

# German Rule in Colonial Ewedome (Ghana), 1890-1914

Wilson K. Yayoh

*University of Cape Coast, Ghana*

## Abstract

Ewedome has a unique history; it experienced colonialism under two diametrically opposed colonial powers – Britain and Germany. Yet the colonial experiences of this region remained largely unexplored by historians. This article uses evidence from primary and secondary sources to argue that German colonial rule, though relatively short, shaped the historical trajectory of the Ewedome region in many profound ways. The German policy of direct rule, based on village units, entrenched divisive tendencies and led to the multiplicity of chiefdoms. But it also inadvertently led to the elevation of Awatime, Ho and Kpando above other towns in Ewedome. The collaboration between the Bremen Mission and German colonial officials led to the ‘standardisation’ of the Ewe language and set in motion a process towards fostering a wider Ewe identity. The article adds to the on-going debate on how colonialism reshaped African pre-colonial political organisation and created new identities and new nations.

## Introduction

Ewedome is the area occupied by the northern Ewe of the present-day Volta Region of Ghana. Colonial documents referred to the area as Krepi or Crepe, the delimitation of which one finds difficult. The vagueness of the name Krepi or Crepe led recent scholars to use the local name Ewedome specifically to identify the northern Ewe of Ghana.<sup>1</sup> Ewedome formed part of the interior hinterland of what used to be called the Slave Coast. The territory thus constituted part of the Volta basin

economy made up of Ewes, Guans and the so-called Togo remnant groups, the Ewes being the dominant ethnic group. Ewedome has not received much attention from historians, who are only now beginning to fill the void in the history of Ghana. This obvious neglect of Ewedome epitomises what Nugent describes as ‘entrenched marginality of the region within Ghanaian studies’.<sup>2</sup> Skinner also observed that Dennis Austin’s work on political developments in Ashanti and northern areas were ‘more detailed and more convincing than that of Ewe

and Togoland politics'.<sup>3</sup> Yet Ewedome has a unique history; it experienced colonialism under two diametrically opposed colonial powers - Germany and Britain – and the antecedents of the colonial experience need to be historicised.

The Danes were the first Europeans to have contact with Ewedome and it was the Danes who in the early eighteenth century gave the name Krepri or Crepee to the area occupied by the northern Ewes.<sup>4</sup> Danish merchants travelled upstream on the Volta River to villages such as Aveme and Kpando (all in Ewedome region) to exchange goods such as guns, gunpowder, salt and palm oil.<sup>5</sup> Records show that Ewedome played an important role in the pre-colonial commerce in slaves, cotton, ivory and palm oil, and that the region contributed to the Volta basin economy in pre-colonial era.<sup>6</sup>

There seems to be some underlying question about the conceptualisation of Ewedome in the nineteenth century, though the debate was not made explicit in existing literature. This is whether Europeans conceived of it as an area that contained valuable resources in its own right, and saw the potential for economic development of the region into a self supporting or indeed profit generating area under colonial rule. On the other hand, there was the question as to whether Europeans mainly conceived of Ewedome as an area that was only important in so far as it was a route to somewhere in the slave trade era. Ewedome was part of the route up to the 'famous' Salaga slave market in the present-day Northern Region of Ghana. In the later nineteenth century, the region was of interest to the British partly because they feared it could serve as an alternate route for Asante trade including import of weapons. This article suggests that

this conception changed over the course of the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, and through export agriculture, Ewedome became an economically viable area in its own right. This article underscores the fact that German rule essentially built up this underlying economic development, whilst also ensuring that this did not become tied to political centralisation.

The political history of Ewedome in the colonial and independence era has been told through the prism of amalgamation.<sup>7</sup> There has been some debate both between historians and among the Ewedome themselves, about the extent to which the region was 'disunited', or in anthropological terms, how decentralised was its organisation. Throughout the pre-colonial and German colonial era, Ewedome remained fragmented into small chiefdoms. Cultural peculiarities and the degree of political autonomy tended to be more pronounced in those areas where off-shoots developed further away from the parent settlement. Each political unit showed variations in the Ewe language. The dialect of each unit differed considerably in both 'tonally and segmentally interesting ways'.<sup>8</sup> Gilbert Ansre attempted some classification of the Ewe language in which he identified seven of what he referred to as dialect clusters.<sup>9</sup> Even within a cluster so identified, lexical and phonological variations were highly noticeable. The variations were so remarkable that each political unit was easily identified by the dialect of the Ewe language spoken by its inhabitants. The cultural peculiarities and distances between the various units encouraged individualism among the various states.<sup>10</sup> The German colonial policy of direct rule was based on village units, entrenched divisive tendencies among the

people of Ewedome. But it also created a situation where Ho, Kpando, Amedzofe and their chiefs became important in the German era because they benefited from colonial and missionary policy. This led to the elevation of those towns above others in the region.

### The Colonial Conquest

Though Britain took over Danish forts along the coast in 1850 and Ewedome was very much a part of Danish possessions sold to Britain, the British administration had neither the willingness nor the ability to occupy Ewedome, which was a distant hinterland across the Volta and therefore beyond the recognised extent of the Gold Coast itself.<sup>11</sup> After the Gold Coast Colony was established in 1874, the colonial partition of the region began to escalate in the 1880s with the arrival of the Germans. Consequently, British attitudes began to change in respect of Ewedome. In 1886, Britain invited all states in Ewedome and beyond to Peki to sign a treaty, which could best be described as an Ewedome version of the Fante Bond of 1844. This treaty sought to forestall possible German expansion from the coast.<sup>12</sup> On 7 December 1886, the British government wrote a letter to Bismarck in which it was stated that 'the territory of Aquamoo and Crepe were among those which formerly recognised the authority of the Danish crown and that they were included in the purchase of rights and possessions of Denmark by Great Britain in 1850'.<sup>13</sup>

