Making History in
Banda

ANTHROPOLOGICAL
VISIONS OF AFRICA'S PAST

ANN B. STAHL

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Anthropological Visions of Africa's Past

Drawing on evidence from several disciplines, Professor Ann B. Stahl reconstructs the daily lives of Banda villagers of west central Ghana, from the time that they were drawn into the Niger trade (around AD 1300) until British rule was established early in the twentieth century. The study is designed to make the case for a closer integration of perspectives drawn from archaeology, history, and anthropology.

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ANN BROWER STAHL

Making History in Banda

Anthropological Visions of Africa's Past

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For Christina and Emma

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In November 1996 a group of young men acting on behalf of Banda elders entered the palace of their paramount chief, forcibly removed his sandals, and placed his bare feet on the ground. This act of destoolment brought to a close his nineteen-year reign, which had been the focus of a chieftaincy dispute that began before the death of the previous paramount chief in 1977. This was the longest-lived, most contested chieftaincy dispute in the Brong-Ahafo Region, Ghana, a country where chieftaincy disputes are common. The dispute centered on whether a rotational principle should have prevailed in selecting the dead chief's successor. Rival families marshaled competing visions of history to support their claims to power. The family of the former chief, Kofi Dwuru II, rejected the historical primacy of a rotational principle, and – supported by the majority of elders – selected a successor from their own family who initially served as regent. In 1985 Kofi Dwuru III was placed on the royal stool that embodies the Banda state. The new incumbent survived numerous challenges to his chieftaincy from the rival family, but was ultimately brought down by his own family and their supporters because he refused to offer certain sacrifices which, as a Christian, he felt unable to do. Ironically, his selection as chief had been motivated by his worldliness – he was relatively junior among potential candidates, but was selected because he had worked for a government agency in the capital, and had broader experience of the world than his rivals. For two decades the elders tolerated his Christianity, and their destoolment of him in 1996 further complicated the chieftaincy dispute.

The destoolment of the Banda chief was an act of disembodiment, an act at once profoundly historical, material, and symbolic, and best understood in broader social, political-economic, and temporal context. The event might be read as the culmination of a struggle between tradition and modernity, continuity and change, structure and transformation, one profoundly influenced by the past and its construction. It is a struggle rooted in the ethnic, political-economic, and social history of Banda that draws on colonial and anthropological categories (i.e., tradition) to advance claims to power in the postcolonial state. It is a local struggle, but one that involves the state through periodic police or military intervention and court hearings. It is a struggle that raises questions over whether the competing historical claims of rival factions have any grounding in a lived past, or whether they represent alternative discourses whose construction in the present is shaped solely by contemporary concerns. It is a struggle involving silences, some maintained through active suppression of historical accounts, one open to either historical or anthropological analysis, but

incomplete without both. The event of destoolment provides a window into social processes that can only be understood in their temporal, historical dimensions. As Eric Wolf (1982, 1999) taught us, they are processes that must be understood in a broader geopolitical perspective that takes power into account. As recent social theorists have demonstrated, they are processes with a material dimension, a materiality that actively creates rather than passively reflects "the social," processes that involve bodies, material symbols, space, wealth, and quotidian practices (Cohn 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997).

The materiality of social processes suggests that they are open to archaeological exegesis in pasts both shallow and deep, and that a fuller understanding of the social, political-economic processes that shaped contemporary societies would emerge from considering a broad array of historical traces – material, textual, and oral. Yet anthropologists and historians have typically relied on documentary and oral-historical sources in reconstructing the historical processes that have shaped post-colonial societies like Banda. These sources provide rich, if uneven, insights into the last 100 years and sometimes more. But insights into a deeper past – where the colonial gives way to the "precolonial," history to "prehistory" – are more limited. Insights into this deeper past are often shaped by notions of tradition, allowing analysts to sort among ethnographic and historic descriptions for traces of durable practices that can be excised from their temporal moorings to animate a distant past. It is in constructing this deeper past, one beyond the range of documents and oral histories, that archaeology typically plays a role. The impoverished material remains of abandoned settlements provide inanimate testimony to the daily lives of ancestors, but reveal little about the dramatic encounters like those between the Banda chief and his detractors.

The historic turn in anthropology and the anthropological turn in history promised to produce more integrated understandings of societies past and present. Yet recent literature suggests that the promise of integrated understanding is fracturing under the weight of differing visions of history, society, and culture (Dirks 1996; Spear 1994). Historians find anthropologists insufficiently historical, while anthropologists rue inattention to culture and meaning in history. Some scholars are more interested in the contemporary social, political-economic contexts in which knowledge about the past is produced than in a lived past. In many circles, Foucauldian archaeology has more cachet than does archaeology done with a spade. Archaeology is thus a source of last resort, a source to turn to when the archival and oral-historical trail runs cold. Yet if social life has a profoundly material dimension, what better source to examine than the material record of human social life?

This volume represents an exploration into the theoretical and methodological issues that confront those interested in constructing visions of an African past, especially under the rubric of historical anthropology. The founding of African historical studies was marked by a commitment to multidisciplinary approaches and the use of diverse sources. Yet, as I argue in Chapter 1, unexamined epistemological legacies hampered early interdisciplinary cooperation and continue to lend distinctive shape to the historical projects of anthropologists, historians, and archaeologists in

a period of renewed multidisciplinary activity. This study is based on the premise that anthropologists, historians, and archaeologists have mutually valuable perspectives on African societies, past and present, but that efforts to draw on diverse sources often have a "pasted-together" feel about them. I write from the perspective of an archaeologist trained in an American tradition of anthropology, seeking to understand the distinctive imprint that anthropological, archaeological, and historical "ways of knowing" have on our reconstructions of Africa's past. As an archaeologist who has worked with material, oral-historical, and documentary sources, I explore the challenges and limitations of those sources through a case study of the Banda area of west central Ghana. I endeavor to create images of a lived past, of the material, social, political-economic conditions that shaped the everyday lives of Banda villagers from the period when their social fields were framed by Banda's involvement in the Niger trade (from c. AD 1300), through Banda's pacification and incorporation into the British colonial state early in this century. At the same time, however, I work to examine how the past is constructed in the present – by competing groups within Banda, and by foreign researchers – and explore its consequences in the present. Though the volume focuses explicitly on Africa, the issues confronted and the methods proposed are not peculiar to African studies. In this sense, I hope the book will resonate for those working on similar problems in different parts of the globe.

Organization of this volume

Chapter 1 briefly examines the historical roots of anthropological, historical, and archaeological approaches to Africa's past, highlighting the epistemological legacy of progressive evolutionism and structural functionalism in contemporary historical, anthropological, and archaeological studies. I argue that an unexamined legacy of now-rejected approaches continues to shape historical anthropological practice. This leads me to consider in Chapter 2 the methodological legacies of these approaches. Chapter 3 introduces the Banda case study, which I conceptualize as an interrogation of silences informed by Trouillot's (1995) discussion of power and the production of history. The chapter examines the past in the present, and the potency of history in Banda today. This view of contemporary practice provides a comparative baseline against which to construct an image of a lived past in earlier centuries based on oral-historical, documentary, and archaeological sources. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the regional and subcontinental political economy that conditioned life in Banda. Chapters 5 through 7 examine local life in historical perspective, probing the consequences of broad shifts in the subcontinental political economy for social reproduction. Chapter 5 examines local life in the context of the Niger trade, c. 1300 to 1700, and considers the contemporary saliency of archaeological sites for the minority Kuulo people. Chapter 6 examines the changing social fields of Banda villagers during the period c. 1725–1825 in the wake of growing Atlantic trade and an expanding Asante polity. Here I am concerned with ethnogenesis and daily life on the forest–savanna margins. Chapter 7 examines daily life in the period c. 1825 to 1925 when the western Volta basin was subject to considerable political-economic

upheaval as a result of wars between Asante's provinces, the reverberations of Imam Samori's jihad, and British territorial ambitions. Throughout the volume I assess the resolution of disparate source materials and explore their sometimes contradictory implications, as well as consider the processes – past and present – through which Banda history is made. The final chapter (8) reflects on the implications of this case study for a re-visioned historical anthropology that takes fuller account of the material remains of daily life.

This study draws on unpublished documents from four sources: the Ghana National Archives (GNA), Accra; the GNA, Kumasi; the Northwestern University Library; and the Public Records Office, London. Full citations appear in the list of unpublished documents found at the end of the text.

substantially to our 1994 excavations. Staff at the University of Ghana have also been supportive of the Banda Research Project. Special thanks to Professor James Anquandah, whose engagement in Ghana archaeology through the very difficult years of the 1980s set an example for us all.

I am grateful to the staff of the libraries and archives who facilitated our access to the sources on which this study builds. They include librarians at the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana; staff of the Ghana National Archives in Accra, Kumase, and Sunyani; of the Public Records Office, London, and librarians at the British Library, the Library of the Royal Anthropological Society (Museum of Mankind, London), and the Herskovits Library at Northwestern University.

This project builds on the work of many students. Binghamton graduate students Andrew Black (1990, 1994), Alex Caton (1995), Maria das Dores Cruz (1994), Brian Thomas (1994), Larissa Thomas (1995), and Syracuse University student Leith Smith (since 1994) each contributed immeasurably to our archaeological fieldwork and interpretation. Tim Knapp and Laurie Miroff worked as graduate assistants in our Binghamton laboratory. A number of undergraduate volunteers have assisted us in inventorying and documenting the vast quantities of archaeological materials from our excavations: Maura Cahill, Brian Crandall, Diane DeMartino, Susan DeLeonardo, Krista Feichtinger, Michael Flynn, Samantha Guilday, Rebecca Stollman, Mia VanDeMark, and Chuck Wilke. Thanks to all for their enthusiastic participation.

I am grateful to colleagues who contributed to this project, knowingly or unknowingly. Peter Stahl analyzed the animal bones from our 1989, 1994, and 1995 excavations. Christopher DeCorse examined the imported artifacts from Makala Kataa. Merrick Posnansky shared information about Begho that has helped me understand its relationship with Banda. Leonard Crossland shared knowledge of Begho ceramics. Susan Pollock commented on iterations of writing that found their way into this volume. Through the course of many seminars and conferences, students and colleagues at Binghamton and other institutions challenged me to think more clearly. Finally, Rob Mann and Paul Reckner undertook close readings of the manuscript, as did several anonymous reviewers. I am grateful to them all.

I reserve the largest debt to last. Banda and its history has loomed large in the life of my family for close to two decades. My husband, Peter Stahl, has been unflagging in his support of this work, and his influence as a sounding board for ideas is reflected throughout. His thoughtful advice has sustained my confidence and pointed the way out of more than one dead end. He has taken on the role of mom and dad during my repeated absences from the home front, offering support that many women never experience. It seems insufficient to say that, without him, the research that sustains this study would not have been possible. The lives of my daughters, Christina and Emma, have also been shaped by Banda history. For the periods of absence and the moments of distraction when I was here, I apologize. But know that you've sustained me throughout and there is no greater joy in my life than you.

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Refracted visions of Africa's past

The study of Africa's past has been divided, pie-like, between disciplines with separate yet overlapping histories: history, archaeology, and, more recently, anthropology. These divisions mirror disciplinary boundaries that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as the academy took its modern form. During the present century, these divisions at times blurred, yet each discipline carries with it the freight of its own history (Wolf 1994:1), the assumptions and methods that shape inquiry, the prism through which disciplinary perspectives are refracted. In this chapter, I examine the historic turn in anthropology (cf. McDonald 1996) and its relationship with African history, examining the promise of a robust multidisciplinary understanding of Africa's past. Few studies have delivered on that promise, and I examine how now-rejected paradigms continue to inhibit meaningful integration of historical, anthropological, and archaeological insights into Africa's past. More specifically, I examine a series of epistemological legacies that shape methods of historical reasoning, including progressive evolutionism, the direct historic approach, structural functionalism, and tribal models. I argue that these legacies actively create and maintain a series of silences about Africa's past, silences that are perpetuated by contemporary academic practice.

Silences in the production of history
The textbook history of our youth was a history of states and statesmen, of men primarily, and Europeans predominantly, with a firm focus on events of evident significance. It was a history peopled by few, absent of many. It was a vision that first *Annales*, then British social historians worked to expand by including those absent from European history – peasants, workers, and women. These scholars sought to write *total histories*, inclusive of all. Others worked to produce histories inclusive of non-European peoples – to demonstrate that Africans had a history which could be retrieved despite a dearth of textual sources. Yet these acts of inclusion entail silences of their own, for silences enter the process of historical production at multiple moments: "the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of *narratives*); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance)" (Trouillot 1995:26; emphasis original). Uneven power inheres in each of these moments, actively creating mentions and silences. Thus, history is a dialectic of mentions and silences, silences that cannot be overcome merely by expanding the empirical base of history (Trouillot 1995:48–49).

　　Trouillot's exploration of how power shapes mentions and silences in the history of the Haitian Revolution provides a springboard for examining the epistemological and methodological challenges of working at the intersection of anthropology, history, and archaeology. Though I argue that archaeology has much to contribute, we should not envision archaeology as merely filling an empirical void – adding to the evidential base of African (or other) history. Rather, we need to examine how archaeological evidence creates its own mentions and silences, exploring the power of archaeology in the production of history. Further, we must examine the unacknowledged power of methodology in shaping our vision of African history, interrogating the silences created by: foundational categories like structure; ethnographic models; essentialist views of identity and ethnicity; the mentions and silences of documents and oral histories; the foundational categories of ages and stages in archaeology; and forms of historical reasoning that render the partialities of early accounts more complete by reference to later sources.

Envisioning Africa's past

Constructions of Africa's past were long shaped by the perception that African societies represented earlier stages in human development, and therefore a distant past. A pervasive and persistent progressive evolutionary view – widely held by colonial officers and early scholars alike – contributed to the view that Africans lacked history. African societies were perceived as bounded units that could usefully be slotted into a unitary evolutionary hierarchy. Contact with the "outside," and therefore "history," was perceived as recent and the source of only superficial change. A traditional present connected seamlessly with a relatively unchanging past. These assumptions differentially molded the perspectives of the disciplines among which the study of Africa's past was divided. When these assumptions were questioned, each discipline responded in terms of existing agendas. Differences remained in foundational concepts, and in the type, scale, and temporal context of the societies focused on by each discipline, differences that sabotaged efforts at interdisciplinary cooperation in the experimental moment of the early independence period (Vansina 1962; Vansina et al. 1964; cf. Robertshaw 2000; Schmidt 1978, 1990; Vansina 1995). We are now arguably in the midst of another experimental moment. The recent rapprochement between history and anthropology has seen historians more attentive to the social dimensions of history, and anthropologists attuned to the temporal dimensions of cultural production (Dirks 1996; Eley 1996; Faubion 1993; Feierman 1993; Moore 1986:1; Sahlins 1993). Yet each discipline has brought to the rapprochement working assumptions and practices from earlier disciplinary incarnations that lend distinctive shape to their end products. In this chapter I briefly consider the epistemological legacy that each discipline – anthropology, history, and archaeology – brings to the study of Africa's past, and reflect on the challenges of working in interdisciplinary spaces. I do not intend an exhaustive historical treatment. As Ortner (1995:176) observed, "In this era of interdisciplinarity, scholarly exhaustiveness is more unattainable than ever." Rather, I sketch the preoccupations of the disciplines, focusing on Anglophone literature.

Anthropological visions of Africa's past

Historically oriented studies in anthropology bear the imprint of an ethnographic genre developed through the writings of British social anthropologists. This genre has been extensively critiqued and its contours are well known (Asad 1973; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Fabian 1983; Hymes 1969; Koponen 1986; Thornton 1983; Vansina 1987; Wolf 1984). Its focus was on simple societies in rural contexts, perceived as bounded and isolated from neighboring societies, little changed from a traditional past (cf. Lewis 1998). Under the combined influences of French sociology and a colonial concern to establish effective governance, anthropological attention focused on social structure and political organization (Moore 1993). Yet despite an emphasis on social statics (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940; Radcliffe-Brown and Forde 1950), it is naive to suggest that anthropologists were unaware of the changes wrought by missionization and colonial rule (cf. Goody 1990, 1998). As Moore (1994:29–73) has pointed out, anthropologists of the period wrote about culture contact and social change (Fortes 1938; Gluckman 1958; Mair 1938; Malinowski 1938, 1945). Importantly, however, they treated the topic separately from their structural-functional descriptions of tribal societies, producing two genres:

> One was the closed description of the way of life of particular African peoples, a kind of timeless abstraction of "the way it probably was" before the colonial period, as if native life could be conceived as a self-contained system uncontaminated by outside contacts. The second mode of description was entirely different and was concerned with the historical moment at which the fieldwork was done. This genre provided data on everything from labor migration to the impact of colonial institutions.
> (Moore 1994:39)

This split in the literature thus flowed from the sense that the study of culture contact was ancillary to the central project of the structural-functionalist (Thomas 1989:6).

The preoccupations of mid-century anthropology created a distinctive prism through which African societies were viewed, a vision refracted by a lingering progressive evolutionary view of the world. These characteristics included: (1) an emphasis on social statics – structure – disembedded from the dynamics of culture change as evidence of "modernity" was stripped away (Goody 1990); (2) a focus on kinship and political systems, and a concomitant lack of interest in the material world; (3) a concern with functionally integrated, bounded cultures, associated with territories and conceived as types (acephalous, segmentary, etc.); (4) primary emphasis on tribal or "primitive" societies, with less attention to indigenous African states, or so-called detribalized peoples (Ekeh 1990); (5) a focus on homogeneous groups that corresponded to the anthropological notion of "tribe," and a concomitant lack of interest in more heterogeneous societies that often occupied the interstitial areas between homogeneous "tribes" (Kopytoff 1987:4–5); and (6) a lack of interest in connections between societies of different scales (Goody 1990; Sharpe 1986).

Anthropology faced a growing crisis of relevance in the immediate postcolonial

period, marginalized in Africa because of its focus on "primitive people and their quaint customs" (Shaw 1990:219; also Ekeh [1990:665–666]). Partly in response, anthropologists developed an interest in the temporal dimensions of social process through the 1970s and '80s (cf. Cohn 1987; Evans-Pritchard 1962). The roots of this interest were diverse (Faubion 1993). Ethnohistory[1] drew attention to a long history of change that flowed from European encounters, whether direct or indirect (Cohn 1987:57–58; Trigger 1982, 1985). Growing attention to global interdependencies wrought by capitalist expansion led proponents of modernization, dependency, and world systems theories to see economic change as a catalyst to social change. This challenged a vision of non-western societies as isolated and bounded social units. Drawing on the work of Braudel, Wallerstein (1974) argued that a capitalist world system had united the globe from the sixteenth century. His work resonated with that of anthropologists studying New World peasant societies (Mintz 1985; Roseberry 1988:162–165, 1989; Wolf 1982). Wolf combined insights from decades of research among peasants with Wallerstein's global perspective to document how the lives of non-European peoples were affected by the expansion of European capital. His book (Wolf 1982) brought the work of ethnohistorians, previously marginal within mainstream anthropology, to the attention of a broader audience.

The 1980s saw growing attention to the implications of European expansion for culture change (e.g., Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1992; Mintz 1985; Moore 1986; Ortner 1990; Sahlins 1981, 1985; Stoler 1985; Trigger 1985; Wilmsen 1989). Historical concerns were firmly embedded in African anthropology by the 1990s (e.g., Berry 1993; Guyer 1988; Moore and Vaughan 1994; Moore 1993). These studies rejected evolutionary schema that severed connections between contemporary societies of different scales, slotting them into different levels of evolutionary development. They complemented anthropologically informed studies by historians who documented similar processes in Africa (Feierman 1993). But anthropologists questioned the primacy of the "core" in determining the response of the "periphery," prompting interest in the agency of local peoples in the face of global change (Moore 1987; Ortner 1984; Wolf 1982). Though the historical turn in anthropology lacks theoretical integration (Peel 1995:582), many authors have been concerned with the relationship between structure, event, and process at the local level (Moore 1986:1–12; Ortner 1990; Sahlins 1981; Stoler 1985:viii), and with colonization as a cultural process (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997; Sahlins 1993; Stoler and Cooper 1997).

In many respects the historical ethnography that has emerged departs radically from the modal anthropology of earlier decades. But in other respects historical anthropology (in its diverse forms) carries the baggage of an earlier anthropology in its: (1) continued emphasis on structure and its determinant role in history; (2) lingering reliance on the notion of relatively stable precolonial or precontact cultures that stand as a reference point for change in the colonial period; and (3) continued focus on relatively homogeneous "tribal" societies (Kopytoff 1987). I explore these in turn.

Historical anthropologists debate the role of structure in history. In his influential

study of the Sandwich Islands, Sahlins (1981, 1985) argued that cultural structures
are reproduced through the actions of intelligent and intentional subjects who do not
necessarily "use existing categories in prescribed ways" (Sahlins 1985:145). Though
culture is always at risk of being transformed through action (1985:149), it is perhaps
most so in contact situations, conceptualized as conjunctures of structures. Sahlins
stressed the intentionality of subjects, an intentionality that can only be understood
within a specific cultural context, and not by reference to an all-encompassing prac-
tical reason (Sahlins 1995). He warned against the imperialism of a historiography
that treats cultures as recent and incoherent products of an encounter with the world
system (1993:6–7). For Sahlins (1993:15), an encompassing structure provides the
terms of debate for members of society – categories may be contested, but they
belong to the same social universe, to a meaningful order of differences if they are to
be contested at all. Thus, for some historical anthropologists, structure provides the
vehicle through which meaning is forged, reproduced, and sometimes transformed
(Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; cf. Ortner 1990). Change is accom-
plished through structure. In some sense then, structure must be antecedent to
change: "If culture must be conceived as always and only changing, lest one commit
the mortal sin of essentialism, then there can be no such thing as identity, or even
sanity, let alone continuity" (Sahlins 1993:4). As a methodological consequence,
events that potentially transform structure (read "culture"; Roseberry 1989) are
located outside culture. Culture is thus situated in history, but not genuinely histor-
icized (Dirks 1996; Peel 1992).

While this raises issues of chickens and eggs and which came first, my concern
here is not with structure in a theoretical sense. Rather, I draw attention to the
methodological and narrative consequences of an emphasis on structure and struc-
tural coherency. Historical anthropological studies are largely preoccupied with
changes associated with the penetration of capital and colonialism. When structure
is conceived as transformed through a "conjuncture of structures" (Sahlins
1981:33–66), it becomes a prerequisite to establish the nature of cultural structures
prior to the conjuncture. History is thus introduced after culture (Dirks 1996:27;
also Peel [1983:1–7, 14], Thomas [1991:36–37]). This has narrative consequences.
Early chapters are devoted to laying out – some more explicitly than others – the
character of "precontact" or "precolonial" structure. The product is reminiscent of
what American anthropologists conceptualized as "salvage" ethnography – the
retrieval of culture in "grandfather's time." This presents a methodological conun-
drum – how to reconstruct a precontact or precolonial period that by definition
precedes the written accounts of Europeans whose presence signals the beginning
of a "conjuncture" (Etherington 1992). I take up these methodological issues in
Chapter 2.

A preoccupation with structure is related to another, largely unexamined, legacy
of earlier anthropology – a focus on relatively homogeneous "tribal" societies (Ekeh
1990). As Kopytoff (1987) observed, anthropologists felt most at home in societies
that fit a tribal model whose epistemological roots lay in the European search for
national identity. As anthropologists became interested in historical issues, they

continued to focus on the societies that preoccupied earlier anthropologists. Few were drawn to the study of "ethnically ambiguous marginal societies" that were ubiquitous along what Kopytoff (1987:4) termed the "internal frontier." It is

> on the fringes of the numerous established African societies . . . [that] most African polities and societies have, so to speak, been "constructed" out of the bits and pieces – human and cultural – of existing societies. This posits a process in which incipient small polities are produced by other similar and usually more complex societies . . . Instead of a primordial embryo – a kind of tribal homunculus – maturing through history while preserving its ethnic essence, what we have here is a magnet that grows by attracting to itself the ethnic and cultural detritus produced by the routine workings of other societies.
> (Kopytoff 1987:3, 6–7)

Migration, ubiquitous in Africa, contributed to the formation of what Kopytoff calls frontier societies (Cohen 1985:214–215). Such frontier areas are characterized by a degree of ethnic fluidity that is revealed only in historical perspective (Goody 1990, 1998; Launay 1995). People have diverse origins, some migrating in as part of a larger group, others as individuals or families seeking refuge, and still others as captives. Frontiers are initially characterized by an institutional vacuum that is overcome by a process of social construction as people forge a new society (Kopytoff 1987:25–39, 1999). While they may draw on the organizing principles of their societies of origin, not everyone shares the same set of organizing principles. One of the challenges that faces societies of multiethnic origins (and there are many, not confined to Africa) is to forge organizing principles, some common understanding of how the world works – a structure if you will. But we might anticipate two consequences: (1) a certain "structural dissonance" early in the formation of a frontier society as members with diverse backgrounds draw on their own principles of meaning and organization; and (2) the resulting "structure" may look quite different from its donor societies, forged as it were through processes of confrontation, compromise, and contestation shaped by power and differential interest (see David and Sterner [1999] for a related discussion; cf. Kopytoff 1999). Yet the very possibility of "structural dissonance" is negated at the outset by a foundational assumption of cultural coherence in some historical anthropological studies:

> In order for categories to be contested at all, there must be a common system of intelligibility, extending to the grounds, means, modes, and issues of disagreement. It would be difficult to understand how a society could function, let alone how any knowledge of it could be constituted, if there were not some meaningful order *in* the differences.
> (Sahlins 1993:15)

While an assumption of cultural coherency may work well in the study of societies to which anthropologists have been drawn – i.e., those that best fit the tribal model described by Kopytoff (1987) – what of frontier societies (like the Banda case study

considered in Chapters 3–7) forged from members of diverse ethnic-linguistic groups characterized by different political systems, forms of kinship, and in some instances distinct religions – different "schemas" to use Ortner's (1990:60) term? Part of the challenge would have been to forge a "common system of intelligibility," a process that implies power, contestation, and ultimately silencing. At the very least, in the interim, we can imagine the existence of competing systems of meaning and understanding that lacked overarching coherency, what Amselle (1993:15) calls "hybrid systems . . . with crossbred forms of logic (*logiques métisses*)." And perhaps the character of frontier societies is not so distinct from societies with more homogeneous origins if we treat culture as something that is not

> simply arbitrary rather than natural in the usual terms of semiotics, but as a particular conglomerate of constructions set in motion by agents, produced within and through social practices (especially practices involving power and inequality) operationalized in the modern age through the agencies of the state and the activities of capital.
> (Dirks 1996:36)

In some sense, then, the foundational category "structure" is called into question – but this need not imply incoherency or disorder; rather, it suggests that structure is something of a moving target – in motion, never quite secure, always formulating, never quite formulated, a site of struggle more intense at some times than others (Reddy 1992:156), a process implied in Amselle's term "primordial syncretism" that aims to capture "the idea of a multiplicity, a plurality of belonging at the beginning, which seemed to me to be the main characteristic of precolonial Africa" (Amselle 1993:29–30). If this is the case, history, which is usually conceptualized as being about change (Dirks 1996:31), does not depend on conjunctures or outside events; rather it inheres in the process of cultural production and reproduction in the face of local, regional, and subcontinental "events." Yet change should not be fetishized as implying only difference, or movement away from earlier practice, for, as Sahlins (1993:16–17) argues, change can be directed at maintaining continuity: "The first commercial impulse of the people is not to become just like us but more like themselves. They turn foreign goods to the service of domestic ideas, to the objectification of their own relations and notions of the good life" (cf. Gluckman 1958).

Problematizing the category of structure has important consequences for how we conceptualize a deeper past, a past beyond the conjuncture with capital and colonialism that has preoccupied historical anthropologists. For despite broad recognition that "'peripheral' populations do not acquire history only when they are impelled along its paths by the machinations of merchants, missionaries, military men, manufacturers, or ministers of state," and that "a truly historical anthropology is only possible to the extent that it is capable of illuminating the endogenous historicity of social worlds" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:24), historical anthropology has concerned itself primarily with the encounter between natives and newcomers. Historical anthropologists have seldom concerned themselves with a deeper past, other than to use it as a reference point for the changes wrought by western

expansion (Cohen 1985:220). Precolonial culture lurks in the distant past as a refer-ent, more or less explicit, against which to judge colonial change. The role of the pre-colonial seems to be linked to the nature of the society under investigation – it is less visible if present at all in the study of plantation laborers and peasantries (e.g., Roseberry 1989; Stoler 1985), but it remains an important referent for those who study societies that were the focus of an earlier anthropology (e.g., Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1992; Moore 1986). This structural legacy also has important consequences for how archaeologists model ancient African societies, a topic to which I return in Chapter 2.

Many historical anthropological studies focus on a lived past, retaining an inter-est in the standard historical question of how the past created the present; but others frame the question rather differently, asking how the past is selectively appropriated, suppressed, or invented in the present (Borofsky 1987; Chapman et al. 1989:5; cf. Trouillot 1995). Tonkin's (1992) analysis of oral history exemplifies this trend. Tonkin is little concerned with finding "residues" of the past in oral histories or with a lived past. Instead she analyzes oral histories as contemporary products, and is con-cerned primarily with how the past is mobilized in the present – producing, in effect, an ethnography of historical production. This literature builds on the "invention of tradition" literature that emerged from Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) influential collection. In anthropology, this has intersected with a growing literature on the con-struction of identity in the colonial and postcolonial periods (Cohn 1996; Launay 1995; Lentz 1994, 1995; Schultz 1984; Spear and Waller 1993; Spiegel 1994; Wilmsen 1989:24–63, 1995; Wilmsen et al. 1994; Worby 1994). These studies reject visions of ethnicity as primordial endowment, examining instead the conditions under which identity claims were invented, imposed, resisted, and grounded in claims about the past, acknowledging the knowledge/power/truth strategies that undergird ethnic formulations.

This literature points to a central tension in historical anthropology over the cen-trality of a lived past to the research agendas of scholars. Constructionism demands that we be attentive to the social, cultural, and political-economic contexts in which knowledge about the past is produced and to the power dimensions of knowledge production. But the danger of extreme constructionism is that we lose sight of the lived past, difficult as it may be to access. Trouillot (1995:2, 29) usefully distinguishes between "historicity 1" (sociohistorical process, or "what happened") and "historic-ity 2" (historical narratives, or "what is said to have happened"), but insists that we cannot focus solely on one or the other. The challenge for historical anthropology then is to write

> a historical anthropology of rural Africa in which time is not merely
> "structural" or process inevitably "cyclical"; in which "noncapitalist" worlds
> are not made to slumber in the ether of the ethnographic present; in which
> the past is reduced neither to evolutionary teleology nor to a succession of
> random events.
> (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:96)

But we should also endeavor to write histories in which the joys, sorrows, challenges, and triumphs that animated the lives of men, women, and children in the past – in short, their lived pasts – are not erased by a recognition that our knowledge of their lives is positioned and shaped by concerns of the present.

Historical visions of Africa's past

History coalesced around its distinctive evidence – written documents – excluding non-literate societies from its domain. It in effect became the study of civilizations and, more narrowly, the study of states and statesmen. Attention focused on individuals and events, rather than collectivities and structural relations (Ricoeur 1980:10). Only with the emergence of *Annales* history in France, and British social history in the post-war period, did emphasis shift to the history of collectivities and subaltern groups (Bloch 1953; Ricoeur 1980; Thompson 1963; Zunz 1985; for social history's deeper roots, Wilson [1993]). This new history drew on non-traditional sources – folklore, maps, and landscapes – to recover the history of ordinary people in building a "history from below." Both aspired to produce "total histories," inclusive of those who had been outside history (Wilson 1993:20–21). Experience became a foundational category (Joyce 1995:79; Tilly 1985; Zunz 1985) as social history became oriented around the problem of how ordinary people "lived the big changes" (capitalism and state making; Tilly 1985; Zunz 1985; cf. Cohen 1985), a trend exemplified by Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963).

At the close of World War II, Africa appeared to Europe as a continent without history. This vision was shaped by a "parched" documentary landscape (Cohen and Odhiambo 1989:16) and persistent evolutionary models (Fage 1970). African societies were seen as locked into evolutionary stages representative of a distant European past (Fabian 1983), with development and modernization as vehicles to pull Africa out of its evolutionary slumber. Early in the 1960s the Oxford historian, Hugh Trevor-Roper, reiterated the Hegelian view of African history (Holl 1995) when he proclaimed to his BBC audience that Africa had no history, for "there is only the unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe" (Trevor-Roper 1965:9).

