 5-Native Administration Finances.'<sup>141</sup> Eventually, a nominal roll of all eligible tax payers was compiled by the end of 1944, paving the way for direct tax to be formally levied in 1945.<sup>142</sup> The ordinance was one of crucial importance and it may well be said to mark the modest beginning of 'local government' in the modern sense, thus completing the edifice of NAs in Ewedome.

The taxes were to be graduated, where and as far as circumstances would allow, according to the gross annual income of the individual. The collection of the tax by chiefs was supervised by the DC, who should examine the native treasury books, to which he

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> NA CO 96/700/14, Memorandum on the Introduction of Direct Taxation in the Gold Coast Colony, 1931.

<sup>140</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/99, Native Administration Treasuries, CEP to Secretary for Native Affairs, 4 December 1940.

<sup>141</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1057, Memorandum on Native Treasuries in British Togoland, 29 January 1941.

<sup>142</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/99, Native Administration Finance, Memorandum on the Southern Section of Togoland, 1944.

must be given access at all times, and at as frequent intervals as possible.<sup>143</sup> All revenue was divided into three parts: one for the state and two to the divisions in which it was collected. From the state share all staff such as clerks, registrars, tax collectors, and the police was paid as well as mail carriers, where the agency or the postal agent's mail carriers served more than one division.<sup>144</sup> The decentralisation of financial administration was found to be appropriate based on experiences gained from the Gold Coast. Rigorous centralised control in many states in the Gold Coast had often resulted in an unduly high proportion of the revenue being devoted to the payment of salaries of chiefs, clerks and the like.<sup>145</sup>

Each divisional council stated what exactly it wanted to spend its two-thirds on for approval.<sup>146</sup> By this method, administration costs were kept low and tax payers were assured that the bulk of their tax was spent within their area and not in the capital towns. It is important to note that part 5 of the 1932 ordinance made it clear that no taxation in any shape or form could be introduced except under a bye-law passed by the state council, and approved by the governor before it could have effect.<sup>147</sup> In addition, there had to be in every NA a finance committee to manage revenue and expenditure. The committee consisted of a chairman, treasurer and three other members appointed by the NA, provided that the appointment of the treasurer was approved by the DC. Three members of the committee were considered competent to transact business at any time. Many NAs had difficulties in handling the finances of their state in an appropriate manner. They had difficulties in

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<sup>143</sup> NA CO 96/746/7, Statement by Accredited Representative to the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the PMC in Geneva, 25 October 1938.

<sup>144</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/594, Togoland Mandated Area-Report to the League of Nations, 1945. See also Native Authority Ordinance Southern Section of British Togoland 1932, Part V-Native Administration Finance.

<sup>145</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of the Commission on Native Courts, Gold Coast, 1951, p.8.

<sup>146</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39//594, Report to the League of Nations, 1945.

<sup>147</sup> Native Administration Ordinance, southern section of Togoland 1932, Part V.

maintaining accounts and preparing estimates. It was this apparent inability of most chiefs to comprehend the very rudiments of financial administration that led to the creation of a central treasury held by the DC on behalf of the chiefs in 1932.

### **Protest Against Direct Taxation**

Protests against direct taxation started in Ewedome even before the coming into force of the Native Administration Treasuries Ordinance. It was difficult to convince the people that development of their divisions was dependent on direct taxation because the history of economic advancement in the Gold Coast showed that it was not necessarily the case.<sup>148</sup> As we have already seen, as early as June 1937, youngmen attempted to destool paramount chief Adzatekpor V of Awatime for the decision by the state council to introduce an annual levy of 2/- for development projects in the state.<sup>149</sup> The youth went round all the divisions to incite people against the tax. They contended that the annual tax was a subtle means by government to reintroduce the Poll Tax imposed by the Germans.<sup>150</sup> As a result, the DC ordered the suspension of the taxes in that state. In 1944, when direct tax was given legal backing, Awatime State Council re-introduced it. On 19 April 1944, a resolution was passed by the council for an annual state levy known as *dudzadrado gadzodzo* (town development levy) to be imposed during the financial year of 1944-45 in all towns and villages throughout the entire Awatime state.<sup>151</sup> The amount was to be spent on all divisions of the state on such projects as roads, education, sanitation, maintenance of public buildings, salary of the clerical staff in the tribunals as well as emolument of the paramount

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<sup>148</sup> NA CO 96/746/7, Statement to the PMC, 1938.

<sup>149</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/280, The Awatime State, Destoolment of Head Chief, Case No. 142/32, June, 1937.

<sup>150</sup> RAG/H DA/D 142/32, Awatime Divisional Council to C.C. Lilley, 13 August 1937.

<sup>151</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/334, Native Administration Treasury-Awatime State, Protests against Annual levy, 1944-1945.

chief. The taxes were graduated in such a way that the paramount chief was to pay 10/-; divisional chiefs were to pay 5/-; all other chiefs were to pay 2/6; all male adults within the ages of 17-60 were to pay should pay 2/- and all female adults within the ages of 17-60 were to pay 1/-. This resolution generated another wave of protest throughout the state.<sup>152</sup>

Women were vociferous this time against direct taxation. In most of the states, women invariably bore the brunt of taxation. They paid tolls on their farm produce at the market. In fact, until the introduction of direct taxation, NAs derived a substantial amount of their revenue from market tolls.<sup>153</sup> Therefore, the women felt they were being over-taxed by compelling them to pay annual tax as well. Leaders of women traders also known as 'Market Queens', were at the forefront of the campaign. In 1951, the market queen of Saviofe was arrested and fined £15 for inciting the women-folk against the payment of the annual tax.<sup>154</sup> Further attempts at prosecuting other queens weakened the united front of the women. Nevertheless, the campaign by the women accounted for the fall in the revenue of Awatime state in 1950-51 by £744 in 1951.<sup>155</sup>

Similar protests occurred in the Liati division of Akpini state. The Asafo Company in Liati protested against the annual tax collection because they claimed their head chief did not seek their consent before assenting to the scheme establishing the collection of the taxes for the state treasury.<sup>156</sup> Meanwhile, a divisional treasury had been in operation in Liati since 1938.<sup>157</sup> The only division which welcomed direct taxation and showed its

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/446, Quarterly Report, Ho Sub-District, 31 March 1951.

<sup>154</sup> As we will see in the last chapter, some of these market queens later became 'Queen Mothers'. The office of the 'queen mother' and its evolution in Ewedome is discussed in chapter six.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/302, Native Administration Treasury-Ho/Kpando District, Protest against Direct Taxation., 1945. The emergence of *asafo* companies in Ewedome is discussed in the next chapter.

<sup>157</sup> RAG/H ACC 226, Petition, People of Liati, Fodome and Ewli to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 25 September 1945.

preparedness to even pay more was Agate in the Akpini state. When the DC visited the division in 1943 to sell the idea of taxation to the inhabitants, the chief told him that taxation was not new to them. The division had, since the 1930s, ensured that all children had free primary education. The cost was borne through the payment of an annual tax which was generally approved by everybody in the division. Much to the surprise of the DC, the youth even indicated their readiness to pay 8/- annually instead of 6/- which the DC had proposed.<sup>158</sup> Agate was a tight-knit community. They derived their income mostly from the production of food crops to feed the major markets in the region.

Protests against direct taxation did not come from the indigenes of Ewedome alone. Strangers residing within the region were more ruthless in their opposition to the tax. One of the consequences of the development of the cash crop economy under colonial rule was the creation of a comparatively mobile labour force. There was the problem of how to handle the presence of such large numbers of 'strangers' from the French territory.<sup>159</sup> Awatime and Asogli states witnessed the emigration of large number of Kabres from the north of French Togo. Many of them moved there in order to earn the money to pay the taxes being demanded by the French.<sup>160</sup> They also wanted a better standard of living.<sup>161</sup> Naturally, one would expect that they could be allowed to naturalise and stay in the divisions in which they worked. But this was not always feasible, for they moved from one division to the other at will.

In 1945, Kpedze, the centre of commercial activities in the Awatime state, bore the brunt of the protests from strangers. There arose a disturbance in the division by the stranger

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<sup>158</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of Togoland, 1943.

<sup>159</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1046, Migration of People from the French Territory to the British Territory, 15 October 1945.

<sup>160</sup> NA CO 96/691/10, Governor of the Gold Coast to Lord Passfield, Despatch No. 021, 26 October 1929.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

community because of the annual levy.<sup>162</sup> In fact, the resolution adopted by the council in 1944 stated that any alien who had lived within the state for more than six months was obliged to pay the annual levy.<sup>163</sup> Subsequently, the strangers decided to move out of Kpedze division to Honuta-Aflakpe whose divisional chief was vehemently opposed to the levy. The divisional chief of Honuta-Aflakpe promised the strangers safe haven and freedom from taxation. This led to serious clashes between the people of Kpedze and the strangers.<sup>164</sup> What aggravated the already volatile situation was the de-roofing of houses by the strangers.<sup>165</sup> While the people of Kpedze were not against the strangers moving to Honuta, it was a taboo for anybody to de-roof a house on the basis that he or she was leaving the division.<sup>166</sup> Apparently, the strangers felt they were not under any obligation to pay taxes. Before the proclamation of the 1932 ordinance, an old German law debarred chiefs from dealing with cases relating to strangers in their towns.<sup>167</sup>

The idea of families raising a levy was not new among the people of Ewedome. There were instances where a family in a village occasionally raised a levy, not for any immediate specific purpose, but to supplement the funds which the head of the family held to be spent on what the family deemed necessary. They objected to the direct tax because they felt that whereas in the case of an occasional levy the purpose of the levy was known before it was imposed, in the case of the annual tax the spending of it might be wholly out of their control. Apparently, there was a wide gap that existed between the principle of acceptance of the system of a levy for a specific purpose, sanctioned by custom, and the acceptance of

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid, Disturbances in Kpedze, 5 April 1945.

<sup>163</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/334, Native Administration Treasury-Awatime State, Protests against Annual Levy, 1944-1945.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Interview with the paramount chief of Kpedze, Togbe Atsridom, 25 September 2007.

<sup>167</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/288, Amalgamation of Division, Awatime State, 1932.

a levy imposed and controlled by the state. The people of Liati, for example, cited an instance where an amount of £25 lodged in the state treasury was allegedly unaccounted for by the paramount chief of Akpini state.<sup>168</sup> When the DC, visited Liati in 1945 to impress upon them to pay 6/- per male into the state treasury they replied,

we have no confidence in the money methods of the Akpini state council, nor the paramount chief Dagadu, and firmly believe that the money raised from the 6/- taxes as suggested will be used to foster the aggrandisement of the paramount stool and the headquarters division to the injury of the petitioners and their divisions.<sup>169</sup>

The impression, whether perceived or real, was that taxes were going to be to the advantage of the divisions that housed the treasury. Therefore, other divisions feared they might not get from the treasuries as much as they put in. This called for an appropriate administrative disposition to assuage the fears of the constituent divisions.

The introduction of direct taxation meant a lot of work for the NAs. Government grants became partly dependent upon the amount that the NAs collected in direct taxation.<sup>170</sup> In this regard, a grant of 17/6 was paid to each NA for every £1 collected in direct taxation during the years 1948-1949.<sup>171</sup> The onus therefore was on NAs to improve their efficiency of tax collection in order that they could attract more government grant. Other considerations that guided the disbursement of the grant were the expenditure of the NAs on personal emoluments, including allowances paid to customary office holders, honoraria

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<sup>168</sup> RAG/H ACC 226, Petition, Liati, Fodome and Wli to the Governor, 25 September 1945.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Togoland Report, Corrections to paragraph 217, 1950.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

to court members and allowances to postal agents.<sup>172</sup> In addition, there was a grant based on the population of the state. For example, in 1949 a grant of £1/10 per hundred head of population was paid to each NA.<sup>173</sup> To ameliorate the burden on NAs with low population figures, special assistance was given to such states at the discretion of the Chief Commissioner of the Colony on the recommendation of the Senior DC. In 1950, for instance, Asogli received a special amount of £100 to enable it to carry out repair works on its water tanks.<sup>174</sup>

In Ewedome, as in other parts of the colony, NAs had the freedom to graduate the annual tax according to occupation or some other criterion that would take into account ability to pay.<sup>175</sup> From the government's point of view, the introduction of some elasticity in the tax regime was one way of minimising protest.<sup>176</sup> In the Gold Coast Colony, where the tax was varied to bear definite relation to the material conditions of the various localities and to take into account the difficulties evinced by periodic price fluctuations, protest was minimal.<sup>177</sup> In Ewedome, the NAs overlooked this dispensation. Although chiefs paid a higher rate, a flat rate was applied throughout the states.<sup>178</sup> This certainly did not go down well with many divisions which felt that they were poor therefore they should be made to pay a lower rate than their neighbours in the more endowed divisions.

From the later part of 1950, things began to stabilise due to increasing interest in the work of the NAs and a better understanding of their functions, which resulted in protests against direct taxation beginning to wane.

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, Corrections to paragraph 225.

<sup>176</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/5/42, Report on Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa, 1940-42, p.6.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

### REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE IN 1949/50

_NATIVE AUTHORITY	REVENUE	EXPENDITURE
Akpini State	£6,183	£4,740
Asogli State	£9,353	£9,492
Atando state	£5,574	£4,189
Awatime State	£5,221	£4, 997
<b>Total</b>	<b>£26,331</b>	<b>£23,418</b>

Indeed, most NAs increased their annual taxes considerably in 1950 and 1951 without much protestation. For example in 1951, Awatime increased its rate for men from 6/- to 12/-.<sup>179</sup> Some of the youth groups (*Sohewo*) in Awatime and Asorgli who most violently opposed the operations of the treasury became most anxious to see it working well.<sup>180</sup> In the 1950-51 financial year, 39 percent of revenue for the NAs was made up of direct taxation with court revenue 16 percent, fees and tolls constituted 14 percent and government grant 28 percent.<sup>181</sup> The young CPP-supporting nationalists were reconciled to the idea of having well ordered finances but maintained that they would rather see the CPP-led government assume complete control instead of the chiefs.<sup>182</sup> Once again, it appears that the increases in the rates for 1950-51 were made possible by increase in the producer price of cocoa. For

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<sup>179</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, Corrections to paragraph 225. Increase in the rate for women in Awatime for 1951 was put on hold due to protests by women. See PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/446, Quarterly Report, Ho Sub-District, 31 March 1951.

<sup>180</sup> Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of Togoland for the 1949. *Sohewo* is an Ewe term for *Asafo* companies.

<sup>181</sup> UN Trusteeship Council Visiting Mission Report, December 1950, p. 39. Figures for the table were taken from NA CO 96/816/3, Summary of the Togoland Report of 1950, p. 16.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.* We shall return to the emergence of CPP activism in Ewedome in the next chapter.

the 1950-51 crop season, the price of coca was 70/- a load, an equivalent of £131 per ton, as against 45/- a load (£85.30 per ton) the previous year. It is also reasonable to suggest that the reforms carried out in 1949 might have contributed to greater willingness of the inhabitants to pay rates than in previous years.<sup>183</sup>

### **The Trusteeship System and the 1949 Ordinance.**

Soon after the end of the war, Governor Sir Shelton Thomas visited Vane in Awatime and informed Adzatekpor V that Japan was defeated and that it would not be long before the young men of Awatime would return from India and Burma.<sup>184</sup> A far more significant development following the war was the replacement of the mandate system with the trusteeship system. When on 17 January 1946 the British Foreign Secretary said to the United Nations General Assembly that they welcome the trusteeship council which was to replace the mandate system, it marked yet another political change in the history of Ewedome and British Togoland as a whole.<sup>185</sup> The British government then declared its intention to enter into negotiation for placing Tanganyika, Cameroons and Togoland under the Trusteeship system.<sup>186</sup> These territories had been under the mandate system conferred by the erstwhile League of Nations for 25 years.<sup>187</sup>

A most striking difference between the mandate and the trusteeship systems was that in the case of the later, there was a UN Visiting Mission, which was empowered to visit the territory to see things at first hand and to listen to the concerns of the inhabitants.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, p. vi.

<sup>184</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/288, Visit of Sir Shelton Thomas to Vane, 13 September 1945.

<sup>185</sup> Trusteeship Report of 1946, p. 1.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>187</sup> Article 75 of the UN Charter which made for the establishment of a trusteeship system was signed at San Francisco on 26 June 1945.

<sup>188</sup> For further discussion of the differences between the two systems, see Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 3

Measures were taken to ensure that the international supervision of the administrative authorities was more effective than it had been under the mandate system. Other non-European countries such as the US and USSR had the authority to question the administrative authorities. The annual reports to be submitted by the administrative authorities to the UN General Assembly were based on a 'questionnaire drawn up by the Trusteeship Council in accordance with Article 88 of the UN Charter.'<sup>189</sup> But from the perspective of the colonial powers, the administrative authorities still had permission to make proper use of the resources of the trust territories for defence and economic purposes.<sup>190</sup> The implication of all this was the pressure it brought to bear on NAs and administrative officers to meet the expectations of the UN visiting missions.

As early as the 1920s, Sir Gordon Guggisberg was quoted as saying that 'the British were not to keep the African people over whom they were ruling in a state of permanent subjugation which in days gone by was represented by slavery and in days yet not so altogether past, by the economically false policy of exploitation of the country regardless of the interests of the people'.<sup>191</sup> He went on to say that they had to adopt the policy of trusteeship for the well-being and development of the country for the benefit of the inhabitants and for the general welfare of mankind.<sup>192</sup> The point being emphasised here is that the policy of trusteeship was not new to British policy makers. It was a familiar policy that had been agitating the minds of British colonial officers long before the principles of trusteeship were written into the charter of the United Nations in 1945 and before Britain formally exercised the policy of trusteeship from 1946 to 1956 in British Togoland. It was

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<sup>189</sup> Terms of the UN Trusteeship Agreement for Togoland, Article 16, October 1946.

<sup>190</sup> Report on the Trusteeship Territories in Africa Under United Kingdom Mandate, British Secretary of State to British Parliament, 23 January 1946.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*

no surprise therefore that the cardinal objectives of the trusteeship system and the functions of the trusteeship council largely reflected British ideals of 'development trust'.

The ultimate objective of the trusteeship system was self-government or independence.<sup>193</sup> One specific provision of the agreement was that the administering authorities had to constitute their respective territories into customs, fiscal or administrative union or federation with adjacent territories and to promote the political advancement of the inhabitants.<sup>194</sup> The coming into force of the trusteeship system by and large shaped the political, constitutional, and economic development of Ewedome from 1946. Thenceforth, various policies and ordinances that were passed in relation to the territory as well as innovations in the NA system were largely informed by the provisions of the trusteeship agreement and post-war developments in the Gold Coast.

From 1946, steps were taken to reappraise the working of the NAs. In practice, the tribunals still presented certain weaknesses of a technical nature such as the excessive cost of litigation, the partiality of tribunal members, and the power of the registrar, whose knowledge of the law was generally greater than that of any of the tribunal members.<sup>195</sup> As stated earlier, the executive and judicial functions of the chiefs were closely bound together. That was why varying measures of control over native tribunals were embodied in the 1932 ordinance. It was up to the officers and the registrars on the ground to enforce those controls. There is no gainsaying the fact that the effectiveness of the entire NA system was contingent largely on the degree of supervision or stimulus they received from

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<sup>193</sup> Fourth Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Petitions, 13 July 1950.

<sup>194</sup> Article 5 of the UN Terms of Trusteeship for Togoland, October, 1946.

<sup>195</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 337, Native Courts, Petition from Chiefs, 1946.

the officials on the ground.<sup>196</sup> This happened to be some of the weaknesses of the British policy of indirect rule. In Ewedome, it appears that the close co-operation between the DC and other officers with the chiefs tended to weaken the enforcement of regulations.<sup>197</sup> So extensive were the political quarrels, personal distrusts and partiality among the chiefs that some reforms were necessary to maintain the successful functioning and integrity of the tribunals.<sup>198</sup> The strength of the NAs depended largely on the prestige of the tribunals. Whenever the integrity of the tribunals was compromised, the position and authority of the whole NA system was seriously impaired.<sup>199</sup>

A more serious problem had to do with the enforcement of the orders of the chiefs. Since the establishment of the tribunals, chiefs in most cases had to resort to the use of the oath to enforce their orders. This traditional method of enforcing court orders was not always effective. In 1936, for instance, 58 applications for enforcement of tribunal judgement were sent to the DC out of which 57 were enforced.<sup>200</sup> This arrangement was not the best, for it led to the delay of justice. The question then was whether the DC should continue to enforce tribunal judgements or the tribunal should be empowered to enforce their own judgements through conventional means. Certainly, clearer arrangement had to be made for the support of the authority of the native tribunals in any action which they legally or rightly undertook. The absence of such a policy was making the administration of justice illusory and the power of the NAs weak.

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<sup>196</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, *Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa*, 1940-42, p. 22.

<sup>197</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1544. DC to CEP, June 1946; PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/559, Acting CEP to the Governor of the Gold Coast, 29 January 1946.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, p. 24.

<sup>200</sup> Section 38 of the 1932 ordinance empowered the DC to enforce tribunal judgements.

The inability to enforce NA laws, coupled with the wishes of the rising groups of educated youngmen for a wider representation on the state council and the desire to make the 'stranger communities' feel part of the system, led to the passing of the Native Authority (Southern Section of Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship) Ordinance in September 1949.<sup>201</sup> The ordinance made it possible for approximately one-third of the members of each NA to be individuals who did not hold office by tradition and for members of 'stranger communities' to be represented.<sup>202</sup> These non-chiefs were initially nominated.<sup>203</sup> Though the inclusion of educated non-chiefly elements in NA administration was part of the general reshaping of indirect rule following the Second World War, the 1949 ordinance has to be understood within the context of post-war labour militancy, riots and a surge in anti-colonial sentiment in the Gold Coast in 1948.<sup>204</sup>

Causes of the disturbances in the Gold Coast were multi-faceted. The frustration of the educated elite who were anxious to take part in politics, the failure of government to appreciate that rule through chiefs was becoming obsolete, public resentments at the increasing concentration of certain trades in the hands of foreigners, and the disappointment of ex-servicemen and others with post-war conditions, were some of the causes.<sup>205</sup> Although the 1948 riots did not spread to Ewedome, their impact on the youth in the region was profound. Native authorities were proving incapable of containing the rise of anti-colonial 'nationalism' and increasing dissatisfaction with the rule of chiefs. Therefore, the 1949 ordinance was seen as a belated attempt to democratise the NA system. Cooper sees

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<sup>201</sup> From the administrative point of view, the 1949 ordinance was largely influenced by the coming into force of the trusteeship agreement.

<sup>202</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 64, Gazette Extraordinary, Togoland under British Mandate, 4 August 1949.

<sup>203</sup> Fourth Report of the UN Trusteeship Council Ad Hoc Committee on Petitions, 13 July 1950, p.23.

<sup>204</sup> An examination of post-war rethinking of indirect rule by the British government is found in Reid, *History of Modern Africa*, p. 254.

<sup>205</sup> NA CO 96/796/5, Strikes and Disturbances in Accra, Report of Commission of Enquiry, 1948, p.1. Causes of the 1948 riots are found in Apter, *Ghana*, p. 169-172; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 70-77.

such reforms as an attempt by the officials to re-legitimise colonial rule in view of rising post-war aspirations and agitations in Africa.<sup>206</sup> In the Gold Coast, the Watson Commission set up to investigate the 1948 disturbances had already recommended major constitutional reforms.<sup>207</sup>

### **Native Authority Police Force**

In 1949, it came to light that a key to the problem of how to enforce the orders of the NAs was the introduction of NA police forces to assist in law enforcement at the local level.<sup>208</sup> A critical aspect of the 1949 ordinance was section 46 which stated that, 'there should be established in and for the area of authority of a NA a body of police'.<sup>209</sup> This was welcomed by the chiefs. All the same, there was the contrary view that investigating and prosecuting of offences against NA bye-laws should be undertaken by the Gold Coast police.<sup>210</sup> The fact is that bye-laws were of local application and required local interest and knowledge for their enforcement. The Gold Coast police were liable to constant transfer from one area to another which made it difficult for them to acquire the necessary local knowledge. Even though there was the view that chiefs could be overly empowered by providing them with a police force, it was important that an effort be made to enforce local bye-laws.

Native authority police established in 1949 performed a wide range of functions.<sup>211</sup> These included the maintenance of peace and order in the state, investigating offences

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<sup>206</sup> Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 62-65.

<sup>207</sup> For a discussion of Watson's Report, see Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 20.

<sup>208</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/450, Chief Police Commissioner to DC, Ho, 11 August 1949; PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/450, Conference of Senior Police Officers, June 1946.

<sup>209</sup> Native Authority Ordinance 1949, Section 46.

<sup>210</sup> R AG/H RAO 7/9, Native Authority Police, Petitions, 1949.

<sup>211</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/450, Native Authority Police, Responsibilities and Functions of Native Authority Police, 20 October 1952.

reported to them or detected by them and handing over to the Gold Coast police cases beyond the jurisdiction of the native courts. Furthermore, they conveyed convicted persons to the nearest prison. In addition, they undertook day and night patrols within their areas, enforced local bye-laws and price controls by acting as price inspectors as well as accompanying revenue collectors. In some cases, they actually collected fees, tolls and rates for the NAs. The NA police had the powers to search premises and arrest with or without warrant.<sup>212</sup> Other non-statutory duties included maintaining order at NA meetings and court sessions and acting as orderlies, runners, messengers and attendants to chiefs.<sup>213</sup>

Native authority police were not armed. Therefore, it was necessary for the Gold Coast police to afford them assistance from time to time. When it became evident that the NA police was being seriously obstructed in the performance of their duties, a chief police officer at the request of a DC would detail as many Gold Coast police as the situation might demand to be present in the state while the NA police performed their duties.<sup>214</sup> Normally, the native police force comprised a sergeant, two corporals and eight constables.<sup>215</sup>

One major policy evinced by the 1949 ordinance was that it conferred powers on the NAs to legislate by means of orders and rules.<sup>216</sup> Orders could be made when it was intended that legislation should only be temporary. Rules could be made for the same purpose as orders, and for any other purpose providing for peace, order, good government and welfare of the persons.<sup>217</sup> The difference between orders and rules was that whereas only the approval of the DC was necessary in the case of orders, rules necessarily required

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<sup>212</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, p. 47.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 53/19/50, Assistance to Native Authority Police Forces, 15 February 1952.

<sup>215</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 51/19/50, Native Authority Police, Asogli State, 22 June 1950.

<sup>216</sup> See detail provisions in the 1949 Native Authority (Southern Section of Togoland under UK Trusteeship) Ordinance of 1949.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid; Togoland Report of 1950, p. 34.

approval of the governor.<sup>218</sup> Examples of rules applied by the states concerned markets, deaths, marriages and divorce, activities of herbalists and palm wine sellers, slaughter houses, lorry parks, and the registration of births.<sup>219</sup> Orders were used by all NAs to control the practice of bush burning and to establish native police forces.<sup>220</sup> That the zeal of the NA was emboldened from 1949 by the presence of the NA police was not in doubt. It must also be emphasised that the coming into force of NA police in 1949 and their role in supervising and collecting taxes greatly improved the tax collection. On the flip side, however, the creation of NA police had the unintended effect of widening the disjuncture between the chiefs and their subjects. Some of the police officers were accused of arbitrary arrest and it was this which gave the NAs a 'despotic' outlook.

#### **Judicial Reforms: Native Courts**

Consequent to the 1949 ordinance, a Native Court 1949 Ordinance for Togoland was introduced to amalgamate existing divisional tribunals.<sup>221</sup> The courts so constituted were grade 'B' courts and there was only one grade 'A' court for a state. In all, 24 courts were established in the whole of southern Togoland in place of the divisional tribunals.<sup>222</sup> This idea of native courts replacing divisional tribunals was part of a general reform of courts in the Gold Coast since Governor Sir Alan Burns assumed office in 1941.<sup>223</sup> At the time, it was observed that most of the tribunals were too unwieldy to be considered as 'a model of judicial decorum'.<sup>224</sup> Consequently, a committee was appointed by Burns in 1942 to

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<sup>218</sup> Most often the Governor delegated this power to the Chief Commissioner of the colony.

<sup>219</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, p. 34.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 64, Gazette Extraordinary, 4 August 1949.

<sup>222</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts, 1951, p.8.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

consider the working of the tribunals. The report of the committee led to the passing of the 1944 Native Court (Colony) Ordinance, which in turn shaped the native court arrangement in Ewedome in 1949.

#### NATIVE COURTS IN AWATIME NA IN 1949

COURT NO. 1	COURT NO. 2
Awatime Tribunal	Honuta Tribunal
Akome Tribunal	Hoe Tribunal
Dodome Tribunal	Klave Tribunal
Dzolo Tribunal	Kpeze Tribunal
Saviofe Tribunal	Kpoeta Tribunal

The arrangement in Awatime vividly illustrates the amalgamation of tribunals in Ewedome in 1949. In Awatime Native Authority, the tribunals in Awatime, Akome, Dodome, Dzolo and Saviofe were grouped together to form one grade 'B' court. The court thus constituted had jurisdiction over only the five divisions grouped under it. The court however did not sit permanently in one division.<sup>225</sup> For example, if there were many cases in Awatime at one time, the court would arrange to sit at Awatime. At the same time, if there was say one case from Saviofe, the court could try that case while it was sitting at Awatime. In effect, there were two grade B courts in Awatime state with three magistrates. In other words, the court rotated among the divisions whose tribunals constituted the court. In preparing the schedule, opportunity was given to effect any desirable reorganization

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<sup>225</sup> RAG/H DA/D 71, Awatime Native Authority, Awatime state to the DC Ho, 27 April 1949.

having regard to both tradition and efficiency.<sup>226</sup> This enabled the state to reduce the number of tribunals to only two grade 'B' courts.<sup>227</sup>

The new courts continued largely in the firmly rooted traditions of the existing NAs. The only modification was the inclusion of a greater number of non-chiefs on the NAs. It was expected that the new NAs and courts would enjoy identical powers to those held in the Colony.<sup>228</sup> The new composition of the state councils drew protest from some of the educated youth in Ewedome. Their concern was that the appointment of non-chiefs to the state councils was dictatorial and undemocratic.<sup>229</sup> They contended that non-chiefs should have been elected by universal suffrage.

### **The Southern Togoland Council**

The 1949 ordinance also established a Southern Togoland Council as part of the reorganization of NAs in the region. The council was made up of 15 members, with three elected by each of the erstwhile NAs.<sup>230</sup> It was to meet from time to time to deliberate upon matters affecting the welfare and interest of the southern section of Togoland. In addition, it would elect one member to the Gold Coast Legislative Council and appoint a member each to the Cocoa Marketing Board, the Agricultural Development Corporation, the Agricultural Produce Marketing Board and the Library Board.<sup>231</sup> Each NA in the whole of southern British Togoland elected three members to the council, which meant that Anfoega was not

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<sup>226</sup> Schedule to the 1949 Native Authority Ordinance for Southern Section of British Togoland.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.* In addition to the two grade 'B' courts, there was one Native appellate Court for the state served by one Registrar.

<sup>228</sup> Coussey Committee had been set up in 1948 to make recommendation for constitutional reforms in the Gold Coast. Therefore, the 1949 ordinance was enacted pending the receipt and consideration of the Coussey report.

<sup>229</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 5128/8.067, TUNA Youth Section to Senior DC Ho, 4 December 1949.

<sup>230</sup> The council had its first meeting in Ho on 16 February 1950.

<sup>231</sup> NA CO 96 827/2, Minutes of Meetings of Southern Togoland Council, 23 February 1950.

represented because of the latter's refusal to join any of the amalgamated states.<sup>232</sup> This council was not of much significance since it was merely an advisory body with no legislative powers.<sup>233</sup> It was not a body of chiefs composed along the lines of the Provincial and Joint Provincial Council of the Colony or the Asanteman Council, except that it was the apex of the NA system in the southern British Togoland region.<sup>234</sup>

Apart from the one seat allocated to the council on the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast, it did not meet the expectation of the chiefs and the youth.<sup>235</sup> The disbursement of government funds for local development was taken over by a non-statutory Southern Togoland Rural Development Committee.<sup>236</sup> Its functions were to submit to the government schemes for economic development, and to supervise, within the limits of its competence, approved schemes.<sup>237</sup> All the same, the coming into being of the council marked the first time in the history of the territory that a body was established that could debate and express a common opinion on matters of interest to the territory as a whole.<sup>238</sup> It is however important to note that the re-structuring of NAs in Ewedome at this time was considered as being only an interim measure because further reform of local government

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<sup>232</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 131-132.

<sup>233</sup> Togoland Report of 1950, p. 13; NA CO 96/827/5, Togoland Administration, The Standing Consultation Commission, 1 November 1950; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 82.

<sup>234</sup> NA CO 96/827/5, Togoland Administration, The Standing Consultation Commission, 1 November 1950; NA CO 96/824/7, Constitution: Regional Government, 1951. The number of seats for the Southern Togoland Council was increased to three in 1950. See D. E. K. Amenumey, *The Ewe Unification Movement: A Political History* (Accra, 1989), p. 114.

<sup>235</sup> Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 83. Detailed discussion of the unification problem follows in the next chapters. For representation of Southern Togoland Council on the Legislative Council, see Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 147.

<sup>236</sup> UN Visiting Mission Report, 1950, p. 15.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> RAG/H Press Release No. 160/50, Public Relations Department, Accra, 16 February 1950; Interview with Mawusinu Dogoe, daughter of Lawyer Dogoe, 8 December 2007.

was imminent in view of the process towards a major constitutional reform in the Gold Coast.<sup>239</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Native Authorities were able to hold their own for two decades in Ewedome due largely to the relative acquiescence which British colonial rule enjoyed in the region from the end of the 1920s to the later part of the 1940s. To the British officials, the NA system was successful in the way it provided a layer of local 'legitimate authority' between themselves and the mass of people, whose immediate concerns were somewhat dealt with by local chiefs. An obvious disadvantage was that the traditional authorities no longer derived their power from their subjects. Instead, colonial officials became the source of the chief's political authority. This eroded the chief's accountability to the people. By and large, the NA system was a superimposition of a bureaucratic administrative structure on the pre-colonial system of authority in Ewedome. This often sat awkwardly with the traditional African process of decision-making where the elements of consultation and consensus were highly valued. The cost of running such a bureaucratic administrative system, the need for fostering a sense of corporate responsibility within the NAs, in addition to providing for economic and social development, all in the midst of the depression in the 1930s, made the introduction of direct taxation inevitable.

As the territory began to witness social and political transformation, changes were introduced into the NA system to accommodate the balance of forces that were developing. In many respects, the coming into force of the trusteeship system and economic, social and political unrest in the Gold Coast following the Second World War changed the chemistry

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<sup>239</sup> RAG/H ACC No. 64, Gazette Extraordinary, 4 August 1949.

of native administration and set in motion a series of reforms in 1949. These reforms were a last-gasp attempt to keep increasingly out-of-date system afloat.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE TRANSITION FROM NATIVE AUTHORITIES TO LOCAL COUNCILS, 1949-1951

Native Authorities served the purpose of the colonial state and its intermediaries in Ewedome for some eighteen years from 1932 to 1949. Indeed, the interwar period was the heyday of the NA system of administration in British colonial Africa. The colonial political structure provided a platform for many chiefs to garner considerable power and authority. From 1948, however, the rise of popular anti-colonial nationalism in the Gold Coast served to articulate and to organise simmering discontent and frustrations of non-chiefly elements for change. In Ewedome, the demand by the UN for political advancement of the Trust Territories and the crystallization of 'Ewe national consciousness' into political movements such as the All Ewe Conference (AEC) and the Togoland Union (TU)/Togoland Congress(TC) in the 1940s 'speeded up the agenda for decolonisation [and] provided the focus for the development of active local politics'.<sup>1</sup> All this affected British colonial policy, culminating in the promulgation of a new constitution in 1950 and the formation of a diarchy in the Gold Coast in 1951. The stage was thus set for the first phase of the process of decolonization, which involved the dismantling of the NA system of local government.

This chapter first examines the grievances that the people of Ewedome had against NAs. It then focuses on how the shift to elected local government in Ewedome was carried out by a new reformist colonial regime in league with the Gold Coast nationalists. It demonstrates

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<sup>1</sup> Ken Kwaku, 'Tradition, Colonialism and Politics in Rural Ghana: Local Politics in Have, Volta Region', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 1 (1976), p. 79.

how this attempted democratization of localised forms of government represented a key part of the broader pattern of political change. Finally, the chapter examines some of the acrimonies and protestations that characterized the transition and then discusses the structure of the new local government system.