The presence of Dr Gustav Nachtigal, the German-Consul General, on the coast in 1884 and the French presence to the west and in the Sudanese zone posed a major threat to British interests in the Gold Coast hinterland. German merchant activities along the coast created

conditions that were invigorating for smuggling activities.<sup>14</sup> German traders were interested in the dry Togoland coast because the area was outside the British custom zone where a custom duty of 4 percent on imports was in force from 1874.<sup>15</sup> The Germans sought to win over local traders by introducing cheap but inferior products into the market.<sup>16</sup> Such activities were inimical to British trade east of the Volta.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, long before Nachtigal arrived on the coast, the Africans made repeated calls on Britain to annex the area and bring it under British protection, but to no avail.<sup>18</sup> The intended benefits which Britain sought to gain from the 1886 treaty with states in Ewedome failed to materialise. Apart from the British flag, which of course, the states were happy to keep, no effective measures were taken to ensure that the chief of Peki really had an effective control over the other states in the region.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, 'Britain did not establish a colonial presence in the form of settlements or administrations in the Kpando area before the arrival of German colonial forces'.<sup>20</sup> Far from limiting their activities to the coastal enclave, in 1886 Germany began to expand into the interior as far as Agotime, one of the Adangme states near Ho.<sup>21</sup> In fact, Amenumey quoted a German news paper, Berlin Messe as having reported that 30 German flags were sent to the chiefs in Ewedome region.<sup>22</sup> This degenerated into a diplomatic row between Germany and Britain. The bone of contention here was Kpando's position as a big market centre in Ewedome where the major Salaga trade route converged with other smaller routes.<sup>23</sup> The revitalisation of the route following the withdrawal of Asante in 1874 changed the geo-political position of Kpando considerably.<sup>24</sup> Indeed,

recent archaeological research conducted by Apoh confirmed earlier findings which projected Kpando as a major trading centre in the hinterland of the Slave Coast of West Africa.<sup>25</sup> In addition, Amenumey noted that the Germans had their eyes on the River Volta and wanted it to be the boundary between the German territory and the British protected area.<sup>26</sup>

As the diplomatic wrangling between Britain and Germany continued, the Bremen Mission was being firmly established throughout Ewedome. Before 1869, steady progress had been made by the missionaries to convert the local people to Christianity but in 1853, the spectre of an imminent Asante invasion of Ewedome forced the Bremen Mission to relocate to Keta.<sup>27</sup> The Mission, which had returned to the territory after 1874, re-opened stations at Ho and the mountainous town of Amedzofe in 1876 and 1890 respectively.<sup>28</sup> In order to win the confidence and support of the traditional authorities and appeal to the ordinary people, the missionaries steered away, as much as possible, from local politics. In furtherance of this policy, most villages or towns where the Bremen missionaries operated had a section exclusively reserved for new converts, a religious segregation known as *Kpodzi*.<sup>29</sup> Converts who lived in those secluded places were absolved from the laws regarding the observance of taboos and other traditional observances which the missionaries considered 'fetish'.

One area where the missionaries were successful was the promotion of the Ewe language as a unifying force through church and school programmes. On arrival, they realised much to their dismay that the existence of various variants of the Ewe language, coupled

with the many Guan dialects and Togo remnant languages, was a major hindrance to their proselytising and education programmes. To get over this problem, the missionaries decided to develop what came to be known as 'standard Ewe' in an attempt to harmonise the various variants of the Ewe language.<sup>30</sup> It became the only vernacular taught in schools within the region. It was also used in the liturgy and the preaching of sermons.<sup>31</sup> Diligent missionary research into local ethnology and linguistics led to the publication of many books in Ewe. By 1914, the first copy of the Bible translated into Ewe through the co-ordinating efforts of missionary Jacob Spieth was published and circulated among congregations in Eweland.<sup>32</sup> In a way, Ewe became a prestige language. This practice of standardising and promoting one variant of a language by missionaries was not peculiar to Ewedome. It was very much the tool for the construction of 'African custom and identity'.<sup>33</sup>

German missionary activities were not confined to proselytisation alone. They sought to give the converts some degree of economic security by training them in handicrafts and laying out experimental farms. At face value, the activities of the German missionaries looked innocuous to British interests. The missionaries promoted the teaching and learning of English in their schools and they showed no tendency to impose German culture. All this was in the interest of Britain. But the German missionaries inadvertently paved the way for Germany's audacious challenge to Britain in Ewedome. In fact, in 1888, the presence of the Bremen missionaries in Ewedome facilitated the penetration of the hinterland by Hauptmann von Francois, a German government official. Hauptmann von

Francois traversed Ewedome to Krachi and Salaga and having acquainted himself with the economic potential of the area, he made attempts to persuade the inhabitants to accept the German flag.<sup>34</sup>

In 1890, Britain gave in to Germany's persistent desire to occupy Ewedome.<sup>35</sup> Following the Heligoland Treaty in that year, Britain ceded the greater part of Ewedome to Germany, retaining control over the Peki and Awudome areas only.<sup>36</sup> Thus, Peki and Awudome, important towns in Ewedome, were never part of German occupied territory of Ewedome. It is important to note that the colonisation of Togoland by Germany was in response to demands by German traders for protection against 'arbitrary custom duties levied by the African chiefs' in along the Ewe coast to the south of Ewedome.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, Dr Nachtigal's coming to Lome in 1884 was initially meant to solve the problem between the local chief and the German traders.<sup>38</sup> This seemingly innocuous move eventually resulted in placing the coastal enclave under German protection. It is, therefore, important to note that German colonial activities in Ewedome proceeded from the Ewe coast to the south of Ewedome and were influenced by this historical fact, although German colonial policies and practices in Ewedome differed from what pertained in southern German protectorate.<sup>39</sup>