Trevor-Roper's articulation of a widely held sentiment became a battle-cry for the first generation of Africanist historians who, in the wake of independence, sought to decolonize African history. The lack of scholarship on precolonial history was identified as a pressing void (Ekeh 1990:672; Fage 1970; Vansina 1962:128; Vansina et al. 1964), and expatriate historians and their African students began to assert that Africa had a retrievable past. Like *Annales* and social historians, African historians confronted a thin and inherently biased documentary record. They pioneered the use of new sources that required new methodologies. Vansina's methodological treatise (1961, 1965) marked the debut of a new approach to African historiography in which historians drew on a variety of non-traditional sources, including oral traditions, archaeological evidence, and historical linguistics. Massive efforts were devoted to collecting oral traditions before they disappeared (Birmingham 1970:55; Gray 1970; Vansina 1962), and in this regard, African history shared an agenda with

an earlier "salvage" ethnography. The focus was firmly on the precolonial, with the goal of creating an autonomous African past (Simensen 1990:268).

Significantly, however, the agenda of the new African historiography was still shaped by the progressive evolution to which it was ostensibly a reaction (Mudimbe 1994:xv). The assumption of progress was not questioned; rather, the goal was to demonstrate that Africa *too* had experienced progress, thereby enhancing respect for Africa and its newly independent nations (Neale 1985, 1986). "Where colonial writing had tried to show that Africans stood outside of the 'mainstream' of progress, post-independence writing sought to portray them as active within it; the mainstream, however, is a Western idea, and one which scarcely anyone thought to question" (Neale 1985:3–4). A generation of scholars thus worked to counter Trevor-Roper's claims, but, because they did not question the assumption of progressive development, continued to write African history in a "Trevor-Roperian" way (Fuglestad 1992:310). Their focus was on kingdoms and states and the "right to universality, and thus the acknowledgment of African contributions to the make-up of humanity" (Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe 1993:1). Stateless, so-called acephalous societies were important only insofar as they represented precursors of more complex forms. Indeed, the prominent African historian Ali Mazrui expressed concern that more documentation of simple groups might perpetuate the image of Africa as unprogressive (Neale 1985:15).

Thus the focus of early African historiography was on states and statesmen, though an interest in economies developed early on. Its processual focus, an overarching concern with dynamics rather than statics, distinguished it from anthropology. But early independence historiography was shaped by values drawn from a European liberal tradition – "personal rights, constitutional freedom, and economic liberalities" (Simensen 1990:272), and marked by efforts to demonstrate the rationality of natives (Temu and Swai 1981:22; e.g., Wilks 1975; see critique by McCaskie [1992, 1995]; cf. Wilks 1993:xvi).

An early emphasis on precolonial societies was overtaken in the 1970s by a growing concern with the effects of European imperialism and colonialism (Coquery-Vidrovitch and Jewsiewicki 1986; Feierman 1993; Wallerstein 1986). More radical forms of historical interpretation emerged with mode of production analyses, and the study of peasants and the oppressed (Coquery-Vidrovitch 1969; Terray 1977, 1980; see Jewsiewicki [1989:16–26]). Underdevelopment came to be seen as a systemic consequence of capitalism's expansion (Rodney 1972). But mode of production analyses suffered from ahistoricity; change was confined to specific conjunctures, specifically the penetration of capitalism. And because reconstruction of precolonial modes of production relied on colonial sources, anachronisms derived from the study of transitional forms were imported into the past (Jewsiewicki 1989:20). Mode of production analyses reproduced perceived divisions between societies of different scales by opposing "precapitalist" and "capitalist" societies, diverting attention from encompassing networks (Amselle 1993:16). As historians reacted against mechanistic formulations of capitalist penetration, they focused on the agency and resistance of ordinary people, prompting new work in African social

history. A concern with the local spurred studies of how household economies were affected by involvement in cash crop production (e.g., Etienne 1977; Isaacman and Roberts 1995; Roberts 1984, 1992; see Berry [1993], Guyer [1988, 1991] for parallel concerns in anthropology).

As historians of Africa moved toward social history, the self-confident project of total history suffered a blow from poststructuralist and postmodern critiques prompted by the so-called linguistic turn in social history (Eley 1996; Joyce 1995; Reddy 1992; Vernon 1994). Critiques focused on the totalizing, universalizing qualities of a "modern" history committed to grasping society as a whole (Eley 1996:213). Drawing on semiotic stances in anthropology, Saussurean linguistics, and Foucauldian notions of discourse, some historians stressed the intermediary role of language in our experience of the world, and the power/knowledge relationship that inheres in the production of history. For example, White's (1973) *Metahistory* drew attention to the structuring force of narrative and rhetorical strategies, emphasizing the role of aesthetics in the production of history. Where earlier social historians stressed the evidence of experience as crucial to social history, critics claimed that experience was one among a number of foundational categories taken for granted in historical practice (Vernon 1994:88). By naturalizing experience, treating it as an unmediated, transcendent, transparent rendering of "reality," social history was accused of reproducing the ideological systems it purported to analyze, as essentializing differences created and reified by the categories that shaped "experience" (Scott 1991; for a critique see Downs [1993]). Critics refused "a separation between 'experience' and language" and "insist[ed] instead on the productive quality of discourse" (Scott 1991:793). Social historians were thus challenged to reorient their studies and "take as their project *not* the reproduction and transmission of knowledge said to be arrived at through experience, but the analysis of the production of that knowledge itself" (Scott 1991:797). The problem resonates with that of structure in anthropology in that categories that shape experience (class, gender, and so on) were taken as antecedent. In this sense, there is a common thread between a revisioned social history and a historical anthropology that seeks to historicize culture (as opposed to placing culture in history; Dirks 1996). Critics of social history suggest that it is no longer enough to ask how the everyday world of ordinary people came to be; rather, we must examine how received categories shape our reconstructions of their lives (e.g., "everyday life," "ordinary people"; Certeau 1984; Eley 1996:198).

Postmodern and poststructural influences have been most keenly felt through postcolonial critiques of Africanist historiography. Drawing on parallel critiques of Orientalism (Said 1978), African philosophers examined the invention of Africa and the construction of African studies (Appiah 1992; Mudimbe 1988, 1994). Historians began to reflect on the epistemological ethnocentrism of African historical studies (Newbury 1986), and to recognize that what passed as radical scholarship in the early independence period was rooted in nineteenth-century European epistemologies. "To claim that we were able to change others' worlds without changing ourselves, the epistemological and theoretical tools, and our narrative conventions, was just an

artifice" (Jewsiewicki 1989:36). The tension in anthropology over the centrality of lived pasts (Trouillot's [1995] "historicity 1") compared to the forces that shape history-making in the present ("historicity 2") thus resonated with parallel developments in history.

Archaeological visions of Africa's past

An enduring legacy of archaeology has been the commitment to a project of world prehistory that seeks a universal history of humankind underwritten by a progressive evolutionary vision. The study of prehistory received a major impetus from the discovery of deep time in the mid-nineteenth century (Trigger 1989:91–94), resulting in a powerful new allegiance between archaeological evidence and the comparative method (Kehoe 1991). Nineteenth-century antiquarians busied themselves with the task of filling in deep time, constructing the past of pre-literate Europe by reference to "primitive" societies from beyond Europe's borders (Lubbock 1865; Nilsson 1868; Wilson 1862).

The powerful new evolutionary synthesis that guided both anthropological and archaeological studies in the late nineteenth century naturalized the existing world order and legitimized the domination of Europe over its colonies (Trigger 1989:110–147). The "Big Sequence" communicated a message at home as well, for although change was viewed as natural and inevitable, the emphasis on *gradual* change simultaneously reinforced the status quo. Thus Pitt Rivers believed archaeology could "show the working classes the slow pace of self improvement in the prehistoric past, and the dangers of over-rapid change" (quoted in Dennell [1990:552]).

The early twentieth century saw increased emphasis on diffusion and migration as sources of change in both anthropology and archaeology (Trigger 1989:150–155); however, progressive developmental ideas were not altogether abandoned (Stocking 1974:422–424, 1987:152). The appeal of diffusion and migration was shaped by several factors: nationalism and class conflict at the end of the nineteenth century that directed attention to the origins and movements of ethnic groups (Trigger 1989:161–167); the growing complexity of archaeological evidence and new knowledge of regional correspondences; and practical concerns of dating (Childe and Burkitt 1932). Cross-dating relied on comparing archaeological sequences in areas with no documentary record (i.e., pre-Roman Europe) to those associated with literate cultures (i.e., the Near East and Egypt). Yet despite the emphasis on diffusion, an evolutionary classification continued to shape archaeological inquiry. Gamble (1993:40–44) terms this meshing of diffusionism and evolutionism the *imperial tradition*, which divided the world into innovative centers where new technologies originated (Europe and the Near East), and passive hinterlands to which innovations subsequently diffused (Africa). The result was an "erasure of local history" (Schmidt and Patterson 1995:4). African archaeology emerged within this intellectual milieu, with profound implications for archaeological visions of Africa's past.

Africanist archaeologists have historically eschewed theory (Schmidt 1995:133), often viewing themselves as constructing basic culture history that was theory-neutral; however, progressive evolutionism is implied in the age/stage framework that

underwrites African culture history (Stahl 1999b). During the colonial period, Africans were assumed to be late-comers to the revolutionary developments that marked human progress – agriculture, metallurgy, and civilization – and because of a presumed lack of time depth, Iron Age sites were perceived as inherently uninteresting (Clark 1990:189). Lack of interest in Iron Age sites stemmed from an assumption that the Iron Age graded into the ethnographic present. Thus Iron Age sites, especially those that were late in time, were assumed to have been inhabited by peoples little different from contemporary Africans in rural settings. Political motivations also shaped disinterest in Iron Age studies in southern Africa, where investigations might invite controversy over the links between archaeological sites and the marginalized Africans in the settler colonies of Rhodesia and South Africa (Hall 1990:64; Kuklick 1991).

Thus on the eve of African independence, archaeologists perceived Africa as a backwater. Later prehistory was seen as a mosaic of invasion and diffusion that introduced crucial developments into Africa from the Mediterranean world (Andah 1995; McIntosh and McIntosh 1988:102–110; Okafor 1993; Sinclair, Shaw, and Andah 1993:16–31; Stahl 1984). Iron Age sites were assumed to represent ancestors of contemporary African agriculturalists, who were perceived by colonial officials and scholars alike as relatively backward peoples. Several authors have examined the racism inherent in assumptions about later period archaeology that denied African achievement, especially pronounced in the interpretation of Great Zimbabwe (Garlake 1982; Hall 1990, 1995; Holl 1990; Kuklick 1991; Trigger 1989:130–138). Scenarios of stagnation were shaped by a submerged evolutionism and a preference to see change as due to outside influence, a fact made more obvious by the paucity of direct evidence (Holl 1990:310; Stahl 1984:20).

African independence redefined the importance of the precolonial past. New states required new histories that demonstrated the achievements of African peoples, and their intellectual capacity to make their own history (Temu and Swai 1981:18–22). Retrieving African history required new sources, including archaeology, and a focus on the Iron Age sites that represented the historic heritage of African peoples. Archaeologists turned their efforts to two new ends: (1) forging national histories for newly emerging nation states, which translated into increased attention to Iron Age sites; and (2) countering the image of Africa as an unprogressive cultural backwater.

The post-independence agenda of African archaeology affected the types of archaeological sites targeted for investigation, with profound implications for our understanding of Africa's past (Stahl 1999b). In order to counter the image of Africa as unprogressive, archaeologists worked to document the antiquity of revolutionary developments (as defined by Childe [1936]; the transition to agriculture, metallurgy, and urbanism). Interest in these developments was shaped by the same submerged progressive evolutionary agenda that had underwritten an earlier African archaeology – the perception of Africa as backward could only be countered by demonstrating that it *too* was active in the story of human development (Rowlands 1989a, 1989b). Post-independence archaeologists targeted sites that were likely to

document these important revolutions, especially the early town sites that signaled the origins of complex societies (see R. McIntosh [1999] on how these endeavors were shaped by western imagery of cities). Progressive evolution is, after all, a race – it matters who got there first (Neale 1985:10). Little attention was paid to the relationship between societies of different scales (i.e., between urban centers and their hinterlands), in part because evolution is a cumulative phenomenon, rendering societies perceived as survivals of earlier stages (i.e., so-called acephalous societies) at best uninteresting, or at worst obsolete. The result was a winnowing of variability through time, with attention diverted away from so-called simple societies that were perceived as remnants of earlier developmental stages (Andah 1995; Stahl 1999b).

Ironically, the revolution in radiometric dating that placed Africa center-stage in the story of human origins further marginalized African archaeology in world prehistory. Archaeology was reinfused with evolutionary ideas in the 1960s (Trigger 1989:289–328), resulting in renewed interest in the origins of agriculture and civilization worldwide. Radiocarbon dates on early agricultural sites in Africa were disappointingly late in worldwide perspective, especially in light of Murdock's (1959) claims for antiquity (Stahl 1984). So too were dates for iron metallurgy (i.e., Tylecote 1975). Urban sites had long been assumed to postdate Arab contact, and not until the late 1970s was there archaeological evidence to the contrary (McIntosh and McIntosh 1984:74). These results confirmed, through scientific means, that African societies had been late-comers to all-important diplomas of progress. In more subtle fashion, it also confirmed the feeling that the lifestyle of present rural peoples differed little from their prehistoric ancestors. Steeped in a progressive evolutionist paradigm, archaeologists continued to employ the comparative method to draw connections between societies past and present. Using this well-established "omnivorous intellectual machine" (Fabian 1983:16), ethnographic snapshots of traditional cultures could be used to animate the lifestyles of the prehistoric past. Not surprisingly, the frequent (though not inevitable) result was a prehistoric past that closely resembled the "traditional" present.

Thus until relatively recently, archaeological interpretations of Africa's past were shaped by the following modal characteristics. (1) Although archaeologists were ostensibly interested in process, they were preoccupied with change *between*, rather than within, blocks of time (i.e., transitions between discrete ages/stages). Within these blocks, emphasis was primarily on statics – thus attempts to depict lifestyles of prehistoric cultures took the form of normative accounts, much like ethnographic snapshots. (2) An interest in economies underwritten by a progressive evolutionary agenda focused attention on the *origins* of technologies (potting and metallurgy) and adaptations like sedentism, food production, and urbanism. (3) The primary unit of analysis was the site, although sites were typically viewed as representative of larger units, loosely equivalent to the cultures/tribal entities described by ethnographers. (4) Though the scale of society varied through time, the emphasis in any given period (i.e., within the Iron Age) was on the most complex societal forms, effectively winnowing simple societies out of archaeological scenarios through time (Stahl 1999b).

And (5) the study of spatial connections between geographical areas was conditioned by an interest in diffusion of key traits like agriculture or food production.

The image of Africa's past that emerged from these archaeological investigations was difficult to reconcile with either historical or anthropological visions of African societies. As historians moved away from an early preoccupation with the glories of ancient states toward greater concern with European involvement and its consequences for Africa, archaeologists continued to focus on origins and antiquity, offering little to an interdisciplinary audience. The uncritical use of ethnographic description to animate archaeological remains created a past in the image of the present, and reinforced a sense of stasis prior to European intervention. In Chapter 2, I discuss recent archaeological research that departs from earlier practice, and demonstrates the potential of archaeology to deepen our understanding of Africa's past.

Working in interdisciplinary spaces

Scholars of the early independence period believed that a fruitful engagement between history, archaeology, and anthropology/sociology could shed new light on Africa's past. In retrospect, the interdisciplinary engagement promised by that experimental moment was sabotaged by the distinct epistemologies, questions, and methods that each discipline brought to bear on the study of Africa's past. We are arguably in the midst of another experimental moment in which there is incentive to work toward greater integration of anthropology, archaeology, and history. Disciplinary monologue has given way to dialogue between history and anthropology. There is a burgeoning interest in material culture and everyday life. Yet archaeology remains curiously isolated in this experimental moment. Few historians draw systematically on archaeological insights (Vansina 1995), and anthropologists even less so (Orser 1994:6).

While the time may be ripe for a powerful new synthesis between anthropology, history, and archaeology, working in interdisciplinary spaces, as this study does, is fraught with tensions that emerge from distinct epistemologies, foundational categories, and assumptions about the questions that count. Tensions also emerge from the distinct sources upon which each discipline draws. Most often these result in a subordination of one approach to the other or, worse yet, inattention to alternative approaches and perspectives. Yet these tensions are productive if viewed as supplemental. Dirks (1996:34–36) suggests that Derrida's notion of the supplement offers a way of theorizing the relationship between culture and history.

> A supplement is something that is added as if external to the thing itself, but its necessity paradoxically proclaims the essential inadequacy of the original. Supplementarity suggests why every dialectical structure must remain open, why no synthesis can be anything more than provisional. The supplement coexists with that which it supplements in a fundamentally destabilizing way. (Dirks 1996:35)

Conceiving of anthropological, historical, and archaeological perspectives, questions, and evidence as supplemental, rather than additive, places them in productive

tension, enabling us to see the possibilities and limits of their distinct forms of knowledge (cf. Hall 1992, 1994, 1999). Such a perspective also highlights the overlapping yet distinct processes involved in the production of mentions and silences within each discipline (Trouillot 1995).

A supplemental perspective necessarily draws attention to the questions and assumptions that shape inquiry within each field, and to where, within interdisciplinary spaces, those questions and assumptions are formulated. Questions and perspectives formulated in one arena may be at best unproductive or at worst disabling when translated to another. This suggests that the questions and assumptions that guide inquiry in one field may not be appropriate to others. For example, archaeology is disabled in a history that privileges textual metaphors and discourse, and in an anthropology that privileges meaning, for archaeological evidence is distinct from that of either history or anthropology (Stahl 2000a). We must acknowledge at the outset the role of power/knowledge/truth strategies in determining what counts as "evidence," lest we take the category of evidence as a given (Trouillot 1995). But both history and anthropology rely on evidence primarily based in language – what people said, and what people wrote about what they and others did. While powerful analyses can result when societies are viewed through the lens of their own epistemologies (Apter 1992; cf. Law [1995] for a historical example), archaeological sources – the material residues of life – are devoid of the linguistic cues that allow investigation of these epistemologies. While we access/create the reality of these material residues through language (i.e., in our descriptions of them), archaeological evidence is removed from the context in which it was used and imbued with meaning through language by the people who made and used the objects. While some archaeologists have experimented with textual metaphors and likened archaeological interpretation to a reading of the past (Hodder 1991; Hodder et al. 1995), applications have been less convincing than the rhetorical expositions of this stance (cf. Hall 1992, 1994, 1999).

But language is not the only means by which people forge meaning in the world. Material culture plays an important role in the process, and anthropologists are coming to recognize the importance of the "social life of things" (Appadurai 1986). Material objects are endowed with meaning through *practice*, and indeed play a role in forging, transforming, and reproducing meaning. In this sense, material objects are indexical of the "manner in which social relations were mapped out in tangible forms" (Hall 1993:178). Hall is one of the few archaeologists working in Africa to have taken up the problem of meaning and material culture in the past, adopting a poststructuralist semiotic stance. In a study of the colonial history of urban Cape Town, "By viewing the past as a set of complex texts, intertwined to form a discourse, we . . . avoid privileging written documents over the archaeological record, or artefact assemblages over travellers' accounts, probate records and paintings. Rather, they are all different views on a past which is revealed through comparison and, particularly, contradiction" (Hall 1994:167). Archaeological "texts" are valued especially for insights into the conditions of the underclass, underrepresented in documents and invisible in paintings. By juxtaposing the material record of upper-class

diet – which reveals a reliance on locally caught fish – against textual descriptions that emphasize Indian Ocean fish, Hall illustrates the symbolic load carried by diet, and the efforts made by upper-class people to distance themselves from the diet of the underclass which they in part shared (Hall 1992, 1994, 1999). But Hall's methodology works precisely because of the overlapping character of his sources – in other words, the documents, paintings, buildings, and material residues were produced by residents of a single society (that of Cape Town), and many by members of a single privileged class whose European background facilitates an interpretation of meaning. What of places where the sources are more partial, less overlapping, and where people did not share in a European understanding of the world? Here the retrieval of meaning implied in a semiotic approach promises less. While we may be able to glean something of the relationships between objects from contextual analysis (Lightfoot 1995), their meaning remains opaque, relying heavily on analogical models (Chapter 2).

Historians of the linguistic turn privilege language, and by extension texts. But textual metaphors privilege forms of analysis derived from literate societies, and divert attention from other ways of perceiving the world – through smell, taste, touch, and hearing – sensibilities that may be "central to the metaphoric organization of experience" and thus "potent conveyors of meaning and memory" (Stoller 1995:22, 30). An emphasis on text thus reinforces the mind/body split characteristic of modern academic practice (Stoller 1995:27). Recognition of this has contributed to a burgeoning literature on the body as a site of historical practice, with special attention to dress (Cohn 1996:106–162; Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997; Hendrickson 1996; Stoller 1995; Weiner and Schneider 1989). Growing recognition of the constructive and reconstructive capacity of objects in social life has reinvigorated the study of "material culture" (Appadurai 1986; Arnoldi et al. 1996; Cohn 1996:76–105; Miller 1987, 1998; Thomas 1991), *potentially* paving the way for a more robust consideration of archaeological evidence in historical anthropological studies. But for archaeological sources, especially those produced by nonliterate cultures for whom documentation is limited, we must move beyond text and textual metaphors, setting aside perhaps the question of meaning for reasons that I take up in Chapter 2. Archaeological sources have the potential of taking us beyond what people said and wrote, to *what they did in the world*, helping us to explore "the intended and unintended consequence of their thoughts and actions" (Kirk 1994:233; also Peel 1995:606), in short, yielding insight into the *practices of everyday life*. It is the site of everyday practice that archaeology can contribute to a historical anthropology that is "dedicated to exploring the processes that make and transform particular worlds" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:31). The common ground of everyday life is a potentially rich site for integrating historical, anthropological, and archaeological insights into the local consequences of colonization (Lightfoot et al. 1998). As the Comaroffs observed, colonization is the "reconstruction of the ordinary. Of things at once material, meaningful, mundane" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:293). A focus on everyday life can divert us from rushing "too quickly toward an agenda which deals with the relations of 'larger processes, big social structures,

and whole populations' . . . [and thus] losing sight of the intimate areas of social life where real contradictions are managed and actual structures are enraveled" (Cohen 1985:228). While we should not expect ethnographic, historical, and archaeological sources to combine neatly, additively, to yield a composite view of everyday life, this study works to demonstrate that, viewed supplementally, a richer view of African historical practice can result.

2

Envisioning Africa's lived past

For centuries Europeans accessed their past through the Other's present. The yawning expanse of deep time opened by Brixham Cave (Trigger 1989:93–94) was rapidly peopled in the image of the world's backward populations, neatly ordered according to the progressive developmentalism of Enlightenment conjectural histories. Book titles evoked the methodology that flowed from a progressive developmental epistemology: *Prehistoric Times as Illustrated by Ancient Remains and the Manners and Customs of Modern Savages* (Lubbock 1865), or *Ancient Hunters and their Modern Representatives* (Sollas 1915). By traveling in space, Europeans simultaneously traveled in time (Fabian 1983:8; also Thomas [1989]). Uniformitarian premises underwrote the methodology that shaped comparison of past and present; comparing like to like, savage to savage, barbarian to barbarian, prehistorians animated Europe's deep past, beyond the reach of documentary sources. Thus, for Lubbock (1865:426–582), descriptions of "non-metallic modern savages" supplemented the fragmentary insights of mute stone tools (Stahl 1993a:237–242). This comparative method – "that omnivorous intellectual machine permitting the 'equal' treatment of human culture at all times and in all places" (Fabian 1983:16–17) – held sway so long as categories of mundane and typological time (ages and stages, terms like traditional/modern, preliterate/literate, precapitalist/capitalist; Fabian 1983:22–23) dominated anthropology.

This chapter turns to the problem of how we envision a lived past in light of the changing disciplinary contours outlined in Chapter 1. Historians, anthropologists, and archaeologists today share an interest in how local, everyday practices were shaped and reshaped by broader historical forces. But as the pioneering Africanist historians recognized, new questions and problems require new methods (Vansina 1961; Vansina et al. 1964). We require new conceptual tools and approaches that follow the direction of the problem (Guyer 1988:253). Here I am concerned with methodology in interdisciplinary spaces created by intersections of anthropology, history, and archaeology. This kind of examination is crucial – though we may purge our writings of evolutionary overtones, the continued use of methods rooted in earlier paradigms may lead us to recreate the images we seek to abandon. Here I explore how we access a lived past – how do we envision the lives of men, women, and children and the societies in which they lived? I begin by examining the methodological consequences that flow from epistemological legacies rooted in earlier – now rejected – anthropological and archaeological approaches outlined in Chapter 1. I am particularly concerned with the unacknowledged legacy of the comparative method in how

we use contemporary societies to reconstruct a distant past. I explore the irony that, though historical anthropologists insist on social dynamism, in practice that dynamism extends only so far as written records – a tendency reinforced by the tenacity of progressive evolutionary models in African archaeology. I am specifically concerned with how archaeological methods have contributed to its marginalization in the current experimental moment, even though, ironically, anthropologists recognize the importance of material remains in constructing a fuller picture of Africa's past.

The role of the precolonial in historical imagination

Historians came late and only slowly to the study of non-literate societies, and then faced the partialities of sources relevant to *Alltagsgeschichte* – the history of everyday life (Lüdtke 1995). Yet social historians in Europe and historians of tropical Africa pioneered the use of new sources in their efforts to recapture the lives of non-literate peoples and classes – landscapes, folklore, oral traditions, material remains, and more. Conversely, anthropologists were long concerned with non-literate societies, but came late and only slowly to the study of history. Ironically, however, the historic turn in anthropology has been shaped by documentary sources – the written accounts of missionaries, colonial officers, and travelers are used to address how local practices were affected by these agents of historical change. Far less use has been made of landscapes and material remains, especially archaeological sources.

Much historical anthropological research has been shaped by an implicit sense that change and dynamism in Africa are recent and flow from the colonial encounter (Cohen 1985:220). In this view, the precolonial is conceptualized as a time "prior to impact" (Chanock 1985:9–10; Ranger 1993:69), and a dichotomy between precolonial/colonial is implicitly paired with stability/change, tradition/modernity, conveying a sense that life before the colonial period was unchanging (cf. Goody 1990, 1998). This is a tenacious view. Stoller, in outlining the historical background of spirit possession in Niger, offhandedly observed that "Before the establishment of European administrations, the trade between West Africa and Europe had resulted in little, if any, social change on the continent" (Stoller 1995:58).

> Until the European partition of West Africa, the growth and ultimate failure of Euro-African trade had limited impact on West African economies, let alone West African social life. Even during the 20-year period of partition and conquest, the colonial powers were so preoccupied with their conquering stratagems . . . that even the maneuvers of European armies had little impact on the everyday routines of most West Africans. *In most regions social and economic life remained virtually unchanged*. Such stasis was short lived, however, for the sudden imposition of British and French colonial rule provoked widespread social and economic change in many regions of West Africa.
> (Stoller 1995:61; emphasis added)

Yet, paraphrasing Wolf (1984:394), even a pinch of history undermines this view of West African social dynamics. These asides in a study devoted to mimesis as a form

of embodied opposition to colonial rule is symptomatic of a deeply entrenched sense of Africa's past that is the legacy of an earlier anthropology.

For many authors, identifying change in the colonial period is dependent on a comparison with what went before – often captured as the "precolonial" period, or what Thomas (1991:37, 88) terms "autonomous preconditions." This approach is characterized by a narrative structure that proceeds from early to late, from precolonial to colonial. The precolonial serves as a baseline against which to assess change in the colonial period, and many studies open with a chapter devoted to "precolonial life" that serves as a discursive foil to highlight change in the colonial period (e.g., Comaroff 1985; Moore 1986; Peel 1983). While the role of the precolonial varies from author to author, the comparative approach that it implies raises a series of methodological questions. How fully can we imagine the precolonial past? What methodological tools and sources inform our visions of the precolonial? How well do the colonial documents to which anthropologists have turned adequately capture "precolonial" practice (Thomas 1991:37)? And finally, how has archaeology contributed to our understanding of both the "precolonial" and of the changes wrought by colonialism?

Precolonial baselines: the logic of the present

Archaeologists have a long history of worrying over how to reconstruct the past. Our primary sources are the physical, material remains of past societies, and interpreting their sociological significance depends on analogical reasoning, using our knowledge of present patterns to inform on the past. Analogy enters into archaeological inquiry at multiple levels (Wylie 1985, 1988, 1996) – from relatively simple insights into how a particular tool or object might have been used, to more complex models of social hierarchy and their material correlates. A primary source of worry has been over the problem of selecting appropriate analogues (Stahl 1993a; Wylie 1985). Are there criteria that can guide us in selecting reliable analogues? These are what Wylie (1985) distinguished as *source-side concerns*. How do we apply analogues once we have selected them? Are there criteria that enable us to assess how well the analogical model captures past processes? These are what Wylie (1985) referred to as *subject-side concerns*.

In an archaeology shaped by progressive evolutionary thinking, the criteria for selecting appropriate analogues were clear – informed by the comparative method, one compared like to like. The evolutionary categories of band, tribe, chiefdom, and state guided the selection of "typical" ethnographic models – the segmentary Nuer, the conical clans of Hawaii, and so on (cf. Yoffee 1993). In other cases, however, archaeologists sought analogues from societies that were historically linked. The so-called *direct historical approach* dominated in areas like the American Southwest where there was perceived continuity between past and present (Stahl 1993a:242–243; Upham 1987). The direct historical approach worked back in time – sites that could be historically and geographically linked to a living society established an archaeological baseline for that culture. Excavation of successively earlier sites allowed the archaeologist to explore the culture history of the group in question (Fenton 1952; Fewkes 1896; Heizer 1941; Parsons 1940; Steward 1942:337).

While many archaeologists were concerned with how to select "appropriate" ana-
logues, they paid less attention to their application (Wylie 1985). Application often
took the form of a more or less extensive "mapping on" of ethnographic detail onto
the past, using analogues as illustrative devices (Stahl 1993a:236). In effect, the past
was modeled in the image of the ethnographic present, creating what Chance (1996)
has dubbed an "ethnographic past." Only in rare cases did archaeologists adopt a
comparative approach that was sensitive to *difference* between ethnographic and
archaeological contexts, and therefore to change through time. For example,
Strong's (1933, 1935) and Wedel's (1938) research in the American Plains docu-
mented the dramatic changes in Plains Indian societies as a result of the introduc-
tion of the horse; but more characteristically, the direct historic approach was a
method that created identity between past and present. Indeed, the assumptions of
sameness and continuity were built into Fenton's formulation of "upstreaming."
Fenton, who worked on Iroquois sites in the northeastern United States, articulated
three premises that underwrote the methodology of upstreaming:

> (1) Major patterns of culture tend to be stable over long periods of time, so
> that one should watch out lest he commit the fallacy of assumed
> acculturation; (2) "upstreaming" proceeds from the known to the unknown,
> concentrating on recent sources first because they contain familiar things,
> and thence going to earlier sources; (3) a preference for those sources in
> which the descriptions of society ring true at both ends of the time scale.
> (Fenton 1952:335)

Built into the method, then, was the assumption that continuity was the norm, and
changes fairly superficial.

