

# UNIVERSITY OF GHANA – LEGON

## BONO STATES' RELATIONS WITH ASANTE 1712 – 1959



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**DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to the late Rev. Isaac Konadu Adum and Mrs. Rebecca Adum for their efforts and sacrifice towards my formal education.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that apart from references made from certain published and unpublished sources which have been duly acknowledged, this thesis is the product of my own research work, and that no part of it has been submitted as a dissertation to a different university.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Adm.	Administrative (Records)
A.N.F.	Asante National Fund
ARG.	Asante Region Group of Files
B.A.R.	Bono-Ahafo Region
B.K.C.	Bono Kyempim Council
B.K.F.	Bono Kyempim Federation
BRG.	Bono-Ahafo Region Group of Files
C.C.	Chief Commissioner
C.P.	Committee of Privileges
C.P.P.	Convention People's Party
D.A.O.'S	District Administrative Office, Sunyani
D.C.	District Commissioner
I.A.S.	Institute of African Studies
N.J.O.	Native Jurisdiction Ordinance
N.L.M.	National Liberation Movement
PRAAD'A.	Public Records and Archives Administration Department, Accra.
PRAAD'K.	Public Records and Archives Administration Department, Kumasi.
PRAAD'SY.	Public Records and Archives Administration Department, Sunyani.
R.A.O.'S.	Regional Administration Office, Sunyani.
W.P.A.	Western Province of Asante.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the nature of Asante's relations with states in the Bono part of the Bono Ahafo Region. The thesis also examines the response of the various Bono states to Asante imperial rule, and how those states which resisted Asante rule were treated by Asante chiefs.

The study reveals that prior to the Asante invasion of Bono in 1712, Asante traders bought kola, livestock and pottery from Bonduku, Abesim, Kyeraa, Manso, Tekyiman, Ahwenekoko and other settlements in Bono. The invasion of 1712 notwithstanding, economic relations between the two increased. During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Atebubu and Bonduku became important market centres visited on a regular basis by Asante traders. Later in the 1880s, the Kintampo and Wankyi markets expanded into international ones patronized by Asante traders, and traders from North Africa.

Politically, however, Asante conquest of Bono soured relations between Asante and the Bono States as a result of the frequent capture, and often the murder of Bono chiefs or their subjects. The conquests also resulted in the looting of gold resources of the states, and the replacement of legitimate Bono rulers by persons without any claim to legitimacy.

Asante rule resulted in the polarization of Bono society, between pro-Bono and pro-Asante states. These factions became antagonistic towards each other, formed alliances with neighbours who shared their ideology, and fought each other on a number of occasions. Anti-Asante sentiment persisted and grew in intensity from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In pursuit of freedom and independence from Asante rule, the Bono people identified with the Convention People's Party (C.P.P.) in the 1950s. In consideration of their support for the C.P.P. in the general elections of 1954 and 1956, the Nkrumah

regime rewarded the Bono by constituting their states and Ahafo into an autonomous administrative region in 1959.

## INTRODUCTION

Originally "Bono" referred to the peoples of the Manso chiefdom. Subsequently it became applicable to speakers of the Twi-Bono dialect. Today the noun, Bono, is used as a geographical term to describe the peoples of the Bono section of the Bono Ahafo Region of modern Ghana.

The history of the relations between the Bono states and Asante is the history of the Bono struggles for autonomy from Asante. Struggles between the Asante and the states in Bono, date back to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Oyoko dynasty of the emerging Asante state fought the Dormaa people in the Kwaman area of modern Kumasi. This forced the Dormaa people to migrate in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to settle among their kinsmen in Gyaman in modern Bono territory. There was relative peace between Dormaa and other states in Bono and Asante, until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century when an Asante army attacked Ahwenckoko, the Wankyi capital, and destroyed it. Ten years later, (1722/23) Asante defeated Bono Manso. In 1731 they defeated Gyaman. Between 1744 and 1747, Banda, Atebubu and other chiefdoms in the Bono area were similarly brought under Asante subjection.

The main reason for these conquests was economic. The Bono markets at Bonduku and Bono Manso had become important centres of trade since the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The states in the North-western part of Bono were rich in gold, kola and other natural resources. Gyaman was particularly famous for cotton production. The Bono people were also noted for their manufacture of iron implements, cloths and pottery.

Although the North-eastern part of Bono was not rich in gold and other natural resources, their position on the Mampong-Highway- the main trade route to Yendi, Salaga and other important market centres in Northern Ghana put them in a position to

regulate Asante trade to the north. They could close the route, and thus deny Asante access to the northern markets. From the northern markets, Asante traders exchanged kola for handiworks like pottery, leather products, clothing and blankets. Other trade goods Asante obtained from the northern markets were slaves, livestock, sheep and salt. Naturally, Asante wanted to integrate the Bono states into their economic system. Hence Asante attacked the Bono states and reduced them to dependency between 1750 and 1900.

The long period of Asante rule notwithstanding, very few serious studies have been undertaken about relations between the two peoples. Gyaman is the only state whose relations with Asante have been partially studied and documented by K.A. Britwum, McCaskie, and Agyeman E.A. These works are respectively Kwadwo Adinkra of Gyaman in A Profile of Brong Kyempim, edited by Kwame Arhin, Ashanti Empire and its northern neighbours 1700-1874 (Legon M.A. Thesis, 1969 in the Balme Library), and Gyaman: Its Relations with Ashanti (1720-1820) also a Legon M.A. Thesis – 1965. These works focus on Kwadwo Adinkra's reign, which lasted from 1801-1818. Considering the length of time in which Gyaman was subjected to Asante rule, the studies provide insufficient information about Gyaman relations with Asante.

Other writings on the Bono states include the following: Ferguson G.E., 'Ashanti and the Brong Tribes', and Dickenson J.R., 'Comments on the History of Atebubu'. Both studies are found in Research Review, 1970: Ashanti Research Project, Supplement, February- March 1970 edited by Kwame Arhin.

Scattered pieces of information on Bono are found in Wilks Ivor, The Northern Factor in Ashanti History, (IAS, Legon, 1961), Wilks, Asante in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order, (Cambridge University Press, London,

1975), Tordoff William, Ashanti Under the Prempeh's 1888-1935 (Ph.D. Thesis, 1965 Balme Library), and Tordoff, "The Brong Ahafo Region" in Economic Bulletin, Vol.3 No.2, (1959).

Other publications which have some information on Bono include Meyerowitz's publications; The Sacred State of the Akan, (Faber and Faber, London, 1949), Akan Traditions of Origin, (London 1952), The Akan of Ghana, their Beliefs, (London, 1958) and At the court of an African King (London, 1962).

Rattray's Ashanti, (Oxford University Press, London, 1923), Ashanti Law and Constitution, (Oxford, 1929), Religion and Art in Ashanti, (Oxford, 1927), and Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland; (Oxford University Press, 1932), and also Busia, The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti (Oxford University Press, 1951), provide useful information about some Bono states. Indeed, in almost all history books on Asante, there is some information about one Bono state or another. Nevertheless the authors mention the area in passing.

The few publications on Bono states have their own shortcomings. Arthur John's, Brong Ahafo Outlook, (University Press, Kumasi, 1965), discusses the ancient Bono State, and recounts the authors travelling experience across the Bono districts. It also highlights events leading to the creation of the Bono Ahafo Region. The book provides very little information about the political structure of the Bono states and relations of the present Bono states with Asante. Similarly, although the works of Brempong and Warren titled The Tekyiman State Histories of Stools and Deities provide vital information, they are limited only to the Tekyiman State.

J. Boachie-Ansah, and Effa Gyamfi have made valuable contribution to our knowledge of Bono in their respective works: The contribution of Archaeology to the

History of Wankyi (M.A. Thesis, Legon, 1979), and Oral Tradition and Archaeology: A Case study of the Bono State, (M.A. Thesis, Legon, 1974). Unfortunately the information they provide is mainly archaeological.

In 1979, an attempt was made by the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana to collect essays on the Archaeology, History, Language and Politics of the Bono people of Ghana. According to Kwame Arhin, the editor, the original aim of the work, later published under the title, A Profile of Brong Kyempim, (New Times Corporation, Accra, 1979), was to produce data, on the basis of which one could demarcate the Bono as a distinctive Akan sub-group. The research produced very little information about the relations between the Bono and Asante states.

This M.Phil. Thesis is a modest attempt to provide a history of the relations of a number of states in the Bono area with Asante. The large number of the states involved in this research, however, makes it impossible to give full treatment to the individual states. The detailed story of the individual states must await the endeavours of future research students.

The greatest problem I encountered in course of the research was the collection and collation of oral data. Most of the elderly people did not see any relevance in recalling and recording their experience as Asante subjects. They argued that whatever happened between the Bono and Asante in the past must be allowed to rest. Indeed none of the Bono Amanhene granted me interviews for information about their states' relations with Asante as requested. The few sub-chief and other informants from Bono provided bias and prejudiced stories, which was difficult to analyse.

Due to the problems associated with oral material, I collected most of the data from secondary sources. I regarded information from documented materials to be more

reliable since most of the authors were not Bono citizens and were likely to provide a more dispassionate discussion on relations between the Bono and Asante states.

I also gathered some of the information from the Native Affairs (ARG) files, District Administrative and Native Affairs files (RAOs), Bono-Ahafo Group (BRG) of files and Adm. Files. These are in the National Archives in Sunyani, Kumasi and Accra.

Despite the problems associated with oral traditions, I used the little but interesting information I gathered from my informants. I also used a few newspapers and reports. These included "Ashanti Pioneer" and "Daily Graphic" of the 1950's, Reports of the proceedings of the Committee of Privileges, and the Committee on Asanteman – Bono dispute. Other primary sources were the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly and Ghana Parliamentary Debates located in Balme Library, Legon.

The thesis has three chapters. The first chapter is a brief discussion on the formation of the Bono state and the pre-Asante political, social and economic institutions of the Bono state.

Chapter two looks at the invasion of Bono by the Asante army, the system of Asante administration in Bono, and the relations between the various Bono states and Asante in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Chapter three examines the events that led to the creation of the Bono-Ahafo Region. The chapter looks at the immediate reaction of Bono to the Asante defeat of 1900 and to Prempeh's return from exile in 1924. It also discusses Bono's response to the British government's decision to restore the Asante confederacy and the subsequent agitation for Bono autonomy by the Bono Kyempim Movement.

The conclusion summarizes the thesis.



CHAPTER ONE1.1 THE PERIOD BEFORE ASANTE INVASION

The area currently referred to, as "Brong" comprises the ten administrative districts in the northern half of the Bono<sup>1</sup>-Ahafo<sup>2</sup> Region of modern Ghana.<sup>3</sup> The Northern part of the Bono Area has boundaries with the Northern Region to the North. On the south, it is bounded by the Ahafo districts and the Asante Region; on the East by the Volta Region; and on the West by Cote d'Ivoire. It is estimated that the Bono district has an area of about 9624 square miles.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The etymology of "Brong" is in dispute, Nana Kwame Twi, a former Hansuahene of Tekyiman asserts that the Bono were first called gonogonofoo by their neighbours, meaning people who do not lie and with time this was corrupted to Bonofoo. Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III, a former Omanhene of Techiman also claims that Brong is a corruption of Bono or Obono, which originated from the Akan word Obonoo which in Akan denotes debut birth – Obono (debut), woo (birth). The likely etymological origin of Bono seems to be Bon ano (entrance of a hole). It is believed that after the Amuowi cave collapsed, the Bono deity, Biakru, advised the Bono to settle at the entrance of the Amuowi cave from where the people created other villages. It is possible that the Bono ancestors referred to themselves as Bon ano foo (people who live at the entrance of the hole) and with time this was corrupted to Bono foo. Bono foo was eventually used as a reference name for inhabitants of the entire Bono district. Manso (large town) became the Bono capital. See Brempong K.O and Warren D.M., Techiman Traditional State, Stool and Town Histories (1) (Tekyiman, 1971). P.165; Also Arhin K., (ed) A profile of Brong Kyempim (Afram Publications, Accra, 1979). Pp. 40, 49-55. Also interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye 80 years, Tekyiman Akyeamehene 6 July 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Ahafo traditions assert that the area they now occupy was a thick forest with plentiful game and wild edible fruits. The soil favoured farming. Their ancestors used to say cha ye fo (Life is easier here). This eventually became Ahafo. While some of the states assert that their ancestors settled in Ahafo voluntarily, others believe that they were settled in Ahafo by Opoku Ware to watch and report to Kumasi any imminent threat from Tekyiman, Dormaa, Sehwi or Aowin. Others say that their ancestors who were mainly hunters were settled in Ahafo to provide bush meat to the Asantehene. Like the Bono, the Ahafo were divided into pro-Asante and pro-Ahafo states in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There were frequent conflicts between these two parties, and between the Ahafo chiefs and chiefs of Asante proper. For more on the Ahafo, see Dunn J., and Robertson A.F., Dependence and Opportunity: Political Change in Ahafo (Cambridge University Press, 1973), and also PRAAD'A Adm. 1309, and 1482. Letters from the Chief Commissioner's Office to the Commissioner, Western Province of Asante.

<sup>3</sup> See Map II

<sup>4</sup> For the estimated size of Bono, see PRAAD'K. ARG 1/20/4/81. Annual Report, Western Province of Ashanti 1934-1935. The population of Bono at the time was estimated at about 182,000.

The Bono area lies between the Savanna region in the north, and the thick forest of Asante in the south, and has a very congenial climate. Bono is neither too hot nor too cold, with temperatures averaging between 25<sup>0</sup> and 30<sup>0</sup> Celsius daily. The area experiences a heavy rainfall and enjoys the double-maxima type. The dry season begins from mid-November, and ends at the end of February.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the Wankyi and the Kintampo districts in the northern zone, which have highlands, the rest of Bono is low-lying, with land elevation ranging between 167 and 333 metres above sea level.<sup>6</sup> The area is well drained by the rivers Tanσ, Bia, Tain and Pru. There are innumerable streams such as the Fia, Bisa, Awora and others. The rivers and streams serve as important sources of water supply for the people of the area. The Bono area is also endowed with a large, cultivable, fertile land comprising semi-deciduous forest with different species of timber. The soils of the area are rich in gold and other precious mineral resources. Their luxuriant vegetation favours farming and the rearing of animals<sup>7</sup>.

The earliest settlements in Bono were Manso, Nsuatre, Nkoran Nkwanta, Duayaw Nkwanta, Asekye, Hani, Amomam, Nsoko (Begho) and Wankyi.<sup>8</sup> The Wankyi, Hani, Bono and Nsoko claim to be aborigines. They assert that their

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<sup>6</sup> This information was provided by the Regional Lands Department Office, Sunyani.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, 80 years, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, 6 July 1999.

ancestors emerged from the Amuowi cave in modern Nkoranza district.<sup>9</sup> Between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the late 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Gyaman, Mo, Nkoranza and Dormaa settled among these aborigines. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Bono Manso, Nsoko (Begho) Wankyi, and the Gyaman settlements had expanded their territories. They became well-known states in the Bono area, and beyond.<sup>10</sup> The most famous of the Bono states was Bono Manso.

## 1.2 The Bono (Manso) State

The origin of the Bono state, like most states in West Africa is obscure. Three main traditions of origin are given to explain its emergence. The first tradition asserts that the ancestors of the Bono state descended from the sky amid great thunder and lightning. The second tradition relates that the ancestors of Bono emerged from a cave at Amuowi. In commemoration of their emergence, the Bono during the Apuo festival chant . . . "We came from Amuowi, ancient creator, mother earth. . . we came from Amuowi."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Anquandah J.R., Rediscovering of Ghana's Past (Longman, Sedco, 1982). P. 87. Also Akrasi Seth, A Historical Study of the Dormaa State, B.A. Long Essay, Department of History, University of Ghana, (Legon, 1981) 'Introduction'. See also Meyerowitz, E.L. The Akan Traditions of Origin (Faber and Faber, 1952). Pp. 43 & 62. Also PRAAD`SY, RAO 2/41 Histories of Origin of the Brong States, Ameyaw-Nuamah K., The History of Wankyi, B.A. Dissertation, Dept. of History (Legon, 1973) Pp. 7-10. After the foundation of Ahwenekoko, the Wankyi capital, the people called their state Wankyi. The name was derived from "Wankyire asa" a bush pig, which is believed to have led the Wankyi, people out of the Amuowi cave. Other Wankyi traditions say that after a Dormaa-Wankyi war, the Tekyiman chief then settled them behind Tekyiman - won-akyi (behind them). The name should therefore read wankyi or wonakyi and not Wenchii. The Wankyi deny that Tekyiman ever defeated them. Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagyee, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, 7 July 1999. Also see Ameyaw-Nuamah, op. cit. P.12

<sup>10</sup> These were among the states, which appeared on the 17<sup>th</sup> century map of the Gold Coast, supposed to have been drawn by a Dutch cartographer on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1629. See map in Research Review, Volume 7 No. 1, University of Ghana, Institute of African Studies (IAS) Legon, 1970. P. 34.

<sup>11</sup> Brempong and Warren, (1973). P.69.

These two traditions are unacceptable. It is obviously an example of the African belief in mystical origins of states, as no human being can descend from the sky or live in the ground for a long period. A plausible explanation is that in the olden days life was insecure because of constant feuds and wars. As a result of this insecurity of life, the weaker people resorted to various ways of protecting themselves from enemies. Some hid in trees others on mountaintops, and some in the numerous caves in the area. Amuowi was in this case one of the places used as a place of refuge in times of danger. It is possible also that people claim to have come from Amuowi to enable them claim autochthonous status.

The third and the most widely accepted tradition claim that the ancestors of Bono were immigrants from the ancient Mali kingdom. The tradition claims that following the fall of the Mali Kingdom in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Bono migrated from Timbuktu, crossed the Volta and settled in present-day Burkina Faso, where they are said to have founded their first settlement.<sup>12</sup> The Bono claim that after a short stay, the Kibisi who lived north of the Mossi kingdom attacked them.<sup>13</sup> In the ensuing confusion, the Bono settled among the Yatenga people and experienced a rapid increase in population. This made it difficult to sustain their extensive farming systems.<sup>14</sup> In search of farmlands their chief Nana Asaman led them along the banks of the Black Volta, and from there, they settled in the modern Nkoranza area.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Anquandah, (1982), P. 86.

<sup>13</sup> Meyerowitz, (1952), P. 44. My informants in Tekyiman accept this tradition but could not provide the name of this first settlement.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman, 7 July 1999. According to him, the Bono of Tekyiman have very cordial relations with the Mossi people whom they regard as their kinsmen. Personally I disagree with this tradition. I believe that the Bono like other Akan migrated from the Dahomey gap and settled in the Adanse area. As Adu Boahen asserts, the Akan, which includes the Bono later, dispersed to other parts of Ghana. I believe that the Bono claimed origin from the Mali Kingdom to enable them disclaim tribal

The Bono have since regarded Nana Asaman as the founder of the Bono State.<sup>16</sup>

The Bono are believed to have first settled in the woods and caves in the Nkoranza area. The most remembered among the caves is the Amuowi cave. It served as a shelter for a greater number of the Bono people, but perhaps it collapsed during a landslide, which the Bono interpreted as a bad omen.<sup>17</sup> They consulted the community deity, Biakuru, and were told to build a new settlement at the bon ano (entrance of the cave). Here king Asaman founded a settlement and named it Bono Manso.<sup>18</sup>

The oral tradition of the Bono assert that when Asaman led them to settle at Manso in the 12<sup>th</sup> or the 13<sup>th</sup> century, there were no other settlements in the area and its immediate environs. Ambitious clan heads were tempted to establish their separate settlements away from the Manso settlement. Such chiefs wanted to be independent of the ruling Oyoko dynasty and run their own affairs.<sup>19</sup> The Manso ruler also encouraged families to settle further away from Manso to prevent over population. Tuobodom for example was established and ruled by the Adontenhene of Manso,<sup>20</sup> while the village of Besedan<sup>21</sup> is believed to have been settled by slaves of one of the early Manso queenmothers to buy Kola for her.<sup>22</sup>

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links with Asante. Any ancestral links with Asante would not justify their struggle for autonomy which started as early as the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. There are other reasons to discount this. Yatenga was one of the states formed by a descendant of Na Gbewa founder of the Mole-Dagbani States who arrived in Ghana probably in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when Manso already existed.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> See Stool Histories, (I) op. cit. Pp. 65-69, 111-115.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, July 6-7, 1999. Many people are said to have died in this disaster, which occurred on a Friday. From this disaster Bono derived the Finda oath.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, Tekyiman, July 7, 1999. Manso then became the capital town of the Bon ano people.

<sup>20</sup> Addai, M.K., The History of Brong Tekyiman, B.A. Long Essay, Department of History, (University of Ghana, Legon, 1971/72). P. 16.

<sup>21</sup> Besedan is translated Kola House (barn) where kola was preserved and later sold to the Hausa and Mossi traders. Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman, 6 June 1999.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Apart from families and clans, individual hunters are believed to have set up nnan (camps) as their resting-places during hunting expeditions. For example Akoma nnan which was one of such camps later developed into the village now known as Akomadan.<sup>23</sup> In the course of the Bono expansion in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, some of the Bono left behind in Mossiland migrated and settled among them to escape maltreatment by the Mossi. This wave of immigrants caused the population of Manso to increase, necessitating the creation of new settlements for these immigrants. Tekyiman oral tradition asserts also that their chiefs permitted non-Bono immigrants to settle in the present Nkoranza and Kintampo territories.<sup>24</sup> Such immigrants were peacefully integrated into the social and political structures of the Bono state mainly through marriage. Sons born from such unions were appointed as heads of the immigrant lineage and represented them on the Omanhene's council. The Mponoahene who was in charge of the northern border of Bono for example, belonged to the people who settled in Bono from Pramboase to the North-west of modern Tekyiman.<sup>25</sup>

The magnanimity of the Manso authorities in giving out portions of land to settlers earned them the appellation Bono Kyempim doduakwa, hene mu hene (Bono head of thousand nations, planter of nations, king of kings).<sup>26</sup> Bono traditions assert that by the close of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Bono settlements extended westwards to river Yabo near the Gonja State, and the borders of Duayaw Nkwanta in the south. The small

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Madam Yaa Manu, citizen of Tekyiman, Sunyani, July 1998. She claims that the founder of the village was a hunter called Akoma from Manso, who used that settlement as a resting-place during hunting expedition.

<sup>24</sup> Informant, Nana Kofi Aboagye, 80 years, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, July, 6 1999.

<sup>25</sup> Effa-Gyamfi, Oral Tradition and Archaeology: A case study of the Bono State, M.A. Thesis (Legon, 1974). Also Arthur, Brong Ahafo Outlook, (Brong Ahafo Publications, Sunyani, 1970). P. 22.

settlements of Tanoso, Tuobodom, Abofour, Akomadan, Besedan, Hani, Asekyc, and Tekyiman among others were expanded into villages within the emerging Bono Kingdom. These villages lived as separate settlements but owed political allegiance to the royal Oyoko clan in Manso.<sup>27</sup>

During the reign of Nana Obunumankoma<sup>28</sup> in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Bono authorities abandoned their policy of peaceful expansion. In the course of their military expansion, the Bono found Nsuatre, Duayaw Nkwanta, and Nkoran-Nkwanta already established as states in the modern Bono territory. The Bono saw these states as potentially dangerous, and resorted to the use of force to defeat, and incorporate them into the Bono state. Obunumankoma is said to have dispatched a Bono army led by one Kasa Kwaretoapie against Nsuatre. The latter was easily defeated and incorporated into the Bono State. The war against Duayaw Nkwanta and Nkoran-Nkwanta was interrupted by the death of Obunumankoma. His successor, Takyi Akwamu resumed the attack against Duayaw-Nkwanta and Nkoran-Nkwanta, and defeated them. Their defeat according to Tekyiman tradition enabled Bono to defeat the inhabitants of the present day Atebubu territory.

The Bono army next attacked Banda, which lay west of the expanding kingdom. The reason for this westward expansion was both political and economic. The rich gold deposits of the Banda state were diverting attention from the northward trade of Bono.

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<sup>27</sup> Brempong and Warren, *op. cit.* Pp. 142 and 153. Apart from it being a common saying among the present Tekyiman people, this saying has been transformed into a drum language of the people of the Tekyiman State to constantly remind them of the greatness of the ancient Bono Kingdom.

<sup>28</sup> Addai, *op. cit.* P. 29. See also Effa-Gyamfi, *op. cit.* P. 16. The Manso Bono capital is said to have extended over 2 square miles, with a population of about five thousand.

<sup>29</sup> My informants in Tekyiman could not tell me whether Nana Obunumankoma was the same person as Obunumankoma of Fanteland. They were emphatic, however, that some Tekyiman people migrated to the coast during the formative years of the Bono State following a succession dispute in Tekyiman. The Traditions claim that others joined them in 1722 when Asante forces destroyed the Bono State.

Naturally, the Manso authorities made efforts to end this economic rivalry, and to attempt to shift the centre of trade back to the Bono state, and monopolize the trade in kola and gold.<sup>29</sup>

Economic considerations were not the only driving force. The need for political security was an important factor. Despite its successes in the wars against Nsuatre, Duayaw-Nkwanta and Nkoran-Nkwanta, Bono still faced threats of a possible invasion from the fast-expanding Banda state. The Bono state had to end this western threat from Banda, and ensure that they remained the only powerful state in the Bono area. Just before the attack, Bono was plunged into an inter-clan dispute, which resulted in the death of its king, Nana Takyi. The prosecution of the Banda invasion fell to Takyi's immediate successor, Nana Akumfi Ameyaw I who personally led the Bono army to inflict a crushing defeat on the Banda at the battle of Tain. After a brief occupation of Banda, peace was made and Banda accepted to become a tributary state. Banda agreed to pay ten bags of gold monthly, and to relinquish their control of the mines, which became state property. The defeat of Banda resulted in a shift of the centre of trade from Banda to Manso, which became the resort of Hausa and Berber traders from other parts of West Africa.<sup>30</sup> The defeat of Banda ended the military expansion of Bono. By the end of the

<sup>29</sup> Meyerowitz, *op. cit.* P. 29. According to her, Begho, which was the capital of the Banda state was a famous market centre and attracted traders from far and near into the Banda kingdom. The Gonja under Ndwura Jakpa invaded the Kingdom in the 17<sup>th</sup> century but the Banda continued to trade with the Hausa and Berber traders. Also Fage, J.D., *Ghana: A Historical Interpretation*, (Greenwood Press Publication, 1983) and Arhin, K., *Ashanti Market Towns and Market Centres* (I.A.S) P.6. Fage asserts that Begho was destroyed through civil wars around 1640. By 1700 Bonduku had succeeded Begho as the principal Dyula trading town in the Bono area.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, 80 years, Tekyiman Akyeamebene. According to him Banda later retaliated and fought the Bono when certain Bono people settled on Banda land, but the Banda attack was quickly repulsed.

17<sup>th</sup> century, the state is said to have become the most powerful state in present Bono area.<sup>31</sup>

The successes of the Bono were due to their military prowess. Kosa Kwaretoapie, and Takyi Akwamu were very capable military leaders. The Bono armies were swift, and always took their enemies by surprise.<sup>32</sup> Then also is the fact that Bono state was more stable and united than the defeated states. The Bono traditions for instance assert that during the Bono-Nsuatre war, the latter was seriously handicapped by a dynastic dispute, which ruled out co-operation among themselves.<sup>33</sup> Banda also lost the war with Bono because it was weakened by threats of invasion from the Nafana people who lived in the Gyaman district. The Nafana threat made it difficult for Banda to concentrate her attention on the Bono invasion. In addition Banda was allegedly weakened by civil war, which resulted from a bitter quarrel between the Beoo and Nsoko dynasties. This made Banda vulnerable to attack.

Although Bono became the largest state in the modern Bono area, on the eve of the Asante invasion of Wankyi in 1712, Atebubu, Dormaa, Nsoko and Wankyi also existed as separate, autonomous states in the Bono district of the Bono-Ahafo Region of Ghana.<sup>34</sup>

### 1.3 Political Organization

<sup>31</sup> This is doubtful because at the same time Wankyi and Nsoko existed as independent states in the area. Besides Nana Kofi Aboagye asserts that Bono ancestors were peace loving and did not expand Bono territories through military force. Bono only fought states like Banda, which expanded into the Bono territory.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* Nana Kofi Aboagye asserts that some of the people had talisman and charms against the poison on arrowheads. This, according to him made Bono popular. The Akwamu and Denkyira people frequently employed them to fight in their wars. For more on Bono-Denkyira relations see Meyerowitz, *op. cit.* Pp. 57-61.

<sup>33</sup> Addai, *op. cit.* P.20.

<sup>34</sup> See the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries' maps of the Gold Coast drawn by European cartographers.

The people of the pre-Asante Bono state belonged to the Akan linguistic group.<sup>35</sup>

Apart from some minor differences of detail their political system did not differ markedly from those of other Akan groups.<sup>36</sup> Like any other Akan ethnic group, it was hierarchically structured. At the apex of the administrative structure was the Omanhene (paramount chief). Below the Omanhene were the Apakanfoo (chief with two or more Adikrofoo under his supervision), followed by the Adikrofoo (village chiefs). Until the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Omanhene was the king of only the Bono people. However, Nana Obunumankoma,<sup>37</sup> during whose reign the state expanded to incorporate other states, became the head of Bono and non-Bono people in the state.