### **The Decline of Native Authorities: Native Courts**

One of the main grievances with the NA system in Ewedome was the reservations that many people harboured about the native courts. The native courts as constituted by the chiefs and their elders had become unsatisfactory in dealing with litigations which were fast passing from 'customary' cases to ones which required a higher standard of knowledge of law and legal procedure. The courts also were far too cumbersome in their composition. Generally, the ordinances which established the courts only stated that the courts should be composed of chiefs and their councillors in accordance with native custom without specifying the mode of selection of these councillors and the number that should be selected. This left the composition of the courts to the discretion of the chiefs thereby increasing their numbers and compromising efficiency and effectiveness.<sup>2</sup> Attacks on the native courts were part of the broader anti-colonial movement of the post-war era when lawyers began to demand the codification of customary law and the professionalisation of the native courts.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, Native Administration and Political Development in British Tropical Africa, 1940-42, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> For a broader analysis of post-war reforms of customary law in Africa, see Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 128-137. With specific examples in the Gold Coast, see Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 13-15.

There had been constant attacks in many parts of the Gold Coast on the continuous recognition of the oath by the NAs as a means of bringing a case before the native courts.<sup>4</sup> As we have seen, the oath was one essential customary form of judicial procedure that was preserved by the statutory rules. The main ground for objection to the oath was its use by the native courts to extort heavy fees and fines from litigants.<sup>5</sup> In Ewedome, the use of the oath as a means of instituting a civil action unnecessarily increased the cost of litigation. For example, a person who swore the oath had to report the fact and terms of the oath to the Registrar of the nearest native court and pay a fee of £1 for the case to be heard.<sup>6</sup> The argument by most educated citizens and law officers was that the oath was archaic, unnecessary and undesirable.

We noted that these problems with the native courts were already emerging by the early 1940s, prompting the enquiry set up in 1942 by governor of the Gold Coast Sir Allan Burns.<sup>7</sup> Rathbone described the report as 'utterly devastating'.<sup>8</sup> The 1943 report noted *inter alia* that the cost of litigation was inflated and that the courts were regarded by members 'as a source of revenue instead of a fount of justice'.<sup>9</sup> But the 1949 ordinance which replaced native tribunals with native courts in southern section of British Togoland did not go far enough to address these pent-up concerns. It will be recalled that one way by which chiefs enforced executive orders was to swear the oath on their subjects. Such orders could be for the execution of development projects such as the construction and maintenance of roads and classroom blocks. A classic example was the use of the oath to bring about the cocoa

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<sup>4</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts, 1951.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1544, Native Tribunals Committee of Enquiry (Blackall Report), 12 February 1943, p. 4-55.

<sup>8</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1544, Native Tribunals Committee of Enquiry (Blackall Report), 12 February 1943, p. 18; PRAAD/A ADM3/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts, 1951, p. 8.

hold-up of 1929-30 in the Gold Coast.<sup>10</sup> The attack on the oath had the effect of eroding the authority of the chief and, by extension, that of the NAs.

In Ewedome, the NAs had been unwilling to spend money on the staff and infrastructure of the courts to bring them to an appreciable standard. A disturbing trend was the huge disparity in the quality of court buildings.<sup>11</sup> The salary of most of the Registrars and court staff was woefully inadequate.<sup>12</sup> This, coupled with an inadequate training programme for court staff, led to poor service delivery. The native police established in 1949 were poorly paid and trained with no prospects of advancement. Constables attached to the NAs were paid as little as £1/10 a month, far below the government approved minimum wage of £5.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, the combination of executive and judicial functions by the NAs meant that there was too close a connection between the courts and the chiefs. Even though the NA Ordinance of 1932 made a clear distinction between the functions of NAs and those of the state councils, the distinction was largely theoretical. In reality, the same people served on both councils and that blurred the supposedly distinct functions of the two. Mamdani was thus right when he remarked that the NA system effectively 'fused in a single person all moments of power; judicial, legislative, executive, and administrative', a point also made by Spear.<sup>14</sup> This gave rise to corruption, the use of the courts as a political weapon and delays in dispensing justice. To avert such delays in the Colony and Ashanti, the 1944 ordinance set a minimum of 200 cases to be dealt with annually by the federal courts to ensure that they carried out a reasonable amount of business.<sup>15</sup> In the southern section of

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<sup>10</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 214, Assistant Chief Commissioner to the Senior District Officer, Ho, 1945.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts, 1951, p. 21-22.

<sup>14</sup> Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 23; Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 14.

<sup>15</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts, 1951, p. 9.

British Togoland, the report noted the inability of this guiding principle to have much effect because of the territory's particular history.<sup>16</sup> As noted earlier, the 69 native tribunals introduced under the 1932 Ordinance were reduced to 24 amalgamated native courts under the Native Courts Ordinance of 1949.<sup>17</sup> But the reduction in the number of courts did not, in fact, represent a fundamental change, for the panels of the new courts were greatly increased to include members drawn from all component divisions.<sup>18</sup> From 1949, there were as many as 30 persons on the panels of a native court in Ewedome and other parts of southern Togoland.<sup>19</sup> Besides, the underlying problem of combination of magisterial and executive functions by the NAs was not resolved. It is interesting to note that the administrative officers themselves combined magisterial and executive functions in the colonies. This perhaps accounted for their lack of enthusiasm in separating the two functions<sup>20</sup>

A further sore point was the name 'native court' which was considered to be no longer appropriate in view of the complexity of cases brought before them. The name 'native court', as originally conceived, was solely concerned with the administration of 'native law'. Admittedly, the courts had grown beyond the mere administration of 'customary law' or 'native law'. Native courts, after 1949, began to exercise jurisdiction in matters falling quite outside the ambit of native law, and in particular, they were empowered to adjudicate in respect of criminal offences under the penal code.<sup>21</sup> As we shall see, customary law has

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/80, Report of Commission on Native Courts, 1951, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> Togoland Report, 1950, p. 76.

<sup>20</sup> See PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, p. 26. RAG/H RAO/C 214, Assistant Chief Commissioner to the Senior District Officer, Ho, 1945

<sup>21</sup> Native Courts (Southern Section) Togoland Ordinance of 1949.

been undergoing synthesization since the start of colonial rule.<sup>22</sup> In fact, the criminal law which operated in Ewedome combined both the Gold Coast law, as set out in the criminal code, and native customary law.<sup>23</sup>

From 1949, the likelihood that the native courts could extend their jurisdiction over all persons, irrespective of race, was probable. This would inevitably have serious ramifications for the substantive law administered, and also for the composition of the courts, the training and qualifications of court officials as well as court procedures.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout colonial Africa, the use of native custom for the administration of justice in societies which were becoming more complex as a result of social change posed a major problem in the administration of justice. Customary law became important in the formulation of British colonial policy in the inter-war period when colonial officials wanted to synthesize the native legal system and use it 'to regulate their dealings with local people'.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, most appeal cases from the native courts went to the district courts which were essentially English courts. Native custom varied greatly and was too little known in many areas outside the locality for it to form the basis of law enforceable, ultimately, in English courts. The practice of sending disputes to the English courts at district headquarters had, in many regions in Africa, already 'undermined the authority of the local rulers and profoundly affected indigenous law'.<sup>26</sup> It created a scenario whereby 'a

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<sup>22</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism' p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/1544, Native Tribunals Committee of Enquiry, 12 February 1943.

<sup>24</sup> RAG/H ACC N. 26/50, Conference of African Courts Advisers, Agenda, 1953.

<sup>25</sup> A detailed analysis of the process by which customary law was created in Africa and its key role in the functioning of indirect rule under the NA system is found in K. Mann and R. Roberts (eds.), *Law in Colonial Africa* (Portsmouth, 1991), 3-47; Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 13-16.

<sup>26</sup> Mann and Roberts, *Law in Colonial Africa*, p. 13.

dual system of law was administered by two forms of judiciary, the English and the native courts'.<sup>27</sup>

In his analysis of the evolution of customary law, Spear remarks that by removing what was deemed repugnant to natural justice from indigenous legal systems and combining 'colonial and common law, administrative regulations and Christian injunctions', customary law ceased to be wholly indigenous law.<sup>28</sup> Mann and Roberts see the fusion of European laws and indigenous African legal system as an 'elaboration of customary law, [which limited the] power and authority of local rulers'.<sup>29</sup> The case of Awatime as illustrated in Chapter 3 was a classic example of how colonialism subordinated African indigenous systems of law 'to metropolitan legal traditions'.<sup>30</sup> As these elaborations continued and the society was becoming more complex, chiefs were finding it difficult to reconcile native custom with the defined law of the ordinance.<sup>31</sup> Worse yet, the absence of such codification rendered native customary law largely contradictory in terms.

Admittedly, codification was a formidable task which could take a very long time to accomplish.<sup>32</sup> As Spear has shown, in every colonial territory there were many variants of customary law that made attempts at codification illusive.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, as Mamdani notes,

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<sup>27</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, p. 34; Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> Spears, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 13-14. The point that these changes in customary law were in some cases brought about by the role of administrative officers in the exercise of their appellate powers was noted in PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, p. 30.

<sup>29</sup> For the dual effects of colonial law on the authority of chiefs, see Mann and Roberts (eds.), *Law*, p. 33.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8; Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 13.

<sup>31</sup> Togoland Report of 1941, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> According to Brett Shadle and Spear, the colonial authorities were less keen on codifying customary law in order to allow for flexibility in its application to the different segments of the African societies. See Brett L. Shadle, "Changing Traditions to Meet Current Altering Conditions", Customary Law, African Courts and the Rejection of Codification in Kenya, 1930-60', *Journal of African History*, 40 (1999), p. 411-28; Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 16.

<sup>33</sup> Spear, 'Neo-Traditionalism', p. 13.

codification had the potential of limiting 'the scope for local initiative'.<sup>34</sup> It had always been the policy of the British officials not to interfere with customary law unless it was found to be 'repugnant to natural justice'. Customary law touched on the values and belief systems: birth, puberty, marriage, death, inheritance and the veneration of ancestors that held African societies together. Therefore, any unbridled modifications could affect the very existence of the societies. Moreover, according to Rathbone, it could antagonise the chiefs, important allies of the colonial state.<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless, colonial officials recognised the importance of 'the spread of Western legal arrangements to the growth of trade and civilization'.<sup>36</sup>

### Socio-Economic Change

The rise of 'youngmen' has been recognised as absolutely central to the entire process of the emergence of anti-colonial nationalism and decolonization in Ghana.<sup>37</sup> The youngmen, according to Callaway, constituted 'the historical dissenters of changing Ghanaian society'.<sup>38</sup> Austin attributes this phenomenon to the opposition by the new breed of school leavers to the established order.<sup>39</sup> Western education turned out scholars from institutions such as Achimota College in the early 1940s whose goals and aspirations were to develop Gold Coast nationalism independent of traditional authorities.<sup>40</sup> The Gold Coast Youth

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<sup>34</sup> Mamdani cited Bechuanaland Protectorate as an exceptional colony where customary laws were codified in the late 1930s. Thereafter, it became part of the main stream British administrative reforms in the 1950s. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, p. 129.

<sup>35</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 15; Berman, 'Ethnicity', p. 316.

<sup>36</sup> Mann and Roberts, *Law in Colonial Africa*, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> The term 'youngmen' is a Ghanaian neologism which refers to the youth or commoners. They are known in Ewe language as *soheawo*. See details in Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. xiv.

<sup>38</sup> Callaway, 'Local Politics', p. 123.

<sup>39</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 49.

<sup>40</sup> For detailed analysis of the hostility of the youth against chiefs and the colonial officials in the Gold Coast, see Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 146-174. Skinner also observed how the rapid expansion in primary

Conference held in 1943 showed how far the youth in the Colony had come in making their voices heard.<sup>41</sup> However, the established NA system dominated by the elderly chiefs largely blocked any concomitant political advance for youngmen. This, according to Skinner, deprived the youngmen 'of mechanisms by which their interest could be represented to chiefs and elders'.<sup>42</sup> Iliffe, who referred to education as 'the chief dynamic of colonial change', cited Ewe as one of the ethnic groups which embraced missionary education in the 1900s.<sup>43</sup> In the words of Welch, 'most analysts of Ewe society have commented upon the relative ease with which social change accrued among the Ewe'.<sup>44</sup> As an increasing numbers of youngmen in Ewedome received western education, there emerged changes in human relations at the level of the individual and at the level of the state. The youngmen began to see things from a wider perspective than the narrow divisional and chiefly enclaves.

Collier's analysis of the impact of adult education on the territory from 1947-1966 shows how those inhabitants who benefited from such programme offered by the University College of the Gold Coast came back home with ideas of nationalism.<sup>45</sup> Though the People's Education Association (EPA) formed under the adult education programme always emphasised its non-partisan nature, its curriculum dealt with topics such as economic, political, social and cultural changes taking place in the Gold Coast.<sup>46</sup> It also

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education in the post-war Africa led to the creation of 'a cohort of discontented young men'. See Skinner, 'Agency and Analogy', p. 291.

<sup>41</sup> Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 160.

<sup>42</sup> Skinner, 'Agency and Analogy', p. 291.

<sup>43</sup> Iliffe, *Africans*, p. 229.

<sup>44</sup> Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 43.

<sup>45</sup> Collier, 'Ablode', p. 123-155.

<sup>46</sup> For the courses offered by the Adult Education programme, see Rhodes House Library, Oxford [hereafter, RHL], NSS. Afr. S. 1877, Papers of Lalage Bown, Fourth Annual Conference of EPA at Hohoe, 3 May 1953.

aimed 'to provide leaders for the nation and for political parties'.<sup>47</sup> Collier examined in particular, the contact between Togoland participants in the Adult Education programme with leaders of the United Gold Coast Convention and concluded that the formation of an alliance of political leaders in the southern section of British Togoland was attributable in part to the Adult Education programme.<sup>48</sup> As Collier put it, 'adult education was one of the ways by which Togoland came to feel confidence in their own ability to lead...the result was a clear determination to prevent Togoland's fledgling elite from being submerged within that of the Gold Coast'.<sup>49</sup> The overall effect of this was a shift in the social structure by 1949 as traditional institutions and their functions were caught up by these transformations. This rising aspiration of the youth was reflected in the creeping disrespect for NA directives.

Another factor responsible for the climate of change in Ewedome was religious change brought about by conversion to Christianity. In her study of Ewe appropriations of Christianity, Meyer observed that missionary pietism was interpreted to mean disengagement with traditional society.<sup>50</sup> The converts saw themselves as more civilised than the non-Christians and so they began to long for social and political mobility.<sup>51</sup> In effect, Meyer argues, conversion provided the avenue by which individuals sought to disengage themselves from the traditional society or family.<sup>52</sup> Christianity thus produced a class of converts who were beginning to despise indigenous values and structures in favour

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<sup>47</sup> RHL, NSS, Afr. S. 1877, Papers of Lalage Bown, Speech by Mr G. Adali-Morttly, to the Fifth Regional Conference at Aburi, 29 August 1954. See also Collier, 'Ablode', p. 127.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 125-126

<sup>49</sup> Collier, 'Ablode', p. 155.

<sup>50</sup> Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 213.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 214.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 213.

of western values.<sup>53</sup> All of this played into the growing argitation against NAs. Debrunner quoted Westerman as having said in 1936 that by attacking traditional religion of the Natives of Togoland, Christianity 'removed valuable forces holding the social organization together'.<sup>54</sup>

In addition, the church was an important factor in reshaping Ewe identity. From 1911, the Bremen Mission mooted the idea of training the natives to become independent of Europeans.<sup>55</sup> The process was aided by the translation of the Bible into Ewe in 1915 and a gradual increase in the number of natives trained as pastors and deacons.<sup>56</sup> These developments were responsible in creating Ewe identity that tended to bind Ewes and non-Ewes together. In fact, the Ewe Bible, in the words of Lawrance, provided the 'Ewe subgroups a mutual intelligibility on which they could build cultural, political, and social objectives'.<sup>57</sup> Following the expulsion of the Germans from the region, an independent Ewe Church had developed by the early 1920s and began taking over most responsibilities of the German Mission. In 1922, an agreement between the board of the Mission in Bremen and the native pastors led to the birth of the 'Evangelical Church'.<sup>58</sup> At its the first all-African synod held in May 1922 at Kpalime in the present-day Republic of Togo, the synod emphasized its identity as an Ewe Church. Consequently, the name 'Ewe Evangelical Church' was adopted.<sup>59</sup> It later became the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.<sup>60</sup> Some of the native pastors, who had their training in Germany, were exposed to ideas of nationalism

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<sup>53</sup> Analysis of how religion opposed to indigenous cultures divided family and communities is recorded in Berman, 'Ethnicity', p. 340-341; Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 213-214.

<sup>54</sup> Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 123.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, p. 132.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, p. 132-136.

<sup>57</sup> Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 123.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, p. 163.

<sup>59</sup> It is important to note that there were native pastors from the non-Ewe areas of Amedzofe and Akpafu districts on the Synod. See *Ibid*, p. 163. Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 19.

<sup>60</sup> Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p. 141.

and on their return, they became active advocates of Togoland politics. An example was pastor Paku who at one time served as the secretary of the Togoland Union. In demonstrating the processes by which an indigenous political leadership emerged in Ewedome region, Skinner notes how the Bremen Mission produced teachers who later became founders of the Togoland unification movement in the late 1940s.<sup>61</sup> She notes in particular, S. G. Antor, E. O. Kofi Dumoga, G. O. Awuma, F. R. Ametowobla and K. A. Ayeke who had served at various times as pastors, catechists or teachers.<sup>62</sup>

Added to the religious transformation was the centripetal pull of the mines and cocoa farms in the Gold Coast which saw a sizeable proportion of youngmen drifting to and from the Gold Coast in search of job opportunities. This fuelled a gradual weakening of family ties, widespread erosion of established religious and social values and less loyalty to traditional institutions. The mutation of the social structure led eventually to political change as the youth began to question the validity of the NA system and the privileged position of chiefs. Chieftaincy institution began to lose significance in the sight of the youth who had acquired elements of new western lifestyles. By the 1940s, *asafo* became very active in all facets of life in Ewedome.

It is important to explain the meaning of *asafo* and to bring out its significance in the politics of Ewedome. *Asafo* is an Akan name for youth organizations that emerged in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries among the Akan communities in the what became Gold Coast Colony.<sup>63</sup> They were especially prominent among the Fantes of the Central Province of the Colony. *Asafo* had duality of purpose. As a social organization, it was composed of

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<sup>61</sup> Kate Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p.141. Welch recounts the conscious effort made by the church to create Ewe unity. See Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 43-48.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> For the origins of *asafo* among Akan, see The Gold Coast Chiefs List, 1928-29, p.3; Ray A. Kea, *Settlements, Trade, and Politics in the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast* (Baltimore, 1982), p. 132.

both men and women and it facilitated the integration of newcomers into the communities.<sup>64</sup> As a military organisation, it was made up of only men for offensive and defensive purposes.<sup>65</sup> Since the various ethnic groups relied on the *asafo* for the prosecution of their wars, the latter became an influential group in the political decision-making process of the communities.<sup>66</sup> According to Rathbone, *asafo* groups were responsible for many destoolment cases in the Colony in the colonial period.<sup>67</sup> In most cases, they were seen as an 'unruly lot'.<sup>68</sup> *Asafo* was part of the institutions that were borrowed by the people of Ewedome from their Akan neighbours in the pre-colonial era. In the 1920s, *asafo* companies became the vehicle for the aspirations of rising groups of western-educated literate 'youngmen' who were increasingly frustrated by the political authority of the indirect-rule chiefs.

#### **Political Change: Ewe/Togoland Nationalism.**

We have noted that some of the forces pushing for change in Ewedome in the 1940s were, broadly speaking, similar to those elsewhere in the Gold Coast where social change generated by the cocoa economy, labour migration, education and Christianity led to the demands for political change. But as we shall see, the emergence of Ewe national consciousness, the trusteeship status of the territory and the agitations for unification set the whole process of change and decolonisation in Ewedome apart. Put differently, the process of decolonization was subsumed by the fight for and against Ewe unification. The Ewe regions of the Gold Coast Colony were also convulsed by the integration/unification

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<sup>64</sup> Kea, *Settlements, Trade, and Politics*, p. 132.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 24.

<sup>68</sup> Kea, *Settlements, Trade and Politics*, p. 132.

debate. Thus, the dynamics of decolonization in Ewedome became more complex, assuming more of an international dimension than was witnessed in the southern Gold Coast, Ashanti and the Northern Territories. The promotion of the Ewe language, the emergence of political movements and the special status of the territory were some of 'the historical processes that created a Togoland national identity'.<sup>69</sup>

In Ewedome, the demand by the educated youth for wider participation in the working of the NAs did not come until 1949. In fact, by 1948, few people in Ewedome were literate.<sup>70</sup> The NAs sometimes recognised their own deficiencies when it came to handling issues which fell outside the domain of tradition or custom. They often drafted educated people into their fold to assist in carrying out specific duties. Many African officials who worked in the NAs as registrars, bailiffs, secretaries and so on were western educated people. We see similar a situation in Tanganyika where, according to Iliffe, the NAs 'welcomed educated guidance'.<sup>71</sup> It is in this regard that the intervention of the youth of Ewedome in Togoland politics and their challenge to chiefly authority from the later part of the 1940s has to be understood within the broader context of political developments in the Gold Coast.

We saw that in 1947, J. B. Danquah cashed in on generational disaffections and expectation of the youth in the Colony to form the first political party, the UGCC. The aftermath of the 1948 riots in the Gold Coast saw the division in the leadership of the UGCC, with the breaking away of Kwame Nkrumah and the formation of his own Convention People's Party in 1949. This marked a turning point in the rise of the youth against established chiefly authority. Within the climate of change, the CPP provided an

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<sup>69</sup> Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p. 128.

<sup>70</sup> NA CO96 796/5, Report of Commission of Enquiry into the Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948, p. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History of Tanganyika*, p. 329.

outlet for the youth to see their political ambitions fulfilled. The party's activism spread into Ewedome and fed into the growing agitation of school leavers whose numbers had been increasing since the 1940s. By the late 1940s, the *asafo* in Ewedome started to develop into a significant political force and began to draw inspiration from CPP activism in the Colony to oppose chiefs in Ewedome on a number of important political issues. All this fits into the analysis of how social movements provided fertile ground for the 'collective mobilization' of aggrieved segments of the society for political power.<sup>72</sup>

In addition, Ewe national consciousness, which began with the promotion of the Ewe language by the missionaries in the nineteenth century, provided an avenue for the formation of voluntary organisations and the crystallization of quasi-political parties which transcended territorial divisions by the mid 1940s. According to Nugent, the emergence of various groups all professing Ewe nationalism had their origin in the proliferation of voluntary associations in the Gold Coast long before 1947. His list of some of those associations included the Anyako Union, Glidzi Union and Togoville Union.<sup>73</sup> A lot has been written on these Ewe political groupings in all the standard works on Ewe unification. The most important ones were the All-Ewe Conference formed in 1946, the Togoland Union in 1947 and the Togoland Congress in 1950.

During the German period, there was an association of Togolanders known as the *Bund der Deutschen Togolander*, a League of German Togolanders, originally founded by the Germans when they occupied the territory. This group was re-organised in Accra in 1922 by people referred to by Amenumey as ex-clerks who could not find new jobs because of

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<sup>72</sup> Quote taken from Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 39.

<sup>73</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 158.

their inability to speak English.<sup>74</sup> Some of the objectives of the Bund were to establish close contact with Germany and to undertake to represent Togoland at the League of Nations.<sup>75</sup> Later, in 1951, the Joint Togoland Congress (JTC) adopted the Swastika for a flag. The use of the Nazi symbol was seen by the government as a misguided attempt by the JTC to stress the unity of the area once under German rule.<sup>76</sup> For fear that the Swastika could provoke disturbances in the territory, the government prohibited its use.<sup>77</sup>

The gradually emerging consciousness on the part of the Ewes of their shared history and traditions found concrete expressions in the activities of the first ever Ewe group, the Ewe Union, founded in Accra in 1943, which became the All-Ewe Conference (AEC) in 1946. It was fairly representative of educated people from all parts of Eweland including Peki, Anlo and Ewes from the French mandate. Those from the French mandated territory were represented by the *Comité de l'Unité Togolaise* (CUT), formed in 1938 and led by Augusto De Souza, Sylvanus Olympio and Jonathan Savi de Tove.<sup>78</sup> Some of the leaders from the British side included D.A. Chapman, Philip Gbeho from Anlo to the south and G.O. Awuma, Kofi Dumoga, V. O. Anku, E. Amu and S. G. Antor from Eedome. Its dissatisfaction had its origin in the economic inconveniences imposed on the people by the different fiscal policies of the mandatory powers and by the rigid regulations of trade across the frontiers owing to the world war.<sup>79</sup> Nugent describes the founders of the AEC as a lobby group in Accra which sought to win the Gold Coast nationalist over in the fight for

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<sup>74</sup> Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 27.

<sup>75</sup> NA CO96/719/3, League of German Togoland (Bund der Deutsch-Togolander), Circular, Accra, 19 December 1923; NA CO96/715/8, Petition to the League of Nations, 1925 by the Bund. Details about the Bund are found in Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 27-28; Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 34; Lawrance, *Locality, Mobility, and "Nation"*, p. 120-147.

<sup>76</sup> RAG/H S.092/3, Senior DC to the Chief Commissioner of the Colony, 6 September 1951.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 164. The date taken from Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 68.

<sup>79</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/339, Unification of Ewe-Speaking People, Memorandum on the Administration of the Southern Section of Togoland, 1946.

Ewe unification.<sup>80</sup> The objective the AEC was the creation of an independent Ewe state, composed of the Ewe-speaking parts of the Gold Coast and the Ewe-dominated southern parts of Togoland under one single administration.

As the Gold Coast began to move towards independence, the need to decide on whether to join Ghana or Togoland pushed the people of Ewedome to reflect upon their identity. Though identity can change dramatically over a couple of generations, there was still an awareness in the 1940s and 1950s of the role of Anlo in Akwamu and Ashanti slave raiding and slave trading in the nineteenth centuries. In 1947, E. O. Kofi Dumoga, V. O. Anku, G.O. Awuma and S. G. Antor revived and exploited this rift between the northern Ewe and the Anlo to canvass for secession of Togoland from the AEC and to form the Togoland Union. The Togoland Union's aim was Togoland unification (not Ewe unification) and it campaigned on the platform of 'Togoland for Togoland'.<sup>81</sup>

The TU was supported by some people from the non-Ewe Buem area who feared that any form of unification based on the Ewes as a whole would be dominated by the Gold Coast Ewes.<sup>82</sup> In Ewedome itself, the minority ethnic groups tended to support the Togoland Congress. In fact, the secretary of the Togoland Union, Mr S. G. Antor, was from Logba, a non-Ewe division within Ewedome. The point was that, though the minority ethnic groups insisted on their cultural identity, they were often drawn into the larger Ewedome/Ewe identity for national level politics.<sup>83</sup> Nugent attributed this partly to the limited scale of their languages which made it impossible for them to use those languages

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<sup>80</sup> For details on the activities of the AEC, see *Ibid*, p. 43-52; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 164-74.

<sup>81</sup> While the AEC from 1952 wanted Ewe unification, the TC was working against Ewe unification so as to avoid being dominated by Anlo and Peki Ewes of the Gold Coast. See PRO CO 96/827/3, *Togoland: Minutes of Southern Togoland Council*, Ho, 29-30 September 1950; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 189. See also *Amenumey Ewe Unification*, p. 119.

<sup>82</sup> United Nations Visiting Mission Report, 1950, p.10.

<sup>83</sup> See Nugent, 'Few Lesser People', p. 163.

as means of ethnic mobilization.<sup>84</sup> Later in 1950, the Togoland Congress emerged. It was a merger of different political groupings in the Trust Territory after a conference held in Borada.<sup>85</sup> It included the vast majority of the traditional rulers, the Togoland Union, the Togoland National Farmers' Union, the Togoland Youth Association as well as some members of the All-Ewe Conference.<sup>86</sup> It was the members of the TU which constituted the leadership of the Togoland Congress.<sup>87</sup> With the emergence of the Togoland Congress, the All-Ewe Conference lost its original political significance.<sup>88</sup>

Mr S. G. Antor was the Togoland Congress leader who spearheaded the campaign for unification of the two Togolands as an independent state.<sup>89</sup> The Togoland Congress resisted any moves that would bring the Ewes of the trust territory together with those in the Gold Coast.<sup>90</sup> The emergence of the Togoland Congress increased the tempo of the fight for and against Togoland unification. Another factor in the rise of Ewe nationalism was a launch in May 1945 of a monthly journal known as the *Ewe Newsletter* edited by D. Chapman, one time leading member of the AEC. The journal started as a monthpiece of the All-Ewe Conference and from 1946 also appeared in an Ewe-language version. This enabled it to reach out to numerous Ewe readers in both British and French Togoland. The journal was most critical of the administering authorities in its bid to forge Ewe consciousness and

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, p. 164.

<sup>85</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 190; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 139; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 180-181.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid; Collier, *Ablode*, p. 175.

<sup>87</sup> This might be the reason why Collier suggests that 'prior to 1953, the name Togoland Union was used for the Togoland Congress'; Collier, *Ablode*, p. 191. For further clarification, see Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 35.

<sup>88</sup> D. Chapman and Gbeho both Anlo Ewes and founding members of the AEC moved to join the CPP.

<sup>89</sup> Mr S. G. Antor was born on 27 December 1913 in the non-Ewe division of Logba Alakpeti. He obtained teachers's Certificate 'A' (4-Year) from Akropong Presbyterian Teacher Training College in 1938. His first teaching job was at Hohoe Evangelical Presbyterian Middle School in 1938-40. It was at Koforidua where he was teaching in the late 1940s that he got involved in Togoland politics. From 1957-58, he was imprisoned by the CPP government for his role in Togoland politics and his alleged involvement in the disturbances that followed the 1956 plebiscite in Ewedome. He was a member of the Constituent Assembly in 1967-68 and went on to become Ghana's Ambassador to Togo under the Busia regime from 1968-72. He died in exile in Togo on 2 June 1986. Interview with Mr Antor's son, Bob Antor, a retired educationalist, 17 December 2007.

<sup>90</sup> See Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 139-147; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 182; Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 35.

nationalism.<sup>91</sup> As Skinner has shown, literacy in the Ewe language was key in mobilizing support for the unificationists.<sup>92</sup>

It is also important to establish the role of the UN Visiting Mission as a catalyst in the surge in Ewe nationalism and the decline of the NAs in the territory. Until 1946, the acrimonious political conflicts between the youth and chiefs in the Gold Coast were not prevalent in Ewedome. Even when the process of decolonization began in the Colony, Ewedome was largely a recipient of the product and not an active participant. Ewedome's involvement in the process towards independence started with its participation in the 1951 election. The point is that the situation in Ewedome was very different from other areas in the Gold Coast. The issue of whether to integrate British Togoland into the Gold Coast or to unify British and French Togolands seemed to have engaged the attention of the people of Ewedome more than decolonization itself. It was the presence of the Visiting Mission, which added a spark to the surge in Ewe national consciousness and an appetite for decolonization in Ewedome.

The presence of the Mission was important in the process of 'political activation and mobilization in which groups and strata of the population [were] progressively drawn into the vortex of active political involvement'.<sup>93</sup> In fact, the 1949 and 1952 Missions' report which recommended measures favouring Togoland unification testify to this assertion.<sup>94</sup> The Missions were responsible for the evolution of rival political groupings and the fierce struggle for recognition and power that became a feature of the years preceding independence in 1957. Most of the delegates on the Mission were from countries that were

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<sup>91</sup> *The Ewe Newsletter*, September, 1947, p. 1.

<sup>92</sup> Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p. 141-143.

<sup>93</sup> Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 51.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, p. 47.

essentially anti-colonial such as the USSR, China and India. They visited the territory in 1949, 1952 and 1955. The 1949 Visiting Mission, for example, found the NA system to be 'inconsistent with the progressive political development of the indigenous inhabitants of the Trust Territory towards self-government and independence'.<sup>95</sup> In addition, the Mission saw the outlook of the NAs as limited to the chiefly class as restrictive to the development of a sense of unity and a common identity among the inhabitants. This image of the NAs was contrary to the principles of the UN with its avowed objective of opening the political space for advancement towards self-government or independence. Indeed, the UN was at pains to ensure the democratization of the NAs as a pre-requisite for the ultimate advance to self-rule. It was in this regard that Coleman stressed the role of the Visiting Missions in 'the political awakening of the people of Togoland'.<sup>96</sup>

Thus, the desire by the Missions to democratise local government and, at the same time, promote the separate identity of Togoland provided fertile ground for Ewe national consciousness. It was this awareness created by the UN Visiting Mission that partly emboldened the zeal of the youth to fight for participation in local government. The youth conducted this fight, as in other parts of the Gold Coast, mostly through boycott of communal labour and the payment of taxes. The task of the Mission in ascertaining the sentiment of the inhabitants provided a platform for the western-educated literates such as Antor who began to feel that the future direction of their region was in their hands. The Missions whipped up anti-imperialist sentiments in the territory through 'the publicity given the principle of self-determination [leading to] fundamental changes in foreign

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<sup>95</sup> NA CO 96/790/4, Consideration of 1947 Report by Trusteeship Council, 1949.

<sup>96</sup> Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 51.

rule.’<sup>97</sup> Colonialism thus became the most criticised force as the inhabitants became aware of their rights to self-government and independence as well as their special position as a Trust Territory. We shall now see how the social and political change served to weaken the individual NAs in Ewedome.

The Atando NA in particular was an albatross around the neck of administrative officers. Nugent writes that the problems of Atando were never resolved until the era of the NAs ended in 1951.<sup>98</sup> This NA, constituted in 1949, was seen as a complete failure. Its failure had been due largely to internal dissension in Likpe and Ve divisions and to the fact that Atando had been used as ‘a sounding-board in the play of Togoland politics rather than as an administrative body’.<sup>99</sup> A further problem in Atando was that rich divisions like Gbi had been unwilling to help the poorer ones in the confederacy, while the taxpayers in the poorer divisions objected to paying a levy into the common pool and receiving nothing for their money. The Ve division was divided by a constitutional dispute concerning the head chief, the stoolfather and the sub-chief of Ve Kolenu.<sup>100</sup>

Lipke, one of the non-Ewe divisions to the north of Ewedome, had always been resentful of their inclusion in an Ewe dominated NA. For his decision to join Atando NA, the Grand Council of Likpe, led by Nana Mensah, resolved to destool their head chief, Togbe Akoto, on 24 April 1950.<sup>101</sup> The people of Bakpele, a sub-division of Likpe, refused

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<sup>97</sup> Welch, *Dream of Unity*, p. 74.

<sup>98</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 145.

<sup>99</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/142, Local Government Enquiries, CO, Cape Coast to the Governor, Gold Coast, 9 March 1952; For opposition in Likpe against Atando NA, see Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 40.

<sup>100</sup> PRAA/A ADM 39/1/505, Gbi Hohoe Local Council Enquiry, 20 November 1951.

<sup>101</sup> RAG/H No. 226.2, Likpe Native Affairs, Grand Council of Likpe to the President of Southern Togoland Council, 27 August 1951; PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/256, Petition-General, Likpe Grand Council to the Minister of Local Government, 12 August 1951. See also Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 144; Nugent, ‘Few Lesser People’, p. 170-173.

to pay taxes to the Atando treasury at the instigation of Nana Mensah.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, the attitude of this faction frequently necessitated intervention by the Gold Coast police force.<sup>103</sup> By 1950, the Atando NA had almost broken down after having existed for only one year. The finance board refused to cooperate with the secretary.<sup>104</sup> The youth of Ve division wished to have the Secretary, believed to be anti-Nkrumahist, dismissed but the chiefs of the Gbi division demurred.<sup>105</sup> Thus, Atando became a battle ground for Togoland politics.

