

ORAL TRADITIONS OF SAMPA, HANI, DEBIBI, NAMASA,
BANDA, BROAHANE AND MENGYE (MENJI) -

Africana
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BRONG AHAFO

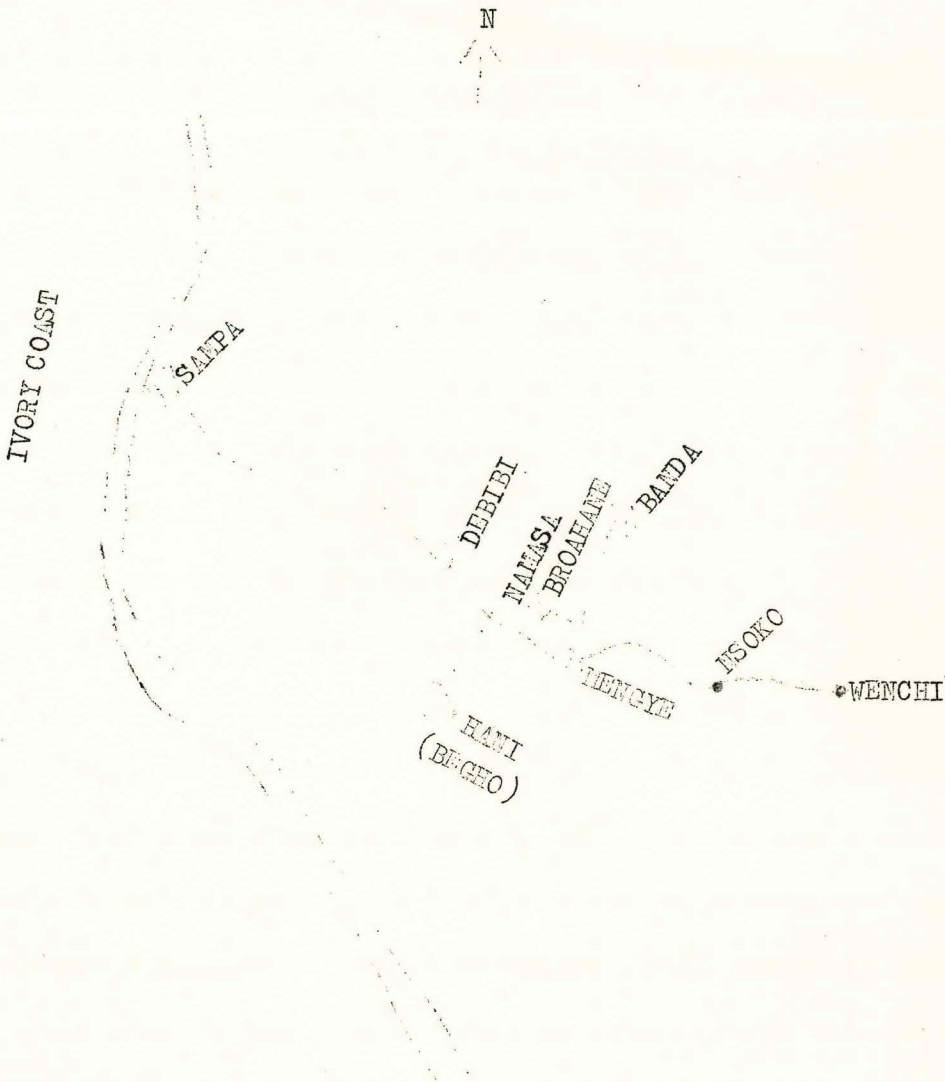
COLLECTED BY

E.S.K. OWUSUH

INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
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A DIAGRAM SHOWING PLACES COVERED IN NORTH-
WESTERN BRONG AHAFU, JUNE 1976.



KEY



International Boundary

Places Visited

KUMASI

INTRODUCTION

A quick glance at the diagram on page one showing the area covered, indicates its compactness and contiguity. Each settlement is just a stone-throw from the other with only Banda and Sampa at the ends which out-distance the others.

Despite its close-up nature the population is heterogeneous with complex traits of culture by way of religion, dress, behavioural patterns and attitudes. While a sizeable proportion profess islamic religion the rest are traditional religionists. Many languages are spoken. For instance, the Muslim enclaves comprising Namasa, Mengye and Broahane speak Weela, Gyogopla and Ntore respectively. The other groups, namely: Hani, Sampa, Banda and Debibi speak Bono, Nafara (for Banda and Sampa) and Palla. My discussions with Mr. Persson revealed that the linguists have classified all these numerous languages under the Iigbi group. The Nafana race consists of Banda, Sampa and Debibi. The Hani people represent the Bono "duoduakwa" while the Mande comprises Namasa, Mengye and Broahane (partly). The Banda-Muslims, who now inhabit Wenchi, is within the Mande for they were brought along from those regions. The research student should carefully consider the traditions of origin of the various ethnic groups because as land is the basis of social organization they tend to claim that they migrated from nowhere or from the heavens or holes.

On the strength of available evidence I am inclined to think Namasa had been the cradle of ancient civilization in the Beo (Begho) Kingdom.