The Omanhene was the chief political, military, judicial and religious leader of the entire state. He was obliged to maintain close supervision over the activities of the apakanfoo and to reconcile their sectional interests. At the end of every adaduannan (forty days), he consulted with his apakanfoo and received reports from them about affairs in their divisions.<sup>38</sup> The Omanhene was the chief with the largest number of functionaries in the Bono State.<sup>39</sup> The leaders of those functionaries were directly responsible to the Omanhene in their day-to-day activities.<sup>40</sup> The Omanhene had the

<sup>35</sup> See Boahen, A., *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries*, (Longman, 1975), P.1. Linguistically, the people of Ghana are composed of two principal sub-families. These are the Gur and the Kwa groups of languages found to the north and south of the River Volta respectively. The Kwa group to which most of the languages of the people of West Africa belong is further divided into the Akan, the Ga-Adangbe and the Ewe groups. Among the Akan-speaking peoples who constitute about 45 per cent of the entire population of Ghana are the Ahanta, the Akyem, the Akuapem, the Akwamu, the Asante, the Bono, the Fante, the Guan, the Kwawu, the Nzima and the Sehwi. Some Akan such as the Anye Bawule are found in the Cote d'Ivoire.

<sup>36</sup> Interview with Nana Aboagye, Tekyman Akyeamehene, July 1999. According to him the concept of chieftaincy and kingship among the Akan originated from Bono and others modified it to suit conditions in their localities.

<sup>37</sup> See P.10

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyman, 6 July 1999.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyman, 6 July 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyman, 6 July 1999.

mandate to create non-hereditary chiefs with the approval of his elders<sup>41</sup> and determined whether or not to include them in the state council. The Omanhene also reserved the right to claim the wealth of his subjects and the power to determine which chiefs should enjoy the privilege of riding in a palanquin.<sup>42</sup> He could not be insulted, assaulted or wrongly accused since he was regarded as the representative of the ancestors.

In spite of these rights, there were checks on the Omanhene, which helped to forestall any attempts at dictatorship and tyranny. The first check on the powers of the Omanhene was the royal stool. Like other Akan the royal stool was the traditional symbol of authority of the king and an embodiment of the ancestral spirits of Bonoland. It represented a sacred emblem linking the ancestors, the living and the people yet unborn. It therefore signified the solidarity and permanence of the state with the Omanhene as its living custodian. As the physical representative of the ancestors of Bonoland, the Omanhene was expected to display a high sense of honesty and sincere service to his subjects.<sup>43</sup> He was required to show unquestionable courage, loyalty and truthfulness to his subjects. Any action by an Omanhene, which tended to indicate disrespect of state deities and ancestors; or a blatant violation of any custom, was regarded by the people as desecration of the royal stool.<sup>44</sup> Such behaviour could lead to destoolment if the Omanhene refused to apologize and appease the deities and the ancestors. Thus the sacredness of the royal stool was itself a check on the reckless and despotic use of the king's powers.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

The second check on the powers of the Omanhene was the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders, which comprised the queenmother and the apakanfoo constituted the highest decision-making body of the state. Like other Akan, Bono tradition obliged the Omanhene to consult this council on issues involving sacrifices to the state deities, maintenance of law and order, declaration of war and peace, imposition of taxes and strict adherence to custom.<sup>46</sup> An Omanhene who disregarded the Elders in the implementation of state policies faced possible opposition from them, which could result in his destoolment. Any attempt to destool the Omanhene could lead to civil strife and it was avoided through cooperation between the Omanhene and his councillors.<sup>47</sup>

The last factor that served as a check on the Omanhene's powers was the will of the people. Like other Akan, the Bono Omanhene ruled by the unwritten consent of the people. Any disregard of their rights could lead to social violence in the form of riots and mob action and a call for his destoolment. Such mob action was spearheaded by the youngmen in the state capital. They would beat nnawuta (gong gong), attack the king, take off his sandals, assault him and declare him destooled.<sup>48</sup> Thus while the Omanhene seemed to possess unlimited powers, he was in reality retained as king if he complied with his installation oath, which obliged him to take the advice of the elders and respect his subjects' rights.<sup>49</sup>

Next in rank to the Omanhene was the Tekyimanhene who was the Krontihene of the Bono State. The Krontihene was followed by the other apakanfoo of the state,

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Brempong and Warren, op. cit. Pp. 122-123

<sup>49</sup> The oath of allegiance in the pre-Asante Bono State was the same as in today's Tekyiman. The king-elect swears by the Mponponso sword which the early Bono kings used in their wars. He lifts it up and down, and promises to be loyal to his subjects and divisional chiefs, to lead the state in war, to be truthful, never

namely, the Adontenhene, Nifahene, Benkumhene, Gyaschene, Oyokohene<sup>51</sup> and the Kyidomhene who resided in Manso the state capital. The elevation of any Opakani in Bono was a reward for the role played by his predecessors in the historical development of the Bono state. For example, the other chiefs conferred the office of the Oyokohene on the head of the Oyoko clan because King Asaman who led the Bono in the migration from Timbuktu belonged to the Oyoko clan. It was deemed necessary to recognize Oyoko as the royal clan of the Manso people.<sup>51</sup>

Similarly, Nana Takyi who founded Tekyiman, the second largest town of the Bono state belonged to the Krontire division. Hence the Krontihene ranked next to the Omanhene's stool. The first Adontenhene of the Bono state was said to have fought bravely in the Bono-Kibisi war. For his valour, he was rewarded with the stool.<sup>52</sup> The rest of the apakanfoo belonged to the lineages of the sons of the early Bono kings.<sup>53</sup> The nomination of an Opakani became the responsibility of members of their maternal family, but the election was subject to the approval of the Omanhene of the Bono state.<sup>54</sup> Each Opakani enjoyed considerable autonomy in tax collection and administration of justice and also had his Krontihene, Nifahene, Benkumhene, Adontenhene and all the other functionaries.<sup>55</sup>

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flee from enemies and to faithfully serve his people. He swears on the state deities that he should be sanctioned if he violates any of his vows.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. The Oyokohene was the equivalent of the Akwamuhene of other Akan. Oyoko was the royal family of the Bono State.

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, 6 July 1999.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. See also Brempong and Warren (I), P. 95.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. Although generally the divisional chiefs were called apakanfoo (chiefs who had rights to ride in the palanquin), in the pre-Asante Bono period, only the Krontihene and the Adontenhene were rewarded with this right for the roles they played in the state during its formation in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Each of the Apakanfoo had oversight of certain villages in the pre-Asante period.

For example, the villages of Tekyiman, Tanoboase, Baafi, and Nkwaakuru were under the Krontire stool. The Nifahene ruled Dewoman, Nkwaeso, Tadieso and Dapaafo while the Oyokohene supervised Manso, Nyafoman and Twumia. Aboabo and Baemire were under the rule of the Adontehene while Aworowa, Gyeema, Asueyi and Akurofrom were under the Gyase stool. Under the Kyidom stool were Krobo, Tanoso, and Ofuman. The Benkumhene ruled Forikrom, Atomfoso and the Nsuta villages.<sup>56</sup>

The titles of all but the Oyokohene who was the Akwamuhene, indicated the place they occupied in the politico-military organization of the Bono State. The military formation of the Bono state like other Akan, consisted of the Twafoo (advanced guard) in front. Adonten, Akwamu and Krontire comprised the main body. The king's bodyguards were the Gyase division, while the Kyidom division formed the rear guard. The Benkum and the Nifa wings flanked the main column. In the absence of the Omanhene, the Krontihene commanded the state army.

Like other Akan states, there was no standing army in the Bono state. In the face of an imminent war, the Omanhene would send messengers to the divisional chiefs carrying a replica of the Omanhene's mponponso sword or a crocodile tail. This indicated that they were from the Omanhene's court. The village chief would inform the people through the Dawubofoo (gong gong beater), or the Akyeremadefoo (palace drummers) about the impending war. The Atumfoo (blacksmiths) of each division provided arms and ammunition, and other military hardware. These included locally manufactured guns, spears, arrows and swords.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. For other ancient villages see Brempong and Warren (I), P. 100.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. Also Brempong and Warren (I), P. 74. The crocodile was the totem animal for the Tekyiman State.

Apart from hereditary chiefs there were appointed chiefs in the Bono State. Such a chief could become a member of the state council. In the Bono state, the Sanaahene (chief in charge of state treasury), and the Atumfuohene (chief of the blacksmiths), were two of such important chiefs. As appointed officials, their offices were non-hereditary.<sup>58</sup> Created chiefs did not have stools, regalia or functionaries but were respected by all, because they had the capacity to offer mature and effective leadership. They remained simply as individuals performing the functions for which they were appointed. All created offices could be abolished at any time; especially when they outlived their usefulness. They were simply abolished by the Omanhene with the consent of his council.<sup>59</sup>

The process of nominating an Omanhene was similar to other Akan ethnic groups. When the stool became vacant either through the destoolment or death of an Omanhene, the entire membership of the Oyoko clan met to consider the succession. The Oyokohene who was also the adehyeepanyin (senior royal) would be asked to consult with the Ohemaa (queenmother) and identify the lineage of the Oyoko clan from which the next chief would be selected.<sup>60</sup> In accordance with local custom the queenmother was given the prerogative to nominate a suitable person from the selected royal lineage. The stool was usually given to the eldest male of the selected lineage. The nominee was expected to be blameless, courageous, and someone who had indicated his ability to offer mature and effective leadership. Like other Akan, physical deformity disqualified a candidate.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, July, 1999

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.



After the divisional chiefs had been informed of, and had agreed to the Ohemaa's choice, the wanko (a kind of round kerchief) was put around the neck of the abusuapanyin (family head) of the candidate elect, who later put it around the neck of the king-elect. The wanko signified the conferring of chiefly office to the candidate elect. The Apakanfo next presented the family of the candidate elect with two pantu<sup>62</sup> and about forty predwan<sup>63</sup> to "beg" for the candidate. If the family accepted the presents, the king-elect was then presented to the public for approval. If the public rejected the Ohemaa's nominee for three consecutive times the public elected its own king from the royal family. The public was given this responsibility to ensure peaceful co-operation between the Omanhene and his subjects.

Like other Akan, certain customary rites were performed for the new king in the stool room. The king-elect was held by the arm by the adchyee panyin (the Oyokohene), and by the waist by the mma-mma panyin (the eldest surviving prince). In accordance with Bono traditions, the king-elect stood nude, and was placed on the black stool three times. The Oyokohene then poured libation, and asked the ancestral spirits for guidance and support for the new Omanhene.<sup>64</sup> In lieu of a suitable candidate from the royal family, the stool was given to the eldest surviving son or brother of the deceased king. Such a person became a regent and relinquished his position when a rightful claimant of

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. Two pantu is equivalent to four bottles of wine.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. One predwan amounted to eight pound sterling. Forty predwan therefore amounted to about £240,000 in today's terms. In return, the new king after his installation paid to the kingmakers aseda (thanksgiving fee) of between 200–300 predwan, an estimated amount of £1.6–2.4 million in today's value.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

the stool was installed.<sup>65</sup> The nomination, rights, privileges, duties and sanctions of the apakanfoo and the adikrofoo were similar to those of the Omanhene.<sup>66</sup>

There existed a vast range of native courts in the pre-Asante Bono State that was hierarchically structured. There were the courts of the Adikrofoo, the Apakanfoo and the Omanhene. The smallest judicial unit was the Odikro's court. The highest and the most powerful was the Omanhene's court. Cases of seduction, swearing of the village chief's oath, breach of taboos, adultery between subjects, incest, conflict between individuals, and suicide were dealt with by the Adikro or the Apakanfoo and their Elders. Appeals could be filed from these lower courts to the Omanhene's court.

Before a Chief's court heard a complaint, the plaintiff who was seeking to enforce his or her rights, or ensure that justice was done to the offended person first made a report to the Okyeame (linguist). The Okyeame in turn informed the king of the complaint. Fridays were set aside for judicial matters at the Omanhene's court because that day was dabone (sacred day). The ahenkwa (court heralds) were sent to inform the divisional chiefs about the complaint, and to invite them to deliberate on the case on the following Friday. An Ahenkwa was also sent to summon the offending party to the Omanhene's court giving the time and day. The ahenkwa carried the crocodile tail, which was the traditional symbol of summons. If the offender lived in a village outside Manso, the Ahenkwa presented the crocodile tail to the Odikro of the village, who informed the offender of the Omanhene's summons.

On the appointed day, both the complainant and defendant appeared before the panel of the Omanhene and his divisional chiefs who sat in their judicial capacity to see

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

to the proceedings. Nana Kofi Aboagye asserts that whenever the Fiada oath was breached, the Omanhene and his elders put on mourning outfits showing the gravity of the case. In cases involving individuals, the friends and relatives of the contesting parties, and indeed any citizen who cared to be present had the right to do so. The procedure for dispensing justice in a chief's court was the same as at other Akan states. The Okyeame would give a summary of the case to the assembled crowd. Both the plaintiff and the defendant and all witnesses then swore the Fiada oath and on any of the three deities of the state.<sup>67</sup> Witnesses were then sent out of court. The complainant first stated his case. The defendant may cross-examine the plaintiff. The defendant and his witness were then given the chance to state their case.

The Okyeame would call for a recess after all parties had been heard, and all questions asked and answered. In private the Apakanfoo deliberated and arrived at a judgement, which was based on the guiding principles of equity, logical analysis, ethical norms of the State, and above all the evidence presented by the disputing parties. When there was a split among the panel of judges (apakanfoo), the Omanhene had the last say. Judgement was then passed by the Omanhene through the Okyeame.<sup>68</sup>

Cases involving swearing the Fiada oath, insult or assault on a chief, murder, and seduction of a chief's wife were heard by the Omanhene's court only. These were considered offences against the ancestors and their living representatives. Accordingly, they attracted the heaviest penalty. Until 1900, anybody who was found guilty of any of these crimes underwent the atopre ritual. The offender was tied to a tree in the centre of Manso. A sharp rod was pierced through the person's cheeks to prevent him or her from

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

cursing the Abrafoo (executioners), the king, or any other person. A kahyire (pad of banana leaves) was tied to the person's head. He or she was then tortured by the general public. A culprit was pardoned if majority of the people called for his release. On the other hand if the public asked for his or her death, the culprit was tortured to death. Murder and adultery with the king's wife were the greatest crimes in the state and attracted the death penalty. A culprit was quickly beheaded by the Abrafoo in a place called bogyawwe (blood never dries) on the outskirts of Manso, the state capital.<sup>69</sup>

Other cases such as suicides, incest, insult, conflicts between individuals, and telling of lies before the chief's court were considered minor cases because they did not directly affect the chiefs, ancestors or the state deities, hence they attracted minor penalties. Punishment comprised amputation, banishment, solitary confinement, public flogging and fines. For example anybody who cursed his neighbour was flogged and fined about twenty nsuansa. The family of a person who committed suicide paid a fine of 200 predwan, three sheep and four pantu of drinks.<sup>70</sup>

#### 1.4 Sources of Revenue

In the pre-Asante period, payments of gold into the Omanhene's Sanaa (treasury) was the main source of revenue to the state. The Omanhene employed a number of his servants to dig gold for him from the rich gold mines at Obuase,<sup>71</sup> Adwoa Sika,<sup>72</sup> and Prabom. Individual miners on Bonoland sent their gold to the Omanhene's palace. The Omanhene as custodian of the land reserved the right to take a portion of the gold. In the

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman 6 July 1999.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* Nsuansa and predawn were currency units. My informants had forgotten their values.

<sup>71</sup> Brempong and Warren *op.cit.* Pp. 160 and 166.

<sup>72</sup> These settlements derived their names from the abundance of gold in the rocks – Hence Obuo (rock) ase (under), and Adwoa (Monday born) sika (gold). It is believed that gold was first extracted on a Monday hence Adwoa. As a mother constantly feeds its child with milk, so was the area reliable in providing gold to miners. Informant, Maame Yaa Manu, 87 years, a citizen of Tekyiman, resident in Sunyani.

case of Bono citizens, the Omanhene collected one-third of the gold.<sup>73</sup> Strangers were regarded as illegal miners and were given one-sixth portion of the gold.<sup>74</sup>

The Omanhene claimed an absolute right to the wealth of his subjects. He could send an Ahenkwaa (servant) to a subject with a message that agyapadee yi se hene (the king deserves your property/wealth). The subject had to oblige, and hand over his wealth to the king. In this way the king obtained akawa, agudee and other precious items from his subjects.<sup>75</sup> In addition hunters sent the thigh of big game like elephant, zebra, antelope, the deer and others to the Omanhene who was regarded as custodian of Bonoland and its resources. If for one reason or the other the meat could not be sent to the Omanhene, the gold equivalent of the meat was sent. Other important sources of revenue to the king were aseda (thanksgiving fees), proceeds from court fines, omantuo (state levy), apcatuo (war tax) and ayiboadee (levy towards the funeral of a chief).<sup>76</sup>

Like other Akan, state revenue was spent in making akofena (swords), pea (spear), umbrella tops, and other stool regalia. The Amanhene used revenue also in building and maintaining their palace, purchasing weapons of war, and maintaining the king's servants. The Omanhene was vested with the power to withdraw gold from the sanaa but had to explain the reason to the general community at a public meeting.

<sup>73</sup> Arthur, *op.cit.* P. 21. Among the officials at the Omanhene's palace were the Sanaahene and his assistants – Sanaafoo or Fotosanfoo. They weighed the gold with the usennee (scale), and collected 1/3 into the state treasury. Gold dust was kept in a container of about five feet in height, while gold nuggets were cast into yarns by gold-smiths and stored in the Eputu, (a type of hut for storing yarns) believed to have been made by Nana Ameyaw in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

<sup>74</sup> Informant, Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman, Akyeamehene.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* Nana Kofi Aboagye, the Tekyiman Akyeamehene says that this right was abolished during the reign of Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III – (1943 – 1980). Nana Ameyaw considered it obnoxious and outmoded. But this practice might have been abolished earlier because of the establishment of law courts in the colonial period. The courts would regard such an act as a breach of fundamental human rights and would rule in favour of a complainant.

<sup>76</sup> Brempong and Warren; (I) The aseda (thanksgiving fees) paid by a victorious party in civil cases was 2 predwan about 13 shillings sterling. Half of the amount was given to the innocent party and the other half kept in the state treasury.

Subjects could verbally protest against the reckless use of state revenue, and the Omanhene's council upheld protests if they found them justifiable.<sup>77</sup> The acquisition and use of revenue by Apakanfoo and Adikrofoo were similar to that of the Omanhene.

### 1.5 Social Activities

Prior to the advent of Islam and Christianity, the Bono had their traditional beliefs. The Bono, like all other Akan believed in the existence of God whom they called Nyame. They also believed in numerous taboos relating to farming or visits to the riverside on stipulated days. It was believed that contravention of these taboos could incur the wrath of the ancestors, which might bring misfortune upon the state. Similarly, the Bono revered asaman (ancestral spirits), for they believed in life after death. For this reason the dead were carefully dressed and buried with gold, clothing, cooking utensils, and other necessities of life; to be used in the ancestral world.<sup>78</sup> Sometimes on the death of a chief his attendants were sacrificed and buried to serve him in the ancestral world.<sup>79</sup>

The Bono believed in Abosom (the worship of deities), symbolized by trees, rocks and other inanimate objects like clay figurines. Sacrifices were made to the deities and their blessing was sought in all spheres of life. The Bono had a number of important deities such as Taa Mensa, Taa Kora, Twumpuruo,<sup>80</sup> Boakyiriwa and Mframa.<sup>81</sup> Barren women consulted these deities for fertility and when they had children, they invariably named them after the particular shrine responsible for the birth of the child. This accounts for names like Kwaku Dente, Yaw Tano, Akora, Mensa and others. Whenever any

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman, July 6, 1999. See also Brempong and Warren (I), P. 75.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. Taa is a corruption of the word Tano. The people of Tekyiman believe that the three deities were the sons of River Tano. Taa Mensa means Taa (Tano) and Mensa (third born) Taa (Tano) Kora/Akokora (old man). Taa kora was the first born of River Tano and it was regarded as the oldest among the three deities.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. See also Brempong and Warren, Histories of Techiman Deities (II), (Tekyiman, 1971) P.93

misfortune befell a particular family, or an individual, they consulted their state deities through fetish priests to ascertain the cause, and seek advice as to how such an unfortunate situation could be averted.

The most important state deities were Taa Kora, Twumpuruo and Taa Mensa.<sup>82</sup> These were consulted on matters affecting the entire state like wars, epidemics, and famine. The shrines prophesied on matters concerning the internal affairs of the state, such as impending epidemic diseases. Sacrifices were made to avert such disasters. On the death of an Omanhene, the state deities protected the king's wives from execution by the Abrafoo. Before the traditional council arrived at any decision, the state deities were informed and sacrifices were made for a successful implementation. Matters concerning festivals, sacrifices, libation and all other traditional customs were under the authority of the priests of these shrines. It was through the state deities that sacrifices, prayers, and thanksgiving were directed to the ancestors in return for their blessings.<sup>83</sup>

The Bono observed several festivals such as Munokuo, Bayere, Fofiada, and Apuo.<sup>84</sup> The most important of these festivals was the apuo, which was essentially a rite of propitiation of the spirits of the royal ancestors for a plentiful harvesting. According to traditions, the word apuo was derived from puo meaning "whole" – something that is whole; and in their context it referred to a complete year of planting and harvesting. The two-week festival was celebrated between January and February when a new planting season began. The festival had a political significance. On the seventh day, freedom of

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>83</sup> Information by Nana Kofi Aboagye Akycamehene, Tekyiman.  
<sup>84</sup> For detailed information on the Apuo and other festivals see Addai, op.cit. Pp. 22-28. Also Danso-Atta, The History of the Tekyiman Apuo Festival, B.A. Long Essay, Department of History, (Legon, 1992). Chapters 2 and 3.

speech and expressions was granted to all. Everybody was permitted to say openly what he thought of the chiefs and other people in the state. By allowing people to express themselves a sense of reconciliation was created in the state.<sup>85</sup>

Marriage in pre-Asante Bono was not different from the practice in other Akan states. It entailed an agreement between the contracting families, and the payment of aseda. Endogamy was a taboo in the Bono State. Types of marriage in Bono included the adehye awadee, Do-yere awadee, Ayete, Kuna and Mpena awadee.<sup>86</sup>

Adehyee awadee was the marriage of a free man and a free woman. All that was needed was the payment of aseda or bride price by the suitor's family. If the aseda was not paid or accepted, the husband had no legal right to claim damage for adultery, and was not liable for his wife's debts.<sup>87</sup> The promise by an elderly free born to marry a young girl when she grew up was known as Awowa awadee. If such a wife died before she attained maturity her family could provide a substitute, usually the sister of the deceased. This type of marriage was similar to the Do-yere form of marriage, where out of love a person promised to give his young daughter to a friend as a wife. The prospective groom was obliged to provide the girl's basic needs till she was of age. However, unlike the Awowa awadee, the girl's parents were not obliged to provide a substitute in the event of the death of the girl.<sup>88</sup> The marriage of two or more sisters to the same man at the same time was called ahene awadee, and it was a crime for a commoner to enter into such a union.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Danso-Atta. Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye. See also Arthur, op.cit. Pp. 148-152.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

In Bono, the various royal families were obliged to provide a wife each to the Omanhene's harem. This practice was called Ayete.<sup>90</sup> Ayete was limited to the original seven clans since they were regarded as the true royals. A nephew could inherit the wife of his deceased uncle, and this was called kuna awadec. With the exception of chiefs, commoners could live as man and wife without the payment of aseda. This was known as mpena awadec.<sup>91</sup>

The system of inheritance in the Bono kingdom was mainly matrilineal because it was believed that one's proper ntoro (blood) was from the mother's side. The maternal nephew of a deceased man inherited his wife, position (if he was a chief), and property. The successor assumed responsibility for the welfare of the wife and children of the deceased. Although the inheritance of property was through the matrilineal line, that of traditional office like court drummer, executioner, and court crier were inherited through the patrilineal line. The Bono believed that since the child derived his sumsum (spirit) from the father, the child(ren) would automatically have innate abilities of their father for the performance of such traditional duties.<sup>92</sup>

### 1.6 Economic Activities

Economic activities in the Bono state initially centred on hunting, farming and gathering of fruits from the wild.<sup>93</sup> Farming, which was the basic economic activity of the Bono people was at the subsistence level because there was no need to make large farms. Clan chiefs obtained land for farming from the paramount chief who exercised overall

<sup>90</sup> Nana Takyi Akwamu allegedly instituted this practice in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to ensure the loyalty of the sub-divisional chiefs. The present Tekyimanhene, Osabarima Takyiaw Arneyaw does not follow this custom, which he considers unnecessary and expensive. He is however willing to continue the practice only if the state would assist him financially. Since the elders are not prepared to provide him with the assistance he needs, the elders agreed for him to rule without the Ayete wives.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. See Brempong and Warren (1), Pp. 124-127.

control over land in the state. The clan chiefs gave out portions of land to families for cultivation. Any family that cultivated a piece of land claimed usufructuary rights over the land and its resources for themselves and descendants.<sup>94</sup> Strangers could not cultivate Bono land without permission from the chief or a clan head, and claim usufructuary title to such land. During the pre-Asante period, family heads that gave portions of the family land to strangers for cultivation were not paid a share of the produce. After each harvest, the farmer merely showed his or her gratitude by giving part of the produce to the landlord.<sup>95</sup>

The ubiquitous hoe, cutlass, and the axe were the major farm tools used by farmers in the pre-Asante society of the Bono state. Root crops such as cassava, cocoyam and yam, and also maize and peas were cultivated at the subsistence level.<sup>96</sup> Bush fallowing was the only system of farming known by farmers in the Bono state.

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<sup>94</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye 80 years, Tekyiman Akyeamehene 7 July 1999.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

Hunting was the second most important economic activity of the Bono people. Bono hunters hunted game like the tromo, kwaduo, apuro and birds of all kinds. Hunters used fidie (wooden traps or underground mines), tadua (bow and arrow), and locally made guns for their hunting activities. Snails were gathered mainly for domestic purposes, but occasionally some were dried and exchanged for other products in the markets at Manso and Tekyiman. Fishing, mushroom collection, and crab catching were the other important activities in the state in the period up to the 14th century.<sup>97</sup>

Nana Ameyaw Akumfi I's reign in the 14<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a transformation of the economy of the Bono state. Gold was discovered in the hills to the north and west of the state, and people engaged themselves in its extraction. Panning and deep-pit mining were the main methods employed in obtaining gold. Through panning, the miners collected gold dust with cane baskets from the alluvium of rivers Tano, Tain, Bisi and Awora.<sup>98</sup> Gold particles were also picked from the ground, and along the banks of rivers and streams after they had been exposed by rain. The gold miners obtained greater quantities of mpokua (nuggets) of gold by digging into the alluvium deposits along riverbanks. With the use of the asoso (adze) and aso (hoe) the miners sank shafts of between two and three feet in diameter, and about thirty and sixty feet deep into the alluvium. Pieces of rock were broken off the shafts, and carried in a cane basket to the surface. The stuff was then pounded with wooden sticks in a wooden mortar. The alluvial

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. Gold extraction was an ancient occupation of the Bono people. Excavations at Manso, Ahwenekoko and other areas in Bono revealed a variety of golden implements, which are dated to about the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Nketia asserts that Bono Manso and Ahwenekoko exploited and used gold, long before the Kingdom of Asante was founded. See Anquandah, op. cit. P. 97, also Nketia, J.H., Funeral Dirges of the Akan (Exter Townsend, 1958) P. 220.

gold, or the deep-pit gold, was finally washed in a kodoo (wooden concave pans), to collect the refined gold particles.<sup>99</sup>

Gold became an important commodity of trade in the Bono state. People transported it by headloading to Bona and Kong in present day Cote d'Ivoire which were important markets for the gold trade. Bono traditions say that following the discovery of gold in the state, Nana Akumfi Ameyaw sent the heir apparent, Obunumankoma to the courts of the states in the Sudanese belt to advertise his state's wealth. Traders and goldsmiths in the West African sub-region gradually settled in the Bono state to trade. It is believed that they taught Bono craftsmen gold smithery. Using the "cire perdue" (lost wax) technique, the Bono craftsmen made golden, brass, and iron products for the chief's palace, and for sale to traders who patronized the Bono markets.<sup>100</sup>

Some of these foreign traders were also skillful weavers, craftsmen, and experts in cloth weaving. Bono traditions mention that traders from North Africa introduced the metal gyaneboo (spindle whorls), which became common in the Bono area after the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Bono craftsmen

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. See also Effa-Gyamfi, op. cit. Pp. 66-73. It was estimated that a brass pan of about 12 pounds of powdered quartz yielded between 5/- and 6/- worth of gold dust, about (c4, 800). See Brempong and Warren (I), P. 136 also Arthur, op. cit. Pp. 20-21

<sup>100</sup> For more on the lost wax technique of making golden objects see Gerrard, T., The Akan Gold Weights (Oxford, 1986) Pp. 137-139. Meyerowitz asserts that Asante acquired the technique of weighing gold only after Bono was defeated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Meyerowitz, (1952), P. 16. Tekyiman traditions maintain that the idea of weighing gold spread to other states in the south. A common saying among the Tekyiman people is yaabo nsennie ma Asante Kotoko bede beedi yen - (We have created the scales and Asante are mocking us with it). See Brempong and Warren (I) P. 166. Also Arhin, Asante Trade and Accumulation, (Legon, I.A.S.), p.13. Anquandah, op. cit. Pp. 88, 92. Iron working was known in Bono in the first half of the first millennium A.D. During the middle and late Iron Ages, it became increasingly widespread. Manso for instance had an industrial quarter. Excavation of house mounds in Manso brought to light variety of iron goods comprising spoons, knives, bracelets and arrowheads dated to AD 1250-1750.

used the metal gyanchoo, and made improved types of cloths. Beo, Fugu, Gagaoga, Nsafoa, and other types of cloth replaced the kyenkyen cloth of the Bono people. Bono became famous for weaving and dyeing of cloths.<sup>101</sup> Among the local sayings to express the quality cloths made in Bono is Bede Beo ntoma iwa mpoa (Begho cloths are used to flaunt one's wealth and status).<sup>102</sup>

Another important commodity of trade besides gold was kola nut. Mainly, women and children collected kola from the wild during the kola season of May and November.<sup>103</sup> It was sold to the Hausa, Mossi and Berber traders. Kola to these traders was an indispensable stimulant, and a necessity for the travelling trader.<sup>104</sup> To preserve kola, the seeds were wrapped in leaves, and kept in the bese buom (kola barn), to await a favourable time when traders could sell at a higher price.<sup>105</sup> The high demand for kola sustained the trade to the 1890s when rubber and cocoa trade replaced it.