The final blow to Atando was the alleged arrest of the sub-chief of Likpe Kukurantumi by Hohoe division in 1951. The sub-chief went to Hohoe, the main trading centre in the area, on 12 February 1951 and he was said to have been arrested, beaten and detained by the youth of Hohoe for six days for his role in opposing the inclusion of Likpe in Atando NA.<sup>106</sup> In the report sent to the DC of Kpando on 25 February 1951, the people of Likpe narrated how they had been suffering harassment when they visited Hohoe to attend hospital or to transact business.<sup>107</sup> Atando was therefore a major blot on the success of NA administration in Ewedome.

Internal disputes were not peculiar to Atando. Asogli was another hot spot of chieftaincy disputes. The history of chieftaincy in the Ho division of the state was a complicated one that spanned several generations from the end of the Asante wars in the 1870s to 1958. As we saw in Chapter 3, the Bankoe stool family had resented the transfer of their paramount status to Dome since the early days of amalgamation in the late 1920s.<sup>108</sup> This resentment

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<sup>102</sup> Nugent, 'Few Lesser People', p. 170.

<sup>103</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/256, Petition-General, 27 August 1951; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 144.

<sup>104</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/505, Report by the DC, Kpando, 20 November 1951.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* Gabusu, the head chief of Gbi, was a staunch member of the Togoland Congress.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Lawrance, 'Bankoe v. Dome', p. 250-253

grew in proportion when Howusu, the divisional chief of Dome, became the paramount chief of the NA.<sup>109</sup> This prevented the two divisions from working together. Moreover, the Asogli amalgamation had never been a happy one. Many of the divisions were extremely small and when they were placed alongside their more influential and richer neighbours, the latter became unwilling to sacrifice their resources for mere cooperation.

Added to the chieftaincy disputes was the retardative effect of Togoland politics, which divided the state between the AEC and the TU to the extent that there were five Togoland Union and twenty-three All-Ewe Conference divisions in the state in the late 1940s.<sup>110</sup> While the youth of Asogli supported the TU, the chiefs were for the AEC. Meanwhile, the Asogli Youth League (AYL), a group regarded by the chiefs as subversive of traditional authority, had been active in gaining supporters from among the *asafo* in the outlying divisions and as a result many of the youngmen in all of the divisions became actively opposed to the political opinions of their chiefs and elders.<sup>111</sup> Collier recounts how the AYL put pressure on Mote Kofi, the paramount chief of Asogli state to withdraw his support for the AEC and to throw his weight behind the TU in November 1949.<sup>112</sup>

In April 1949, when it became evident that Howusu, the paramount chief of Asogli state, had come under the influence of the TU, the other chiefs passed a resolution to elect their own president of the NA.<sup>113</sup> The issue became complicated when Agotime initially supported Howusu.<sup>114</sup> Agotime, a non-Ewe division, was the richest in the state. It was regarded at the time with a certain awe by the other divisions because of the qualities that

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Detailed discussion of these political parties follows in the next chapter.

<sup>111</sup> The opposition of Asogli Youth League to chiefs and the AEC is well covered in Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 119; Nugent, *Amugglers*, p. 172.

<sup>112</sup> Collier, 'Ablode', p. 57.

<sup>113</sup> This point was also made in Collier, 'Ablode', p. 57.

<sup>114</sup> RAG/H 2/110, Asogli Native Affair, Senior District Commissioner, Ho, to Chief Commissioner, Cape Coast, 14 March 1950.

its people displayed in the Asante war. It was the support from Agotime that enabled Howusu to call the bluff of his rivals in the Asogli NA. Later on, the secretary to the NA, F.Y. Medie, was able to prevail upon Agotime to withdraw its support for Howusu on condition that the chief of Agotime would be elected the paramount chief of Asogli state when the amendment order No. 62 of 1949 ordinance was made.<sup>115</sup>

True to the plan, the chief of Agotime was elected paramount chief of Asogli NA in 1949.<sup>116</sup> This apparent change of the constitution of Asogli NA to a confederacy system with an elected president was a severe blow to the amalgamated policy in Ewedome.<sup>117</sup> As expected, the secretary's position became a source of discontent. The youngmen of Ho had worked to incite public opinion against the secretary. Consequently, he was persuaded to tender his resignation.<sup>118</sup> During the period that these disputes lasted, the Asogli NA record books were lodged at the divisional court in Accra.<sup>119</sup> Added to this was the fact that Asogli had grown too large for effective administration. The 1948 census put the population of the area at 45,164 and there was frequent complaints of neglect from the component divisions, most distant from Ho.<sup>120</sup>

In 1949, Awatime state decided to pool the resources of all its divisions to implement a three-year development plan so that by the end of the third year, each division would have had some major work carried out in its area.<sup>121</sup> The plan was to use the revenue from

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid. For brief background information on Mr F. Y. Medie and his contribution to Asogli, see Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 170.

<sup>116</sup> RAG/H 2/110, Asogli Native Affair, Senior District Commissioner, Ho, to Chief Commissioner, Cape Coast, 14 March 1950.

<sup>117</sup> This point is also made in Collier, '*Ablode*', p. 25.

<sup>118</sup> RAG/H RAG/H 2/110, Asogli Native Affair, Senior District Commissioner, Ho, to Chief Commissioner, Cape Coast, 14 March 1950.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/511, Memorandum on the Composition of Local Councils in Ho, 25 April 1950.

<sup>121</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/518, SDC, Ho, to the CC of the Colony, Cape Coast., 28 September 1951.

Kpedze market to supplement revenue from taxes.<sup>122</sup> The divisional chief of Kpedze had always resisted any interference by the NA in his division. He was keen on developing his division independent of the state. Besides, the head chief was a staunch supporter of the TC while Adzatekpor was in league with the CPP. The attitude of the head chief of Kpedze was a source of considerable trouble. When an attempt was made by the state to collect the entire revenue from the market on 12 August 1950, the divisional chief tried to obstruct the rate collectors. But the youth rose against the chief and condemned his behaviour. The intervention of the youth notwithstanding, the divisional chief succeeded in inciting the stallholders to object to the payment of the rents imposed by the NA.

In Akpini, there was the gradual erosion of the authority of Dagadu Bulla from the 1930s. According to Brown, Bulla's involvement in cocoa business took him to stay in Accra and his long absence from the state stoked discontent among component divisions.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, *Togbe* Bulla owed many cocoa farmers whose cocoa he had collected and shipped to Holland in 1938.<sup>124</sup> The Kpando Asafo Union took advantage of *Togbe* Bulla's misconduct and took control of the state finances. Brown again noted that before 1948, there was little involvement of educated youngmen of Kpandu in Togoland politics.<sup>125</sup> But this changed from 1949 with the rise of the CPP. In addition, Akpini state was a geographically unwieldy unit, stretching diagonally as it did from Wli in the north-east to Tsoho in the south-west across the main communication line running from north to south. Yet its machinery of local government was not able to initiate development projects over

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<sup>122</sup> Hitherto, only two-thirds of the revenue from market went to the state treasury.

<sup>123</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 52.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

more than a very limited area.<sup>126</sup> This was the result of the inability of the NA treasurer to supervise works in outlying towns other than the headquarters.<sup>127</sup>

One of the main purposes of the local government reorganisation in 1949 was to cure the lack of executive control in the NA system. As it turned out, this problem could not be solved if the present size of Akpini NA was not trimmed down. The efficiency of revenue collection, the functioning of the courts, the control of markets and of all other local administration services in Ewedome varied inversely according to distance from the local government headquarters. Obviously, the presence of the UN Visiting Mission coupled with the precocious rise of the CPP in the Gold Coast from 1949 set the stage for the contest between integration and unification in British Togoland as a whole.

Thus, with the specific context of Ewedome, as Atando, Asogli, Awatime and Akpini have demonstrated and as we shall see in the next chapters, chief-subject antagonism went beyond mere agitation for chieftaincy to be delinked from local government. It complicated and takes forward the standard interpretation of rising generational conflict. The privileged position of the chiefs was therefore threatened when the British officials, being mindful of social and political transformations taking place in Ewedome coupled with political unrest in the Gold Coast, began to make significant but belated changes to the NAs. That reform, however, could not go far enough, as it was overtaken by rapid political and constitutional developments in the Gold Coast.

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<sup>126</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/518, SDC, Ho, to the CC of the Colony, Cape Coast, 28 September 1951.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

## The Coussey Committee and Local Government Reforms

The British colonial government had never been oblivious to the deficiencies inherent in the NAs, which was why it had since 1944 set up the machinery for the reform of native administration in the Colony.<sup>128</sup> In Ewedome, the 1949 reform which increased the participation of progressive non-traditional elements in the administration of the NAs and changed the native tribunals into native courts clearly testified to government's desire to see local government reformed. That attempt at reform, as stated earlier, was seen as belated only because of the 1948 unrest in the Gold Coast and the series of reforms that were to follow. The chiefs were simply incapable of meeting the socio-economic demands of a rapidly changing society in addition to containing the growing nationalist agitation. Not even a reformed NA system could provide a solution.

As far back as August 1947, a summer school was organised for officers from Africa at Cambridge aimed at stimulating thought and discussion on the problems of local government in African territories.<sup>129</sup> As a sequel to the summer school, a governors' conference was convened in London in November 1947 to examine the details of the recommendations of the Cambridge school. The recommendations were based on the collective experience of a large number of officers from the different African territories and could therefore be regarded as representing an agreed general statement of policy on local government in African territories. It represented a logical evolution of a 'modern' form of local government in African territories.

Essentially, the recommendations pointed to the need for a better organisation of local government and the value of applying UK experience to the problems of local government

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<sup>128</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 18.

<sup>129</sup> NA CO 96/810/6, Secretary of State to the Officer Administering the Gold Coast, 13 January 1947.

in Africa.<sup>130</sup> It was further emphasised that the aim of government policy must be to 'build up an effective and representative local council system within the framework of the NAs themselves with a chain of responsibility through district councils'.<sup>131</sup> By a representative local council, it was understood that members of the councils would, at least in part, be elected. Before the 1947 recommendations could be given serious consideration, however, the 1948 disturbances in the Gold Coast accelerated the process that would lead to the complete abolition of NAs. The causes of these disturbances have been examined in all the standard narrative of political change in the Gold Coast. But it is important to state here, as we noted in the last chapter, that a major cause of the disturbances was the frustration on the part of the educated elite anxious to take active part in politics coupled with the disappointment of ex-servicemen at post-war conditions.<sup>132</sup>

Arguably, the 1948 unrest ought not to have been of any consequence in Ewedome, considering its status as a Trust Territory whose future relation with the Gold Coast had not yet been determined. However, apart from the general post-war economic difficulties in all British colonies, the people of Ewedome had specific economic grievances with the government. The Cocoa Marketing Board was set up by statute as a semi-public corporation began operation in 1947 with an initial capital of £14,000,000 made available by the West African Produce Control.<sup>133</sup> Its remit was to cushion the effects of price fluctuations.<sup>134</sup> No inhabitant of Togoland was a member of the Board. This constituted a major source of discontent and agitations directed at the NAs and the colonial government.

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<sup>130</sup> NA CO 96/810/6, Conference of African Governors, November 1947.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> NA CO 96 796/5, Report of Commission of Enquiry into Disturbances in the Gold Coast, 1948, p. 1. The youth felt the government was delaying 'Africanization'. For details, see Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 50-74.

<sup>133</sup> NA CO 96/790/4, Consideration of 1947 Report by Trusteeship Council, March to April 1949.

<sup>134</sup> The Board was expected to fix prices at a level that would 'give the cocoa farmer a stable income' See Coleman, 'Togoland' p. 21.

The Togoland Congress accused the colonial government of 'using the Cocoa Marketing Board to swindle Togoland cocoa farmers of their fair share from cocoa proceeds'.<sup>135</sup> It is important to note, however, that in 1946/47 the area that came to be known as the Volta Region (including the British Trust Territory) produced 16.2 thousand tons of cocoa.<sup>136</sup> This constituted only 8.4 percent of the overall cocoa produced in Ghana in that period.

The report of the Watson Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances recommended an amendment of the Gold Coast constitution to give every citizen of ability an opportunity to gain political experience. These recommendations had wider implications for the Trust Territory too. It was this recommendation that led to the appointment of the Coussey Committee in 1948.<sup>137</sup> The new governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, and his group of younger Colonial Service officials who came to replace the older colonial staff showed willingness to dialogue and negotiate with the leadership of the political groupings.<sup>138</sup>

It is worthy of note that the Coussey recommendations on local government took into account some of the policies worked out in Cambridge and London in 1947. Part two of the report, which focused entirely on local government, recommended far-reaching reforms that would change completely the structure of local administration.<sup>139</sup> While the report acknowledged the contribution of the NAs to local administration as 'definite progress and solid achievement', it identified three weaknesses inherent in the system.<sup>140</sup> To begin with,

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<sup>135</sup> "Most Secret" *Politics in Togoland: The British Government's Attempt to Annex Togoland to the Gold Coast, by the Movement for a Democracy of Content* (New York, 1953), p. 6. This document was produced by the Togoland Congress.

<sup>136</sup> For the data on the quantity of cocoa produced in the region and other parts of Ghana from 1933 to 1970, see Merrill J. Bateman, 'An Econometric Analysis of Ghanaian Cocoa Supply', in R. A. Kotey, C. Okali and B. E. Rourke(eds.), *The Economic of Cocoa Production and Marketing* (Legon, 1973), p. 315.

<sup>137</sup> The committee was made up of some chiefs and people drawn from the UGCC. Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 170; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 78

<sup>138</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 29-30; Austin, *Politics*, p. 85.

<sup>139</sup> Coussey Committee Report, 1949.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17-18.

the report felt that the 1949 ordinance which made provision for the nomination of 'commoners' onto the NAs and the state councils did not go far enough in democratising the NAs. Those nominated were few and their inclusion was said to have strengthened rather than weaken the privileged position of the chiefs and their elders, much to the discomfiture of people with the requisite capabilities and willingness to contribute to the progress of society.<sup>141</sup>

It was also noted that the high rate of illiteracy among the members of the NAs was a major deficiency in the proper functioning of the system.<sup>142</sup> Finally, the report attributed the cumbersome nature of the procedures of the NAs to the inability of the latter to attract qualified support staff.<sup>143</sup> The report therefore suggested that members of the local councils should pass a literacy test.<sup>144</sup> At the heart of the issue was the substantial reduction in the influence of the traditional authorities in local affairs. Added to this was the fear on the part of the chiefs of being left entirely out of the business of local government.<sup>145</sup> To mitigate this loss of power, paragraph 435 of the Coussey report made a vague reference to the possibility of establishing a 'privy council'.<sup>146</sup> But this proposal was rejected by the Secretary of State.<sup>147</sup>

Although the newly formed CPP had reservations about the report, it saw aspects of the report relating to local government as a necessary step in 'reducing the power of traditional bodies in the country side'.<sup>148</sup> The British government generally agreed with the Coussey Report that only the educated elements could provide the energy and progressive spirit

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid, p. 17.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> NA CO 96/822/2, Gold Coast Constitution, Local Government, 1951.

<sup>145</sup> NA CO 96/824/4, Constitutional Matters Affecting Chiefs, 1949.

<sup>146</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 3/6/69, Coussey Committee Report, 1949.

<sup>147</sup> *West African Affairs*, 10, 7 April 1951, p. 4.

<sup>148</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 30; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 87.

needed to manage rising post-war expectations.<sup>149</sup> But the colonial government also felt that there was a looming danger that the councils could be, in turn, dominated by the educated elite. It was essential, according to British officials, to pay greater attention to giving means of expression to the inert and politically unconscious part of the population for purely local interest, as against the educated and progressive parts.<sup>150</sup> Chiefs had stood by the government in times of difficulty and the feeling among some government officials was that they owed it to the chiefs that their future should not be handed over for determination by an anti-chieftaincy majority in the local councils.<sup>151</sup>

Indeed, Hailey had warned as far back as 1942 that:

intervention in the interest of the educated or similar elements may of course have its dangers. An educated or trading section which can obtain a controlling position in a native council may in time constitute an oligarchy which will not be less harmful to the interest of the general community than the dominance of a chiefly family or conservative elders.<sup>152</sup>

Change, according to the officials, must be gradual enough to allow the majority of the people to be sufficiently literate and politically experienced to protect themselves against exploitation.<sup>153</sup> So far as Ewedome was concerned, there was the need for a corresponding degree of cultural, political and economic development to accommodate the changes envisaged. The government averred that it was necessary to develop local councils from the

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<sup>149</sup> NA CO 96/822/2, Colonial Office on Coussey Committee Report, 1949. This view of the Colonial government that the Coussey Report would enhance 'administrative efficiency and accountability' is also made in Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 30. For the impact of the Coussey recommendations on traditional authority, see Cooper, *African since 1940*, p. 52.

<sup>150</sup> NA CO 96 822/2, Colonial Office on Coussey Committee Report, 1949

<sup>151</sup> Ibid; NA CO 96 824/4, Constitutional Matters affecting Chiefs, 1949.

<sup>152</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, Native Administration p. 16.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid; NA CO 96 822/2, Colonial Office on Coussey Committee Report, 1949.

existing system by orderly means and in a manner acceptable to the chiefs and the general population.<sup>154</sup> Moreover, the issue of 'democracy' ought not to be overemphasied. In the words of Hailey, chiefs had always been, in many respects, 'dependent on the assent of their councillors'.<sup>155</sup> He cited the Gold Coast, where constitutional devices existed for dispensing with chiefs who attempted to act unilaterally.<sup>156</sup> This might not be democratic by conventional standards, but as Hailey points out, 'it was equally not autocracy'.<sup>157</sup> What was important was to harness the loyalty and enthusiasm of all segments of society.<sup>158</sup> This could only be achieved if the new system of local government was based on the already familiar institutions in the communities. Even more worrying to officials was the possibility of friction developing between state councils composed entirely of chiefs and the new local councils. State councils were to have power to make laws on matters affecting the social and cultural life of the people. The local councils, on the other hand, would deal with all local government matters. Yet, social and cultural life of the people had implications for local government matters too.

In December 1949, a select committee was appointed by the Gold Coast Legislative Council to settle the precise manner in which the recommendations could be applied to the various territories. The committee recommended that since the new form of local authorities that were to be established were so divorced from the old NAs, the new bill should be called a 'Local Government Ordinance'.<sup>159</sup> The Coussey Committee had proposed three classes of councils which were designated 'A', 'B' and 'C', and were to be

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/42, Native Administration, p. 17.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> RAG/H RAO/C. 458/48, Chief Commissioner to all District Commissioners on Select Committee on Local Government, 25 April 1950.

known as 'Local Authorities'.<sup>160</sup> The select committee found the Coussey proposal too elaborate and rather suggested two classes of councils composed of district and local councils and the Legislative Council accepted that.<sup>161</sup> According to the structure, all local councils irrespective of whether they were in the urban or rural areas were subordinate to district councils. They were, however, autonomous in the performance of functions delegated to them and they had direct access to the regional administration in respect of those functions under the established instrument.<sup>162</sup>

The district and local councils would be composed of a majority of elected non-traditional members drawn from within the area concerned and by representation of the traditional authorities (from existing state councils) up to not less than one-third of the total membership. In effect, a mixture of direct appointment and elections were to be made to local councils, while members of district councils were to be drawn from the local councils. The new local councils were to be accorded a wide range of powers and functions relating to taxation, education, forestry, land conservation, agriculture, public health, control of markets, and maintenance of roads, among others. The functions of the paramount and divisional chiefs and their councils were to be embodied in a completely separate ordinance.

Local government reform was seen as the essential bottom tier of a new, increasingly democratized system of rule, eventually leading to full self-government. Thus Coussey's local government proposals were part of a bigger package of constitutional reform at the centre of which was a Legislative Assembly, two-thirds of which was to be elected on a

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<sup>160</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/47, Report of the Select Committee on Local Government, 1950, p. 2; PRAAD/A ADM5/3/69, Coussey Committee Report, 1949, p. 20.

<sup>161</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/142, Memorandum on Local Government Reform in the Gold Coast, 1951.

<sup>162</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/47, Report of the Select Committee on Local Government, 1950, p. 2.

popular franchise and one-third elected by the existing chief-dominated Territorial Councils. In December 1950, a new constitution giving greater representation and say in government to Africans came into effect.<sup>163</sup> In the general election that followed in 1951, the CPP won the majority of seats in the new National Assembly. Nkrumah himself won the Accra municipal seat even though he was in prison at the time the election was conducted.<sup>164</sup> The Southern Togoland Council elected F. Y. Asare as a territorial member to the Assembly, though the Togo Union tried to prevent Togoland from taking part in the elections.<sup>165</sup>

Nkrumah thus came out of prison in February 1951 to be the 'Leader of Government Business'.<sup>166</sup> In 1952, his title was changed to the Prime Minister.<sup>167</sup> At the same time, the British officials had to repackage Nkrumah and present him to the people 'as a responsible leader'.<sup>168</sup> Under the constitution, the appointment of the Executive Council was still the preserve of the governor, not the leading party in the Legislative Assembly.<sup>169</sup> A number of important departments such as finance, defence, external affairs and justice were still under the control of the Colonial Office. Nkrumah now began to collaborate with the British under what he termed 'tactical action' but was described by Apter as a 'combination of ideological purity and pure political opportunism'.<sup>170</sup>

For Nkrumah, the democratization of local government offered the chance for the CPP to replace what he regarded as outdated, anti-democratic and anti-CPP chiefs with

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<sup>163</sup> Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 179.

<sup>164</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 103.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8 and 147.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>168</sup> See Cooper, *Africa since 1940*, p. 64.

<sup>169</sup> The LA was a unicameral house set up under the 1950 constitution. See Apter, *Ghana*, p. 180.

<sup>170</sup> Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 214.

'modern', democratic and, hopefully, CPP-supporting local government bodies.<sup>171</sup> In August 1951, the local government ordinance was passed into law. Even before the 1951 election, there was much evidence that the CPP was hostile to chieftaincy.<sup>172</sup> Its paper, the *Accra Evening News*, founded in 1948, carried a famous editorial on 5 January 1950 in which it warned chiefs opposed to the CPP that they would one day 'run away fast and leave their sandals behind them'.<sup>173</sup>

The institution of chieftaincy, however, would continue to operate in the existing state councils. Thus, the functions of the state councils were to be limited to matters of constitutional nature affecting traditional authorities. These included the selection and enstoolment of chiefs, maintenance of stool property and general responsibility for customary law. However, any modification to customary law in a state had to be submitted to the governor in council for approval.<sup>174</sup> Another important change effected in the rural areas since the coming into office of the diarchy was that the British District Commissioners became Government Agents.<sup>175</sup> The change of title was to placate the local people by creating the impression that the district officers were no longer agents of colonialism but representatives of the new diarchy regime.

### **The Delimitation of Local Council Areas**

The Coussey Committee suggested three guiding principles for local government reforms. First, the factor to be considered for setting up councils was 'community of

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<sup>171</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 22; Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 242.

<sup>172</sup> The hostility of Nkrumah towards chieftaincy in the Colony and Ashanti is well covered in Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 32.

<sup>173</sup> *Accra Evening News*, George Padmore Library, 5 January 1950. The point is also made in Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 22.

<sup>174</sup> RAG/H, State Council (Colony and Southern Togoland) Ordinance, 1952 (Not Filed).

<sup>175</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 159

interest of the people in the area'.<sup>176</sup> This implied that existing states and divisional organisations should, wherever feasible, be the basis for the formation of a local authority. Second, the population of the area had to be taken into account and third, the resources of the area. A strong caveat to the above principles was that:

although the existing states would form the basis of the formation of local authorities, yet it was important that efficiency and convenience of administration should not be sacrificed to this principle. Consequently, wherever there was a conflict between geographical factors and traditional allegiance, the former should prevail if that would lead to more efficient administration.<sup>177</sup>

Certainly, Coussey's principal criterion was fraught with many difficulties if it was to be used in defining local government areas, particularly in politically fragmented regions such as Ewedome. In the first place, there was the inability of the inhabitants to understand the difference between the new local government system and the old NAs. Second, complications were likely to arise over the election of traditional members of a council should it be decided that, for administrative purposes, part of a state should be included in the area of a council whose area of administration was based on that of a different state. Finally, there was the possibility of land disputes engulfing the councils in cases where a local council area might cut across existing boundaries. Experience from the NAs from 1932 to 1949 in Ewedome shows that the overriding factor in the establishment of a workable local government system was the influence of traditional ties.<sup>178</sup> In the view of

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<sup>176</sup>PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/69, Coussey Committee Report on Local Government, 1949, p. 20.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/47, Report by the Select Committee on Local Government, 1950, p. 2; RAG/H RAO/C 234/49, Memorandum for the members of the Standing Committee of the JPC, 25 April 1950.

government officials, the co-operation of the people was the *sine qua non* of any local government system and the people should be encouraged to accept the new system even at the expense of a theoretical loss in administrative efficiency.<sup>179</sup>

To obviate the above problems, an attempt was made to strike a compromise to ensure that the benefits of the new system would not be lost through too sudden and complete a break with the NA system. It was seen as desirable by the select committee to adopt existing NA areas as the basis for local councils. The select committee conceded that the new conception of district councils might prove acceptable only if the local councils conformed, as far as possible, to NA areas and were at the same time 'amenable to the principle of community of interest'.<sup>180</sup> Furthermore, it was recommended that special consideration should be given to individual cases and the inhabitants should be consulted in those areas where a complete departure from the existing NA system was contemplated.<sup>181</sup>

In effect, each local council was to be established by separate instrument to allow the 'supersession' of a NA area by a new local council to be looked at thoroughly on a case-by-case basis.<sup>182</sup> The bill enabled enquiries to be held in connection with the preparation of those instruments.<sup>183</sup> In addition, by establishing each council by a separate statutory instrument, the ordinance provided considerable latitude in relations to the powers and functions vested in each local council. For example, the power to impose rates could be vested in a local council or in the district council. The enquiries were to be carried out in two phases. Phase one consisted of the 'democratisation' of the existing NAs, which would

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 5/3/47, Report by the Select Committee on Local Government, 1950, p. 2.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, p. 6.

<sup>182</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/142, Memorandum on Local Government Reform in the Gold Coast, 1951.

<sup>183</sup> The new councils were to be known as Local Authorities. RAG/H, Press Release No. 1352/51, 29 October 1951. See also Coussey Report, p. 20.

be reconstituted in the form of local authorities, which would themselves carry out, in the first instance, much the same functions as the old NAs and over similar areas.<sup>184</sup> The second phase was to organise the re-distribution of functions or any regrouping of areas which might be desirable.<sup>185</sup>

### **Petitions and Protests**

In Ewedome, the delimitation of new local council areas brought to the fore, once more, the controversial policy of amalgamation. The process was greeted by similar protests and representations that bedevilled that policy in the 1930s. The new local government system required that some of the existing states be broken up. Yet, strong feelings of independence still existed. Many states were seeped in petty political squabbles and objected to joining a local council which bore the name of a neighbour. These divisive tendencies might well lead to a general disintegration of local councils into a multiplicity of small local groups all refusing to co-operate with one another. It became an urgent necessity for agreed policy to be formulated on the structure of local government in Ewedome with particular reference to the numerous applications received from small groups for separate local councils.<sup>186</sup> The enquiry team included the GA, his assistants and some of his administrative staff, most of whom were indigenoues representatives.<sup>187</sup>

The first petition for a separate local council came from Alavanyo division in the Akpini state in 1952. Alavanyo had a population of 2,659 according to the 1948 census.<sup>188</sup> Kpando itself was agitating for a local council of its own. It had a population of 7,661 and the

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> RAG/H D.A/D260, Regional Officer, Ho, to the Minister of Local Government, Accra, 28 November 1952.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> RAG/H D.A/D6281, Government Agent, Ho, to the Regional Officer, Ho, 7 December 1952

remaining divisions, including Alavanyo, had a total population of 5,944.<sup>189</sup> The desire of Kpando was always to wash its hands of the other divisions, which were regarded as retarding its progress.<sup>190</sup> In Asogli, the chief and the people of Ho Bankoe even before the inception of the Asogli Local Council had repeatedly asked for a separate local or urban council for the town.<sup>191</sup> The people of Bankoe and their chief had not as yet reconciled themselves with the decision of the enquiry team to place the whole of Ho in one council: Asogli Local Council. They had withdrawn their representative members from the council and had even started collecting their own levy for which a post office savings bank account was opened in 1952.<sup>192</sup> It became apparent that the old Bankoe-Dome conflict of the 1930s was going to be a stumbling block in the successful operation of the proposed Asogli Local Council.

As usual, Atando posed the greatest challenge when the enquiry team met all the divisions at Ve on 1 December 1951.<sup>193</sup> Despite the fact that Atando had been a failure, no one division was prepared to say, in the presence of the other two divisions, that it wished to break away from the confederacy. When the Assistant District Commissioner visited the three divisions separately and had private conversation with the chiefs and their elders, he found a general satisfaction in all three divisions that their confederacy was to be brought to an end.<sup>194</sup> In a protest letter to the government against their inclusion in Atando NA and the proposal to convert Atando into a local council, the people of Likpe stated that

a power backed by a law placed in the hands of a backward

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> PRAAD/D ADM 39/1/505, Gbi Local Council Enquiry, 20 November 1951.

<sup>194</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/505, ADC to Officer in Charge, Gbi Hohoe LC Enquiry, 5 December 1951.

people to applied against people against whom they have a hereditary grudge and deep seated time immemorial bitterest enmity and hatred persecutions unprovoked prosecutions must be the logical out-come among such semi-backward people.<sup>195</sup>

The tone of the protest letter epitomised the degree of animosity among the three component divisions. It would therefore be imprudent, according to the enquiry team, to convert Atando NA into a local council. The Gbi division, with a population of 7,822 people, including Hohoe, a major commercial centre for the whole of southern Togoland, was thought to be rich and capable enough of supporting its own local council. In southern Togoland, only in Gbi and in Anfoega was it proposed by the CPP government that a separate local council, not based on an existing NA, should be formed.<sup>196</sup> Apart from the sole exception of Sefwi Bekwai, no local council had been recommended for an area whose population was lower than 10,000 in the Gold Coast proper.<sup>197</sup>

This recommendation for a separate local council for Gbi division was made in order to meet the special needs of Hohoe town.<sup>198</sup> It was felt that if Hohoe continued to expand, it might be capable of developing at some future date into an urban council. Moreover, looking at the finances of Atando, Gbi by itself would not fare any worse than the NA did as a whole and there were good grounds to expect it to do considerably better.<sup>199</sup> The name Gbi-Hohoe Local Council was chosen instead of Gbi Local Council because it was thought that by bringing in the name of Hohoe town, stress would be laid on the essentially urban

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/505, Schedule to the Draft Instrument on the Report on Gbi Local Council, 20 November 1951.

<sup>197</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/142, Chief Commissioner to the Officer in Charge, Enquiry Team, Hohoe, 23 October 1951.

<sup>198</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/505, Schedule to the Draft Instrument on the Report on Gbi Local Council, 20 November 1951.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

nature of that local council.<sup>200</sup> This had the added advantage of forestalling any objections from other rural divisions which might argue that if the Gbi division could have its own local council, there was no reason why their division should not receive the same treatment.

The next issue for the enquiry team in Atando was where to place Ve and Likpe divisions. It was proposed that Lipke should join the Buem Lefanas local council to the north of Ewedome. Separating Lipke and putting it elsewhere did not mean any greater likelihood of its cooperation, but it was probably better to keep a non-cooperative unit outside Gbi Hohoe, which had an urban responsibility.<sup>201</sup> Although Ve initially made a representation for a separate local council, they later gave in to the decision to include them in the proposed East Dain local council.<sup>202</sup> Initially, the proposal generated yet another protest from Logba, Nyagbo, Have, Agate, Tafi and Woadze divisions.<sup>203</sup> The protest was in respect of the headquarters of the local council. The group maintained that the headquarters should be sited at Logba Alakpeti instead of Ve, the headquarters of the defunct Atando NA. If the headquarters was moved to Logba it was likely that Ve division with a population of 5,236 might try to secede.<sup>204</sup> Ve might carry with it the divisions of Wli, Fodome, Liati and Leklebi whose combined population totalled 5,131.<sup>205</sup> This would leave the protesting divisions with a population of 5,820 without a local council.<sup>206</sup>

The refusal of Anfoega to join Akpini Local Council or any other local council was a threat to the entire programme of local government reorganization in the region.<sup>207</sup> It will

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/142, Local Government Enquiry, 9 March 1952

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> RAG/H ACC No.67/54, Resolution by Six Divisional Chiefs to the Government Agent, Ho, 23 September 1952.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid,

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 511/50, Memorandum from Anfoega to the Trusteeship Council, 15 August 1951.

be recalled that Anfoega had had no experience of local government since it had never formed part of a NA. They set out three conditions under which they would join any local council. First, due regard should be given to Anfoega as a separate entity independent of the other divisions in any such council.<sup>208</sup> Second, due consideration should be given in assignment of seats to Anfoega as an independent division on the council.<sup>209</sup> Third, there should be an independent divisional treasury for Anfoega. In the absence of the fulfilment of these conditions, Anfoega would demand a separate council.<sup>210</sup> In the end, not only was the request for a local council granted, but also a separate native court and a police force were established for Anfoega.<sup>211</sup> This decision to treat Anfoega differently sparked a wave of protests throughout Ewedome. Later events showed that Anfoega was a stronghold of the CPP. Anfoega was one division that welcomed the CPP into Ewedome because of that division's long standing antagonism with the British colonial government over amalgamation. Anfoega's support for the CPP enabled it to be granted the special dispensation for its own council. As Nugent has shown, *Togbe Tepre Hodo III*, the paramount chief of Anfoega, was one of the traditional rulers that the CPP won into its fold in Ewedome.<sup>212</sup>

The Awatime NA was the only state which posed little problem for the enquiry team. It was relatively stable and had a much respected paramount chief in the person of Adzatekpor of Awatime.<sup>213</sup> It was accordingly recommended that the Awatime NA be replaced with a local council covering the same area. It was also suggested that to

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<sup>208</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 458/48, Memorandum from Anfoega to the Select Committee on Local Government, 1 July 1950.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> PAG/H RAO/C.1079, Anfoega Local Council, Native Court and Police Force, 4 September 1952.

<sup>212</sup> Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 213. See also PAG/H RAO/C. 1079, Government Agent, Kpando to Judicial Adviser, Cape Coast, 30 August 1952. Hodo III was one of the chiefs who protested against German occupation of Ewedome. It took a German expedition to subdue him in 1901. See Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 212.

<sup>213</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/511, The Composition of the Local Councils in Ho District, 28 September 1951.

emphasise the difference between the new local council and the state, the local council should have a different name. It is worth remembering that when the amalgamation of divisions was effected in 1932, the name Awatime was adopted for the NA because Awatime was the largest division in the state and the paramount chief came from Awatime. Under the amalgamation, however, the Ewe language was adopted as the official language for the transaction of business by the state. Even the official language of the state courts was Ewe. Since the coming into force of the new local government ordinance of December 1951, the Ewe-speaking divisions had looked forward to pushing their cultural 'dominance' over the Awatime-speaking people a step further into a political dominance.

The Ewe-speaking states used their majority position on the state council to change the name of the state from Awatime to *Hokpe* State Council and the local authority to *Yingor* Local Council in 1952.<sup>214</sup> These were Ewe names. In addition, they voted to move the headquarters of the state and the local council from Vane in Awatime division to Dzolokpuita, an Ewe-speaking division. In effect, Hokpe state superseded the Awatime State Council and Yingor Local Council superseded the Awatime NA. The adoption of the name Hokpe was suggestive of what took place on that day in 1932 when Captain Lilley brought the Ewe and Awatime people together to form the amalgamated Awatime state. *Ho* is an Ewe word meaning town and *kpe* means to meet.<sup>215</sup> *Hopke* therefore means the coming together of different towns.<sup>216</sup> *Yingor*, on the other hand, means to 'move forward' and it signified their desire to advance the development of their divisions.

This change of name did not go down well with Awatime people. They saw the change of names and the transfer of the headquarters of the local council to Dzolokpuita as an

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<sup>214</sup> PRAAAD/A ADM 39/1/183, Yingor Local Council to Awatime Traditional Authority, 6 February 1953.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

orchestrated move by the Ewe-speaking divisions to dominate Awatime. In a strongly worded petition to the government in February 1953, the people of Awatime demanded a separate local council.<sup>217</sup> They indicated their resolve not to pay taxes to Yingor local council and also not to take part in the activities of the Hokpe state. While no official reasons were adduced for rejecting the request by Awatime, it is reasonable to suggest that if that request was granted, Adzatekpor would cease to be the paramount chief over the Ewe divisions.