This tendency to model the past in the image of the present was exacerbated by
the filter of traditional and non-traditional practice that shaped ethnological dis-
course, creating substantial silences in ethnographic accounts (Adas 1995; Koponen
1986; Thornton 1983; Vansina 1987, 1989, 1995). American and British anthropol-
ogists alike were keenly aware of the effects of "culture contact" on the peoples they
studied; yet because the goal was to capture culture/society in "grandfather's time,"
the veneer of "modernity" was stripped away to reveal the "traditional" culture that
was the focus of the standard monograph – much as if "the original pre-colonial
tribal society still existed inside a carapace of colonial and post-colonial bureaucracy
and western technology. Chip the colonial shell away and you will be back to the tra-
ditional core" (Leach 1989:43). Change was assumed to be superficial and recent
(Adas 1995; Koponen 1986:67; Thornton 1983). Archaeologists in turn drew on
these accounts as unproblematic representations of "traditional" cultures/societies
and projected these images into the prehistoric past. When combined with the evo-
lutionary logic that informed archaeological inquiry in general, and African archae-
ology in particular (Stahl 1999b), ethnographic patterns were linked to the
ages/stages that framed archaeological research. As a result, practices and structures
that emerged through a long history of encounter with Europe were projected deep
into the precolonial past (cf. Wilmsen 1989). The problematic logic of the "ethno-

graphic present" thus animated an equally problematic "ethnographic past" (Chance 1996:392; Stahl 1993a:243; Upham 1987).

Historical anthropologists – especially those engaged in an anthropology of colonialism – confront the problem of how to construct a precolonial past against which to assess change and continuity through the colonial conjuncture. Here we face the unevenness of source materials that has long preoccupied historians of Africa. As Fenton (1952:337) observed, "our knowledge follows the frontier"; documentary sources were produced by agents of colonial and imperial expansion as they penetrated the worlds of non-literate peoples. Social historians have long confronted the partialities of documentary sources (Bloch 1953; Lüdtke 1995; Thompson 1963); however, these partialities are further complicated in frontier contexts when non-literate societies come into contact with literate ones. As ethnohistorians have long known, Europeans were "deaf" to the cultures about which they wrote (De Mallie 1993), and viewed "otherness" through familiar tropes and a lens of their own (Achebe 1978; Galloway 1991, 1995; Hammond and Jablow 1970; Hulme 1986; Koponen 1986:62; Pratt 1992; Thornton 1983). Historical anthropologists have become adept at analyzing these tropes and their structuring effects on European accounts, what Wylie (1985) would term a "source-side concern." But a more intractable problem is that documents do not fully chronicle the impacts of European expansion – the effects of colonialism reverberated beyond the documentary frontier associated with soldiers, missionaries, and traders. This was especially marked in the case of the ecological changes that flowed from imperialism (Crosby 1986; Dobyns 1991; Dunnell 1991). Diseases moved in advance of the colonizers who introduced them. Introduced plants and animals often spread rapidly, well before the missionaries and colonial officials who encouraged or imposed new agricultural practices. Trade too reverberated beyond the frontier of European penetration. How many African societies felt the effects of the slave trade long before the ethnographies that shape our historical imaginations were produced? Ekeh (1990) argues that the inability of African states to protect their people from enslavement shaped the lineage systems that are taken as a quintessential characteristic of African societies. Their ubiquity has been read as a sign of deep historical roots, but Ekeh's analysis suggests that ubiquity may signal instead a shared response to a common problem (cf. Stahl 1993a:249–250).

While anthropologists have become skilled at identifying the tropes that framed early European accounts, they have at times been less sensitive to the tropes and preoccupations that shaped twentieth-century ethnography (Vansina 1987). The legacy of structural functionalism predisposed anthropologists to stress the coherency and durability in the social and cultural structures of African societies (Chapter 1). Nowhere is this legacy more clearly expressed in contemporary historical anthropology than in methodology, a methodology that shows considerable similarity to the direct historical approach in archaeology. Like archaeologists who use a direct historic approach, historical anthropologists (and historians) seek sources with a direct historical connection with their object of inquiry. Much as the archaeologist seeking to animate the material remains of a distant past, historical anthropologists (and

some historians) use documentary sources from a variety of time frames to generate a composite image of precolonial culture or structure. Fragmentary insights drawn from early travelers' accounts are combined with later missionary accounts and even later ethnographic studies to create a precolonial baseline, assumed to capture the essential character of precontact society prior to its contamination by westernization (Friedman 1992:203). Thus bits and pieces of historical detail are fleshed out by reference to later – often ethnographic – accounts that provide fuller documentation. This tendency is particularly marked among anthropologists who see culture (or structure) as antecedent to history (Dirks 1996; and Chapter 1). In this view, the past is, in some sense, the "same country" – "that is, there are significant continuities between the human past and the present of an area . . . because the identities, social ideals and models for action which are employed in the present are drawn, at least in part, from that past" (Peel 1983:7). If structure is assumed to be relatively durable, a vision of precolonial structure can be cobbled together from disparate sources spread over the span of the colonial conjuncture (Comaroff 1985:13–14, 42–120; cf. Leach 1989). Here historians may find the "scent of old-fashioned anthropological analysis" (Etherington 1992:214) as anthropologists focus on their accustomed subject matter in the distant past – on kinship, ritual, political organization, and so on. Familiar anthropological tropes emerge – authority structures are portrayed as consensual; internal politics are sanitized as tension is downplayed; and order and reciprocity are emphasized (Ortner 1995:176–178).

In effect, the temporal dimension of culture is erased in constructing precolonial baselines, their durable structure emphasized with inadequate attention to their construction and reconstruction through time. It is assumed that the anthropologist is skilled at winnowing those features of social and cultural life from postcolonial sources that are relevant to our understanding of precolonial life, yet the criteria that inform this winnowing are seldom explicit (Vansina 1987, 1989). Unlike archaeology, where we have – at least in theory – the independent evidence of material remains against which to assess our analogical models, historical anthropologists offer no such evidence. We must simply trust that the precolonial baseline that serves as a discursive foil for discerning change in the colonial period is free from anachronisms, and that the perceived structural coherence of colonial period African societies provides an adequate lens through which to view their pasts. In this view, the precolonial period serves as a baseline for change – a "mere anterior state to the present," but not "fully as a historical object, a form of society with its distinctive processes and dynamics" (Peel 1983:7).

The timeless images of African societies that flow from these methodological practices in historical anthropology and archaeology work in concert, reinforcing one another. Archaeologists who use analogies in illustrative fashion anachronistically project practices or structures that were a result of colonial conjunctures into the past (Chance 1996). By using a direct historical approach inattentive to change, archaeologists have been complicit in sustaining a view of precolonial Africa as a landscape of continuities. These practices have marginalized archaeology's relevance within history and historical anthropology, reinforcing a sense that change flowed largely

from colonial encounters. Archaeology in this view is relevant to a deep past, a means to explore the impacts of changes with evolutionary significance – the invention of agriculture, metallurgy, and cities (Stahl 1999b). Historians and anthropologists in turn use archaeological reconstructions as evidence of the durability of traditional practice/structure, seemingly unaware of the circular nature of these inferences (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:83–85).

These methodological practices in historical anthropology, archaeology, and, to some extent, history are informed by a theoretical conviction that, though precolonial societies may have been dynamic, they were dynamic within limits that are adequately captured by colonial sources – in effect a uniformitarian premise that past processes are captured by some combination of ethnography, colonial documents, and travelers' accounts (cf. David and Sterner 1999). As Ardener (1989:22–23) observed, "in a sense, all baselines of history are conceptually in this situation: real histories are, in the absence of total documentation (what would total documentation be like?) rearranged by changes in the infinite sequence of successive presents, producing, as with the chess puzzle, histories that did not happen." While the distant past is conceived as relatively stable, capitalism and colonialism are taken as fundamentally new forces that precipitate social, political, and economic changes of a new order. Only through contact with these forces do African societies become fully historical. Yet there is a conundrum – documents produced by colonial agents are put to double duty – on one hand, to forge images of precolonial culture/structure before disruptive forces appear on the scene, and on the other, to inform on the changes wrought by those same agents.

Thus we face the problem of partialities in envisioning Africa's lived past, silences that are inscribed with power. As Trouillot (1995:26) cogently argued, silences enter historical production at multiple moments; moments of fact creation, fact assembly, fact retrieval, and retrospective significance. These are processes informed by both theory and methodology, and, importantly, underwritten by power. We must contend not just with the making of sources, but also with how our retrospective reading of those sources contributes to an "ethnographic past" that bears an uncertain relationship with the lived past. We must contend with how nineteenth- and early twentieth-century authors' conceptualizations of "traditional practice" silenced practices not so conceived. How did the consensual emphasis of twentieth-century structural-functionalism paper over cleavages between men and women, elders and juniors, the powerful and the powerless? How effectively did documentary sources capture the sometimes traumatic imposition of colonial rule as "settlements and crops were burned, war, epidemics and famine raged, [and] populations declined precipitously" (Vansina 1989:344)? How do the precolonial baselines so constructed silence the historicity of societies with which travelers, traders, missionaries, and colonial officials came into contact? Is it possible to conceptualize a lived past that differs from a known present – is the past "another country" in relation to the present, a place where identities, social ideals, and models for action differed? In this case we face the profoundly unsettling question of its "knowability."

"Invented traditions" and the knowability of the past

Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) collection of essays on invented tradition prompted a rethinking of the rigidity of tradition, sparking a pendulum swing in the way historians and anthropologists thought about tradition. Where tradition was previously perceived as fixed and stable, and thus rooted in time (cf. Vansina 1990:257–260), a burgeoning literature in the 1980s presented it as malleable, fluid, and shallowly rooted. Academics who chronicled the invention of tradition frequently found themselves at odds with the groups whose authenticity they undermined through the deconstruction of tradition (Friedman 1992; Hanson 1989; Linnekin 1991). The constructionism associated with the "linguistic turn" (Chapter 1) further eroded any sense of the durability of so-called tradition (Ranger 1993:62). Archaeologists too began to focus on the construction of the past in the present (Gathercole and Lowenthal 1990; Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Layton 1988, 1989). Some, inspired by Derrida's (1976) critique of the fixity of texts, likened the ethnographic and archaeological records to texts subject to multiple readings, and stressed our inability to sort among various readings (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Hodder et al. 1995; Shanks and Tilley 1987; Tilley 1993; cf. Wylie 1996). Thus a discursive view of history became widely diffused in the 1980s and 1990s. By focusing attention on how the past is made in the present, attention was diverted from the problem of how or whether that history is rooted in a lived past (Chapman et al. 1989; Tonkin 1992; cf. Trouillot 1995). Yet the presentism characteristic of this stance is incompatible with an interest in the lived past of flesh and blood people.

The notion that history is mere discourse, that traditions are invented, rests on false dichotomies between a lived past and historical memory, "real" traditions and "invented" ones, as well as a conceit that the everyday struggles of people to make a life for themselves and their families through changing circumstances – the lived past – are largely irrelevant. As Appiah (1992:168) observed, life in Ghana (and Africa generally) goes on in spite of overwhelming political and economic challenges; people make deals, buy and sell goods, build homes, marry, and raise families. An extreme constructionism "denies the autonomy of sociohistorical process" and ignores the materiality of history – that history begins "with bodies and artifacts" (Trouillot 1995:6, 29). Instead we might adopt a "neomodern" perspective (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:7) – one attentive to the issues of representation and the power of discourse, but that insists on interrogating sources to contextualize the "stories of ordinary people . . . in the wider worlds of power and meaning that gave them life" as part of an effort to show "how realities become real, how essences become essential, how materialities materialize" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:17, 20). But how, in a "neomodern" historical anthropology, do we illuminate the "endogenous historicity" of African social worlds in light of the methodological issues outlined above? Is the problem identified by Leach (1989:43) insurmountable? "A later generation of anthropologists have indeed substituted the algebra of structural transformation for the missing sequences of recorded history. But either way, the past becomes a fiction invented by the ethnographer." Can we escape the logic of the present – one rooted in tropes of progressive developmentalism, of cultures

inside and outside history, of structure and its reproduction – in our efforts to know a lived past?

Leach (1989:44) identified two sources that inform on the historicity of "primitive" societies: written documents and archaeology. Yet archaeological sources stand in unique relation to the non-literate societies that are the object of historical anthropological inquiry. Unlike documents, produced by the traveler, trader, missionary, or colonial official, the material remains and their contextual associations in the archaeological record represent the material embodiment of the societies themselves. They represent the residues of past practice – the production, exchange, and consumption of goods, the modification of space that shaped social interaction, the residues of power created and exercised through objects – in short, they embody *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977, 1984). They are in certain respects our most direct link to *Alltag*, everyday life, authored as they are by the hand of those whose lives we wish to learn about. They represent the outcome of myriad daily decisions and routines, practices that at times reproduced extant orders, and at other times transformed them (Lightfoot et al. 1998). In short, they represent the residues of culture-in-the-making, albeit transformed by a myriad of postdepositional processes like decay and redeposition and the recovery strategies of archaeologists. Archaeological sources present their own problems of interpretation, of knowability (Wylie 1996); they do not represent the "magic bullet" that will reveal the past. Like other sources, other archives, archaeological residues and our interpretations of them are shaped by silences and mentions and thus must be viewed with the same critical eye as more conventional archives. Yet they remain a largely untapped source in historical anthropology, one that draws our attention firmly to Trouillot's "historicity 1" – the socio-historical processes that shaped the lives of flesh and blood people. As the Comaroffs observed, historical ethnography "must begin by constructing its own archive. It cannot content itself with established canons of documentary evidence, because these are themselves part of the culture of global modernism – as much the subject as the means of inquiry" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:34). As I work to demonstrate in the following case study, archaeological sources have an important, but largely untapped role to play in that archive (see also, Denbow [1999], Galloway [1995], Hall [1993, 1999], Lightfoot [1995], Lightfoot et al. [1998], Maret [1999] Pikirayi [1999], Robertshaw [1999], Rogers [1990], Wilmsen [1989]).

Drawing on recent historical, historical anthropological, and archaeological literature, I turn now to outline a methodological program that builds on multiple strategies: (1) upstreaming from the present; (2) the supplemental use of sources; and (3) a critical comparative approach to both source- and subject-side concerns in our efforts to envision Africa's lived past.

Into the past: upstreaming from the present

Historical narratives typically follow the "arrow of time" – the "historian's lodestone" because of the premise of causality: "what comes later cannot affect what comes earlier" (Vansina 1990:33). Yet as Vansina (1990) observed, comparative reference to the "present" (whether defined as yesterday or the ethnographic present)
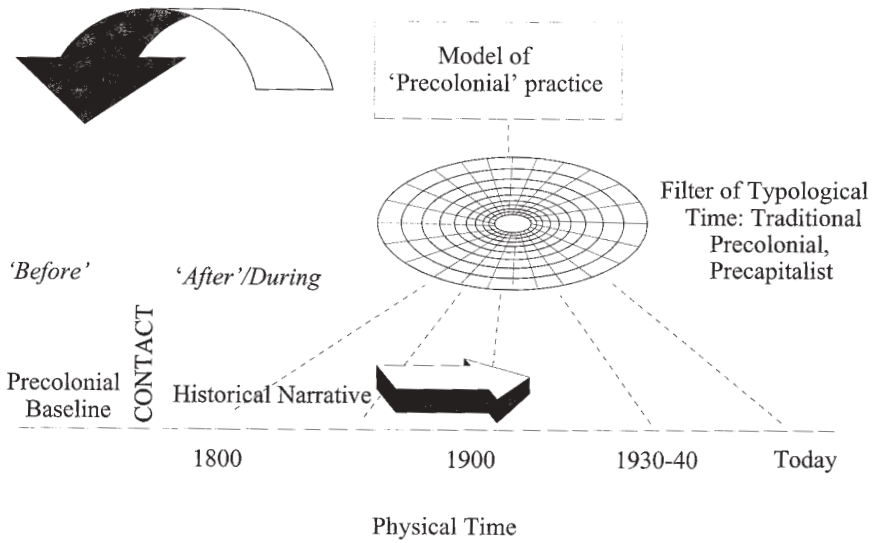
Figure 2.1. Model of historical reasoning using a "precolonial" baseline. "Traditional" elements are extracted from postcontact sources, then extrapolated as a model of precontact culture. The same sources are then used to interrogate change in the postcontact period

informs our knowledge of the past. Scholars often play fast and loose with time, exporting an "ethnographic present" into a distant "precontact" past to create a baseline for assessing change and continuity through the colonial conjuncture, a practice captured schematically in Figure 2.1. In this approach "durable" elements are extracted out of sources from diverse temporal contexts (dashed lines in Fig. 2.1), and abstracted into a composite view of precolonial practice that forms a baseline for comparison. The notion of tradition (or structure, or custom) serves as a filter through which to sort coeval practices with a view to winnowing those that inform on "before" and those that flow from "after" (Stahl 1993a). These represent the "autonomous preconditions" (Thomas 1991:88) that shaped colonial conjunctures. Historical narrative begins with the rupture of contact, and moves toward the present, often using the same sources to address the consequences of colonial conjunctures. Some authors recognized the limitations of this approach and eschewed the use of a baseline, though it remained implicit in their comparative analyses. Chanock's (1985) study of customary law in Malawi and Zambia was premised on a distinction between colonial and precolonial, though he acknowledged the problem of seeing the "precolonial" as a time before impact. The nineteenth century in central Africa was "a time of violent and rapid change . . . anything but a traditional world in which custom reigned. We do not have a 'traditional world' as an identifiable baseline" (Chanock 1985:10; also Goody [1990, 1998]). Because of the difficulty in establishing an image of precolonial practice, "My approach is to let the people 'hit the ground running', in all the disarray of conflict, rather than to begin with them in the stylized formations of the parade ground" (Chanock 1985:10). Yet as Chanock

(1985:15) observed, people face the future backwards, "interpreting and dealing with new exigencies as they arose in terms of relationships and ideas they had already known." In this sense, a knowledge of "what went before" is crucial to our understanding of how people coped with "what was to come."

In his epic study of political tradition in equatorial Africa, Vansina (1990) adopted a somewhat different approach based on Fenton's method of upstreaming. Recall (above) that Fenton (1952:335) insisted that upstreaming proceeds from the known to the unknown, "concentrating on recent sources first because they contain familiar things, and thence going to earlier sources." In Vansina's (1990:33) view, a baseline should represent "a situation limited in time to a given generation" and should capture the major social and cultural features just before colonial conquest (1990:32), "the date when administrative control began to be exercised by tax collection, by the nomination of local authorities, and often by the conducting of a census" – c. 1899–1900 in his case study (1990:21). After this, equatorial Africans lost the autonomy that Vansina sees as a prerequisite for the vitality of traditions (1990:259). Yet Vansina recognized the effect of time in eroding our ability to construct such a baseline; if conquest occurred c. 1900, by 1970 we could no longer expect to find individuals whose parents had lived in the precolonial period; most were now the grandchildren of precolonials (1990:22), and by 1990 many were their great-grandchildren.

From this baseline in the immediate precolonial generation, Vansina used comparative linguistics and oral traditions to probe 1,000 years of equatorial African history, arguing that political traditions showed considerable flexibility in the face of new forms of trade, new cultigens, and so on. Though a dearth of archaeological evidence frustrated Vansina, he suggested that his reconstruction based on alternative sources could be tested against archaeological sources, for "Indications have been given as to what should be found where and when" (1990:250).

In the Banda case study that follows, I adopt the methodology of upstreaming, but in a somewhat different form than Fenton or Vansina. Both authors winnow "traditional" from "non-traditional" practice, though in a temporally more proximate period than some who project the precolonial deep into a precontact period. For Vansina, more recent sources are contaminated by the loss of autonomy, the loss of direct contact with the lived experience of those who lived in "autonomous" conditions. Loss of autonomy is linked to the imposition of direct administrative control, glossing the degree to which "autonomy" may have been compromised by longstanding involvement in international commerce. Both authors show a preference for the enduring – for "descriptions of society [that] ring true at both ends of the time scale" (Fenton 1952:335). For Vansina, this flows from a preference for structural-functional interpretations; traditions are flexible in his view, but nonetheless serve to integrate social collectivities (1990:260). Despite their insistence that we come to "know the past" by "backing into it," their practice of upstreaming is still conditioned by the dichotomies of traditional/non-traditional, precolonial/colonial.

Figure 2.2 schematically captures the practice of upstreaming used in this study. I begin with a discussion of contemporary structures and practices – drawn from knowledge of the Banda area in the 1980s and 1990s. The sources of this knowledge

Temporal Comparison

Structures &
practices
of culture-
making

Historical
Narrative   Physical Time

To 1700	1800	1900	Mid-century	1990s

Sources
*Arabic chronicles   *Travelers'
                          accounts

                                                    *Colonial
                                                     accounts

                                            *Ethnography   *Observation

*Archaeology   *Hearsay on coast   *Oral history   *Interviews
                                                              (written)
                  *Archaeology   *Oral history   *Gossip
                                     (written)   *Archaeology
                                                                              *Oral history
                                    *Archaeology
                                                                              *Ethno-
Temporal Comparison   archaeology
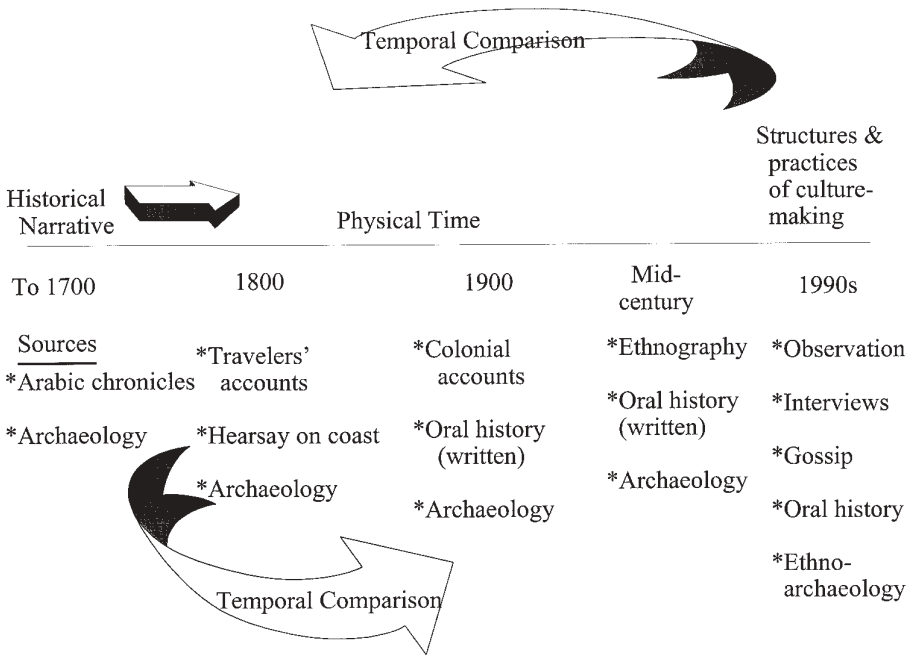
Figure 2.2. Methodology of upstreaming used in this study. Sources are seriated and used comparatively to discern continuities and discontinuities through time. This approach recognizes the partialities of sources and their diminution as one moves back in time

are diverse – based on observation, interviews, gossip, oral histories relayed in contemporary contexts, and from "ethnoarchaeological" analysis of contemporary material practice (Chapter 3). This portrayal of contemporary structures and practices is partial, constrained by the limits of experience, conceptual tools, and preoccupations. It is not then a totalizing baseline, and it resists the normative connotations of the term "baseline" in that my portrayal is attentive to contemporary struggles, especially those involving history. It is not a reified structure, and not intended as a portrait of culture to which history will be added (Dirks 1996). It is rather an attempt to capture the logic of contemporary practices, a view of culture-in-the-making, which is a process that looks to history to create advantage and meaning in the present. This view of culture-in-the-making provides a comparative lens through which to view longer term history – particularly the effects of involvement in extraregional networks on everyday life in Banda, first the Niger trade, later the Atlantic trade, Banda's incorporation into Asante, and later the British colonial spheres. As we move back in time to explore the effects of extraregional involvements on local life, we face an unevenness of sources (Fig. 2.2). The challenge is to use these diverse sources – ancient artifacts, documents, and oral histories – comparatively, tacking back and forth (Wylie 1989) between present and past to understand change and continuity in local life over the last seven centuries. My approach is

shaped by a supplemental use of sources attentive to both source- and subject-side concerns. I turn now to consider these methodological elements.

The supplemental use of sources

Social historians, historical anthropologists, and historians of everyday life have been exceptionally creative in using diverse sources to recover subaltern histories. The partialities of standard documents have been augmented by the interrogation of paintings, maps, town plans, folklore, and material remains. Archaeological sites, composed as they are of the mundane bits and pieces of daily life, should provide a powerful witness to the everyday, though as historical archaeologists discovered, a witness undervalued by historians. Despite a long tradition of historical archaeological investigations of colonial America, Whittenburg (1983:51) observed: "one will search almost in vain for mention of historical archaeology or material culture in the pages of the *William and Mary Quarterly*, the most important forum for colonialists." This resonated with the unfortunate definition of historical archaeology as "the most expensive way in the world to learn something we already know" (Deetz 1991:1).

Historical archaeology provides an instructive case for exploring the marginality of archaeological sources in historical studies generally. As it developed in North America, historical archaeology was caught betwixt and between prehistory and history (Deagan 1988). Historical sites were used either as test cases for prehistoric models, or as material evidence to substantiate documentary sources (Beaudry 1988:1). In either case, research agendas were set outside the field of historical archaeology, and did not take into account the strengths and limitations of historical archaeological sources. By the late 1980s, historical archaeologists were working to save themselves from irrelevancy by redirecting attention to the "questions that count," and the problems that historical archaeology was well poised to address (Cleland 1988; Deagan 1988; Farnsworth 1993; Leone 1988; Mrozowski 1988; Schuyler 1988; South 1993). Deetz (1988) argued that the distinction between history, ethnography, and archaeology lay primarily in their data and that an intellectual apartheid prevented scholars from perceiving their shared goals. For Deetz (1991:6), historical archaeology provided insight into the unintended, the subconscious, and into world views not apparent from written records. Building on Saussurian structuralism, Deetz took inspiration from Glassie's (1975) analysis of folk housing to probe the coherence behind mundane material culture, arguing that objects from tableware to house form expressed the Georgian concern for symmetry and order (Deetz 1977). Leone too looked for coherent patterns, though saw these as expressions of dominant ideologies asserted through both the private and public domains (Leone 1984, 1995, 1999). In both cases, the authors worked to demonstrate that archaeology could contribute something distinctive to the study of the historically well-documented "us" (cf. Johnson 1996, 1999). Other historical archaeologists worked to demonstrate the important role that archaeology could play in the study of the "other" within – the underclass and particularly enslaved Africans. These were people whose lives were poorly represented in documentary sources, and then in highly biased fashion. A number of archaeologists pursued the study of slave

quarters as a means of documenting the everyday lives and resistance of the enslaved (Agorsah 1993b; Ferguson 1992; Funari 1999, McKee 1992; Orser 1988, 1990; Singleton 1985, 1995; Thomas 1998; Wilkie 1997). While some archaeologists fell into the essentializing trap of linking artifacts to particular groups (Upton 1996), an emerging "archaeology of pluralism" (Lightfoot 1995; Lightfoot et al. 1998; Loren 1999) has worked to account for the complexities of colonial societies and to examine the role of material culture in negotiating one's place within them.

Until recently, historical archaeology was a marginal pursuit in Africa, initially linked to direct expressions of European expansion. Early studies focused on European forts and castles (DeCorse 1993; Posnansky and DeCorse 1986), and more recently on African sites associated with European settlements (DeCorse 1989, 1992, 1998a, 1998b; Kelly 1997a, 1997b, 2001). A recent fluorescence of historical archaeological research in South Africa has broadened the scope of historical archaeological research (Hall 1993, 1999; Hall et al. 1993; Schrire 1995). Under the auspices of the Historical Archaeological Research Group at the University of Cape Town, archaeological investigations have centered on eighteenth-century Cape Town and its hinterland with a focus on "vernacular building, food patterns, everyday material culture and the lives of ordinary people" (Hall 1993:183). Hall in particular has adopted a textual, semiotic approach (Chapter 1). For Hall (1994:172), a semiotic approach enables archaeology to do more than simply amplify narratives; instead "it allows us to discern how symbols were manipulated in everyday forms of domination and resistance." Buildings – bricks and mortar – mapped out social relations and naturalized domination and subordination in the past, just as historical preservation efforts continue to do so in the present. Using contradictions and disjunctures as entry points, Hall uses "the material world to interpret the verbal world, and the verbal world to interpret the material world" (1992:373, 1999; also Leone [1988:33]). This contributes to a subversion of texts and a breaking of icons to produce alternative understandings of South Africa's past (Hall 1994:182). So Hall is as concerned with a lived past as with the power of the past in the present (cf. Trouillot 1995). Yet as Hall acknowledges, the material remains of subordinate groups provide "thin" insight compared to the "thicker" understanding of dominant groups that emerges from the synergism of rich textual and visual resources combined with a more abundant material record (also Hall et al. [1993]).

Other historical archaeological studies focus on the frontier of European colonial settlement in South Africa. Schrire's study of Oudepost I, a small Dutch military garrison and refreshment station 120 km north of Cape Town was intended to generate insight into the colonial impact on Khoikhoi pastoralist-foragers. Archaeological evidence at the site at first appeared inconsistent with the documentary picture of Oudepost as a site where soldiers raised crops and stock; instead, there was considerable evidence for soldiers living off the land, invading the pastoral-foragers' niche with the superior technology of guns and horses (Schrire 1992). Later investigations documented the remains of large-scale butchering episodes, suggesting instead that sheep raiding was probably more disruptive to local Khoikhoi (Schrire et al. 1993).

But as with subaltern groups in urban settings, the Khoikhoi on the Dutch frontier were rather dim apparitions compared to the relatively richer insights into the daily lives of the Dutch soldiers stationed at Oudepost I (Schrire 1995). Thus the scale and texture of insights derived from material compared to textual sources differed considerably, lending an opaqueness to the lives of the Khoikhoi.

Historical archaeology has moved away from its role in confirming documents. Increasingly its focus is on the gaps in history – on invisible groups (the subaltern, the underclass), invisible behavior (the mundane business of daily life), and invisible logics (mentalities); in other words, on silences in history. While some archaeologists approach these silences in additive fashion – envisioning archaeological sources as "fleshing" out historical narratives, contributing to a more encompassing view of the past – we need to heed Trouillot's (1995) caution that silences cannot simply be erased by adding more sources. Rather than viewing archaeological sources as additive, adding to the empirical base of documents, filling in the gaps of history, we need to be attentive to the tensions and incompatibilities between sources, allowing different types of sources to destabilize the insights drawn from others (Hall 1992, 1994, 1999; Peel 1995; Trouillot 1995:48–49). A supplemental view of sources (Dirks 1996:34–36) does not seek a totalizing vision of a lived past; rather, it recognizes the partialities, the cracks, the cleavages, both in our understanding of a lived past and in the production of history in the present. At the same time, we need to be attentive to how archaeological sources contribute to historical production, tracking their power in the production of both silences and mentions in historical narrative (Trouillot's "historicity 2" [1995:29]).

Yet we need to recognize a silence that flows from historical archaeology's relation to textual sources; by definition historical archaeology focuses on literate societies, and only tangentially on non-literate societies as they come into contact with literate ones. Whether the relationship is viewed as complementary and additive, or disjunctive and supplemental, the textual record remains an important foil for historical archaeology. Societies that lay beyond the documentary frontier are marginalized as the province of "prehistoric" archaeology, which is shaped by distinct research strategies and preoccupations (Lightfoot 1995:202–206). In this sense, a separation of historic and prehistoric archaeology works against the goals of historical anthropology. Many historical anthropological studies focus on the same *non-literate societies* that were the object of an earlier anthropology. But recent sites of these societies fall in the domain *neither* of historical archaeology (given a lack of textual evidence and therefore direct connection with European sites) *nor* of prehistoric archaeology, whose research agenda is typically driven by a progressive evolutionary logic that directs attention to early time ranges (Stahl 1999b; also Lightfoot [1995:202–204]; cf. Denbow 1999; Wilmsen and Denbow 1990). In cases where historically recent sites have been the focus of prehistoric archaeologists, the tendency to use illustrative ethnographic analogy (see above) has contributed to the sense that these sites mirror an ethnographic present (Huffman 1982, 1996; cf. Pikirayi 1999; Pikirayi and Pwiti 1999).