Her history is full of rich material with a long list of rulers chronologically arranged.¹ According to one document, I laid hands on the kingdom has been in existence for over 2,000 years before Christ. But the Nafana traditions seem to nullify this claim. According to them, two kingdoms existed before the emergence of Namasa. These were the Kolossa and the Gyamera kingdoms. It was during the Gyamera period that the Nafana (Banda and Sampa) came from Kakala to settle in the area. It was pointed out that the Kolossa inhabited the same area where Namasa is at the moment. This contention is supported by Agyeman Dua² and my own work among the Gyaman who say they came to meet the Mpantra (Nafana) and the Kulamo (Bontuku) whom they later defeated and took their land.³

The frequent use of the word "King" may be found non-conventional here. The only explanation I offer is to designate the title to a ruler of an ethnic group so as to differentiate him from his sub-chiefs. So the king stands out distinctly from the lesser chiefs. I am at a loss with the terms "Palla" and "Mpantra".

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- 1: The list contains more than thirty kings. No list has equalled this so far in the region
 - 2: See Ghana Notes and Queries No. 9, November, 1966 pp. 36-39.
 - 3: There has been a land dispute between Sampa and Suman Ahenkro (Gyaman). I was shown some documents by Nana Sarpahene.

The Debibi people claim to be both "Palla" and "Mpantra". But the Nafana (Mpantra) deny any close affinity with them. I hope, more research work will clarify the situation - Are the Palla and Nafana the same people?

ACCULTURATION:- With the only exception of Hani (Degho) the rest are non-Bono speakers. The Namasa claim to be the true indigenous people. But this is not confirmed by the traditions of the other ethnic groups. It should also be borne in mind that Namasa, Mengye, and Broahane have heavy Moslem populations - over 90% in respective areas.

The physical appearance of the three ethnic group is quite different from those at Banda, Sampa and Debibi. The men look tall, strong and hefty with good physique unlike their "dwarfish" and "smallish" neighbours. They seem to have travelled far and wide and have Western tastes e.g. clothing and taking tea or coffee after meals. Their way of life, behaviour and culture is quite different and this is conspicuous to any visitor. They do not own stool property like palanquin, swords and the Black stool. The few they have were given them by outside powers. The Gyamans introduced gold-plaited swords to them while the Asantes presented gifts like palanquin, swords and asipim chair as partners in war.

Their long association and interaction with other peoples, particularly Asante, has affected their language-culture.¹

1: I am solely concerned with the non-Bono speakers here. This is similar to the situation with Badu and Seikwa (Kulamo).

Though they have local place-names yet they have come to adopt those imposed on them by their conquerors Asante and Gyaman. This is a typical example:-

Imposed Name	Indigenous Name
(1) Debibi	(1) Gbizige
(2) Namasa	(2) Demisa or Demusa
(3) Sampa	(3) Sangba
(4) Banda	(4) Kukalla (The Kulamo call it Kukai corrupted).
(5) Broahane	(5) Bokana
(6) Mengye	(6) Tuggye

I feel the imposition was done so that the conquered might identify with the conquerors. This was in line with the Asante philosophy of "Obi Nkyere Obi ase" - (No one points to the ancestry of another)

As I have already indicated somewhere else this area is a rich source of historical activity bearing in mind that the great Beo (Begho) kingdom once existed here and also Namasa was used as a hide-out by Samore. Moreover, it had been the centre of activity between the great warring kingdoms of Asante and Gyaman for centuries. The works of Messrs. Carol D. Jordan and Andrew Persson (Banda and Broahane) both of the Institute of Linguistics, Tamale, will in no mean measure serve to unearth the past activities of these people.

These anthropologists have been interacting with the inhabitants for several years and will get a better view of the structural and behavioural patterns of these societies. Already Mr. Jordan has made several collections of material and some publications to his credit and he is also working on translating the Holy Bible into Nafara. His counterpart, Mr. Persson is leaving no stone unturned and has also come out with a paper entitled "Some Oral Traditions of Brawhani" which Dr. Kropp Dakubu kindly gave me a copy of the one deposited in the Institute of African Studies Library at Legon.

Some of the difficulties I experienced in this area included (a) lack of transport (b) lack of water (c) unpassable roads and (d) accommodation to some extent. My only advice to all future researchers is not to take up any assignment here between January and July - No water!! All the streams got dried up during this period. Coincidentally, the ideal period which is after June brings incessant rains which cut deep gullies in the roads to render them unmotorable. It is pathetic to note that an industrious farmer at Broahane disposed of his 500 (five hundred) tubers of water yam (afasee) for only ₦5.00 (five cedis). This is quite incredible but yet it did happen. His explanation was that these yams were getting rotten. With the bad condition of the roads the driver he approached was not prepared to charge not less than ₦100.00 (one hundred) to convey them to the nearest market at Tschiman; and moreover, this would leave him with no profit.

So he had to dispose of the whole lot for such a paltry sum to buy "TAWA" - locally treated tobacco.

Despite some hardships and other inconveniences I found the exercise exciting, adventurous, and interesting. One would love to see the non-descript range of Banda Hills immediately beyond Banda - Ahenkro. It is just a beautiful scenery and I'll treasure the memory of it for long.

My attention was also drawn to a mysterious tree which emerged from an opening at Dompofie near Banda. According to Mr. Persson this opening swallowed up almost a whole group of people. The only survivors now form a household with a distinct language of their own. It is worth extracting something from them before they get extinct. There is the much-talked-of Banda Lake under the Makala Chief. Its water is neither boiled nor drunk without going through some rituals. I hope, this beautiful lake could be developed to attract tourism.