In the case of Asogli NA, a decision was taken to split it into two forming Anyigbe and Dzigbe local councils.<sup>218</sup> There was an alternative proposal to set up one council, but this proposal was rejected by other divisions which would not like to join a local council whose ceremonial president would be Howusu of Dome.<sup>219</sup> Meanwhile, Asogli State Council was not able to meet for a long time and whether in fact it could be said to exist at all was doubtful.<sup>220</sup> In fact, as we have seen, Ho-Bankoe and Ho-Dome were implacable rivals of long standing. It was certain that anything like a representative meeting of the state council could not be held at the time because of the feud between the two divisions.<sup>221</sup> Thus, the only alternative way of electing traditional members to the local councils in Asogli was to have them elected by the divisional chiefs sitting in council. Any mention of the Asogli State Council in the instrument setting up the local council comprising all the divisions of the old Asogli NA might lead to complete boycott of the local council.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/703, Awatime Traditional Authorities to the Governor, Accra, 21 February 1953.

<sup>218</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/305, Quarterly Report-Ho sub-District, 31 December 1951.

<sup>219</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/518, Petition –Akoefe Chiefs to SDC Ho, 6 May 1952.

<sup>220</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/147, ADC, Ho, to the CCC, Cape Coast, December 1951.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

## The New Councils

By May 1952, delimitation of the first group of local councils had been completed.<sup>223</sup> In place of the four old NAs (including Atando), ten local council were created initially in Ewedome.

### LOCAL COUNCILS IN EWEDOME IN 1952<sup>224</sup>

DISTRICT	FORMER NATIVE AUTHORITY	LOCAL COUNCILS
Ho	Awatime	Yingor
	Asogli	Adaklu
		Asogli
		Anyigbe
		Dzigbe
Kpando	Akpini	Ablode
		Anfoega
		Akpini
		East Dain <sup>225</sup>
		Gbi Hohoe

As regards the election of traditional members, the Senior DC noted that the recommendations, in so far as Kpando and Ho districts were concerned, departed in some respects from the proposals contained in the report of the Colony Select Committee on local government.<sup>226</sup> He recommended, for instance, that except where a local council area was coterminous with the area of a state, as in the case with Awatime, they should be elected by a council of chiefs composed of the paramount chief (if any) and divisional chiefs in the

<sup>223</sup> RAG/H ACC/No. 493, Local Enterprise, 1952-1954, p.16.

<sup>224</sup> Awudome and Peki Local Councils were missing in the above table because they did not form part of the NAs in Ewedome. It was later in 1953, following the creation of the TVT Region, that Awudome was included in the Ho District Council and Peki was made to join Kpando District.

<sup>225</sup> As we noted, some of the members of Atando joined the East Dain Local Council.

<sup>226</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/518, SDC to the Governor, Accra, 28 September 1951.

area of the local council.<sup>227</sup> The presidency of the local council was to be elected by a council of chiefs or by the state council where a local council area was coterminous with the area of a state to serve, for a one year term. The president had no casting vote and he presided only on ceremonial occasions.<sup>228</sup> The table below shows the councils which replaced the NAs.

The proposal to divide the territories of the NAs into local councils in 1951 revealed a technical problem in relation to the native courts, police and prisons. It was proposed that the area of jurisdiction of native courts should be left unaltered as far as possible.<sup>229</sup> But this was not feasible because it would necessitate a native court exercising jurisdiction outside the area of authority of a local council which would finance it. In this regard, there was an urgent need to make slight alterations in the areas of jurisdiction of the existing courts to adjust them to coincide with the proposed local councils areas. For the NA prisons, they were to be administered by the local council in whose area they were situated.<sup>230</sup> Native Authority police force was absorbed into the local council structure but was to be known as Local Authority Police. They were to perform much the same functions except that they were no longer expected to serve as guards to the chiefs or run errand for them.<sup>231</sup>

The new local government structure could not be deemed complete without some organization of local councils into districts councils. Under the old NA system, British officials with indigenous supporting staff headed the district headquarters. The transition to

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid .

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/142, Draft Instrument on Local Councils in Southern Togoland, 1951.

<sup>230</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/142, Draft Instrument on Local Councils in Southern Togoland, 1951.

<sup>231</sup> Interviews with Mr Edem Gbadegbe, retired registrar of Dzolopkuita Local Council, 20 May 2000. See also RAG/H ACC. 277/52 Native Authority Police-Proposal, 1952.

the new form of local government gave opportunities to non-traditional indigenous inhabitants to have an increasing degree of participation in the administration of their affairs at the district level. Some Government Agents had reservations about the setting up of district councils.<sup>232</sup> District councils in other parts of the Gold Coast had not been successful. In the Colony, there were doubts whether the local councils could afford to support district councils financially. As of 1952 only two district councils had been formed in the Colony, both for the centralised states of Akim Abuakwa and Kwahu, and it was proposed to proceed cautiously with the establishment of others.<sup>233</sup> In Asante, nearly all the district councils had been established but many were failing to secure good attendance at meetings.<sup>234</sup> The crux of the matter, however, was that the new local government system with its elaborate structures was more expensive to run than the old NAs.

In 1951, changes were made in the administrative boundaries of the Ho/Kpando districts. A new district headquarters was opened at Jasikan in 1951 to administer the non-Ewe-speaking areas in the northern part of the region.<sup>235</sup> Krachi, which was formerly part of the Northern Territories, was included in the southern section in 1950 and now became part of the Jasikan district in 1951.<sup>236</sup> The composition of the district councils was such that not less than one-third of the traditional members from each local council sat on the district council. These traditional members were either elected from among the members of the component local councils or otherwise as agreed by the state council(s). All the non-traditional members of a district council were elected from the component local councils

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<sup>232</sup> RAG/H RAO/C451/15, Conference of Government Agents, Ho, 25 June 1953.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 458/48 Chief Commissioner, Cape Coast to Select Committee on Local Government, 25 April 1950.

<sup>236</sup> RAG/H C 458/48, Akpini NA to the Select Committee on Local Government, 6 June 1951.

according to the population of the individual local councils. For example, a local council with a population of 6,000 might be entitled to one member. Where applicable, a few seats were reserved for members representing 'special interests', though the records were silent on what constituted 'special interest'.

### KPANDO DISTRICT COUNCIL

Local Councils	Traditional Members	Representative Members	Total
Anfoega	1	1	2
Ablode	1	3	4
Akpini	2	3	5
East Dain	2	4	6
Gbi-Hohoe	1	2	3
Peki-Guan	2	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>26</b>

### HO DISTRICT COUNCIL

Local Council	Traditional Members	Representative Members	Total
Adaklu	2	1	3
Anyigbe	3	1	4
Asogli	3	1	4
Awudome	2	1	3
Dzigbe	3	2	5
Yingor	3	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>

In deciding on the boundaries of the district councils, much consultation was done with the various local councils to determine the district under which each council would like to

work. Meanwhile, the policy was to ensure that all the district councils were as equal as possible in size and that the lands of the various councils within a district were contiguous. To achieve this balance, it was decided to include the Peki-Guan and Awudome local councils in Kpando district. Consequently, the creation of the Trans-Volta Togoland Region in line with the recommendations of Coussey and Phillipson reports became very urgent. The area of the Trans-Volta Togoland Region was demarcated in section two of the State Councils (Colony and Southern Togoland) Ordinance, 1952. It included southern Togoland and contiguous areas of the Gold Coast such as the states of Anlo and Peki and the divisions that formerly constituted the Tongu NA.<sup>237</sup> This covered a total area of about 9,000 square miles and a total population of about half a million persons.<sup>238</sup> Its implementation, however, was delayed by protests from the Southern Togoland Council and the Togoland Congress.<sup>239</sup> These notwithstanding, the government created the TVT Region in June 1952. This paved the way for Peki and Awudome, which were not part of the trust territory, to become part of the local government re-organization in Ewedome.<sup>240</sup> The proposal to include Peki and Awudome in Kpando district, however, presented a problem of its own, which delayed the restructuring process until 1953.

There had been a long-standing dispute between Peki and Awudome since 1886 in which the latter had fought doggedly to secede from the former. Following the introduction of the Coussey Report, Awudome was granted a separate local council. This singular act by government gave Awudome the impression that their separation from Peki state was recognised *de facto* if not *de jure*. Consequently, Awudome decided to join Ho district, not

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<sup>237</sup> State Councils (Colony and Southern Togoland) Ordinance, 1952.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> *Daily Graphic*, 17 November 1952, p. 1; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 84.

<sup>240</sup> A further discussion of the regional reorganization and the protests that it generated follows in the next chapter.

because they had a greater affinity with the people of Ho but because they wanted to emphasise their independence from Peki. The reaction from Peki was very swift. They felt strongly that Awudome should not be allowed to join Ho district because that would be tantamount to official recognition of the separation of Awudome from the Peki state.<sup>241</sup> Peki had made a demand to be allowed to stand on its own as a district, but to emphasise its resolve not to let Awudome go, Peki agreed to join Kpando district on condition that Awudome would as well be included in the Kpando District Council.<sup>242</sup>

After a protracted negotiation, it was decided that traditional allegiance should not be the basis of establishing district councils; otherwise, the councils could be distracted by the overbearing influence of traditional authorities. More importantly, the inclusion of Awudome and Peki in the same district could be counter-productive in the sense that the feud between the two states could engulf the whole district. Peki obviously had many advantages in joining Kpando district. It was likely to get more attention from the Government Agent at Kpando than it would get if it was added to the larger Ho district. In addition, it would be in the same district with their kith and kin - the Gbi of Hohoe -thereby forging closer co-operation between them. Even though some parts covered by the Kpando district might seem somewhat remote, many Peki people had been farming extensively in the area to the north of Hohoe and therefore had interests in common with the people of that area.<sup>243</sup>

In order to keep the expenses of district councils to a minimum, it was proposed that they should use the offices of local councils established at Ho and Kpando and use the staff of the same local councils. Those councils could then be reimbursed for the additional work

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<sup>241</sup> Awudome had been under the suzerainty of Peki since the colonial period.

<sup>242</sup> RAG/H LG S.033, District Councils-Grouping of Peki-Guan, 5 December 1952.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

through honoraria contributed by the constituent local councils and that each local council should pay attendance and travelling expenses of its own representatives on the district council.<sup>244</sup> In order to prevent the overlap of functions, and preserve some autonomy at the level of the local councils, the district councils were given well defined roles.<sup>245</sup> The powers vested in district councils were to be permissive rather than mandatory and district councils should assume responsibility for certain functions such as the construction of roads with the support of local councils.<sup>246</sup> By the end of 1953, the structures of local government were established in Ewedome.

### Local Council Elections

The final stage of the transition to the new form of local government was reached with elections to the various local councils held from 1952-54. Elaborate regulations spelling out the conduct of the elections were contained in the subsidiary legislation made under the Ordinance of the Gold Coast Colony, Ashanti, the Northern Territories and Togoland under the UK Trusteeship in 1952.<sup>247</sup> All local council areas were divided into smaller units called 'wards', and each ward elected one councillor for a three-year term. The wards were so demarcated that each division and sub-division had a representation. Candidates vying for election as councillors were nominated by three qualified voters of the ward for which he or she was a candidate.<sup>248</sup> Voters who wished to nominate a candidate had to fill a 'Form A' indicating their name, address, a description of themselves, date of birth and

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<sup>244</sup> RAG/H RAO/C0233/32, Instrument Establishing the Ho District Council, 21 March 1953.

<sup>245</sup> RAG/H RAO/C451/15, Conference of Government Agents, Ho, 25 June 1953.

<sup>246</sup> RAG/H RAO/C0233/32, Instrument Establishing the Ho District Council, 21 March 1953.

<sup>247</sup> RAG/H Local Government Ordinance 1951, Section 24, The Elections (Local Government) Regulations, 19 January 1952. See Revised Edition, V. VIII.

<sup>248</sup> For details on the election result, see *Ibid.*

signature. Eight days before the date fixed for the elections, the full list of the candidates, the wards for which they were nominated, and the persons by whom they were nominated were published within the local council area. Elections to the various local councils were not conducted on the same date. For example, Akpini, Asogli, Adaklu, Gbi (Hohoe) and Yingor Local Council elections were held in 1952, Ablode in 1953, and that of Anfoega took place in 1954. To qualify as a voter, one had to attain the age of 21, own immovable property within the area of a local council or have resided within the area at least six months preceeding the date of one's application to register and paid the basic rate unless such a person was specifically exempted from paying rates.<sup>249</sup>

With the exception of Asogli and Yingor where almost all the candidates were elected unopposed, the elections in other local council areas such as Ablode, Adaklu, Akpini and Gbi were hotly contested.<sup>250</sup> This was partly responsible for the acrimony that characterised this maiden local government election in the territory.<sup>251</sup> The CPP mounted a spirited campaign in its bid to win majority seat in local councils in the territory.<sup>252</sup> The Togoland Congress, fearing defeat, initially called for a boycott of the registration exercise and the elections.<sup>253</sup> This accounted largely for the low registration in Togoland.<sup>254</sup> All the same, the election went ahead as scheduled, amidst intimidation and harassment of Togoland

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<sup>249</sup> Local Government Ordinance, Section 12 (A, B&C), 1951.

<sup>250</sup> The stronghold of the TC was Kpando district with its expanding towns of Hohoe, Vakpo and Anfoega. See the *'Most Secret' Document*, p. 10. The point that the CPP became dominant in all rural areas in Ashanti and Togoland after the 1951 election is made in Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 33-49.

<sup>251</sup> The campaign strategies of the TC and the CPP are analysed in Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 185- 188.

<sup>252</sup> Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 39.

<sup>253</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 113. Collier argues that CPP rallies were well attended because the diarchy government made state resources available to the party. *'Ablode'*, p. 225.

<sup>254</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 113.

Congress supporters. The tables below on Asogli Local Council illustrate how the ward system worked.<sup>255</sup>

**DEMARICATION OF WARDS**  
(Asogli Local Council, 1952)

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Number of Persons Registered</b>
<b>A. Totokoe</b>	733	Tokokoe Mate Tokokoe Aburi	188
<b>B. Tanyigbe</b>	1,280	Tanigbe Anyigbe Tanyigbe Atidze Tanyigbe Etoe	390
<b>C. Akoefe</b>	1,280	Akoefe Akoefe Dzafe	394
<b>D. Hodzo</b>	625	Hodzo	394
<b>E. Ho</b>	1,016	Ho-Kpenoe Ho-Takla Ho-Tokor Ho-Wayanu	208
<b>F. Ho-Dome</b>	600	Ho-Dome North	157
<b>G. Ho-Dome</b>	740	Ho-Dome South	105
<b>H. Ho-Bankoe</b>	1,000	Ho-Bankoe North	331
<b>I. Ho-Bankoe</b>	1,500	Ho-Bankoe South	305
<b>J. Ahoe</b>	900	Ahoe	170
<b>K. Ahliha</b>	500	Ahliha	37
<b>L. Heve</b>	600	Heve	102

<sup>255</sup> Data for the above table was obtained from RAG/H RAO/C 147 No. LC 19'3 Asogli Local Council Elections, 2 April 1952.

## ELECTION RESULTS, 1952

### (Asogli Local Council)

Local Council	Ward	Candidate(s)	Votes
Asogli	A	J. K. Adzali (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	B	D.Danso (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	C	S. K. Dusu (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	D	D. K. Yeboa (CPP)	Elected Unopposed
	E	G. Y. Klu (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	F	A. W. K. Dey (CPP)	Elected Unopposed
	G	C. B.K. Attah (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	H	J. K. Nutsunyo (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	I	P. K. Keh (CPP)	175
		S. G. Dzaba (TC)	15
		S. W. Akondor (TC)	0
	J	F. R. Ametowobla	
	K	S. O. Awuma (TC)	Elected Unopposed
	L	S. Nkansah-Annaney (CPP)	Elected Unopposed

Well after the elections the struggle between the CPP and the TC continued to rock the councils creating the situation where some councillors were forced to resign for their support of one party or the other. For example, in 1953, three chiefs from Sovie wrote a letter to the chairman of the Akpini Local Council seeking the resignation of Godfred

Sapati, councillor for Sovie ward 'H', from the council. Their charge was that Sapati never consulted them before going to council meetings; neither had he ever briefed them on any proceedings from the meetings.<sup>256</sup> It turned out that Sapati was a strong CPP supporter while the chiefs calling for his resignation were TC supporters.<sup>257</sup> Such cases abounded throughout the Territory and they were never resolved.

For representatives of traditional authorities on local councils, elections were held by each traditional area to occupy one-third of the seats. In this respect, taking the case of Asogli as an example, the local council had 12 elected members therefore the state council elected six representatives to the Asogli Local Council. Elections of representatives of traditional members to the councils were generally smooth except in Asogli where *Togbe Afede* refused to accept his seat on the council unless the constitutional dispute between him and Howusu was settled.<sup>258</sup> Despite these obstacles, the elections gave the inhabitants, for the first time, the right of suffrage and an increasing degree of participation in local government. The old NAs were effectively replaced by new institutions by a 'modernizing' nationalist government in league with the out-going reformist colonial regime.

## Conclusion

The transition to elected local government was a key part of the larger process of decolonization in the Gold Coast. Indeed, the transition was the main avenue through which decolonization became perceptible in rural areas such as Ewedome. In the wake of the rising demand from younger, educated group for reform, the very existence of the NA

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<sup>256</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 179 No. LC 24, Akpini Local Council Elections, Petition from Sovie Konda, 23 June 1953.

<sup>257</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 179 No. 0344/67, Report by Acting Government Agent, C. N. Weatherburn, Kpando, 7 July 1953.

<sup>258</sup> RAG/H Correspondence No. 0405/SF.3/14, Regional Officer, A. Cowley, Ho, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Housing, Accra, 28 October 1953.

system was threatened. Thus, the only prop supporting the NAs was the colonial officers.<sup>259</sup>

The 1951 ordinance therefore represented a major change with emphasis more on a representative system of local government. The new system was modelled largely on the UK structure of local government but with considerable variations tailored to suit local needs and peculiarities.

Ultimately, the objective of establishing local councils was to replace what was perceived as an anachronistic and undemocratic system with a democratic one that gave participation to 'commoners'. Obviously, such a process was not likely to achieve the desired results without a 'modern' system of local government. Admittedly, the NA was essentially a colonial superstructure, the continuous existence of which was incongruous with the new wave of political, economic and social transformation in the 1940s and 1950s. By the abolition of the NA system, Nkrumah and the CPP leadership reckoned that local government structures would be controlled by the party-therefore actually bolstering central control by the new nationalist government. Nevertheless, the question as to whether the new system could deliver more efficient and democratic local government without exhibiting the same weaknesses identified with the old NAs is worth asking. The answer to this question forms the main theme of the next chapter of this study.

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<sup>259</sup> Apter, *Ghana in Transition*, p. 150.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE RUN-UP TO INDEPENDENCE, 1953-1956

The completion of the new local government structure in Ewedome in 1953 coincided with the gradual devolution of power to the CPP-dominated Cabinet and Legislative Assembly in the Gold Coast. This development had a direct bearing on the trusteeship status of the territory. Politics, which in British Togoland had been localised and focused on native states, emerged at regional level by the 1940s. From 1954, it assumed greater intensity with the rise of a bitter contest between the CPP government and the Togoland Congress over the future status of the Trust Territory. The CPP, supported by the British colonial officials, was determined to integrate the Trust Territory into the Gold Coast. The Togoland Congress, encouraged by the formation of two other regional opposition parties, the National Liberation Movement (NLM) and the Northern Peoples' Party (NPP) in 1953-54, vehemently opposed such a move and rather sought the unification of the two Togolands as an independent entity.

What is of significance to this study is the effect of the struggle between integrationist and unificationist advocates on the overall development of local government in the Ewedome region. The chapter begins by analysing the initial problems that confronted the new local councils in the turbulent years in the run-up to independence. It focuses on the politicization of local government as the issue of the status of the Trust Territory emerged at the local, national and international levels. In doing so, the chapter re-examines the existing narrative of the Ewe unification question, as it unfolded in Ewedome, in order to

illuminate our understanding of the impact of the struggle for and against integration on the local councils.

### **Initial Problems with the Establishment of Local Councils**

By 1953, all the local councils in Ewedome had been established. It was soon realised, however, that the setting up of the councils by law was one thing and getting them to function efficiently was another. In several cases, there was dissension regarding the boundaries of the councils, which was often rooted in old land disputes. It was contemplated by the enquiry team that the new councils would have a higher percentage of 'enlightened' members who would come more readily to agreement with their neighbours concerning boundary demarcations than the members of the old NAs. It was hoped that interim boundary arrangements would be accepted by the members of the councils as a workable basis for the councils to start operating. The final demarcation could then be the first duty of the councils when they formally began work.<sup>1</sup>

Most people still had a confused conception of the functions of the new councils. This confusion was due to the fact that many members of the defunct NAs had at the same time been members of the state councils and the two bodies came to be regarded as synonymous. It will be recalled that even though the NAs were abolished, their State Councils continued to exist as residual bodies. People found it hard to visualise a local council that would be entirely distinct from the State Councils. The possibilities of friction between State Councils and local councils appeared to be considerable at the inception of the latter. This was not only in the field of everyday business, but also in the legislative and financial spheres. The onus was on government officials to bring more focus on the continued

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<sup>1</sup> RAG/H RAO/C 313, Supersession of Native Authorities, Progress Report, Ho, May 1952- June 1953.

existence of State Councils and to ensure that they and not the local councils would still deal with certain customary matters. The financial implications of the division of functions between local councils and state councils obviously needed the closest examination to prevent this resulting in a considerable increase in administrative cost.

According to the transitional provisions, there was to be no interregnum between the exit of the NAs and the establishment of local councils.<sup>2</sup> The transitional arrangement was such that all assets, liabilities and rights of action belonging to NAs passed over to the local councils automatically, with little time to appoint the required personnel to head the councils. Thus, there were delays in the new councils holding their first meetings and actually discharging their duties. Until the first meetings were held, the councils could do nothing. They could not even appoint agents to do their work and during that period the task of the NA staff, who were absorbed into the councils, was made difficult because they could not receive any directives from their new employers. In addition, there was the problem of what to do with the assets where the NAs (with the exception of Awatime NA) were succeeded by more than one council.

In effect, certain powers that the NAs had been exercising were in abeyance until the local councils, at or after their first meetings, could direct their exercise anew. This had adverse effects on the financial administration of the councils at the initial stages. For example, the financial committees of the NAs ceased to exist on the very day the local councils were established. The new councils, according to the ordinance, must by resolution appoint a finance committee at its first meeting and declare the persons who were authorised to sign and countersign payment vouchers and cheques.<sup>3</sup> The banks

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<sup>2</sup> See Local Government Ordinance Section 10, 1951.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, Section 42, 1951.

required to be furnished with a copy of any such resolution with the seal of the councils or the signatures of all the local council members.<sup>4</sup> As a result, no money could be paid out and no cheques could be drawn and the salaries of the staff inherited from the NAs could not be paid.<sup>5</sup> The situation was similar to that which pertained in Asante, where the newly elected councillors had no idea how funds for projects could be accessed.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, projects such as the construction of 'feeder roads and school buildings required local council expenditure'.<sup>7</sup> The situation was made worse by lack of adequate accommodation arrangements for the new councils. Government made £2,000 available for the new councils to construct or purchase new buildings, but this would take time. It appeared that not enough thought was given to the transition process and that the establishment of the councils in Ewedome and the Gold Coast as a whole was done in haste.<sup>8</sup>

The councillors were new to their work, yet many of them were over-zealous in trying to make a clean break with the past system of NAs by introducing radical changes into the working of the councils. In particular, charges were made that staff inherited from the NAs were being dismissed or victimised and traditional authorities being denied allowances while councillors were granting over-generous allowances to themselves.<sup>9</sup> Some localities were split into two factions, one supported the local council and the other the traditional authorities. The result was a regrettable state of affairs with the working of local councils

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<sup>4</sup> RAG/H C.264/LCF26, Anfoega Local Council Treasury, September 1952.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Kate Skinner, "It Brought some Kind of Neatness to Mankind": Mass Literacy, Community Development and Democracy in 1950s Asante', *Africa*, 79 (2009), p. 493.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> For examples on how this affected local councils in the Gold Coast, see J. K. Nsarkoh, 'Development of Local Government in Ghana-1951/71', *Journal of Management Studies*, 1 (1977), p. 77. See also Ronald Wraith, *Local Government in West Africa* (London, 1964), p. 18-19.

<sup>9</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/502, Local Councils, Trans-Volta Togoland Region, Survey of Local Government, 17 January 1953/54.

prejudiced at the very onset.<sup>10</sup> Despite these difficulties, the local councils inherited a strong tradition of self-help that had been built up in the villages and divisions by the old NAs. The task was to ensure that this well-grounded tradition of self-help was, so far as possible, grafted into the work of local government. For this purpose, councils were tasked to encourage villages, groups of villages and small divisions to propose special rates for works to be carried out in their areas.<sup>11</sup> These special rates attracted additional grants from central government. In this way, the local councils provided scope for those groups which wished to increase the pace of their development to do so. This yielded dividends with an increase in the rates collected during the 1952-3 fiscal year of 100 percent over the previous year.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Trans-Volta Togoland Council**

The creation of the TVT Region in 1952 needed to be given more meaning by bringing Togoland and the Gold Coasters together in a regional administrative body. The plan was first mooted in 1948, when Sir Thorleif Mangin, Chief Commissioner of the Colony, toured the southern section of Togoland and discussed with the chiefs and their subjects the need for a representative of Togoland on the Joint Provincial Council as the first step towards Togoland having a representative on the Legislative Council.<sup>13</sup> It was subsequent to this that the 1949 Native Authority Ordinance for the southern section of British Togoland was passed to harmonise the NAs in the territory in line with that of the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> RAG/H D A/D 6281, Meeting by Local Council Officers in Kpandu District, 17-19 March 1953.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> RAG/H D/D 388, Chief Commissioner's Office to the District Councils in Togoland, 20 January 1949. The JPC was for over 30 years been the body of chiefs in southern Ghana with its headquarters at Dodowa, the capital of the Eastern Province of the Colony. It was dissolved in 1958 by the CPP government to give way for Houses of Chiefs in the regions it had previously covered. See *West Africa*, 29 November 1958, p. 1129.

Gold Coast Colony to facilitate the admission of southern Togolanders into the JPC.<sup>14</sup> This proposal, as already noted, was responsible for the increased agitation for Togoland unification. It will be recalled that, historically, political organisation and social identities in Ewedome tended to be highly fragmented and focused on immediate localities. This outlook could not, of course, change overnight, for it was natural that divisional affairs should have a prominent place in the people's thought. Nonetheless, Mangin, a staunch supporter of the old indirect rule order at this time of rapid move towards reform, thought otherwise. He felt that, for further progress to be made in the development of local government, this interest in divisional affairs must give way to interest in those of larger political units such as the Joint Provincial Council or a regional body.<sup>15</sup>

The Ewe chiefs of Ewedome were not sure how their membership of the Joint Provincial Council could affect their status as a Trust Territory and a possible unification with Ewes in French Togo.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the failure of the Southern Togoland Council established in 1949 was due in part to the feeling of uneasiness by a large concentration of Akan strangers to the north of Ewedome that they would not be easy bedfellows with the more numerous Ewes on a regional body. After careful consideration, the Gold Coast government decided to shelve the idea of Togolanders taking seats on the JPC in the belief that it would only be a matter of time before they were naturally drawn into closer contact with the JPC.<sup>17</sup> This decision stemmed from concern that the Togoland Union could capitalise on the issue and cause a split in the territory, especially as the union was composed largely of members of

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<sup>14</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/495, Address by the Chief Commissioner, T. R. O. Mangin, Ho, October 1948; RAG/H D/D 388, Chief Commissioner's Office to the District Councils in Togoland, 20 January 1949; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 11; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 173.

<sup>15</sup> RAG/H D/D 388, Chief Commissioner's Office, 20 January 1949.

<sup>16</sup> RAG/H D/DA 1060, Memorandum on Togoland (Southern Section) under British Trusteeship, 27 October 1948.

<sup>17</sup> RAG/H, Excerpt from the Handing Over Notes from Mr Dennis to Mr Hindle, 19 October 1948 (No File Number).

the more educated class.<sup>18</sup> Besides, a lot of work had to be done on the various legislative amendments required to carry this decision into effect. Consequently, the matter became the subject of correspondence between the DC of Ho, and the office of the Chief Commissioner of the Gold Coast until 1950, when major constitutional developments were set in motion in the Gold Coast.<sup>19</sup>

In 1953, the regional reorganization was completed with the creation of the TVT Council. Its members were drawn from local and district councils including Anlo and Peki and it was to support and supervise the new local councils in their bid to increase the pace of economic and social development.<sup>20</sup> It was also meant to give the inhabitants better opportunities of working together in common institutions, solving common problems and helping to plan and coordinate the development programmes of the local councils.<sup>21</sup> The council could deliberate on matters affecting local government which were of common concern to the people of the region as a whole and could make representations on such matters to the central government. As a deliberative and advisory body, it had no executive or legislative functions.<sup>22</sup> Government consulted it in formulating policies regarding important issues such as constitutional matters, development programmes and the like. A regional officer was to be appointed to coordinate all government activities in the region

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<sup>18</sup> RAG /H D/D 388, Chief Commissioner's Office to the District Councils in Togoland, 20 January 1949.

<sup>19</sup> The Southern Togoland Council opposed the creation of the TVT Region on the grounds that it was not in the interest of the special status of the trust territory. RAG/H D/D A 8/0167/99, Southern Section of Togoland under British Mandate Ordinance, 2 May 1949.

<sup>20</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/691, Minutes of the Southern Togoland Council, 5 to 18 February 1950; Sir Sydney Phillipson Commission Report on Regional Administration, 1951, p. 16; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 84.

<sup>21</sup> Speech by the Regional Officer to the First Meeting of the Trans-Volta Togoland Council, 11 July 1953.

<sup>22</sup> Togoland Report, 1952.

and to be responsible directly to the central government in Accra.<sup>23</sup> There were six other officers including an Assistant Regional Officer and a Secretary.<sup>24</sup>

Many Ewes of the Trust Territory continued to show resentment against the establishment of Trans-Volta Togoland Region and its Council, which they claimed could be dominated by Ewes from the Gold Coast.<sup>25</sup> Since the British took over Togoland from the Germans, the area had witnessed the influx of Gold Coast Ewes, mainly from Peki and from Anlo, the coastal region to the south. G. O. Awuma, one of the leaders of Togoland Union, observed that it was difficult to see how Togoland could be given education in self-determination when all the key positions in the local councils, the schools, commerce and even the churches were filled with 'adventurers' from the Gold Coast Eweland.<sup>26</sup> It seemed therefore to the Togolanders that the government, the missionary societies and the merchant houses seemed to have conspired to support Gold Coast Ewes to dominate Togoland. Consequently, the feeling among the inhabitants was that the new regional council was going to operate at the pleasure of Gold Coast Ewes who were more educated than the Ewes in the Trust Territory.

There was no doubt that Ewedome, and for that matter the entire trust territory, was in a backward state of economic development. It is also a fact that although the region was administered as an integral part of the Gold Coast, 'its trust status conveyed special assistance from the British government and the responsibility towards the UN rested on the shoulders of the British government'.<sup>27</sup> This position was supported by the Treasury in

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<sup>23</sup> Togoland Report, 1952.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Petition from Southern Togoland Council to the Governor. See NA CO 96/827/2 Minutes of Meetings of Southern Togoland Council, 23 February 1950.

<sup>26</sup> RAG/H D A/D140 A, Gerald O. Awuma to the Colonial Secretary, Gold Coast, 7 June 1952; The dominance of Anlo and Peki Ewes in the Trust Territory is also noted in Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> NA CO96/826/9, Colonial Office to the Governor, Accra, 22 November 1950.

London which felt that there was 'a pre-eminently strong case on strict economic grounds for a measure of further [financial] assistance to Togoland and the Cameroon'.<sup>28</sup> The effective administration of such a fund in the territory made a strong case for a regional body that could oversee its implementation. The Togoland Congress opposed the creation of the regional council on the ground that it was not represented on the Coussey Committee that made the proposal for the creation of regions as part of local government reforms.<sup>29</sup>

The action of uniting the Ewes in the Colony and those in Ewedome was designed to further the long-held objective of the colonial administration, and later that of the CPP, of more fully integrating Togoland into the Gold Coast. This would make it easier to resist pressure in future for the unification of the British and French Trust Territories.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the UN Trusteeship Council observed that the plan to create the Trans-Volta Togoland Region, conceived in 1949, 'appeared to have the effect of strengthening the integration of the southern section of the Trust Territory with the adjoining part of the Gold Coast'.<sup>31</sup> Although the governor retained reserve powers over Togoland, there was a gradual devolution of powers, both executive and legislative, to the CPP from 1951.<sup>32</sup> According to Coleman, 'it was impossible to determine whether any particular measure affecting Togoland since 1951 has been the act of the British government (which was the administering authority) or the act of the CPP in the cabinet'.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> NA CO96/826/9, Correspondence from the Treasury, London, 29 December 1953.

<sup>29</sup> NA CO96827/2, Petition: Togoland Council, 23 February 1950.

<sup>30</sup> NA CO96/824/7, Note by the Colonial Office on the Coussey Report, 1950.

<sup>31</sup> Report of the Trusteeship Council to the General Assembly, New York, 23 July 1949 to July 1950, p.44.

<sup>32</sup> The fact that the governor never used his reserved powers as regards Togoland is stated in Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

## Development Issues

At the first meeting of the TVT Council on 11 July 1953, *Togbe Tepre Hodo III*, chief of Anfoega, who represented the Anfoega Local Council, was elected president.<sup>34</sup> The first task of the council was to consider how the £1,000,000 development grant announced by Nkrumah for the region in the Legislative Assembly on 7 July 1953 should be spent.<sup>35</sup> The council submitted a proposal for a number of development projects which received approval from government in Accra. These projects included the construction of feeder roads, a trade school at Kpando, a hospital at Worawora in the Jasikan District and one in the south, a number of dressing stations, telecommunications and the Anfoega community centre. By 1954, a lot of progress had been made in various facets of development under the new local government system. Almost all the councils had completed work on their new offices and court houses.<sup>36</sup> Drilling started in Ho and Adaklu areas after two geologists had been posted to the trust territory to carry out a water supply survey in order that necessary information could be obtained for executing the water project proposed by the TVT Council.<sup>37</sup> Good progress was also made with the building of the Mawuli secondary school, a regional education and regional administration blocks in Ho while a non-boarding secondary school was opened in a temporary building at Kpando.<sup>38</sup> The period also saw the completion of work on the first phase of the building programme for Hohoe district police headquarters.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Togoland Report, Appendix A 1953.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> RAG/H, Progress in TVT 1951-1954, Report by the Regional Officer to the Trans-Volta Togoland Council. 28 April 1954.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

Another development of considerable significance was the establishment of the National Food Board by the government with a grant of £100,000 in order to plan and stimulate ways and means of increasing food production. In the first instance, the board decided to concentrate on the construction and the reconstruction of feeder roads in order to speed up and facilitate the flow of food stuffs from farms and villages to the main centres.<sup>40</sup> This plan benefited Ewedome in particular as roads linking Adaklu to Kpedzegle, Waya-Kpedzegli, Aboudi to Waya and Abutia to Juapong were constructed. The trunk road linking Hohoe to Kpeve was completed in 1954 and all major towns were linked with telephone lines.<sup>41</sup> In addition, a bridge was to be built over the Volta as a way of opening up the region to other parts of the Gold Coast.<sup>42</sup> This commitment was designed to dispel the propaganda by the Togoland Congress that the government was neglecting the Trust Territory.<sup>43</sup> The Togoland Congress had used the low level of development of the territory as a tool to campaign against integration.<sup>44</sup> Coleman attributed the delayed political integration of the territory into the political life of the Gold Coast partly to the inability to bridge the Volta River.<sup>45</sup> Further boost was given to the development of the area following the opening of branches of British Bank of West Africa and Barclay's Bank in Hohoe in 1952.<sup>46</sup>

The bridge across the Volta River was constructed at a cost of £560,000 and a trunk road from the bridge through Kpeve in Ewedome was also completed. Drifts were built across

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<sup>40</sup> RAG/H ACC/No. 282, Feeder Roads in Trans-Volta Togoland, 1955, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> RAG/H, Progress in TVT 1951-1954, Report by the Regional Officer to the Trans-Volta Togoland Council. 28 April 1954

<sup>42</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1 456, Handing over Note, Kpandu 22 August 1953.