Incompatible research designs and agendas further sabotage the comparability of

sources, generating data that are unsuitable to the questions that count in historical anthropology. This is exemplified in the ambitious two-volume study by Sahlins (1992) and Kirch (1992) devoted to the anthropology of history in Hawaii. The strength of archaeology is envisioned as offering "not only a more complete economic statement than is available from the documentary evidence, but also a *temporal projection of the local socioeconomic structure back into prehistory*. Archaeology thus permits the shorter-term 'structures of the conjuncture' to be anchored to a deeper past, to 'structures of the long run'" (Kirch 1992:25; emphasis added). Despite the innovative effort to join archival ethnography and field archaeology, the result feels pasted together because of the economism and evolutionary logic that has underwritten the archaeological study of Hawaii's prehistoric past. Historic changes are juxtaposed against a prehistoric archaeological record generated according to an evolutionary logic of segmentary lineages and conical clans (Kirch 1992:28). Instead of pasting over incompatibilities between archaeological sources generated with different goals (evolutionary or historical), we need to interrogate those incompatibilities (Wylie 1996:339–340), examining their role in shaping the contours of historical narrative. I return to these issues in discussing source-side concerns.

An important lesson to be taken from this brief overview of historical archaeology is that we may run aground in our efforts to envision Africa's lived past if we uncritically import the research agendas and preoccupations of one field into another without considering the quality and strength of our evidence to address those questions. Not only do we need to decide on the questions that count, but we need to examine these in relation to theory (Chapter 1), our conceptual apparatuses, and the character of our sources. Questions that can be productively addressed using one set of sources may be opaque using another. Little (1992), for example, has argued against the use of a textual metaphor in interpreting non-textual material culture. In her view, likening the interpretation of material culture to the "reading of a text" exports a model based in literacy to contexts in which it is irrelevant, glossing the distinctive ways in which material culture communicates in social contexts (cf. Small 1999). In another example, social historians associated with *Alltagsgeschichte* are concerned with the subjectivity of "little people"; on social production, construction of meaning, and how ordinary people perceive their lives (Eley 1995:ix). Drawing inspiration from Geertz's "thick description," they strive to produce microhistory that engages in *Anteilnehmen* ("active identification and involvement") with historical subjects (Lüdtke 1995:25). Like ethnographers, practitioners of *Alltagsgeschichte* work to develop "experience-near concepts from the perspective of the actors themselves" (Medick 1995:51), working to probe how "social and even economic relations are produced or terminated in the cultural sphere of meaning" (Medick 1995:62). Meaning has become central too within historical anthropology, illustrated for example by the Comaroffs' insightful work on the "colonization of consciousness" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997). An interest in the materiality of quotidian practice has been shaped by a concern with the meaning of the new material forms – clothing, houses, adornment (Burke 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, 1997; Hendrickson 1996; Weiss 1996). And meaning

is a prominent concern in the emerging field of material culture studies (e.g., Miller 1998) and postprocessual archaeology as well (Hodder et al. 1995; Tilley 1993).

But a meaning-centered approach to archaeological sources may be problematic, most especially in contexts where we do not have recourse to specific kinds of documentary or oral sources (Stahl n.d.). While context and associations may help us identify meaningful patterns (Hodder 1991:143–146; Lightfoot 1995), our interpretation of their meanings typically depends on illustrative analogical models in which meanings drawn from oral, ethnographic, or documentary sources are mapped onto past material patterns. Yet we know that meaning varies in both time and social space. Men and women may assign different meanings to the same objects (Barlow and Lipset 1997), as may different classes (Bourdieu 1984) or individuals (Certeau 1984). Recent studies alert us to the altered meanings of objects in changing political-economic circumstances. Home industry cloth took on new significance in India as Gandhi and his supporters upheld home-produced textiles as a powerful symbol of resistance to British rule (Bayly 1986). Similarly, the "baubles of Britain" that had been objects of social distinction in colonial America took on new meaning in the decade leading up to the American Revolution, one that Breen (1988) argues was crucial in unifying colonists in revolt. So too was the meaning and significance of cloth transformed by the French Revolution (Reddy 1986; also J. H. Smith [1998]). Each of these studies insightfully probed the meaning of objects by reference to language-based sources – correspondence, diaries, speeches, or dictionaries. In each case, the language-based sources were (1) contemporaneous with the objects in question, and (2) produced by those who inscribed the objects with meaning. But in contexts where we do not have the language-based sources (oral or documentary) *produced by the people who endowed the objects with meaning*, our assessment of meaning derives from illustrative analogical arguments that take meaning out of time, freezing it according to its understanding at a particular moment.

We need therefore to consider the questions that shape research in relation to the strengths and limitations of our sources (Wylie 1996:340). This is not intended as a call to return to a reductionist objectivist approach that dichotomizes objects and ideas, the material from the ideological. As practice theoreticians have been at pains to point out, objects and ideas are enmeshed in relational processes. But they are processes that are *unevenly glimpsed through different sources*, and our research agendas should take this into account. Thus, in the case study that follows, a dearth of contemporaneous language-based sources leaves the meaning of past material patterns opaque. Rather than focus on *meaning*, I opt to interrogate *taste*, which I suggest is more accessible through our material entry point to this portion of the lived past (Stahl n.d.). My "turn to taste" is shaped by Bourdieu's (1984) *Distinction*. Taste is embodied – that is, it is manifest in objects and practices that are shaped by socially conditioned preference and choices (Bourdieu 1984:190). Taste preferences are not fixed, but rather locked in a dance of supply and demand, production and consumption, shaped by past choices and dispositions (*habitus*), but continually reframed by social tensions both within and outside the local setting (cf. Dietler 1990, 1998). Objects simultaneously manifest and create taste. Taste focuses our attention on

consumption, but not to the exclusion of production; rather, it helps us attend to the dialectics of production and consumption, much as in Steiner's (1985) insightful analysis of how British textile manufacture was shaped by African taste in cloth. Struggles over taste are surely symbolic and endowed with meaning, but whereas taste is manifest, *embodied* in objects, the meaning with which they are endowed is likely beyond our reach in contexts where language-based sources are few or absent. Yet taste-making mechanisms (Appadurai 1986:29–33) are potentially within our analytical reach using archaeological sources.

A supplemental approach to sources thus recognizes that questions and perspectives formulated in one arena may be at best unproductive, or at worst disabling, in another. The concerns and research agendas set in one discipline with reference to particular sources may not translate easily to other disciplines and sources. Thus a supplemental view draws attention to the possibilities and limits of distinct forms of knowledge (Dirks 1996; Stahl 2000b). When combined with a concern to interrogate the silences and mentions that emerge from these forms of knowledge – what Trouillot (1995) terms an ethnography of historical production – I hope to demonstrate that a supplemental view of sources can contribute to our understanding of the "endogenous historicity" of the societies we study. In sum, while archaeology has considerable potential to help us overcome the limitations of an anthropology dependent on the sources of the colonizers by expanding the archive to include the material remains of past societies, this depends on how we define the questions that count (Stahl 2000b). In a historical anthropology preoccupied with meaning and semiotics, an archaeology of non-literate societies is disabled. But in a historical anthropology concerned with sociohistorical process, with understanding the role of materiality in the making and transforming of social worlds, archaeology has much to contribute to understanding processes of social change and continuity both before and after colonial conjunctures.

Source-side concerns
Trouillot's (1995) insistence that we engage in ethnographies of historical production requires that we be explicit about methodology, shedding light on the processes by which we arrive at knowledge claims. Examining the possibilities and limitations of distinctive forms of knowledge implies an interrogation of both *source-* and *subject-side concerns* discussed above (Wylie 1985). We can enrich these categories if we think of them in relation to Trouillot's observation that power enters into historical production at multiple points – the making of sources, the creation of archives, the retrieval of facts, and the endowing of significance (Trouillot 1995:26). As we upstream from our knowledge of the present (our partial view of culture-in-the-making) to probe sociohistorical process, how do we interrogate the possibilities and limitations of diverse sources, taking into account source- and subject-side concerns? I consider source-side concerns first.

A crucial first step in probing sociohistorical process is examining the moments of fact creation and assembly (the making of *sources* and *archives*; Trouillot 1995:26). In the case of documentary sources, the moment of fact creation is bound up in the cat-

egorical models and preoccupations of their authors. Historical anthropologists and historians have become adept at interrogating the categories that worked to create and maintain grammars of difference, the domains of inclusion and exclusion that framed silences and mentions (Cohn 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, 1997; Stoler 1989; Stoler and Cooper 1997). So too must scholars interrogate how colonial states organized knowledge and how this constrains attempts to analyze the colonial situation (Cohn 1996; Stoler and Cooper 1997:4, 18). This practice must be extended to ethnographic and archaeological "archives" as well. We need to be attentive to how anthropology's focus on homogeneous "tribal" societies obscured the character of more heterogeneous societies of the "internal African frontier" (Kopytoff 1987; also Amselle [1993]), and how ethnographers' preoccupations shaped the representations that comprise the ethnographic archive (Vansina 1987). So too must we concern ourselves with the distinctive imprint that a progressive evolutionary agenda has had on the archive of African archaeology (Andah 1995; Stahl 1999b), recognizing that archaeological sources generated to address questions framed by an evolutionary agenda are likely to be insufficient for addressing the concerns raised by historical anthropology. For example, the tendency to record artifacts by quantity and type eliminates contextual information that is crucial to understanding the broader spatial organization of an archaeological site (Lightfoot 1995:207; Lightfoot et al. 1998). So an important source-side concern, whether for oral, documentary, or archaeological sources, is an examination of the preoccupations that shaped those sources and archives.

A starting premise in approaching archives is that they inadequately capture the variability and dynamics of societies either before or during the colonial conjuncture. We should anticipate that some practices and social forms were casualties of early colonial encounters and thus are not represented in the colonial archive (David and Sterner 1999; de Barros 2001; Guyer 1999; Guyer and Belinga 1995; Warnier and Fowler 1979). In these cases, archaeology provides our main source of insight into social forms and practices that did not persist into the colonial period. In other cases, the conceptual baggage of colonial officials obscured organizational dynamics, for example the links between "states" and "tribes," and imposed fixity and boundaries on fluid landscapes (Cohen and Odhiambo 1989; Goody 1990, 1998; Ranger 1993; Sharpe 1986). Ethnic categorization is a particularly well-documented example of such practices (Lancaster 1974; Launay 1995; Lentz 1994, 1995; Peel 1989; Worby 1994), and historians and anthropologists have become adept at interrogating archives and making these processes visible. Yet these categories cannot simply be dismissed as "fictions" stripped away to reveal "facts"; these social taxonomies shaped colonial practice, opening and foreclosing particular paths of action (Stoler and Cooper 1997:6). Thus we must interrogate the categories and knowledge claims of archives as they relate to practice and power.

At the same time as we interrogate the categorical and conceptual framing of archives, we must also be attentive to the inadequacy of our conceptual language to grasp distinctive features of African societies before the conjuncture (Guyer 1995b, 1999). In a provocative piece on wealth in people as wealth in knowledge, Guyer and

Belinga (1995) argue that the language of markets, with its stress on accumulation and divisions of labor, does not adequately capture processes of social differentiation and elaboration in central Africa. Here, they argue, wealth rested as much on the possession of knowledge as in the possession of things. They suggest that leadership was rooted in *composition*, or the bringing together of different knowledges, rather than in accumulation (cf. Kopytoff 1999:93). In societies where knowledge of crafts, ecological relations, the supernatural, exchange, and so on was diffused among diverse individuals, "Leaders had to attract the holders of a knowledge they did not themselves possess" (Guyer and Belinga 1995:112). Compositional practices have been neglected in social theory, perhaps because of their "relative decline as an organizational principle in the colonial period. Kinship and Kingship survived the disorder and demographic collapse of colonial rule that may have eliminated enough of the wealth that was 'people' to profoundly impoverish the compositional process" (Guyer and Belinga 1995:118). The colonial period perhaps witnessed a new emphasis on accumulation fueled in part by the uniformity of manufactures that flooded the continent at the dawn of the colonial era. So we must pay particular attention to the disruptions of both the "colonial" and "precolonial" periods and to how political-economic changes reshaped the daily lives of Africans prior to and during the construction of the colonial archive. Demographic change may be a particularly important variable here, for loss of people "must entail a catastrophic loss of wealth for societies whose knowledge is a key resource, possibly undermining social reproduction itself" (Guyer and Belinga 1995:118).

A methodological observation that flows from Guyer and Belinga's discussion is the need for a temporally sensitive view of sources and archives. We need to avoid the "watershed" approach that conceptualizes the study of colonization and its consequences in terms of "precolonial" and "colonial" periods (Chanock 1985). In the Banda case study that follows, population dynamics were presumably reshaped well before the direct colonial conjuncture (cf. Goody 1990, 1998). New crops were adopted early in the history of the Atlantic trade, and local demographics were affected by Banda's waxing and waning involvement in the slave trade. The taste for European goods developed unevenly, some objects rapidly incorporated and others not. Moreover, as Peel (1983:4) observed, "Penetration of capitalist relations of production may . . . be one part of our story, but it is not assumed to be the essence of the story, for other strands of change, such as conversion to world religions and the imposition of new forms of political control, not only have their own dynamics," but also do not occur in lockstep fashion. Being attentive to the temporal context of sources enables us to interrogate these patterns of change and continuity without collapsing them into dichotomous categories of precolonial/colonial, traditional/modern. Periodization may be required, but these periods should be tailored to the quality of source materials and the nature of change in a particular area. A period of rapid change may require finer-grained divisions than periods of less substantial change (Stahl 1993a:249). This seriation of sources (Vansina 1989:346) is particularly important in our efforts to examine sociohistorical processes across the landscape of colonial conjunctures.

A supplemental perspective that draws on multiple archives (historical, ethno-

graphic, and archaeological) helps us to probe these source-side concerns. The possibilities and limitations of distinctive forms of knowledge are thrown into greater relief when multiple archives are drawn upon. But this assumes a comparative approach to sources, to which I turn in discussing subject-side concerns.

Subject-side concerns

Subject-side concerns enter particularly into Trouillot's (1995:26) final two moments of historical production: the making of narratives and the making of history. Here a supplemental approach has appeal given its intrinsic comparative emphasis, for at this point in the production of history we need to be particularly attentive to dissonance among sources. Rather than papering over cleavages and points of disagreement, we need to treat these as entry points into the "tensions of empire" (Stoler 1989; Stoler and Cooper 1997), as sources of insight into those arenas where policy and practice did not mesh, where the imagined world of colonialism contradicted lived experience (Comaroff 1997).

Archaeological sources hold considerable potential to reveal the silences that inhere in documentary archives and to compare policy with practice. These practices can only be revealed by a comparative approach to analogical modeling (Stahl 1993a) in which we tack back and forth between sources to reveal not only points of similarity but also disjuncture (Wylie 1989, 1996). Increasingly we see archaeologists problematizing ethnographic sources, using them in comparative fashion to explore points of commonality and difference between past and present. Patterns that diverge from ethnographic expectation provide points of departure that inform on how practice may have diverged from policy, or in other cases how the past differed from the present. So, for example, archaeology in pluralistic contexts has revealed material practices associated with creolization that contrast with sumptuary policies and colonial efforts to police boundaries between groups (Lightfoot et al. 1998; Loren 1999). In an African context, Hall's (1984) work on Iron Age settlements in the interior of South Africa led him to question the stability of Kuper's (1980) ethnographic model of the Southern Bantu homestead that has informed Huffman's interpretations of Southern Bantu sites (Huffman 1982, 1996). Huffman (1996:6–8) employs a direct historic approach and uses analogy illustratively, seeing considerable durability in the structure and cosmology of Southern Bantu societies despite periods of increasing social complexity (see Lane [1998] on the androcentric biases of this model). Hall's analysis of Later Iron Age settlements calls this into question. Adopting a comparative approach that interrogates the degree of fit between the ethnographic and archaeological patterns, Hall (1984) concludes that settlements that predate the *difaqane* (Zulu wars of the early nineteenth century) show a different structure than do the post-*difaqane* sources on which the ethnographic model is based (cf. Plug [1996] on subsistence).

Once we have identified points on which the ethnographic and archaeological or historical sources diverge, the challenge is to explore the significance of those disjunctures or contradictions (e.g. Hantman 1990). Here we must rely on our sociological and historical imaginations, shaped as they are by a broad knowledge of

sociohistorical processes, for example of power, resistance, frontier dynamics, social reproduction, and so on. Here other analogical models may come into play as we draw comparatively on our knowledge of colonial situations in other parts of the world. Again, however, we must adopt a comparative approach in their deployment. In the end, we should not aim to produce a totalizing narrative of the lived past. Partialities and silences remain, especially as we move into a more distant past where the diversity of sources dwindles and we become increasingly reliant on the material residues of archaeology.

Envisioning Banda's past

The goal of the case study that follows is to envision how the lived past in Banda was shaped and reshaped by the broader political-economic context in which local lives were enmeshed. My approach is supplemental in that it is attentive to the destabilizing effects of working with multiple archives – ethnographic, oral-historical, documentary, and archaeological. It is comparative in that it interrogates patterns of similarity and dissimilarity with respect to both source- and subject-side concerns. It is temporally sensitive in that it works to seriate sources, working back and forth in time between a partial view of contemporary culture-in-the-making and the fragmentary glimpses of culture-making practices in the past. At the same time as I work to envision Banda's lived past, however, I endeavor to engage in an ethnography of historical production, keeping the tension between Trouillot's "historicity 1" (sociohistorical process) and "historicity 2" (historical narrative) firmly in view. To this end, I explore history-making practices of Banda peoples as well as the academics who take Banda history as their subject of inquiry. My envisioning of Banda's past is shaped by: my preference for interrogating political-economic processes rather than structural reproduction; my sense that archaeological sources are better suited to address some questions than others – exploring embodied practices like taste rather than pursuing symbolic concerns with meaning; and by my overarching concern to make a case that archaeological sources can contribute much to a historical anthropology concerned with sociohistorical process and the lived past.

3

The past in the present: history-making in Banda

The men who deposed the Banda paramount chief in November 1996 had history on their side, as did those who opposed his installation. History, in the sense of knowledge about the past, is ever present and invoked in support of present actions in Banda. Competing factions in the chieftaincy dispute marshal different historical visions, struggling over the primacy of a rotational principle and the role of different families in a distant past (cf. Lentz 1993). Thus history is intensely negotiated, with significant consequences in the present – a kind of "workshop history" (Cohen and Odhiambo 1989:30). Some argue that knowledge about the past is mere discourse, positioned, contextual, and constructed, and not necessarily grounded in a lived past. For social anthropologists interested in asking "How did the present create the past?" (Chapman et al. 1989; Tonkin 1992), rather than the more typical formulation "How did the past create the present?", the idea of a past constructed in the present is perhaps a comfortable position. But this academic stance is as arrogant as the positivist history that it critiques, for it treats as irrelevant the lived past – the everyday practices and struggles of people to make a life for themselves and their families through changing circumstances. While we must be attentive to how the past is created in the present, we should retain a focus on how the everyday practices of the past created the present. An extreme constructionist position "denies the autonomy of the sociohistorical process" (Trouillot 1995:6), and ignores the materiality of history – that history begins "with bodies and artifacts" (Trouillot 1995:29). Thus,

> What happened leaves traces, some of which are quite concrete – buildings, dead bodies, censuses, monuments, diaries, political boundaries – that limit the range and significance of any historical narrative. This is one of many reasons why not any fiction can pass for history: the materiality of the sociohistorical process (historicity 1) sets the stage for future historical narratives (historicity 2).
> (Trouillot 1995:29)

In Ortner's (1995:188, 189) words:

> it seems to me grotesque to insist on the notion that the text is shaped by everything but the lived reality of the people whom the text claims to represent . . . [the] obligation to engage with reality seems to me precisely the difference between the novelist's task and the ethnographer's (or the historian's). The anthropologist and the historian are charged with

representing the lives of people who are living or once lived, and as we
attempt to push these people into the molds of our texts, they push back.
The final text is a product of our pushing and their pushing back, and no
text, however dominant, lacks the traces of this counterforce.

The remaining chapters of this volume work between the tension implied in
Trouillot's distinction between "historicity 1" and "historicity 2." I first conceived of
this project as one directed toward the study of sociohistorical process; as what in
some sense "really happened"; however, over the years of my association with Banda
I came to recognize the multiple sites where history is produced, the role of power
in the production of historical narratives, and the "invented" quality of history and
tradition. Yet to label traditions as "invented" is to mark them in contradistinction
to traditions not so marked, presumed "authentic" (Dirks 1996; Ranger 1993).
Trouillot's model of historical analysis provided me with the tools to analyze
retrospectively what I came to recognize practically over the years as I have been
engaged in a study of Banda history. In this chapter, I examine the multiple sites
where Banda history is produced, and the tensions that shape historical narratives
about Banda in the present. My goals are twofold: (1) to examine contemporary
practice as a source of comparative insight for later chapters that move into a deeper
past; and (2) to examine the past in the present – history-making in Banda – at the
fin de siècle. In subsequent chapters, I move to consider sociohistorical process in a
lived past, decades and then centuries removed from the late twentieth century. Here
I draw on multiple sources – oral, archival, and archaeological – in an effort to con-
struct a vision of life in Banda over the past seven centuries, working to "coax up
images of the real" (Ortner 1995:190). It is a vision shaped by a political economy
perspective – one that views local life as conditioned, but not absolutely constrained
by political-economic conditions on a regional, subcontinental, and global scale.
Banda has a long and complex history of external relations: today its relationship
with the nation state; prior to that, its articulation with the British colonial govern-
ment; before that, its integration into the Asante state; and in earlier periods, its
involvement in trans-Saharan exchange. What were the effects of these ramifying
webs of external connections on the daily lives of people in the Banda area? How did
these shape contemporary culture, and what are the implications for how we might
use contemporary cultures as sources of insight into the past? The questions that
have oriented this study are concerned primarily with daily life at the local level: how
were ethnic and political styles influenced by this frontier context? How was the
balance of power affected by Banda's incorporation into hegemonic states, first
Asante, and later the Gold Coast Colony? What was the effect of its involvement in
the Atlantic economy, however indirect, on subsistence, craft production, and
exchange? How were settlement and production strategies affected by periods of
unrest and upheaval, and what was the effect of British pacification on the daily lives
of Banda residents? I draw on a variety of evidence – ethnographic, oral-historical,
archival, and archaeological – to address these questions. Like Bloch's (1953:150)
searchlights, the light shed by historical sources may be more intense for some ques-

tions, while the beam of archaeological evidence may be stronger for others. Throughout, I explore the conceptual and methodological challenges of working in interdisciplinary spaces with these multiple and, at times, incompatible sources.

I begin this chapter by orienting the reader to the contemporary Banda landscape and describing everyday practices at the end of the twentieth century that will be used as a source of comparative insight in subsequent chapters. I conclude by exploring the multiple sites where Banda history is produced, highlighting the role of the past in Banda's present, and power in the production of history.

Defining the spatial scale of analysis

If there is a word that describes the Banda area of west central Ghana it is "transitional." Today it is situated on the margins of the tropical forest in an area of wooded savanna (Fig. 3.1). Culturally, it is transitional between the Akan world of the forest, and the Guang states of the open savanna (Goody 1963). Linguistically and ethnically, it comprises a potpourri of people representing the Kwa (Akan, Ewe, and Guang), Voltaic and Mande language families. Many people who reside in the area trace their origins elsewhere – to the northern or western regions of Ghana, or central Côte d'Ivoire. Thus, Banda exemplifies Kopytoff's (1987) internal frontier.

Anthropologists who have experimented with political-economic approaches have struggled to define appropriate units of analysis, and where to enter the complex web of relations that link local communities to wider networks (Ortner 1984:141–144). Their focus on culture and small-scale societies has shaped their preference for the community, the village, or the ethnic group as a point of departure. The units of analysis problem is particularly thorny in a frontier context like Banda. We are confronted by multiple ethnicities. The temporal context of the study exceeds the life of the village and the community as currently constituted. Local oral histories are replete with stories of movement, involving both emigration and immigration of groups and individuals. These suggest a complex ethnic history and malleability of ethnic identity (Stahl 1991), common to frontier areas (Kopytoff [ed.] 1987). This dynamism militates against using contemporary ethnic groups as units of study. Thus, I enter the complex web of historical relations through a geographical unit. The Banda area, an arbitrarily defined geographical area imbued with cultural significance today as the stool lands of the Banda paramount chieftaincy, provides a geographical stage for historical actors operating within varying spheres of power. Geography has shaped how societies occupying this space relate to the larger world, defining it at times as strategic, at other times marginal. Thus, this study explores the dynamics of historical, cultural change and continuity in an artificially circumscribed but culturally significant space. I do not suggest that this unit of analysis is isomorphic with the historical landscape of Banda peoples past or present, for as Cohen and Odhiambo (1989:44–60) demonstrate in their study of Luo history, people operate simultaneously in overlapping landscapes of varying scale that link town and country, city and province, coast and interior. Taking the Banda area as a unit of analysis is thus a heuristic device. Rather than attempt to "gain conceptual control of the simultaneous production of several . . . landscapes" as do Cohen and
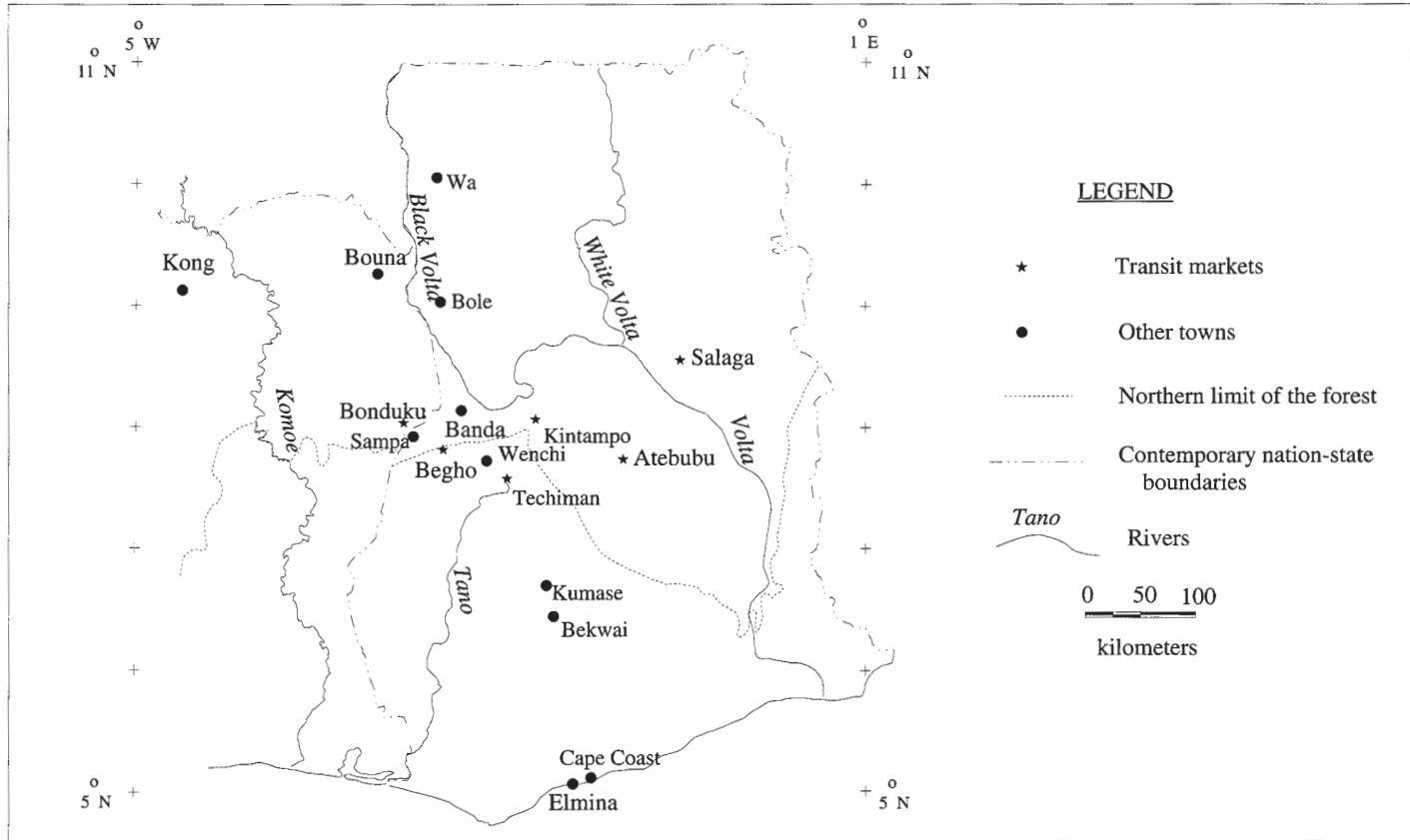
Figure 3.1. Historic towns mentioned in the text

Map labels:

+ 5 W

+ 11 N

Wa

Kong

Bouna

Black Volta

Bole

White Volta

Salaga

Komoe

Bonduku

Banda

Sampa

Begho

Kintampo

Wenchi

Atebubu

Techiman

Volta

Tano

Kumase

Bekwai

Cape Coast

Elmina

5 N

1 E

11 N

LEGEND

★   Transit markets

●   Other towns

....   Northern limit of the forest

—··—··—   Contemporary nation-state boundaries

Tano   Rivers

0   50   100

kilometers

Odhiambo (1989), this study treats the geographical area as a stage upon which historical actors constructed societies, and from which to examine the broader political-economic landscapes (Chapter 4) that conditioned life in Banda over the last seven centuries.

Geography of the space

The Banda area lies immediately south of the Black Volta River in west central Ghana (Fig. 3.2), and is today synonymous with the territorial limits of the Banda paramount chieftaincy. The Black Volta forms the northern boundary of both Banda stool lands and the Brong-Ahafo Region. The topography here is varied (Fig. 3.2). The low, undulating landscape to the east gives way to razor-backed hills that rise dramatically above the western landscape. These hills, composed of resistant metamorphic rock, trend northeast–southwest and present a barrier to east–west movement for a distance of some 50 kilometers south of the Black Volta. Easy access to the western hinterlands is restricted to a series of gaps in the hills: two adjacent to the banks of the Volta; a third near the contemporary village of Banda-Ahenkro; a fourth where the Tombɛ River winds its way eastward from the Banda hills; a fifth near the village of Wewa, and a sixth west of Bofie, where the Chɛn River cuts through the mountains. These gaps condition human movement and contemporary villages are strategically sited in relation to them. Although the mountains restrict movement, the difficult terrain to the west made Banda an attractive refuge in periods of stress.

Movement is today affected by motorable roads (Fig. 3.2). Until 1999, when a newly constructed gravel road linked Banda directly to the Wenchi–Bole road (through Ngre), a single untarred track provided the only access to Banda by motor vehicle. Infrequently graded, the road deteriorates quickly during the rainy season when rushing waters create gullies and deep ruts. The old road intersects with an untarred road connecting the market towns of Sampa (on the Côte d'Ivoire border) and Wenchi, district headquarters for this area of the Brong-Ahafo Region. Villages off the main road are accessed by narrow farm tracks that are sometimes impassable during the rainy season. The main Banda road dead-ends at the Volta River at the site of a prospective hydroelectric dam. The deteriorating quarters of the Soviet engineers employed by the Nkrumah government to plan the dam now houses staff of the Bui National Park (Fig. 3.2), a forest and wildlife reserve encompassing lands that formerly belonged to the Banda stool. Several Banda villages lie west of the Banda hills (Dorbour, Dumboli, and Adadiem). Winding footpaths through forest and over mountains link villages east and west of the hills. They remain important arteries for communication and commerce. Because of Banda's proximity to the international frontier with Côte d'Ivoire, footpaths have been important arteries for smuggling, particularly during the economic crisis of the early 1980s (Dei 1988, 1994; Posnansky 1980, 1984b).