In conclusion, I remind all readers that all the tapes used in this exercise have been deposited in the Institute's Library at Legon. That I conducted the interviews in Bono dialect mostly; and that the Kulange was used on only one occasion at Broahane where the informant was well versed in it. This was done to clarify a point in Mr. Persson's paper earlier mentioned. I express my very sincere thanks to all the chiefs who co-operated to make my work a success, especially, Nana Sampahene who made available to me some valuable documents.

ORAL TRADITIONS OF BANDA B/A

Respondents:-

- (1) Name: Nana Kofi Dwuruh
Status: Omanhene of Banda Traditional Area.
Age: 150 years
Date: 9th June, 1976.
- (2) Nana Kofi Mensah, Gyasehene, 45 yrs.
- (3) Nana Sienyono Kwabena, Akyeamehene, 50 years
- (4) Nana Wulo Aboateaa, Banimhene, 67 years
- (5) Kwame Donkor, chief Farmer, 50 yrs.
- (6) Pastor J.K. Yeboah, African Faith Tabernacle Congregation church, 55 years.

Others in attendance were:

- (1) J.M. Dwuruh, Oheneba (Prince) 24 years
- (ii) A.A. Ahenkan, Oheneba (Prince) 32 years
- (iii) Kingsley K. Kuma, Ohenenana,¹ 21 years.

Prayer (Apaee) by Nana Kofi Dwuruh himself.

This was said in Nafara but Nana's voice was so faint that I could not write it down.

The translation was done in Iwi by Nana Kofi Mensah, Gyasehene, of Banda Traditional Area.

1: The King's great grandson.

The Translated Version

- (1) Bere a Nananom firii Kakala (France)¹ baa asase yi so
Nananom betenaa asase yi so asomdwoee mu
Nana seisei yesee yenkyere abakosem
Abakosem ne se ye baa ha betenaa asase yi so no
Nana Kra Longo na ode yen baaes
- (2) Afei bere a yereba no na Sampa
Sie Nyonogbo na oka ho
Na yebaes no na Nananom tee no gyaa Sampa
Se tena ha, na mereko anim
Akotena bepo no ase
- (3) Afei seisei Kra Longo a ode yen firii France
Baaes no nsa a yede bo mpaes
Ama dwumadie no akoso nie
Enti wo nsa ni gye
Se yekasa a yenkasa mfom
- (4) Se asem a yerebeka enni mu
Enti Nana Sie Longo wo nsa ni
Mo mmoa yen se asem a yerebeka agu
Afidie yi mu yi enko so
Emma yen mfom na dee yerebeka biara entene
- (5) Nti wo nsa no no
Nana Kra Longo wo nsa ni
Nana Sie Longo wo nsa ni
Mpanyimfo a mo baa akyire
Mo nsa ni mongye nom
Ma yenko dwumadie no so
Ma enko so pepepe ma yen

1: This refers to the Republic of Ivory Coast.

English Version (Transliteration)

- (1) When our ancestors left Kakala for this place
They came to settle here in peace
Now we are asked to tell our history
Our history is that when we came to settle here
Nana Kra Longo was our leader who brought us.
- (2) Again when we were coming Sampa
Sie Nyonogbo was with us
But he was left behind at Sampa
By our ancestors to stay there
While Nana left to go and stay below the hill
- (3) It was Kra Longo also brought us from France¹
And we are pouring this libation in his honour
To let this interview be successful
So this is your drink
When we talk don't let us falter
- (4) Let what we are going to say be acceptable
So Nana Sie Longo, your drink
Help us so that what we say into this machine
Will be right
Don't let us falter
Let what we say be straight
- (5) So this is your drink
Nana Kra Longo, your drink
Nana Sie Longo, your drink
All the Elders who came after
This is your drink and drink it
To let the interview be successful
And let everything be orderly for us.

1: That is the present Republic of Ivory Coast.

Q. Where did you come from to settle this area?

A. Kakala.

Q. Where is Kakala?

A. In France, Gyimini line¹.

Q. Why did you leave your former place?

A. There was a stool dispute over succession and inheritance.

Q. Who was the true successor?

A. Kra Longo. He was entitled to inherit the stool wives (Kunafo) but this was denied him so he left to build a new township.

Q. How did you leave?

A. We came in one group and Sampa Sie Nyonogbo was with us at that time. The Tampi people were with us too.

Q. Who are the Tampi people?

A. They are now in (France) i.e. Ivory Coast. Thus three groups of one family came; viz

- (i) Kra Longo
- (ii) Sie Nyonogbo
- (iii) The Tampi

But the overall leader of the three groups was Kra Longo.

Q. Did you find any other people living here when you arrived in this place?

A. Nobody was here up to the R. Tain. Nana Agyeman had not then come to settle here.

1: In the neighbourhood of Gyimini (Jimini).

Q. Who was this Nana Agyeman?

A. The Gyaman King.

Q. What language did you speak when you arrived here?

A. Banda Kasa (Banda language).

Q. Could you give us the name of that language?

A. Nafana.

Q. How do you call the Banda people?

A. Nafana.

Q. Do the people and the language the same?

A. No, the language is called NAFARA while the people are NAFANA.

Q. Do you think your language has changed?

A. No.

Q. How was your state founded?

A. The founder was Kra Longo.

Q. How did you come by the name Banda?

A. Our ancestors went to the Mfantse war on the side of Asante.

On reaching Kumasi we insisted going straight to the coast to meet the enemy without a sleep-over at Kumasi. Thus we were referred to in Twi (Bono) "Ba Nda" - They did not sleep.

The phrase "Ba Nda" became Banda up to this day.

