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Settling in and holding on : a socio-economic history of northern traders and transporters in Accra's Tudu: 1908-2008

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Settling in and holding on. A socio-economic history of northern traders and transporters in Accra's Tudu: 1908-2008

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de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof. mr. P.F. van der Heijden,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op donderdag 3 november 2011
klokke 15.00 uur

door

Ntewusu Samuel Aniegye

geboren te Accra
in 1974

Promotiecommissie:

Promotor:	Prof. dr. M.E. de Bruijn (University of Leiden)
Co-promotor	Dr. J.B. Gewald (Afrika-Studiecentrum)
Overige leden:	Prof. dr. E.K. Akyeampong (Harvard University)
	Prof. dr. R.J. Ross (University of Leiden)
	Dr. Stefano Bellucci (IISG, Amsterdam)

For Professor Ato Quayson, Professor Sheilah F. Clarke-Ekong, Mr. Paul Konde and Mary Elizabeth Davies

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VIGNETTE

The Tomato Market in 2008 (Picture by author 2008)

The Tomato market transformed in 2011 (Picture by M. de Bruijn)

Allahu Akbar (repeated 4 times), God is great; *Ash-had al- la ilaha illa llah* (repeated twice), I bear witness that there is no god except the one God; *La ilah illa llah*, there is no god except One God. The muezzin at the Tudu Central Mosque calls out the *Adhan/Azaan*, for prayers, summoning Muslims in Tudu for mandatory (*fard*) prayers (*salah*). This is repeated five times daily. But such calls for prayers are not unique to Tudu: most communities in Accra, particularly the *zongos* of which Tudu is also a part, do the same. But how unique is Tudu with regards to religion, and how important are Islamic prayers in Tudu with reference to other communities in Accra? Tudu is the only

zongo in Accra which does not have a church; neither does it house a traditional shrine. From Tudu's foundation in 1908 until now, the mosque has acted as a rallying point for most residents and Muslim traders in Tudu.

Besides Tudu's uniqueness in terms of religion, one also encounters the chants from drivers' mates of the various commercial vehicles popularly called *trotro*. From dawn to dusk one frequently hears them shout, "Accra, *cra, cra, cra*", while pointing the index finger towards the city centre. Whether the vehicle is coming from important towns such as Nsawam in the north, Ashaiman in the south, Aburi to the east, or Kasoa to the west, these shouts are the norm rather than the exception. They are all heading towards the Central Business District, which includes Tudu.

The drivers continue to bring in passengers and traders since more buyers and sellers continue to rush for more goods in and around Tudu. The head porters, popularly called *kayaye*, have seen the opportunity and have congregated around Tudu's central lorry park waiting for customers to buy and for them to carry. Some stand at the road intersections and chase the vehicles with load into the lorry park. It is a way of pre-registering for load.

A few years ago commercial carrying of goods was done in conjunction with horse-drawn transporters. During a visit in March this year to Abbas, one of the immobilised horse-drawn transporters showed the sad state of the decline of the use of horses for transport. "I wish my horses were here. I would have made the *Bature* (referring to Prof. Mirjam de Bruijn) to ride". The events narrated above regarding motor vehicles and non-motorised transports are part and parcel of Tudu's daily life. They also reflect the interconnectedness between the various forms of transport in Accra.

But is the Tudu today the same as that of yesteryear? The tearing down of mud houses and the erection of new two-, three-, four- and even five-storey buildings are an evident reality in Tudu. Such manifestations indicate that Tudu has gone through and is still going through some transition. "On Monday I am going to court again. A rich man has sued me. He wants to sell this lorry park for more buildings. The poor man already has no peace and the rich people will make sure they [referring to the poor] do not have peace", says Paa Joe, one of those born in Tudu and now an official at Tudu Lorry Park. "Lorry parks are not for sale", argues Paa Joe himself in court, since his lawyer did not

appear to represent him. However, in Ghana's political landscape, politicians can do anything. Political heavyweights are behind the rich man, and even though lorry parks belong to the government, drivers and traders in Tudu fear that with some of the politicians supporting, the rich man might win the case. Tudu is now a prime real estate area, and many businessmen want to erect buildings to house shops and offices. Should the court rule in favour of the businessman, Tudu's lorry park will have to relocate.

In the meantime, hawkers on the streets and in Tudu Lorry Park continue to ply their trade, occasionally polluting the air with noise as they shout the items on offer and the prices that go along with them. The street to the north is still occupied by the Lebanese, who still sell building materials. Their love for fruits and vegetables has also led to the emergence of a small market around the 'Lebanon House', in an area which was initially reserved for indoor games.

Perhaps one needs to also mention the way and manner one is disturbed by some of the most haunting fears in Tudu, notably theft and abuse of cocaine. Since the 1980s a cocaine economy has emerged in Tudu, and more and more addicts throng to Tudu daily. The addicts are comfortable with anything and everything except cameras. "Hey! Don't *snash* (snap) me picture", they will yell to anyone carrying any object which is or resembles a camera. In times past, people going to the cocaine market would have been seeking one thing: kola nuts or meat, and much later shea butter. Today the kola-nut trade is in decline in Tudu, the cattle have long since been relocated to outlying areas, and the shea-butter market has moved to the Timber Market.

Today one popular agricultural product in Tudu is tomatoes. When I began the research in 2007, it was a delight to visit Tudu on a Monday or Thursday. Vehicles from all over tomato-producing areas arrived from dawn till noon, and buyers from other areas in Accra and even Lome and Lagos came to buy the fresh tomatoes. Two years later the tomato sellers were ejected. Rich people had come to buy the lands on which they sold tomatoes, and storied buildings were erected to house shops and offices. These shopowners do not offer Ghanaian products for sale but Chinese goods, which include shirts, trousers, bags, and so on. But a few tomato traders continue to occupy the little space left.

It is these changes that make the story of Tudu interesting and worthy of investigation. The research which I have conducted through archival search, interviews,

and observation has led to this thesis, a thesis which explores the socio-economic history of Tudu from 1908-2008.

INTRODUCTION

Braimah

The social history of Tudu, a *zongo* in Accra, Ghana, tells us the story of urbanisation from colonial times to the present. It relates to the so-called 'northern factor' in Ghanaian history. This discussion was initiated by Ivor Wilks nearly fifty years ago.[1] Northerners have contributed to the growth and development of metropolitan Accra through their involvement in transport and trade. One cannot come to an adequate understanding of the growth and development of Accra, and thus Ghana as a whole, without looking at the role of northerners in the city's history.

The story of Braimah will serve in this thesis as one of the central case studies that help to support the argument. The thesis also presents the story of the relationship between technology/transport, communication, and societal development.

Braimah, a prominent kola-nut trader of mixed Yoruba and Fulani parentage in Ilorin, left Nigeria along with other family members on a self-imposed exile in 1860.[2] His exile took him to Salaga in the present-day Northern Region of Ghana. Salaga was historically important for its kola-nut trade and as a slave market centre. Throughout pre-colonial and colonial times, Salaga was a known *zongo*.[3] *Zongo* is a Hausa term, meaning the camping place of a carrier or a lodging place of travellers.[4] It is also a term which referred to the section of a town where Muslim traders lived. *Zongos* are not new in Ghana, and many Ghanaian cities have such a *zongo*. For example, Ivor Wilks indicates the role of Mande traders in the foundation of Bole and other *zongo* communities in present-day Gonjaland, as well as of Tafo in present-day Ashanti prior to the British-Ashanti war of 1874. Kwame Arhin has documented the establishment of *zongos* by Hausa, Dyula, and Dagomba traders in the Ashanti frontier towns of Attebubu and Kintampo after 1874. In Tamale, the capital of the Northern Region of Ghana, Jeremy. S. Eades reports on Yoruba entrepreneurs from the 1930s to the 1960s,

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[1] I. Wilks, *The Northern Factor in Asante History* (Legon: Institute of African Studies, 1961); I. Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[2] M. B. P. Braimah, *A Migrant African Chief* (Baltimore: Noble House, 2001), 5. In this thesis, the names Braimah, Butcher Braimah, Chief Butcher Braimah, Alhaji Braimah, Braima I, and Chief Braimah have been variously used to refer to the same person, just as referenced in files in the archives.

[3] J. A. Braimah & J. R. Goody, *Salaga: The Struggle for Power* (London: Longmans, 1967), vii-viii.

[4] E. Shildkrout, *People of the Zongo: The Transformation of Ethnic Identities in Ghana* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 67.

who were mostly located in three *zongos* in Tamale: namely, Hausa Zongo, Mossi Zongo, and Sabon Gida. Finally, Enid Shilkrout also discussed the Mossi Zongo in Kumasi.[5]

It was the Salaga Market that Braimah's earlier kola-nut trade in Ilorin depended on for supplies.[6] Braimah's relocation from Nigeria to Salaga was simply a move higher up the supply chain. He already understood the economic opportunities that awaited him there. In Salaga, Braimah traded mostly to Ilorin and Kano and other areas in present-day Nigeria.[7] He had large numbers of porters who assisted him in his trade. Furthermore, he was responsible for supplying horses to the Gonja and Dagomba aristocracy. However, after the British-Ashanti war of 1874 and the destruction of Kumasi that followed, Braimah's economic opportunities were in danger. The destruction of Kumasi by the British was a decisive moment which led some of the ethnic groups in the north to revolt against the Ashanti. In Salaga the Gonja revolted and murdered Ashanti's resident ambassadors. The response by Ashanti was to cut the supply of kola nuts from Brong Ahafo to Salaga, by first murdering Grunshie head porters responsible for carrying kola nuts to Salaga. Ashanti then went on to establish kola-nut markets in Ashanti's northern frontier towns of Atebubu and Kintampo.[8]

Braimah fled with other northern traders to Accra, while other traders moved to the newly established markets in Atebubu and Kintampo in present-day Brong Ahafo Region. The rest moved to Kete Krachi in present-day Volta Region. It is important to note that some Muslim traders had already participated in trade to the coast prior to Salaga's destruction. Such trade was minimal, but it is nevertheless possible that as a

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[5] For more insights on these *zongos*, see I. Wilks, 'The Northern Factor in Ashanti History: Begho and the Mande', *The Journal of African History*, 2:1 (1961), 25-34; K. Arhin, 'Aspects of the Ashanti Northern Trade in Nineteenth Century Africa', *Journal of International African Institute*, 40:4 (October 1970), 363-73; J. S. Eades, *Strangers and Traders: Yoruba Migrants, Markets and the State in Northern Ghana* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 1993); E. Schildkrout, *People of the Zongo: Transformation of Ethnic Identities in Ghana* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). We shall return to these *zongos* in the course of our discussions in subsequent chapters.

[6] The Islamic jihads of 1804 had led to the consolidation of the Sokoto Caliphate and altered consumer patterns. Kola nuts became a substitute for alcohol. Kano in this regard emerged as a central distribution point, for which much depended on Asante and its tributary markets. For more on the jihads and kola-nut trade, see G. Austin, *Labour, Land and Capital in Ghana: From Slavery to Free Labour in Asante, 1807-1956* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2005).

[7] Interview with Alhaji Mohamed Buniameen Braimah (a.k.a. Alhaji Billy), Tudu, 3 August 2009. He is the '*Balogun'* of the current Yoruba chief, Chief Braimah IV, and Secretary to the Association of Muslim Chiefs in Ghana.

[8] K. B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography* (Cambridge: University Press, 1969), 241.

result of this, Braimah also knew of the economic potential and opportunities which Accra presented.[9]

Before discussing the effects of the sojourn of Braimah and other northerners in Accra, the following section considers some of the historiography concerning northerners in Accra.

The people of Accra: an overview of the literature

The 'northern factor' in Ghanaian history is one of the aspects of Ghana's past and present that is ever-present but hardly ever talked about in a serious context beyond the merely anecdotal, let alone discussed in an academic setting. Certainly, most academics working on Ghana are able to refer to the magisterial works by Rattray, Meyer Fortes, and Staniland, yet how these may relate to Ghanaian history as a whole is often left aside.[10] In a sense, and without wishing to push this point too far, academics working on Ghanaian history in the present are much like Edward Bowdich on his famous mission from Cape Coast to Asante in 1817. Like Bowdich, we are aware of the existence of 'Sallagha, the grand market of the Inta kingdom', or 'Yahndi, the capital of Dagwumba', but what these places look like and what their importance is within Ghanaian history is generally dependent upon a perspective dictated by Asante.[11] To underscore the point being made, nearly fifty years after publication, Ivor Wilks's *The Northern Factor in Ashanti History* still awaits a worthy successor.[12]

In reviewing scholarly works related to northerners' settlement patterns, and their role in the economy of Accra, it is useful to begin with a brief discussion of terminology. In this thesis, the word 'northerners' is used in a generic sense. Its usage is neither contradictory nor inappropriate in Accra and, indeed, perhaps the whole of southern Ghana. In southern Ghana and among the Ga and Akan, *Hausa nyo* (Ga) or *Pepeni/Otani/Sreimni* (singular in Akan) or *Pepefuo/Ntafuo/Sreimfo* (plural in Akan)

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[9] D. Maier, 'Competition for Power and Profits in Kete-Krachi, West Africa, 1875-1900', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 13:1 (1980), 33-50.

[10] R. S. Rattray, *The Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), repr. 1969; M. Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1945); M. Staniland, *The Lions of Dagbon: political Change in Northern Ghana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).*

11 T. Edward Bowdich, Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, 3rd edn, edited, with notes and an introduction by W. E. F. Ward (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1966), 172 & 177.

[12] I. Wilks, *The Northern Factor in Asante History* (Legon: Institute of African Studies, 1961); I. Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

refers to people from the three northern regions: Northern Region proper, Upper East, and Upper West, as well as people originating from Burkina Faso, Niger, Togo and Nigeria. The categorisation of 'northerners' as one singular entity is borne out of historical experience and a long observation of their behaviour by southern ethnic groups.

In southern Ghana, 'northerners' have a tendency to group together, often in a separate location distinct from 'southerners'. Informants in Tudu report that the need to stay together is one of the ways of dealing with the uncertainties of the city and a means through which one can access security and support.[13] Northerners also have a greater orientation towards Islam. They are likely to engage in a common trade or labour, mostly unskilled. The categorization of northerners implies a wide-ranging number of ethnic groups in Accra. However, for the purpose of this discussion, much of the definition of northerners will apply to the following ethnic groups: the Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Kotokoli, Mossi, Dagomba, Mamprusi, Grushi, and Gonja.[14]

[13] See Life Histories of head-load porters in Chapter 2 for this view on security and support

[14] I shall make categorisations where necessary, such as northerners from Nigeria to include the Hausa, Yoruba, and Fulani, or northerners from Ghana to include Dagomba, Gonja, Mampruise, Grushie, and so on. In more specific cases, I shall use the names of the ethnic groups concerned. But I shall use the word 'northerners' when I am collectively discussing all these ethnic groups mentioned above. It is important to mention that other authors, such as Keith Hart, also identify or define 'northerners', particularly the Frafra in urban centres, as a 'poor group'. According to Hart, northerners make up the more poorly paid within the organised or government labour force. They work mainly as domestic servants or labourers, or engage in similar jobs which lack high skill requirements. Hence, Hart's northern category relates to employment in the low-paid category. Paul A. Ladoucer also reported on the impact of colonial policy in inducing labour migration to southern coastal cities, leading to the formation of what he called 'northern solidarity'. This solidarity facilitated the expansion of the Northern Peoples Party, one of the largest parties in 1957 and one of the official opposition parties to the Convention Peoples Party. Hence, Ladoucer defines the northerners in urban centres as more of a political category, which served as a means to participation in the wider political activities in the country. As has already being noted, these two perspectives regarding 'northerners' are different from the way in which I define or use the term 'northerners', especially in the context of Tudu. For more on the discussion of northerners by the two authors, see K. Hart, 'Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 11:1 (Mar. 1973), 61-89; P. A. Ladouceur, *Chiefs and Politicians: The Politics of Regionalism in Northern Ghana* (London: Longman Group Ltd, 1979), especially Chapter 5.

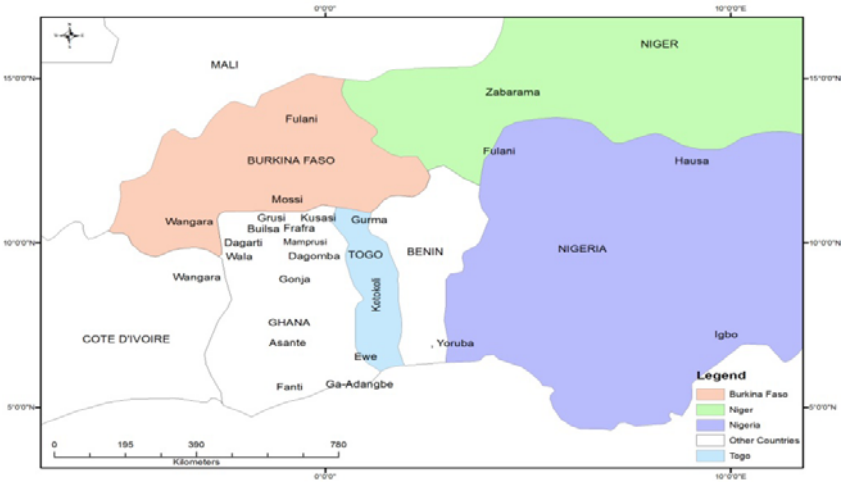

Fig.1. Map of West Africa and Ghana, showing some of the northern ethnic groups who migrated to Accra.

It will also be proper to consider in the literature review aspects of the history of the indigenes of Accra, the Ga, whom the northerners came and met and who were very welcoming and generous in their dealings with them, especially with regards to making land available for them to reside and to trade on. A review of Ga literature will in part enable us to understand how Tudu was settled, which is the primary aim of the next chapter.

A number of historians have looked at the Ga prior to the profound urbanisation which took place in Accra.[15] Quarcoopome, in tracing the urbanisation of Accra, does not refer to northerners, even though northerners have been part and parcel of the urbanisation of Accra.[16] He notes that Accra, in the middle of the seventeenth century, comprised only a few scattered hamlets. After 1680, Accra began to experience phenomenal growth both physically and demographically. The process took a dramatic

[15] I am aware of Ga-centric works such as I. Quaye, 'The Gas and Their Neighbours: 1600-1942' (unpublished PhD thesis, Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon, 1972); M. Field, *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* (London, 1937); Marion Kilson, *African Urban Kinsman: The Ga of Central Accra* (C. Hurst & Co, 1974); R. J. H. Pogucki, *Land Tenure in Ga Customary Law* (Accra, 1955); R. Claire, *Sharing the Same Bowl: A Socio-Economic History of Women and Class in Accra* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984); E. Akyeampong, 'Bukom and the Social History of Boxing in Accra: Warfare and Citizenship in Pre-Colonial Ga Society', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 35:1 (2002), 39-60; M. Kilson, 'Taxonomy and Form in Ga Ritual', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 3, 1 (1970), 45-66; M. Kilson, 'Ambivalence and Power: Mediums in Ga Traditional Religion', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 4, Fasc. 3 (1971-2), 171-7. These detailed works contain information about Accra. In order not to divert the focus of the review, I selected only a few authors. However, references have been made to these works as well as other works dealing with Accra in the course of my discussions in this thesis.

[16] S. S. Quarcoopome, 'The Impact of Urbanisation on the Socio-Political History of the Ga Mashie People of Accra: 1877-1957' (unpublished Ph D thesis, African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, 1993)

turn after 1877, when Accra became the capital of the British colony, the Gold Coast, initiating a process of urbanisation.

By 1957, the year in which the Gold Coast obtained its independence, Accra had become the foremost metropolis in Ghana. It became the commercial, industrial, financial, and administrative capital. Quarcoopome's thesis is mainly concerned with the consequence of urbanisation on the indigenous Ga Mashie people in Accra. He focuses especially on their social and political institutions, which, he argues, were profoundly undermined by urbanisation.[17] Even though Quarcoopome does not lay emphasis on *zongos* as part of the general expansion of Accra, the general outline of his thesis is useful for our understanding of the growth of Tudu, especially in the general context of Accra's urbanisation process. He notes, for example, that issues of diseases and earthquakes were one of the main reasons why some residents in Ga Mashie were resettled in Korle Gonno and Kaneshie.[18] I argue in this thesis that these reasons were very similar for the relocation of northerners from Cow Lane to Tudu, Sabon Zongo, and South Labadi, although at different historical times.

Another addition to the urban historiography of Accra is John Parker's *Making the Town*.[19] Parker, just like Quarcoopome, fails to highlight the importance of northerners in the making of Accra. He begins his study with an overview of Ga history from the seventeenth to the early nineteen century, emphasising the strategic importance of commerce and political change in the making of Accra.[20] In reviewing competing social science conceptions of African cities, Parker emphasises the importance of Ga ideas of town and country for understanding the dynamics of the social system in Accra. Throughout his book, Parker demonstrates the continuity and adaptability of Ga institutions in responding to changing political and economic realities and the importance of Ga institutions in shaping the early colonial city of Accra.[21]

However, Parker's account stimulated my thoughts and gave me a sense of direction regarding the way and manner in which events within the city shaped the activities of northerners in Accra. I began to consider some of the traditional Ga systems

[17] *Ibid.* 159.
[18] *Ibid.* 67-71.
[19] J. Parker, *Making the Town: Ga State and Society in Early Colonial Accra* (Portsmouth, Oxford: James Currey, 2000).
[20] *Ibid.* xxii.
[21] *Ibid.* especially Chapter 4.

of controlling trade in Accra, and whether or not the Ga have power in Tudu's economic space. It became evident that even though the traditional mode of taxation of traders was taken over by the modern state through the Accra Town Council and later Accra Municipal Assembly, during certain important occasions such as the yearly festival of the Ga called *Homowo,* the Ga Mantse (king or chief) still collected tax in the Tudu commodity market, and instead of cash, a certain quantity of the products was demanded. This confirms claims by Parker that despite Accra's rapidly urbanising identity, certain traditional practices and institutions within the city remained unchanged.[22]

Parker's assumptions, along with those of Kropp-Dakubu and Richard Brandt, are flawed, as they date the foundation of Tudu to later than that of Adabraka. The inaccuracy arises as a result of the archival document regarding a meeting held at the Christiansborg Castle in 1908.[23] Further investigation in the archives suggests that it was not in fact until a year or so after the 1908 meeting that Adabraka began to be developed as a community, by which time Tudu was already in existence. With the exception of a brief discussion about Braimah and Mallam Bako in Cow Lane and Sabon Zongo, Parker does not discuss in detail the very important role of northerners in the making of Accra.[24] The shifting of trade from Cow Lane to Tudu and the subsequent evolution of a Central Business District is, in my view, a central and essential part of the city. One would have expected that once he introduced migrants such as Chief Braimah into his narrative on northerners in Accra, he would have continued his analysis of their role until the end of the 1930s. In failing to do that, the historical scope of his book fails to capture the contribution of northerners in both the 'making of Accra' and the transformation of Tudu into a business district. In this vein, Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis revisit Parker's study. They stress both the contributions of northerners to the physical evolution of Accra and the success of individual Ga elite transporters, as exemplified by James Ado of Christainsborg, whose transport business depended on head-load porters in Accra.

[22] *Ibid.* 237.
[23] *Ibid.* 198. The views of the remaining authors will be discussed in Chapter 1.
[24] *Ibid.* 164-5.

A balance to the otherwise heavily Ga-focussed literature on Accra is Ione Acquah's *Accra Survey*.[25] Her survey, carried out in 1953-4, marks one of the earliest attempts at documenting in a single book the demographic, political, socio-cultural, and economic profile of Accra. Her study has chapters on housing, economic life, government, religion, and education. There is a useful analysis of the composition of the population and a valuable account of the town's historical and geographical background.

On economics and urban growth, which in part is the concern of my thesis, Acquah provides some useful insights. She notes the impact of urbanisation on residence patterns and describes segregated communities based on 'strangers' and 'indigenes'.[26] On aspects of economic activity in the city, she notes that as the city develops there is a gradual shift into buying and selling as opposed to fishing and farming.[27] She emphasises the role of women, whom, she argues, constitute the majority in trade.[28] Even though Ione Acquah recognises the presence of northern migrants in Accra, she does not strongly link their role in the urban economy. For example, she does not recognise the enormous trade in kola nuts and shea butter that was occurring in Accra. She also neglects to discuss head portage as an independent labour category but links head portage to issues of housing, where most of the head porters (*kaya kaya*) passed their night around the beach or in the town centre.[29]

Acquah also fails to make an explicit link between traditional northern migrant leadership and trade. Even though she admits that there is a greater tendency for northern migrants to always seek a leader in Accra, she fails to identify the various reasons for the pursuit of leadership.[30] The argument presented in this thesis is that political leadership is one of the ways by which northern migrants negotiate their way through the turbulent political and economic terrain in urban Accra. Evidence from field reports and archival sources indicates that such positions confer on the migrants an ability to negotiate with both indigenous (Ga) and modern (colonial) political structures for purposes of gaining advantages in residence and trade. This is clear especially in the

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[25] *I. Acquah,* Accra Survey: A social survey of the capital of Ghana, formerly called the Gold Coast, 1953-1956 *(London: University of London Press Ltd., 1958)*
[26] *Ibid.* 47.
[27] *Ibid.* 16.
[28] *Ibid.* 35.
[29] *Ibid.* 53-4.
[30] *Ibid.* 101-3

case of Chief Braimah, Kadri English, and Amadu Ilorin, as later discussions will show. Chapters 2 and 5 of this thesis contribute to this earlier research as I indicate the importance of northern leadership on both portage and kola-nut trade in Accra.

The only major work dealing with the role of northerners in Accra's urban growth is that written by Deborah Pellow.[31] Pellow uses one of the *zongo* communities in Accra called Sabon Zongo, which was established around 1912, to discuss space and its relationship to community development.[32] For her, the situation of Accra's Muslims from the late-nineteenth century to the early-twentieth century was one of social and spatial unity. Muslims fought among themselves for space and recognition in the mosques.[33] The conflicts in turn exposed the superficial unity that had been formed. The struggles indicated that the Muslims wanted to maintain some form of ethnic distinctiveness in the urban setting. She explores issues of community development, family ties, and political legitimacy in Sabon Zongo. Pellow also deals with the physical and environmental features of Sabon Zongo and everyday life in the *zongo*. Though the study mainly concentrates on Sabon Zongo, some of her perspectives on Muslim migrants in Accra are employed in this discussion of the founding of Tudu.

Pellow recognises the role of internal political struggle among the Yoruba and Hausa prior to 1912. She draws the conclusion that it was Mallam Bako's own initiative that led to the foundation of Sabon Zongo. She dismisses the role of the colonial administration and credits the Ga king, King Tackie II, for facilitating the acquisition of land in Sabon Zongo. Even though it is true that Bako was influential in the movement of the Hausa to Sabon Zongo, the involvement of the colonial administration, especially in giving an order for relocation, should have formed the critical component of Pellow's discussion.

The relocation of Hausas to Sabon Zongo was not only due to the competition for religious authority which occurred in Cow Lane. A close scrutiny of the events leading to the foundation and growth of both Tudu and Sabon Zongo indicates that,

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[31] D. Pellow, *Landlords and Lodgers: Socio-Spatial Organisation in an Accra Community* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002). I am aware of K. Hart's 'Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 11:1 (Mar. 1973). Hart used the Frafra, an ethnic group from present-day Upper East Region, as an entry point to discuss broader informal activities in Nima in particular and Accra in general. The author's views on the choice for trade especially after the 1960s have been incorporated in Chapter 7 regarding trade in tomatoes in Tudu.
[32] *Ibid.* 55.
[33] *Ibid.* 51.

besides religious factors, conflicts arose as a result of trade and transportation. The porters carrying kola nuts from the interior to Accra have always had conflicts with each other, reflecting the economic tensions between the Yoruba and the Hausa in Accra.[34] Such tension related to trade initially raised its head during a meeting with the Governor, prior to the foundation of the two communities, and were actualised in the selection of two different sites by the two ethnic groups. A few years after the foundation of the two communities, the economic fortunes in Tudu made some Hausa butchers leave Sabon Zongo and move to Tudu, while Hausas in Sabon Zongo wrote a letter in protest to the colonial administration, denouncing the butchers as Hausa.[35] Incidentally, the economic dimension of the conflicts, which in part contributed to the foundation and growth of Sabon Zongo, has not been addressed by Deborah Pellow. In this study, Chapters 1 and 5 consider the expansion of Tudu and the kola-nut trade in order to fill this gap in Pellow's work.

The most significant work on the relevance of urban transportation in Accra is that by M. Grieco, N. Apt, and J. Turner.[36] The authors, in focusing on female traders in Accra, note that there are indicators suggesting that 'travel behaviour' and the use of transport technologies are not gender-neutral. The commercial sector in Accra, as in other parts of West Africa, is dominated by females, as also is the utilisation of transport modes in Accra.[37] These authors maintain that one can only understand transportation in Accra—especially the interplay between social structure, cultural practices, economic processes, and informal urban transport use—in the context of grossly inadequate infrastructure and formal public transport. The authors identify two broad transport systems in Accra: motorised and non-motorised transportation.[38] Their book is especially useful in my discussion of transport systems in Accra because Tudu, as a lorry park and a site of intense informal activity, is an integral part of Accra's transportation system.

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[34] See Chapter 5 for these conflicts among the kola-nut head porters.

[35] Public Records and Archival Administration Department (Hereafter PRAAD), Accra, SNA 11/1446, Mohammedan community in Accra, 1920.

[36] M. Grieco, N. Apt & J. Turner (eds.), *At Christmas and on Rainy Days: Transport, Travel and Female Traders in Accra* (Vermont: Asgage Publishing Company, 1996). Earlier works by P. R. Gould and K. B. Dickson discussed transportation in general terms in Ghana and did not specifically set out to write about urban transport systems. For their perspectives on transport systems, see P. R. Gould, *The Development of Transportation Pattern in Ghana* (Evanston, Illinois: North-western University Studies in Geography, No. 5, 1960); K. B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

[37] *Ibid.* 7.

[38] *Ibid.* 22.

The authors argue that female porters' non-adoption of new technologies was as a result of not being culturally accustomed to the utilization of such technologies. They argue that, consequently, improved technologies such as the wheelbarrow or push-cart were monopolised by male porters. The authors also do not make mention of horse-drawn transportation, which existed alongside head portage in Accra from at least the beginning of the twentieth century. I argue in Chapters 3 and 4 that both male and female porters, the majority of whom were northerners, had already been exposed to various transport technologies, including horse-drawn transport and bullocks, both for the cultivation of land and for the transportation of goods to market. [39] Finally, I argue that head portage was not the domain of either men or women. I suggest in Chapter 5 that the current trend of women's dominance of head-portage came about only during the 1980s, with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes.

From the review, it is evident that despite the long participation of northerners in Accra's urban economy, no one text exists detailing the role and participation of northerners in Tudu, certainly a beacon of Accra's urbanity. What is known about northerners in terms of residence is limited to Sabon Zongo, ignoring Tudu in the process. It is this void that this thesis seeks to address.

Braimah Continued

As previously noted, the relocation of Braimah and other traders coincided with another significant event: the capital of the Gold Coast was relocated in 1877 from Cape Coast to Accra.[40] The choice of Accra as the administrative capital intensified immigration, leading to a gradual expansion of the town. Braimah and a few others would contribute to the history of Accra by founding their own community called Zongo Lane. Braimah and the other northern migrants engaged in the kola-nut trade, this time sending the kola nuts by sea to Lagos rather than by road as occurred in Salaga. Braimah also continued with the horse trade in Accra and added cattle trade to these two trading activities. But his supply base of horses was minimal, since it was only a few horse-drawn transporters who bought horses from him. We need to understand that, in terms of the horse trade, his supply base was mainly the Gonja and Dagomba aristocracy, who were certainly

[39] *Ibid.* 71-2.
[40] R. Grant & P. Yankson, 'City Profile: Accra', *Cities,* 20:1 (2002), 65-6.

absent in Accra. In Accra he had more competitors, including his son, Imoru Mabolaji Peregrino Braimah, who also supplied horses to horse-drawn transporters.[41]

Meanwhile, changing conditions in Kete Krachi began to affect Braimah and influenced the manner in which he conducted his trade in Accra. As mentioned earlier, the decline of Salaga from 1874 onwards also led to the presence of some northerners in Kete Krachi, a situation from which its trade benefited since trade was gradually diverted there from Salaga. By 1892 the migrant quarter in Kete Krachi—comprising Hausa, Yoruba, Gonja, and Dagomba—became populous and decisively opposed the indigenous rules imposed on them by their host, the Krachi people.[42] They refused, for example, to obey the taboos imposed on them by the Odente Shrine since they considered themselves Muslim. In addition, they refused to pay the traditional taxes imposed on them by the chief of Kete Krachi, preferring instead to obey their own chief, the Sarikin Zongo. With these frequent abuses of local mores by the migrants, a conflict broke out between the *zongo* and the indigenes in 1894.[43] The conflict led to further migrations to Kpong in the present-day Eastern Region and Accra, increasing the northern community in Accra in the process and thereby increasing trade activities.

With the entry into Accra of other traders in the Lagos-bound kola trade in the later part of the 1890s and the expansion of the city, Braimah quickly added cattle-rearing and butchery to his trading activities, a feat which earned him the title, 'Braimah the Butcher'.[44] Braimah brought Fulani herdsmen to take care of his cattle and grazed the cattle in the area where present-day Tudu is found. Meanwhile, in addition to kola nuts, Zongo Lane became central in the internal distribution of meat and the sale of shea butter. In keeping with the traditions in the north and to offer a re-orientation of trade from Asante to the coastal town of Accra, the British named the northern market, which had become known for its meat and bordered the residence of Chief Braimah, the Salaga Market. The indigenous Ga corrupted the name to 'Sraha'.[45]

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[41] See Chapter 3 for more insights on horse-drawn transportation.
[42] D. Maier, 'Competition for Power and Profits in Kete-Krachi, West Africa 1875-1900', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 13:1 (1980), 39.
[43] *Ibid.* 42.
[44] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Mohammedan Community Accra, 1902.
[45] In this thesis I shall use the word 'Salaga' to refer to the Salaga in the north and use the word *Sraha* to mean the market in Accra. This is to avoid confusion and to keep with the corrupted name in Accra, which is known by the indigenous Ga and other Ghanaian ethnic groups. Salaga Market (*Sraha)* is close to the General Post Office in Accra.

His success in the kola-nut and cattle trade, his respect for the indigenous Ga, and his generosity towards his fellow northerners made the King of the indigenous Ga, King Tackie Tawia, appoint Braimah as chief of Muslims in Accra in 1903. [46] His selection as chief was not confirmed by the colonial administration until 1909 due to opposition from some of the Hausa residents of Cow Lane, who felt they had a greater right to Muslim leadership since they had a greater attachment to Islam compared with the Yoruba. But Braimah still acted as chief over the northerners in Accra and over some northern migrant communities in the south, including Kumasi.[47]

In 1908 there was a bubonic plague in Accra, which caused many deaths, including at Cow Lane. To address the problems of the plague and other health concerns, the colonial administration decided to decongest the inner core of the city, Cow Lane being within this area. Two sites were proposed for the northern migrants: Kibi Road (Tudu and some parts of present-day Adabraka) and Ogblogo Road (Sabon Zongo). As a result of the internal strife among the northerners, already mentioned, particularly between the Yoruba and the Hausa, when Chief Braimah chose Kibi Road, the Hausa chose Ogblogo Road.[48]

Chief Braimah was tasked with the duty of moving the northern migrants from Cow Lane to his choice of Tudu. Chief Braimah, in order to have a greater monopoly over his cattle and kola-nut trade and to establish a purely Yoruba community, encouraged more Yoruba to move to Tudu. But Braimah's cattle trade and his dual parentage had also exposed him to the Fulani. Therefore, Braimah was also able to move other Fulani, besides the cattle herders, to Tudu. His long spell in Salaga also exposed him to the Gonja, who were the overlords of Salaga and its market in the north, as well as the Dagomba and Kotokoli, who made extensive use of the Salaga Market. Hence, in forming Tudu, Braimah succeeded through his exposure to the wider ethnic mix to encourage the Gonja, Dagomba, Fulani Mossi, and some Hausa to move to

[46] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Mohammedan Community Accra, 1900-1930.

[47] One of the early Ga ethnographers, Quartey Papafio, asserts that until his untimely death, King Tackie Tawia had the intention of attaching the Muslims in Accra to the Gbese stool. By so doing, Braimah would become one of the important elders of the Gbese stool and could then be permitted to attend or send representatives to the tribunal of the Ga Manche. It is important to note that the King's action was in recognition of the numbers as well as the importance of northerners in Accra's economy. As Papafio noted, 'the usefulness of these people is felt in all spheres of activity. As their numbers increase, they become more and more wealthy and there is no knowing if all that is best in Accra will not ultimately pass into their hands'. For more on the Ga and Braimah, see A. B. Quartey-Papafio, 'The Ga Homowo Festival', *Journal of Royal African Society*, 10, No. 40 (Jul. 1911).

[48] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Mohammedan Community Accra, 1900-1930.

Tudu, thereby creating a cosmopolitan northern ethnic niche in Tudu. Chief Braimah died in 1915, seven years after the foundation of Tudu.

From what has been narrated so far, it is evident that Braimah is not only a founding figure of Tudu, but he also reflects most of the themes that will be addressed in this thesis. Braimah's figure helps us focus on migration, urbanisation, trade, and transport as it pertained to northerners in Accra. Through Braimah, for example, it is possible for us to trace certain patterns of northern migratory history. In the same way, we can discuss how the patterns changed through time. Braimah's story is just one of the many stories about northerners moving in waves down to Accra. It also indicates the residential, trade, and transport preference of northerners in Accra. Unfortunately, existing studies provide insufficient contextual accounts of why northerners move to Accra and why they are concentrated in particular ethnic enclaves (*zongos*) in parts of the city of Accra. As shown already, in the limited cases where reasons were given for such movements to Accra, less effort has been dedicated to properly analysing economic activities and labour history within these ethnic enclaves.

Motivation

From Braimah's story, many research questions arise: Did the death of Chief Braimah lead to the collapse of Tudu as both a residential and trade neighbourhood? To what extent have northerners been able to utilise the urban space of Accra for their economic benefit? To what use have they put traditionally known modes of transport? And how did they integrate new transport technologies, such as the motor car, in their everyday social and economic life?

This thesis sets out to answer the above questions, using northerners in Accra's Tudu, including Chief Braimah, as a case study. I chose Tudu because it reflects a 'forgotten history' of one of Accra's important communities. As we have found from the literature, with the exception of Cow Lane, Tudu seems to be one of the longest-surviving *zongos*. It has existed for over a century, yet ethnographers on Accra's history have neglected it**.** I argue that Accra has become what it is today in part owing to the presence and economic activities of northerners. I shall defend this argument by using Tudu as a case study. By investigating the process of Tudu's transformation, we can detect the various stages that led to the evolution or emergence of certain trade and

labour categories in Accra. Taking Tudu as a nexus, aspects of Accra's history can be explained. Tudu does not exist in isolation but rather is part of an overall pattern of development. It can therefore be seen as both a product and producer of change in the residential pattern, commercial development, and trade and transport configurations which have occurred in Accra over the last century.

The thesis covers the period 1908-2008. In all historical writing, periodization is important. It places the discussions in proper context and allows for a detailed analysis of changes through time. In order to write an informed social history of northern traders and transporters in Tudu, it is necessary to set boundaries. I have decided to limit the attempt at a social history of Tudu to the period between 1908 and 2008. It was in 1908 that, as a result of the outbreak of bubonic plague, the colonial administration in Accra decided to relocate the inhabitants of Zongo Lane or Cow Lane in Accra to two sites, namely Kibi Road (Tudu) and Ogblogo Road (Sabon Zongo) The predominantly Hausa community moved to Sabon Zongo and the Yoruba and other ethnic groups—mostly kola nut, shea butter and cattle traders—moved to Tudu. Since that date, trade and the northern presence have been a marked part of Tudu's history.

The year 2008 has been selected as the terminal date for the thesis because of the history of the lorry park, which forms an important component of the study. The lorry park was established in 1929 for purposes of moving passengers and goods to and from Accra. The park continued to assume new dimensions both socially, economically, and politically. For purposes of a proper discussion of the lorry park over the years, 2008 was taken as the best year through which all the activities at the park could properly be analysed. For example, since its foundation, the lorry park continued to operate on different routes, depending on the political and economic or social climate. The last of such routes, from Tudu to Abidjan, began around 2001 but formally developed at the end of 2008.

In addition, non-motorised transport has been treated as an important component of the overall history of the northerners in Tudu, especially in terms of the opportunities offered for latter-day porters from the northern part of the country. As already pointed out and to be discussed shortly in this introduction and again in Chapter 2, conflicts and economic policies were and still are important factors necessitating the migration of the female head porters to Accra. The last of such serious conflicts was in 2008, involving

the Kusasi and the Mampruise. At the park, the Mampruise and the Dagomba head-load porters are the most numerous. Hence, it is important to conclude the study of non-motorised systems in Tudu in 2008, and by so doing the relationship between transport and survival in Tudu will be clearly understood.

The study of northerners in Tudu is, in a way, a continuation of the history of northerners in Ghana. By their residence in Accra and engagement in trading and transportation, northerners contribute to shaping Accra's history. This thesis is also an important component of understanding contemporary migration waves in Accra and the labour history of West Africa. It illuminates our understanding regarding urbanisation and the internal dynamics of trade in Ghana, especially the resilience of northern trade and trade goods in the midst of mass-imported European and manufactured goods. The study also broadens our understanding of the relationship between immigrant integration in a community that has been under-represented in Ghana's urban research. In a city such as Accra, where northerners have not been a recent phenomenon, research into their economic and labour history has largely been neglected.

Comparative Literature: Accra as a city

Even though the study is a localised one and mainly concerns a section of one of Ghana's largest cities, it has wider ramifications for the whole of Africa and can be deployed for similar studies elsewhere. The study did not set out to directly compare groups within other cities in Africa to Accra, yet the study of northerners in Tudu is of comparative relevance especially when one considers similar occurrences in other parts of the continent. For example, in Sudan, Amad Alwad Sikainga describes how immigrants from the north of Sudan, through the railway system, have a noticeable presence in Atbara and have also altered the metropolitan landscape in conspicuous ways. They have built places of worship, established ethnic stores, restaurants, and services for their communities and have become involved in host-country politics.[49] Just as with Atbara, Tudu displays similar physical, economic, and political characteristics, as later discussions will show. Both developed close to military barracks built at the initiative of the colonial administration and have utilised 'modern forms of

[49] A. A. Sikainga, 'Corporate Identity and Solidarity among the Railway Workers of Atbara, 1924-1946', *New Political Science*, Vol. 23, No. 1. (2001), 114-17; A. A. Sikainga, *"City of Steel and Fire": A Social History of Atbara, Sudan's Railway Town, 1906-1984* (Oxford: James Curry, 2002), 49.

transportation' as a means to their development. Both have a heavy representation of immigrant groups from the northern part of their countries and have been active in the politics of their respective countries.

In the same way, Abner Cohen's study of Hausa traders in the Yoruba city of Ibadan, south-west Nigeria, provides insights into the Hausa trading diaspora in Ibadan, where through trade the Hausa identity gained new meaning in Nigeria.[50] For Cohen, 'being Hausa' in Ibadan has to be understood in the particular urban context, defined by activities in the cattle and kola-nut trade. Against the view that tribal or ethnic identity is a cultural given, he insists that the mobilisation of ethnic solidarity is situational and a strategy for collective action to achieve specific economic or political goals.[51]

One could draw similar conclusions from Accra and, in fact, the whole of Ghana. In Ghana, *zongos* are associated with northerners but comprise a variety of groups originating from different parts of the north and are associated with particular trading activities such as kola-nut trade and shea-butter trade, or unique kinds of labour such as horse-drawn and head portage. In the *zongos* in Ghana and particularly in Tudu, several other ethnic groups have capitalised on the broad categorisation of 'northerners' to gain trade advantage as well as residential security.[52] The direct correlation between Tudu in Ghana and Sabo in Nigeria is that both communities were founded around the same time, Sabo in 1906 and Tudu in 1908. Both emerged or were established as a result of the cattle and kola-nut trade. Whereas Sabo was settled mostly by the Hausa, Tudu was settled by Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, and other northern Ghanaian ethnic groups. Each group had the backing of both the indigenous community—such as the Yoruba in Ibadan and the Ga in Accra—and the British administrative system in the establishment of their autonomous business quarter and have used their independent status to monopolise trade in cattle and kola nuts.

Despite these broad similarities with respect to residence and trade, there are differences that are of comparative relevance. Unlike in Sabo in Ibadan, where the socio-political and economic positions of *maigida* or landlords were monopolised by

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[50] A. Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa: A Study of the Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns* (London: Rutledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 49.
[51] *Ibid.* 27.
[52] Examples include the Bassari and Bulsa, among others. These groups do not bond culturally or religiously with the known groups of *zongo* such as Hausa, Yoruba, Kotokoli, and so on but have always capitalised on their residence in the *zongos* to gain trade and labour advantage, especially in portage.

males only, in Tudu the introduction of new forms of transport technology, such as motor vehicles, and the creation of the lorry park in the 1920s empowered females to participate in traditionally male-dominated arenas of trade, such as kola nuts, and some of these women rose to the position of *maigida*.[53] The position of *maigida* comes along with the spoils of control of sources of supply and distribution of trade goods. Hence, the entry of females into the trade and the acquisition of a more beneficial economic position forced some of the males to divert kola trade to areas that were particularly free of female participation. In much the same was the position of *nkuwurche* (oil chief) re-invented by the Gonjas in Accra in the 1920s, as a way of dictating terms in the shea-butter trade and controlling the supply sources of shea butter to Accra.

Apart from discussions of trade in Tudu, discussions of transport systems in Tudu illuminate our understanding of the various transport technologies in Accra and Ghana. In every urban setting, transportation is crucial in moving both people and goods into, out of, and within the city. By discussing the various transport technologies, this study contributes to urban transport history. Beyond the regional level, it is of global comparative importance because different countries adopt different transport technologies. In Korea, devices for carrying goods were chosen according to the things to be carried: grain was carried in wrapping sacks, and medicinal plants and herbs in mesh bags and jars. In windy regions or areas of steep terrain, carrying loads on the back was preferred to carrying them on the head.[54] The hilly nature of eastern Nepal has led to the development of commercial load-carriers from the 1820s until today. They carry loads mainly with back baskets that have forehead straps.[55] Head-loading is the dominant and preferred method in most Sub-Saharan African countries. In Chad, people of different traditions in neighbouring villages use different water-loading systems: head-loading, shoulder-loading and back-loading.[56] The clay pot in most cases has satisfied the Chadian rural communities in its age-long role in the carriage of water.[57]

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[53] See Chapter 6 for more roles of the *maigida* in Tudu. For the *maigida* in Sabo, Ibadan, see A. Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, 71-4.*
[54] C. W. Sik, *Modes of Transportation: Traditional Koreans Society* (Ewha Women's University Press, 2007), 11.
[55] N. J. Malville, 'Bearing the Burden: Portage Labor as an Adaptive Response to Predictable Food Deficits in Eastern Nepal', *Human Ecology*, 33:3 (Jun. 2005), 423.
[56] O. Tweedy, 'The Central African Highway', *The Geographical Journal*, 75:1 (Jan. 1930), 7.
[57] C. Spindel, 'Kpeenbele Senufo Potters', *African Arts*, 22:2 (Feb. 1989) 66-73.

How different are these transport systems in other countries from Ghana in general, and from Tudu in particular?

In Ghana there are equally important regional and/or geographic differences in the adoption of different transport technologies. In the north, very little use is made of the horse for portage. The reason for this is that the horse is the preserve of northern royals and up to the 1940s one needed the acquiescence of chiefs in order to be allowed to ride a horse.[58] Meanwhile, the north of Ghana has seen the increased use of bicycles since their introduction into the country.[59] Varied reasons have been given for this increased use of bicycles in the north, including geographical realities such as the flat nature of the northern terrain with its savannah grassland and the higher levels of poverty.[60] But a journey into the transport history of the north will reveal that the use of bicycles was an innovation that arose as a result of the imposition of the royal edict on horse utilisation by 'common people' (*Nyamase* in Gonja). Indeed, oral traditions of Gonja even claim that once a commoner sat on a horse, the horse's lifetime was limited.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note the large-scale use of donkeys in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in place of horses for transport purposes in the north. Even though donkeys are slower, they have been very visible in the economy of the Ghanaian north. Until the introduction and subsequent expansion of motorised transportation, the success of the north-bound kola-nut trade was due to the use of donkeys. The archival data clearly indicates the use of donkeys in the kola nut-producing areas in present-day Brong Ahafo, particularly Takyiman, Bechem, and Nkoranza, to mention just a few.[61] The introduction of the motor vehicle in 1902 into the Gold Coast revolutionised trade and changed the processes of transportation in the north significantly from the early 1920s onwards.[62] From that time on, more and more motor vehicles were used to convey goods to the north, and donkeys featured less in long-distance trade. But this did not also limit their utility in terms of transportation, since they continued to be used for short-distance transportation in the north.

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[58] C. Oppong, *Growing up in Dagbon* (Accra-Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1973), 18.
[59] The north as used here comprises Northern Region (with its capital in Tamale), Upper East (with its capital in Bolgatanga), and Upper West (with its capital in Wa).
[60] J. Turner, M. Grieco & E. A. Kwakye, 'Subverting sustainability? - Infrastructural and cultural barriers to cycle use in Accra', *Presented at the Seventh World Conference on Transport Research, Sydney (16-21 July 199)*, 2.
[61] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/12/23, Cattle from Zuarungu and Kola Trade, 1910-1911.
[62] See Chapter 4 for introduction of the motor car and its subsequent impact on trade patterns between the north of present-day Ghana and Accra.

In the middle belt and the forest areas, goods mainly used to be head-ported or rolled using casks. While head-load portage has still persisted, especially in the cocoa- and palm-producing areas, motorisation has overtaken cask rolling as a means of transportation. In the Kete Krachi areas, oxen were used in colonial times to transport salt from the banks of the Volta River to Salaga and other outlying areas.[63]

In the coastal areas, head portage is still common, especially in Accra. In Accra, in addition to head portage, rickshaws were used by members of the Gold Coast Assembly and the Accra Town Council. The introduction of motorised transport led to the diversion of rickshaws for the carriage of goods. To ensure increased carriage of loads, the two wheels were replaced by four wheels with pneumatic tires, turning them into a kind of four-wheel load-carrying platform trolley, popularly called 'hand-trucks'. This innovation has facilitated the transportation of goods in the urban centres, particularly in Accra and also at the lorry parks throughout the country, and they offer stiff competition to head portage.

By reference to the case history examples above, this study will explore some of the reasons for the different patterns of adoption of transport technologies in Accra, particularly the use of human-powered, horse-drawn, and motorised transport technologies. The study will explain the role of ethnic niches in transportation in Accra and the appropriateness of the various technologies to the local needs. It will also look at the economic implications and the socio-cultural context informing the adoption of such technologies. I consider this very important in understanding the historical evolution of transport systems within Ghana.

Essentially, Tudu's trade in kola nuts and shea butter and its transport modes, such as motorised transport, horse-drawn transporters, and head porters, are dominated by members of ethnic groups coming from the northern part of Ghana and some other parts of West Africa, particularly the Dagomba and Yoruba. While the story of northern immigrants in the fields of trade and transport is distinctive, it can also provide insights into the labour market trajectories of other immigrant groups in Accra. It is therefore important that a brief background discussion be devoted to the historical antecedents that contributed to the northern presence in Accra. This will assist in understanding why

[63] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 56/1/242, Salt Records at Krachi, 1922.

trade in particular products and certain forms of transportation became attractive to the northerners in the city.

Northerners in Accra: From Slavery to Structural Adjustment

In 1994, while doing my national service as a teacher in Mataheko, one of the tomato-growing areas in the Dangbe East District of the Greater Accra Region, two Fulani herdsmen had a fight. Two of the spectators quickly gave instructions in Ga-Dangbe to one of the young men, aged about fifteen years, *"Ya'che teacher Sammy"*, meaning "Go and call teacher Sammy". When he got to the gate of the house where I lived, he started shouting my name, "Teacher Sammy! Teacher Sammy!" I came out and asked the young man what the matter was. He told me that my brothers were fighting and I was urgently needed to separate them since they were from my 'hometown'. In the Mataheko community, as 'a northerner' from the northern region, I was the only person with my particular background, but my host community identified me within a wider identity. This anecdote puts our discussion of northern migrants in context. I have already indicated that individuals that come from the three northern regions, namely Northern, Upper East, and West Regions, and particular ethnic groups from Nigeria such as the Hausa and Yoruba and also the Mossi from Burkina Faso and Kotokoli from Togo, have the tendency to reside in the same locality within Accra—the *zongos*. This residential choice reflects common economic or occupational activities such as trade and transport within the city of Accra.

The importance of the 'North' as a source of slaves, as tribute or otherwise, in the past is an historical truth that cannot be denied and has long-lasting consequences for the position of the 'North' within Ghana's past and present. Slavery and the Atlantic slave trade are central to coming to an understanding of Ghana. Slavery and the slave trade played out, broadly speaking, across different geographical areas: the coastal and forested zones of the 'South' and the savannah of the 'North'. As the Atlantic slave trade waxed and waned with the export of unfree labour drawn from the 'North', the accompanying developments of the Akan forest kingdoms and the coastal communities of Ghana are an aspect of the country's past that has had an enduring impact on Ghanaian society in the present. The role of the 'North' as the source of unfree labour continues to influence the present and colours all forms of contemporary discussion

dealing with the 'North'. In the present, the descendants of victims of slavery have perspectives on the past that differ from those of the descendants of the perpetrators of slavery and the slave trade. These divergent views of the past play out in the present and directly influence contemporary developments in Ghana.

Throughout history, Accra has benefited or relied on northerners to perform important economic functions. During the period of the slave trade, Grushie slaves were used in Accra both for cultivation of crops and also as porters by long-distance traders and farmers.[64] When slavery was finally abolished and legitimate trade introduced, most of the Grushie slaves were still utilised for the cultivation of palm oil by individual Ga and Afro-European businessmen.[65] Examples include the slave community at Abokobi. Others founded their own communities, such as Achimota and Tunga, where they cultivated their own crops such as cassava and other vegetables. This group will become important in Chapter 7 of this thesis, as they will form the first group to supply vegetables, including tomatoes, to the Tudu Market.[66]

In addition to the slaves, the most significant northern migrations to Accra came about around the 1870s. The first migration had to do with the British-Ashanti war of 1874.[67] The war changed trade patterns and led to the substantial movement of northern traders to Accra. Accra and Kpong became viable alternative markets in which northerners could trade. The combined effects of additional conflicts—among the Gonjas themselves in Kpembe and Salaga regarding succession to chiefship in 1892, in Kete Krachi in 1894 between the indigenes and the refugees who left Salaga to Kete Krachi, and in the bombing of Salaga by Germans in 1896—also encouraged more southward migrations to Accra. As we shall see in Chapters 2, 6, and 7, it is this group

[64] R. Dumett & M. Johnson, 'Britain and the Suppression of Slavery in the Gold Coast Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories', in S. Miers and R. Roberts (eds.), *The End of Slavery in Africa* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press Ltd, 1988), 89.
[65] J. Parker, *Making the Town*, 94-5.
[66] Those in Tunga, for example, came into the limelight in colonial archival historiography owing to their continuous breaking of Ga taboos by fishing crocodiles in the sacred Sakum lagoons, a practice which was against indigenous Ga custom and tradition. Tunga has since been outgrown by Dansoman and lost its northern flavour. The same applies to Achimota: its northern flavour was also lost to Western elitism owing to the establishment of Achimota School. For more on these communities, see PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/1185, Grushie Community Accra, 1920.
[67] After the 1874 war, a number of military officers in Accra were recruited from Salaga through Inspector Firminger and Native Officer Abdul Karimu. They formed what was to be known as the Hausa Constabulary, thus augmenting an earlier northern military group, the Glover Hausas. After disbandment, some of them took up residence with northern traders in Cow Lane. This group will become important in our discussion on the expansion of Tudu and the evolution of the lorry park. For the recruitment from Salaga, see M. Johnson, 'The Slaves of Salaga', *The Journal of African History*, 27:2 (1986), 341-62.

of migrants which included Chief Braimah and founded Tudu, as well as those who engaged in cattle, kola-nut, and shea-butter trade.[68]

The third wave of migrations to Accra was largely related to necessity for labour as a result of the cocoa boom in the first two decades of the 1900s. Even though Accra was not a cocoa-producing district, the outlying areas to the east of Accra were major areas where cocoa was produced. Increased cocoa production injected new capital into the city and encouraged constructions such as roads, rail, and housing, for which northern labour was demanded.[69] Considered in this context, one could argue that cocoa production, which was non-existent in the north, provided a means through which northerners could also participate in the internal and external economic activities associated with cocoa, as they head-ported the products from the producing districts to the shipment points in Accra. Evidence in Chapter 5 of this study supports the conclusion that besides the carriage of cocoa, this group was also engaged in the carriage of kola nuts to Tudu.

Furthermore, in the 1920s sisal became an important economic crop in coastal Accra both for local use and for export. Two reasons informed the establishment of the one-thousand-acre sisal plantations in Accra. First, the colonial administration developed sisal with the hope that it would prove to some extent an alternative source of revenue should cocoa crops show signs of failure.[70] Second, its cultivation was to demonstrate that sisal and other crops could be grown on what had hitherto been considered by colonial administrators as unproductive and poor lands on the plains of Accra.[71] Unlike cocoa, in which production was mainly in the hands of individual southern ethnic groups such as the Akan and Ewe, sisal production and sale was effectively in the hands of the colonial administration. Rather than utilise Ga labour, which would have been cheaper due to its proximity, the colonial administration relied on northern migrant labour to produce sisal in Accra.[72]

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[68] For the conflicts and their effects, see K. Arhin (ed.), *The Papers of George Ekem Ferguson: A Fanti Official of the Government of the Gold Coast, 1890-1897* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 1974); also J. A. Braimah & J. R. Goody, *Salaga: The Struggle for Power* (London: Longmans, 1967).
[69] R. Brandt, 'The Role of Cocoa in the Growth and Spatial Organisation of Accra (Ghana) Prior to 1921', *African Studies Review*, 15:2 (Sept. 1972), 277.
[70] P. M. Louis, '(Gold Coast, 1925)', in P. W. Romero (ed.), *Women Voices on Africa: A Century of Travel Writing* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 166.
[71] *Ibid.* 166.
[72] PRO, Kew, London, CO 96/682/9, Sisal Plantation at Accra, 1928.

The question then is why should the colonial administration rely on northern labour rather than the indigenous labour from the Ga? It is important to note that beginning from 1919, it was becoming very difficult to obtain labour because Accra's expansion had diverted much of it to the construction industry, which was comparatively more remunerative.[73] In Chapter 2, I shall examine the relationship between this group and head portage in Tudu. Urban growth provides opportunities as well as contributing to the emergence of problems. One of the important problems that became associated with Accra's expansion was the rise of crime and other social vices. Thus, security became one of the top priorities of the colonial administration. Increased crime also coincided with urban riots regarding prices in commodities as well as alleged exploitation by expatriate firms in the 1930s.[74] And to contain it, northern soldiers stationed in Tamale and Kumasi were transferred to Accra, since the Glover Hausas had already been disbanded.[75] In the 1930s and early 1940s the need for forces in the Second World War encouraged the recruitment of a number of northern soldiers to Accra to fight outside of the Gold Coast and also to ensure internal security, especially by securing most of the major entry and exit points in the country.[76] This latter group together with the first, the Glover Hausas, became significant in the expansion of the residential neighbourhood of Tudu and its lorry park, since some of them took residence there and others became drivers at the lorry park.[77]

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[73] PRAAD, Accra ADM 11/1, Difficulty in Obtaining Carriers for special Remittances 1919. It is important to mention that the presence of some of the northerners in Accra could be traceable to other colonial policies. For example, issues of deliberate French and British policies induced the southward migration of northerners. In certain cases, British and French laws on labour and taxation compelled northerners to move to the forest and coastal areas of present-day Ghana to work. By 1936, taxation and Native Treasuries were introduced by the colonial government in the Northern Territories to replace labour recruitment. The imposition of taxes created new pressures on the people to move to Accra to work to earn money to pay their taxes or remain in their new environment. The same applied to the Mossi of present-day Burkina Faso; they also began to migrate to work in the south to earn money to pay taxes introduced by the French. Some stayed permanently in Accra as a way of escaping from taxes. For more on these policy-induced migrations, see I. Sutton, 'Colonial Agricultural Policy: The Non-Development of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 22:4 (1989), 645; E. P. Skinner, 'Labour Migration and Its Relationship to Socio-Cultural Change in Mossi Society', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 30:4 (Oct. 1960), 375-6.

[74] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 14/1/270, Lorry Parks Accra, 1938-1939

[75] PRAAD, Accra, CO 20/36/5, Regimental Headquarters of Gold Coast Regt, Removal from Kumasi to Accra, 1939. The Glover Hausas were a military unit recruited from Nigeria and other parts of present-day Northern Ghana. Their name derived from Glover, a British Military Surgeon stationed in Nigeria but commander of the unit in some of the Gold Coast Wars involving the British, particularly in the 1870s.

[76] D. Killingray, 'Military and Labour Recruitment in the Gold Coast During the Second World War', *The Journal of African History*, 23:1 (1982), 89.

[77] See Chapters 1 and 4 for the residential preference and occupation of this group of disbanded soldiers.

In the 1950s and mid-1960s, the presence of northerners from neighbouring countries, such as Burkina Faso and Togo and others from Nigeria and Niger, in Accra was due to the open-door policy adopted by Kwame Nkrumah.[78] Before independence was granted, the open colonial economy underwent substantial modification. Central to the modification was the expansion of the public sector, especially in Accra. The effect of this expansion was to create forces leading to the further concentration of growth within the region. Basic development processes after 1957 led to further spatial concentration of activity within the main urban areas. The basic factor responsible for migrations of Ghanaian northerners to Accra in the post-independence years was disparity in economic and infrastructural development.[79]

In 1969 and the 1970s, fewer northern migrations, especially from Nigeria and the Sahelian region, were experienced in Accra. The Aliens Compliance Order of K. A. Busia in 1969 led to mass deportation of aliens, especially the Yoruba and the Lebanese. Arguments regarding the deportations were varied, but the dominant view had to do with the monopoly of Ghanaian businesses by expatriates and the need to regulate their activities and to create space for Ghanaian entrepreneurs in the economy.[80] The policy made Ghana in general and Accra in particular unattractive to migrants from Nigeria and other surrounding countries. A few years after the deportations, the Ghanaian economy experienced a downturn, leading to a number of Ghanaian emigrations, especially to countries within the West and Central African region and to some parts of Europe.[81] Meanwhile, the 'Operation Feed Yourself' policy by General Ignatus Kutu Acheampong in 1972 empowered rural communities as they were given subsidies to produce crops to feed the country. The initiative stabilised the northern economy through rice production and temporarily led to reverse migrations. Ghanaian northerners in Accra began to return home since the rice fields offered more prospects for them.[82] This promise was short-lived due to the overthrow of the Acheampong administration,

[78] It is important to note that despite the increases in migration into Ghana, some were deported for political reasons. For the deportations, see A. Biney, 'The Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah in Retrospect', *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol.2, No. 3, (Mar. 2008), 143.
[79] J. Songsore, *Towards A Better Understanding of Urban Change: Urbanisation, National Development and Inequality in Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2003), 4.
[80] J. Songsore, *Towards A Better Understanding of Urban Change*, 5.
[81] R. Gravil, 'The Nigerian Aliens Expulsion Order of 1983', *African Affairs*, 84:337 (Oct. 1985), 529.
[82] N. Van Hear '"By-Day'' Boys and Dariga Men: Casual Labour versus Agrarian Capital in Northern Ghana', *Review of African Political Economy*, 31 (Dec. 1984), 45-7.

first in what was called a 'palace coup' and finally by Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings in 1979.

The final cause of the presence in Accra of northerners from the three northern regions of Ghana was the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) under Jerry John Rawlings in the 1980s and the ethnic conflicts of the north from the 1990s to the present. Jeffrey Herbst is of the view that the SAPs in Ghana had a rural rather than urban bias.[83] I argue, however, that even though they were supposed to benefit the rural communities, their implementation in Ghana led instead to an unintended consequence, which ultimately had an urban impact as migrants were encouraged to move to the urban centres. SAPs had three important components—namely, economic liberalisation, privatisation, and a general restructuring of the state's role in the economy.[84] Through their general economic policy, for example, SAPs increasingly connected Ghana to the global economy since the policy required that trade restrictions on imports be relaxed. But trade liberalisation resulted also in negative trends that affected rural economies, particularly the economy of the Ghanaian north, and encouraged the expansion of towns and cities through migrations, particularly to Accra. How was this possible? In the first place, the introduction of SAPs demanded that all subsidies on agriculture be removed.[85] The northern economy at that point in time had depended heavily on the production and sale of local rice, maize and tomatoes. With the removal of subsidies, the farmers could no longer produce these commodities, and with little other option, some of the northerners migrated to the south—particularly to Accra—to look for wage employment.

These movements have also led to a dependence on other non-motorised transport systems such as head portage, since the urban sprawl of Accra has rendered some residential areas inaccessible by motorised transport. As we shall see in Chapter 2, the northern migrant group were able to take advantage of this and move goods through head loading from one point of the city to another or from one lorry park to another.[86]

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[83] J. Herbst, *The Politics of Reform in Ghana, 1982-1991*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 76-95.
[84] G. Owusu, 'Small Towns in Ghana, Justification for their promotion under Ghana's Decentralisation Programme', *African Studies Quarterly*, 8, Issue 2, (Spring 2005), 54.
[85] A. Shepherd, 'Grain Marketing in Africa Under Conditions of Structural Adjustment', *Journal of International Food and Agribusiness Marketing*, 1:2, (1989), 25.
[86] See Chapter 2.

Closely related to the above are the numerous ethnic conflicts which have erupted in northern Ghana from the 1990s to date. All the conflicts are related to land, chieftaincy, and ethnicity.[87] Brukum blames the inter-ethnic conflicts on indirect rule and its support for the so-called majority ethnic groups against the minority. He also notes that the occurrence of intra-ethic conflicts, such as the chieftaincy crises in 2002 in Yendi, was due to the manipulation of the traditional constitutions on succession.[88] Jonsson builds on Brukum's argument and considers the inter-ethnic conflicts a result of a gradual ethnic identity consciousness that came about since the 1970s. Talton was of the view that Western education offered the minority, and especially the Konkomba, the opportunity to challenge the authority of the Dagomba in the 1960s and 1970s. Since the 1980s, the educated elite were influential in the forging of a Konkomba identity. This identity facilitated the overthrow of Dagomba suzerainty in the conflicts of 1981 and 1994.

While the works of Brukum, Jonsson, and Talton have dealt with conflicts and their causes which prove sufficient for our understanding of the north, their research does not take into account the manner in which the conflicts contributed to youth migrations to Accra. In most cases, each conflict in the north triggers off some migration to Accra. Most of the latter-day migrants are young and lack resources; they can neither go into trade nor seek any form of formal employment. This group mostly engages in head-load portage or the collection of garbage or scrap metals within designated areas in the city, including Tudu.

From what has been stated so far, it is clear that northerners both as labourers and traders were either needed to sustain the urban economy of Accra which existed

[87] N. J. K. Brukum, 'Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts in Northern Ghana, 1980-2002', in I. K. Odotei & A. K. Awedoba (eds.), *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 434-5; B. Talton, ''Food to eat and pito to drink.' Education, local politics and self-help initiatives in Northern Ghana, 1945-1972', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, 7 (2003), 205-6. Also J. Jonsson, 'The Overwhelming Minority: Traditional Leadership and Ethnic Conflict in Ghana's Northern Region', (Oxford: CRISE Working Paper No. 30, Feb. 2007, University of Oxford), 27-33.

[88] Brukum distinguishes between the majority and minority groups by indicating that these two are just taxonomies and have no demographic significance. They were and still are being used to refer to ethnic groups that have or have not been able to build empires or centralized governmental institutions. Hence we have, for example, under the majority, groups such as Dagomba, Gonja, Mampruise, and Nanumba, while the minority covers groups such as the Konkomba, Nawuri, Nchumburu, Kusasi, and Frafra, among others.

under colonial administration or came there as a way of escaping taxes, wars or economic uncertainties.

Prospectus of the chapters

The thesis builds on the literature so far reviewed to examine the gradual transformation of Tudu from a cattle-rearing settlement to an urban neighbourhood. It is a study of how, through trade, people from the northern part of Ghana and beyond contributed to Accra's evolutionary process. Thus, the thesis contributes to social history that focuses on northerners and their economic heritage in Accra. It is also a labour history, focussing on transportation in order to discuss how men and women as actors transformed the transportation landscape of Accra. The historical works on which I focus will help explain the ways in which men and women from the north have shown agency in their actions and reactions to local and world events. It offers new insights into northern history in Accra, based on archival finds and oral interviews. The thesis has the following parts as its prospectus:

Introduction: This section explores the general context in which scholars have discussed northerners in Accra. It provides an overview of the trade, transport, and residential choice of northerners and advocates the need for a detailed study of northerners in Accra's Tudu from a residential, trade, and transport point of view.

Chapter 1, 'The foundation and growth of Tudu', will examine the physical growth of Tudu. The basic material concern of this chapter is the general factors in Accra which informed the foundation and subsequent growth of Tudu. It examines the role of Chief Braimah, northern and non-northern groups, and the colonial government in the making of Tudu. Factors which will be considered in the expansion of Tudu will include the plague of 1908, the building of a military barracks in Tudu in 1916, the segregation laws and the relocation of the Ga, Ewe and Sierra Leonean middle-class in 1918 and the 1920s, the relocation of the Lebanese in the 1930s, the earthquake of the 1940s, the Aliens Order in the 1960s, and the Economic Recovery Programme of the 1980s.