The Banda road was constructed after World War II using local labor. It is a "one-way" road; locally owned and operated lorries leave Banda villages early in the morning, six days a week, and travel either to Wenchi or Sampa, depending on the
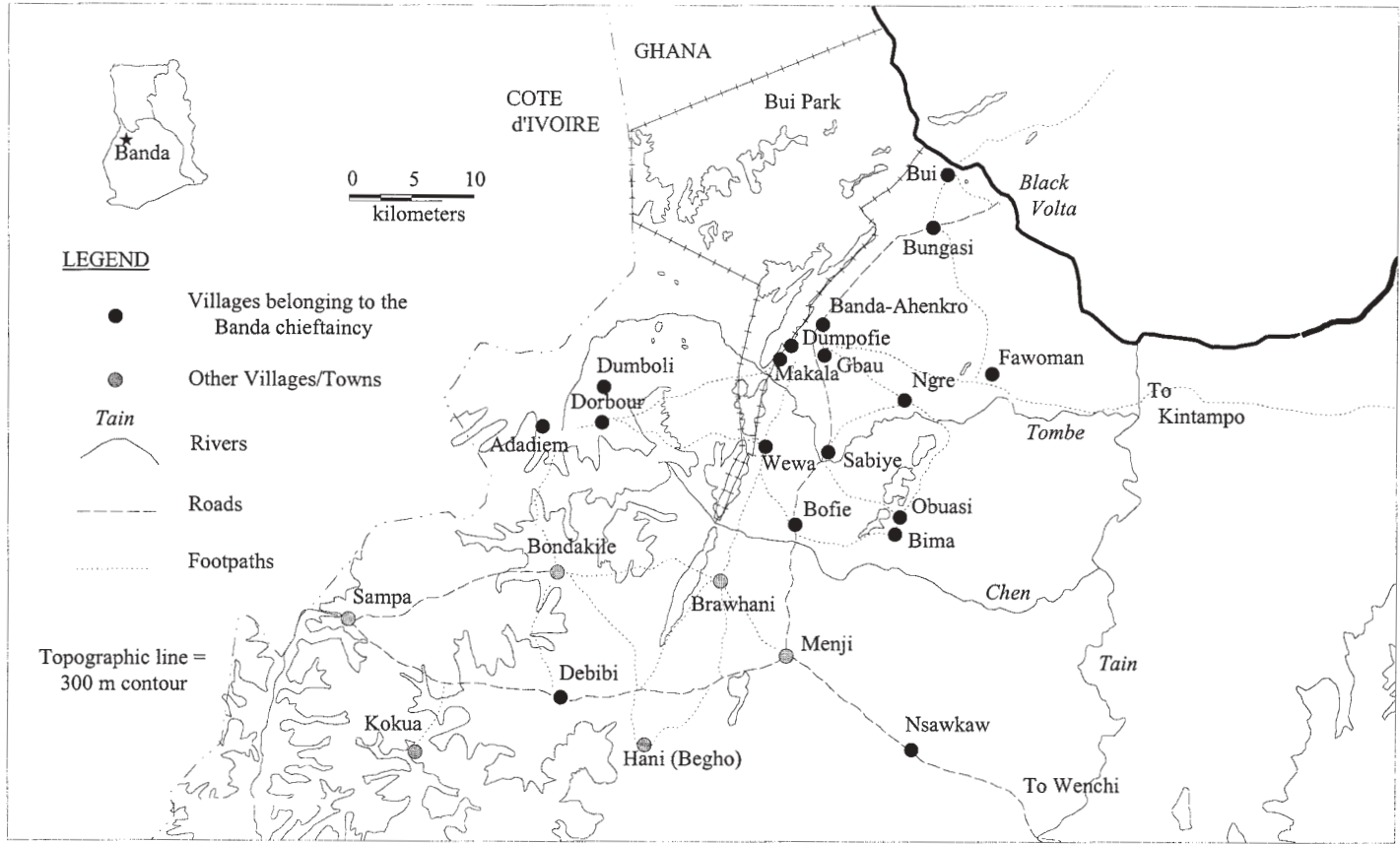
Figure 3.2. Map of the Banda area

day in the market cycle, making a return journey the same afternoon. The 75 km journey to Wenchi can take two to six hours, depending on the state of the lorry and the number of stops to load and unload people and goods. Few people in Banda own passenger cars, and those who do leave them in towns or urban areas. Outside lorries travel intermittently to Banda to transport foodstuffs to market, or bring kerosene for sale. Petty entrepreneurs selling balms occasionally appear in private cars, announcing their presence on loudspeakers and plying customers with miracle cures.

Bole, the nearest market center in the Northern Region, can be accessed by crossing the Volta River. Passengers cross by canoe and make their way to Banda-Nkwanta (Banda crossroads), where they connect with transport to Bole. Before the southern motor road was constructed, the Volta crossing was the important connection between Banda and the colonial world (KA 168).

The location of Banda villages is only partially influenced by motor roads. Most villages are located off the main road and are accessed by "bush tracks." Lorries travel to these villages only at harvest time to transport yams, tomatoes, and other cash crops to urban markets. Archaeological evidence suggests that village location has remained stable, at least since the close of the nineteenth century (with the exception of Fawoman, founded in 1956; Fig. 3.2). Virtually every village in the area is associated with an adjacent archaeological site (a *kataa*, or ancient place) abandoned in the 1920s when colonial officials encouraged people to establish new villages, laid out according to British planning principles (Chapter 7). A variety of evidence – archaeological, archival, and oral-historical – suggests that these villages were established after 1896 when the British pacified the central Volta basin.

Banda stool lands were diminished by the establishment of the Bui National Park (c. 37, 000 hectares) in 1971 (Fig. 3.2). The reserve occupies 11 km along the south bank of the Black Volta River, but narrows to a finger-like projection focused on the Banda hills south of the village of Banda-Ahenkro. Although the park dramatically affected hunting practices, it minimally influenced settlement or agriculture. Gold Coast Geological Survey officials characterized the tract of land between the Banda hills and the French frontier as uninhabited in 1923 (Kitson 1924:40), and Banda elders recall that only a single small hunting village (Kasa) was relocated when the park was established.

Two factors shape the siting of contemporary villages: hydrology, and access to arable land. A Gold Coast Geological Survey stressed the scarcity of water in the low-rolling hills and linked this to the lack of permanent settlement there (Kitson 1924:40). Banda receives c. 125 cm of annual rainfall from March to October (Walker 1962), punctuated by a brief dry spell in June and early July. During the dry season (October through February), seasonal streams that drain the low-rolling hills cease to flow. Permanent water, supplied by perennial rivers (Tombɛ, Chɛn; Fig. 3.2) or springs along the mountain edges, was thus a draw for settlement. The majority of contemporary villages are located within walking distance of such rivers or springs though water is drawn from boreholes today. Access to arable land also guides village placement. Because fields are rotated, farmers require access to land several times greater than they currently cultivate. Areas immediately surrounding the villages are

not cultivated because of free-ranging goats and sheep. Ideally, farmers establish fields within easy walking distance of their villages; in practice, however, farmers are forced to cultivate remote areas and construct sleeping shelters on their farmsteads.

Natural resources

The geological substrate of Banda comprises three broad north–south zones that condition economic activities like potting, gold mining, and agriculture. The low-rolling terrain east of the Banda hills is underlaid by coarse sericite-hematite sandstones and quartz conglomerates of the Tarkwaian Formation. To the west the highest hills, rising 250 meters above the valley floors, are composed of highly resistant metamorphosed "greenstone" schists of the upper Birrimian series. South of the Tombɛ River gap, they give way to an auriferous conglomerate that extends from the Tombɛ south to the Wewa gap. Early colonial surveyors noted extensive pits, the result of gold mining by local people. Further west, these greenstones and auriferous conglomerates give way to argillaceous rocks of the lower Birrimian, including phyllites and schists (Bates 1962; Gay 1956:2–5; Kitson 1924:40–41). Potting clays occur both east and west of the Banda hills, and the distinct underlying geology makes it possible to distinguish them chemically through neutron activation analysis (Chapters 5–7).

Banda vegetation is dominated by savanna woodland. A continuous grass cover of variable height (to 3 meters in moist areas to the south) is dotted by dispersed trees that survive annual burning. Vegetational associations are clearly affected by human activities. Much of the area has been cultivated during the past century, and most of the landscape is burned annually. Brush fires are intentionally set early in the dry season both in and outside Bui National Park. Controlled burning reduces the likelihood of uncontrolled brush fires, facilitates hunting, and stimulates new growth of savanna grasses, which benefits grazing fauna.

The savanna woodland gives way to a more complex stratified forest vegetation approximately 50 kilometers south of Banda-Ahenkro. The forest exists today in remnant form. Lone *Ceiba* trees stand witness to the relentless logging that has denuded the forest. Logging has had a visible impact in the period between my first (1982) and most recent (1995) visits to Banda. Extensive cutting to the south has forced loggers to move to the northern forest fringes, where they fell sparse and poor-quality trees. Here forest has given way to monotonous seas of impenetrable elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*).

The Banda area was formerly rich in wildlife, a heritage that the Bui National Park was meant to preserve. In 1931 a touring colonial official described the area as periodically visited by elephants and buffalo, inhabited by small numbers of lions, and abundantly populated by roan antelope, hartebeest, hyena, and leopard (KA 168). By 1982, the elephants were gone, though the park remained rich in artiodactyls (e.g., bushbuck, kob, oribi, duiker, hartebeest, waterbuck, buffalo, and warthog), and was home to a variety of primates (colobus monkey, patas and green monkey, and baboon; Stahl 1985a:76–77). Carnivores were less common, but included leopard, spotted hyena, and the occasional lion. Aardvarks can still be found along

the Black Volta. A unique feature of Bui Park is the relatively large herd of hippos that frequents the river and ranges into surrounding lands during the dry season. The fate of this herd is uncertain if plans to construct the Bui Hydroelectric Dam move ahead. Common fauna in the farmlands to the east include cane rat or grasscutter, prized for its rich, fatty meat, and game birds such as francolin. Hunting, combined with population growth and pressure on agricultural land, has reduced virtually all these species in recent decades, prompting government regulations on hunting.

Regional economy

Straddling the border between forest and savanna woodland, Banda long occupied a strategic position in north–south trade. The antiquity of external connections is attested by Begho, a medieval entrepôt located on the southern margins of the Banda area (Fig. 3.2; Posnansky 1973, 1976a, 1976b, 1977, 1979, 1987; Wilks 1982a; see Chapter 4). Today, Banda is considered remote and difficult of access, but it is nonetheless thoroughly integrated into a market economy. Cash is essential for household reproduction in Banda. Some expenses are seasonal, i.e., hiring migrant labor during labor bottlenecks (to clear fields and form yam mounds early in the dry season). Other expenses are incurred by only some families (school fees). Some are periodic (for clothing, pots, and other food-processing equipment), while others require access to small amounts of cash on a continuing basis (kerosene, cooking oil, fish and meat, batteries, soap, and, since 1989 in Banda-Ahenkro, to grind corn at the diesel-powered mills). Local market transactions are conducted primarily in cash rather than barter. Social payments too are monetized, with funeral obligations met with cash payments (cf. Arhin 1995:98; Manuh 1995). Housing has become a focus of capital outlay, as people increasingly use metal roofing sheets, mill-cut boards, and cement in construction. Some of these needs could be met without cash, as they are when economic circumstances are difficult (Dei 1988; Posnansky 1980, 1984b; Stahl 1994c). Yet manufactured goods, once luxuries, are today perceived as necessities (Arhin 1976/77:459–460; Guyer 1995a). We have little detailed information on when cash became essential for household reproduction in Banda (Chapter 7), but the pressures of monetization have surely affected the allocation of labor (including the gendered division of labor) as households devoted increasing resources to cash crop production and market activities (Stahl and Cruz 1998).

Agricultural production

The agricultural sector is today geared to production beyond subsistence needs. Banda is relatively rich agriculturally because of its distinctive geology. The savanna ochrosols and brunosols that formed on Banda rocks are more fertile than the groundwater laterites that dominate much of the Volta basin (Brammer 1962). Until recently, Banda farmers cultivated primarily yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) as a staple and cash crop. Yams from Banda and neighboring areas of the Brong-Ahafo Region are vital to the urban food supply, and are funneled south to Kumase and Accra through transit markets like Techiman. Calabash (*Lagenaria siceraria*), cleaned and dried for use as containers, are also cultivated as a cash crop. Cassava (*Manihot esculenta*), a

New World introduction, is cultivated on an increasing scale, while maize (*Zea mays*), another New World crop, and guinea corn (*Sorghum bicolor*) remain secondary crops in the area. Other New World crops are grown as condiments, including tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*), chili pepper (*Capsicum* sp.), and peanut (*Arachis hypogaea*). The role of these crops in contemporary cuisine raises questions about the timing of their introduction, and the character of earlier food ecology, questions that can best be addressed through archaeological evidence (Chapters 5–7). Other vegetables and condiments are of African origin: okra (*Hibiscus esculentus*); bambara groundnut (*Voandzia subterranea*); and cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata*). Although cooking oil is often purchased at market today, protected stands of the shea-nut tree (*Butyrospermum parkii*) provide a source of locally available oil.

Although tobacco was grown on a small scale in the area for much of this century (KA 168, KA 2063), large-scale tobacco farming began in the mid-1980s because of incentives offered by the Pioneer Tobacco Company (Stahl and Cruz 1998:223). The shift to tobacco cultivation has impacted food production. Tobacco farming is labor-intensive, especially during the period when the fragile seedlings are transplanted. Harvest also demands substantial labor input as leaves are picked, bundled, and hung for drying. Because the labor demands for tobacco coincide with those for other food crops, tobacco farmers have found it impossible to engage in both tobacco and food crop production, resulting in a net decline in locally available foodstuffs.

Banda peoples keep a range of domestic fauna including sheep, goat, cattle, chickens, and guinea fowl. With the exception of cattle, domestic fauna are free-ranging. Herds of individually owned cattle are typically tended by immigrant Fulani. Kept in an enclosure by night, the cattle are allowed to range in abandoned fields and uncultivated areas by day. By contrast to surrounding areas, Banda is normally free from tsetse fly (though tsetse was present during the heavy rains of 1995), the vector of trypanosomiasis or sleeping sickness that affects both humans and large grazers such as cattle and horses (Desowitz 1980). Thus, Banda residents have been able to maintain larger herds of cattle than their neighbors to the east, west, and south. Pigs were not kept when I first visited Banda in 1982, but are in small numbers today.

Fishing is a full-time specialization of villagers living along the Black Volta, most of whom are Ewe-speaking people who emigrated up the Volta River in the 1920s and 1930s. The dug-out canoes used for fishing also ferry passengers across the Volta River. Fish are caught using traps or nets, then dried and smoked. The Volta catch makes its way south to villages in the Banda area by head-loading or the occasional lorry, and it figures prominently in the foodstuffs sold at the Banda-Ahenkro market, held each Tuesday morning.

Craft production

Few crafts are practiced in Banda villages today. In 1931, a touring district commissioner observed spinning and weaving in villages throughout the area, although the level of activity appeared to vary by village (KA 168, KA 2063). As elsewhere in the region, cloth was produced by household members primarily for household consumption (cf. Etienne 1977; Roberts 1984). Weaving was thus a part-time craft. Old

women remember a time when spinning was common, and many still have spindle whorls and can demonstrate the art of spinning. Cotton is not grown today, and colonial sources suggest that it was cultivated on a small scale east of the hills. By contrast, it was grown in quantity west of the hills, and obtained from Sampa market by Banda villagers (Sikiasso; KA 168).

Cloth is a vehicle through which individuals create and maintain social distinction, and is today acquired solely by means of cash. Prestige cloths now include strip-woven *kente* cloths, produced primarily by Akan peoples to the south, and wax prints, manufactured in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire; however, the most durable and expensive prints are imported ("Dutch" wax prints). Gifts of cloth play an important role in marriage ceremonies, and cloth is an important means of social display in a variety of ceremonial contexts (funerals, weddings, durbars, and so on). Cloth has thus moved from the domain of household to extra-household production, with implications for household relations as cloth acquisition became monetized (Stahl and Cruz 1998; Chapters 5–6).

The only craft practiced on any scale today is potting. Earthenware pots are produced in several villages west of the Banda hills. Two fall within the Banda chieftaincy, and are home to Nafana potters (Adadiem and Dorbour). One is a Mo village in the neighboring Sampa chieftaincy (Bondakile; Crossland 1989; Crossland and Posnansky 1978). Women in these villages supplement their incomes by making, firing, and/or trading earthenware vessels (Cruz 2001). Although their pottery is stylistically similar, they produce differently sized vessels. Potters in Adadiem formerly made large vessels for cooking or water storage (demand for these diminished with increased availability of large metal and plastic containers). Dorbour potters make small cooking and water storage pots (Cruz 1996). Today, potters ply their wares in local markets and through door-to-door sales (Stahl and Cruz 1998). Pots are head-loaded along footpaths through the Banda hills, to be sold in villages on the east side of the hills. Here potters stay with relatives until their loads are sold. This pattern of marketing appears to be a recent one, adopted after metal vessels became widely available and reduced the demand for earthenware pots (Cruz 2001).

Cultural geography of Banda

Banda is today at the interstices of areas dominated by relatively homogeneous ethnic groups who organized themselves into polities prior to British colonial rule (Chapter 4). Areas east and south of Banda are dominated by Brong-speaking peoples, an Akan group found throughout central Ghana. To the north lies Gonja, dominated by Guang-speaking peoples (Goody 1966b, 1967). Gyaman, centered on Bonduku to the west, resembles Banda in its ethnic complexity, incorporating Akan-, Senufo-, and Mande-speaking peoples (Agyeman 1966; Tauxier 1921; Terray 1977). Only Mo-speaking people, a Voltaic/Gur-speaking people who live along the Black Volta River, were not clearly incorporated into one of these polities.

The contemporary ethnic composition of the Banda area reflects its interstitial or frontier position. Five ethnic-linguistic groups are represented in the twenty-four villages that today make up the Banda paramount chieftaincy (Stahl 1991:251–257).

The Nafana (Mfantera) are politically and numerically dominant, and trace their origins to Kakala, a village in Côte d'Ivoire. Their language, Nafaanra, is related to Senufo languages spoken in Côte d'Ivoire (Glaze 1981:1–6). The Banda Nafana represent the eastern extent of the Nafaanra language. The Ligby are the second most numerous ethnic-linguistic group. These Mande-speaking people represent remnants of a trade diaspora centered on the forest–savanna margins (Goody 1964; Wilks 1961; Wilks et al. 1986:2–30). Small numbers of Mo speakers (Degha) live in the Banda area, although Mo are concentrated north and east of the Banda area. Ewe-speaking peoples are recent immigrants to the Banda area (1930s) and live in riverside villages where men engage almost exclusively in fishing, and women in processing fish and *gari* (cassava meal). The only Banda inhabitants who claim to be autochthonous are the Kuulo (Dumpo, Ndmpo), speakers of a Guang language. Based on his brief ethnographic survey of the Banda area in 1956, Goody represented Kuulo (Dumpo) as a remnant language (Goody 1963:177).[2] Indeed, only a handful of Kuulo elders and a few young men speak Kuulo today; Kuulo children speak Nafaanra as their first language (Stahl 1991:256), and some Nafana today perceive the Kuulo as Nafana people (Chapter 5).

The majority of Banda villages are occupied by people who self-identify as Nafana (Fig. 3.3). Several villages have a Ligby quarter (Bungasi, Bofie, Sabiye) while several others are exclusively Ligby (Sase, Kanka, Bima). Dumpofie is the only Kuulo village, though Kuulo also live in Banda-Ahenkro (Boadum Katoo) and Sabiye (Tapanwolo Katoo). Ewe villages include Akanyakrom, Agborlekame, and Dokachina, all located along the Black Volta. Nafana villages may be composed of a single (i.e., Fawoman, Makala), or several matrikin groupings (Samwa, Sabiye, Banda-Ahenkro). Most of the outlying villages are inhabited by several hundred people, most of whom are children. Banda-Ahenkro, the largest settlement, is home to an estimated 2,500 people.

Arguably then, the Banda chieftaincy fits Kopytoff's image of a society constructed from the cultural raw materials of surrounding areas. Although there is an "official" history that stresses the unity of Banda history (Ameyaw 1965; Owusuh 1976), the histories of individual families provide a different, more fragmented view of ethnogenesis (Stahl 1991; Chapters 5–7). Kopytoff captures the shared features of societies forged in such pockets between established societies:

> The collective, "official" history that such a society tells about itself may be unitary and straightforward. But it is belied by the individual histories of its separate kin groups that show their ancestors coming from different areas and at different periods – as refugees from war or famine, or as disgruntled kin group segments, or as losers in the succession struggles of their kin groups or polities, or in reaction to accusations of witchcraft. Some of them may continue to maintain relations with their relatives, taking part in their funerals and marriage rituals, and there may be lingering differences in customs, usually those of marriage and burial that are attributed to different ethnic origins. There may also be some linguistic differences. The collectivity
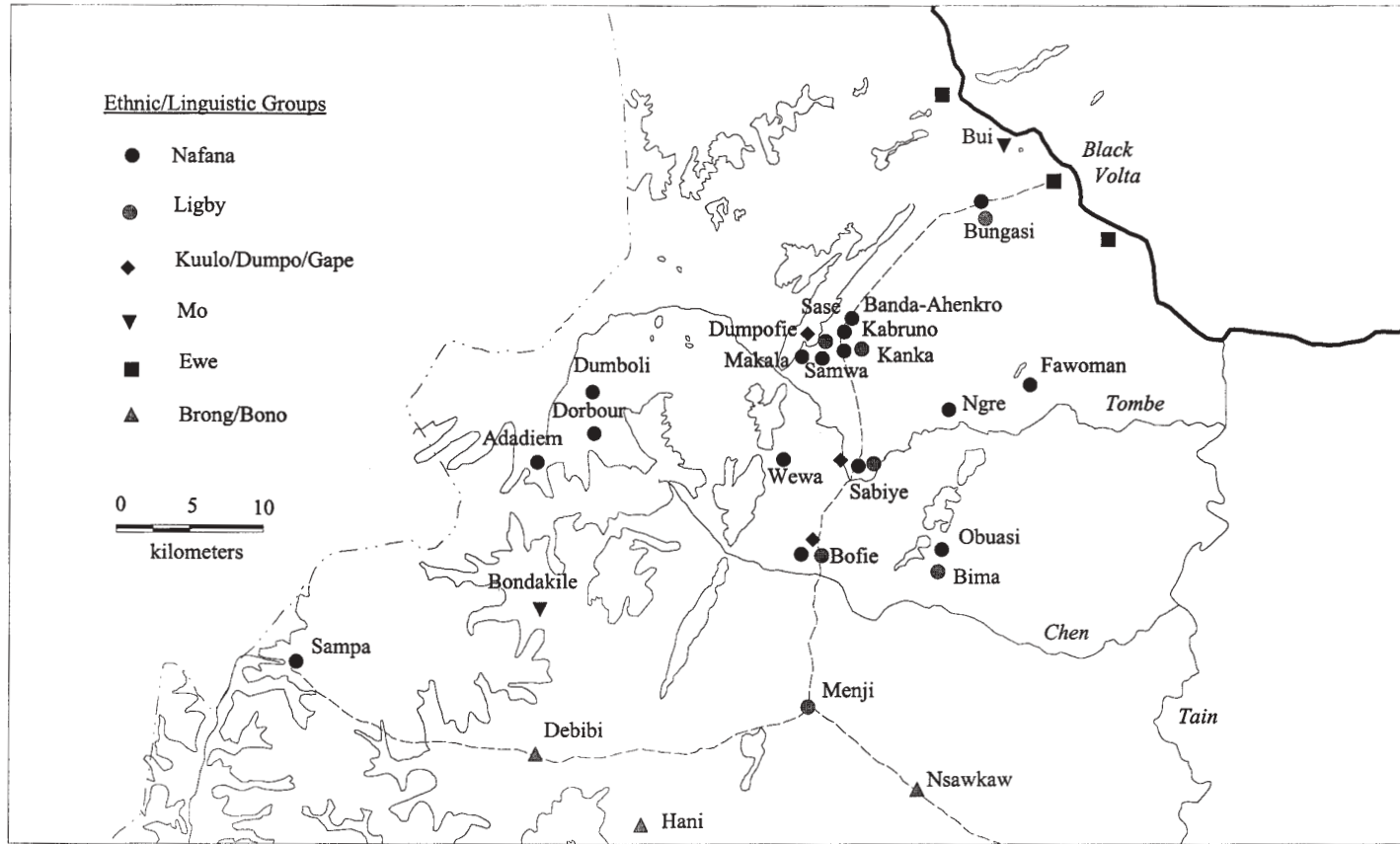
Figure 3.3. Distribution of ethnic-linguistic groups in the Banda area

Table 3.1 *Nafana calendric cycle*

Alieri[1] (Sunday)	*Tini* (Monday)	*Tarita* (Tuesday)	*Ariwa* (Wednesday)	*Amusa* (Thursday)	*Ajuan* (Friday)	*Siwri* (Saturday)
1 Sumbɔɔ	2 Ajira	3 Jiniŋe	4 Jopo	5 Ablee	6 Jirikolo	7 Sumbɔɔ
8 Ajira	9 Jiniŋe	10 Jopo	11 Ablee	12 Jirikolo	13 Sumbɔɔ (**Fofie**)[2]	14 Ajira
15 Jiniŋe	16 Jopo	17 Ablee	18 Jirikolo	19 Sumbɔɔ	20 Ajira	21 Jiniŋe
22 Jopo	23 Ablee	24 Jirikolo	25 Sumbɔɔ	26 Ajira	27 Jiniŋe	28 Jopo
29 Ablee	30 Jirikolo	31 Sumbɔɔ	32 Ajira	33 Jiniŋe	34 Jopo	35 Ablee
36 Jirikolo	37 Sumbɔɔ (**Fodwo**)[2]	38 Ajira	39 Jiniŋe	40 Jopo	41 Ablee	42 Jirikolo

Notes:
[1] Days of the week in italics are days in the seven-day cycle. The six-day cycle rotates against this seven-day cycle to complete a 42-day calendric cycle.
[2] Terms in bold are the Akan terms assigned to specific junctures of days in the 42-day cycle. Fɔfie falls on a Sumbɔɔ that coincides with an Ajuan; Fodwo is a Sumbɔɔ that falls on a Tini.

> may have a dominant "public" language, but some of its kin groups may
> privately maintain the knowledge of the language of their parent group.
> (Kopytoff 1987:5)

As we will see, the strands of diverse origins can be teased out through judicious use of oral-historical evidence. But first, I describe the contemporary styles (Royce 1982:28) of these ethnic-linguistic groups, and the local historical narratives that account for their existence.

Nafana

The Nafana represent themselves as a homogeneous ethnic group who migrated to Banda from Kakala in contemporary Côte d'Ivoire. A history collected by Ameyaw (1965) on behalf of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, recounts that the Nafana left Kakala because of a chieftaincy dispute with neighboring Jimini-speaking people. The Ameyaw history, collected over the course of a day or two from the previous paramount chief (Kofi Dwuru II) and his elders, is locally received as the official history of the Banda Nafana, and traces the origins of all Nafana to Kakala (but see Chapter 6).

Time in the Nafana world is governed by the rotation of two calendars – a cycle of six days that rotates against a cycle of seven days, creating a 42-day calendric cycle (Table 3.1). A similar calendar governs the passage of time in the Akan world (Adjaye 1987; McCaskie 1980; Rattray 1927). Despite similarity in structure, Nafana names for individual days differ from their Akan counterparts. As among the Akan, certain conjunctions between the six- and seven-day cycles are considered particularly auspicious for ritual activity, while others bode less well for specific ventures (see McCaskie [1980:185–189] and Wilks [1993:198–199] for the Asante). For example,

Table 3.2 *Akan day names*

Born on	Male	Female
Sunday	Akwasi	Akosua
Monday	Kwadwo	Adwoa
Tuesday	Kwabena	Abena
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akwia
Thursday	Yao	Yaa
Friday	Kofi	Afia/Afua
Saturday	Kwame	Amma

the conjunction of a Sumbɔɔ with a Tini (Monday in the seven-day cycle) – referred to as Fodwo – or the conjuncture of a Sumbɔɔ with an Ajuan (Friday) – termed Fofie – are considered auspicious days for state ceremonies. Notably, both conjunctions are referred to in Nafaanra by Akan terms (Fofie and Fodwo). Other activities are guided strictly by the seven-day calendar (e.g., working in the bush or on farms is prohibited on Fridays when dwarves and witches are most active).

Today Nafana children are most often named according to the day of the week in the seven-day cycle on which they are born, using the Akan system of seven male and seven female day names (Table 3.2; Rattray 1927). Formerly, however, the Nafana employed a more complex system of day names, incorporating reference to the day of the week in the six-day cycle, and birth order in the family (Table 3.3). For example, first-born male names are prefixed with Shie, and first-born females with Yeli. Both terms function today as indicators of respect. Birth order was established separately for males and females. The significant gaps in Table 3.3 reflect the disuse into which the system of Nafaanra day names has fallen; today, only elderly Nafana recall the details of the system, and then in only fragmentary fashion.

Nafana identity is defined by a variety of cultural practices (Stahl 1991). The Nafaanra language is one important, but not the only, prerequisite of Nafana identity. Equally if not more important are female rites of passage at puberty and marriage. Nafana kin organization is dictated by a matrilineal principle whereby people are organized into "houses" (*katoo*). Membership in the *katoo* is defined by maternal links, and a woman's identity as a Nafana is crucial to membership in the ethnic group. Women must undergo Nafana nubility (*manaa ndiom*) and marriage (*bijam* or *sanwaa*) rites if they wish to "boast of being a Nafana." These rites continue to be practiced by many Nafana girls, with the exception of those who profess Christianity. Elder women orchestrate *manaa ndiom* rites, exercising control over junior females. Rites must begin on one of three days in the 42-day calendric cycle: Amusa-Sumbɔɔ; Amusa-Jopo, or Amusa-Jiniŋge, but cannot be performed in the dry season. *Manaa ndiom* rites last for four weeks, during which the initiate is fed special foods and contact with men is prohibited. On the final day, decorated with sacred beads, she travels through the village greeting people. The beads include mosaics, chevrons, and other heirlooms of the

Table 3.3 *Nafaanra day names*

Birth order	Gender	Day in the six-day cycle					
		Sumbɔɔ	Ajira	Jiniŋge	Jopo	Ablee	Jirikolo
1	Male	Shiembɔ	–	Shiejiniŋge	Shiejo	Shiechambɛ	–
	Female	Yelimbɔ	–	Yelijiniŋge	Yelijo	Yelichambɛ	–
2	Male	Sambɔ	–	Sanjiniŋge	Sanjo	Sanchambɛ	–
	Female	Yambɔ	–	Yajiniŋge	Yajo	Yachambɛ	–
3	Male	Wlombɔ	–	Wlojiniŋge	Wlojo	Wlochambɛ	–
	Female	Nyimbɔ	–	Nyijiniŋge	Nyijo	Nyinichambɛ	–
4	Male	Pɛmbɔ	–	Pɛjiniŋge	Pɛjo	Pɛchambɛ	–
	Female	Pɛnimbɔ	–	Pɛnijiniŋge	Pɛnijo	Pɛnichambɛ	–
5	Male	Tio/Obaa	–	Tio/Obaa	Tio/Obaa	Tio/Obaa	–
	Female	Hlembɔ	–	Hlejiniŋge	Hlejo	Hlechambɛ	–
6	Male	Nyua	–	Nyuajiniŋge	Nyua	Nyuachambɛ	–
	Female	Nyua	–	Nyuajiniŋge	Nyuajo	Nyuachambɛ	–
7	Male	Tɔmbɔ	–	Tɔmbɔ	Tɔmbɔ	Chambɛ	–
	Female	Tɔ	–	Tɔ	Tɔ	Chambɛ	–
8	Male	Milla	Milla	Milla	Milla	Chambɛ	Milla
	Female	Milla	Milla	Milla	Milla	Chambɛ	Milla
9	Male	Senyu	Senyu	Senyu	Senyu	–	Senyu
	Female	Senyu	Senyu	Senyu	Senyu	–	Senyu

European trade, and are treasured possessions curated by old women (Caton 1997).

A year must pass between completion of *manaa ndiom* rites and performance of the marriage rites known as *bijam*. *Bijam* may only be celebrated by those young women who have undergone *manaa ndiom*. Wedding rites are restricted to the same conjunctions of days in the 42-day cycle as *manaa ndiom*, but do not take place during the dry season (see Pitt [1926:76–77]). The prospective husband is expected to provide his wife-to-be with clothing (two half-pieces of cloth, two head kerchiefs, and a pair of sandals or shoes), and formerly was expected to give his bride a special textile (*nyankacha*) made from twelve strips of white woven cloth. The strips were provided by his mother's sisters, which he and his friends sewed together on the first day of the marriage rites. Because local cloth is no longer produced in the area, *nyankacha* are most often borrowed from elder women. The bride wears this cloth on her head during the second day of the marriage rites. Though the bride may continue to reside with her mother after the *bijam* rites, she cooks her husband's meals, fetches his water, and washes his clothes.