NB: We got to know the Asantehene through Nkoranza Baffoe who befriended our ancestors.

Q. Which states have been your neighbours?

A. We heard only of the Mo people who are just beyond Adre (i.e. the Black Volta).

Q. List of Kings:-

- A. (i) Kra Longo
(ii) Sakyi
(iii) Pezoo
(iv) Ohene Gyira
(v) Habāā
(vi) Nana Dabla (Dabila)
(vii) Yaw Sie Longo - He went to the Mfanti war
(viii) Nana Kofi Dwuru - (present king).

Q. List of Queens:-

- A. (i) Yadwo Gongo
(ii) Kyame Brofea - She was noted for her braavery and beheaded women who went contrary to custom e.g. getting pregnant when customary rites and not been performed. She also did the singulary deed by cutting the head of the defeated Kolossa king; hence the title "Brofea" - knife.¹
(iii) Kodongi
(iv) Amma Kwatia
(v) Adwo Boke
(vi) Pani. Yaa
(vii) Nana Amma
(viii) Nana Amma Bile
(ix) Adwoa Kepefo (present Queen)

1: The Kulamo word for knife is Brofea (who borrowed from the other?)

- Q. What significant events happened in the reigns of these kings/Queens?
- A. (i) Sie Lango - He was a great warrior and went to Mfanti War.
- (ii) Kyane Brofea - See her feats in cutting off the head of the Kolossa king and also observing the strict norms of society.

GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONS

- Q. How is your state governed?
- A. The following chiefs help in the administration - Krontihene, Gyaschene, Nifahene, Kyidomhene, Benkumhene, Ankobeahene and the Adontenhene.
- Q. What roles do they play in the government?
- A. (i) Queen - She rallies round the women when they are needed.
- On the installation of a new king the Queen is to be informed first. She takes active part in the selection of a new ruler.
- (ii) Krontihene - He is the Acting Head of state. In some matters things pass through him to the king.
- (iii) Gyaschene - He is styled the "son" of the king. He takes charge of the sons and daughters of all the past and present rulers. He rallies them round the Great Stool.
- Domestic issues involving the stool fall within his domain.

Q. What towns and villages fall within your administration?

A. Mangoase, Buil, Kasaa, Lokakyena, Battor, Famang, Dorboo, Kabronu, Kanka, Sasi, Gbao, Dompofie, Sangba, Makara, Wewa, Banda-Boasi, Bofie, and Mengye.¹

others are Sabie, Nyire, Kogyee, Domoli, and Broahane (part of it serves Banda).

Q. Is Broahane part of the Nafana people?

A. They are Ntögore but Nafana people constitute part of the town. Formerly the whole town served Banda.

Q. What are the rules of succession in your state?

A. Consideration is given to one's brothers or sisters' sons. But preference usually goes to the brother whose mother is the most senior.

Q. What about one's own sons?

A. They are not entitled to the stool.

Q. What are the main gods of your state?

A. (i) Sanya Kopo - War god

(ii) Kafonno

(iii) Taplapoo

(iv) Tise

The Taplapoo:

It is a Lake god and protects us from wars and diseases.

No one fetches water from it for any domestic use as its water is not boiled

1: This was formerly under Banda but now detached.

Sacrifices should be made before the water is collected for drinking purposes. The caretaker is the Makala chief; and Makala is 10 (ten) miles from Banda Ahenkro.

Q. Of all the gods which is the most powerful?

A. No answer.

Q. How were they acquired?

A. Sanya Kopo came first. We heard of it as giving protection in time of war so we went for it.

Q. From where?

A. Kabanya.

Q. Where is this place?

A. Near Bole.

Q. How did you acquire the others?

A. (ii) Kafonno - We brought it from Kakala.

(iii) Tiee - Also from Kakala.

Q. What are the emblems, the main state swords and the symbols of your state?

A. We have the Bongebonge which is the local name for apakan (Palanquin) and the Poo (pou) which is the sword. These were part of the stool property we brought from Kakala.

Q. In whose reign did you acquire them?

A. Kra Longo.

Q. What are the oaths of your state?

A. Fiada.

Q. How did it come to be adopted?

A. It was on one Friday at 7 a.m. that Nananom had their first war hence Fiada (Friday) became our oath.

Q. In whose reign?

A. Kra Longo.

Q. What are the penalties attached to it?

A. In the past if one swore it that party would not eat again. But now the swearer will only provide a sheep for purificatory rites.

Q. What are the main festivals of your state?

A. (i) Tanco - yam festival

(ii) Sanyakopo

(iii) Tiece

(iv) Taplapoo

(v) Gyobenne - For both traditional and Muslim worshippers

(vi) Donnyi - Muslims only.

Q. How are they celebrated?

A. (i) Tanco - It is celebrated on Nkyidwoo Day.

All sub-chiefs (who ride in palanquins) come to join the king who rides in a palanquin to the river-side to perform some customary rites.

Q. How is it done?

A. A sheep is slaughtered and a dozen eggs offered to the river. A cow is also offered to baptize the Great Stool. We do all these on the Nkyidwoo Day. Two drums of drinks are offered to the stool before the cow is slaughtered.

Q. What are your death and marriage rites and customs.

A. Marriage

A young man had to do brideservice to the would-be wife's parents in the past. If the parents got satisfied they would give their consent to the marriage. He was at liberty to take any girl as a wife.