Originally, there was no medium of exchange in the Bono trade. Traders exchanged their commodities by means of barter trade system. Nana Obunumankoma is said to have introduced cowrie shells and gold dust to facilitate the exchange of goods in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>106</sup> The nsennea (scale), and the abramboo (gold weights), became the standard systems of weighing gold. It became easier to exchange products, as the abramboo were

<sup>101</sup> Brempong and Warren (1) Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Anquandah, op. cit. P. 86. Also interview with Madam Mary Kyeremeh, 56 years Sunyani, 1998.

<sup>103</sup> There were two kola seasons. The first was the Awia bese (minor season) and Abribera bese, (the major season). According to Madam Yaa Manu of Sunyani, one could obtain 120-200 pound sterling or about 1600 predwan during the major season.

<sup>104</sup> Arthur, op. cit. P.22.

<sup>105</sup> This information was provided by Madam Yaa Manu, 87 years, a citizen of Tekyiman, Sunyani, July, 1998. Also Arhin, Asante, Trade and Accumulation, (Legon, I.A.S.). P.12. Bono-Asante trade in gold declined in most part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Following the increase in the production of cocoa and rubber in Bono in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, trade with Europeans increased as against kola and other trade goods traded to the north of Asante.

<sup>106</sup> Asihene, E.V. The Apoo Festival, (Ghana Publishing Corporation; 1980). P 3.

in different units of kokua, nsua, asuanu and asuansa.<sup>107</sup> Trade and other economic activities went on smoothly throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 1.7 Bono-Asante Relations c. 1690-1712

Before c.1712, peaceful political, social and economic relations existed between Asante and the Bono states. Politically, Bono chiefs had peaceful interactions with Asante chiefs. Nana Ameyaw Kwakye (c.1690-1723) the Bono Omanhene was believed to have established friendly relations with the Asantehene, Osei Tutu (c.1697-1717). Because of the trust and confidence the Bono and Asante had in each other, Bafour Twum, a Kumasi Amakom royal popularly known in the historical record as Bafu Pim,<sup>108</sup> who had been granted land for settlement at Nkoranza became the Asantehene's ambassador to the Bono state. Through him, Osei Tutu and Kwakye Ameyaw became friends. He usually accompanied Bono messengers to send regular gifts of gold and kola nuts to the Asantehene to strengthen the Bono-Asante friendship.<sup>109</sup> This created cordial relations between the two states.

The social relations between the Bono and Asante were also friendly. Asante farmers settled on Bonoland where they created permanent settlements in modern Odumase, Nkoranza and Nsuatre. These Asante traders and hunters were not disturbed

<sup>107</sup> Brempong and Warren (1), P.166. Unfortunately my informant Nana Aboagye could not provide the values of these currency units in modern currency terms.

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye Tekyiman Akyeamehene, 6 July 1999. Nana Aboagye says that the name Bafu Pim, commonly found in books is wrong. According to him, the right name is Bafour Twum. I am tempted to agree with him because the man was an Asante royal who usually use Bafour as a title. Bafu is a more popular name in Bono than in Asante. It is possible that the early Europeans spelt the name wrongly and it has since been used till now. Moreso, the name 'Pim' is not used by the Bono or Asantes. For more on Bafour Twum see Fynn, Asante and Its Neighbours 1700 - 1807 (Longmans), P. 103. Reindorf, C. C. History of the Gold Coast and Ashanti (University Press, 1966), P. 71. Effa-Gyamfi, op. cit P. 19' and Meyerowitz, The Early History of the Akan States of Ghana, (London) P.101. See also Brempong and Warren (1), P. 73 for the origin of the name Bafu. The origin of the name as related by Brempong's informants is not convincing.

<sup>109</sup> Informant Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman.

while going about their activities.<sup>110</sup> Many such immigrants intermarried with the Bono people. Traditions assert that Asante citizens also consulted Bono deities such as Guakro, Taa Kora, Botene, and many others.<sup>111</sup> Bono citizens also consulted Asante deities such as Aninhwe, Ampento, Antoa and others.<sup>112</sup>

Asante and Bono traditions assert that Asante obtained the first yam seeds from Nana Ameyaw Kwakye during the reign of Osei Tutu.<sup>113</sup> In the same period, Asante traders freely exchanged their products in the Bono markets of Manso, Ahwenekoko, Bonduku and Kintampo without hindrance. Bono traders sold their wares of pottery, cloths, kola and the kyem (shield of baboon skin), in the Kumasi market.<sup>114</sup> From Tafo, Kaase, Ofinso and Ohwim in Asante, the Bono obtained European cloths, salt and kola. Kintampo, Atebubu and Donkoro Nkwanta, which were located along the Trade Routes from Asante to the Northern markets, served as resting places for Asante traders.

The Bono of Tekyiman assert also that the Asante were permitted to dig for gold on Bonoland. They sent the gold they obtained to the Bono chiefs who gave them the one-sixth portion given to all non-Bono miners.<sup>115</sup> Between about 1712 and 1747, the Asante army defeated Wankyi, Bono, Gyaman, and the Atebubu states, and incorporated them into the emerging Asante Kingdom. This ended the autonomy, which Bono had enjoyed, and set the stage for another stage of Bono history.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. See also Addai, op. cit. P. 17.

<sup>113</sup> PRAAD'A Adm. 1320 Origins of the Asante Confederacy; "A theory", Pp. 111-112.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, 80 years Tekyiman, 7 July 1999. The baboon skin was so strong that bullets or arrows could not penetrate. The kyem was made of tough kontromfi (baboon) skins trimmed round and glued together. Other people say that the skin of the kontromfi was similar to the savanna vegetation and was used to cover themselves from enemies. See also Research Review Volume 7, No.1 (1970), P. 41. Arhin, Trade and Accumulation (1976), Pp. 14-15. Trade between the Bono and Asante started in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Mande-Dyula traders of Begho-Nsoko and the Bono of Wankyi,

Summary

This chapter has attempted a description of the pre-Asante society of the Bono state. Some of the Bono people claim to be autochthonous, while others assert that their ancestors migrated into the Bono area. Between the 13<sup>th</sup> and the early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the small settlements in the modern Bono area expanded their territories into states. The Amanhene of the Bono state encouraged some families to create their own villages. Individuals and ambitious clan leaders established their own villages in the vast unoccupied lands within a radius of between thirty and forty kilometers of Manso, the original settlement of the Bono people. The political, social and economic institutions of the Bono people were similar to those of the other Akan ethnic groups.

The Bono (Manso), Gyaman, Wankyi and Atebubu states became the most important states in the present day Bono area. Between 1690 and 1712, the political, social and economic relations between these states and Asante were peaceful. However, between c.1712 and c.1750, the Asante army defeated all the powerful states in Bono and subjected them to Asante rule.

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Tekyiman, Bonduku, Wiase, Atebubu traded with Ofinso, Ohwim, Tafo, Kaase and Asantemanso. See also Arhin, *The significance of Gold in the History of the Akan Peoples*, (I.A.S. 1991) Pp. 3-4.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

2.1 BONO-ASANTE RELATIONS 1712 – 1900

The first Asante invasion of Bono occurred in 1712 with an attack on Old Wankyi. Asante considered the attack as an unfortunate accident caused by her advance guard, which mistook Wankyi for Dormaa Ahenkro.<sup>1</sup> Wankyi tradition on the other hand asserts that the invasion was deliberate. The tradition claims that Old Wankyi was attacked because it was conveniently situated to exploit both forest and savanna resources. Old Wankyi also lay on the Begho-Sudan trade route. The land was endowed with gold, ivory and kola resources, which were important items of trade in the trans-Saharan trade. The strategic position of Wankyi enabled her to participate fully in the trade and thus became prosperous. Ameyaw-Nuamah<sup>2</sup> asserts that the position and the abundance of natural resources made Wankyi a right subject of attack.

Certain Wankyi sources say that the Asante deliberately attacked on a Thursday afternoon when most people were on their farms.<sup>3</sup> Others assert that three months to the

<sup>1</sup> Dormaa was being pursued by Osei Tutu to avenge the death of Obiri Yeboah believed to have been killed by the Dormaa people. See Busia K.A., The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti, (Oxford University Press, 1951) P.76. See also Boahen, A., Topics in West African History, P. 73. Obiri Yeboah is believed to have been killed around 1670 in a war against Dormaa who were then occupying the region of Suntreso. I did not find any documentary evidence to suggest that Dormaa was attacked in 1712. Adjei-Kyeremeh asserts that the Dormaa people engaged Asante in nine major battles, and it was only in one of these battles that Dormaa was defeated. Although this could be in 1712, I personally believe that the Asante claim that Dormaa was the target was a ploy to cover their mischief in the attack on Wankyi. In any case, there is sufficient evidence that Asante attacked Wankyi in the early 18th century, plundered its gold resources and destroyed its capital. Asante captured the Wankyi chief and queenmother and installed a non-royal to the Wankyi stool. See Adjei-Kyeremeh, History of Dormaa, B.A. Dissertation, Dept. of History, (Legon, 1975) Pp.3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Ameyaw-Nuamah, K., The Origins of the Wankyi People Reconsidered, B.A. Long Essay, Department of History, (University of Ghana, 1973). Pp. 23-24. Also Ward, W.E.F., A History of Ghana (Allen and Unwin, London, 1958). P. 141.

<sup>3</sup> See Donkor, C.E., History of Wankyi Long Essay Dept of History (Legon, 1971/72). The traditions agree that Wankyi derived its oath "Yawoada" from the tragic defeat by Asante in 1712.

fateful Thursday, the Asantehene sent messengers to consult the Gyanso Mensa shrine, which was unusual. The people of Wankyi believe that this was an attempt to locate the sacred Ahwenedwa (royal stool of pure gold beads). On the advice of the Gyanso Mensa shrine, the chief of Wankyi managed to hide the stool at the confluence of the rivers Trome and Tain.<sup>4</sup>

In any case, in or around 1712, the Asante army destroyed Ahwenekoko, the Wankyi capital. The inhabitants of the town were scattered. Wankyi traditions claim that Asante looted the queenmother's ahwenedwa and other stool regalia. Reports of the attack reached as far as the coast. In October 1715, Van Hearsen, the Dutch Factor at Axim, reported, ...a few years ago, the Zaay had sent an army of 3,000 men against an inland country called Affindiecoco.<sup>5</sup> Nana Gyan, the Wankyihene and Afowaa Dankoto, the queenmother were allegedly taken captive to Kumasi.<sup>6</sup>

Asante met a greater challenge in their attempt to subdue the Bono State. At the time of the attack on Bono, Asante was not militarily strong. Fynn points out that:

Asante, which had been defeated by Akyem in 1717 and had lost most of its troops in its war with Seŋwi and Nzima in 1721/22 was militarily incapable of threatening the territorial integrity of a more populous and powerful state of Tekyiman.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Ameyaw-Nuamah, *op. cit.* P. 21. The capital, Ahwenekoko derived its name from Wankyi's fame in the making of gold beads hence ahwene (beads), kokoo (gold). The Wankyi people say that their ancestors brought the ahwenedwa from the Amuowi hole.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted by Daaku K.Y. in 'A note on the fall of Ahwenekoko and its significance in Asante History' in *The Historical Society of Ghana No. X* (December 1968), P.44. Also Ameyaw-Nuamah, *op. cit.* P.23. The Asante are said to have expressed their regret for the attack. As a sign of genuine friendship and reconciliation with Wankyi, Asante subsequently arranged an alliance of mutual defence with the people of Wankyi – an attack on Wankyi meant an attack on Asante and vice versa. The Wankyihene was elevated to Obrempony (paramouncy) with direct access to the Asantehene at anytime. The Asantehene ordered that no Wankyi citizen, no matter the crime he committed should be executed. This assertion if it was true was an obvious attempt to mitigate the Asante attack.

<sup>6</sup> Busia, *op. cit.* P. 77.

<sup>7</sup> Fynn, *op. cit.* P. 103. Tekyiman became the name and capital of the state after 1722. Until then, it was the second largest town of the Bono State.

To enable her defeat the Bono, Bafour Twum<sup>8</sup> was asked to study the Bono state and devise strategies for its capture. Around 1720, Bono was plunged into a succession dispute following the death of Nana Brimpong Katakya, and the accession of Nana Ameyaw Kwakye to the Manso throne. The faction, which opposed Ameyaw, did not reconcile with him after his installation and wished his downfall.<sup>9</sup>

The behaviour of Nana Ameyaw's children further alienated him from the people. They allegedly threw spears into sores, and cut open the stomach of pregnant women.<sup>10</sup> They also allegedly killed people who, in the process of fetching water from the Aponkosu (river for horses), stepped on blankets they had spread along the river's bank.<sup>11</sup> Ameyaw is also said to have become adulterous.<sup>12</sup> By 1721, the Bono people were tired of Ameyaw's rule and wished for his downfall. According to Takyiman accounts,<sup>13</sup> Bafour persuaded the disgruntled faction of the Bono people from fighting for Ameyaw in the event of war. In 1722, Bafour is said to have detained Bono messengers who were visiting Kumasi to present the monthly gift of gold by Bono to the Asantehene, compelling them to spend the night in his palace. Bafour allegedly stole the gold gift and filled the sacks with aduro (gunpowder), which the Bono messengers delivered to the

<sup>8</sup> Historians seem to agree that Bafour was an Asante royal who lived in the Bono State. Through treachery or deceit, he is believed to have caused the defeat of the Bono kingdom. See for example Fynn, *op. cit.* P. 103. Reindorf, History of the Gold Coast and Asante, (University Press, Ghana 1966) P.71. Efa-Gyamfi, Archaeological contribution to the History of Bono Manso, Ph. D. Thesis, (Legon, 1978), P.19. Addai, History of Bono Takyiman, B.A. Dissertation, Dept. of History, (Legon, 1971/72) Pp. 21-22, and Meyerowitz, The Early History of the Akan States of Ghana, (London, Red Candle Press, 1974), P. 101.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Addai, *op. cit.* P.12

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Efa-Gyamfi, *op. cit.* P.29.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Takyiman Akyeamehene, 6 July 1999. I believe that Bafour has been used as a scapegoat by Takyiman to defend the Bono defeat. Asante was in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century a powerful state with a strong army. It had defeated Akwamu, Denkyira, Fante, Nzima, Dagomba and other states. With its large, well-trained and well-equipped army, Bono would have been defeated whether or not Bafour sent information about Bono to Asante.

Asantehene. By custom, this meant a declaration of war. Tekyiman people claim that the Bono messengers were tortured and sent back to Manso to inform Nana Ameyaw to prepare for war.<sup>14</sup>

Just after their arrival in Bono, a combined Asante and Nkoranza force attacked Bono at a time the state was not prepared for war. The conflict between supporters and opponents of Ameyaw seriously weakened the unity and moral cohesion of the state. Consequently, the disgruntled faction stored their guns in river Fia to avoid the temptation of fighting for Ameyaw. They refused to fight saying Se Ameyaw anya ne ko a onko nhye (If Ameyaw has provoked war let him fight by himself and perish).<sup>15</sup> This enabled the more experienced Asante army, under the able leadership of Amankwaatia Kwame, the Bantamahene, and Amakomhene Ade Kusi to defeat the Bono army.<sup>16</sup>

Manso and Tekyiman, the two important towns of the Bono State, were sacked and burnt down. At Manso the confusion is said to have been so great that people fled across the Volta. Some Tekyiman people are said to have joined their kinsmen who had migrated to the coast of Ghana some centuries earlier. The majority of the Bono, however, migrated to the Gyaman State under one Guogyia, a son of Kwakye Ameyaw where they founded a settlement known today as Anno. Some of the Bono are also said to

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. See also Warren and Brempong (I) P. 84, Effa-Gyamfi, op. cit. Pp. 49-50, Donkor, op. cit. P. 13.

<sup>16</sup> Indeed this seems to be a better account than those rendered by Ward and Reindorf. See Ward, A Short History of the Gold Coast, (Longmans, 1950) Pp. 50-51, Reindorf, op. cit. P. 72. The views of Ward and Reindorf that the Bono damped their guns in a river to use them later belittle the military intelligence of the Bono people. The Bono-Asante war was not the first war Bono fought with firearms. The state had fought and defeated some of their neighbours with guns and knew that guns cannot be commanded to shoot on its own accord. The Bono would not have buried their guns in the ground or kept them in a river for forty days with the intention of using them to fight.

have settled in Abease, Berekum and Wankyi.<sup>17</sup> The Asante army plundered Bono gold and resources and Nana Ameyaw and Dwamenawaa Akenten the Ohemaa of Tekyiman were taken captive to Kumasi. Thus the peaceful relations between Bono and Asante came to an end.<sup>18</sup> The defeat of the Bono state enabled Asante to station its forces in Nkoranza, and from there the Asante army attacked and defeated Gyaman around 1731. Gyaman was attacked because the state lay on the trade route to the northern markets, and was a rival of Asante in the trade to the north.<sup>19</sup>

In 1747, Dawia, the chief of Atebubu refused to surrender peacefully to Asante and his state was attacked and defeated by the Asante army led by one Asaman Ankra.<sup>20</sup> This enabled Asante to control the Trade Route from Asante to the Salaga market. Reindorf says that the defeat of Atebubu marked the end of Opoku Ware's conquests of the Bono states. Asante kept its forces in Atebubu to check counter attacks from the defeated states. In 1750 most of the Asante army returned to Kumasi but Asaman Ankra and a small Asante force remained in Atebubu state.<sup>21</sup>

From 1750 the Bono states became subject to Asante. Asante set up strong administrative machinery in Bono following the conquests. Some of the war commanders were appointed as ahwesofoo (Supervisors) and were settled in the conquered state. For

<sup>17</sup> Informant, Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman Akyeamehene, 6 July 1999.

<sup>18</sup> Addai, *op. cit.* P. 14.

<sup>19</sup> Reindorf, *op. cit.* P. 84. Also Adjei-Sarkodie Y., History of Nkoranza B.A. Long Essay, Department of History, University of Ghana, (Legon, 1981), P.10. Also Wilks, L., Asante in the Nineteenth Century the Structure and Evolution of a Political Order (Cambridge University Press, London, 1975), P. 171.

<sup>20</sup> Reindorf, *Ibid*.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*. Also Hay J.D., Ashanti and the Gold Coast (Stanford, London 1974), P. 23. Hay estimates the strength of the Asante army at 60,000 men. Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 245 Ivor Wilks says that Banda collapsed not as a direct result of the Asante invasions but rather in consequence of a breakdown of town life as the diverse ethnic groups represented there rioted and fought one another. He asserts that the warfare led to the collapse of the state.

example, Bafour Twum was appointed to oversee the Nkoranza and Tekyiman areas.<sup>22</sup>

Ade Kusi and Asaman Ankra were given responsibility for Hami (Nsoko), and Atebubu states respectively. Under the Adamfo system of the Asante kingdom, the Akyeamehene (Chief Linguist), of Kumasi had oversight responsibility for Tekyiman. Asante appointed Abu Bakr Bamba as resident commissioner in Banda and he sent regular reports about Banda to the Asantehene in Kumasi. Wankyi, Dormaa-Ahenkro and Berekum were placed under the Nsumankwaahene, Bremanhene and the Ankobeahene respectively.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Adum-Atta was Adamfo to Nsoko and Nsuta/Tekyiman. Atebubu was under the Bremanhene of Oyoko in Asante and the Namasa were placed under the Akyempimhene. Yeji approached the Asantehene through the Gyasewahene and Amanten served through the Kumasi Nsumankwaahene. Pran and Sampa were under the Ankobe and the Akyempim stools respectively.<sup>24</sup>

In some cases the Asantehene replaced Bono Chiefs with his own nominees. For example, Nketia Kwasi was enstooled chief of Wankyi after the state was defeated in 1712 even though he was not a royal.<sup>25</sup> During the Gyaman-Asante war of 1731, the Asante army allegedly killed Abo Kofi, the Gyamanhene, and enstooled Kofi Sono Ampem of a rival family as the new Gyamanhene.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Kwaku Fokuo was enstooled by the Asante as the Nkoranzahene in 1894 to replace Nana Effa Kofi after the

<sup>22</sup> Adjei-Sarkodie, *op. cit.* P. 11.

<sup>23</sup> Wilks, *op. cit.* (1975) Pp. 39, 116 and 247 and Rattray, (1929), Pp. 94-98. Lewin, Asante before the British, 1875-1900, (The Regent Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1978) P.111. Under the Adamfo system, responsibilities of provincial states were entrusted to certain Kumasi sub-chiefs who were regarded by the subject states as friends in court.

<sup>24</sup> Wilks, Asante Government in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, A Draft Paper (1964), P. 39. Also Wilks, (1975) P.245.

<sup>25</sup> Donkor, *op. cit.* P. 46.

<sup>26</sup> Ward, *op. cit.* P. 141. Ward asserts that Opoku Ware's intention was to create enmity between the ruling families in Gyaman. The ruling families however agreed to take their chiefs alternatively from the two rival families. Thus Opoku Ware's plan failed. Nana Kwame Gyana, the Abakomahene of Dwenem in the Gyaman district agrees with this claim. See also Wilks, (1975) Pp. 299-300 and Lewin, (1978) P.62.

Nkoranza-Asante war of 1893.<sup>27</sup> In Berekum, the stool elders refused to cooperate with Nana Kofi Banie whom Asante enstooled as Berekumhene in 1895.<sup>28</sup> Thus during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Asantehene arrogated to himself the right to enstool and destool chiefs in the Bono area. In addition, Asante created security posts, which were settled by Asante soldiers in Berekum, Nkoranza and Odumase.<sup>29</sup>

Both the individual ahwesofoo and the soldiers in the security posts were expected to mount close surveillance on the traditional authorities of the Bono states to prevent revolts. Cruickshank asserts that the Asante overlords in the Asante provincial states communicated to the subject chief the will of the Asantehene. He asserts that the representatives, as in the other parts of the Asante kingdom:

exercised a general superintendence over their subjects. They also guarded against, and spied out any conspiracies that sub-chiefs might form to recover their independence.<sup>30</sup>

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Owusu Teseamandi was groomed by Asante to occupy the Gyaman stool. He was allegedly abducted from Kumasi in January 1881 with the complicity of British officials.

<sup>27</sup> Wilks, (1975) Pp. 299-300. Kwaku Fokuo was subsequently destooled by the Nkoranza traditional authorities.

<sup>28</sup> Benneh K., The History of Berekum, B.A. Long Essay, Department of History, (Legon, 1981) P. 12.

<sup>29</sup> Arhin, 'Asante Security Post in the Northwest' in Arhin (ed), A profile of Brong-Kyempim Essays on the History, Language and the Politics of the Brong Peoples of Ghana, (Afram Publications Limited, Accra 1979). Wilks, (1975), P. 245. Little is known of the identity of the Asante Provincial Commissioners in Bono. Imam said b. Malik who resided in Gyaman merely says that since their conquest, Gyaman paid tribute in slaves and farm produce to the Asante representative in the State. Arhin sounds convincing with the claim that Berekum was an Asante security post. His assertion that Tuobodom and Odumase were Asante security posts is doubtful. Indeed if the Asante decision to create security posts in Bono started as early as 1731 as Arhin asserts, then Nkoranza which was ruled by an Assent royal should have been the right place and not Tuobodom which was ruled by a Bono chief. Besides Tuobodom lay to the north of Tekyiman whiles Nkoranza was located along the Kumasi-Tekyiman trade route. Arhin must have assumed that the states were security posts because Tuobodom and Odumase had Assent and Bono chiefs ruling simultaneously. It must be noted that the appointment of an Assent chief in Odumase and Tuobodom were not for security reasons; Assent chiefs ruled the Assent residents in these villages.

<sup>30</sup> Cruickshank B., Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast Vol. 2 (Frank Cass, 1966). P. 320.

Indeed the Adamfo and the Ahwesofo could disapprove of decisions of Bono state councils.<sup>31</sup> Besides, Bono chiefs were obliged to give one-third portion of bopono (large animals), and ahudee (treasure trove) to the Asantehene. Also, before they were recognized, newly installed Bono Amanhene swore to the Adamfo and the Asantehene in Kumasi. Moreover the Asantehene's court heard appeals from the Bono Amanhene court, but the Bono hardly appealed to the Asantehene's court because it was tiresome and expensive to travel to Kumasi to await the decision of the Asanteman court.<sup>32</sup> The Asantehene's court allegedly delayed cases involving Asante and Bono citizens and its decisions always favoured the Asante. The Bono allege also that they paid heavy fines in the Asantehene's court.<sup>33</sup>

The Bono states also paid tribute and market tolls to the Asante Treasury. Bono tributes included slaves, livestock, gold, and textiles. Tekyiman for example paid an annual tribute of slaves, cows, sheep, cotton cloths, and some silk products.<sup>34</sup> Wankyi sent gifts of food and meat to the Asantehene during the Odwira festival.<sup>35</sup> After Asante crushed the Gyaman revolts of 1752, 1765 and 1801, Gyaman became loyal to Asante in the payment of its tribute. Wilks asserts that before the Asante-Gyaman war of 1818, Adinkra Kwadwo, the Gyamanhene, paid an annual tribute of about 100 predwan besides large pieces of gold, slaves and farm products.<sup>36</sup> Bowdich described Adinkra as a tool of

<sup>31</sup> See Nana Nuama, the Akyeamhene of Kumasi's testimony before the Committee of Privileges in 1936 in File No. PRAAD'SY, RAO 1/104, Sunyani. He stated that the Tekyimanhene would have notified the then Akyeamhene if Asantehene had invited the Tekyiman people from exile in Gyaman.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Nana Amankwaa Koran, 75 years, Abakomahene of Susuanso, 8 July 1999.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Nana Kofi Aboagye, Tekyiman, 6 July, 1999.

<sup>34</sup> Wilks, (1975) P.241. Also Bowdich, T.E. Mission from Cape Coast to Ashantee (1819) P.321.

<sup>35</sup> Busia, op. cit. P. 16.

<sup>36</sup> Wilks, (1975), Pp. 65 & 241 According to Wilks, Agyeman, the Gyamanhene, estimated the amount paid by Gyaman at between 225 and 18,000 oz of gold.

the court of Comassey, and a king who received consular directives and transmitted the revenue to Akomassey as they are received from those states, which are under their control.<sup>37</sup>

Gyaman oral traditions assert also that before 1818, Adinkra established friendly relations with Osei Bonsu of Asante. In 1801, Gyaman claims to have helped Asante to fight Gonja and Bouna who were part of Asante's northwestern territories, but revolted to restore Osei Kwame to the Asante throne.<sup>38</sup> In the campaign against Bouna Abu Bakr as - Sadik, himself a witness reports that Adinkra played a remarkable role in ensuring Asante's success in the war.<sup>39</sup> Adinkra distinguished himself as a courageous and a brilliant fighter for Asante, which displeased his own people. A section of the Gyaman people took advantage of Adinkra's absence from Gyaman, and attempted an unsuccessful revolt to destool him as he appeared to this faction to have betrayed the cause of Gyaman independence and nationalism by supporting Asante, especially when Adinkra's predecessors had persistently resisted Asante rule.<sup>40</sup> Because of this the Gyaman Elders invited Ben Kompi II, who was Adinkra's rival to occupy the Gyaman throne.<sup>41</sup> The revolt was however crushed by Adinkra with the support offered by Asante troops.