Failure to undergo female rites of passage undermines a woman's status as a "proper" Nafana and precludes her becoming a female head of family. Even though fathers and daughters belong to different *katoo*s, the father's reputation and standing is negatively affected if his daughters do not undergo these rites of passage, especially if he occupies a position of authority. Thus, the recently deposed paramount chief was widely criticized for not ensuring that his daughters underwent *manaa ndiom*, rites from which they claimed to be exempt as Christians. Nafana men, by contrast, do not go through rites of passage to establish their Nafana identity; rather,

Plate 1. Manacles found by game park officials in Bui Park. Photo by A. Stahl, 1994

they gain their identity through their mother. To be a proper Nafana man is to have been born of a proper Nafana woman.

Each *katoo*, or matrilineage, is associated with a group of dwellings (usually a compound) where the male head of family resides; however, matrikin are not necessarily coresidential – members of the matrilineage live dispersed throughout the village. Young people establish residence where rooms are available. A *katoo* is headed by male and female elders who can be approached to resolve disputes. The male head of family is responsible for sacrifices to the ancestors (*kuloo*) of the *katoo*, to any special shrines (*sɛɛn*) associated with the matrikin group, and is the matrikin's representative at the chief's court. Periodic meetings where family members discuss problems and resolve disputes are forums for workshop history. Elders remind juniors of traditions, of the importance of female rites of passage, and the consequences of abandoning tradition. A tension between past and present structures the lessons drawn from history in these family forums.

Ancestors are ever present for Banda villagers, and public and private ceremonies invariably involve sacrifices to them. The ancestors' displeasure translates into misfortune for the living and prompts divination to discern the source of unhappiness. Prominent among the ancestors are former male and female heads of family whose names are remembered and invoked in myriad ritual contexts. The death of male family heads is celebrated by distinctive rituals, one involving the use of leg manacles fashioned from iron, presumably relics of the slave period (Plate 1). These must be

displayed by daughters of the deceased family head, who dance with them in a public context. Deceased male heads of family are embodied by stools to which sacrifices are periodically offered. Curated in a special room under the custodianship of the family head, they serve as mnemonics that keep the names of former family heads alive. Objects thus play an important role in recreating the past in the present.

Kuulo

Goody (1965) described the Kuulo, whom he referred to as "Dumpo," as a minority being assimilated by the Nafana. Though the Kuulo language is no longer spoken by Kuulo youth, this small group of matrikin display a remarkable tenacity of identity. Despite their reliance on Nafaanra as a lingua franca, the Kuulo do not view themselves as Nafana. Unlike the Nafana, for whom ethnic identity is constructed in part through female rites of passage, Kuulo identity is synonymous with ancestry. To be Kuulo is to be descended from the ancestress Wurache (Chapter 5). Other "Dumpo" people, like the Gape family of Bofie, trace their origins to other ancestors who, like Wurache, descended to the area from the sky. As among the Nafana, objects play a role in invoking historical memory, as do sites on the landscape – shrines, sacred groves, and abandoned village sites – all of which are bound up in the workshop history of the Kuulo and other Dumpo people (Chapter 5).

Kuulo identity is further solidified by the distinctive customary practices. Kuulo girls do *not* undergo nubility rites, and they practice distinctive marriage rites. Kuulo marriage rites are practiced only when both the bride and groom are Kuulo. If a Kuulo man marries a Nafana woman, Nafana marriage rites are performed. In the case of a Kuulo woman marrying a Nafana man, the Kuulo offer their own sacrifices if the Kuulo woman proves to be a virgin. Children born of unions between the Nafana and Kuulo belong to the mother's family. The funerals of Kuulo ancestors are celebrated with a distinctive pattern of drumming that originated in the time of Wurache (Stahl and Anane 1989:19). Further, the Kuulo celebrate their own yam festival in addition to the state festival of the Nafana (below). The Kuulo celebrate their New Yam Festival on a Fofie, their custom from the time of Wurache. In years when their festival precedes that of the Nafana, consumption of the new yams is postponed until after the Nafana state celebration.

Historical tension between the Nafana and the Kuulo endows narratives about the past with saliency in negotiating the present. The Kuulo have no access to the paramount stool of the Banda chieftaincy, despite their claim to be the original inhabitants of the Banda area. The Kuulo make no claims on the stool, agreeing that the Nafana brought the chieftaincy with them when they migrated from the west (see below). Rather, the Kuulo claim to have formerly owned the land, symbolized in the Kuulo position of *kahole wura* (Goody 1964:193–194). The *kahole wura* was responsible for propitiating the land, e.g., at the beginning of the dry season or prior to annual burning. This balance of authority between the Nafana, as rulers, and the Kuulo, as owners of the land, was ritually played out during the installation of the paramount chief (but see below). The Kuulo claim to have provided the medicines used to wash the chief on the eve of the ceremony. Further, the Kuulo claim that a Kuulo individ-

ual held the chief by his waist and lowered him onto the ancestral stool the required three times. This claim is disputed by the Nafana, and became an issue of contention in the context of the chieftaincy dispute (below). Today, the Kuulo no longer hold the position of *kahole wura*, nor did they play a role in the 1985 installation of the recently deposed paramount chief. The position now rests with the Nafana, and is termed *trafun*. This transfer of ritual obligation occurred as a result of a land dispute during the colonial period. Members of Kuulo Katoo brought a land claim against Nafana residents of Makala village, claiming that the Nafana usurped Kuulo lands.[3] Colonial officials decided against the Kuulo on the grounds that the British held the land. Because the Nafana held the position of chief, they transferred the position of earth priest to the Nafana as well (Stahl 1991). I return to the competing claims of the Kuulo and the Nafana in a discussion of the chieftaincy dispute below.

Ligby

The Mande-speaking Ligby represent the remnants of a trade diaspora that linked the forest with Sudanic trade emporia, and ultimately with trans-Saharan networks. Several accounts suggest that the Banda Ligby descend from traders who dispersed after Begho was attacked by Asante in 1722 (Goody 1966a:18). Unlike the Nafana or Kuulo, the Ligby are patrilineal. Their adherence to Islam accounts for the distinctive set of customary celebrations that distinguishes Ligby ritual life (e.g., marriage and funerary rites, Ramadan, etc.; see Bravmann [1975]). Ligby men are less likely to be engaged in full-time farming, and more likely to be involved in either trading or the transport business. An exception are Ligby who have recently become involved in tobacco farming.

   The Ligby occupy residentially discrete areas, both in the form of separate villages (e.g., Kanka, Sase, and Bima) and separate sectors of Nafana villages (i.e., in Bofie). Ligby villages are headed by religious leaders (imam) selected from the prominent family in the village. Generally, the eldest son succeeds his father as imam; however, selection of a successor depends upon knowledge of the Koran. Ligby men are distinguished by their Muslim garb, and women by their distinctive headdresses. While the Ligby speak their own language amongst themselves, conversations with Nafaanra-speaking people are most often conducted in Nafaanra.

   Marriage is allowed with non-Ligby so long as the partner converts to Islam. In instances of marriage between a Ligby man and a Kuulo or Nafana woman, the patrilineal principle prevails. Children inherit only from the father's side. Marriage ceremonies are restricted to two major times of the year – at the end of the month-long fast of Ramadan, or at the end of the month of pilgrimage, Dhu'l-Hijja (Bravmann 1975:159). Masked dancers may perform at these marriage celebrations, though this depends on the groom's ability to pay for their services (Bravmann 1975:160).

Mo and Ewe

Mo and Ewe live in small villages on Banda's northern margins. Mo villages dominate the area immediately north of the Black Volta and west of Banda (i.e., Jamma,

Bondakile). Bui is the only Mo village in the Banda chieftaincy, though a number of people who self-identify today as Nafana acknowledge Mo ancestry. The Mo at Bui speak their own language, and stress a matrilineal principle in establishing kin relations. Mo, like the Kuulo and Ligby, practice distinctive rites of passage. Their girls do not undergo puberty rites, and marriage rites do not take place until a woman has given birth to her first child. Girls are betrothed upon reaching puberty, after which the couple may cohabit, but the union is celebrated only after the birth of the first child.

Ewe-speaking people are concentrated in fishing villages along the Black Volta River. They are recent immigrants to the area, having sought land from the Banda paramount chief in the 1930s. They make their living by net and trap fishing, and supply much of the fish that is consumed in the Banda area.

Village organization and layout

Banda-Ahenkro is the largest Banda village and has the greatest complexity of matrikin groupings. Seven are identified as the founding families of Banda-Ahenkro, and play a prominent role in puberty and marriage rites. They include: Sielɔngɔ Katoo (royal family); Nyawaa Katoo (House of Krontihene); Loobia Katoo; Shiofi Katoo; Kafɔnɔ Katoo; Yao Dabla Katoo; and Sie Gbaŋmbo Katoo. All these families today identify as Nafana – they speak the Nafaanra language, and their daughters undergo Nafana rites of passage. However, four trace their origins to different ethnic groups and provide important insights into the historical dynamics of ethnogenesis (Stahl 1991; Chapter 7).

All Banda villages are today organized around a main thoroughfare that provides vehicle access, however infrequent the traffic. Houses along the main street are typically arranged in compounds composed of rectilinear buildings oriented around an enclosed courtyard (Plates 2 and 3). Gaps between structures create entryways which are unimpeded by doors or gates (Fig. 3.4). Rooms usually open on the interior courtyard, though they occasionally open to the exterior (Fig. 3.4b). Most rooms are associated with a roofed porch or veranda. Though they vary in size, a typical sleeping room measures 4 x 2.5 meters. Walls are often constructed of coursed earth (tauf), though sun-dried blocks made from sandcrete are preferred by those who can afford them. Aluminum roofing sheets increasingly replace the grass-thatched roofs that were ubiquitous when I first visited Banda. Roofs are invariably gabled, and supported by a timber and pole construction that is independent of the structure walls. Outbuildings (i.e., wet-season kitchens) are more likely to be made from pole and daga (wattle and daub) construction. These are less durable than coursed earth constructions, but can be raised quickly with a minimum of materials. Most household activities take place out of doors, with rooms used primarily for sleeping and storage. Women cook in the open courtyard, moving to roofed shelters or enclosures when it rains. Most compounds have multiple hearths, sometimes associated with distinct domestic units; however, they are often clustered so that women can socialize while cooking.

Not all structures are in the form of compounds. As one moves to the peripheries

Plate 2. Exterior view of a compound in Makala, 1994. Photo by B. Thomas, 1994

Plate 3. Interior view of a compound in Makala, 1994. Photo by L. Smith, 1994

LEGEND

Compound walls

Porches

Posts

Hearthstones
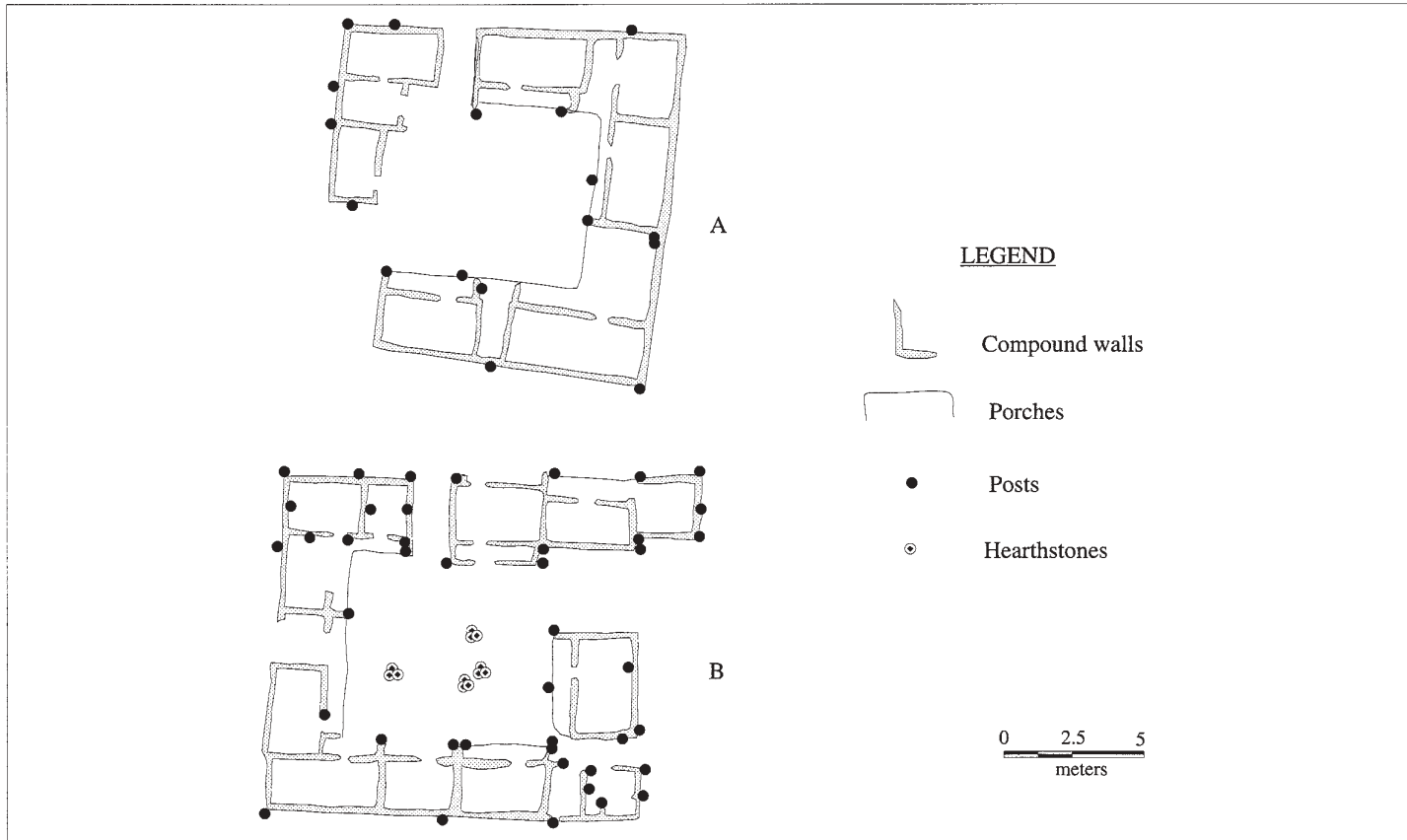
Figure 3.4. Plan view of Banda compounds

of villages, dwellings often consist of several rooms arranged in linear or L-shaped fashion and comprise a minimal residential unit (Fig. 3.5). As additional resources become available, rooms may be added at right angles or opposite the original room(s). Thus the construction of compounds is accretionary, with few people able to afford or mobilize the labor to construct a complete compound in a single phase. But just as rooms may be gradually added, so too may old rooms be lost (Agorsah 1985, 1993a). Earthen and thatch dwellings require constant maintenance. Thatch must be patched, then replaced when it becomes infested with insects. Walls must be shored up as they begin to erode. Porches and floors must be replastered to minimize erosion from torrential rains. Despite maintenance efforts, however, buildings ultimately collapse, especially during the rainy season. Collapsed rooms may be razed, and a new room built on the leveled remains of its predecessor. Rooms may also change function as they deteriorate. A room no longer suited for sleeping may be used for storage, and later abandoned and left to collapse.

Villages in Banda today are laid out on a grid, a product of British village planning schemes that involved relocation and rebuilding of villages (see Chapters 4, 7). A main thoroughfare orients the grid which holds in the center of contemporary villages, but breaks down on the outskirts where more recent houses have been built (Fig. 3.5 and Plate 4). The imposition of village planning by the British raises questions about the character of villages before relocation. Contemporary village plans and house forms can serve as a comparative model (Chapter 2) to investigate this problem archaeologically (Chapters 5–7).

Contemporary villages have special-purpose areas for latrines, middens, and cemeteries. Latrines are deep pit structures located on the edges of town, with separate facilities for men and women. Smaller midden heaps are dotted about town, and comprise primarily kitchen sweepings. Today, if the family can afford it, the dead are buried in wooden coffins; if not, the body is wrapped in cloth. Burial takes place in cemeteries on the village outskirts. All these practices reflect intervention by colonial officials (Chapter 4; cf. Anderson 1995), raising questions about earlier practice.

Organization of the chieftaincy

Chieftaincy is today part of a parallel system of governance that operates alongside the national bureaucracy in Ghana. This system maintains so-called traditional structures of governance, and has its origins in the British policy of indirect rule. Local polities select chiefs according to local formulae, who are then admitted to the Regional and National Houses of Chiefs. Jurisdiction of these bodies is restricted to matters of chieftaincy (i.e., disputes over succession); however, they exercise influence on "development," acting as a clearing house and lobbying agency for regional and local development projects.

The organization of the Banda chieftaincy mirrors that of Akan chieftaincies in the Brong-Ahafo and Asante Regions (Bravmann 1972), although Banda peoples are not Akan. Positions within the chieftaincy are referred to as "stools," and each chief has a carved wooden stool (some named) that symbolizes his office. Stools within the chieftaincy are restricted to Nafana men. Stool-holders are entitled to possess

LEGEND

◉ Mango/Ceiba tree

L Compound

Makala Village, 1994

To Makala
Kataa ◉

N

20 m

Lorry track
to Samwa
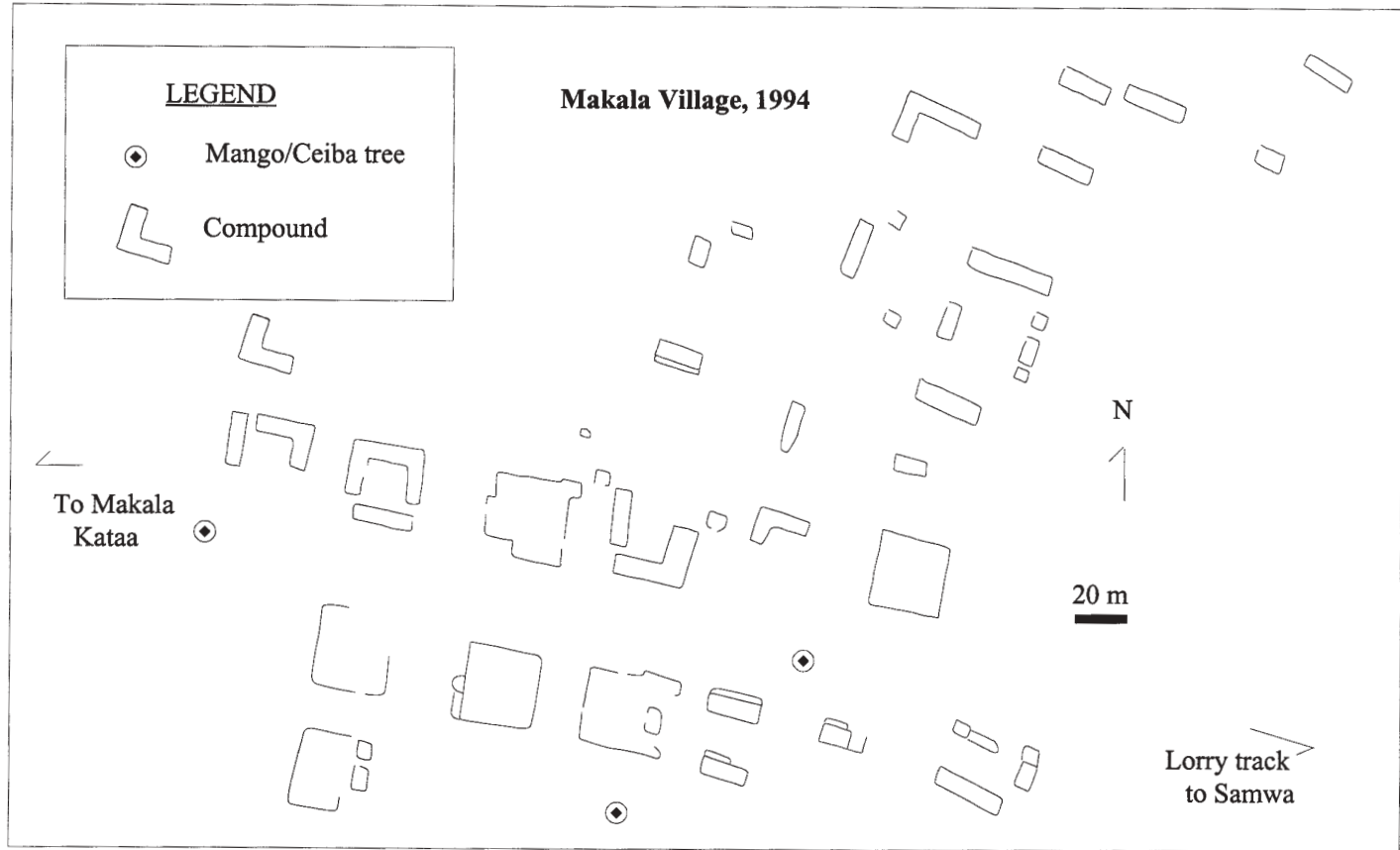
Figure 3.5. Map of Makala village, 1994

Plate 4. Banda-Ahenkro viewed from the Banda hills, 1982 (view to the east). Photo by A. Stahl

regalia, including umbrellas, drums, and perhaps a palanquin (Bravmann 1972), though not all do, for it depends on their ability to raise funds (Stahl and Anane 1989:6, 11). There are twenty positions represented on the Banda Traditional Council, including the paramount chief (Omanhene) and the queen mother (Ohemaa; Table 3.4). The majority of these stools are inherited within a matrikin group (*katoo*); two stools rotate between families (Dadeasobahene and the Akyeamehene); and two stools are recent titles for which the current incumbent is the first title-holder (Tufuhene and Gyasewahene). In addition, the Traditional Council includes the head of each village in the chieftaincy (*odikro* or imam in the case of the Ligby villages). The Council meets irregularly, as needed. The meeting house, constructed during the colonial period, is located in Banda-Ahenkro.

The paramount chief is selected by the kingmakers (Table 3.4) and the queen mother (Ohemaa). The Ohemaa provides an initial list of eligible candidates. Eleven kingmakers decide the successful candidate, and the installation rites closely parallel those of the Akan (Agyeman-Duah 1965). Until recently the paramount stool of the Banda paramount chieftaincy rotated alternately between two families: Sielɔngɔ Katoo of Banda-Ahenkro; and the Kabruno family who hold the title of Nifahene. Sielɔngɔ Katoo traces its origins to the first Nafana chief, Kralɔngɔ, who left the ancestral village of Kakala over an inheritance dispute (Ameyaw 1965; Chapter 6). Thus, members of Sielɔngɔ Katoo see their claim to the chieftaincy as rooted in antiquity. Nevertheless, a principle of rotation governed access to the stool. Upon the death of a chief from Sielɔngɔ Katoo, a successor was selected from the house of Petele in Kabruno (Ameyaw 1965; Stahl and Anane 1989:22). This family is reputedly of immigrant Mo origin. Oral traditions suggest that they were incorporated

Table 3.4 *Positions within the Banda chieftaincy, 1902–1986*[1]

Village[2]	1902–12[3]	1917	1918, 1922	1934–35	1986[4]
<u>Banda-Ahenkro</u>	Head chief	Omanhin	Omanhene Jasihene	Omanhene Ohembaa Odikro (Kronti)	Omanhene Ohemaa Krontihene[5] Gyasehene[5] Akyeamehene[5] Baamuhene Abakomahene
<u>Adadiem</u>	–	–	–	Odikro	–
Asempaneye	–	Headman	Headman	–	–
<u>Bima</u>	–	–	–	Headman	–
<u>Bofie</u> (Chalo)	Chief	Odikro	Headman	Headman	–
<u>Brawhani</u>	–				Akwamuhene[5]
Bui	Chief (1906)	Odikro	Headman	Odikro	–
Bungasi	Chief	Osafohene	Headman	Odikro	Adontenhene[5]
Dadease	–	Odikro	–	–	–
<u>Dorbour</u>	–	Osafohene	Headman	Odikro	Dadeasobahene
<u>Dumboli</u>	–	–	–	Odikro	–
<u>Dumpofie</u>	–	Odikro	Headman	Odikro	–
Fawoman	–				Apagyahene
<u>Gbau</u>	–	Odikro	Headman	Odikro	Tufuhene Gyasewahene
Gbini	–	Odikro	Headman	–	–
Gladow	–	Odikro	Headman	Krontihene	–
<u>Kabruno</u>	–	Brimpon	Nifahene	Nifahene	Nifahene[5]
<u>Kanka</u>	–	–	Headman	Odikro	–
Kanyere	–	Odikro	–	–	–
Kasa	–	Odikro	–	Odikro	–
Kojei	–	–	–	Odikro	–
Lawra (Lura)	–	Headman	Headman	Odikro	–
<u>Makala</u>	–	Osafohene	Headman	Odikro	Twafuorhene[5]
<u>Ngre</u>	Chief	Osafohene	Benkumhene	Benkumhene	Benkumhene[5]
<u>Obuasi</u>	–	Odikro	Headman	Odikro	–
<u>Sabiye</u>	Chief	Osafohene (Sabi 1) Odikro (Sabi 2)	Headman (Sabi 1) Chidomhene (Sabi 2)	Odikro Kyidomhene	Ankobeahene[5] Kyidomhene[5]
<u>Samwa</u>	–	(1 & 2) Headman	Headman	Odikro	Oyokohene[5]
<u>Sase</u>	–	–	Headman/ Leman	Leman	–
Tankomia	Chief	Odikro	Headman	Odikro	–
<u>Wewa</u>	Chief	Odikro	Headman	Odikro	Nsoaehene

Notes:

[1] Information derived from the Gold Coast Civil Service List, 1902, 1903, 1904–05, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910–11, 1912, 1917, 1918, 1922, and The Gold Coast Chiefs List, 1934–35, available on microfilm at the Northwestern University Library, Film A403, Reels 1–3. The 1986 list derives from the 1986 record book of the Banda Traditional Council.

[2] Underlined villages belong to the contemporary Banda chieftaincy. Other villages are either abandoned, or today belong to neighboring chieftaincies.

[3] Villages in the early Civil Service Lists reflect the route colonial officials took through Banda and not a comprehensive listing of Banda villages.

[4] The 1986 roster of the Banda Traditional Council did not list village headmen. The Akan term *odikro* is used to refer to the heads of Nafana and Kuulo villages today, while Ligby villages are headed by an imam.

[5] Kingmakers.

into the succession of chiefs in reward for service to a chief from Sielɔŋɔ Katoo (Ameyaw 1965). This principle of rotation was not upheld in the last succession, and is the root cause of the bitter chieftaincy dispute that plagued Banda for two decades (below).

A newly installed chief celebrates the funeral of his predecessor to legitimize his succession. Because of the chieftaincy dispute, Kofi Dwuru II's funeral celebration was delayed eight years, and in 1985 members of the Kabruno family attempted to block it by convincing police to revoke the Sielɔŋɔ family's permit for a public gathering. Funeral celebrations invoke, create, and reinforce historical memory as previous paramount chiefs are remembered for their special qualities. Memories are embodied (cf. Stoller 1995) through the impersonation of former chiefs. If, for example, a chief is remembered as a great hunter, someone appears in that role at the funeral. The material possessions of previous paramounts also evoke (and create) memory. The new chief distributes possessions reflecting the special qualities of former chiefs among different sections of the royal family who reside in different villages. Several days before the funeral celebration, the heirs gather and engage in a competitive drama in which each party impersonates the chief from whom they think they should inherit. Claims to inherit from particular deceased chiefs are based on kinship ties. A judge is appointed to decide who should inherit which possessions. After the funeral, the objects are kept in village stool rooms, but must be relinquished at the funeral of the next chief. While these possessions serve as mnemonics, keeping alive and creating memories of former paramounts, so too can silences be created through their exclusion, altering the past to serve the present.

State festivals

State festivals create and maintain power relations between subjects and the paramountcy. They also provide an opportunity for dissenters to express dissatisfaction through non-compliance or by disrupting "normal" practice. Among the Asante, the Odwira or yam festival was the primary state festival, and represented a time when subject chiefs were expected to pay homage to the Asantehene, reinforcing their allegiance to Kumase (McCaskie 1995:144–242). Similarly, the primary state festival for the Banda chieftaincy is the New Yam Festival, locally known as Fiŋge. The customary rites performed during the festival lift prohibitions on consuming new yams, and signal the beginning of the yam harvest. Anyone who consumes new yams before the festival must sacrifice a sheep in atonement. The date for the New Yam Festival is established by the Krontihene, in consultation with the elders. The festival must take place on a Fodwo, a conjunction that occurs once in each 42-day calendric cycle, sometime between July and early September when the yams are ready for harvest.

Just prior to the festival, men travel to their farms to dig new yams to be eaten on the day of the festival. Unlike other areas of West Africa (Coursey and Coursey 1971), there is no prohibition against digging the new yams with metal tools. Women and young girls carry the yams back to the village. The new yams offered to the ancestral stools are provided by the Chokoe family of Gbau village. Chokoe Katoo

provides the paramount chief with four new yams, a new earthenware cooking pot, a new earthenware woman's eating dish (*kpokpoo*), a new large calabash (*kɔɔngɔ*), and a new calabash spoon. These items are sent to the chief the day before the festival. In return, Chokoe Katoo receives the hindquarter of the sheep sacrificed by the royal family as part of the New Yam ritual (Stahl and Anane 1989:3). Ritual offerings are made at the Tano shrine and the stool room that houses the stools of past chiefs. Palace rituals are witnessed by the heads of Banda-Ahenkro's seven founding families and the Ohemaa. They may not be witnessed by any circumcised male (hence Muslims are prohibited), nor by anyone who eats goat. Goat meat is associated with women among the Nafana, and goats are never offered to Nafana ancestral stools, nor may the paramount chief eat goat. Sheep are associated with the Nafana royal family and men.

While celebration of the New Yam Festival can be taken to signal unity in the paramountcy, the actions of dissenters or of separate ethnic groups signal dissent or efforts to maintain and underscore a distinctive identity (cf. McCaskie 1995). While the Kuulo view the state yam festival as one to which they are subject, they underscore their separateness by celebrating their own distinctive rites. While they respect the Nafana festival by postponing consumption of yams until its completion, thus complying with the power of chieftaincy, they simultaneously signal solidarity among their minority identity. The actions of dissenters send a different message. Only villages who supported the incumbent chief in the long-standing chieftaincy dispute sent representatives to the palace during the New Yam Festival or on other occasions. And the yam festival has been the occasion for violence sparked by the chieftaincy dispute (see below), undermining the unifying logic of the festival.

A second state harvest festival plays a less prominent role in the Banda area and does not appear to carry the symbolic freight of the yam festival. The sorghum and millet harvest festival (Yualie) is associated with sacrifices made to the Jafun shrine housed on the outskirts of Banda-Ahenkro. Yualie takes place on a Fofie. Celebration of the festival is the primary responsibility of Loobia Katoo, one of the seven founding families of Banda-Ahenkro. In preparation for Yualie, the female head of Loobia Katoo brews batches of sorghum and millet beer (*pito*). On the designated Fofie, a goat is killed on the shrine, and a chicken sacrificed to discern whether the offerings have been accepted. The paramount chief and his elders are present for the sacrifices. A hindquarter of the goat is sent to the paramount chief. Calabashes of sorghum and millet pito, as well as tapioca made from each grain, are offered to the shrine. The women of Loobia Katoo prepare these foods, but they are offered by the Jafun *bɔɔnyiifun*, male caretaker of the Jafun shrine. Following the sacrifices, any person who has prayed to the Jafun shrine during the preceding year must slaughter an animal and provide meat to the *bɔɔnyiifun* The male and female heads of Loobia Katoo don distinctive white garb during the Yualie celebration (Plate 5). The male head dons a shirt-like garment (*batakari*) made of strip-woven cotton cloth, a style of northern dress that contrasts with the Akan-style cloth worn by chiefs and elders of Banda. Members of Loobia Kataa trace the origins of the Yualie celebration and the Jafun shrine to the north (Stahl and Anane 1989:21), a point to which I return in Chapter 6.

Plate 5. Elders of Loobia Katoo, dressed in ritual garb worn during the Yualie festival, 1986. Photo by A. Stahl.