In Chapters 2 and 3, I shall discuss 'non-motorised transport systems in Tudu'. In Chapter 2, titled 'From *Kayakaya* to *Kayayo'*, head portage will be discussed. The main focus of this chapter is the gradual transformation of head-load portage in Tudu.

Here, I will account for the entry and exit of the various ethnic and gender groups involved in portage in Tudu. In the 1920s, the number of female head porters dwindled, leading to the monopoly of this transport system by men. The trend continued until the 1980s when, following policy conditions from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as well as ethnic conflicts in the north of Ghana, most of the male carriers were replaced by female carriers from the north of Ghana.

In Chapter 3, entitled *Kyekyendokye* (Bicycle Horse), I shall discuss the introduction of horse transportation by the Yoruba in Accra. Using Tudu as a point of entry, the chapter will discuss the various socio-economic and political factors that underpin the introduction and subsequent utilisation of horse transportation in Accra. I argue that the introduction of motorised transportation has not totally replaced traditional modes of transportation. This argument is borne out by the various conclusions drawn by several authors on Accra's history and public perception that the introduction of motorised transport, especially the municipal transport system which became operational in 1927, totally eclipsed horse-drawn transportation in Accra.

Chapter 4, 'Connecting the City: The Motor Car, Lorry Parks and Routes in Tudu', investigates the reason behind the introduction of the motor car and the creation of lorry parks in Ghana. The chapter places emphasis on Tudu Lorry Park and provides an historical appraisal of the various transport routes at the lorry park. The appraisal of the routes will serve as a prelude to our discussion on trade in Tudu in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. The argument in the chapter is that the creation of Tudu Lorry Park served as an important organisational unit through which drivers, traders, and residents in Tudu participated in the wider economic activities in the Gold Coast and later Ghana.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are concerned with trade in Tudu. Kola nuts, shea butter and tomatoes are selected for discussion. The various sources of supply, the ethnic groups involved, and the reason for the maintenance of trade in these products with respect to their cultural and socio-economic and political uses in Tudu, are discussed in detail. The roles of motorised and non-motorised transport and of the lorry park in widening opportunities for traders in these products will be handled in chapters 5, 6, and 7. Trade in tomatoes has been included because unlike kola nut and shea butter, which have a greater utility among northerners, initially the tomato market originated as a result of the African middle-class and the police and military barracks in Tudu. With the continuous

expansion of the city, demand for tomatoes increased, becoming a sought-after commodity by all of Accra's urban dwellers. Tudu is the largest market for the tomato trade in Accra, but even though trade in tomatoes was begun by northerners, today the tomato market is mostly dominated by Akan and Ga women. The chapter on tomatoes provides a very important conclusion to all the discussions on Tudu and its development within urban Accra; it demonstrates the strong linkages of northern transporters, interpreters, and farmers with Akan buyers and sellers. These factors illustrate the ever-evolving importance of Tudu and the transformation of Tudu as a 'northerners' economic space' to a 'multi-ethnic space'.

Chapter 8 is a summary and conclusion to the thesis. In this chapter the main highlights are the overall impact of urbanisation, transportation, and trade on Tudu from 1908 to 2008.

1

The Foundation of Tudu and Urban Growth of Accra

Introduction

Following the outbreak of bubonic plague in 1908, the colonial administration set about attempting to rezone and reorganize the urban landscape of Accra.[89] Alhaji Braimah, the unelected but recognised chief and spokesperson of northerners in Accra, was able to capitalise on this. Through his shrewd management of relations with the colonial administration and the Governor in particular, Braimah was able to ensure that a large tract of land, which would later become known as Tudu, came to be reserved for the settlement and occupation of northerners living in Accra. While Braimah continued to maintain a household in Cow Lane, Jamestown, he also established a house in Tudu and set about creating a space within Accra where northerners could not only live but also engage in economic activities—specifically transport and trade. This chapter contributes to our understanding of the role of northerners in Accra, and how northerners contributed to the economic development and physical establishment of Accra. In addition, in describing the establishment and development of Tudu, it serves to provide a backdrop to the thesis as a whole.

Accra, the capital city of Ghana, is the largest city in the country. Like many other cities in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is experiencing a rapid rate of growth; indeed, its rate of urbanisation makes it one of the fastest-growing cities in West Africa. The rise of Accra as an urban centre dates to 1877, when the colonial headquarters was relocated here from Cape Coast. Accra was selected as the site of colonial administration for a number of reasons, prominent among which were health-related issues as well as geographical concerns.[90] With the colonial machinery in Accra came a large number of migrants and merchants, and in the process the political and economic power became focused here. One prominent feature that developed afterwards was the expansion of the inner core of the city and the development of separate residential enclaves of northerners, called the *zongos*. Initially, the relocation of northern traders from Salaga

[89] Harriet Deacon has detailed in another context how an administration used medical discourse to justify racial segregation. Harriet Deacon, 'Racial segregation and medical discourse in nineteenth-century Cape Town', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 22:2 (1996), 287-308.
90 R. Grant & P. Yankson, 'City Profile: Accra', Cities, 20:1 (2002), 65-6.

and Kete Krachi as well as others from other parts of the north and Nigeria had led to one of the first *zongos*, called Zongo Lane.[91]

However, by the first decade of the 1900s, the same health concerns which constituted a major reason for the relocation would equally define the initial expansion of the city. Disease outbreaks in the inner core of the city, including Zongo Lane, led to the enforcement of a new urban policy, which required the segregation of Accra's population into three broad categories: the indigenes, the Europeans, and northern migrants.[92] This policy would lead to the foundation of a new northern-migrant enclave called Tudu. Subsequent disease outbreaks and other factors unrelated to disease would see the incorporation of other ethnic groups and nationalities into Tudu, leading to its expansion and development.

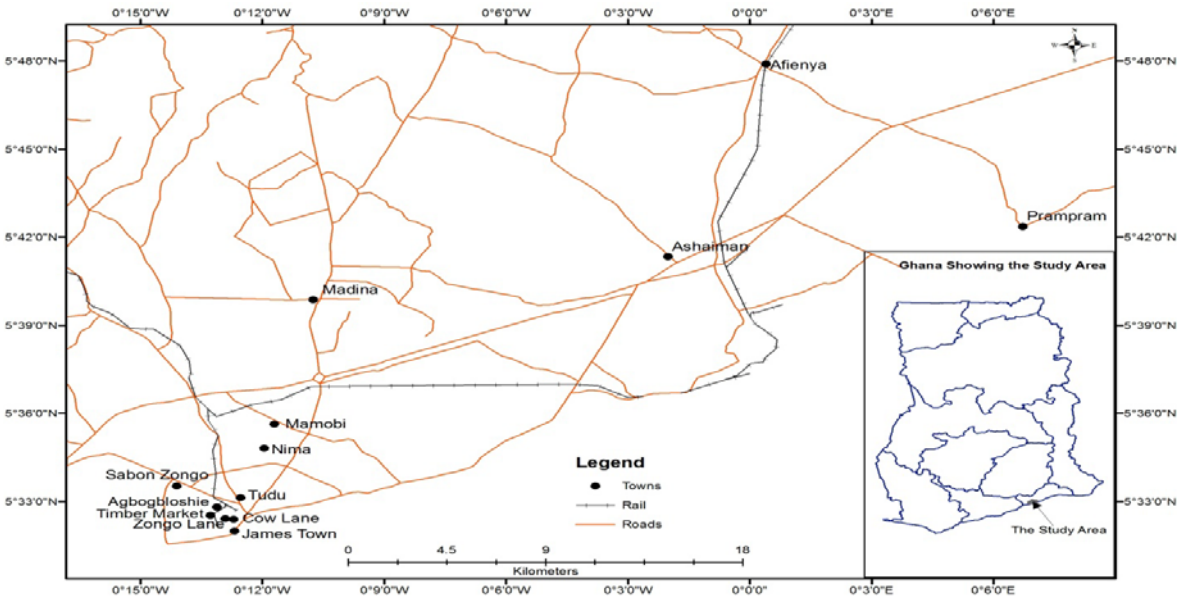

Fig 2. Map of Accra showing the study area and some important settlements in Accra.

[91] See Introduction Chapter for the development of Zongo Lane.

[92] It is important to note that segregation policies in Accra began around the 1880s and 1890s. These were rigorously pursued following the outbreak of yellow fever and bubonic plague in the first decade of the 1900s. Indeed, the yellow fever outbreaks in 1910 and 1911 made segregation an absolute necessity in the coastal towns of Accra, Winneba, Cape Coast, and Sekondi-Takoradi. Considered in this context, one could argue that the colonial administration used diseases as an excuse for segregation in the Gold Coast. For more on segregation, see PRAAD, Accra, ADM 5/3/11, Report on Plague in the Gold Coast in 1908; PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/3/14, Report on Yellow Fever in 1910 and 1911.

Geographically, Tudu is situated to the north-east of the Accra city centre and about two and a half kilometres from James Town (Fig. 2). James Town is further south of Tudu and along the sea coast. It is one of the oldest parts of Accra and a fishing port populated mostly by the Ga, an indigenous people of coastal Ghana. James Town also houses an English fort, James Fort, which was built between 1672 and 1673 by the Royal African Company. [93] Tudu extends over an area of about one and a half square miles. It is bounded to the north by Adabraka, to the south by Makola Market, to the east by Ridge Hospital, and to the west by the railway station at Kantamanto (Fig. 3). The land in Tudu is owned by the Asere Akutso.[94]

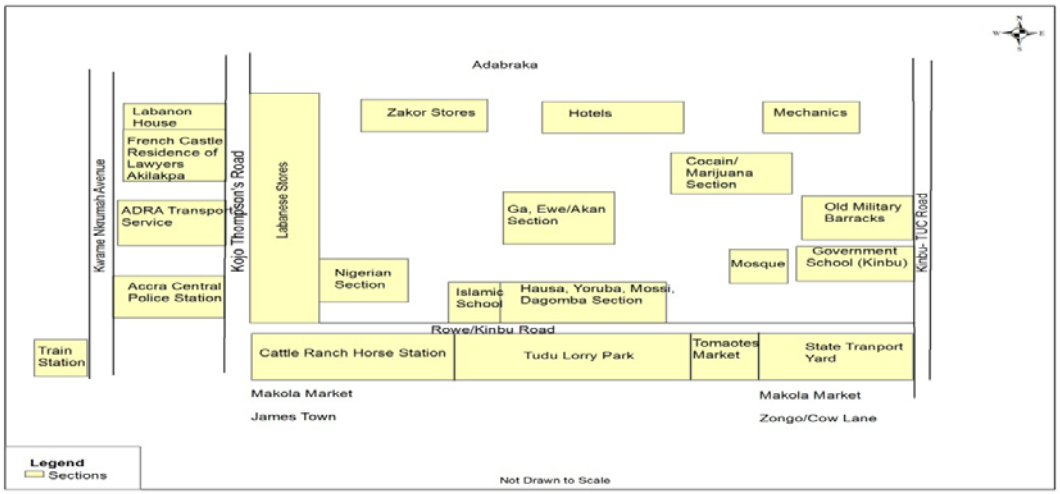

Fig. 3. Map of Tudu showing the various sections.

This chapter details the foundation and gradual growth of Tudu, which aside from the disease outbreaks was influenced additionally by other factors, such as earthquakes, trade, and transportation. Interestingly, these factors all affected the ethnic and national composition of Tudu in different ways. Even though, as a location, it was initially conceived and planned by the colonial administration as a settlement for northerners and to some extent it retained a northern bias in terms of trade and transport other groups were quickly incorporated into this space. This chapter will address some of the perceptions and misconceptions of earlier scholars concerning the foundation of Tudu as well as Adabraka. Furthermore, it will deal successively with local accounts of, firstly, the northerners of Tudu and, secondly, the non-northerner section in Tudu and

[93] J. Parker, *Making the Town:* 10.
[94] Asere Akutso refers to a group of indigenous Ga who live in James Town, Accra.

how these groups interact and re-make the space that the colonial government administratively defined. The chapter lays the foundation for our discussion on transportation and trade in the remaining chapters.

The Founding of Tudu: New Beginnings

Urban planning in the newly created capital of Accra was driven by two main concerns: sanitation control and disaster management. The bubonic plague of 1908, the yellow fever outbreaks of 1911 and 1913, and the influenza epidemic of 1918 gave the British colonial administration the opportunity to persuade people living in the congested coastal neighbourhoods of Ga Mashie, Nleshie, and Cow Lane that it was in their interest to move to the newly developed outlying neighbourhoods of Adabraka and Tudu.[95]

A number of contrasting dates have been given for recognizing Tudu as an independent community by early researchers. Richard Brand places the development of the Tudu community in 1920 and attributes the general expansion of Accra, including Tudu, to the cocoa boom at the time.[96] In contrast, Kropp Dakubu argues that the establishment of Tudu occurred in the 1930s and 1940s.[97] However, oral sources and archival documents clearly show that Tudu was founded earlier than the dates given in the established historiography. Brand's main thesis (proposing that cocoa was central) is not supported by the archival records or my own interviews. These show that it was disease, specifically the outbreak of plague, and population density which prompted the need to relocate northern migrants and the cattle and kola-nut trade to Tudu. Kropp Dakubu's assertion that Tudu was founded in the 1930s and grew southwards after Adabraka cannot be historically accurate once one considers additional chronological and geographical facts. It is clear from the sources that Accra expanded northwards and the reverse could not have been the case. Ione Acquah provides useful insights on the early urbanisation process of Accra and offers some leads to Tudu's early history. As she points out:

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[95] Insights from Ato Quayson, Accra, 7 July 2009. His current research is on the relationship between urbanisation and globalisation in the city of Accra.

[96] R. R. Brand, 'The Spatial Organisation of Residential Areas in Accra, Ghana, with Particular Reference to Aspects of Modernisation', *Economic Geography*, 48:3 (1972), 284-95

[97] M. E. Kropp-Dakubu, *Korle Meets the Sea: A Socio-Linguistic History of Accra* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 44.

> *Between 1917 and 1927 when the Governor, Gordon Guggisberg administered the country great changes were effected in the town* [Accra]*... to the north of Ussher Town and James Town, Tudu and Adabraka were developing as commercial and residential districts.*[98]

Even though Ione Acquah does not give the exact date for the founding of Tudu, it is evident that even before 1930 Tudu was already a commercial centre. Archival sources indicate that the founder of Tudu, Chief Braimah, died in 1915. In a letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, dated 3 May 1920, the District Commissioner in Accra wrote:

> *In reply to your letter No SNA Case 24/1915 of the 4th April forwarding a complaint by Kadri English, a Hausa against the Ga Mantse, I have the honour to report as follows: Since the death of the Yoruba Chief Braimah I in 1915 the Mohammedans Community in Accra has been split up into sections who refused to acknowledge the leadership of his successor Braimah II. It is this man that the Ga Mantse is supporting.*[99]

According to Alhaji Haruna, his grandmother, a prominent early kola-nut trader in Tudu, had acquired a piece of land in Tudu in 1905 from the Asere Mantse. Furthermore, he states that five huts belonging to Chief Braimah's herdsmen were found in Tudu at the time of the acquisition.[100] By Haruna's estimation, Tudu was probably founded around 1900 or earlier, but his estimation is also problematic. In July 1908 following the outbreak of a plague, the Governor, John P. Rodger, held a 'palaver' with the Mohammedan community in Accra. In that meeting, El Imam Fulata Boronu represented the Hausa community, Fulani Muhamed Bakari represented the Fulani community, and Alhaji Braimah represented the Lagos (Yoruba) community. At the meeting, the Governor spoke as follows:

> *I supposed* [sic] *you have been informed that owing to the serious outbreak of plague it is proposed to form a Zongo so that all the Mohammedans can have a place to live together. You will then be allowed to keep your cattle & co. outside the town. You have the choice of two sites. One on the Ogblogo Road and the other on the Kibi Road. You will be required to move to one of these sites before the end of the year. Which site do you prefer?*[101]

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[98] I. Acquah, *Accra Survey,* 28.
[99] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Mohammedan Community, 1920.
[100] Interview with Alhaji Haruna, Tudu, 3 January 2008, and Nima, 20 January 2008. Alhaji Haruna currently stays at Nima, another *zongo* in Accra, since their family house has been sold to shop-owners in Tudu. According to Alhaji, he was ten years old at the time of the earthquake of 1939.
[101] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1446, Mohammedan Community, Palaver held at Government House, Christiansborg, 1908.

Alhaji Braimah's choice at that meeting was the site on the Kibi Road, which is currently Tudu.[102] In view of the ultimatum that was given for a new *zongo* to be formed before the end of 1908, the founding of Tudu could not have been earlier than 1908.

Of Tudu and Adabraka: Resolving the misconception

In the introduction to this chapter, I indicated the areas that border Tudu. Among them was Adabraka. It is important to devote a few paragraphs to correct the misconception regarding the Adabraka community and that of Tudu. This is important because of the events leading to the foundation of the two communities and how this conceptualisation has subsequently been used by various researchers on Accra's history. It is true that both were founded owing to the plague of 1908. But each community developed differently. One could argue that, to some extent, Tudu's place in the historiography of Accra is missing owing to the misconception about these communities. Debora Pellow and John Parker, for example, could not differentiate the two communities and blended the two as one: Adabraka. By failing to go beyond this way of classifying and understanding these complex spaces, they never grasped the real historical difference between them in terms of when they were actually founded or settled.[103] This study will make some important clarifications. While it is true that an Order was given by the Governor in 1908 for the Mohammedan inhabitants in Zongo Lane to move to a new *zongo* on the Kibbi Road, it should be noted that the Kibbi Road now linking Tudu to the Kwame Nkrumah Circle runs through both Tudu and Adabraka. By better distinguishing the two communities, it becomes clear that Adabraka did in fact develop later than Tudu, and not in 1908 as the authors suggest. Extracts from the sanitary improvement report indicate that plots in Adabraka Township up to 1912 were still not taken up with any avidity.[104]

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[102] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1446, Subject, Mohammedan Community, Palaver held at Government House, Christiansborg on 9 July 1908. It must be stated that at that meeting the Governor gave approval only to those with decent housing to stay in Cow Lane. A portion of the land in the same vicinity close to the mosque was also reserved for those he termed *better class* to stay, but none of their cattle were to be in Cow Lane.

[103] D. Pellow, *Women in Accra: Options for Autonomy*, (Algonac, Michigan: Reference Publications Inc. 1977), 81; J. Parker, *Making the Town*, 198.

[104] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/443, Extracts from sanitary improvement, Adabraka Town Site, 1912

The second misconception has to do with the name Adabraka. Peregrino Braimah attributes the name Adabraka to its association with the area in which trade was going on and refers to the term *alabraka*, which in Hausa means 'to seek reduction in the course of bargaining'; the term *alabraka* was corrupted to Adabraka.[105] But this view is fraught with difficulties and should not be simply accepted as an apparently neat explanation. Even though one cannot dispute the fact that some trade went on in Adabraka, such trade would not have occurred before 1912 and even for some years after, by which time the name Adabraka was already in use.[106] Further evidence in the archives indicates that there was no substantial trade in Adabraka until the 1930s, and there is evidence to show that even up until 1934, the market which was established in Adabraka was unoccupied. The medical officer for Accra in his Memorandum to the Colonial Secretary wrote:

> *I have to report that the conditions of the market at Adabraka is* [sic] *perfectly good, but it has never been used nor is ever likely to be used as a market. Its erection was needless expense to government. It has to be swept daily but produces no revenue'*.[107]

Several other reports within the period under review do not make reference to any trade in Adabraka and indeed indicate the failure of its inhabitants to take advantage of trade initiatives by the colonial government.[108] Deborah Pellow also attributes the name Adabraka to begging. According to her, the inhabitants of Adabraka often wander about with their hands out saying in Hausa "*adabaraka*", that is "give me a little something" (for the sake of blessedness) and with time the beggars became known as the 'Adabraka people'.[109] Again, Pellow's explanation, just like that of Peregrino Braimah, cannot be accepted at face value. Oral accounts in Tudu and Adabraka suggest an alternative meaning which has nothing to do with trade or begging but rather is derived from a Fulani Muslim cleric and scholar called Mallam Abdul-Mumin.[110] Mallam Abdul-Mumin had established an Islamic school in Zongo Lane called Ala'baraka, which

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[105] M. B. P. Braimah, *A Migrant African Chief*, 39.
[106] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/14/290, Letter from Colonial Secretary to Secretary for Native Affairs dated 12 November 1912, Adabraka Town Site. In the course of the discussion, it was made evident that it was towards the end of 1912 that the Colonial Secretary contemplated the establishment of a cattle market at Adabraka.
[107] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 11/14/290, Adabraka Market, Accra, 1930.
[108] A special case being the report from the Select Committee on Estimates, chaired by Nana Sir Ofori Atta I (1881-1943), Omanhene or King of Akyem Abuakwa, in present-day Eastern Region. For the reports, see PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 11/14/290, Adabraka Market, Accra, 1930.
[109] D. Pellow, *Women in Accra*, 83.
[110] Interview with Abass Adamu and Abdallah Kadri, Tudu, 11 July 2008.

means ‘Allah’s Blessing’. Since his school was also in the congested neighbourhood, he had to relocate with his Muslim colleagues and his pupils to Tudu in 1908 when they were asked to do so. Since other plots north of Tudu were not taken up, Mallam Mumin moved with his Ala’baraka school to occupy the area north of Tudu.

Since moving there, the name of his school was corrupted to Adabraka and used additionally to denote the name of this new community. In most cases, even documents clearly dealing with Tudu would be classified as Adabraka or South Adabraka, sometimes with specifications such as Yoruba Community, South Adabraka (Tudu). It is perhaps the confusion in labelling the files or in the correspondence which has caused many researchers to assume that Tudu developed after Adabraka. But a close scrutiny of the files in the archives indicates a correlation regarding the settlement patterns of the various ethnic groups in Tudu and Adabraka. The settlement patterns indicate that the Yoruba section which is Tudu was settled first, before the Fulani section which is currently Adabraka.[111] Having established the circumstances leading to the foundation of the two communities, it is important to consider other historical events which facilitated the expansion of Tudu.

The Northern section

In discussing the northern section, emphasis is placed on the role of Chief Braimah in its development process. However, other events after his death in 1915—such as the inter-*zongo* migrations in 1919 and the earthquake of 1939—and post-independence events—such as the Aliens Compliance Order of 1969, the effects of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), and ethnic conflicts in the 1980s, 1990s and after 2000—are incorporated as important contributors to the expansion of the northern section.

Before considering these factors in detail and their subsequent impact on Tudu’s expansion, it is important to appraise the rationale behind the colonial government’s interest in northerners in Accra at this initial stage. I argue that besides the concern with disease, there were other reasons which made the colonial administration very interested in the foundation of separate northern communities in Accra. Central to this was the need for revenue generation and grounds for testing the practicalities or otherwise of British administrative policies. As will soon become evident, the colonial

[111] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/443, Adabraka Town Site, 1912.

administration's support for the leadership of Braimah and the foundation of a Muslim community in Accra was not accidental. It fell in line with the general politics and policies of the British at the time. The colonial administration saw in northerners and Islam the potential for trade and taxation and also the advantages of using the Muslims for administrative and labour purposes.

Holger Weiss and Emmanuel Akyeampong provide us with useful leads in this direction. Weiss points to a very important policy shift of the British from being anti-Muslim to pro-Muslim in the first decade of the 1900s. Early British colonial policy was basically shaped in Northern Nigeria. It was here that indirect rule became the foundation for British colonial rule. In Northern Nigeria, indirect rule was based on an alliance between the traditional Islamic establishment and the colonial government.[112] In the north of Ghana, the colonial establishment was in favour of Islam because Islam was especially thought of as been suited to the natives. It helped in the spread of civilisation, encouraged a decent life, and gave impetus to trade.[113] Previously, in the northern part of the Gold Coast and Ashanti, Muslim clerics were incorporated into the courts of chiefs. In Accra, the Ga did not make use of Muslim clerics in their courts. One probable explanation is that unlike in Ashanti and the north (where the basis of political power in part derived from north-bound trade), in Accra until the relocation of Braimah and his colleagues, northern trade to Accra was minimal and did not warrant the presence of the clerics in the Ga native courts. As indirect rule was being introduced, the colonial administration wanted to use the northern communities in Accra as a laboratory for producing an administrative class using Arabic and Hausa as the basic qualification.[114]

The need for Islamic and Hausa scholars is largely linked to the fact that the colonial administration at the introduction of indirect rule received so much criticism from the colony's Western-educated elite, who were the most vociferous opponents of the policy.[115] The opposition was a significant signal that the colonial administration should not rely solely the western educated elite. Even as early as 1902 the colonial

[112] H. Weiss, 'Variations in the colonial representation of Islam and Muslims in Northern Ghana, Ca. 1900-1930', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 25:1 (Apr. 2005), 76.
[113] H. Weiss, 'Variations', 78.
[114] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/1450, Application for Employment, 1903.
[115] R. S. Gocking, 'Indirect Rule in the Gold Coast: Competition for Office and the Invention of Tradition', *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines*, 28:3 (1994), 422.

government had begun administratively experimenting with disbanded members of the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary from Cow Lane. They were already stationed in important northern markets, including Salaga, as tax collectors (though Salaga's market had already declined in importance).[116]

It is important to bear in mind that the use of the Gold Coast Constabulary was not accidental. The Gold Coast Constabulary, the majority of them northerners, already performed internal security and police duties in the British colony of the Gold Coast. For example, they were deployed a number of times in Accra in the nineteenth and early twentieth century to quell rebellions and riots. They were also instrumental in the late nineteenth-century British wars against the Ashanti.[117] Their duties while in service had exposed them to both the geography and economic activities of the Gold Coast; in addition, their versatility in the local languages, including Hausa, made them suitable for administrative duties. Pokoo Aikings notes the re-engagement of this group for purposes of controlling prices as well as preventing the hoarding of goods in the cities and towns in colonial times.[118] In Cow Lane, Abdul Rahim, a relative of Chief Braimah, was the clerk responsible for collecting the taxes on kola-nut exports on behalf of the colonial administration. In Tudu, Nuhu Issah was one of such Muslims who was employed in the service of the colonial administration and was specifically designated for collecting revenue from trade in Tudu.[119] Even as late as 1954, some of the northern headmen, owing to their knowledge of Islamic, native, and customary laws were asked to serve on the municipal court panels in Accra.[120]

Another reason was the fact that in the later part of the nineteenth century, it was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain the interest of the natives in providing the transport needs of the colonial administration. This was exemplified first by the difficulty in obtaining Ga and Fanti carriers from the coast to carry supplies of British administrators and soldiers from the coast into the interior.[121] The need for a specific community serving as a pool from which to draw porters was one of the factors taken

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[116] Goody & Braimah, *Salaga the Struggle for Power*, 111.
[117] J. Parker, *Making the Town*, 105; P. Akins, *The Police in Ghana 1939-1999* (Accra: Rescue Printing Press, 2002), 8; PRAAD, Accra, CO 20/36/5, Regimental Headquarters of Gold Coast Regt, Removal from Kumasi to Accra, 1939.
[118] P. Akins, *The Police in Ghana*, 7.
[119] Interviews with Baba Addisa and Nuhu Issah, Tudu, 5 January 2008.
[120] I. Acquah, *Accra Survey*, 101.
[121] R. S. Gocking, 'Indirect Rule in the Gold Coast', 426.

into account for the development of northern communities in Accra and other coastal towns. The demand for transporters also worked along the lines of indirect rule, since the colonial administration needed to recognise local authority figures first that they could rely upon to supply such labour. In the case of Tudu, again it is the story of Chief Braimah which comes to the fore. The support that the colonial administration gave Chief Braimah, as will be shown in Chapter 2, paid off in terms of his provision of porters for both the colonial administration and himself. It was therefore not accidental that during Chief Braimah's time, a branch of the Public Works Department (PWD) was opened in Tudu in the second decade of the 1900s, immediately after the foundation of Tudu. In Chapter 4, we shall realise that this department transformed into a State transport hub in opposition to private motorised transporters in Tudu.[122]

But the question still remains as to the economic reasons for the growth of such communities in Accra. I am of the view that the economic dimension can only be understood through the friction which had already become endemic in Accra between the Native Ga on one hand and the colonial authority on the other. This tension was based on the payment of taxes or tolls. As Akyeampong rightly points out, by the beginning of the twentieth century the Ga trading class with its mullato component was in decline owing to the growing activities of European firms.[123] The gradual decline of Ga trade meant a reduction in local revenue to the colonial administration. In 1894 the colonial government's attempt to introduce a municipal government based on municipal rates and license fees to subsidise the colonial expense of running the capital city provoked strong resentment from the Ga.[124] When the colonial government passed the 1894 Town Council Ordinance, which brought to fruition the municipal system, the people of Accra and Osu mounted a fierce campaign in opposition to the measures. Up until 1898, emergency powers were invoked in some cases to stabilise the situation. One probable explanation for the protest and refusal to pay such fees and rates was the resentment which stemmed from the decline of the Ga trading class.

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[122] We are informed of recruitment of porters also in Winneba and Cape Coast for similar portage purposes. Even though Chief Braimah had control in the interior, some specific northern individuals were still approved by the colonial administration. A specific example in Winneba was Mallam Salaga, who was recognized by the District Commissioner for such purposes. For more on the Winneba northern community and Cape Coast, see PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/501, Hausa Community, Cape Coast, 1913; also PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/553, Hausa Community, Winneba, 1911.

[123] E. Akyeampong, 'Bukom and the Social History of Boxing in Accra', 44.

[124] *Ibid.*

Ironically, it was at this period that northern trade picked up considerably in Accra. This is evidenced by letters which were exchanged by the Secretary for Native Affairs and District Commissioners in Ashanti and northern provinces, indicating that northern trade continued to be an important source of revenue generated by the colonial establishment.[125] This was informed by the collapse of northern trade markets such as Salaga, Kintampo, Atebubu, and Kete Krachi.[126] The Governor did not hide his feelings about the prospects and relevance of northerners and their trade in Accra. In a meeting with representatives of the various northern ethnic groups, including Chief Braimah, in 1908, the Governor indicated his willingness to continue encouraging more northern trader migrants to Accra and even directed one of his officers to be specifically responsible for sorting out shipment problems of the northern kola-nut traders.[127]

From the evidence, it is clear that besides disease, the colonial administration saw in northerners the potential of an alternate solution to some, if not all, the problems which were being faced in Accra at the time. Through this separate community, with Braimah as leader, a valuable asset for indirect rule was identified: Braimah could facilitate the collection of revenue to offset the refusal to pay rates by the native Ga. Indeed, as will be shown in Chapters 2 and 5, precisely this became the case with porters and kola-nut traders, when Braimah was able to generate revenue for the colonial administration through the head porters under his authority.

As previously noted in the map above, the original section of Tudu was settled by northern ethnic groups. They included such groups as Fulani, Yoruba, Zabrama, Kotokoli, Mossi, and Gonja.[128] By 1909, the British administration of the West African colonies had been fully established, and Muslim migrants became significantly more numerous in Accra. Chief Braimah was appointed their head. Earlier, in 1902, Braimah was appointed and recognised as leader of Muslims in Accra by the Ga, the owners of Accra. However, he was not presented to the colonial government in this role by the Ga

[125] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11, SNA, Shea butter, 1912; also PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 14/11/12, Kola Export Tax, 1918-1919.
[126] See Chapter 1 for further detail on the factors responsible for the collapse of these markets.
[127] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/ 1447, Mohammedan Community, Accra, 1908.
[128] See introduction to the thesis for definition of the north and northerners. For settlement purposes these groups were and still are classified as one entity. In subsequent chapters their trade and transport specialisation will mark them out as distinct categories. The Ibo, whom we shall soon classify as northerners in the course of our discussion, have not been part of this long process of Tudu's history, since they were neither in Salaga nor in Cow Lane but came to Tudu only for a brief period.

King, Tackie Tawia I (1862-1902), before his death. As such, his appointment remained unfinalised. As King Tackie II wrote in his letter to the Governor:

> *In continuation of the conversation you had with me last regarding Mr. Braimah having been elected as Headman over his people, I have once more to confirm that it was not an act done by me and my power but the late King having made all arrangements previously to his death, told me as his last words in the presence of witnesses that he believes he will not live long and in case he dies the things which he had made for Mr. Braihma* [sic] *must be taken by me with witnesses and present it to him in the presence of his people. This being the late last kings last words, I have carried it out as with us natives the last wishes of the dead must be complied with.*[129]

Braimah continued to act as chief of all Muslims in Accra until 1909. The government could not approve Braimah until this period because of lack of cooperation and internal fights among the migrants, particularly the Hausa. As indicated by a letter from the Secretary of Native Affaires to Mallam Bukari, a Hausa opinion leader:

> *Alhaji Braimah informs me this afternoon that there is a festival tomorrow for the Mohamedans, I must therefore ask you to look again at the letter to you telling you that the government recognise Alhaji Braimah as Chief of the Mohammedans in Accra and that passes for Mohammedans* [sic] *Festivals are granted to him. I learnt with regret that you and your followers have not yet come to be on good terms with Alhaji Braimah. It is the order of the government that every Mohammedan should serve under Alhaji Braimah.*[130]

These internal struggles would influence the way Chief Braimah settled people at Tudu. In the meantime, some of the migrant groups such as the Zabrama and Hausa asked for their own chiefs. The colonial administration appointed and recognised other northern migrant chiefs, but it was Chief Braimah whom the colonial administration and native Ga considered as the most important migrant chief. Therefore, the colonial administration still relied upon him to encourage northern inhabitants in the inner city of Accra, including the Ga, to move to Tudu and Adabraka.

As indicated earlier, however, Braimah, in view of the opposition being faced particularly from the Hausa, decided first to build Tudu as a purely Yoruba community, including only other ethnic groups that would offer him little opposition. To further his agenda of building an entirely Yoruba community different from Adabraka, Chief Braimah continued to provide reports to the colonial administration, which indicated that the northerners preferred Tudu (which then was referred to as the Yoruba and

[129] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1505, Mohammedan Community Accra, 1909.
[130] *Ibid.*

Hausa quarter or section). The contents of the correspondence between the Colonial Secretary and the Secretary for Native Affairs vividly captures the intentions of Chief Braimah:

> *I have seen Chief Braimah.... he states that the Mohammedans are not very anxious to build the plots in Adabraka and they would welcome the idea of unoccupied plots in the Yoruba and Hausa section.*[131]

By the time of the First World War, Braimah had encouraged more Yoruba to move into Tudu. He not only found a community for his Fulani cattle-herders and his Yoruba kinsmen but went on to create a kola-nut and cattle market in Tudu. Whereas the kola-nut trade continued to be carried out in Tudu, as Tudu expanded the cattle market was relocated further north towards Adabraka. As noted by the Sanitary Engineer:

> *The land to the north of the Yoruba Section I propose to utilise as an open market with cattle kraals behind, a thirty feet roadway to be between the kraals and the market and on the north and south. The land on the west side of the Kibi Road can be left for the present as grazing ground for the cattle and wells. It will be necessary to sink more wells.*[132]

It is important to note also the presence of members of the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary and the building of a police headquarters in Tudu, which substantially contributed to Tudu's expansion. Prior to the First World War, some members of the Hausa Constabulary in Cape Coast and Kumasi were transferred to Accra.[133] The bulk of them, being Muslims, identified with Zongo Lane and later Tudu. By the First World War, some of the soldiers, namely Hamza Wangara, Mallam Abubakr, Baba Amadu, and Amadu Suuka had acquired land at Tudu. In 1916, the colonial administration established a police barracks there in addition to the public works department (see picture below).[134] A few years later a Recruitments Reception Depot was also established in Tudu, to facilitate military recruitments for the Gold Coast Regiment. The establishment of these important units in Tudu indicated its growing significance as an important urban hub.

In the meantime, the establishment of the barracks and the reception depot created a demand for numerous and diverse forms of semi-skilled labour. Thus, Tudu's location outside the city centre and its proximity to these sources of employment made

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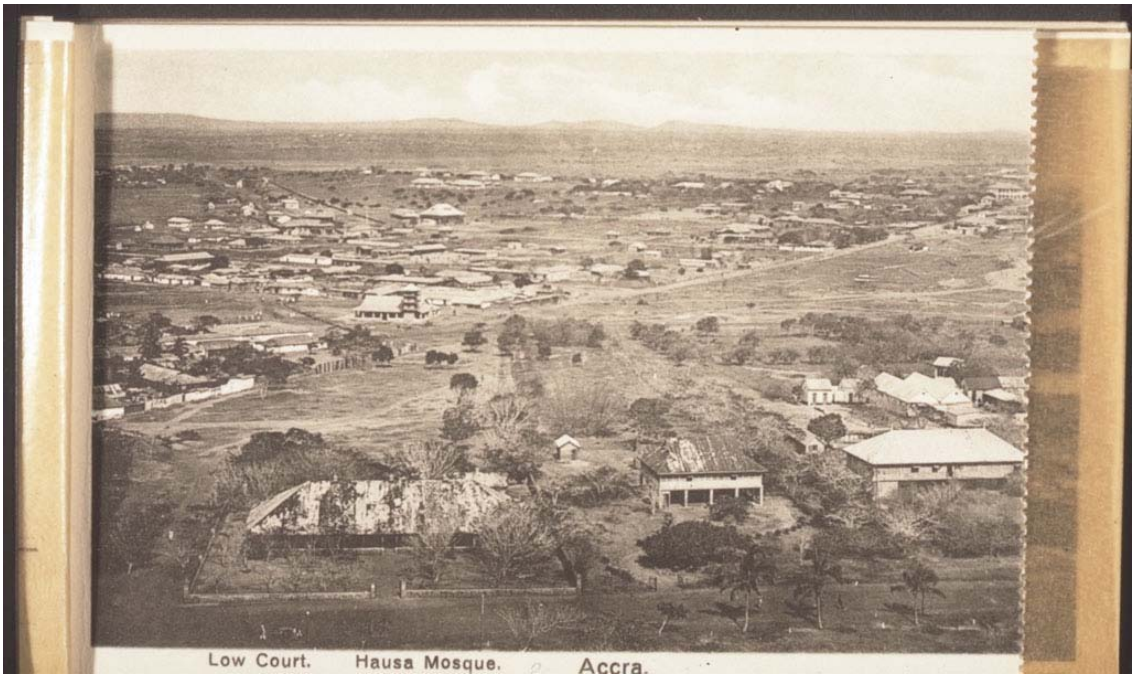
[131] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/ Adabraka Town Site, 1912.
[132] *Ibid.*
[133] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/9/1/27 Soldiers to Accra, 1913.
[134] W. H. Gillespie, *The Gold Coast Police: 1844-1939* (Accra: The Government Printer, 1955), 50.

it an attractive residential area for people from the inner city of Accra and for migrants. These people came to provide services to the expatriate officials, as cooks, stewards, labourers, and porters. Furthermore, the demobilisation of the African troops of the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) after the First World War led to a further growth of Tudu. Some of the WAFF incorporated military units from Gold Coast, Gambia, and Nigeria. Upon retirement, many of these soldiers decided to stay in the city to seek employment as drivers, technicians, cooks, and watchmen or to establish small-scale enterprises rather than go back to their places of origin. Tudu, which had invariably become the new attraction to strangers, became the choice of this new group of soldiers in addition to the police barracks. The retirees, in taking up residence in Tudu, also show that Tudu was traditionally a magnet for foreigners.



Parts of Accra including Tudu prior to 1918. Note the Tudu area above the foreground, on the immediate left of the picture illustration. (Source: QQ-30.027.0013-0021. Reproduced with permission from Mission 21 archives, Basel Switzerland)

By 1919, Tudu's growth and general centrality in trade triggered the first inter-*zongo* migrations among the otherwise rival *zongo* settlements—namely, from Sabon Zongo to Tudu. Some of the Hausa, especially about twenty cattle traders and butchers who were located in Sabon Zongo, relocated to Tudu. Their relocation precipitated an outcry and

protest in the Hausa settlement of Sabon Zongo, and residents of that *zongo* wrote a letter of protest to the colonial administration, castigating them for not behaving as loyal members of the Hausa Community. [135]

Even though cattle played an important role in the development of Tudu, events in the inter-war period and the general expansion of Accra contributed to Tudu losing some of its residents, particularly the Fulani, to other areas. In the inter-war period there was a decline in cattle trade and meat owing to the cessation of the delivery of cattle by the French authorities in Cameroon. Earlier, in addition to local sources, Accra received some of her cattle from the Cameroons.[136] Following the defeat of Germany in the First World War, Cameroon was divided between the French and the British in 1919. Most of the Accra-bound cattle came from the northern part of Cameroon, which after 1919 was administered by France. During the period under review, France itself had still to overcome the weakness of her own economy following the devastation of World War I. The main economic interest of France was for French Cameroon to provide her with raw materials from within the France Zone at the lowest possible cost.[137] This policy by France had wider ramifications, including an impact on the cattle supply to other West African countries.

In the meantime, during the inter-war period, most of the towns in French Cameroon were assuming urban status. An example was Yaounde, which became the French capital of Cameroon in 1921.[138] The problem of how to make the local food economy support the larger and more diversified non-agricultural population resurfaced. The local economy was not too poor to do so, but the people did not seem disposed to raise the necessary crops and livestock and put them on the market.[139] Their refusal was due to price controls which were introduced by the French colonial administration, which offered lower prices for agricultural goods including cattle. By 1924, food supplies were a serious issue. The difficulties of provisioning the Yaounde market became a major concern for the administration. With difficulties even in satisfying the local demands, exports to the Gold Coast were curtailed. Owing to the continuous

[135] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/11502, Letter from Hausas in Hausa Zongo to SNA, 1919.
[136] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 9/2/3, Importation of Cattle by Sea- Restrictions, 1930.
[137] J. I. Guyer, 'The Food Economy and French Colonial Rule in Central Cameroun', *The Journal of African History*, 19:4 (1978), 577-8.
[138] *Ibid.*
[139] *Ibid.*

shortage of cattle and beef in Accra, the colonial government encouraged the importation of more cattle from the Mossi areas in present-day Burkina Faso and northern Ghana as well as encouraging the rearing of cattle in the Nungua, Prampram, Winneba, Nyanyano, and Mafi areas, which were considered close to Accra.[140]

By 1934, it became difficult to rear animals within Accra itself. Under the Mosquito Ordinance, the Sanitation Department was empowered to destroy crops that they considered a health risk and capable of breeding mosquitoes. Furthermore, they were able to prevent the rearing of animals in Accra, particularly in areas such as Tudu and Adabraka.[141] Some of the cattle owners in Tudu moved to areas such as Nima, New Town, Ashaiman, and Shiasie.[142] The growth of the cattle population in Mafi, Nyanyano, and Winneba provided ready employment for some of these northerners from Tudu, particularly the Fulani, who relocated to those areas at the insistence of the acting principal veterinary officer, who told them to herd the cattle there.[143] The Fulani population therefore began decreasing in Tudu as they relocated to other suburbs of Accra. However, while they had been physically removed from Tudu, they were still attached to the place as some of them still maintained trade links there. Others still brought their cattle and dairy products such as milk for sale to Tudu. Thus, economically, the northern factor was still strong in Tudu.

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[140] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 9/2/8, Establishment of Cattle farms in Accra, 1930. Nungua is located in the Tema Metropolitan Area of Accra; Prampram and Ningo are located in the Dangbe-West District of the Greater Accra Region; Winneba is currently in the Central Region of Ghana, located between Accra and Cape Coast; Nyanyano is divided between the Greater Accra Region and Central Region; Mafi is located in the Volta Region of Ghana. Prampram and Ningo and Labadi in Accra were known for the production of cattle in pre-colonial and colonial times, but the rapid urbanisation of Accra led to a situation where their production could not match the demands; hence the reliance on the aforementioned sources.

[141] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 11/14/7, The Mosquito Ordinance, Representations as to Working Of, 1934. The ordinance already existed since 1911 as the 'Destruction of Mosquito Ordinance'. It was at first used for purposes of decongesting the inner core of the city as a result of the frequent disease outbreaks, including the yellow fever outbreaks of 1911. Owing to the expansion of the city and improvement in motorised transport, the Ordinance was rigorously applied, this time targeting the rearing of animals in addition to mosquitoes.

[142] Plots in Nima and New Town were acquired earlier around the 1920s and used by some Fulani cattle owners and herders who were different from those under Braimah. It was the municipal laws which were introduced that led to the relocation of more Fulani herders to Nima. We need to understand that Chief Braimah died in 1915, thereby granting some autonomy to those who otherwise worked under him and allowing them move to places of their choice. Nima became the preferred choice of some of his cattle herders. The new northern communities which were founded after the 1930s will become very important in our discussions on the development of northern trade and portage in Tudu. For the development of some of the northern migrant communities, see Mary-Esther Kropp Dakubu, *Korle Meets the Sea*, 46.

[143] PRAAD, Cape Coast, ADM 1 Letter from A. Fulton, Veterinary Officer, South Veterinary Service, Letter to Acting Commissioner Central Province, 1934.

In 1939 a severe earthquake destroyed much of central Accra and gave an added impetus to move to the suburbs.[144] The first scheme that became operational immediately after the earthquake was that temporary structures were erected in areas such as the railway station at Kantamanto close to Tudu and other areas. Inhabitants of Tudu who were affected by the earthquake report that they took refuge at the lorry park.[145]

Initially, the gradual expansion of Accra showed signs of slums and congestion. Plans to address this were made by the colonial administration. The occurrence of the earthquake provided impetus for the building of what the colonial government termed the 'New Accra'.[146] The new buildings took into consideration the building plans which were drawn earlier for decongestion purposes. In West Korle Gonno, the houses were erected for fishermen who initially refused to relocate to Tudu and Adabraka, as later discussions will show. Besides the fisher folk in Ga Mashie in the building of the New Accra, the colonial administration took into consideration the migrants in Accra, the majority of whom were settled in Tudu and provided unskilled labour such as portage. One report contains the following remarks:

> *Arising out of the provision of housing for the permanent inhabitants of Accra rendered homeless by the earth quake it is* [sic] *also become necessary to take into account the requirements of the considerable number of floating alien population which is always present and which provides most of the supply of unskilled labour. To this class the purchase of a house offers no attraction even if it were financially possible and the only method of providing for their accommodation is the construction of quarters which can be hired out at a fixed rent'.*[147]

The residential accommodation for the floating unskilled labour and other natives who were not fishermen was located in Labadi, east of Tudu and about eight kilometres away. In the new residential area, the government was responsible for the maintenance of the new quarters, for which the cost was added to the rent. But overall, the amount paid by the occupants was appreciably less than the amount charged by landlords who possessed even more 'inferior' accommodation in Accra.[148] The occupants paid only four pence per month, which included both rent and rates for water, while in central

[144] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 5/4/41, N. R. Junner, Ernest Tillotso and C. S. Denkih, Gold Coast Geological Survey (bulletin no.13) The Accra Earthquake of 22 June, 1939.
[145] Interview with Alhaji Haruna. His profile has already been given.
[146] PRO, Kew, London CO 96/762/2, Earth Quake- Restoration of Accra, Rehousing, 1939.
[147] PRO, Kew, London CO 96/762/2, Earth Quake: Restoration of Accra, Rehousing, 1939.
[148] *Ibid.*

Accra, including Tudu, rents had gone up to about ten pence for the same type of accommodation.[149] Realising the advantages in the new housing scheme, residents of Tudu, including both those who had already lost their houses through the earthquake and others whose houses were not affected by the earthquake considered this an opportune time to relocate while renting or selling their houses in Tudu.

Alhaji Kudjin, a popular transporter, and a few others including Alhaji Baidare, a prominent kola-nut trader, were among those in Tudu who relocated to the newly constructed houses in Labadi. Their relocation provided an entry point for the Ibo traders popularly called *Cha'kre* by the Yoruba and Hausa inhabitants in Tudu.[150] The first group of Ibos began populating Tudu in the 1940s and 1950s. The presence of the first group attracted more Ibos to Tudu in the early 1960s. The Ibo population was not permanent and as traders they were always seeking opportunities elsewhere in Ghana. Archival sources indicate most of them relocated to Takoradi because of the advantages of the harbour there.[151]

Unlike the colonial period, when natural disasters mainly caused relocations into and out of Tudu, in the post-colonial context the contraction and later expansion of the northern section was increasingly due to national policies and conflicts. For example, both the Yoruba and the Ibo, some of whom had become prominent in their respective trades, were affected by the Aliens Compliance Order of 1969. The Aliens Act of 1963, amended in 1965, required all aliens in Ghana to have residence permits. In 1968, Legislative Instrument 553 decreed that aliens must also have a work permit before they could act as employers, self-employed persons, or employees.[152] In July 1969, all embassies were given nine months to register their nationals and provide them with the documents needed to obtain work permits, but action was slow. On 18 November 1969, the 'Compliance Order' was issued giving all aliens without residence permits two weeks to obtain them or leave the country. Very few African aliens had the necessary papers. The chaos which followed was compounded by a government

[149] Information from Alhaji Kudjin, whose profile and date of interview are provided in Chapter 2. For additional rates for accommodation in central Accra, including Tudu in post-independence Accra, see M. E. Harvey and R. Brand, The Spatial Allocation of Migrants in Accra, *Ghana Geographical Review*, 64:1 (Jan. 1974), 1-30.

[150] Throughout my interviews, my informants could not tell me why the Ibo in Tudu were nicknamed *Cha'kre*.

[151] PRAAD, Sekondi, WRG 24/1/250, Nigerians in the Gold Coast, 1940-1959.

[152] M. Peil, 'The Expulsion of West African Aliens', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 9:2 (Aug. 1971), 206.

pronouncement that the police should search and arrest all aliens lacking papers or trading permits.[153] Tudu was also inhabited by aliens from Nigeria, and as a major trading centre in the city it was greatly affected since some of the residents lacked the necessary papers and had to leave.

Even though the Ibo stayed briefly in Tudu, for just about twenty years or so, they made a lasting impression. They left a legacy of trade which was quite different from that of the early northerners in Tudu. Rather than trade in cattle, kola nuts and shea butter, they were known to have introduced retail of European goods, traditional Nigerian cloths, and the cassava staple *gari* to Tudu.[154] They also opened shops within the Tudu community, which was in contrast to the Lebanese, who preferred to open their shops in the market and along the roads in Tudu. The role of the Lebanese in the history of Tudu will be explored later. The departure of some of the Yoruba and Ibo allowed some Akans, especially the Kwahu and Akwapim from the Eastern Region, to acquire their houses and shops. Following the overthrow of the Busia regime in 1972, some of the Yoruba came back to buy back their houses and shops, but while a few succeeded, the fact that Tudu had long been a commercial centre made it difficult for many of them to buy back their properties. It is interesting to note that the Ibo did not come back to Tudu. Their refusal to return could be due to the fact that a few years after the Order, Ghana plunged into economic decline, and it was not profitable for them to trade any more in Accra. But the return of the Yoruba is significant because, unlike the Ibos who came there briefly and had to leave, the Yoruba consider Tudu as their home; their attachment is not only economic but also has some social and cultural implications.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and the numerous ethnic conflicts in northern Ghana prompted youth migrations from the north of Ghana, particularly the Dagomba, Nanumba, and Mampruse, into Tudu. Following the introduction of the SAP in Ghana in the 1980s, there was large-scale retrenchment and reduction of state funds for public services.[155] Also, as a result of the Structural Adjustment it became expensive to produce agricultural crops since subsidies on agricultural goods were abolished. The north, which had been a major rice- and maize-

[153] *Ibid.* 207.
[154] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 6/3/475, Imports of cloth from Nigeria, 1943; PRAAD, Sekondi, WRG 24/1/250, Nigerians in the Gold Coast, 1940-1959.
[155] L. Smith, *Tied to Migrants: Transnational Influences on the Economy of Accra, Ghana* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, African Studies Collection, 5 (2007), 9.

producing area and which relied heavily on agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, tractors, and combine-harvesters, was greatly affected. Initially, the rice fields absorbed some of the migrants bound south. The collapse of the rice fields led to a renewed wave of labour migrants into Accra. This time around, many engaged in the carrying of goods; they were called *kayaye*.[156]

Closely related to the SAP issue in terms of migration are the numerous intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts within the last three decades in the northern part of Ghana. The conflicts have increased the waves of northern migrations to the south of Ghana. The issue of youth migration, especially among the *kayaye* from the north, increased during the 1994 conflict and subsequent conflicts in the area. Between 1980 and 2005, there have been over twenty such conflicts in different parts of the north.[157]

The evidence suggests that most of the *kayaye* stayed in areas such as Agbogbloshie and Tudu to ply their trade in the lorry parks and markets. With the recent influx of these new migrants, Milton E. Harvey and Richard Brandt's findings in the 1970s cannot be seen to match the current conditions in the Central Business District. According to the authors, the Central Business District and especially Tudu has, since the 1970s, been unattractive to new migrants from the north. One of the important reasons given was increases in rent. But I argue that such increases in rent rather made the immigrants innovate, by clustering together in rooms or sleeping in people's stores.[158] Tudu turned out to be a very attractive location for the *kayaye* because it has its own lorry park and it is also close to one of the largest markets, Makola Market. In addition, Tudu is also close to the Ho and Tema Station lorry parks. The markets and lorry parks are important nodes for traders and passengers, who are the major clients of the *kayaye*. As previously noted, in addition to clustering together and sleeping in kiosks, some of the *kayaye* sleep in the lorry park at Tudu, while the rest moved in to

[156] *Kayayoo*, (plural *kayaye*) is a term used by the Ga to describe women who engage in carrying wares for a fee. Etymologically, this term is derived from two words, one from Hausa (*kaya*, meaning 'wares' or 'goods') and the other from Ga (*yoo*, meaning 'woman'). Even though men also engage in carrying, it appears the focus is mainly on women, an issue which I will discuss in Chapter 2.

[157] For more on the conflicts, see N. J. K. Brukum, *Guinea Fowl, Mango and Pito Wars. Episodes in the History of Northern Ghana, 1980-1999* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, Accra, 2001).

[158] M. E. Harvey and R. Brand, 'The Spatial Allocation of Migrants in Accra, Ghana', *Geographical Review,* 64:1 (Jan. 1974), 12. See Chapter 2 for more insights on these coping strategies of the head porters.

occupy the military facility which was constructed for purposes of military recruitments.[159]

From what has been discussed so far, it is evident that the northern section has been very resilient in its urbanisation process, even as circumstances threatened to undermine its growth. In most cases, the exit of some members of a particular northern group coincides with the entry of yet another group. The continuous presence of northerners in Tudu is due to its central location, which tends to offer varied opportunities which other migrant communities in Accra such as Sabon Zongo, New Town, and Nima do not offer. It is important to mention that with the exception of the Ibo, all the ethnic groups mentioned, such as Yoruba, Hausa, Kotokoli, Dagomba, and Gonja, still have some of their members and houses in Tudu and are still engaged in trades associated with their various groups, as subsequent chapters will describe. But, as was mentioned earlier, even though Tudu was conceived as a northerners' enclave, it also incorporated other ethnic groups and indeed other nationalities. In order to understand how all these groups contributed to the development of trade and transport, it is necessary to discuss the non-northern factor in Tudu. This will be important in subsequent chapters for understanding particular historical changes that took place.

The Non-Northern Group: The African Middle-Class and the Lebanese

As previously noted in the map of Tudu, Tudu is inhabited by both northerners and non-northerners. While the preceding section outlines how the northern section became settled, this section will consider the processes that led to the foundation and growth of the non-northern section. But first it is important to put this disparate group in context. Socio-economic developments in Accra encouraged the influx of many people from the hinterland to Accra in search of jobs, leading naturally to the phenomenal growth of Accra. Unlike the northerners, who until the outbreak of the plague were all located in a separate *zongo* called Cow Lane, the new migrants such as the Akan stayed among the indigenous ethnic group, the Ga.[160] In the same way, with the exception of the Governor

[159] After the Second World War the recruitment centre was moved to El-Wak Stadium, close to the airport in Accra. The Tudu recruitment centre was converted to a transit quarters for ex-servicemen. To date there are still ex-servicemen at the recruitment centre who stay together with the *kayaye* or porters.

[160] According to Nana Donkor, prior to the 1900s the first Kwahu migrants to Accra stayed with the Yoruba traders in Cow Lane. Interviews confirm this but put the numbers at less than ten who stayed with the northerners. They were mainly tenants and did not move with the northerners. In fact, their

and other notable administrators, most of the Europeans stayed among the indigenous Ga ethnic group until about 1905.[161] The presence of multi-ethnic groups and nationalities in Accra, with its attendant consequences on population, unfortunately did not keep pace with sanitation and health. Consequently, there often broke out in the town epidemics with disastrous consequences.[162]

As indicated already, at the outbreak of the plague in 1908, the first group to be asked to relocate to Tudu were the northerners, who were mostly traders in kola nuts, cattle, and shea butter. But beginning from 1911 there were outbreaks of other diseases, particularly yellow fever. In view of the renewed health threat, the colonial administration evoked the segregation laws and asked the Ga, of whom a majority were fishermen, to relocate to Adabraka. The fisher folk in Ga Mashie, an area close to the sea, refused to move because of the distance. Adabraka was far from the seashore. As the Governor rightly pointed out:

> *The Usher town people generally have shewn* [sic] *a marked disinclination to take up land in Adabraka for settling there... they are overly always of the poor class, or of a class such as the fishermen whose occupation confines them to the town.*[163]

Besides distance and occupation, they also considered the plots too small for their families. In the end, it was the African middle class (elite) in James Town, Usher Town, and Ga Mashie that moved, but instead of Adabraka, they chose to settle in Tudu.[164] The African middle-class relocated to Tudu in three stages. The first group relocated in 1911, the second group in 1913, and the third group in 1918. With the exception of those who relocated in 1911, the rest at first did not want to relocate. The reason for their action will be explained shortly.

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concentration at Okaishie shows that they would have had other Ga landlords after the northerners relocated and their houses were demolished. This group, however, will be significant in the next chapter, as they influenced drivers in Tudu to demand a separate lorry park as a way of attracting business away from the Lebanese in Tudu. For more on the Kwahu migrants from Eastern Region, see N. E. Donkor, *A Socio-Economic History of Okwahu Migrants in Accra* (MPhil thesis, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, 2003).

[161] Even though most of the administrative class moved to Ridge after 1905, some of the Europeans, such as the traders, were still staying among the Ga up until 1913 or even later. This is evidenced by the reference to this group of Europeans in almost all the disease outbreaks in Accra. For perspectives on this group, see PRAAD, Accra, ADM 5/3/11, Report on Plague in the Gold Coast in 1908; PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/3/14, Report on Yellow Fever in 1910 and 1911.

[162] S. S. Quarcoopome, 'The Impact of Urbanisation', 63.

[163] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/443, Adabraka Town Site, 1912

[164] Some of the African middle-class that moved to Tudu were Lawyer Dove, Lawyer Sawyer, Lawyer Harrison, Lawyer Buckle, Mr. Moning, Mr Lutherrodt, Mr Sowu, Mr. Glover, Mr Orgle, Mr. Tetteh, and Mrs. Love. I am grateful to Mr. Nat Amartefio for the insights.

As noted above, the fisher folk did not want to relocate because of their occupation, but the elites who remained in James Town, Usher Town, and Ga Mashie until after 1911 did not want to move owing to one important reason: they considered segregation humiliating. The elites did not hide their feelings and frustrations about segregation. The newspapers became the avenues through which they let off steam and lashed out at the colonial administration. They considered the significance of segregation a thing of the past, an exploded theory and a spent force. They described it as a crowning piece of insanity.[165] Behind this media backlash was the claim by the elite that they would stay put in the old quarter rather than move to Tudu. As far as they were concerned, the means of communication of diseases was through the air and not by humans. As they pointed out, in mimicry of white fears in the Gold Coast:

> *In the West Indies, white and black live together in the same street and on the same side of it and no one dares to think that the contiguity of the blacks means the fatal communication of infectious and contagious disease. Here on the Gold Coast or in West Africa, the native no matter his attainment of antecedents is impregnate with microbes to an extent which makes it deadly for his white neighbour.*[166]

However, in March 1913, this stance changed drastically following another outbreak of yellow fever, which claimed the lives of whites only, who owing to the segregation laws were already housed in a European quarter called Ridge. As the elites pointed out:

> *Despite the segregation, recent events at Accra showed that segregation of the whites from the blacks has not rendered them immune against yellow fever. Already the three cases recorded were all amongst the white people. What do we propose? To do away with segregation? Not at all. We Fantis, Twis and Gas still ask for segregation.*[167]

So, as they claimed that segregation was not necessary, instead of staying in the Ga Mashie area, they moved to the new elite quarter in Tudu, which was already accommodating the few who had moved there before 1911. It is interesting to note that the change in attitude was recognised by the Secretary for Native Affairs, who also

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[165] *The Gold Coast Nation*, Cape Coast, Thursday, 30 March 1911

[166] *The Gold Coast Nation*, Cape Coast, Thursday, 7 January 1912

[167] *The Gold Coast Nation*, Cape Coast, Thursday, 4 December 1913. It is important to note that the disease-inspired segregation policies were not limited to the Gold Coast alone. In South Africa, for example, Harriet Deacon reports that since the 1860s, medical and scientific discourses played an important role in defining urban segregation, especially in Cape Town. For more on this subject in South Africa, see H. Deacon, 'Racial Segregation and Medical Discourse in Nineteenth-Century Cape Town', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 22:2 (Jun. 1996), 287-308.

noted sarcastically that at long last the elite had belatedly seen the advantages of segregation.[168]

Additional disease outbreaks, especially the influenza of 1918-19, led to the movement of the third elite group to Tudu. This time around, it was not by choice but by the strict enforcement of the Infectious Disease Ordinance.[169] By this ordinance, houses considered to be unhealthy had to be torn down. This third group was more economically speculative than the first two waves of immigrants: instead of acquiring the usual one plot of land, some of them invested their money in more plots, with some acquiring an acre. The consequences of such acquisitions will be explored shortly, but their actions indicate that by 1918, Tudu was becoming an important node in Accra's urbanisation.

House of one of the elite in Tudu, Lawyer Sawyer, built in 1921. (Picture by author, 2008)

By 1922, the Selwyn Market was opened close to Tudu. The market was to ensure the easy distribution of food and other products. In order to provide for an easy flow of passengers and goods into the market as well as the railway station, which had been

[168] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/443, Adabraka Town Site, 1912.
[169] S. S. Quarcoopome, 'The Impact of Urbanisation', 64; K. David Patterson, 'The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-19 in the Gold Coast', *The Journal of African History*, 24:4 (1983), 485-502.

relocated from James Town to Kantamanto, the Rowe Road Lorry Park, later called the Central or Tudu Lorry Park, was opened in 1929.[170]

The opening of the market as well as the lorry park, both of which occurred in the 1920s, substantially changed colonial plans regarding Tudu's urban space. Rather than pursue only sanitation and health policies, the colonial administration was concerned about proper transport design in Tudu. This should be understood in the general context of the importance that the British attached to maintaining road infrastructure to facilitate exploitation of domestic and exportable products.[171] Policies and programmes were geared towards expanding road networks. In Tudu, those who suffered most from the road construction were the elite quarter, for which reasons will be given in the course of this discussion. It is important to mention, however, that not all the elite were affected. At least about twenty of the elite families were affected by the belated road-construction policies. Their experiences can be categorised into three types: those who were relocated with compensation, those whose houses and lands were taken without compensation, and those who lost part of their property and were compensated.

Mr. Orgle, a native Ga, was one of those affected by the implementation of the urban renewal and road construction. Orgle relocated to Tudu from central Accra in

[170] Rowe Road passes through the Tudu community and the lorry park to the Tudu Police Barracks. The road was named after Governor Samuel Rowe. Rowe was a British army surgeon who attended to the medical needs of the British and some native residents in Lagos, Nigeria. In 1863 he was given additional responsibility as magistrate and administrator in Palma district, located east of Lagos. In 1870 Rowe was responsible for the Hausa Police, popularly called the 'Glover Hausas', who were transferred from Lagos to Cape Coast, Gold Coast. This group became important in the establishment of the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary. Both Rowe and Glover, another British military surgeon in Lagos, led the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary in the British campaigns against Ashanti in 1873-1874. Samuel Rowe was knighted after the Anglo-Ashanti war and made Governor of the Gold Coast in 1882. He retired from the colonial service in 1884. It is important to note that even though by the time of the introduction of the motor vehicle, Rowe was no longer in active service, he nonetheless was important in the history of Tudu through his association with the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary (later the Gold Coast Regiment). As indicated earlier in this chapter, members of the regiment were influential in the development of Tudu. Also, part of the proposals for Accra's Urban Design was made under the Governorship of Rowe. It is sufficient to note that the design was what later influenced the foundation of Tudu in 1908. It was therefore not out of place that a road passing through Tudu to the Police Barracks was named after him, and when the lorry park was created it also automatically took the name the Rowe Road Lorry Park or Central Lorry Park. Officially the name Central Lorry Park still remains, but in popular usage it is the Tudu Lorry Park that is widely known and used among traders, passengers, and drivers. For more on Samuel Rowe, see H. S. Brown, '"Colonialism on the Cheap": A Tale of Two English Army Surgeons in Lagos, Samuel Rowe and Frank Simon, 1862-1882', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 27:3 (1994), 551-88.

[171] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 17/1/1, Mechanical Transport carried out in the Colony: Periodical Reports on Experiment, 1929-1933.

1918. He acquired land in Tudu to settle as well as to build a school, but in 1929 he received a letter from the Accra Town Council indicating that a road would run through his school.[172] After voluntarily surrendering the land to the government to construct the road, he expected to be relocated. Hearing nothing from the Council, Orgle wrote a letter requesting a new plot before he would move out. But his request was not granted. The otherwise compromising Orgle wrote to the President of the Town Council, in view of the refusal for relocation, nullifying his earlier commitment of his plot and house for road construction. He further reminded the Town Council of a previous application that he received from the education department for a possible lease of his property, including his school; but in view of the land's potential value, he declined to give it to the education department. According to him, if he was not going to be relocated, then he saw no reason why he should make exceptions to the Town Council.[173] The following year, part of his school was destroyed and a road constructed to link to the lorry park. He was paid thirty-five pounds as compensation. E. Tetteh was also in a similar situation to Orgle, and for three quarters of his demolished house he was compensated with nine pounds.

J. A. Love falls into the second category, those who were not given any compensation. Love, just like her colleagues, received a letter from the Town Council indicating that her house would be demolished for road construction. She agreed to the Council's proposal of the demolition of her house because she was promised by the Accra Town Council that she would be relocated to a suitable site. After the road construction, she was not given an alternative plot as promised; neither was she given any form of compensation. What makes Love's case interesting was that she protested not only by writing to the president of the Town Council but went further to protest in writing directly to King George of Great Britain, complaining not only about the injustice meted out to her by the colonial administration but warning the King of the eventual ruin of the British Empire in Accra and the entire Gold Coast Colony.[174]

The third group of elite were those who were adequately compensated. For example, J. O. Annan in 1918 acquired four plots of land, each measuring one acre. He

[172] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 11/14/20, Layout of South Adabraka, 1930.
[173] Ibid.
[174] *Ibid.*

built on one while the other three lay fallow. When the construction of road led to the destruction of his house, Annan was compensated with one hundred and fifty pounds.[175]

Essentially, by 1934, the three scenarios represented what the elite quarter went through owing to the road-centred urban design during that period. It is evident that by this period the elite quarter had dwindled in importance, making the northerners a sizable majority in Tudu and the most important residents in terms of trade. Of interest to this discussion also was the emergence of a new elite quarter, popularly called Plot No. 24. Almost all the dispossessed elite who had the chance of relocation were offered plots between Tudu, Adabraka, and the European quarter at Ridge. Currently, parts of Plot 24 have been incorporated into Farrar Avenue. This new quarter along with Ridge acquired importance in the history of Tudu as they became valuable sources of employment for servants and other workers from the northern section in Tudu. Civil servant residents of Plot 24 came to depend on the lorry park and the market in Tudu for most of their travel and nutritional needs.

Prior to the departure of the elite group from Tudu in the 1920s, there is evidence of Lebanese traders who relocated from the inner core of the city to Tudu. Even though informants in Tudu could not tell me the precise date for their settlement in Tudu, there is physical evidence to show that prior to the period that the Ga elite left Tudu, there were some Lebanese residents already in place. As the residential map of Tudu shows, immediately bordering the house of Lawyer Sawyer, a prominent Ga who relocated to Tudu in 1911, was a sports complex called Lebanon House. Lebanon House was built by the Lebanese community in Tudu in 1925 for purposes of playing indoor games. Names mentioned among the early Lebanese settlers in Tudu include Sataradis and Majiid Staad. These two were particularly known for engaging in gold trade while also supplying horses to Tudu's animal-drawn transporters.