#### German Rule, 1890-1914

At the time Germany assumed administrative control over Togo, Ewedome had become used to dealing with British officials. Some chiefs had learned the English language and the spectre of having to learn German haunted them. Besides, the support which the people

of Ewedome received from the British in subduing Akwamu and Asante 'in the 1869-74 wars' endeared Britain to the hearts of many in Ewedome.<sup>40</sup> In addition, the people of Ewedome wanted to preserve the revitalisation of their commercial links with the Gold Coast since the defeat of the Asantes in 1874.<sup>41</sup> The news about the 1890 Anglo-German partition of Ewedome generated a great resentment and shock throughout the territory. Even F. M. Zahn, the missionary director from 1862 to 1900, was very unhappy about the partition.<sup>42</sup> The Ewes in the hinterland were aware of Germany's harsh policies in Southern Togo such as flogging and forced unpaid labour.<sup>43</sup> In 1891, chiefs and their elders from Vakpo, Tsrukke, Have, Tafi Nyagbo, Awate, Aveme, Botoku and Wusuta met at Anfoega to elect Hodo III, chief of Anfoega, to lead them to the British Colonial Governor in the Gold Coast to plead for British intervention in preventing German occupation of their states.<sup>44</sup>

In 1894, Lieut. Klose led a German police force (*polizeitruppe*) to Kpando and Anfoega and forced the people to receive German flags and to surrender the Union Jack.<sup>45</sup> From Anfoega, the Germans rushed to Awatime, another area where pro-British sentiments were strong. The people of Tafi had averred that they were being attacked by Awatime for accepting a German flag. To avert an imminent German reprisal, the people of Awatime managed to secure a German flag overnight and hoisted it before the Germans had arrived.<sup>46</sup> The Germans succeeded in cowing the people into submission partly because of the sudden shift of Kpando's loyalty to Germany. Apparently, Kpando felt that since the Anglo-German boundary placed Peki squarely in the Gold

Coast, it would end whatever claim Peki continued to make over Kpando and other Ewedome states.<sup>47</sup>

German administration in Ewedome and indeed the whole of German Togo has been described as unimpressive.<sup>48</sup> The period of German colonial administration in Ewedome was relatively short; shorter than it was in the south.<sup>49</sup> Although Germany on paper took over Ewedome in 1890, it was not until 1897 and 1899 that it built its first outposts in Kpando and Ho respectively.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, tangible German colonisation of Ewedome can be said to have started from 1899. In the words of Knoll, the German colonies were lost just as they 'began to reach a level of maximal efficiency'.<sup>51</sup> For this reason, Knoll postulated that 'we would have had a better perspective of German rule if it had been possible to juxtapose the time of mature colonisation in the German African empire with a similar period in the British and French empire'.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, Togoland, according to Crabtree, was acquired by Germany primarily for the purpose of exploiting the resources of the region and not to colonise it, while Henderson was of the view that Germany had wanted to use the region as a corridor to penetrate to the Niger.<sup>53</sup>

From 1898, Ewedome was governed from the German administrative district of Misahohe.<sup>54</sup> Germany's colonial rule was dictated by a policy of decentralisation which based local administration on village units.<sup>55</sup> Views diverge on whether or not the German system of direct rule caused the disintegration of larger political units in Ewedome. While Knoll stated that the Germans did not purposely fragment traditional polities, Collier argues that by basing their rule on village units,

'the Germans had perhaps been more realistic about the acephalous organisation of Ewe-speakers and other people of southern Togoland'.<sup>56</sup> Although one could acknowledge the fact that Ewedome had been disintegrated and disunited, it is equally true that German colonial policy entrenched the fragmentation of the region. The aim was to break down such states as Kpando, Awatime, Anfoega and Asogli, which were developing into large centralised states. In this way, the Germans hoped to prevent any concerted action against their administration. This was no different from what pertained in Tanganyika, where the colonial policy of Germany was 'to weaken tribal cohesion and to break down tribal government'.<sup>57</sup>

In furtherance of this policy, even subordinate chiefs were given recognition as independent or paramount chiefs (*Oberhauptling*) instead of chiefs (*Hauptling*) in their divisions. Each village head, who went to Misahohe came back with a German badge and a hat.<sup>58</sup> As a result, each village became what Verdon referred to as a sovereign political group.<sup>59</sup> This led to the multiplicity of chiefdoms to the extent that by the end of German rule there were as many as 243 chiefs in Ewedome.<sup>60</sup> In the words of Apoh, the German involvement in chieftaincy accounts for the numerous chieftaincy disputes in the territory to this day.<sup>61</sup> A similar situation occurred in Buem state, made up of Akan and autochthonous people, as late as 1907. In that year, the German governor, Graf Zech, told the head chief of Buem that his enstoolment would be recognised only if the political independence of Akpafu, Likpe, Santrokofi and Tapa was guaranteed. Consequently, those hitherto subordinate divisions broke out of the Buem state.<sup>62</sup>

Although traditional authorities continued to rule their people, their powers were restricted, particularly in judicial matters.<sup>63</sup> They had to receive regular instructions from German officials regarding judicial procedures. As part of the measures to streamline the courts, chiefs were ordered to limit their court summon fees to six shillings (6 marks).<sup>64</sup> Apoh saw the reduction in the judicial powers of the chiefs as a humiliation.<sup>65</sup> The district was headed by a political officer (*Bezirksamtman*) who had unlimited jurisdiction except that in theory, he had to seek confirmation from the governor in the German capital of Lome before carrying out sentences, which carried a penalty exceeding 300 marks or imprisonment over three months.<sup>66</sup> In practical terms, the situation was different in the hinterland where the district officer 'could proclaim a martial law, and with a minimum of two assessors, hear a capital charge summarily, and have the death penalty carried out without receiving the governor's sanction'.<sup>67</sup> Chiefs were also used to enforce forced labour, particularly in the production of palm kernels.