This military co-operation between Adinkra and Osei Bonsu provides sufficient proof of the very cordial relations between Gyaman and Asante, in the period before 1818. Osei Bonsu needed Adinkra to help him crush Bouna, and other northwestern

<sup>37</sup> Bowdich, *op. cit.* P. 321. Also Robertson G.A., 'Notes on Africa' (1819) and Arhin (ed.), Hrong Kyempim, Quoted by Britwum, K. A. Also Bowdich, (1819) P. 321 and Wilks, (1975) P. 117.

<sup>38</sup> Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee* (1824). P. 245. Osei Kwame the Asantehene was destooled by his elders for converting to Islam.

<sup>39</sup> Wilks, (1975) P. 23.

<sup>40</sup> Dupuis, *op. cit.* P. 249

<sup>41</sup> Dupuis, *op. cit.* P. 259

states; on his part, Adinkra needed Asante military cooperation to enable him maintain his position on the Gyaman throne. Britwum suggests that as a result of this military cooperation, it is possible that Adinkra remained a loyal vassal of the Asante state and fought in the Asante-Fante war of 1807-1817.<sup>42</sup>

Asante-Gyaman cooperation however, came under strain in about 1817. In September 1817, Bowdich reports that the relations between Asante and Gyaman rulers were cold.<sup>43</sup> Gyaman eventually revolted in December of that year. The revolt against Asante, which culminated in a war known as Adinkra war, was the result of two factors. First, Adinkra reneged on payment of the Gyaman tribute to Kumasi, because in addition to the tribute Asante demanded Gyaman's Golden Stool.<sup>44</sup> Secondly, Adinkra was confident of military support from Kong and therefore diverted to Kong the tribute he was to pay to Asante.<sup>45</sup> To strengthen their friendship a dynastic marriage was made between Gyaman and Kong in which Adinkra married Nyankura, a Mande princess from Kong.<sup>46</sup> Osei Bonsu regarded Adinkra's refusal to pay tribute to Asante and his alleged alliance with Kong an Asante enemy as a great threat to Asante suzerainty over Gyaman.<sup>47</sup>

More seriously, Asante detested Adinkra's possession of a golden stool, which

<sup>42</sup> Britwum, 'Kwadwo Adinkra of Gyaman' in Arhin (ed) *Brong Kyempim*, P. 71.

<sup>43</sup> Bowdich, (1819), P. 169. See also Agyeman, E.A., *Suma and Seketia Traditions* (1964) 'A note on the foundation of the Kingdom of Gyaman' in *Ghana Notes and Queries No. 9*, November, 1966, Pp. 36-39.

<sup>44</sup> Britwum, in *Brong Kyempim*, P. 71. According to Dupuis, an Asante ambassador was sent to Gyaman in 1820 to help reconcile Gyaman and Asante. The ambassador informed him that Asante fought Gyaman because Adinkra defied them and wanted to transfer allegiance and tribute to the of Kong, a neighbouring Mande Dyula State. See Dupuis, *op. cit.* Introduction, P. xxxiii and P. 98.

<sup>45</sup> Dupuis, *op. cit.* P. 98.

<sup>46</sup> Reindorf, (1895), *op. cit.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, P. 163.

<sup>47</sup> Britwum, *op. cit.* P. 71.

Bowdich describes as being thickly plated and embossed with gold. According to him, the stool was "greater in splendour and value and in every way superior to that used by the Ashantee chief."<sup>48</sup> According to Bowdich the Asante stool was carved out of common wood of the country and encased in golden plates.<sup>49</sup> The Gyaman stool had a far greater meaning and significance for Asante than its reported superior quality. Asante regarded the fabrication of the Gyaman stool as an act of gross arrogance by Adinkra, and a proof of his ambition to become as great and powerful as the Asantehene. In the Asante confederacy, the Asantehene is the only king permitted to possess and sit on a stool decorated with gold.<sup>50</sup> The carving of the golden stool was regarded by the Asantehene as an act challenging his position; he therefore took steps to dispossess Gyaman of the stool.

In 1818, Adinkra surrendered the stool to Kwame Butuakwa, an Asante commissioner who was sent to demand it.<sup>51</sup> This displeased some of Adinkra's subjects, and according to Bowdich Adinkra's sister who was away when the Gyaman stool was surrendered became enraged on her return. She considered Adinkra a coward and reprimanded him severely. Adinkra sought to placate her by ordering another golden stool to be made to replace the one surrendered to Asante.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Bowdich *op. cit.* P. 244, also Britwum in Brong Kyempim P. 72.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Busia, *op. cit.* (1951) P. 56.

<sup>51</sup> Arhin (ed); *Brong Kyempim*, P. 73. Kwame Butuakwa was at the time Asante Resident Commissioner in Abura Dunkwa in the Central Region of modern Ghana and an official of the Asante Treasury. Also Arhin, *Trade, Accumulation and the state in Asante in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (I.A.S. Legon, 1989) P. 15. He asserts that the possession of a golden stool by another ruler in Asante if widely known, would have been the end of the presumption of the Asante of their mastery over their neighbours. Wilks suggests that the rapid growth of the Salaga market led to the decline in the Asante trade to Bonduku and it was this which induced Gyaman to attempt to secede from Asante. See Wilks, (1975) P. 271.

<sup>52</sup> Bowdich, *op. cit.* P. 244.

When the news of the new Golden Stool reached Kumasi, the Asantehene again sent messengers to demand it together with an accumulated tribute of about 1000 ounces of gold. This second demand is said to have infuriated Adinkra who refused to surrender the stool and placed the Asantehene's messengers under arrest. Adinkra is said to have addressed his council of Elders in the presence of the Asante messenger in these words;

Akyekyedee wotwa nkontompo.  
Akyekyedee wotwa nyariyiya. Wo baakofoo  
yi wosie basa, wo sie sre, wotua dua, woto  
kosua – Na wo mma yi bedi deeben? Asante  
kotoko se wogye apem... yanya  
nea ebeba mmra.<sup>53</sup>

This is literally translated, "you tortoise you are a liar and a cheat. You alone you have limbs, you possess a tail, and you lay eggs. What shall your children eat? Asante Kotoko says she is demanding a thousand ounces of gold. From where shall we get it? We cannot afford it. Come what may!"

In describing the Asante as akyekyedee (tortoise) Adinkra emphasized Bono view that the Asante were liars, double-faced, and cheats. Like the tortoise which possesses the features of a mammal and a bird, Asante made two different demands namely, tributes and the Gyaman golden stool. Adinkra considered these demand unreasonable and said that Gyaman could not afford them. The state was prepared to face the consequences. In anger, Adinkra ordered the ears of the Asante messengers to be cut off and all Asante in Gyaman to be thrown into Gyaman gold pits.<sup>54</sup>

By 1818, both Asante and Gyaman had made preparations for war. In Asante,

<sup>53</sup> Arhin, (ed) Brong Kyempim. For details see P. 78 (Footnote No. 29 of Britwum's article)

<sup>54</sup> Dupuis op. cit. P. 165.

Osei Bonsu is reported to have ordered military uniforms, guns and gunpowder from the English, the Dutch, and the Danes for himself and his army during late 1817 and early 1818. Asante is said to have made sacrifices to their deities to solicit their help and support for the war. Moslems in Kumasi were asked to pray for the king's success in the Gyaman campaign.<sup>55</sup> Adinkra could only obtain a limited quantity of arms and ammunition from the English in Cape Coast and failed to obtain supplies from the other Europeans. These European traders had established very good relations with Asante and were not prepared to assist the Gyaman to fight the Asante. Consequently, Adinkra is believed to have made a last minute attempt to negotiate for a peaceful settlement with Asante, but Asante turned down the Gyaman offer of 400 *bendas*, an equivalent of 3200 pounds sterling (Roughly 15.2 million cedis in today's value).<sup>56</sup> Adinkra was able to recruit a large force of about 140,000 men from Gyaman, Kong, Bouna and other neighbouring states.<sup>57</sup> This army was prepared to fight an equally large Asante army of about 80,000 men from metropolitan Asante, Akuapem, Akwamu, Akyem Bosome and Akyem Kotoku and several thousand others mobilised by the Moslems in Kumasi and put under Baba, the spiritual head of Moslems in Asante.<sup>58</sup>

Hutchison says that the Asante army first encountered the Gyaman army on the Gyaman frontier in February 1818.<sup>59</sup> The two forces fought gallantly and showed that they were skillful and courageous fighters.<sup>60</sup> They are said to have attacked and killed

<sup>55</sup> Hutchison's Diary in Bowdich, (1819) Pp. 381-446. It was the usual practice for the Asantehene to request the spiritual backing of the Asante deities and Moslems to pray to God to intercede to ensure Asante victory in war.

<sup>56</sup> Reindorf, *op. cit.* P. 165. He asserts that Adinkra sued for peace because the army from Kong failed to arrive on time.

<sup>57</sup> Dupuis, (1824). Appendix P. cxxx

<sup>58</sup> Dupuis, *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Hutchison's last despatch of February 1818, in Bowdich, *op. cit.* P. 440.

<sup>60</sup> Arhin, (ed) *Brong-Kyempim*, P. 79 footnote no. 40

several of the Asante forces, and successfully pushed the rest away from the Gyaman territory. When it seemed that Gyaman had won the war, Amankwaatia, the Bantamahene and war commander is said to have consulted with Kokofu, Dwaben and Bosome chiefs to adopt a new strategy. With the help of their armies the Asante crossed the Tain and routed the Gyaman forces.<sup>61</sup> Some were killed; others managed to escape from the battlefield to Kong and about five thousand others including Tamia, Adinkra's sister and Apau his son were taken captive to Kumasi.<sup>62</sup>

The fate of Adinkra, the Gyamanhene, is not certain. Osei Bonsu the Asantehene is reported to have told Dupuis that Adinkra was killed, his gold taken away, and his skull broken.<sup>63</sup> Asante allegedly captured the Gyaman stool after Gyaman had been completely defeated.<sup>64</sup> Oral traditions of the people of Suma Ahenkro assert however that although Adinkra was defeated, the Gyaman stool was not captured, and the Asante army did not kill Adinkra. The traditions allege that when Adinkra realized that the state would be defeated, he asked his wife to hide the stool regalia and then committed suicide.<sup>65</sup> Adinkra's son, Apau who was put under severe torture, showed a different body to the Asante war commanders.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Arhin, (ed) *op. cit.* P. 76.

<sup>62</sup> Agyeman, Suma Traditions *op. cit.* Appendix III. Arhin, *The financing of the Asante expansion* (Legon, I.A.S.) 1965 P. 16. Also Wilks, (1975) Pp. 247 and 320. Tamia is said to have been given in marriage to Adumihene Kwadwo Sampene. Their daughter Apomahwene married Kofi Kakari and gave birth to Owusu Teseamandi. Tamia is said to have been repatriated by Kwaku Dua I (1834-1867). Apau is said to have been killed when he attempted to raise a rebellion in Kumasi in the 1820s.

<sup>63</sup> Dupuis, *op. cit.* Pp. 164-165.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> The traditions of Koti and Seketia in Agyeman, *op. cit.* Appendix II.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* The Asante discovered what they believed to be Adinkra's body with his head almost battered. The body was removed and sent to Kumasi. Britwum asserts that it is very likely that Apau showed the wrong body. I am tempted to agree because of the respect Africans accord the dead particularly chiefs and royals.

Adinkra's death did not end the Asante-Gyaman war. The Gyaman men took refuge in Kong territory, reorganized and returned immediately with troops sent by Kong to fight the Asante forces. This compelled Asante to remain in Gyaman till 1819, when they returned to Kumasi. By then the political atmosphere in Gyaman had returned to normal.<sup>67</sup> However, Asante tightened its control over the state. Gyaman was made a province in lieu of the tributary rank it enjoyed before.<sup>68</sup> Asante assumed full and undisputed control over the sovereignty of Gyaman. Asante stationed permanent troops at Amanaha, on the banks of the Assin river in Gyaman. The object was to prevent the Gyaman inhabitants from trading or having direct communications with the European traders along the coast.<sup>69</sup> The Dutch diaries and correspondence of 1815-1823 record that Asante appointed a Caboceer as king of Bontooko.<sup>70</sup> The Caboceer became an Ohwesoni (personal representative) of the Asantehene who from then jointly ruled Gyaman with Adinkra's successor, who was chosen, according to custom from the Zanzan ruling house.

The maintenance of an Asante army to supervise Gyaman, and its neighbours and the appointment of an Asante resident official after the 1818-war show the firm grips that Asante had on Gyaman. It shows that Asante was not satisfied with the previous administrative arrangement in Gyaman, which allowed greater power and freedom in the hands of local rulers. In view of these security measures it is very likely also that contrary

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<sup>67</sup> Arhin, (ed); Brong Kyempim, P. 77.

<sup>68</sup> Dupuis, op. cit P. 263.

<sup>69</sup> Dupuis op. cit, Appendix cxx II.

<sup>70</sup> Arhin (ed); Brong Kyempim, P. 77.

to the assertion by Gyan-Duah and Arhin, Berekum was established as a security post after the Adinkra war rather than in 1731.<sup>71</sup>

Asante celebrated the Gyaman defeat with the Bono states that fought on her side. Among them was Tekyiman whose king was in Kumasi with all his sub-chiefs. After the celebration of the Asante victory had ended, Asante announced that it had seized seven Tekyiman villages of the Tano/Tain basin namely Branam, Nkyiraa, Nwoase, Ofuman, Tonoboase, Tanoso and Tuobodom.<sup>72</sup> The reason for the seizure was Asante admiration of their valour, and the spiritual power of their deities. Tekyiman lost absolute control of these villages, which had rich and fertile lands. The Asantehene installed Asante chiefs to rule Asante residents who had settled there after the Bono Asante war of 1722. These Asante chiefs became rivals of the Bono chiefs. Henceforth a system of dual chiefship was established in the Tekyiman district. As was to be expected, the two chiefs became rivals and during the 19<sup>th</sup> century they continually litigated over the ownership of Tekyiman land.

The Ofuman township for instance was divided into Ofuman I, and Ofuman II sections. The former had an Asante chief, and the latter were Bono. The two sections frequently quarrelled over the ownership of Ofuman lands. The people of Ofuman II held that they were the original settlers of Ofuman and should be recognized as the rightful owners of the land.<sup>73</sup> Asantes held that they defeated them and owned the land. By the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Bono of the Tekyiman area had been unsuccessful in their

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* Also Gyan-Duah, C., Church and Society, with particular Reference to the Berekum District of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana; An Unpublished M. Phil. Thesis, Department of the Study of Religions (Legon, 1988), P. 69.

<sup>72</sup> Warren and Brempong (I) Pp. 53, 140.

<sup>73</sup> Information was provided by Madam Mary Kyereme 66 years, Sunyani., August, 1998. See also Warren and Brempong, *Ibid.* Meyerowitz, Early History of Akan States, (London, 1952), Pp. 57-61.

attempts to reclaim ownership and total control of the resources of the seven villages seized by Asante.<sup>74</sup>

Available records show that from time to time, Bono chiefs dutifully provided large numbers of able-bodied men to join the Asante army. Bowdich asserts that Nkoranza supplied about 1000 men to the Asante army. Abesim sent 1500 men to Asante and Tekyiman provided between 6000 and 12,000 men.<sup>75</sup> Nana Atta Effa of Nkoranza is believed to have commanded about 10,000 Bono men during the 1874 war.<sup>76</sup> Other Bono men in the Asante army were captives, who, according to Lewin and Wilks, were captured by Asante from Banda, Gyaman and other states in Bono area during Asante wars against the Bono in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>77</sup>

Bono troops contributed greatly to Asante successes in war. Troops under Amankwaatia, the famous Asante war commander for instance, included captives from Banda, Berekum, Dormaa and Nsuatre.<sup>78</sup> Berekum traditions assert that the state fought for Asante in the 1806-1807 Fante war.<sup>79</sup> According to Busia, Wankyi men contributed to the Asante victory in the Asante-Gyaman war of 1818-1819, and the Asante-Awuna war of 1838-1867.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Information was provided by Madam Mary Kyereme, Sunyani. She claims that the Tekyiman people resettled in the 7 villages when they returned from exile in Gyaman in 1897. The then Tekyimanhene assumed ownership of the villages. See chapter 3 for the conflict between the Bono and Asante residents.

<sup>75</sup> Wilks; *op. cit.* P. 243.

<sup>76</sup> Lewin; *op. cit.* P. 62; Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 247.

<sup>77</sup> Lewin; *Ibid* and Wilks, Pp. 73&247.

<sup>78</sup> Wilks; *op. cit.* P. 247.

<sup>79</sup> Busia; *op. cit.* P. 63. He asserts that Wankyi fought for Asante in the wars of 1874, 1896 and 1900.

<sup>80</sup> Benneh; *op. cit.* See also Arhin; *Asante Security Posts* (I.A.S. March, 1973). Berekum tradition asserts that they paid for the gunpowder they used in Asante wars. Indeed Arhin asserts that (Arhin, 1967, Pp. 283-291) the Bono who participated in Asante wars paid *Apeatuo* and other fees which is collectively referred to as *Ka*. See also Rattray – (1929) P.105. Besides 300men from Berekum are said to have died in the Asante-Fante war. See also Ameyaw, *Traditions of Banda* (I.A.S. 1965) Pp. 25-27. The traditions claim that Banda fought for Asante in her invasion of Fante in 1807-1817. Osei Bonsu is believed to have presented a palanquin, sword and a drum to Bandahene Mgono Mulodwo in appreciation for their contribution to Asante success in the war.

Bono troops were placed in the Adonten division of the Asante army; a position in which they were used as shock troops.<sup>81</sup> In the 1874 war for instance, Kofi Kakari is believed to have placed Bono troops at the hottest parts of the battlefield at Abakrampa and Odaso. The intention was to punish the Bono for consulting the Krakye Dente shrine, which advised them against fighting in this war and other Asante wars.<sup>82</sup>

Asante also developed a superiority complex towards the Bono and generally regarded them as slaves. This is exemplified by an interview Osei Bonsu is said to have had with Apau, the son of Adinkra in 1819. Nana Osei Bonsu is reported to have said:

Your father was a rebel; he was full of pride  
and wanted to be king. He forgot he was a  
slave. He forgot I was his master.<sup>83</sup>

Indeed, the Bono believe that Asante sold most of the Bono captives into slavery. For example after the 1760 and 1818 wars Asante is said to have sold the adult captives from Gyaman into slavery.<sup>84</sup> Tekyiman tradition claim that Nana Dwamenawaa, the Tekyimanhemaa, was made to sweep the Kumasi market and other stinking places in the Asante capital.<sup>85</sup> Bono rulers were in addition marginalized in the administration of the confederacy. The 200 members of the Asantemanhyiamu (Asanteman Council) included only two Bono chiefs namely Nkoranzahene and Tekyimanhene. Even these two were occasionally invited.<sup>86</sup> The Bono resented this exclusion and in the 1890's when the British established their presence in Bono, its chiefs complained to the colonial

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<sup>81</sup> Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 279. Arlin (ed) Brong Kyempim 'Introduction'; Meyerowitz, At the Court of an African Chief (London, 1962). P. 39.

<sup>82</sup> Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 279.

<sup>83</sup> Dupuis, (1824), P. 165.

<sup>84</sup> Wilks, (1975) P 247, also Arlin, The financing of the Ashanti expansion (I.A.S., 1965) P. 16.

<sup>85</sup> Arthur, (1975). P. 43.

<sup>86</sup> Lewin, *op. cit.* Pp. 91, 108.

government about the concentration of administrative power in the hands of Asante in the Council.<sup>87</sup>

The Bono were so disenchanted with Asante rule that they wanted the downfall of that nation. They used the opportunity offered them by the apuo festival to point out Asante's ungratefulness, and to express their delight at Asante's troubles. In an apparent claim that it was the Bono who introduced the nsenee (gold weights) to Asante, Tekyiman apuo songs for example taunted:

We made scales for the Asante porcupines; they only used them to cheat us. The Asante chiefs may have bought them but he did not buy us.<sup>88</sup>

Again when the British captured Nana Prempeh I in 1896, Tekyiman apuo songs taunted Asante by saying:

They know nothing about guns, had they known about guns, would they have let the Whiteman to seize their king Prempeh and Yaa Akyaa without firing a gun?<sup>89</sup>

It is obvious that the Bono never reconciled themselves to their political subordination to Asante. However all attempts to secure their independence were suppressed by the Asante army. The Bono were overawed by the power of the Asante army and acquiesced. They had to bide their time till 1874 when Asante itself was defeated by the British in the "Sagrenti" war.

## 2.2 Post – Sagrenti War Era

<sup>87</sup> Lewin, op. cit. P. 34.

<sup>88</sup> Rattray, Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterlands, (London, 1932), P. 104. See also Danso Atta op. cit. P.11ff.

<sup>89</sup> Rattray, op. cit. Pp. 153-156. This was sung to taunt Asante for its inability to fight the British in 1896 leading to the capture and arrest of Prempeh I and Nana Yaa Akyaa the Asantehemaa (Queenmother). These were taken first to Elmina and finally to the Seychelles Island.

After the Asante defeat by the British in 1874, the Bono adopted a defiant attitude towards Asante. This is summed up in this quote by an unnamed chief of Atebubu:

The Ashanti monarch was formerly our master; The English fought with him and entered his capital. Ashanti with all that pertains to it became the trophies and captives of the conquered. We can assert our independence of Ashanti but will only serve the English who delivered us from the tyrannical rule of the bloodthirsty African monarch.<sup>90</sup>

The above statement is purported to have been the argument of many Bono people after 1874. It explains their preference for British rule and it summarizes the reasons for their hatred for Asante during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Bono who had considered Asante rule to be tyrannical saw the defeat by the British as an opportunity to defy the Asante. Hence after the war, Nana Kwaku Gyan, the Atebubuhene, immediately closed the Asante trade route, which passed through his territory.<sup>91</sup> This compelled the Asante traders to sell in the town at very low prices. This led to the expansion of the Atebubu market. Besides, Atebubu, which had agreed in 1860 to fight Krakye on behalf of Asante, now teamed up with Krakye, Abease, Yeji, Dwan and Wiase to resist Asante rule.<sup>92</sup> Atebubu sent ivory tusk to the British government<sup>93</sup> to solicit their military assistance claiming their inability to fight Asante whom they

<sup>90</sup> Ferguson, G.E. 'Ashanti and the Brong Tribes' in Arhin (ed); Research Review, Ashanti and the Northeast; Ashanti Research Project, Supplement – (Institute of African Studies, 1970). P. 15. Emphasis added.

<sup>91</sup> Ferguson, op. cit. P. 16. Also Ward; op. cit. P. 141. Wilks, 1975 P. 280. Asante citizens in Atebubu were either massacred or made prisoner and all their property appropriated.

<sup>92</sup> Ferguson, ibid. Also a letter by Gouldsbury to Your Excellency, 27-3-1876, in File no. DP/DT 508.7. (I.A.S.). Europeans used inducements or dashes to persuade Atebubu and Krakye to open up the trade route for trade. On July 1876, Krakye was again opened up for free trade on land and the Volta.

<sup>93</sup> Ferguson; op. cit. P. 21.



regarded to be militarily superior.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, the priest of the Krakye Dente shrine who became the spokesman of the Eastern Bono confederacy sent tusks of ivory to the British with this message:

Many years before, the Brongfo had considered Ashanti as the most powerful people they had ever heard of, but it is now quite obvious that there was one more powerful, and that was the English whiteman, so that the Brongfo did not see why they should not prefer the whiteman to Asante.<sup>95</sup>

In 1875, Gyaschene Pimpim regent of Gyaman informed Mensa Bonsu's messengers that Gyaman was no longer the "wife" of the Asantehene but was "married" to the British. Considering the importance of the Bonduku market in the economy of Asante, Mensa Bonsu resorted to negotiations with the Gyaman authorities to restore friendly relations. In 1877, an Asante mission led by a Fante diplomat, Hydecooper, was in Bonduku to negotiate with the Gyaman to restore friendship between Asante and Gyaman. The work of the mission was a spectacular success. By late 1877, most divisional chiefs of Gyaman desired to continue to owe allegiance to Asante to ensure an uninterrupted trade between Asante and Gyaman. Agbodeka asserts that the mission supported Agyeman's opponents to enstool Kokorbo, a favourite of Mensa Bonsu as king of Gyaman. Thereafter, the Gyaman opened the trade route for free trade between Asante

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* See also Wilks (1975) P. 280. The British quickly seized the opportunity of extending their influence into Bono. On March 8 1876, a British special commissioner Gouldsbury and the Chief Priest of the Dente Shrine agreed to trade without inhibitions.

<sup>95</sup> Wilks; (1975), P.280. Two Asante missions were sent to persuade the Krakye people. The Krakye allegedly massacred both missions but Mensa Bonsu did not want to disrupt trade and resorted to negotiations instead of war.

and Bonduku the Gyaman capital.<sup>96</sup> Gyaman-Asante political relations however remained fragile.<sup>97</sup> In 1877 Tekyiman refused to send troops to help Kumasi to quell a rebellion by Dwaben. This resulted in a war with Asante and Tekyiman was defeated. Tekyiman is said to have settled in Gyaman for twenty years and returned in 1897 when the British had defeated Asante.<sup>98</sup>

Nkoranza posed the greatest problem to Bono solidarity and unity in the post – 1874 period. The Nkoranza chiefs considered themselves as paternal uncles of the Asante because of a marriage between Nyarko, niece of Osei Tutu, and Adu Panin of Amakom an uncle of Bafour Twum.<sup>99</sup> As a result, strong kinship ties bound the Nkoranza chiefs to the king of Asante. This is evidenced by the military, political and economic roles Nkoranza played in the Asante kingdom in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Nkoranza acted as the security post of Asante to the northeast,<sup>100</sup> and due to this peculiar position, the state acquired the status of the northernmost province of the Asante kingdom in Bono instead of a vassal state. Nkoranza became a fully recognized member of the Asante union of states, and it enjoyed a privileged position allowed any provincial state in the Asante kingdom.

As an integral state of Asante, Nkoranza formed the left division of the Asante army with the Nkoranzahene as divisional commander.<sup>101</sup> The Nkoranzahene attended the annual Odwira festival, took the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene, and recognized

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<sup>96</sup> Agbodeka, F., *African Politics and British Policy in the Gold Coast 1868-1900*, (Longman, 1971) Pp. 87-89. Also, Ward, *op. cit.* P. 288. In 1877 and 1879 for instance Lonsdale and Smith were in Gyaman to offer the Gyaman British protection if they wished for it. The offer was declined. Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 280.

<sup>97</sup> See Pp. 92-95.

<sup>98</sup> Meyerowitz, (1962), P. 46.

<sup>99</sup> Fynn, *op. cit.* P. 37. This marriage alliance is said to have produced Opoku Ware I of Asante

<sup>100</sup> Arhin, *Papers of G. E. Ferguson*, P. xv.

<sup>101</sup> Wilks, (1975), P. 73.

the Golden Stool as a binding force between the Nkoranza and the Asante states.<sup>102</sup> The Nkoranza chiefs also participated in the installation ceremony of the new Asantehene, and the funeral rites of a deceased one, at which functions the Nkoranza people presented gifts to the Asantehene.<sup>103</sup> On the death of an Asantehene, Nkoranza is said to have sent people to be killed for the ritual towards the burial of the departed king.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, the peace and order in Nkoranza after 1723 facilitated commercial activities between the traders from the north, and Asante.<sup>105</sup>

This friendship and cooperation between Nkoranza and Asante continued into the 1870s; and in the aftermath of the Sagrenti war Nana Atta Effa, the Nkoranzahene, remained loyal to the Asantehene. According to Ferguson, the chief refused to join the Eastern Bono Federation, which was formed to throw off Asante rule. He continued to owe allegiance to Asantehene and sent chiefs to participate in the Asanteman council meetings in Kumasi the Asante capital.<sup>106</sup>

This loyalty of Nana Effa appealed to Kofi Kakari, the then Asantehene. In appreciation, the latter conferred upon the former, court decorations and insignia comprising state umbrellas and accoutrements, gold sandals, and other articles, although the Asante confederacy did not permit any provincial chief to possess such items.<sup>107</sup> The friendly relations between Nkoranza and Asante also enabled Asantehene's market

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<sup>102</sup> Osei-Kwadwo, A Historical Study of the Political system of the Nkoranza traditional area: an unpublished B.A. dissertation, Dept. of History, (Legon, 1992), P. 88.

<sup>103</sup> Osei Kwadwo, P. 89. See also Daily Graphic Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 1999 for Nkoranza's participation in the burial and funeral ceremonies of Otumfuo Opoku Ware II, the Asantehene.

<sup>104</sup> Osei Kwadwo, Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Bowdich, (1819) P. 321.

<sup>106</sup> Ferguson, in Research Review P. 23. See also Lewin op. cit. P. 108.