A second wave of Lebanese came to Tudu when in the 1930s it became evident that the Gold Coast Cocoa Marketing Board was granted a monopoly over the purchase of cocoa.[176] Even though some Lebanese were already buying cocoa from the interior into Accra, none of them was granted the agent status to be able to buy cocoa on behalf

[175] For J. O. Annan, see PRAAD, Accra CSO 11/14/19, Layout, South Adabraka, Acquisition of Land, 1930; for Tetteh see PRAAD, CSO 11/14/17, Land Required by Mr. E. Tetteh, In Exchange of Proposed Road, 1930.
[176] K. G. Bartels, 'Stranger Groups in Developing Societies: The Lebanese in Liberia and Ghana' (BA thesis, Harvard College, 1973), 32.

of the cocoa marketing board. The few Lebanese who were located in the cocoa-producing villages moved to Accra, further increasing the Lebanese population and trading activities in Tudu. Their arrival coincided with the departure of the African middle-class. Although archival sources do not provide us with the specific numbers, they were at least substantial enough to have caused shortage of stores and shops as well as building space around the Selwyn Market. The market contributed to the gradual growth of Tudu and added value to the land in and around Makola as trade now centred around these two markets. As the area attracted more buyers and sellers, there was a growing need for expansion of existing shops and the building of new ones by the new Lebanese traders, but the colonial administration denied them on account of diseases and congestion. For example, a Lebanese by name Mr Shaul, who had a shop around the Sewlyn Market, applied to the Accra Town Council for extension of his shop. The matter was referred to the Director of Medical Services and the Acting Commissioner of Lands. Their comments are worth quoting here. The Medical Director wrote as follows:

> *If more store accommodation is desired in the locality of the market, let commercial interests acquire, for example the land and the* [sic] *insanitary property bordering Boundary Road and Derby Avenue and build there. In this way plague spots will be abolished without expense to the government.*[177]

The Commissioner in response wrote as follows:

> *I entirely agree with the Director of Medical Services that it is of utmost importance to preserve Market Areas in Accra free from encroachment. Part of the reason why this area has become a valuable commercial centre is due to the fact that the market is there. If continued encroachments are permitted it may well be that the popular trade area will move again.*[178]

It is evident from the above that there was no available space for shops within the Tudu market area. This limitation compelled the Lebanese to acquire plots along the newly constructed roads such as Boundary Road, now Kojo Thomson Road. Informants report, for example, that Sataradis and Majiid Staad were influential in acquiring the remainder of the plot which at first belonged to J. O. Annan, while the Zakour family also acquired the plot where Mr Ogle had his school in Tudu. The Lebanese preferred Tudu because of its strategic location. Its proximity to the markets would ensure a flow of Ghanaian consumers and agricultural producers. Tudu was close to the larger expatriate

[177] PRADD, Accra, CSO 11/14/144, Letter from Commissioner of Lands to President, Accra Town Council, Selwyn Market, 1934. Boundary Road is now Kojo Thomson Road. It was renamed by Jerry John Rawlings in 1982. Information provided by Ato Quayson.

[178] PRADD, Accra, CSO 11/14/144, Letter from Commissioner of Lands to President, Accra Town Council, Selwyn Market, 1934.

commercial firms, such as United Africa Company (UAC), United Trading Company (UTC), and Paterson Zochonis, and the two expatriate banks of Barclays and Standard. The Lebanese were favoured with the 'passbook system', so that with little capital they could buy from these firms on credit and sell in their shops.[179] Thus, in Accra, spare-parts' shops of the Lebanese were located along the Kojo Thomson Road, which is the main street linking Tudu to Adabraka and beyond.[180]

Danwana and the Lebanese

The Lebanese ability to integrate successfully into African communities, including Tudu, is born out of their patterns of migration. Emigration from Lebanon had a localised pattern, and related families moved from a particular locale in Lebanon to settle in specific districts in West African colonies.[181] Hence in Tudu the Zakour family tend to be the dominant traders. By the time of independence, the Lebanese had become well integrated into Tudu. Not only were they praying in the same mosque with other residents of Tudu, but as indicated already, the Lebanese also established a club-house called 'Lebanon House' in Tudu to promote sports, especially volleyball, table-tennis and basket-ball. The 'Lebanon House' facilitated interaction among the various ethnic groups and nationalities in Tudu. However, the Aliens Act of 1969 affected some Lebanese in Tudu just as it did the Yoruba and Ibo in the northerners' section. Lebanese such as Satarides had to leave for home, while Maajid Staad died of a heart attack as a result of the Order.[182] Some Lebanese, such as the Zakuor family, however, have still maintained their businesses and shops in Tudu because some of them have claimed Ghanaian citizenship.

From the discussion so far, we may note two broad categories of inhabitants and traders in Tudu, those of northern origin and the rest from the south or from Lebanon. But there are important questions to be asked and answered in Tudu's urbanisation history. For example, what is the rationale behind the seizure of the lands of the elite,

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[179] By the passbook system, traders obtained a passbook which entitled them to make wholesale purchases on a credit basis from certain European stores. For more on the operations of the passbook system, see R. Howard, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Ghana* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 187-9.
[180] K. G. Bartels, 'Stranger Groups in Developing Societies', 32.
[181] E. K. Akyeampong, 'Race, Identity and Citizenship in Black Africa: The Case of the Lebanese in Ghana', *Africa*, 76:3 (2006), 10. Akyeampong notes the manner in which the Lebanese, despite their integration, also usually remain endogamous. We shall see in the course of the discussion how some of the Lebanese managed to integrate in the northern section.
[182] Interview with Baba Addisa. See Chapter 3 for Baba Addisa's profile and dates of interviews.

since the northerners' section in Tudu, though geographically closer to the lorry park, was not affected by the grand urban road design? Also, why were the Lebanese allowed to move into Tudu when the elite group were moved out?

It is difficult to find precise reasons for the targeting of the elite quarter besides roads and their importance to the market and lorry park. However, events during the period yield further understanding about the colonial administration's actions. In the first place, the elite quarter was close to the railway station; there was therefore the need for direct accessible routes from the lorry park to the railway station for purposes of loading and offloading both goods and passengers. As Chapter 4 argues, the development of motorised transportation took place in concert with rail systems. So, even though the lorry park and the market seemed to be the most important reason for the relocation of the elites, the colonial administration was also much concerned with the development of rail transport, to the extent that there was a grand design to build the south-western part of Tudu, which was occupied by the elite, as a major railway station.[183] Plans were underway for a direct railroad within the city and to neighbouring areas, such as Dodowa and Akuse, to mention just two. The projected termini of all these routes was Kantamanto, which incidentally bordered the elite quarter at Tudu.[184]

Secondly, I mentioned that in elite quarter, unlike in the northerners' area, there were speculative settlers who had acquired plots larger than their northern counterparts, as evidenced by the acquisition of one acre of land by J. O. Annan. The colonial administration by their action was to check the excess accumulation of lands in Accra. The establishment of the new elite quarter popularly called Plot 24 demonstrates well that the elites were not permitted to acquire vast tracks of land as they did in Tudu.

Thirdly, the northerners' enclave was already well settled and densely populated, and there was no need to rush a road through it. In the elite quarter, the fact that some plots were not built on means that it was still in its developing stage, so relocation would not cause as much disruption as would have been the case with the northerners' enclave.

Finally, and most importantly, the colonial administration was much more concerned about the northerners' section because, unlike the elite who were mostly civil

[183] Interview with Joseph Kenneth Dadzie, Takoradi, 7 August 2009. Dadzie is the current Chairman of the Interim Management Committee of the Railway Workers' Union
[184] Interview with Joseph Kenneth Dadzie.

servants, the northerners by their occupation had started assuming positions of economic significance in Accra, examples of which include Braimah, Amadu Ilorin, and Baidare among others. Their economic activities were in line with the second most important reason for Tudu being established, which was for purposes of trade. The colonial administration had always been interested in developing Tudu as a node for trade and transport. Even though it became more difficult to raise cattle in Tudu, the administration still considered northern traders important in the provision of meat in Accra, as the history of the development of the northern route in Chapter 4 indicates. Reasons of trade are also implied by the Lebanese presence in Tudu. The Lebanese were permitted by the colonial administration to acquire land and put up shops along the roads in Tudu, thereby providing additional evidence that Tudu was intended as the commercial hub of the town.

But just how relevant is the non-northern group to Tudu's northern history? In the first place, the two constituencies which developed as though independent from each other were gradually brought into the northern discourse through religion and trade. For example, some of the Ga residents in Tudu and some Lebanese who were already Muslim finally succeeded in redefining identity based on religion. Frequent communal worship in the mosque in Tudu changed the whole concept of *danwana*. In the later part of the 1800s up to the first decade of the 1900s, *danwana* (literally, 'my relation' in Hausa) was used in the strict sense to apply to migrant Muslims from Yorubaland and was particularly used for Braimah and his family. It was also used in a relaxed form to apply to Gonjas from northern Ghana. This was due to the fact that Braimah and his family stayed in Salaga in the 1860s and early 1870s. But with the use of the mosque by Ga, Lebanese, and other groups, *danwana* was gradually incorporated into the religious dynamics of Tudu. It was used to identify those who frequented the mosque. This means the Yoruba, Ga, Lebanese and any other Muslim in Tudu could refer to each other as danwana. In the course of my interviews, an informant elaborated on the concept of *danwana* in the following manner:

> *If a Ba hankare* [Ga] *frequents the mosque and a northerner does not who is my* danwana [relation]*? Definitely it is the Ga. It is his marriage ceremony I would attend, his funeral I would attend and his problems are equally mine.*[185]

[185] Interview with Baba Addisa and Mallam Nuhu in Tudu on 17 May 2009.

This statement from the informant indicates the extent to which the mosques greatly influenced social relations and undermined to some extent the importance of 'sectionalisation' and class in Tudu.

Of importance to our discussion on Tudu as both an economic and transport hub is the extent to which the concept of *danwana* has been utilised for purposes of trade and transport. By praying in the same mosque, the Lebanese, Yoruba, and Muslim Ga were able to convert *danwana* into a symbolic capital which perpetually kept them tied to each other economically. For example, in the case of the Lebanese shop owners, if a customer who is Muslim and prays in the mosque switched to buying products from a European or another Lebanese shop, after Friday prayers it became a common practice for the particular Lebanese shopkeeper to ask the customer why for so long he or she had not bought from his shop. It was not uncommon for the Lebanese shopkeeper to remind the Muslim customer of the common identity that they shared not only as Muslims but as *danwana*. The mosque became a source of social networking. Also the concept has been used by traders in the northern section to facilitate the carriage of their kola nuts and cattle from the interior to Tudu. An example is mentioned in the archival documents of Messrs ADRA Brothers, Lebanese motorised transporters who began running cargo and passenger vehicles in the 1940s to Cape Coast, Sekondi, and Takoradi but who had to, in addition, tailor their services towards the northern economy in Tudu, such as the conveyance of cattle from the north to Tudu and the conveyance of kola nuts bought by Yoruba and Kotokoli traders to Tudu and Lagos.[186]

Some of the northern horse-drawn transporters depended on a Ga horse merchant called Attram, who became Muslim after moving to Tudu in 1914.[187] Abbass, one of the horse transporters, reports that the concept of *danwana* has always facilitated the acquisition of horses from Attram, since he could use that at times to get horses at either a lower price or on hire-purchase. In addition, the remainder of the elite-quarter majority of the Ga and civil servants also did not separate themselves from the general concerns of the northern section. In 1936 it became evident that Tudu had many

[186] I am grateful to Abraham Akrong for the insights on the operation of Adra. Akrong is aged sixty-one years and is a lecturer at the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana. He is also a native Ga from Labadi. He was the immediate head of the religions department in the Institute. He provided these insights during an informal discussion in the Jones Quartey Building, University of Ghana on 1 August 2009.

[187] Information from Abbass Adamu . See Abbass life history in Chapter 3.

immigrants, which created sanitary and health concerns. Particular mention was made by the Ga civil servants and some northern traders in Tudu of many people taking their bath in the open spaces and sometimes in the streets near water pumps. The civil servants and traders quickly petitioned the colonial administration as to the unpleasantness of such state of affairs in a civilised city such as Accra and requested public bath-houses in Tudu. This demand was answered by building two public bath-houses, the first in the northern section and the second in the lorry park.[188] In relation to Accra, then, we clearly see that the non-northern factor indirectly or directly in the real sense became connected to the trade, transport, and other affairs of the northerners. This practice is to some extent different from other locations or northern migrant communities, such as New Town, Madina, and Sabon Zongo.

Conclusion

This chapter showed how colonial policy and personal initiative resulted in the making and consolidation of a northern community in Accra. The chapter also discussed episodes in which people of northern origin used the opportunity of a broader urban design in Accra to establish their own community called Tudu. However, Tudu incorporated not only northerners but also merchants and petty-traders, owners of small enterprises (in this case the Lebanese), the Akan, and members of the public sector who comprised high civil servants, judges, magistrates, ex-military, and police officers. Northerners, by founding Tudu, have therefore helped to transform Accra from a circumscribed enclave to a larger city.

[188] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 11/14/260, Public Bath Houses at Tudu, Accra: Request for Erection, 1936.

2

From *Kayakaya* to *Kayayoo*: Head-Load Portage in Accra's Tudu

Introduction

Accra, like any other city in the world, depends for its survival and day-to-day functioning on the transport of goods, people, and services within, into, and out of the city. Prior to the introduction of the internal combustion engine, transport in the coastal forests of West Africa was either by water or on the heads, backs, and shoulders of people. The urban centre of Accra, which lies within these forests, was and continues to be similarly dependent on the labour power of people for its transport needs. Without this labour power in the past and in the present, the city of Accra would have ceased to exist and not become the metropolis that it has become. From the early 1900s, and probably since before that, transport in Accra has been dominated by northerners, and one can only understand Accra by looking at the role of northerners in the city's transport and trade. Transport has proved to be the niche which northerners have been able to occupy and maintain throughout the past century. Generally lacking the formal skills that would have made them eligible for work within the civil service, and also lacking the ethnic affiliations which would have enabled gainful employment beyond unskilled labour in gold mining and cocoa farming, northerners have been able to find employment within the transport sector in Accra. With nothing but their muscle power, northerners were and continue to be employed as porters in Accra and have thus contributed to and ensured the continued existence of Accra.

Head-load portage has played a very important role in the economic history of Ghana. In spite of its centrality to pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial Ghanaian history, it has received only cursory attention. In situations where it has been given any attention, the assumption has always been that head-load portage is a modern-day affair and mainly involves women. This view needs to be modified. In Ghana in general and Accra in particular, most head-load porters until the 1980s were wage labourers. This chapter is a continuation of the discussion on portage in Tudu. This component traces the historical development of head-load portage in Accra and Tudu. Unlike horse-based portage, which was begun by men and continued to be dominated by them, in the case of head-load portage in Accra, archival sources and oral evidence showed the

dominance of men in head-load portage in Tudu from 1908 until 1980. From 1980, northern women rather than men became the most numerous in head-load portage.

What explains this sudden transition? How different is female portage from that of male portage? What are the problems faced by these female porters? What is the role of motor transport and of Tudu Lorry Park in the overall discussion of head-load portage? These questions require in-depth discussions of the processes and policies that came to define head portage in Accra and how northerners came to dominate and develop Accra through portage.

The research conducted by Fred Amponsah, Nana Apt, and Margaret Gricio on non-motorised transportation in Accra provides a useful entry into the discussions on head-load portage in Accra.[189] However, one limitation in the research conducted by the authors is the absence of some aspects of non-motorised transport, such as the horse-drawn transportation which we shall discuss in the Chapter 3. Another limitation is the lack of attention to the historical processes which defined portage in Accra. The authors attempted to interpret portage as a modern-day affair and noted that head-load portage in Ghana has been culturally defined as women's work. Such a conclusion should not be taken at its face value. There are other reasons in addition to culture, such as the Structural Adjustment Programme imposed by the World Bank and the numerous intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts in northern Ghana, which defined head-load portage in Accra. Rather than assume that head-load portage is culturally defined as women's work, evidence from the archives indicates an overwhelming presence of men in head-load portage before the 1980s.

The following discussion is divided into two broad sections: the era from 1908 to 1980 and from 1980 to the present. The first section provides a general historical appraisal of the nature of northern migrations and of portage in Accra from 1908 to 1980. The second section discusses the factors responsible for the latter-day head portage from 1980 to the present. It focuses on the activities of female head-load porters at Tudu Lorry Park.

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[189] For the work of these authors, see M. Grieco, N. Apt & J. Turner (eds.), *At Christmas and on Rainy days: Transport, Travel and the female trader of Accra* (Vermont: Ashgage Publishing Company, 1996); also Agarwal, S., M. Attah, N. Apt, M. Grieco, E. A. Kwakye & J. Turner, *Bearing the Weight, The Kayayoo – Ghana's Working girl child* (Accra: University of Ghana Centre for Social Policy Studies, 1997).

Migration and the *Kayakaya* Presence in Accra: An historical appraisal[190]

Seasonal labour migration is an integral part of the social and economic life of West Africa.[191] In Ghana, some commentators see the migrant labour system as a useful adaptation to the unequal distribution of resources, particularly between the rich forest and coastal south and the poor savannah north.[192] Labour migrations have also been interpreted as a direct product of colonialism. It would seem that in an attempt to correct the imbalance between the north and the south, the colonial administration encouraged southward migrations. In this regard the role of the British colonial administration in stimulating labour migrations cannot be ignored. For example, in 1928 the Commissioner for Northern Province had occasion to write as follows:

> *Owing to the great damage to the crops in the Zuarungu district caused by heavy falls of rain at the period of harvest in 1927 conditions of almost famine proportion obtained at the beginning of the year under review. The areas affected were chiefly that inhabited by the Nankani tribe and to a certain extent by the Talensi and Builsa tribes and involved a population of approximately 100,000 people. As a result of this and previously similar occurrence the policy of Government has been to endeavour to persuade the people to migrate southwards.*[193]

In line with the government's policy of encouraging southward labour migrations, private individuals in the south could make requests for labour to the district and regional commissioners in the Northern Territories. For example, in July 1929 the Adontehene of Kumasi requested fifty labourers from the Northern Territories through the District Commissioner of Tamale.[194]

In 1931 the Commissioner had occasion to report that:

> *The Northern Territories has* [sic] *always been relied on to supply labour in the south. Throughout the dry season there is considerable*

[190] *Kaya* in the Hausa language means luggage, load or goods. In the south of Ghana, *kaya kaya* refers to the head portage of goods for a fee. In this chapter, *kayakaya*, depending on the context in which it is used, will also refer to a group of Zabarima porters in Accra. 'Carriers' will mean those who engaged in head-load portage under the colonial administration and for some individual Muslim elites. *Kayayo* (singular) and *kayaye* (plural) will refer to head-load portage by females, mostly from the northern part of Ghana.

[191] K. Swindell, 'Migrant Groundnut Farmers in the Gambia: The Persistence of Nineteenth Century Labor Systems', *International Migrations Review*, 11:4. (Winter 1977), 452.

[192] J. Songsore, *Towards a Better Understanding of Urban Change: Urbanisation, National Development and Inequality in Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2003).

[193] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/10, 1928-1929 Annual Report for the Northern Province, NT.

[194] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 15/2/15, Recruitment of Fifty Labourers from North, 1927.

> *migration of labourers and traders from the north and people on their routes make a living catering for them.*[195]

By 1949, migration of northerners to the south had become institutionalised. The institutionalisation of migration in the later period was due to advancement in communication between the north and the south. For example, the Commissioner reported that:

> *The highest proportion of adult males estimated to be absent from their home villages at any one time is fifteen percent in Zuarungu area of the Mampruise district. The greater number of these migrants return to their homes for the farming season. The journey is not particularly arduous and motor transport facilities are now adequate.*[196]

Whereas some of the migrants remained in the forest belt to engage in farming in the cocoa and mining areas, some ended up in the coastal area as labourers and carriers. In Accra quite a number were engaged in the cultivation of sisal and head-load portage. As the Superintendent of the Sisal Plantation in Accra reported:

> *There is no shortage of labour during the year though it is necessary to rely on the Northern Territory labour..... it has been very gratifying to notice numbers of old contract labour returning on their own for work on the plantation. In most cases they have travelled by foot for over 300 miles from their homes in the Northern Territories to the sisal plantation to work. It certainly proves that work on the sisal plantation is not as unpopular as was assumed at first.*[197]

Oral tradition and written literature indicates that some of the migrants engaged in head-load portage in Accra. The following discussion attempts to trace the development of portage in Accra and Tudu from 1908 to the present.

The Era of Carriers: 1908-80

Archival sources and oral accounts indicate the utilisation of head-load porters, called carriers, and hammock men by missionaries, administrators, and traders. Three types of head-load porters are distinguishable within the period under review. There were those who carried loads and human beings such as missionaries and administrators. Others were permanently hired by individuals to work for them. The remainder were freelance

[195] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/42, Census Report 1931, For the Southern Province of the Northern Territories.
[196] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/161, Report on the Gold Coast, 1949.
[197] PRO, Kew, London, CO 96/682/9, Sisal Plantation at Accra, 1928.

carriers.[198] The missionaries and administrators usually relied on their offices and private individuals to organise carriers for them for a fee. For example, the Secretary for Native Affairs in Accra was responsible for recruiting carriers for administrators who were leaving Accra for other places. The correspondence below between Craven of Cape Coast Castle and the Secretary of Native Affairs in Accra in 1910 bears witness to this practice:

> *I left on July 10th at about ten o' clock with eight so-called hammock boys and twelve carriers I have had great trouble with the hammock boys supplied me for my march here. Six of them left me at Tantum and I had to walk to Saltpond, where the District Commissioner found six to replace them. I hope these six deserters will get no pay. I have of course subsisted them daily.*[199]

The government, through the Secretary for Native Affairs, also relied on individuals and agencies in Accra for the supply of carriers. An example is James Addo of Christiansborg, who was an agent for the colonial administration in Accra.[200] A memorandum of understanding signed between Addo and the government of the Gold Coast showed that Addo was to 'supply the Governor with able-bodied male carriers from Accra to any place within forty-eight hours after been required in writing to do so'. The government agreed to pay the contractor (Addo) as bonus the amount of one shilling for each carrier of a load not exceeding 60 lbs.[201] The government's scale of wages for carriers per diem for a head load not exceeding 60 lbs to any of the following destinations—Ada, Akuse, Kpong, Prampram, Kwitta (Keta), Saltpond, Akuapem Mampong, Winneba, and Cape Coast—was between two shillings, six pence and one shilling, three pence.[202] The insecure nature of the roads at that time and the need to limit desertions and thefts compelled the colonial government to provide escorts for the head-load carriers to their destinations. For example, on 9 September 1919 the acting Treasurer in Accra had occasion to write as follows:

> *The District Assistant treasurer, Accra, now reports to me that on the 2nd instant the usual requisition was made for four carriers for conveying a remittance to Akuse and Mampong on the 4th idem. The police escorts duly arrived at the appointed time but the carriers did not turn up and consequently after waiting for considerable time at the*

[198] I made these categorisations based on the evidence I obtained from interviews and archival sources.
[199] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1, Hammock Men, 1910
[200] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1, Difficulty in Obtaining Carriers for special Remittances, 1919
[201] *Ibid.*
[202] *Ibid.*

> *District treasury, the escorts had to be sent back to the police barracks.*[203]

In addition to the carriers that were used by administrators and missionaries, some private traders also used the carriers in the course of their business. For instance, Chief Braimah, the founder of Tudu, had a number of male carriers who were responsible for carrying his kola nuts from various parts of the present-day Eastern Region to Accra.[204] There existed some difference between the carriers of the administrators and those of Chief Braimah. For example, unlike the one-shilling commission given by the colonial administration to Addo for recruiting carriers, Braimah's carriers paid six pence to the chief of carriers, who was responsible for supervising the rest of the porters.[205] What might have contributed to such a situation was the position that Braimah held. Braimah was not only a trader but also a leader of the Muslim community in Accra. He also had the backing of the colonial government in all that he did. Chief Braimah could therefore decide on any amount that should be paid. As later discussions will show, an attempt by one chief of carriers to charge a one-shilling commission led to complaints by the carriers and subsequently the chief of carrier's dismissal.

The government's support of Braimah was due to the colonial administration's policy of exploiting both human and material resources in the colony and making maximum profit with minimal expenditure. As indicated already, six pence were paid to Braimah's head carriers instead of the usual one shilling paid by the government to Addo per carrier. Estimates indicate that in areas where Braimah used his men rather than commissioned carriers, costs were reduced to the barest minimum.[206]

Another difference was that even though the carriers of Braimah were free labour, they were regulated by him through the chief of carriers whom he selected. Braimah's power to select and dismiss carriers was illustrated in a letter to the Secretary for Native Affairs, as follows:

> *Sometime ago but not so long, in consequence of a complaint repeatedly made to me against him, I was compelled to set aside Abudu Gurmanu, whom I had made chief of all carriers between this and the interior and district towns of Accra. Abudu Gurmanu therefore ceased to be chief of*

[203] *Ibid.*
[204] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Hausa Community, 1912.
[205] PRAAD, Accra, ADM, 11/150, Hausa Community, 1913.
[206] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/36, Kola Export Tax, 1918-1919

> *carriers supplanted and replaced by the nomination and appointment by me with the universal consent of my people of Mallam Oseni.*[207]

Complaints from head-load carriers to Chief Braimah and the Secretary for Native Affairs indicate that Abudu Gurmanu had capitalised on his position as the head of carriers to molest, oppress, ill-treat, and extort money from his fellow carriers who carried goods from Nsawam to Accra.[208] Chief Braimah had the power to select and dismiss carriers and their leaders. A correspondence between the dismissed head porter and the police clearly explains the state of affairs between Chief Braimah and his carriers on the one hand and the position of the colonial administration on the other:

> *A complaint has been made to his Excellency by Chief Braimah and Chief priest Mallam Barko against you for causing serious trouble amongst chief Braima's people in Accra and Nsawam in connection with the appointment of Malam Oseni as Headman of Hausa Carriers. I am directed to caution you against interfering in any way with any of Chief Braimah's people.*[209]

Braimah's activities vis-à-vis his carriers led to protest from some other northern groups, especially from the Hausa in Accra. Even though the protest centred on the dismissal of Gurmanu, there were religious and political undertones. Braimah's position as the head of all Muslims in Accra had always been challenged by some northern groups, especially the Hausa. The dismissal of Gurmanu, who had been appointed by Native Officer Ali, a Hausa, and the appointment of Oseni by Braimah was interpreted as one of the moves by Braimah to marginalise the Hausa politically and economically. Letters of protest were sent by the Hausa to the Secretary for Native Affairs. One example of such letters from Kadri English and Mamma Ali read as follows:

> *I have the honour most respectfully to report that Chief Braimah recently appointed a certain man as the chief of the Hausa Carriers and subsequently introduced him to the authorities. This action on chief Braimah's part is calculated to create friction and a great deal of unpleasantness as Abudu Gurmanu who is still alive, has been recognised for over ten years as the chief of these Hausa Carriers. He was appointed to the office by the late Native Officer Ali who served the state with distinction for several years. Abudu Gurmanu's social status is admitted by every Mohammedan here as higher than that of the person Chief Braimah has made chief of the carriers and*

[207] PRAAD, Accra, ADM, 11/1502, Hausa Community, 1913
[208] *Ibid.*
[209] *Ibid.*

> *it is against Mohammedan law if a person of an inferior rank be appointed to an office which is held by another with a superior social rank without any just cause.*[210]

The contestations between Chief Braimah on the one hand and the Hausa elite on the other over head-load porters in Accra was a reflection of the general problems and divisions that existed among the Hausa and Yoruba migrants in Accra. The two groups have always contested the legitimacy of each other over secular and religious leadership. As Braimah rightly pointed out:

> *Abudu Gurmanu by establishing himself as Chief of carriers is thus contributing to the impending troubles of commotion, unrest and civil wars as well as clanship and tribal differences to which I have referred to in clause 1 of this letter in regard to the precarious situations of affairs. My people have had frequent attacks on them in some up country towns, contributed by Abudu Grumanu forcing them to pay tolls of fees of one shilling per head to him as recognised chief of carriers. I pointed out the extortion of one shilling per head from the carriers instead of six pence. Thanks to a kind of protecting providence they as often have resisted the temptation to fight. I did all I could to prevent friction of any kind between peoples.*[211]

Chief Braimah died in 1915. After his death some of the carriers in Tudu asserted themselves and began engaging in trade as individuals.[212] However, another prominent kola-nut trader in Tudu, Amadu Illorin, inherited some of the head-load carriers who had previously worked under Chief Braimah.[213]

As improvements in motorised transport came about, so did the reduction in commissioned carriers. By the 1930s the lorry park in Tudu was already running freight and passenger services along most of the routes which the head-load porters were operating on, such as to Nsawam, Ada, Keta, Saltpond, Cape Coast, Kpong, and Prampram, among others. Hence, both the long-distance carriers under the colonial administration and those previously under traders such as Chief Braimah and later Amadu Illorin were gradually replaced by motorised transport.[214] However, a third category of head load porters emerged in the 1930s and 1940s. This third category was

[210] *Ibid.*
[211] *Ibid.*
[212] See Chapter 5 for more insights.
[213] Information provided by Baba Addisa. Baba Addisa was the second son of Amadu Illorin. His profile is provided in Chapter 2.
[214] It should be noted that Chief Braimah died in 1915, yet the kola-nut trade continued in Tudu. Some of the Kotokoli who at first were porters under Chief Braimah became involved in the trade after his death. Baba Tudu (alias Amadu Illorin) also continued with the kola-nut trade up to the 1940s.

mainly referred to as the *kayakaya*. They were not commissioned carriers as in the case of Addo and his carriers, nor were they under anyone as had previously occurred under Chief Braimah. These were freelance head porters and operated at the markets and the lorry parks. Occasionally they went around the neighbourhoods and collected garbage. Improvement in motor transport led to an increase in their activities as more goods and passengers were moved from the hinterland to Accra. The group was mostly Zabarima, as observed by Ione Aquah:

> *Within the town centre there is a hard core of persons who habitually sleep out, who may or may not have relatives in the town. They are mainly the Zabarimas, popularly called kaaya kaaya which is a name used for people carrying loads.*[215]

The Zabarima combined head-load portage with trade, because with the exception of the few successful Zabarima traders located in the markets, the rest of the Zabarima had the least tendency to stay in Accra.[216] They therefore made the best use of their short stay by engaging in trade and head-load portage. Their close association with the lorry parks and the markets exposed them to passengers and passenger demands, especially demand for petty products (*kaya*) such as flash lights, batteries, and combs, among other things. They mainly carried the 'kaya' in smaller quantities around the lorry parks and markets, so that if anyone needed their services for portage they could easily run the errand and return for their products. As Alhaji Kujin reported:

> *The difference between kayakaya the trader and kayakaya the porter was difficult to identify. The Zabarima men walked in groups and carried kayakaya (wares) which they sold but none-the-less will carry anything for a fee if you called them. They at first could be described as scavengers who could even go to neighbourhood in search of empty bottles and other waste materials which they washed and resold.*[217]

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[215] I. Acquah, *Accra Survey*, 53.

[216] J. Rouch, *Notes on Migrations into the Gold Coast* (Musée de l'homme, Paris, 1954), 19. Perhaps the Zabarima history of non-permanence is due to their history in Ghana. Until the collapse of Salaga, the Zabarima were known for slave-raiding and sales. Even though they bonded with royals in the north, they were usually non-permanent since they only captured and sold slaves and then went in search of more. In Accra, evidence existed of children taken from the north and sold in the south. One could say that moving in and out was born out of this lifelong economic practice of selling slaves. For their slave-raiding activities, see P. C. Garlick, 'The Development of Kwahu Business Enterprise in Ghana since 1874: An Essay in Recent Oral Tradition', *The Journal of African History,* 8:3 (1967), 466.

[217] Interview with Alhaji Kujin, Tudu, 15 May 2009. Kujin was born in 1931. His father was an ex-serviceman who fought in the First World War. Until the First World War his father was an escort policeman, mainly responsible for protecting District Commissioners any time they travelled in hammocks from Accra to neighbouring districts. His father was one of the ex-servicemen who bought land at Tudu. Kujin also built his house in Tudu but later relocated to Labadai. In 1982 he was made the Chairman of the Welfare Committee at Tudu Lorry Park, a position he has held until today.

Despite the general characteristics of Zabarima porters, such as the tendency or ability to combine trade with their occupation, there were instances where some took the carriage of goods as their sole occupation. They were usually the newly arrived Zabarima in the city. Such porters in most cases operated under a head porter or leader called the *harrman* (corrupted from headman). The *harrman* would have arrived earlier and have a sound working knowledge of the city, particularly of the lorry parks. It was the *harrman*'s duty to determine the price to be collected for each quantity of load carried from the lorry park to other locations within the city. He kept the money on behalf of the carriers, and for playing the role of a 'caretaker' he retained ten percent of the price charged. If the porters came to the city to work and buy a particular product such as a bicycle, it was the headman's duty to buy it for the porter before his departure. If it was also for any other purpose, such as to pay for debts or marriage, then he handed over the money to the porter on the day of his departure. Those who decided to stay longer also graduated to become future headmen.

In the 1960s two important factors led to the reduction of the Zabarima carriers in Accra and Tudu. The general economic decline in the country in the 1960s led to a reduction of migrations from other West African countries into Ghana.[218] The few headmen that operated also had to leave because of a new policy: the regime of Busia's Progressive Party instituted the Aliens Compliance Order in 1969, and this policy led to a mass expulsion of aliens from West African sub-regions, including the Zabarima. As later discussions will show, the exit of the Zabarima carriers created an opportunity for the Kotokoli to engage in *kayakaya* in Tudu, but only for a brief time. Their activities ended by 1980, having operated for just about a decade.[219]

It is important to note that earlier some Kotokoli were engaged as carriers under Chief Braimah, but that group transformed into traders after the death of Braimah.[220] The second group of Kotokoli head-load porters migrated to Tudu in the 1970s but were mainly involved in any kind of head-load portage in the lorry park. As one of the informants reported, "the *kayakaya* that we knew in this lorry park after the Zabarima

[218] J. Songsore, *Towards a Better Understanding of Urban Change*, 5.
[219] Interview with Paa Joe, Tudu, 25 May 2009. Paa Joe's profile is provided in Chapter 4.
[220] See Chapter 5 for more on the kola-nut trade.

left were the Kotokoli".[221] The Kotokoli head-load porters were usually not permanent in their job. They easily graduated to another position at the lorry park, the position of union porters. As union porters they are usually responsible for bringing in passengers and loading goods unto the vehicles at the park.

Essentially, one could describe the porters used by the colonial administrators—those hired by Addo, those under Chief Braimah, and the Zabarima *kayakaya* men—as semi-professionals whose emergence in Accra was a response to labour demands of the time and whose labour was remunerated. From the discussions above it is evident that males dominated the early forms of head-load portage in Accra. The dominance of males in the pre-1980 period was due to the strenuous nature of the journey and the deaths that resulted from such migrations from the north to the south. Even though there was improvement in motor transportation after the 1920s, most of the migrants still made the trip on foot, sometimes resulting in hunger and death. The average journey per day for the travellers is thought to be from fifteen to twenty miles. Generally, the migrants slept out around the villages, under trees, while many slept on the side of the road.[222] Shelter was taken in the villages on a wet night. There were instances where villages on the migratory routes could not contain the number of migrants, thus resulting in deaths. For example, in 1931 the District Commissioner for Gonja district reported as follows:

> *There have been several deaths from starvation reported. This occurred among labour moving along the road. If they developed sore foot or are otherwise incapacitated from walking they lied* [sic] *down anywhere besides* [sic] *the road and are subsequently found dead or dying of starvation. The local people report these cases but generally not until it is too late, as the unfortunate are not noticed until they are in extremis.*[223]

From the discussion, it was also established that male portage before 1980 did not involve any use of technology, which is in contrast with the conclusions of Seema Agarwal et al. that in Ghana head-load portage is culturally defined as women's work and that portage by men almost invariably involves the use of a technology, such as

[221] Interview with Paa Joe.
[222] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/42, Census Report 1931, For the Southern Province of the Northern Territories.
[223] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/42, Census Report, 1931.

hand-pulled carts or wheel-barrows.[224] The period of dominance of females in head-load portage (*kayaye*) in Accra and the use of hand-pulled carts, a period which forms the next discussion, is a consequence of both local and external factors which came about three decades ago.

The Era of Female Porters (*kayaye*): 1980 to the present

Throughout the previous discussions, it was evident that males dominated head-load portage until the 1980s. The discussion below offers reasons for the gradual replacement of the male porters by females. Ghana in the early 1980s adopted the World Bank-inspired Structural Adjustment Programme (SAPs) in response to a persistently dismal socio-economic performance which had begun in the 1970s. These reforms involved economic liberalisation and privatisation and a general restructuring of the state's role in the economy. The implementation of these measures has restored some level of economic growth and stability at the macroeconomic level.[225] However, this has come at a high social cost owing to the fact that most vulnerable groups have been adversely affected, both directly and indirectly, by measures such as the withdrawal of subsidies on social services, retrenchment of labour, and general increases in prices of goods and services.[226]

In addition, the implementation of SAPs in Ghana has been criticised as further stimulating economic activities in the traditionally resource-rich regions and the relatively developed south. This, it is argued, has further widened the gap between the north and the south.[227] In the specific context of the northern regions, the military intervention of 1981 and the adoption of SAPs has led to the collapse of certain agricultural activities such as rice cultivation and a reduction in the cultivation of maize. The onset of the 1981 revolution in Ghana saw the driving into exile of the emerging capitalist rice producers and the destruction of their agricultural equipment. The architects of the revolution blamed Ghana's economic woes on market women and

[224] S. Agarwal et al., *Bearing the Weight*, 2.
[225] G. Owusu, 'The Role of Districts Capitals in Regional Development: Linking Small Towns, Rural-Urban Linkages and Decentralisation in Ghana' (PhD thesis, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway, 2005), 119.
[226] A. Aderanti, 'Introduction', in A. Adepeju (ed.), *The Impact of Structural Adjustment on the Population of Africa* (London: UNFPA/James Currey Ltd, 1993), 1-6.
[227] G. Owusu, 'The Role of District Capitals in Regional Development', 110.

expatriate businessmen.[228] Hitherto, the north produced rice to satisfy the south. Rice production offered employment to men and women, both at the time of maintaining the farms and the time of harvesting the rice.[229] Rice producers mainly depended on women for harvesting. For every week of harvest, a bag of raw rice was given to each woman. The withdrawal of subsidies made it impossible for rice to be cultivated. As a direct consequence of no longer being able to make a living, these women began to migrate to the south to engage in carriage of goods as a way of getting income.[230]

The period of Structural Adjustment also coincided with conflicts in the northern part of Ghana. The numerous intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts, mainly related to land, chieftaincy, and ethnicity within the last two decades in the northern part of Ghana led to the *kayaye* presence in Accra. Since 1980 there have been thirty conflicts in the three northern regions.[231] Gonja attacked and destroyed a Battor village at Kafaba in 1980 and again destroyed Tuna in the same year. Gonja was involved in wars with the Nawuri and Nchumburu in 1991, 1992, and 1994. Gonja fought among themselves at Yapei and Kussawgu in 1992 and at Daboya in 1994. Nanumbas and Konkombas fought in 1980, 1994, and 1995. Dagomba and Konkomba fought in 1994. In 1991 Dagombas fought among themselves at Vogu and Zabzugu. Between 1980 and 1986, Mampruisi and Kusasi fought three times in Bawku area. In 1988 and 1994, the Bimoba also went to war with the Komba. In 2000, there was another conflict between the Mamprusi and Kusasi, and in 2002 there was a very serious conflict in Dagbon regarding the occupancy of the Yendi skin.[232] Since 2002 the Mampruse and Kusase have fought between themselves more than 12 times in Bawku.[233]

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[228] J. Songsore, *Towards a Better Understanding of Urban Change*, 10.
[229] N. Van Hear, "'By-Day" Boys', 46.
[230] From the 1980s, following the dominance of women in head-load portage, the name *kayakaya*, which was in vogue during the time of male-dominated head-load portage and which in Hausa means 'wares', was replaced by *kayayo*, a combination of both Hausa and Ga. *Kaya* meaning 'wares' in Hausa and '*yo'* meaning woman or female in Ga. Incidentally, despite the fact that some males are still engaged in head loading, the name *kayakaya* is not used to refer to them. Perhaps this is the case because most of the head-load porters in Tudu carry wares for existing customers who know their location and just go in to call them.
[231] For the conflicts, see N. J. K. Brukum, *The Guinea Fowl, Mango and Pito Wars;* J. Jonsson, 'The Overwhelming Minority'.
[232] The Yendi skin refers to the highest traditional political office of the Dagombas. It is occupied on a rotational basis among two royal families- the Abudu and Andani.
[233] Bawku is located in the Upper East Region and is inhabited by two major ethnic groups: the Kusasi and the Mamprusi. Konkombas are located to the eastern part of Yendi, particularly around the town of Saboba, but some are settled in other districts in the Northern Region. The Vagla are located in the Western part of the Northern Region and have Bole as their District capital. The Nawuris and Nchumburu

The numerous ethnic conflicts in the north have left farms destroyed, men killed, and villages burnt down. Most women lost their husbands, fathers, and brothers.[234] The effect of such destruction was the migration of women and children to the urban centres to engage in *kayaye* and also for safety. Some of the men remained to cultivate the land. Others also migrated to the urban centres, particularly Accra, and got involved in alternative economic activities, the most notable being the collection of garbage and scrap and the use of hand-pulled or push carts, popularly called 'trucks', to convey goods.[235] As Baba Addisa remarked:

> *What brought* kayayo *to Tudu was the fight in the north involving Konkomba and Dagomba. At first we knew only Zabarima and Kotokoli as* kayayaka*; the Zabarima had a kind of* tarpaulin *which they sewed. It was an overall. Even khaki was softer. They wore*

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are Guan ethnic groups located south-east of Tamale and have Kpandai as their district capital. Kafaba is located on the banks of the River Volta and close to Salaga, the capital of the East Gonja District. The Battor belong to the Ewe ethnic group and come from Battor in the Volta Region. Their occupation as fishermen has led to their migration in search of fish to other areas of the country.

[234] Conflicts in Northern Ghana before 1980 never led to mass migrations and some were even intra-ethnic in nature. For example, the Konkomba almost always fought among themselves over cattle, wives, and land, and rarely engaged in conflicts with other ethnic groups. For internal conflicts among the Konkomba, see PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/2/62, Inquiry into Konkomba Riots, 1934.

[235] It is important to note that the ethnic conflict in the north which was devastating was the 1994 conflict, involving the Konkomba on one hand and the Gonja, Dagomba, Nanumba, and Mampruse on the other. Interestingly, members of all these ethnic groups engage in *kayaye*, except for the Konkomba. Also, ethnic groups such as the Nawuri, Nchumburu, Bassari, and Bimoba, to mention just a few, do not have their women or men engaged in *kayaye*. The natural question is: why such a state of affairs? The answer lies in the political economy of these ethnic groups. For example, the Gonja, Mampruse, Dagomba, and Nanumba mainly cultivate cereals and legumes such as rice, corn, beans, and groundnuts. The cultivation of these crops depends on agricultural inputs such as tractors and fertilisers. Hence, when the Structural Adjustment Programme was introduced and subsidies on agricultural inputs were removed, the effect was greater on these groups. The Konkomba, Nawuri, Bassari, Nchumburu, and others mainly specialised in the cultivation of yams, cassava, and guinea corn. The cultivation of these crops does not depend on tractors or fertilisers; hence, the effect of Structural Adjustment was minimal. Also the Konkomba, Nawuri, Bassari, and Nchumburu women were and still are partners with their husbands in the total political economy. For example, women have the right to mix crop pepper, okro, and other crops with yams on their husband's farms. Also, the brewing of local beer, called *pito,* by Konkomba, Nawuri, Bassari, and Nchumburu women, which is mostly drunk by clansmen on market days, ensured a continuous income for the women. Market days rotate on a weekly six-day basis. The ethnic conflict of 1994 also yields to the same analysis. Dagomba, Gonja, Nanumba, and Mampruse women are mainly engaged in trade. They usually buy foodstuffs from the Konkomba, Nawuri, and Bassari villages for resale in the urban centres. When the conflict broke out, most of the Dagomba and Gonja villages were burnt down, including the foodstuffs that were stored by the traders. Also, the Dagomba and Gonja women in particular could not go to the Konkomba, Nawuri, Nchumburu, and Bassari to buy goods. Having lost their homes and capital and facing constraints, some women and men left for the urban centres, particularly Accra, to engage in portage and other economic activities. [I am grateful to Mr. Samuel Nkubal and Alhaji Alhassan Sulemana Gonje for this information. Nkubal is a lecturer at the Department of Achaeology of the University of Ghana. Alhaji Sulemana is a fiddler and one of the custodians of Dagbon History. Gonje taught at Yendi Secondary School from 1985-92. From 1992-2000 he held a political position in the Yendi District Assembly as the Presiding Officer. He resigned as a Presiding Member in 2001. He has since formed his own non-governmental organisation (BIRDS) in Yendi.]

uniform. When you shout kaya *you see them running to you. Then you select the one to carry your goods.*[236]

So how do the *kayaye* go about their work in Tudu and Accra?

Doing *kayakaya* in Tudu: Establishing Networks

Different authors have explained the functioning and usefulness of networks in Ghana. Hanson, for example, explains that networks in Ghana have different forms and shapes and that people are members of many different social circles.[237] He examines social interactions from a spatial point of view and looks at the linkage structures between these social spaces. Since they turn out to be very important to further individual goals and aspirations, he calls the social spaces the "backbone of contemporary community life".[238] Other researchers also point to the importance of social networks as an asset that can be called upon in hard times, enjoyed for its own sake or used for material gain.[239] Friends and family are often considered to be one's 'social safety net', and maintaining these networks serves many aims.

So what social networks do the *kayaye* rely upon in Tudu in particular and in Accra in general? I am of the view that the *kayaye* rely on the spatial location of *zongos* and consider *zongos* as important networks. For example, the majority of them inhabit Agbogbloshie, Konkomba Market, Timber Market and Sodom and Gomorra. All these four settlements grew out of Old Fadama, which was a *zongo* formerly inhabited by Hausa and currently heavily settled by the Dagomba.[240] The kayaye are also located in Tudu Lorry Park and Tema Station. While the lorry park in Tudu is within the boundaries of Tudu itself, Tema Station, another lorry park, is less than half a kilometre away from the Tudu community. The *kayaye* also operate at Madina. Curiously, the *kayaye* do not operate at Kaneshie, Kwame Nkrumah Circle, and Achimota, even though these locations, especially Kaneshie and Kwame Nkrumah Circle, have very large lorry parks and large markets where there is brisk business going on.

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[236] Interview with Baba Addisa in Tudu, 5 January 2008, 17 May 2009.
[237] K. T. Hanson, 'Landscapes of Survival and Escape: Social networking and Urban Livelihoods in Ghana', *Environments and Planning*, 37 (Jun. 2005), 1291.
[238] *Ibid.*
[239] M. Woolcock, 'The Place of Social Capital in Understanding Social and Economic Outcomes', *Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, 2:1 (2001), 17.
[240] M. Amponsah-Annan & S. Kyei-Gyamfi, 'Final Report on the Kayaaye Exercise in Accra Metropolitan Area', (Accra: Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, Nov. 2008), 3.

The question is: why this state of affairs? One probable answer is that these areas are not *zongos* and in fact lack the northern flavour. Even though Kaneshie is close to Sabon Zongo, trade between Sabon Zongo and Kaneshie is minimal in comparison with trade between Sabon Zongo and Agbogloshie and Central Accra. The residents of Sabon Zongo were in Central Accra, specifically at a *zongo* called Cow Lane, before relocating to Sabon Zongo.[241] They have since maintained their social and economic links with Cow Lane. The same applies to residents of Old Fadama: they were also Hausa blacksmiths who relocated from Cow Lane to stay there. Digressing a little bit from Accra, in Kumasi similar trends exist. The *kayaye* in Kumasi mainly operate in the Kejetia Market and less so at the Asafo Market, even though Asafo Market has an equally sizeable lorry park, with buses shuttling between Accra and Kumasi carrying passengers and luggage in addition to goods. The preference for Kejetia is that aside from Kejetia being one of the largest markets in Ghana, Kejetia also shares a boundary with Moshi Zongo, the first and oldest *zongo* in Kumasi, which also offers the *kayaye* some security.[242] From the explanation so far, it is clear that the *kayaye* regard *zongos* as important networks crucial for their survival in the city.

There are three categories of *kayaye* at Tudu Lorry Park: the sitters (*shitonima*), the roamers (*ban-ginda*), and the caregivers (*mmanima*). The sitters are usually those who are privileged to be employed by specific shops in and around the lorry park. They usually appear neater and do not usually carry head-pans around. They are usually between the ages of twelve and twenty-five. They sit by the store until a customer comes to buy goods; then they carry the goods to a specific destination and come back to the store. A few lucky, honest, and hardworking ones graduate to become sales girls in the stores. Despite the privilege of working in the stores, the sitters are usually the first suspects if money and food are missing at the shop. Members of the group easily pick up Twi and Ga languages, owing to their constant interaction with shop owners and customers. On Sundays they in turn teach the newcomers Twi and Ga.

The roamers usually do not have a specific store and normally roam around the lorry park looking for customers. They are usually not too well-dressed as they do not

[241] See PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Mohamedan Community, 1908.
[242] In both Kaneshie in Accra and Asafo Market in Kumasi, goods are broken down from their bulk form when they are delivered at the lorry parks by hand-pushed trucks.

know specifically what load they will be carrying. They normally regard those by the stores as the lazy ones who cannot face the sun.

The caregivers are usually the oldest among the group. Usually they have given birth to two or three children and hence have some experience in playing the role of a nanny. They are responsible for taking care of the children and property of the rest of the *kayaye*, especially the roamers.[243] Because some of them have children who are still as young as three months, some of the caregivers who have children of the same age act as wet mothers for the roamers. This allows the roamers to be able to carry more goods and over longer distances. It also enables them to be able to negotiate their way through the overcrowded business district, an action which would be hazardous to the children if they were tied to the backs of their mothers. For taking care of the children, the caregivers receive an amount of one Ghana cedis per child each day. In most instances, the children under care range from a minimum of five children to a maximum of seven children. Hence, income accruing from taking care of the children is quite considerable.

[243] Beginning in the 1990s, a group of armed robbers made the *kayaye* their target. Usually when they go to work they move around their places of abode and steal their money, sewing machines, and clothing. In 1998 they adopted a different strategy. They would pour petrol around wooden structures where the *kayaye* usually stay. When the *kayaye* were away in the lorry parks and markets to carry goods, the thieves would break into their rooms, take their property, and set the whole area on fire. Since the employment of the caretakers, such robberies have decreased in number. I stayed in Agbogbloshie in 1998 and therefore had the opportunity of learning about their operation. In the course of the research, informants confirmed the same at Tudu.

One of the caregivers with children at Tudu Lorry Park. (Picture by author, 2008)

Nonetheless, some roamers risk carrying their babies around rather than entrust them with some caregivers. Also, from time to time some of the caregivers go around to carry goods, especially when one of the roamers is sick and offers to take care of the children. All three categories make use of the head or carrier pan, which is so important for the *kayaye*. I will now devote a few paragraphs to the rationale behind the use of the carrier pan in head-load portage in Tudu.

Getting Started: The Head-Pan, an indispensable tool

The head-pan, the basic tool of the *kayaye*, has not been given proper attention by earlier commentators on *kayaye*. How can one discuss the *kayaye* and ignore the head-pan, the basic tool for their work? In Ghana the earthen pot was a very important article for moving and storing liquid and solid products. It was one of the most important requirements in marriage. A woman needed several pots at home. Different pots served

different functions, such as cooking, carrying and storing water, cloths, and foodstuffs, and entertainment.[244]

In some communities in Ghana the head-pan has almost replaced pots in terms of carriage and for storage. The head-pan made from steel is round in shape and mainly used in carrying water and foodstuffs. Some also use it to store cloth in the rural areas. In Accra, the head-pan, just like the cart for the horse, remains the most important asset in the *kayaye* business. Unlike the views of Nana Araba Apt, who claims that it was a cultural stereotype that led to the non-adoption of wheel technology such as 'the truck' by the *kayaye*, I argue that the multiple uses of the head-pan explain why it has remained the most important asset for the *kayaye* in Accra and that this is the reason for the non-adoption of wheel technology. If we consider cultural stereotyping as an impediment to the use of wheel-based portage by the female *kayaye*, then the same will apply to the use of other technologies. There is evidence to show that in their own cultural setting in the northern part of Ghana, where most of these *kayaye* originate, they have used some form of wheeled technology with their male colleagues. An example is bullock farming.[245] So what makes the head-pan more attractive?

In the first place, the head-pan is cheaper to buy and easier to obtain in Accra. A head-pan costs around seven Ghana cedis to buy or fifty pesewas to rent per day.[246] The price is low because it is usually the old head-pans that are used for the trade. In some

[244] Among the Nawuri, a Guan tribe located in the south-eastern part of the Northern Region of Ghana, when a death occurs in the village, at night the women come out with their pots to perform a dance called *Kolo* ('pot'). As they dance and twist their waists, they hold their groins and weep. Sometimes the songs reveal some of the labour and problems faced by women, while in other cases the songs are a direct accusation of the deceased for having been insensitive to the pains of women, especially the deceased's mother, who went through labour to bear him or her.

[245] A field visit with students from Calvin College, Michigan, USA in November 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 to the Northern Empowerment Association (NEA), a Canadian NGO at Janga in the Mampruse West District of the Northern Region of Ghana, revealed that women in Janga have formed associations where they use bullocks to engage in farming. In addition, they use the same bullocks fitted with carts to transport their products to market centres in Northern Ghana. [In research on the use of wheeled technology by both men and women, I interviewed Mr. Kofi Ndamele Sawyer on 2 January 2008. He also confirmed that both women and men use mobile technology without regard to culture. Ndamele Sawyer is 56 years old and Head of the Animal Traction Unit, College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, University of Ghana. Sawyer holds a diploma certificate from the Nyamkpala Agricultural College, now University for Development Studies, Tamale and a post-diploma certificate in Farm Implements and Extension Services from the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Prior to his appointment at the University of Ghana, he worked with the Ministry of Agriculture as an extension officer and was located in the Karaga District of the Northern Region of Ghana from 1980 until 1992, when he joined the University of Ghana. At Kariga he trained farmers, including women, in the use of bullocks for farming and transportation of farm produce to market centres in the north.]

[246]Information provided by Asana Zakari at Tudu on 24 April 2009. Asana's profile is provided under Case History at the end of this chapter.

cases, scrap dealers pick them up and sell them on to artisans called *machele* in Dagbani or *gban-gban*, so called because of the sound from their tools as they hit the metal. The *machele* or *gban-gban* will make only minor repairs and sell the pan on. Some of the artisans who used to operate in Tamale around the central mosque have relocated to Agbogbloshie because of the upsurge in the *kayaye* business in Accra. The increase in the number of the artisans in Accra is even making the head-pans cheaper. Some of the *kayaye* are even able to buy on credit and pay later. In short, the flexibility in acquiring the head-pan makes it attractive to the *kayaye* as opposed to wheeled transport, which is more expensive and is not offered on credit.

In addition to the head-pan being cheap and easy to acquire, there are other considerations for its use. For example, since the female *kayaye* stay is usually shorter than their male counterparts in Accra, usually spending there three months at least and six months at most, it makes much more economic sense to invest in the cheaper head-pan so as to be able to acquire what is most needed.[247] Also, unlike their male counterparts (truck boys) who operate in groups, the *kayaye* operate as individuals. The head-pan is therefore easy to lift by one person or in some situations with the assistance of the customer. Owing to the busy nature of the areas—lorry parks and markets—where they ply their trade, it is easier to use the head-pan as they can easily meander through the crowd. As we shall realise later, in the specific case of Tudu Lorry Park, push carts are even banned from entering the park owing to congestion, and this policy has worked to the advantage of the *kayaye*, who can roam about the park with their carrier pans.

[247] The *kayaye* stay between three to six months because they always come for a specific purpose, such as to work and buy a sewing machine, or buy articles for marriage, or save money to go and pay a debt, or look for capital to go and trade. In most instances, they are able to get the money or items within three months at least and six months at most and immediately return home.

Kayaye carrying yams in carrier pans to the Tudu lorry park (picture by author, 2008)

The *kayaye* usually sleep in places such as the Tema Station lorry park in Accra or uncompleted buildings as in the case of Madina. These places lack certain basic amenities such as water, so after work they usually use the head-pans to draw water for bathing. In the same way, some of the *kayaye* who have children usually bath their children in the head-pans. In places which lack bathroom facilities, some of the mothers also take their bath in the head-pans and pour the water on the streets. Even where there are bath-houses, some bathe in the head-pans as a way of saving money. For example, some of the *kayaye* who are between the ages of ten and fifteen years, usually carry lighter loads and hence are not able to get as much money as the older ones. Bathing in the head-pans enables them to economise, since at the public bath-houses they pay both for the water and for using the facility.[248]

The head-pan is highly versatile in its uses. When the *kayaye* are not working, they turn the head-pan down and sit on it. Hence the head-pan plays a very important role when it comes to leisure. In rare cases, reminiscences of home compel some of them to entertain themselves by singing, drumming, and dancing. In all cases, the head-pan is used as a drum. In the evenings when they gather to eat, they turn their head-pans down, sit on them, and eat. On rainy days, the head-pan serves as an umbrella as it is turned over their heads to prevent the rain from beating down on them.[249]

Finally and most importantly, the head-pan is a source of security for the *kayaye*. They have used the head bans as a defensive as well as offensive weapon in

[248] Interview with Amina Bukari, Tudu, 24 April 2009.
[249] Interview with Amina Bukari, Tudu 24 April 2009

Accra. The *kayaye*, as will be seen later, have been subjects of abuse from the revenue staff of Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), lorry drivers, their customers, and the general public. They have often fought AMA staff over tickets, their customers over fees, and the general public over moving space. Drug addicts usually attack them for their money.[250] As an informant reported, "If cocaine takes on a junkie, everybody is his victim". To survive the hardships of Accra and to maintain their safety, they usually confront abusers with their head-pans. Evidence abounds at the Tudu cocaine market, with a lot of head cuts on the junkies owing to their confrontations with the *kayaye*.

The several uses of the head-pan as indicated above therefore makes it more attractive to the *kayaye* than wheel technology.

After acquiring the head-pan what happens next? How is the head-pan used, and do all the *kayaye* use the head-pan? The next discussion considers the operations of the *kayaye* in Tudu.

Operations and Utilisation of *Kayaye*

As indicated already, the *kayaye* mainly operate as individuals but nonetheless sit in groups of between four and ten. Usually the roamers sit according to their towns or villages of origin, or if they are many from the same village they sit according to clans or families. At Tudu Lorry Park two groups are identifiable: the Mamprusi and the Dagomba. If a customer needs their services the customer will shout only "kayayoo" and about two or three run towards the customer. Hence the way of soliciting the services of the *kayaye* is not too different from the colonial period when the Zabarima men operated. They equally responded to the "kayakaya" call.[251]

There is another way by which the *kayaye* ply their trade at the lorry park. Usually in the mornings they stand at the major road intersection between Tudu and Novotel.[252] As a vehicle approaches, they literally 'arrest' (*ngbage*) the load in the vehicle while it is still in motion.[253] For example, one will say "I have arrested the load in the red-painted vehicle"; another will say "I have arrested the load in the green-

[250] Those who sniff cocaine in Tudu are called *junkies.*
[251] Interview with Alhaji Kujin. His profile has already been provided above.
[252] Novotel is a French hotel located about 300 metres north-east of Tudu Lorry Park.
[253] *Ngbage* in Dagbani, the language spoken by the Dagomba, means 'to arrest'.

painted vehicle".[254] In the case of such pre-registrations or so-called arrests of the loads, each person who has registered follows the respective vehicle to the lorry park and all the loads in the vehicle are hers. If it is too much for her to carry, she calls her colleagues to help, but she has the right to negotiate with the owner of the goods.

In some cases they run after the vehicles from behind while the vehicle moves to the lorry park. In such cases they make specific arrests of loads in the vehicles. One will say, for example, "I am carrying any bag in the car"; another will say, "If there are vegetables, I will carry"; and so on. These methods are employed to out-compete each other. It is also a way of preventing the customers from going to the truck boys, who use wheeled transport, are located outside the lorry park, and usually wait for customers to come and call them. No doubt the truck boys claim that the *kayaye*, by following the vehicles for loads, have succeeded in taking away most of their customers. However, despite the pre-registration of the loads, the customer reserves the right to deny them carriage of his or her goods.

Unlike in colonial times when prices for carrying goods were predetermined, as occurred under Addo or the colonial administrator, at the lorry park the amount paid for a head load depends on the negotiating skills of the *kayaye* and the nature of the goods. In most cases charges range from one cedi (about fifty euro cents) for a distance of about half a kilometre, to three Ghana cedis (one euro, fifty cents) for a distance of about three kilometres.[255] Besides the general charges, they have specific charges for delicate products such as eggs, glassware, and cooking oil, especially palm oil. These products attract about fifty per cent extra on the prices mentioned. The delicate nature of these products makes *kayaye* walk at a slower rate since care must be taken.[256] On Mondays and Thursdays their charges are also somewhat higher, since those days are the market days in Tudu and there are a lot of vehicles moving in and out of the lorry park with goods and passengers. Because Tudu Lorry Park operates twenty-four hours a day, the *kayaye* are always busy, but most of them stop work after six o'clock in the evening. Theoretically, all lorry parks are supposed to stop operating after six o'clock in

[254] A similar practice exists among the tomato sellers in the lorry park: when vehicles arrive with tomatoes, the sellers usually 'arrest' the boxes. Yam sellers at the Timber Market and Konkomba Market at Agbogloshie also 'arrest' the tubers of yams before negotiating prices with the farmers.
[255] Even though most of the *kayaye* operate within the three-kilometres radius, some of them go as far as Kanda, almost six kilometres from Tudu—but such situations are rare.
[256] Interview with Amina Bukari, Tudu, 24 April 2009.

the evening. In Tudu the rule has been effectively applied; hence, vehicles arriving and loading late have to do so outside the lorry park. In part, this is the reason the *kayaye* stop working around that time. As migrants also, the uncertainty in terms of security is another reason they do not go beyond six o'clock. Some *kayaye* are of the view that operating at night could expose one's person or one's earnings to greater risk, especially from thieves.

So what motivates the general public and traders to make use of the *kayaye*? In colonial times, carriers were badly needed and their services indispensable because of the lack or inadequacy of transport facilities. There were few alternatives such as motorised transport. At present, despite the availability of taxis and trotros, the services of *kayaye* are still needed.[257]

Kayaye have and still are providing an indispensable service to traders and passengers, especially those in the poor and middle-income brackets. *Kayaye* in Tudu Lorry Park carry goods to most parts of Accra. Operating from Tudu Lorry Park, they carry goods to neighbourhoods such as Tudu itself, James Town, and Adabraka, among others. They also carry goods from one lorry park to another, such as from Tudu to Tema Station lorry park, or from Tudu to the Cocoa Marketing Board (CMB) lorry park or Salaga Market lorry park. The significance of their services was really felt during the era of frequent fuel shortages in the country. Unlike horse-based portage, where fuel shortages in the 1940s led to the utilisation of horses to a greater extent in Accra, in the case of head-load portage it was the fuel crises of the 1980s that led to a greater use of the *kayaye*. Relying on the *kayaye* in times of fuel crises shows the extent to which motor transport and head-load portage are interconnected. Both played and continue to play a very important role in the transport system in Accra.

The fees charged by *kayaye* are considered very moderate when compared with the motorised system; therefore, small traders frequently use *kayaye*. A trader from James Town, in an interview, reported that most traders would be out of business or their business would be reduced in size without the *kayaye*,[258] the reason being the low

[257] Trotro are privately owned minibus vehicles that travel fix routes in Ghana. They are very common in the cities including Accra.

[258] Interview with Grace Kwatey, James Town, 17 June 2008. Grace was born in 1957. Her father was a fisherman and her mother a *kenkey* (see Chapter 3 for definition of kenkey) seller. According to Grace, she started school in James Town in 1963, but her father Kwatey had heard that fishing at Akosombo was profitable. In 1965 Kwatey removed Grace from school and took her and her brothers to Akosombo. They

charges by the *kayaye*. The traders cannot afford the services of taxi and other motorised transport. Some of the traders have specific *kayaye* who carry their goods. In such situations, the trader normally buys the goods and gives them to the *kayaye* while they then use motor transport, mostly trotro, to get to their destinations or follow the *kayaye* on foot, depending on the availability of motorised transport and also the traffic situation on the road. At times traffic can be so heavy that the preferred means of transport is head-load portage. The *kayaye* can meander their way through the dense vehicular and human traffic more easily.

Other customers who patronise the services of the *kayaye* admit that in addition to their affordable fees, they are also able to convey goods to destinations that motor vehicles cannot reach. The settlement patterns in Tudu, Nima, James Town, and New Town, among others, are not well planned; therefore, most of the houses in these areas cannot be accessed by motorised vehicles. It is therefore more convenient and appropriate to use *kayaye* since they can use footpaths. Another factor that makes people prefer the services of the *kayaye* to motorised vehicles is that most taxi drivers are reluctant to carry certain loads, such as fresh fish or meat. They complain that blood from meat makes their vehicles dirty, while fish makes the vehicles smell. Some of the taxi and trotro drivers decline to pick up passengers with goods and baggage generally, complaining that the process of loading and off-loading goods wastes time and therefore reduces their chances of getting passengers they are competing for with other drivers. The structure of the lorry park itself and Makola Market warrants the use of human transport because vehicles that bring goods into the park cannot have access to all the individual stands and stalls erected by the traders. There is therefore continuous need for the services of head-load portage in order to complete the distribution network. The services of *kayaye* and other head-load porters are therefore indispensable, and without them the informal transport system would not be complete.

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lived in Akosombo for five years fishing and without any schooling for Grace. They returned in 1970, by which time it was too late for Grace to continue her education. She joined her mother in the *kenkey* business and has remained in the business to date. According to Grace, her mother is old and weak and Grace had to take over running the business. She is assisted by seven sales girls, who are strategically located in parts of Accra such as Tudu, Tema Station, and Mamprobi, among others. She uses the *kayaye* mainly to convey ingredients from Makola Market to James Town.

Competition, Ambition, and Leisure

The *kayaye* have many competitors, such as taxis, trotro, and truck boys. They have to contend with the ever-increasing presence of taxi drivers and truck boys. The advantage the *kayaye* have within the park is that the management has decided to allow the truck boys to bring goods in, but they cannot park their trucks within the lorry park and solicit for customers since the park is overcrowded with vehicles and hawkers. Such a policy favours the *kayaye* within the park. There is a limit in terms of loads that the *kayaye* can carry; hence, despite the fact that management's decision favours them, if it comes to the portage of certain goods such as bags of corn, groundnuts, and beans, the customers usually go for the truck boys. In addition, on rainy days, taxis are usually preferred by the traders to prevent the goods from getting wet.

The competition faced by the *kayaye* has led to some innovations. For example, the *kayaye* now go around the shops and vehicles and take the clothes of drivers and shop keepers, which they then wash for a fee. They usually take the clothes on Saturday evening and wash them on Sunday morning so that the shop owners and the drivers and mechanics can have their clothes on Monday morning when they come to work. Considering the fact that Tudu Lorry Park has over 400 drivers, over 100 shops, and many mechanics, the income accruing from Sunday washing is enormous. Some *kayaye* also capitalise on weather variations to switch to other jobs. For example, when the sun is hot they sometimes switch to the selling of iced water at major road intersections in and around Tudu. Some of them have also gone into prostitution as a way of supplementing their income. Some also work for food vendors. Sometimes they are hired to wash dishes or to carry the food about the lorry park and sell.

The *kayaye* have some ambitions. Formerly, when men dominated the *kayakaya* trade, their main ambition was to buy a bicycle. Bicycles in those days were seen as a sign of modernity and progress.[259] For northern migrants, especially porters, a sojourn in the south is incomplete without a bicycle. The demand for bicycles by head-load porters at that time was as a result of few motor transport services in the north.[260] Secondly, bicycles were easily used to exchange for cattle; hence, buying one was a

[259] Interview with Kweku Bulsa, Tudu, 1 August 2007. He is from Sandema and a male porter at Tudu Lorry Park.

[260] Even to this day, bicycles are still very common in the northern part of Ghana. Improvements in one's income levels usually lead to the acquisition of a motor bicycle.

form of investment. The popularity of the bicycle at that time was also the prestige value attached to it. The most immediately available means of transport aside from walking was the horse. Non-royals were, however, prevented from using horses.[261] Bicycles were therefore an alternative to horses. The bicycle was literally the 'iron horse', a substitute for the real horse that was denied them by royals.

Unlike the ambitions of the men, the *kayaye* have a different technological ambition. In most cases their ambition is to buy a sewing machine.[262] The sewing machine is considered a success symbol in the *kayaye* business. One would expect that the sewing machine could help the *kayaye* undertake an apprenticeship in their respective villages and hence diversify into sewing, a comparatively less strenuous activity than portage. While some have such an ambition, others buy the machine for other reasons. Some consider it a necessary article among the items needed for marriage.[263] Others buy it so that they can resell it in case of any eventuality. In such cases it is either sold or used as collateral for a loan in the village. Besides the ambition of acquiring a sewing machine, some *kayaye* who have yet to marry and even some married ones invest in clothes and cooking utensils.[264] Some have the ambition of going into trade. Those who want to go into trade are usually modest in the acquisition of material things, especially clothes. They usually keep their money, carry the money back to their respective villages, and engage in trade.

One cannot discuss the *kayaye* without talking about leisure. Leisure is important in our discussion of head-load portage because of the way it is sought and enjoyed. There are several components that make up leisure and several places that one can seek leisure, but I will concentrate on one leisure activity which is enjoyed by every *kayayo*, whether young or old: going to the beach. The beach has remained the number-one place of leisure, to the extent that the *kayaye* have created a space for themselves called the '*bola* beach' or '*kaya* beach'.[265] On Sundays, *kayaye* colleagues from Madina, Agbogbloshi, and Tema Station join those in Tudu and head straight for the

[261] See Chapter 3 for the use of horses.
[262] Interview with Alfred Kwesi Bour, Tudu, 21 March 2008. See Chapter 4 for Kwesi Bour's profile.
[263] *Ibid.*
[264] *Ibid.*
[265] *Bola* means a refuse dump but is currently used to designate any garbage in the city. In some cases, collectors of garbage are also called *bola*.

beach. They usually go to the beach around 1 p.m. and stay until 7 p.m., by which time they have finished their laundry.