Power and social control

Today a measure of social control lies with the state, represented by the police post in the village of Gbau (Fig. 3.2). For many years Banda had a small police force; however, the size of the force swelled after violence erupted in 1994 between residents of Banda-Ahenkro and Kabruno, after which district officials viewed Banda warily.

Despite the police presence, social control remains the province of extended families and officials of the paramountcy. Pastors exercise some influence among the minority Christian community, which is divided among several denominations (Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic, and Pentecostal). Other Banda villagers, mainly Ligby, are Muslim and subject to their imam. In addition, there are vestiges of two power associations that exercised considerable social control in the past; the Gbain and Do societies. Both are masking societies on which I have little primary information because of the secrecy that surrounds them. While the association of masking cults with Senufo-speaking peoples has long been recognized (Bochet 1965; Glaze 1981), scholars overlooked the existence of masking traditions among the Islamic Mande-speaking peoples in eastern Côte d'Ivoire, western Ghana, and elsewhere (Bravmann 1975:144–148; and passing references in Launay [1992]).

Bravmann (1973, 1974, 1975, 1979) has published the most extensive account of masking associations in western Brong-Ahafo, based on his 1966–67 fieldwork in Bonduku, eastern Côte d'Ivoire, and villages associated with the Sampa and Banda chieftaincies. Bravmann believes that both Do and Gbain are Mande in origin. He

describes Do masks as a purely Ligby tradition in the Banda area (Bravmann 1975:159). The masks are finely carved representations of animals (plates in Bravmann [1973, 1975, 1979]; Freeman 1898:152; Tauxier 1921:291–296). Do dancers, their heads clad in masks and cloth drapes and their bodies in raffia or ragged cloth, make public appearances on a variety of occasions. They may dance at Ligby weddings and they perform at the funerals of imams. They also appear at celebrations marking the end of Ramadan and the month of pilgrimage. Bravmann (1975:159–160) stresses that the Do masquerade is accepted by local Islamic leaders, and plays a quasi-political role since it marks both state and secular occasions. Representatives of the national government may also be honored by the appearance of Do dancers.

Bravmann (1975:163–166) believes that the other masking association, Gbain, also originated with Islamic Dyula and Ligby peoples, and was only later adopted by neighboring "pagan" peoples. He described Gbain masks as stylistically distinct, taking the form of a bush-cow or buffalo. These large, horizontal masks may be fire-breathing, a feat accomplished by placing a small perforated cup with glowing embers in the mouth of the mask. Gbain is more secretive than Do, and is closely associated with anti-witchcraft activities. The mask is supported by a secret society made up primarily of men, though in at least one instance, membership included a post-menopausal female who served as head of the association in one Banda village. The mask appears only at night, with the masked dancer draped in raffia and adorned with iron anklets, armlets, and bells. Distinctive drum songs are played as the dancer proceeds through the village, visiting each compound in search of witches.[4] There are few masks today, one of which is housed in the village of Dorbour. Neither women nor children may view the mask – the sight of it causes women to become barren and children to die. Bravmann (1975:164) noted that the mask appears on Fridays after the conclusion of Muslim prayers, which he cited as evidence in support of a Dyula–Ligby origin for these masks. This may, however, be a coincidence. The animist Nafana, a Senufo-speaking people most closely linked with this association in the Banda area, believe that witches and spirits are most active on Fridays. People report that the mask may dance on a Fofie, a Sumbɔɔ, on the occasion of a member's death, or if the mask is determined to have caused the death of an individual.

Making history in Banda
The preceding descriptive account has an ethnographic air about it, treating practice and culture as received and natural, rather than contested and constructed. In this section, I turn to the role that narratives about the past – Trouillot's "historicity 2" – play in the present. Produced at multiple sites, some local, some foreign, their production and consumption are imbued with power, authorizing some visions of Banda history while silencing others.

Making history in the colonial period
British commitment to indirect rule placed a premium on knowledge of "traditional" governance (Adas 1995; Lackner 1973; von Laue 1976). In the Gold Coast, a

concern to chart native governance led to the appointment of a Special
Commissioner for Anthropology in 1921 (R. S. Rattray; McCaskie 1983b; von Laue
1976; CO98/36; CO98/50; CO98/55). Rattray served in this capacity until 1931, con-
centrating on Asante, interviewing "greybeards" in remote villages (McCaskie
1983b:189), piecing together from remembrance and observation a vision of tradi-
tional Asante political organization. Published in 1929, his *Ashanti Law and
Constitution* provided a blueprint for indirect rule (Kuklick 1979:50; Wilks 1975:119–
124). But indirect rule was a Janus-faced strategy: committed to conserving African
tradition, but modifying practice to suit colonial needs, at once resisting change and
imposing it (Kuklick 1979:43–59).

Today the Banda chieftaincy mirrors an Akan model in which chiefs occupy a posi-
tion in a military organization (Arhin 1980:24). Positions are referred to by Akan
(Twi) terms.[5] Yet this structure is arguably a product of the colonial period, an arti-
fact of the British "making history" in Banda. A crisis in indirect rule in the 1920s
prompted British officials to restore the Asante confederacy along "traditional lines"
in 1935 (Tordoff 1965:227, 333). To lay the groundwork for this, Rattray traveled
north to areas formerly under Asante control, and reported the "startling discovery"
that Asante's former provinces were organized in much the same way as Asante:

> The old familiar titles and offices appeared under names either identical or
> so little different as to be easily recognisable as corruptions of the Akan
> language . . . The highly-elaborated Akan organization, military and civil . . .
> The secret and elaborate enstoolment ceremonies in connection with
> enstoolment of Akan kings, all were found to be in existence here . . . [their
> constitutions] *are similar to that of the Akan, and function on similar lines* . . . [It
> is] unnecessary to stress the importance of this discovery at the present time,
> when the Government are contemplating the introduction of indirect rule. A
> knowledge of these facts should simplify matters for us considerably, and
> give us a working formula upon which to base a native administration suited
> to local conditions.
> (CO98/55:11; emphasis in original)

But evidence suggests that Banda's political structure was an exception to Rattray's
rule, and that an Akan model of chieftaincy was imposed on Banda during the colo-
nial period. This process can be tracked through the Gold Coast Civil Service Lists
(Table 3.4). Beginning in 1902 (the first year Banda appears on the chieftaincy lists)
and continuing through 1912, the Civil Service Lists identify Banda officials simply
as chiefs (with the exception of "Head Chief"). In 1917, a new terminology mapped
Banda political organization: some chiefs were distinguished as Osafohene while
others were listed as Odikro, an Akan term for village chief. Osafohene was a term
that administrators were familiar with from coastal societies (Chukwukere 1980). In
1918, officials abandoned the term Osafohene, and substituted the term "Headman"
for Odikro. A handful of positions were now designated by Asante terminology
(Jasihene [Gyasehene]; Nifahene; Benkumhene; Kyidomhene), terms that elevated
these positions relative to village headmen. The structure of the 1922 list remained

stable, while in 1934–35, it was altered once again. Village chiefs were again referred to as Odikro and the list elaborated the range of positions within the chieftaincy (Ohembaa [Ohemaa]; Krontihene). Further elaboration of the Akan structure in ensuing years is implied in a comparison of the 1934–35 list and the official members of the Banda Traditional Council according to its 1985 roster. Significantly, many of these positions are associated with short lists of former office-holders (Stahl 1991). Thus, though there is no question that Banda was incorporated into Asante in the eighteenth century, an isomorphism of political structure did not necessarily follow. Colonial officials imposed an Akan structure on the Banda chieftaincy, though they assumed that structure was a natural outcome of Banda's incorporation into Asante. From 1935, that structure has been elaborated to include a full range of kingmakers (below).

History-making and the politics of chieftaincy

Banda history made its academic debut after Ghanaian independence when researchers from the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana worked systematically to collect oral histories before knowledgeable elders died. Banda was visited twice by Institute scholars: once in 1965 and again in 1976. The resulting documents (Ameyaw 1965; Owusuh 1976) represent the "official" history of the Banda chieftaincy today. The recently deposed paramount chief has in his possession copies of both, which are brought out and consulted whenever the topic of Banda history is broached. They supplement a history collected from Banda elders during the colonial period by Thomas E. Fell, a Travelling Commissioner assigned to the Western Province of Ashanti.[6] His history consisted of a brief outline of events in the history of the Banda chieftaincy, beginning with the Nafana migration from Kakala, and a list of former paramount chiefs (Table 3.5). A fourth written version of Banda history appears in the proceedings of a 1936 land dispute hearing before the Asantehene's Native Court "A" between Yaw Mensah, Odikro of Bemah (Bima) and the Banda Omanhene Kwasi Srapim (KA 985).

The Ameyaw (1965) and Owusuh (1976) histories differ in format. The Ameyaw (1965) account appears to have been collected on a single day (November 20, 1965). His role in soliciting information and structuring the narrative remains opaque. The account is written as a chronologically ordered narrative, beginning with the Nafana migration from Kakala. The history is event-oriented, and details a series of wars and confrontations with neighboring polities. I suspect that Ameyaw elaborated on some episodes based on his knowledge of Brong-Ahafo history. Owusuh also collected historical information during the course of a single interview (June 9, 1976), but the history is published in question and answer format, allowing the reader to see how information was elicited. Because he used a standardized questionnaire, the interview lacks an overarching narrative.

Both the Ameyaw and Owusuh histories formalized Banda history, creating an authorized narrative cited by academic historians. But whose vision of Banda history is authorized by these written versions? According to a list of informants, both Ameyaw and Owusuh interviewed a relatively small group of Banda elders that

Table 3.5 *Former Banda paramount chiefs according to Fell (1913), Ameyaw (1965), and Owusuh (1976)*

Fell 1913	Ameyaw 1965	Owusuh 1976	Date/Links
Salongo	Kralongo	Kralongo	
–	Gyara	Gyara	
Kralongo	Sielongo	Sielongo	Goody (1965:13, footnote, p. 89) suggested this was Shitayi (SHYTAQ; Sie Taki) of the Gonja Chronicle (Kitāb Ghanjā); the chronicle reports that SHYTAQ died in July 1751 after ruling 30-odd years (Wilks et al. 1986:97–98). Linked by Banda traditions to Osei Tutu (d. 1712 or 1717) and to an attack on Gonja/Bole (Ameyaw 1965: 2; Wilks et al. 1986:141).
Saki	Sakyi	Sakyi	Banda ruler whose name is linked to Asante invasion of Banda (Ameyaw 1965:3–5). Dutch sources suggest the invasion dates to the dry season of 1773/74 (Yarak 1979).
Munjera	–	–	
Pekzu	Pehzoo	Pehzoo	
Mumugwanda	–	–	
Peteli	Petele[1]	–	First chief from the Kabruno house; beginning of the rotation between Sielɔngɔ and Kabruno houses.
Hahbah	Habaa	Habaa	
Worojlo	Wulo Dwo[1]	–	Name linked by Banda tradition to Asante campaigns against Fante (1806–07) and Gyaman (1818–19); Ameyaw (1965); Fell (1913).
Dabla	Dabla	Dabala	Linked to Asantehene Kwaku Dua I (r. 1834–67) who entreated Banda people to reoccupy their lands (Ameyaw 1965:8).
Hah Chambi	–	–	
–	Sahkyamo Wurosa[1]	–	Name linked to 1892–93 hostilities with Nkoranza (Ameyaw 1965; Lewin 1978:171).
–	Sie Yaw Dwuru (Regent)	Sie Yaw Dwuru (Regent)	Chief at time of 1894 treaty with British (CO879/41 No. 479, enclosure 2 in no. 57).
YaSailongo	Yaw Sielongo	Yaw Sielongo	Chief at time of Fell's visit; had held office since 1900 (Fell 1913); listed as Head Chief or Omanhene in Gold Coast Civil Service Lists from 1904 through 1922 (Table 3.4). The microfilm version of lists at Northwestern University Library (Film

Table 3.5 (*cont.*)

Fell 1913	Ameyaw 1965	Owusuh 1976	Date/Links
	Kwasi Sinapim[1]	–	A403) contains no lists between 1922 and 1934. Listed as Omanhene in the Gold Coast Chiefs List, 1934–35 (Table 3.4).
	Kofi Dwuru II	Kofi Dwuru II	Reigned 1938–77.

Note:

[1] Chiefs from the Kabruno house, who were edited out of the list of chiefs in 1976 when Owusuh interviewed Kofi Dwuru II and his elders. This marks an early stage in the chieftaincy dispute that long plagued the Banda chieftaincy.

included Kofi Dwuru II, the Banda paramount chief who reigned for almost forty years (1938 to 1977). Kofi Dwuru II and most of his elders were Nafana, so Nafana history has been treated as isomorphic with Banda history in authorized versions. While other groups are mentioned, the perspective is resolutely Nafana, engendering silences at the moment of fact creation (Trouillot 1995:26). More specifically, the view is one from the royal house, amply illustrated by comparing the list of former chiefs recorded by Ameyaw in 1965 with that of Owusuh in 1976. Table 3.5 compares the list of former chiefs according to the Fell (1913), Ameyaw (1965), and Owusuh (1976) histories. The Fell list differs in several respects from those of Ameyaw or Owusuh: it includes two early chiefs not listed by them (Munjera and Mumugwanda), and omits one or two more recent chiefs. More striking are the differences between the Ameyaw and Owusuh lists, both collected from Kofi Dwuru II. A comparison shows a consistent pattern of omission. Following Pehzoo, the fifth chief on both lists, the Owusuh history omits every other chief listed in Ameyaw (Petele, Wulo Dwo, Wurosa, and Kwasi Sinapim), all of whom were from the Kabruno family. Moreover, the Ameyaw history describes how the rotational principle between the Kabruno and Sielɔngɔ families developed, while the Owusuh history is silent on the rotational principle. These omissions represent a deliberate silencing of history on the part of Kofi Dwuru II and his supporters, and mark an early phase in the recent chieftaincy dispute.

In broad outline, the chieftaincy dispute arose before the death of Kofi Dwuru II, who was from Sielɔngɔ Katoo. According to the rotational principle, he was to be succeeded by the Nifahene, a position held by the Kabruno family. According to residents of Banda-Ahenkro,[7] the old chief grew weak in his final years, and the Nifahene began to usurp privileges accorded the paramount chief. Prior to Dwuru's death, the Nifahene drafted a letter in the name of Kofi Dwuru II to the chief of Obuasi (Fig. 3.2), informing him that he should send the hindquarter of hunted animals, a prerogative of the chief, to the Nifahene. The letter was discovered, read in an open forum, and condemned as a violation of custom by the Kabruno family. Because of this, Kofi Dwuru II took the stance that the stool should not pass to the

Kabruno family upon his death. Based on interviews with Kabruno residents, Bravmann (1972:166) traced the roots of the dispute to a claim made by the incumbent Sielɔngɔ family in 1965 that the white stool of Kralɔngɔ (primary symbol of the Banda chieftaincy) be housed permanently in the newly constructed stool room at Banda-Ahenkro (to which the Banda Traditional Council would not agree).

Banda kingmakers disagreed over who should succeed the Kofi Dwuru II upon his death, each side mobilizing different historical narratives in support of their stances. Members of Sielɔngɔ Katoo maintained that the Kabruno family had been included in the stool rotation as a prerogative of Sielɔngɔ Katoo – that the Kabruno family had access to the paramount stool only by virtue of an ancestor of Sielɔngɔ Katoo rewarding one of their ancestors for faithful service (Ameyaw 1965). Just as they could grant access, so too could they restrict it. This was a position with which the majority of kingmakers were sympathetic. The Kabruno family, on the other hand, stressed the historical precedence of the rotational principle, but found support from only a handful of other villages: Bungasi, Obuasi, Dumpofie, and the Ligby village of Kanka. Theirs was a minority view, and a successor, Kofi Dwuru III, was chosen from Sielɔngɔ Katoo who acted as regent from 1977 but was not enstooled until 1985. The chieftaincy dispute festered despite the installation of Kofi Dwuru III. Struggles ensued over whose name would be entered in the National Register of Chiefs. Kwame Kupoh, the rival candidate, got his name entered, blocking registration of Kofi Dwuru III. The issue was taken up by a regional tribunal under the Rawlings government in the middle 1980s. After hearing testimony from a number of Banda kingmakers, members of the tribunal decided in favor of the Sielɔngɔ family, citing a lack of support amongst the kingmakers for the Kabruno candidate. This was associated with a crucial shift in the historical discourse on chieftaincy. Sielɔngɔ supporters began to appeal to the "traditional" role of kingmakers in support of their position. Kingmakers are a common institution among the Akan peoples of Ghana, and therefore have a widely recognized legitimacy. Simultaneously, they began to maintain silence on the principle of rotation acknowledged by the Ameyaw (1965) history. But the "traditional" role of kingmakers was arguably a product of the colonial period as British officials imposed an Akan blueprint on the Banda chieftaincy (Stahl 1991). Regardless, Ghana officials in the mid-1980s sided with Sielɔngɔ Katoo, and expunged the rival's name from the National Register of Chiefs, entering that of Kofi Dwuru III.

But this is not merely a fight between old men armed with historical discourse. It is a dispute punctuated by violent outbursts pitting young men armed with machetes, torches, and competing visions of Banda history against one another, with tragic results. In 1986, not long after Kofi Dwuru III's name had been entered in the National Register, a violent confrontation coincided with the celebration of the yam festival. The violence followed a soccer match on the eve of the New Yam Festival. A quarrel broke out among youths from Banda-Ahenkro and Kabruno during the course of the match. At its conclusion, as the young men from Banda-Ahenkro passed through Kabruno on their way home, they were met by Kabruno residents

wielding cutlasses (machetes) and sticks. Fourteen men were seriously injured in the brawl, eleven from Banda-Ahenkro and three from Kabruno. Their wounds were primarily from cutlass blows to the head, and three of the most seriously injured were transported to the nearest hospital at Wenchi (75 km). One man from Banda-Ahenkro died from internal injuries sustained during the beating. A second violent outburst took place in August 1994 in the week preceding the New Yam Festival. Young men from Banda-Ahenkro reportedly set fire to several houses in Kabruno in retaliation for perceived abuses by the Kabruno chief. There was considerable loss of property and several men died as a result of injuries sustained during the violence. Thus it is a conflict that involves weapons and bodies as well as historical discourse.

These infrequent instances of violence punctuated an otherwise brooding resentment over the chieftaincy dispute. The Nifahene who first struggled with the former paramount chief died in 1982, but no new Nifahene was enstooled. A younger Kabruno claimant then contested Kofi Dwuru III's claim to the stool, a claim made moot by his destoolment in November 1996.

Thus there are multiple sites of history-making in Banda, especially as it relates to matters of chieftaincy. Kofi Dwuru II's editing of the chieftaincy list shows his awareness of the power of history and the importance of controlling its production. But that was not his only act of silencing. During the period 1976–77 Dean Jordan, a linguist and Bible translator who lived in Banda-Ahenkro for a decade (1972–82), collected a series of historical accounts from local families as material for a literacy project. Although Kofi Dwuru II initially agreed to the project, he later demanded that all copies of the histories be destroyed, imposing a silence this time at the moment of archive creation (Trouillot 1995:26).

The Banda Research Project and history-making in Banda

I have been involved in the production of Banda history since 1982, first as a graduate student pursuing archaeological research, and later as an academic engaged in oral-historical (in 1986) and archaeological research (in 1989, 1990, 1994, and 1995). Since 1990 I have worked with graduate students, who are also involved in producing Banda history. There is an obvious power dimension involved here – we come to Banda, a poor rural community, as members of a wealthy society with access to resources unavailable to local people. We come with scholarly credentials and government authorizations to investigate Banda's past. There is an imperialism implied that has prompted calls for the production of "authentic" cultural histories that are attentive to local identities, common people, and their daily activities (Andah 1995:180–181). While our project has focused on precisely these issues, Andah's formulation glosses the complexities of power relations, hegemony, and issues of "authenticity" at the local level. Within Banda, cleavages along the lines of ethnicity and power shape perceptions of authenticity, a point amply illustrated by the chieftaincy dispute. I turn now to consider the role of the Banda Research Project in making Banda history.

The origins of the Banda Research Project, as we have come to label ourselves for granting agencies, involved serendipity. I first traveled to Banda in July, 1982, in

search of a site for dissertation research which focused on the period when a mobile hunting-gathering lifestyle gave way to increased sedentism and food production, changes associated with an archaeological phase known as the Kintampo complex or culture (Anquandah 1982; Stahl 1985a, 1985b, 1986). Banda offered several things that other prospective research sites did not – a house where I could live with a local family, an accessible countryside where I could look for early sites, and, most importantly, food. Food was an important consideration in 1982; Ghana's debt crisis was at its height, and it coincided with a series of poor harvests. Transportation was in a shambles, and food was scarce in the cities and most towns. Thus, my introduction to Banda, where I lived from August to December, 1982, was in a period of economic crisis during which people struggled daily to make ends meet.

My focus in 1982 was on early archaeological sites; my research assistant Mensah Listowell and I, later joined by my husband Peter, spent considerable time walking fields looking for early sites, but also interviewing people who knew about old places. Most of the sites that we found or were shown were not the very early sites that I sought, but more recent "Iron Age" sites, most dating to the last 500 years. Some were abandoned early in this century, and knowledgeable elders linked them to stories about nineteenth-century figures like the Imam Samori (Chapters 4, 7). Many elder men and women with whom I spoke in 1982 chastised me for my apparent lack of interest in these sites. I collected their stories, but without a clear sense of how they fit into my research. My dissertation included a chapter describing the "Iron Age" sites; but it was included out of a sense of commitment to report information rather than an interest in the sites themselves. Yet those stories influenced my long-term interests. I was struck by the area's ethnic complexity, and by the qualities that I would later assimilate to Kopytoff's (1987) discussion of frontiers. As an archaeologist, I was struck with how the ethnic complexity of Banda was masked by a relatively homogeneous material culture, and my next trip to Banda was motivated by an attempt to understand the relationship between ethnicity and material culture.[8]

I returned to Banda in July–August, 1986, when I began to focus on the recent history of Banda peoples. Although that project was motivated by a sense that material culture and ethnicity were not isomorphic, I held an essentialist view of ethnic groups at the outset. A local research assistant, James Anane, and I collected histories from thirty families, which were put together in a booklet for circulation in the community (Stahl and Anane 1989). These interviews marked a turning point in my research agenda as I became aware of variability in ethnic styles over time, in the situational dimension of ethnicity, and of how ethnic identity intersected with larger events. This led to a paper on ethnicity (Stahl 1991), and to a research agenda influenced by the work of Wolf (1982), Trigger (1985), and others who were exploring the impact of global developments in local, non-western contexts.

My next visit to Banda was in 1989 (June–July) when I began archaeological excavations at Makala Kataa, a Nafana site abandoned early in the twentieth century. Working with a local crew, we uncovered remains of abandoned houses, kitchens, and garbage deposits that held clues to how daily life had changed over the past

century. In 1990 (June–July) I returned, accompanied by Andrew Black, a graduate student, to continue excavations at Makala Kataa, testing two nineteenth-century villages on the site. Black returned to Banda in 1992 (January to June) to pursue an ethnoarchaeological study of animal use. He augmented his ethnographic and oral-historical research with small-scale excavations of recent middens in Banda-Ahenkro. Excavations at Makala Kataa were expanded in 1994 (June–July) when I was accompanied by three graduate students. One, Maria Cruz, remained in Banda through December, 1994, studying contemporary potting in the villages to the west of the Banda hills. In 1995 (June–July), I returned to Banda with four students to excavate at an earlier site – Kuulo Kataa – that would allow us to extend our comparative sample further into the past. One of these students (Alex Caton) pursued a study of beads and their uses and collected women's histories. In November 1996, Leith Smith, a project member since 1994, returned to Banda to conduct an expanded archaeological survey, focusing especially on the Banda hills where no systematic work had previously been done.

Thus the bulk of our project time has been spent digging holes and counting the pottery sherds that come out. Yet throughout my time in Banda, I have asked questions, been told stories, attended rituals, listened to gossip, and witnessed political upheavals associated with the long-standing chieftaincy dispute in the area. My experience of Banda is biased in a number of ways. Foremost is my elementary proficiency in Nafaanra, the dominant language in the area. In all interview situations, I have relied on a small number of translators, all of whom are highly proficient in English. Further, my associations have been primarily with men; although I have interviewed a number of elder women regarding family histories and women's rites of passage, I have always relied on a male translator in these instances. My visits have been confined primarily to the rainy season, violating the anthropological adage that one should spend a full round of seasons to gain an adequate sense of life throughout the year. Further, my view of Banda is "Ahenkro-centric" – I have always resided in the village of Banda-Ahenkro, seat of the recently deposed paramount chief, though I have associated with the people of Makala and Dumpofie through our archaeological work. Because I have always resided in Ahenkro, the chief's opponents perceived me as allied with the chief. Yet I have visited most of the villages in the chieftaincy, and conducted oral-historical interviews in many. Maria Cruz resided for a time in Dorbour, a village on the west side of the Banda hills, and her experiences there provide a useful balance to the emphasis in my work on the eastern side of the hills (Cruz 2001). My knowledge of Banda is also Nafana-centric, since most of my contacts and close associations are with Nafana men and women. These partialities shape the representation of Banda history presented here.

A particularly thorny issue in contextualizing our work is the chieftaincy dispute, and it has impinged on our historical research in myriad ways. The role of the present in producing the past has been most evident through the lens of the chieftaincy dispute, especially in the oral-historical component of the project. A brief history of that study is warranted for the insight it lends into the process of historical production. In 1986 I worked with James Anane, a Nafana research assistant, collecting oral

histories of Banda families. The study centered around the problem of ethnicity and Akanization – i.e., how was it that peoples of the Banda chieftaincy had come to adopt features of Akan political organization described by Bravmann (1972)? Anane and I set out to interview individual families to complement the royal traditions that had been the focus of earlier researchers. Our interviews targeted male and female heads of family, and were guided by a handful of questions intended to prompt remembrances: Where did the family come from? Do they play a special role in the chieftaincy? If so, how did they come to play that role? Are there any family members remembered for special qualities or deeds? And we asked family elders to provide a list of former male and female heads of family. The project had the approval of Banda authorities. On my arrival, I met with the chief and his elders, outlined what I proposed to do, offered drink for libations, and received the elders' permission to proceed. I was concerned that the project not be simply an academic enterprise, so I offered to produce a booklet of family histories that would be distributed to families, local schools, and so on. The paramount chief and his elders supported the idea of a booklet, seeing it as a way to encourage awareness of local history among the youth. All participating families were aware that we were preparing such a booklet, and while I recognized that this would affect the kind of information people shared with us, I felt it was an important trade-off in order to "give something back" to the community.

Within a few days of starting interviews, I was confronted by Tolɛɛ (Nafaanra term for grandfather and the appellation for the paramount chief), who expressed concern that we were interviewing people other than royal family members. He warned me that people were telling us lies about Banda history. Although we conducted interviews within family compounds, walls have ears and it became clear that there was surveillance of our interviews. Tolɛɛ suggested, then demanded, that interviews be conducted at the palace in his presence. After a day of negotiation, he agreed that people might feel uncomfortable speaking at the palace, but insisted that his representative accompany us on interviews. This was an unhappy compromise, but one which lasted only a few days as the representative lost interest. But throughout that summer I was occasionally summoned to the palace as Tolɛɛ endeavored to "correct" misinformation. His corrections most often focused on families' claims to have come from Kakala, the ancestral Nafana village (Stahl 1991; Chapter 7). Thus Tolɛɛ and his elders worked to silence the history of some families at the moment of fact creation, disputing their claims to have "always been Nafana." Their efforts to exercise power over the production of history at Trouillot's (1995:26) second moment, that of fact assembly or archive-creation, had longer lasting effects, and centered on the reception of the "blue book," the booklet of family histories known for the color of its cover (Stahl and Anane 1989).

The blue book represents relatively direct translations of the family interviews. Because they were intended as a form of local literature, I imposed a narrative form on some, although a few, especially those of the Kuulo families, had been told to us in the form of a relatively uninterrupted narrative (Chapter 5). I brought the blue books to Banda when I returned in 1989 to begin the archaeological phase of the

project. I assumed that I would distribute them personally to the families that had participated, but Tolεε and his elders requested that all copies be delivered to them; they would see that individual families received their copies. I complied, and within two days was summoned to the palace. There I met with Tolεε and several of his senior elders who expressed their thanks for the booklets, but noted a problem; an inaccuracy in the Kuulo family history. Two passages in particular were of concern. One was a claim that the Kuulo, who all parties agree are autochthones, had "conferred the position of chief on the Nafana" after their migration to the Banda area. The word "conferred" was of course an English gloss of a Nafaanra term, probably more closely captured by the word "allowed." The Banda elders insisted that this was incorrect because the Nafana had been chiefs in Kakala before they migrated to Banda. I suggested that perhaps the English word "deferred," with its slightly different meaning, might be an easy substitution, to which they agreed. More problematic were two sentences describing the role formerly played by the Kuulo in installation rites of the paramount chief. Recall that the Kuulo had lost the position of *kahole wura* (earth priest) during the colonial period when a colonial official decided in favor of the Nafana in a land claim brought by the Kuulo. This decision eliminated their role in installation rites – to wash the feet of the paramount chief, and to hold the waist of the chief as he was lowered on the ancestral stool. This claim was deemed unacceptable by Tolεε and some of his elders. Despite a long argument in which I tried to allay their concerns by pointing out that the Kuulo made no claim to play such a role in the present, the elders were adamant that these lines must be eliminated from the family histories. They requested that I blacken out the offending sentence which must have held for them the threat of a future claim, one that the blue book "authorized" by putting in writing. At the time, compliance seemed my only option, although I expressed strong concerns about how the Kuulo would interpret this censoring.

The censored versions of the blue books were circulated to all families but one – the Kuulo of Dumpofie. The strong black lines through the offending sentences in the Kuulo history prompted considerable curiosity and gossip. People quickly discovered that by holding the book at the proper angle in strong sunlight, they could read the offending line. The censoring thus drew far greater attention to the offending line than had the books been circulated in uncensored form. Here then was a clear exercise of power in the production of history, a struggle between mentions and silences that has yet to be resolved.

The danger presented by the Kuulo family history can only be understood within the context of the chieftaincy dispute. Dumpofie, home of the Kuulo family, supported the Kabruno candidate for chief. According to Nafana elders, their historical claim to have played a key role in installation rites was motivated by a desire to influence the outcome of the chieftaincy dispute. Nafana elders interpreted their claim as a ploy to increase their influence in external evaluations of the dispute.

Thus the struggle over the blue book, which I did not anticipate, was a struggle over mentions and silences that pitted dominant members of the majority ethnic group against a minority ethnic group and a foreign academic. I felt profoundly

uncomfortable arbitrating history at the local level, and with the censoring of Kuulo historical narratives. The experience heightened my awareness of my contradictory positioning in the community and of the complexities that lie behind exhortations to produce authentic local histories. Such calls gloss the fact that "the production of historical narratives involves the uneven contribution of competing groups and individuals who have unequal access to the means for such production" (Trouillot 1995:xix). It also heightened my awareness of the power implied in the version of Banda history authorized by my academic writing. Since 1986, then, there has been a central contradiction and tension in my relationship with Banda. I have always sought and received permission and support from Tolɛɛ and his elders to pursue our work, and I and my students are, quite naturally, viewed as allied with the chief. We have lived in his village and have been publicly embraced by him. This was most clearly signaled by the elders' decision (Tolɛɛ and the kingmakers) to install me as a queen mother (Nsɔkua Hema) in 1995 to acknowledge our contributions to the community. During 1994–95, we constructed a building with National Science Foundation funds to house students and laboratory facilities. We consulted local authorities, and agreed on a building design that could serve as a community center. It was turned over to the community at the end of our 1995 season and is used for town gatherings, to house visitors, and will ultimately be home to exhibits on the archaeological sites. While the title of queen mother was a great honor bestowed on me, it was also a co-optation. Banda elders jokingly referred to me as a "Banda ambassador" who could help improve the image of Banda, badly tainted by the violence of 1994. Yet privately my relationship with Tolɛɛ and the elders has been characterized by struggles as I have endeavored to include perspectives other than theirs in constructing a vision of Banda history.