<sup>107</sup> Ferguson, Ibid.

representatives to stay in Kintampo to collect the one-third proportion of market tolls paid by all traders.<sup>108</sup>

Nevertheless as it is common to most conquered peoples, the desire to be free and exercise self-rule was always present among the Nkoranza people. Hence despite its friendship with Asante, Nkoranza waited for the right moment to assert its independence from Asante. In 1883 when Kofi Kakari was killed in Kumasi, Nkoranza accused Mensa Bonsu of masterminding the murder and used that as a pretext to defy the Kumasi chiefs. To register his discontent with Asante, Atta Effa granted refuge to Mensa Bonsu's opponents. He also protested to the Asantehene against the huge tolls imposed on Nkoranza and other Bono citizens. Nana Atta Effa teamed up with Kwaku Gyan, Atebubuhene, Kwabena Fofie of Tekyiman, Bekwi of Seikwa and Kwadwo Agyeman II of Gyaman and refused to release the Asante fugitives who fled to the area as a result of the succession dispute in Kumasi.<sup>109</sup> This act infuriated Asante but Asante postponed its attack on Nkoranza because of the instability in metropolitan Asante following the destoolment of Osei Bonsu in 1883. When Prempeh I eventually became Asantehene in 1888, Effa's successor, Nana Opoku Katakyera swore the Asantehene's oath to assist Prempeh establish his authority over rebel states in Bono.<sup>110</sup>

This was welcome news to Prempeh in view of the immense economic benefits that Asante derived from the Bono area. Indeed Arhin asserts that the Asante northern

<sup>108</sup> Dickenson, 'Comments on the History of Atebubu' in Arhin (ed), *Ashanti and the North-East* P. 13. See also Wilks, (1975) Pp. 282-285. The Kintampo market expanded after the Atebubu rebellion of 1874. By 1882, it had become the largest market in the north of the Asante Kingdom. Market tolls were shared between the Kintampohene, the Nkoranzahene in whose state Kintampo was situated and Asantehene their overlord.

<sup>109</sup> Wilks; op. cit. Pp. 115, 288, 291, 292 and 583. Also Sorkpor, G.A., *The Leading Amantuo States and their role in the disintegration of the Asante Empire 1874-1901*. (I.A.S. 1966) Pp. 8-9.

<sup>110</sup> Wilks; (1975) Pp. 280, 296, 297.

trade provided her with substantial revenue.<sup>111</sup> The closure of the Atebubu route however severed contacts between Asante and the Dyula and Hausa traders, hence Prempe and his supporters used every means to reassert Asante's authority over the Bono states.

In early 1888 for instance some Asante circulated rumours in their kingdom that the British government had accepted gold valued at about £8,000 from Asante to invade and defeat Atebubu and other Bono states.<sup>112</sup> The motive behind this rumour, according to Ferguson, a British government trade agent was to lower the prestige of the British government so that the people in northern Asante would lose confidence in the British and serve Asante. Because of this, the Asantehene was pleased when in late 1888 the Nkoranzahene pledged his loyalty to Asante. Like Kofi Kakari, Prempeh presented Opoku with a gold sword and other paraphernalia.<sup>113</sup>

As proof of his loyalty, Opoku is said to have refused to give up Owusu Sekyere II, the Mamponghene (who had himself settled in Nkoranza territory) to Prempeh's supporters in the Nkoranza township. This resulted in a conflict between Owusu Sekyere, the Mamponghene and Opoku, the Nkoranzahene. Opoku sought the help of Kwabena Asante the Atebubuhene against Mampong but was denied because of his refusal to join the confederation of the Eastern Bono states.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Arhin, *Ashanti Sources of Revenue and Expenditure* (I.A.S. Legon 1981). Also Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 282. Early in 1876, the Kpembewura (Kpembe Chief) in whose territory the Salaga market was located asserted that at one time as many as 10,000 traders entered Salaga to trade, most of whom were kola traders from Asante. Bowdich (1819) P. 334. Asante is said to have derived about 500% profits from its northern trade. See also Skipton Gouldsbury to Your Excellency 27-3-76. Report on a Journey from Coomassie to Salaga for the purpose of opening up the roads and trade between the former and the coast, (I.A.S. Legon, 1876). Also, PRAAD'A, Adm 1482 No. 5773.

<sup>112</sup> See Ward *op. cit.* P. 284. Considering Asantes' resolve to regain control over Bono, one may have to agree with Ward that in 1878, Mensa Bonsu sent messengers to Gyaman to say that the Queen of England had given the whole of Gyaman to him. The British Governor is said to have sent an official to Bonduku to deny the claim.

<sup>113</sup> Ferguson, *op. cit.* Pp. 20-21.

<sup>114</sup> Captain Dickinson, in Arhin (ed); *Ashanti and the North East* P. 34 ff.

Opoku was destooled before the war because of his links with the Asantehene and he died a few days later. His successor, Nana Effa Kofi appealed for support from Prempe, and though help was delayed Nkoranza won the battle against the Mampong state.<sup>115</sup> Prempe's refusal to help Nkoranza worsened the already strained relations between Nkoranza and Kumasi. Nana Effa declined the invitation from Asante to swear the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene. He was not willing also to release the citizens of Kokofu, Mampong, Nsuta, and Kumasi who had fled to settle in Nkoranza territory. He rather wanted Nkoranza and Kumasi to become "friends apart"<sup>116</sup>.

By June 1892, both Nkoranza and Asante had made preparations for war. Nana Kofi Effa allegedly sent twelve slaves and gold to pledge Nkoranza's allegiance to the fetish priest of Krakye, indicating his preparedness to join the Eastern Bono Confederacy. In response, the Priest is said to have sent charms and gunpowder to Kofi Effa and pledged the confederation's preparedness to assist Nkoranza.<sup>117</sup> The Nkoranzahene also sent four Ivory tusks and twelve predwan of gold valued at £86/ 8 shillings sterling to the British government in an attempt to persuade them to support her.<sup>118</sup> Nkoranza's plight worsened when Asante forces occupied the Mo-Nkoranza border, and prevented the Mo from moving in to Nkoranza territory to help the Nkoranza state. Nkoranza was burnt

<sup>115</sup> Ferguson, *Ibid.* Also Wilks (1975) P. 282. Wilks says that Opoku was not destooled but he committed suicide before the war started. This is not improbable because enemy forces usually made sport of a defeated king's body. In the olden days, chiefs regarded this as disgrace not only to themselves but also to their ancestors, succeeding generations and the state. Chiefs wanted to avoid this and often committed suicide before a war was fought. Informant Nana Kwadwo Mensa, 86 years, former Abakomahene Susuanso - Sunyani, August 1998.

<sup>116</sup> Ferguson, *op. cit.* Pp 19-20

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.* Also Gouldsbury, *Ibid.* It must be noted that the Asante army was still powerful but was preoccupied with inter-state conflicts. When Dwaben was defeated, Asante directed its attention to Nkoranza and other rebel territories. It is true also that Kumasi's response to the rebellion in the eastern Bono was due to the economic importance of the area and Mensa Bonsu's diplomacy. Indeed Krakye allegedly massacred two delegations from Asante in 1876/1877 while trying to negotiate a settlement of the Bono rebellions yet Mensa Bonsu chose not to make war on her.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* The expected help from the British never arrived.

down but they are said to have won the encounter that took place in the swamp and marshes of Kumfa near Kintampo. Asante is believed to have lost about 300 men who were killed or taken captive. This forced the Asante army to retire to Kumasi.<sup>119</sup>

Meanwhile, Owusu Sekyere, the Mamponhene used the strained relations between Nkoranza and Kumasi as an opportunity to reconcile with Prempeh I. Having assured Prempeh of working for the reannexation of the Bono people to Asante, Sekyere became a close ally. Henceforth, Prempeh received most information about the Bono chiefs through him. Ferguson claims that Sekyere informed Prempeh that only Atebubu had signed a treaty with the British. He is said to have revealed that Asante invasion would succeed if Prempeh could exclude Atebubu, when fighting since Atebubu was in close alliance with the British.<sup>120</sup> Sekyere also tried to entice priests of the Krakye Dente shrine not to interfere in the Asante Nkoranza conflict. He is said to have requested the Dente Priests to predict the defeat of Kofi Effa if he fought against Asante. He asked that the Chief Priest should advise Nkoranza to yield to Asante subjection and rule.<sup>121</sup>

Kwasi Gyantrubi, the Dente chief priest rejected these appeals and accepted Nkoranza's appeal for help. He addressed the Mampong messengers with these words,

Your king has fought with the king of Ashanti; he has also fought with the king of Nkoranza. What sympathy has he with either Nkoranza or Kumasi, or what interest has he in their reconciliation?<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ferguson Pp. 22

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

As a demonstration of his support for Nkoranza, the priest arrested the Mamponghe's messengers who numbered about twenty-three, seized their guns, twelve kegs of gunpowder, and an amount of £7/ 4 shillings.<sup>123</sup>

Eventually in 1893 Nkoranza and Asante prepared for another war. Before the war, Amankwaatia Kwame, the Bantamahene who led the Asante army assured the Asantehene on oath that he would proceed to Nkoranza or wherever the king of Nkoranza might be, and bring him as a captive to the Asantehene. He is believed to have said;

I will visit Brumasi, I will take my osen (breastplate) to the king of Prang, Yeji and Dwan. I will encamp at Atebubu where the shady trees will give shelter to my troops, and on my return, I will bring Atebubu, Nkoranza, and all the Bono nations with me to you as part of your kingdom by conquest.<sup>124</sup>

This time, Nkoranza moved early to settle on the Nkoranza-Mo border to avoid another surprise attack by Asante from that direction. The southern trade route to Asante was also closed to prevent Asante traders from selling in the Kintampo market and to prevent a surprise attack from the south.<sup>125</sup>

Unfortunately for Nkoranza, the Atebubu council was divided over their support for her, because of a clause in the Atebubu-British treaty of 1890, which debarred Atebubu from fighting with a foreign country.<sup>126</sup> Hence, with the exception of Kwabena Kru, the Abeaschene, the entire council of Eastern Bono states declined to support Nkoranza. This

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid. See also Lewin, op. cit. P. 171. The other commander was Edwesohe Kwasi Aframe. The Kumasi troops numbering about 17,000 were equipped with between 300-700 snider weapons. Asante troops in Kintampo alone numbered 15,000.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

division among the Bono favoured Asante. It was Asante's desire for Bono to remain divided to be dealt with as individual states. The Asantehene message to Atebubu, which was sent through his messengers Akwa and Opoku, read:

Tell the king of Mampong and the King of Atebubu that the king of Ashanti sends his compliments. That the king wishes to inform them that he is at war with Nkoranza, and cautions the king of Atebubu not to aid the Nkoranza; should Atebubuhene Kwabena Asante do so Prempeh would destroy Atebubu. Prempeh cautions other Brong not to join the war. If the king of Atebubu is for peace, Prempeh is for peace.<sup>127</sup>

The message compelled the Atebubu chiefs to meet again. At the meeting, members expressed the view that although they disagreed on certain issues, they were not unmindful of Asante mischief, and the possibility of Asante attacking them as well. The council declared:

... we know the artfulness of the Ashantis, we were once ourselves members of the kingdom before; In some cases while negotiations are being conducted, their forces are being disposed to the best advantage. In other cases though, you may keep perfect neutrality, yet when the Ashanti army attacks, they invariably include you in the war.<sup>128</sup>

As a result of this perception about Asante, the council pledged their support for Nkoranza. Kwabena Asante, the Atebubuhene replied the Asantehene through Akwa and Opoku, his messengers in these words:

I have never received messengers from Kumasi since I severed my connection with them, and now that Prempe is at war with Nkoranza why should he send to me. Prempe knows that we are all one

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added.

<sup>128</sup> Ferguson, P.24.

member of the Bono tribe. If Prempeh desires peace, he should offer to make peace with the king of Nkoranza. I understand that the king of Nkoranza has asked for the protection of the governor of Accra. In that case, he is my brother, if Prempeh desires peace, he should offer it to my brother, but if Prempeh fights him, notwithstanding, then it is possible his operations may be extended to the other members of the Brong tribe.<sup>129</sup>

When Prempeh failed to persuade the Atebubuhene, he sent another message to the Amantinene, an Atebubu sub-chief, in December 1893 reminding him that his ancestors served Asante and he should do the same. Prempeh regretted the Ohene's attitude in running to Atebubu anytime there was a dispute between Asante and Nkoranza. The state was urged to refrain from the practice, or face the wrath of Asante "after the white man has left the shores of the Gold Coast."<sup>130</sup>

When all efforts to negotiate with the Bono failed, Asante attacked Nkoranza in late December 1893. The expected support from the Eastern Bono states did not come, obviously because of the Atebubu-British Treaty. Only Kintampo and Abease supported Nkoranza in the war.<sup>131</sup> When Atebubu and Krakye finally sent military support to Nkoranza, the state had already been destroyed. Nkoranza claimed to have lost five of its men, in addition to about five thousand women and children who were taken captive to Kumasi.<sup>132</sup> The Nkoranza stool and regalia were looted. Some of the Nkoranza people

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Wilks, (1975) P. 299-300.

<sup>131</sup> Lewin op. cit. P. 46.

<sup>132</sup> Ferguson, Ibid. Also Tordoff, op. cit. P. 63. In the same year, 1893, Samory and his followers, the Sofas defeated the Gyaman and drove out Agyeman, Gyamanhene from Bonduku. Agyeman sent messengers to the coast to ask for British protection. On July 12, 1893, Gyaman was divided between France and Britain. a boundary was drawn so as to leave Bonduku in the French territory of present day Cote d' Ivoire. Old Drobo became the capital of the Ghanaian territory.

crossed the Pru river and settled in Worawora in present-day Volta Region of Ghana.<sup>133</sup>

When Kofi Effa and some of his followers settled in the Atebubu district, Asante anticipated an alliance between Atebubu and Nkoranza and sought to prevent it. Once again, Prempe sent a message to the Atebubuhene, which read:

The king of Ashanti presents his compliments to you all. He has heard that the people of Atebubu and the Brong people are asserting their country. If they like peace, Prempeh is for peace. If they like war they will have it. Prempeh desires that the king of Nkoranza, the king of Atebubu, and the king of Mampong should return to serve him; and they should eat fetish with him; should they not do so, they are not for peace with Ashanti. If they are for peace the King of Ashanti is for peace. If the messengers return with unfavourable reply, the army at Abease shall proceed against Atebubu and the Brong people. Should the invasion of the Brong people, as well as the capture of the Nkoranza king not be feasible now, the army would retire to Kintampo and wait till it can fight them.

Atebubu was allowed five days to consider the message though Asante must have realized its inability to fight a confederation of the Bono states that were supported by government troops of 300 men stationed in the Atebubu territory. When the Asante messengers heard that Kofi Effa was in Atebubu territory they left for Kumasi without proceeding to Atebubu. The expected attack never came, and in October 1894, Akwa and Opoku the Asantehene's messengers delivered yet another message to the Atebubuhene in which Prempeh declared friendly intentions towards the Bono people.

<sup>133</sup> See Map – Ashanti and the North East and Sarkodie, *op. cit.* Pp 20 – 21. Certain Nkoranza traditions do not acknowledge Nkoranza's defeat in 1893. According to these traditions the war ended indecisively. Others claim that Nkoranza was afraid of Asante menace on their peace. And the regent Yaa Saa asked for British protection with fifteen loads of gold. In February 1894 a treaty of trade was signed between Nkoranza and the British government.

Nevertheless, Prempeh did not relinquish his plans to recapture the Bono states. In October 1895, he is believed to have sent about 300 officials and retainers with a gift of gold to Samory the slave raider to solicit his military assistance to defeat the Bono states, but this did not materialize. The relation between Bono and Asante remained strained until 1896 when the British weakened Asante leadership by the capture and arrest of Prempeh and other royals. Thereafter, it became impossible for Asante to reorganize and attack the Bono states again.<sup>134</sup>

## 2.2 Anglo-Bono Relations

In the years following the Sagrenti War, the Asante Security Posts of Asokore-Berekum and its allies in Odumase and Nsuatre became targets of destruction by their Bono neighbours. Since their creation, Asantes in these towns fought on the side of Asante against Bono.<sup>135</sup> The people of Berekum for example, were instrumental in the Asante defeat of Gyaman in 1818. They are believed to have fought so courageously that as a mark of his appreciation, Osei Bonsu, the Asantehene presented Nana Kwaku Diawuo, the then Berekumhene, with a sword to signify his bravery in the war.<sup>136</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Gyaman in particular and other Bono regarded Berekum as a threat to their sovereignty. Gyaman and their cousins at Dormaa looked for an opportunity to attack the state to liberate Berekum neighbours from the Asante yoke. The British defeat of Asante in 1874, and the inter-state conflicts that followed in metropolitan Asante provided the opportunity for Gyaman to attack her.

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<sup>134</sup> Ferguson, *ibid.* Also Ivor Wilks, *op. cit.* P. 388. It is believed that Samory requested 1000 ounces of gold which Prempeh considered exorbitant. See also Tordoff, *op. cit.* P. 63 and Agbodeka *op. cit.* Pp. 162-164, 166-168. Lewin *op. cit.* Pp. 171, 173-174, Cardinal, *The Gold Coast* (London Press, 1931) Pp. 33, 34, 47.

<sup>135</sup> Arhin, 'Ashanti Security Posts in the North-West' in Arhin (ed) *Brong Kyempim*.

<sup>136</sup> *ibid.*

In or around 1883, Dormaa and Gyaman formed an alliance and jointly attacked and sacked Berekum and its allied states of Nsuatre and Bosomtwe Odumase. The immediate cause of the Berekum-Gyaman war was the killing of some Gyaman traders in Berekum, and the refusal of Nana Kwasi Diawuo the Berekumhene to surrender the culprits for trial. The remote cause for the war was that the pro-Asante states of Berekum, Nsuatre and Odumase had refused to ally with Gyaman to rebel against the Asantehene after the 1874 war. Gyaman, like the other Bono states had rebelled because of the desire to secure their independence from Asante.<sup>137</sup> It needed the support of neighbouring states to enable her defeat the Asante army. When Gyaman failed to persuade Berekum and its allies to support her, the former used the killing of its traders in Berekum as a pretext to attack Berekum.

The war, which became known as the Nkyibena (sacred tuesday), disorganized the Berekum state. Berekum citizens fled to Wankyi, Duayaw Nkwanta and other pro-Asante states. Many other Berekum citizens were captured and sent to Bonduku, the Gyaman capital, until Diawuo's successor, Nana Kwaku Datte successfully negotiated for their return in about 1885. Just before Nana Datte died, he instituted the oath of Nkyibena in remembrance of the war. The refusal of Asante to assist Berekum in the Nkyibena war marred the friendly relations between Berekum and Asante. In 1890, during the reign of Nana Kwabena Owusu (1882-1920), Berekum accepted the colonial government's protection and control.<sup>138</sup>

The active participation of the British in Bono affairs in the post-Sagrenti war

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<sup>137</sup> See P.76 for Gyaschene Paimpi's message to Kumasi and Hydecooper's mission to Bonduku.

<sup>138</sup> Benneh, *op. cit.* See also Berekum Traditional Council Records: PRAAD/SY RAO 2/37 Berekum Native Affairs, Sunyani.

period contributed to Bono defiance of Asante. The chiefs of Wiase, Nkoranza, Abease, Amantin, Boase, Ofuman, Nkra, Wankyi and Nsoko entered into treaties of friendship and trade with the British in February 1894.<sup>139</sup> Gyaman, Atebubu and Tekyiman in 1889, 1890, and 1897 respectively, also entered into treaties of friendship and freedom of trade with British government officials.<sup>140</sup>

In 1895, Prempeh was told by the British to refrain from attacking his neighbours especially those of Nkoranza, which had asked for and was being given British protection.<sup>141</sup> In early 1896, Lt. Col Piggot a British official is said to have supplied Nkoranza and other neighbouring towns with gunpowder as a means of protecting themselves against attacks from Samory although Samory was in far away Gyaman along the present Cote d'Ivoire border.<sup>142</sup> It is not surprising that most Bono states fought for the British or remained neutral during the Yaa Asantewaa war of 1900.<sup>143</sup> The Asante defeat enabled Bono to secure a temporary relief from Asante rule. In 1901, Asante was declared a British protectorate state, and from 1902, Asante and Bono were under direct rule of the British government.

### Summary

The Bono rightly believed that the Asante attacked them in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to secure control of their gold, ivory and other resources. Following the Asante conquests, the Bono became vassals of Asante. They paid huge annual tributes, and provided men

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<sup>139</sup> Wilks (1975) Pp. 280, 288, 296-297. Also Ferguson in Arhin (ed) Pp.25-26

<sup>140</sup> Tordoff, (1965). Pp. 49 and 145, Ward, op.cit. P.301

<sup>141</sup> Tordoff, op.cit. Pp. 60, 92.

<sup>142</sup> Wilks; (1975) P. 388. Also see Dickinson 'Comments on the History of Atebubu' in Arhin (ed) Ashanti and the North East, P. 36. Also Lewin op.cit. P. 178.

<sup>143</sup> Ward, op.cit. P. 311. Among the states, which assisted Asante in 1900, were Bekyem, Duayaw Nkwanta and other Ahafo states. Atebubu, Tekyiman, Wankyi, Bereku, Wam (Dormaa), Nkoranza and Gyaman (Drobo) helped the British by contributing men or allowing British troops to camp in their territory.

for the Asante army. Asante appointed ahwesofoo (overseers), to settle in Bono and supervise the subject states. Asante administrative policies undermined the authority of the Bono chiefs, but they could not relieve themselves of the Asante yoke because of the strength of the Asante army. Gyaman, which defied Asante power, was attacked and defeated anytime they rebelled. More often than not, the Bono were captured and killed and their gold resources were looted.

The pain and indignities of Asante rule found expression in Bono apuo songs, which often celebrated Asante misfortunes. The defeat of Asante in 1874 came as a relief to the Bono who from then on continually defied the Asantehene's authority. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, certain Bono states entered into treaties of friendship and protection with the British and in 1902 both Bono and Asante went under British rule.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.1 THE EMERGENCE OF BONO AS A SEPARATE REGION

When Asante and the Bono states became British protectorates in 1901, the way was paved for the Bono to reconsider their relation with Asante. It became clear during the first thirty years that the long period of Bono subjection to Asante rule had had some impact on some of the Bono states. The paramount chiefs of Dormaa, Bosomtwe Odumase, Tekyiman and Wankyi, and the sub-chiefs of Seikwa, Suma and Seketia continued to swear the oath of allegiance to Asante chiefs.<sup>1</sup> They also referred instoolment and destoolment cases, oath swearing, and other customary issues to the Asante Native Authority.<sup>2</sup> The people of Bosomtwe Odumase who were royals from Bantama in Kumasi continued to provide chiefs for the Bantamahene's stool. In 1900 for instance, Kwabena Kyere was enstooled chief of Bantama, and in 1930 Nana Kwame Koran of Odumase abdicated his stool, to become the Bantamahene with the title Kwame Gyau II.<sup>3</sup>

The chiefs of Berekum, Sunyani, Drobo, Atebubu, Abease, and Nkoranza among others who were elevated to paramount status by the British colonial government were, however, inclined to sever all political links with Asante after 1901.<sup>4</sup> In the period before

<sup>1</sup> Lewin, *op cit*. P. 212; Also see Annual Report on Asante by Chief Commissioner, Asante in PRAAD'K ARG 1/2/20/11. The sub-chiefs were displeased with their position as subordinates of the Gyamanhene.

<sup>2</sup> PRAAD'A Adm 1312, Berekum Native Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*. The people of Bosomtwe Odumase assert that their ancestors migrated from Kumase Bantama to settle in their present location for security reasons. See also Tordoff, *Ashanti under the Prempehs 1888-1935* (O.U.P. London, 1965), P. 102

<sup>4</sup> PRAAD'K ARG 1/2/17/6, Tekyiman Affairs. The Ofumanhene now sent elephant tusks, tails and forelegs of big game to Tekyiman instead of the Asantehene. See also Tordoff, *op. cit*. Pp. 145-146, 303, 304. The disunity among the Bono was a problem to Bono solidarity throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1931 for example Dormaa, Berekum, Wankyi and Kintampo supported Asante to protest against the proposal by the Further Retrenchment Committee set up by the British Government to find a means of

Prempeh's return in 1924 and the restoration of the Asante Confederacy in 1935, Asante was unable to exercise effective control over the Bono states. This enabled each state to regulate its own internal affairs under the direct supervision of the Colonial government. Consequently, relative peace and harmony prevailed between the Bono states and Asante.

In 1924, when the British proposed to reinstate the Asante monarchy, Asante chiefs assumed that Prempeh's return would mean the restoration of the pre-colonial kingdom of Asante. This belief persisted in spite of the fact that early in 1924, nineteen Asante chiefs had signed a document prepared by the British government, which stated that Prempeh I would remain a private citizen, hold no official status and exercise no authority over the Bono states.<sup>5</sup>

Despite this agreement, Asante tried to re-assert its control over the Bono states. For example in 1924, Nana Kwame Akowua, the Akwamuhene of Kumasi requested the Wankiyihene to join Asante chiefs to welcome Prempeh I from exile, because of the so called "immemorial" loyal service rendered by Wankyi to the Asante monarchy.<sup>6</sup> Shortly before his re-instatement as Kumasihene on 12 November 1926, Prempeh was reported to have sent gunpowder to the chiefs of Nsuatre, Subonpan and Wankyi to kill elephants for personal consumption. Apart from Wankiyihene who was prepared to send elephants because he had done so in the past, the other states refused the request.

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increasing the revenue of the government. Bono States called this an attempt to undermine and destroy Asante. Atebubu, Tekyiman, Nkoranza, Drobo, Abease and Banda however supported the committee's proposal that Asante and the Northern Territories be administered as a single entity.

<sup>5</sup> PRAAD'SY BRG, 28/1/1 "Secret File" W.P.A. 1/1925, Sunyani

<sup>6</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/8 "Secret File" P. 8. Letter from Kwame Akowua, Head Chief of Akwamu Ahenfie (New Asafo) Kumasi, to Wankiyihene - 14-3-1924. At the same time Prempeh sent gunpowder and lead bars to the Tekyimantahene to provide him with bush meat. Prempeh also sent a case of gin to the chief of Yeji as a token of gratitude for the Yejihene's prayer for his repatriation. The main concern of the British however was the fear of a possible re-organization of the Asante Kingdom to fight them. Hence the British official in Kumasi advised Wankyi and Tekyimantia not to secure further supplies of gunpowder from Prempeh.

These acts of interference in Bono native affairs by Asante caused anxiety among some Bono chiefs and led them to inquire from the British government about their status viz-a-viz that of the Asantehene and his sub-chiefs.<sup>7</sup> The apprehension among the Bono of the Wankyi district came to the notice of Geoffrey Parker, the District Commissioner (D.C.) of Wankyi. In 1925, he reported that the chiefs of the Wankyi district had ever since Prempeh's return been 'anxious and nervous' as to their exact status.<sup>8</sup>

Asante made similar interferences in the Dormaa district. In 1926, Prempeh I invited the Dormaahene to his installation ceremony informing him that the British government was restoring him as Asantehene. In response the Dormaahene sent some chiefs to represent the state at Prempeh's installation.<sup>9</sup> Again in June 1927, the Akwamuhene of Kumasi accepted to arbitrate in a case involving two young men and their Odikro at Wamahinso. Since the incident occurred in the Dormaa state it was expected that the Akwamuhene would allow it to be handled by the Dormaahene's council. Accordingly, Mr. Ballentine, the Provincial Commissioner of Sunyani informed the Akwamuhene that he had no business interfering with affairs in the Dormaa division.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, some of the Bono chiefs and their "youngmen" revived their Asafo (warrior organizations), to deal with any Asante threat to re-subjugate them. Between 1924 and 1936, (when the asafo companies were disbanded in the Asante Confederacy), the various Bono Asafo companies destooled pro-Asante chiefs at Nkoranza, Tanoso,

<sup>7</sup> PRAAD'SY "Secret File" District Commissioner, Wankyi to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, 21-1-1925. P. 27.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Tordoff; op. cit. Pp. 208, 209, 221.

<sup>10</sup> PRAAD'SY BRG. 28/1/1 "Secret File". P.60. J.A. Ballentine to Akwamuhene of Kumasi; 9-7-1927. The Commissioner described these demands as very dangerous, as it meant that Prempeh was trying to assert his overlordship over the Wankyi and Dormaa stools.