Q. Did he perform the same rites a young man?

A. No.

Q. Did the king choose wives from some households?

A. Yes.

Q. Could you give us some examples?

A. Yes (i) From Yaw Dabla House - Gyase clan

(ii) From Beema House - Gyase clan

(iii) From Opanyin Yaw Pe Yaw - Gyase clan.

Death of a Youth:-

It was a sad affair in the past. The youth met and bought, say, six kegs of gun powder. There was firing of musketry. After burial drinks were served to the people. Local drumming and dancing followed.

Q. What was done to ascertain whether the dead lived a good life on earth before burial?

A. If any death occurred the father of the deceased was informed first. The dead was asked whether he was destined to die in that manner or the ancestors came for him. If he was bad¹ or good he

1: This always refers to being a witch.

would say it.

Q. Did this involve the ritual of "carrying"?

A. Yes.

Q. How was this done?

A. Eight people with four on each side carried the whole dead body.

If the deceased died abroad the sleeping cloth and mat or bedding were brought home. In such a circumstances only four people would do the carrying i.e. two on each side.

Q. Death of the king:

A. This was reported two weeks after. The death was confined to an inner circle. It took three weeks for the public to get a wind of it. It was the responsibility of the Okyeame and sword bearers to go round to tell the various wing chiefs.

Q. On whose authority was the public informed of the king's death?

A. Krontihene and Adontenhene.

Q. What happened if someone else said it?

A. In the past he would be executed.

Q. What did the Elders bring along to mourn their king?

A. Drums, guns and powder.

Q. How do the Elders swear to their dead king?

A. Now if you go tell the departed Ancestors. That the state you've left. Is in the hands of Krontire and Adonten
So they (ancestors) should help to find
A suitable successor for you

Who will administer the state well

If you go take this drink and inform the Elders.

So that we will be able to administer the state

Kose! Kose!! Kose!!! (Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!)

Q. Were there any human sacrifices?

A. Yes. In the past his Kra (soul servant) had to accompany him. The Adontenhene, too, had to offer one human being at the burial. We stopped all these when the white man came.

Q. At present what do you sacrifice instead?

A. Cow.

Q. Have you any drum music, songs, incantations etc. in which your history is narrated?

A. We call the atumpan drums bepoo. We used them to transmit messages in time of danger e.g. war, death or fire.

Praise song in Nafara:-

Finingi oo Fini me metrinfu a
Mendwama bongoo fonga me
Aao Nafanam, onwonou Nafana Nwonoun
fonoufaa!

Kana fefre obiaa yiriyere
Mofa tenebi obiaa tenebi

Twi Translation

Dwa a yeabo no ha seisei
Mpanyimfoo nyinaa ahyia
Afei na obrempon apue
Obiara nsore ngyina ho
Otumfoo reba! Otumfoo reba!!
Oretena ase! oretena ase!!
(Obiara nso ntena ase)

English Version

At this durbar grounds
All the Elders have met
The Mighty One is about to appear
All must rise up
The Mighty One is coming, he's coming
He is sitting he's sitting
(All can sit down now).

WARFARE

- Q. Did your state have any standing army?
- A. All men were mobilised to fight during wars.
- Q. How did you fight?
- A. The Adontenhene went ahead of all of us. Benkum and Nifa took the left and right wings respectively. The king was always at the rear. The Gyasehene, stool carriers, sons and daughters of the king surrounded him. The Gyase clan formed the security guard.
- Q. Which of the chiefs took charge at home?
- A. Abakomahene.
- Q. What weapons did you use?
- A. We at first used bows and arrows. We came to use the gun afterwards.
- Q. From where did you obtain the gun?
- A. The Gyimini (Jimini) people manufactured some for us.
- Q. Where is Gyimini land?
- A. Half is in Ghana and the other half is in the I. Coast.

They made gunpowder also.

Q. In whose reign did you obtain the gun?

A. Sie Longo.

Q. Have you any Asafo companies?

A. No.

ECONOMY

(a) Agriculture

Q. Have you always been farmers?

A. Yes.

Q. What crops did you cultivate?

A. Yam, cassava, maize, atoko (guinea corn) and ayuo (millet).

Q. Have you heard about salt?

A. Yes.

Q. Where did you get salt from?

A. Krachi (Krakye).

Q. You have also heard of kola nuts?

A. Yes, we obtained some from Asante.

Q. Are there any minerals in this area?

A. Yes. We mined gold in the past.

(b) Post European Period

Q. Have you heard of the slave trade?

A. Yes. We bought some slaves and captured others in war.

Q. How were you treating these slaves?

A. We gave them food and clothing. If you failed to look after him well he would bolt away.

- Q. Could a slave rise up in a family to inherit a stool?
- A. No. It was only captives in war who could be considered in few cases.

RELIGIOUS

- Q. Were your ancestors Christians, Muslims or ancestral worshippers?

A. Traditional religionists.

- Q. What is bosom (god)?

A. We have "stone god" - "bo some" and "adunsini" god.

The "stone god" was not taken to war, it was the "boduaa" (suman) that was carried along to war.

- Q. Have you heard of Kasampere - god?

A. Yes.

- Q. Where is it?

A. No reply.

- Q. Have you also heard of Dwomo - god?

A. We don't have it here.

- Q. Have you got Fetish Priests or Akomfoo?

A. There is a difference between Akomfoo (Fetish Priest Dancers) and Bosomfoo (Fetish Priest Diviners). The Dancers display in public and use white clay e.g. the Tano god dancer. But the Bosomfoo prays and offers sacrifices (fowl) to the gods. He does not dance in public.