The Bremen missionaries did not hide their opposition to German colonisation of the territory. Some were said to have instigated the natives against the German colonial officers. Missionary Franz Michael was said to be an ardent critic of imperialism. He felt acquisition of colonies could not be justified on moral grounds.<sup>68</sup> Missionaries and anthropologists were on record to have raised concerns about German overrule in Africa on the floor of the *Reichstag*.<sup>69</sup> Accusations of German officials by missionaries led to the trial of Carl Peters in 1897 and the withdrawal of Governor Eduard von Liebert from the Kilimanjaro district of German East Africa in 1899.<sup>70</sup> In

Ewedome, the harsh colonial rule, especially in 1902-1904, became a clear embarrassment for the missionaries because it compromised their political neutrality and hindered the missionary efforts at converting more Africans.<sup>71</sup> Jacob Spieth, a Bremen missionary, served as a lawyer for the people of Ewedome by presenting their grievances to the German government.<sup>72</sup>

Although Kpando initially favoured German rule as a means of shedding Peki's attempts to dominate, and although Kpando benefited by becoming a sub-station, ultimately it fell out of political favour with the Germans for a number of reasons. First was the German imposition and enforcement of border restrictions. The border restrictions and the diversion of trade to Lome affected trading activities in Kpando and Ewedome as a whole.<sup>73</sup> Then the forceful removal of a local deity to make way for the building of a German administration post at Kpando-Todzi angered the inhabitants and contributed the growing resentment against the Germans.<sup>74</sup> Matters became worse when in 1913 the German colonial government decided to inoculate people against an alleged outbreak of sleeping sickness. Dagadu Anku (Dagadu III), the head chief of Kpando, was suspicious of the exercise and opposed the planned inoculation. The inoculation was not the only concern of Dagadu. People who were suspected of being infected with the sleeping sickness were sent to an isolation camp in Kluto in present-day Republic of Togo and very few of them came back to Ewedome. Some of the patients also lost their sight because of the use of the drug atoxyl.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, Dagadu III was deported to Cameroon in 1913.<sup>76</sup> According to the diary of a German officer, who was

captured in Togo in 1914 and sent to Kpando, two other charges were framed against Dagadu III. First, he was accused of having written to the Kaiser abusing the German colonial government in Togo. Second, he was charged with writing to the Governor of the Gold Coast asking to be brought under British Rule.<sup>77</sup> It came, therefore, as no surprise that when the First World War broke out, Kpando alone contributed 200 men to serve Britain in the Cameroon and East Africa campaigns. In addition, Kpando contributed £500 to the fund of the Red Cross Society during the war.<sup>78</sup>

To facilitate the easy enforcement of custom barriers, chiefs were tasked to keep the boundary between Germany and the Gold Coast clearly marked, and from 1909 were to be paid 5/- per mile for doing so.<sup>79</sup> Every chief was issued a 'Road Notice', which detailed those chiefs who were responsible for clearing the boundary. People needed a pass from the Germans to cross the border. Those who violated this directive were punished severely by the German officials. On 22 May 1910, for instance, the son of the chief of British Kpeve went to German Kpeve to tap rubber and he was arrested and fined £10. The chief was unable to pay the fine so his son died in prison at Kpando.<sup>80</sup> In reality, neither the general policy of repression which the German administration adopted towards the people of Ewedome nor the flogging by German officials caused anything like the anger that was occasioned by the exaction by the German government of direct tax. Apart from the six marks payable annually by all males, or work not more than 12 days in a year or products corresponding in value to that amount, there were all sorts of other taxes imposed by the Germans. This included rubber, animal and

emigration taxes<sup>81</sup> The inhabitants reacted variously to this high-handedness of the Germans.<sup>82</sup> Right from 1892, people in German territory migrated in droves to settle in British territory.<sup>83</sup> Most of them settled in and around Mampong and Somanya.<sup>84</sup>

The German colonial government was supportive of missionary efforts to promote formal education in the area. This cooperation was important because the early German officials needed the services of the missionaries as advisors and interpreters.<sup>85</sup> At Amedzofe, a seminary for the training of mission teachers and a residential senior school for boys and girls were established in 1890.<sup>86</sup> The enviable place of Amedzofe in the history of education in the region cannot be glossed over. Amedzofe became the centre of education throughout the colonial period, drawing students from far and near. Indeed, in many respects, the fortunes of education in Trans-Volta Togoland were closely tied up to the pioneering works of the Germans in Amedzofe. Other schools were opened at Ho for infants. In 1914, there were 47 Bremen Mission schools in Ewedome while enrolment in schools stood at 1,673.<sup>87</sup> In essence, the presence of German colonisers helped to advance missionary programmes which had hitherto been disrupted by the Asante invasion of 1869.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, wars among the various states in the region following the Asante invasion subsided because of the German presence. This provided the impetus for economic activities.<sup>89</sup>

The German period also saw the development of the exchange economy with the introduction of cash crops such as coffee, palm oil and an increase in cotton production.<sup>90</sup> Of these crops, cotton, palm kernel and coffee production were the ones which drew most

attention from the German government. The formation of *Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee* (Colonial Agricultural Board) in 1896 in Germany facilitated the intensification of agricultural activities in German colonies in Africa as a whole.<sup>91</sup> British colonial documents noted that 'great pains were taken by the Germans to stimulate local enterprise, especially in demonstrating improved methods of cultivation' of cash crops.<sup>92</sup> The Germans first encouraged cotton production and saw a growth in exports, but the local people then developed a preference for palm products, which were more lucrative.<sup>93</sup> From 1900, the German government stepped up cotton production in the area. This led to increase in export of cotton to an average of about 500-550 tons a year.<sup>94</sup> The period also coincided with the rubber boom starting from the 1890s.<sup>95</sup>

Cocoa cultivation on a large scale did not start in German Togoland until after 1902, though the crop had been introduced earlier in Ewedome by inhabitants, who went to the Gold Coast and came back with cocoa seeds. Initially, the German officials did not allow the cultivation of cocoa because they wanted to preserve the forest.<sup>96</sup> Forestation was one important project on the agenda of the Germans, but cocoa cultivation involved the clearing of the forest and there was great effort by German officials to induce the inhabitants to preserve the forest. Later, German officials distributed cocoa seeds from Cameroon in Togoland such that by 1904, Togo began exporting a substantial quantity of cocoa.<sup>97</sup> According to Crabtree, there was an increase in the export of cocoa in German Togo from 1 ton in 1903 to 283 in 1912; while Nugent recorded an export of 335 tons from 1906-1913.<sup>98</sup>