Tekyiman and Tuobodom.<sup>11</sup> Writing about them in his 1924/25 annual report, the D.C of

Wankyi, observed that:

... there is a gradual and an almost imperceptible change coming over native affairs in Ashanti, the Ashanti chiefs have tried cases from time immemorial, and with the power of life and death, they demanded blind obedience. The blind obedience is no longer the order of the day, because the youngmen are no longer ignorant. They do not fear torture of death at the hands of a more or less barbaric tyrant. The former fear had been displaced by a feeling of independence and safety which gives vent to criticism of their elders, and a desire when dissatisfied to take the law into their own hands.<sup>12</sup>

In 1929, the Asafo of Odumase tried to prevent the entoolment of pro-Asante chiefs in the town. The Odumase state was divided into pro-Asante and pro-Bono divisions with each division having its own chief.<sup>13</sup> The litigation, bickering and infighting between these divisions affected the social development of the town. For

<sup>11</sup> PRAAD'K, ARG. 1/2/17/2, Tekyiman Native Affairs, Kumasi. The leaders of the Asafo companies in Wankyi and Nkoranza districts were wing chiefs. The leaders of the Nkoranza Asafo for example included Kyidomhene Yaw Anane, Okyeame Kwasi Daa and Krontihene Kwame Boadu. In the 1920s Tekyimanhene Yaw Kramo (1921-27) was destooled and murdered because of his links with the Asantehene. Again in Tekyiman, Asafoakye Agyei led some Tekyiman "youngmen" to destool Nana Yaw Ameyaw (1928-30) who was perceived by the "youngmen" of having links with Asante. For more on Bono Asafo, see ARG. 1/2/17/2, PRAAD'SY RAO 1/104 Sunyani

<sup>12</sup> PRAAD'SY, BRG. 28/20/15. Report of the Western Province of Ashanti (W.P.A.). 1923/1925. See also Tordoff, *op. cit.* Pp. 303-304, Wilks, (1975) Pp. 375, 379, 382, 384, for more information about Bono Asafo activities in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Also BRG. 28/2/48, Nkoranza Affairs, 7-3-33. Certain ambitious chiefs used the Asafo to pursue their objectives. In Nkoranza, J.S.R. Robertson the D.C. wrote to the Assistant Chief Commissioner of Asante and stated: "As regards the Omanhene, since I took over the district, I have had more trouble in his division than all my other divisions put together. I think generally, this is all due to the Omanhene calling on the Asafo on every possible occasion to do his work, whether it is destooling (sic) or court work. The young men run wild, and he has no control over them. If the young Omanhene could be persuaded to disband his Asafo company and sit down quietly with his elders and run his division like any other Omanhene, he would find things very much better for him"

<sup>13</sup> The Bono division was called Antepim Odumase, while the pro-Asante division was called Awua or Bosomtwe Dumase. Both divisions were named after their first chief.

instance, it is said that the dual chiefship contributed to the dissolution of marriages in the town as couples were often divided in their support for the two divisions. It also sometimes prevented prospective couples from marrying. The few who intermarried did not know which division to support during conflicts, and to save their marriages, most of them left the town, and returned only during the funeral of close relatives.<sup>14</sup> Thus throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, there was lack of cohesiveness in Odumase. Rather, suspicion, divisiveness and hatred reigned supreme. The rivalry between the two divisions is also said to have affected the celebration of the Tanyaw festival<sup>15</sup> and mobilizing people for communal labour in the town.<sup>16</sup>

In view of these problems, the pro-Bono Antepim division in 1930 sought to sever all links between Asantes in the state and those in metropolitan Asante. The Antepim division attempted to prevent the installation of a pro-Asante chief in the town when Nana Kwame Koran, the chief of Bosomtwe Odumase became Bantamahene in 1930.<sup>17</sup> Some youngmen of the Antepim section attacked their colleagues from the Bosomtwe division of the town, when the latter were parading Nana Kwaku Fokuo the new chief through the streets of Odumase. This resulted in a conflict between the two divisions. The conflict attracted the Asafo sympathizers from neighbouring pro-Bono states of Fiapre, Nsuatre, and Sunyani. These supported the Antepim division to fight the Bosomtwe

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<sup>14</sup> See Yeboah, History of Dual Chiefship in Sunyani Odumase; an unpublished B.A. dissertation, (Dept. of History, Legon, 1990). Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* For information on the Tanyaw Festival see Arhin, Ghana Today (Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1978). P.8.

<sup>16</sup> See details in Yeboah, *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> PRAAD'A, Adm 1312, Berekum Native Affairs, 1924-1930.

division.<sup>18</sup> Kwaku Gyau died in the conflict and twenty-four others were seriously wounded and treated at the Sunyani hospital.<sup>19</sup>

S. Warring, the Acting Provincial Commissioner of the Western Province of Asante dispatched a police force to restore peace and order in the town. Chiefs of the two divisions were also made to deposit an unspecified amount of money as bond and to promise to be of good behaviour till the actual bond was signed.<sup>20</sup> Nananom Kofi Ansu and Kwasi Sabi, the respective Adikrofoo of Sunyani and Fiapre were fined 100 and 50 pounds respectively.<sup>21</sup> This however could not stop the rivalry between the two divisions; neither did it prevent the Asante chiefs from interfering in Odumase's affairs. In October 1930, the Antepim chief again reported to the Sunyani D.C. about the "continuing interference of the Bantamahene in Odumase native affairs."<sup>22</sup>

By early 1931, the protests of Bono youngmen had undermined the friendly relations between Bosomtwe and Kumasi chiefs. On 20 March 1931 Kwaku Fokuo, the Bosomtwehene swore the oath of allegiance to Nana Kwadwo Baanie, Omanhene of Berekum instead of the Bantamahene. The new chief promised to keep peace in Odumase, and to sever all connections with the Bantamahene whose influence the chief observed, "usually brought disturbances to the town."<sup>23</sup>

More Bono states protested against the British government's proposal to restore the Asante confederacy. Some of these anticipated a change in their status from

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* Acting Provincial Commissioner, hereafter (A.P.C.) and Western Province of Asante hereafter (W.P.A.)

<sup>21</sup> For details of the agreement see PRAAD'SY, BRG. 23/2/31. Letters from D.C. Sunyani to Chief Commissioner, Asante 1930-1935. A hundred pounds is equivalent to €500,000 in today's value. One pound is about €5,000.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> PRAAD'A Adm. 1312, Berekum Native Affairs.

paramouncy to ordinary chiefs.<sup>24</sup> Others feared a return of another Asante period of tyranny and oppression.<sup>25</sup> Notable among these states was Berekum. After the 1900 war, the British colonial government introduced certain political changes in Bono. Chiefs who fought for them in the 1900 war were elevated to the status of paramount chiefs, while paramount chiefs who supported Asante were demoted to the rank of ordinary chiefs.<sup>26</sup> Berekum, under Nana Kwabena Owusu, fought for the British in 1900, and was elevated to paramouncy in 1903. The colonial government placed Duayaw Nkwanta, Bekyem, Bosomtwe Odumase and Nsuatre, who were Amanhene (paramount chiefs) in the pre-colonial period but backed Asante in the 1900 war under the jurisdiction of Berekum.<sup>27</sup>

As a paramount chief, the colonial government vested the Berekumhene with powers to destool his sub-chiefs for insubordination. The Berekum paramouncy exercised this power in 1930, when Nana Kofi Mensa the Bekyemhene was destooled for carrying to a durbar of chiefs the golden stick, which was the prerogative of the Berekumhene.<sup>28</sup> Nana Kwame Boaten, the Omanhene of Berekum was not prepared to forfeit these privileges, hence he and his elders, and the sixteen Asafoakye (leader of an Asafo organization), of the state led a series of formal protests from Bono against the proposed restoration of the Asante confederacy.

<sup>24</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/106 Berekum Native Affairs 15-8-33.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Tordoff, op.cit. Pp. 101-109. Also PRAAD'SY BRG. 28/1/23. Busia, op.cit. P.101. North-western Asante comprised Gyaman, Wankyi, Tekyiman, Berekum, Wam, Asafo and Sikasiko. The capital was later transferred to Odumase and to Sunyani. North-Eastern Asante states were Nkoranza, Atebubu and Abease. Nkoranza was its capital.

<sup>27</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/106 and DAOS 1/101. Berekum Affairs 15-8-33. See also Excerpts from Petition by Berekumhene and elders to Chief Commissioner, 5-8-1933 in PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/106. Also Tordoff, Op.cit. P. 134. For example, most of the sub-chiefs of the Berekum State like Duayaw Nkwanta were situated far from Berekum. Tordoff was wrong in saying that the post-1900 reorganization of Asante was for administrative convenience rather than of punishing the rebel and rewarding royal states.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. For other problems see also Tordoff, op.cit. Pp. 210, 324-328.

In 1933, they complained to the D.C. at Sunyani that Asante will resume their tyrannical, atrocious, cruel and inhuman acts; and that they did not share in the opinion that Asante should once again return to the olden dynastic regime of central government.<sup>29</sup> Abease, Atebubu, Drobo, Dormaa, Gyaman, and Tekyiman also protested against the restoration of the confederacy. Wankyi and Nkoranza were neutral, while Banda and Kintampo favoured the restoration.<sup>30</sup> Tekyiman, Wankyi, Abease, and Dormaa, which in 1924 had pledged to contribute £100 sterling yearly towards Premph's restoration, reneged on their pledges.<sup>31</sup>

The protests by the Bono states towards the restoration of the Asante confederacy threatened the success of British administrative policies. At the time, Britain was interested in establishing large Native Authorities to which responsibilities such as health, education and road construction could be delegated. In an attempt to overcome Bono protests, the District Commissioner of Sunyani assured the Bono states that in the restored confederacy, the domestic affairs of "properly constituted divisions" would not be interfered with.<sup>32</sup> The Bono were also assured that the restoration would not affect

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<sup>29</sup> PRAAD'SY, BRG 28/2/24, Enstoolment of Chiefs, W.P.A. It is not clear whether Asante exercised some authority over Berekum in the 1930s. However before Berekumhene endorsed the installation of Kwaku Fokuo as Odumasehene, the Berekum stool elders requested him to swear to sever all political and traditional links with the Bantama stool. Berekum stated in the petition: "We are Bono and Bono and Asante have nothing in common. The restoration of the confederacy is a retrogressive step: to join forces with Asante would be to invite disaster. We need no masters besides the British. If government has failed to hold their trust with us, then because we are left unprotected, we shall return to serve French Gyaman, our former overlord. We will not recognize and will never dream of going to amalgamate with Kumasi." See also PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/106, Berekum Affairs. Also Tordoff, (1966) Pp. 135, 136, 383. Somehow the fears of Berekum were justified. In 1935, the chief of Duayaw Nkwanta claimed the rank of Omanhene and a jurisdiction over Berekum, Nsuatre and Odumase. The British government regarded the claim as unreasonable and disallowed it.

<sup>30</sup> Tordoff, (1966) P. 388

<sup>31</sup> Secret File P. 60. By 1930, Tekyiman had already paid £60 but stopped payment. The other states reported that they were too poor to pay anything.

<sup>32</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO'S 2/8 Secret File P. 110. Also Brong Kyempim File RAO 2/104, Paragraph 7 Africa, Vol. XL II No.2 April 1972. At the same time, the British sent a contradictory message stating that states could withdraw from the confederacy, subject to the approval of their application by the British government.



their liberty and freedom of thought, but "a high standard of justice would be maintained in the confederacy." Bono states could therefore withdraw from the confederacy when they so wished.<sup>33</sup>

By 1935 the British had successfully persuaded the Bono states to join the confederacy. Most Bono chiefs willingly took the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene during the durbar for the restoration of the confederacy on 31 January 1935. All the chiefs of the Berekum State, and their counterparts in the Drobo and Wam Pamu (Dormaa) states, pledged their loyalty to the Asantehene. Other chiefs were Kofi Wiafe of Nkoranza, Fosu Gyeabour II, Tekyimanhene, Kwasi Boakye of Wankyi and Kwasi Appia of Odumase.<sup>34</sup>

The British government was insincere in its assurances to the Bono chiefs. At the durbar to mark the restoration of the Asante Confederacy, the Chief Commissioner of Asante declared that:

The British government met the Ashanti people under the administration of a sort of monarchy according to their national rights and customs with the late Prempeh as their king. It battled the people, subdued them...smashed up their kingdom. If it now turned out that the very government having realized its faults in the above respect and the wrongs it had done to the people, is desirous to make amends by the restoration of their

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* See also Tordoff, (1966), Pp 339, 388. The British officials were themselves divided over the question of restoration of the Asante confederacy. In 1932, the D.C. of Sunyani, Mr. Sanderson protested against what he called "The policy of coercion". He argued that the policy could provoke the Bono to lose confidence in the British administration. To him, "it was not correct to reckon as members of the Ashanti confederation people who were continually endeavouring to assert their independence." Sir Shanton Thomas, the Chief Commissioner of Asante wrote to the Secretary of State in March 1934 and argued among other things that, "the political amalgamation of Asante and the Bono would make a stronger state and facilitates administration."

<sup>34</sup> Wallace-Johnson; A Full and Illustrative Report of the Restoration of the Asante Confederacy (London, The Farleigh Press, 1935) Pp. 38-39. Other chiefs were Kwaku Atuahene, Goasohene and Akwasi Paka III Tekyimanahene.

natural rights, in the form of a confederacy. I see no reason why there should be any objection whatever to its inauguration, or why the question of petition from the Amanhene should have any bearing on the subject.<sup>35</sup>

Agyeman Prempeh II, the Asantehene, also perceived that the ancient Asante Confederacy had been restored. In the last paragraph of his address at the durbar Prempeh declared,

We are serving the British government because they fought and conquered us, in the same way you too are serving me because I fought and conquered you, therefore be submissive and help me to serve the British government peacefully.<sup>36</sup>

This declaration of support by the British government enabled the Asantehene to resume his position as leader of an Asante kingdom. Between 1935 and 1951, the Bono chiefs suffered indignities under Asante. They verbally protested or petitioned the Law Courts. In 1951, the chiefs of Tekyiman, Drobo, Abease, Sunyani, Dormaa and Suma presented some of their grievances in the form of a Petition to the Convention Peoples Party (C.P.P.) government for redress.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.2 Bono Grievances

First, the states resented the rule, which obliged Bono chiefs to swear the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene as a condition for recognition by the Asantehene and the British government. Until a Bono chief swore the oath, he was regarded as Nkwankwaahene (chief without rights) and denied gazetting by the government.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Wallace-Johnson, *op. cit.* p.9.

<sup>36</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 B.K.F. File.

<sup>37</sup> See petitions in B.K.F. file.

<sup>38</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 B.K.F. File, Droboman's Petition to the Mate Korle Commission, 1951.

Besides, such swearing ceremonies involved a great deal of expenditure. Dormaa for example claimed to have incurred "huge financial losses" when Nana Kofi Asubonten, their chief, swore the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene in Kumasi in 1941.<sup>39</sup>

The Bono states as well regarded as demeaning, offensive, and an affront to Bono dignity, and culture, the practice whereby the Asantehene stepped on the neck of a Bono chief when swearing the oath of allegiance.<sup>40</sup> The Drobo regarded chiefs who swore the Asantehene oath to be unworthy of respect of their subjects; rather they deserved destoolment. In 1951, the Droboman chiefs declared,

The mode of swearing the oath by placing the Asantehene's foot on our chief's head when taking the oath of allegiance was a principal cause for the Droboman chieftaincy becoming unsuitable (sic). Thus every chief who swears that oath was despised by his people and deposed.<sup>41</sup>

After 1935, Bono chiefs were treated with contempt and regarded as inferior to their Asante counterparts. At a durbar of Asante chiefs in February 1935, Nana Yeboa Afari of Dormaa was singled out for humiliation when he was asked to remove his fillet and sandals in public before greeting the Asantehene.<sup>42</sup> Nana Afari felt disgraced and was compelled to leave the durbar grounds abashed and humiliated.<sup>43</sup> In 1941, Okyeame

<sup>39</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/37 Dormaa Native Affairs, Pp. 388-89, 30-11-1948.

<sup>40</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 Statement of Grievances by the Drobo State in relation to the Ashanti confederacy. P.19. This is a sign of submission and the acceptance of Asantehene's superiority over the divisional chief. It must be noted that this form of oath taking applied to all the divisional chiefs in the Confederacy, but this does not explain away the objection of the Bono chiefs. Unlike their Asante counterparts Bono chiefs did not regard the Golden Stool to warrant such "humiliation" at the hands of its occupants.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.* See also B.K.F. File The Bono described Asante and the Bono variously. The youth of Abease described Asante as "wolves" and Bono as "sheep". To the Dormaa, Bonos were like the Israelites in the Bible while Asante was compared to the Egyptians. The Drobo described themselves as hewers of wood and drawers of water for Asante. The Abease women stated that Asante aim and interests were inimical to Bono progress because Asante wanted to eliminate Bonoland.

<sup>42</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/37, Dormaa Native Affairs P.29. See also Notes on meeting of the Reconciliation Committee and the B.K.F. 9-8-1951.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

Amoaten of Kumase Amakom referred to Nana Kofi Bosea III of Drobo consistently as Odikro at a court sitting in Kumase.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, at an Asante durbar in 1941, Nana Asubonten of Dormaa was detained in the sun for carrying a golden stool to the durbar grounds.<sup>45</sup> When he failed to answer questions posed to him, he was kept in cells. Dormaa claimed to have given Asante large amounts of money before the stool was released to them.<sup>46</sup>

Drobo chiefs again alleged that Nana Kwasi Bediako, their paramount chief, collapsed and died in 1942 when the Asantehene refused to recognize the Nana Bediako's claim to custodianship over the villages of Dwenem, Kwatwoma, Atuna, Suma and some villages in the Tain area.<sup>47</sup> At a confederacy council meeting in 1950, the Asantehene requested Nana Agyeman Badu to withdraw his suggesting that the council should defer the reading of the Select Committee's report on Local Government on Asante to enable members discuss it thoroughly.<sup>48</sup> The Dormaa people felt humiliated by this ill treatment by Asante, which they regarded as contravening the original understanding that the restoration "would not imperil the enjoyment of individual liberty and their freedom of thought."<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, the Bono asserted that the Asanteman council favoured Asante in judicial and administrative matters. Indeed, following the 1946 and 1947 reorganization

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<sup>44</sup> Droboman Grievance, *Ibid*.

<sup>45</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/37 Dormaa Native Affairs.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>47</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 B.K.F. File, Droboman grievances.

<sup>48</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/37 Dormaa grievances.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*.

of the Asanteman council, Prempeh II used his unlimited powers to appoint only Asantes to the council.<sup>50</sup> Asante also dominated the Confederacy Council. For example out of the twenty-four members of the confederacy council, twenty-two were Asante divisional chiefs including the Asantehemaa and other appointees.<sup>51</sup> The Bono States were dissatisfied that Asante dominated the confederacy council.<sup>52</sup> Also, in 1950, the Asantehene used his prerogative to change the name of the confederacy council from the Asante Confederacy Council to Asanteman Council.<sup>53</sup> The Bono resented this change of name. They feared that Asante would eventually return to the pre-colonial situation.<sup>54</sup>

Again, the Bono claimed that the centralization of Asante courts in Kumasi and their cumbersome procedures rendered the administration of justice rather slow and expensive. Bono claimed that their chiefs who attended these courts were not respected. Hence their chiefs always returned humiliated.<sup>55</sup> The chiefs alleged that the Bono citizens who were tried by the courts usually stayed in Kumase for two and three months, to await the verdict of the courts.<sup>56</sup> Due to such delays, the Bono incurred huge expenditures. Besides the Asante who constituted the majority of the panelists of Asante courts always favoured their kinsmen and allegedly imposed heavy and exorbitant fines on the Bono.

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<sup>50</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/104 B.K.F. File Asanteman-Bono Dispute. Points in Statement of reasons for Bono secession from Asanteman council given by some Bono chiefs.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. It is not clear from the records which Bono states sent delegates to the confederacy council meetings. It seems however that only paramount chiefs attended confederacy council meetings and there were a few of them in Bono

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. For the Bono, Asanteman (Asante states) suggested that all states in the confederacy were Asante. If Bono accepted the change of name then they had accepted the Asantehene as their overlord as well.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

In view of what Bono chiefs regarded as Asante's misrule, some of their chiefs resisted Asante orders. For example, in 1938, Dormaa and Berekum defied the Asanteman order to fell old cocoa trees to improve the production of food crops.<sup>57</sup> The chiefs regarded the order as a deliberate attempt to impoverish Bono citizens. This is corroborated by Drah who asserts that:

In the volatile circumstances of the immediate post World War II period, the Bono chiefs may have felt that the continued enforcement of the order would put their areas in an economically disadvantageous position compared with the true Asante divisions.<sup>58</sup>

Another Bono grievance against Asante was in connection with the Asante National Fund (A.N.F.).<sup>59</sup> The Bono chiefs were aggrieved over the fact that Asante was unfair in the disbursement of the Fund. The Drobo for instance complained that although the state always paid the levy, they were not given any financial assistance when bushfire destroyed Atuna and Kwamesekrom in 1939. Besides, up till 1951, the only Bono beneficiary of the Asanteman Scholarship Scheme was Abrefa Busia of Wankyi, who later became Prime Minister of Ghana. That scholarship was even withdrawn at some

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<sup>57</sup> Arhin (ed) (1979). Pp. 130-131. See also Busia, *op. cit.* P.121. Since 1912, Asante and the Bono neglected their food crop farms in favour of cocoa production. By 1938, almost every forest in Asante had been cleared for cocoa farming. To improve food crop production, the Asanteman council passed a resolution to forbid cocoa production in Asante.

<sup>58</sup> Arhin (ed) 1979, P. 131

<sup>59</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104. Also Busia, *op. cit.* Pp. 173-175. The ANF was an annual levy of two shillings sterling per man and one-shilling sterling per woman. The Asanteman council collected this for communal development and to raise revenue for scholarship for students in the confederacy. Of the total amount collected, each division retained two-thirds part and paid one-third into the 'National' Fund. A committee administered the fund. According to Nana Kofi Aboagye, the Akyeamehene of Tekyimian, the levy was collected between October 1 and January 31. Gong gong was beaten to announce the collection. Asante officials collected the tax from persons above seventeen years. Family heads were obliged to ensure that everybody paid the tax.

point, as was the case of other Bono beneficiaries. In the case of Busia, Asante withdrew the scholarship when he allegedly failed his examinations at the Oxford University.<sup>60</sup>

It is obvious also that the Bono were neglected by Asante in the provision of social services like maintenance of buildings, and improving upon the existing public facilities in Bono towns. After his tour of the Drobo and Gyaman districts in 1952, the D.C. of Sunyani observed that the Bono area was still an extremely backward area, which had received very little benefit from their association with Kumasi.<sup>61</sup> Indeed the main objective of the Youth and Development Associations, which were formed in the 1950s in Badu, Dormaa and Nsuatre, was to improve what the Dormaa Youth Association described as "the long neglected Bonoland."<sup>62</sup>

The Bono chiefs of Abesim, New Drobo, Dormaa and Tekyiman also protested to the British government against Asante chiefs' resumption of claim on Bono land and resources.<sup>63</sup> Land in these states was considered by Asante to be the exclusive property of the Asantehene because Asante defeated them in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>64</sup> Since custodianship of land among the Akan was associated with allegiance of the subject chief to the paramount chief, Asante also expected the Bono chiefs to owe allegiance to the Asantehene. For instance in 1935, Bono and Asante settlers in Tanoso fought when the newly enstooled chief of the town refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the

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<sup>60</sup> Arhin (ed) (1979), P. 132. Explanation by C.E. Osei the Financial secretary of the confederacy council. The Scholarship Board was dominated by Asantes. The only Bono on the Board was one Boahen who was there in his capacity as an Education Officer of Sunyani.

<sup>61</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/14, Letter from the District Commissioner, Sunyani, to the Chief Commissioner, Asante, July 1954.

<sup>62</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 27/1/2 Dormaa Traditional Council Affairs; Part of Dormaa's resolution read: "The Bono states have realized the need to form a federation of Brongs for the improvement of the long neglected Brongland". See also PRAAD'SY DAOS 2/31, 1/11, 1/93 and 2/11 for other associations formed in the 1950s.

<sup>63</sup> See letters and petitions in PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104. B.K.F. File.

<sup>64</sup> See Nsumankwaahene of Kumasi's letter in PRAAD'S RAO 2/8 Tekyiman Native Affairs P.9.

of the confederacy. Prempeh II was appointed its vice president.<sup>68</sup> After five days' sitting, the committee decided that ownership of Tekyiman, and its villages must by virtue of the 18<sup>th</sup> century conquest be given to the Asantehene. The committee argued that the "question of a monarch's title to the fruit of his conquest is not one of privilege or prerogative, but of legal or dynastic right."<sup>69</sup>

Tekyiman felt cheated by the decision of the Committee and protested. As proof of its dissatisfaction, Nana Kwaku Kyereme, Tekyimanhene, and Nana Gyako II, his successor refused to swear the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene in 1936 and 1939 respectively.<sup>70</sup> When Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III was enstooled in 1943, he never reconciled himself to the loss of the Tekyiman villages. Although he spent two nights in Kumasi in 1946, he did not pay homage and allegiance to the Asantehene.<sup>71</sup> Nana Ameyaw continued his claims to the seven villages in spite of British government support to Asante.<sup>72</sup> Indeed the Tekyimanhene is believed to have lost a number of court cases at the Appeals Court but these did not discourage him from asking for the restoration of Tekyiman villages.<sup>73</sup> Ameyaw successfully induced his sub-chiefs at Tuobodom, Tanoso and Ofuman to boycott meetings of the confederacy council. On 13 February 1948, eighty-six chiefs, sub-chiefs, youth leaders and elders of the Tekyiman

<sup>68</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 BKF File. See also Tordoff, (1965) P. 352.

<sup>69</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 B.K.F. file. Tekyiman argued that the Committee of Privileges did not alter the ownership of land but only the allegiance of the Tekyiman people. They argued further that since Britain had not carved out portions of Asante for itself, Asante could not likewise carve out portions of the Tekyiman land.

<sup>70</sup> PRAAD'K, ARG. 1/2/17, Tekyiman Affairs. Also, PRAAD'SY Ibid. P. 197, PRAAD'K. 1/2/26/2. File on the Restoration of the Asante Confederacy 18- 2-1935. P.33.

<sup>71</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/8, Tekyiman Native Affairs P.137. When he was found out he wrote a letter to apologize and paid to the Asantehene a pacification fee of £4. 13/shillings sterling, one sheep and 2 bottles of gin.

<sup>72</sup> PRAAD'SY 2/8, Report of the Committee of Privileges, 29 September 1947. The D.C. of Wankyi reported to the Chief Commissioner of Asante that there was a Bono nationalism in the air which if not handled well could bring crisis in the confederacy.

<sup>73</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P. 41.

State wrote to the Chief Commissioner of Asante requesting their secession from the confederacy council.<sup>74</sup> The state terminated communication with the Asantehene, and stopped paying the 1/3 share of the Asante National Fund.<sup>75</sup> From this period, a state of cold war existed between Tekyimanhene and the Asante Confederacy Council. He is believed to have urged his elders on with the following words:

The time has come for all of us to seek to restore the glorious heritage of the Bono people. This is one of my immediate problems and I count upon you for your support. We will only seek the restoration of our lost villages through constitutional means, so be steadfast.<sup>76</sup>

Nana Ameyaw is also said to have reminded his elders about the ancient Bono Kingdom, which was conquered and annexed to Asante in 1722, and the need to rebuild it. Nana Ameyaw accused Asante of destroying the custom and traditions of the Bono people.<sup>77</sup> As a sign of their desire to be independent the chiefs of Tekyiman formed the Bono Kyempim Federation (B.K.F.) in February 1948. The aim of this Federation was to persuade all Bono States to form a council of Bono chiefs similar to the Asanteman Council of Asante.

### **3.3. The Bono Kyempim Federation (B.K.F.)**

The immediate effect of the formation of the Federation was that it exacerbated the existing conflicts between pro-Bono and pro-Asante people. For example, in March

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<sup>74</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/31. Wankyi Native Affairs. The solidarity among the Bono attracted the notice of the D.C. of Wankyi. In his 1947-48 report he stated that Nananom Agyeman Badu and Akumfi Ameyaw had taken the unprecedented step of visiting other chiefs' division to encourage them to join the Brong Kyempim Federation. See also RAO 2/104 26-6-51.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> PRAAD'SY 2/104 B.K.F. File. Statement of Grievances to the Mate Korle Committee, Epilogue, Paragraph 2.

<sup>77</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P. 50.

1948 the Bono of Tuobodom reported to government about the maltreatment they had received at the hands of their Asante counterparts following Tekyiman's announcement to secede from the Asante confederacy. According to them, their cocoa farms were seized at the instigation of the Kumasi Nsumankwaahene who exercised supervisory responsibility over the town.<sup>78</sup> Despite the numerous appeals by the B.K.F., the British government did not intervene in this conflict. Similar pro-Asante and pro-Bono conflicts occurred in Nkyiraa and Branam in 1948.<sup>79</sup>

The conflict between Bono and Asante in Ofuman where the state was markedly divided into pro-Asante Ofuman I, and pro-Bono Ofuman II divisions was the most serious of all the conflicts that presaged the secession of the Tekyiman state from the Asante confederacy. On March 25, 1948, Nana Kwasi Dua, a pro-Asante chief was at home when he overheard one Adu Kofi an elder of Ofuman II, saying that anybody who supported the Asantehene should be ashamed of himself. He argued that Bono were united, and the Asantehene could no longer have any power over the Ofuman state. Adu Kofi is alleged to have said also that Tekyiman had taken possession of Ofuman, and assumed control of the entire Asante divisions of the Tekyiman state.<sup>80</sup> Nana Dua is said to have sworn the Ntamkese (Great Oath) of the Asantehene to refute the claim.<sup>81</sup> In order to provoke the Asante, Adu Kofi swore again before the former that there was no Asantehene, and therefore no great oath. When Adu Kofi refused to slaughter a sheep, as

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<sup>78</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/8 Tekyiman Affairs.