- Q. What roles do the priests play in the state?

A. The Akomfoo divine to know whether the earth is polluted so that we pacify it. Again a priest can foretell future drought or great

winds about to occur. The necessary rites will then be performed to avert national calamity.

Q. Do you think there will come a time when there will be no Fetish Priests?

A. Yes, I believe this. In the past there was no Christian Church here but now the Christian believers seem to out-number the traditional worshippers.

ANCIENT RELICS AND ITEMS OF REGALIA

Q. Are there any ancient sites, relics, cemeteries etc. in your state?

A. Yes (i) Taplapoo

(ii) Kafonoo - No visits on Fridays

If one violates it he will go mad. To regain sanity he has to make a thorough confession.

Q. Has there been any litigation over land boundaries between your state and any of the neighbouring states?

A. Yes, there has been one between us and Techiman over who owns the Obuasi lands.

Q. Who settled the dispute?

A. A D.C. at Kintampo.

Q. Have you a copy of the proceedings in your possession?

A. No. They got burnt when the town was in conflagration some time ago.

Q. Have there been any internal disputes over succession and destoolment of the king?

A. No. We do not destool the king. He reigns for life.

But the lesser chiefs can be destooled.

Q. Could you tell me the relationship between your state and the following:-

(i) Sampa - We are kith and kin who emigrated from Kakala.

(ii) Kofi - Nothing with them.

(iii) Mengye (Menji) - It was part of Banda in the past but now independent.

(iv) Suma Ahenkro - Independent state

(v) Namasa - According to our tradition Namasa was the junior linguist to Banda.

(vi) Hani (Begho) - We fought and conquered Begho. They were then known as the Damusa people.

Q. Were the Namasa part of the Begho kingdom?

A. Yes. They were the Damusa people.

Q. You mentioned Gyamera, where are they now?

A. Just beyond Sampa.

(vii) Nsoko - What I have been told is that the Asantes came to invade Nsoko and carried a lot of them away. They came to inform Bandahene. The Bandahene gave them a calabash full of gold to pay the ransom Asante was demanding. Asante afterwards came to attack Banda on the pretext of finding more gold. Nsoko helped Banda to fight Asante.

The Asantehene asked Nsoko why they helped us and Nsokohene replied "Nipa ye wo aye a da n'ase";¹ indicating our generous assistance to them some time past should be paid for.

Q. Who was the Nsoko king at that time?

A. Nana Ampoforo.

(viii) Badu (Kulamo) - What I have been told is that we were allies in many wars. They helped us and we helped them. We got to know each other through wars. As a result cordial relations existed between us. There is joking relationship between us.

Q. Could you tell us the conflict between Badu and Seikwa - all Kulamo?

A. No answer.

(ix) Techiman - We litigated over Obuasi lands.

(x) Wenchi - In one of our wars we lost our stool which was found by the Wenchi people. The Wenchiene built a hut and placed it inside. There was "musuo" (calamity) over it and the Wenchiene came to inform Bandahene. We went to pay money to Wenchiene before we got the stool back.

1: This could be interpreted to mean 'A friend in need is a friend indeed'.

(xi) Asante:- Nothing

Q. Did you not have any interaction with the Asante kingdom?

A. When we came we did not know them. It was through the help we gave to Nsoko that they got to know us. The Asantes thought we had plenty of gold and therefore attacked us to get it. We climbed over this range of hills you see there.¹

Their guns could not reach us. The Banda king Dabla's son came down to tell the Asantes that they could not get us where we were. He was asked to go and bring down his father. The king came down and kola was "split" or broken open signifying peace. This war was indecisive.

(xii) The Nkoranza Affair:-

After some time Nkoranza Baffoe's² hunter and Bandahene's hunter met. They (kins) became friends. The friendship developed and Nkoranzahene led Bandahene, Sie Longo, to Kumasi. Bandahene was introduced to Baffoe's father - Asantehene - at Kumasi. The Bandahene carried along his bow and arrow. The Asantehene enquired to know whether it could kill.

1: Banda town is built just below this range of hills.

2: Baffoe was the son of Osei Tutu.

No sooner had the reply been given than he ordered for a slave to be tied to a tree to a tree to be experimented. The Bandahene aimed and took a shot killing his victim instantly. The Asantehene became suspicious of Baffoe's activities for he accused him of having brought a dangerous friend to him. The Asantehene said, "You Bandahene go and leave Baffoe behind".

Naturally Bandahene protested on the grounds that without Baffoe he would not know his way back. The Asantehene then gave in. Prior to this Baffoe had then been earmarked for execution because of the incident earlier on. Thus the Bandahene save the life of Baffoe. "Ababio Kantamanto" - This was the title bestowed on Bandahene when he swore not to take a step back home without Baffoe.

(xi) Mo - We inhabited the same territory with them. The son of Mohene and that of Bandahene had a conflict which made us separate. The local name we have for the Mo people is Gyamie (plural) and Gyan (singular).

Q. How do you call the Kulamo?

A. All those who speak Kulange (Badu and Seikwa) are known to us as Gbulaugbula (plural) and Gbulau (singular)¹.

(xii) Nsoatre and Berekum - Nothing with them.

(xiii) Dormaa - There is joking relationship between us.

1: Could this be the corrupted form of Kulau - the singular of Kulamo?