<sup>43</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 234.

<sup>44</sup> The broader political argument of the TC in league with other opposition parties are well laid out in *Ibid*, p. 233-234.

<sup>45</sup> Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 20.

<sup>46</sup> RAG/H, Progress in TVT 1951-1954, Report by the Regional Officer to the Trans-Volta Togoland Council. 28 April 1954.

the Oti and Asukawkaw rivers to link up the road between Kpando and Kete-Krachi to the north. The construction of these two drifts, available to motor traffic for all but four months of the year, speeded up the transportation of foodstuff from the Krachi area and greatly stimulated the movement of market women from Ewedome to yam producing areas of Kete-Krachi. These road networks facilitated not only the distribution but also the increased production of foodstuffs. In addition, the feeder roads facilitated the provision of portable water supply by making it possible for the heavy machinery of the Department of Rural Water Development to reach hitherto inaccessible areas to provide boreholes for rural communities.<sup>47</sup>

Until 1954, district councils were unable to undertake more than consultative and advisory functions due to improper planning resulting in the lack of linkage between the regional institutions and the local and district councils. The purpose of the district councils was to provide services within their areas which they could administer better than any of their member local councils. From 1954, however, plans were made for them to carry out their proper roles in the field of local government. Their main activities were the construction and maintenance of roads which formed part of the TVT Council's road programme. The road projects were funded from two sources: the central government, in which case the district councils acted as local agents, and from the local councils. While funds from the central government was used to construct the roads, the cost of their maintenance was to be funded by the local councils.

Other functions of the district councils included responsibility for controlling the Cocoa Marketing Board grants made available to cocoa growing areas in the trust territory. These functions were performed in addition to those which the 1951 Local Government

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<sup>47</sup> RAG/H ACC/ No. 282, Feeder Roads in Trans-Volta Togoland, 1955, p. 7.

Ordinance enjoined them to perform. For example, district councils took over the maintenance and management of maternity homes and local clinics and local courts.<sup>48</sup> Under a new education ordinance, district councils became the authorities responsible for ensuring that government's policy in the fields of primary and middle education was carried out.<sup>49</sup> In line with the practice under the erstwhile NAs, the councils were responsible for the construction and maintenance of school buildings. This task of planning and supervising primary and middle education was arguably the most formidable undertaken by district councils. Part of the grant from the Cocoa Marketing Board was to be used in assisting scholars from the territory and other parts of the region who were attending the University College of the Gold Coast, the Kumasi College of Technology or Sixth Form schools in the Gold Coast. In performing these functions, district councils took over responsibilities that had hitherto been borne by District Development Committees.<sup>50</sup> District Development Committees were set up as far back as 1949 and from 1952, each of them was allocated £2,000 to spend on the development of their districts.<sup>51</sup>

In the past, owing to the slow development of primary and middle education and the absence of secondary schools in the trust territory, fewer students from Ewedome than from Anlo and Peki and other parts of the Gold Coast had obtained education beyond middle school level.<sup>52</sup> Formal education started very late in Ewedome even though there had been

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<sup>48</sup> Yingor Local Council clinic stood out as the most successfully managed local council project in Ewedome. In 1956, there was an average of 60 patients visiting the clinic daily, rising to between 70 and 100 patients daily by 1958. These figures were contained in a letter written by the Senior Medical Officer in Charge of Maternity and Child Health Service in the Volta Region addressed to the Regional Medical Officer at Ho expressing the need for a hospital at Dzolokpuita, the seat of Yingor Local Council, 9 October 1972. Copy of the letter obtained from the elders of Dzolokpuita, on 5 July 2007.

<sup>49</sup> RAG/A A/DA 39/253, Organization of Local Authorities in TVT as District Education Authorities.

<sup>50</sup> RAG/H AD/D253, Organization of Local Education Authorities in Trans-Volta/Togoland.

<sup>51</sup> RAG/H ACC/NO.282, Feeder Roads in Trans-Votal Togoland, 1955, p. 2

<sup>52</sup> RAG/H ACC/497, Education in Trans-Volta Togoland, Memorandum by the Minister of Education and Social Welfare, 30 November 1953.

schools in the Gold Coast areas inhabited by Ewes for more than hundred years.<sup>53</sup> It was only at the beginning of 1952 that free primary education was made available to all children.<sup>54</sup> Consequently, very few people from Ewedome occupied positions of importance in the government service, teaching and commerce. This situation had been commented upon by the Visiting Mission in 1950.<sup>55</sup> It was one of the most bitter causes of division between the people of Ewedome and Ewes in the Gold Coast. It was to hasten the removal of this grievance that the TVT Council had made its proposal for a special scholarship scheme for the region.<sup>56</sup> The grant was to cover a seven-year period at an estimated cost of £40,000 and it formed part of the £1,000,000 pledged by Nkrumah for the development of the region.<sup>57</sup>

Most inhabitants of Ewedome were disappointed about the lumping together of the trust territory and the Gold Coast areas for the disbursement of the scholarship scheme.<sup>58</sup> They had expected the scheme to be devoted specifically to bridging the yawning gap in the education differential between the trust territory and the Gold Coast areas occupied by other Ewes.<sup>59</sup> The UK government's report on education, which was corroborated by the UN report on scholarships, showed that the majority of the most educated people in Togoland were teachers; however, out of twenty scholarships made available to the southern section of Togoland in 1948, only one was awarded to an indigenous teacher.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, it had been observed by the Trusteeship Council in 1950 that some Gold Coast Ewe

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<sup>53</sup> United Nations Visiting Mission Report, 1949, p. 45.

<sup>54</sup> Togoland Report, 1952.

<sup>55</sup> RAG/H United Nations Visiting Mission Draft Report, 1949, p. 45; RAG/H, UN Trusteeship Council-Examination of Petitions, (Fourth Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Petitions), 13 July 1950.

<sup>56</sup> RAG/H, Trans-Volta Togoland Council, Supplementary Scheme for Scholarships and Bursaries, 1953/54.

<sup>57</sup> RAG/H, Address by the Prime Minister to the Trans-Volta Togoland Council, Ho, 1953.

<sup>58</sup> ADM 39/1/532, Trans-Volta Togoland Council Development Plan, Standing Financial Committee Report, 1953/54, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Togoland Report, 1948, p. 145.

teachers were transferred to Ewedome and were given Togoland addresses so that they could benefit from the scholarship scheme.<sup>61</sup> 'This created the impression of official connivance with Gold Coast Ewes to deprive indigenous Togolandees of scholarship specifically allocated to the latter.'<sup>62</sup>

The TVT Council appreciated the fact that extension of the scope of its scholarship scheme beyond the Trust Territory would not address the imbalance that the people of Ewedome had been yearning to correct since the late 1940s.<sup>63</sup> But the hands of the council appeared to be tied by the joining of the territory to the Ewe-dominated parts of the Gold Coast. It was therefore inadvisable to discriminate in the disbursement of the scholarship grants by excluding the Gold Coast areas, particularly as the Tongu area between Ewedome and the Anlo region, with one-fifth of the total population, was also 'very backward in terms of development'.<sup>64</sup> The onus was therefore on the district and local councils in Ewedome to fill whatever gap the scholarship scheme would leave in the promotion of vigorous education programmes. For example, Yingor Local Council was compelled in 1954 to impose a special education rate to enable it pay the hugely increased rate of expendable equipment grant to schools.<sup>65</sup>

In Ewedome, the task of district and local councils in supplementing the cost of education and, at the same time, undertaking other development programmes was herculean due to the relatively meagre annual grant allocated to the region from 1953. During the financial year 1953-54, the sum of £946,210 voted for the whole country under the

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<sup>61</sup> UN Trusteeship Council, Fourth Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Petitions, New York, 13 July 1950.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/532, Trans-Volta Togoland Council Development Plan, Standing Financial Committee Report, 1953/54, p. 1.

<sup>64</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum by the Minister of Education and Social Welfare, 30 November 1953 (Not Filed).

<sup>65</sup> PRAAD/A ADM, 39/1/183, Yingor Local Council, Estimate for 1954/55, 3 July 1954.

'ordinary estimates' was distributed as follows: the Colony received £326,000, Asante £330,000, the Northern Territories £221,000 and Trans-Volta Togoland got only £49,000.<sup>66</sup> Some of the criteria used in distributing the grant included the amount raised by the local councils in direct taxation the two previous years and a reimbursement of cost of living allowances paid by authorities to their employees.<sup>67</sup> In large part, this formula was anomalous and very much to the detriment of Ewedome in particular and the Trans-Volta Togoland Region as a whole.

The 1951 local government finance report, for example, showed that the grant-in-aid per head of population was 3/- more in Ashanti than the other regions.<sup>68</sup> The main reason for the advantageous position of Ashanti was the operation of the formula which matched every £1 raised in direct taxation with 16/- in government grant.<sup>69</sup> In 1950/51, Asante NAs with a population of 817,000 raised a total of £248,330 from rates, whereas the Colony NAs including the TVT Region with a population of 2,122,000 raised only £144,110.<sup>70</sup> Ashanti had huge natural endowment with large mineral deposits and timber concessions appreciably greater than the rest of the country.<sup>71</sup>

Presumably, the grant based upon the amount raised by direct taxation was to encourage local councils to raise more money from the levying of rates but its effectiveness as an incentive was largely limited. It was difficult to imagine local councils in poorer regions such as Ewedome having to raise taxes in anticipation of a corresponding increase of government grant two years after. Under the NAs in Ewedome, a tradition had been set by

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<sup>66</sup> RAG/H, Distribution of Grants to Local Authorities other than Municipalities, 1953/54; PRAAD/A ADM 5/7/170, Local Government Financial Statistics, 1953/54.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> RAG/H, Local Government Finance Report, 1951.

<sup>69</sup> RAG/H, Distribution of Grants to Local Authorities other than Municipalities, 1953/54.

<sup>70</sup> RAG/H, Local Government Finance Report, 1951.

<sup>71</sup> RAG/H, Distribution of Grants to Local Authorities other than Municipalities, 1953/54.

the British officers in fixing rates whereby the emphasis was rather on what the people themselves were willing to pay. The formula adopted for disbursement of the government grants differed markedly from that tradition and favoured the more prosperous areas to the detriment of the poorer.

In addition, socially 'backward area' grants were distributed at the discretion of officers in charge of the regions.<sup>72</sup> The designation was relative; it differed from region to region and there were considerable variations in the method of allocating grants based on 'backwardness'. Regional circumstances might well have a bearing on the decision as to which local councils were in most need of assistance. The most appropriate formula was one which took into account the population and the number of local councils in the region. Population was an easily understood factor and taking into account the number of councils in a region was also relevant because the greater the number of local councils in a region, the greater the proportion of administrative and overhead expenditure. Moreover, in Ewedome, there was little to choose between the potential resources of individual local council areas, which made the distribution of grants according to population more relevant.

In 1954, the purpose of paying local tax was still seldom fully understood, despite attempt in the previous year to launch a local government publicity campaign. The film 'Progress in Kojokrom' was shown in almost every village of any size and a pamphlet, 'Your Council and Your Progress' was widely distributed in nine local languages.<sup>73</sup> A follow-up campaign with the theme: 'Pay Your Local Council Rates' was also started with the support of the department of Social Welfare and Community Development and the

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> RAG/H, Pamphlet on T.V.T. Local Enterprise, 1952-1954.

Extra-Mural Department of the University College of the Gold Coast.<sup>74</sup> The publicity was part of a nation-wide mass literacy and social welfare programme initiated by government with the inception of the new local councils. In the words of Skinner, the essence of those mass programmes was to educate the rural folk and make them 'receptive to a range of expensive governmental interventions'.<sup>75</sup> For British officials, the training of students in local government was seen as necessary since there was 'a good deal of prejudice among African students against the emphasis placed by colonial policy on local government reforms which they tended to regard as a device to avoid the grant of responsible government'.<sup>76</sup> The basic training of such officers involved attachment for one year to a suitable local government institution in the UK and attendance at Oxford or Cambridge in order to obtain the requisite cultural background and a degree in a wide variety of subjects.<sup>77</sup> Many of these students returned only to be stationed in Accra.

### **Local Councils and the Question of Integration**

In this section, we return to the contested terrain of Togoland unification. We have seen how the youth of Ewedome began to get involved in Togoland politics and the effects it had on the NAs and chieftaincy. We noted also that the post-Second World War era marked the beginning of Ewe cultural consciousness and nationalism, which built up gradually until it reached a crescendo in the early 1950s.<sup>78</sup> Hitherto, as noted in the previous chapters, the Ewes of Ewedome had been a disunited people who tended to resist any attempt to bring

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Skinner, "It Brought some Kind of Neatness", p. 471.

<sup>76</sup> NA C096/827/8, Gold Coast Africanization Committee, Colonial Office to R. P. Armitage, Secretary, Accra, 2 June 1950.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> The point that Togoland unification was driven by Ewe 'cultural and political renaissance' is made in *West Africa*, 1 December 1956, p. 969.

them together. The gradual emergence of a movement towards Ewe unification, however, changed all that.

From 1953, the Togoland Congress intensified its fight against integrating British Togoland with the Gold Coast in reaction to political developments in the Gold Coast involving the rise of the Northern People's Party and the National Liberation Movement in 1953-56. There were allegations that Government Agents in the Gold Coast were conducting campaigns to the effect that the UN was not capable of helping Togoland to realise their aspirations. The allegations had their roots in a booklet published in 1953 by the Togoland Congress, which it called a 'Most Secret' document on the future of Togoland.<sup>79</sup> The document, allegedly written by the British government, was said to have contained plans to incorporate Togoland into the Gold Coast. According to the document, the problem facing the British Colonial Office was 'how to ensure that the territory emerges from its trust status not later than the Gold Coast attains full self-government and that it becomes an integral part of a self-governing Gold Coast'.<sup>80</sup>

Meanwhile, the Van Lare Commission had completed the redemarcation of electoral districts for the second general elections to be held in 1954.<sup>81</sup> Three constituencies were created in Ewedome: Kpando North, Ho East and Ho West. The Togoland Congress had made a demand to the Commission to ensure that the electoral districts did not overlap the Trust Territory and the Gold Coast.<sup>82</sup> In addition, the Togoland Congress wanted a separate legislature to be created for Togoland to show its special status as a Trust Territory.<sup>83</sup> The

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<sup>79</sup> "Most Secret" *Politics in Togoland*. See also Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 193; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 176 and 203; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 146.

<sup>82</sup> Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 146.

<sup>83</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 233; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 88.

relevance of the 1954 elections was in its objective of establishing a sovereign government that would place the administration of the Gold Coast and the British Togoland in the hands of Africans, including Togolanders.<sup>84</sup>

In the elections, S. G. Antor won Kpando North, which included Hohoe, Rev. Ametowobla, a Togoland Congress supporter from Awatime who stood as an independent candidate, won Ho West and G. O. Awumah took the Ho East seat.<sup>85</sup> In all, the CPP had 72 out of the 104 seats in the Assembly, eight of which were from the TVT Region. Togoland Congress participated in all these elections because, according to Amenumey, it feared CPP supporters could be elected to speak on behalf of the territory.<sup>86</sup> After 1954, the insistence of Togoland Congress on unification of the two Togolands was of questionable relevance. The victory of the CPP in the 1954 general elections moved the political development of the Gold Coast and Togoland rapidly towards independence. It introduced significant political advances both at the local and the national levels to the extent that the number of Togolanders on the national legislative body had increased from one in 1951 to six in 1954.<sup>87</sup> As it happened, the United Kingdom Trusteeship Order-in-Council 1954, for all intent and purposes, effectively put paid to any hope of unificationists realising their objectives.<sup>88</sup> What fuelled the consternation of the Togoland Congress most was the 'progressive devolution of real executive power to the CPP component of the Executive and the Legislative Assembly'.<sup>89</sup> The only portfolios reserved for the governor were those of defence, security, external affairs and the responsibility for the administration of British

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<sup>84</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 200; Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 86.

<sup>85</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 241. In all, Togoland Congress won six seats. See Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 114.

<sup>86</sup> Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 87-88.

<sup>87</sup> See RAG/H ACC 343, Mr Scott to the Fourth Committee of the Trusteeship Council, 8 December 1954.

<sup>88</sup> The UK Order in Council 5 May 1954 was the last of a series of successive constitutional reforms which progressively brought Togoland closer to the Gold Coast short of a plebiscite.

<sup>89</sup> See Coleman, 'Togoland', p. 20.

Togoland as stipulated by the Trusteeship Agreement.<sup>90</sup> The reforms also introduced an all-African cabinet, which included two Togoland: G. O. Awuma from Ho and F. Y. Asare from Buem.<sup>91</sup>

For practical purposes of local government administration, revenue accruing in the southern section of British Togoland was included in the budgets of the Gold Coast as a whole and expenditures were allocated to the former based on the needs of the parts of the Gold Coast with which it was administratively integrated.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, the use of the central government services of the Gold Coast in running the administration of the trust territory had resulted in an appreciable reduction in overhead administrative costs for the local government institutions since 1951.<sup>93</sup> The argument in favour of this administrative arrangement was that if it were not for the close association of the territory with the Gold Coast, the resources of the territory would be quite insufficient to support the standard of local government organization and development already achieved in British Togoland.<sup>94</sup>

For the quarter of a century that British Togoland had been administered as part and parcel of the Gold Coast, the local government and educational systems had been developed on the British model. All the modern ideas, philosophical and political thoughts, institutions, trade practices, monetary policies, and indeed the overall way of life of the people of British Togoland had developed along British lines. Anything to the contrary, according to integrationists, could be a retrograde step in the political and economic development of the Trust Territory. All this fed into the CPP's agenda that focused on the

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<sup>90</sup> RAG/H ACC 343, Mr Scott to the Fourth Committee of the Trusteeship Council, 8 December 1954..

<sup>91</sup> The two Togoland: defected from the Togoland Congress to join the CPP. See Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p. 143.

<sup>92</sup> UN Visiting Mission Report, 1950, p. 6.

<sup>93</sup> UN Trusteeship Council Records, the Ewe Problem, 9<sup>th</sup> Session, New York, 24 July 1951.

<sup>94</sup> CO96/827/826/9, Colonial Development and Welfare Assistance to Togoland, 1950.

creation of a strong, centralised and unitary independent state, which would include the trust territory. Federation or outright separation, to the view of the CPP, was associated with the outdated power of chiefs, especially with regard to the NLM in Asante.<sup>95</sup> This notwithstanding, the Togoland Congress still felt it had a strong case, for the UK government had no mandate from the UN to transfer its responsibility over the Trust Territory to the new Gold Coast government.

What is of concern to this study is the effect of the struggle between integrationist and unificationist advocates on the overall development of local government in the territory. While the new local government system sought to reduce, according to the nationalist modernizers, the overbearing influence of chiefs, there was the real danger of separatist parties gaining control over local councils. As it turned out, local government affairs became caught up and confused with national politics, as the councils became the platform for canvassing support for or against integration. In Kpando District Council, for example, a ban was placed on the discussion of Togoland politics at its meetings because the district was not exclusive to the trust territory but extended into the Gold Coast.<sup>96</sup> We noted that Peki, which had been outside the Trust Territory, was incorporated into the Kpando District in 1953. However, this could not insulate the council from the politicisation of its proceedings. Kpando became one of the hottest spots for the showdown between the CPP and the Togoland Congress.

The leadership of Togoland Congress toured Ewedome and specifically called on the inhabitants not to cooperate with councils.<sup>97</sup> Local Councils were labelled as CPP-invented

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<sup>95</sup> RAG/H, CPP Regional Secretariat, Ho, Pamphlet on *Togoland and Gold Coast: Forward Together to Freedom* (Accra, 1953), p. 7.

<sup>96</sup> RAG/H LC 23/SF.4, Kpando Local Council Meetings and Minutes, 1954.

<sup>97</sup> PRAAD/A ADM39/1/511 No. S.0180/SF.30, Asogli Local Council, 1954.

structure that should not be allowed to work. There were demands by the Togoland Congress to move the Trans-Volta Togoland Council headquarters from Ho to Hohoe with the excuse that the future political position of Ho was uncertain.<sup>98</sup> But the real reason behind this demand was that Ho was more of a CPP stronghold than Hohoe. It will be recalled that the Togoland Congress newspaper, the *Vanguard*, which appeared at irregular intervals, was published by the Togoland News Syndicate at Hohoe until it was suspended in 1954.<sup>99</sup> Hohoe was the *de facto* headquarters of the Togoland Congress. Ho, in contrast, was host to the second national annual conference of the CPP in 1951, where the future strategy of the party was approved.<sup>100</sup>

Interestingly, all the councils including those in Ewedome resolved to be integrated into the Gold Coast.<sup>101</sup> But as we shall see, it became clear from the results of the plebiscite conducted later in 1956 that the local councils in Ewedome were hijacked by CPP activists who whipped councillors to create the impression that the inhabitants of Ewedome were in support of integration. One interesting development common throughout Ewedome was the tendency for elected councillors to switch camp to the side of the CPP once they got onto the local councils, while the wards which elected them remained predominantly pro-Togoland Congress. One cogent reason given by Brown for this trend was that 'participation in council implied support for the TVT administration, positions which were opposed by the Togoland Congress'.<sup>102</sup> Besides, there were material benefits for councillors to gain from supporting the CPP. All key positions went to CPP supporters. Some

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<sup>98</sup> RAG/H, Memorandum by Ho District Branch of the CPP on the transfer of TVT Council from Ho, 8 September 1955.

<sup>99</sup> RAG/H, Suspension of the Togoland News Syndicate, May 193 (Note filed). See also Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 139.

<sup>100</sup> Austin, *Politics*, p. 162.

<sup>101</sup> Reference to UN Trusteeship Council Petitions on Togoland from 1950 to 1954.

<sup>102</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 272.

Togoland Congress supporters who resisted the use of coercive apparatus to force them to decamp boycotted initial council meetings in protest. Brown cited the case where Togoland Congress councillors from Alavanyo boycotted the first sittings of the Akpini Local Council.<sup>103</sup> In this way, the CPP came to have absolute control over the local councils right from 1951 to 1966.

The CPP itself had advantages to gain in seeking the integration of Togoland into the Gold Coast. Its stance emanated partly from the proposed Volta River project, an elaborate hydro-electric power scheme which involved the damming of the river. The economic implications of the project on the livelihood of the fishing communities along the river were enormous. An aerial survey conducted in 1957 showed that the artificial dam to be created would displace many of the Togolandese living along the river banks. Togolandese, particularly from Ewedome, had therefore sent a petition to the UN demanding that the Volta River scheme should be looked at as an international project on which Togoland should be 'represented as a nation'.<sup>104</sup> It would have been unthinkable for the Gold Coast government to build such a gigantic dam so close to Togoland and allow the latter to become an independent nation. That would have had serious security implications for the Gold Coast. It was imperative, therefore, that Togoland remain part of the Gold Coast without which the project might have well been abandoned.<sup>105</sup>

Meanwhile, the people in Buem-Krachi District to the north of Ewedome were linguistically and historically linked to the Gold Coast. The Krachis and Nkonyas were said to have migrated from the Gold Coast. The same could be said of Adeles and Nchumurus

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, p. 272-273.

<sup>104</sup> RAG/H ACC No.344 Petition from Togoland Youth Association, Ho District, to the UN Trusteeship Council, 28 September 1953. S. T. Fleku, a Togolander, was subsequently appointed to the planning committee of the Volta River Project in 1953. See Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 145.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

(in the Nkwanta district of the present-day Volta Region) who traced their origin to the west. In pre-colonial times, the chief of Krachi was said to have served the Asantehene.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, the inhabitants in the northern section of British Togoland had their kith and kin in the Gold Coast with whom they shared common customs and traditions. Not even the division of Dagomba into two by the Anglo-German partition of 1890 could prevent the Ya Na in German Yendi from continuously exercising authority over the selection of chiefs among the Dagombas in the Gold Coast.<sup>107</sup>

Consequently, they described the whole idea of unification as 'a political madness that sought to exchange the frontier to their east for a new frontier to their west'.<sup>108</sup> In a resolution sent to the UN Trusteeship Council, the Buem-Krachi District Council reiterated the point that they were 'tired of being handed over from one power to another and considered that the progress of their area had been greatly retarded by the frequent changes in the foreign powers who had administered them'.<sup>109</sup> The only area where a dissenting view was recorded was Biakoye Local Council to the north of Ewedome, made up predominantly of a number of small ethnic groups which were neither Akan nor Ewe. Certain chiefs in this area declared their preference for unification of the two Togolands on the ground that the 'Gold Coast had been their enemies since time immemorial'.<sup>110</sup>

In December 1954, the UN General Assembly observed that the imminent independence of the Gold Coast rendered the continued administration of British Togoland by the UK government under the Trusteeship Agreement impossible.<sup>111</sup> A change in the Trusteeship

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<sup>106</sup> UN Trusteeship Council, Mandate of the Buem-Krachi District Council to its Delegates to the Trusteeship Council, 29 January 1954.

<sup>107</sup> UN Visiting Mission Report, 1952, p. 35.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> UN Trusteeship Council Petitions, Petition from the Buem-Krachi District Council, 13 October 1953.

<sup>110</sup> RAG/H ACC.0012, UN Visiting Mission to Biakoye Local Council, 24 August 1955.

<sup>111</sup> RAG/H, Press Release No.1565/54, Office of the Secretary to the Governor, Accra, 23 December 1954.

Agreement was also not feasible, for any such change could 'necessarily affect the interests of the inhabitants of Togoland under French administration.'<sup>112</sup> Meanwhile, the prospects of unification with French Togoland looked very bleak, making the stance of the Togoland Congress untenable. As late as 1954, the French authorities made it crystal clear to the UN that they had not contemplated any programme towards rapid independence of that territory.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, no one could guess the exact conditions under which French Togoland would eventually be granted independence, or whether or not those conditions would be compatible with the aspirations of all Ewes.<sup>114</sup> Among the imponderables was the likelihood of the French government backing an idea of 'balkanization as against the creation of a new African state'.<sup>115</sup> What made the situation more intricate was the statement by the British government to the UN that when the Gold Coast became independent it was not prepared to remain in Togoland.<sup>116</sup>

The Togoland problem was first brought to the attention of the Trusteeship Council as far back as 1947, when seven petitions were received from the AEC and from Mr Augustino de Souza, President of the *Comité de l'Unité Togolaise* in French Togoland demanding the unification of Ewe people.<sup>117</sup> Yet, the problem was allowed to simmer for that long. As the Gold Coast drew nearer to independence, the issue became more complex. The UN Visiting Mission stated in 1953 that

it seems clear that a constitution granting full autonomy to the  
Gold Coast cannot be made to apply also to Togoland so long

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> UN Special Report on Ewe Unification Problem, New York, 1955, p. 43.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> R. W. Howe, *Black Star Rising: A Journey through West Africa in Transition* (London, 1957), p. 179.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. See also RAG/H Trans-Volta Togoland Council Addresses, Arden-Clarke to Trans-Volta Togoland Council, 17 December 1954.

<sup>117</sup> UN Visiting Mission Report on the Trust Territory of Togoland under French Administration, Letter of Transmittal from S.K. Benerji, Chairman, to Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary General, 18 October 1955.

as the Trusteeship Agreement retains its present form, since the United Kingdom Government would no longer exercise any control over the Gold Coast Government it would not be possible for Togoland to be administered any longer as an integral part of the Gold Coast and still retain the United Kingdom Government as its Administering Authority'.<sup>118</sup>

Based on these facts, the UN General Assembly adopted the draft resolution terminating the Trusteeship Agreement.<sup>119</sup> The Trusteeship Council was then tasked to determine how the wishes of the inhabitants could be ascertained. In pursuance of this task, a special visiting mission was despatched to the territory in 1955.<sup>120</sup> The importance of this resolution lay in the fact that while the Trusteeship Agreement was emphatic about the need for earliest possible attainment of self-government or independence for the trust territory, it was silent on the factors to be considered in deciding on the termination of the trust status.<sup>121</sup>

### **Local Councils and the 1956 Plebiscite**

After the 1954 election, the CPP endeavoured to speed up the integration process by embarking on a vigorous political campaign to open branches in the trust territory with the view to integrating it with the Gold Coast 'by the time of Ghana's independence'.<sup>122</sup> Interestingly, the slogan of the CPP was 'freedom' while that of the Togoland Congress

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<sup>118</sup> UN Visiting Mission Report (Document No. T/1040), 1953, paragraph 84.

<sup>119</sup> RAG/H, Press Release No.1565/54, Office of the Secretary to the Governor, Accra, 23 December 1954.

<sup>120</sup> UN Visiting Mission Special Report, 24 October 1955, p. 42.

<sup>121</sup> RAG/H ACC, 343 Mr Scott to the Trusteeship Council 8 December 1954.

<sup>122</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 222.

was the Ewe translation of freedom which is '*ablode*'.<sup>123</sup> Arrangements were made for the leadership of the CPP to meet members of the local and district councils. Nkrumah toured Ho district with Komla Gbedemah and held meetings in such towns as Ho, Hohoe, Kpando, Kpetoe, Kpedze, Vane and Saviefe.<sup>124</sup> Gbedemah, an Ewe from Anlo, was a leading member of the CPP and a key lieutenant of Nkrumah who became the first Finance Minister of independent Ghana. His presence in Nkrumah's entourage was to appeal to ethnic sentiments of the Ewes of Ewedome and to calm fears that integration with the Gold Coast implied the subjugation of Ewe of Togoland, but his Anlo identity did not help matters.

The local councils became the main field on which the political battle between the CPP and the Togoland Congress was fought. Many council meetings frequently broke up in disorder and confusion and there were instances where councillors refused to attend meetings. As the councils were divided into factions, the initial enthusiasm of both councillors and the general populace began to wear off.<sup>125</sup> In some cases, the campaign brought in its trail outright conflict. At Hohoe in August 1954, some people opposed to integration vandalised a CPP van, destroyed its loud speakers and assaulted its occupants. One person was arrested, charged, convicted and sentenced to two months' imprisonment.<sup>126</sup> In Awatime, for example, towns and villages which supported the CPP became targets of abuse.<sup>127</sup> In East Dain Local Council, the political differences reached such a crescendo that the council became divided into two with one half threatening to

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<sup>123</sup> For details about the use of Ewe-language chants and songs in the campaigns see Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p. 132.

<sup>124</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/305, Quarterly Report, Ho Sub-District, 31 December 1955.

<sup>125</sup> RAG/H LG/SF.5, Yingor Local Council Meetings, Agenda and Minutes, 20 August 1955; PRAAD/A 39/1/456, Handing over Note, Kpandu District, 22 August 1953.

<sup>126</sup> RAG/H ACC.0012, UN Visiting Mission to Biakoye Local Council, 24 August 1954.

<sup>127</sup> RAG/H RAO/C.728, TVT,SF/10, Report to the Trans-Volta Regional House of Chiefs, 23 June 1958.

secede to form a separate council to avoid the political machinations of Antor and the Togoland Congress.<sup>128</sup> In Asogli Local Council, the disruptive effects of the struggle between unificationists and integrationists led to the resignation of some councillors and a threat by their respective wards to withdraw from the council in 1955.<sup>129</sup>

The situation in Akpini Local Council was most deplorable as the relocation of a new market from Togoland Congress-dominated Aloyi to a pro-CPP Tsakpe led to serious dispute between the CPP group, most of whom were the youth, and the separatists.<sup>130</sup> Some councillors walked out in protest at the attempts by the chairperson of Akpini Local Council to get the full support of the council for integration.<sup>131</sup> The opposition to the council intensified when, according to Brown, the Treasurer of the Akpini Local Council embezzled £700.<sup>132</sup> The immediate response of taxpayers was to form the Ratepayers Association in 1954, forcing the government to interdict the Treasurer.<sup>133</sup> Brown noted further that the antagonism between integrationists and unificationists made it virtually 'impossible for local council to attempt any revenue collection in pro-Ablode areas'.<sup>134</sup>

Rate collection suffered also because many elderly people became reluctant to pay their rate in protest against the move by government to integrate the territory into the Gold Coast.<sup>135</sup> In the words of Brown, 'cocoa farmers supported Togoland Congress while local council and government department employees [who were more educated, younger with

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<sup>128</sup> RAG/H LG.2/SF.7, East Dain Local council, 31 December 1953.

<sup>129</sup> RAG/H LG 6336, G.O Awuma to Asogli Local Council, 7 December 1955.

<sup>130</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/456, Handing over Note, Kpandu District, 22 August 1953. This point is also noted in Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 297.

<sup>131</sup> Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 146.

<sup>132</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 305-306.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, p. 305-306.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, p. 306.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

less social status or wealth] tended to support the CPP'.<sup>136</sup> This further explains how the generational divide noted in the previous chapters continued to have retardative effect on the new councils. In Akpini Local Council areas, 'CPP supporters were omitted from the nominal roll, upon which rate liability was based, and several cases where Togoland Congress supporters were harassed for payment, and where organized raids were made on pro-Ablode villages'.<sup>137</sup> It is worth noting that the resolution of the issue of integration was pivotal for the development of local government in the territory.

On 9 May 1956, the people of Togoland under the UK Trusteeship went to the polls to decide whether their territory should be united with an independent Gold Coast or whether it should be separated from the Gold Coast and allowed to continue under trusteeship, pending the ultimate determination of its political future.<sup>138</sup> The results of the plebiscite showed 92,775 for union with the Gold Coast and 67,529 for separation. Allegations of rigging were made by the Togoland Congress, though it failed to provide concrete evidence in support of its allegation.<sup>139</sup> An interesting picture that emerged showed that while Ewedome voted overwhelmingly for separation, the other ethnic groups to the north voted for union with the Gold Coast.<sup>140</sup> Even within Ewedome, the picture was more complicated than the general figures show.

Skinner makes the point that political affiliation with either the Togoland Congress or the CPP and voting in the plebiscite operated on 'communal lines'.<sup>141</sup> She notes further that 'local issues, rather than adherence to a broader party manifesto, were determining voting

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid, p. 254.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, p. 303.

<sup>138</sup> The decision to hold a plebiscite was based on the recommendations of the UN Visiting Mission Report of 1955.

<sup>139</sup> Daily Graphic, 12 May 1956, p. 1.

<sup>140</sup> Figures taken from Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Skinner, 'Reading, Writing and Rallies', p. 126-7.

behaviour'.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, the fight for and against integration provided fertile ground for local rivalries and conflicts to be articulated through CPP/Togoland Congress politics.<sup>143</sup> In other words, internal feud or stool rivalries between *dukowo* often determined the support for or against integration. Amenumey notes that because of an old dispute between Vakpo and Anfoega, Vakpo decided to support unification while Anfoega was a stronghold of the CPP.<sup>144</sup> In East Dain Local Council, the old conflict between Tafi and Logba was revived and articulated with national politics. The political differences reached such a height that the council became divided into two with one half, most from Tafi, threatening to secede to form a separate council to avoid the political machinations of Antor, a citizen of Lobga.<sup>145</sup>

#### Results of the 1956 Plebiscite

Section	Union/Integration	Separation
Northern Section	49,119	12,707
Southern Section	93,095	67,493
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>142,214</b>	<b>80,200</b>

#### Results of the 1956 Plebiscite in Ewedome

District	Union/Integration	Separation
Ho	7,217	18,981
Kpando	8,581	17,020
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,798</b>	<b>36,001</b>

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> For examples of the interaction of local and national issues and its effects on local communities can also be found in Ahafo. See John Dunn and A. F. Robertson, *Dependence and Opportunity: Political Change in Ahafo* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 315-321.

<sup>144</sup> Amenumey, *Ewe Unification*, p. 144.

<sup>145</sup> RAG/H RAO/C.728, TVT.SF/9, Report to the Trans-Volta Togoland Council, 23 June 55.