<sup>79</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/41 Tekyiman Villages

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> A person swearing the Ntamkese, the most solemn oath of Asante would simply say Meka Ntamkese (I swear by the Great Oath) or Meka Kormante ne Memenede (I swear by Kormantse and Saturday). The Great Oath of Asante referred to the death of Osei Tutu, the founder of the Asante Nation in the war with the Akyem near Kormantse on a Saturday. Allusion to this tragic incident was forbidden on the grounds that it offended the Asante ancestors and estranged them from the living. People believe that swearing the oath might bring about a repetition of the former disaster. For more details see Tordoff; (1965) P. 40.

custom demanded, it resulted in a serious conflict between the two factions. A number of people were said to have sustained injuries until Goldie-Scott the Assistant District Commissioner of Wankyi sent a police force to restore peace and order in the village.<sup>82</sup>

Indeed the British, who were bent on ensuring the success of the indirect rule policy in a united Asante, ignored Tekyiman petitions to secede. Instead, the British sought to compel Tekyiman to remain in the Asante confederacy.<sup>83</sup> In 1947, Major C. O. Butler, the Chief Commissioner of Asante visited Tekyiman to confer privately with the Tekyimanhene. The Major is said to have assured the Omanhene that he would be given a reasonable compensation and a six months tour of the United Kingdom if he reconsidered his decision to secede, but Ameyaw stuck to his decision.<sup>84</sup> Indeed the chief is said to have been enraged by what he described as “an annoying letter” he received from the Chief Commissioner of Asante reminding him that by trying to disturb the Asante nation, he was kicking his head against a stone.<sup>85</sup>

By early July 1948, all attempts to persuade Ameyaw to rejoin Asante had failed. The British are said to have planned to exile him. This forced Ameyaw to seek asylum in Cote d’Ivoire.<sup>86</sup> In late July 1948, the District Commissioner of Wankyi was asked to close down the Tekyiman Native Authority. All appeals by Tekyiman to the British to

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> See Brukum, N.J.A., The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast under British Colonial Rule 1897-1965: A Study in Political Change. An unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (Toronto, 1997) Chapters 8 and 9 for similar attempt by the British government to help create large chieftaincies in the Northern Territories

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* Also Tekyiman Grievances in PRAAD’SY, RAO 2/104. In December 1 1947, the Major sent a letter to the Tekyimanhene in which he stated that Tekyiman could petition to the Governor about the Committee’s decision, but stressed that he could not “hold out any hopes that His Excellency will feel disposed to consider the decision of the Committee of Privileges on this matter”.

<sup>85</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P. 50.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

restore its authority failed.<sup>87</sup> The plight of the people of Tekyiman worsened when the British withheld all grants to the schools in the Tekyiman district. It became the responsibility of the Tekyiman people to administer the schools. Men and women voluntarily donated toward the well being of teachers in the Tekyiman schools.<sup>88</sup> By August 1948, it had become evident that the British would not relinquish their support for Asante. Consequently, on 28 August 1948, Nana Ameyaw wrote to the Asanteman and the Chief Commissioner announcing Tekyiman's withdrawal from the confederacy. In January 1949, the D.C. of Sunyani suggested to the British government not to issue gunpowder to the Bono chiefs and to withdraw education and food grants to members of the B.K.F., but Ameyaw was obstinate<sup>89</sup>.

One basic problem Tekyiman faced was how to win the support of other states. In pursuit of his objective, Nana Ameyaw sent his elders out as emissaries to other Bono states. They were to explain the aims and objectives of the Bono Kyempim Federation, and to dispel all doubts, which agitated the minds of the chiefs.<sup>90</sup>

Ameyaw and his elders achieved some success. At the time of its inauguration at Tekyiman on 9 February 1951, the chiefs of Dormaa, Abease, Suma and the New Drobo states had become members of the Bono Kyempim Federation.<sup>91</sup> These states were bitter about one act of Asante or another. At the inauguration, the members swore by their stools and ancestors to fight relentlessly, by all constitutional means to free themselves and other Bono from Asante domination. Members also demanded a separate Traditional

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<sup>87</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/8. Tekyiman Affairs. See also Boahen, (1975), P.167. Ameyaw was an active member of the radical 'youngmen' of the U.G.C.C. He was in Saltpond on 12 June 1949 when Nkrumah announced the formation of the Convention People's Party (C.P.P.).

<sup>88</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P. 53.

<sup>89</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO, 2/8 Tekyiman Affairs.

<sup>90</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P.53.

<sup>91</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/8 P.216.

Council to be independent of Asanteman, They appealed to the British government for recognition of their Federation and to accede to their petition to withdraw from the confederacy.<sup>92</sup>

The British authorities were still against any division of Asanteman, on the grounds that administration of the confederacy would be rendered more difficult in a divided Asante. Hence they refused to recognize the Bono Federation.<sup>93</sup> More serious than the Britain's uncompromising attitude was the disunity of Bono states. Atebubu for example considered the Federation's dispute with Asantē as a struggle by Tekyiman to regain its villages, and therefore adopted a lukewarm attitude towards the B.K.F.<sup>94</sup> Drobo, Suma, Odumase, and some villages in Tekyiman remained divided into pro-Asante and pro-Bono divisions. In addition, the pro-Asante states of Berekum, Nkoranza and Wankyi were indifferent to the B.K.F., and supported Asanteman because of their historical links.<sup>95</sup> However the Federation's vision was sustained by the bitterness they harboured against Asante.

In the meantime, the Asante Youth Association (A.Y.A.) indicated its preparedness to mediate in the conflict between Asanteman and the Bono chiefs. It planned to contact the Dormaahene on one hand, and the Asanteman council on the other hand through the Chief Commissioner of Asante to devise an immediate solution to the Bono Asanteman crisis but Dormaa rejected the offer.<sup>96</sup> The British Government could not ignore the conflict between the Asante and the Bono chiefs indefinitely. In June 1951,

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. See grievances in the B.K.F. file.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/43, Atebubu Affairs.

<sup>95</sup> See Chapter Two.

<sup>96</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/58 Dormaa Native Affairs.

the newly installed Convention Peoples Party (C.P.P.) government appointed a three member Committee of Enquiry headed by Nene Azu Mate Korle, Konor (chief) of Many Krobo, to investigate the Asanteman-Bono dispute.<sup>97</sup> The Committee was asked to examine the situation presented by the differences between certain Bono chiefs, and the chiefs in Asante, and to consider steps to be taken to restore unity for future constitutional development.<sup>98</sup>

In the list of grievances submitted to the committee, the Bono chiefs re-emphasized that they were not kinsmen of the Asante and rather regarded them as imperialists.<sup>99</sup> They declared:

The hour has come, and no nation can take calmly the domination of her freedom by another nation. Those who condemn the action of the federated Bono states in breaking away from the Asanteman council, should first condemn the action of the whole country, for the present struggle to be free from the domination of British imperialism; for the one is just like the other, only (on) a minor state or confined to a section of the country.<sup>100</sup>

The Bono affirmed their belief in their capacity to manage their own affairs for a happy and a better Ghana.<sup>101</sup> The Bono Federation spoke of a national boundary between the northern part of Asante and the southern parts of Bono, with Asante occupying the southern section, and Bono the northern section.<sup>102</sup> In a letter to the British government in

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<sup>97</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/103. Confidential letter from the D.C. of Sunyani/Wankya to Chief Commissioner of Ashanti 7-3-51. The other members of the committee were J.H. Allasani and A.Y.K. Djin.

<sup>98</sup> Report of the Committee on Asanteman – Brong Dispute in PRAAD'SY 2/104 BKF File Sunyani.

<sup>99</sup> PRAAD'SY 2/104 B.K.F. File Statement of grievances, Paragraph 2.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* From BKF to Governor through the Chief Commissioner (C.C.) Ashanti. The Federation stated that there could never be real peace and harmony between the Bono and Asante as long as the Asante looked down on the Bono as drawers of water and hewers of wood.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

August 1951, the Dormaa re-affirmed this view. They stated that Bono did not participate in the ritual by Okomfo Anokye to unite Asante, and were therefore not part of the Asante kingdom.<sup>103</sup> Bono nationalism intensified when between 1951 and 1952 Abease, Berekum, Dormaa, Drobo, and Tekyiman requested government to delete their names from the schedules of the Asanteman council because they were being ill-treated by Asante.<sup>104</sup> But Asanteman refuted all claim of ill treatment.

Although in their letters and petitions, neither individual B.K.F. members nor the B.K.F. as a body made an explicit demand for a Bono region, it became clear from their grievances that Bono wanted to sever all traditional links with Asante.<sup>105</sup> They wanted a separate Bono existence, which would enable them to be politically, constitutionally and administratively independent of Asante. The B.K.F. questioned the historical basis of heir allegiance to the Golden Stool. The Federation sought to lead the campaign for self-determination for the Bono in the form of a separate state.<sup>106</sup>

In the meantime, Nananom Akumfi Ameyaw, and Agyeman Badu toured both pro-Bono and pro-Asante divisions to entreat the latter to join the Bono Federation.<sup>107</sup> Nana Agyeman Badu for example visited the Suma and Sampa states where he spent five days trying to persuade the pro-Asante faction in the states to join the B.K.F.<sup>108</sup> The B.K.F. succeeded in persuading people to support their cause. In 1952, the Drobo district

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<sup>103</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 1/14. Notes on meeting of the Reconciliation Committee. Dormaahehe's contribution 9-8-51.

<sup>104</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 1/105 Chief Regional Officer to Asanteman Council (1952).

<sup>105</sup> See BKF's Statement of Grievances.

<sup>106</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 1/14 Notes on Meeting of Reconciliation Committee and B.K.F. 9-8-51.

<sup>107</sup> PRAAD'SY, BRG. 27/1/1 Dormaa State Council Affairs P.62.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* Rev. B.O. Aboagye the Presbyterian Church Minister who was an Akuapem is said to have hosted Agyeman Badu during his tour. The Sunyani D.C. accused the Pastor of dabbling in local politics and suggested to the Presbyterian Mission to transfer him. PRAAD'SY RAO 2/103 Letter from D.C. Sunyani to C.C. Kumasi. See also Kyeremeh, I., *The Achievement of the Presbyterian Church in the Brong Ahafo Region*. B.A. Dissertation (Legon, 1994). P.26.

alone could boast of 3576 people who supported secession as against 1807 who did not. Of the 1807, the D.C. of the Western Province of Asante (W.P.A.) claimed that majority of them would support Bono secession from Asante if there was a referendum.<sup>109</sup>

Meanwhile, in October 1952, the Mate Korle Committee presented its report to the C.P.P. government. In it, the committee listed the Bono grievances, and held that some of them had substance, but suggested a few solutions.<sup>110</sup> For instance, the committee suggested that even though a Bono Council could be formed, it did not necessarily mean that Bono should withdraw their membership of the Asanteman council.<sup>111</sup> The committee was not however explicit on whether the envisaged Bono Council would be a traditional, or a constitutional body.<sup>112</sup> The C.P.P. considered the report as ambiguous and did not issue a White Paper on it. It considered the restoration of unity in Asante as of paramount importance, and assumed that the report if published might exacerbate the dispute.<sup>113</sup> Accordingly, the C.P.P. refused to provide a copy of the report to the B.K.F. delegation, which was sent to ask for it.<sup>114</sup>

Between 1952 and 1954, the B.K.F. lost some grounds. Nana Agyeman Badu who had been at the forefront of the B.K.F. activities left for further studies in the United Kingdom.<sup>115</sup> The only other active leader in his absence was Nana Akumfi Ameyaw III,

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<sup>109</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 BKF File P.63.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.* A copy of the Committee's Report in PRAAD'S RAO 2/104.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* The chief and the people of Nsuatre thought that it was not right for Dr. Nkrumah to recommend to the Governor to implement any findings in the Report because "many Bono States were not consulted by the Commission."

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* See also Arthur, *op. cit.* Pp. 48-49.

<sup>113</sup> PRAAD'SY 2/104 18/3-1953. From Secretary to the Governor to the Chief Regional Officer, Asante. Nkrumah replied that he was unable to grant them an interview and send a copy of the Committee's Report as requested.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* From Secretary to the Governor to the Chief Regional Officer, Asante. In March 1953, a B.K.F. delegation was in Accra to discuss with Dr. Nkrumah the Prime Minister the objectives of the BKF and to request for a copy of the Mate Korle Report. Nkrumah replied that he was "unable to grant them an interview or send a copy of the Committee's Report as requested"

<sup>115</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/37, Dormaa Native Affairs.

the Tekyimanhene, who as an individual could not carry out the great responsibility of organizing the Federation. In addition the Dormaa State, which was a stronghold of the B.K.F., was rent by a land boundary dispute between the Omanhene and the Wamfiehene. In 1952, Nana Kwasi Ansu, the Wamfiehene declared himself Omanhene of the Mansen state, and declared support for Asanteman. Since the Mansen area constituted a large portion of the Dormaa state, the B.K.F. support in Dormaa weakened considerably.<sup>116</sup>

In Tekyiman, Asante settlers in the state who had always tried to undermine the B.K.F. became more active following the lapse in B.K.F. campaigns in the area.<sup>117</sup> In the same period, some of the divisional chiefs of Drobo namely, Kofi Sadia, (Pinankohene), Kwasi Agyei (Drobo Nifahene), Kwasi Adinkra (Ankobeahene), and Yaw Bediako (Gyasehene), after failing in their bid to destool the Omanhene of Drobo formed the Awasu Union and joined the pro-Asante faction in the district. Also T.G. Nurser, the Assistant Government Agent of Sunyani managed to convince some states to support Asanteman. He claimed that the B.K.F. had reconciled with the Asanteman Council. This greatly weakened the front of the Bono Kyempim Federation.<sup>118</sup>

### **3.4: B.K.F. and National Politics**

The return of Nana Agyeman Badu from London in 1954, and more importantly the formation of the National Liberation Movement (N.L.M.) revived the fortunes of the B.K.F. A few months after his return, Agyeman Badu reorganized the Federation into an active movement through rallies. At the same time, the N.L.M. was formed in Kumasi.

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<sup>116</sup> Drah, F.K., 'The Brong Political Movement' in Brong Kyempim, P.136.

<sup>117</sup> PRAAD'SY 2/33 Political unrest in the Wankyi District.

<sup>118</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/100 Droboman Affairs.

The objective of the N.L.M. was to achieve a federal constitution for an independent Ghana. The movement declared that Asante was a nation and should remain so.<sup>119</sup> This objective appealed to Asante ethnic sensibilities but ran counter to the B.K.F.'s position and objectives. The Movement wished to secede from the Asante confederacy and create a confederacy of Bono states.<sup>120</sup> Hence, when Prempeh II, the Kumasi state and Asanteman openly declared their support for the N.L.M., the B.K.F. formed an alliance with the C.P.P., the political opponent of N.L.M. Henceforth the Bono-Asante dispute entered the arena of national partisan politics and reconciliation of Bono and Asante became an impossibility.

In the same year (1954), the B.K.F. changed its name to Bono Kyempim Council (B.K.C.). Drah suggests that this was probably a way of ensuring that the B.K.F. a Bono separatist movement was not confused with the Asante agitation for a Ghanaian Federal State.<sup>121</sup> But Drah's assertion should not be taken on its face value because from other records, the Federation adopted the noun "Council" when the C.P.P. proposed to establish Area Councils in the country.<sup>122</sup> At the same time, the C.P.P. realized that it could exploit the opportunity offered by the B.K.C – Asanteman dispute to its advantage. Nkrumah is said to have personally approached Nana Agyeman Badu at Dormaa and promised to

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<sup>119</sup> Austin, D. Politics in Ghana, 1946-1960 (Oxford, Paperback 1970) Chapter 6. See also Boahen, Ghana, Evolution and Change in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (Longman, 1975), Chapters 18 and 19.

<sup>120</sup> See Drah in Brong Kyempim Pp. 138-139.

<sup>121</sup> Drah, in Brong Kyempim P. 160, footnote number 41. The exact words were: "The change of name may have been dictated by the concern to ensure that the BKF would not be confused with the Asante Federal Movement."

<sup>122</sup> See PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104, BKF File. Letter by Agyeman Badu in "Pioneer" January 31, 1955 and September 27 1954. Letter from one Benuye Kofi P.6. Also PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 BKF File, Brong People's Organization (BPO) to Governor, December 12, 1955 and BKF to the Chief Regional Officer Ashanti, February 16, 1955 and March 16, 1955. Indeed before the change of name, some Bono often called the Federation "Council". After the change, the BKC and the BPO wrote many letters to inform government of the change.

create a separate and an independent Bono region should the C.P.P. win the 1954 general elections.<sup>123</sup>

With this assurance, most Bono chiefs and their subjects shifted their allegiance to the C.P.P. Agyeman Badu who had stood in the 1951 general election on the ticket of the United Party (U.P.) against Yeboah Afari the C.P.P. candidate, now in 1954 joined the C.P.P. and persuaded his divisional chiefs to do likewise.<sup>124</sup> Besides, the Dormaahene personally took to the field to campaign for the C.P.P. He is said to have organized rallies and attended them in a palanquin amidst drumming.<sup>125</sup>

Bafour Akoto of the N.L.M. is said to have approached Dormaahene's opponent, the Mansenhene to persuade him to join the N.L.M. The latter is said to have reassured the former of his allegiance to the N.L.M. and the Asantehene. Okyeame Akoto in return granted Mansen's request for paramountcy and admitted Mansen to the Asanteman council.<sup>126</sup> The N.L.M. no doubt would have been rejected in the Dormaa state considering the impact the B.K.C. had had on the state, but for the conflict between the Dormaahene and the Mansenhene, which had reached its climax when the N.L.M. emerged in 1954.

The emergence of the N.L.M. was a great relief for Nana Kwasi Ansu, the Mansenhene and other pro-Asante states that had already declared their support for Asanteman and had refused to join the B.K.C. The Mansenhene who until this time (1954) was a staunch C.P.P. supporter realized that he could secure his independence of the Dormaahene by denouncing his support for the C.P.P. In addition, the chief perceived

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<sup>123</sup> Austin, *op. cit.* Pp. 143-144.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Amponsah, M., The C.P.P.-N.L.M. Conflict in Dormaa, an unpublished B.A. dissertation; Dept of History (Legon, 1984) Chapter two.



that he could gain a free hand as a member of a different party to deal with his rival the Dormaahene. Furthermore, he hoped that an N.L.M. victory would be synonymous with his triumph over the Dormaahene. Lastly, the secessionist call of the N.L.M. to withdraw the Asante nation from the rest of the Gold Coast tied in very well with the Mansenhene's secessionist campaign to be independent of the Dormaahene's authority. Accordingly, the Mansenhene left the C.P.P. fold with a section of his subjects. He now pursued his secession efforts with extra vigour, and this time he aimed at withdrawing the loyalty of the chiefs of the entire Mansen territory from the Dormaa state to pledge their loyalty to the Asante Union.<sup>127</sup>

The Mansenhene's action could not have any serious effect on Dormaa, the B.K.C. foothold. He could not persuade the other Mansen towns and villages to join the Asanteman-NLM fold. More seriously, Wamfie was occupied by security forces, which restricted Mansenhene's activities to only Wamfie.<sup>128</sup> Wamfie and a few other Bono States thus became the Asante-backed NLM's outposts where Asante and the NLM perpetuated their interests. The pro-Asante chiefs and their pro-BKC opponents in Dormaa and other Bono States became more or less the respective leaders of the NLM and the CPP and the rallying points of affiliations to the two parties.<sup>129</sup>

The chiefs organized rallies in the form of durbars where they exhorted their subjects to support their respective parties. The pro-N.L.M. states became known as Matemehofoo (secessionists) with the slogan matemeho. In the Dormaa state Mansenhene's faction were called the Mansenhenedom (Mansen chief's supporters) or

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Informant, D.C. Boahen, citizen of Dormaa, resident in Sunyani; August 1998.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with Nana Owusu Nketia, 78 years, a citizen of Wamfie resident in Sunyani. 8-7-99

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

matemchofoo, while the Dormaahene's faction was either called C.P.P. or Dormaahenedom (Dormaa chief's supporters). Indeed the formation of these alliances became the main causes of conflict in Bono and Asante after the formation of the NLM in 1954.<sup>130</sup>

In the meantime, the officials of the C.P.P. used their position to advance the goals of the B.K.C. For instance, on February 21, 1955, the Legislative Assembly adopted a private motion by S.W. Yeboah, C.P.P. Member of Parliament for Sunyani asking for the publication of the Mate Korle report.<sup>131</sup> This was followed by a concession to Bono aspiration when in March 1955, Nkrumah dealt with several aspects of the Bono-Asante dispute, in a statement in the Legislative Assembly. In the first place, he told the House that he had recommended to the Governor to publish the Mate Korle Committee's report. The Prime Minister also informed the Assembly that he had presented to government the B.K.C. petition in which the Bono Kyempim Council declared that the states of Dormaa, Tekyiman, Abease, Odumase I, Drobo, Suma, Wiase, Sunyani and Bekyem had seceded from the Asanteman Council.<sup>132</sup> Nkrumah stated again that his government was considering the B.K.C.'s petitions and was examining the possibility of setting up a Bono Kyempim traditional council, a Development Committee for the Bono area, as well as the establishment of two administrative regions for Asante.<sup>133</sup>

As expected, the pro-Asante states in Bono vehemently protested against the C.P.P.'s proposal to divide Asante into two regions. Wankyi, Duayaw Nkwanta and Bosomtwe Odumase sent out telegram messages to the Prime Minister to withdraw the

<sup>130</sup> For details see Amponsah, *op. cit.* Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>131</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P. 43-44. Also Gold Coast Legislative Assembly Debates, 18-2-1955.

<sup>132</sup> Gold Coast Legislative Assembly Debates, 25-3-1955.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

proposal to divide Asante.<sup>134</sup> They argued that the rise of the N.L.M. had already resulted in violence, arson and anarchy in the confederacy. The states feared that there would be more violence if the Asante Region was divided. Wankyi for instance pointed out that:

The proposed division of Asante will lead to more strife, bloodshed, create great confusion and hamper ancient constitution of the people. It will also intensify the dispute, and thereby prevent peaceful co-existence in the Asante confederacy.<sup>135</sup>

The chiefs of Wankyi believed that the proposed creation of the Bono Region was not for the good of the Bono people, but was for political convenience of the C.P.P. In a letter to the "Ashanti Pioneer" on 6 April 1955, the Wankyi chief and his elders declared:

The C.P.P. is in a dilemma, and having demonstrated their inability to settle the Ashanti affairs, the Nkrumah government is now adopting the communist method of creating confusion in Ashanti, in order to divert the attention of the Asanteman council to the Brong Kyempim Council, hoping that would give the C.P.P. government a respite.<sup>136</sup>

Surprisingly, some of the states that supported the B.K.C. also protested against the C.P.P. government's plans to create a new region. Bekyem, a pro-Asante state that

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<sup>134</sup> See letters in PRAAD'SY 2/37. Wankyi State Affairs, PRAAD'SY DAOS 1/101 Odumase Affairs and DAO 1/93.

<sup>135</sup> The 'Ashanti Pioneer' 6-4-55, p.7. Also Telegrams in PRAAD'SY DAO 1/115, 26-3-55 for Telegrams. Wankyi stated; "We the members of the Wankyi state council shall not take this challenge lying down. We have fought and defeated Nkrumahism in the Wankyi state and we shall fight it relentlessly and uproot it completely from the whole country ... we shall refuse to recognize the BKC if it is set up." Wankyi people disliked Nkrumah because it is believed that one Nkruma of Wankyi caused the first Wankyi king to disappear when their ancestors were emerging from the Bonoso hole. The king went back into the hole and never returned. Since then ninth born children have been ill-treated in the Wankyi state. Indeed two common sayings in Wankyi are "Wankyi bekyiri Nkrumah nso bewo Badu." (The ninth-born child is a taboo in Wankyi but they give birth to the tenth), and "Nkrumah ye busufoo" (Nkrumah is an accursed person). This is one of the reasons for the fanatically anti-CPP (Nkrumah) attitude of most people of Wankyi during the Nkrumah regime.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

had in 1954 joined the B.K.C. opposed any attempt to transfer Bekyem to Bonoland.<sup>137</sup> Similarly, Nana Kwadwo Twene, the Sumahene and his elders, the Nsuatrehene, and the chiefs of Fiapre, Sunyani, and Drobo individually sent telegram messages to oppose what Drobo described as “forceful disintegration of Asante by government.”<sup>138</sup> They asked the C.P.P. government to withdraw the resolution for the interest of peace and tranquility between the Bono and Asante people.<sup>139</sup> Drobo even threatened to rejoin the Asanteman council unless the C.P.P. withdrew its proposal. It argued that development for them could be achieved successfully without dividing Asante into two regions.<sup>140</sup> Indeed by early 1955, there had already been a number of bloody confrontations between the B.K.C. and the Matemcho (N.L.M.) supporters in Berekum, Drobo, Suma, Tekyiman, Dormaa, Wamfie, Odumase and also some towns in Ahafo.<sup>141</sup> This affected the social and economic lives of many people.<sup>142</sup>

Hence, following the Prime Minister’s address in the Legislative Assembly, the B.K.C. again lost grounds. Some states withdrew their membership of the Council in the interest of peace. Out of the eleven principal pro-B.K.C. states, only Abease, Dormaa and Tekyiman because of their land disputes with Asante remained strongholds of the council. Berekum, Drobo, Banda, Kintampo, Nkoranza Wankyi, Odumase and the Suma states shifted grounds to the N.L.M.<sup>143</sup> This compelled the B.K.C. to attempt to regain its

<sup>137</sup> PRAAD’S Y DAOS 1/115, Resolutions and Protests File From Bekyemhene to Asantehene 5-4-55.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> PRAAD’S Y DAO’S 1/115, Telegram from the Suma State to the BKC, 26-3-55.

<sup>141</sup> PRAAD’S Y RAO 2/59, Sunyani District Villages, Handing over notes of the Sunyani and Wankyi districts by Mr. J.E. Patterson, M.C. government agent to Mr. D. Awotwe, the new D.C. 13/9/56. The Provincial Commissioner’s letter of 13/9/56 stated: “Considerable bitterness between Dormaa and the Mansenhene has bedeviled peace and has caused violence from time to time.”

<sup>142</sup> For details see Amponsah, op. cit. Pp. 23-30.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid. Wankyihene to the “Ashanti Pioneer” 6-4-55.

image, and support. In response to the withdrawing of its members, the council in a letter to the states concerned declared that the Prime Minister's statement just coincided with the struggle of the B.K.C. to create their own democratic institutions.<sup>144</sup> But this did not convince the states, which continued to owe allegiance to the Asantehene and the Asanteman council.

In the following months, the stage was set for the B.K.C.-C.P.P. alliance on one hand, and the N.L.M.-Asanteman alliance on the other: to consolidate their position in Bono. Anti-N.L.M. sentiments increased in the B.K.C. strongholds and vice-versa. For example, in May 1955 three youngmen of Tekyiman who were accused by the Tekyimanhene of planning to start a branch of the N.L.M. in the town were summoned to the Omanhene's court. They were accused of betraying the B.K.C.'s cause and were severely beaten by the people, and fined by the court.<sup>145</sup> In Berekum, the Youth Association attacked the pro-N.L.M. chief and gave him the option to support the C.P.P. or be destooled.<sup>146</sup>

In May 1955, the Manhyia Police arrested Nana Agyeman Badu and Kwasi Yeboa, his linguist, in Kumasi during a visit to the city.<sup>147</sup> The people of Drobo also claim that Nana Bosea Gyinantwi III, their chief, was harassed by the Asantehene's servants while he was in the city.<sup>148</sup> An anonymous letter of 5 June 1955 revealed:

Four to five days ago, the Asantehene have (sic) ordered some youngmen to beat all the subjects of the Dormaahene whom (sic) are staying in Kumasi . . . for the sole reason that

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* BKC to the "Ashanti Pioneer" in PRAAD'SY 1/115.

<sup>145</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/8, Tekyiman Native Affairs.

<sup>146</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/103, Confidential Letter D.C. Wankyi to Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, 7-3-55.

<sup>147</sup> PRAAD'SY, RAO 2/58, Dormaa Native Affairs.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

their master Dormaahene has refused to serve the Asantehene anymore,<sup>149</sup>

Henceforth, the B.K.C. resorted to what Drah describes as "Political blackmail"<sup>150</sup> to compel support from the C.P.P. to intervene in Bono native affairs. Disgruntled chiefs expressed their preparedness to join the C.P.P. if the party supported them to withdraw from the Asante confederacy. For instance, in a petition of October 1955, the Bekyemhene who had been destooled by the Kumasi state council, threatened to withdraw from the CPP unless the government restore him and recognize the B.K.C. as a separatist movement.<sup>151</sup>

In response to the B.K.C.s petition the CPP amended the State Council of Asante Ordinance of 1952.<sup>152</sup> This allowed all manners of chiefs the right of appeal to government to restore him as chief. Following the Amendment more Bono chiefs supported the C.P.P.'s decision to create the Bono region. The Asanteman and the NLM opposed the amendment of the Ordinance, arguing that it was a direct attack on the constitutional heritage and culture of the Asante nation.<sup>153</sup>

The amendment of the Ordinance coincided with the debate between the NLM and the CPP as to what kind of constitution independent Ghana should have, and whether there should be a by-election before independence or not. The NLM argued for a fresh

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<sup>149</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/58 Dormaa File.