The *bola* beach is located behind the Accra Cultural Centre, about three kilometres from Tudu. *Bola* beach, as the name implies, is one of the filthiest beaches on the coastline of Accra, yet it is preferred by the *kayaye*. The preference for this beach is born out of social and economic considerations. In the first place, they pay no fees for using the beach, unlike other beaches in Accra, where one pays two Ghana cedis for ordinary days and four Ghana cedis for special days such as Independence Day. Also, the beach gives the *kayaye* a sense of exclusiveness from other ethnic groups and a sense of inclusiveness among themselves.

The *kayaye* prefer the beach because it is one of the sites that is newsworthy on their return home. The northern part of Ghana lacks this facility; hence, swimming in the sea is one of the ways of acquiring urbanity. Furthermore, it is at the beach that they can practise the Twi language that they have picked up while working from Monday to Saturday. New migrants are taught how much to charge for what load and for what distance. As they swim, they imitate customers and pedestrians and issue mock instructions in Twi to each other as though they were still carrying loads. This inculcates in the new migrants the basic terminology that they will need in their work in the lorry parks and markets. This explains the need for exclusiveness. Those who normally handle the tutorials are the sitters, who owing to their constant interaction with shop owners and traders are able to pick up the Twi language easily. From our previous discussions of the newly arrived Zabarima porters, the limitations of language and knowledge of distance which were important in price determination often led to the intervention of the *harrman*. Here, the northern Ghanaian female porters use leisure instead to overcome such limitations.

Finally, in the process of enjoying leisure time, they are joined by their male Dagomba or Mampprusi tribesmen, who usually engage in the collection of scrap metal or garbage in the city. Here love is negotiated and accepted or rejected. As an ice-breaker, the men narrate to the women the fortunes they have accumulated throughout the week. The women in turn tell them about the problems they have gone through while plying their trade. By 7 p.m. they walk back in pairs, groups, or singles, reflecting upon the success of some in getting partners and the failures of others.

Just as the *kayaye* use their leisure time in the city, so do they face a lot of problems in Accra.

Problems of *Kayaye* in Tudu

Language

Communication is very important in every human activity. In Accra, three languages are critical in any kind of engagement: Ga, Twi and English. Whether in the process of plying their trade or seeking any kind of assistance, the *kayaye* have to use one of these languages. Unfortunately, most of the *kayaye* are not able to communicate in these languages. In their home setting, Dagbani or Mampruse is the language that is used, but in Accra they have to negotiate prices and communicate among their customers using Twi. Getting to Accra and starting portage the same day or the next means that the *Kayaye* will have to immediately adjust to the language challenge. Inability to communicate well in Twi has often led to quarrels between the *kayaye* and the customers over the price that was demanded at the onset. To get over that, new arrivals usually rely on those who have stayed longer for negotiations. As indicated already, on Sundays they move to the beach in order to get some tutorials from their colleagues who have already picked up the Twi language.

Accommodation

Shelter is indisputably one of the basic needs of mankind. The type and quality of the accommodation in which the *kayaye* stay relate to the market or lorry station they mainly work at.[266] In colonial times they are reported to have inhabited the lorry parks or shop verandas, and a few also slept in canoes on the beach. [267]

The *kayaye* in Tudu now have three dwelling places: the lorry park, the Armed Forces Reception Depot, and Agbogbloshie. Usually, the already-mentioned sitters have the opportunity of sleeping on the verandas of shops at the lorry park. Shop owners prefer this kind of arrangement because it saves them from hiring security guards (watchmen). It also helps the *kayaye* save some money because their colleagues in other markets pay for sleeping on the verandas, usually about 50 pesewas a day, amounting to

[266] Interview with Salamata Abdullai, Tudu, 10 April 2009. Her profile is provided under Case Histories in this chapter.
[267] I. Acquah, *Accra Survey*, 53.

about 9 Ghana cedis (6 euro) a month. Others sleep at Agbogbloshie even though they work in Tudu. Those who sleep at Agbogboshie usually rent wooden rooms and about five of them stay inside. These are usually those who have worked for about four months and have accumulated some money. It costs about twenty Ghana cedis (about 13.33 euro) a month to hire a wooden room at Agbogbloshie.

If one considers the amount paid by five in a room, it is cheaper than that paid to sleep on the verandas. But what usually makes the majority sleep on the verandas of shops or on benches at the park, or in some cases in the vehicles with the drivers' mates, is that the rental policy in Ghana is such that one is required to pay at least a year's advance, which in the case of Agbogbloshie works out at twenty-four Ghana cedis (16 Euros).

Considering the fact that the *kayaye* normally spend between three to six months in Accra, the option which makes most economic sense is always the veranda. Those who intend to stay longer, however, pay for a room, and in some cases they get married to the scrap collectors in Agbogbloshie. Those who do not get married but return home arrange with the male scrap collectors in Accra to find other *kayaye* to occupy the premises. With such arrangements, the difference is sent back to them in the north.

Finally, the Armed Forces Reception Depot, which was built for the purpose of recruiting police in 1916 and expanded in 1939 to facilitate recruitment for the Second World War, continues to host *kayaye*. After demobilisation some of the ex-servicemen who had already bought lands in Tudu and put up houses stayed in the community. Some who could not put up houses continued to stay at the Armed Forces Reception Depot. In the 1980s some *kayaye* began sleeping on the veranda of the depot, but gradually by 1990 they were able to get some rooms there to stay. They have made a special arrangement with the caretaker. The caretaker also justifies their stay by indicating that there are currently about seven destitute ex-servicemen in the premises, and the *kayaye* feed them daily. For him their stay there helps the ex-servicemen since they are fed and also now have company. Even though it appears that this arrangement is beneficial, it really puts some financial constraints on the *kayaye*. As one reported;

> *Whether we get money or not we have to feed them. They always tell us that this is their place and if we do not want to give them what they want they too will make sure we do not stay here anymore.*[268]

[268] Interview with Amina Bukari, Tudu, 24 April 2009.

Despite this complaint, in comparison with the other *kayaye* who sleep within the park and on verandas, those at the depot have several advantages. For example, they do not hire more caretakers to take care of their property and children. The facility is walled and therefore offers some form of security. Besides Seidu, the caretaker, an ex-serviceman has been permanently hired as a security guard for the whole area by the Greater Accra Pensioners' Association. Finally, they have stand pipes, which gives them access permanent access to clean water.

Money matters

Money is an important factor in daily life. The very reason why the *kayaye* come to Accra is money. Not getting money in a day works against the *kayaye* on several fronts. For instance, some pay daily for their sleeping place. Inability to get money means it will be difficult to sleep for the night. They have to pay for facilities at the 'White House' to enable them to take a shower or use the washroom.[269] All of them eat in the 'chop bars' located at the lorry park on a daily basis, except on Sundays when some of them cook at the park.[270] This means that if they lack money they cannot eat. An informant reported that their number-one problem is without doubt money. The need for money compels them to hunt about for loads in and around the lorry parks and the markets. After they get the money, the second and most important problem is how to keep the money. Some lose the money again as they struggle for more loads to carry. When competition becomes keen, the call of "*kayaye*" sets them running towards the customer and some in the process lose their money.

Since most of them even lack proper accommodation, they have to keep their money in their bags and keep it behind the Drivers Union kiosks at the lorry park. Thieves who are often aware of the money go for it in those locations. The number-one thieves in this regard are the junkies.[271] Sometimes too their own colleagues return to where they keep their bags and steal the money. There are also reports of some *susu*

[269] The building containing the public washroom and bath-houses in Tudu is called the White House.
[270] Chop bars are local restaurants in Ghana.
[271] Those who use cocaine in Tudu are called *junkies*. Locals differentiate between the junkies. Those who have taken cocaine to the point that they feel almost dizzy are called the *noders*. They are usually not feared by the *kayaye* because they can easily be overcome even by a single *kayayo*. But *higa* are those that are so feared. They are usually those that are almost insane and can inflict machete wounds on those who try to prevent them from stealing. The *kayaye* usually face *higa* with their head-pans, which are sometimes used as a shield and or a missile.

collectors running away with their money.[272] It is easier for the *susu* collectors to run away with their money because the activities of *kayaye* are more localised. They operate within specific markets and lorry parks. *Susu* collectors therefore find it easy to run away with their money to another part of the city or divert into another profession all together.[273]

Sexual exploitation

The lorry park is an important place of sexual abuse and rape of the *kayaye*. In the course of my interviews, I met two *kayaye* who were raped. Usually the lorry park is governed by the AMA and the welfare unit of the lorry park. But the officers close around 8 p.m. The *kayaye* therefore sleep on the floor of the various branch offices or verandas of shops or benches. Shoe-shine boys, who equally roam about without space and use the lorry park as a sleeping place, usually go and have sex with them.[274] This practice is possible because of the limitations imposed by the expansion of the city and the presence of large numbers of migrants.[275]

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[272] In *susu*, a number of people who trust one another form a small savings club under the leadership of a leader who keeps and disburses the funds. The club has a life-span, at the end of which each of the members will have collected their share. For insights into *susu* or *esusu*, see T. Falola, 'Money and Informal Credit Institutions in Colonial Western Nigeria', in J. I. Guyer (ed.), *Money Matters: Instability, Values and Social Payments in the Modern History of West African Communities* (London: James Curry, 1995), 170-1.

[273] Paa Joe reports that five years ago they were able to track down a *susu* collector who, having taken the money, joined the Ghana Immigration Service. The Immigration officers operate mainly at the border towns, the seaports and airports. Paa Joe, a trained security guard from Libya, went to the airport to meet friends who were returning and in the process chanced upon the former collector. He confronted him with the issues at the park and the money he had run away with. According to Paa Joe, the former collector doubled the amount collected for the *kayaye* as a way of appeasing them and to save his job and his public image.

[274] The term used by the shoe-shine boys for such sex is *odahobede*, meaning 'she is lying down, come have sex' in Twi. Usually the shoe-shine boys approach the new arrivals and tell them that they are responsible for guarding the park at night and would like to know if they have sought permission to stay at the park. Inability to prove themselves usually leads to a sexual deal. Some refuse and raise the alarm, while others comply. However, *odahobede* has also been extended to a real sexual negotiation between the *kayaye* and the shoe-shine boys, in which case the *kayaye* knows of the boy and will pretend to be asleep as the boy engages in sex with her. Some of the girls also allow this to go on because the shoe-shine boys and the *kayaye* seem to have a greater bond, as they all criss-cross each other in search of jobs at the park. They circulate the same space over and over again. They see the shoe-shine boys as protectors, as opposed to the junkies who only come to steal their money. There have been reports of shoe-shine boys at the park assisting the *kayaye* to attack the junkies.

[275] A. M. Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 143.

Harassment and intimidation by officials and the general public

The *kayaye* face a lot of harassment from officials as well as the general public. In most cases harassment leads to a number of fights between the *kayaye* and the public. For instance, the *kayaye* have fought several times with AMA officials over daily tolls. They pay a daily income tax of one cedi (50 euro cents). Considering the fact that there are over 30,000 *kayaye* in Accra, with a sizable majority in the Central Business District, their yearly contribution to the AMA's budget and Ghana's revenue is quite considerable.[276] Usually the AMA officials demand the money whether or not the *kayaye* have had business for the day. In some cases, when they have just secured the first customer and are carrying the goods to the destination and before they can take money, they are stopped mid-way and made to pay. Since they have not yet arrived at their destinations, they usually will not be able to pay. The situation is even more complex for those who have newly arrived and have just rented the pan and have to pay for it for the same day or who cannot even express themselves in English, Twi or Ga for the toll collectors to understand. On a daily basis, the toll collectors seize not fewer than twenty head-pans. Once a pan is seized and taken to the AMA head office, the *kayaye* have to pay an extra one Ghana cedi as penalty. To avoid this traumatic situation, some of them borrow money from friends or take their savings to pay for the fees for the day. But the situation is even more complicated if they have not been able to get customers the previous day. One of the informants summarised her feelings as follows:

> *They* [referring to AMA staff] *have nothing to do rather than take our money, seize our pans or beat us. They take money from us but do not do anything for us. If they take money from the drivers they repair roads for them. If they take money from us what do they do for us in return? We pay for everything here, food, water and accommodation if even it is on a veranda we pay for.*[277]

The *kayaye* always operate at the lorry parks and markets, and these areas are always crowded with people and vehicles. In trying to negotiate through the crowd and follow their customers, who at times are in a hurry to catch a trotro or taxi, they sometimes knock over wares displayed on the pavement by hawkers and traders or sometimes hit fellow pedestrians or vehicles, and this often leads to insults and, in some cases, slaps.

[276] M. Amponsah-Annan & S. Kyei-Gyamfi, 'Final Report on the Kayaaye Exercise', 3-5.
[277] Interview with Asana Zakari, Tudu, 26 May 2009.

Before concluding, I present below two case histories to show the specific circumstances under which some individuals became head-load porters in Tudu and what they have achieved in the *kayaye* business.

Case History One: Salamata Abdulai

Salamata was born in Tolon in the Northern Region of Ghana in the year 1960. Her parents were both working. Her father was a rice farmer and her mother was a caterer. Her father completed form four at middle school. She lived in her place of birth for only a short while. At five years old, Salamata was taken by her Aunt Ramatu to Salaga in the Northern Region to live with her. The greatest portion of Salamata's life was spent in Salaga. She attended her elementary school there from primary one to six. After primary six, her aunt denied her the opportunity to go to middle school. She was instead made to help the aunt in her small trading activities. She moved with her aunt from one village to another, buying farm produce from the villagers and selling at the Salaga and Tamale markets.

At the age of twenty she was married to Abukari, a butcher from Bimbilla. They moved to Bimbilla briefly and relocated to Wulensi where the husband plied his trade while she was buying farm produce from the villages around Wulensi and selling at Bimbilla and Tamale. Unfortunately, in 1981 a war broke out between the Nanumba and Konkomba. She lost her husband in the war. All her property was taken away by the Konkombas who had entered Wulensi and burnt their house down. Left with little choice, she went back to her parents in Tolon, by which time she already had a set of twins. She assisted her father on the farm, especially with the harvesting of rice. By 1983 there was a severe draught in the country, and her father could not harvest his rice as usual. To add to this trouble, the father had borrowed money from the Agricultural Development Bank in Tamale to farm. That year her father could not repay the loan.

While the loan was outstanding, subsequent years saw reductions in rice cultivation in the whole of northern Ghana because Structural Adjustment had been introduced and its implementation affected farmers, especially those producing rice. It affected them in two ways. The first had to do with subsidies on agriculture, which were taken away. The second had to do with the trade liberalisation policy which was part of the Structural Adjustment Programme. The liberalisation policy removed protective

tariffs on imported products, including rice. Hence, larger quantities of rice from China, Thailand, and the United States were imported into the country. With no subsidies to continue production and the influx of rice from the aforementioned countries which sold cheaper than the Ghanaian rice, most of the rice farmers, including Salamata's father, were rendered jobless as they could not compete.

Salamata at this point already had her two children in school, so to continue supporting them she left for Accra to engage in *kayakaya*. As one of the pioneers in the carriage of goods, she was joined by four others from her hometown in 1986. Rather than return, she decided to remain in Accra and continue with her *kayayo* business. According to her, she is now more than a grandmother as many *kayaye* from her village come to lodge with her. She has decided to remain so as to guide the younger ones who arrive in Accra to engage in *kayaye*. According to Salamata, she has derived a lot of benefits from the *kayakaya*. Even though she does not charge the younger *kayaye* any money, she benefits in kind from them. Each set of *kayaye* that leaves for home after their brief stay with her buys an assortment of products, including fabrics, dresses, and perfumes among others for her as gifts. According to her, the hazards of head loading are many, and it is better that she remains to guide the younger ones.

Through her *kayayo* business she has been able to take care of her two children. She decided not to remarry so as to be able to concentrate on her children's education. Her children are both in their final year at the Tamale Polytechnic, with one pursuing a course in accounting and the other in marketing.

Her motivation for staying in Tudu is the numerous advantages there. The lorry park provides continuous work for her. She stays at the Armed Forces Reception Depot, which is relatively more secured than the other places. She has still been able to retain certain aspects of *zongo* life, such as the usual Friday prayers, Islamic marriages, outdoor events, and festivals. According to Salamata, these activities keep her happy and psychologically satisfied. The cultural and religious vacuum that has been created as a result of her relocation has been filled owing to her stay in Tudu.

Salamata's case is in contrast with that of most of the *kayaye*. In the first place, most of them stay just briefly and move back to the north. Perhaps the problems that she went through while in the north have made her determined to stay in Accra. Secondly, the few who stay longer in Accra normally rent their own rooms and stay with others,

but she has decided to stay at the Armed Forces Reception Centre, a facility which otherwise is reserved for ex-servicemen. Again, her choice could be due to the fact that renting a place will still not yield the desired results because of the number of *kayaye* that keep coming to her. In addition, as she is determined to see her children through higher education, attempts at renting a place will mean more financial burdens on her and her children.

Case History Two: Asana Zakari

Asana Zakari hails from the West Mampruise District—specifically, from Kpasenkpe, twenty miles off the Tamale-Bolgatanga road. Her father is a farmer and her mother is a housewife. Her father cultivates maize and groundnuts and also rears cattle. Asana has not had any formal education and had been helping her mother in the house before coming to Accra to engage in *kayakaya*. According to her, she had always resisted going anywhere to engage in *kayakaya* until two years ago when there were floods in the whole area where they lived. All their crops were washed away and the cattle could not be found. She informed her mother that she would go to Tamale and engage in *kayayaka*. Her father had always warned her not to go anywhere for *kayayaka*, but with the disaster her father gave his approval, especially when she said that she was not alone from the village and that they were about five that were going to ply their trade in Tamale, which was nearer home. According to Asana, they first went to Tamale to engage in the *kayayaka* business but soon realised that Tamale did not offer many opportunities for their trade. Unlike Accra, where the heavy traffic situation can compel customers to take *kayakaya* so as to get out of the congested business district, Tamale was relatively free of dense traffic and people could easily drive cars around. Besides, as she reported, the men in Tamale were always 'rushing for the load', taking everything that was available from the newcomers. Four of them decided to leave Tamale for Kumasi. One remained in Tamale and switched into water vending.

In Kumasi the four worked at the Kejetia Market but soon realised that more *kayaye* were arriving. They decided to leave for Cape Coast since they had been told that there were no *kayaye* in Cape Coast. According to Asana, the lack of *kayaye* caused them to continue to Accra because there were no social networks for them in Cape Coast. They knew no one and no one knew them. They felt that was risky since they did

not know who they could turn to in case there was a problem. So they all left for Accra. In Accra they went to Agbogloshie but finally had to leave for Tudu because, as Asana reported, “In Agbogbloshie you always carry heavy load. You are carrying yams, tomatoes, or plantain. In Tudu sometimes you carry light things such as cloth or shoes but nonetheless gets some money at the end of the day. Should I die because of money?” While in Tudu, Asana accidentally came across her aunt who was working at the Agricultural Development Bank in Madina. The aunt took her home and got her a job as a house-help in the house of a Gonja couple. According to Asana, she had her own room in the house of the Gonja couple and was paid thirty Ghana cedis a month. She was given a mobile phone and was fed and clothed. The thirty Ghana cedis was kept in a separate bank account for her at the Prudential Bank in Madina.

On one of her trips to the Madina Market with the Gonja couple to buy provisions for the house she met another aunt who was engaged in *kayaye* in the Madina Market. The aunt advised her to go back into the *kayaka* business because that was the only way by which she could make enough money. So when the Gonja couple left for work she packed all her belongings and left for Tudu again to continue her *kayaye* business. She is of the view that whereas staying with the Gonja couple was good, she was always lonely. “All I do is to watch television till their children come from school. The children cannot speak my language; neither can I speak theirs. It is only their father and mother who speak Dagbani. I was always bored in that house.” In Tudu, Asana makes about 50 Ghana cedis (33.33 euro) a month. However, she can save only 20 Ghana cedis (13.33 euro) since she has to pay to use the bathroom facilities and pay every night for sleeping on the verandas of shops. The rest of the money is lodged into her bank account since she still has her savings account book.

She has already bought a sewing machine, one of the basic commodities that almost every *kayaye* needs. Now she is buying some fabrics out of her savings, and once she gets enough she will leave for her home town. Someone has already gone to see her parents to ask for her hand in marriage. Even though she bought the sewing machine, she does not intend to learn how to sew. She rather prefers to trade. She intends to buy corn, groundnuts, and millet from Kpasenkpe and sell them at Bawku or Tamale.

If one considers Asana and the other *kayaye*, one will realise that the sewing machine is more of a social security towards future eventuality. Almost every *kayaye* intends to buy a sewing machine. Rather than being a tool for attaining meaningful and stable jobs, the sewing machine has become one of the indicators of a successful *kayayo*. It is a status symbol, and one's career status as a *kayaye* is incomplete without it. It has assumed importance in the marriage articles of the north and is simply displayed on the rear of a table in the room of most of the women in the rural north. Asana needs it together with other articles and money to make her life complete when she returns home.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to discuss portage in Accra. The chapter suggested that portage is not a new phenomenon in Accra, but has intensified considerably since the 1980s. This was mainly caused by the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes and ethnic conflicts in the north, as well as by improvement in the transportation networks in villages and urban areas. The chapter also emphasised the role of northerners in this transport system and shows that the linkage of communities within Accra would probably be difficult without this form of portage. Through portage, more goods have come to circulate in Accra, with northerners serving as porters and more and more people in Accra experiencing the low cost for permanent transport in the city. Without northern porters, much of the trading activities in the city would grind to a halt.

3

Kyekyedokye (The Horse Bicycle) in Accra's Transport History

Introduction

Accra, as indicated earlier, would not have been what it is today without the contribution of northerners to transport and trade. In considering transportation in Accra, the contribution of northerners cannot be overstated. In motorised and particularly non-motorised transport, northerners have dominated. Head portage and horse-drawn transport were two of the most important non-motorised transport systems in Accra, and in these northerners dominated. In the case of horse-drawn transport, from its inception in the colonial period to independence and beyond, northerners monopolised this form of transport in Accra. They were able to do this because many of them came from savannah societies that were established around horse-borne elites, where the skills associated with maintaining and keeping horses were highly respected. This chapter looks at the manner in which northerners contributed to the growth and development of Accra through their use of horse-borne transport and trade.

By horse-based portage, I mean the carriage of goods and passengers using horses with a cart or carrier. Despite the contribution of horse-drawn transportation to Accra's transport history, this aspect has not been given any scholarly attention. The neglect is due to an over-concentration on other transport systems in Accra. Discussing horse-drawn transportation will enable us understand the linkage that this form of transportation had with the Tudu community, its lorry park, and Accra in general. In addition, through horse-drawn transport we will be able to understand the contribution of northerners to the transport economy of Accra. By so doing, the basic argument of this study regarding northerners and their contribution to Accra's evolutionary history will become more apparent.

I argue that contrary to the widely held opinion that by 1927 motor transport replaced portage, especially horse and mule transport, the constraints on motor transport in its early years of introduction and the labour crises of the time served as important triggers for the development and growth of horse-based portage in Accra. Improvement in motor transportation led to an increase in the importation of horses to Accra from Northern Ghana, which were then used for transport purposes. To this day, horses are still an important means of transport in Accra, albeit on a limited scale. The decline in

the use of horses for transportation in Accra was not solely due to the increase in motorised transportation but also due to government policy regarding aliens in Accra.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first considers the acquisition of horses and carts and transport groups in Tudu, while the second section focuses on the utilisation of horses for transportation in Accra. We conclude the second section with two life histories.

Getting a Horse for Trucking[278]

Horses in Tudu were brought from a variety of sources. During the pre-colonial and colonial period, Accra was a thriving livestock centre.[279] The bulk of the supply of livestock was from the northern parts of Ghana and Nigeria. Ghana depended on Nigeria for quite a long time for the supply of cattle.[280] Suppliers of cattle to Accra from Nigeria, such as Chief Braimah and Baba Tudu, incorporated or supplemented the supply of horses with cattle. The Kotokoli territory, now divided between Ghana and Togo, and Kete Krachi were also important sources of horses to Accra. Some residents of Tudu, such as Imoru Mobolaji Peregrino Braimah, a son of Chief Braimah, also imported horses from the United Kingdom.[281]

By 1913, horse racing and polo had become important sports in Ghana and Nigeria. The sports were mostly patronised by expatriates, the educated elite, and businessmen.[282] By 1925, Tudu had a race course in addition to the Lebanon House which hosted indoor games, where most of the tournaments took place. As a result of these sports, some Lebanese and Syrians who were resident in Tudu began importing and selling horses in Tudu. Examples include Sataaradis and Majid Stahd. Majid Stahd operated the Home Light Stable.[283] Some horse-based porters bought some of the newly imported horses from the Lebanese and Syrians, while others bought the weak, imported horses they were already using for racing. There was a perception that the foreign

[278] I shall use transportation and trucking as well as transporters and truckers interchangeably, depending on the issues I am dealing with, but they both convey the same meaning.
[279] I. Odotei, *Migration, Fishing and Development: A Case Study of Ningo* (Accra: Royal Gold Publishers, 2003), 4.
[280] PRAAD, Accra, C.S.O 110/30, Importation by Sea of Cattle, 1930.
[281] M. B. P. Braimah, *A Migrant African Chief*, 82.
[282] *The Gold Coast Nation*, 2:53, Cape Coast, West Africa, Thursday March 20, 1913.
[283] Interview with Baba Addisa Tudu, 17 May 2009.

breeds performed better in terms of racing and for carriage of goods. Such a perception led to significantly more importation of foreign horses.

Beside the external sources, in the 1930s and 1940s Tudu got some of her horses from Mossi traders in the local markets in Bawku and Wa, and from Dagomba chiefs and royals in Yendi.[284] Horses are the prestige possessions of royals and titled men in the north. It was reported that until 1942, a chief might refuse to allow anyone in his district to buy a horse, unless through his mediation.[285] No chief was without a horse because the horse was the basis of the chief's political and military power and a symbol of chiefship (*nam* in Dagbani). The chiefly class used horses for important occasions, such as the Damba and Fire festivals, as well as for patrolling the territorial boundaries of their respective areas.[286]

The refusal of the chiefs to allow their subjects to use horses probably explains the reason why the north, which had an advantage in terms of rearing or acquiring horses and was relatively free from tsetse flies compared with the south, could not develop any meaningful transport systems using horses. Unlike the north, in the south and particularly in Accra there was a need for horses for transport purposes. Evidence of the coast-bound trade in horses is contained in the 1928-9 annual report for the Northern Territories:

> *The bulk of the goods imported into the districts are re-exported. Cattle, sheep, goats, fowls, horses and dawada come in from the north and proceed down to Kumasi and the coastal towns*[287]

Besides the thriving trade in horses between the north and the coast by merchants, individual Mossi migrants moving to the southern part of Ghana came along with cattle, goats, sheep, and horses. The District Commissioner for Salaga reported that there were

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[284] Bawku is located in the Upper East Region of Ghana and shares a border with Burkina Faso and Togo. Wa is the capital town of the Upper West Region and shares borders with the Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso. Yendi is the second-largest town in Northern Region, next to Tamale, and shares a border with Togo. Yendi is the traditional capital of the Dagombas. The paramount King of the Dagombas, the Ya-Na, stays in Yendi, with sub-chiefs in the respective towns such Tamale, Mion, Saveligu, Tolon, Kumbungu, Kariga, and Gusheigu, among others. The Ya-Na rules over his own people the Dagomba as well as other ethnic groups such as the Konkomba, Bassari, and Chokosi. The territory that he rules over is referred to as Dagbon.

[285] Christine Oppong, *Growing up in Dagbon* (Accra-Tema: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1973), 18.

[286] Damba and Fire festivals are yearly festivals celebrated by the centralised societies of the north. The Damba festival commemorates the birth of the Holy Prophet Mohammed, whereas the Fire festival commemorates the dock of the ark of Prophet Nuhu (Noah) on Mount Ararat. Some traditions, however, hold that the Fire festival commemorates instead the loss of a Dagbon Prince, who was later found at night, but the arrival of Islam in Dagbon led to the Islamisation of the festival.

[287] PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/3/10 Annual Report for the Northern Province, 1928-1929.

a number of Mossi stopping in Buipe and an average number of floating populations each day in Salaga, Prang, and Yeji numbering 250 heading down south with their animals, including horses.[288] The animals served as an economic and social security for the migrants' survival in the city, as they sold them on and depended on the income realised until they got stable jobs. In the 1950s and 1960s, in addition to the northern suppliers, some Ga residents in Tudu, realising the economic opportunity offered by horse-drawn transportation, joined other northern suppliers to provide horses to Tudu. A well-known example is Mr. Attram, who supplied most of the horses to Abass Adamu in Tudu.

Finally, the police and military were important sources for the supply of horses to the horse-based porters in Tudu. Horses were sold off after they had outlived their usefulness in the police or military service. Initially, ten pounds each was allocated for acquisition of horses together with a forage allowance to officers of the mounted infantry of the West African Frontier Force. The abuse of the forage allowance by some members collecting double rates as a result of maintaining two horses, together with compensation for lost horses, led to the termination of the horse acquisitions for all members.[289] Some of the horses were sold off, and a few members of the force were permitted to maintain horses for patrols and guard ceremonies. Issifu Lalo, a resident of Tudu, whom we shall learn more about in this discussion, got most of his horses from the police headquarters in Tudu. Up until today, the military and police still remain an important source of supply of horses to truckers, in addition to supplies from the north.

Buying the Horse and Fixing the Cart

As indicated already, there were several sources from which horses were bought and sold. Prices of horses were different from place to place. Prices were between 10 pounds and 18 pounds in the north. As reported by the District Commissioner for Gonja District in 1944:

> *Horses are anything from twelve pounds to eighteen pounds. No more should be paid.... the prices of ponies has tended to go to absurd length.*

[288] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/42, Census Report for the Southern Province of the Northern Territories, 1931. Salaga is located in the south-eastern part of the Northern Region, while Prang and Yeji are in present-day Brong Ahafo Region. Buipe is on the banks of the river Volta and on the main Tamale-Kumasi trunk road.

[289] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/392, West African Frontier Force; Horse Allowance, Requesting discontinuance in Accra and the Northern Territories, 1925.

> *Mr Philbrick paid thirty five pounds for a pony which was a good one, but I have seen better ones for one quarter of the price.*[290]

It was possible, based on the above observation of the commissioner, that despite the general price range, there were instances when the prices of horses went beyond the normal price. Coincidentally, Abbass Adamu, Mallam Nuhu, and other jockeys in Tudu indicate that horses brought from the north to Tudu cost between 18 and 20 pounds, an indication that horses were being sold at a mark-up of 5-10 percent in Accra.[291] The acquisition of horses for transportation also led to the growth of an industry in James Town and Agbogloshie involving the production and repair of carts (*kyekyedokye*).[292] Informants report that the blacksmiths and carpenters who made and repaired the carts used by the horses were mostly Ga, while the remainder were Hausa. This shows an efficient collaboration between Ga natives and the northern migrants in transportation in Accra.

Having discussed the various sources for acquiring horses in Tudu, the next section discusses the various transport groups in Tudu and the various factors which gave impetus to the utilisation of horses for transportation in Tudu and Accra.

Transport Groups in Tudu

At its foundation in 1908, Tudu had only one horse transport company, operated by Mallam Gariba, a contemporary of Chief Braimah and an ex-serviceman. Prior to Tudu's foundation, Gariba's horse-drawn transporters were already responsible for the movement of goods, particularly kola nuts from houses in Cow Lane to the beach. When Tudu was founded, some of Mallam Gariba's transporters still continued their trade in both Cow Lane and Tudu. However, in the early 1920s, as a result of increased demand for their services, there evolved another horse transport group called the Tangass Line (corrupted from Town Council). The Tangass Line was formed by Alhaji Dandani, who at first worked for Malam Gariba. Tangass initially had a contract with the Accra Town Council, whereby they carried garbage in Accra alongside carrying goods. By 1929, following the creation of Tudu Lorry Park and the subsequent increase

[290] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/125, Gonja District Annual Report, 1944-1945.
[291] Abbass Adamu's profile is provided under Life History Two at the end of this chapter. He was interviewed at Tudu with Baba Addisa. They have been friends since childhood.
[292] In Tudu, just as in other *zongo* communities, the horse is called *dokye*, plural *dokuna*; the carriage or cart is called *kyekye* (bicycle); the horse with the carriage is *kyekyedochi* (the bicycle with the horse).

in the movement of goods into and out of the park, Issifu Lalo, another employee of Malam Gariba, broke away and formed his own group called the Sakast Stable. The Tangass Line continued to operate from the south of Tudu Lorry Park, and Sakast group operated from the northern part of the park. Realising the competition offered by his former employees, Malam Gariba in 1930 decided to abandon horse-drawn transportation. Therefore, by 1930 Accra had only two important horse-drawn transport groups, namely the Tangass Line and Sakast Stable.

The members of Sakast comprised Abass Adamu (Yoruba), Barawu (Hausa), Alhassan (Dagomba), Dangbe (Ewe), Zik (Kotokoli), and a few others. Those of the Tangass Line were made up of Okiri (Ibo), Ibrahim Malice (Yoruba), and Alhaji Dandade (Yoruba), among others. But Abass Adamu, transporter with Sakast Stable, left after his master Issifu Lalo had bought him a horse and encouraged him to go and start his own business.[293] He did not give any name to his group but had the following people in Tudu who worked under him: Alhassan Gondo (Yoruba), Karimu Fire (Yoruba), Issifu Bassiru (Hausa), Abdulai (Dagomba), and Sumaila Gorongoro. Sumaila was an Ewe born in Tudu and raised by Issifu Baba, a kola-nut trader. He was named Amedzro, but after conversion to Islam was called Sumaila.

The names listed above reflect the interconnectedness among the ethnic groups that lived in Tudu at the time. Such interconnectedness was important among the migrants and could be viewed as one of the strategies adopted to survive the urban environment, an environment which not only offered opportunities but was also at times unfamiliar, unfriendly, and insecure.

By 1939, the operations and contribution of the two transport groups, Tangass and Sakast, to Accra's development were so visible as to be recognised by the sanitary engineer of Accra, as later discussions will show. So how were horses used in Accra?

Utilising Horses in urban Accra

The use of horses for transportation will be explained from four angles: lack of motor vehicles, urban growth, economic depression, and Structural Adjustment Programmes.

[293] Information on the operation of the various groups was given by Baba Addisa, and Mallam Nuhu, Tudu, 17 May 2009.

As noted in Chapter 4, historically, motor transportation was introduced in the Gold Coast around 1902 by the then Governor, Sir Mathew Nathan.[294] Until after the First World War the colonial government did not show much commitment to the expansion of roads or motor traffic facilities in Accra. In considering the disadvantages of motorised transport, another Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Hugh Clifford, noted that where motor traffic was heavy, as in certain quarters of Accra, the cost of metaling rose to 3,000 pounds per mile and the results left a great deal to be desired, as cost of upkeep was heavy. He went on further to note:

> *I do not think that even this lavish expenditure would permanently achieve the desired results since casks can be rolled and drawn with equal facility over surfaces which are not thus fortified. In these circumstances, I think it must be recognised that the construction of metalled roads for the use of motorised Lories is not from the point of view of the government a proposition that is economically sound.*[295]

As the government showed little interest in investing in motorised transport and the construction of roads, the position of private transporters in the first decade of the 1900s was also indifferent. Private transporters were of the view that wear and tear resulting from the condition of the roads reduced the life of a lorry. They were of the view that lorries could only last about three years, yet the annual cost of repairs was as high as 25 per cent of the initial value of the lorry.[296] Such a consideration initially deterred businessmen and private individuals from investing in motorised transportation, as evidenced by the report of the Governor:

> *Already businessmen in this colony are beginning to ask themselves how far it is to their advantage to use Lorries in the existing condition*.[297]

Despite his lack of interest in expanding motorised facilities, the Governor still recognised that with the gradual urbanisation of Accra, efficient means of transportation was crucial. As he reported:

> *There can, I think be no doubt that the colony is rapidly outgrowing its existing means of transport together with its available labour force and that energetic action is necessary if the phenomenal increase in its prosperity which the past few years have witnessed is not more long to be abruptly arrested.*[298]

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[294] A. P. Haydon, 'Sir Mathew Nathan, Governor of the Gold Coast 1900-1904', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 11, (1970), 106.
[295] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/15/2/2, Gold Coast Extension of Railway System, 1913
[296] *Ibid.*
[297] *Ibid.*
[298] *Ibid.*

From the above, it is evident that Accra lacked a proper motorised system prior to the First World War. According to Abass Adamu, one of the horse-drawn transporters, his predecessors who used horses for transportation in Accra prior to the First World War did so because there were few alternatives and horse transportation was considered one of the best means of transportation. Horses were faster than humans and moved more goods to far places within a relatively short time. By 1914, Accra had expanded to include Adabraka, Labadi, Osu, and other places, but with less motorable roads or motor cars. The lot fell to head-load portage by humans, who nonetheless were slower and carried lighter loads.

Just as the expansion of the city did not come along with proper motorised transport, it was the same with the provision of basic social amenities such as pipe-borne water. It is important to note that until 1914, Accra depended mainly on wells, rain water, and lagoons.[299] The dependence on these sources of water led to a boom in the carriage economy, especially using horses. Even when Accra was connected with pipe-borne water and street pipes were installed for the general public, few inhabitants connected pipes to their homes because water from the street pipes was free while those connected to homes attracted a fee. In order to save cost in terms of connecting to individual homes, the colonial administration put a high fee on water connected to private homes. The effect was that some lost their homes when they defaulted in payment, and their houses were confiscated and sold by the Accra Town Council.[300] To avoid confiscation of their homes owing to default in payment of water bills, most inhabitants in Accra depended on the street pipes for water. Many residents also requested the Zabarima water carriers (*ruwaruwa*) to supply them with water, while others depended on horse-based portage for supply from the public stand pipes. Essentially, the introduction of horse-based portage prior to the First World War can be seen as a technological innovation which was necessary in the wake of both urbanisation and the unavailability of motorised transport facilities within Accra.

Events during the First World War and after also facilitated the use of horse-based portage. For example, the cocoa boom immediately after the war led to the further growth of Accra, which in turn led to a diversion of labour from head-load portage into

[299] PRO, Kew, London, CO 96/742/14, Water Supply: Petition by Ga Mantse, 1938.
[300] *Ibid.*

construction and other sectors.[301] The diversion created an opportunity for horse-based portage in Accra. For example, the scale of wages for carriers per diem for a head load not exceeding 60 lbs to any of the following destinations—Ada, Akuse, Kpong, Prampram, Kwitta (Keta), Saltpond, Winneba, and Cape Coast—was between two shillings, six pence and one shilling, three pence.[302] Construction companies paid between three shillings, six pence and two shillings, two pence. In extreme cases, four shillings, two pence was offered to some labourers.[303]

The desperation on the part of colonial authorities for labour in other fields, including head-load portage, compelled the Governor, under the auspices of the Colonial Secretary, to convene a conference to deliberate on the issue. At the conference, the Colonial Secretary stated as follows:

> *It has recently come to my knowledge that higher rates of pay than the scheduled have been offered and paid by a firm which was not operating in the colony at the time of our last meeting and that this breakaway has been followed by another large employer of labour without notice to the central Labour Bureau... it is useless to continue to attract employees away from one another. I do not blame the men for going where the highest pay is offered and it is for you to say whether this unhealthy competition is to continue or whether some general understanding is to be come to on the question.*[304]

Whereas the desertions created an opportunity for horse transportation in terms of carriage of goods, the same construction or building of houses also brought about enormous opportunities for the use of horses for carrying sand, bricks, wood, and cement to construction sites.[305] As one of the horse-based porters reported:

> *Much of the sand used for building was brought from the seaside by horses. I did not use my horse to carry sand for building but my friends did. That time no tipper trucks and it was horses that carried sand from the beach to the sites. It was later that sand for building was brought from other places such as Achimota and Kasoa. Also the Timber Market was located right*

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[301] For more on the impact of the cocoa on Accra's development, see R. R. Brand 'The Spatial Organisation of Residential Areas in Accra, Ghana, with Particular Reference to Aspects of Modernisation', *Economic Geography*, 48:3 (1972), 284-98. For scarcity of labour, see K. O. Akurang-Parry, 'We cast about for a Remedy: Chinese Labour and African Opposition in the Gold Coast: 1874-1914', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 34:2 (2001), 365-84.

[302] PRAAD, Accra ADM 11/1, Difficulty in Obtaining Carriers for Special Remittances, 1919. Ada and Prampram are located in the Greater Accra Region; Akuse and Kpong are currently in the Eastern Region; Keta is in the Volta Region; Saltpond and Winneba are in the Central Region.

[303] *Ibid.*

[304] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1, Artisans and Labourers- Accra Schedule of Daily Rates of Pay, 1919

[305] It must be stated that even to this day, communities which lie close to the beach such as Labadi, James Town, Mamprobi, and Chorkor, still use the sand on the beaches for building.

here between the lorry park and the Makola Market before it was moved to Fadama. The wood for building and roofing were all carried by horses.[306]

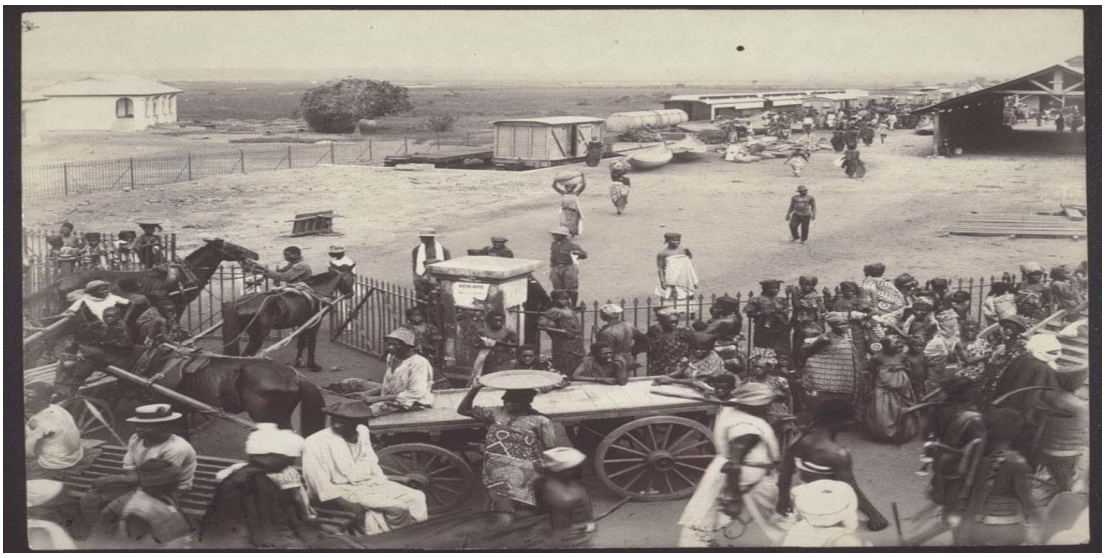
It is interesting to note that the use of horses in the construction industry in Accra persisted even into the post-independence era.

A horse used to carry timber at the Timber Market in Accra. Note also the sea-sand and the stone chippings. (A-M1-B-N-00134-01. Photo by Willis Bell, taken in 1958, reproduced with permission from Mofra Foundation, Accra, Ghana)

Earlier I noted the lack of commitment by Sir Hugh Clifford in developing motorised transport, which led to the development of horse-based portage in Accra. In 1919, the Gold Coast had a new Governor. Governor Guggisberg, unlike Sir Hugh Clifford, was committed to the development of infrastructure in Accra, including the provision of railways and roads. By 1923, the Accra-Kumasi railway line was completed. More cocoa and kola nuts were brought from Akyem areas—including Nsawam, Mangoase, and Adawso—to Accra by train. In most cases, horses and men were used to transport the cocoa from the railway station to the port in James Town.[307] The kola nuts were also transported by horse to the various *zongos* in Accra. Even though goods could be transported at record speed to any point along the line by trains, the further conveyance of these goods was still dependent on forms of animal portage.[308] The utilisation of

[306] Interview with Baba Addisa.
[307] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/14/12, Report Book on the Visit of His Royal Highness: The Prince of Wales to the Gold Coast Colony, 1925.
[308] J. B. Gewald, 'Missionaries, Hereros, and Motor Cars: Mobility and the Impact of Motor Vehicles in Namibia before 1940', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 35:2/3 (2002), 258.

horse-drawn transportation to complete the chain of distribution shows the complementary role of both transport systems in Accra.



Group of horse-drawn transporters wait for load at the railway station in Accra (Source: D-30.01.040. Reproduced with permission from Mission 21 archives, Basel, Switzerland)

As noted in the next chapter, the successful connection of roads from the interior to Accra facilitated the movement of goods and passengers into the city, a factor which necessitated the introduction of municipal transport services and the creation of lorry parks.[309] Beginning with the Salaga Market lorry park in 1925 and the Rowe Road or Central (Tudu) lorry park in 1929, by 1939 a third lorry park west of the Salaga Market lorry park were operational in Accra. The creation of the lorry parks brought further opportunities for horse-drawn transporters in Accra.[310] Contrary to the assertion by Deborah Pellow that municipal transport came to replace horse and mule transport in 1927, archival sources indicate that horse and mule transport continued several years after and were put into greater use for conveying goods within the city.[311] In fact, trade statistics show an increase in the importation of horses from the Northern Territories into the colony during the period. For example, 642 horses were imported in 1927-8, the number increased to 958 in 1928-9, and further increased to 1,009 in 1929-30.[312] Even though motorised transport was in use, the colonial administration still recognised the importance of horse-drawn transportation in Accra's development. As the

[309] PRAAD, CSO, 14/1/270, Lorry Parks, Accra, 1938
[310] *Ibid.*
[311] D. Pellow, *Landlords and Lodgers*, 27.
[312] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG, 8/3/20, Blue Book Report, 1927-1930

correspondence between the Sanitary Engineer and the President of the Accra Town Council in 1934 regarding horse-based porters in Tudu reports:

> *The suggestion that the area between Boundary Road extension and the lorry park could be utilised as a market space would involve the removal of the two groups of stables and their erection elsewhere. These stables contain about twenty horses and mules, many belonging to poor truck owners in the neighbourhood who were persuaded to remove their animals from the congested compounds in the middle of the town.*[313]

The above statement suggests that horse and mule transportation not only survived years after the introduction of municipal transport services but also played a complementary role to the lorry parks and markets in Accra just as it did with rail transport. As indicated earlier, the creation of Selwyn Market and Makola Market also contributed to the gradual growth of Tudu.[314] The markets added value to the land in and around Makola as trade now centred around these two markets. There was a growing need for expansion of existing shops and the building of new ones by traders. As indicated in chapter one by 1939 the Lebanese had established shops in Tudu since it was close to the larger expatriate commercial firms such as United Africa Company (UAC), Union Trading Company (UTC), and Paterson Zochonis (PZ). The establishment of the shops and stores, in addition to the two markets, brought business to horse-drawn porters as they moved goods from the markets, shops, and stores to various locations in Accra.

As lorry parks, markets, shops, and stores provided jobs for the horse owners, so the economic depression and petrol shortage in the 1940s provided added advantages to the use of horses. In 1949 an animal census in Accra revealed that there were as many as 800 horses in Accra, some of which were used for transportation.[315] As a result of the economic depression of the 1940s, the colonial authority became very economical in the use of petrol. An informant reported that the period could be described as the golden age of horse-based transportation in Accra, as many traders depended on horses for conveying foodstuffs to sales points and homes.[316] Government policy restricted the use of petrol for the conveyance of passengers and products other than foodstuffs. In addition, the government advocated the use of other means of transportation rather than motor transport. Within Accra itself, the Governor, through the Colonial Secretary, sent

[313]PRADD, Accra, CSO 11/14/144, Selwyn Market, 1934.
[314] See Chapter 1.
[315] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/161, Report on the Gold Coast 1949.
[316] Abass's profile has been given in previous discussions

a circular to all government officials advising them of the need for petrol to be conserved. A portion of the circular read as follows:

> *I am directed by the Governor to inform you that further severer restrictions in petrol consumption have now been approved to meet changing circumstances as regards petrol supplies. Private cars will be most affected by the proposed reduction in issues and it is certain that the authorised allowances will not in many cases be sufficient to enable car owners to drive daily between their houses and their offices.*[317]

To add to the problem, commercial drivers were given a 'permit' or 'chit' to purchase petrol according to the work in which they were engaged. Since the petrol allowance was usually small, owners of commercial vehicles naturally tended to carry the highest-paying freight, and in most cases they took passengers and left the less remunerative foodstuffs.[318] Those who agreed to carry foodstuffs from distant places, upon arrival at the lorry park in Accra and because of the sparse use of petrol, usually called horse-based porters to do the internal distribution. An informant from the Tankass Line reported:

> *We were as important as the vehicles. We completed the chain of transportation. We did not quarrel with the lorry drivers because they did not take our jobs from us. They rather gave us job. In the night when the vehicles arrived they came and woke us up to carry corn and kola to Osu and Nima or any part of the city. Even white people came to us to move their furniture to their homes when they bought from the stores at UTC. Some residents in Accra hired the horses from us to tour the city. Those who could ride would pay one pound for the whole day; those who could not ride, we carried them round and charged two pounds for the whole day. We charged around eight shillings for load between Tudu and Osu or Tudu and Nima or Kaneshie. We took three shillings for loads to Adabraka and James Town. Our charges were considered cheaper than lorries.*[319]

In the 1950s, the metropolitan boundaries of Accra were expanded to include newer areas such as Madina and Abeka, among others.[320] The expansion of the city brought some important significant changes in horse transportation in Tudu. For example, the expansion of the city led to the utilisation of more efficient means of garbage disposal such as the use of garbage vehicles. Alhaji Dandani's contract for garbage collection

[317] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 17/1/61, Bus Service for European Residents, 1942.
[318] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 17/1/5, Petrol Quotas to vehicles transporting Foodstuffs etc. to Main Centres of Population, 1942.
[319] Interview with Baba Addisa and Mallam Nuhu, 17 May 2009
[320] I. E. A. Yeboah, 'Demographic and Housing Aspects of Structural Adjustment and Emerging Urban Form in Accra, Ghana', *Africa Today*, 50:1 (Spring-Summer, 2003), 113.

was therefore terminated. The termination of his contract led to the collapse of the Tangass Line. Alhaji Dandani immediately diversified into motor transportation and began operating on the Tudu-Tamale route. Akin to the Tangass Line, Sakast Stable, owned and operated by Issifu Lalo, collapsed in 1969 following the introduction of the Aliens Compliance Order. The Order led to the deportation of Issifu and most of his employees. Abbass, who earlier worked with Sakast, inherited all the horses. He was spared deportation because of his connections to Salaga in the north, since his grandmother was Gonja. Also, unlike Sakast Stable and Tangass Line, some of Abass's workers were Ghanaians.

The 1970s also saw a significant growth of population of Accra despite the economic crises of the time.[321] Consequently there was an upsurge of local restaurants in some parts of Accra, especially within the lorry parks as well as other neighbourhoods such as Osu and Labadi. Since most of the food was prepared in homes and transported to particular selling points, the vendors mainly relied on the horses to transport the food to the designated areas. Furthermore, in the 1970s road transport in Accra was elaborate, allowing a specialisation of some of the horse transporters in the conveyance of prepared foods from other neighbourhoods into the busy areas in the city. One of the transporters (Abass Adamu) in Tudu narrated his evening routine in the 1970s as follows: "I moved *kenkey* of one of my customers called Numuae from Osu to Tudu Lorry Park.[322] I also moved cooked rice of another customer from James Town to Mamprobi and Korle-Bu, and a third customer's *wakye* (boiled rice and beans) from New Town to the lorry park at Kwame Nkrumah Circle and carried *banku* from Adabraka to Tudu Lorry Park".[323]

In the later part of the 1970s and early part of the 1980s the economy of Ghana was in desperate crisis.[324] Motor transportation was infrequent, and it was very difficult to obtain petrol and also lorry parts, especially tyres. This lack of transportation also reinforced the use of horses for transportation. The economic crises of the 1980s led to the migration of many Ghanaians to most neighbouring countries in West Africa and

[321] Ibid. 110.
[322] *Kenkey* is a meal made from milled corn. It is usually eaten with fish and ground pepper mixed with tomatoes.
[323] Routine of Baba Addisa.
[324] S. D. Barwa, 'Structural Adjustment Programmes and the Urban Informal Sector in Ghana', *Issues in Development*, Discussion Paper 3 (International Labour Office Geneva, 1995), Introduction.

Europe, with more relocating in Nigeria. In Nigeria those who had some money bought and sent essential commodities to Tudu for onward distribution. Tudu is the only lorry park in Accra which runs regular motor transport services to the major cities in Nigeria. The lorry park therefore became a major facilitator of remittances. Oral sources indicate that remittances at times went beyond money to include clothes, soap, sewing machines, sugar, and rice. Horse-drawn transporters in Tudu became a link between Accra and Nigeria as they used their horses to cart the goods from the park to the houses of the inhabitants.

Abdulai, a Dagomba horse-based porter, also describes the important role played by the horse-drawn transporters during the time of Ghana's economic crises. According to him, the later part of the 1970s and the early 1980s was both the most lucrative and the most risky period for them.[325] Economic hardships of the time compelled traders to adopt a number of survival strategies. Tudu, as a major transport hub in the proximity of Makola Market, became the head of *kalabule* (the black market). Horses became important means of transporting imported goods from the seashore into the market, mostly at night. The territorial waters of Ghana, especially along the coast in the Greater Accra region, were not well policed. When vehicles picked up goods from Lagos or Lome, the goods were discharged half-way at Sege and then loaded onto canoes heading to the sea-shore at James Town.[326] From James Town, horse riders collected the goods, which included soap, sugar, rice, and cloth, among other things and transported them to Tudu for onward transportation at the lorry park to other destinations in the country. The rest of the goods were transported by horses to other parts of Accra. According to Abdulai, it was possible to use horses in the smuggling business because they possessed two advantages. If the police team were on foot, the horses were faster than the police. If they were also in a patrol car, the horse riders could quickly leave the main road and move into the neighbourhoods and in between the houses, making it difficult for the police to pursue them in their cars. From the story narrated above, it is clear that even though the activities of the horse-drawn transporters seem to be illegal, they nonetheless

[325] Interview with Abdulai Dagomba Tudu, 18 May 2009. Abdulai is about seventy years old and was one of the employees of Abass Adamu. He now has two horses and hires them out to Muslims in Tudu when they are celebrating the Id-ul-Adha and Id-ul-Fitre.

[326] Sege is located on the Accra-Lome highway. It is about thirty minutes' drive from Accra. Abdulai's story corresponds with a similar occurrence in Accra and Lome following the fuel crises of the 1940s in Gold Coast. For more on the smuggling of the 1940s, see PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 6/5/21, Smuggling and Seizure in Southern Section, Eastern Frontier Preventive Service, 1941-1945.

played an important role during difficult times in making available basic commodities to residents of Accra and beyond.

In 1985, Abass was knocked down by a vehicle after delivering goods in Nima. With no one to continue his business, horse transportation ended in Tudu in 1986. But Alhassan, whom he had trained, continued the transportation business in Sabon Zongo, another suburb of Accra. With the gradual increase of 'trotros' in Accra, and the ever increasing numbers of head-load porters from the northern part of Ghana, horses have come to be used less frequently in the city.[327] Today, horses are mainly used in moving kiosks meant for small trading, hairdressing salons, and drinking bars. What has remained of the horses' use in Tudu are the hiring aspects for purposes of celebrating Islamic festivities, such as Id-ul-Adha and Id-ul-Fitre.

A section of the Yoruba community celebrating the 2008 Id-ul-Fitre at Tudu on hired horses. Ahead is Alhaji Mohamed Buniameen Braimah (a.k.a. Alhaji Billy). He is the '*Balogun'* of the current Yoruba chief, Chief Braimah IV, and Secretary to the Association of Muslim Chiefs in Ghana. (Photo by author, 2008)

One would have thought that owing to the resilience of horse transportation it could have been used on a larger scale in Accra. What then were the factors which worked against the growth of horse transportation in Tudu and Accra? And what is the life history of some of these transporters? We conclude the discussion on horse-based portage by elaborating on the constraints faced by this important transport component and providing two life stories in the horse transportation business.

[327] *Trotro* refers to mini-vans used in conveying passengers in Accra.

Competition, Constraints, and Life Histories

Throughout this discussion I have indicated the importance of horse-based portage in Tudu and Accra. However, the significance of horses for transportation in Accra should not be over-exaggerated. Horse transport did not wholly displace head-load portage, a mode which we have discussed in the previous chapter.

Besides the human-related competition, the most hostile constraint was the disease environment owing to the incidence of tseste fly. Tsetse fly is the vector of trypanosomiasis, which causes sleeping sickness and eventually death.[328] Even though the central part of Accra, which includes Tudu, was relatively free of tsetse fly, the prevalence of tsetse fly in the immediate environments such as Dodowa, Aburi, and Winneba prevented the expansion of horse-based portage beyond Accra.[329] The unfriendly environment made it very difficult to breed more horses even though a few succeeded in breeding against several challenges in Accra. The limitation has often compelled transporters to depend upon imports of horses from further north as far as Bawku, Wa, and Yendi and from imports by sea from Lagos and the United Kingdom.

Another constraint was time. Despite the fact that horse-drawn transportation was faster than human portage, it had certain inherent problems when compared with motor transportation. For example, more time was needed to allow the animals to graze and rest.[330] Horses were less effective when the sun was hot. It was therefore not surprising that informants reported their preference for using horses to cart goods at night and in the mornings.

The construction of additional lorry parks in Accra and the completion of roads within the city also affected the smooth operation of horse-based portage in Tudu and Accra. Accidents from motorised transport remain the greatest hazard to horse-drawn traffic. Unlike other countries where lanes are made for pedestrians, bicycles, and horses, in Accra the street is shared by all these forms of transportation. Considering also the fact that some Ghanaian motor drivers do not know road traffic regulations,

[328] D. C. Dorward & A. I. Payne, 'Deforestation, the Decline of the Horse and the Spread of the Tsetse Fly and Trypanosomiasis (Nagaa) in Nineteenth Century Sierra Leone', *Journal of African History*, 16 (1975), 239-56.
[329] K. B. Dickson, *An Economic Geography of Ghana*, 219.
[330] J. B. Gewald, 'Missionaries, Hereros and Motor Cars', 276.

using the same streets with motor vehicles is nothing short of risky.[331] There have been reports of horses and their riders being knocked down by moving vehicles, but the most serious accident was in 1985, involving Abass Adamu, whose life history is contained in another section of this chapter. The accident rendered him permanently disabled, thus ending his career.

The third risk is attacks by robbers. Horses are used to convey goods at any time once they are called upon. The need to maximise profit and also to satisfy customers makes the porters work throughout the night. Most of the areas are poorly lit, making robbers less visible. Informants say the Kawo Kude Junction around Nima and the area further north of Adabraka remain the dreaded areas for them.[332] They have on several occasions been attacked, consequently forcing them to use long and winding routes to avoid the robbers, or travel in pairs.

Having examined the problems associated with horse-drawn transportation, it is important to look at the life histories of those associated with horse transportation. Two people have been selected for discussion. The first was an importer of horses; the second began with horse-drawn transportation and ended with it.

Life History One: Imoru Mabolaji Peregrino Braimah: The supplier of horses

Imoru was the second son of Chief Braimah, the founder of Tudu. His mother was Peregrino Fatima, a second wife of Chief Braimah. Fatima's father was one of the returned Afro-Brazilians from Bahia to Dutch Accra in the first decade of the nineteenth century.[333] Imoru Mabolaji was married to two wives and had seven children. Just like his father, who was a businessman in kola nuts and cattle, he also went into business. Unlike his father, he instead dealt in horses and the export of gold and other imported products. His business took him to the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

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[331] For insights into careless driving and illiterate drivers, see article by Miss Cecelia Agyekum, *Gold Coast Daily Mail*, 29 October 1956.

[332] Kawo Kudi in Hause translates as 'Bring Money'. The name came about as a result of thieves who, in the course of their operation, always tell their victims to bring money before they are spared. The Junction is north-west of the Accra International Airport and about two minutes' drive from the 37 military hospital in Accra.

[333] Alcione M. Amos & E. Ayesu, 'I am Brazilian'. History of the Tabon, Afro-Brazilians in Accra, Ghana, in *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana,* New Series, 6 (University of Ghana, Legon, 2002), 41.

Imoru's ability to travel to these places was probably due to the connections of his maternal uncles. For example, Francis Zaccheus, Peregrino's eldest son and a brother of Imoru's mother, was born in Accra but left for England in the 1860s to study. In the later part of the 1880s he moved to the United States, where he published a newspaper in Albany, New York. Eventually he settled in Cape Town, South Africa, where he published for many years a newspaper titled the *South African Spectator*. He died in South Africa in 1919.[334] As one of the informants reported: "For Imoru to take the name Peregrino means he had very close contacts with his uncles; he got his wealth from the maternal uncles rather than from his father, Chief Braimah".[335]

By 1930 Imoru had begun importing horses from the United Kingdom and supplying them to Tudu and Accra. Through his horse trade and other businesses, Imoru had become wealthy and built mansions in Cow Lane, Tudu and New Town. He was a patron of the Accra Race Course and the Accra Turf Club. In the 1930s he was made an administrator of the Accra Race Course. Imoru employed his younger brother and his son at the race course. His brother was in charge of flagging the starter to signal the take-off of horses and his son was the commentator. Imoru was one of the first Yoruba in Accra to keep peacocks, parrots, and ostriches in his house garden. He also kept a stable in New Town, where he maintained a permanent residence. He hired jockeys who ran races for him.

His favourite imported horse, named Uda Uda, earned Imoru fame and wealth. One of his jockeys won three trophies with Uda Uda. The performance of the horse made other stable keepers and horse-drawn transporters rely on him for similar breed from abroad. Besides supplying horses, Imoru facilitated tournaments between Ghana and Nigeria. Imoru sold some of his local breeds which he reared to his kinsmen in Tudu but gave away the imported horses that were used for races and became weak free of charge to the porters. He was therefore one of the contributors to the development of horse-drawn transportation in Tudu and Accra.

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[334] *Ibid.* 53.

[335] Interview with Alhaji Mohamed Buniameen Braimah (a.k.a. Alhaji Billy), Tudu 3 August 2008 Alhaji Billy received his elementary education at Adabraka and secondary education at Kinbu, Tudu. He studied at Accra Academy for his Advanced-Level Certificate and received his BA Degree at the University of Ghana, Legon, in economics and Islamic studies. He went to Cairo for further studies in Arabic. He returned to Ghana in the 1960s and has since been a building contractor and an exporter of yams to the United Kingdom. He is one of the grandsons of Chief Braimah, the founder of Tudu. He is the *Balogon* of the current Yoruba chief, Chief Braimah IV. The position of *Balogon* is equivalent to the *Sarikin Yachi* or chief warrior among the Hausa. He is secretary to the National Association of Muslim Chiefs in Ghana.

The success of Imoru's business led to his importation of a Lincoln Limousine in the 1940s, a time when horse-drawn transportation was still used in Tudu. That feat added to his prestige and popularity in Accra in general, and Tudu in particular. His name changed from Imoru Peregrino Braimah to 'Imoru Lincoln'. Imoru Peregrino Braimah, alias Imoru Lincoln, died in Accra in 1957.

Life History Two: Abbas Adamu: the transporter

Abass could not tell me his date of birth but said he was born before the lorry park in Tudu was established in 1927. His father was called Adamu Kukaa and his mother was Fatima Baidare, the daughter of a prominent kola-nut trader. His father had one wife and gave birth to three boys, including Abass, and one girl. Abass is now the only surviving child of his father. Abass's father was a cattle trader in Tudu. None of the children was sent to school. His father was one of the few who felt Arabic or Islamic education was the best for his children since that would keep them closer to Allah. Abass was sent to the Arabic School (*makaranta*) of Mallam Ala' braka, one of the founders of Adabraka.[336] Abass did not finish the Arabic school. According to him he got the basics, at least those that he could use for his daily prayers.

At the age of twelve he began going to the Accra Race Course, where he met his master Issifu Lalo, who was already using horses to cart goods in Accra. He told him that he would like to join him. Lalo told him that to use horses for transport business he needed to be strong and also have a lot of patience, so he would have to wait until he was grown up. To make use of his time, in the mornings he went to the Orielly Secondary School, which was located at Tudu and close to his house and squatted behind the classrooms to listen to the teachers teach. As he said: "For me it was not Mathematics, Science, or English. All I knew was that every day the teachers spoke English and that was all I wanted to learn". In the evenings he would go to Tudu Lorry Park to head-load smaller goods of traders to their homes in Tudu.

At the age of fifteen he was recruited by Lalo into the transport business. Fortunately for him, his three years of frequenting the secondary school paid off. He could communicate in the English language, an asset which he put to use in his business as a horse-drawn porter. He was superior to his colleagues because he could speak

[336] See Chapter 1 for more on Mallam Ala' braka

English and therefore had a larger clientele. He worked for Lalo in his Sakast Stable for ten years. Abass's colleagues at Sakast included Barawu, Alhassan, Dangbe, Zik, and a few others whose names he could not remember. He described his period of work with Sakast as fruitful since his master Lalo built two houses and married several wives as a result of the success of the transport business.

In the 1940s Lalo bought a horse from Imoro Lincoln and gave it to him to start his own business. By 1960 Abass had over ten horses working for him. Unlike his master Lalo, who bought horses from Imoro Lincoln and the police, he bought most of his horses from a Ga horse merchant called Attram. Attram brought most of his horses from Yendi, for Abass, unlike his colleagues who depended on the foreign breeds, was of the view that the local breeds were better suited for horse-drawn transportation since they easily developed immunity to trypanosomiasis. Abass employed more people in 1969 after he inherited horses from his master, who was affected by the Aliens Compliance Order. Abass was constantly personally carrying goods with his employees. He therefore became popular among his employees and his clients, who described him as 'a simple man'. According to Abass, through his horse trade he married four wives, the last one on 14 August 1966. He had twenty children in all, with four sets of twins.

Abass had five friends: Salifu Issah, a Yoruba, whose father also used horses to carry goods in Ilorin, Nigeria; Kwame, alias Ataa Maeoo, a Kwahu (one of the Akan groups) and now resident in the United States; Atta Quaye; Nii Adey; and Felii, alias *to yo teen*. Abass later abandoned his last three friends after one of them refused to top up his money with one penny for a cinema show at Roxy.[337] The next day he named one of his horses 'I Walk Alone'. He transferred his friendship to his horse, which will not only 'give me money but will not betray me', he said.

His customers included Ibos, Kotokoli, Ga, Kwahu, and Ashanti. For the Ibos and Kwahu, he conveyed their goods from the supermarkets such as UTC, UAC and Kingsway into their shops. Some of his Ibo customers were Cecilia, Leid, Okiri, Adolf, and Timothy. For the Ga he mostly conveyed corn from the lorry park to their homes at Osu and Labadi and then *kenkey* from their homes back to the lorry parks in Tudu, Tema Station, and Kwame Nkrumah Circle. His Ga customers included Amorkor, Adjele, Nii Attah Kwame, and Numuae. For the Kotokoli he conveyed kola nuts from

[337] Roxy Cinema is south of Tudu and about ten minutes' walk from the lorry park in Tudu.

the lorry park to their homes in Tudu and other *zongos* in Accra. The names of some of his Kotokoli customers included Amadu Ilorin, Alaweye Bako, Giwa, Chief Abdul-Rahim, Alhaji Etree, Tudu Matan Fada, Mallam Tanko, Alhaji Sumaila, Issufu Aliu, and Issifu Issah. He also carried yams from the lorry park to various places in Accra. Yams in those days were kept in paper boxes, making it easier to load unto horse carts. His yam customers were mostly Ashanti: two names he could remember were Atta and Antie. With shea butter he was more of a distributor than a transporter. He usually received money from the Sarikin Zongo of Koforidua, and then he would give the money to drivers going to the north. They would buy the shea butter and transport it to the lorry park at Tudu. At the park he would load the shea butter to a house a few kilometres from the lorry park, called Samori house. There he was told where within the city to send the butter to customers. The rest of the shea butter remained there until he got word or message (*labaru* or *sako* in Hausa) from the Sarikin Zongo of Koforidua. Then he would load it again into his cart back to the lorry park and load it on the vehicles bound for Koforidua. He was given a commission for all these tasks.

According to Abass, he became so popular in most parts of Accra that as a result he was persuaded to join the Convention Peoples Party, since Kwame Nkrumah frequented the house of Amadu Ilorin, alias 'Baba Tudu', the father of Baba Addisa and a colleague in the horse-drawn transportation business. Abass got involved in party politics, especially with the Young Pioneers at Tudu. He was given the chance to display with his horse during the Independence Day celebration in 1957. On that day he changed the name of his favourite horse 'I Walk Alone' to 'Ghana Forever'.

Abbas returns to Tudu after attending the Independence Day celebration in 1957. The name of the horse 'I Walk Alone' was changed to 'Ghana Forever'. (Picture reproduced with permission from Abbas).

After Nkrumah's overthrow, Abass was not active in politics until the time of Rawlings in 1979 and 1981, when became he a member of the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR) in Tudu. In 1985 he was knocked down by a vehicle at Novotel when he was returning from Nima after discharging bags of kola nuts. He has since abandoned his horse riding since his waist has been dislocated. His three wives abandoned him after the accident, leaving the fourth one, Asana, the one he married in 1966. From 1986 until now, he has been an advisor to the Muslim community in Tudu and always goes to the police station to bail out people who are arrested in Tudu. Even though Abass is not the sole transporter in Accra, his predicament led to a shift in the history of horse-drawn transportation. Following his accident, the focus of horse transport shifted to Sabon Zongo.

Conclusion

From the discussions so far, it is evident that northerners have played a very important role in the transport revolution in Accra. It is also a fact that horse-based portage not only survived and played a complementary role in the early days of rail and road transportation, but actually increased throughout the early period of introduction of motor cars. The increased use of horses for transporting goods and building materials indicates that northerners have contributed to both the economic development and physical expansion of Accra through the use of horses.