DOCUMENTS

At Banda I had some prepared documents from Mr. Dean Carol Jordan of the Institute of Linguistics, Tamale, who has been resident at Banda for several years. He and his family now speak and write Nafara thoroughly and have many collections to their credit. With his permission and that of Prince J.M. Dwuruh, I produce the documents here unedited and unbridged. The reader is to take pains for the narration is difficult to follow with its long unwieldy sentences.

NO. 1:

History of Banda

"The Bandas came from a place called Kakala in the Eastern part of the French Territory and settled at a place called Tampi. The first Bandahene who came with all the people was called Kra Longo. He fought all the villages through which he traversed to Tampi. He fought with him large followers including the people of Wurakyi, Sampa and Jinijini. The first chief having served for the place for settlement, spotted the Banda land on which he and his people settled. He met only a few people from Mo on the land and he killed some and sold them. One of the elders of Bandahene came across Bori Kwadwo, an ancestor of Yaw Mensah on a certain hill called Chonchon. That elder was Tokemau. That Bori Kwadwo and his sister Yawa and people were then in a hut just on the base of the hill. Tokemau captured these two inhabitants and took them to Bandahene Kra Longo. When these people were asked, they said to have come from Kuntia and had been there for just a week.

Bandahene refused to give them to Tokemau to go and sell them. In their request, the Bandahene permitted them to go back to stay on their land where Tokemau captured them. Bori Kwadwo, Yaw Mensah's ancestor reported to Tokemau a month after their return that a fetish had descended from the sky into their hamlet. Bori Kwadwo and Tokemau reported this fault to the Bandahene. Bandahene decided that Bori (Bori) Kwadwo should take in-charge of the fetish for him. Bandahene Nkramofoo¹ found a village close to Bori Kwadwo's hamlet and named it Bema meaning Nana's farm after the first Kramo who made a farm there.

Bori Kwadwo's hamlet was named Twimfroase. All these people continued to serve the Bandahene until Asantehene Osei Kwadwo heard of Banda and sent to invite him to come and serve him. Bandahene refused to render allegiance to Asantehene contending that he was independent. This annoyed the Asantehene who sent an army to kill the Bandahene.

The latter had then allied with Nsawkawhene sent to ask him to come to his help. Nsawkawhene went and helped the Bandahene against the Ashanti army. The Ashantis defeated the Bandas with their ally - Nsawkaw. The Bandas after the defeat climbed a hill and sat on the summit of it. The Ashantis could not reach them. A prince of Banda by name Kwasi Abofu who was then in French territories having heard of the defeat of his people by the Ashantis who told him that if his people would submit to serve them (Ashantis) the war would end.

1: Moslems (pl.) and Kramo (sing.)

The prince carried this news to his people on the top of the hill. They agreed to descend the hill and accepted the terms of the Ashantis provided that they would drink fetish with the prince that on their descent the Ashantis would not kill them. This was done and the Bandas came down from the hill and accepted to own Ashantihene as their overlord. The Bandahene took the usual customary oath of allegiance. Some time afterwards the Bandahene died and was succeeded by one Wolo-Dwo in the time of Nana Bonsu Panyin who asked for the assistance of Bandas in Ashanti war with the Denkyiras. Bandahene obeyed the invitation and came with his army including Tampihene, Nsawkawhene and us.

On their arrival in Kumasi, they were quartered at different places, Yaw Mensah's ancestor, Bori Kwadwo was given to Nsuman-Kwahene by the Ashantihene upon an application by Nana Bandahene to accommodate him.

After the war, we returned to Kumasi. Before this time, the Bandahene or the Bandas rode on horse back. They didn't know how to use the palanquin (apakan). The Asantehene gave to Bandahene an "apakan" Boma drum, Kantamanto and six (6) Golden swords. There is only one of these swords left today. After giving these gifts to Bandahene the Asantehene gave him permission to leave for Banda. Bandahene was empowered by Asantehene to take possession of all the lands in Banda.

Sometime later, the Asantehene, Nana Bonsu Panyin sent again to inform the Bandahene to come and assist him to fight the Jamans. The Bandas went and assisted. After the war, the Bandas were accused of displaying cowardice during the war and so the Ashantis fined us

1,000 predwans. This scared the Bandas and we decamped to Bouna in the French Territories. The Bounas in there also fought us away from their land. We removed and settled at a place called DUMA. The surviving ancestor of Yaw Mensah (Bema) was called Shamewow went with us. The Bandahene at that time was called Dabila. The Ashantis having heard of us sent to administer fetish to Bandahene who consented to serve Ashantihene again. After taking the fetish, the Bandas moved to their land Banda.

No sooner after our return, than the Ashantihene was deported. We became independent and consequently, the Jamans fought us and defeated us of our land. We removed to Mo which was then serving Nkoranza. Therefore the land on which we settled belonged to Nkoranzahene. During the Ashanti-Nkoranza war, the Ashantis supplied us with gunpowder and asked for our assistance. This provoked the Nkoranzas and they fought against us. As the Bandas had no land again, to settle thereon, the Bandas removed to Offinsu Akomadan and settled there.

After a time, the Bandahene went to Bondouku and interviewed the son of Bondouku Ajeman (Agyeman) by name Papi for the restoration of our land to us and agreed upon payment of 60 (sixty) predwans by the Bandahene plus two royals - male and famele. The Bandas then returned to Banda no longer? after the white man came to Ashanti. We lived peacefully on the land.