To facilitate the transportation of these crops to market centres, the German government decided to open up the area by the construction of feeder roads, especially linking up Ho. The Germans used forced labour and the threat of severe punishment and fines to force the people to construct roads using the crudest of implements.<sup>99</sup> In 1914, British officials described the system of communication in German Togo as 'admirably adequate for the needs of Togoland as it existed'.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, according to a contemporary archaeologist, the growth of Kpando as the nerve centre of commercial activities in Ewedome was attributable to the German effort at improving communication networks in the territory.<sup>101</sup> By 1904, Ewedome and German Togo as a whole, due largely to the imposition of direct tax and forced labour became economically viable to the extent that Germany no longer found it necessary to expend grant-in-aid.<sup>102</sup>

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 sent waves of jubilation throughout the territory. Many of the people of Ewedome identified themselves with the war to get rid of the Germans. Consequently, the local people made generous contributions towards the war efforts.<sup>103</sup> When British soldiers entered Lome in 1914, German soldiers surrendered without any resistance because at the time, the latter had a more important responsibility of defending Kamina, the big German wireless station.<sup>104</sup> The Anglo-French operations against the Germans in Togoland were therefore a success, for it turned out to be 'the only easy conquest that the English and French had made in their assaults upon the German colonies'.<sup>105</sup> Apart from the burning down of offices by German officials

in Ho, Ewedome did not suffer much physical damage.<sup>106</sup> The few German property left in the British sphere of Togoland was sold by auction as 'enemy properties'.<sup>107</sup> Most farmers, however, suffered as prices of their produce fell due to the war. Palm kernel producers bore the brunt. In 1913, the price was 6/6 per load of 60lbs, which fell to 3/- by 1914.<sup>108</sup> More excruciating was the fact that the partition left the railways in Togo under French control thereby leaving Ewedome 'without any trade outlet to the sea'.<sup>109</sup>

Despite the German policy of divide and rule in the region, missionary activities coupled with German colonialism inadvertently led to the elevation of Awatime, Kpando and Ho above other towns in Ewedome. We noted that the German missionaries had turned Amedzofe, the mountainous town of Awatime, into a citadel of education from 1894 when a teacher training college was established there and from where educational programmes radiated to other parts of the region and beyond.<sup>110</sup> In addition to the seminary for the training of teachers, Amedzofe had, before 1914, a senior residential school for boys.<sup>111</sup> Similarly, Kpando became an important administrative centre since a sub-district headquarters was built there by the Germans in 1894.<sup>112</sup> From 1895 to 1901, there were collaborations between the German officials and Dagadu of Kpando in quelling opposition to German authority in Tove and Anfoega.<sup>113</sup> In return for Kpando's collaboration with the Germans during the period, Brown noted that 'the Germans recognised Kpandu as being one of the most important inland Ewe chiefdoms and the Kpandu chief was seen to have political influence over much of the northern Krepi area'.<sup>114</sup> In much the same way, Ho was

one of the earliest Bremen Mission stations. It had a senior residential school for boys and girls as well as a market centre and the chief acquired a certain amount of importance and prestige.<sup>115</sup> The German officials also had offices in Ho. Thus, the German period in turn reshaped the political landscape by elevating Awatime, Ho and Kpando above other *dukowo*. The reputation of these towns proved very important when the British took over from the Germans in 1914 and wanted to introduce the policy of amalgamation in the early 1930s. On the international level, the transfer to British rule brought Ewedome and all former German colonies onto the international stage and led to a change in their status as colonies to that of Mandated Territories and later Trust Territories.

It is important to note that the change in the status of the territory notwithstanding, anti-German feelings continued to linger on in Ewedome. For example, when the Second World War broke out in 1939 rumours had been rife in Kpando and Hohoe about the imminence of war between Britain and Germany.<sup>116</sup> Fear was heightened by the fall of France in June 1940 with speculations that Germany would repossess her former African colonies as part of a negotiation for a truce with France.<sup>117</sup> Patently, there was tension throughout Ewedome and many started moving into the Gold Coast for fear of a possible German attack on Togoland.<sup>118</sup> It took the dexterity of chiefs to avert mass migration from the territory. State council meetings were organised by chiefs where resolutions were passed declaring loyalty and support to the British Crown.<sup>119</sup> It was this anti-German sentiment that encouraged the people of Ewedome to contribute towards the British war

effort. One week each May during the war years was declared 'Mosquito Bombers War Week' and every inhabitant was required to contribute to the prosecution of the war as the amount to be realised was to be used in the purchase of Mosquito Bombers planes to bomb Berlin.<sup>120</sup> In 1944 over One Thousand pounds was collected.<sup>121</sup> However, from 1951, as the Gold Coast moved tumultuously towards independence, the status of British Togoland had to be determined. The diarchy in the Gold Coast was determined to integrate the territory into the Gold Coast to form one independent country, while the inhabitants vehemently opposed the move. Consequently, the inhabitants of Ewedome in particular shifted their loyalty to the Germans and wished the Germans came back to ensure their Togoland identity.<sup>122</sup> Indeed, when it became clear that the British were resolute in pushing through the integration process, the inhabitants under the auspices of the Togoland Congress, 'adopted a flag embossed with the design of the Swastika in fighting what they called British and French imperialism'.<sup>123</sup> Thus the fight against integration dragged on till 1956 when the United Nations' sponsored plebiscite ensured that British Togoland was formerly integrated into the Gold Coast.

## Conclusion

The processes towards formal colonisation of Ewedome started from 1884 in response to the demand by German traders on the coast for official German government protection. Germany's colonial rule in Ewedome was characterised by harsh and inflexible policies and flogging as a widespread form of punishment. The period saw the monetisation of the economy, the promotion of cash crops

for exports, the introduction of direct taxation, the construction of some roads to open up the region and support for education. Though missionaries were initially opposed to colonial acquisition of the territory, the coming of colonial rule provided a peaceful atmosphere for the advancement of the evangelising mission, which had been disrupted by the Asante invasion of 1869-1874.<sup>124</sup> Wars among the various ethnic groups subsided because of the presence of German soldiers and officials in the region. However, the German policy of making the village unit the basis of colonial rule entrenched tendency towards small-scale political units.