Two months after the plebiscite, the third general elections were held in the Gold Coast and the trust territory on 17 July 1956 to sort out two very important issues. The first was whether the UK government should relinquish power to the CPP in 1956.<sup>146</sup> The second issue was whether at independence the country should be a unitary or federal state.<sup>147</sup> The Togoland Congress once again won in its three traditional districts in Ewedome – Ho East, Ho West and Kpando North – but the CPP, which stood for unitary state, was the overall winner by claiming 71 out of 104 seats throughout the country.<sup>148</sup> The results of the plebiscite and the 1956 elections effectively killed off federalist and separatist tendencies of opposition elements and put paid to the campaign of the Togoland Congress for the unification of the two Togolands. Nevertheless, it did not end the spate of violent incidents in Ewedome; on the contrary, violence escalated in Kpandu and Hohoe areas in 1956-7. The leadership of the Togoland Congress wanted to salvage something out of the loss they suffered in the plebiscite by fighting for the recognition and maintenance of southern Togoland identity within the enlarged Gold Coast. This it hoped to achieve by the creation of a separate region for Southern Togoland.<sup>149</sup> Although the Togoland Congress got the support of a large number of chiefs, it was frustrated by the Togoland branch of the CPP.<sup>150</sup> The Togoland Congress and the majority of chiefs then decided to boycott the

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<sup>146</sup> Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 323.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, p. 347.

<sup>149</sup> RAG/H, Report by Parliamentary Opposition Fact-Finding Delegation to Southern Togoland, 1957, p. 3.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

independence celebrations scheduled for 6 March 1957 until their demand for a separate region was met.<sup>151</sup>

On the 27 February 1957, the Togoland Congress organised a rally in Kpando to galvanise support for the boycott of the events on March 6. After the rally, unsubstantiated rumours spread alleging that 'the Togoland Congress had hatched plans to vandalise the police station; dynamite houses and shoot supporters of the CPP; that Togoland Congress had sent 150 youngmen to Kumasi to train as Action Troopers; that assassination plot was formed at Kpandu Aloi; that the people were being trained in the bush for subversive activities'.<sup>152</sup> It was also alleged that CPP supporters had a secret meeting at Kpandu Agudzi where guns and gunpowder were distributed to members.<sup>153</sup> The government's position on the issue was that while no one was under any obligation to take part in the celebration of the independence, it would not countenance any attempt to prevent those who wished to do so.<sup>154</sup>

The discovery of alleged Togoland Congress camps in the Alavanyo area in the Kpando district and Hodzokofe in the Ho district led to the deployment of 485 police and 400 troops into Ewedome. To legitimize the presence of the troops, the Governor signed a Peace Preservation Order on 26 February 1957. Searches were conducted to retrieve firearms, cutlasses and other weapons.<sup>155</sup> On 4 March, some supporters of the Togoland Congress in Kpando went to the forecourt of the district and local councils and dismantled decorations and buntings mounted in preparation for the independence celebration and broke the windows of the council buildings. They then moved on to vandalise the Post

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

Office and a petrol station which had also been decorated. On 6 March, there was an exchange of fire between another group of Togoland Congress supporters and the police which left two people dead and several wounded, despite a ban on the use of arms and ammunitions.<sup>156</sup>

Indiscriminate arrests were made by the police, resulting in many innocent people being beaten and arrested. Elderly people, travellers and even members of the CPP who did not oppose the celebrations were mistakenly arrested and severely beaten.<sup>157</sup> The whole district was mired in utter confusion and chaos, with 141 arrests made. The disproportionate reprisal by the government forces in the run-up to independence created widespread fear, indignation and disquiet throughout Ewedome, which adversely affected the work of local government institutions. Ironically, Kpando tended to benefit most from the CPP government during these turbulent periods in the run-up to the 1956 plebiscite. According to Brown, 'between 1952 and 1957, Kpando received more benefits in the form of development than at any other time before or since'.<sup>158</sup> Kpando was a stronghold of the CPP in Ewedome and the strategy of the party was to use resource allocation to promote the development of constituencies which were most supportive of the party and its leader. Kpando *borbobor* - a cultural dance performed by the youth of Kpando - became an organ of the CPP. The group attended all CPP rallies and attracted many of the youth. More specific to Kpando's case was the dominant role played by its CPP activists in the TVT Council, a body responsible for the distribution of government grants and projects in the region from 1952 to 1958.

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<sup>156</sup> RAG/H LC.23/SF.4, Kpando Local Council Meetings and Minutes, 1955. This date (1955) refers to the date that the file was started.

<sup>157</sup> Report of Parliamentary Opposition Fact-Finding Delegation to Southern Togoland, 1 April 1957.

<sup>158</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 293.

Examples of projects undertaken in Kpando included district council offices, community centre, health centre, secondary school, library, pipe-borne water, new market, post office, tarring of the streets of the town, construction of drainage system and the trade school, which later became Kpando Technical Institute. All these projects were executed within a period of four years.<sup>159</sup> The most disturbed picture was that even within Kpando itself, CPP- dominated areas benefited more than Togoland Congress areas such as Kpando-Aloyi in the allocation of development projects.<sup>160</sup> This explains the decision of *Ablode* supporters to boycott payment of rates to the councils in Ewedome. Brown quoted the Government Agent at Kpando, David Heaton, as saying in 1955 that, 'party politics plays an unfortunately large part in the council's affairs and colours almost all its discussions'.<sup>161</sup> This problem identified by Heaton became a disturbing feature of local government throughout Ewedome right from the inception of the new councils and well into the post-independent era.

## Conclusion

Local government institutions in Ewedome began to make progress from 1953 after the initial setbacks brought about by poor transitional arrangements. The modest progress made in the area of education, health, road construction, agriculture and the provision of potable water to district headquarters was due largely to the one million pound grant made available to the region by the CPP government. As the Gold Coast moved towards independence, the trusteeship status of British Togoland brought the issue of integration onto the international

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid, p. 294-296.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid, p. 273.

stage. The dynamics of Togoland identity coupled with the CPP- dominated government's determination to integrate the Trust Territory into the Gold Coast complicated matters.

The political atmosphere of the territory was greatly disturbed. The overall effect was that modern party politics began to impact negatively on local councils. The division of local councils into separatist and integrationist factions made the new institutions of local government vehicles for the broader party political struggle. Local government programmes were brought to a virtual standstill. The results of the plebiscite and the subsequent integration of Togoland into the Gold Coast was no different from what happened in some parts of Africa where the partition of the continent forced smaller African political entities to dissolve in larger ones.<sup>162</sup> In the case of the Ewes of Ewedome, the real danger was that any ethnographic state within the southern section of British Togoland would be an anachronism and that the resolution of the problem came as a breather to the CPP and the UK government. As for the development of local government in the territory, it remained to be seen whether the local councils fared any better following the final settlement of the question of integration.

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<sup>162</sup> One exception to this general observation is the case where Gambia avoided incorporation into a united Senegambia.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE IMMEDIATE POST-INDEPENDENCE**  
**PERIOD, 1957-1974**

On Ghana's attainment of full independence in March 1957, the CPP government had to come to terms with the need to establish firm control over the country as well as to forge a strong sense of shared nationality among its citizens. At independence, the country was patently polarized. Disturbances in Ewedom in 1957 were the most violent and serious facing the CPP government. These developments strengthened Kwame Nkrumah's resolve to introduce tough policies to crack down on the opposition, which made the CPP increasingly authoritarian. The period thus saw attempts at consolidating the CPP at the grassroots level as the country moved towards a one-party state. For the party to be present throughout the country meant firm control over local government structures. Over a period of nine years, the regime restructured local government three times.<sup>1</sup> Such frequent reforms brought the government's seriousness of promoting sustainable development into question because the 'unstable structure of local government was a constraining factor'.<sup>2</sup>

The impact of CPP policies and those of successive governments: the National Liberation Council of 1966-9, the civilian Busia regime of 1969-72 and the National Redemption Council which came to power in 1972, on local government in Ewedom is the focus of this chapter. The chapter begins by examining the CPP's handling of the opposition in Ewedom after independence and evaluating the impact of government's policies in relation to local government. It then examines local government in the post-

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<sup>1</sup> For the categorization of local government reforms under the CPP, see Ben Amonoo, *Ghana 1957-1966: The Politics of Institutional Dualism* (London, 1981), p.157.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 159.

Nkrumah era up to 1974, the year local councils were abolished throughout the country, and concludes by giving a brief overview of local government to the present. This extends the scope of the chapter a little beyond the 1974 cut-off date for this study.

### **The CPP and Opposition Elements in Ewedome**

No sooner had the CPP assumed full office than disturbances erupted in various parts of the country associated with one opposition party or another. The Alavanyo disturbances were soon followed by the emergence in Accra of the Ga movement known as *Ga Shifimo Kpee* which posed a threat to CPP control in Ghana's capital city. These developments at the very embryonic stage of the nation were considered by the CPP as a recipe for the emergence of dangerous 'sub-nationalisms'.<sup>3</sup> The response of the government was to establish firm control over localities by introducing draconian laws such as the Avoidance of Discrimination Act of 1957 designed to proscribe political parties formed on a regional basis.<sup>4</sup> The government was systematic in its resolve to push chiefs out of local government and party politics and cow opposition elements into submission.<sup>5</sup>

The CPP strategy during the anti-colonial movement, according to Rathbone, was to make the party attractive to groups opposed to the established traditional system of authority by vilifying chiefs and labelling them as agents of colonialism.<sup>6</sup> After independence, this strategy changed to associating chiefs with opposition parties. In the then Gold Coast, there had been a large number of destoolments and attempted

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<sup>3</sup> *West Africa*, 5 January, 1957, p. 5. See also Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 361.

<sup>4</sup> For the debate of this bill in parliament in December 1957, see K. A. Busia, *Ghana's Struggle for Democracy and Freedom* (Accra, 1979), p. 51-59.

<sup>5</sup> For a catalogue of cases of harassment of chiefs in the southern Ghana, see Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 32-46.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 37.

destoolments directed against chiefs. Destoolment charges were framed up in 1957 against Nene Matekole, an important chief in the Krobo region of the Gold Coast, as well as reported murmurings of allegations against the *Asantehene*, whose person until then was regarded as almost sacred.<sup>7</sup> We also see in 1959 the imprisonment of Bafour Akoto, the *okyeame* of the *Asantehene*, for his alleged role in supporting the opposition.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, in the Trans-VoltaTogoland region, 'there was arbitrary destoolment of chiefs who were opposed to the policies of the CPP'.<sup>9</sup> Brown notes the resolve of the CPP to enstool chiefs in Kpando who were receptive to the government, a development which led to chieftaincy disputes.<sup>10</sup>

It did not appear to British officials at the time that the actions taken against chiefs in particular were centrally inspired. Nkrumah was said to have discouraged overt intervention by the CPP in the attacks on chiefs.<sup>11</sup> Though the party stated that it was not its policy to attack chiefs, it admitted that 'when they occurred, they were the direct results of the bad behaviour of individual chiefs'.<sup>12</sup> According to British sources, there appeared to be a surge of genuine popular feeling against the political role played by chiefs in central and local government.<sup>13</sup> The British view was that the attainment of independence and the assumption of power by the CPP abandoned the chiefs to the 'wolves', as the protection the latter had enjoyed under the colonial system was no more.<sup>14</sup>

Be that as it may, the pronouncements by leading members of the CPP and the headlines in the *Evening News* critical of chiefs gave credence to the view that the attempts by the

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<sup>7</sup> NA CO 96/824/4, Gold Coast Opposition to Dr Nkrumah, April 1957.

<sup>8</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 150.

<sup>9</sup> RHC/H, Minutes of the Volta Region House of Chiefs, December, 1966.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 327.

<sup>11</sup> NA CO 96/824/4, Gold Coast Opposition to Dr Nkrumah, April 1957.

<sup>12</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 33.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

CPP government to extricate itself from the attacks on chiefs was a camouflage meant to placate the general public.<sup>15</sup> Tapping into the exuberance of the youth, the CPP grew militant in its opposition to chiefly authority and to dissenting views from individuals and groups. Its youth wing, the Ghana Young Pioneers Movement (GYPM), formed in 1960, and the so-called 'verandah boys' were used to attack traditional values and propagate socialist ideals.<sup>16</sup> These groups represented attempts by nationalist parties in Africa to create what Apter refers to as 'overarching political parties, voluntary associations, and governmental forms that bridge older parochialism'.<sup>17</sup> In Kpando, for instance, Brown observed that between 1957 and 1960 the CPP supporters 'used the coercion resources available to them from central government to bring about the imprisonment, exile, conversion or capitulation of the Ablode activists'.<sup>18</sup>

In Ewedome, the conflict between the CPP and the chiefs in every nook and cranny of the territory remained tense well after the 1956 plebiscite. We have seen that the campaign for and against Togoland integration had drawn every chief in Ewedome into active politics and brought most of them into direct confrontation with the CPP. Furthermore, the integration of British Togoland into the Gold Coast and then independent Ghana did not end the desire of many Ewes on both sides of the border for unification with their kith and kin. Pockets of resistance were manifestly visible in big towns such as Ho, Hohoe and Kpando as well as smaller villages and towns such as Dzolo, Akome, Dedome, Kpedze,

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<sup>15</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 46.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 34. 'Verandah boys' formed what is referred to as 'the grassroots constituents' of the CPP. See Jonathan H. Frimpong-Ansah, *The Vampire State in Africa: The Colonial Economy of Decline in Ghana* (London, 1991), 75.

<sup>17</sup> David Apter, 'The Role of Traditionalism in the Political Modernization of Ghana and Uganda', *World Politics*, XIII (1960), p. 45.

<sup>18</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 230.

Anoe, Honuta, Dogblome, Awiesu in the Ho district.<sup>19</sup> Inhabitants both in Ghana and in French Togo were disappointed that 'Ghana's independence had in fact made the frontier far more rigid'.<sup>20</sup> Again, the alliance between the Togoland Congress and the opposition NLM and NPP was provocative so far as the CPP was concerned. For example, the CPP was quick to attribute a disturbance in the rural areas of Asante in 1957 to the influence of the Togoland Congress.<sup>21</sup> In consequence, Ewedome, which was the stronghold of the Togoland Congress, had to be swept clean of any anti-Nkrumahist elements.

Parliamentary debates on the situation in the Trans-Volta Togoland Region in 1958 documented a catalogue of government's reprisals against the opposition in Ewedome.<sup>22</sup> The Preventive Detention Act (PDA), approved by cabinet in January 1958, gave the government power to 'imprison without trial people whose actions were deemed to be prejudicial to the state's security'.<sup>23</sup> In Ewedome, this drove many of the chiefs and their elders who professed *ablode* into exile in French Togoland. The leadership of the Togoland Congress, including S.G. Antor and Kojo Ayeke, were sentenced to three years imprisonment in 1957 for their alleged involvement in the disturbances in Alavanyo.<sup>24</sup> Such tough actions were aimed at preventing opponents of the party from becoming 'the basis of opposition politics'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Interviews conducted with *Togbe* Debrah IV of Logba Vuinta, 20 April 2006 and *Togbe* Adai Kwesi VI, paramount chief of Awudome, 14 June 2006.

<sup>20</sup> *West Africa*, 9 November 1957, p. 930.

<sup>21</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 107.

<sup>22</sup> Parliamentary Debates, Parliament House, 1958.

<sup>23</sup> Parliamentary Debates, 11 December 1957. For a vivid description of the CPP government's reprisal in Have in the East Dayi Local Council area, see Kwaku, 'Tradition', p. 83. This is also supported by interview with C.F.Y. Dekavie, a retired educationalist, Hohoe, 15 July 2007; Mr George Feakpi, a retired civil servant whose father also went into exile in French Togo, 8 August 2007, and Mr C.K. Kudor, Sohefia and a retired civil servant at Dzolokpuita, 24 December 2005.

<sup>24</sup> Interviews with Mr Bob Antor, son of Mr S.G. Antor (Secretary of the Togoland Congress), Logba Alakpeti, 1 July 2007; PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/144, East Dayi Local Council, Report on Violence in East Dayi local council area, September 1957.

<sup>25</sup> Jeffrey Herbst, *The Politics of Reform in Ghana, 1982-1991* (Berkeley, 1993), p. 79.

Added to this was a widespread rumour that prominent chiefs in Ewedome opposed to the CPP had acquired local guns from Alavanyo in readiness to take on the government in their bid to secede from Ghana. A list of such chiefs from Akome, Dzolo, Ho, Kpedze, Dzolopuita, Kpando-Aloyi, Alavanyo, Kpando-Kwanda, Hohoe and other towns was said to have been presented to the government by leading CPP members in the territory. Rumours of such a list, fuelled by the newly passed Preventive Detention Act, was enough to send some prominent chiefs and their elders running to French Togoland where they were to remain until the overthrow of the CPP in 1966. Some of those chiefs and their elders included *Togbe* Komla Tei, chief of Kpando Aloyi, Gabusu of Hohoe and Joshua Aborbor, a Linguist of Dzolo.<sup>26</sup> By 1961, organised opposition in Ewedome had been weakened. The merging of the Togoland Congress, the NLM, the NPP and the Ga Shifimo Kpee to form the United Party in 1957 had diverted attention from local and regional issues, which were of most concern to local communities, to parliamentary and national issues.<sup>27</sup>

Development projects in the territory continued to be channeled to towns and villages which supported the CPP.<sup>28</sup> Funds for some of those development projects such as market stalls and post offices were generated through taxes paid by all the inhabitants irrespective of their party affiliations. Yet, the allocation of those projects became a tool in the hands of party officials who used local councils to allocate projects based on party considerations. According to Ken Kwaku, Have-Etoe ceased to be the market centre of the whole of Have

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Madam Agnes Takyi, wife of *Togbe* Tei of Kpando Aloi, 31 May 2007.

<sup>27</sup> *West Africa*, 16 November 1957, p. 1081.

<sup>28</sup> The practice was common in other parts of the country as well. See Amonoo, *Ghana*, p. 161.

division because of its opposition to the CPP.<sup>29</sup> In its place, the East Dayi local council relocated the market to pro-CPP Have-Aklame.<sup>30</sup> When the people of Etoe built their own market, Kwaku noted that it was destroyed by the local authority police.<sup>31</sup> At Kpedze in the Yingor Local Council area, the decision by the CPP activists to site a new market at Kpedze-Todze for political reasons led to a row between the paramount chief of Kpedze and the local council. The council was unable to reach an agreement on the site for the market for which it had received a government grant of £2,000.<sup>32</sup>

In 1963, a proposal was made by the regional commissioner to move the headquarters of Yingor Local Council from Dzolokpuita to Kpedze.<sup>33</sup> Kpedze was a larger town, had a large market, a bank and a police station as well as better amenities to accommodate visitors. But this proposal was rejected by the government on the account of Dzolokpuita's support for the CPP.<sup>34</sup> The Ho West constituency of the CPP held its meetings at Dzolokpuita. During one of his campaign tours of the territory in 1956, Nkrumah had to take refuge at Dzolokpuita to avoid an alleged attack on him by *ablode* exponents.<sup>35</sup> As a reward, Dzolokpuita was made a district headquarters of an enlarged local council in 1963 with jurisdiction covering Abutia and Awudome.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Kwaku, 'Tradition', p.82. Nugent also made the point that communities which supported the CPP received special consideration in the allocation of grants. See Paul Nugent, 'An Abandoned Project and History in Ghana's Volta Region', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 37-38 (1996), p. 212.

<sup>30</sup> Kwaku, 'Tradition', p. 82.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> RAG/H RAO/C.1087, Yingor Local Council, Kpedze Affairs, 19 March 1958.

<sup>33</sup> RAG/H LG.12/V.5/2089, Proposals for the Delimitation of Parliamentary Constituencies, Regional Minister, Ho, to the Ministry of Justice, Accra, 10 September 1963.

<sup>34</sup> Interviews with Cephas Kudor, youth leader and a retired civil servant, Dzolokpuita, 5 October 2006; Anthonio Asinyo, a prominent migrant farmer at Dzolokpuita, 1 December 2005; Mr Alifo Henry, Abutia Elder and a retired educationalist, Abutia Kloe, 15 September 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Interviews conducted with the linguist of Dzolokpuita and Mr Nelson Tsahey, a retired Post Office Master at Dzolokpuita, 20 December 2006.

<sup>36</sup> RAG/H, Speech by Mr Ottu Dake to Dzolokpuita Local Council, 1963. Interview with Mawusinu Dogoe, the daughter of Lawyer Dogoe, a member of parliament from Yingor Local Council area in 1963, 4 September 2007.

## Chieftaincy Reforms

The CPP observed that any attempt to reform local government and entrench itself in the local areas would be meaningless unless the umbilical cord attaching the institution of chieftaincy to local councils was completely broken. Obviously, the CPP was distraught by the spectre of 'divided sovereignty' which was very much in evidence throughout the country.<sup>37</sup> According to Donal Ray, contemporary African states suffered from divided sovereignty because chiefs drew their legitimacy and authority from pre-colonial roots while the new states were created by colonial rule.<sup>38</sup> As we have seen, until the 1940s, 'African political expression was traditionally structured through the office of the chiefs.'<sup>39</sup> The transition from colonial rule to independence in many African states was, however, punctuated with tension between the new 'modernising' nationalists and traditional authorities.<sup>40</sup> Chiefs were now seen not only as competitors for power within the new state, but also as representatives of the old colonial order that was a stumbling block in the way of change.<sup>41</sup> Rathbone traces the root cause of the tension between Nkrumah and the traditional authorities to the insistence of some chiefs 'that the pre-colonial kingdoms were, in effect, sovereign powers'.<sup>42</sup> He noted further that the unreformed traditional authorities constituted an obstacle against the 'modernising agenda espoused by the CPP.'<sup>43</sup> Nonetheless, as noted earlier, chiefs' engagement with local politics had a long tradition

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<sup>37</sup> Donal I. Ray, 'Divided Sovereignty in Ghana', *Journal of Legal Pluralism*, 37-38 (1996), p. 198

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>39</sup> Harriet B. Schiffer, 'Local Administration and National Development: Fragmentation in Ghana', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 1 (1970), p. 59.

<sup>40</sup> See Emile A. B. van Rouveroy Van Nieuwaal, 'Chiefs and African States', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 25-26 (1987), p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> Ray, 'Divided Sovereignty', p. 198; Van Nieuwaal, 'Chiefs and African States', p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 32.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150. It is on record that the Asanteman Council was instrumental in organizing the opposition National Liberation Movement. See Apter, 'The Role of Traditionalism', p. 45; Charles Adom Boateng, *The Political Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana* (New York, 2003), p. 92.

which pre-dated the emergence of political parties. Therefore, though the CPP sought to dislodge chiefs from their position of local power, it recognised the impossibility of completely obliterating the institution in view of the interest that people continued to show in traditional authorities.<sup>44</sup>

Until 1958, chiefs in Trans-Volta Togoland region had not been organised as one definite body. Chiefs in the Colony and Asante and the Northern Territories had territorial councils where they met and discussed matters affecting the welfare of chieftaincy and of the country as a whole. The Joint Provincial Council which sat at Dodowa in the Colony and the Asanteman Council had been appropriate platforms for consultation between the government and the chiefs in those regions. As far back as 1955, the TVT Council petitioned the government to set up a territorial council of chiefs for the region.<sup>45</sup> This demand was not met at the time because of the government's preoccupation with the integrationist struggle and the uncertain political climate in the territory. Furthermore, in a territory mired in chieftaincy disputes, all chiefs who were *fiaga* of divisions (divisional chiefs) wanted to have a seat on the council, which would be a recipe for chaos in view of their sheer numbers. Government found out that there were some 103 divisional chiefs in Trans-Volta Togoland and it would cost a colossal amount to elevate all chiefs to paramount status. Therefore, the formation of such a council had to proceed tactfully to avert re-enacting the drama that characterised the amalgamation process under Lilley in the 1930s.

The CPP government set up the Van Lare Committee in November 1956 to undertake a full study of chieftaincy in Ewedome in particular and the region as a whole and to

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<sup>44</sup> Nugent, 'An Abandoned Project', p. 212.

<sup>45</sup> RAG/H TVTC 103/ V.3/23, Minutes of the Third Session of the TVTC, Ho, 26 September 1956.

recommend to government how the regional council of chiefs should be constituted. The Van Lare report was published in July 1957 and government, acting upon the report, elevated some divisional chiefs to paramount status while others retained the designation of divisional chief.<sup>46</sup> Protests erupted throughout the region, particularly in Ewedome. One shortcoming of the report was that the committee used the most recent population census of 1948 and registration figures for local council elections as one of the yardsticks for upgrading a chief to the status of a paramount chief.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, the absence of amenities and job opportunities in some areas had caused many people to migrate, swelling the population of other places before the census was taken. The real population of each town or village could only be ascertained if all inhabitants of a state were asked to go to their various divisions before the census. Even then, the population of a state was not an appropriate criterion for determination of the status of a chief. As some chiefs noted, 'you can not change or reduce the age or the ration of an old person because he is short'.<sup>48</sup>

In Ewedome, the traditional political set-up, as noted in chapters 1 and 2, was such that every division having a territorial claim and jurisdiction had a *fiaga* or an *omanhene*. In the normative sense of the title, there was no difference in status between a *fiaga* or an *omanhene* of one division and the other, though in reality, some stools were of higher status because of feats during war time and other factors. The alteration in the pre-colonial political organisation was due to the policy of amalgamation by the colonial government in the 1930s which gave the title of paramount chief to three chiefs in Ewedome while others

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<sup>46</sup> W. B. Van Lare Report on Chieftaincy in the Trans-Volta Togoland Region, 1957. This policy was reversed later by the Chieftaincy (Amendment) Decree 112 by the National Liberation Council in 1966.

<sup>47</sup> Van Lare Report, 1957, p.15. It is important to note that the report was not released to the public but the reforms carried out by the government were based on the recommendations contained in the report. See Van Lare Report and RAG/H, Minutes of the TVT Council, Address by Hon. C.H. Chapman, Regional Commissioner, 11 March 1958.

<sup>48</sup> RAG/H, Petition from *Dufiaga* of Fievier against the Regional House of Chiefs Bill, 28 June 1958 (Not filed).

were made subordinates. What the Van Lare report and the House of Chiefs Act of 1958 did was to complicate the issue further by using population and political affiliation with the CPP to promote some divisional chiefs as paramounts, making them permanent members of the Regional House of Chiefs, while all others were to retain the title of divisional chiefs.<sup>49</sup> This brought the total number of paramount chiefs in the TVT Region to 38 in 1958.<sup>50</sup>

The interpretation of the title 'paramount chief' in the Chieftaincy Act showed the government's own misunderstanding of the issue. According to the act, 'a paramount chief means a chief who is not subordinate to any chief other than Asantehene'.<sup>51</sup> This implied misleadingly that every paramount chief in Ghana was subordinate to the Asantehene.<sup>52</sup> To give legal backing to government's act of willfully creating and destooling paramount chiefs, a Chieftaincy Recognition Act was passed in 1959. This act gave the government the mandate to withdraw its recognition of any chief and 'even prevent the chief from residing in a specific area'.<sup>53</sup>

Tongu area with about twenty divisions was allocated seven seats on the Regional House of Chiefs and this was seen as an attempt by the government to sow seeds of discord among the Tongu confederacy.<sup>54</sup> In Ewedome, some prominent chiefs were denied paramount status. For his persistent refusal to amalgamate with Akpini state, the *Fiaga* of

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<sup>49</sup> Van Lare Report, 1957; House of Chiefs Act, Section 4, Fifth Schedule, 1958. At the first sitting of the house, Nana Akpandza III of Buem was elected the first president. See TVT Region House of Chiefs Minutes, 4 November 1958.

<sup>50</sup> See RAG/H, Petition, Working Committee of the Interim House of Chiefs TVT on behalf of *Fiagas* of Awatime and Ho, 11 July 1958 (Not filed).

<sup>51</sup> Chieftaincy Act, Section 68, 1961.

<sup>52</sup> This interpretation was withdrawn after persistent protest; the new interpretation read 'Paramount chief means a chief who is not subordinate to other chiefs; and in Asante, a chief who is not subordinate to any other chief other than the Asantehene'. See Minutes of the Regional House of Chiefs, Ho, 13 April 1962.

<sup>53</sup> K. Bofo-Arthur, 'Chieftaincy and Politics in Ghana since 1982', Unpublished Paper presented at Chieftaincy and Development Conference, University of Ghana, Legon, February 2000.

<sup>54</sup> Petition, *Dufiaga* of Fievier, 28 June 1958. The total number of seats in the Regional House of Chiefs was 38 in 1958. See RAG/H Petition, Working Committee of the Interim House of Chiefs TVT on Behalf of *Fiagas* of Awatime and Ve, Ho, 11 July 1958. (not filed).

Ve, *Togbe* Delume, was not recognised as a paramount chief.<sup>55</sup> One of the towns in Ve area, Golokwati, was the headquarters of the infamous Atando Native Authority which later became the headquarters of the defunct East Dayi Local Council.<sup>56</sup> Ironically, *Togbe* Gabusu, the paramount chief of Gbi towns, and *Togbe* Hodo, *Fiaga* of Anfoega, were among those chiefs who were recognised as paramount chiefs and accorded permanent seats on the Regional House of Chiefs, even though they also refused to be amalgamated.<sup>57</sup> In Hokpe State, which included seven Awatime divisions and ten Ewe divisions, one paramount chief was to be elected to represent the state.<sup>58</sup>

Protests also came from Buem state to the north of Ewedome. The grouping of chiefs within the Buem state for the purpose of electing representatives to the Regional House of Chiefs fell short of the aspirations of several ethnic groups, particularly the Akpafus and Bowiris.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, the supplement to the Gazette allocated a permanent seat to the *omanhene* of Buem. All the other chiefs from Jasikan, Teteman, Kudje, Guaman, Bowiri and Akpafu were to elect one member to the house on rotational basis. Undoubtedly, the grouping looked irregular considering the fact that Bowiri and Akpafu were ethnically and linguistically different from the Buem-Lefana. A second group of non-Ewe speaking people made up of Likpe, Lolobi, Nkunya and Santrokofi were also allocated one seat even though

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<sup>55</sup> RAG/H, Petition from *Togbe* Delume of Ve against the Regional House of Chiefs Bill, 5 July 1958(not filed).

<sup>56</sup> East Dayi Local Council was subsumed in the Kpandu District Council as part of the reorganisation of local councils in Ewedome in 1958.

<sup>57</sup> RHC/H, Minutes of the Regional House of Chiefs, Ho, 13 April 1962; Interview with Mr W. K. Ahiabo, Registrar, Regional House of Chiefs, Ho, 16 September 2007. *Togbe* Hodo was recognised as paramount chief by the CPP even before the Van Lare Report was ready.

<sup>58</sup> The head chiefs of other divisions were raised to the status of paramount chiefs because of their support for the CPP government. Interview with Mr Henry Akatsi, Research Officer, Regional House of Chiefs, Ho, 16 September 2007.

<sup>59</sup> See Ghana Gazette, Section 4 (5), 21 June 1958. (Not Filed). See also petitions from Liati division, 19 July 1958.

they had no common language or customs. It was no wonder that they too vehemently opposed the House of Chiefs Act of 1958.<sup>60</sup>

For the CPP, the setting up of the Regional House of Chiefs was a perfect opportunity to 'cage' chiefs by diverting their energies from local government issues into a body which had no real political power.<sup>61</sup> The function of the regional body was mainly 'to determine all matters of a constitutional nature involving paramount chiefs within the region'.<sup>62</sup> The House of Chiefs Act of 1958 effectively restricted chiefs' access to local government administration.<sup>63</sup> This was not surprising because earlier in that year, the government had announced its intention of reducing the number of chiefs on all municipal, urban and district councils to one.<sup>64</sup> On the occasion in 1958 of the dissolution of the Joint Provincial Council, Nkrumah stated that

the time had come,...when it is no longer necessary or desirable for chiefs to be concerned with the executive duties of government. Houses of chiefs would assist the government in matters of customary law in safeguarding traditions and customs. The government now even believe that traditional members should be withdrawn from local councils, since their experience was no longer necessary on them.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> See RAG/H TVT10/SF. 2, Petition from Likpe Traditional Area, 27 August 1958; RAG/H, Memorandum by the *omanhene* of Santrokofi to the Minister of Local Government, 20 July 1958.

<sup>61</sup> For detailed examination of the gradual subordination of chiefs to central government control and their final exclusion from local government, see Kwesi Jonah, 'The Electoral Response of Ghana's Traditional Rulers to their Subordination and Alienation in Local Government', in Amposah and Bofo-Arthur, *Local Government in Ghana*, p. 209; Apter, *Ghana*, p. 121; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 377.

<sup>62</sup> House of Chiefs Act, 1958. Its establishment brought the total number of houses of chiefs in Ghana to five: Eastern, Western, Northern and Ashanti with headquarters at Koforidua, Cape Coast, Tamale and Kumasi respectively. See *West Africa*, 1 November 1958, p. 1095.

<sup>63</sup> House of Chiefs Act, Section 17a, 1958; Interview conducted with *Togbe* Tam Tia, paramount chief of Todome, at Ho, 5 September 2007.

<sup>64</sup> RAG/H, Press Release No. 79/58, Traditional Members Serving on Local Government Council, 18 February 1958 (not filed).

<sup>65</sup> *West Africa*, 29 November 1958, p. 1129.

This threat by Nkrumah to remove chiefs from local council was indeed carried out in 1959 by the CPP.<sup>66</sup> This was followed by the Local Government Act of 1961 and the Chieftaincy Act of 1961, both of which made no provision whatsoever for chiefs to be included in the working of local councils, except to elect paramount chiefs as ceremonial presidents of the councils. What Nkrumah did, van Nieuwaal writes, was to set the parameters for traditional authority so that by the end of the CPP regime, chieftaincy had 'come to the edge of the grave'.<sup>67</sup> The various acts passed by parliament were designed to rid chiefs of real political power because Nkrumah saw traditional authorities in league with the opposition as 'subversive'.<sup>68</sup> In this respect, Nugent was right when he stated that the house of chiefs 'was important to those who sat in it- and maybe to those who thought they should sit in it- but it impinged comparatively little upon popular consciousness... and that the centre of gravity lay in the villages rather than at the higher tiers'.<sup>69</sup> Thus, events in Ewedome fit well into Rathbone's analysis of the erosion of chiefly authority in Asante and the Colony under Nkrumah's regime. The reforms were, however, not complete without the creation of 40 Traditional/Joint Traditional Councils on 30 November 1962.<sup>70</sup> It is worthy of note that the creation of Joint Traditional Councils was not dissimilar to the policy of amalgamation during during the colonial era. It was the Regional House of Chiefs at its meeting of 28 February 1959 which recommended that the name of the region should be changed from Trans-Volta Togoland Region to the Volta Region based on allegations that

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<sup>66</sup> Interview conducted with Mr Akatsi, Research Officer, Volta Region House of Chiefs, Ho, 2007. This point was also made in Paul Nugent, *Africa Since Independence* (New York, 2004), p.123.

<sup>67</sup> Van Nieuwaal, 'Chiefs and African States', p. 4; Boateng, *Political Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah*, p. 91.

<sup>68</sup> Apter, 'The Role of Traditionalism', p. 57.

<sup>69</sup> Nugent, 'An Abandoned Project', p. 215.

<sup>70</sup> Chieftaincy Act of 1961, Section 69. See also VR/HC.5584, Clerk, Volta Region House of Chiefs to the Regional Administrative Officer, Ho 17 February 1969.

the government of the French Togoland was planning to annex the region.<sup>71</sup> Consequently, the National Assembly changed the name to the Volta Region in 1959.<sup>72</sup>

An important innovation in the institution of chieftaincy in Ewedome was the introduction of the position of *Nyonufia*, literally meaning 'women's chief' but mistakenly referred to as Queen Mother.<sup>73</sup> Until this point, Akan-style queen mothers were not known in Ewedome. By virtue of the patrilineal system of inheritance, the institution of chieftaincy among the Ewes was an all-male affair. Though both women and men were equal before the law, the patrilineal system made men the head of nuclear and extended families as well as lineages. The institution of queen mother therefore did not evolve with chieftaincy among the Ewes.<sup>74</sup> Even in Akan areas, in exception to Yaa Asantewaa, the queen mother's role did not go beyond the nomination of a successor to the stool. Consequently, women in Ewedome did not form part of the administration of the NA system because they did not fit into the scheme of indirect rule. Although there was no deliberate colonial policy to exclude women from local government, the parameters of indirect rule inadvertently meant a complete exclusion of women. In this respect, local government became 'a citadel of male political power and domination'.<sup>75</sup>

It was only in the early 1940s that the situation began to change in Ewedome. Many women became educated and got employment in such occupations as nursing, teaching and

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<sup>71</sup> Minutes of the Regional House of Chiefs, 28 February 1959.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> The title 'queen mother' is a contested one. There seems not to be any agreement among historians and anthropologists as to whether women chiefs among the Ewes could rightly be referred to as queen mothers. Lynne Brydon refrained from the use of the term in her works on the Ewes because of its contested nature. She preferred the title 'women chief' instead. See Lynne Brydon, 'Women Chiefs and Power in the Volta Region of Ghana', *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 37-38 (1996), p. 227-247. The queen mother among the Akans could be the mother, aunt or sister of the chief or King. Indeed, the current queen mother of Asante is the biological mother of the present Asantehene, Osei Tutu II.