4

Connecting the City: Motor Car, Lorry Parks and Routes in Tudu

Introduction

Although the motor vehicle was introduced into Accra in 1902 for the use of the Governor, Sir Nathan Mathew, for purposes of efficient administration, it was soon appropriated by northerners in the city. In later years after its introduction, the motor vehicle, just like human-powered and horse-drawn transport, became the means through which northerners contributed to the development of Accra, first as drivers and second as vehicle owners. This was possible because the Royal West African Frontier Force was composed mostly of northerners. While in active service in East Africa, these northerners acquired driving skills. After demobilisation in the 1920s, some of them took on the job as drivers in Accra, with some graduating to be vehicle owners. The motor vehicle also became important in northern trade in Accra, as traders used it to move their kola nuts, shea butter, and—later—tomatoes into, out of, and within Accra. With the establishment of the lorry park in Tudu in 1929, motorised transport fell firmly under the control of northerners. And by the establishment of the Motor Transport Union, a precursor to the Ghana Private Road Transport Union, much of the urban space within the Central Business District of Accra came to be controlled by northerners. This chapter charts the development of Accra through northerners and their involvement in motorised transport in the city.

The chapter discusses some of the changes that occurred as a result of the introduction of motorised transport in Accra's Tudu. I argue that a critical appreciation of the motor vehicle and the lorry park is essential to the history of Tudu and Accra. For regardless of whether one is studying horse-drawn transport, head-load portage, or trade in Tudu and Accra, one cannot ignore the role of the motor vehicle and the lorry park. The chapter presents an overview of the introduction of the motor vehicle in Ghana. It also investigates the reasons for, and relevance of, the establishment of lorry parks by the colonial administration in Accra, in order to highlight the connections this transport system had with other transport modes and economic activities in the other chapters. Finally, the chapter deals with the complex relationship between various local political networks which existed and thrived at the lorry park, such as the Drivers' Association.

The historical context of transport and goods in Accra

Trade was and still remains an important occupation that connects Accra to most of the other parts of Ghana. Different products link the city to its neighbours and the hinterland. These products include palm oil, kola nuts, shea butter, traditional cloth, beads, and cattle, among others. Trade in these products required different modes of transport. For example, head portage was a well-known and indispensable transport system that linked Accra to other parts of Ghana. But head portage was slow and expensive and could be dangerous. Much energy was required and, in addition, a separate daily allowance and daily charges had to be maintained for porters.[338] In areas where palm trees were grown, such as Akropon and Krobo in the present-day Eastern Region, palm oil and palm kernel were rolled to Accra.[339] The disadvantage of rolling casks along tracks was the danger it posed to other track users and the frequent accidents that resulted owing to weak bridges constructed over streams and rivers. As Governor Gordon Guggisberg noted in the early part of the 1920s:

> *In the palm-bearing areas these tracks were often widened, sufficiently to permit large casks of palm oil or palm kernel to be rolled along them. On steep hills it was no uncommon sight to see one of these casks which was rolled by three or four men, get out of control and come bounding down the track, threatening unwary travellers with extinction and seriously damaging the wooden bridges and culverts.*[340]

Another important transport system was by water. Water transport had been one of the most important transport networks in Ghana. Connection to Accra was by sea, mainly using canoes from the present-day Central, Western, and Volta regions and areas further afield. Well-known international destinations for Ghanaian canoe-men included present-day Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal, and Liberia. River connection was limited to the Volta, which flows through Northern Ghana to the estuary at Ada via Kpong, making available northern products such as kola nuts and shea butter to Accra through the ports at Kpong, Akuse, and Ada, and southern products—particularly salt—to the Northern Territories.[341]

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[338] See Chapters 5 and 6 for more insights on the trade in kola nuts and shea butter.
[339] G. Guggisberg, *The Gold Coast: A Review of the Events of 1920-1926 and the Prospects of 1927-1928* (Accra: Government of the Gold Coast, 1927), 78. Krobo refers to a geographical area that spans from Dodowa, about thirty minutes' drive east of the Accra city centre, to Kpong, about an hour's drive from Accra. The geographical area is inhabited by a Dangbe ethnic group called the Krobo. Akropong is north-east of Accra and also about one hour's drive from the Accra city centre.
[340] *Ibid.* 79.
[341] See Chapters 5 and 6.

Within Accra, horse- and mule-drawn transport were used, but the presence of tropical insects such as tsetse fly prohibited any effective use of animals as means of transportation between Accra and the interior, especially the forest zones.[342] Rickshaws were another option. Rickshaws were mainly patronised by the elite in Accra, particularly the honourable members of the legislative council.[343] Rickshaws, however, lacked compactness, owing to the lack of a proper connection between the carriers and the container with its passengers.

Rail transport became available from 1910, when the Accra-Weija railway was built to facilitate the construction of the Accra water-works, situated at Weija, about twenty miles west of the city. In 1916 the line was taken over by the railway department, opened to public traffic, and used for the carriage of passengers and foodstuffs for the Accra market.[344] In 1918 a rail line, which had started from Accra eastwards in 1909, linked the city to the cocoa- and kola-nut-producing areas of the present-day Eastern Region. In 1923 the railway was connected from Kumasi to Accra, completing a very important transport network. The internal line from Weija to Accra, however, was replaced by a road in 1939, as a result of the increase in the costs of running the line and competition from motorised transportation.[345] In addition to the cost and competition, the railway did not provide direct means of communication to specific geographical locations, and goods still had to be head-loaded to loading points.

Thus, even though prior to the introduction of the motor vehicle, different modes of transport were already in existence—namely portage, water, animal-drawn, and railway—these had several limitations. It was due in part to these limitations that the motor car was introduced into the Gold Coast.

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[342] See Chapter 5 for more insights.
[343] G. Guggisberg, *A Review of Events*, 79. Gordon Guggisberg and the elite in Accra referred to the rickshaws as go-carts. Why the Governor and inhabitants in Accra chose to refer to them as go-carts is unclear, but informants indicate that 'go-go' was a common phrase that was used by the elite, in this case the passengers, to signal their illiterate carriers to move any time they were ready to go.
[344] PRO, Kew, London, CO 96/744/7, Public Works: Replacement of the Accra-Weija Railway by Road, 1939.
[345] *Ibid.*

The Motor Vehicle and Early Development of Motorised Transport

The first motor vehicle in the Gold Coast, a Gardner-Serpollet steam-driven car, was obtained in 1902 for the use of the Governor, Sir Mathew Nathan.[346] It was ordered apparently on the suggestion of the Secretary of State, Mr Joseph Chamberlin, who wrote in a dispatch that

It must be advisable to employ a motor car as an experiment on the roads near Accra or Cape Coast.[347]

Nathan's car remained in use until about 1908, when it was sold to Monsieur A. Dumas, a local French trader, for five pounds. Owing to poor performance, Dumas decided to abandon it. Earlier attempts to increase the number of motor cars after the first car did not yield much result because of technical problems. For example, when Nathan wanted to import a petrol-driven car, a shipping company (Elder Dempster) which was to transport it objected on the grounds that their steamers could not provide conditions necessary for the safe-keeping of its petrol.[348]

By 1910 there were about twelve motor vehicles in the country. It is important to clarify the kinds of vehicles used in the Gold Coast at this stage. There were privately owned and publicly owned vehicles. The privately owned vehicles were also further divided into two types: namely, those used for the convenience or conveyance of the owner or his family, and those privately acquired and used for commercial purposes. Privately owned commercial vehicles were further divided into passenger (buses or lorries) and freight vehicles (mostly referred to as 'cargo vehicle'). The publicly owned vehicles were also divided into two types.[349] The first type were those used for official government business—mostly pick-ups, saloon cars or four-wheel-drives or buses.

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[346] A. P. Haydon. 'Sir Mathew Nathan, Governor of the Gold Coast 1900-1904', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana,* 11 (1970), 106.

[347] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 2/3/3, Confidential Dispatch from Secretary of State to the Governor, 1900.

[348] G. Guggisberg, *A Review of the Events,* 79. According to Anthony P. Haydon, Nathan's motor car was sold the next year (1903) to Dumas, and owing to its inefficiency it was thrown into the sea. So far I have not come across any archival or written literature backing Haydon's claim. For more on Nathan and the motor car, see A. Haydon, 'Sir Mathew Nathan, Governor of the Gold Coast 1900-1904', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 11 (1970).

[349] Note the difference in terminology. Unlike the United States of America or some parts of the Western world where any commercial passenger vehicle, with the exception of taxis, is termed public transport, in Ghana things are different. Publicly-owned transport refers to State-operated vehicles, while passenger transport, with the exception of taxis, owned and operated by individuals is termed private commercial transport. Perhaps the differences in terminology are due to the fact that unlike some Western countries, where passenger transport is operated by companies, in Ghana the majority of the passenger transport system is in the hands of individuals.

These vehicles mainly conveyed workers to and from their workplaces or moved from one place to another to perform official business. The second type were publicly owned commercial vehicles. These were mostly buses and freight vehicles which performed commercial functions on behalf of the government.

But there was also a third category of motor vehicles, which were neither owned by individuals nor the government, and these were those owned by other commercial concerns—examples of which include the timber, mining, and trading companies. Their operations resembled those of the government-owned vehicles, as they were used only for the sake of their companies, performing tasks such as conveying workers or the company's products. But there were also instances where the government in the early period of motorisation had to depend on the vehicles of these companies to perform government business. The reason will be explained in the course of this discussion. The categorisation of vehicles as outlined above has remained the same to date. The main concern of this chapter is the private commercial vehicles; but for purposes of analysis, the state-operated vehicles and those of commercial concerns will be referred to in the course of the discussion.

As previously noted, most of the important trading concerns, both European and African, such as Messrs West African Lighterage and Transport Company, Basel Mission, Abrahams & Co, and Swanzy Transport Ltd, among others, became pioneers in the importation of vehicles and had their own fleet of vehicles. These were mainly used to transport cocoa and other produce from the outlying districts to the rail stops or directly to the ports. By the time of the First World War, contract work was accepted by several of the firms to carry load and building materials on behalf of the government. At this stage, the government was still interested only in the development of the rail system, as opposed to the road, and had not pursued acquisition of commercial vehicles.[350]

Despite the acquisition of vehicles for commercial purposes by private concerns, construction of roads was still in its initial stages, and most of the roads were not well developed owing to climate and the lack of qualified personnel and resources. For example, the climatic conditions and scarcity of personnel with suitable knowledge

[350] PRAAD, Cape Coast, ADM 23/1/2127, Trade Roads, 1917. Some of the companies and firms included West African Lighterage and Transport Company, Basel Mission, Abraham & Co., and Swanzy's Transport Company Ltd.

about metalling made the maintenance of roads in good repair a matter of heavy cost. Constant attention and care had to be given after heavy rains. Apart from causing damage to bridges and washing away culverts, the rain also softened the roads so much that during the rainy season many of the roads frequently had to be closed to traffic until they had an opportunity to dry out and harden again. For the same reasons, the weight of motor vehicles was limited, and the use of pneumatic tyres was compulsory. Both problems presented severe handicaps to the development of mechanical transport in the Gold Coast. As argued in Chapters 2 and 3, in the case of Accra, this handicap compelled traders to use non-motorised transport in the conveyance of their goods.

After the First World War, the colonies of West Africa were flooded with cheap but efficient American Ford vehicles. The Ford vehicles, unlike others, inflicted only slight wear and tear on the roads. The introduction of the light Ford vehicle into the Gold Coast therefore partly solved the problem of motorised transportation. As John Maxwell rightly pointed out:

> *The introduction of the Ford vehicles completely revolutionarised transportation. The standardisation of their parts and the simplicity of their construction rendered it easy and cheap to maintain in a good state of repair.*[351]

Motor vehicles no longer remained just in the big towns and cities but spread into the countryside. The number of vehicles imported into the country also increased. For example, in 1919 the number of vehicles in the Gold Coast was 532, but by 1920 it had increased to 2,040. The increase in the number of motor vehicles was an indication of the determination of private firms and individuals to use the new technology for local purposes. Even though the main idea for the initial introduction of the motor vehicle was for administrative reasons, it was soon appropriated and used commercially by individuals and firms.

In the same vein, Chamberlin's consideration for the introduction of the motor vehicle into the Gold Coast was modified by colonial administrators. Besides serving the purpose of mobility, the motor vehicle was considered a means through which ideas of advancement were expressed. The link between motor transport and 'civilisation' was perfectly captured in a dispatch from the Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Roger to Chamberlin, some of which read as follows:

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[351] J. Maxwell, *The Gold Coast Handbook 1923*, 222.

> *Our laws will continue to run little further than our officers can watch its execution a large population will remain almost untouched by the civilising influence of Europeans and the desire for better things will not be awakened in them, education for their children will continue in many cases to be beyond their reach and the morals and intellectual advancement of the natives will be checked and retarded. Until the existing transport facilities have been considerably relieved a large labour of the colony will be devoted to the conveying of produce to the coast or to the nearest railway station by primitive means which entail a deplorable waste of human energy. The toil and intelligent* [sic] *which might be devoted to agriculture and other productive work will be expended upon the mere movement of goods from place to place.*[352]

Whereas colonial administrators were concerned about the utilisation of the motor vehicle for purposes of advancement, global forces were also shaping the direction of motor transport in the Gold Coast. For example, rivalry between American and British manufacturers reached a peak as each competed for customers for the young motorised transport service in the Gold Coast. A circular from the Export Department of Morris cars in Soho, Birmingham indicated the commercial importance and viability of their vehicles for British colonies and ran adverts which persuaded firms and individuals to 'Buy British and be Proud of It'.[353] Governor Guggisberg in his report of 1920-6 noted that there was serious failure on the part of manufacturers in the United Kingdom to satisfy the chief requirement of the Gold Coast: namely, the production and supply of light lorries.[354] Interestingly, the competition worked to the advantage of private businessmen, who in the midst of the competition could make a choice between British- or American-manufactured vehicles, a choice which otherwise would have been limited.

Motor traffic in the Gold Coast thus increased year by year with the importation of more vehicles and the construction of roads. From an initial 4,600 vehicles in 1926, the number increased to 6,070 in 1927. The increase in motor transport also led to an increase in mobility of persons and goods, necessitating the introduction of lorry parks in Ghana.[355]

[352] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/15/2/2, Gold Coast- Extension of Railway, 1913.
[353] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 23/1/2358, Motor Transport, 1926.
[354] G. Guggisberg, *A Review of Events*, 34.
[355] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 14/1/270, Lorry Parks, Accra, 1938-1939.

Emerging Trends and Lorry Parks in Accra: Population Change, Urban Expansion, and Markets

The colonial administration defined a lorry park as 'an area declared by a transport control officer to be an official parking place for motor vehicles'.[356] Indeed, other descriptions of Ghana's lorry parks follow similar lines. James William Jordan defined a lorry park as 'a large empty field, often an acre or more in sizeable towns, near the centre of the town. In smaller villages it may simply be an open place near the gas pumping station. Typically there is no shelter from the sun or rain but women and children could be found selling food to passengers'.[357] Poul Ove Pederson simply considered lorry parks as 'typically located at the markets and generally owned by the local governments, [having] generally poor infrastructure, with a small and untarmacked field with a small office building. There are seldom any secure storage spaces and no equipment for loading and unloading of freight'.[358]

These are initial but insufficient attempts to understand the nature of the lorry park; the definitions offered by the authors only reflect the physical space of the lorry park, ignoring the multiple roles that the lorry parks play. I argue that besides the physical space, lorry parks are an important microcosm of both urban and rural life. Lorry parks reflect the socio-political, economic, and cultural life of a country. In addition, lorry parks also provide new opportunities to break out of roles set for people or constraints placed on them by society.[359]

The creation of Accra's lorry parks was a direct reflection of the changing demography of the city at the time, as well as other emerging issues such as the establishment of markets. The population had grown from 18,574 in 1911 to 38,049 in 1921 and further increased to 61,556 by 1931.[360] Ethnically and internationally, it was composed of the indigenous Ga, migrants from the north and other African countries, Lebanese, and Europeans. The stratification of Accra's population into four was also reflected in the way lorry parks were created in Accra. The Salaga Market lorry park was the first to be established in Accra around 1925. It was meant to facilitate the

[356] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 17/1/57, Scheme for the control of the Operation of Motor Vehicles, 1942.
[357] J. W. Jordan, 'Role Segregation for fun and Profit: The Daily Behaviour of the West African Lorry Driver', *Journal of the International African Institute*, 48:1 (1979), 35.
[358] P. O. Pedersen, 'The Freight Transport and Logistical System of Ghana', *CDR Working Paper 01.2*, (Copenhagen: Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen, 2001), 48.
[359] A perfect example are the female head porters from Northern Ghana in Tudu. See Chapter 2 for detailed discussion.
[360] S. S. Quarcoopome, 'The Impact of Urbanisation', 75

distribution of fish and meat within the city. Considering the fact that the Ga were fisher folk and the majority residents—particularly in James Town, Ga Mashie, and Mamprobi—and the routes plied to and from the first lorry park were mainly connections with these known coastal settlements, we could say the park in Salaga was created purposely to satisfy the transport needs of the indigenous Ga.

In 1927 the government began operating a municipal bus system in the city, with a terminal at the General Post Office. The Post Office lorry park became the second lorry park in Accra. The focus of the park, unlike that of Salaga Market, was mainly on the conveyance of passengers. Indeed, the very segregationist tendencies which we observed (Chapter 1) in the foundation and growth of settlements within the city of Accra also applied in the operation of this municipal transport system. There were different boarding times for African civil servants, European workers, and 'ordinary' passengers within the city.

Unlike the Salaga Market lorry park, whose creation was influenced by trade in fish and meat, one could argue that the bus terminal at the General Post Office was created owing to Accra's spatial growth and an increase in passenger traffic within the city. A few examples will support this claim. At the introduction of the municipal bus system, Accra had physically expanded to incorporate a new European residential area at the Ridge, east of Tudu and north of Victoriaborg. Further to this development, a contagious disease hospital was built exclusively for Europeans in the newly developed quarter. In this way, Ridge became the first and foremost 'whiteman's town of Accra'. As already indicated in the previous chapter, in the same period in which Ridge was built, the predominantly African quarter of Accra, that is the old nuclei of James Town and Ussher Town, also began to expand northward along the Station Road (now Kwame Nkrumah Avenue) to incorporate present-day Tudu and Adabraka. Health concerns also caused Governor Gordon Guggisberg to demolish some dilapidated structures in central Accra, with the residents being housed in government buildings around Mamprobi.

Significant to the physical expansion of Accra during this period was the large modern hospital designated The Gold Coast or Korle Bu Hospital, built in 1923 and acclaimed to be one of the best in Africa.[361] Korle Bu, unlike the European Hospital at

[361] F. E. K. Amoah, 'Accra: A Study of the Development of a West African City', (MA thesis, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, 1964), 71; F. K. Buah, *A History of Ghana* (Oxford: Macmillan, 1998), 113.

Ridge, was intended to serve the African community. But of importance to our discussion is the fact that Korle Bu quickened the physical expansion of Accra. Hitherto, the westward development of Accra had been obstructed by the lagoon and the marshy areas further west of the Korle Gonno area. By bridging the lagoon between the old sections of the town and the new hospital, a great transportation barrier had been broken and the stage was set for the use of motor transport.[362]

Meanwhile, from the second decade of the 1900s, Cantonments also emerged as an important administrative and military settlement in addition to Victoriaborg, Tudu, and Ridge. Cantonments augmented Victoriaborg in the administration of lands and forestry.[363] It also assumed an important military role in addition to Tudu since another detached unit (artillery) of the Gold Coast Regiment was located there. With this spatial density, there was the need for a modern form of transport to link these disparate administrative and residential communities. Direct transportation between these communities in Accra was provided by a well-designed road across the lagoon with tarred carriage footpaths and drains.[364] With improvement in the infrastructure, the stage was set for the operation of the Municipal Bus system. Three main routes were adopted, namely from the Central Post Office to Korle-Bu Hospital, Labadi, Cantonments and Adabraka, thereby facilitating mobility of the European staff resident at Ridge as well as other African civil servants already resident in central Accra, Tudu, and Adabraka. From what we have seen so far, it is evident that the Municipal Bus system, with its terminal at the Post Office, became important in ensuring that the spatial locations mentioned above—the Ridge, Cantonments, Tudu, Adabraka, and Korle Bu—were all connected through motorised transport. Also from the narration above, it is evident that these two lorry parks never operated outside of Accra. Their operations were limited to particular locations within the city.

However, Accra at this stage was becoming interconnected with other parts of the Gold Coast in terms of trade and migration, especially from the Northern Territories. The railway still performed the role of the main mover of passengers from the interior to Accra. Even though commercial vehicles had yet to assume an increased importance in

[362] G. Guggisberg, *A Review of Events*, 123.
[363] G.Guggisberg, *A Review of Events*, 123; PRAAD, Accra, CSO 17/2/60, Motor Transport Facilities for African Officials at the Cantonment, 1940-1950.
[364] G. Guggisberg, *A Review of Events*, 123.

linking the city to other parts of the country, plans were already afoot in the city for the motor vehicle to play this role.

In 1929 the third lorry park—Rowe Road/Central lorry park, popularly called Tudu Lorry Park because of its location in Tudu—was established. The Tudu lorry park, unlike the previous two, performed the dual role of moving goods from the interior into Accra and facilitating passenger transportation into and out of the train station at Kantamanto, about three hundred metres west of Tudu. Considering the fact that the main concern of the colonial administration for this lorry park was for the movement of goods and passengers to and from Accra, one can conclude that Tudu Lorry Park was specifically created neither for the indigenous Ga nor for the Europeans and their African civil servants, but rather for the group of migrants and traders coming in and out of Accra from other parts of the Gold Coast and even beyond.

Before discussing Tudu Lorry Park in detail, it is important to note that by 1938 other factors unrelated to food demands and population growth influenced the colonial administration to establish additional lorry parks in Accra. Prominent among the reasons was revenue loss. By 1938, despite increase in vehicle numbers, revenue at the Salaga Market lorry park was dwindling. A committee set up by the Accra City Council to investigate reduction in revenue to the council reported that non-payment of lorry park tolls was an important factor in the reduction of revenue. To address the problem of revenue, the committee proposed the establishment of additional lorry parks. The committee agreed unanimously to recommend that the western portion of the site at the Salaga Fish and Meat Market be made available for use as a lorry park. By 1940, in accordance with the recommendation, a lorry park was established at Knutsford Avenue.[365]

Later on, in the 1950s and 1960s, local political activities also influenced the establishment of lorry parks in Accra. For example, the origin of the Abossy Okine lorry park was due to Kwame Nkrumah's desire to sift information from the motor vehicle spare parts' dealers located there. This group of traders were considered by Nkrumah's political party, the Convention Peoples Party, to be anti-Nkrumah and were using price hikes of vehicle parts as a political tool to render his government unpopular.

[365] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 14/1/270, Lorry Parks, Accra, 1941.

In the 1970s, the main reason for the establishment of lorry parks in Accra was to decongest the inner core of the city. Here the lorry park in Kaneshie provides the prime example. In the 1980s and 1990s the trade liberalisation policies led to the favourable development of the motor transport sector in Ghana, leading to the acquisition of more vehicles. The acquisitions also impacted additionally on the creation of lorry parks, mainly by the government and private operators such as the Ghana Private Road Transport Union and Progressive Transport Union. It is interesting to note that by 2008, Accra had over one hundred lorry parks. As noted earlier, different reasons accounted for the creation of earlier lorry parks, with Accra's food demands and its changing urban demography and revenue being the prime reasons. Current interviews in most of the new lorry parks revealed that the reasons for their creation were not too different from earlier considerations, even though increases in vehicular numbers, passenger traffic, and internal disputes among the drivers seem to be paramount.

Tudu Lorry Park in Focus

Tudu Lorry Park differs from other lorry parks in Accra in many respects. Geographically, Tudu Lorry Park is located in the Central Business District, close to the Makola Market. So far, from the colonial period to the present, it is the only lorry park which has consistently operated internal and international destinations. In 2008, the park had an estimated 400 vehicles and operated two types of commercial vehicles: freight and passenger services. The passenger vehicles ranged from 5-seater Volvos, BMW saloon cars, 7-seater Peugeot cars, and 12-seater Urvan buses to 33-seater Benz or Tata buses. The freight services consisted of cargo vehicles and numbered about fifty. The cargo component since the 1970s dwindled because of the relocation of some of the cargo trucks to other lorry parks, such as Agbogbloshie and Kwame Nkrumah Circle.[366]

Before proceeding with the discussion, it is important to turn our attention a little to the physical evolution of Tudu Lorry Park, viewing it through the lens of photographs gathered from the archives and taken during fieldwork.

[366] In 1971 Tudu Lorry Park alone had close to 193 cargo vehicles. It should be borne in mind that from the period of introduction of motor vehicles up to the 1970s, cargo vehicles performed the dual role of moving passengers and goods. That in part accounted for the increase in numbers of cargo vehicles, but their concentration at Tudu Lorry Park was due to the fact that until after 1970, Tudu served as the major node for both passenger and freight services. For more on the vehicle figures, see J. W. Jordan, 'Role Segregation for Fun and Profit', 33-4.

Tudu Lorry Park in the 1950s. (From the archive of the Information Services Department, I.S.D., Accra. Reproduced with permission from I.S.D.)

Tudu Lorry Park in 1973. (From the archive of the Information Services Department, I.S.D., Accra. Reproduced with permission from I.S.D.)

The Lorry Park in 2008. (Picture taken by the author, 2008)

From the pictures above, it is evident that Tudu Lorry Park has gone through significant changes, both in terms of vehicle types and physical space. For example, during the colonial period, most popular vehicles at the lorry park were Ford, Bedford, Austin, and Dodge (the latter popularly called *motor way* because of its speed), among others. One will also note the limited number of vehicles in Tudu Lorry Park during the colonial period. In the first photo for example, there seems to be a certain panic to squeeze into the available *trotro*. With the exception of the chassis, the main body of the vehicles and the seats were mostly built in the Gold Coast, particularly in Kumasi, using wood. After independence, wooden vehicles continued in use, in addition to buses which were fitted with leather seats. Just as there was a change in design, so also there was a change in the preference for other vehicle brands. Mercedes-Benz buses, DAF buses and, in some cases, Toyota buses came to replace Bedford, Austin, Ford, and Dodge at the park. But the most important vehicular revolution at the park occurred in the 1980s and 1990s, when owing to trade liberalisation policies, more second-hand vehicles were imported into the country from Europe, Asia, and the United States of America. In most cases these used vehicles were delivery vans in their countries of origin, but once they arrived in Ghana, they were fitted with seats and glass windows on the sides and used as mini-buses to convey passengers and goods into and out of Accra. This trend has continued to this day.

The physical space of Tudu Lorry Park has shrunk from an estimated space of about two acres to one acre. The reduction in space was a consequence of the growth of the city, which as noted before led to the relocation of some of the freight vehicles to other lorry parks in Accra as a way of decongesting the inner core of the city. The second effect of the growth of the city which had a negative impact on the size of the park was the growth of shops and stores. Tudu, through its lorry park and markets, became an important nodal point for commerce. With a lack of space for the construction of shops and stores, many traders began encroaching on the available space at the lorry park. This trend, which began immediately after the establishment of the lorry park, has continued to this day.[367]

Despite the reduction in space, Tudu lorry park and the drivers continue to connect Accra to most destinations in the country. We therefore turn our attention to the evolution of routes at the park.

An historical account of the evolution of routes and destinations in Tudu Lorry Park

One important question which a reader may ask is how relevant transport routes are to our discussion of Tudu Lorry Park. In my view, Tudu Lorry Park acquires meaning to some extent from the way it is used. The operation of vehicles along the various routes is one among the several uses of the park. The historical evolution of the routes at the park is therefore part of the total transformation process that the lorry park has brought about in Tudu. The map below indicates some of the important destination towns and cities to which the vehicles at the park operate, thus serving as a guide to our discussions in this section.

[367] *Ghana News Agency*, 'Regional Minister, Three others to face contempt charge', Tuesday, 21 April 2009; *The Statesman*, 'Traders Curse Judiciary: In Tudu Turf War', 11 May 2009.

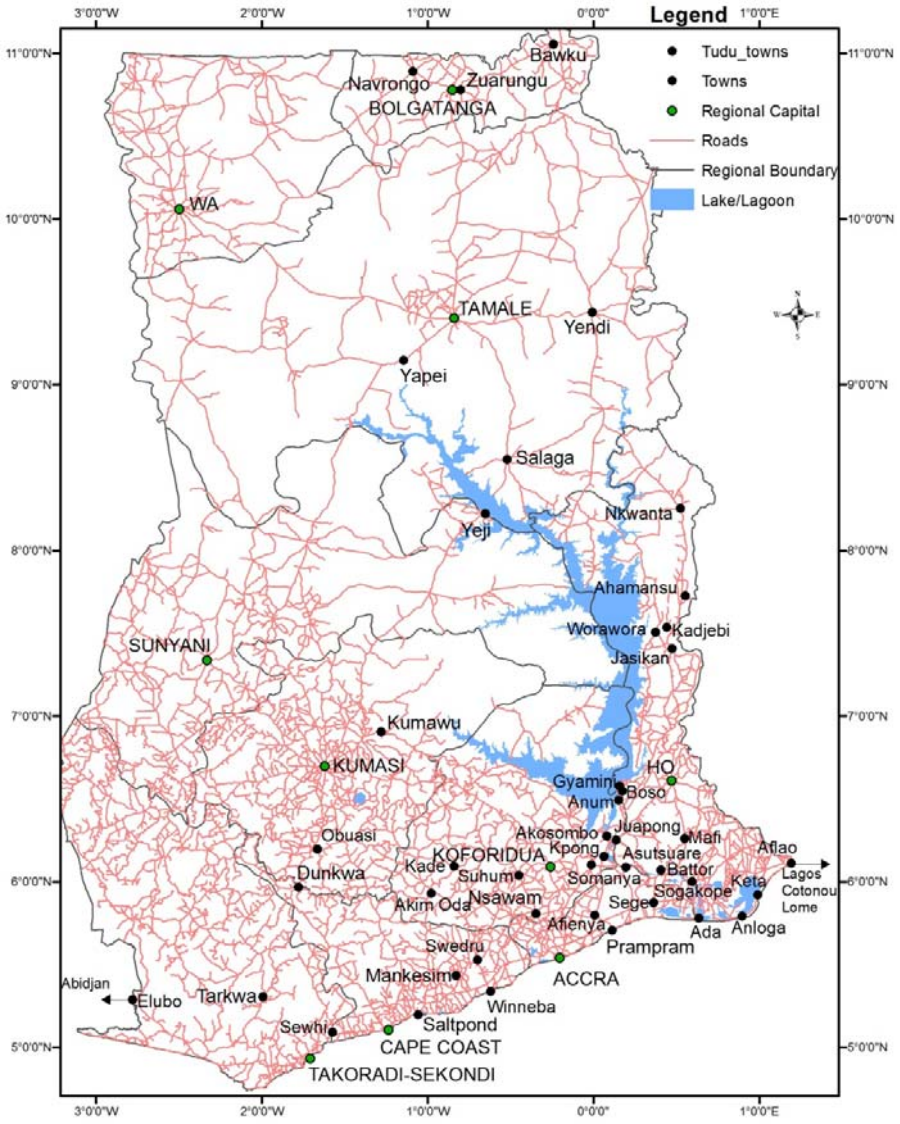

Fig. 2. Routes and destinations at Tudu Lorry Park, 2008.

The evolution of routes at Tudu Lorry Park was influenced by a number of factors. The most important include trade, markets, migrations, social relations, and, to some extent, politics. A particular route may develop as a result of one or more of these factors. The intention here is to give the reader a general overview of the products offered by each route and an idea of the group of people that use the lorry park. Arguably, all routes serve social, economic, cultural, and even political purposes, but some are better placed to serve certain purposes than others. Ideally, each route should be discussed in detail, based on the degree or frequency of usage for economic, social, or political reasons. In

order to be coherent in my discussion, I have selected only one route for a detailed discussion. However, I also provide a quick summary of the other routes.

Northern Route

The northern route developed the same year that Tudu Lorry Park was founded. Trade, migrant labour, and the presence of ex-servicemen and their dependants contributed to the development of the route. As indicated on the map, important destinations on the route include Yeji, Salaga, Tamale, and Bawku.[368] While Tamale and Bawku are on a direct route, Yeji and Salaga are on a different branch road after Kumasi. In the introductory chapter on the foundation and growth of Tudu, I indicated the role of the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary in the growth of Tudu. Following demobilization, some of the soldiers, such as Ex-Sgt. Amadu Suuka, Ex-Sgt Bukari Grumah, Pte Kofi Boafo, and a host of others, took on jobs as drivers since they had already received training as drivers and mechanics while in the military.[369] Some drove at the lorry park, with preferred destinations such as Salaga, Navrongo, and Tamale. We shall return to some of them in the later part of this discussion.

In the 1920s, the availability of motorised transport had an impact on labour migrations and trade in general. There was an increase in trade between the coast and the north. For example, south-bound trade in horses, cattle, sheep, goats, ostriches, native cloth, shea butter, *dawadawa*, hides, robes, twine, dried fish, fowl, and—later—tomatoes, and north-bound trade, such as English cloth, salt, and brass and copper rod increased.[370] Even though the increase in trade was attributed generally to improvement in motorised traffic between the north and the south, the contribution of the northern drivers at Tudu Lorry Park in this overall trade development is not in doubt. Informants in Tudu narrate the overwhelming presence of the products listed above in Tudu immediately after the establishment of the lorry park.[371] But of greater interest to our discussion of the impact of motorised transportation and of the northern route on trade is

[368] Yeji is in the Brong Ahafo Region. Even though Yeji is in the Brong Ahafo region, it retains a strong northern flavour owing to its proximity to Salaga. To get to Salaga, one has to cross the Volta River to Makango, a town on the opposite side. The Salaga which is referred to in this section is a *zongo* in the Northern Region of Ghana and different from the Salaga Market in Accra. A detailed distinction has been provided in Chapter 1. Bawku is further north-east of Tamale..

[369] For the list of ex-servicemen taken as drivers in the Gold Coast after the First World War, see PRAAD, Cape Coast, ADM 23/1/308, Lorry Drivers, East Africa Gratuities and Medals 1918-1927.

[370] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/20, Blue Book Report, 1930.

[371] See Chapters 5, 6, and 7 for more insights on the impact of the lorry park on trade.

the introduction of shea butter and other new products such as goats and fowl to Accra and the participation of a wider group of traders, including Syrians, Dagomba, and Mossi in the north-bound salt trade and south-bound cattle trade.[372]

Hitherto, the main animals consumed in Accra from the northern parts were cattle; but by the 1930s, goats and fowl from the north were added to the diet. Two factors accounted for the demand for meat from other sources, to which the route to the north accordingly responded. By the 1930s, owing to advancement in motorised transport, a number of roads were constructed within Accra, which made it increasingly difficult to rear cattle, particularly in Tudu and Adabraka, the areas most well-known for the rearing of cattle within the city.[373] In addition, the economic recession of the 1930s, the Second World War, and the outbreak of cattle diseases in Nigeria prevented the importation of cattle by sea from the French Cameroons and Lagos.[374] This created a vacuum, which was filled by imports from the northern part of Ghana, present-day Burkina Faso, and the Ivory Coast. Both the inadequacies in supply following the curtailment of these supply sources and the increase in Accra's urban population created a demand for goats and fowl from the present-day Upper East and Northern Regions, in addition to the demand for cattle from these regions and present-day Burkina Faso.

As the distribution network changed, so also did the groups involved. Initially it was the Yoruba, some of them longtime residents in Tudu who were responsible for the supply of cattle to Accra from Lagos and the Cameroons, mostly by sea. The change in transportation from sea to road also changed the ethnic groups involved: increasingly, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and some Syrians replaced the Yoruba in the supply of meat to Accra via the northern route.[375] The Dagomba, in addition to the sale of cattle, became settled butchers in Tudu and other parts of Accra. With the salt and shea butter trade, instead of the Ada, who usually transported salt up the Volta River to the northern part of Ghana and brought back shea butter and sold at Kpong, the introduction of motorised transport and the creation of the lorry park led to the replacement of the Ada by

[372] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/20, Blue Book Report, 1930.
[373] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 11/14/174 Sewlyn Market, Amendment of Regulations, 1932.
[374] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 9/2/3, Importation by Sea of Cattle, 1930-1938.
[375] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/125, Gonja Province, Annual Report 1944-1945.

Dagomba women and some ex-servicemen in the shea-butter trade and the distribution of salt by Mossi and Syrians.[376]

After the replacement of the Ada canoe-men, the Ada went back to fishing. The switch led to the foundation of fishing communities along the river Volta, particularly at Yeji and Makango. Prior to advancement in motorized transport, the known settlements of the Ada people were Yapei—referred to in colonial jargon as 'Tamale Port' and located in the present-day Central Gonja District of the Northern Region of Ghana—and Kete Krachi in the present-day Volta Region.[377] The presence of the Ada in Yeji also attracted Ewe fishermen from the coast. With the urbanisation of Accra in the 1940s and 1950s, there was a demand for river fish to augment the supply by Ga fishermen in Accra. Also, some urban dwellers in Accra prefer river fish to sea fish. The preference could be due to the presence of more migrants in Accra besides the indigenous Ga. The alternative was to depend on river fish mostly from the river Volta, with the majority of it coming from Yeji. The need for river fish in Accra led to the development of a new route from Tudu to Yeji. Fish is perishable and therefore demands quick and efficient transportation, which has been and continues to be provided by the Tudu-Yeji route.

Drivers at Tudu Lorry Park, such as Mohamed Alhassan, Rolex Agbenyega, and a few other colleagues, report that in the 1950s they capitalised on the efficiency of the route and bought what they termed 'consumables'.[378] These included fishing nets, flash lights, kerosene stoves, a kind of straw mat called *apeto wezo*, and baskets made from palm trees which they bought from Accra's Central Business District and supplied to the fishing communities at Yeji. It is important to note that as trade goods, some of the products listed above were either not known or were in limited circulation within the

[376] For more on the salt trade on the Volta, see I. B. Sutton, 'The Volta River Salt Trade: The Survival of an Indigenous Industry', *The Journal of African History*, 22:1 (1981), 43-61.
[377] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/125, Gonja Province, Annual Report 1944-1945.
[378] Interview with Rolex Agbenyega, Tudu, 2 February 2008. Rolex is from Keta in the Volta Region. His father was a fisherman located in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where Rolex was born in 1945. In 1957 his father moved to Benin to continue fishing, but Rolex was brought back to Ghana to begin his elementary education. After completing his elementary education in Accra, Rolex learnt to repair television sets and tape recorders from a company called Star Electronics. Interestingly, Rolex did not establish a shop to continue repairing televisions and tape recorders; he chose instead to be a driver's mate. His reason was simple: "I could make more money on the road than in the shop", he said. Having been a driver's mate for four months, he learnt to drive. He obtained a driver's licence and was give a vehicle by his father. After two years of driving, he bought his own vehicle and plied the route between Tudu and Keta and Tudu and Yeji. Having worked in Tudu Lorry Park as an 'owner driver' for almost three-and-a-half decades, he was elected chairman of the Keta branch of the Ghana Private Road Transport Union in Tudu in 2005. He has held that position until now.

business district until the commencement of the route. A typical example was the straw mat mentioned above. The motivation for plying the route in the 1950s by drivers, therefore, was the multiple profits that they made through fares and the provision of 'consumables', unbeknownst to the vehicle owners.[379]

In addition to the trade in fish, the semi-permanent nature of the Ewe along the river has kept the route busy owing to the movement of the family members of the fishermen to and from Yeji and their hometowns in the coastal areas of the Volta Region, during funerals, festivals, naming, and marriage ceremonies. The route therefore is not only of an economic significance but is also of social relevance.[380]

As we shall discover in Chapter 7, from the 1960s through the 1970s and into the mid-1980s, the northern route played a very significant role in the movement of locally produced rice and tomatoes to Accra's markets. The industrialisation policy of Nkrumah in the 1960s and the 'Operation Feed Yourself' programme of General I. K. Acheampong of the mid-1970s encouraged the production of rice and tomatoes in the north, most of which were sold in Accra. The trend continued until the introduction of the Economic Recovery Programme of Jerry John Rawlings in the mid-1980s. This programme caused rice and tomato production to collapse since subsidies on agriculture were taken away and importation of rice and tomatoes was encouraged. Even though the route dwindled in importance in terms of movement of the aforementioned goods, it facilitated labour migrations to Accra, especially of female porters, the *kayaye*.[381]

The final but also very important destination on the northern route is that from Tudu to Salaga. Just like the route to Tamale, this route is of relevance in terms of making shea butter available to Accra. But informants in Tudu indicate that the route also served a very important social need. Some Yoruba residents in Tudu, particularly the Braimah family, still regard themselves as natives of Salaga, even though they are migrants from Nigeria. As they put it in Hausa, *Mun fito Salaga* (literally, "We are

[379] Focus group discussion with drivers on the northern route interviewed at Tudu on 5 July 2008. The drivers categorise the consumables into basic consumables and essential consumables. The basic ones include toiletries and provisions, and the essential ones are fishing nets, flash lights, kerosene stoves, a kind of straw mat called *apeto wezo*, bamboo sticks, and baskets made from palm trees. The essentials' category is directly linked to fishing and is therefore considered very important. The straw mat is preferred to synthetic mats because Ewes have a cultural attachment to the former.

[380] It should be borne in mind that some of the fishermen still travel by canoe to their home town, but the majority make use of motorised transport. I used the term 'semi-permanent' because at old age the fishermen usually move to permanently settle in their hometowns in the Volta Region.

[381] See Chapter 2 for detailed discussion of *kayaye*.

natives of [or we come from] Salaga"). The notion of coming from Salaga indicates the formation of a social identity which transcends Accra's urban space into the rural hinterland. It projects a sense of belonging and a sense of place or roots, Salaga and Tudu, which subsequently demands frequent travels between the two places.

Apart from Braimah's family, there were other issues which made people travel to and from Salaga, one of which included the place of Salaga as a *zongo*. As already noted in the introduction, Salaga collapsed in the nineteenth century as a major trading point in kola nuts and slaves, but it still remained essentially a *zongo*. As a *zongo* and a social hinterland, social activities such as marriages, funerals, naming ceremonies, and festivals still keep Salaga in touch with other *zongos* in the south, particularly Accra. Tudu facilitates the contact through its fleet of vehicles and northern drivers plying their trade to Salaga and back. However, an important observation about the travellers both to and from Salaga is *sako* (message). *Sako* goes beyond its intangible literal meaning among those travelling for social reasons. There is an informal commercial network, based on the buying of essential but scarce commodities which are then sold in the destinations of the route by the travellers themselves. The profits made help to reduce the cost of travel or money spent on other social activities. Sometimes, known traders in both areas give money to those travelling for social reasons to buy scare commodities for them in the areas that they are travelling to and where such products are in abundance. Such travels, therefore, have much wider implications for the development of trade both in the Central Business District and Salaga, even though such travels may have been informed incidentally by social reasons, such as attending a funeral or marriage ceremony.[382]

It is important to note that while the northern route has played a significant role in moving a variety of trade goods to Tudu as well as ensuring the availability of migrants in Accra, the products or groups of migrants have impacted differently on Tudu's economic growth. The extent to which each impacted on Tudu will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

[382] During my field work I noticed that saltpetre (*kanwo*) and locust beans (*dawadawa*) featured prominently in such travels. *Kanwo* is bought from Accra and *dawadawa* from Salaga.

Summary of other routes in the lorry park

Apart from the northern route, two major routes are operated on the eastern route from Tudu, with destinations to Nsawam, Suhum, Akim Oda, and Koforidua.[383] These destinations were and still are important in making available kola nuts to Tudu and foodstuffs to Accra's markets, particularly the Makola Market.[384] The second route, popularly called the 'Krobo route', went through Dodowa and Somanya and joined the Volta route at Kpong. The route from Tudu to Krobo largely developed as a result of Krobo markets.[385] Krobo markets were held twice a week and it is from these markets that the Central Business District, including Tudu, got her palm oil and palm kernel, pots and beads. Pottery and bead-making were and still are an important part of Krobo economic life, and the operation of the route ensured continuous income for the inhabitants. The Ga of Accra use beads in their daily life both for ornamental and ritual purposes. The significance of this route to Accra can therefore not be overemphasized. Conversely, those in Accra supply industrial goods to the Krobo markets via the lorry park.

Unlike the Northern and Eastern Region routes, the development of routes from Tudu to parts of the Volta Region were largely due to two important factors. The first was local production of fish, coconuts, sugar cane, and shallots, which were important for Tudu's economy as the urbanisation of Accra had caused these products to be in high demand. Destinations of the first route include Aflao, Anloga, and Keta, among others.[386] The second reason for the development of routes in the Volta was due to migrant cocoa farmers in the Buem area. The other route in the Volta Region goes north-east of Accra, and destinations include Kpeve, Have, Ho, Kpando, Hohoe, Jasikan, Kadjebi, and Wurawura. The route developed as a result of Anlo migrant cocoa farmers who left Anlo because of a disease which affected their coconuts. In Chapter 5 we shall realise how this particular route facilitated the availability of kola nuts for the Kotokoli and Chamba ethnic groups resident in the above-mentioned areas.[387]

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[383] See map above for destinations.
[384] I shall discuss the sources of kola nuts in Chapter 5.
[385] For more on the Krobo markets and plantations, see M. J. Field, 'The Agricultural System of the Manya-Krobo of the Gold Coast', *Journal of the International African Institute*, 14:2 (April 1943), 58-9.
[386] S. E. Patten and G. K. Nukunya, 'Organisational Responses to Agricultural Intensification in Anloga, Ghana', *African Studies Review*, 25:2/3 (June-Sept. 1982), 67.
[387] Dorm Adzobu, 'Impact of Migrant Ewe Cocoa Farmers in Buem, the Volta Region of Ghana', *Bulleting of the Ghana Geographical Association*, 16 (1974), 45.

The western route from Tudu operates to destinations such as Winneba, Saltpond, Mankessim, Cape Coast, Secondi-Takoradi, Dunkwa, Tarkwa, and Obuasi. Its development was largely due to the port in Takoradi, opened in 1928, a year before the establishment of Tudu Lorry Park. The creation of the port in Takoradi in 1928 facilitated trade between Accra and the western corridor. Most of the products needed in Accra, such as flour for bread, provisions, and building materials were met by the western route. The colonial administration also relied on drivers on this route to convey their mails to and from the Takoradi Port any time the delivery van was not operational.

One of the vehicles plying the western route (Accra-Sekondi) parked at a lorry park. Note the mail compartment on the vehicle. (Source: Qu-30.003.0514. Reproduced with permission from mission 21 archives, Basel Switzerland)

It is important to conclude on the western route by noting the importance of the route to the overall development of a market for 'used clothes' from abroad, called *obroni wawu.*[388] Through the port in Takoradi, private Ghanaian traders in the 1930s began importing used clothes from various parts of Europe and the United States of America, leading to the development of a second-hand clothes market at Kantamanto, close to Tudu. The park played an important role in the distribution of the used clothes to other

[388] It is important to note that following the successful completion of the Tema Harbour in 1964, some of the second-hand clothes are imported through Tema. But Takoradi still plays a very significant role in the importation of second-hand clothes , and some of the traders at Kantamanto still prefer buying second-hand clothes in Takoradi because it is cheaper there. The port there is less busy compared with Tema, so bureaucracy is reduced and fewer bribes have to be paid. [Interview with Mark Tuffour, 22 December 2008 . Mark is sixty-five years old. He used to be a second-hand clothes seller but has recently shifted to selling new goods, especially menswear from China.]

parts of the country. In Chapter 8 we shall discover how this market provided jobs for some of the Yoruba in Tudu.

In addition to the routes internally to the various parts of Ghana, Tudu has international schedules to Lome in Togo and Lagos, Abuja and Kano in Nigeria, Ouaghadougu in Burkina Faso, and Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire. Among the international routes, the most popular was and still remains the Tudu-Lome-Lagos route. Its popularity is tied to the history of Tudu, whose inhabitants have been mostly nationals from Nigeria and Togo and are composed of a majority trader class. As indicated in Chapter 5, kola nut was a highly sought-after product in those two countries for a considerable length of time.[389] The route since the 1930s facilitated the movement of kola nuts to Lagos in Nigeria and parts of Togo. It also facilitated the movement of Togolese and Nigerian migrants to Accra. In the 1940s and 1950s, the route acquired an additional responsibility for moving trade goods, some of which include tobacco, cigarettes, and liquor from Lome, Yoruba cloth from Nigeria, and the smuggling of petrol from Ghana to Togo.[390] And in the later part of the 1960s, it facilitated the exit of Nigerians from Accra following the Aliens Compliance Order. In the 1970s, following Ghana's dismal economic performance, the route facilitated the movement of Ghanaians to Nigeria and Cameroon, migrants who went there to seek greener pastures. Tudu Lorry Park at that time became very important in Accra's economy, as most of the sojourners sent remittances to family, friends, and relations. Even though by the 1980s Ghanaians were deported from Nigeria, the route continued to facilitate trade in European goods from Lome and Lagos. The same trade has still continued from the 1990s to the present.

It is evident from the above that the introduction of the motor vehicle has impacted on Accra in different ways, one of them being the creation of lorry parks, and the park in Tudu remains paramount owing to the numerous destinations at the park and its ability to ensure the availability of goods in Accra while also supporting the movement of passengers into and out of the city. But during its history the lorry park also faced some stiff competition from other transport organisations within the same

[389] See Chapter 5 for reasons for kola-nut demands in Nigeria and Togo.
[390] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 6/3/475, Imports of cloth from Nigeria, 1943; also PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 6/5/21, Smuggling and Seizure in Southern Section, Eastern Frontier Preventive Service, 1941-1945.

urban space. We shall turn our attention to this and conclude with the Drivers' Association in the lorry park.

Competition and survival in Tudu's transport hub

The competitors in the transport industry in Accra and Ghana are many. At its foundation in 1929, the railways system was the first major competitor to Tudu Lorry Park. The railway system operated to most of the destinations that vehicles at the lorry park plied, except the North and Volta region. However, by the late 1930s and early 1940s, the competition offered by the railway had declined. Many people preferred travelling by road rather than by rail because it was cheaper, especially following the introduction of diesel vehicles into the country.[391] Diesel vehicles could cover more miles with less fuel consumption, a factor which brought in a number of legislative acts to curtail the importation of diesel vehicles.[392]

In 1949 the Gold Coast Railways facilitated the formation of the Government Transport Services, a precursor to the State Transport Corporation. By the establishment of the Government Transport Services, the early justification for the creation of motorable roads for purposes of playing a supplementary role to the railway system in the movement of passengers and goods was defeated. For at this stage it became clear that motorised transport was replacing or had gradually replaced the railway lines and that government transportation was lagging behind private commercial transportation in the provision of freight and passenger transportation. Incidentally, in Accra, the terminal of the government-owned Gold Coast Transport Services was located in Tudu, about 150 metres east of Tudu Lorry Park.

What prompted the colonial administration to site the terminal close to Tudu Lorry Park in 1949 was obvious. Tudu had become the most important node in Accra. Additionally, there is evidence in the archival records indicating that by operating commercial vehicles in Accra and specifically at Tudu, government would be able to make appreciable savings in government transport expenditure, since (as mentioned already) some of the staff had to hire vehicles from private companies for official duties.[393] More importantly, it was the hope of government that the profits from

[391] PRAAD, Accra, Scheme for the Control of the Operation of MotorVehicles, 1942.
[392] *Ibid.*
[393] PRAAD, Sekondi, WRG 1/6/33, State Transport Corporation, 1949-1972

motorised transport could be used to defray the costs incurred by the railway systems in Accra.[394] Hence, we understand the continuation of the government's interest in exploiting motorised transport for the benefit of the railway system. At the Government Transport Terminal in Tudu, the vehicles imported and used were of a greater passenger capacity than those that operated in Tudu Lorry Park and were of a better quality in terms of seating space. For the private commercial drivers and vehicle owners in Tudu, the government's actions were clearly aimed to frustrate their business by taking away their customers, since the Government transport services operated to most of their destinations, such as Kpando, Ho, Akatsi, Hohoe, and Cape Coast, to mention just a few.[395]

From the 1950s up to the mid-1960s, the Government Transport Services still operated to the destinations mentioned above. But in 1966 the name was changed from the Government Transport Services to the State Transport Corporation (STC). The reason for the change in name was to grant it greater autonomy and formalise its independence from the railway system. The change in name did not alter the agenda of the State Transport Corporation in terms of its operations on some of the traditional routes plied by drivers from Tudu Lorry Park.[396] Despite the competition, Tudu Lorry Park has retained its passengers and traders from the period of the establishment of the State Operated Terminal in Tudu to date.

One question that may be asked is how Tudu Lorry Park managed to survive the competition from the State Transport Corporation. One thing that is clear is that despite the lower charges demanded by the State Transport Services, there were a several factors which worked against its successful competition with the Tudu drivers. The first has to do with the frequent breakdown of their vehicles. Owing to bureaucracy, requisitions for the purchase of vehicle parts usually had to go through the Minister of Transport. The busy nature of the ministry often led to delays in signing such requisitions. The delays often led to a reduction of fleets or the purchase of non-functional vehicles and vehicle parts, leading to intermittent services on some of the

[394] *Ibid.*
[395] *Ibid.*
[396] *Ibid.*

routes.[397] With such irregularity in services, passengers and traders naturally drifted to Tudu Lorry Park.

Furthermore, the State Transport Corporation buses do not take certain loads on their buses, particularly meat, fish, and other agricultural products. But the private commercial vehicles carry everything. The convenience of being able to travel with one's own goods has often compelled many traders to maintain their loyalty to the private transporters in Tudu. To add to this, some of the traders also preferred Tudu Lorry Park because they operate different vehicle types, so that if one was in hurry, he or she can take a vehicle with a smaller passenger capacity. This provides wider options for passengers since there are vehicles that load 8, 12, 15 or 30 passengers. The government-run buses hardly have any such vehicle categories and mostly operate with a capacity of about 50 passengers or more. That has often led to delays.

Finally and most importantly, in considering the success of Tudu Lorry Park, credit must be given to some of the traders and passengers. As will be pointed out in Chapters 6 and 7, since its inception there has been a very good rapport between drivers and traders at the lorry park, leading to symbiotic patronage of each other's services. It is important to add that without the organisational ability of the drivers, it would have been difficult to sustain the park or out-compete the government-supported transport service in Tudu. However, rather than concentrate on all the activities of the drivers at the park, I have decided to provide only a short history of the association.

The Tudu Drivers' Association

The exact year for the foundation of the Tudu Drivers' Association is unclear, but informants were of the view that the association was formed in the early part of the 1930s. Initially, the main reason for the foundation of the association was the unfavourable government policies on motorised transport. We have already understood that legislative acts were made to curtail the importation of diesel vehicles. Also, government introduced its own long-distance vehicles as a way of cutting costs on staff expenditure while offering competition to private motorised transport in Tudu. The association was formed under the initiative of Ex-Sgt. Bukar Grumah, Pte Amadu Suuka, Pte Kofi Boafo, Amadu Ilorin, Imoro Lincoln, and E. K. Gbedemah. It is

[397] Carolyn Opata, 'Rot in Intercity STC Exposed', *Business and Financial Times,* Accra, Friday, 16 July 2010.

important to note that with the exception of the first three ex-servicemen and E. K. Gbedemah, all of whom were drivers, the rest were traders in kola nuts, cattle, and horses.[398]

Two reasons accounted for the involvement of the traders in the affairs of the association in Tudu. Informants report that the non-driver membership arose as a result of their residence in Tudu and their utilisation of the lorry park for trade. It is significant to note that government attempts at regulating motorised transportation were not limited only to the importation of vehicles but were also aimed at traders. For example, there were attempts by the colonial administration to encourage patronage of trains by preventing traders from using motor vehicles to convey their products to Accra, even though motor transport seems to have been cheaper.[399] By the 1940s, the membership of the Tudu Drivers' Association was mainly composed of drivers and commercial vehicle owners. Traders, however, had representatives. The increase in membership of drivers and vehicle owners was due to the incorporation of the Tudu Drivers' Association into the wider Motor Drivers' Union in the country.

Since its incorporation into the Motor Drivers' Union and later the Ghana Private Road Transport Union, membership in the association has always been for registered drivers at the lorry park with a driver's licence, owners of the vehicles at the park, and 'bookmen or collectors', who are referred to as 'porters', and traders. In fact, among all lorry parks in Ghana, it is only the Tudu Drivers' Association that incorporates traders in their activities. The reason for this will become evident in our discussion on tomato trade in Chapter 8.

There are two types of drivers at the lorry park: the regular drivers whose vehicles are always on the road, except on days that they decide to rest or go to the mechanic; and those that are called 'spare drivers'. The spare drivers are usually those whose vehicles have been seized by their owners or involved in an accident, or those who have recently obtained their driver's licence and have yet to be given a vehicle. They mostly go to the park and sit around the Welfare Office. Usually, if one of the

[398] See Chapters 3 and 5 for details on horses and kola nuts.

[399] In fact, in some instances there were even physical confrontations between colonial officials in the interior and traders regarding which means of transport they could use. In most places where the railways operated, the colonial administration always preferred that traders used the rail rather than road. For such confrontations, see PRAAD, Accra, CSO 17/1/3, Road and Rail Competition, Economic Situation of the Railway, 1933.

regular drivers is sick or is attending to personal matters, the spare driver is called to drive the vehicle to the specified destination and back. Even though the spares are drivers at the park, they are not part of the association as they do not pay monthly dues.

The benefits of being a member are many. Some are financial and involve support during bereavement, marriage, childbirth, and ill-health. Soft loans are also available to drivers to meet contingency expenses. Lately, drivers at the lorry park have been included into the National Health Insurance scheme, for which the premium is paid from the contribution of the drivers to the association.

From the discussions, it is clear that the association is important, especially as it ensures the proper functioning of the lorry park as well as the regular flow of goods and services into and out of Accra.

Conclusion

Accra has experienced important physical and socio-economic transformations. Among these transformations is the movement of passengers and goods, both manufactured and agricultural, into and out of Accra by the motor vehicle. Being the first to be trained in the use of motor vehicles during the First World War, northerners, through the ownership of vehicles or as drivers, have ensured easy access of goods as well as services from Accra to rural areas and vice versa, thereby contributing to the socio-economic development of Accra and beyond.

5

A Nut of Essence: Kola-nut trade in Tudu

Introduction

As discussed in the preceding chapters, northerners have played an important role in the physical evolution of the city of Accra through their role in transport. In the following chapters we discuss their contribution to Accra's development through trade in specific commodities. Kola nuts are a forest product; nonetheless, its trade and consumption have been dominated by northerners. In the north, which is savannah grassland, kola is used for ritual and leisure purposes. In the south and Accra specifically, kola is used for its labour-enhancing properties. Historically, the supply and distribution of kola has been controlled by northerners through Tudu and its lorry park. The control of northerners over the kola trade, coupled with kola's function within rituals and as a leisure and work-enhancing drug, has facilitated the continued development of Accra.

In 1908, a multi-purpose meeting was held between representatives of northerners in Cow Lane, the first *zongo* in Accra, and the Governor at Victoriaborg. Victoriaborg was the headquarters of the colonial administration as well as the residence of the Governor of the Gold Coast in Accra. Prominent among the issues discussed was the need to recognise Braimah as chief of all northerners in Accra, the majority of attendees responding in the affirmative. Other issues discussed were sanitation and trade. In concluding the meeting, the Governor wanted to know if the northerners had any grievances. Chief Braimah, who at that meeting was already confirmed as leader of the northerners, spoke about kola nuts. He described the unwillingness of northern traders to park their kola nuts at the beach and their preference to keep their kola nuts in their homes. In addition, they were against the marking and fumigation of their kola nuts, which was required by law prior to their export to Lagos. Finally, he indicated the difficulty encountered by kola-nut traders in transporting their kola nuts to Lagos.[400]

Later, in 1913 there was an open conflict between the pro-kola nut carriers of Braimah and those of the Hausa.[401] The troubles led to a re-organisation of the position of the Sarikin Tudu as Chief Braimah introduced important positions such as the

[400] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1446, Mohammedan Community, Palaver held at Government House, Christiansborg, 1908.
[401] PRRAD, Accra, ADM, 11/1502, Hausa Community, 1913.

balogun and the council of elders.[402] For Braimah the attack on his kola-nut carriers amounted to a declaration of war, and the presence of the *balogun* could not have been more appropriate. His action was not an isolated case, for it was in keeping with the general pan-Yoruba economic survival strategy which began in Nigeria after the takeover of Ilorin by the Fulani.[403] However, unlike in Nigeria, where the title was achieved through warfare, in Tudu the qualification was reserved for successful traders, although Braimah's children and grandchildren have since monopolised it. In a way there was no contradiction, since the Braimah family seems to have been among the most economically successful in Tudu. But the fact that theoretically any trader could be a *balogun* brought in unity and competition among the traders in Tudu. In addition to the *balogun*, Chief Braimah incorporated prominent kola-nut traders from other ethnic groups who were resident in Tudu into his fold, and they served as the council of elders. By incorporating other groups in Tudu, Chief Braimah succeeded in establishing a kind of hierarchy, where the *balogun* and the chief porter had to report to him.

The events and issues raised above and Braimah's comments at the meeting provide very useful leads into various aspects of the kola-nut trade in Accra, prominent among them being the primacy of northerners and of *zongo* communities in Accra as important nodes of the trade. The issues also reveal the market outlets and the link between transportation and the kola-nut trade. Above all, they show how leadership is germane in the kola-nut trade.

The general trend in the historiography of the kola-nut trade in Ghana is that little attention is given to it in the *zongos* in Accra or the involvement of other ethnic groups. Earlier research by Paul Lovejoy and Edmund Abaka on the kola-nut trade in Ghana is well known and will be discussed in detail here.[404] Suffice it to say that these

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[402] *Sarikin* in Hausa means 'elder' or 'leader'. Sarikin Tudu therefore refers to the leader of Tudu. The term *balogun* literally means 'lord (*bale*) of war (*ogun*)'; hence the 'warlord' affixation. It was used traditionally by the Yoruba people of Nigeria as a title for their war generals. The title *balogun* became particularly important in the early part of the 1800s, when the Yoruba faced many threats from Muslim jihadists from the north of Nigeria, particularly the Fulani. The position also became useful during the time of intense commerce in Yoruba land, especially in the later part of the 1800s and the first decade of the 1900s. Even though it appears that the import of the title was mainly due to war, in Nigeria there is evidence of people with such titles negotiating trade and administrative terms in colonial times. Hence, the role performed in Tudu seems not to be very contradictory in a sense. For more on the *balogun* in Nigeria, see S. O. Oyetade, 'A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Address Forms in Yoruba', *Language in Society*, 24:4 (Dec. 1995), 515-35; T. Fayola, 'The Yoruba Toll System: Its Operation and Abolition', *The Journal of African History*, 30:1 (1989), 69-88.

[403] See Introduction Chapter for more insights.

[404] See, for example: E. Abaka, *Kola is God's Gift: Agricultural Production, Export Initiatives and the Kola Industry of Asante and Gold Coast c.1820-1950* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005); P. E. Lovejoy, *Caravans of Kola: The Hausa Kola Trade, 1700-1900* (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1980); P. E. Lovejoy, 'Kola in the History of West Africa', *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, 20. Cahier 77/78

works are very important to our understanding of long-distance trade in kola nuts, involving 'dominant' groups such as the Hausa and Ashanti. This chapter is a brief but significant addition to the scholarship on this important commodity.

The chapter will also focus on two ethnic groups in Tudu, the Yoruba and the Kotokoli, which dominate the kola-nut trade in Tudu. Reference will be made, however, to other ethnic groups such as the Hausa for analytical purposes. The chapter will also emphasise the central role of motorised transportation and of traditional leadership in the kola trade. Discussing the various trade patterns, transport systems, and leadership structures that evolved as a result of the kola-nut trade will enable us to understand aspects of Tudu's socio-economic and political history as well as the general history of northerners in Accra and beyond. For we shall, in this chapter, understand how the ingenuity and entrepreneurial skills of kola-nut traders in Tudu contributed to the reshaping of cultural and political histories of some Ghanaian societies.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the various uses and supply sources of kola nuts to Tudu. Our attention is drawn to the Yoruba and Kotokoli kola-nut traders in the second section. The third section considers the role of transportation in the kola-nut trade in Tudu. The fourth discusses leadership positions that emerged in Tudu as a result of the trade. Emphasis is placed on two such positions, namely the Sarikin Tudu and the *maigida*.

Sources and Usefulness of kola nuts: Insights from Tudu and Accra

The hawker of kola nuts is a regular feature of most streets in Ghana, including those of Accra, and kola nuts are common throughout West Africa. Kola is the nut of a tree, *cola nitida* or *cola acuminata*, which grows in West Africa.[405] It is round in shape and the size of a chestnut, and the nuts can be white or red in colour.[406] Of the two major species of kola, *cola nitida* has been far more important historically in trade in West Africa; hence our discussion will centre on the *cola nitida*.

(1980), 97-134; P. E. Lovejoy, 'Polanyi's "Ports of Trade": Salaga and Kano in the Nineteenth Century', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 16:2 (1982), 245-77.

[405] P. E. Lovejoy, *Caravans of Kola*, 6; E. Abaka, *Kola is God's Gift*, 1; S. D. Brown, 'The Court and the Kola Nut: Wooing and Witnessing in Northern Ghana', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1:1 (Mar. 1995), 130.

[406] B. Agiri, 'The Introduction of Nitida Kola into Nigerian Agriculture, 1880-1920', *African Economic History*, 3 (Spring, 1977), 1.

Kola-nut demand within Accra is directly related to Accra's urbanisation and the city's expansion. Immigrations to Accra led to the founding of more *zongos* in addition to Cow Lane and Tudu. Some of these include Sabon Zongo, Old Fadama, New Town, Nima, Madina, and so on. These *zongos* became important outlets for kola nuts in Accra. In all the *zongos*, kola nuts were an important ritual commodity among northern migrants. Kola nuts were required for all important occasions and ceremonies, such as marriage, naming, and mortuary rites. Kola nuts were used to seal all marriages among northern migrants. In Tudu, for example, as much as 'one calabash of presentable kola nuts' was required as part of the marriage articles.[407] Furthermore, the leaders in the *zongo*s in Accra, including Chief Braimah, used kola nuts to legitimise their authority. A petition from the Hausa Community to the governor in the first decade of the 1900s, rejecting Braimah's appointment, bears evidence to this fact:

> *When the Accra were about to give Ibrahima King, on Friday, Ibrahima sent us kola nuts on Thursday but we refused to accept these kola nuts. Those who brought the kola nuts returned with them. Then we made writing* [sic] *and sent it to the King* [Ga King] *who called us on Friday, we went there. He said to us; Has this Kingship, Ibrahima has been invested with been made with your knowledge? We said No. He said we should go home settle and reunite till the arrival of the Governor. We went home.*[408]

From Braimah's time to this day northern migrants have still maintained headmen in the cities. In all cases, the kola nut is still a very important symbol of legitimacy among the migrants seeking traditional leadership positions. In fact, increases in northern migrations to Accra have even led to the 'sectionalisation' of leadership. In order to gain maximum control over their own affairs, almost all northern ethnic groups have their headmen in all parts of Accra. We have the Dagomba and Gonja Chiefs in Madina, Lapaz, New Town, and so on. The approximate number of these headmen is over two hundred in Accra.[409] Considering these numbers, the importance of kola nuts in their daily activities cannot be overstated. Indeed, the presence of these headmen has led to

[407] A calabash of kola nuts is simply one hundred kola nuts. A calabash would have been used as the standard of measurement of the nuts. It must, however, be borne in mind that there are varying sizes of calabash. My informants could only describe the size of the calabash used as being the size of a carrier pan.

[408] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1446, Mohammedan Community Report of Mallam Garba and Mallam Bako and Mallam Nainoo to Secretary of Native Affairs 16th January 1903.

[409] In 1977, Nima alone had 16 headmen from the north representing their various ethnic groups. For more on the leaders in Nima, see M. Ibn Chambers, 'The Political Economy of Urbanisation: A Study of Leaders and Development in Nima; A Slum in Accra' (MA thesis, Political Science Department, University of Ghana, 1975), 67.

the gradual incorporation of traditional festivals, such as *Adosa* of the Kotokoli, into Islamic festivals in Accra. During these festivals there is evidence of the use of kola nuts both as gifts and also in the performance of rituals associated with *Adosa*.[410] Among the Yoruba in Tudu, kola is generally used to welcome guests. Social protocol requires of the Yoruba to break kola nuts and share them amongst themselves when a guest is received or when an important meeting is held.

The military in Tudu also patronised kola nuts. Kola nuts became an important part of the dietary needs and daily ration of the military in colonial times.[411] The reasons for the incorporation of kola nuts were varied, but three will be discussed here. The first was the fact that the majority of the recruits were from the north and therefore very much accustomed to the chewing of kola nuts.[412] The second was that the nut was used as a stimulant and the military used it to stay awake, especially during night duties. Kola nuts contain caffeine and theobromine, both alkaloids which stimulate the central nervous system.[413] The third was the fact that kola nuts reduce fatigue and sometimes reduce hunger and thirst.[414] From 1916, Tudu gradually emerged as an important node for the colonial military establishment, beginning with the establishment in Tudu in 1916 of a barracks for the Gold Coast Regiment. The barracks was expanded in the 1920s to incorporate more members of the regiment, who were transferred from Kumasi and Tamale to Accra. In the later part of the 1930s and early 1940s, as a result of increased recruitments for the Second World War, an additional military depot, referred to as the 'Reception Depot', was built about five hundred meters east of the original barracks in Tudu. The expansion of this infrastructure, coupled with increased recruitment, led to an increase in kola-nut demand in Tudu.