In effect, each town or village in Ewedome, no matter its size and population, became a chiefdom of a sort. This further served to deepen segmentation and made the number of independent political units stupendous. The fragmentation was so pervasive that by the time Britain took over the administration of the territory, there were numerous small independent chiefdoms. But so far as the incoming British officials were concerned, the unintended elevation of Awatime, Ho and Kpando during the German period meant that the crystallisation of states around those three towns for the purpose of local government was feasible in the midst of the numerous chiefdoms scattered all over Ewedome. But the outbreak of the First World War and the ease with which the British took over Lome, the capital of German Togo, surprised many Togoland. The British commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Frederick Carkeet Bryant, conquered Togoland in August 1914 with a scratch force of 1,200 men, most of whom were natives.<sup>125</sup> The German governor of Togo, Herr Baron von Doering, surrendered Lome

to the British without a shot, sparking spontaneous jubilation throughout Lome.

## Endnotes

1. See Lynne Brydon, 'Constructing Avatime: Questions of History and Identity in a West African Polity, c.1690s to the Twentieth Century', *Journal of African History*, 49 (2008), p. 26; G. K. Nukunya, 'Rejoinder: Michel Verdon and Ewe Ethnography', *UNIVERSITAS*, II (2008), p. 138.
2. Paul Nugent, *Smugglers, Secessionists and Loyal Citizens on the Ghana-Togo Frontier: The Lie of the Borderlands since 1914* (Athens, OH, 2002), p. 50.
3. Kate Skinner, 'Agency and Analogy in African History: The Contribution of Extra-Mural Studies in Ghana', *History of Africa*, 34(2007), p. 292.
4. Hans W. Debrunner, *A Church between Colonial Powers* (London, 1965), p. 68.
5. PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/42, Le Lievee, Essay on the Tribal History of Kpando Division, 19 April 1924.
6. See R. A. Kea, 'Akwamu-Anlo Relations, c.1750-1813', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 10 (1969), p. 60; Marion Johnson, 'Asanti East of the Volta', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 8 (1965), p. 48. See also a Funeral Brochure for the Late Dagadu VII of Kpando, April 2007.
7. See Nugent, *Smugglers*; Paul Nugent, "A Few Lesser People": The Central Togo Minorities and their Ewe Neighbours' in Carol Lentz and Paul Nugent (eds.), *Ethnicity in Ghana: The Limits of Invention* (London, 2000); Katherine Alexandria Collier, 'Ablode: Networks, Ideas and Performance in Togoland Politics, 1950-2001' PhD Thesis (University of Birmingham, 2002).
8. Herbert Frederic Walker, 'Topic in Ewe Phonology', PhD Thesis, University of California (1971), p. 1.
9. For details on this classification see Gilbert Ansre, 'The Ewe Language' in Kojo Gavua and Francis Agbodeka (eds.), *A Handbook of Eweland*, 2 (Accra, 2000).
10. Wilson K. Yayoh, 'Ethnographic Research, Local Power Brokers and the Political Reorganisation of Colonial Ewedome, British Mandated Territory, 1914-1930s', *Contemporary Journal of African Studies*, 3 (2015), p. 46.
11. According to M. Johnson, Britain did not express interest in colonizing the Ewedome region 'so far as no other European power was showing interest in the area'. Johnson, 'Ashanti East of the Volta', p. 56.
12. Arthur J. Knoll, *Togo Under Imperial Germany, 1884-1914* (Stanford, 1978), p. 28.
13. PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/20, Anglo-German Boundary Agreement, 7 December 1886; Colonial Office List, 1910, p. 211.
14. Gordon Le Sueur, *Germany's Vanishing Colonies* (New York, 1915), p. 110-111.
15. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 10; W. O. Henderson, *The German Colonial Empire 1884-1919* (London, 1993), p. 49. In 1904, the Germans went ahead to increase their export duties to 10 percent, far more than the 4 percent imposed by the British in the Gold Coast. See Sandra E. Greene, *Gender, Ethnicity and Social Change on the Upper Slave Coast: A History of the Anlo-Ewe* (Portsmouth, NH, 1996), p. 141.
16. Le Sueur, *Germany's Vanishing Colonies*, p. 110.
17. It was to check the smuggling along that part of the coast that in 1886 the boundary between British and German territories was for the first time fixed so that the Gold Coast police could enforce the rules along the border. See PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/20, Anglo-German Boundary, 1986.
18. Le Sueur, *Germany's Vanishing Colonies*, p. 111.
19. According to the paramount chief of Peki, the treaty was simply ineffective. Interview conducted in August, 2000. Details of Kpando-Peki rivalry is recorded in David Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry and Krepi Politics', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 15 (1974), p. 201.
20. Wazi Apoh, 'The Archaeology of German and British Colonial Entanglements in Kpando-Ghana', *Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 17