<sup>150</sup> Drah, 'The Brong Political Movement' in Arhin (ed) *Brong Kyempim*, P.140.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Arthur, *op cit*, Pp. 47-48. Under the 1952 Ordinance, only paramount chiefs could appeal against the decisions of the Asanteman Council or direct to the Governor to resolve constitutional issues.

<sup>153</sup> Drah, in *Brong Kyempim* P. 141. Also Footnote number 45. At an Emergency Meeting of Asanteman in October 1955 Nana Asumejahene stated: "Nkrumah and his followers had found Asante a hard nut to crack owing to its peculiar and unique culture and traditions ... By this bill, Nkrumah was determined to destroy Ashanti both as a Nation and as a people, for he was asking for power to determine who should be and who should not be chief."

election while the CPP stated that there was no need for it. By early 1955, a clear constitutional stalemate had been reached.<sup>154</sup>

After repeated appeals from both parties, the Colonial Government invited Sir. Frederick Bourne, an expert in constitutional matters, to help resolve the impasse. Sir. Bourne arrived in Ghana in September 1955 and began his investigations. In his report, he advised against the creation of a federation on the grounds that it was not necessary for a small country like the Gold Coast.<sup>155</sup> He advised that the long-standing differences between the Bono and the Asante council, notwithstanding, there was no justification for a separate region since Bonoland was small and its inhabitants were divided on the issue of secession.<sup>156</sup> The CPP agreed in principle with the recommendation, and withheld its proposal to create the Bono region.

Despite Bourne's recommendation, the BKC members continued their demands for separation from Asante. It argued that a separate region would facilitate Bono development, and remove the sense of neglect among the Bono, especially those living furthest away from Kumasi.<sup>157</sup> Dormaa for instance complained that the Asante commissioners rarely visited the state and lacked both an understanding of, and an interest in their welfare.<sup>158</sup>

The B.K.C. felt that the close association of the Chief Officer of Kumasi with Asanteman, and the Asanteman council, favoured Asante. It argued that if a Bono region was established, the Kumasi office would be relieved of great deal of work resulting from

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<sup>154</sup> Boahen; *op. cit.* Pp. 186-187.

<sup>155</sup> Drah, in *Brong Kyempim*, P.141.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> Arthur, *op. cit.* P.50.

<sup>158</sup> PRAAD'SY DAO'S 1/115. Resolutions, Petitions and Protests File. 5-4-1955.

the changed political atmosphere in Asante and the outbreak of local disputes between Asante and Bono supporters in Nkoranza, Berekum and Dormaa states. Lastly, the BKC believed that a Bono Regional Officer would be able to deal expeditiously with petitions, estimates, and resolutions.<sup>159</sup>

Although these were sound proposals, they were beset by many other problems. First there was the problem of determining whether the Ahafo section, which had close links with Kumasi, and was predominantly pro-NLM, would be included in the region. There was also the difficulty in demarcating the regional boundaries, in this politically tense region of Asante to avoid cutting across traditional allegiances. There might as well be disagreement in Bono over the siting of the new Regional headquarters. Should it be Tekyiman, the earliest state in Bono, or Sunyani which had since colonial times been the seat of the District Commissioner of the Western Province of Asante (W.P.A.)? More seriously, there was the danger that there would not be coordination in the new region since up to 1956, Wankyi, Nkoranza, Kintampo, and Banda, which were pro-Asante states continued to resist the BKC.<sup>160</sup>

The argument against the creation of a separate Bono region was a sound one considering the political rivalry between pro-CPP and pro-NLM factions in Bono after 1954. Even more insidious was the question of whether pro-Asante states would still owe traditional allegiance to Asante or not. This was given less consideration by the CPP, which probably felt that there was no need to consider traditional loyalties when determining the borders of a region for administrative convenience. In Bono though, this was necessary in view of the frequent disputes within, and between states on the question

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<sup>159</sup> ibid.

<sup>160</sup> ibid.

of allegiance to Bono and Asante chiefs. For example, the Dormaa-Mansen dispute of 1952/1954 seriously threatened decision-making in the Dormaa state.<sup>161</sup> The frequent conflicts between Antepim and Bosomtwe Odumase chiefs, who supported Bono and Asante respectively also needed to be resolved. These conflicts continually posed a problem in the town, such that Sunyani refused to join Odumase in forming a local council.<sup>162</sup> Consequently, between 1952 and 1955 the Sunyani district alone had three separate Local Authorities, namely, the Sunyani Urban Council, the Sunyani Area Local Council, - which included Odumase, but excluded Sunyani township and the Sunyani District Council.<sup>163</sup>

In the CPP's view, granting the BKC's demands for a Bono region would result in a flood of similar secessionist demands.<sup>164</sup> The party was therefore reluctant to create the new region. Eventually though, the CPP seemed to have placed the interest of the party above that of the country. The party considered that to be lukewarm in its support for the Bono cause threatened to alienate the large support it had in the Bono area.<sup>165</sup> It would further weaken the CPP support in Asante as the emergence of the NLM in 1954 affected the CPP's performance in the 1954 general election in Asante. Consequently, the CPP had intensified its campaign in the Bono area after the elections to seek to gain political advantage over the NLM.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Amponsah, *op. cit.* P.31.

<sup>162</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/32 Odumase-Sunyani State Affairs

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* For detailed information on conflicts between Antepim and Bosomtwe Odumase see Yeboah *op. cit.* Pp. 22-26.

<sup>164</sup> Drah, in *Brong Kyempim* P. 139.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

In February 1956, the C.P.P. invited the N.L.M. and the B.K.C. to the Achimota Conference convened to discuss the future system of government for Ghana.<sup>167</sup> With regard to Bono and Asante, the conference's task was to discuss the Report of the Constitutional Advisor and to recommend solutions to the salient features of Regional devolution recommended in the report.<sup>168</sup> The N.L.M. did not see the need to discuss the Report and therefore declined the invitation to the Achimota Conference. The Bono delegation, which was led by Nana Agyeman Badu, was apparently given a sympathetic hearing by the conference. The conference's report released the same year recommended to the government the need to set up a separate Assembly<sup>169</sup> and a Regional House of Chiefs for the Bono area.<sup>170</sup>

In parts of the White Paper on the report of the Constitutional Advisor published in April 1956, the C.P.P. government accepted in principle the demand for the establishment of a separate region. The government proposed to consult the district and local councils of the Bono area on this issue to find out if a majority of the Bono Councils favoured the creation of a separate Bono region.<sup>171</sup>

This came as a surprise to the N.L.M., which rejected the government's proposal and rather urged government to adopt a federal constitution to administer the country. It continued to press for what it called "a constitution that would provide adequate

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<sup>167</sup> PRAAD'SY RAO 2/104 BKF to the Prime Minister, 16-2-55. The BKC was invited through the Asanteman and in reply they reminded the CPP to publish the Mate Korle Committee Report. They emphasized that they had already declared to government their intention to secede from the confederacy and could not be represented by the Asanteman or the NLM. Fortunately for the BKC, the NLM turned down the invitation.01

<sup>168</sup> Drah in Brong Kyempim P. 141.

<sup>169</sup> Drah, op. cit. P.142.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

safeguards for individual and minority rights and effective powers for the region within a unitary state framework"<sup>172</sup>

By contrast, the B.K.C. hailed the C.P.P. decision to create the region. It demonstrated its pleasure by voting massively in the 1956 elections. This enabled the C.P.P. to win four of the six seats in Bonoland. In the seven Bono and Ahafo constituencies, the C.P.P. polled 41,222 as against 32,881 for the N.L.M. and its allied parties.<sup>173</sup> In May 1958, the C.P.P. government appointed B. Yeboah Afari as Regional Commissioner and on 3 November 1958, it introduced into the National Assembly the Constitutional Bill.<sup>174</sup>

In December 1958, the C.P.P. government introduced the Repeal and Restrictions Bill, which received an assent of the Queen of England in the same month. This created an opportunity for the C.P.P. to introduce into the National Assembly the Bill establishing the Bono-Ahafo Region and a House of Chiefs. On March 20, 1959, under a Certificate of Urgency, the Bill passed through all its stages. It received the Governor General's approval and became operative on April 4 1959, when the region and its House of Chiefs were inaugurated in Sunyani by the C.P.P. government. From then, the Bono assumed the position of a distinct administrative and a judicial division.

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<sup>172</sup> The impasse over the new constitution compelled the Secretary of State to request the CPP to hold fresh elections to determine the strength or otherwise of support for its constitutional proposals. The CPP won the elections.

<sup>173</sup> For the detailed results of the election see The Ghana Evening News 19 July 1956, Pp. 1-3. See also PRAAD'SY 2/104 BKF File Quarterly Report, 1 October 1957 - 31 March 1958.

<sup>174</sup> Arthur, op. cit. P. 51.

## CONCLUSION

The focus of this dissertation has been Bono before 1712, and the relations between Bono and Asante after 1712. It has been argued that prior to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, there were many settlements in the Bono area. In about the middle 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Bono Manso settlement expanded its territories through conquest and the creation of new settlements within a radius of between 30 and 40 kilometres of the Manso settlement. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Bono Manso state had become one of the famous states in the country. The political, social and economic systems of the Bono were similar to those of the other Akan states.

The relations between Bono Manso and Asante in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century were friendly. The Bono Manso king regularly sent gifts of gold to the Asantehene to mark their friendship. People from Bono and Asante visited each other's territory to trade, to consult shrines, or to found settlements. The friendly relations between Bono and Asante ended in 1712 when Asante attacked Ahwenekoko, the Wankyi capital and looted their gold resources and state regalia. Between 1722 and 1747 Asante defeated Bono Manso, Gyaman and Atebubu to exploit their gold resources to finance its wars campaigns. Asante also wanted to control the trade route to the Salaga market.

To strengthen her control of Bono, Asante stationed officials in Bono. These officials shared authority with Bono chiefs. This developed ultimately into dual chiefship – with the indigenous Bono population looking up to their chief and Asante immigrants looking up to the Resident as their chief. In some cases, pro-Asante chiefs, without

traditional claims to legitimacy, replaced duly elected Bono chiefs. Asante also established military posts in Bono.

These security measures enabled Asante to be able to exercise constant supervision of affairs in Bono and to make Bono and its neighbours sincere subjects. The exemption of states like Nkoranza from the excessive annual tribute enabled Asante to retain their loyalty; but this created antagonism between Nkoranza and her neighbours. The Bono states looked for an opportunity to destroy them. The rivalry among the Bono states made it difficult for Bono to effectively challenge the Asante authority. Bono endured all indignities by Asante until 1874 when the British defeated Asante in the Sagrenti War.

Asante defeat rekindled Bono nationalism. Atebubu led other states in the Eastern Bono area to form a federation of Bono states to resist Asante rule. Nkoranza and other Asante allies also revolted. With British government support, these states sustained their rebellion till 1900 when Asante was itself defeated by the British in the Yaa Asantewaa War.

Bono attempts to regaining their independence from Asante were however balked by British policy to elevate chiefs and create large local authorities. Most sub-chiefs were displeased with the change in position or status and this created envy and hatred between sub-chiefs and their paramount chiefs. The division of states by the British disorganized most Bono states. The restoration of the Asante confederacy in 1935 initiated strong protests from the Bono chiefs who felt cheated by their Asante counterparts, but the British Government ignored their petitions. The CPP Government, which had ignored the Bono federation's petitions to recognize it, changed its position when the Asante-

based NLM was formed in 1954. The CPP openly supported the Bono federation and in exchange for their support of Bono in its struggles with NLM, the CPP in 1959 relieved the Bono by granting them a separate region and a separate House of Chiefs.

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APPENDIX 1

THE BRONG-AHAFO ACT 1959 IN THE ANNUAL VOLUME ACTS  
OF GHANA ENACTED IN 1959 BY LORD LISTOWELL

Assented to in Her Majesty's name and on Her Majesty's behalf - 25th March 1959. An Act to make changes in the regions into which Ghana is divided, 4th April 1959.

1. The act is enacted by the Queen's most excellent Majesty, by, and with the advice and consent of the National Assembly of Ghana in Parliament and its authority.
2. The area consists of the northern part of the present Ashanti and a small area previously in the Northern Region.
3. In accordance with Section 3 of the House of Chiefs Act, 1958, there shall be a House of Chiefs for the Brong-Ahafo Region.
4. The occupants of the Brong-Ahafo stools cease to be members of any House of Chiefs.
5. The first meeting of the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs shall be held in accordance with Section 8 of the Houses of Chiefs Act of 1958.
6. Matters of a constitutional nature involving a member of Ashanti House of Chiefs shall be determined by a committee of those respective Houses of Chiefs; and appeal shall lie to the President of the House, who shall refer the appeal within the prescribed time to an Appeals Commissioner for hearing under the Act.
7. For the purpose of compelling the attendance of parties, and witnesses, and the production of documents, a committee acting under the provisions of this section shall have the powers of a magistrate court in the exercise of its civil jurisdiction.
8. The Ashanti and the Brong-Ahafo Region shall each constitute a single Judicial Division.



9. The Act shall not affect the existing law in the part of the Brong-Ahafo Region which was formerly in Ashanti, but subject to section 7, the law in the part of Brong Ahafo, formerly part of the Northern Region.
10. In any enactment passed or made after the commencement of this Act, the expression 'Ashanti' means Ashanti Region.
11. Lands and Native Rights Ordinance shall not affect customary law in Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo. On the South the area include the following local councils: Western Dormaa, Ahafo, Bomaa, Bechem, Tokyimantia, Duayaw-Nkwanta, Chiraa, Abesim, Wenchi, Techiman, Tano-Subin, Nkoranza, Atebubu, Wiase, Dwan, Volta River Federation.
12. The members of the Brong-Ahafo House of Chiefs; the Amanhene of Abease, Atebubu, Banda, Bechem, Berekum, Dormaa, Drobo, Dwan, Kukuom, Mo, Nkoranza, Suma, Techiman, Wiase, Wenchi, Pran and Yeji.

Prepared by K.B. Ayensu  
Clerk of National Assembly.

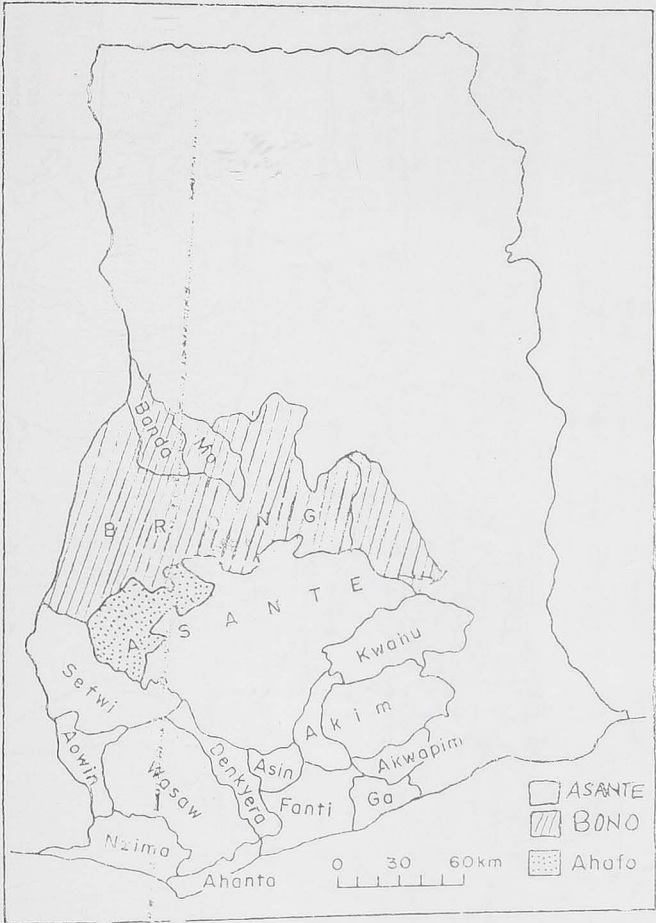
APPENDIX II

HISTORICAL EVENTS IN BONO

<u>Date</u>	
c.1270	Bono began expanding their settlement at Manso.
c.1300	People began extracting gold in the Bono State.
c.1350	Bono fought against the Banda State.
c.1370	Nana Kwakye Ameyaw invited some traders into the Bono Kingdom.
c.1600	The Bono State reached its peak of glory.
c.1690	Internal dynastic dispute in the Bono State.
c.1692	Nana Akumfi Ameyaw ascended the Bono throne.
c.1711/12	Ahwenkoko, the Wankyi capital was destroyed by the Asante army.
c.1720	Bafour Twum settled at Nkoranza.
c.1722/23	Bono was defeated by Asante forces.
c.1731	Gyaman was attacked and defeated by Asante.
c.1745/47	Atebubu and other states in Eastern Bono were defeated by Asante and became Asante vassals.
c.1752	The first Gyaman revolt against Asante rule.
c.1818/19	The Adinkra (Gyaman) war with Asante.
1874	Atebubu closed its side of the Asante Trade Route to the Salaga Market and formed the Bono Confederation with other Bono states.
1875	Gyaman defied Asante.
1877.	Tekyiman defied Asante rule and fought her.
1883	Nkoranza under Nana Ata Effa defied Asante. The Bereku-Gyaman

(Nkyibena) war.

19. 1892 The first Asante-Nkoranza war. Asante forces defeated Nkoranza.
20. 1893 Nkoranza and Kintampo were attacked again.
21. 1900 Some Bono states fought for the British in the Yaa Asantewaa war.
22. 1920/21 Bono revived their Asafo groups to resist any attempt by Asante to re-subjugate them.
23. 1935 States in Bono with the exception of Atebubu joined the restored Asante Confederacy.
24. 1936 Committee of Privileges ruled in favour of Asante in the Asante-Tekyiman dispute over the ownership of villages in Tekyiman.
25. 1948 Tekyiman announced its secession from the Asante confederacy and formed the Brong Kyempim Federation.
26. 1950 Some Bono were elected members to the Legislative Assembly.
27. 1951 The B.K.F. was inaugurated in Tekyiman. The C.P.P. appointed the Mate Korle Commission to investigate the Bono Asante dispute.
28. 1954 The C.P.P.- B.K.F. alliance was formed
29. 1956 Nana Agyeman Badu led a delegation of the B.K.F. to the Achimota Conference.
30. 1958 Mr. B. Yeboah Afari became the first Bono-Ahafo Regional Commissioner.
31. 1959 The Bono Ahafo Region and the Bono Ahafo House of Chiefs were inaugurated by the C.P.P.



TRIBAL MAP OF GHANA SHOWING THE POSITION OF AHAFO IN RELATION TO THE BRONG TRIBE AND ASANTE TRIBE.

(From Atlas of Population Characteristics, Accra, 1964)  
A historical, geo. of Ghana - K. B. Dickson (Cambridge University)

N O R T H E R N

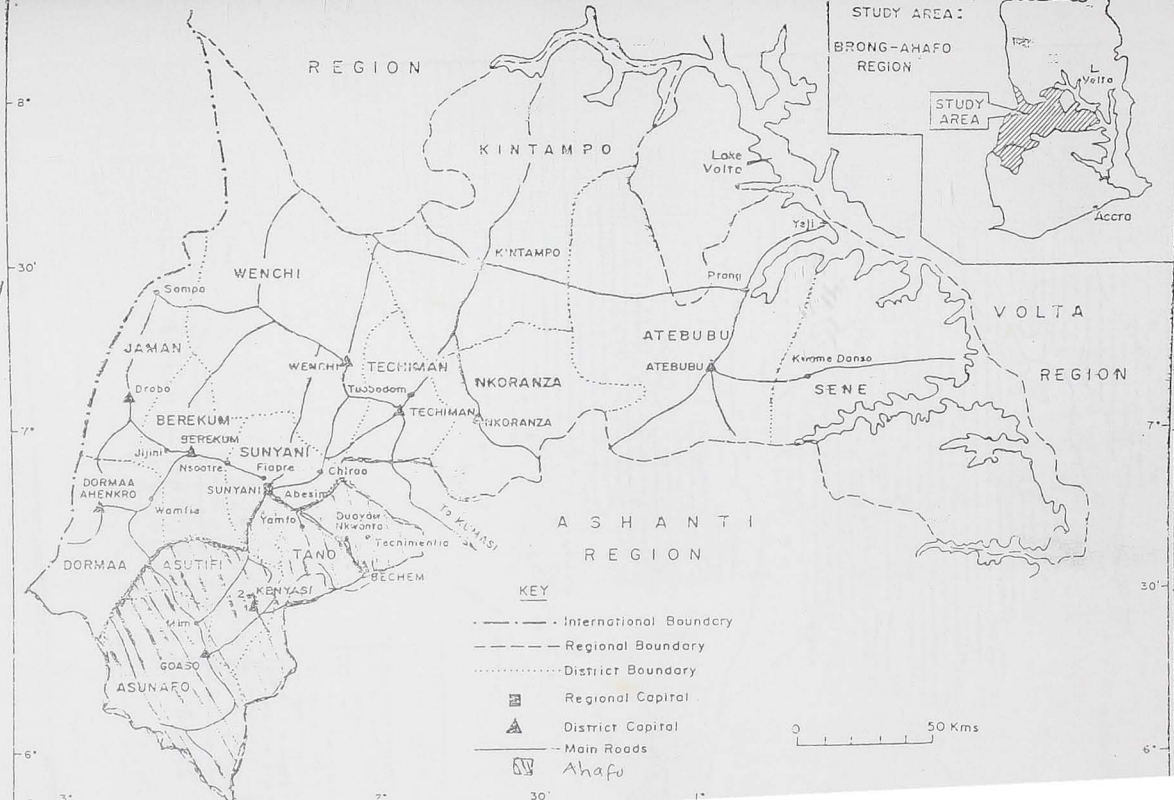
LOCATION OF THE

STUDY AREA:

BRONG-AHAFO

REGION

STUDY AREA



KEY

- International Boundary
- - - - - Regional Boundary
- ..... District Boundary
- Regional Capital
- ▲ District Capital
- Main Roads
- ▨ Ahafu

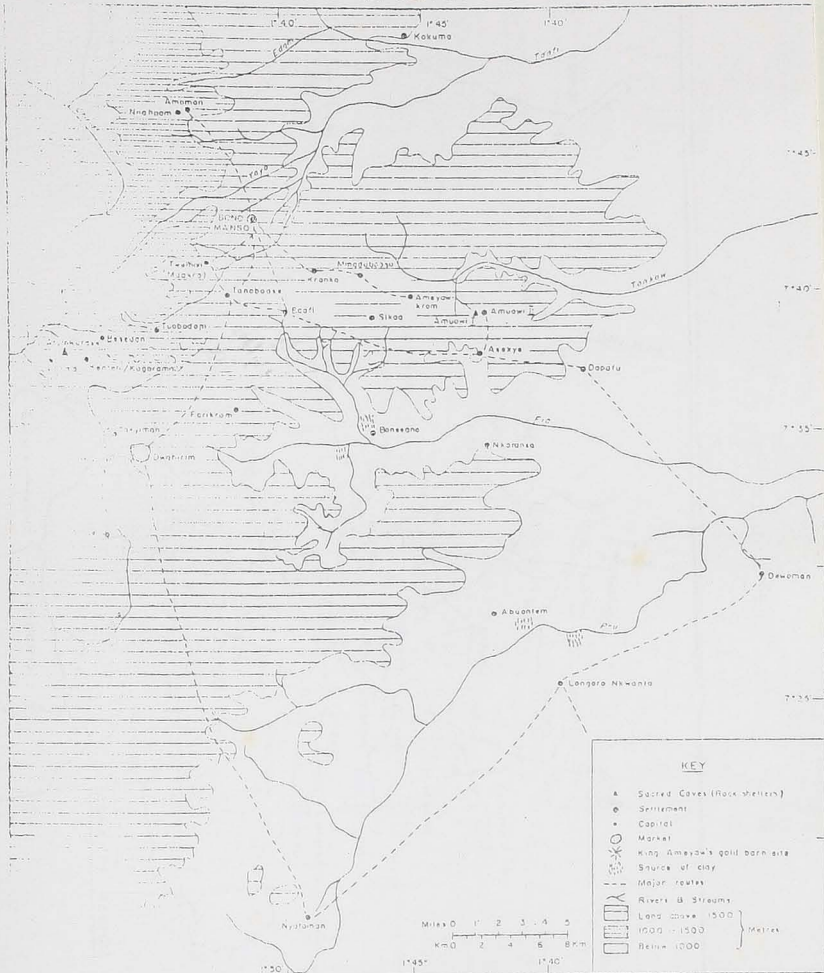


8°  
30'  
7°  
6°

7°  
30'  
6°

3° 2° 30' 1°

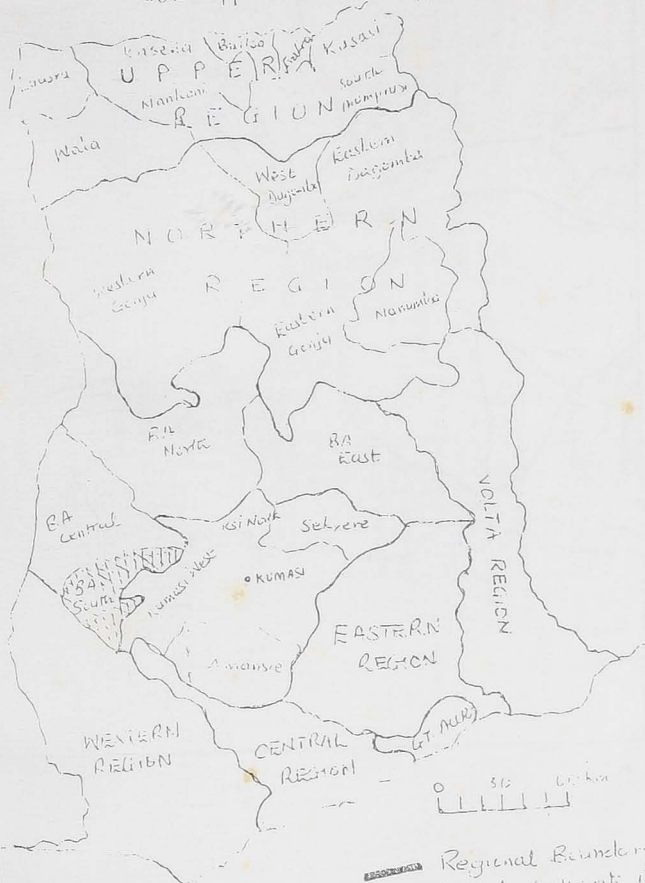
AKO MANSO STATE SHOWING IMPORTANT PRE-18TH CENTURY SETTLEMENT



SOURCE: EFFAH-GYAMFI, M.A. THESIS, BALME LIBRARY



GHANA: Administrative Units before the division of Upper Region into Upper East and Upper West Regions.



- Regional Boundary
- Local Authority Boundary
- B/A South - formerly Western Ashanti before the creation of the EA Region in 1955

Adapted from: A historical geography of Ghana →

by R. T. ...



# KUMASE : FOCUS OF ROUTES

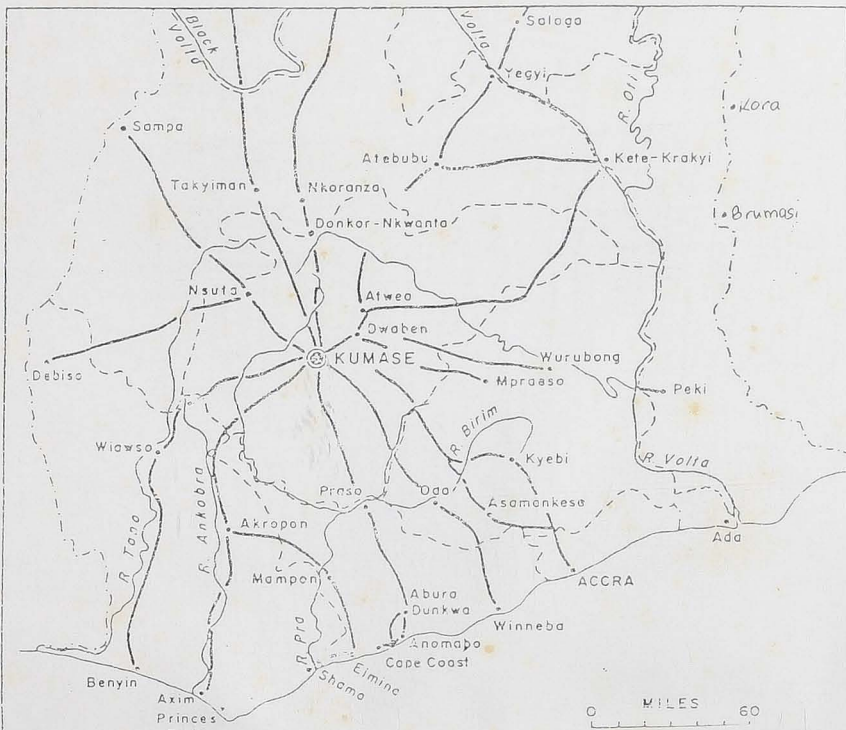


FIG. 2