The significance of the kola nut to the users of the lorry park is also worth discussing. Since the establishment of the lorry park, kola nuts have been part of the

[410] For example, before the machete festival (*Adosa*) of the Kotokoli, it was the norm for kola nuts to be presented to the headmen before the commencement of the dance. In the 2005 *Adosa*, I counted over one hundred headmen at the ceremony in Madina.
[411] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG,1/9/18, Supply of Goods to Regimental Officers, 1908.
[412] Interview with Pookoo Aikins, Police Training School Tesano, 2 September 2009. Aikins is an Assistant Commissioner of Police at the Police Training School. He holds an MA in Information Studies from the University of Ghana. He is currently in charge of the Library of the Police Training School. He is also the author of the book, *The Police in Ghana 1939-1999* (Accra: Rescue Printing Press, 2002). For the ethnic composition of the Gold Coast Regiment, see B. Hettne, 'Soldiers and Politics: The Case of Ghana', *Journal of Peace Research*, 17:2 (1980), 173.
[413] P. E. Lovejoy, *Caravans of Kola*, 4.
[414] Interview with Pookoo Aikins.

operational process of the park. Tudu has one of the lorry parks that operate twenty-four hours a day. Because the lorry park operates day and night, it is always full of passengers, traders and drivers. The presence of these people caused kola-nut traders to also operate twenty-four hours a day. As already noted, kola nut contains caffeine and acts as a stimulant, and it is chewed by many drivers who want to remain alert. Long-distance drivers in Tudu who ply the Lagos, Lome, Abidjan and Ouagadougou routes are known patrons of kola nuts. Long-distance itinerant traders in Tudu also make use of kola nuts. In the course of plying their trade, they arrive at night and usually use the nut to stay awake since thieves go around stealing goods and money from sleeping traders. Patronage of the nut picks up on Sunday and Wednesday nights, as traders bring vegetables for the Monday and Thursday wholesale market in Tudu.

A lorry park guard buying kola from a trader at the entrance of Tudu Lorry Park. (Picture by author, 2008)

Some traders at the lorry park consult marabouts in the Tudu community in order to increase sales. In most cases, white kola nuts are used by the marabout and religious healers who perform divinatory rituals for the traders. Sometimes elaborate rituals are

requested at the lorry park on Fridays, which usually include cow milk, cowries, millet, and white kola nuts.[415]

Finally, kola nuts are used to solidify bonds of friendship and strike new acquaintance among the different ethnic groups that inhabit Tudu. As an informant rightly put it:

> *Without kola nuts in Tudu you cannot make new friends and you cannot keep old ones. When we sit together to talk what keeps the conversation going is kola nuts. As we talk we share it* [kola nuts]. *Anyone who comes here and can chew kola nuts can easily get integrated in the society, for he can easily make a lot of friends. At times we move about with kola nuts in our pockets for it is not uncommon for a friend or relation to ask you at any point in time for one kola nut or a piece of it.*[416]

The sources of supply of kola nuts to Tudu are many. These sources are different from those of Salaga in the north, where most of the kola nuts come from Ashanti, particularly areas around Kumasi and Mampong, and some areas in present-day Brong Ahafo, such as Kintampo, Bechem, Wenchi, Sunyani, Duayaw-Nkwanta, Takyimantia, and Tuobodom.[417] Kola-nut traders in Tudu depend minimally on these sources and instead depend mostly on supplies from the present-day Eastern Region and Central Region of Ghana. Prominent among these areas are Adawso, Kibi (Kyebi), Mangoase, Asamankese, Nsawam, Koforidua, and the Krobo areas in Eastern Region, while Nsaba, Nyakrom, Dunkwa, Ajumako, Assin, and Saltpond are the main sources in the Central Region.[418]

The reason for dependence on the Eastern and Central region is due to proximity. These areas are closer than the areas mentioned earlier in Ashanti and the

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[415] Interview with Alhaji Abubakr, Tudu, 7 July 2007 Abubakr is a Yoruba and was born in 1918. Abubakr was involved in the buying and selling of horses in Tudu, but he is a trained Mallam and offers consultation to traders at the lorry park.

[416] Interview with Adamu Issahaku, Tudu, 7 July 2007. Adamu Issahaku is a Kotokoli and a retired driver. He is currently the chairman of the Accra, Hohoe, and Kajebi drivers' union in Tudu. Adamu was born in 1940. At age fifteen he became a driver's mate to Haruna, one of the first drivers at Tudu Lorry Park. His master Haruna had two vehicles that were used to load kola nuts to Hohoe and Lagos. The first was a Bedford, with a signboard reading 'Awake God is there'. The second one had a signboard reading 'One Man Thousand'. Adamu got his driver's licence in 1960. He drove a DAF cargo vehicle loading kola nuts, as his master did, until 1970 when he bought his own Benz bus, switching from cargo to passenger transport in Tudu. He drove his own vehicle until 1984, when he stopped driving owing to old age. But as is usual in the park, such retired drivers are also given positions within the union to ensure that they get some income.

[417] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/12/36, Cola Survey of the Eastern and Ashanti Areas and a General Review of the Gold Coast Industry, 1931.

[418] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/12/36, The Kola Trade, 1921-1934

Brong Ahafo. Secondly, production in the Central Region from the 1920s increased and made prices cheaper for kola-nut traders. Following the successful operation of the railway system from Takoradi to Kumasi in 1904, trade began to gravitate again around Kumasi. At first, the British-Ashanti wars of 1874 and 1900-1 led to the re-emergence of Cape Coast as a central distribution point. Ashanti came to depend on Cape Coast, as traders from Cape Coast continued to supply Kumasi with basic needs owing to the destruction from the wars.[419] The railway revived trade and led to the decline in the Central Region's trade bound for Kumasi. To address this problem, the Governor in his address to the chiefs and people advised inhabitants in present-day Central Region to increase kola-nut and citrus production to counter the effects of the trade diversion. [420] With these varied sources, the Yoruba and Kotokoli became central in the kola-nut trade. Reasons for the emergence of these two groups will be explained in the course of this discussion.

The Yoruba Kola traders in Tudu

In Accra, kola-nut trade was carried out by a number of ethnic groups, but the most prominent were the Yoruba and Hausa. From 1874 until 1908, kola-nut trade was carried out in Cow Lane and around the beach in James Town, located in an area called Old Accra. In Old Accra, the Hausa had dominated the trade despite the fact that numerically the Yoruba were the majority.[421]

The selection of Tudu in 1908 gave Braimah and other Yoruba kola-nut traders the opportunity to control the trade in Tudu. Braimah was a Yoruba, yet his command of the Hausa language and his earlier involvement in the kola-nut trade in Salaga, the northern town of Ghana, enabled him to wield authority over a much greater ethnic mix in Accra, namely the Grushie, Mossi, Kotokoli, and some Hausa.[422] Besides, since Nigeria seems to have been a major destination of kola nuts, the Yoruba in Tudu, under Braimah, were of greater consequence. The rest of the ethnic groups in Tudu were reduced to carriers and loaders of kola nuts to the ships bound for Lagos, until

[419] Government Gazette (Extra Ordinary), Accra, 40 (29 June 1907), 464.
[420] *Ibid.*
[421] D. Pellow, *Landlords and Lodgers*, 46.
[422] Interview with Ibrahim Osman, Tudu, 11 January 2008. Ibrahim is a retired lecturer from the University of Education in Winneba, Ghana, where he was the head of the Physical Education Department. He is the grandson of Chief Braimah, the founder of Tudu. He currently resides in New Town but still visits the family house in Tudu.

Braimah's death in 1915.[423] Before discussing the effects of the death of Braimah and its impact on the Kotokoli, it is important to mention that in Tudu some Yoruba continued trading in kola nuts after Braimah's death, even up to the present day. Some prominent kola-nut traders that were remembered in Tudu among several Yoruba traders were Amadu Ilorin, Alaweye Bako, Giwa, Chief Abdul-Rahim, Alhaji Etree, and Tudu Matan Fada. We shall return to some of these names in this chapter when discussion turns to motorised transport and leadership positions in kola-nut trade.[424]

The Kotokoli kola-nut traders in Tudu

According to my informants, it was after the death of Braimah that the Kotokoli, both men and women, got involved in the kola-nut trade in Tudu.[425] The question is: why the participation of the Kotokoli after the death of Braimah? Archival and oral evidence indicates that the Kotokoli were composed of porters (carriers) supervised by a chief porter.[426] Chief porters were stationed in foremost kola-producing areas in the present-day Eastern Region of Ghana. They were responsible not only for carrying kola nuts to Accra, but also for collecting fees on behalf of Braimah.[427] Their role as chief porters therefore placed them in the middleman position, which was transformed into a trader group after the death of Braimah.

There is a correlation between the rise in the number of Kotokoli in the kola-nut trade and the period immediately after the death of Braimah. Sources in the archives show a sudden rise of the Kotokoli from 1917 in the transport of kola nuts to Lagos and of Kotokoli women engaging in the buying and selling of kola nuts from the Central and

[423] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1502, Mohammedan Community, 20 May 1920.
[424] A list of some kola-nut traders in 1922 indicates that the Yoruba had dominated the kola-nut industry in the Gold Coast. They were followed by the Hausa. Even though the list is not exhaustive—it only indicates some figures of traders along the coast and some parts of the present-day Eastern region—it nonetheless provides us with information regarding how trade was conducted even after Braimah's death. For a full list of those mentioned in the sample survey of 1922, see PRAAD, Cape Coast, ADM 23/1/241, 1922
[425] Interview with Alhaji Aliu Kudjin, Tudu, 12 December 2007. Kudjin is from Paga in the Upper East Region of Ghana. He could not tell me his age, but he said he moved out of Tudu to stay in Labadi after the earthquake of 1939. He got his driving licence in 1957, having failed his driving test twice in 1949 and 1950. He is the head of the Welfare Office at Tudu Lorry Park. He was interviewed with Paa Joe, his assistant. Paa Joe lives in Tudu. He was a newspaper vendor at the park from 1952-60. Later he became a driver at the park.
[426] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/1502, Letter of complaint regarding selection of Chief Carriers from Kadri English to Secretary of Native Affairs, 1912,
[427] *Ibid.*

Eastern Regions to Accra.[428] In several of the petitions signed after Braimah's death regarding kola-nut trade between the Gold Coast and Lagos, Kotokoli names feature prominently, examples of which include Braimah Kotokoli, Chief Salifu Kotokoli, and Mumuni Kotokoli, to mention just a few. Some of them, in addition to the Lagos-bound trade, were also involved in trade within the Gold Coast. In Tudu, Amadu Ilorin (alias Baba Tudu), Mumuni Kotokoli, Alasa Kotokoli, Alhaji Baedare, and Salifu Haruna were well-known kola brokers. Alasa Kotokoli, for example, bought all his nuts on credit and did most of his selling through Kotokoli women and hawkers in Tudu Lorry Park and Makola Market, sellers who did not pay until they had sold their nuts. The kola was brought to him by both men and women from the kola-producing areas of Southern Ghana, areas such as Nsaba, Oda, Nyakrom, Asamankese, and Dunkwa. His suppliers were mostly Kotokoli.[429]

Apart from the death of Braimah, there were other significant factors which contributed to the growth in numbers of the Kotokoli in the kola-nut trade in Tudu. Furthermore, with the exception of a few Kotokoli who engaged in the Lagos-bound trade, examples of which include those mentioned above, the Kotokoli unlike the Yoruba were not concerned so much about the external trade to Nigeria. They mainly specialised to a larger extent on the internal markets within the Gold Coast and Togo. They, unlike the Yoruba, identified certain changes in the socio-cultural and political practices in some parts of the Gold Coast as well as Togo and quickly converted the changes to trade opportunities. As noted already, after Braimah's death the first opportunity that was used by the Kotokoli to engage in trade was the mass conversion of their kinsmen and women from animism to Islam. Two events will permit us to understand how events unfolded in Kotokoli territory and how that affected Islam and subsequently kola-nut demand. The Kotokoli were first exposed to the Islamic religion through contacts with Hausa and Yoruba traders, who made extensive use of the route from Salaga through Sokode (an important Kotokoli town) to Nigeria. By the mid-1800s, Kotokoli territory had been swept by Muslim influence, beginning with the

[428] PRAAD, Cape Coast, ADM 23/1/241, District Commissioner, Saltpond to The Commissioner, Central Province, Cape Coast, 4 July 1922.
[429] P. Hill, *Indigenous Trade and Market Places in Ghana, 1962-1964* (Clare Hall, Cambridge, 1984), 240.

conversion of their paramount King, Uro Jobo Bukari II (1850-1880).[430] Uro Jobo made conversion to Islam compulsory in his kingdom. In a bid to press home his demands for compulsory Islamisation, war broke out. This led to mass migrations into the Gold Coast, now Ghana, thereby stagnating Islam in Kotokoli land in the process.

Uro Jobo's successor, Uro Eso, was also pro-Islam but was not interested in using compulsion to engender conversions. Even though he was a moderate Muslim, his ascension to the throne also coincided with the period of German rule, which began in the 1880s.[431] The Germans were not comfortable with Islam in their territories, which comprised present-day Volta Region and parts of Togo, including the Kotokoli area. In some cases, Muslim preachers in these areas were even jailed by the Germans.[432] This period ushered in the second phase of stagnation of Islam, which remained at a low ebb until the beginning of the First World War.[433] The demise of Germany saw a new wave of Muslim evangelists in Kotokoli territory. The impact of evangelists such Malam Musa, a Fulbe from Adamawa, meant that by 1914 there were five thousand Muslim converts in Kotokoli. Musa and his followers had moved across the hinterlands of Dahomey (Benin) and Togo and the Gold Coast, converting many as they went.[434] By 1925 the number of Kotokoli converts rose to fifteen thousand, and in 1955 there were twenty-five thousand converts.[435] By the 1960s almost all the Kotokoli had become Muslim. Significantly, the rise of Islam amongst the Kotokoli saw the substitution of kola nuts for *choukoutou* (see picture below), a local millet beer with kola nuts.[436]

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[430] P. Alexandre, 'Organisation Politique des Kotokoli du Nord-Togo', *Cahier d'Etudes Africaines*, 4:14 (1963), 249.
[431] H. Klose, *Klose's Journey to Northern Ghana, 1894*. Translated by Inge Killick. (Accra: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, 1964), 1-3.
[432] H. Weiss, 'Variations in the colonial representation of Islam and Muslims in Northern Ghana, Ca. 1900-1930', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 25:1 (Apr. 2005), 79.
[433] H. Weiss, 'German Images of Islam in West Africa', *Sudanic Africa*, 11 (2000), 53-6. It is important to note that even though mass Kotokoli conversions did not take place here, some of the Islamic customs were already prevalent, such as the wearing of the long flowing gowns by the ruling elite. For such fragments of some of the Islamic culture prior to the First World War in North-Eastern Ghana and Togo, see H. Klose, *Klose's Journey to Northern Ghana, 1894*: 130-7.
[434] H. Weiss, 'Variations', 79.
[435] P. Alexandre, 'Organisation Politique', 245.
[436] It is important to note that even though *choukoutu* is largely abhorred by the Kotokoli, it is still prepared on a minor scale in some of the communities such as Kwe in Ghana and Bafilo in Togo. These two Kotokoli communities still maintain a very strong hunter cult, where libation using *choukoutu* precedes the hunter initiation rites.

Choukoutou, the local beer of the Kotokoli, now replaced by kola nuts. (Picture by author, 2008)

Choukoutou was usually required during marriages, naming ceremonies, and in hunting and funerary rites.[437] It was also consumed in large quantities during important Kotokoli festivals and ceremonies, including the Yam festival (Fududi), Guinea Corn festival (Mila) and Fire festival (Nimlilo).[438] But Malam Musa and his followers preached against the consumption of beer.[439] Kotokoli social life is highly reciprocal, and it is the reciprocity that makes almost all their ceremonies compulsory. So with the kola nut as obvious substitute for beer, kola nuts became a part of marriage, funeral rites, and other festivals, and the demand dramatically increased.[440] Prominent kola-nut porters in Tudu, such as Salifu Haruna, quickly took advantage and began supplying kola nuts to Kotokoli settlements such as Kwei, Sokode and Atakpame. Over time, they came to

[437] G. Reisner, 'Three Ceremonies in Togo', *The Drama Review*, 25:4 (Winter 1981), 53.
[438] D. A. Ntewusu, 'A Sociological Study of Kotokoli Marriages and Festivals', (BA Long Essay, Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, Legon, 2009), 25.
[439] H. Weiss, 'Variations', 79.
[440] It is important to note that despite the fact that kola nuts replaced the local beer in most of the Kotokoli settlements, there are still instances in which the local beer is brewed for specific ritual purposes. For example, on a yearly basis Kotokoli hunters usually perform purification rites on their hunting implements such as guns, bows and arrows, and spears. During these rites, the local beer is usually brewed for purposes of pouring libation and also for consumption

dominate specific supply zones in the south of Ghana. As Polly Hill observed of some of the Kotokoli suppliers:

> *In a Zongo near Asamankese which is situated in the southern kola-growing belt, there are about twenty kola wholesale traders all but one of whom is said to be Kotokoli from Sokodei in Togo…. Alhaji Asaman, from Sokodei claimed to be the head of the group and to have been brought here by his father who was in the kola trade when he was young.*[441]

The Buem area also increasingly offered opportunity for Kotokoli kola-nut traders in Tudu.[442] Picking up as a major cocoa-producing area since the 1920s, the increase in cocoa production in Buem led to labour migrations into the area from the northern part of Ghana and some parts of Togo.[443] The relocation of the Kotokoli in Tudu was due to the defeat of Germany in the First World War and the subsequent economic decline of their area. The iron-ore mining which had been central here during the German period collapsed after their departure.[444] The French and the British who inherited this area after the World War were not interested in investing in the iron-ore deposits. Instead, the British encouraged cocoa production in the northern part of the present-day Volta Region. With no other alternative source of income and already exposed to the cash economy, many of the migrants moved into the cocoa farms in the Buem areas.[445] As a result of the presence of these migrants, a stratum of *zongo*s developed in cocoa-producing towns such as Jasikan, Hohoe, Wurawura, and Ahamasu in the present-day Volta Region of Ghana.[446] These *zongo*s became important nodes for the distribution of kola nuts from Tudu.[447]

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[441] P. Hill, *Indigenous Trade,* 240.

[442] Buem refers to an area in the north-eastern part of the Volta Region. It is settled by an Akan group called Buem, but in the 1920s the Ewe from the coastal part of the Volta Region migrated there to cultivate cocoa. For more on the causes of the migrations, see for example, S. E. Patten & G. K. Nukunya, 'Organisational Responses to Agricultural Intensification in Anloga, Ghana', *African Studies Review*, 25:2/3 (June-Sept. 1982), 67.

[443] B. N. Lawrence, '"En Proie a Du Cacao": Land and Resources Conflict on an Ewe Frontier, 1922-1939', *African Economic History,* 31 (2003), 151.

[444] (No Author), 'Iron and Steel in Ghana: A Survey of the Market, Raw Materials and Production Potential', (Accra: Industrial Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, May 1970), 15; H. Klose, *Klose's Journey to Northern Ghana, 1894*, 130.

[445] (No Author), 'Iron and Steel in Ghana', 15.

[446] M. Johnson, 'Migrant Progress', *Bulletin of the Ghana Geographical Association*, 19:2 (July 1964), 22.

[447] Interview with Alhassan Braimah, Tudu Lorry Park, 20 August 2009. Alhassan is aged sixty-seven years and currently he is the chairman of the Accra-Aflao-Abidgan branch at Tudu Lorry Park. He owns three vehicles and he started driving at the lorry park in 1960 but retired in 2001. According to Alhassan, in the 1960s he was one of the drivers that conveyed kola nuts to Lagos. When the trade dwindled, he

In the 1920s and 1930s other factors which were unrelated to Islam in Kotokoli territory and the emergence of *zongo*s in Buem also contributed to kola-nut demand. The introduction of indirect rule became an important means through which the Kotokoli conquered new land and introduced kola nuts. Through the indirect rule system, most ethnic groups considered as 'acephalous' were brought under the more 'centralised' ethnic groups in northern Ghana.[448] For example, in present-day Northern Region, the Bassari and Konkomba were put under the Dagomba, and the Nawuri, Nchumburu, Vagla, and Mo were put under the Gonja. In Upper West Region, the Dargarti and Lobi were put under the Wala, and in Upper East Region the Kassina, Frafra, and Kusasi were put under the Mamprusi.

The need for proper rulership made some of the Dagomba, Gonja, Wala, and Mamprusi send resident chiefs into the towns and villages of the acephalous groups.[449] These four groups are all Islamised, and therefore in their new setting they went along with their mallams.[450] In some cases, some of the mallams and imams officially served in the chiefs' courts. Other Muslim preachers also visited these places from time to time to evangelise, with some taking permanent residence in these 'diasporic' communities.[451] The combined effects of indirect rule and the presence of mallams and imams saw an increase in demand for kola nuts, since a much larger population and geographical area had been incorporated into the chief territory. Visits to the chiefs required the presentation of kola nuts. In almost every village with a chief in the north, especially among the centralised groups, regular visits on Mondays, Fridays, market days, and festive days are the norm; one cannot visit the chief without gifts, especially kola nuts. This practice has continued until today.[452]

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switched to passenger transport on the same route, Tudu-Lagos. In 2000 he became one of the pioneers of the Tudu-Abidjan route but retired in 2001 owing to old age.

[448] H. Weiss, 'Variations', 87; B. Chalfin, 'Border Zone Trade and the Economic Boundaries of the State in North-East Ghana', *Journal of International African Institute*, 71:2 (2001), 217.

[449] In some cases, they ruled through 'headmen'. The headmen had to report to them on a frequent basis, sometimes weekly. And in all cases the headmen had to carry kola nuts with them as gift for the chief.

[450] A mallam is an Islamic cleric or teacher. Imam is an Islamic leadership position and used for the worship leader in a mosque.

[451] H. Weiss, 'Variations', 77.

[452] By discussing the effects of indirect rule on kola-nut consumption, I am not suggesting that it was only during indirect rule that kola nuts became a central part of northern chiefly etiquette. There is evidence to the effect that in all centralised polities of northern Ghana, particularly among the Gonja, Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Nanumba, the kola nut was and continues to be a ubiquitous companion of chieftainship. Kola nuts are very important both in daily affairs and in competition for traditional chiefly office. Subjects and princes also pay visits to the chief and in most cases present kola nuts as their 'greeting

Closely related to these processes of change is the use of the mallams and imams by both the centralised and acephalous groups for their spiritual and social needs, again involving the use of kola nuts. It is important to note that the interaction between the acephalous groups on one hand and the royalty and mallams on the other did not lead to any substantial conversions on the side of the acephalous groups. The reason being that the acephalous groups were and still are engaged in the worship of ancestors and deities. Nonetheless, they used the mallams for their own spiritual needs, which in some cases required the use of kola nuts. It is important to note that one of the areas in which the influence of Islam on non-Islamic cultures is most immediately apparent is that of magico-religious activity.[453] The reason such 'Islamic magic' is of appeal to the non-Islamised, especially among our reference acephalous group, is that their traditional religion is essentially eclectic in its approach to the supernatural; while they have a framework of religious concepts and beliefs, there is much scope for change, for new ideas, and for new deities and new cults.[454] In times of sickness or need, members of the acephalous groups still consult—in addition to their deities—the mallams, and in most cases sacrifices have to be made especially on Fridays, including the use of kola nuts and cow milk. In most northern communities, these Friday sacrificial rituals became known and are still known as *sadaka*.[455]

The constant interactions between the centralised and non-centralised groups also led to a change in some of the ceremonies and practices of the non-centralised or acephalous groups. Among the Nawuris, bush meat, which was part of the marriage articles, was replaced by a hundred kola nuts. In addition, during naming ceremonies and funeral celebrations, kola nuts were and are still shared among all those present, just

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gifts'. The chief, who always has his reserved kola nuts in a kettle, also gives the visitor kola nuts in return. The chief's kola (*naab-gori* in Mamprugu and *ewur-kaposhe* in Gonja), unlike those presented by the visitors, has a different meaning and value. It is both the chief's greeting and the sign of his gratitude for the greeting he received. In addition, kola nuts are prevalent in marriage, funerary, and naming ceremonies, and in the communal labour organised in and among these ethnic groups. The kola nut's importance for our discussion here lies in the widened circuits of its distribution which came about as a result of indirect rule. For the established forms of distribution and use of kola nuts among the centralised groups in Northern Ghana, particularly the Mampruse and Gonja, see S. D. Brown, 'The Court and the Kola Nut: Wooing and Witnessing in Northern Ghana', *The Journal of The Royal Anthropological Institute,* 1:1 (Mar. 1995), 129-43; E. N. Goody, 'Greeting, begging, and the presentation of respect', in J. S. LaFontaine (ed.), *The Interpretation of Ritual, Essays in Honour of A. I. Richards* (Tavistock Publications, 1972).

[453] J. Goody, 'The Impact of Islamic writing on the oral cultures of West Africa', *Cahier d' Etude Africaines*, 11:43 (1971), 458.

[454] *Ibid.* 459.

[455] *Sadaka* in Hausa simply means 'sacrifice'.

as occurred among Muslims. Until the 1930s it was the fruits of the Sand Paper tree (local name, *Kapoli*) which was commonly shared, but while some have still kept the traditional sharing of *kapoli*, the majority use kola.[456]

Fruits of Sand Paper Tree (*Ficus sycomorus*), now replaced by kola nuts in the Nawuri area of Northern Region. (Picture by author, 2007)

From what has been discussed, we find a gradual emergence of a kola-nut economy in areas that otherwise were not accustomed to the use of kola nuts, and in all these areas the Kotokoli from Tudu were instrumental in ensuring supplies.

Finally, the emergence of *gorovudu* (kola spirits) since the 1940s as an established belief system in Ghana, Togo, and Benin has led to an increased demand for kola nuts. *Goro* in Hausa means kola nut, and *vudu* refers to a cluster of spirit deities venerated mainly by the Ewe in Ghana, as well as other ethnic groups in Togo and Benin.[457] In Ghana and Togo, *gorovudu* emerged as a result of the slave trade, legitimate trade, and labour migrations. It came about as a result of the fusion of

[456] There are two varieties of the Sand Paper tree. The female (*Ficus sycomorus*) which is edible and the male (*Ficus asperifolia*) which is non-edible. It is Ficus sycomorus which is usually used for the ritual. I am grateful to Mr. Ndamele Sawyer for this information. See Chapter 2 for Sawyer's profile.

[457] J. Rosenthal, 'Foreign Tongues and Domestic Bodies: Gendered Cultural Regions and Regionalized Sacred Flows', in M. Grosz-Ngate & O. H. Kokole (eds.), *Gendered Encounters: Challenging Cultural Boundaries and Social Hierarchies in Africa* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 183.

cultures from the north and the south, particularly in present-day Volta region and among the Ewe. The initial role of *gorovudu* was witch-finding, but the focus quickly changed from witch-finding to performing the usual protective and healing work demanded of most deities.[458] With its focus changed to issues of healing and protection, its members increased. What is of significance to our discussion here is the economic element of *gorovudu*, viz. the demand for kola nuts.

Gorovudu possessions and worship are prevalent in the Volta Region and other parts of Togo and Benin, especially on Fridays, for which kola nut and animal-blood sacrifices have to be made.[459] It was the frequent demands for these kola nuts for *gorovudu*-related ritual purposes which Alhaji Ankiti, a former kola-nut trader in Tudu, maintains kept him in business for years in Tudu and the borders between the Volta Region and Togo. As he reported:

> *I supplied kola to these areas because it was in constant demand since it was a basic ritual requirement especially during spirit possession. I do not know how I would have survived in business without some of these rituals. I give them what they want and they give me money which is what is important in trade.*[460]

From the above we realise that even though kola-nut exports were mostly to Nigeria and had more mainly Yoruba in Tudu supplying to Lagos, by the second decade of the 1900s, a number of factors came to stimulate internal demands for kola nuts, such as the spread of Islam, the foundation of new *zongo*s, the incorporation of new areas into the centralised traditional political systems, and the emergence of *gorovudu* in Ghana, Togo, and Benin. I argue that the Yoruba and Kotokoli kola-nut traders were able to meet this demand only due to improvement in transport technology. And for this we turn to the relevance of transport systems, particularly motorised transport, to the kola-nut trade in Tudu.

Transportation and kola-nut trade

The most important connections in kola-nut trade were new forms of transportation. As noted in Chapter 2, initially porters—mainly Kotokoli—brought kola nuts from the Eastern Region of Ghana to Accra. Modern transportation had made kola much more

[458] *Ibid.* 184.
[459] *Ibid.* 192-3.
[460] Alhaji Ankiti, Tudu, 21 August 2008. Ankiti is eighty years old. He is a native of Kwei, one of the Kotokoli villages in present-day Volta Region, but lives in Madina.

available to most members of the society. The completion of the railway from Kumasi to Accra in 1923 facilitated the transportation of kola nuts to Accra.[461] Internal distribution of kola nuts in Accra was mainly performed by head-load or horse-drawn portage.[462]

Besides these systems of transportation, kola-nut traders also depended on motorised transportation. In Ghana, as in most parts of Africa, the motor vehicle led to the development and accessing of new markets, as well as the establishment of a completely new economy centred on motor vehicles.[463] It is important for us to note that the prospects of road transport in the kola-nut trade had been much anticipated. Amadu Ilorin's report to the colonial government in 1919 helps us discuss the issue of motorised transport further. In his report regarding kola-nut trade, Amadu Ilorin (alias Amadu/Baba Tudu) wrote as follows:

> *Kola nuts from Ashanti some go by land to Mossi, Sokoto and Kano and takes about three months to Sokoto. It takes four months to Kano from Cooomasi. By steamer from Secconde it takes about five days to Lagos and three days by rail from Lagos to Kano. It takes about two months from Lagos to Sokoto by walking. No railway from Lagos to Sokoto. Kola nuts from the colony are shipped to Lagos or Nigeria from the ports of Cape Coast, Saltpond, Winneba and Accra. If a boat of kola takes nine days from Secconde to Lagos it must go bad. The kola shipped from Secconde sustains more damage than those shipped from Cape Coast, Saltpond, Winneba and Accra because the Kola from the port in Seccondee goes right down the bottom of the ship and it suffers more* [sic]. *If a boat takes five days from Seconde to Lagos the damage will not be much..... If one takes hundred donkeys load from Coomassi to Sokoto about two loads will spoil and in that case by land (donkeys) is also better than by steamer and only takes too long to reach.*[464]

The report from Amadu to the colonial secretary summarises the invaluable advantages of road transport and explains the reason for the sudden switch of kola-nut suppliers to the motor vehicle. From the mid-1920s, maritime exports of kola nuts to Lagos declined. Lovejoy and Abaka attribute the decline to alternative sources of kola nuts to Lagos, particularly productions within Nigeria and imports from Cameroon and Sierra

[461] PRAAD, ARG, 1/12/36, The Kola Trade, 1921-1934.
[462] See Chapters 2 and 3 for more insights on human and animal-drawn portage
[463] J. B. Gewald, 'Transformations In Transport In Zambia: Preliminary Ideas Regarding A Social History Dealing With The Introduction Of The Motor-Vehicle In Zambia, 1890 – 1930', (Leiden: ASC, Working Paper 74, 2007), 5
[464] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 14/11/12, Secret Letter, Kola Export Tax, 1918-1919.

Leone.[465] Even though there were alternative sources of kola to Nigeria, I argue that at least from Tudu and at most from Accra in general, maritime exports dwindled not only because there were alternative sources of kola supply to Nigeria but also because improved motorised transport led to more kola nuts getting to Nigeria by road. Oral and archival evidence provide considerable evidence about the events in Tudu, explaining how some important Yoruba kola-nut traders, such as Amadu Ilorin, Alhaji Umarugarwa, and Matan Fada chose to send their products to Lagos via road. The other Kotokoli traders such as Baidare, Alhaji Alasa, Alhaji Salifu, and others diverted their kola nuts to the emerging kola-nut markets in Ghana and Togo, particularly when the lorry park was created in 1927.[466]

As explained by Amadu, even if kola-nut traders risked using the donkey, it was a better option than sea transport. One thing is paramount in Amadu's report: whereas the steamer had the advantage of speed over the donkey, it lacked proper ventilation. Conversely, carriage by donkey ensured ventilation but lacked speed. Kola nuts are perishable and hence need efficient transportation. The only solution to the dilemma faced by the kola-nut traders was motor technology since it combined speed and ventilation. Prior to Amadu's report, Elder Demster, the shipping line from Liverpool which mainly handled the kola nuts from the Gold Coast to Nigeria, admitted that ventilation was a major problem in transporting kola nuts from the Gold Coast to Lagos.[467]

Internally, the fastest means was by railway but this proved to be expensive. Kadri English, one of the prominent kola-nut traders in Accra, could not hide his feelings and displeasure at the increase in prices in the conveyance of kola nuts from the interior to Accra by railway.[468] But were these the only reasons that accounted for the sudden switch to motorised transport?

Oral and archival evidence indicates other equally important factors which came to define the switch to motorised transportation, but three in particular will engage our

[465] P. E. Lovejoy, 'Kola in the History of West Africa', *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines,* 20 (1980), 126; E. Abaka, *Kola is God's Gift,* 87.
[466] The first routes introduced at the park were New Town in Accra, and Nsawam, Kyebi, Swedro, Suhum Somanya, and Kpong in the Eastern Region. These routes, aside from the first one, were strategic because they were kola-nut and food-producing areas which were linked to the two markets in Tudu: the Selwyn Market and the Makola Market. The routes connected the kola trade in Tudu to those areas, thereby offering more opportunities to kola-nut traders in Tudu.
[467] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/12/23, Kola Trade, 1910-1911.
[468] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1263, Kola Trade, 1925.

attention here. One of the most important reasons why the kola traders switched to motorised transportation were the rules and regulations governing shipment of kola nuts. For health reasons it was obligatory for all exportable kola nuts to be fumigated, something the traders disliked because it was widely regarded that fumigation had an effect on the flavour and taste of the nuts.[469]

Health reasons also led to the making of rules which required that kola nuts be parked at the beach instead of in homes. Keeping them at the beach was meant to prevent the spread of airborne diseases and to make it easier for inspection. But again, at the beach the moisture and salinity contributed to the rotting of kola nuts, especially when it was the practice for shipment to occur only within a week or two.[470] Reports from the traders indicate the rotting of kola nuts at the beaches in Accra, Winneba, Sekondi, and Saltpond.[471] Meanwhile, losses arising from rotting kola nuts were not paid for by the shipping companies, causing financial losses for the traders.

The traders also complained about double taxation. At the Accra point of exit, export duty was charged and at the Lagos point of entry import tax was imposed on the kola nuts. Double taxation worked negatively against kola-nut traders who made use of sea-borne transport.[472] Even though later diplomatic correspondence between the colonial government in the Gold Coast and Nigeria led to the abolition of the tax in Lagos, the effects had already compelled the traders to seek alternative transport means.[473] With motorised transport they paid only export tax; even then, some of the traders managed to escape payments since there were a number of routes from the producing and loading points to the markets.[474]

By 1930 almost all kola-nut distribution outlets had experienced the enormous impact of the motor vehicle. In his 1930 sessional address to the Legislative Council, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Ransford Slater, referred to the role of motorised transport in the kola-nut trade within and between the Gold Coast and other countries in West Africa.[475] Transporting kola nuts by motor vehicle also offered the traders the

[469] Interview with Baba Addisa. Baba Addisa is the second-born of Amadu Ilorin. See Chapter 3 for his profile.
[470] PRAAD, Kumasi ARG 14/11/12, Kola Export Tax, 1918-19.
[471] *Ibid.*
[472] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1263, Kola Trade, 1922.
[473] *Ibid.*
[474] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG, 1/12/36, The Kola Trade, 1921-1934.
[475] *The Gold Coast Times*, 22 March 1930. Extracts from the Address of His Excellency, the Governor.

opportunity to make brief stops and sell their products. As observed in a survey report in 1931:

> *There are several reasons for the change of direction of trade and the utilisation of motor lorries all of which could be a measure of the economics of the industry.....The merchants dealing in tons of kola borne by motor-lorry is* [sic] *equally favoured and can realise investments in a very short time without undue risk of deterioration. Having purchased the nut it can be loaded at his convenience and there are a lot of markets within easy reach and still better prices to be obtained at the markets. The markets are sufficiently near to the merchant to turn over his cash within a few days involving little risk and a minimum outlay of capital.*[476]

By 1940 there was a thriving Yoruba kola-nut business between Mangoase in present-day Eastern Region, Tudu, and Lagos, with the majority of the traders Lagos-bound using the motor vehicle.[477] At the same time, the Kotokoli traders also infiltrated Akyem, Oda, Saltpond, and other areas which had become important producing regions. Within the same period in Tudu, Lebanese and Syrians also acquired motor vehicles and began conveying the kola nuts of traders to various parts of the Gold Coast and even outside Gold Coast.[478] Even though informants in Tudu could only remember the involvement of the Lebanese and Syrians in the 1940s, evidence from archives indicates Syrians and Lebanese engaging in kola transportation and trade from the Gold Coast using motor vehicles even earlier and going as far as the Sudan with kola nuts.[479] The trend in the utilisation of the motor vehicle for kola transport purposes was the same in the 1950s and 1960s. At the time Polly Hill conducted her research in Ghana in 1964, vast amounts of kola nuts were still being exported from Kumasi, Asamankese, and Tudu to Lagos. As she says of Tudu:

> *The centre of the Kola exporting trade to Nigeria in Accra is a Zongo near Kwame Nkrumah Avenue (Tudu). One of the big buyers, who does not himself travel to buy, is a trader from Kano, Alhaji Umarugarwa. He sends out about three or four men, all Nigerians to buy Ghanaian nuts on his behalf. Sometimes they buy by hundreds sometime by bags; the nuts are then repacked in cocoa bags and sent to Lagos, or Agege, in one of the six lorries owned by the Alhaji. Many other traders in this centre go out to buy in southern Ghana; all the traders who come here*

[476] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 1/12/36, Cola Survey of the Eastern and Ashanti Areas and a General Review of the Gold Coast Industry, 1931.
[477] Interview with Alhassan Braimah. His profile has already been given.
[478] See Chapter 1 for the role of the Lebanese in the northern economy in Tudu. Also, see PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/125, Gonja District Report, 1944-1945.
[479] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG8/3/10, Annual Report 1928-1929.

> *to sell are also based here. These buyers are Ghanaians, Kotokoli, Nigerians etc. One of them lists many localities especially in Kwahu where he buys. He is Alhaji Ibrahim Mangoase.*[480]

An inspection of the 'Bookman Book' during my field work in Tudu confirms the importance and popularity of motorised transport in kola-nut trade even after Polly Hill's research in 1964.[481] For example, the Bookman's record reflects the 'moving' of at least twelve kola-nut vehicles every Monday and Saturday between 1964 and 1969.[482] According to my informants, what reduced the popularity of the trade to Lagos was the Aliens Compliance Order of 1969, which led to the deportation of many of the kola-nut traders to Nigeria.

Some traders returned after the overthrow of K. A. Busia in 1972 and resumed their kola-nut trade, but the military intervention by Jerry John Rawlings in 1979 and again in 1981 finally reduced the kola-nut trade to its barest minimum. For example, in 1979 when Rawlings staged his coup, Makola Market bordering Tudu was bombed and kola-nut traders were equally not spared, forcing a further relocation of some of the traders to the interior and others back to Lagos.[483] In the 1980s and early 1990s, military rule negatively affected trade in kola nuts in Tudu. Trade between Ghana, Togo, and Nigeria almost always compelled kola-nut traders to carry different currencies. By carrying different currencies, the military always suspected them of money-laundering and in several cases seized their capital. That reduced the interest of most of the traders, who instead diverted to the buying and selling of European and Chinese goods, with a few choosing to engage in the trade outside of Accra. By 2009 very few Kotokoli and

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[480] P. Hill, *Indigenous Trade*, 243.

[481] The bookman, sometimes referred to as collector, is responsible for collecting fares from passengers on behalf of the vehicle owner or the driver. He is also responsible for determining prices for the goods to be carried by a particular vehicle. In most cases, he enters all the tickets sold or fares collected and the amount paid for goods in a special book called the 'bookman book'. Sometimes the movements of vehicles in and out of the lorry park are also recorded in this book. On rare occasions, an offending or disrespectful driver can also be 'booked' in the book. Booking a driver involves simply writing his name and vehicle number and the offence he has committed. But getting booked can have disastrous consequences. The driver will soon be arraigned before the disciplinary committee, which is usually composed of representatives of porters, drivers, vehicle owners, and sometimes traders. And depending on the offence, the driver can be pardoned upon rendering a apology, given a fine, or banned from operating within the lorry park.

[482] To 'move' a vehicle in the park means to give permission to a loaded vehicle to leave the lorry park with its passengers or goods.

[483] For an account of the bombardment of Makola Market and the disruption of other trading activities in Accra and Ghana, see B. Hettne, 'Soldiers and Politics', 185; C. Robertson, 'The Death of Makola and Other Tragedies', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 17:3 (1983), 469.

Yoruba engaged in the kola trade, with few vehicles loading the kola from within the park. Some prefer to load directly from the kola-nut producing points and driving off to the areas of demand. In addition, the increase in operation of a number of lorry parks makes it difficult for one to trace the quantity of kola nuts. But the fact remains that kola nuts are still brought to Tudu, and these kola nuts are bound for the internal markets such as the *zongo*s in Accra and areas in the Volta Region.

With this discussion in mind, we conclude this section by re-examining some of the views of earlier researchers—some of whom have been mentioned already—on kola-nut shipments to Lagos, which indicate that there was decline owing to production of kola nuts in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Cameroon. The evidence above proves that we can also attribute the decline to alternative production sources, especially so when these researchers' conclusions were mainly based on the reductions in maritime shipment from Accra to Lagos.

As we have discovered in this discussion, new markets were found in addition to the already known markets, and in both old and new markets the motor vehicle was greatly relied upon and indeed proved to be the most valuable alternative to address all the transport problems initially faced by kola-nut traders. Unlike the ships, motor vehicles could load from different places and move through different routes to kola-nut distribution or market centres within the country or the sub-region, thereby making it difficult to compile definite statistics. Even though available statistics in other parts of Ghana are difficult to come by, there is still evidence to the effect that the kola-nut trade is still very much alive in Ghana and that kola nuts are still transported by motor vehicles to Nigeria from various places, including Tudu Lorry Park. In much the same way, Tudu continues to play an important role in kola-nut trade internally by facilitating the distribution of kola nuts in the *zongo*s in Accra. The importance of the kola-nut trade is evidenced by the various leadership positions that emerged as a result of the kola-nut trade in Tudu, such as the Sarikin Zongo and the *maigida*.

Kola-nut trade and Leadership in Tudu: Sarikin Zongo and Maigida in comparative perspective

Sarikin Zongo

The founder of a *zongo* community naturally became the *sarikin* (leader) of that *zongo*.[484] In Tudu, Chief Braimah was the founder and therefore even though he was not resident in Tudu he was the Sarikin Tudu from 1908 until his death in 1915. In Accra and most parts of Ghana, usually the *sarikin zongo's* power, unlike that of the indigenous leaders, is not vested in the land because he lacks a 'stool'.[485] His authority is dependent upon a relationship with the indigenous authority, the Ga Mantse. The position of the *sarikin* also depends on the continuing support of members of his community. But the *sarikin zongo* is equally important in the kola-nut trade. For example, in Cape Coast the *sarikin zongo* was important in the resolution of conflicts and collection of taxes on behalf of the colonial administration.[486] In Accra in general and Tudu in particular, we find a much more elaborate participation or role of the *sarikin zongo* in the kola-nut trade.

As indicated already, in Tudu the first Sarikin Tudu was Chief Braimah. Braimah's life was complex. He was not only a founder of the Tudu community; he was also a cattle and kola-nut trader. Much of the discussion in this initial stage regarding the Sarikin Tudu and its link to the kola-nut trade will centre on him. Oral accounts indicate that at the peak of his power, Chief Braimah regulated all kola-nut trading activities in Tudu. Braimah's customers came from distant places such as Suhum, Adawsoo, Koforídua, Lagos, and so on. Most of these traders needed services such as

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[484] In most cases, the name of the particular *zongo* or ethnic group in question is attached to the title *sarikin*. So for example, we have Sarikin Tudu, Sarikin Madina, Sarikin Yorubawa, Sarikin Kotokolawa, Sarikin Dagombawa, and so forth. Incidentally, the name *sarikin*, though meaning 'leader', can in a more subtle way translate as 'chief'. For example, the Ga manche is referred to as Sarikin Ankarawa. Chief Braimah lived in Cow Lane until his death in 1915, but some of his family, such as Imoro Mobolaje Braimah and his brothers, lived in Tudu. All matters in Tudu were referred to him for adjudication, and he had some of his guests staying in Tudu and others with him in Cow Lane. Perhaps the proximity of Cow Lane to Tudu was why he was still maintained as the Sarikin Tudu. It is important to also mention that by Braimah being regarded as Sarikin Tudu, it does not mean this was his only role or position. For in the real sense, as indicated already, Chief Braimah was the leader of all Muslims and northerners in Accra from 1902 until his death in 1915. His importance in Tudu is due to the fact that he founded the community and actively participated in its economic activities, particularly the trade in kola nuts and cattle.

[485] The stool is a symbol of authority in the southern part of Ghana, while the 'skin' is the symbol of authority in the northern part of Ghana. Both stool and skin are objects, the stool usually made of wood, and the skin usually that of a wild animal such as a lion or tiger. However, the Nchumburu, Nawuri, and Mo, though located in the north, use stools as symbols of authority. For such objects of authority in Ghana, see I. Odotei & A. Awedoba, (eds.), *Chieftaincy in Ghana*, 493-504.

[486] E. Abaka, *Kola is God's Gift*, 104.

warehousing facilities, credit, price information, and other services. Above all, as most of them were strangers, they needed to be accommodated and this function fell to Braimah.

In addition, all forms of transportation of kola nut were under his supervision. We have already seen in the introduction how Braimah provided information on sea-borne transport of kola nut and his disappointment regarding the behaviour of the shipping agents responsible for transporting kola nuts from Accra to Lagos. Braimah was also central in providing head-load porters from the interior to Accra. In fact, in Tudu until the death of Braimah, most of the head porters responsible for carrying kola nuts from the interior to Accra were controlled by him.[487] He usually selected the 'head porter', who not only supervised porters but also collected tolls on his behalf. The collection of tolls was an integral part of the economic basis of the power of Braimah. The tolls were a major source of revenue to the colonial administration, while the levies, judicial fees, and fines went to Braimah. Indeed, Braimah determined the direction of trade and in most cases had the backing of the colonial administration.

There were instances where the governor intervened when Braimah's authority was challenged by other kola-nut traders and ethnic groups, particularly the Hausa. The reason for this was that Braimah had always ensured the collection of tolls for the colonial administration, particularly from porters.[488] The support given to Braimah justifies the earlier references I made in Chapter 1, regarding the use of Braimah for purposes of generating revenue and for indirect rule.

It is interesting to note that Chief Braimah was economically autonomous from Ga authority in Accra. Apart from the yearly collection of all tradable goods including kola nuts in Tudu during the Ga yearly festival called *homowo*, the Ga interfered very little with the kola-nut trade in Accra. This is unique and different from what pertained to trade in Ashanti and Salaga. In Ashanti and Salaga, trade was rigorously regulated by the Ashantihene and the Kpembiwura. In most cases, northern kola-nut traders were not permitted into metropolitan Asante, particularly Kumasi, while the important routes leading into and out of Salaga were rigidly controlled by Asante resident ambassadors.[489] In Accra, kola-nut traders under Chief Braimah were relatively free to

[487] PRRAD, Accra, ADM, 11/1502, Hausa Community. January 3rd, 1913.
[488] See Chapter 2.
[489] E. Abaka, *Kola is God's Gift*, 80

conduct trade, with little or no interest or threat from the indigenous power that is the Ga Manche. The non-interference by the Ga subsequently increased the power and importance of Chief Braimah in Accra, including Tudu. He was used in all spheres by the community and colonial administration. He was contacted by the government in all affairs related to kola-nut trade in Tudu and Accra, including issues related to obedience or contravention of the law.[490]

Even though the indigenous Ga guaranteed the independence of Chief Braimah in handling trade and dealing with the government and migrants, the same could not be said of other northern colleague kola-nut traders. Religious conflicts in Accra soon entered into the economic space of migrants in Accra, which caused the Hausa to embark on a feverish attempt to curtail the power of Chief Braimah, especially his ability to adjudicate cases related to kola nuts and collection of fees.[491] In one such protest about Chief Braimah's growing power in the kola-nut trade and subsequently his political leadership, some Hausa elders in the *zongo*s petitioned the colonial administration, citing ethnicity as a factor which guaranteed their independence in trade, trade in which Chief Braimah had no right to interfere. [492] As the anti-Braimah kola-nut traders simmered with anger, it was just a matter of time for this to lead to an open confrontation. As noted in the Introduction, in 1913 there was an open conflict between the pro- and anti-Braimah kola-nut carriers, leading to a reorganization of the position of Sarikin Tudu and the establishment of a hierarchy of leadership, which incorporated the *balogun*, the head porter, and some elders in the kola-nut trade.

From 1913 there was devolution of authority from Braimah to the *balogun* and head porters. They were allowed to carry out certain responsibilities in the areas of trade and transport without undue interference. Nonetheless, in all circumstances their actions would have to be ratified in due course by the highest authority in the hierarchy, Chief Braimah. With this well-established structure in place, Braimah had the courage to dabble in the affairs of other kola-nut traders in Accra. For example, Oseni, one of the Hausa porters who was considered an extortionist by his fellow carriers, was immediately discharged of his duties by Chief Braimah.[493] Clearly, the Yoruba migrants

[490] PRRAD, Accra, ADM, 11/1502, Hausa Community, 1913
[491] *Ibid.*
[492] *Ibid.*
[493] *Ibid.*

under the leadership of Braimah were incorporating traditional political structures from their home country in Accra as a belated move to counter the threats from the Kotokoli in the kola-nut trade. By the beginning of the First World War, through the kola-nut trade, Braimah had instituted various positions and titles and designated office holders at different levels of authority in the hierarchy, depending on the areas concerned. Examples include the supply sources in the interior and the sales points in Accra, particularly Tudu. Chief Braimah died in 1915, but Tudu continued to exist as a major kola-nut trading centre. So what happened to leadership? For an answer to this, we turn our attention again to other positions that emerged after Braimah's death.

The collapse of Sarikin Tudu and Emergence of Maigida

Maigida ('landlord' in Hausa) is an important position in trade. The *maigida* bulked products entering long-distance trade and distributed commodities from distant places. The *maigida* resident in trade towns also furnished accommodation to merchants, served as brokers in local exchange, collected information on market conditions, supplied packing and storage facilities, offered translation services, extended short-term credit, and provided other assistance to clients. [494] Considered in this context, it is evident that the roles of the *maigida* at times overlapped with the role of the *sarikin*.

As noted already, after the death of Chief Braimah I, in the same year his son Ali Tika Braimah was installed as Chief Braimah II and as the leader of all Muslims and, by extension, northerners in Accra. Just as his father had experienced opposition, so also was his appointment greeted with a number of protests and rejections by the northern groups. As the 1918 letter from the District Commissioner to the Secretary for Native Affairs reports:

> *On the death of Alhaji Braimah, the Yoruba appear to have chosen his son Ali Braima a man of about twenty five years to succeed him but Hausas contend that they have never been consulted and will not acknowledge him. The Yorubas say that if the Hausas refuse to recognise Ali Braimah, they will refuse to recognise Mallam Bako as Leman* [Imam]. *The Yorubas advance their claim on the Muslim Law which recognises the descent by sons but it will be seen that there is no preceding for this in Accra. It is perfectly plain that the Hausa would have no respect for this young Yoruba who has neither the tradition,*

[494] A. Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa*, 71; P. E. Lovejoy, *Caravans of Kola*, 31.

nor age to support him and is equally clear that at present at least the Yoruba will not bow to the ecclesiastical authority of the Hausa.[495]

One important development during this period was the number of petitions of the various ethnic groups to have their leaders recognized by the colonial administration. By 1925 the colonial administration had enlarged the number of migrant chiefs in Accra and given recognition to the following as leaders of their various groups: Kadri English for Hausas, Bukari Mardah for Grunshies, Mama Jimala for Wangara, and Ibrahima Dambaki for Fulanis.[496] With this, Chief Braimah II's influence, unlike that of his father, dwindled and was in most cases limited to and felt among the Yoruba. That in and of itself was not surprising because, as already indicated, Chief Braimah I in his desperate attempt to contain the Hausa incorporated the heads of other ethnic groups engaged in the kola-nut trade in Accra—such as the Kotokoli, Dagomba and Gonja—into his political structure, and after his death all of them became independent.

Although evidence from the above suggests that, in part, migrant political power in Accra derives from the kola-nut trade, unlike his father, Chief Braimah II could not exercise his power in the trade. Some of the reasons given by informants include age. Even though age is unimportant when it comes to trade, it was nonetheless cited as a factor which worked against Chief Braimah II. There were thus multiple reasons for the demise of the position of Sarikin Tudu. The views of informants regarding his age and the exercise of power ties into the thoughts of the colonial administration regarding his youthfulness, which was already feared and considered problematic in the eyes of the colonial administration. However, the more convincing reason is the fact that Chief Braimah I, during the period of trade, did not include Ali in the kola-nut business, preferring instead to introduce him to the cattle trade and Koranic scholarship. Therefore, on ascension to the leadership role, he chose instead to concentrate on the cattle trade and the spread of Islam in Accra.[497] Hence, the mantle of leadership and regulation of trade in Tudu soon fell on a more senior Yoruba, Amadu Ilorin, a contemporary of Braimah and one of the prominent kola-nut traders. Already, Amadu Ilorin had a wider clientele and accommodated traders, a role which caused him to attain the title of *maigida*. With Chief Braimah II's inability to control trade and with power shifting to Amadu, the formal role of Sarikin Tudu in regulating kola-nut trade

[495] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/1502, Hausa Community, Accra, 1918.
[496] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1/1502, Hausa Community, Accra, 1925.
[497] M. B. P. Braimah, *A Migrant African Chief*, 65.

ended in the 1930s. However, Amadu Ilorin also could not regulate the activities of all the kola-nut traders. His influence was limited to Yoruba traders since leaders of the various ethnic groups, especially the Kotokoli, had began to have their own *masugida*.[498]

In addition to *masugida*, the Kotokoli also adopted a strategy that served to implant them well into the political economy of the kola-nut trade. In the 1940s, in addition to accommodating their clients in their homes, they turned one of the houses in Tudu into a kola-nut depot and named it the *Gyidakotokolawa* (literally, 'house of Kotokolis').[499] New entrants into the kola-nut trade who were Kotokloi had the opportunity of bringing their products into the house and conducting trade without paying for accommodation or commission. With time, the *Gyidakotokolawa* became an important house where all decisions regarding kola-nut trade in Tudu were taken. The *Gyidakotokolawa* also became the place where all the individual Kotokoli *masugida* met to iron out their trade differences. In order to draw other traders into their fold in the 1950s, the name was changed from *Gyidakotokolawa* to *Gyidakowa* (literally, 'everybody's house', as opposed to 'house of Kotokolis'). This was a clever move to extend economic and ethnic power. By changing the name, a much wider group came to participate in the kola-nut trade in Tudu, such as the Dagomba. From the 1950s through to the 1960s and 1970s much of the kola-nut trade in Tudu, including some of the Yoruba trade, shifted from individual homes to the *Gyidakowa*, which was what Polly Hill encountered in her study of indigenous trade in Accra in the early 1960s.

By this shift the prominence of the Kotokoli *masugida* in the kola-nut trade was much felt, for even though in principle the *Gyidakowa* was for every trader, the Kotokoli nonetheless introduced the *lada*, a commission which was paid to individual *masugida* who brokered any trade deal in Tudu. The *lada* ensured their economic survival as well as their political importance in the trade. With improvement in motorised transport and additional new markets mainly conquered by the Kotokoli, the centre of gravity in kola-nut trade changed. It no longer depended so much on exports to Lagos as the ability to identify areas of high demand. And in this, the Kotokoli beat the

[498] *Masugida* is the plural of *maigida*

[499] The house belonged to a Ga woman called Antie Dede. She had no children but nonetheless took care of the poor in Tudu. She made a verbal will that on her death the house should be given to orphans to stay in for free. When she died in the 1940s, her house was instead used for the kola-nut trade.

Yoruba to the game. They had established a distribution niche in almost all the important kola-nut centres. By accessing more markets, a number of traders came to depend on them.

Conclusion

As has been discussed, kola nuts are produced in the forest areas of southern Ghana. But their sale and distribution in Accra and even beyond Ghana is entirely in the hands of northern traders, most of whom are located in Accra and particularly in Tudu. By the trade in kola nuts, northerners have enhanced Accra's position as an important entrepot for kola nuts and connected the city to international commerce on a very broad scale. They have also contributed to the development of most Akan producer communities in the interior, for without them most of the kola nuts would not have had any market outlets.

6

Linking the North to the South: Shea-butter trade in Tudu

Introduction

In contrast to the kola nut, a forest product traded by northerners in Accra, shea butter is a product from the north of Ghana traded and distributed by northerners in Accra. Shea butter is an essential commodity in the daily life of the inhabitants of Accra. It is used for all manner of purposes, from ritual to cooking to industrial applications. Its production and distribution for Ghanaian use is in the hands of northerners, who dominate and control its transport and trade through Tudu. In the following chapter, the manner in which northerners have contributed to the growth and development of Accra is dealt with through the commodity of shea butter.

The Northern Territories were annexed to the Gold Coast colony in 1900.[500] The annexation was preceded by an exploration of the political situation and the economic possibilities of the north. Central to these explorations was a trip made by George Ekem Ferguson, a Fante geologist employed by the Gold Coast government to visit and make treaties in the area.[501] In addition to the political manoeuvring, Ferguson noted the possible resources of the north. Some gold and ivory figured in his list, but the major possibilities appeared to be agricultural. His report indicated that the shea butter tree (see picture below) was widespread, rice and millet grew well in the plains, and the development of a cotton, tobacco, and indigo industry was projected. Considerable caravan trade existed in livestock from the north to the south as well as kola from Ashanti to the north. Ferguson saw the economic possibilities of the north largely in terms of trade, and in particular the shea-butter trade, a trade which to him would be valuable not only in terms of exports but also for generating internal revenue for the colonial administration.[502]

[500] The Northern Territories comprise the present-day Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions.
[501] K. Arhin (ed.), *The Papers of George Ekem Ferguson: A Fanti Official of the Government of the Gold Coast 1890-1897* (Leiden: Africa-Studie Centrum, 1974), 66.
[502] I. Sutton, 'Colonial Agricultural Policy: The Non-Development of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 22:4 (1989), 638.

Shea butter trees located along the Tamale-Salaga road. (Picture by author, 2010)

Governor Gordon Guggisberg, writing three decades after Ferguson's explorations, shared similar views:

> *It is essential to the security of our prosperity that we should find new fields and new articles of production on a large scale. In the Northern Territories we have this field... Apart from cotton however the Northern Territories possess two important factors in the creation of great export industry, namely a large hard working farming population and a great potential of shea nuts and groundnuts. These three products, cotton, Shea nuts and groundnuts combined with large trade in cattle and hides and skins will not only render the Northern Territories self-supporting which they are not at present but also enable them to earn revenue for further development.*[503]

Indeed, in the early years of British administration, revenue in the north derived almost entirely from caravan tolls and market dues, including dues on the sale of shea butter.[504] In the south there is evidence of the circulation of shea butter. As later discussions will show, in Accra the expansion of the city saw the increasing use of shea butter for various purposes, leading to an increased demand. Considering the increasing demand

[503] F. G. Guggisberg. *The Gold Coast Review of Events*, 58.

[504] Besides stimulating trade and drawing revenue, there were other equally important reasons for the colonial administration's interest in shea butter. For example, trade in shea butter was considered one of the major methods through which currency could circulate in the north, since trade there was mostly by barter. It was also considered as an insurance crop against cocoa failures in the south and a counterpart to the other oil crops, such as groundnuts. Furthermore, by involving themselves in the shea-nut trade, the colonial administration could control chiefs and their subjects and ensure the success of other programmes, such as the protection of the environment against bush burning and other traditional practices considered abnormal by the administration. The caravan toll was abolished in 1908, but payment of market dues has continued to this day. For more on these issues, see PRAAD, Accra ADM, 11, SNA 349, Sheabutter, 1903; I. Sutton, 'Colonial Agricultural Policy: The Non-Development of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 22:4 (1989) 637-69.

for shea butter in Accra, insights into its trade in Tudu is important for several reasons. Through the trade we can understand how Tudu became tied to the Gold Coast's and later Ghana's political economy as various aspects of the country's political experience impacted directly on the shea-butter trade in Accra. Furthermore, through the shea-butter trade, we will be able to explain the ever-changing dynamics of ethnic groups and transport systems vis-à-vis economic activities in the city. Finally, through the shea-butter trade we will be able to understand aspects of Northern Territories' cultural life, such as female leadership structures, which have been reproduced in Accra.

In Ghana, little research has been conducted into trade in shea butter. The lack of interest in shea-butter trade is probably due to the over-concentration of studies on other crops such as cocoa and palm oil. With the exception of the book by Brenda Chalfin, there is no substantial literature on shea-butter trade in Ghana.[505] Chalfin's account is limited to attempts by the State to control or regulate the shea-butter and shea-nut trade in Ghana and the patterns and relations between the global world, the State, and domestic levels in the shea-butter economy.[506] Other articles by the same author concentrate on the shea-butter trade in the town of Bawku in present-day Upper East Region.[507]

This chapter adds to the limited literature on shea butter by offering new insights into the shea-butter trade in Tudu and the wider context of Accra. First, we briefly consider the importance and uses of shea butter as well as aspects of the shea-butter trade in its initial stage in Tudu and Accra, with emphasis on two trading groups: the Ada and the Ntrapo. Here, canoe technology is examined for its ability to guarantee access to shea butter in the north and provide supplies to the south through Gonja traders in Tudu. Second, the chapter presents the changing profile of shea-butter traders in Tudu. To do this, we will discuss the entry of ex-servicemen and Dagomba women into the shea-butter trade following the collapse of the canoe as an important transport

[505] B. Chalfin, *The Shea Butter Republic: State Power, Global Markets and the Making of an Indigenous Commodity* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
[506] *Ibid.* 14
[507] See for example, B. Chalfin, 'Old Commodities in New Niches: The Shea Economy as Frontier', *African Economic History*, 32 (2004), 51-63; B. Chalfin, 'Border Zone Trade and the Economic Boundaries of the State in North-East Ghana', Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, 71:2 (2001), 202-24; B. Chalfin, 'Risky Business: Economic Uncertainty, Market Reforms and Female Livelihoods in Northeast Ghana', *Development and Change*, 31 (2000), 987-1008; B. Chalfin, 'Market Reform and the State: The Case of Shea in Ghana', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 34:3 (Sept. 1996), 421-40.

mode and the emergence of motorised transport in shea-butter trade. We conclude with the leadership position that emerged in Accra as a result of the shea-butter trade.

Importance of Shea Butter in Tudu

A number of factors account for the demand for shea butter in Tudu in particular and Accra in general. Shea butter is used as pomade in Accra. It is a particularly effective moisturizer because it contains so many fatty acids which are needed to retain skin moisture and elasticity. Some economic activities in Tudu and Accra are performed outdoors, such as hawking, touting, and portage, among others, thereby exposing the skin to sunburn, insect bites, and so on. In most cases, shea butter is used to improve such skin conditions, since shea contains Vitamin A. Shea butter is also thought to be useful for the treatment of skin diseases, especially chicken pox and ringworm. The first and second decade of the 1900s in Accra marked an era of widespread skin diseases such as these.[508] Medical facilities were few, so inhabitants of Tudu mixed shea butter with camphor to treat the diseases. In addition, the positive biochemical and physiological effect that shea butter has on skin injuries makes the butter ideal for wound healing. Furthermore, shea butter is used for treating abscesses (boils). It is also very good for treating coughs and for massaging babies and young children to keep their bones flexible.

Mechanics, carpenters, traditional caterers, and drivers at Tudu Lorry Park who sustained wounds in the course of their occupations have reported in the course of my interviews that shea butter promoted and accelerated the healing of wounds. In addition, shea butter was used for massage and in the treatment of broken limbs. Human portage was and still remains an important economic activity in Tudu. It is also an occupation which engenders muscle fatigue and aches. Northern migrants, both old and new, who engage in human portage in Tudu treat themselves with shea butter whenever they are injured. Porters in Tudu use the shea butter on the heels of their feet to treat cracks and soften their feet. Attending to the feet is considered a basic requirement for the carriage of goods in Tudu.[509] Tudu is also an outlet for the distribution of different varieties of

[508] For more on skin diseases in Accra and their treatment in the early 1900s, see J. Maxwell, *The Gold Coast Handbook, 1928* (London, 1928), 174.

[509] Interview with Kweku Bulsa, Tudu, 1 August 2007. Kweku Bulsa is from Sandema in the northern part of Ghana. He came to Tudu in 1977 and got a job with the Public Works Department in Tudu as a labourer (he described his duties as a 'concrete man' since he mixed the sand and cement at every

local soap made from shea butter. The Gonjas produce a kind of soap called *gbanyakwaya*. The Yoruba who were located in the forest areas of Ghana also use shea butter with ash from burnt cocoa pods to produce a local soap called *anagosamina* or *alatasamina*. These varieties were and are still sold in Accra. Finally, shea butter is used to treat sores on the hoofs of horses. It must be borne in mind that in Tudu, horse transport remained an important economic activity until 1985. The intense use of horses for carriage led to cracks in the hoofs.[510]

Besides the health-related uses enumerated above, shea butter is used in cooking at home. Tudu was a cattle-rearing and cattle-trading neighbourhood. Cattle-rearing not only provided opportunities for male cattle traders but also for women. Sale of cow's milk and local cheese (*wagashie*) was an important economic activity of Fulani women in Tudu. Fulani women used shea butter to fry the *wagashie* for sale.[511] The demand for shea butter in Tudu was also attributed to the growth of Accra in general and the presence of a new class of consumers, namely colonial officials. The Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary, constables and their dependants, regularly purchased shea butter among other commodities to use in food preparation.

Shea butter was also used effectively in the maintenance of ritual objects in Tudu. For example, drummers in Tudu used it to soften their drums and palms, especially during the dry season. In a community that saw the contracting of marriages, naming ceremonies, installing of headmen and chiefs, burials, and festivities on a frequent basis, the presence of drummers was indispensable. As a former resident of Tudu recollects of his stay in Tudu in the 1940s and 1950s:

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construction site). In 1979 he was sacked. He got a job with the Accra Metropolitan Assembly that same year as a cleaner, but owing to the redeployment exercise in the mid-1980s he lost his job. Faced with limited options in the formal sector, he branched into *kayakaya*. Kweku has been living on a veranda at Tudu Lorry Park since 1977. He is married with two children, aged thirteen and eleven. The children are all in junior-high school. Kweku describes Tudu Lorry Park as a place of unlimited opportunities. In addition to portering, his background as a 'concrete man' enables him carry out minor repairs on the floors and walls of stores and shops in Tudu for a fee. His long stay at the park enables him to have a strong network with drivers, so he can travel at will without paying fares. Some hawkers, numbering about twenty, keep their wares with him and pay him a total sum of 20 Ghana cedis (13.33 euros) each day. He has hired a room for his mother in-law at Mamprobi, another suburb of Accra. His children stay with their grandmother and attend school. He has refused to leave the lorry park because he feels more comfortable there.

[510] Interview with Abbass Adamu. Abbas was the last person to use horse transport in Tudu. His profile has already been given in Chapter 3. According to Abbas, it is rare in Tudu for horse owners to send their horses to the veterinary department in Accra. They always use local herbs to treat their horses.

[511] Interview with Alhaji Haruna, Tudu, 3 January 2008. According to him, he was ten years old at the time of the earthquake of 1939. Haruna is the treasurer for the Tudu-Kade-Akim Oda drivers' union at Tudu. His grandmother was a kola-nut trader in Tudu.

> *In Tudu every weekend what we hear and see is Amariya, Amariya (Islamic Wedding). Hardly any week passed without Amariya. Most times those who make a lot of money are the drummers and praise singers. As they go around they are given money. But one thing I remember always with them was shea butter. Though I did not know what that meant, I knew it was associated with their profession.*[512]

Drumming is particularly important among northern ethnic groups in the *zongos*, including Tudu, because it is not only considered entertaining, but it is also an hereditary occupation which some families in the *zongos* cannot do without. Besides such public ceremonies mentioned above, the drummers sometimes also go to Tudu Lorry Park to drum for money. Indeed, among the shea butter sellers, the majority of them from the north, the genealogies of their families are narrated by the drummers and the various exploits related to shea-butter production or sales are recounted. In such cases, the egos of shea-butter traders are not only heightened but they are reminded that their trade in shea butter is absolutely necessary.[513] These numerous uses for shea butter naturally encouraged its trade in Tudu.

Shea-butter trade in Tudu: New Beginnings

According to Brenda Chalfin, shea butter initially came to the south by long-distance traders plying the length and breadth of the country. Such traders incorporated shea-nut products into their marketing networks. The main suppliers during this period were the Yarse, a Mossi sub-group who gathered and moved trade goods from the southern part of present-day Burkina Faso and Northern Ghana to the southern part of Ghana. They specialised in shea butter, in addition to livestock, and exchanged shea butter for kola nuts in Asante markets.[514] Other important groups in shea-butter trade to the south in pre-colonial and colonial times which were not covered by researchers were the Gonja and the ex-servicemen. The question then is this: when did these groups engage in shea-butter trade and how did they organise the trade? Did they remain the sole traders in shea butter and what role did Tudu play in the trade? Oral and archival sources provide answers to the conduct of shea-butter trade in Tudu.