- (2013), p. 356.
21. Germany's enthusiasm for the acquisition of Ewedome had already been largely by the reports which missionaries wrote about the economic viability of the interior.
  22. Divine Edem Kobla Amenumey, 'The Ewe People and the Coming of European Rule, 1850-1914, Unpublished MA Thesis (University of London, 1964), p. 140.
  23. Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 203.
  24. Brown. It is important to note that 1869 to 1874 witnessed large-scale Asante invasion of Ewedome.
  25. Apoh, 'The Archaeology', p. 354.
  26. Amenumey, 'Ewe People', p. 144.
  27. Carl Christian Reindorf, *History of the Gold Coast and Asante* (Basel, 1895), p. 248; H. W. Debrunner, *A Church between Colonial Powers* (London, 1965), p. 68.
  28. Reindorf, *History*, p. 248.
  29. This point was also made in Meyer, *Translating the Devil*, p. 8.
  30. According to some experts, 'standard Ewe' derives some linguistic features from Ewe dialects of Keta, Peki and Lome. See Edoh Togah, 'Hands Off my Ewe', *Cahiers du Cerleshs* (Ouagadougou, 2001), p. 20.
  31. This was in line with the policy of the missionaries to provide what they called 'indigenous education'. Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 59.
  32. Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe in Ghana History* (Edinburgh, 1999), p. 59. It is important to note also that Bernhard Schlegel published the first Ewe grammar in 1856 while Diedrich Westermann published an Ewe dictionary in 1856. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 15.
  33. Quote taken from Bruce Berman J., 'Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism', *African Affairs*, 97 (1998), p. 322.
  34. A.W. Cardinall, 'The Story of the German Occupation of Togoland', *Gold Coast Review*, 2 (1927), p. 196.
  35. See 'Togo-land, The German Protectorate on the Slave Coast.' *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography*, 9 (June 1885), p. 377.
  36. PRAAD/A ADM 39/1/174, Anglo-German Boundary, 1904-1908. The Ewe states that came under the British became part of the Volta River District under the Eastern Province of the Gold Coast Colony. See also Apoh, 'Archaeology', p. 356.
  37. 'Togo-land, The German Protectorate on the Slave Coast', p. 377.
  38. 'Togo-land'.
  39. On the coast, the Germans practiced direct rule, but in Ewedome indirect rule through chiefs was put in place.
  40. Apoh, 'Archaeology', p. 355-6.
  41. Accra and Ada had served as major trading centres for goods from Krepiland. See Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 209.
  42. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 34.
  43. See Amenumey, 'Ewe People', pp. 167-172.
  44. PRAAD/A ADM39/1/174.
  45. Cardinall, 'German Occupation', p. 206; Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 211.
  46. Cardinall, 'German Occupation', p. 206. Debrunner gave the credit to the Bremen missionaries in Amedzofe for their role in preventing bloodshed when Awatime refused to accept German authority. See Debrunner, H. W. *A History Of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra, 1967), p. 209.
  47. Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', pp. 208-209.
  48. D. E. K. Amenumey, 'German Administration in Southern Togo', *Journal of African History*, 4 (1969), p. 624.
  49. According to Fage, the period from 1884 to 1914 could best be described as the bare laying of the foundations of German rule in Africa, which had hardly been established before it was liquidated. See J. D. Fage, 'British and German Colonial Rule: a Synthesis and Summary' in Proser Gifford and W. M. Roger Louis (eds.), *Britain and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule* (Yale, 1967), p. 701.
  50. Amenumey, 'German Administration', p. 625.
  51. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 4. It was only by 1910 that

- agricultural projects were beginning to yield results. See W. A. Crabtree, 'Togoland', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 54 (January, 1915), p. 172.
52. Crabtree.
  53. Crabtree, 'The Germans', 361; Henderson, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 50.
  54. The whole of German Togo was divided into seven administrative districts. NA CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Togoland, 1920-21. Misahohe was an important inland market on the trade route linking Salaga through Kpando to Palime, in the present-day Republic of Togo. See Amenumey, 'Ewe People', p. 158.
  55. Michael Verdon, *The Abutia Ewe of West Africa: A Chieftdom that Never Was*, (Berlin, 1983), p. 77.
  56. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 49.
  57. John Illife, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 323.
  58. The hat was a steel helmet bearing the German crown. For the curtailment of the judicial powers of chiefs, see NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Togoland, 1920-21, p. 21.
  59. Verdon, *Abutia Ewe*, p. 77.
  60. Wilson Kwame Yayoh, 'Challenges to British Policy of Direct Taxation among the Northern Ewe of Ghana', *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 12(2015), p. 2.
  61. Wazi Apoh, 'Archaeology and Heritage Development: Repackaging German/British Colonial Relics and Residues in Kpando, Ghana', in Wazi Apoh and Bea Lundt (Eds.), *Germany and Its West African Colonies: Excavations of German Colonialism in Post-Colonial Times* (Berlin, 2013), p. 37.
  62. NA CO96/746/7, Report by C. C. Lilley, Accredited Representative to Geneva, 24 to 25 October 1938; Togoland Report 1937, p. 4.
  63. The introduction of tribunals and the way they operated was foreign to traditional judicial procedures. Family and clan heads no longer had the responsibility to settle even minor cases. All cases were to be sent to the tribunal of the head chief or that of the sub-chief. PRAAD/A ADM39/1/42, Le Lievre, Kpando Division, pp. 5-6.
  64. RAG/H Case No. 48/20, Amalgamation of Divisions in Togoland.
  65. Apoh, 'Archaeology and Heritage'.
  66. NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Sphere of Togoland, 1920-21, p. 21
  67. NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report.
  68. For details on the encounter between the missionaries and the German officials, see Debrunner, *A History*, p. 208; Cyprus C. Adams, 'The African Colonies of Germany and the War' *Geographical Review*, 1 (January, 1916), pp. 452-453.
  69. Crabtree, 'German Colonies in Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society*, 3 (1914), p. 12.
  70. Henderson, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 84.
  71. Dates taken from Knoll, *Togo*, p. 55.
  72. Knoll, p. 56.
  73. This explains why there was a fierce resistance to German occupation of Krepiland in Tove. Eventually, the town was ravaged by the Germans. These restrictions notwithstanding, British merchants continued to have a fair share of the trade in Ewedome. It is said that 'the British had better landing facilities at Ada and Keta than the Germans possessed at Lome'. So Keta and Ada still attracted goods down the River Volta. The value of British trade in Togoland in 1910 was said to have amounted to £100,000. See Henderson, 'British Economic Activity in the German Colonies', p. 60.
  74. Apoh, 'Archaeology and Heritage'.
  75. PRAADA/A ADM 11/1/602, Le Lievre, 'The Kpando Division', p. 34; Knoll, p. 89.
  76. A Brochure on *Danyiba Kaka* Festival, 1974. Chief Dagadu was brought back to Kpando by the British in 1915. See NA CO96/672/5, Togoland Report, 1927.
  77. These accusations against Chief Dagadu were indicative of the growing resentment against German rule. See PRAAD/A ADM 11/1/603, The Return of Dagadu from Cameroon, 18 January 1915.
  78. PRAAD/A ADM39/1/25 and ADM11/1/603.
  79. Hitherto, compulsory, unpaid labour was used by the Germans to construct roads. See K. B.