One day a Doctor, Taylor, went and asked the Bandahene to give him a bearer to accompany him to Oboase land to inspect it for mining

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purposes. Bandahene deputed Akanni and Moses Adjei (a prince of Juabin who was a clerk to Bandahene) to go with the Dr. to Oboase as requested. The Oboasene at that time was one Akwasi Gyinsiaw who was succeeded by Kofi Gyani. The Doctor having inspected the land and returned to Kintampo, sent twenty-five pounds (£25) to Bandahene by way of consideration money. The Bandahene gave three pounds (£3) to Bandahema (Queen), two pounds (£2) to Akwasi Gyinsiaw, Oboasene, to offer sacrifice on the land for it to become prosperous. When Kofi Gyani died Kofi Girini succeeded him. Kofi Girini concerted with Moses Adjei who had then been dismissed by Bandahene to go and live on Oboase land and collect all monies in respect to the land and bring to him. His intention deprived Bandahene a share.

Moses Adjei founded a village called Asempanaye on the disputed land. Bandahene sent to question him as to what he was doing on the land. Moses Adjei replied that it was Oboasene Kofi Girini who placed him there. Kofi Girini ran to Techiman and asked Techimane to fight for Oboase land for him, promising to share with him the proceeds from the land.

The D.C., Mr. Wilkonson (Wilkinson?) at Kintampo sent for Bandahene and told him that Techimane had complained to Capt. Poole D.C., Sunyani; that Bandahene had disposed of his land. The Commissioners of Wenchi and Sunyani respectfully met at Oboase and after hearing the evidence, of both Techiman and Banda, gave judgement for Banda as the then owner of Oboase land. As the then chief Commissioner, Sir Fuller hand demarcated the boundaries between Nsawkaw and Banda, and Suma and

Banda. The Bandahene knows that he has no boundary with any other person in the disputed area".

KABRONO AND BANDA AND AHENKRO HISTORY

"When Nana Saki succeeded Kra Longo, there was a woman who came through the Banda mountains to stay with Nana Saki and Nana took her to Chame (Kyame) Boofie (Borofea) to fetch her water.

Nana Saki gave the woman attached to him to be taken away and Peteli said they will (would) stay and serve him.

Peteli and his sister served Nana Saki for a long time and Nana Saki told his men that when he died Peteli should succeed him. When he died he was succeeded by Peteli. He died within some few days and was succeeded by Wulo Gyo (Dwo). This brought the name of Kabrono to the people meaning - Fever place".

Bandas and Mohammedans

"When Kra Longo was coming to this land with his peoples, he went and took some Mohammedans to lead him and begged¹ God for him. They were the Kankan² people. When Kra Longo and his people came to this land they came and met the Saasi (Ligbi) people here. They said to come from Bego (Begho).

1: To offer prayers on his behalf

2: Is in the Republic of Guinea - West Africa.

When Banda people landed here, there was also a chief ruling the Sampa people called Senyumo Kpoo (Sie Nyonogbo). The chief came to Bandahene and told him to fight the Saasi people. The fought against these people and conquered them and some of them ran away. The Kankan people had nowhere to go because Kra Longo brought them down from Kakala".

Prepared by: James Magellan

Banda Ahenkro

Typed By: D.L. Jordan

Institute of Linguistics

Tamale.

A Short History by Nana Bandahene in Explaining the Reason why we are allies with Ashanti.

"There was a king called Sie, when he died, they divided his wives among the town. The chief who came to him was Kra Longo. When he came he was annoyed and told them that, so far as they have divided the women to the town, they don't want him to succeed the chief.

Because of the women, he fought against and came to this land. When they reached here there was nobody on this land up to Manje, Nsawkaw, Seikwa and Tain. They stayed at Banda for a long time and the chief of Ashanti came to them and greeted. As it is now the Ashantis can't treat us bad and we too can't do the same to any Ashanti due to some agreement before taking a medicine in the old wars according to their tradition.

After all this, the chief of Bondougu came. At that time they were staying at Amanfi a land near Dormaa Ahenkro. The time he came here, Kra Longo had died and was succeeded by Sie Longo. The chief of Bondougu begged him a land to stay and he gave him a land and they built a town called Bondougu and Kafa. That time all this lands were belonging to the Nana Bandahene before Sabora and a certain white man came.

After all these, there was another chief called Saki. One day the chief of Nsawkaw Nana Ampofo came to Nana Saki and told him to lend him money to give to the Ashantis because they wanted to overcome him. He gave him a basketful of money free. When the Ashantis heard that Nana Saki gave him the money they came and fought against the Bandas. In the war, Nsawkaw chief came and helped us. We were defeated and went to stay at Akomadan. We ran away from that town. After the war, Nana Saki died and he was succeeded by Nana Wulo Gyo (Gwo). When Nana Wulo Gyo was a chief there was a war between the Ashantis and Fantis. The Ashantis came to Nana Wulo Gyo to go and help them. After the war, Banda people went and stayed at Bouna because we were charged after the war that we were playing cowardice. And that fled us there. There broke a war too between we and the Bonas. We over took their land. One day, there was a festival and Bandas were all intoxicated and the Bounas came and attacked us and drove us to Awaso, and after the war, Nana Wulo Gyo died and he was succeeded by Wulo Dabila. When Wulo Gyo¹ was on the stool we forced to fight those Bonas and even killed the chief before came to this present land Banda."

Prepared by Anane James Magellan (Sept. 1974)

1: This King's name is virtually absent on the list given me.

Another absentee is Nana Saki.