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[512]Interview with Nat Nunoo Amarteifio, former Mayor of Accra, Adabraka, 3 April 2008

[513] Interview with Alhaji Alhassan Sulemana Gonje, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, 22 December 2007. Gonje's profile has been provided in Chapter 2. For more on the drummers in the *zongos* in Accra, see D. Pellow, 'Male Praise-Singers in Accra: In the Company of Women', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 67:4 (1997), 582-601.

[514] B. Chalfin, *Shea Butter Republic*, 90.

The Canoe Traders: Ntrapo and Ada

In the pre-colonial era, a specialised group of Gonja ferrymen (Ntrapo) were engaged in trade to the coast.[515] The Ntrapo were an indigenous Guan ethnic group who were absorbed into the Gonja Kingdom.[516] Their traditional roles include fishing and conducting trade for the Gonja aristocracy. The roles of the Ntrapo as reported are in contrast with K.B.Dickson's conclusions that fishing was not traditionally a significant occupation in the inland states in Northern Ghana.[517] As noted before, George Ekem Ferguson, on a mission to sign treaties of trade and friendship on behalf of the British Crown, documented the trade in shea butter between Gonja and the Coast.[518] Insecurity in Salaga and most parts of Gonja in the later part of the 1800s led to the sudden collapse of long-distance trade by the Ntrapo.[519] As indicated in the previous chapter, the insecurity also led to the relocation of northern trade, particularly trade in kola nuts and cattle, to Cow Lane in Accra and later to Tudu in 1908.[520] Gonja traders were among those who relocated to Tudu. Unlike the Yoruba, Hausa, and Kotokoli who were engaged in kola-nut and cattle trade, the Gonja were engaged in shea-butter trade. In Tudu a different network for the distribution of shea butter developed. Instead of the Ntrapo, who mainly transported the shea butter from Kafaba and other places in Gonjaland to the coast, Gonja shea-butter traders in Tudu had to rely on Ada canoe-men.[521]

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[515] Insights about the ferrymen were obtained from two earlier research projects into the history of the Gonja. The first project was from 2001-3 and researched the chieftaincy institution in Gonja. The second research project was conducted in April 2006 and was on endangered languages. During the second project, interviews were conducted at an Ntrapo village called Kpalignase, on the banks of the Volta close to Salaga. Chief Dramani, aged 90 years, and his brother, aged 87, remain the only speakers of the Ntrapo language in Kpalignase. Both the Ntrabo ethnic group and language are almost extinct, having being absorbed by the Gonja ethnic group.

[516] J. A. Braimah & J. R. Goody, *Salaga: The Struggle for Power*, 1.

[517] K. B. Dickson, 'Trade Patterns in Ghana at the Beginning of the Eighteenth century', *Geographical Review*, 56:3 (July 1966), 422.

[518] K. Arhin (ed.), *The Papers of George Ekem Ferguson*, 68.

[519] More insights on the Ntrapo came from a research project which I conducted from 2001-3. The information was provided by the late G. S. Bakari on 15 November 2002. G. S. Bakari was the chief of Tuluwe. Tuluwe is located west of Salaga and is one of the royal divisions of Gonja. Chief Bakari was a director at the Ministry of Agriculture in Tamale. He was made chief in 1987 and was a member of the National House of Chiefs. Besides being a director at the Ministry of Agriculture, Chief Bakari was also the head of the Research Unit of the Regional House of Chiefs in Tamale. He died in 2004.

[520] Public Records and Archives Administration Department PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1446, Subject: Mohammedan Community, 9 July 1908.

[521] Kafaba is located to the south-west of Salaga. It is also by the banks of the Volta River. The Ada are located in the Greater Accra Region and specifically at the estuary of the Volta River

For a considerable period of time the canoe men sent salt up north, as far as Yapei (Tamale port); on their return, they bought shea butter and yams for sale at Kpong and Akuse.[522] The shea butter was finally carried to Tudu via Somanya and Dodowa. Being the sole transporters of shea butter to the coast, the Ada could dictate the terms of trade by regulating the quantity of shea to be supplied to the coastal markets. The dominance of the Ada caused the colonial administration to consider regulations. The first attempt at regulating the activities of the Ada canoe-men was policing. As part of their duties, the Volta River Preventive Service was to regulate the movement of goods, including shea butter, on the Volta River. Such regulations also covered any kind of distribution of the shea-nut fruits from the north to the south. For example, even when samples of the shea nuts were needed at the government botanical gardens in Aburi, passage had to be sought from the Supervisor of the Volta Preventive Service.[523] This early move by the colonial administration at controlling the shea-butter trade is in contrast with Brenda Chalfin's claim that State regulation of shea products began in the 1940s.[524] As noted already, despite the regulation, the Ada still controlled the transport of shea butter to Gonja shea-butter traders in Accra via Kpong and Akuse.

In 1911, Mr Branch, the government agriculturalist, was of the view that the monopoly of the Ada canoe-men could be broken if the government could buy all the shea butter brought to the local markets in the north. But again, the prosecution of this plan was constrained by transportation.[525] As the Curator for the Aburi Botanical wrote to the Colonial Secretary:

> *With reference to Mr. Branch's suggestion that the government might undertake to purchase all the sheabutter at Tamale and the markets in its vicinity. I do not think it is a practical proposition as long as the transport on the River Volta is in the hands of the Ada coast traders who allege that they are prepared to buy all the shea butter which is brought to them for sale at the Tamale Port (Yapei) and therefore, they could not be expected to facilitate the transport of a product of which they were themselves buyers and shippers.*[526]

Indeed, throughout the second decade of the 1900s the Ada canoe-men continuously exploited the limitations of transportation on the part of the government to monopolise

[522] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11, SNA 91/1910, Shea butter, 1911. Kpong, Akuse, and Somanya are currently in the Eastern Region, and Dodowa is in the Greater Accra Region.
[523] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11, SNA, 96/1911, 1903.
[524] Brenda Chalfin, *Shea Butter Republic*, 14.
[525] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11, SNA, 349, Shea butter, 1911.
[526] *Ibid.*

the trade. They quoted high transport charges from the north for transporting shea butter bought by the colonial administration or European firms such as Swanzy Ltd. to any of the coastal ports such as Amedica or Addah. Amedica and Addah were the most proximate places where the colonial administration could get the shea butter offloaded for onward shipment to Liverpool.

Meanwhile, the symbiotic relationship which developed between the Ada and the northern economy, based in part on shea-butter and also salt trade, led to an interesting phenomenon. The Ada traders gradually increased their presence along the River Volta and very close to the shea-butter trading areas. By the 1910s, they had established shea-butter buying depots at strategic places such as in Kete Krachi and Yapei in the north. Shea products from the western part of the Northern Territories were bought at Yapei, whereas products from the eastern part of the Northern Territories were bought at Kete Krachi.[527]

The action of the Ada canoe-men in monopolising supplies to the Accra markets should be understood on the following grounds. The Ada canoe-men used shea butter as an insurance product against the salt trade. An informant who had engaged in the salt trade to Yapei reported that the risks involved with the trading in salt were higher. For example, in the case of an accident on the river, almost all the salt was unrecoverable since it all dissolved. Unlike salt, shea butter floats and the calabash in which the shea butter was kept made it easier for it to be recovered from the water. In addition, proceeds from shea butter sales enabled them to recover losses arising from bad sales of salt owing to competition. It was a fact that Ada salt was preferred by many of the local consumers up north. But between 1915 and 1920, the Ada faced competition from outside the Gold Coast. The French from Togo and Burkina Faso began introducing French salt into the northern market, which the Ada had monopolised for several years.[528] The presence of alternative salt sources drew prices down and limited the profits of the Ada traders. Engagement in the shea-butter trade ensured that maximum benefit was derived, as they loaded shea butter on the return journey. By so doing they also unconsciously protected their customers, the Gonja traders in Tudu, against intense competition. We shall return to this as the discussion progresses.

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[527] *Ibid.*; PRAAD, Tamale, NRG8/3/10 Annual Report of 1928-1929.
[528] D. T. E. Maier, 'Colonial Distortion of the Volta River Salt Trade', *African Economic History*, 15 (1986), 24.

The transport advantage enjoyed by the Ada and their monopoly on supplies to the Accra market through the Gonja traders in Tudu was curtailed by the construction of the road from Kumasi to Tamale in the 1920s. The road finally connected the shea-butter producing areas of the north to Accra by motor transport.

Motor Transportation, Ex-Servicemen and Gonja Women

Modes of transportation are central to the shea-butter trade. As indicated already, shea-butter trade was initially in the hands of the Gonja ferrymen called Ntrapo and later Ada canoe-men. In the north, human and animal-drawn portage, bicycles, wheel barrows, and cargo cars constitute the most important means of transporting shea butter to the market centres.[529] Usually, shea-butter traders in Tudu go to the various markets at Gushiegu, Bimbila, and Saboba to buy shea butter.[530] After purchase, they transport the butter by motorised transport to Accra.

Archival sources indicate an increase in shea-butter transport to the south by road in the 1920s. For example, in the West Gonja district alone, 3,792 head-loads of shea butter were transported by lorry to the south in 1927. The figure increased to 6,710 head-loads in 1928.[531] As noted in Chapter 3, the increase in trade goods and passengers to Accra was in part responsible for the establishment of Tudu Lorry Park in 1929.[532] The establishment of Tudu Lorry Park facilitated the movement of shea butter from the north to Accra. Since the 1930s, Tudu Lorry Park has operated routes to the northern part of Ghana. In those years, shea-butter traders in Tudu used Mossi drivers for haulage of shea butter to Tudu, most of the drivers being demobilised members of the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary.[533] Hamza Wangara was one of the known ex-servicemen

[529] W. McKim, 'The Periodic Market System in North-Eastern Ghana', *Economic Geography*, 48:3 (July 1972), 333-44; C. S. N. Shields, 'The Western Gonja (Bole) District of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', *The Geographical Journal*, 67:5 (May 1926), 431.
[530] Gusheigu, Bimbilla, and Saboba are located in the Northern Region of Ghana.
[531] PRAAD, Kumasi, ARG 3/15/30, Traffic in Goods South Bound. Figures from Bamboi Ferry, 1929.
[532] PRAAD, Accra, CSO, 14/1/270, Lorry Parks, Accra, 1938.
[533] Interview with Alfred Kwesi Bour, Tudu, 21 March 2008 Kwesi Bour was born in 1930. He trained as a vehicle mechanic with a certain Thomas, a Briton in Takoradi in the Western Region of Ghana. He qualified as a mechanic in 1954 and received his driver's licence in 1955. His father was with the Gold Coast Regiment from 1930-50 and saw action in Burma. Kwesi Bour was a driver at Tudu Lorry Park from 1955 to 1960. In 1961 he got a job with MIS, a Timber company in the Central region of present-day Ghana, where he was in charge of maintenance of vehicles. The company always defaulted in the payment of salaries, so he came back to Tudu to drive a Bedford, with the sign-board 'Chisco Kids'. He plied the Tudu-Takoradi route. In 1962, following attempts to overthrow Kwame Nkrumah, Kofi Baako, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, employed Kwesi Bour as a spy at Tudu Lorry Park. While

drivers who brought shea butter to Gonja traders in Tudu. With the utilisation of motorised transportation, the venue of trade in shea butter in Tudu also changed. Instead of deliveries and sales in the homes of the individual Gonja traders, the trade moved to the house of Hamza Wangara. Informants indicate that the relocation was one of the strategies adopted by Hamza to recover his transport fares from the traders. In all cases, transport fares were only paid when delivered in Tudu. Some traders after sales were reluctant to pay the fares, or ploughed the profits back into their business. It was because of such dishonest traders that Hamza moved the market to his house. Informants indicate that he did not mind locking up several calabashes of shea butter belonging to traders who were perpetual fare defaulters.

Despite his strictness, Hamza Wangara facilitated the distribution of shea butter by linking Gonja traders to his colleague ex-servicemen, some of whom took up residence in the Armed Forces' Reception Depot in Tudu. He was also instrumental in linking traders to his colleagues in the Gold Coast Legion premises, located further south of Tudu. The Legion premises were used as a stable for the Gold Coast Constabulary Force. Just like other northerners, they used shea butter in food preparation. Also, as mounted members of the constabulary, they used shea to treat cracks in the hoofs of the horses. During the period under review, much of the policing in Accra depended on horse patrols since there were few patrol vehicles. The few vehicles that there were could also not be used because of a general caution on the use of vehicles by government agencies owing to the economic depression at that time. Closely related to the above in terms of shea-butter use among the service personnel is the butter's role in foot care. Up to this period the police and military non-official corps still walked barefooted, and just like the porters in Tudu, they took care of their feet by using shea butter. In the 1940s the Legion premises was enlarged to serve as the main dispersal, resettlement, and welfare centre for demobilised servicemen from the Second

driving he recorded every conversation that was against Nkrumah and gave it to Kofi Baako. He kept changing his routes at the park, sometimes to the Tudu-Tamale route or Tudu-Lagos route, so as to get more information for the president. In 1966, following the overthrow of Nkrumah, Kwesi Bour fled to Nigeria. He came back to Ghana after the 1969 elections and continued his job as a driver in Tudu. He drove a Ford with the signboard 'Bear No Grudge'. He chose the signboard because his colleagues mocked him after his return from exile. He retired as a driver in 1984. He still goes to Tudu Lorry Park and has his name on the payroll of the Tudu-Takoradi drivers' union in Tudu.

World War.[534] These men also composed a very important consumer group for the shea butter.

Concurrent with the above were increasing demands in Accra for shea butter owing to the boycott of European goods, including foreign-prepared cooking oil, in the 1930s. In the early part of the 1930s, the world economic crisis reduced the purchasing power of most of the European companies in the Gold Coast.[535] Some of the companies were not only in the supply of European goods to the country but also engaged in the buying of Ghanaian products, particularly cocoa. In 1930 low cocoa prices led to bad feeling and bitterness among farmers against the United African Company (UAC), which was both a buyer of cocoa and a trading company in the country. Various reports from the UAC agents in the coastal cities indicate a general resentment of the locals towards the perceived European exploitation and a demand for the boycott of European products. As one of the district commissioners noted:

> *A gong has been beaten limiting the price of foodstuffs in the markets sold to Africans and the prices to Europeans or their servants is to be whatever can be obtained. This is a recent development....The Amanhene (chiefs of towns) of this province as well as other Amanhene of the Central and Eastern Province of the Gold Coast summon all their sub-chiefs, elders and subjects to a mass meeting and swore an oath with a penalty of five pounds and a sheep that in view of the low prices of cocoa, being offered by the European firms no one should sell cocoa but keep it until the European firms would pay more per load. Every native has kept the oath unviolatedly by keeping their cocoa in their houses.... they have in conjunction with the resolution beaten a gong with the same oath forbidding any native be he literate or illiterate to buy anything from the shops or stores of European shops.*[536]

While the chiefs called for a boycott of European goods, food was also in short supply in the cities, including cooking oil. Urban dwellers took to the press calling on the chiefs and opinion leaders to ensure that their subjects supplied food to the cities.[537] This call provided additional opportunity for shea-butter traders to supply their products to the urban centres, including Accra. Alhaji Kudjin and Alfred Kwesi Boar, both retired drivers at Tudu Lorry Park, remember this period as the golden age for shea-butter traders in Tudu, since they mainly carried shea butter on most of their trips from

[534] Report of chairman of Veterans Association of Ghana to the Ministry of Defence, in File VAG/ARC/37/A, General Administrations, closed 31/03/08.
[535] PRAAD, Cape Coast, ADM 23/1/244.
[536] *Ibid.*
[537] *Gold Coast Times*, Cape Coast, 28 March 1931.

the north to the lorry park. Specific comments from Kwesi Boar are worth recounting here:

> *I was among the first drivers in this lorry park. I have moved passengers and goods from one part of this country to another. A few years after the establishment of this lorry park there emerged a sudden demand for shea butter in Accra. I had to abandon other routes to concentrate on the north, because there was constant load of shea butter to Accra. It was a time of good business for us drivers in this lorry park.*[538]

By the 1940s some newcomers, particularly former members of the Gold Coast Regiment resident in Tudu, were attracted to the commercial opportunity offered by shea butter in Accra and became involved directly in buying shea butter from the north and selling alongside the female Gonja shea-butter traders in Tudu. A typical case in point was Samoli Mossi. Perhaps a detailed history of Samoli is necessary for a proper appreciation of the gradual intrusion of male ex-servicemen into the shea-butter trade.[539] Samoli had been in the service of different employers in Accra as a cook since 1925.[540] His service contracts ranged from longer periods of six, three or two months to shorter periods of six days as cook. At the outbreak of the Second World War he enlisted in the capacity of his profession as cook. While serving in East Africa during the War, he was found guilty of a charge of being in improper possession of an automatic pistol and of bringing local Abyssinian women into his quarters at night. Consequently, he was discharged in 1942 by the Captain of his Battalion, R. B. Ross.[541]

To make matters worse, the captain disfigured his cooking license by writing damaging comments on the licence, describing him as of a 'surly and bad-tempered disposition, dirty in his habits and a poor cook'.[542] With this damaging report, Samoli could not re-enlist as his other colleagues did, neither could he gain any employment as cook in Accra since the report on his certificate was so damning. Fortunately, Samoli was paid his entitlement or bonus for sixteen months, amounting to seven pounds and six pence. With no other possibility of continuing as a soldier or a cook, he went into the buying and selling of shea butter. Incidentally, the army also gradually came to

[538] See Chapter 4 for the date of interview and profile of Bour.
[539] Even though archival accounts use the name Samoli in Tudu, some of my informants knew him by the name Samori. Other written accounts also identify him as Samori.
[540] PRAAD, Accra, CSO 2/12/135, Soldiers Discharged from the Gold Coast Regiment-Petitions from, 1940-1944.
[541] *Ibid.*
[542] *Ibid.*

depend on him and later his agents for shea butter. The interesting thing about Samoli was that in order to be able to create a niche for himself in the shea-butter trade, he decided in the 1950s to buy a house a hundred metres south of Tudu. His business strategy in selling shea butter was also very different. Samoli decided to get in contact with all the Sarkin Zongos in the Central and Eastern Regions. From Tudu he supplied shea butter wholesale to the *zongo* chiefs, who in turn distributed it on his behalf for a commission.

Meanwhile, by 1957, Hamza Wangara had retired as a driver, compelling him to switch to a less strenuous occupation, which was the selling of water from the stand tap in his house. His supply of water extended to include outlying areas such as Adabraka. Also, he employed Zambrama water peddlers, popularly called *ga-ruwa* (literally, 'Here is water' in Hausa) who sold to passengers and traders at the lorry park and on the streets of Accra. His house, which was known initially in Hausa as *Gyida-mankade* ('House of shea butter') became the *Gyida-ruwa* ('House of water'). With this shift in focus, Hamza transferred his Gonja shea-butter sellers to Samoli's House.

By the 1960s, Samoli's House had become one of the major centres for the distribution of shea butter as well as other products. As indicated already, shea-butter trade is one in which no single item is dealt in. We saw how the Ada combined it with salt trade. In the same way with the motor-borne shea-butter trade, traders usually came along with other products such as maize, dried cassava chippings, groundnuts, and local rice. In Samoli's yard each section was used for the wholesaling of the different products mentioned.[543] Of interest to our discussion is the evolution of another economic activity in Tudu owing to the widened trade opportunities in these products, including shea butter: the demand for containers.

[543] P. Hill, *Indigenous trade*, 133-6.

Shea butter packed in sacks and covered with calabashes in a store at Timber Market, ready to be distributed to retailers from other parts of Accra and beyond. Note the names of each retailer on the jute sacks covering the calabash. (Picture by author, 2009)

New Technology, packaging, and the emergence of a new trader class

Packaging is an important component in any economic venture which involves the handling of products, particularly those that are agricultural in nature. The use of good containers results in vast improvements in handling, thus lowering damage and costs that might arise owing to the use of improper containers.

Shea butter, as well as other products, requires proper containers for storage and for ease of transport. This demand led to the evolution of another Zabrama trader class in Tudu, who specialised in the sale of both used and old sacks in Samoli's house. Following the increasing utilisation of motorised transport, two types of containers became necessary in the transport of shea butter from the north to the south: empty jute bags or sacks and calabash. Initially, when shea butter was sent via river, the only container in use was the calabash. Even though traditionally the calabash has been the main means for storing shea butter, for water-borne transport it had the additional advantage of floating, so that in cases when the canoe got involved in an accident the shea butter could be recovered.

Following motorisation, many switched to the use of both calabash and jute sacks. Informants report that the sack prevents dust from getting into the butter, a risk which was of little significance when transported by canoe. In most cases, the shea

butter is placed in a sack and covered on top with a large calabash. While the calabash is obtained from the north, the jute sacks have to be obtained from the Ghana Cocoa Marketing Board in Accra and Takoradi or from Lagos in Nigeria. Alahuba Mega, a Zabrama sacks' or bags' wholesale trader, for example, relied on drivers at Tudu Lorry Park to bring him large quantities from Lagos. After taking delivery of the sacks, he re-allocated them to his kinsmen, each of whom, needless to say, operated on his own behalf by selling it to the shea-butter traders. Some have even professionally advanced into bag-mending, as well as bag enlargement by inserting strips. That is done to maximise space within the sacks for maximum carriage of shea butter and other products. Samoli's house continued in importance until the Aliens Compliance Order of 1969. Following the Order, most of the Zabrama and Mossi sellers left, and Samoli himself died two years later, leaving the Gonja traders.

In the meantime, the expansion of Accra had led to the intensification of demand for foodstuffs, including yams. The demand offered opportunity to Dagomba men to enter the yam trade, which at first was traditionally the domain of Zabrama men and Akan women.[544] A Dagomba man called Abukari, who was resident in Tudu, began trading in yams in 1970. In order to facilitate his business, Abukari bought vehicles and began loading yams and shea butter to Tudu. The success of his transport business made him to abandon trade in yams. Informants indicate that he gradually replaced the Mossi transporters in Tudu since he came to own many vehicles. In addition, other Dagomba vehicle owners and drivers preferred to lodge with him in Tudu. Considered in this context, though he was a driver, he was also performing the function of a *maigida*. The control of transportation by the Dagomba led to the involvement of Dagomba women in addition to the Gonja in the shea-butter trade in Tudu.[545] Thus, there was a gradual change in the demography of shea-butter transporters and traders in Tudu. From Ntrapo, to Ada canoe-men, to the Mossi, and finally the Dagomba. The Dagomba, unlike the Gonja, bulked their shea butter in their houses in Tudu but sent it to Samoli's house to sell during the day. The move was to avoid conflict between them and their colleague Gonja traders.

[544] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG, 8/3/125, Annual Report of the Gonja District, 1944-1945; J. Rouch, *Notes on Migrations*, 40.
[545] Interview with Alfred Kwesi Bour.

According to informants, from 1975 the number of Dagomba women in the shea-butter trade kept increasing while those of the Gonja were decreasing.[546] The trend continued until 1977 when, as part of the decongestion of the Central Business District, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly relocated the cargo drivers at Tudu to Old Fadama (Timber Market).[547] A year later, the yam and Dagomba women shea-butter traders moved to join the drivers at Timber Market. But the Gonja shea-butter traders continued to sell their shea butter in Samoli's House. The bombing of the Makola Market in 1979 destroyed the capital of the Gonja shea-butter traders, since Samoli's house was adjacent to the market. The Gonja traders were also not spared. With the disruption of trade and the emergence of another shea market in Timber Market, most of the Gonjas diverted to other trading activities, particularly the sale of yams, thereby finally collapsing the Gonja involvement in the shea-butter trade in Tudu. The demise of Gonja traders offered the Dagomba the opportunity to monopolise both the transportation and sale of shea butter in Accra.[548]

Dagomba Traders: New Opportunities

By 1980, shea-butter trade in Accra had been monopolised by Dagomba women. Timber Market instead of Tudu became the depot where shea butter was sold on a wholesale basis. The shift was a result of a general urban design to decongest the inner city. To achieve this, the cargo drivers in Tudu were moved to the Timber Market. As indicated already, some of the cargo vehicles were owned by the Dagomba, the shift naturally leading to a movement of the Dagomba women alongside their male drivers to the Timber Market. The entry of Dagombas coincided with yet more opportunities in addition to the traditionally known reasons for shea-butter demands in Accra.

[546] Interview with Baba Addisa, Tudu, 30 March 2008. He was born around 1924 in Tudu and has remained in Tudu to date. See Chapter 4 for more on Baba Addisa.
[547] Interview with Alfred Kwesi Bour. Timber Market is south-east of Tudu and about two-and-a-half kilometres from Tudu.
[548] Interview with Hajia Fatima, Timber Market, 4 May 2008. Fatima is a Dagomba, aged sixty-seven. She began trading in shea butter in 1979 at Timber Market. She is currently the leader of the shea-butter sellers in Accra. She lives at Nima, another *zongo* in Accra. Unlike the period when the shea-butter sellers were in Tudu, in Timber Market age is a major consideration in the trade. Hajia Fatima is referred to as *Ti Kpema* (our elder). In Tudu there was a different position which regulated the trade.

The early part of the 1980s, especially 1983, marked a period of serious food shortages and lack of basic necessities of life, including kerosene.[549] The demand for shea butter soared both in the rural and urban areas. While it was increasingly demanded for the preparation of domestic food, it also regained its former place as an illuminant and a substitute for margarine among urban food sellers.[550] Most of the food sellers at night, particularly those who sold on the streets and in the lorry parks, resorted to shea butter to power the traditionally known lanterns called 'Bombongass'. Bakers used the butter for lining bakery containers. Initially, it was margarine that was used for that purpose.

Likewise in the 1980s, the system of health-care delivery was in chaos. Hospitals could not function for lack of basic medicines and essential supplies such as anaesthetics and bandages. The frustration of failing to obtain basic equipment for their functions and a general low income led to the departure of a number of medical staff from the country.[551] More and more Ghanaians, owing to the lack of medicines and medical staff, resorted to traditional herbal medicine. Peddlers of herbal medicine descended upon the urban centres where there was dense population and a growing market for herbal products.[552] Several driver-turned-herbalist informants in Tudu Lorry Park reported that they abandoned their profession as drivers in the 1980s to go into herbal medicine because of the ready market it guaranteed within the city. According to them, most of the raw materials such as roots, bark, and leaves of plants such as *Napoleona imperialis* were processed in the villages, but they usually mixed the raw materials with shea butter in Accra and sold it to people who sustained fractures and pulled muscles. It is important to note that such herbalists in Tudu enjoy a prestige owing to the efficacy of their products and the fact that their charges are cheaper than the hospitals.

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[549] R. M. Price, 'Neo-Colonialism and Ghana's Economic Decline: A Critical Assessment', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 18:1 (1984), 165.

[550] Interview with Abena Twumwaa, James Town, 8 July 2007. Abena is about seventy-five years old and has been a baker in James Town since the 1970s. She was one of the few who had their catering training from the Department of Community Development. She has used margarine and other substitutes, including shea butter, in her baking life.

[551] R. M. Price, 'Neo-Colonialism', 165.

[552] C. A. Anyinam, 'Persistence with Change: A Rural-Urban Study of Ethno-Medical Practices in Contemporary Ghana' (PhD thesis, Department of Geography, Queen's University, Kingston, 1987), 144; C. A. Anyinam 'Traditional Medical Practice in Contemporary Ghana: A Dying or Growing "Profession"?', *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 21:3 (1987), 333.

The implementation of the Economic Recovery Programme in the later part of the 1980s and 1990s also offered new opportunities for shea-butter sellers. As part of the educational reforms, more vocational and technical training was proposed and rigorously followed. The emphasis in some of the vocational schools was on hairdressing, sewing, and carpentry. Similarly, the Economic Recovery Programme led to retrenchment in the public service. Some staff in the various government establishments were laid off while others were retrained to go into private business, with some of the women opting to receive training in hair-care. Furthermore, some graduates from the junior and senior secondary schools and some migrants in Accra went into the hair-dressing profession because of the large market that it commanded in the city.

In the 1990s the phenomenon of hair-dressing as a popular occupation was evident as more hair-care or hair-dressing saloons were dotted around all parts of the city of Accra.[553] The upsurge also had an effect on shea-butter demands. Some of the vocational institutions teaching hair-dressing and some of the private hair-dressing salons operated by individuals (sometimes referred to as 'Madams') emphasise the use of shea-butter products in hair-care. Carson's Beauty School in Adabraka, Tudu's neighbour, is known for popularising the use of shea-butter products among its graduates.[554] Hair can be damaged by overuse of hair dryers, hair strengtheners, curling irons, and harsh chemicals like those found in hair-dye and hair-straightening solutions.[555] Since the use of these implements and chemical products are essential in the hair-dressing profession, hairdressers use shea butter on the hair of their customers for the rehydration of their hair. Shea butter works by penetrating the roots of the hair and replenishes each hair shaft with the necessary vitamins and nutrients.

Finally, the ethnic conflicts of the north and a general lost of confidence in the rural economy has led to more migration of the youth to the urban centres in search of jobs. In 2007, the labour economy of Accra witnessed an increase, with those belonging to the 'female manual carriage sector' (*kayayei*) from the north totalling 2,432 in only

[553] Hairdressing institutions have existed since pre-colonial and colonial times in both their traditional and modern forms. The concern here is the increase in numbers and its impact on shea-butter consumption. For a detailed discussion of the history of hairdressing in Ghana, including the institutions, see D. S. Essah, 'Fashioning the Nation: Hairdressing, Professionalism and the Performance of Gender in Ghana, 1900-2006', (PhD dissertation, Department of History, University of Michigan, 2008), 136-77.
[554] *Ibid.* 198
[555] *Ibid.* 191

three markets out of the dozen markets in Accra.[556] This has had an effect on demand for northern cuisine. Among the *kayaye*, in their residential and working areas, which include Tudu Lorry Park, one finds an increase in the preparation of traditional dishes such as *tubane, chikaba, kose*. All these dishes are prepared or eaten with shea butter or shea-butter stew.[557]

Related to the above is the emergence of 'high-class' restaurants since the 1990s, specialising in the preparation of northern cuisine only and strategically located in some parts of the city such as the Kwame Nkrumah Circle, Opeibia, and Madina. The targets of these restaurants are middle- and high-income northerners, mostly civil servants and successful businessmen. The weekends are usually busy days for such restaurants as clansmen throng to the restaurants to catch up with 'home food and home news'. The upsurge in these 'ethnic' restaurants, which make extensive use of shea butter, provides income to Dagomba shea-butter traders, since shea butter is a central part of northern cuisine. Meanwhile, shea-butter trade is also a way of surviving in the ever-growing catering industry in Accra. Indeed, most of the proprietors are from the north. Those who excel in such food preparations are normally contracted to prepare food during birthday, naming, wedding, funeral, or other ceremonies. From what has been discussed so far, it is evident that while the traditional uses of shea butter are still intact, new uses are being found or new markets are being created. This calls for effective control of both supplies and trade. For this we turn our attention to one important position which emerged to regulate the shea-butter trade in Accra.

Nkuwurche and shea-butter trade in Tudu

The first and most important question that one may ask is who the oil chief (*nkuwurche*) was, how did the position originate, and what were her roles in the shea-butter trade?[558] The *nkuwurche* was a female position which originated around the second decade of the 1900s in Tudu. Even though the position of *nkuwurche* originated around this period, the centrality of Gonja women in regulating trade dates back to the seventeenth century.

[556] M. Amponsah-Annan & Sylvester Kyei-Gyamfi, 'Kayaaye Exercise', 2.

[558] *Nkuwurche* is a derivative word from Gonja. *Nku* means 'oil' and *wurche* means 'female chief'. *Nkuwurche* literally translates as 'oil chief'.

When Ndewura Jakpa, the founder of the Gonja kingdom, conquered Daboya in the north, he placed the town under his daughter's control and entrusted her with the mining and sale of salt in Daboya.[559] She was given the title 'queen of the salt wells' (*burugu wurche*), which was corrupted to *buwurche*. *Buwurche* also controlled the weaving industry in Daboya. Over time, the position spread into all the Gonja towns and villages. Instead of *buwurche* they were called female chiefs (*ewurche*). Even in contemporary times, the position is part of the Gonja political set-up, even though the female chiefs play complementary roles to the male chiefs.[560] This background of female leadership, in my view, acted as an impetus to the creation of the *nkuwurche* in Tudu.

According to informants, the position originated when Gonja women in Tudu had to buy shea butter from Ada canoe-men at Kpong.[561] The *nkuwurche* was responsible for payments of all transactions at Kpong. In Tudu, the *nkuwurche* was a key factor in the shea-butter trade. She gave blessings or consent to most of the transactions, without which transactions were usually considered inconclusive. Besides being an intermediary, the *nkuwurche* was a shea-butter trader in her own right, usually with many assistants. The Gonja custom of fostering enabled Gonja migrants in Tudu to have many foster children.[562] In most cases, the children became sales-girls for the *nkuwurche*. Engagement in trade is considered a form of training and in conformity with the Gonja ideology of fostering. With time these 'fostered children' and assistants became stationed agents in the major shea-butter trading centres or markets in the northern part of the country. After making sufficient purchases, they either brought the shea butter personally to the *nkuwurche* or gave it to trusted drivers to deliver at Tudu Lorry Park. In the park, porters carried it to the *nkuwurche*, who then sold to customers from the neighbouring markets in Accra and beyond. Even when trade shifted to Hamza Wangara and Samoli's House, the *nkuwurche* still operated and remained significant

[559] E. Goody, 'Daboya Weavers: Relation of Production Dependence and Reciprocity', in E. Goody (ed.), *From Craft to Industry: The Ethnography of Proto-Industrial Cloth Production* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 51.
[560] For more on female leadership in Ghana, see I. Odotei & A. K. Awedoba (eds.), *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance And Development* (Accra, Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006).
[561] Interview with Alhaji Haruna, Tudu, 3 January 2008 and Nima, 21 January 2008. Haruna's profile has already been given.
[562] For fostering in Gonja, see E. Goody, *Parenthood and Social Reproduction: Fostering and Occupational Roles in West Africa* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 37-9.

until 1979.[563] The operation of different destinations from Tudu Lorry Park facilitated shea-butter trade in Tudu.

Prior to the creation of Tudu Lorry Park, the *nkuwurche* was responsible for accommodating or housing clients from nearly all the *zongos* in Nsawam, Koforidua, and Saltpond. Considered in this commercial context, the *nkuwurche* functioned more or less like the *maigida*.[564] Thus, a successful *nkuwurche* is a relatively well-off person. Oral historians in Tudu report that the *nkuwurche* sometimes allowed the sales-girls or fostered children to engage in trade on their own, especially when they were over twenty years and of a marriageable age. She provided the start-up capital and negotiated for clients for them. Her involvement as a middle-woman attracted a commission from both sides. Even when trade shifted to Samoli's House, she still collected commission. For instance, she got one cedi for every transaction. It is worth noting that shea-butter traders in Tudu had no unions representing their interest. The lack of a union or association also helped to maintain the supremacy of the *nkuwurche* in the shea-butter trade.

The most important advantage to the *nkuwurche* and the shea-butter traders on one hand and the drivers on the other was their ability to sustain the shea-butter trade in Tudu from the 1940s, when the government of the Gold Coast, later Ghana, became involved in the purchasing and export of shea butter and shea nuts through the Cocoa Marketing Board, even though such purchases were irregular. Oral accounts indicate that the success was as a result of the cooperation between drivers at the lorry park and the traders. Drivers at the park could transport the shea butter on credit pending sales. Alternatively, shea-butter traders provided loans to drivers to maintain their vehicles any time they ran out of cash. There was determination from both drivers and traders to sustain the trade in the midst of competition from the State. By sustaining the trade, both the drivers and traders benefited.

It is important to note that from the 1980s there emerged another position, called the shea-butter '*magazia'*, which also emerged in Accra as a result of the shea-butter

[563] Interview with Hajia Meri, Tudu, 11 May 2008. Hajia Meri was interviewed at Timber Market, where she buys yams for export. She is a Gonja who used to sell shea butter at Tudu. She is now into the yam business. According to her, she did not leave the shea-butter trade because Gonjas were pushed out of the trade, but because buying yams for export was easier and less tedious. She admitted, however, that she raised her capital for the yam business from shea-butter trade, and she has an ambition to go into shea-butter export.

[564] *Maigida* has been explained in the previous chapter.

trade. Functionally, the *magazia*'s role is not too different from that of the *nkuwurche*, except that unlike the *nkuwurche*, which is the preserve of Gonja traders, the *magazia* is a position monopolised by Dagomba women. The evolution of such a position reflects the current trends in shea-butter trade in Accra. For, as already indicated, the introduction of motorised transport brought added advantage to Dagomba women, who have not only taken over the shea-butter trade from Gonja women but have also succeeded in creating the *magazia* position to help regulate their trade.

Conclusion

Northerners have contributed to the health of the people of Accra through the therapeutic uses of shea butter's constituent compounds. In Accra shea butter is used in the treatment of wounds, burns, and broken bones. Shea-butter traders have also enabled restaurants to prepare northern-based cuisines that use shea butter. Finally, the cosmetic demands of many salons that attend to the hair needs of women in Accra are met on a daily basis, all courtesy of northern shea-butter traders.

7

From Northern Traders to Southern Queens: Tomato Trade in Tudu

Introduction

Tomatoes are essential in the cuisine of the inhabitants of Accra. Tomatoes are a comparatively new ingredient in southern Ghanaian cuisine. In contemporary Accra virtually no meal can be considered complete without the inclusion of tomatoes. There are varied sources through which Accra gets its tomatoes. In this commercial network there are large numbers of northerners serving as producers, transporters, porters, and interpreters. In Accra, Tudu is the largest market for tomatoes' trade and distribution. Without the production and transportation of tomatoes by northerners, the sale and consumption of this essential commodity in Accra would have been limited.

This chapter is about trade in tomatoes in Accra. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section gives reasons for the demand for tomatoes in Accra. The second section traces the sources of tomatoes to Tudu. The third section provides insights into the role of transportation in the tomatoes trade. The fourth section sheds light on the interpreters, sorters, and weavers in the tomato trade. The fifth section contains a discussion of the Tudu Tomato Sellers Association and a conclusion.

Demand for Tomatoes

Several reasons account for the demand for tomatoes in Accra. First is the phenomenal growth of Accra. According to the 2000 population census, Accra's population currently stands at 2.2 million.[565] The changing consumption patterns of Ghanaians have seen tomatoes become an important vegetable in Ghanaian dishes, from *kenkey* to *fufu*,[566] and they are used in stews and soup in almost all Ghanaian dishes. As urbanisation facilitates a shift towards Western food tastes and more people work outside their homes and adopt different lifestyles, trade in tomatoes has responded to increasing demand. Furthermore, in addition to urban Ghanaians, the number of resident expatriates, visitors and tourists has increased the need for restaurants and fast-food outlets. The restaurant and fast-food sub-sector is considered one of the largest and has

[565] Ghana Statistical Service: 2000 Population and Housing Census, Special Report on Urban Localities.
[566] *Kenkey* is a meal made from corn, while *fufu* is made from cassava, plantain, cocoyam or yam. The cassava, plantain, cocoyam or yam is pounded into a ball.

witnessed a phenomenal growth since 2000, averaging twenty per cent per annum.[567] Besides the household- and service-sector demands, there are also demands from Lome in Togo and Lagos in Nigeria for fresh tomatoes from Ghana. An historical account of the various sources of supply of tomatoes to traders in Tudu will be useful in understanding how the traders get the tomatoes to satisfy these demands.

Sources of Tomato Supply to Tudu

Oral accounts indicate that prior to 1920 a group of Grushie cultivated vegetables, including tomatoes, at Achimota and sold them to the Yoruba in Tudu. The Yoruba also sold the vegetables around the central mosque, located between Tudu and Cow Lane. Archival records establish the location of the Grushie in Achimota, but the account does not indicate their occupation.[568] It is possible that the Grushie learnt the cultivation of the vegetables from a group of Afro-Brazilians called the Tabon, who as early as the 1880s were engaged in such farming activities in present-day Adabraka.[569] It is pertinent to understand the background of these Yoruba who engaged in the tomato trade, and it is necessary to distinguish them from Yoruba kola-nut traders.

Informants in Tudu report that the first group of Yoruba tomato sellers originally worked under Chief Braimah in his kola-nut trade. Even though it was the Kotokoli that were more visible as porters, there were some Yoruba and Grushie who worked for him as carriers. After his death, some of the Yoruba carriers did not branch off as individual traders, nor were they willing to work with other groups of Yoruba or their former colleagues, the Kotokoli who had become independent kola-nut traders. With the expansion of the city they easily identified tomato sales as a viable option. For this new group of tomato traders, the expansion of the city offered them an alternative economic opportunity to the earlier kola-nut- and shea-butter-focussed economy in Tudu and Accra. It was not too difficult for them to go into tomato trade because, as already

[567] Interview with Samuel Bawa Ambiasin, Legon, 3 December 2007. Bawa is a technical director at the Ministry of Agriculture. He is currently an MPhil student at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ghana. His duties at the Ministry of Agriculture are monitoring and evaluating the distribution of foodstuffs in urban Accra.

[568] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/1185, Grushie Community, Accra. Dated, 15th Nov. 1921. The Grushie are from the Upper West Region of Ghana; a small number also live in the Upper East Region. Achimota is about ten minutes' drive north of Tudu.

[569] A. M. Amos & E. Ayesu '"I am Brazilian": History of the Tabon, Afro-Brazilians in Accra, Ghana', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, 6 (2002), 45.

mentioned, some of their colleague porters were Grushie who also went to join their tribesmen in the cultivation of tomatoes in Achimota.

Informants report that the family of Chief Braimah in Tudu and the Afro-Brazilian (Tabon) community further south of Tudu were ready consumers of these tomatoes supplied by this group of Yoruba. The Tabon were already accustomed to a European lifestyle owing to their sojourn in Brazil. The Tabon were known to have been vegetable producers in Adabraka, but the expansion of the city had compelled them to abandon vegetable farming as their farmlands were converted into residential buildings as Tudu expanded northwards to incorporate Adabraka.[570] Therefore, they had no choice but to rely on supplies from the Yoruba.

Chief Braimah's family consumed tomatoes from an early stage, as he had married Fatima, an important member of the Perigrino family in the Afro-Brazilian community of Accra.[571] Chief Braimah and his wife Fatima had five children, including Imoro Mobulaji Braimah.[572] Imoro Mobolaji and his family stayed initially in Tudu before moving to another *zongo* called Lagos Town (now New Town). By their association with the Tabon through Chief Braimah, they also became important customers of the Yoruba tomato traders. Besides the Braimah family and the members of the Afro-Brazilian community, the elite in Tudu were also known patronisers of supplies from the Yoruba. Some of the elite had become accustomed to tomatoes through their experimental consumption, explored especially through education at school, and others by their association with the Afro-Brazilian community. Besides Chief Braimah's marriage, other members of the elite from Tudu married some of Fatima's siblings. John Plange and Heward Mills married her two older sisters.[573] In this way, we can understand that the expansion of Tudu itself during this initial stage and the social exchange which was part of this expansion formed the basis for the survival of the tomato trade begun by the Yoruba.

By 1922, the growth of the city of Accra necessitated the creation of a food market called the Selwyn Market, to help ease the pressure on the single Salaga Market.[574] The creation of the market expanded opportunities for tomato production and

[570] *Ibid.* 44-45.
[571] M. B. P. Braimah, *A Migrant African Chief*, 30.
[572] See Chapter 3 for life history of Imoru Mobolaji Perigrino.
[573] M. B. P. Braimah, *A Migrant African Chief*, 30
[574] PRADD, Accra, CSO 11/14/144, Selwyn Market date 3rd March, 1934.

consumption. By this stage, the tomato was no longer considered an elite product as its consumption had caught up with most of the urbanites. Nsawam became a principal source for the supply of vegetables to Tudu.[575] Up to the 1930s and through the 1940s, Nsawam maintained its prominence in the supply of vegetables to Accra. As the Director of Agriculture reported:

> *The supply of vegetables to Accra is not yet satisfactory. A few market gardeners have with our assistance made some progress but production is not likely to keep pace with the demands caused by an increasing European population nor can regular supplies be guaranteed. I therefore recommend the establishment of a government garden to be run by this department. This farm should be at Nsawam which is the chief natural market gardening area for the Accra Market especially in the dry season. The farm will also serve as an instruction and demonstration centre which is badly needed.*[576]

The prominence of Nsawam in vegetable production was an impetus to the colonial government's decision to establish a government garden to supply vegetables while training farmers in 'modern' methods of vegetable production. The colonial administration's action was simply an addition to an economic activity which was already budding in addition to cocoa and kola-nut production in the area. C. H. Happer, the Commissioner for Eastern Province, had already witnessed traffic in tomatoes from Nsawam to the Accra market in 1914. As he reported:

> *I left about 7:00 a.m. for Nsawam by road, about twenty miles. The glory of the Akim road, or rather the Accra-Nsawam portion of it has departed* [sic]. *Very little traffic was met with. About six miles from Nsawam, I passed some women carrying loads of tomatoes for Accra market. One of the parties was communicative. She said she would sleep one night before she reached Accra. She expected at least 30/- for her load which seem to weigh about 70 lbs.*[577]

Happer did not report who the main customers were in Accra, nor were informants in Tudu able to shed any light on this source of supply besides their knowledge of Achimota as a prominent source. It is possible that the supplies from Nsawam occurred concurrently with the supplies from Achimota. The Yoruba identified the increased demand and took advantage by buying supplies from producers and selling to the consumers.

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[575] Nsawam is north of Accra and about thirty minutes' drive from the Accra city centre. Even though close to Accra, it is in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

[576] PRAAD Accra, ADM 11 CSO 8/4/9, Letter from Director of Agriculture to the Secretary for Native Affairs, Dated 26th July, 1941.

[577] T. Williamson & A. K. Green (eds.), *Gold Coast Diaries: Chronicles of Political Officers in West Africa, 1900-1919* (London, New York: Radcliffe Press, 2000), 73.

Meanwhile, the Accra plains picked up as an important source of supply of tomatoes in addition to Nsawam and Achimota in the 1940s and 1950s.[578] Examples of producing areas were Mataheko, a village near Afienya, Ashaiman, Shai Hils, Koluedor, and Sege, all in the Greater Accra region.[579] The production from the Accra plains was usually from July to September. For Nsawam, because of its closeness to the Densu River, farmers could produce on an all-year-round schedule.

Thus, up to the 1940s and 1950s, the Greater Accra region and some parts of the Eastern Region were the principal sources of supply of tomatoes to the Tudu Market. The incorporation of production from the Accra plains led to the gradual replacement of the Yoruba men by Ga women. As one of the old suppliers of tomatoes to Tudu reported:

> *The time that we are talking about is different from now. We are talking of a time that it was difficult to mix with each other. We could not communicate with the Hausa people (the northerners). We always have to use interpreters. Sometimes we do not understand what they say because the interpreters were young Hausa boys. With the Ga women it is easy. Even up to now we always sell to the Ga women because we are the same people.*[580]

[578] By Accra plains I mean areas that are located to the south-east and north-east of Accra Central, which are mostly inhabited by the Ga, Ada, Krobo, and Prampram. There are many towns and villages in the area which produce vegetables, including tomatoes. I shall only mention some of the producing areas in the discussion, especially the major producing area, Ada. It must be stated that Ada refers to the area located at the estuary of the Volta River. The ethnic group is also called Ada. I shall use 'Ada' to refer to the geographical area and 'the Ada' to refer to the ethnic group.

[579] Interview with Daniel Agyeman, Mataheko-Afienya, 23 December 2007. Daniel Agyeman is about eighty years old and he hails from Agyemakope near Ada. He dropped out of school at the age of twelve, when his father could not afford school fees. At age fifteen he left for Cameroon to join his brother, Moses Agyeman, who had relocated to Cameroon in the 1930s to engage in fishing. Having realized some money, he came back to Accra in 1956 and learnt carpentry, finishing his apprenticeship in 1958. Lack of capital to set up his own carpentry shop made him to go back into fishing, this time around with his younger brothers, Barnabas and Benjamin Agyeman. They fished in the Oti River, a tributary of the Volta River and north-east of Tamale. They did their fishing in the Nawuri town of Kitare. Competition from other Ewe fishermen made Daniel and his brothers relocate back to Accra in 1960, this time to Mataheko, a vegetable-farming village near Afienya. Since settling in Mataheko, Daniel Agyeman has been farming tomatoes. According to him, success in tomato farming enabled him to build two houses, buy a tractor, and marry two wives. In 1993, Daniel Agyeman was awarded the Best District Tomato Farmer award for the Greater Accra Region. Daniel and most of the Ada remain an important source of supply of tomatoes to Tudu even today.

[580] Interview with Victoria Agbedam, Mataheko- Afienya, 24 December 2007. Victoria is one of the oldest and most successful tomato farmers in Mataheko. In addition to farming, she buys tomatoes from her colleague farmers in Mataheko, Prampram, and Ningo and sells at the Tudu Market. She has six children. Currently, the fourth-born, Mary, is assisting her to buy some of the tomatoes, while the elder son, Akple, takes care of her farms. Victoria's father was a fisherman and her mother traded in fish. Her paternal uncle, William Zortovi, migrated from Ada to Mataheko to settle and rear cattle. He came with Victoria since he was not married then. According to her, in addition to cattle-rearing, the uncle did some farming, mainly producing cassava. She also began creating some tomato gardens around the house. At age twenty she asked for an acre of land from her uncle, who then had acquired many plots from the

With the taking over of trade by Ga women, some of the Yoruba men moved into other economic activities, particularly driving. Others moved into new areas of opportunity, especially into areas such as Nkwanta in the Volta Region, Salaga, Kpandai, Wulensi, and Bimbilla in the Northern Region. These areas were witnessing new population growth, owing to a new wave of Konkomba and Bassari migrants from Togo.[581] Here, unlike in Tudu, the Yoruba were engaged in the sale of petty goods such as lanterns, imported soap, sandals, mirrors, and other products, popularly referred to as *nyamanyama*.[582] More importantly, they were known to have been an important link between the second-hand clothes market at Kantamato Market—popularly called the *Obroni Wawo* (literally, 'Dead Whiteman/Woman' in Akan)—close to Tudu and the areas mentioned above, as they bought the second-hand cloths in bulk from Kantamanto and sold in these new areas.

As already mentioned, in the 1960s as part of President Nkrumah's dream for the industrialization of Ghana, a tomato factory was established at Pwalugu in the Upper East Region to process tomatoes into paste.[583] Commercial farming of tomatoes was encouraged in Navrongo and Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region to supply the factory. Dams and irrigation projects were established to facilitate water supply and to ensure all-year-round cultivation.[584]

Even though tomato production in the aforementioned area provided for the factory at Pwallugu, the area also became an important source of supply of fresh tomatoes to market women in Tudu. Older tomato traders in Tudu report that the

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Gbugla, who were the original landowners in the Prampram area. From such a modest beginning, she expanded her farms, cultivating about ten acres. On one of her supply trips she met Jonathan Agbedam, her current husband. They got married and Jonathan relocated from Tema to Mataheko to also engage in tomato farming. Victoria has bought a Nissan Urvan bus and a grinding mill. She also established a piggery. Other Yoruba informants, however, indicated that the expansion of the city made them branch into alternative activities, particularly motorised transport. Some of the tomato sellers became drivers and others took up jobs as bookmen in some of the lorry parks, particularly Tudu.

[581] PRAAD, Tamale, NRG 8/3/125, Gonja District Report, 1944-1945.

[582] *Nyamanyama* in Akan means 'messed up' or 'disorderly'. The word was used because the Yoruba sold an assortment of goods, usually packed on a table or in a shop. For the meaning of *Nyamanyama*, see K. Darko, 'Code-switching and lexical borrowing: Which is what in Ghanaian English?', *English Today*, 71, 18:3 (July 2002), 53.

[583] L. E. Grayson, 'A Conglomerate in Africa: Public-Sector Manufacturing Enterprises in Ghana, 1962-1971', *African Studies Review*, 16:3 (Dec. 1973), 339.

[584] The Tono Dam in Navrongo was begun in 1962 and completed in 1985. But production by farmers in the area began before its completion. For more on the successes and failures of the project, see B. Asare, 'Local Involvement in Rural Development: The Tono Irrigation Scheme in Ghana', *Development in Practice*, 12:2 (May 2002), 218-23.

farmers preferred selling tomatoes to them because they offered better prices.[585] The 1970s also saw the production of tomatoes in Akumadan and Ejura in Ashanti Region and Techiman in the Brong Ahafo Region. According to an informant, it was production from these areas that brought more Akan tomato traders into Tudu. So by 1980, trade in fresh tomatoes in Tudu was gradually dominated by the Ga and Akan.

By the mid-1980s and early part of the 1990s, as part of policy conditions from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the Ghanaian government embarked on a major privatisation programme, selling the tomato-canning factory at Pwallugu and relaxing restrictions on tomato paste imports, leading to the collapse of the Pwallugu factory. Naturally, the collapse of the factory should have meant an increase in supply of fresh tomatoes from Navrongo and Bolgatanga to the Tudu Market. But since most of the farmers received subsidies from the government, the collapse of the factory meant that the farmers also did not have enough funds to continue their production. That had wider implications for the tomato trade in Tudu. In order to continue production and subsequently trade, the market women began offering loans to the farmers to continue production.[586] Since the loans could only cater to small-scale production, and demand was increasing, other sources were sought for the Tudu Market. The traders therefore moved into new areas within and outside Ghana.

In Ghana in the 1990s, Kumawu became another source of supply of tomatoes to Tudu. Seven years earlier, the drought and the bush fires of 1983 had destroyed most of the cocoa farms in Ghana, including the farms in Kumawu.[587] As a consequence, cocoa farmers, forced by a limited choice, went into the production of staple foods. As the economy recovered, farmers began to experiment with growing large amounts of vegetables. By the end of the 1980s, the most visible commercial crop was tomatoes.[588]

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[585] Interview with Akua Nkrumah, James Town, Accra, 2 August 2007. Akua Nkruamah is about eighty years old. She hails from Kwahu Oboming in the Eastern Region of Ghana. In the 1950s she traded in yams at the Kumasi Kejetia Market. She usually bought her yams from Salaga and Kpandai in the northern region of Ghana. When yams were out of season, she bought clothes from Accra and sold them in some of the northern markets such as Bolgatanga and Bawku. In the 1960s she began buying tomatoes from Bolgatanga to Tudu. In the 1980s she left the tomato business to her daughter, Akua Twumwaa, whom she had introduced to the trade a decade earlier. Akua Nkrumah went into the yams' trade again. This time, instead of buying the yams from the north, her customers in Salaga and Kpandai transported it to her at the Timber Market in Accra for her to sell. She earns commissions for every hundred yams sold. She said she left the tomato trade because she was too old to travel.

[586] Interview with Akua Nkrumah.

[587] Kumawu is about fifty kilometres north-east of Kumasi, the Regional Capital of Asante.

[588] S. Berry, 'Tomatoe, Land and Hearsay: Property and History in Asante in the Time of Structural Adjustment', *World Development*, 25:8 (1997), 1230. L. M. MacLean, however, is of the view that in

By 1994, tomato sellers from Tudu had ventured into the buying of tomatoes from Kumawu, especially in June and July, which is the peak season in Kumawu. Some of the buyers preferred Kumawu because there was no need for interpreters.[589] Besides, in Kumawu the tomatoes were head-loaded to the Kumasi-Accra road, which meant that no extra transport cost was incurred from the farms to the roadside.

In addition to the internal sources of supply of fresh tomatoes to Tudu, from 2001 to date, the traders have moved to Burkina Faso. Informants in Tudu report that government subsidies in Burkina Faso have made the production of tomatoes cheaper. Meanwhile, Ghanaian agriculture experts allege that imported tomatoes from Burkina Faso are genetically modified, thus producing more and better quality tomatoes.[590] By producing more, prices became low compared with Ghana, ultimately attracting tomato traders from Tudu.

In a nutshell, Tudu, from the second decade of the 1900s until the present has relied on a variety of sources for the supply of tomatoes. The question of how these tomatoes were brought to Tudu will be addressed next by examining the role of both motorised and non-motorised transportation in the tomato trade in Tudu.

Transportation and Tomato Trade in Tudu

Trade in tomatoes did not offer an opportunity only to traders in Tudu but also to drivers and porters. Transporting tomatoes from the various parts of the country to Tudu became one of the ways in which different categories of transporters, including northerners in Tudu, participated in the wider economy of Accra. In the informal economy, the motor-vehicle plays an important role in accessing farms and markets.[591] A good transport system is important to the efficient transfer of tomatoes from the various sources to Tudu. If transport services are infrequent, of poor quality, or

addition to the devastating effects of the drought and bush fires, the switch to tomato production in the Akan areas, which include Kumawu, is instead due to the quick profits tomatoes bring compared with cocoa, a perennial crop. For the views of MacLean on the comparative advantage of tomatoes over cocoa, see L. M. MacLean, 'Empire of the Young: The Legacies of State Agricultural Policy on Local Capitalism and Social Support Networks in Ghana and Cote d' Ívoire', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46:3 (July 2004), 473-4.

[589] The role of interpreters will be addressed in a later discussion.

[590] Adu Koranteng, 'Burkina Faso Tomatoes Contain GM Seeds, Experts Say', *The Statesman*, 21 November 2007.

[591] J. B. Gewald, 'Transformation in Transport in Zambia: Preliminary ideas regarding a social history dealing with the introduction of the motor-vehicle in Zambia, 1890-1930', (Leiden: ASC working paper 74), 5.

expensive, then farmers, traders and consumers will be at a disadvantage. An expensive transport service will naturally lead to low farm prices as traders intend to cut down on cost. Seasonally impassable roads or slow and infrequent transport services will lead to losses as fresh tomatoes deteriorate quickly over time. Traders indeed emphasized the importance of transportation in the tomato trade. As the secretary of the Tudu Tomatoes Sellers reported:

> *We have so many sources we are able to move around because of the vehicles at the park here. Some sources are minor but five are our main sources: Burkina Faso, Navrongo and Bolgatanga in the Upper East region, Akomadan in the Asante region, Techiman in the Brong Ahafo region, and the Greater Accra areas. From December to mid-May we buy from Burkina, Navrongo, and Bolgatanga; mid-May to September, Techiman and its environs, that is Brong Ahafo and Asante Region; Greater Accra region begins around July and end in September.*[592]

In transporting tomatoes to Tudu, different modes of transport are used. Producers from the Accra plains supply tomatoes directly to the Tudu Market. Women who are either farmers themselves or the wives of farmers transport the tomatoes to Tudu. Harvesting is done on Sundays and Wednesdays. Farmers and their children head-load or use 'pushing carts' (*trogo* in Ga-Dangbe) to transport the tomatoes to their houses. In the evening, the tomatoes are loaded unto "Mammy" trucks and Nissan or Toyota Urvan buses and transported on Monday and Thursday at dawn to Tudu.[593] The vehicles usually depart around 3:00 a.m., arriving in Tudu after an interval of one hour or two hours, depending on the distance and the condition of the vehicle. Offloading at Tudu is done on a 'first come, first served' basis, which explains the early departure of the vehicles. The same types of vehicles are used in the transport of tomatoes from Kumawu to Accra. Beyond Kumasi, tomato traders arrange their own means of transport from Tudu to Akumada, Pwallugu and Burkina Faso.

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[592] Interview with Lydia Afoley Anum, Tudu, 17 December 2007. Lydia is the secretary of the Greater Accra Tomato Sellers Association. The headquarters of the association is at Tudu. Lydia has been selling tomatoes for thirty years. She learnt the trade from her aunt. She is also the President of the Ghana Trade Coalition and Livelihood Organization, a non-governmental organisation which was formed to champion the cause of tomato sellers in Ghana. Through her advocacy programmes, USAID gave the Tomato Sellers Association loans to buy land and cultivate tomatoes. Last year the association acquired land at Tano South District and Dormaa, both in the Brong Ahafo region. Even though she is the secretary, Lydia still engages in the tomato trade, sometimes travelling as far as Burkina Faso.

[593] According to Peter Gould, Mammy trucks are so called because they are often owned in whole or in part by the market women. For more on the Mammy trucks, see P. R. Gould, *Transportation in Ghana, The Development of The Transport Pattern in Ghana* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1960), 79.

Off-loading tomatoes at Tudu Lorry Park on a busy Monday morning. (Picture by author, 2008)

Until 1991, The Ghana Road Transport Union (GPRTU) provided all the trucks for conveying the tomatoes from Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, and Northern Regions to Tudu. However, in 1991, a subsidiary branch was formed in the country and given the name, The Ghana Tomato Cargo Transporters Association. The new transporters are semi-autonomous and appear to have a sound working relationship with the tomato traders. The reason for the good relationship is that trucks from the GPRTU can convey any goods, such as yams, maize, and cassava, among others. They operate on a highly profitable basis and convey goods that offer the highest price. At the time that tomato traders need their services, they will be conveying one or more of the products already mentioned. The Tomato Cargo Transporters only convey tomatoes, whether peak season or not. That explains the sound relationship that exists between them and the traders.

It is interesting to note that whereas in the 1970s, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, for reasons of decongesting the Central Business District, moved the Tamale cargo branch from Tudu to the Timber Market, the tomato cargo drivers have been maintained in Tudu. The reason is that whereas the shea-butter sellers lack a strong union, tomato sellers have a very powerful association. Since 1991 they have managed to include drivers in their association.[594]

[594] Interview with Edward Agyepong, Tudu, 1 February 2008. Edward is one of the members of the Tudu Tomatoes Drivers Association. He is from Kwahu Tafo in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Edward was brought to Accra by his uncle in 1960 after his secondary school education, to help sell vehicle spare parts in his uncle's shop at Okaishie, a business area in central Accra. In 1981, owing to the economic hardships in Ghana, he left for Lagos, Nigeria. In Lagos he worked as a labourer with a building firm, and during weekends he did laundry from one house to another. But in 1982 he had to abandon the laundry because of frequent attacks. He and his colleagues were usually mistaken for thieves. Without any prior knowledge about tailoring, he went ahead and bought a sewing machine and followed his friends around markets in Lagos, patching torn clothes (*adieye*). In 1983, as part of the Nigerian government policy, all Ghanaians were instructed to leave. He and his fifteen friends hired a vehicle, packed their belongings, and came to Ghana. His uncle did not take him back because when he was leaving for Lagos Edward did

Drivers and traders face problems when transporting the tomatoes from various sources to Tudu. They both complained bitterly about increasing harassment and extortion by the police at the numerous road-blocks.[595] They claimed that these 'unwholesome' activities result in delays and higher transport cost. Another problem universally encountered are frequent incidents of armed robbery and road accidents. From 2004 to 2008, the tomato traders had not less than eight armed robbery attacks. In one of the cases, the truck hired to convey tomatoes from Burkina Faso ran into a road-block mounted by armed robbers at Kaya in Burkina Faso, the robbers attacked the traders in it, and one of the traders lost 9,700 Ghana cedis (6,258 Euros). The Tudu traders lost about 35 of their members between 2004-8 through such incidents.[596]

In Tudu, some of the tomatoes are transported to Lome and Togo via the Tudu-Lagos and Tudu-Lome routes, while internal distribution is mainly performed by taxis and porters popularly called *kayakaya* (male) or *kayayo* (female). Taxi drivers convey tomatoes with their owners to various points in Accra. Each taxi carries about five boxes of tomatoes, and the cost per trip within the city can vary from about three Ghana cedis (2 euros) to about fifteen Ghana cedis (10 euros). Higher charges are made for more distant locations. Usually over short distances porters are preferred since their fees are lower. The use of motorised or non-motorized transport is also tied to weather conditions. When it is rainy, retailers usually take taxis instead of porters even though the distance may be short and expensive. In considering the different forms of transport used in the distribution of tomatoes in Tudu, the view of Fred Amposah was that theft was a reason for some tomato traders using taxis as opposed to porters. But that view should not be taken at face value.[597] Oral accounts in Tudu indicate that there is an overwhelming trust between porters and tomatoes traders and that porters are preferred

not tell him for fear that he might be stopped. He went to another uncle, who was a driver at Tudu, and he was received. A year later in 1984, he was offered a job as ticket seller in Tudu. He saved money and bought his own Nissan pickup in 1987, converted it into a mini-bus, and began conveying tomatoes and passengers from Ada. In 1995 he got a loan from the bank and bought a cargo vehicle, which he now uses to transport tomatoes from all over Ghana to Tudu.

[595] Interview with Edward Agyepong.

[596] Interview with Elvis Mawenyo, Tudu, 11 January 2008. Elvis is from the Volta region of Ghana. He received his training as a mechanic from one Kofi Appiah in Kumasi. He qualified in 1978 as a mechanic specializing in brakes and clutches. Because of competition in Kumasi, he relocated to Tudu to establish his own shop. He receives a lot of customers from Tudu Lorry Lark, but he said his main patrons are those who operate cargos.

[597] F. Amponsah, 'The Commercial Use of Non-Motorised Transport: Evidence from Accra, Ghana', *Transport Research Laboratory*, 96 (1996), 7.

to taxi drivers.[598] Taxis are used only as a last resort when it comes to bulk transport or long distances.

Besides transportation, there are other actors in the tomato trade in Tudu. The following discussion is on the role of interpreters, sorters, weavers, and carpenters in the tomato trade.

Interpreters and Sorters in the Tomato trade in Tudu.

In my earlier discussion I described how local alliances between the Ga and the Ada provided more effective leverage against the Yoruba tomato traders in the 1940s. As tomato traders in Tudu venture into new areas, the central question is how do they communicate in a standard language? At the tomato market in Tudu, one could easily buy tomatoes using Twi, Ga, or English. In Navrongo, Bolgatanga, and Burkina Faso the situation is different. Frafra, Kassim, and Mossi are the languages of trade on the farms. The situation is even more complicated in Burkina Faso, where French is spoken. In order to be able to trade, Tudu market women hire interpreters, most of them long-term Frafra, Kassina, and Mossi residents in Tudu. As a result of their long stay, they are able to speak both Ga and Twi, the dominant languages of trade in Tudu. They have also acquired speaking knowledge of Hausa from their long residence in the area. This ability to communicate in multiple languages leads the tomato traders to hire them to help in negotiations at the producing areas.[599]

The other group is the sorters, sometimes called 'graders'. They are usually the advance party. They go to the harvest and sort the tomatoes according to large, medium, and small sizes. Each sorter has a mobile phone which was bought by the tomato traders. Any time they finish sorting, they call the traders from Tudu to come to the farms. The traders report that the sorters make pricing simple and fast. Sorting also enables the traders to satisfy the customers in Accra, as different customers prefer different sizes. The issue of grading is in contrast with Poole, Heh, and Seini's findings that vegetable products are not sold on the basis of agreed weights, volumes, and grades in Ghana.[600]

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[598] Interview with Kweku Bulsa, Tudu, 1 August 2007. Kweku Bulsa is one of the several porters interviewed in Tudu. His profile was given in earlier discussions on shea-butter trade.
[599] Interview with Victoria Agbedam.
[600] N. Poole, A. W. Seini & V. Heh, 'Improving Agri-Food Marketing in Developing Countries: Contractual Vegetable Markets in Ghana', *Development in Practice*, 13:5 (Nov. 2003), 552.

Since 2007, the numbers of interpreters and sorters have increased. Interpreters increased from 8 to 17, and the sorters increased from 22 to 43, all located in Tudu Lorry Park. Whereas the increase in number reflects the importance of the tomato trade, the other reason is that as a result of armed robbery attacks the interpreters and sorters have become bodyguards for the tomatoes traders. On the farms too, in cases of dispute between the traders and the farmers, the interpreters and sorters become peace-makers, switching between their native language and the newly acquired Ga or Twi to cool down tempers.[601] Hence, we realize that trade in tomatoes has dramatically different implications for social relations in Tudu than kola nuts and shea butter. For, as we have seen from the above, there is the emergence of an entirely new group who are neither traders, farmers, transporters, nor customers but whose role is nonetheless considered crucial in tomato trade in Tudu.

Weavers and Carpenters

Tomatoes are highly perishable and they have very short shelf-life. This poses risk to the tomato traders in Tudu since there are no central refrigerated warehouses and the cargo vehicles are not fitted with cooling systems. In order to limit losses, the traders in tomatoes rely on traditional packaging methods. Such methods succeed in preserving the commodities for a short time by ensuring that they are naturally cooled by air, with minimum exposure to heat and to the sun before they are sold on. Those who supply tomatoes to Tudu over short distances, such as producers from the Accra plains, pack the tomatoes in baskets made by weavers and usually made of split palm branches, lined with straw or leaves. The baskets are mostly procured from the Volta and Eastern Regions of Ghana. Tomatoes are harvested on the farms when they are just beginning to ripen; only a day or two before the market day, they are packed uncovered in the lined baskets and transported to the markets for sale.[602]

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[601] Interview with Moses Abanga, Tudu, 4 February 2008. Moses was interviewed with two other interpreters and three sorters at Tudu. Moses hails from Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region. He was a driver's mate, but because he wanted his independence he left the job. Moses became a porter at the tomato market in Tudu. His hard work and trust, together with his ability to communicate in Twi, Ga, and Frafra, earned him the job of interpreter. Moses claims that the job of interpreter is more prestigious.

[602] Interview with Anthony Tamakloe, Tudu, 2 February 2008. Tamakloe was born in 1947. He attended elementary school at Logba in the Volta Region. He became an apprentice to his uncle in 1968. He received his driver's licence in 1970 and began driving at Dzodze in the Volta Region. In 1972 he got a job with the Bank for Housing and Construction. In 1980 he left his job at the Bank for Housing and Construction to work with the Lenas Shoe Factory. He left Lenas in 1996. In 1997 he was offered a job as a treasurer at Tudu Lorry Park.