- Dicksion, 'The Development of Road Transport in Southern Ghana and Ashanti since about 1850', *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, 5 (1961), p. 38.
80. PRAAD/A ADM/39/1/20, Petition by Chief Kobla of British Kpeve to the District Commissioner, Volta River District, Ada 1920. Kpeve town was divided into two by the Anglo-German boundary.
  81. Emigration taxes required people who went into foreign country, with exception of the Cameroons, for a period of over three months, to pay ten marks per person. See NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report of British Mandated Sphere of Togoland, 1920-21, p. 53. Some adjustments were made to the annual tax from 1909. For details, see Knoll, *Togo*, p. 74.
  82. The brutalities meted out to natives particularly in East Africa by German colonial officers caught the attention of some sympathizers in Germany leading to the formation of the German Society for the Protection of Natives. This society used the paper *Koloniale Rundschau* to sensitise the German populace about German overrule in Africa. See Crabtree, 'German Colonies', p. 12.
  83. This phenomenon of emigration from Togo to the Gold Coast became a regular occurrence from 1900. See German Colonial Report 3192-93, Potsdam: German Annual Report, 6589-92. See also Amenumey, 'Ewe People', p. 172-173; Barbara Ward, 'Some Notes on Migration from Togoland', *African Affairs*, 49 (1950), p. 129. Knoll noted that from 1902-1904 some people in Ewedome fled into the bush or Peki and other parts of the Gold Coast in the face of German harsh policies. See Knoll, pp. 55-56.
  84. See PRAAD/A ADM39/1/20, Anglo-German Boundary.
  85. The point is also made in Henderson, *German Colonial Empire*, p. 75.
  86. Togoland Report 1926.
  87. NA CO96/724/2, Togoland Report 1920-21, pp. 29-30.
  88. Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 120.
  89. H. P. White, 'Awatime: A Highland Environment in Togoland', *The Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography*, 1 (1956), p. 35; Crabtree, 'The Germans', p. 365.
  90. Details about the increase in cotton during the German period is found in Maier, 'Persistence of Precolonial Patterns of Production', pp. 71-95.
  91. C.T. Hagberg Write, 'German Methods of Development in Africa', *Journal of the Royal African Society* (September, 1964), p. 32.
  92. NA CO96/724/2, Annual Report of Togoland, 1920-21, p. 22.
  93. Donna J. E. Maier, 'Persistence of Pre-colonial Patterns of Production: Cotton in German Togoland, 1800-1914' in Allen Isaacman and Richard Roberts (eds.), *Cotton, Colonialism and Social History in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Portsmouth NH, 1995), p. 89.
  94. German industries also depended exclusively on the importation of raw materials. See Le Sueur, *Germany's*, p.26.
  95. Crabtree, 'Togoland', p. 178-179; Debrunner, *A History*, p. 209.
  96. Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 116.
  97. Knoll, *Togo*, p. 152-153.
  98. Crabtree, 'Togoland', p. 183; Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 51.
  99. Dickson, 'The Development of Road Transport in Southern Ghana', p. 37.
  100. NA CO 724/2, Annual Report on British Mandated Togoland, 1920-1921, 14 November 1922, p. 20.
  101. Apoh, 'Archaeology and Heritage'
  102. Crabtree, 'German Colonies', p. 9. It is also said that after 1907, a large proportion of German Togo's revenue came from Direct Taxation. See Arthur J. Knoll, 'Taxation in the Gold Coast Colony and in Togo: A Study in Early Administration' in Gifford and Louis (eds.), *Britain and Germany in Africa*, p. 449.
  103. David Killingray, 'Repercussions of World War 1 in the Gold Coast,' *Journal of African History*, 19 (1978), p. 40. Anfoega, for example, contributed £165. Other states supplied numerous carriers for the Cameroon through E.T. Mansfield at Misahohe. PRAAD/A ADM

- 39/1/216, Anfoega Native Affairs. Togbe Hodo V to the DC, 1915.
104. NA CO96/742/20, Capture of Togoland in 1914; Crabtree, 'The conquest of Togoland', p. 390. The Germans also wanted to prevent the destruction of Lome with its beautiful buildings and mission stations. PRAAD/A ADM11/1/603, Account of a German Prisoner of War Captured by British Soldiers in 1914. This was the very opposite of what the Germans did in Ho. Immediately on the outbreak of the war, the office buildings were burnt down by the Germans before they left.
105. Adams, 'The African Colonies of Germany', p. 453.
106. For the conduct of the war, see G. M. Wrigley, 'The Military Campaigns against Germany's African Colonies', *Geographical Review*, 1 (January, 1918), p. 47.
107. NA CO 96/724/1, Acting Governor to the Right Honourable, Viscount Milner, 28 July 1920.
108. RAG/H No. 0043, Palm Oil Control 1915.
109. Dickson, 'The Development of Road Transport', p. 39.
110. Debrunner, *A Church*, p. 125.
111. NA CO96/672/5, Togoland Report 1926, x4233. Kpando became the sub-district of Misahohe. See NA CO96/724/2, Togoland Report 1920-21, p. 27.
112. Date taken from Brown, 'Anglo-German Rivalry', p. 213.
113. *Ibid.*
114. *Ibid.*
115. NA CO96/746/7, Report to the PMC, Geneva, 24-25 October 1938.
116. Togoland Report, 1937, p. 21.
117. Nancy Ellen Lawler, *Soldiers, Spies, and Whisperers: The Gold Coast in World War II* (Athens, OH, 2002), p. 3.
118. Togoland Report, 1940, p. 20.
119. *Ibid.*
120. PRAAD/A ADM39/1/99, Memorandum on the Southern Section of Togoland, 1944.
121. *Ibid.*
122. Wilson K. Yayoh, 'What is in a Flag? The Swastika and Togoland Nationalism', *Contemporary Journal of African Studies*, 1 (2013), pp. 1-26.
123. *Ibid.*
124. See details in Nugent, *Smugglers*, p. 120.
125. NA CO 96/742/20, Capture of Togoland in 1914, *News Chronicle*, 22 November 1937, p. 3.

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