<sup>74</sup> The role of Queen Mothers in the nomination of chiefs in Akan areas is outlined in Beatrice Attah-Mensah, 'Gender and Local Government in Ghana: The Case of the 2002 District Level Elections', in Amposah and Bofo-Arthur (eds.), *Local Government in Ghana*, p. 139.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

telephone operation. Since then, women began to take a more active part in local politics and local government. During the struggle for integration, some women from Ewedome became active participants in the Togoland Union.<sup>76</sup> They organised themselves and sent deputations to non-Ewe areas of British Togoland to campaign for unification.<sup>77</sup> In Kpando District Council, the first woman councillor was elected in 1960.<sup>78</sup> Women also controlled a great proportion of the retail trade and the organisation of 'flourishing markets at every main centre'.<sup>79</sup> Most of them traded in foodstuffs, cloth and other imported items.<sup>80</sup> Their market tolls constituted a major source of revenue for local authorities. Despite this change in the orientation and improvement in the status of women, many of them migrated in the late 1930s to such towns as Accra, Tema, Takoradi and Koforidua in the Gold Coast.

In the days of the NAs, attempts were made by some chiefs to stem the tide by evoking fetish upon those women who left for the Gold Coast to force them to return. A typical example was the case involving *Togbe* Tenkoloe Kwaku II and one Affua Dei of Sokode. In a letter to the District Commissioner at Ho, the Chief of Sokode stated that he had evoked the fetish in his division upon the women to force them to return.<sup>81</sup> Affua Dei, who refused to return home, was banished from the town and she had to relocate to Ho.<sup>82</sup> There was therefore the view that the institution of women chief would provide leadership that would address the concerns of women and help stem the high incidence of migration of women into the big towns.

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<sup>76</sup> Togoland Report to the UN, 1953, p. 24.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> RAG/H LC.21/SF.2, Kpando District Council, Meetings and Minutes, 1960.

<sup>79</sup> Togoland Report to the UN, 1953, p. 52.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> RAG/H File No.31/29, Sokode Affairs, 12 June 1946.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

In Ewedome, the first generation of queen mothers started as 'market queens' assisting the local councils in fixing the times during which a market might be held.<sup>83</sup> Later on, their roles were regularised as queen mothers. Most people interviewed gave credit to the CPP for creating the office among the Ewes in order to provide leadership to the women's wing of the party and to give women the chance to participate in party politics.<sup>84</sup> The first queen mother of Gbi state, Mama Dewotonyo I, was enstooled on 27 August 1969.<sup>85</sup> Since the office did not evolve with the institution of chieftaincy, there was no established procedure for nominating *Nyonufia*. Initially, women who were active in the CPP and showed organizational ability were eligible for nomination. There were also instances where some women who went to the Gold Coast and were impressed with the status and role of queen mothers in Akan areas came back to introduced the practice in their villages. A typical example was Mama Agbalisi I (the first *Nyonufia* of Kpando) who was credited with the introduction of the office in Akpini state.<sup>86</sup>

By the late 1960s, the office became fully integrated into the institution of chieftaincy and eligibility was based on integrity, patriotism and to a lesser extent on wealth.<sup>87</sup> The *Nyonufia* then became a member of the kingmakers and her enstoolment was accompanied with elaborate ceremony and rituals. On official duty, the *Nyonufia* was accompanied by a retinue of women. On the occasion of the enstoolment of a new chief, it was the duty of the

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<sup>83</sup> Interviews conducted with Mama Dusi, queen mother of Kpandu Tsakpoe and retired educationalist, Kpando, 7 July, 2007; Mama Amasewa II, queen mother of Hohoe Bla, 1 October 2007.

<sup>84</sup> The CPP was noted for its 'politicisation of women' in the country. See Kevin Shillington, *Ghana and the Rawlings Factor* (London, 1992), p. 162; Biswal, *Ghana*, p. 73.

<sup>85</sup> Before the enstoolment of the queen mother, one *Mama Agoi* from Tokoni acted as queen mother mobilizing market women in Hohoe. Interview with the paramount queen mother of Hohoe, Mama Dewotonyo I, Hohoe, 9 December 2007.

<sup>86</sup> Interview conducted with Mama Agbalisi II, paramount queen mother of Kpando, 27 November 2007.

<sup>87</sup> Among some divisions the *Nyonufia* was selected from the stool father's family.

*Nyonufia* to tie *abotsri* (traditional beads) around the hand of the chief.<sup>88</sup> This ritual signified the acceptance of the new chief by the women folk. She also accompanied the chief to official ceremonies. That notwithstanding, *Nyonufia* wielded no real political power as compared to her counterpart among the Akans.

### Local Government Reforms under the CPP

On assumption of office, the CPP began to extend control over local government. The first major step in this direction in 1957 was the replacement of Chief Regional Officers with representatives of central government who were to be referred to as Regional Commissioners.<sup>89</sup> District and regional commissioners were appointed by the president and they replaced Government Agents and Regional Officers respectively.<sup>90</sup> Nkrumah then moved on to abolish Regional Assemblies for what it termed 'an unnecessary and extravagant interference with efficient government'.<sup>91</sup> Within the CPP hierarchy, 'a small majority of opposition men in two of the Regional Assemblies could still hold up any change' that was intended to reform local government.<sup>92</sup> With two-thirds majority in the National Assembly and opposition seriously weakened in Ewedome by 1958, all was set for the CPP to initiate reforms in accordance with its own whim and imperative.

The government appointed A. F. Greenwood, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government, to enquire into the causes of the stagnation of local councils. The commission observed that local councils were established in the country in 1951 with haste

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with Mama Mawokpor, a retired educationalist and *Nyonufia* of Kpando Tsakpoe, 6 July 2007. The name *abotsre* is an Akan word that entered the Ewe language.

<sup>89</sup> Until 1957, all Chief Regional Officers were British officials.

<sup>90</sup> Nsarkoh, 'Development of Local Government in Ghana' p.79.

<sup>91</sup> *West Africa*, 1 November 1958, p. 1958.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

and that due diligence was not taken in determining their size.<sup>93</sup> In Trans-Volta Togoland, the report noted that there were seven local councils for areas with population of less than 10,000 and that the biggest council had a population of 34,000.<sup>94</sup> Local councils in Ewedome, it judged, were in many cases too small and unwieldy to make efficient units of local government, and there was an urgent need to create local councils with size, population and wealth commensurate with the functions and responsibilities which the government expected them to undertake.<sup>95</sup> Amalgamation, according to the report, would have been appropriate in forming larger local council areas and thereby avoiding the proliferation of councils.

Once again, this report was no different from amalgamation policy adopted by the colonial officers in creating the NAs in the 1930s. However, due to strong local feelings, the inhabitants wanted councils to coincide with the area of jurisdiction of traditional divisions. Amalgamation was still seen by many people of Ewedome as an obnoxious policy foisted on them by the colonial government, and that the achievement of independence meant 'casting aside all forms of local administration established in the past fifteen years and reverting to small independent units'.<sup>96</sup> The report also blamed the deplorable financial situation of the councils on the government's increase of salary of its employees in 1956.<sup>97</sup> This led to a huge financial deficit in the councils to the tune of £440,262.<sup>98</sup> It was further observed that despite the million pounds made available for the development of Trans-Tolta Togoland, there was the need for additional funds if the

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<sup>93</sup> A.F. Greenwood Commission Report, 1957, p. 2.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Greenwood Report, 1957. For the relevance of size in the efficient performance of local government units, see J. R. A. Ayee, 'Decentralisation and Local Governance: The Ghanaian Experience', in Amposah and Bofo-Arthur (eds.), *Local Government*, p. 21.

<sup>96</sup> Greenwood Report, 1957, p. 5.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

councils in the region were to continue to function. This observation was made at the time when the national budget 'showed a balance of payment deficit of £14 million for the second year running' and a rise in recurrent expenditure from £47 million in 1957 to £51 million in 1958.<sup>99</sup> The only link which the report established between traditional authorities and local councils was the same old provision of appointment of a paramount chief in each council area as a ceremonial president with no voting power.<sup>100</sup> This happened to be one of the major criticisms against the report by some chiefs.

Enlarged local councils were created in Ewedome in 1958.<sup>101</sup> For example, Dzigbe, Adaklu, Anyigbe and Dutasor local councils and Ho urban council were amalgamated to form Ho District Council. Then Dzolokpuita District Council was created to cover Abutia, Sokode and part of Awudome. In May 1961, a new local government act was passed. The new act consolidated the provisions in the existing local government and municipal council ordinance and made provision for all-purpose local councils.<sup>102</sup> The year started with ten urban and 54 local councils, making a total of 64 councils in the entire country; a number which was increased to 65 by the end of the year. The reform took no cognisance of the recommendations of the Greenwood Report. Even though the report recommended the creation of large local councils thereby reducing their number, the government lacked the political will to stick to the recommendation. Pressure from CPP party activists in Ewedome forced the government to split the councils once again and increase their number.<sup>103</sup> For example, Akpini Local Council which was dissolved in 1958 because of a

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<sup>99</sup> *West Africa*, 5 July 1958, p. 648.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, p. 6-7.

<sup>101</sup> RAG/H LG.46, Address by Hon C.H. Chapman, Regional Commissioner, TVTR to the Anlo District Council, Keta, 11 March 1958; RAG/H. 46, Re-organization of Local Government in TVTR, March 1958.

<sup>102</sup> Local Government Act, No. 54, May 1961.

<sup>103</sup> Callaway, 'Local Politics', p. 139. Amonoo, *Ghana*, p. 159.

complete collapse of its finances was reconstituted by the government in 1962.<sup>104</sup> Divisional parochialism drove some chiefs to make requests for local council boundaries to be coterminous with their traditional authority boundaries. Callaway noted that the Ho area, which had only one local council in 1958, was split into three local councils in 1965.<sup>105</sup> In 1959, no election of councillors were held in Ho. The CPP simply nominated its party loyalists to the councils.<sup>106</sup>

Fragmented localized political identities clearly remained salient. Therefore the government felt that it was not politically practicable to reduce the number of local councils in the region, and that the problems identified in the Greenwood Report could not be solved just by reducing the number of local councils. Efficiency, it said, would be gained by gradually transferring some local council functions to district councils.<sup>107</sup> As of 1962, however, the only function which had been transferred to district councils was the construction and maintenance of trunk roads to enable the local councils to concentrate more on improvements to feeder roads in their areas.<sup>108</sup>

The real problem which the CPP faced in merging small councils in Ewedome was political affiliation. A council might be predominantly pro-CPP and its neighbour anti-CPP and the two would not cooperate in an enlarged local council.<sup>109</sup> In addition, the government decided in 1963 that the large local council areas should also constitute constituency areas for electoral purposes.<sup>110</sup> All of this led to the proliferation of local

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<sup>104</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 335

<sup>105</sup> Callaway, 'Local Politics', p. 121-144.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p. 138.

<sup>107</sup> RAG/H, Enquiry into the Structure of Local Government in the TVT 1964 (not filed); RAG/ERC 1/1/17, Enquiry into the Structure of Local Government in TVT, 1958.

<sup>108</sup> The district councils gave work on trunk roads to the Public Works Department in 1962

<sup>109</sup> Greenwood Report, 1957, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup> Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Electoral and Local Government Reforms (Siribo Report), Accra, 1963, part III. See also RAG/H, Correspondence from Togbe Kofi Adzi II, Attikpui Traditional Area,

councils and provided patronage to CPP functionaries 'with which to satisfy alienated rank and file supporters, to soothe local traditional demands and to ease central-local tensions'.<sup>111</sup> Unlike the 1951 local government system, these reforms were carried out and imposed on the people without their consent. One of the factors necessary for community development, according to Sautoy, was local initiative that was not imposed from above.<sup>112</sup> Local councils were expected to provide that 'complex administrative machine without forgetting the individuals whom it is intended to benefit'.<sup>113</sup> In Ghana, government's propensity to impose ideas from above was the bane of a successful local government system.<sup>114</sup>

#### Local Government Councils in Ewedome in 1965

Council	Population
Adaklu/Anyigbe	32,000
Anfoega	15,000
Awudome	30,928
Dayi	48,000
Dutsor	29,000
Ho Urban	18,000
Hohoe	40,514
Kpando	71,000
Yingor	33,949

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to the Minister of Justice on Review of Electoral District, 17 July 1964(not filed); RAG/H LC.12/V.5/2089, Proposal for the Delimitation of Parliamentary Constituencies, 10 September 1963.

<sup>111</sup> Harriet B. Schiffer, 'Local Administration and National Development: Fragmentation and Centralisation in Ghana', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 1 (1970), p. 73.

<sup>112</sup> Peter Du Sautoy, *Community Development in Ghana* (London, 1960), p. 3.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid*, p.175.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

Another significant reform that the CPP government introduced was the setting up of town and village committees. In his address at the first seminar of the Winneba Ideological Institute in February 1962, Nkrumah noted that even though local government in the country had been organised at the village level, it was done only by grouping a number of villages to form an administrative unit.<sup>115</sup> According to Nkrumah, 'the internal life of particular villages, therefore, remained substantially unadministered, and the time had come for the problem to be tackled in a forthright manner by organising the life of the community right at the village level'.<sup>116</sup> It is worthy of note that the idea to set up town and village committees was contained in the Coussey Report but for ten years it was not implemented.<sup>117</sup> The Coussey Committee felt that by bringing local government down to the level of the smallest unit it would not only close the gap that existed between many local authorities and the inhabitants at the village level but would also harness local energies towards useful ends. The thinking was that much of the opposition to the payment of annual rates during the era of the NAs was attributable to the lack of contact between local authorities and the people at the village level. It seems reasonable to suggest that people would take a more active interest in local government in general and in their local councils in particular if they were brought more effectively into the picture.

The establishment of the Area Committees had been dictated by the overriding need to have each represented on a District Council by at least one representative councillor. In

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<sup>115</sup> RAG/ H AD/C.291 LG.1/V.3, Appendix D, Press Release, Speech by Dr Kwame Nkrumah to the Winneba Ideological Institute, 3 February 1962.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Local Government Ordinance, Section 44, 1951. The delay was due to the general opinion that it would be a premature step to set up such committees. RAG/HEM, Hyde Clerke, Permanent Secretary, Accra, to the Regional Minister, Ho, 17 July 1952. These committees were however set up in the Anlo and Tongu districts on pilot basis since 1953, but the policy was not extended to the former British Trust Territory until 1963/4. See RAG/H LG.0285/8, Government Agent, Keta, on Village and Town Committee Establishment under Local Government Ordinance, Keta, 17 April 1953; RAG/H LG. 0242/s.f.4, Minute of Members of the Legislative Assembly from the TVTR, Ho, 3 February 1953.

effect, ACs differed considerably in size and varied in population between 500 and 5,000.<sup>118</sup> It was doubtful whether many of the ACs, especially the larger ones, constituted adequate machinery for extending local government into the villages, stimulating local interest and facilitating wider contacts and consultation.<sup>119</sup> As we have seen, in the past some of the best 'local government' works had been done by the villages themselves: deciding what development projects they wished to carry out, agreeing on contributions of money and labour and then going ahead to complete the work. This form of local self-help which had been harnessed by the colonial officials under the NA system could be made to play out in the new local councils.

Nevertheless, the enthusiasm with which the CPP began to embrace the idea stemmed largely from its desire to use the town and village committees to build its party structures and to ensure that its ideology of a one party-state was firmly grounded at the local level. In announcing the decision to set up the committees, Nkrumah was categorical when he stated that members of the village and town committees 'would comprise CPP party representatives at the village level'.<sup>120</sup> From 1962, councillors were elected to local councils on account of them being 'staunch members of the CPP' and they were addressed as 'comrades'.<sup>121</sup>

In addressing councilors and officers of the Yingor Local Council at Dzolokpuita in 1963, the DC stated that

as you are aware, our socialist government headed by our illustrious

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<sup>118</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/253, Organization of Local Authorities in TVTR, 1958; RAG/H D.A/C.355, Re-organisation of Local Government 1958; RAG/H LG.12(JT), Minutes of the Administrative Officers Conference, Ho, 24 May 1958.

<sup>119</sup> RAG/H LG.12(TJ), Minutes of the Administrative Officers Conference, Ho, 6 May 1958.

<sup>120</sup> RAG/H AD/C.291 LG.1/VOL.3 Appendix D, Press Release, Speech by Dr Kwame Nkrumah to the Winniba Ideological Institute, 3 February 1962.

<sup>121</sup> RAG/H, Yingor Local Council, Speech by Mr Ottu K. Dake, D.C. to Councillors at Dzolokpuita, 26 October 1963.

president, and our people's Socialist Party; the Convention People's Party, under the dynamic leadership of Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, are one and the same thing and therefore councils are integral part and parcel of the CPP being important organ of it...Comrades, I have to ask you that all your actions, activities, programmes and policies must be directed in a way only to stabilise the CPP and to give it the fullest possible assistance.<sup>122</sup>

At Kpando, the DC, Rob Johnson Addo, made a similar statement to the councilors: 'as comrades you are members of Osagyefo's great family elected on the ticket of the dynamic party and your election neatly fitted well into the claim for a one-party state'.<sup>123</sup> As in Zambia and many other African countries, 'membership of the ruling party became a form of citizenship'.<sup>124</sup> In other words, party card replaced local council service 'as the best strategy for those with ambitions for office'.<sup>125</sup> The degree of politicisation of local government structures in Ewedome did not only alienate non-partisan elements but also became a spectre that haunted the councils following the demise of Nkrumah's first republic. Contracts for projects were awarded to relatives of council members, who often failed to execute the project or produced shoddy works.<sup>126</sup> Specific powers were conferred on village and town committees, including the ability of the chairman to call meetings at his discretion.<sup>127</sup> In addition, they were to collaborate with the council revenue collectors to

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<sup>122</sup>Yingor Local Council, Speech by Mr Ottu K. Dake, DC to Councillors at Dzolokpuita, 26 October 1963.

<sup>123</sup>PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/146, Akpini Local Council, Address by DC 1 October 1962.

<sup>124</sup>Quote taken from Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 50.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid, p. 43.

<sup>126</sup>Interviews with Mr George Feakpi, a retired public servant, Dzolo, 1 September 2007; Rev E. Dake, Educationist, Peki, 17 September 2007; Dr Ababio, a member of parliament of the fourth republic, 20 December 2000. See also Nugent, 'An Abandoned Project', p. 214.

<sup>127</sup>RAG/H RAO/C.30 LG.20/V.15, Village and Town Committee Regulations, 1962.

ensure that all taxable persons paid the rates regularly, encouraged self-help projects as well as served as a two-way channel of information between the inhabitants and the local authorities.<sup>128</sup> It was not considered desirable for a village committee to raise funds on its own account, because this would derogate from the rating powers of the councils. A village or town committee could, however, apply to the local councils for the imposition of a special rate in that particular village or town for a project for the exclusive benefit of the inhabitants in such a village or town.<sup>129</sup>

To avert the likelihood of members of the committees unilaterally imposing arbitrary rates on the inhabitants, any application for special rates had to indicate the nature of the project or service which it intended to finance.<sup>130</sup> The application should be clear as to whether the project was to be executed by contract or directly by the local councils through hired or unpaid communal labour. Again, the cost of the project and how much self-help funds, if any, were expected from the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development and the estimated time of completion of the project had to be clearly spelt out before the final approval of the project. Subsequently a separate account should be opened in the local authority's books for such a rate so that it would be clear how much the special rate produced.<sup>131</sup> Proceedings of the committees were informal – no staff was employed by any committee, no allowances paid to members and the committees had no right of access to any authority higher than the parent council.<sup>132</sup>

The functions conferred on village and town committees were laudable, but the local government structure from the town/village and area committees to local councils were

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> RA/H RAO/C.30 LG 20/V.15, Village and Town Committee Regulation, 1962, Appendix A.

virtually besieged by party members whose influence became a burden on the whole system. This phenomenon, which intensified after the proclamation of the Republic of Ghana in 1961, meant, according to Schiffer, 'the end to rational organised, autonomous local authorities'.<sup>133</sup> Abuse of power by councillors, most of whom were CPP functionaries, led to frequent suspension of council sittings thereby eroding the confidence which people had in the councils. The CPP-dominated councils became theatres of 'frequent and flagrant abuses of authority'.<sup>134</sup> Akpini Local Council was suspended on 14 January 1958 for this reason.<sup>135</sup> From 1963, Ho District Council, for instance, found it difficult to form a quorum for the transaction of business.<sup>136</sup> Right from independence, decisions of local councils followed the dictates of the CPP, while 'the implementation of council policies was placed in the hands of CPP activists or their nominees'.<sup>137</sup>

The willingness of chiefs to cooperate with the local councils since the abolition of the old NAs showed that chiefs were not out of tune with the exigencies of the time. They were prepared to adapt their institutions to suit the changing conditions of the country. By the late 1950s, chiefs no longer constituted a bunch of illiterate traditionalists. A new generation of chiefs who emerged in Ewedome were men with proven abilities who, on their own personal merit, could be entrusted with important national duties.<sup>138</sup> The institution of chieftaincy in Ewedome, as in the whole of Ghana, was being enriched by educated men.<sup>139</sup> The problem which chiefs had with the town/village committees was that

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<sup>133</sup> Schiffer, 'Local Administration and National Development', p. 74.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>135</sup> RAG/H, Minutes of Akpini Local Council, 15 March 1958. The point was also made in Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 123; Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 304-306.

<sup>136</sup> PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/511, Asogli Local Council, Meetings and Minutes, 1 March 1963.

<sup>137</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpando Area', p. 273.

<sup>138</sup> Nii Anyetei Kwakwryanya II, 'Participation in Local Government: The Role of Traditional Authorities', *Friedrich Ebert Foundation Seminar Series* (Accra, 1975), p. 148.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid*, p.150.

party chairmen, who were also chairmen of the town/village committees, put themselves in charge of the important responsibility of organizing and executing self-help projects and providing a forum for the discussion of common problems of the community.<sup>140</sup> In fact, some chairmen went to the extent of beating the gong-gong without the consent of the chiefs.<sup>141</sup>

Chiefs who wanted to become chairmen of the village/town committees argued that the CPP's goal of building a socialist society was grounded in indigenous culture and conditions and that there was nothing in the institution of chieftaincy that was incompatible with the party ideology. On the contrary, the communal approach to all aspects of life in the villages and towns was in keeping with socialism.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, chiefs could help to mould the customs and the traditions of their committees to the general principles of socialism. In December 1963, the government responded to the request of the Regional House of Chiefs by relaxing the rules governing the composition of the village and town committees. Chiefs who decided to compromise their political neutrality by openly joining the CPP became chairmen of some of the committees.<sup>143</sup>

Some of those chiefs soon found themselves caught up in conflicts of interest. They used their positions as chairmen to drag the committees into holding arbitrations contrary to the tenets of the Local Courts Act of 1958.<sup>144</sup> By dabbling in partisan politics and accepting a particular ideology, some chiefs lost their dignity. The image of village and town

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<sup>140</sup> Minutes of the Regional House of Chiefs, 25 January 1963.

<sup>141</sup> Interviews with Mr J. A. Xexetro, District Assemblyman of Hohoe, 7 July 2007, and Mr A. Malm, Education Officer, Regional Office Ho, 8 July 2007.

<sup>142</sup> Minutes of the Regional House of Chiefs, 24 January 1963.

<sup>143</sup> Other parts of the country, especially Northern Ghana, had since 1958 witnessed the mass defection of chiefs and prominent people to the CPP. See P. Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians: The Politics of Regionalism in Northern Ghana* (London, 1979), p. 168.

<sup>144</sup> Address by the Nana Agyeman Badu to the Regional House of Chiefs, December 1963; Local Courts were established in the region in 1960 to replace existing Native Courts. See Local Courts Act, 1958.

committees also sunk to its lowest ebb due to the collection of illegal fees for stray animals seized and impounded. Such collections constituted a criminal offence under section 18 of the Local Government Act of 1961. An exception to the litany of failures of village committees during the period under review was Ziavi village committee which in January 1966 acted in concert with the people to collect 10/- a man and 5/- a woman to build a school.

In April 1963, cabinet decided that local council police forces in the country should be abolished.<sup>145</sup> Government's view was that if the newly formed village committees were properly organised, it would no longer be necessary to apply force in future to compel people to pay their rates. The committees were to be in a position to provide reliable information about taxable population in their areas so that there would be no difficulty in picking out defaulters for prosecution. The weakening effect of the withdrawal of local authority police on rate collection campaign was enormous. Ghana police could not take over those duties of local council police which were not part of normal police commitments such as rate collection. Those extraneous duties definitely required the presence of enforcement officers which could equally drive unwilling rate payers to attend to their civic duties. As the paramount chief of Kete-Krachi pointed out: 'if there is no local authority police, then there is no local council'.<sup>146</sup> In November 1962, it was observed at Dzolokpuita, the headquarters of Yingor Local Council, that Sisala migrants from Northern Ghana engaged in a charcoal production refused to pay taxes imposed on them by the

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<sup>145</sup> RAG/ERG 1/1/17, Local Government Police, 1963; RAG/H LC.13/V.4/208, Circular, Disbandment of Local Authority Police Service, 3 April 1963.

<sup>146</sup> RAG/H, Petition by Nana Akroasohene of Kete Krachi to the Minister of Local Government, 7 March 1963.

council. Attempts by the council officials to enforce the payment of the taxes resulted in a serious clash between the charcoal drivers and the officials.<sup>147</sup>

Moreover, the peace and tranquility in remote areas where Ghana policemen were not stationed deteriorated. There were instances where warrants were often not executed against those who failed to attend court. The enforcement of the whole of the councils' by-laws had become a huge problem. Following persistent appeal from local councils, in November 1963 government directed that local government policemen who were not absorbed into the Ghana police force should not be laid off but should be appointed as 'enforcement officers'. It was impossible, however, for the councils to absorb a substantial portion of the rejected local council policemen, for many of them were too old to be re-engaged. In 1962, there was a total of 255 local authority policemen in the region, 65 of whom were selected for training and subsequently absorbed into the national police force. The remaining 199 were not enough to fill the void left. In 1963, the regional commissioner lamented the poor state of revenue collection in local councils in the region.<sup>148</sup> This he attributed largely to the absence of local authority police force.

In the midst of all these problems, in 1964 the CPP drew up a grandiose Seven-Year National Development Plan which aimed at accelerated industrialization and the creation of a welfare state.<sup>149</sup> Local authorities were expected to assist by contributing towards the build-up of infrastructure.<sup>150</sup> Out of £540 million non-central government investment provided for in the national plan, £100 million was expected to be contributed through

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> RAG/H, Minutes of the Regional House of Chiefs 26 October 1963.

<sup>149</sup> Dan-Bright S. Dzorgbo, *Ghana in Search of Development: The Challenge of Governance, Economic Management and Institution Building* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 151.

<sup>150</sup> RAG/H, Government of Ghana, Seven-Year Plan for National Reconstruction and Development, 1964. The Seven-Year Development plan was referred to as the 'Socialist Blueprint'. See Dzorgbo, *Ghana in Search of Development*, p. 154-155.

direct labour investment.<sup>151</sup> A substantial portion of the non-central government investment was expected to be realised through the development activities of local councils. Councils had to draw up their own development plan to cover the seven-year period and to ensure that they bore proper relationship to that of the central government.<sup>152</sup>

The national development plan covered such key areas such as agriculture, communications, education, health, industry, water supply, housing and town planning.<sup>153</sup> The local council programmes were expected to feed into the national plan which aimed at the production of cheap food and industrial raw materials through the mechanisation of agriculture and the establishment of state farms. The government also intended to double the country's primary school enrolment which stood at one million at the time and the onus was on councils to construct and maintain new school blocks to accommodate the planned intake.<sup>154</sup>

One major obstacle was the inability of the local councils in Ewedome to raise additional revenue through taxes in order to execute various projects.<sup>155</sup> There was a general deterioration in the efficiency of the work of local authorities as revenue plunged precipitously. In Yingor, Dutasor and Kpandu local councils the cost of revenue collection far exceeded the total amount of revenue collected in 1960.<sup>156</sup> In 1964, for instance, Kpandu District Council collected only £2,803 out of expected revenue of £ 46,000.<sup>157</sup> In

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<sup>151</sup> Details of the plan are contained in the report the local government report of 1958; RAG/H RAO/C.24, Draft Report of Local and Municipal Councils Secretariat, Accra, 1958. The amounts quoted are in Ghana pound.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid; RAG/H RAO/C.24 LG.20/Vol.3, Role of Local Authorities in the Execution of the 7-Year Plan, 1964.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> RAG/H RAO/C.23/V.4, Local Government Matters, Cabinet to the Regional Officer, Ho, 20 December 1960.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> RAG/H LC.23/SF.4, Kpandu Local Council Meetings and Minutes 1963/64.

1965, Ho Urban Council collected only £97,346 instead of expected revenue of £179,189.<sup>158</sup> Local authorities had reached the limit of taxation and they began contemplating a system of local property rating as an alternative source of revenue.<sup>159</sup> Underlying these difficulties was the central government's insistence on local authorities taking on functions which they were not capable of performing with a minimum standard of efficiency.<sup>160</sup>

Thus, the problems that confronted local councils during the CPP regime in Ewedomere were not only frequent restructuring and politicisation but also unrealistic development programmes. Their financial administration was also precarious. There were many cases of misappropriation of cash by treasurers and revenue collectors. A case in point was Mr F. O. K. Agbettoh, the Akpini Local Council Treasurer, who misappropriated various sums of money to the tune of £950.<sup>161</sup> Revenue collectors were in some cases allowed to hold their collections over long periods, contrary to required procedures. It was observed also that much of the indifference shown by local authorities towards the question of expenditure control was due to the ease with which approval of application for supplementary provision was obtained.<sup>162</sup> Many of the councils spent considerable sums of money on development works of various kinds given out on contracts with the hope that applications for supplementary provisions would be approved as a matter of course.

Furthermore, contract procedures laid down in the financial memoranda were not always followed in awarding contracts.<sup>163</sup> Tenders were not invited, initial advances to contractors

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<sup>158</sup> Calaway, 'Local Politics', p. 138.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> The view that local authorities in developing countries can not undertake an unlimited range of functions is note in Nsarkoh, *Local Government in Ghana*, p. 202.

<sup>161</sup> Brown, 'Politics in the Kpandu Area', p. 299-300.

<sup>162</sup> RAG/H, Local Government Estimate, 1965-66. See again, Schiffer, 'Local Administration', p. 72

<sup>163</sup> Schiffer, 'Local Administration', p. 72.

were often in excess of the percentage stipulated and yet the councils were reluctant to enforce the penalty clauses in the agreements where contractors failed to complete the jobs according to schedule. The Regional Community Development Funds Allocation Committee set up in 1959 to provide advice for the distribution of government grants to councils added to the bureaucratic bottlenecks that impeded the smooth flow of funds to the local councils.<sup>164</sup> From 1965, funds were allocated to councils in bits and pieces which stifled long-term planning.<sup>165</sup> In most cases, members of the committee retained part of the funds at the regional office for what they called 'regional projects'.<sup>166</sup> Misapplication of funds by party functionaries became a common feature. A classic example was 'the diversion of £G21,193 meant for local authorities in the region to construct a rest house at Kpedze'.<sup>167</sup> It is interesting to note that Kpedze was the home town of the then regional commissioner.<sup>168</sup>

By the beginning of 1965, the zeal with which the government dealt with the concerns of the local councils began to diminish. Amanoo noted that local government annual rate of expenditure between 1960 and 1966 remained less than 1 percent of the gross domestic expenditure of the country.<sup>169</sup> The period also witnessed a steady fall in local government grants from 1.2 million pounds in 1960 to only 200,000 pounds in 1966. Analysing the expenditure of local authorities from 1951 to 1960, Schiffer concluded that the local councils during the Nkrumah regime failed to bring qualitative development to local

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<sup>164</sup> RAG/H, Local Government Estimate, 1965-66. See again, Schiffer, 'Local Administration', p. 72.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Schiffer, 'Local Administration', p. 73.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid,

<sup>168</sup> The rest house was built during the 1964/65 financial year. Interview conducted with Mr Hans Kofi Boni, the Volta Regional Commissioner during the Nkrumah regime, 2 December 2007.

<sup>169</sup> Amonoo, *Ghana 1957-1960*, p. 171.

communities.<sup>170</sup> Party supporters began to express openly their disillusionment at the inability of local councils to meet the development needs of the citizens.

### **Local Government after 1966**

The 1966 coup that overthrew Nkrumah and the CPP was widely welcomed in Ewedome, partly because anti-Nkrumahist feeling continued to linger on after the plebiscite in 1956. But most importantly, the coup provided the opportunity for those Ewedome fugitives who went into exile in Togo to return home. In the heat of anti-Nkrumahism in the aftermath of the coup, most local councils in Ewedome were subjected to massive destruction. Documents were burnt or destroyed at the headquarters of local councils in a bid to destroy everything Nkrumahist. The 1966 coup dealt a heavy blow to most local councils which were created for political reasons and owed their infrastructural development to their support for the CPP. Moreover, many projects which Nkrumah had put on the drawing board for the development of the headquarters of the local councils were proscribed together with the CPP. It was the plan of Nkrumah to build a police district headquarters, a modern sports field and a district hospital at Dzolopkuita, for example, but the 1966 coup aborted these projects.<sup>171</sup> Since the overthrow of the CPP, no development project of any significance has ever been undertaken in the Nkrumahist stronghold of Kpando. Thus the political support that formed the core around which some of the local councils revolved was broken.

The National Liberation Council (NLC), which took over the affairs of the country following the coup, appointed a commission in 1967 under the chairmanship of Justice

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<sup>170</sup> See Schiffer, 'Local Administration', p. 59.

<sup>171</sup> Interviews with Mr Lawson Addo, a retired treasurer of Yingor Local Council, Akome, 15 June 2004; Mr. Christian Adabrah, a former registrar of the traditional council, Dzolopkuita, 4 August 2006.

G.C. Mills-Odoi 'to consider and make recommendations on certain matters concerning the structure and remuneration of the public services'.<sup>172</sup> The commission focused part of its work on local government. It observed the abysmally ineffective local government structure based on units which were too small to be viable, ridiculing 'the credibility of the system from the point of view of administrative efficiency'.<sup>173</sup> It condemned the excessive centralization of the machinery of government in Accra and called for a major reform of the local government system. In effect, the report stated that local councils had lost that very important ingredient of local self-help and initiative. It proposed that the basic unit of local government should be a district authority which in its view could be 'reasonably viable technologically' and at the same time 'not too remote from local communities to ensure effective local participation'.<sup>174</sup>

Another report known as the Siribo Report published in 1968 revisited the idea of a three-tier system of local government based on regional, district and local councils as the most workable system for the country. It described the state of local government in the country as chaotic and stated that 'the reputation of local authorities had reached its nadir'.<sup>175</sup> Based on these reports the NLC government passed the Local Government Interim Administration (Amendment) decree of 1968 (known as the NLC D 229), which made changes to the structure and composition of public institutions including urban and local management committees to include chiefs.<sup>176</sup> This was followed up after the return to civilian rule in 1969 by the Local Administrative Act of 1971 passed by the Progress Party

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<sup>172</sup> Mills-Odoi Commission Report, 1967, p. 1

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, p.3.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, p.4. It also recommended the merger of local government service with the civil service. See also Local Government Year Book 1970-1971, p. 5-7.