Those who have to transport tomatoes from distant places, especially from Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Upper East regions, and Burkina Faso, to Tudu prefer wooden boxes (see picture below). The production of wooden boxes in Tudu began about twenty years ago. At first the traders bought the boxes from Kumasi. Now it is a large industry in Tudu. The advantages of the wooden box include firmness and ventilation. Spaces are allowed for fresh air to pass through. An informant, however, reported her preference for the wooden boxes owing to security reasons:

> *The wooden boxes have come to save us from quarrels. Before the wooden boxes we used baskets and we tied pieces of cloth on each basket. Every one and her colour. Some use red, others white, some green. We travel over night and long distances too. Sometimes some of us succumb to sleep in the process. Some traders untie the pieces and tie their colour. By the time we get to Tudu it is a big fight. With the wooden boxes we write our names on it. Now we have our names written and no one can change that.* [603]

The switch from baskets to boxes also brought another opportunity. Non-Ghanaians considered the shift a chance to begin providing new and better forms of packaging. In 2008, a Chinese man came to Tudu with samples of plastic containers for traders in Tudu.

[603] Interview with Ama Adjeiwaa, Tudu, 21 March 2008. Adjeiwa is an Ashanti from Ejisu in the Ashanti Region, where she was a seamstress. According to her, by nature she liked trading, but because her mother was a seamstress Adjeiwa had to learn it. About ten years ago she left Ejisu for Accra and joined a friend who was already trading in tomatoes at Tudu. The friend assisted her with capital. She has since been travelling with the friend as far as Burkina Faso to buy goods.

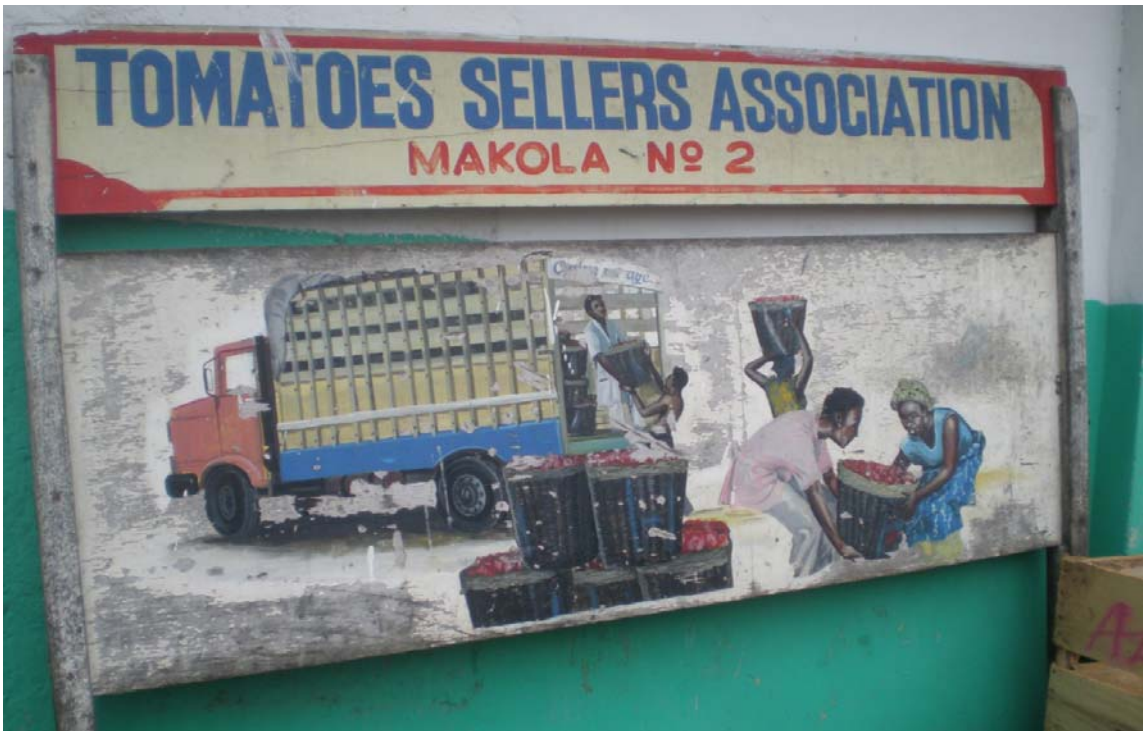
Above: Samples of the Chinese plastic containers in the office of the Tomato Sellers Association in Tudu. Beneath: The old wooden boxes with inscriptions. (Pictures by author, 2008)

Some of the traders rejected the containers, their reason being that they had established a long relationship with the carpenters and did not want to break that trust. Others were interested in the Chinese plastic containers because, according to them, they have to repair the wooden boxes each trip they make, thereby incurring extra cost on each trip. As a compromise, the traders have decided to use the wooden boxes for three more years while the carpenters find alternative locations to do their work or seek different employment.

From the discussions so far, it is evident that there are a number of actors in the tomato trade such as farmers, traders, drivers, weavers, carpenters, interpreters, and sorters. The next and final discussion examines the role of the Tudu Tomato Sellers Association, which co-ordinates all the actors in the tomato trade.

The Tudu Tomato Sellers Association

Trader associations are important players in the agricultural markets of Ghana.[604] In Tudu the sale of tomatoes is in the hands of the Tudu Tomato Sellers Association (TTOSA). Until 1990, membership of the association was limited to women tomato traders in Tudu, but now its membership includes traders from Agbogbloshie and other markets within the city.



A signboard on display at the Tomato Market in Tudu. The picture illustrates some of the various components in the tomato trade and the role of the association as the overall coordinator of these activities (Picture by author, 2008)

The association, which has a membership of 325, was created about 31 years ago. It is headed by a tomato queen (*ntos hemaa*).[605] In the course of my interviews, informants

[604] F. Lyon, 'Trader Associations and Urban Food Systems in Ghana: Institutionalist Approaches to Understanding Urban Collective Action', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 27:1 (Mar. 2003), 11.

[605] *Ntos* is the shorted form of the word for tomatoes. *Hemaa* is the shortened form of *ohemaa* ('female chief' in Akan). For a detailed discussion of *ohemaa* and its duplication among commodity traders in other parts of Ghana, particularly in Kumasi, the capital town of Ashanti, see G. Clarke, *Onions are my*

were of the view that until about thirty years ago there seems to have been no regulatory system in the market, and it was as a result of this that the position of tomato queen evolved. Contrary to that assertion, there is evidence that in fact there was a pre-existing regulatory structure in the markets. In 1921 the Secretary for Native Affairs reported as follows:

> *The collection of dues from people using a market regularly by a 'market chief' or person in charge of the market who happen to be the chief of the village or the owner of the land or a person appointed by the chief or appointed by the regular users of the market, undoubtedly has the sanction of custom and so long as there is no complaints of extortions, should not in my opinion be interfered with. I am not aware of any ruling by government on this point.*[606]

In my view, the gradual absorption of markets by the colonial administration and the appointment of revenue officers led to the demise of the position of the market chief. The demise of the market chief led to the evolution of the tomato *hemaa*, who served as a link between the Ga traditional council and the traders. My claim is based on the position that has been reserved in the Ga traditional council for the tomato *hemaa* even though she might not be a Ga.

In addition to the tomato *hemaa*, the association has other officials, notably the secretary and the treasurer, who exercise authority over members as the queen's representatives. Until 1995, the position of secretary was non-existent and the queen operated through other subordinate officials.[607]

A very interesting development of the tomato association in Tudu is that, unlike the other tomato associations in Ghana, in order to properly regulate the tomato trade in Tudu and subsequently Accra, the interpreters, drivers and sorters were incorporated into the association. In 2007, a journalist was also given an adjunct status in the association. The journalist also doubles as the consultant. With its diverse ethnic and professional mix, the Tudu Tomato Sellers Association has been able to control the varied tomato supply sources. In addition, through the journalist, their advocacy programmes are always considered paramount by the Ghanaian government. Two examples include the induction of the president of the association into the Ghana Trades

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Husband: Survival and Accumulation by West African Market Women (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), especially Chapter 7.

[606] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/892, No. 41/1921, Market Dues, Collecting of by Chief or Land Owners, 1924.

[607] Interview with Akua Nkrumah, James Town, Accra, 2 August 2007.

Union Congress, which I mentioned in the introduction. The second was the total ban on tomato paste from the European Union, China, and the United States.[608]

Members pay an entrance fee of one hundred Ghana cedis that is about sixty six euros and seventy euro cents. Besides the entrance fee, each member pays a tax of five tomatoes on each basket or box off-loaded at Tudu Lorry Park. The tomatoes are collected by the queen's representative. One tomato out of the five is given to the tomato queen. The other four are sold and the amount is paid into the association's account. Considering the fact that about 2,000 boxes are discharged on Mondays and Thursdays, the 'market days' in Tudu, and about 1,000 boxes are discharged on the other days, the profits accruing from the tomato taxes is enormous. The money is used in running the association's daily activities. Since the drivers, interpreters, sorters, and the journalist do not sell tomatoes, they pay a fixed amount of 20 Ghana cedis (15 euros) a year.[609] The association performs social, economic, and political functions.

The association's social functions are performed mainly in the case of the death of a member or her close relatives, such as a parent, child, or husband. When a member dies, the association buys a coffin for the burial. The association further participates in the funeral as a group, putting on the same mourning cloth and carrying baskets full of tomatoes at the funeral. The baskets full of tomatoes and a donation of not less than five hundred Ghana cedis, that is about three hundred and thirty three euros and thirty three euro cents are given to the family of the deceased. When a member loses a relative, the association helps her to organise the burial and the other funeral rites and donates the sum of three hundred Ghana cedis, that is about two hundred euros to her. In cases of protracted illness of a member, the association helps in paying her medical bills.

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[608] From 2003, the Tomato Sellers Association in Tudu, in collaboration with the various tomato sellers' associations in the country, began lobbying the government to ban importation of tomato paste and canned tomatoes. Their reason was that the importation of tomato concentrates or paste was driving them out of business as consumers were gradually shifting from buying fresh tomatoes to tomato paste. Their case was even more convincing when they roped in the farmers. Earlier, there had been reports of increased suicides among tomato farmers. The reason for the suicides was simple: they could not pay back the loans which they had taken from the banks and from the tomato sellers (*tomato queens*, as they are called), owing to the low prices offered for their produce. To exonerate themselves from blame, the tomato sellers also argued that importation of tomato paste had driven prices down. By 2004, the whole issue had taken a political turn, leading finally to an official ban on all imported tomato paste in 2007. For more on the suicides and the ban, see F. Asiamah, 'Tomato Farmers Commit Suicide', Public Agenda, 13th February 2009; Ghana News Agency (GNA), 'Upper East tomato farmers in crisis', Accra, 28 February 2007; K. O. Kuffuor, 'Ban on the Importation of Tomato Paste and Concentrates into Ghana', *African Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 16:1 (2008), 109-12.

[609] Interview with Akua Nkrumah, James Town, Accra, 2 August 2007.

Besides funerals, some members also contribute an amount of seventy Ghana cedis, that is about fourty six euros and sixty six euro cents each year to support each other during marriage or birth ceremonies. This function does not seem to be very important to the members because of the different ages. Most of the traders are above forty years of age and therefore are married already or divorced. There are no sanctions if a member decides not to attend a marriage or naming ceremony. But with funerals attendance is compulsory. Absentee members are made to pay a fine. In all this there are economic undertones. Business alliances are struck during the funerals.[610] But we need to understand the growing importance of the association in Accra from the perspective of the weakening family ties due to urbanisation. Hence, through the tomato trade new social networks are formed which offer support when it comes to marriage and funerals.

Politically, the queen represents the tomato sellers before the Ga traditional council and at the Accra Metropolitan Assembly when matters affecting their interest and the welfare of Tudu are being discussed. They also contribute some tomatoes and cash to the Ga Mantse during Homowo or when the Ga Mantse is bereaved. From time to time the tomato sellers also invite the *wolomei* to pacify the market, especially after the death of a member.[611] It is interesting to know that the tomato *hemaa* is a member of the Ga traditional council. This not only indicates the importance of tomato trade in Accra but reconfirms the legitimacy of the Ga in Tudu. It also confirms the resilience of the position of 'market chief', which was reported by the colonial authorities in early twentieth-century Accra.[612]

Economically, the association's most important function is to regulate the distribution of tomatoes in Tudu by agreeing on the days individual members are to buy from the producers. Each group of traders is composed of a maximum of forty members. Each sub-group is assigned a day of the week to visit the assigned production

[610] Interview with Cecelia Ayeetey, Tudu, 22 March 2008. Cecelia is a Ga, born in Accra in 1948. She completed her elementary school in 1964 and went on to Ho Polytechnic. She took the Royal Society of Arts examination, Accounting option. She worked with the Ghana Education Service in Accra as an accounts clerk for five years, but left afterwards to trade. She said she first sold perfumes, but she later left that and joined the tomato traders. Unlike her other colleagues, she is a seasonal trader, only buying from the Greater Accra region and switching to other products when the production in the region is out of season.

[611] The Ga Mantse is the paramount ruler of the Ga. The *wulomo* (plural *wulomei*) is a traditional priest. Each Ga community has its separate *wulomo*. *Homowo* is a yearly harvest festival of the Ga.

[612] PRAAD, Accra, ADM 11/892, No. 41/1921, Market Dues, Collecting of by Chief or Land Owners, 1924.

area to buy their individual stock for the week. The sub-group is not autonomous but operates within the rules and regulations of the main associations.

Besides controlling the distribution of the tomatoes among its members, the association successfully controls the supply lines by denying non-members direct access to the farms in the producing areas and also the right to sell in the market centres in Accra. In December 2007, in the course of my interviews with the secretary of the association at Tudu, she received a call on her cell phone. She was told that some people had come to discharge tomatoes at Agbogbloshie, one of the tomato markets located south-west of Tudu. The caller wanted her quick intervention. The secretary quickly called a police-patrol team to stop the vehicle from off-loading. I travelled in her car to the Agbogbloshie Market. By the time we got there, the police had already arrived. The vehicle was taken to the Central Police Station at Tudu and detained for three days. All the tomatoes spoilt. Since the vehicle was from Burkina Faso, the driver was charged with unlawful entry into Ghana.

According to the secretary, they maintain strict rules to prevent others from taking over the trade from them.[613] But the involvement of the State security agencies is a manifestation of the extent to which private trading concerns and individuals can manipulate State institutions for their personal gains. In some cases, in order to avoid such confiscations or harassment from the police or the members of the association, the *illegals* (traders who are not members of the association), as they call them, bring the tomatoes as close as Nsawam and discharge them into smaller Urvans and taxis for delivery to customers in Accra. Usually such tricks happen once or twice in a week.[614]

The most important role of the tomato queen or her representative is to regulate disputes among their members or between a member and a farmer. Disputes between members occur if one trader lays claim to tomatoes whose production another trader has helped finance. Disputes between a trader and a farmer also occur if a farmer gets a loan from a trader to finance his farm but refuses to sell the tomatoes produced to the trader, or if the farmer fails to cultivate the tomatoes and has no tomatoes to sell. In the latter

[613] Interview with Lydia Afoley, Tudu, 18 December 2007.
[614] Interview with Ama Adjeiwaa, Tudu, 21 March 2008

situation, there will be a meeting of the trader and farmer concerned together with the other tomato farmers, and the queen or a representative of the queen to settle it.[615]

Oral accounts also indicate that because of the seasonality of production, some buyers divert funds from one area of production to another. They sometimes even use unapproved routes to bypass the farmers. The secretary narrated an incident where a group of tomato traders from Tudu in 2004 bought large quantities of tomatoes from Navrongo on credit. They failed to pay the farmers and instead diverted the funds into the buying of tomatoes from Burkina Faso. On one of their trips some of the honest tomato traders called the farmers on their cell phones and informed them that the creditors were en route to Burkina Faso, and the vehicle was stopped while using one of the unapproved routes. The driver abandoned the cargo car and fled into the bush, while the dishonest tomato traders were severely beaten and taken to the police station in Navrongo. The driver made desperate calls to the queen mother to intervene. The queen had to dispatch the secretary to the site to pay the amount owed, an estimated 13,000 Ghana cedis (about 8,120 Euros) at the time.

Lastly, the association since 2002 has tried to persuade its members to join the government-sponsored social protection programmes, such as the national health insurance scheme, voluntary savings, pensions, and disability benefits. It has also organised workshops to raise members awareness on health issues, especially HIV/AIDS and breast cancer.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with trade in tomatoes in Accra. From the 1920s or even earlier until the present, northerners have played and continue to play an important role in the development of Accra through the tomato trade. They have helped established a tomato market in Tudu and further ensured the availability of tomatoes through production, transport, and distribution. Economically, the wealth of tomato queens in Accra can be directly linked to the efforts of northern farmers and traders, while most of the cuisine

[615] Interview with Philomena Narh, Mataheko-Afienya, 12 December 2007. Philomena is from Toflokpo Salo in Ada and is fifty-three years of age. She began in the tomato trade about thirty years ago. At first she only bought tomatoes from the Greater Accra region, but she ventured into new areas about four years ago, mainly buying from Navrongo and Bolgatanga. Her daughter, Kukuyor, is helping her in the trade.

prepared and enjoyed in homes and in restaurants in Accra would have been incomplete without the collective efforts of northern farmers, drivers, and interpreters.

8

Conclusion

Mr. Kwame Danquah, the Managing Director of Continental Sikaman Agencies Limited, a contracting firm, on 21 April 2009 filed a motion on notice at the Accra Fast Track Court to commit Mr. Nii Armah Ashitey, the then Greater Accra Regional Minister, and three public officials for contempt. The Minister and the three officials were said to have disobeyed the order of the court by mobilising policemen and guards to halt construction work at Tudu Lorry Park.[616]

On 23 April 2009, the same court sentenced eight members of the Tomato Traders Association who had been found guilty of contempt. The eight were accused of destroying building materials meant for work at a new four-storey complex at the park. The piece of land on which the businessman wanted to build was originally occupied by the tomato sellers. After the sentencing, colleague traders—this time not only tomato sellers but traders in general—besieged the court premises, with most wearing red bands and red shirts to indicate their seriousness. Some women went nude while cursing the judges who sentenced their colleagues. Realising that the traders would not budge and that the contractor was also unwilling to halt his building project, the court in May 2009 issued a compromise ruling. It suggested that the contractor should continue his building but must finish within twelve months and that the traders already at the lorry park, especially the tomato sellers, should have the first priority to acquire shops at the park. The Tudu Drivers Association was given the right to supervise trading activities in the new shops in addition to receiving two offices in the building for their use.[617] These events and issues show that the history of Tudu is complex and ever-evolving.

It is remarkable to note how the Order for relocation of northerners from the inner core of the city of Accra in 1908 affected the physical and economic landscape of Accra in different, complex, and unexpected ways. Understanding how this happened takes us to the role of Chief Braimah in ensuring that Tudu and Adabraka became populated. His death in 1915 did not affect the continuous expansion of Tudu, as the same urban planning policies that informed the initial relocation of northerners

[616] *Ghana News Agency*, 'Regional Minister, Three others to face contempt charge', Tuesday, 21 April 2009.
[617] *The Statesman*, 'Traders Curse Judiciary: In Tudu Turf War', 11 May 2009.

continued to inform the growth of the settlement, while additional historical events, such as the earthquakes and government policies on aliens, Structural Adjustment and conflicts, informed a further incorporation of additional northern and southern groups and Lebanese into Tudu. Tudu developed in conjunction with the growth and monopoly of Yoruba and Kotokoli trade in kola nuts, of Gonja, Dagomba, and northern ex-servicemen in the shea-butter trade, and of Yoruba and later Ga and Akan in the tomato trade. All these economic activities occurred within the geographical confines of Tudu, with only a slight change of venue in the shea-butter trade to Timber Market in 1979. It is interesting to note that the very place which has become highly contested and which has led to the court suits was the original market established for purposes of selling vegetables and other foodstuffs by the colonial administration and has remained so to this day.

The different categories of traders mentioned above have been able to overcome the technical problems which are involved in trade by an ethnic monopoly over the major stages of the trade and also by the utilisation of transport systems in Tudu, namely horse-drawn portage, human-powered portage, and motorised transport. In some cases the need to control both transport and trade has involved the development of a network of trading communities in some of the *zongos* and other communities in Accra and beyond. In this way, Tudu came into being as a base for control over parts of the southern and sometimes northern end of the chain of trade and transportation. This has often been made possible through its lorry park, which has consistently operated routes to almost all important locations within the country and even beyond.

Furthermore, the process of achieving such control has often led to the creation or incorporation of northern and southern leadership structures in both trade and transport, examples of which include the Sarikin Tudu and the *maigida* in the kola trade, the *nkuwurche* in the shea-butter trade, and the *ntos hemma* in the tomato trade. In non-motorised transport, the leadership of the head porter and *balogun* was indispensable in colonial times, while the *harrman* and *manima* were essential in post-colonial portage.

The ownership of motor vehicles by different people from different ethnic backgrounds has often not encouraged the formation of ethnic leadership structures at Tudu Lorry Park, but nonetheless the need for proper operational organisation led to the

evolution of a drivers' association, which worked on the lines of the leadership positions mentioned above and which to some extent was dominated by northerners.

Through Tudu's urbanisation and its primacy as a transport hub, we witness a gradual emergence of a certain type of leadership linked to motor transport. The early signs of the entry of this form of leadership into Tudu's socio-economic landscape began in the early 1940s and 1950s, when the Motor Drivers Union incorporated traders and drivers and members of the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary into its fold. Even though in their activities the members of the union were mainly concerned with transport, there were other underlying factors which informed the seriousness with which some of the members attached to the union. Some of the traders saw in the union a way of repossessing their lost prestige owing to the involvement of other groups in trade. Amadu Ilorin, the best-known Yoruba kola-nut trader after Chief Braimah, had already lost much of his influence in the kola-nut trade thanks to the porter-turned-trader Kotokoli group in Tudu. His association with the union ensured once more his power in Tudu, especially when the union was roped into Ghana's independence struggles. Nkrumah particularly considered the drivers in Tudu an important ally in both the struggle for independence and the sustenance of his political propaganda, and in this Amadu Ilorin was an important force to reckon with.

Throughout the 1960s and up to the 1970s, the trader leadership institutions existed side by side with the Private Motor Drivers Union in Tudu, where issues related to transport were dealt with by the drivers, and social issues such as marriages and festivals including trade were handled by the various positions mentioned. But even then, issues of trade usually brought them into sharp disagreement with the Drivers Union, especially since the leaders in the various products felt they had a stake in the determination of transport fares of goods such as kola nuts and shea butter. However, in most cases, with the exception of the tomato traders, the decision of the drivers overrode theirs because in any case the drivers belonged to a wider network, a national association which is always willing to back its own members. The various leaders do not have such a wider network.

In addition, unlike Chief Braimah in colonial times, who had the constant ear of the government and had control over transportation, in recent times it is the drivers' association, sometimes in consultation with the Trade Union Congress, which has the

power to determine prices. Hence Tudu's development transport-wise has also contributed to undermining some of the important traditional structures which ensured its functioning and cohesion.

In addition, our attention has also been drawn to the very nature of how Tudu has functioned since the 1980s. Since the revolution of Rawlings in 1981, Workers Defense Councils (WDCs) and Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) were formed. Countrywide they had powers of adjudication, reprimand, arrest, and in some cases prosecutions. In Tudu, offices for these revolutionary units were located at the lorry park and the majority of the members were drivers. Gradually, all cases within the community or the park were brought to the offices of the CDRs. In 1992, Ghana returned to democratic rule, and most of the CDRs and WDCs were dissolved, but in Tudu they have already made a lasting impression on the inhabitants. At the park the office of the CDR was immediately converted to a 'Welfare Office'. In principle the name changed, but in practice the office is still responsible for all activities in Tudu, from trade to transport and residence.

This is so because members are mostly composed of a northerners' majority who have been former residents in Tudu or are still resident there. Examples include Alhaji Kudjin, who is the chairman of the Welfare Office, and Paa Joe, who is the General Overseer of the park and the community, with additional responsibility for administering corporal punishment to criminals and toll offenders in Tudu. Abdallah is responsible for receiving complaints and grievances of residents, passengers, and traders at the park. Hence, we realize how the nature of the Tudu community has contributed to the evolution of the position of Sarkin Tudu and yet also how its expansion contributed to the diminishing powers of the Sarkin Tudu.

It is true that Tudu was established because of disease outbreaks, but several other factors such as trade and markets came to influence its expansion. Markets and lorry parks gradually worked against the flow of communication between the market and the Sarikin Tudu with the emergence of the Drivers Union. The Sarikin Tudu began to have less stake in the park as well as the market and by extension the whole of the Tudu community. Long-time residents of Tudu such as Baba Amadu and Abbass continue to lament the absence of a very strong traditional position such as the Sarikin Zongo, which is a very important component of all *zongo* communities in Accra and

beyond. As they report, “Tudu has been invaded by strangers”. The stranger category referred to here are other Ghanaian ethnic groups such as the Akan and Ewe, who have recently also held important positions in Tudu Lorry Park in addition to establishing shops and stores around the lorry park and within the Tudu community. By so doing, they have succeeded in transforming Tudu into the heartland of Accra’s economy. More importantly, for a statement such as the one above to be made by a group that are also considered strangers by the indigenous Ga is an indication that northerners not only came ‘to settle in Accra but are determined to hold on’ to their newly found socio-economic heritage in the urban setting.

ANNEXES

Sources and Methodology

The methodology deployed in this study blends archival sources with interviews, in addition to secondary sources. Regarding the archives, there were very important materials in the offices of the Public Records and Archive Administration Department (PRAAD), formerly the National Archives of Ghana (NAG). Throughout my research, the Accra archive has been the most utilised. The holdings in Accra mainly comprise the ADM series, CSO files, NP, PW, and other private documents. The ADM has been serialised from ADM 1 up to ADM 262, excepting ADM 18 and ADM 19.[618] The ADM series contains files related to the correspondence to and from the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA) in Accra. The CSO files also relate to the correspondence to or from the Colonial Secretaries Office, also in Accra. The NP comprise newspapers published from colonial times to the present, while the PW are project works such as long essays and theses, mainly by students in the Ghanaian universities, particularly those studying Library and Archival studies.

It would be difficult to outline all of the information that is contained in each of the individual files mentioned above. It is, however, important to record that I took a close look at most of them. I settled on the ADM 11, ADM 2, ADM 23, and ADM 14 series, as well as the CSO 14, 17, and 9. I chose those files because they fell within the period under study and contained the information that was relevant for discussion in the study. Other files, however, were accessed to provide me with broader ideas about the subject matter. It must be emphasised that the ADM 11 file is the richest and most voluminous classification. There are sub-divisions within the file comprising over 1,856 sub-files and covering the periods between the 1870s and 1920s. Since my study begins from 1908, the ADM 11 was very important for the construction of the history of Tudu prior to the creation of the lorry park in 1929.

As one progresses into the 1930s, the SNA files begin to dwindle with the emergence of the Colonial Secretaries' files (CSO). One can understand the shift through Ghana's political history. By the 1930s, colonialism was firmly grounded, and the roles of the Governor and regional commissioners became very important. The

[618] A. Jones, 'Ghana National Archives: A Supplementary Note', *History in Africa*, 15 (1988), 386.

policies governing the colony were modified to incorporate other outlying areas further north. For me, the shift was of great importance, for one could see in much of the correspondence the need for expansion of the various transport systems in the country. Hence, the CSO files were mined for purposes of constructing the history of both motorised transport and non-motorised transportation, including the creation of lorry parks.

In addition to the Accra archive, I made use of other archives within and outside Ghana. The use of other regional archives for the study was born out of the research topic itself and the need to understand the complex life of Chief Braimah and other northerners. Chief Braimah was a Yoruba from Nigeria but briefly stayed in Salaga prior to moving to Accra. Tudu is inhabited by a number of ethnic groups from northern Ghana, including Togolese and Nigerians. It depended on the north for cattle and shea butter. Its non-motorised systems, including both horses and humans, were also from the north. Kola nuts for the Tudu Market were obtained from the Eastern, Central, and Ashanti regions of Ghana. Tudu depended on the western part of Ghana for a greater part of its imported goods through the Takoradi harbour, which became operational in 1928. The observation above reveals that one cannot successfully write the history of Tudu by depending solely on the archive in Accra: one must use other archives in Ghana.

In the Kumasi archive my main concern was military history, particularly the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary, since they were an important component in Tudu's expansion. Even though I went with this mission in mind, I came to realise that Kumasi held much of the information that I needed for lorry parks, and to some extent kola-nut and shea-butter trade. Kumasi presented me with a variety of reasons for the creation of parks in Ghana, including Ashanti. The information from Kumasi was combined with that which was obtained from archives in Accra and Cape Coast to construct the history of the motor vehicle and the lorry parks in the study.

The Tamale archive proved very useful for the construction of the chapter on shea butter and the development of routes in Tudu. It also contributed to understanding non-motorised transport systems in Tudu. Most of the figures on the importation of horses and movements of northern labour into Accra were found in the Tamale archive. The categorisation of the holdings into seven broad themes—namely, District

Administrative Offices, Regional Administrative Offices, Government Departments, Courts, Education, Special Collections, and Historical Manuscripts—made the search easy and interesting.[619] However, it was the annual reports of the district and regional administrators contained in the NRG 1-9 series and the special collections, particularly the Blue Books and the Ghana Handbooks, that proved particularly useful, as they contained detailed reports of trade and migrant labour. As subsequent discussions showed, it was these reports that enabled me to balance the otherwise empty files on horse importations at the National Archive in Accra.

The archive in Cape Coast provided very good historical accounts of the competition between motor transport and the railway system. Cape Coast also had much information on trade in kola nuts and on disbanded soldiers employed as commercial drivers at lorry parks in the Central Region. Among other things, it was this archive that augmented the history of the kola nuts in Tudu, particularly after the death of Chief Braimah. The trade records regarding the kola-nut trade became slimmer in the Accra archive after the death of Chief Braimah in 1915. Further searches in the Cape Coast archive revealed the involvement of the Kotokoli, a group which at first worked under Chief Braimah as carriers or head porters.

The formation of *zongos* has been a very important aspect of the growth and urbanisation of most communities in Ghana. In Sekondi, the files accessed mainly related to the formation of *zongo* communities there and the occupation of the migrants in the twin cities of Sekondi and Takoradi. The archive provided leads to an internal *zongo*-to-*zongo* migration and the switch to other occupations following the operation of the Takoradi Harbour. For example, groups such as the anti-robbery groups emerged in the *zongos* mainly owing to the formation of such a group in Secondi. Also, the diversion of Ibo from the sale of *gari* and Europeans goods in Tudu to a similar trade in Sekondi and Takoradi was something that was of importance to this study.[620] The information obtained there was used in writing up the first chapter of this study.

The pursuit of information for this study took me to the Public Records Office in the United Kingdom. The purpose of the research visit was to fill in the gaps which I

[619] For more on the Tamale archive, see I. Abdulai, 'The Ghana Public Records and Archival Administration Department: Tamale: A Guide for Users', *History in Africa*, 27 (2000), 449-53.
[620] *Gari* is processed from cassava. It is usually powdery and dry and can be stored for a longer period. It can be eaten in various forms, such as with sugar, stew, or soup.

could not have obtained from the archives in Ghana. Collections in the Public Records Office include papers generated by British involvement in Africa. With respect to Ghana, the former Gold Coast, collections of many prominent British administrators, politicians, and military men who lived in or had connections with Ghana were well preserved. Subject coverage is wide-ranging and includes the following: historical, political, and administrative themes; observations on Ghanaian society, culture, and traditions; and travellers' accounts, maps, charts, and topographical drawings. The documents were arranged according to themes, such as W. O. for records inherited by the War Office, INF for records created or inherited by the Central Office of Information, CO series containing records of the Colonial Office, Commonwealth and Foreign Offices, Empire Marketing Boards and related bodies, and so on.

The CO series was the most useful for this study since they mainly dealt with the correspondence between the Gold Coast and the Colonial Office in London. The information obtained in the CO series helped put the discussion on the early forms of transportation in context. For example, information on the sisal plantation described the first transformation of some northerners engaged as farmhands at the sisal plantation in Accra to head porters. Also, the information on the replacement of the Accra-Weija railway line by road signalled the first signs of the success of motorised transport over rail. The information on E. K. Gbedemah's report on the riots of 1948 shed light on the involvement of Tudu drivers in the decolonization process in Ghana.

Besides researching the archives, I also conducted interviews. The reason for this was that most of the archival material had gaps. The social history of Tudu is essentially a study of society and change, and there is a need for sufficient local information if one is to properly understand the issues. The archives have a limit in terms of dates as well as recording of events. I chose interviews as a way of addressing such limitations. I used the qualitative method because such a description provides a rich view of issues and circumstances. People organise their experiences in the form of narratives. Empirical data were taken from exploratory in-depth interviews and field observation from July 2007 to June 2008 in Tudu. In part, the interviews were conducted in the Tudu community, where most of the northerners reside. The rest of the interviews were conducted in and around the lorry park, where the motor vehicle drivers, porters, and traders ply their trade on a daily basis. In total, ninety people were

interviewed. The information collected during interviews and the archival work enabled a contextual elaboration of northerners in Tudu and Accra and their connection to trade and transportation.

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Table of Selected Key Respondents

Respondent's Name	**Place of Interview**	**Date(s)**
M. Abanga	Tudu	4 February 2008
S. Abdullai	Tudu	10 April 2009
A. Abukari	Tudu	7 July 2007
A. Adamu	Tudu	15 May 2009
B. Addisa	Tudu	5 January 2008, 17 May 2009
A. Adjeiwaa	Tudu	21 March 2008
L. Afoley	Tudu	18 December 2007
V. Agbedam	Tudu	24 December 2007
R. Agbenyega	Tudu	11 January 2008

D. Agyeman	Mataheko-Afienya	23 December 2007
E. Agyepong	Tudu	1 February 2008
P. Aikins	Tesano	2 September 2009
A. Akrong	Legon	1 August 2009
N.N. Amarteifio	Adabraka	3 April 2008
S.B. Ambiasin	Legon	3 December 2007
A. Ankiti	Tudu	21 August 2008
C. Ayeetey	Tudu	22 March 2008
G.S. Bakari	Tuluwe	15 November 2002
A. Braimah	Tudu	20 August 2009
A.M.B. Braimah	Tudu	3 August 2008
A.K. Bour	Tudu	21 March 2008
A. Bukari	Tudu	24 April 2009
K. Bulsa	Tudu	1 August 2007
J.K. Dadzie	Takoradi	7 August 2009
A. Dagomba	Tudu	18 May 2009
H. Fatima	Tudu	4 May 2008
A.A. Gonje	Legon	22 December 2007
A. Haruna	Tudu and Nima	3 January 2008, 20 January 2008
N. Issah	Tudu	5 January 2008
N.N. Issahaku	Tudu	7 July 2007
P. Joe	Tudu	12 December 2007, 25 May 2009
A. Kadri	Tudu	11 July 2008
A. Kudjin	Tudu	15 May 2009
G. Kwatey	James Town, Accra	17 June 2008
E. Mawenyo	Tudu	11 January 2008
H. Meri	Tudu	11 May 2008
P. Narh	Mataheko-Afienya	12 December 2007
A. Nkrumah	James Town, Accra	2 August 2007
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SUMMARY

The study set out to discuss people of northern Ghana and their socio-economic heritage in Accra. In this book, the word 'northerners' is used in a generic sense to cover ethnic groups from the three Northern Regions of Ghana as well as those from some parts of Togo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Nigeria. Northerners have contributed to the growth and development of metropolitan Accra in many ways. In this study their contribution is discussed in three areas: Urbanisation, Transport and Trade. The introduction and the chapters under each of these themes are summarised below.

The introduction begins with the life of Braimah, a prominent kola nut trader of mixed Yoruba and Fulani parentage who migrated from Nigeria to Ghana, then the Gold Coast. Braimah's story provided reasons for this study and grounds for interrogating the works of other authors on Accra's urban and economic history. Using Braimah as an entry point, the study investigated reasons for his migration and other reasons that compelled other northerners within Ghana and outside to migrate to Accra. It was indicated in the introduction that besides the slave trade, the years 1874, 1892 and 1896 were very important dates for the migration of northerners to Accra. In 1874 there was an outbreak of war between the British and Ashanti. The British destroyed Kumasi the seat of the Ashanti Kingdom. The defeat had serious repercussions in the Gold Coast, notable among them was the rebellion by other ethnic groups that otherwise were under Ashanti domination. In the north, the Gonja decided to murder all resident Ashanti ambassadors in Salaga. Ashanti replied by first killing northern kola nut traders and their porters who were trapped in the Ashanti frontier towns of Takyiman Tia, Berekum among others. Secondly, Ashanti created new markets in Attebubu and Kintampo on the northern frontier. With trade diverted to Kintampo and Attebubu, Salaga which in part depended on Ashante for trade particularly kolanuts was denied its economic steam. Some northerners migrated to these two towns on Ashanti frontier to trade whilst the rest, including Braimah migrated to Accra to continue their trade in kola nuts and later, in cattle. Accra at this time had become an important commercial centre. Other events such as the internal wars among the Gonjas in Kpembe in 1892 and the destruction of Salaga in 1896 by Germans further collapsed the economic fortunes of Salaga. The rest of the traders who had hoped for Salaga's resurrection were disappointed and had to migrate to Kete Krachi and Accra.

Unlike the pre-1900 events which centred on warfare and Salaga's destruction, the first decades of the 1900s up until the time of independence saw different reasons for the presence of northerners in Accra. Notable among them was the need for labour. By the time of the First World War, Accra's economic fortunes had doubled, courtesy the cocoa boom of that period. The favourable economic situation of Accra had led to several changes within the town such as an increase in construction of houses, shops and railways. There was also the need for cocoa to be carried from the interior particularly the Akwapim area in present day eastern region to the port in Accra. This demand made the colonial administration to depend on northern migrant labour to carry out most of the transport and construction activities going on. In addition, the increase in cocoa production had also made the colonial administration to put in place contingency plans against the failure of cocoa production. Sisal production was encouraged in Accra as an insurance against cocoa failures. The colonial administration relied on northerners for labour in the Sisal plantations.

In the post independence era it was the different policies and programmes of the various Ghanaian governments that ensured the presence of northerners in Accra. The open door policy of Kwame Nkrumah in the 1950s and early 1960s had encouraged more migrants from the north and beyond to move to Accra in search of jobs. Also the dismal performance of the Ghanaian economy in the 1970s and 1980s led to the adoption of different policy initiatives which equally collapsed the northern economy and led to further migrations to Accra.

Chapter One is concerned with Accra's physical evolution and Tudu's development. In this chapter, I argue that disease outbreaks in the inner core of the city of Accra formed the main reason for Accra's expansion. Following the outbreak of bubonic plague in 1908, the colonial administration set out to redesign Accra. The northern cattle and kola nut traders who were then resident at Cow Lane and Zongo Lane were asked to move out of the inner core of the city and found new communities in Tudu and Sabon Zongo. Chief Braimah chose Tudu while his antagonists, the Hausa decided to relocate to Sabon Zongo. The misconception regarding the dates for the foundation of Tudu and Adabraka is corrected in this chapter. It is established that both communities were part of the grand urban design of Accra but Tudu got populated first.

Also the real meaning of Adabraka is given. This is considered important since many commentators on Accra's history had misrepresented some facts about Adabraka.

In discussing the settlement patterns in Tudu the chapter establishes that the northerners' section was first settled. The reason is simple; it was an order in 1908 from the colonial administration for northerners to move to the new area. Ethnic groups which were crucial in the development of the northern section included the Yoruba, Gonja, and Dagomba among others. Besides the northerners' section, there was also a military barracks which was established in Tudu by the colonial administration to provide security in the Gold Coast. The Ga also migrated to Tudu from about 1911 till 1920. Unlike northerners who were mainly traders; the Ga were an elite group and a middleman class in Accra. They comprised mainly Lawyers, Doctors, Publishers, Teachers and Councillors. They settled west of the northerners' section and close to the railway station at Kantamanto. Unlike the northerners the Ga elite were very speculative and therefore bought more lands in Tudu. In 1929 the colonial administration decided to establish a lorry park in Tudu. There was the need for road expansion to link the railway station from Tudu and arteries towards Achimota and Dodowa. As a result the colonial administration destroyed some of the buildings in the Ga section and relocated some of them to Plot 24 an area close to present day Farrar Avenue.

In the meantime the relocation of the Ga middle class had created opportunities for the Lebanese who quickly acquired plots close to the major roads in Tudu and established shops to sell building materials. The disparate groups in Tudu were brought together through the concept of *Danwana* which recognised each ethnic or national residing in Tudu as a relation. With the presence of other ethnic groups and nationalities, Tudu was gradually transformed from a purely northerners, enclave to a cosmopolitan community.

Chapter two opens the discussion of transport systems in Accra and Tudu with Head Load Portage. The basic argument of this chapter is that because some of the northerners who migrated to Accra lacked certain skills such as education and also lacked enough capital to buy land and go into cocoa cultivation or even mining, they easily went into portage. The various transformational processes of portage is also discussed. It is indicated in this chapter that at first porters were recruited by particular individuals for specific jobs. For example the colonial secretary could recruit porters for

administrators who were travelling out of Accra to other districts. In the same way there were private recruiters such as James Addo of Osu who was also relied upon to provide porters. Some traders also had their own porters or relied on the existing porters to carry their goods for them. For example chief Braimah had quite a number of such porters.

It is interesting to note that whereas porters who were employed by the colonial administration paid no taxes, those who were in the service of traders paid taxes to the government. This practice exposes the real intent for the demand for porters in Accra as the colonial administration was interested in reaping maximum profit with minimal expenditure. The payment of taxes by private porters also confirms the fact that porters also played an important role in the colonial economy by ensuring that the colonial treasury had some money. The chapter concludes discussions on head load portage by indicating that the ethnic profile of porters was not permanent. At each point in the history of Tudu one ethnic group replaced the other in the carriage economy. For example with respect to Tudu, the Kotokoli were very prominent in portage from the 1900s and probably even earlier till the death of Chief Braimah in 1915. When Braimah died they easily transformed themselves into a trader class, thus giving way for the entry of the Zambarima.

The Zambarima became prominent from the 1920s until 1969 when they had to leave as a result of the Aliens Compliance Order in Ghana. The Order compelled many migrants especially those from Nigeria and the Sahelian regions to return home. Their exit brought in another Kotokoli porter class. These were mostly residents and labourers in the Buem areas in present day Volta Region. Following Ghana's dismal economic performance in the 1970s, they left the cocoa producing areas in Buem and came to Accra to engage in portage. Indeed unlike their predecessors under Braimah who easily graduated to become traders, this trader class had a different ambition as they easily became *Book men* at the lorry parks in Accra. Their non-permanence created a vacuum for northern females popularly called *Kayaye* to infiltrate portage in Accra.

A very important corrective is made in this chapter regarding the entry of female porters from the north. Some authors on Accra's history had described cultural factors such as early marriages and female circumcision as important factors that had compelled the Kayaye to migrate to Accra. I establish the fact that it is as a result of the structural adjustment programme with its harsh conditionalities as well as the recent

conflicts in the north that were responsible for the Kayaye presence in Accra. The chapter concludes by indicating the social networks that were established by the porters in Accra and the reasons for the continuous usage of their services by travellers, traders and residents of Accra.

The third chapter is a continuation of the discussion on transportation in Accra. Its focus is horse drawn transportation in Accra. The sources for acquiring horses such as Yendi, Bawku and Zuarugu in Ghana as well as external sources such as Burkina Faso, Nigeria and the United Kingdom is discussed. The various traders in horses such as Ghanaians, Nigerians and Lebanese is also discussed. Until the introduction of motorised transport, horses played an important role in the physical development of Accra. Horses were used to cart sand, stones, bricks and wood to constructions sites. Contrary to popular expectation that the introduction of motorised transport will collapse horse drawn transportation, its introduction instead led to a greater need for horses. The physical layout of most parts of Accra meant that motor vehicles could not deliver goods at the doorstep of most of the traders. In most cases goods were left at the lorry parks compelling traders to complete the transport chain by using horse drawn transporters. Again the frequent fuel shortages in the city often meant that horses were more reliable. The points enumerated for the use of horses for transport are however not over stretched. For example just as any other form of transport its success mostly relied on prudent administration and innovativeness and when the known horse drawn transporter called Abaass was run over by a vehicle in 1985, no other person could continue his business thus ending the history of horse drawn transport in Tudu.

The fourth chapter is an addition to the mobility history of Tudu. Here motorised transport is the main focus. In 1902, following recommendations from the British parliament the first motor vehicle was introduced into the Gold Coast now Ghana. It was used by the then Governor, Maxwell. Due to its poor performance it was abandoned. Subsequent attempts at bringing in more motor vehicles met initial difficulties since the colonial administration rather favoured rail transport. But by the 1930s and 1940s, rail transport could not match motorised transport. More and more vehicles were being brought into the country by individuals and private business establishments, despite the high import taxes imposed by the colonial administration.

The increase in numbers compelled the colonial administration to establish lorry parks in Accra. Even though a general discussion is made of some of the lorry parks, the chapter concentrates on the evolution of the Tudu lorry park. The creation of the park offered opportunity for the demobilised members of the West African Frontier Force, resident in Tudu as well as other private persons to become drivers. Most of the drivers plied various routes, transporting passengers and goods into and out of Accra. Considered in this context one could understand that without the Tudu lorry park and the drivers, most of the goods enjoyed in Accra and other parts of Ghana would not have been available.

As indicated, the third and final section is on trade in Tudu. Here three products were selected for discussion. These include Kola nuts, Shea butter and Tomatoes. The discussion opens with chapter 5 which is concerned with the Kola nut trade in Tudu. In this chapter reasons for the emergence of Kola nut as an important trade article is explained. The notable reason for its demand included its uses in the various socio-cultural activities of northerners resident in Accra. But in addition, Kola nut consumption was not limited to Accra. It was and still is a highly sought after product in most of the northern communities beyond Accra such as the three Northern Regions as well as some parts of the Volta region, including external areas such as Nigeria and Togo. This demand for kola in varied geographical locations called for efficient transportation to these destinations. Here the role of the Tudu lorry park in the diffusion of kola nuts to other parts has been greatly explained. Also important to the discussions in this chapter is the gradual replacement of Yoruba and Hausa Kola nut traders by the Kotokoli. Initially, kola nut trade in Accra was the preserve of Hausa and Yoruba traders. This was the case because they had long since been engaged in its trade in Salaga prior to their relocation to Accra. It was not therefore accidental that they monopolised the trade until the death of chief Braimah when the Kotokoli gradually took over the trade. The chapter concludes with the various leadership positions that emerged or were strengthened by the kola nut trade. Some of the positions include the Sarikin Zongo and the Maigida.

The 6th Chapter concentrates on the Shea butter trade. The evolution of Shea butter as an important commodity in Accra is explained. Shea butter was and is still used as a moisturiser, cosmetic and in the preparation of various cuisines in Accra and

most parts of Ghana. It is also used in the treatment of various ailments in Ghana. These varied uses ensured its continuous demand in Accra. Both the production and distribution of shea butter is in the hands of northerners. By their monopoly of the trade we come to realise that much of the uses derived from shea butter will not have been possible without these northern traders. Just as with the kola nut trade, the shea butter trade also led to the evolution of some positions such as the Nkuwurche.

Chapter 7 concludes the discussions on trade in Tudu by discussing the Tomato trade. The chapter traces the evolution of tomatoes as an elite product to a product of mass consumption. Its supply sources from Adabraka to Achimota and Nsawam to Navrongo as well as sources from Burkina Faso are discussed.

The tomato trade was at first in the hands of Yoruba traders. With time, they were replaced by Ga and Akan women. Tomatoes provided and continue to provide jobs for a wide number of people including drivers, journalist, weavers, carpenters, interpreters and so on. This wide range of workers demanded some proper coordination. It is in this context that the Tomato Sellers Association was born. Right from its inception till date, the association has facilitated the formation of a separate drivers association which caters only for the needs of tomato traders. Also the associations' ability to network led to its incorporation into the Ghana Trades Union Congress. By this the tomato sellers could negotiate for a better deal in transportation and for better prices for their products.

The study also has a conclusion which is the 8th Chapter. The conclusion points to current trends in Tudu. It indicates that by the presence of a vibrant transportation system and trading activities Tudu has gradually been transformed into a business district. Land in Tudu therefore has become prime and many business men and women are seeking every available space to build shops and offices. This trend has led to a number of law suits. A business man had won a case in court to put up storey buildings in Tudu. This development led to the evacuation of some of the tomato traders from Tudu. Earlier shea butter and kola nut traders had also already been moved out. Despite the changes, one also recognises the role of the drivers association and members of the former Committee for the Defence of the Revolution and Union Police in maintaining order in Tudu. This has often led to the fading away of traditionally known positions such as the Sarikin Zongo and Maigida.

SAMENVATTING

In deze studie wordt geschreven over mensen uit noordelijk Ghana en hun sociaal-economische erfgoed in Accra. In dit boek is het woord ‘northerners’ in algemene zin gebruikt, hiermee worden etnische groepen uit de drie noordelijke regio’s van Ghana en tevens uit delen van Togo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger en Nigeria aangeduid. Noordelingen hebben op vele manieren bijgedragen aan de groei en ontwikkeling van metropool Accra. In deze studie is hun bijdrage op drie verschillende vlakken besproken: urbanisatie, transport en handel. De introductie en hoofdstukken van deze thema's worden hieronder samengevat.

De introductie begint met een beschrijving van het leven van Braimah, een prominente kolanoot handelaar van gemengde Yoruba en Fulani ouders, die vanuit Nigeria migreerde naar Ghana - in die tijd de ‘Gold Coast’. Braimahs verhaal voorzag in redenen voor dit onderzoek en voor het raadplegen van werk van andere auteurs met betrekking tot de stedelijke en economische geschiedenis van Accra. Het verhaal van Braimah is als uitgangspunt gebruikt, waarna onderzoek werd gedaan naar zijn redenen voor migratie en andere redenen die noorderlingen van zowel binnen als buiten Ghana er toe zetten om te migreren naar Accra. In de inleiding werd aangegeven dat naast de slavenhandel, ook de jaren 1874, 1892 en 1896 zeer belangrijk waren voor de migratie van noorderlingen naar Accra. In 1874 was er oorlog tussen de Britten en Ashanti. De Britten verwoestten hierbij Kumasi, de zetel van het Ashanti Koninkrijk. De nederlaag had ernstige gevolgen in de Gold Coast, opvallend hierbij was de opstand van andere etnische groepen waarover Ashanti normaalgesproken heersten. In het noorden besloten de Gonja alle Ashanti ambassadeurs in Salaga te vermoorden. De Ashanti reageerden in de eerste plaats door kolanoot handelaren en hun dragers uit het noorden te vermoorden, die onder andere vastzaten in de Ashanti grenssteden Takyiman Tia en Berekum. Ten tweede creëerden Ashanti nieuwe markten op de noordelijke grens in Attebubu en Kintampo. Toen de handel plaatsvond in Kintampo en Attebubu kreeg Salaga, dat voor een deel afhankelijk was van Ashanti voor de handel van kolanoten, geen economische ‘steam’ meer. Sommige noorderlingen migreerden naar de twee steden op de Ashanti grens, terwijl de rest, inclusief Braimah, naar Accra trok om hun handel in kolanoten daar voort te zetten, later met vee. Op dit moment was Accra uitgegroeid tot een belangrijk commercieel centrum. Andere gebeurtenissen, zoals de interne oorlogen bij

de Gonjas in Kpembe in 1892 en de vernietiging van Salaga in 1896 door Duitsers, zorgden ervoor dat de economie in Salaga verder instortte. De rest van de handelaren, die had gehoopt op een wederopbouw van Salaga, was teleurgesteld en moest migreren naar Kete Krachi en Accra. In tegenstelling tot de gebeurtenissen voor 1900, die zich richtten op oorlog en de vernietiging van Salaga, waren er in de eerste decennia van 1900 tot onafhankelijkheid andere redenen voor de aanwezigheid van noorderlingen in Accra. Een belangrijke hiervan was de behoefte aan arbeidskrachten. Tegen de tijd van de Eerste Wereldoorlog was de economische winst van Accra verdubbeld, met dank aan de cacaoboom. De gunstige economische situatie van Accra had geleid tot een aantal veranderingen in de stad, zoals een toename van de bouw van huizen, winkels en spoorwegen. Er was ook noodzaak dat cacao vanuit het binnenland, vooral uit de huidige oostelijke regio Akwapim, werd vervoerd naar de haven in Accra. Deze vraag maakte het koloniale bestuur afhankelijk van noordelijke arbeidsmigranten om het grootste deel van het transport en de bouwactiviteiten uit te voeren. Bovendien had de stijging van de cacao productie ervoor gezorgd dat het koloniale bestuur rampenplannen moest opstellen tegen het falen van de productie van cacao. De productie van Sisal werd aangemoedigd in Accra als een verzekering tegen mislukkingen in cacao. Het koloniale bestuur was afhankelijk van noorderlingen voor de arbeid in de sisal plantages. In de periode na onafhankelijkheid waren het verschillende beleidsmaatregelen en programma's van de verscheidene Ghanese regeringen die voor de aanwezigheid van noorderlingen in Accra zorgden. Het politieke ‘open deur’ beleid van Kwame Nkrumah in de jaren 1950 en 1960 had meer migranten uit het noorden en daarbuiten aangemoedigd om naar Accra te komen op zoek naar werk. Ook leidden slechte prestaties van de Ghanese economie in de jaren 1970 en 1980 tot verschillende beleidsinitiatieven die eveneens zorgden voor de instorting van de noordelijke economie en verdere migratie naar Accra ten gevolg had.

Hoofdstuk één richt zich op de fysieke evolutie van Accra en Tudu's ontwikkeling. In dit hoofdstuk beargumenteer ik dat ziekte-uitbraak in de binnenstad van Accra de belangrijkste reden is voor de uitbreiding van Accra. Na de het uitbreken van de builenpest in 1908 wilde het koloniale bestuur Accra opnieuw ontwerpen. De noordelijke vee- en kolanoothandelaren die toen op Cow Lane en Zongo Lane woonden, werden gevraagd om uit de kern van de stad weg te gaan en zij vonden nieuwe

gemeenschappen in Tudu en Sabon Zongo. Chief Braimah koos Tudu terwijl zijn tegenstanders, de Hausa, besloten om te verhuizen naar Sabon Zongo. Een misverstand met betrekking tot de data van de stichting van Tudu en Adabraka wordt in dit hoofdstuk rechtgezet. Er is vastgesteld dat beide gemeenschappen deel uitmaakten van het grote stedelijke ontwerp van Accra, maar dat Tudu als eerste werd bevolkt. Ook is de werkelijke betekenis van Adabraka gegeven. Dit is van belang omdat veel commentatoren over de geschiedenis van Accra enkele feiten over Adabraka verkeerd interpreteerden. Bij de bespreking van de nederzettingen in Tudu wordt in het hoofdstuk vastgesteld dat het gebied van de noorderlingen als eerste werd bewoond. De reden is simpel: noordelingen werden door de koloniale administratie in 1908 opgedragen om naar het nieuwe gebied te verhuizen. Etnische groepen die van cruciaal belang waren in de ontwikkeling van het noordelijk deel zijn onder andere de Yoruba, Gonja en Dagomba. Naast het gebied van de noorderlingen was er ook een militaire kazerne die in Tudu werd opgezet door het koloniale bestuur om de Gold Coast te beveiligen. De Ga migreerde ook naar Tudu vanaf ongeveer 1911 tot 1920. In tegenstelling tot de noorderlingen, die vooral handelaren waren, was de Ga een elite groep en een middenklasse in Accra. Zij bestond voornamelijk uit advocaten, artsen, uitgevers, leerkrachten en raadsleden. Ze vestigden zich ten westen van het gebied van de noorderlingen en dicht bij het station van Kantamanto. In tegenstelling tot de noorderlingen was de Ga elite zeer ‘speculative’ en kocht daardoor meer land in Tudu. In 1929 besloot het koloniale bestuur om een ‘lorry park’ in Tudu te bouwen. Er was noodzaak voor weguitbreiding zodat het treinstation van Tudu werd verbonden aan Achimota en Dodowa. Als gevolg hiervan vernietigde het koloniale bestuur een aantal van de gebouwen in de Ga sectie en verplaatste een deel van hen naar Plot 24, een gebied dat in de buurt van het huidige Farrar Avenue ligt. Intussen had de verhuizing van de Ga middenklasse kansen voor de Libanezen geschonken die snel percelen dicht bij de belangrijkste wegen in Tudu kregen en die winkels opzetten om bouwmaterialen te verkopen. De uiteenlopende groepen in Tudu werden samengebracht door het concept van *Danwana*, hierin werd elke etnische of nationale inwoner in Tudu als een relatie erkend. Met de aanwezigheid van andere etnische groepen en nationaliteiten was Tudu geleidelijk veranderd van een noordelingen-enclave in een kosmopolitische gemeenschap.

Hoofdstuk twee begint met de bespreking van vervoerssystemen in Accra en Tudu met betrekking tot ‘Head Load Portage’. Het belangrijkste argument van dit hoofdstuk is dat sommige van de noorderlingen die naar Accra migreerden bepaalde vaardigheden misten, zoals onderwijs en voldoende kapitaal om grond te kopen voor cacaoteelt of in de mijnbouw te gaan, hierdoor gingen zij gemakkelijk in ‘portage’. De verschillende transformationele processen van ‘portage’ zijn ook besproken. In dit hoofdstuk is aangegeven dat dragers eerst werden gerekruteerd door particulieren voor specifieke klussen. De koloniale secretaris kon bijvoorbeeld dragers rekruteren voor beheerders die uit Accra vertrokken naar andere districten. Op dezelfde manier waren er particuliere recruiters zoals James Addo in Osu, die ook werd ingeroepen om dragers te verstrekken. Sommige handelaren hadden hun eigen dragers of vertrouwden op de bestaande dragers om hun goederen te vervoeren. Chief Braimah had bijvoorbeeld een aantal van deze dragers. Het is interessant om op te merken dat dragers die in dienst waren van het koloniale bestuur geen belasting betaalden, terwijl zij die in dienst stonden van de handelaren wel belasting betaalden aan de overheid. Dit onthult de ware bedoeling van de vraag naar porters in Accra, omdat het koloniale bestuur geïnteresseerd was in maximale winst met een minimum aan kosten. De betaling van belasting door de particuliere dragers bevestigt ook het feit dat de dragers een belangrijke rol speelden in de koloniale economie, zij zorgden ervoor dat er geld in de koloniale schatkist kwam. Het hoofdstuk sluit de discussies over ‘head load portage’ met de vermelding dat er geen permanent etnische profiel van de dragers is. Door de geschiedenis van Tudu heen vervangt de ene etnische groep de andere in de dragers-economie. Met betrekking tot Tudu waren de Kotokoli bijvoorbeeld prominent aanwezig in ‘portage’ vanaf de jaren 1900, en waarschijnlijk zelfs eerder, tot de dood van Chief Braimah in 1915. Toen Braimah stierf traden zij gemakkelijk toe in een handelaarklasse, waardoor de Zambarima hun werk overnamen. De Zambarima waren prominent in de jaren 1920 tot 1969, toen moesten zij vertrekken als gevolg van de ‘Alien Compliance Order’ in Ghana. Deze dwong vele migranten, met name uit Nigeria en de Sahel regio, om naar huis terug te keren. Hun vertrek zorgde voor een andere Kotokoli dragersklasse. Dit waren vooral bewoners en arbeiders in de Buem gebieden in de huidige Volta regio. Na de zwakke economische prestaties van Ghana in de jaren ‘70, verlieten zij de cacao producerende gebieden in Buem en kwamen naar Accra om

deel te nemen als dragers. In tegenstelling tot hun voorgangers onder Braimah, die makkelijk afstudeerden om handelaren te worden, had deze handelaarklasse een andere ambitie, ze werden makkelijk *'Book men'* in de 'lorry parks' in Accra. Hierdoor werd plaats gecreëerd voor vrouwen uit het noorden, in de volksmond *Kayaye* genoemd, om de 'portage' in Accra te infiltreren. Een zeer belangrijke correctie is in dit hoofdstuk gemaakt met betrekking tot de toelating van vrouwelijke dragers uit het noorden. Sommige auteurs over de geschiedenis van Accra beschreven culturele factoren, zoals vroege huwelijken en vrouwenbesnijdenis, als belangrijke factoren die de Kayaye ertoe brachten om te migreren naar Accra. Ik stel vast dat het structurele aanpassingsprogramma met haar harde voorwaarden en de recente conflicten in het noorden verantwoordelijk waren voor de aanwezigheid van Kayaye in Accra. Het hoofdstuk sluit af met een beschrijving van de sociale netwerken van de dragers in Accra en de redenen voor het voortdurende gebruik van hun diensten door reizigers, handelaars en bewoners van Accra.

Het derde hoofdstuk is een voortzetting van de discussie over het transport in Accra, de focus ligt op door paarden getrokken vervoer in Accra. De plaatsen voor het verkrijgen van paarden, zoals Yendi, Bawku en Zuarugu in Ghana en externe plekken zoals Burkina Faso, Nigeria en het Verenigd Koninkrijk, zijn besproken. De verschillende handelaren in paarden, zoals Ghanezen, Nigerianen en Libiërs, zijn ook besproken. Tot aan de invoering van gemotoriseerd vervoer speelden paarden een belangrijke rol in de fysieke ontwikkeling van Accra. Paarden werden gebruikt om zand, stenen en hout naar bouwplaatsen te vervoeren. In tegenstelling tot de verwachting dat het paardentransport zou instorten door de invoering van gemotoriseerd vervoer, heeft dit juist geleid tot een grotere behoefte aan paarden. De fysieke inrichting van de meeste delen van Accra zorgde ervoor dat motorvoertuigen bij de meeste handelaren geen goederen konden leveren tot aan de voordeur. In de meeste gevallen werden de handelswaren achtergelaten op de parkeerplaats en waren handelaren genoodzaakt om het transport met behulp van paardenvervoer voort te zetten. Ook de frequente brandstoftekorten in de stad betekende dat paarden vaak betrouwbaarder waren. De opgesomde punten voor het gebruik van paardenvervoer zijn echter niet 'over stretched'. Net als bij elke andere vorm van vervoer hangt het succes vooral af van een goede administratie en vindingrijkheid, en toen de bekende paardenvervoerder

Abaass in 1985 werd overreden door een voertuig kon niemand anders zijn bedrijf overnemen en daarmee eindigde de geschiedenis van het paardenvervoer in Tudu.

Het vierde hoofdstuk gaat verder over de geschiedenis van mobiliteit in Tudu. De focus ligt in dit deel op gemotoriseerd vervoer. In 1902 werd, na aanbevelingen van het Britse parlement, de eerste auto geïntroduceerd in de Gold Coast, het huidige Ghana. Deze werd gebruikt door de toenmalige Gouverneur, genaamd Maxwell. Vanwege de slechte prestaties werd de auto niet meer gebruikt. Latere pogingen om meer motorvoertuigen in te voeren waren aanvankelijk moeilijk, aangezien het koloniale bestuur een voorkeur voor treinvervoer had. Maar in de jaren 1930 en 1940 kwam het spoorvervoer niet overeen met het gemotoriseerde vervoer. Steeds meer voertuigen werden het land in gebracht door individuen en particuliere bedrijven, ondanks de hoge invoerbelastingen die de koloniale administratie had opgelegd. De toename van het aantal voertuigen dwong de koloniale administratie om parkeerplaatsen te vestigen in Accra. Hoewel een algemene discussie is beschreven over een aantal van de parken, concentreert het hoofdstuk zich vooral op de oprichting van de Tudu ‘lorry park’. De oprichting van het park bood kans voor de ‘demobilised members’ van de ‘West African Frontier Force’, die in Tudu waren gehuisvest, alsmede andere particulieren om chauffeur te worden. Het merendeel van de chauffeurs had verschillende routes voor het vervoeren van passagiers en goederen in en uit Accra. In deze context kan men begrijpen dat zonder het Tudu ‘lorry park’ en de chauffeurs, het grootste deel van de goederen in Accra en in andere delen van Ghana niet beschikbaar was geweest.

Zoals aangegeven gaat het derde en laatste deel over handel in Tudu. Drie producten werden hierbij ter discussie gesteld; Kolanoten, Shea butter en tomaten. De discussie wordt in hoofdstuk 5 geopend, die is gericht op de Kolanoot-handel in Tudu. In dit hoofdstuk worden redenen voor de opkomst van de Kolanoot als een belangrijk handelsproduct besproken. Een belangrijke reden voor de vraag hiernaar zijn de verschillende sociaal-culturele activiteiten van de noorderlingen die in Accra woonden. Maar daarnaast was de Kolanootconsumptie niet beperkt tot Accra. Het was, en is nog steeds, een zeer gewild product in het merendeel van de noordelijke gemeenschappen buiten Accra, zoals de drie noordelijke regio's, sommige delen van de Volta regio en externe gebieden zoals Nigeria en Togo. Deze vraag naar Kola op verschillende geografische plekken vroeg om efficiënt transport naar deze bestemmingen. De rol van

het Tudu ‘lorry park’ in de verspreiding van kolanoten naar andere gebieden wordt in dit hoofdstuk uitgebreid toegelicht. Ook belangrijk bij de discussies is de geleidelijke vervanging van de Yoruba en Hausa kolanoot handelaren door de Kotokoli. Aanvankelijk was de kolanoot handel in Accra het domein van Hausa en Yoruba handelaren. Dit kwam omdat zij al lang bezig waren met deze handel in Salaga, voordat zij naar Accra verhuisden. Het was dus niet toevallig dat zij de handel hadden gemonopoliseerd tot de dood van chief Braimah, toen namen de Kotokoli geleidelijk de handel over. Het hoofdstuk sluit af met de verschillende leidinggevende posities die ontstonden of werden versterkt door de kolanoot handel, zoals onder andere de Sarikin Zongo en de Maigida.

Het 6e hoofdstuk concentreert zich op de Sheaboter handel. De ontwikkeling van Sheaboter tot een belangrijk product in Accra wordt uitgelegd. Sheaboter werd, en wordt nog steeds, gebruikt als een moisturizer, cosmetisch product en bij de bereiding van diverse gerechten in Accra en de meeste delen van Ghana. Het wordt ook gebruikt bij de behandeling van verschillende kwalen in Ghana. Deze verschillende toepassingen zorgden voor de voortdurende vraag in Accra. Zowel de productie als de distributie van sheaboter is in handen van de noorderlingen. Door hun handelsmonopoly realiseren we ons dat veel van de toepassingen van sheaboter niet mogelijk waren zonder deze noordelijke handelaren. Net als bij de kolanoot handel leidde de sheaboter handel tot de ontwikkeling van een aantal posities, zoals de Nkuwurche.

Hoofdstuk 7 sluit de discussies over handel in Tudu door het bespreken van de tomaat handel. In dit hoofdstuk wordt een beeld geschetst van de ontwikkeling van tomaten als een elite product tot een product voor massaconsumptie. Aanbodsplekken, zoals van Adabraka naar Achimota, van Nsawam naar Navrongo en bronnen uit Burkina Faso, worden besproken.

De tomaathandel was in eerste instantie in handen van Yoruba-handelaren. Met de tijd werden ze vervangen door Ga en Akan vrouwen. De tomaten zorgden, en zorgen nog steeds, voor werkgelegenheid voor een groot aantal mensen, waaronder chauffeurs, journalisten, wevers, timmerlieden, tolken enzovoorts. Deze grote groep werknemers had goede coördinatie nodig, als gevolg hiervan ontstond de ‘Tomato Sellers Association’. Meteen vanaf het begin tot op heden heeft de vereniging een aparte drivers-vereniging mogelijk gemaakt die alleen voorziet in de behoeften van de tomaat

handelaren. Ook heeft het vermogen om te netwerken geleid tot de opname in het ‘Ghana Trades Union Congress’. Hierdoor konden de tomaatverkopers onderhandelen over betere transportdeals en een betere prijs voor hun producten.

In hoofdstuk 8 is de conclusie te vinden. De conclusie wijst op de huidige trends in Tudu. Hierin wordt aangegeven dat Tudu door de aanwezigheid van een goed transportsysteem en handelsactiviteiten geleidelijk is omgevormd tot een zakendistrict. Land in Tudu is daarom belangrijk geworden en vele zakenmannen en zakenvrouwen zijn op zoek naar beschikbare ruimte om winkels en kantoren te bouwen. Deze trend heeft tot een aantal rechtszaken geleid. Een zakenman heeft een rechtzaak gewonnen om flatgebouwen in Tudu te bouwen. Deze ontwikkeling heeft geleid tot de evacuatie van een deel van de tomaathandelaren uit Tudu. Daarvoor waren ook sheaboter en kolanoot- handelaren al vertrokken. Ondanks de veranderingen herkent men ook de rol van de ‘drivers association’ en leden van het voormalige ‘Committee for the Defense of the Revolution ‘ en ‘Union Police’ bij het handhaven van orde in Tudu. Dit heeft vaak geleid tot het verdwijnen van traditionele posities zoals de Sarikin Zongo en Maigida.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Ntewusu Samuel Aniegye was born in Accra, Ghana, on 17 July 1974. He grew up in northern Ghana and attended secondary schools in Yendi and Tamale. He obtained his G.C.E. Advanced Level in 1993 before enrolling as a History student at the University of Ghana in 1995. At the University of Ghana, Legon, Ntewusu obtained his B.A. (Hons) as a history major in 1998, and was admitted to the degree of Master of Philosophy in African Studies (History Option) in December 2005. During his National Service Ntewusu worked as teacher for the Ghana Education Service, and worked as a teaching assistant and senior research assistant at the Department of History and Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana. Between 2007 and 2010 Ntewusu worked as a researcher at the African Studies Centre in Leiden where he conducted research for his PhD. He is currently employed at the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, Legon where he is continuing his research on Ghanaian history.