<sup>175</sup> Siribo Commission Report, 1968, part 3.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid; Nsarkoh, 'Development', p. 81.

government led by K. A. Busia. The new act sought to rejuvenate the whole local government system. It set up local, district and regional councils with the latter as supervisory and coordinating bodies in the regions.<sup>177</sup>

It is important to note that while the centralizing, modernizing and socialist rhetoric of the CPP was inherently hostile to chieftaincy, the opposing so-called 'Danquah-Busia tradition', as previously manifested in the NLM, was always more comfortable with 'traditional' structures. Consequently, on assumption of power, the Busia government tried to reverse some of the policies of the Nkrumah regime with regard to chieftaincy. The new structure tried to revisit the 1951 local government system by introducing traditional elements into the district councils. Two-thirds of the members were to be elected, while one-third were to be chosen from among chiefs.<sup>178</sup> Members of regional councils were also to be elected from district councils, while representatives of chiefs were drawn from the Regional House of Chiefs.<sup>179</sup> The Chieftaincy Act of 1971 in turn repealed the CPP Chieftaincy Act of 1961. The act sought to bring the institution of chieftaincy in line with the provisions of the new 1969 constitution.<sup>180</sup> It established the National House of Chiefs and gave it the mandate to exercise 'appellate jurisdiction in any matter relating to chieftaincy'.<sup>181</sup> The Busia government thus decided to distance itself from chieftaincy matters and to give chiefs that legal leverage to manage their own affairs. Local councils were to be retained as the basic units of local government composed of a mixture of elected

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<sup>177</sup> Ghana Local Government Series on 'Your New Local Authorities' 1977, p. 9. According to Ladouceur, the wording of the Act 'Local Administration' instead of the usual 'Local Government' was reflective of the transfer of local government functions from local councils to district councils. See Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians*, p. 235.

<sup>178</sup> On the northern region of Ghana, see Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians*, p. 234.

<sup>179</sup> Nsarkoh, 'Development', p. 81.

<sup>180</sup> Preamble of the Chieftaincy Act of 1971.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid*, Clause 22(1).

members and representatives of chiefs.<sup>182</sup> Soon after establishing democratic credentials, however, the Busia government in turn 'quickly became authoritarian'.<sup>183</sup> The appointment of party faithful as Regional Chief Executives and Chairmen of district councils showed the new regime's desire to control local government structures in much the same way as the CPP had done.

The most dramatic development that led to a further drastic decline in the performance of local councils in Ewedome under the Busia government was the ill-fated Alien Compliance Order of 18 November 1969. In order to solve the employment problem in the country, Busia's government expelled, without right of appeal, all foreign nationals with the exception of certain selected businessmen.<sup>184</sup> By early 1970, over one million Africans were expelled to neighbouring countries such as Mali, Togo and Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso).<sup>185</sup> Ewedome and indeed the whole of the Volta Region was hardest hit by the policy because of the large number of foreign nationals, particularly Ewes and Kabres from Togo, Hausas and Anagos (people from Nigeria were all referred to by the Ewes as *Anagotowo*).

One feature particular to many of these foreign nationals in Ewedome was that they did not put up permanent buildings.<sup>186</sup> Most of their houses were built with mud and roofed with thatch and leaves. Others were seasonal migrants who came during the cocoa season and went back to Togo and Dahomey when the sales period was over.<sup>187</sup> This kind of movement formed part of the internal migration of people within Africa which dated back

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<sup>182</sup> The number of chief was not to exceed one-half of the number of elected members. See *Ibid*.

<sup>183</sup> Quote taken from Ray, *Ghana: Politics, Economics and Society*, p. 15.

<sup>184</sup> N.O. Addo, 'Migration into Ghana: Some Social and Economic Implications of the Aliens Compliance Order of 18 November 1969', *Ghana Journal of Sociology*, 1 (1970), p. 33-34.

<sup>185</sup> Shillington, *Ghana and the Rawlings Factor*, p.18.

<sup>186</sup> Margaret Peil, 'Expulsion of West African Aliens', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9 (1971), p. 217. Interview conducted with *Togbe* Atsridom IV, paramount chief of Kpedze, 16 September 2007.

<sup>187</sup> Interviews with Mr C.K. Anyomi, Retired civil servant, Ho, and *Togbe* Fiado VI, Dzolopuita, 2 August 2005.

to pre-colonial times and continued during the colonial period. As we have seen from previous chapters, the migration of foreign nationals into the Ewedome area was due not only to the ethnic affinities of the people across the border but also to the boom in the cocoa industry in the early twentieth century.<sup>188</sup>

The coming into power of the CPP government saw a further intensification of migration into Ghana. Nkrumah's industrialization and development programmes made Ghana a magnet for the influx of people. Moreover, to give practical meaning to his pan-African agenda, Nkrumah set up the Bureau of African Affairs in Accra which played host to 'freedom fighters' from other parts of Africa.<sup>189</sup> In 1963, an attempt was made by the CPP government to regulate the inflow of foreign nationals into Ghana. All aliens were required to carry a passport, travel documents and residence permit.<sup>190</sup> But these regulations were hardly enforced on ordinary African immigrants.<sup>191</sup> The deportations that occurred during the early days of the Nkrumah regime targeted foreigners who were perceived to be supporting the Moslem Association Party and the NLM, parties opposed to the CPP.<sup>192</sup>

The pandemonium that greeted the 1969 order to quit brought in its wake massive destruction of property and in some cases, loss of lives.<sup>193</sup> It was more chaotic in the Volta Region because citizenship was not easy to define or identify in this part of the country, for as Peil puts it, 'there were some people who were born in Ghana but grew up in Togo and vice versa.'<sup>194</sup> Out of the total number of 827,000 immigrants in Ghana in 1960, 34 percent

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<sup>188</sup> For a historical outline of migration into Ghana, see Addo, 'Migration into Ghana,' p.20-24.

<sup>189</sup> Kwesi Armah, *Peace without Power: Ghana's Foreign Policy 1957-1966* (Accra, 2004), p. 9.

<sup>190</sup> Alien Regulations, LI 265, section 3, sub-section 2, 1963; Legislative Instrument 553 of 1965.

<sup>191</sup> It is stated that 'there were over 100,000 each of Togolese, Voltaics and Nigerians' who lived in Ghana at the time. See Peil, 'Expulsion', p. 208.

<sup>192</sup> See Rathbone, *Nkrumah and the Chiefs*, p. 106-107; Austin, *Politics in Ghana*, p. 377.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Peil, 'Expulsion', p. 224. It is important to note that this was not peculiar to the Ewes. Other ethnic groups in the north of Ewedome had similar ethnic ties with Togo.

of them were from Togo.<sup>195</sup> In addition, the uncertainty that characterised the struggle for independence in Togo in 1959-60 created political unrest and Togolese sought refuge in Ghana. The Zongo communities throughout the Volta Region became desolate as some of the foreign nationals pulled down their structures out of despondence and anger. In defiance of warnings by government, Ghanaians in the rural areas molested farm labourers while others took advantage of the confusion to steal farm produce.<sup>196</sup> There was a general misconception that all Muslims and anybody wearing flowing gowns, popularly known as *batakari*, were aliens. Such people were unnecessarily harassed, called aliens and in some cases forced to leave the country.<sup>197</sup>

The markets that formed the main source of income for the local councils dwindled in size as Hausa and Togolese traders departed.<sup>198</sup> Foreign goods, which had been common in the markets, all but disappeared.<sup>199</sup> Annual rate of attendance at the local council clinics reduced considerably.<sup>200</sup> At the same time, political developments in the Republic of Togo were working in favour of the Kabres. Following the assumption of power by Gnassingbe Eyadema in a military coup in 1967, the Kabre people of the north began to gain recognition in that country. Many therefore sought to return home as favourable conditions awaited them and their departure created a labour problem for the councils. They were employed to do menial jobs such as the collection of 'night soil', considered by locals as the preserve of the lower class or the down-trodden in society. A good number of them

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<sup>195</sup> Addo, 'Migration into Ghana', p. 20-24.

<sup>196</sup> *Daily Graphic*, 9 December 1969, p.12.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> Peil, 'Expulsion,' p. 211-213.

<sup>199</sup> Most of the itinerant traders in the territory came from countries such as Nigeria, Togo and Dahomey. See *Togoland Report*, 1953, p. 53.

<sup>200</sup> Peil puts the reduction of patient attendance at hospitals in the country following the departure of foreign nationals at 40%. See Peil, 'Expulsion,' p. 220; Interview with Miss Mercy Afenu and Miss Delali Akoe, Nursing Officers who once served at Dzolokpuita Clinic, 20 July 2007.

were engaged in the construction and maintenance of feeder and trunk roads were from the Republic of Togo. The problem of how to get replacements for those immigrant labourers was long to haunt the councils.

In 1972, the increasingly corrupt Busia regime was overthrown in a military coup led by Lt. General I. K. Akyeampong. To address the labour shortage in the road sector, the new Supreme Military Council government changed policy towards road construction and maintenance in the country in 1974.<sup>201</sup> Government's policy as regards roads changed from direct labour to private contract.<sup>202</sup> The road camps that had been built in every local council area were closed down except those located on first class roads. This policy had a telling effect on the maintenance of roads linking most local councils. A number of vehicles that plied these roads withdrew their services thereby affecting the mobility of people, with commercial activities reduced considerably. The deterioration of roads was also indicative of the accelerating economic collapse that the country experienced in the 1970s.

In spite of the numerous commissions set up from 1967 to 1971, local government remained far from being effective. Most of the recommendations in the 1971 Local Administration Act which aimed to strengthen local government structures were not implemented because of the 1972 coup which overthrew the Busia regime. According to Nsarkoh, one drawback was the inability of successive governments to define clearly the functions of agencies operating at the local level. This resulted in what he called 'duplication and overlapping of functions, operational inefficiencies and unnecessary waste of material and human resources'.<sup>203</sup> The pervasiveness of these problems in the face of

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<sup>201</sup> Interview conducted with Mr S.A. Nkansa, retired Director of Ghana Highways Authority, Ho, 20 July 2006.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Narkoh, 'Development', p. 82.

increasing popular expectations and a rapid rise in population put tremendous pressure on the government.<sup>204</sup> Besides, local councils in the country as a whole had been enfeebled by being requested to undertake functions for which they had little or no expertise.<sup>205</sup> Added to the above was the fact that local councils in Ewedome, as in many other parts of the country, never had the privilege of being staffed by qualified workers.<sup>206</sup>

In the light of the failure of local councils to meet the developmental needs of local areas, the Supreme Military Council introduced the Local Administration (Amendment) Decree 258, 1974. The new structure sought to abolish the distinction between local and central government and to create one monolithic structure - District Councils - which had responsibility for the totality of government activity at the local level.<sup>207</sup> The new structure was supposedly designed to take away from Accra the decision-making functions in respect of matters of a purely local significance and to move them to the local areas where the decisions were to be implemented. Yet, the functions assigned to the district councils were not accompanied by a transfer of competent staff and resources.<sup>208</sup> Implementation of local government projects was left to bureauracts in Accra, while the regions became additional administrative bottlenecks in the way of the district councils.<sup>209</sup>

Members of the councils were composed of representatives from the various town and village committees and they held meetings once a month.<sup>210</sup> Development projects such as dressing stations, school buildings, markets, public latrines, and small feeder roads were to

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid, p. 83.

<sup>205</sup> J. A. Boateng, *Your New Local Authorities* (Accra, 1977), p.10; Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Bulletin, November 1996, p. 4.

<sup>206</sup> Samuel N. Wood, *Making the District Assemblies Work* (Tema, 1989), p.10.

<sup>207</sup> Ghana Local Government Series, 1974, p. 2.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid; Ministry of Local Government and Rural development, November 1996, p. 5.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid

be implemented and maintained by district councils.<sup>211</sup> Meanwhile, the new structure of local government had increased the total number of district councils in the country from 49 in 1972 to 65 in 1974.<sup>212</sup> The underlying philosophy behind the creation of the district councils was to ensure that units of local governments were sufficiently large enough to be viable.<sup>213</sup> A Local Government Boundary Commission set up in 1972 took into consideration factors such as communication and accommodation facilities, accessibility to the different parts of the area, the level of economic and industrial activity.<sup>214</sup> Consequently, the district councils had to embrace a number of villages and towns regardless of traditional affiliations and historical or ethnic differences. This reflected a return to the shift from fragmentation to the old colonial policy of amalgamation in the 1930s. But the new local government system became a breeding ground for corruption and financial indiscipline. Under the 1974 Act, central government took over the payment of all remunerations of all staffs of the district councils. This led to the employment of relatives of councilors and the bloating of the payroll of councils.<sup>215</sup>

The abolition of local councils led to a loss of interest in local government by chiefs and their subjects. The new local councils and village committees failed to function as a result of a general apathy. Many people expressed the view that local councils were not commercial entities established to make profit. Therefore, the fact that they were cash strapped was not a good enough reason for them to be abolished. With their abolition, the

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid. It must be noted that the district councils became the sole rating authorities.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid; Report of the Local Government Boundary Commission, 1972; Supplementary Report of Local Government Boundary Commission, 1972. See also Government White Paper on the Boundary Commission Report, 1972; Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Bulletin, November 1996, p. 4.

<sup>213</sup> This was a reverse to the Greenwood report.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Interview, Mr Elias Mensah, Assistant Principal Secretary, Regional Coordinating Council, Ho, 20 July 2007; Mr E.Y. Kotobridza, Budget Officer, Hohoe District Council, 26 July 2007. Mr Harry Bischof, Research Officer, Kpando District Assembly, 27 July 2007.

structural relationship which had existed to extend development programmes beyond the district capitals became nonexistent. Such extreme centralization led to unequal distribution of public expenditure, much to the disadvantage of pauperized rural folk.<sup>216</sup> In evaluating the 1974 local government structure, Saaka concluded that 'for all intent and purposes local government has ceased to exist in Ghana'.<sup>217</sup> He stated that 'the problem was not so much the frequency of the radical structural changes as to the 'minimum consultation with the people affected by it'.<sup>218</sup> This view was corroborated by Callaway, who pointed out that 'political efficiency at the local level' was necessary for the attainment of national political goals in Africa.<sup>219</sup> One indication of political effectiveness at the local level, she observed, occurs when people at the local level feel that they have a stake in the activities of government.<sup>220</sup> The 1974 local government reform took away from the people at the local level their right to participate in the administration of their local communities, a right which was central to the decolonization effort.

### **Local Government to the Present**

The present local government system in operation in Ghana was initiated in 1989 by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), a military government led by Fl. Lt. J. J. Rawlings who seized power in Ghana (for the second time) in December 1981. Rawlings aimed to restructure the old local government system which had been in hibernation since 1974. Very early in its administration, the PNDC realized that the political organizational

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<sup>216</sup> Details about how post-colonial African states created inequalities, see Jean-François Bayart, *The State in African: The Politics of the Belly* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 64-265.

<sup>217</sup> Yakubu Saaka, *Local Government and Political Change in Northern Ghana* (Oxford, 1978), p. 58.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. p. 49.

<sup>219</sup> Callaway, 'Local Politics', p. 121.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

structure under which it was operating could not be sustained.<sup>221</sup> Its much vaunted philosophy of 'participatory democracy' needed to be given practical meaning by way of establishing formalised political structures at the local level that would allow local constituents to participate in the decision-making process. But more importantly, it wanted to give the government a strong support base at the grass-roots level. While the government appeared to be desirous of giving the masses a say in the administration of the country, it wanted a system of government without political parties - a system that was reminiscent of Acheampong's failed 'UNIGOV' ideology.<sup>222</sup> Therefore, as early as 1982, the PNDC established the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) headed by Justice D.F. Anang. The NCD was tasked with the responsibility of assessing how best the government was responding to the expectations of the people, to educate the people about the objectives of the PNDC in relation to 'real democracy' and, above all, to formulate for the consideration of government a programme for a more effective realization of 'a true democracy in Ghana'.<sup>223</sup> After touring all the regions, the NCD came out with a document on the creation of district political authority (District Assemblies) after it had tried to persuade the Ghanaian public that it was not necessary to import a western type of democracy. It also spelt out the modalities for district level elections which aimed to create District Assemblies through what it called 'a democratic process'.

In 1987, the NCD was given additional responsibility of creating 110 districts, registering voters and conducting elections and referenda.<sup>224</sup> This culminated in the

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<sup>221</sup> Herbst, *Politics of Reform*, p. 88.

<sup>222</sup> Interview conducted with Mr J. B. da Rocha, a founding member of the New Patriotic Party, Accra, 5 July 2006.

<sup>223</sup> NCD, Report presented to the PNDC on *Evolving a True Democracy*, 23 March 1991.

<sup>224</sup> Interviews conducted with Dr Afari-Gyan, Chairman of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, Mr Kwame Arhin, Deputy Chairman, EC, Accra, 7 August, 2006.

compilation of a nation-wide voters' register in 1988. Subsequently, District Assembly elections were held in 1989.<sup>225</sup> Only two-thirds of the members of the assemblies were elected; one-third of them were appointed by the PNDC. In an echo of Nkrumahism, chiefs were once again debarred from election to the DAs because government's 'revolutionary' slogan of 'power to the people' was directed at established authorities such as the institution of chieftaincy.<sup>226</sup> The DAs were the highest administrative authorities in the district. They had oversight over decentralised departments and agencies within the districts in addition to raising revenue.<sup>227</sup> They also had the added advantage of formulating local development programmes. DA areas were sub-divided into zones and units with a population of 500 to 1,500 people forming unit committees. The unit committees assisted the DAs in revenue collection by keeping record of taxable persons and property.<sup>228</sup>

The new wave of democracy which blew throughout sub-Saharan Africa at the end of the Cold War in 1989 saw the return to a civilian government in Ghana in 1992, and the transformation of the PNDC into the civilian National Democratic Congress. Following the coming into force of the 1992 constitution, the Local Government Law, 1988, PNDCL 207 was repealed and replaced by the Local Government Act 462, 1993. Though the district assembly concept was aimed at decentralization, its implementation was a sham. According to the NCD's document, the DAs would culminate in the establishment of Regional Assemblies and a National Assembly, the supreme legislative body in the country.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Two chiefs from the Regional House of Chiefs were, however, represented on the Regional Coordinating Council.

<sup>227</sup> There were 22 decentralised departments under each DA. See Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>228</sup> See detail in Kwame A. Ninsin, *Ghana's Political Transition 1990-1993* (Accra, 1996), p. 82.

<sup>229</sup> Interviews conducted with Mr Dan Abodakpui, NDC Minister of Trade and Industries, Dr Kwamena Adjei, Chairman of the NDC and Mr Asiedu Nketia, Member of the Consultative Assembly that drew the draft 1992 constitution of Ghana and the General Secretary of the NDC, Accra, 5 July 2006.

Interestingly, the regional and national assembly concepts never materialised.<sup>230</sup> In place of the regional assembly, a Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) was created with no policy making powers.<sup>231</sup> Throughout PNDC rule, decision-making was centred on Rawlings and his immediate lieutenants.<sup>232</sup> The appointment of one-third of the members of the DAs ensured that the assemblies would 'be beholden to the central government rather than responding to constituents'.<sup>233</sup> District assemblies were supposed to evolve through a democratic process. Yet, the law establishing them was non-partisan. Therefore, what the whole concept sought to do was to establish a localised non-party system that could give the PNDC government control at the local level. Most significantly, the 1992 constitution debarred chiefs from taking part in 'active party politics'.<sup>234</sup>

In Ewedome, no new local councils were created in 1989. The old district councils which existed from 1974 to 1988 were simply designated as DAs with headquarters at Hohoe, Kpando and Ho. The only changes noticeable were the creation of Unit Committees and Town/Area councils. The establishment of DAs did not cure the ills that befell the previous district councils. The three DAs created in Ewedome have been found to be too big and too remote from the local citizens. Centralization of fiscal control in Accra continued to make the decentralization concept a mirage. The sub-district structures such as

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<sup>230</sup> For details about the abortion of the regional and national assembly concept, see Shillington, *Ghana*, p. 169-173.

<sup>231</sup> For details about the composition of the RCC and its functions, see Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Bulletin November 1996, p. 11; Joseph R.A. Aryee, 'Decentralisation and Local Government under the PNDC Rule' in E. Gyimah-Boadi (ed.), *Ghana under PNDC Rule* (Dakar, 1993), p. 119.

<sup>232</sup> Chazan Naomi. 'Anomalies of Continuity: Perspectives on Ghanaian Elections since Independence' in Fred Hayward (ed.), *Elections in Independent Africa* (Westview, 1987); Paul Nugent, *Big Men, Small Boys, and Politics in Ghana: Power, Ideology and the Burden of History, 1982-1994* (London, 1995), p. 176.

<sup>233</sup> Herbst, *Politics of Reform*, p. 90.

<sup>234</sup> The Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, Article 276 (1), 1992. Chiefs protested against restrictions on their participation in the new democratic process but to no avail. See K. Ansah-Koi, 'Walking a Political Tightrope: Chieftaincy and the 1996 Elections' in J. R. A. Aryee (ed.), *The 1996 General Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Ghana*, Accra, 1998), p. 144.

unit committees and Town/Area committees have not been developed and empowered. Unit committees were to elect members to the assembly every four years, but lack of motivation discouraged qualified citizens from standing for election to the assemblies.

Since their establishment in 1989, the DAs in Ewedome have not been able to advance the development of the region. Revenue for the assemblies was derived from the same old sources such as levies, stores and market tolls, lorry parks, tourist attractions and property rates. Non-local sources of revenue included District Assembly Common Funds, District Development Fund and funds from donors such as the EU for specific projects. Ewedome is poorly endowed with natural resources such as minerals and timber. The lack of industries coupled with the destruction of the cocoa farms since bushfires ravaged the Volta Region in the early 1980s meant that the financial base of the DAs has become weak. Since the 1980s, the few cocoa farms in Ewedome were converted into food crop farms. Therefore, the national cocoa output which multiplied due to the transformation of economic policy by the government from 1983, did not produce any significant result in the Ewedome region. Most of the educated youth looking for employment and better living conditions have migrated to Accra and other cities. The consequence of this is that the markets which constituted one of the major sources of income to the DAs in Ewedome have dwindled in size. Therefore, the assemblies are unable to raise enough revenue locally. Apart from the district headquarters that have relatively big market centres, many adjoining towns have small or no markets at all. Even in Ho District, the market only operates once in every five days. The DAs in Ewedome now have to depend largely on District Assembly Common Found disbursed by Parliament. The process of disbursement is cumbersome preventing funds from getting to DAs in time.

In 2004, the New Patriotic Party government (the current 'heir' to the established 'conservative' Danquah-Busia tradition) found the DAs in Ewedome and other parts of the council too big and decided to address the problem by carving two more DAs out of the previously existing three DAs. The new DAs were South Dayi District Assembly (this was carved out of Hohoe and Kpando District Assemblies) with its headquarters at Kpeve and Adaklu-Anyigbe District Assembly (carved out of Ho District Assembly) with its headquarters at Kpetoe. Ho and Hohoe were declared Municipal Councils. Kpando was made an Urban council.<sup>235</sup> According to councillors and inhabitants, this move was only for political expediency. This notwithstanding, the apathy of people towards local government remained unchanged. The new assemblies were bereft of resources, from office accommodation to basic items such as stationery.<sup>236</sup>

Most assembly members interviewed deplored the lack of skills development opportunities for assembly members and the inability of government to empower the DAs to promote local economic development. The revenue base of the councils remained weak with the number of revenue collecting staff of Kpando Urban Council, for example, reduced to seven in 2000.<sup>237</sup> For many years now, none of the councils in Ewedome has been able to collect property rates.<sup>238</sup> Even basic rate collection was poor in all the councils due to the high cost of rate collection, which most often far exceeded the amount collected.

Most disturbing was the alienation of competent personnel from the DAs. As noted earlier, the DA concept was not aimed at democratizing local government along the lines of

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<sup>235</sup> Population was the criterion used in elevating DAs. An area of population of over 250,000 qualified to be promoted to the status of a Metropolitan Assembly. A town with a population of over 95,000 qualified for a Municipal Council while areas with population of over 75,000 was made a DA. See The Ministry of Local Government Brochure on *Ghana: The New Local Government System*, (Accra, 1996), p. 11-12.

<sup>236</sup> Interview, Mrs N. Offie, educationalist, South Dayi District Assembly, 21 October 2007.

<sup>237</sup> Interview with Mr David Kumah, Revenue Supervisor, Kpando Urban Council, 22 August 2007; Mr Harry Biscoff, Record Officer, 27 July 2007.

<sup>238</sup> According to my informants, this was due to lack of punitive measures against defaulters.

party politics. No political parties or organised groups were allowed to take part in the elections. People who contested the elections to become assemblymen and women did so as individuals. It is observed that the operational style of the PNDC government which introduced the DAs was to deny political expression because it feared that political liberalization would generate opposition. Thus the whole district assembly concept was mired in controversy. Most professional bodies and the most capable individuals boycotted the district assembly elections.

With the return to multi-party democracy in 1992, the law which established the DAs should have been amended to allow political parties to be involved in local government. Multi-party politics is a defining feature of liberal democracy and the agitation that led to Ghana's transition to democracy after years of military rule was shaped largely by the people's desire to see a return to party-politics. Yet the DAs in their present form remain peripheral to the main democratic process in the country. The inevitable consequence is the loading of the DAs with people loyal to the party in government.<sup>239</sup> Officers at the DAs are seen as agents of the party in power who sit at the pleasure of the president. So there has been difficulty in harnessing the support of all the people in the districts. In effect, the process amounted to reconfiguration of political institutions and the narrowing of the range of those entitled to political office.<sup>240</sup> With these constraints, the DA system has been unable to restore a 'sense of local civil responsibility' associated with the old NAs among rural people in Ewedome.<sup>241</sup> In Ewedome, people have become disillusioned about local

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<sup>239</sup> The District Chief Executive and the Presiding Member are nominated by the President and approved by two-thirds of the members of the DAs. See Ministry of Local Government Bulletin, November 1996, p. 10.

<sup>240</sup> This view is also expressed in an interpretive analysis of the weakness of the state in Africa. See Bates, *When Things Fell Apart*, p. 52.

<sup>241</sup> Shillington, *Ghana*, p. 164.

government. There was little evidence that local government reforms in the past produced any achievements which might have made subsequent attempts more effective and long lasting. There was therefore much in local government reforms that people in the region subverted and inverted.

### **Conclusion**

Local government in Ewedome came under tremendous pressure at independence. The territory was one area that was actually convulsed by violent conflict right at the time that independence was obtained. This situation shaped the relationship between the ruling CPP government and the inhabitants of Ewedome. Thus, the local government reforms carried out by the CPP government came against the backdrop of lack of popular support for the party in the territory. The haste to rid local government of the influence of chiefs and to control local political structures led to a series of reforms. While the reforms succeeded in rendering opposition elements in Ewedome ineffective, they failed to improve the work of local councils. The creation of local councils became a resource for political patronage and a regular feature in the strategy of governing local people by divide and rule. The many structural changes were not accompanied by detailed planning of local government services and the multiplicity of councils only served to make units of local councils unwieldy and inefficient. Government functionaries' influence became a burden on local councils. The situation deteriorated to the point that by 1974, local councils ceased to exist altogether.

## CONCLUSION

This study has examined the evolution of local government in Ewedome from the formal beginning of British rule in 1922 through the era of the creation of Native Authorities in the 1930s to the moment of genuine democratic possibility in the period 1951-7 and on to the shambles that it became under the corrupt and authoritarian regimes that followed. It has investigated a number of developments relating to the pre-colonial and colonial political structure in Ewedome and participation in local governance. It has become evident that participation in the day-to-day administration of the NAs was initially limited exclusively to the chiefly class. We do see evidence of Akan political culture such as stools, secular rulers, and military formation in pre-colonial Ewedome. However, British colonial rule represented an attempt at further 'Akanization': that is, the construction of suitably-sized states under 'paramount chiefs' through amalgamation. The newly created paramount chiefs accumulated more authority under the Native Authority Ordinance of 1932 than they had in the pre-colonial period. Nevertheless, the participation of commoners in self-help projects such as the construction of roads, the building of schools, markets, and clinics showed the active involvement of all the inhabitants in the working of the NAs.

The application of the policy of indirect rule in Ewedome was particularly intriguing because of the territory's historical antecedents: the fragmentation into small chiefdoms and the effect of German colonial rule which made villages the basic units of administration. The fragmentation and the complex heterogeneity of Ewedome were made manifest by the dialect peculiarities of the various Ewe groups, as well as the cultural and historical uniqueness of each Guan and Central Togo minority groups. This made amalgamation the

only viable option for the establishment of NAs when Britain formally took over the administration of the territory in 1922. Amalgamation was aided by the adoption of 'standard Ewe' as a tool for proselytization and education by the missionaries. In Ewedome, missionary education had created a small literate group by the early twentieth century before formal colonialism. This served to begin the process towards fostering a wider Ewe identity.

Nevertheless, the creation of Akpini, Asogli, Awatime (and later, Atando) states under the policy of amalgamation was not received easily. Every chief began jostling for the position of a paramount chief. This created social and political disequilibrium, with serious ramifications for chieftaincy in Ewedome to the present day. The British officials already had their own preferred choices and could no longer hold themselves as neutral arbiters of conflicting interests and claims.<sup>242</sup> As protests against the policy grew, the flexibility of its application became an important philosophy, paving the way for the formation of the Atando NA in 1949. Amalgamation in Ewedome thus provides insights into the difficulties that British colonial officials faced in their bid to introduce indirect rule in British colonies in Africa. The reforms introduced into the NA system since the 1930s shows that, far from being despotic, the NAs were willing to change their policies to meet the expectations of the inhabitants, whose non-cooperation and protests could impede the execution of development programmes. It is obvious that critics of indirect rule often overstated the power of the colonial state and overstretched the gullibility of rural folk.

The structure of the NA system had been the supporting prop of the chiefs' newly acquired power and authority. From the mid 1940s, as increasing numbers of 'youngmen' in particular were more and more dissatisfied with limitations to their socio-economic

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<sup>242</sup> This view is also expressed by Berman, 'Ethnicity', p. 317.

advance under the NA system, colonial rule began creaking and the 'invincibility' of chiefs and their influential position was brought into question. This fuelled the demand for radical change, which had a profound effect on the institution of chieftaincy and the means of acquiring political power. The ordinary people could and did express their opposition to policies which did not meet their needs. The deficiencies notwithstanding, the NAs had by 1950 laid the foundation for the new local councils that succeeded them.

The transition to local councils in Ewedome was intimately shaped by the question of Togoland unification from 1951 to 1956. The administering authorities had been haunted by the spectre of the possibility of Togoland making a demand for the unification of the two Togolands. Various policies pursued by the British since 1922 aimed at forging cooperation between British Togo and the Gold Coast. The entrenched positions of the Togoland Congress and the diarchy government of the Gold Coast made integration a burning issue, which could only be resolved by a plebiscite in 1956. Local councils were divided between integrationists and unificationists. This had a retardative effect on the proper functioning of local councils and the overall development of Ewedome.

Since independence, local government has lacked serious political direction. Attempts by successive governments to reform local government were dictated largely by their obsession for the control of structures at the local level. This led to the proliferation of small inefficient local councils in Ewedome. Successive governments introduced an alteration in the traditional political structure that saw government party functionaries acting as the rallying point of the people in the rural areas instead of chiefs. In effect, the opportunity presented by the 1951 Local Government Ordinance to marry traditional form of local administration and the 'modern' system of local government was completely

abandoned. Yet, as the thesis has demonstrated, the history of self-help projects has shown that local government administration in the rural areas was closely bound-up with the institution of chieftaincy. Despite the socio-political transformations taking place in the territory, the villages and towns continued largely to be governed by indigenous norms and values. Chiefs thus represented that critical link between modern forms of local government and the time-honoured pre-colonial system of authority. The rural communities still looked up to chiefs for leadership and direction. Therefore the marginalization of chiefs in the day-to-day administration of their villages became the missing-link in the successful development of local government. Since 1988, attempts to decentralise local government and facilitate local level participation through DAs have so far proved unsuccessful. The DAs have turned out to be more politicised than their predecessors. The excessive politicization and over-centralisation alienated many people and give a confused image of local government to this day.

The importance of this study lies in the fact that local government was the means by which governments - both colonial and post-colonial - became visible to rural people. Local government structures and policies since the colonial era have shaped identities, transformed indigenous political systems and influenced the cultural values and mores of rural folks in scores of ways. Indirect rule varied in its application from territory to territory. Therefore, the contribution of this thesis to the on-going debate on colonial rule through chiefs is that a comparative examination of NA administration and the 'modern' post-colonial system of local government (on a case-by-case basis) provides a more objective understanding of indirect rule than the broad narrative has so far presented.

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## INTERVIEWS

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*Mama* Agbalesi II, Paramount Queen Mother, Kpando, 27 November 2007.

*Mama* Dewotonyo I, Paramount Queen Mother, Hohoe Bla, 9 December 2007.

*Mama* Mawokpor, Queen Mother, Kpando Tsakpoe and Acting Principal St Teresa's Training College, Hohoe, 7 July 2007.

Mrs N. Offei, educationalist, South Dayi District Assembly, 21 October 2007.

Dr Afari-Gyan, Chairman, Electoral Commission, Ghana, 7 August 2006.

Dr Kwamena Adjie, Chairman of the NDC, 5 July 2006.

Mr Adolf Adorsu, retired civil servant, Logba Viunta, 2 January 2000.

Mr Adolf Agbenku, Retired Principal Officer, Kpando Local Council, 2007.

Mr A. K. Ahiabo, Registrar, Regional House of Chiefs, Ho, 9 July 2007.

Mr A. Malm, education officer, Regional Education Office, Ho, 8 July 2007.

Mr Asiedu Nketia, member of the Consultative Assembly that drafted the 1992 constitution of Ghana and the General Secretary of the NDC, Accra, 5 July 2006.

Mr Bob Antor, Logba Alakpeti, 1 July 2007.

Mr Dan Abodakpui, NDC Minister of Trade and Industries, 5 July 2006.

Mr David Kumah, Revenue Inspector, Kpando Urban Council, 22 August 2007.

Mr Christian Debrah, former registrar, Hopke Traditional Council, Dzolokpuita, 4 August 2006.

Mr C. K. Kudor, *Sohefia* and retired civil servant, Dzolokpuita, 24 December 2005.

Mr C. Y. Tsetse, Tutor, St. Teresa's Training College, Hohoe, May 2007.

Mr C. F. Y. Dekavie, retired educationalist, Hohoe, May 2007.

Mr Edem Gbadegbe, retired registrar of Dzolopkuita Local Council, 20 May 2000.

Mr G. N. K. Yayoh, elder of Akome Agate, 2 July 2007.

Mr George Feakpi, retired civil servant, Dzolo, 8 August 2007.

Mr Hans Kofi Boni, Volta Regional Commissioner during the Nkrumah regime, 2 December 2007.

Mr Harry Biscof, Record Officer, Kpando Urban Council, 27 July 2007.

Mr Henry Akatsi, Research Officer, Regional House of Chiefs, Ho, 16 September, 2007.

Mr Henry Alifo, retired educationalist, Abutia Kloe, 15 September 2007.

Mr J. B. Da Rocha, lawyer and founding member of the New Patriotic Party, Accra, 5 July 2006.

Mr Kwame Ahin, Deputy Chairman, Electoral Commission, Ghana, 7 August 2007.

Mr Lawson Addo, retired treasurer of Yingor Local Council, Akome, 15 June 2004.

Mr Lawson Osen, *Asafoatse* of Awatime Gbadzeme and retired educationalist, Hohoe 4 December 2007.

Mr Nelson Tsahey, retired Post Office Master, Dzolkpuita, 20 December 2006.

Mr S. Nkansah, retired director of Ghana Highways Authority, Ho, 20 July 2006.

Mr Elias Mensah, Assistant Principal Secretary, Regional Coordinating Council, Ho, 20 July 2007.

Mr E. Y. Kotobridza, Budget Officer, Hohoe District Council, 26 July 2007.

Mr Vanance Kyekye, retired Kpando Local Council worker, 3 July 2007.

Rev. E. Dake, educationalist and a Minister of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Peki, 17 September 2007.

*Togbe Adzatekpor VI*, President of Hokpe Traditional Council, and former President of the National House of Chiefs, 8 June 2002.

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*Togbe Kwadzo Dei XI*, Paramount Chief of Peki, 3 July 2007.

*Togbe Koto IV*, Chief of Fodome Woe, 4 August 2007.

*Togbe Tam Tia*, Paramount chief of Todome, 5 September, 2007.