This is a mere sampling of the multiple sites where Banda history is produced; however, it demonstrates the dialogic, dialectical character of making history. Positioned actors – chiefs, members of minority ethnic groups, academics – represent the past through the lens of the present in relation to pressing problems of the day. This is no less true of academics than of kings, who produce texts (histories) that are a "mixture of facts, stories, symbols, presuppositions, and the like arranged according to a contemporary grid" (Mudimbe 1994:4). We endow the past with significance in relation to the present (Mudimbe 1994:195). But we should resist the idea that, because our knowledge about the past is positioned, partial, and shaped by the categories we impose on it, it is no longer important to ask questions about a lived past. And we should be suspicious of calls for "polyphony" that claim no grounds for sorting among differing points of view, viewing them as mere stories, for it diverts attention from the structural inequalities that underwrite social relations (Handsman and Richmond 1995:115; Trouillot 1995:xix). Thus, this study proceeds from a recognition of the tension between Trouillot's historicities 1 and 2, but keeping a firm eye on the sociohistorical processes that shaped the daily lives of Banda residents in the past, and how that lived past contributed to the character of life in Banda today.

4

The political-economic context

The notion of the "pre-colonial" as a time "prior to impact" (Ranger 1993:69) is belied by West Africa's long-standing connections with the larger world. Trans-Saharan caravan networks linked West Africa, the Islamic Mediterranean, and, indirectly, Christian Europe from the end of the first millennium AD. Fifteenth-century Portuguese mariners pioneered sea routes, providing an artery for the flow of West African gold to Europe. Later, manufactured goods were ferried to Africa, exchanged for humans exported to bondage in the New World, where they produced raw materials for European industry. This infamous triangle of trade intimately linked the political-economic fates of four continents. Their fates were no less linked with the abolition of the slave trade and the shift to "legitimate" trade early in the nineteenth century. The partitioning of Africa at the Berlin Conference (1884–85) ushered in the relatively brief colonial period, during which the map of Africa took its present form. Growing involvement of European capital and distinctive forms of development (and underdevelopment) ensured continued links between West African nation states and the global economy in the postcolonial period. While the broad strokes of these political-economic developments are well known, their impact on the daily lives of people – especially those living in areas removed from the coast – are poorly understood.

The history of the Banda area, insignificant today from a global economic perspective, mirrors this well-rehearsed series of extraregional developments. Banda has been variably integrated into spheres of power whose geographical focus lay in different directions. To be sure, Banda peoples differentially embraced and resisted the external forces that conditioned their daily lives. And just as surely the cultural context in which their lives were embedded changed in ways that are obscured by labeling contemporary cultural practices as "traditional." The extent of change is a question to be posed – we cannot predict the response of local people to external forces (Isaacman and Roberts 1995:2–3); rather, we must garner diverse evidence to characterize the form and impact of external forces in specific temporal contexts. Only then can we speculate on how the lives of Banda peoples were conditioned by the broader context in which they lived. Before focusing on the changing social and political-economic landscape of Banda in Chapters 5–7, I examine in broad brush strokes the political-economic conditions that shaped those changes.

Subcontinental and intercontinental exchange c. 1100–1600

The Sudanic kingdoms (Ghana, Mali, Songhai) have long been known to European scholars through the writings of Arab geographers (Bovill 1968). Early archaeologi-

cal investigations were shaped by western representations of urbanism and rein-
forced the impression that Sudanic states were a product of Arab contact (R.
McIntosh 1999; McIntosh and McIntosh 1984, 1993). More recent excavations have
targeted early levels of sites like Jenné-Jeno (Fig. 4.1), demonstrating the roots of
long-distance exchange and urban life in the period before Arab contact (McIntosh
and McIntosh 1984, 1986, 1993). This work highlights the variable character of late
first-millennium societies along the southern margins of the Sahara (S. McIntosh
1994:177–182, 1999a, 1999b), and suggests that, although external exchange was
important, local exchange in crafts and food was equally if not more important to
the local economy. Historians and archaeologists now suggest that Sudanic patterns
of ethnic specialization among fishing people, farmers, pastoralists, and craft
workers (smiths and potters) may be rooted in the late first millennium (Brooks
1993; McIntosh 1993, 1998).

Gold was a staple of the North African trade, and derived from "Wangara," which
Wilks (1982a:334; Wilks et al. 1986:2) argued was a diaspora rather than a locale.
Wangara traders were Mande peoples from Mali who traveled to gold-bearing areas
of the forest like the Akan goldfields – an area of auriferous deposits between the
Volta and Komoé Rivers in present-day Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire (Fig. 4.2; Wilks
1982a:336). They left an indelible linguistic and cultural imprint on the Akan-speak-
ing peoples with whom they traded (Goody 1964, 1966a; Wilks 1961, 1962).
Wangara commercial activity was centered at a place known to Arabs as "Bitu," or
"Bighu," and to the Akan as "Bew" or "Nsɔkɔ" (hereafter Begho; Wilks 1982a:343,
345). This entrepôt, where forest resources – gold and kola – were exchanged for
northern commodities – salt, cloth, and copper alloys – was strategically located on
the forest–savanna boundary. Mande caravans were unable to penetrate southern
latitudes where trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness) affected their pack animals.
Forest goods arrived at Begho via human portage and were transferred to caravans
for the northward journey to the Niger termini of the trans-Saharan trade.
Europeans too recognized the strategic importance of Begho; it appeared as the
northernmost charted land on a 1629 Dutch map of the Gold Coast (Daaku and van
Dantzig 1966). While there is broad agreement that forest resources played an
important role in the Saharan trade, there is disagreement over the antiquity and
scale of forest settlement (Klein 1994; Wilks 1977, 1994). Recent archaeological
research near Bekwai (Fig. 4.2) suggests that historic towns (Asantemanso,
Adansemanso) substantially predate a European presence on the West African coast
(Shinnie 1988, 1992; Shinnie and Vivian 1991; Vivian 1990). Yet forest occupation
probably expanded after AD 1500 due to several factors: European demand for gold,
linked to its use as a currency from the thirteenth century (Wilks 1982a:334–335); a
long dry period (c. 1100–1500) that followed an episode of increased humidity prior
to c. 1100 (Brooks 1993:7); and the Black Death, which may have spread across the
Sahara during the fifteenth century (Posnansky 1987:16–17).

Oral traditions linked Begho to an abandoned site in the vicinity of a small Brong
village, Hani, immediately south of Banda. The site was the focus of archaeological
investigations by the West African Trade Project, headed by Merrick Posnansky
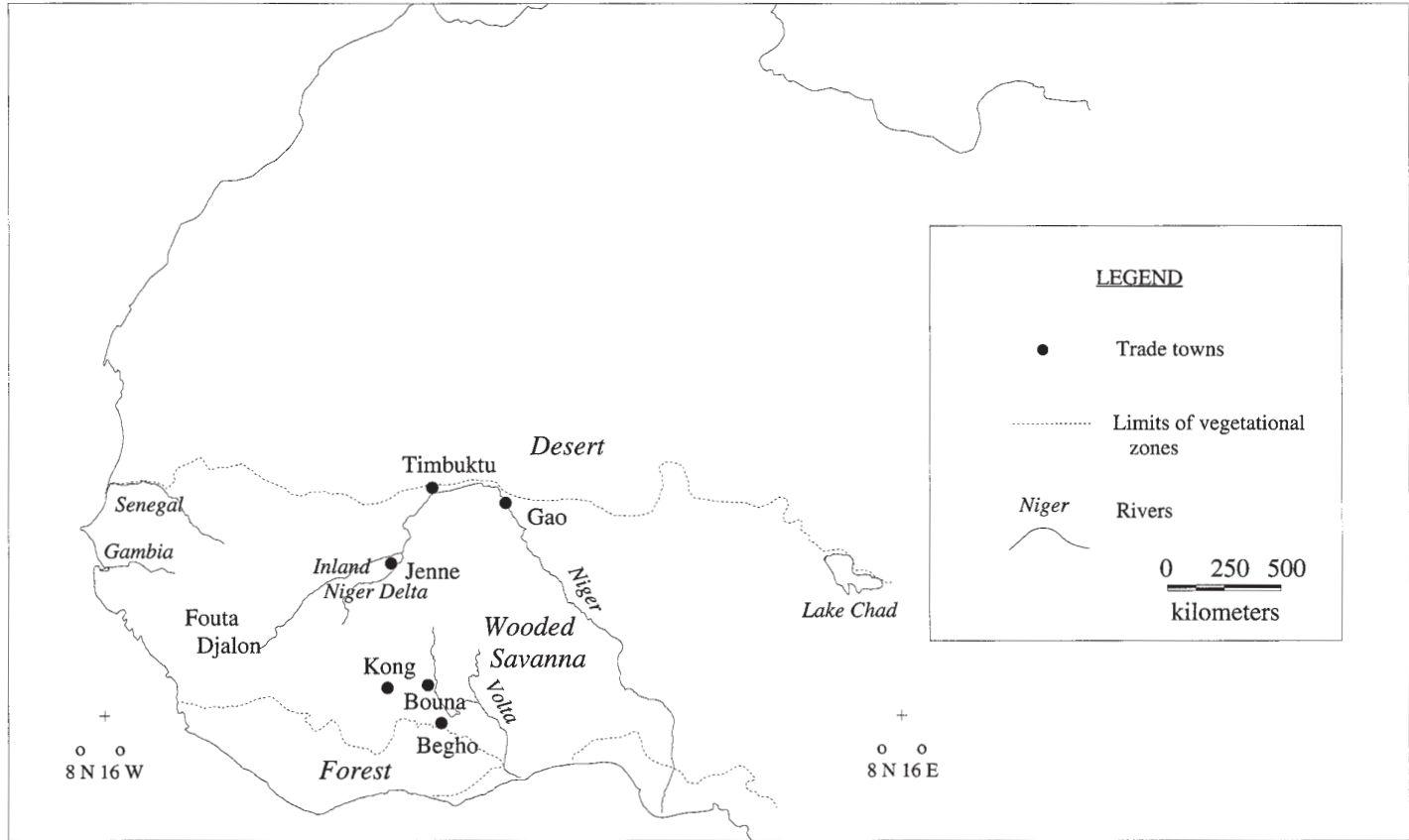
Figure 4.1. Centers in the Niger trade

LEGEND

●   Trade towns

··········   Limits of vegetational zones

Niger   Rivers

0   250   500

kilometers

Desert

Senegal

Gambia

Timbuktu

Gao

Inland   Jenne
Niger Delta

Fouta
Djalon

Wooded
Savanna

Kong

Bouna

Begho

Forest

Niger

Volta

Lake Chad

8 N 16 W

8 N 16 E
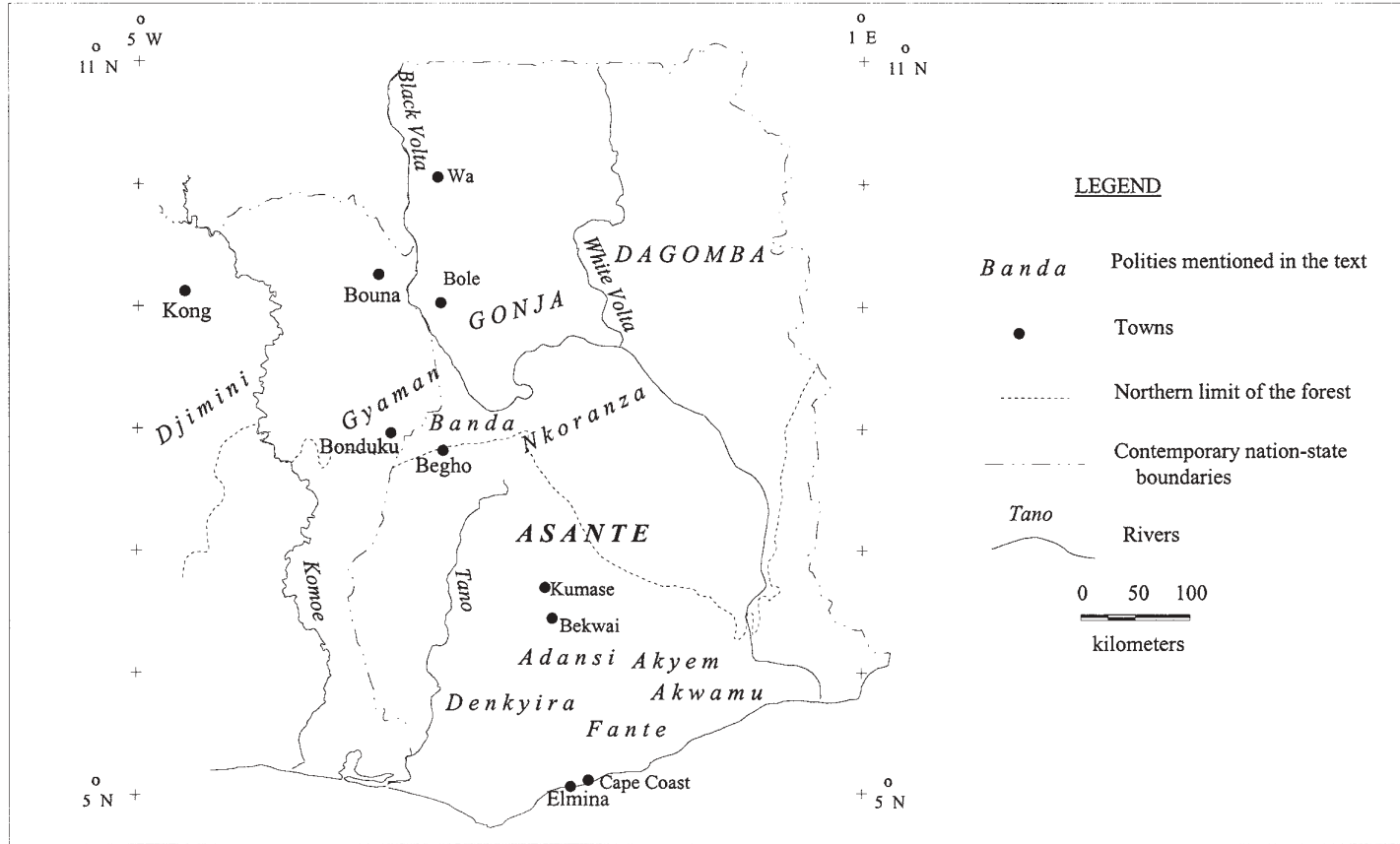
Figure 4.2. Historic polities mentioned in the text

(Posnansky 1973, 1976a, 1976b, 1979, 1987). According to oral sources Begho was laid out in quarters inhabited by different ethnic-linguistic groups: a Brong quarter; the Kramo, home to Mande-speaking merchants; and Dwinfuor, occupied by artisans. The Nyarko quarter was allegedly occupied by people of mixed origins (Posnansky 1976a:51). Most of the c. 1,500 low mounds on the site probably represent collapsed structures (Anquandah 1993:648). They cluster in four areas, separated by a distance of a kilometer or two, thought to represent the discrete quarters described by oral-historical accounts (Posnansky 1976a:51, 1979:24–25, 1987:17). Yet it is likely that the term Begho referred to a larger area than the site near Hani (Garrard 1980:41; Posnansky 1979:25). Neighboring towns, like Old Bima in the Banda area, probably shared in the Sudanic trade (Bravmann and Mathewson 1970; Chapter 5).

Excavations between 1970 and 1979 by members of the West African Trade Project demonstrated that not all quarters at Begho were contemporary. The central township (Brong, Kramo, and Dwinfuor quarters) was at its peak between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries (Flight 1973:548; Posnansky 1976a:62; Posnansky and McIntosh 1976:189; Stahl 1994b:64–65); however, radiocarbon dates from Nyarko quarter predate the Sudanic trade (Posnansky and McIntosh 1976:189). Thus Mande-speaking traders may have come into contact with people already exploiting locally available gold. Involvement in the gold trade was suggested by ceramic disks that conformed to the Islamic system of weights used to measure gold and silver (*mitkal* and *uqiya*; Garrard 1980:12–15, 42; Posnansky 1976a:56). Ceramics from the Nyarko quarter included red, design-painted pottery, distinct from later ceramics at Begho (Crossland 1976a). Similar pottery found throughout the Volta basin (Stahl 1994b:90–91) is commonly linked with Mande influence based on apparent similarities with pottery from Sudanic sites like Kumbi Saleh (Davies 1964; Goody 1964; Mathewson 1968; Wilks 1961); however, excavations at stratified sites suggest that painted pottery has a long history in the Volta basin (York 1973). Yet the period c. AD 1400–1700 witnessed intensified contact with the Middle Niger, evidenced by exotic goods including beads, copper, a piece of glass, and several pieces of sixteenth-century Chinese porcelain (Posnansky 1976a:51).

At its height, a variety of artisanal specialties were practiced at Begho, several shaped by Sudanic influences. Iron was produced at Dapaa, a large smelting complex that yielded three radiocarbon dates ranging from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries (Calvocoressi and David 1979:16). Large-scale production probably contributed to deforestation (Goucher 1981:182–183). Textile production is attested by numerous (often painted) spindle whorls, which resemble examples from the important merchant town of Jenné-Jeno on the Niger River (Posnansky 1987:17–18). Locally woven cloth is today produced on narrow strip looms (Gilfoy 1987). Historians of textile production suggest that strip weaving is Sudanic in origin, and was introduced to Volta basin societies through mercantile connections (Posnansky 1976a:56). A brass foundry, evidenced by hundreds of crucibles in the Dwinfuor quarter (Garrard 1980:41), probably signals northern influence as well. Finished brass vessels, often adorned with Arabic script, were imported into the savanna

woodland and may have inspired innovations in ceramic form, including sharp angles or carinations that appear as new elements on medieval pottery at Begho. Today such brassware is included in the state paraphernalia of modern Volta basin chieftaincies (Bravmann 1973; Garrard 1980:41–42; Posnansky 1976a:52), and Asante (see frontispiece in Rattray [1927]). Ivory was also worked at Begho, and two examples of ivory side-blown trumpets – important regalia among contemporary and historic Akan peoples – were recovered from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century contexts (Posnansky 1976a:53, Fig. 20). Begho is thus viewed as a conduit through which artisanal skills later elaborated by historic Akan states (e.g., Asante) were introduced to Ghana (Garrard 1980:37–66; Posnansky 1976a, 1977, 1987).

Expanding Saharan exchange probably built on existing exchange. Small numbers of marine shells in Kintampo complex contexts attest connections between coastal and interior regions as early as the mid-second millennium bc (Flight 1976:217; Stahl 1985a:205–206). Other raw materials appear to have been exchanged as well (Stahl 1993b). Following Posnansky's suggestion that contact with the Niger resulted in a diffusion of artisanal skills and symbols of status and power, the importance of Sudanic connections was bound up in the creation and maintenance of social distinction, and linked to a growing taste for new commodities that created material distinction between those with access to prestige goods and those engaged primarily in production for local consumption and exchange.

Historical and archaeological investigations of ancient West African societies have been preoccupied with issues of social complexity and extraregional exchange in prestige goods (Stahl 1999b). These preoccupations flowed from a concern to counter images that sub-Saharan Africa was dominated by subsistence-based societies with little potential for generating surplus (Sinclair et al. 1993:21–25). But this drew attention from local exchange networks that probably figured more prominently in the daily lives of people than the extraregional networks that were a source of power and prestige for local elites. The West African Trade Project devoted some attention to local networks; however, they assumed that late twentieth-century patterns of craft production provided an accurate model of craft production for Begho (Crossland 1989:51–82; Crossland and Posnansky 1978). Based on general similarities in ceramic form and decorative treatment, Mo-speaking potters from the village of Bondakile (Fig. 3.2) were thought to provide a model of craft specialization that could be applied to Begho. Yet the assumption of isomorphism drew attention from how local craft production was affected by incorporation into a market economy over the past century (Stahl and Cruz 1998; Chapters 5–7).

Begho was probably involved in the slave trade during the period 1400–1600 when there was a steady flow of slaves to Islamic North Africa. Prior to 1500 the primary trade was in women and children (Lovejoy 1983:24). Though the trade supplied income for some, it was not the primary focus of merchant activity, and the slaves "tended to be a by-product of politically-motivated military activities" on the "raiding frontier" (Lovejoy 1983:27–28). By the sixteenth century, slaves were deployed in production by Islamic states of the Sudan (on plantations and in salt mines; Lovejoy 1983:32–33). The Islamic trade remained fairly constant through the

eighteenth century; however, the rapid rise of the Atlantic trade after 1600 was associated with transformations in the political economy of enslavement (Dumett and Johnson 1988; Lovejoy 1983:44–134; McSheffrey 1983).

The Atlantic trade and the growth of forest polities c. 1500–1700

Portuguese mariners made landfall at the future site of São Jorge da Mina (later Elmina) in 1471, where they constructed a fortified warehouse in 1482 (Hair 1994; Wilks 1982a:336; Wilks et al. 1986:3). Within a decade, the stretch of Guinea coast known as the Gold Coast became the major supplier of bullion to Europe through a maritime route that bypassed Islamic middlemen. Though the importance of African gold was soon eclipsed by the discovery of vast reserves in the New World, other commodities, particularly slaves, drew European traders in growing numbers over the next three centuries. Although the shift was gradual (Wilks 1982b), trade that formerly flowed north to Sudanic entrepôts was increasingly funneled to the coast. This undermined the position of emporia along the forest–savanna margin that had mediated the Sudanic trade (i.e., Begho). As the fulcrum of trade shifted to the forest zone, upward of fifty polities emerged in the Gold Coast hinterland (Kea 1982:2).

The southward shift in the gravity of trade was resisted by Sudanic polities. Eighteenth-century Arab sources chronicle the diversion of trade away from Sudanic entrepôts as Mande traders became increasingly involved in the Atlantic trade. In response, Sudanic rulers mounted a campaign against Begho intended to reestablish the northward flow of gold (Wilks 1982b:458–472). The founding of Gonja, a state that dominated the wooded savanna north of the Black Volta River (Fig. 4.2), was associated with this campaign. Oral and documentary sources associate the campaign with the historic figure Naba'a (Jakpa; Goody 1967), who, after attacking Begho, withdrew north of the Black Volta and established the overkingdom of Gonja through a series of brutal conquests before 1650 (Wilks 1966, 1982b:469–472, 1993:29–31). The northward flow of gold temporarily increased, but Sudanic resistance could not stem the southward flow of trade in the long run. Though the northern trade played a role in the subcontinental political economy into the twentieth century (Arhin 1970, 1979, 1987; Austen 1987:37–39; Kea 1982), the terms of trade were set in the south from the late seventeenth century.

A wealth of historical scholarship has shed light on the complexities of Gold Coast political-economic history (Agbodeka 1971; Arhin 1979; Fynn 1971; Kea 1982; Wilks 1975, 1993; Yarak 1990). The narrative of Gold Coast history is one of increasing consolidation of political-economic interests by both Europeans and Africans. An early Portuguese monopoly rapidly gave way to competition among European powers for Gold Coast trade. The Dutch challenged the Portuguese by establishing a fortified station at Mori, 15 miles east of Elmina in 1612, and captured Elmina in 1637 (Yarak 1990:94–95). Within two decades English, Dutch, French, Swedish, Danish, and Brandenburger trade interests were represented on the Gold Coast (DeCorse 1998b; Fynn 1971:14; van Dantzig 1982:189–190). By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, trade was dominated by the British, despite a continued Dutch presence.

A similar concentration of political-economic influence characterized African states. A complex mosaic of forest states mediated trade in ivory, gold, and slaves between the hinterland and Europeans before the mid-seventeenth century (Adansi, Denkyira, Akwamu, Akyem; Daaku 1966; Daaku and van Dantzig 1966). Their power was eclipsed late in the seventeenth century by the emergence of Asante. Oral sources suggest that Asante rose from a union of diverse Akan peoples who fled northward to areas around Bekwai/Adansi (Fig. 4.2) to escape the control of Denkyira which dominated the Cape Coast hinterland. Unification was promoted through stories of common origin and allegiance to newly invented state symbols (Fynn 1971:31–33). Consolidation of power was embodied by the Golden Stool (Sika Dwa), primary symbol of authority among the Asante (McCaskie 1983a:30). Under Osei Tutu, the first Asantehene, Asante forcibly imposed its hegemony over its southerly neighbors, and subsequently extended its control over northern polities. Both he and his successor, Opoku Ware, campaigned in the north, mounting attacks on Begho. While early scholars assumed that hostilities with Asante dealt the fatal blow to Begho, archaeological evidence suggests a continued occupation of the site into the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Posnansky 1987:20–21). Nevertheless, the movement of artisans away from Begho to the Asante capital at Kumase further eroded its economic basis. That, combined with evidence for environmental degradation brought on by iron smelting (Goucher 1981:188), contributed to Begho's steady decline. By 1750, Asante territory extended from the Volta basin in the north (Gyaman and Gonja) to the immediate hinterland of the coast; however, its control over tributary states oscillated. Periods of strife within Asante were characterized by rebellion in the provinces, with the result that Asante control over its neighbors waxed and waned during the next 150 years (Wilks 1975:243–309).

The character of the Atlantic trade varied in time and space. Although gold first attracted Europeans to the area, its role in the Guinea trade varied considerably – New World gold quickly diminished the importance of West African sources. At the same time, gold increased in value on the Gold Coast, and soon Brazilian gold was imported by Gold Coast polities (Kea 1982:11). The growth of sugar plantations in Brazil and the West Indies fueled the demand for slaves, the primary export from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth century. British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, combined with a growing demand for raw materials in Europe, forced readjustment to "legitimate" trade early in the nineteenth century (palm oil, ivory, gold, and rubber; Grier 1981:24–29). The range of imported goods varied as well (Alpern 1995). Initially, guns played a limited role in the Guinea trade (Kea 1971). A papal order (1481) reaffirmed an earlier ban on trade in firearms that was intended to keep them out of the hands of the "enemies of Christ" (i.e., Muslims; Wilks et al. 1986:9). Instead, the Portuguese traded cloth, obtained from North Africa, and slaves, obtained further east along the Guinea coast, for Guinea gold (Wilks et al. 1986:9–10). In the period 1500–35, before their monopoly on the Gold Coast trade was challenged by the Dutch, the Portuguese imported an estimated 10,000–12,000 slaves to Elmina to be exchanged for Akan gold (Wilks et al. 1986:10). It is assumed that slaves were used to mine gold (cf. Dumett 1979), and that they played a crucial

role in agricultural intensification in the forest (Wilks 1977; cf. Klein 1994; reply by Wilks [1994]).

Although slaves were the focus of the Guinea trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, not all areas of the coast participated equally. Most Gold Coast forts traded fewer than 100 slaves annually (van Dantzig 1982:197; cf. Behrendt 1995; Fynn 1971:14–16). Van Dantzig (1982) suggested a graded involvement in the trade from west to east along the Gold Coast: slaves were only occasionally obtained from areas west of Elmina where the gold trade predominated; from Elmina to the mouth of the Volta, slaves and gold competed; east of the Volta, slaves were the mainstay of the Atlantic trade. Although the short-lived Akwamu state appears to have been primarily oriented toward the slave trade, early Asante appears less so. But access to firearms (Inikori 1977; Kea 1971; Richards 1980), the "means of destruction" (Goody 1971:39–56), played a crucial role in Asante's ability to extend its hegemony over its northern neighbors. The resulting warfare produced captives, some consumed by the internal slave trade, and others destined for the horrors of the middle passage and what lay beyond.

Other dimensions of the Atlantic trade have received less scholarly attention. New World crops were introduced to West Africa early in the Portuguese trade, transforming African cuisines. In some cases they supplemented indigenous crops, in others replaced them, with significant implications for nutritional ecology. The documentary record provides limited insight into this dimension of the Atlantic trade (cf. Alpern 1992; Curtin 1983; Pelto and Pelto 1983). Archaeologists have shown little interest in the impact of New World crops on the subsistence ecology of Africa, treating them as little more than temporal markers. Historians and archaeologists often assume that diffusion is an adequate explanation for the widespread adoption of New World crops, with the result that "the options, calculations and initiatives of African peasant groups have been swept away in favor of either fateful coincidences of a geographical or culturalist type, or of modernization policies of external or government origin" (Chrétien 1988:93). Instead, we need to be attentive to the circumstances that made New World crops attractive (or necessary) alternatives (Guyer 1996; Ohadike 1981).

Asante's dominion c. 1700–1896

The event history of eighteenth-century Asante is dominated by military campaigns and successional disputes (Fynn 1971). Opoku Ware (1720–50) faced rebellion in the south upon his enstoolment, a pattern that characterized later successions as well. He aggressively expanded Asante's domain, and at its peak Asante's territory covered an estimated 100,000 square miles, and included some 3 million ethnically diverse inhabitants (Lewin 1978:12). Once Asante achieved its territorial apex, commerce supplanted warfare as the primary focus of state activities (Metcalf 1987:391).

Despite territorial oscillations, Asante maintained a stable organization from the end of the eighteenth century to the 1870s (cf. McCaskie 1995). Wilks (1975) distinguished three regions within "Greater Asante": a metropolitan region; the inner provinces; and the outer provinces (cf. Arhin 1979:23). These regions were linked

by "great roads" that radiated out from Kumase to various market centers in the north and south (Wilks 1975:1–18, 1993:189–214). The metropolitan region comprised Kumase and its environs. Its boundaries were marked by the presence of *nkwansrafo* ("highway police"; Wilks 1975:48), whose duties, according to Bowdich, included enforcing an embargo on the movement of guns and powder beyond the bounds of metropolitan Asante (Fynn 1971:120). Inner provinces were distinguished by their subject, rather than tributary, status. They were tightly integrated into the Asante confederacy, and, with few exceptions, comprised Akan speakers who shared in "Asante law and Asante rights," including the tax structure of metropolitan Asante (Wilks 1975:69–70; cf. Agbodeka 1971:193). Inner provinces were subject to the "Great Oath" (Rattray 1929:102–105), and to participation in the annual Odwira festival which underscored Asante unity and allegiance to the Golden Stool (Arhin 1979:24; see McCaskie [1995:144–242]). Control points along the trade routes demarcated inner from outer provinces (Wilks 1975:54). Tributary outer provinces were typically peopled by non-Akan groups (Arhin 1967; Wilks 1975:71). Asante ruled its outer provinces indirectly, through existing chiefs (Wilks 1975:59–71), and the annual tribute demanded of outer provinces varied depending on the kinds of products available in and around the province. For example, large provinces like Dagomba and Gonja were required to supply tribute in slaves, livestock, and cloth.

Although the number of slaves exported from the Gold Coast pales in comparison to Senegambia, the Slave Coast, or the Congo, the slave trade was a significant factor in the political-economic landscape of the seventeenth to nineteenth century. Some scholars posit that slaves in the Gold Coast hinterland were acquired primarily as a byproduct of warfare and state-building rather than as a product of slave-raiding (Maier 1990). The external trade peaked in the first half of the eighteenth century, and declined steadily throughout the second half of that century. By 1800, the volume was less than half of what it had been fifty years before (McCarthy 1983:74). Asante supplied many of the slaves exported by the Dutch from Elmina. Records from 1770–71 indicate that some 1,500–1,600 slaves were shipped from Elmina, most of whom were supplied by Asante traders (Yarak 1990:100). The slave trade did not cease altogether with British abolition in 1807 (Roberts and Miers 1988). Trade continued in ships sailing under Portuguese and Spanish flags until about 1820, but by around 1826, the external trade appears to have dwindled to a trickle (McCarthy 1983:74). Reduced external demand resulted in a glut of unmarketable slaves in Asante, who were reportedly settled in farming villages (Dickson 1964:29). Still, internal demand for slaves continued. Ironically, the shift to "legitimate" trade in agricultural commodities advocated by abolitionists probably contributed to the expansion of internal slavery, for slaves were used to produce and transport export crops such as oil palm and cocoa (Lovejoy 1983:136, 160; Wilks 1993:229).

Asante generated captives in several ways. Gonja and Dagomba were required to supply c. 1,000 slaves annually to Kumase (Arhin 1974:100; Wilks 1975:67). These they acquired by raiding small-scale, so-called acephalous societies that occupied the interstices between states (Lobi, Grunsi, etc.). War captives taken during disputes

with neighboring chieftaincies were another source of slaves. Though raiding and military expeditions were confined in theory to areas outside Greater Asante (Wilks 1975:70–71), in practice there was considerable strife among Asante's northern provinces during the nineteenth century. Successional disputes in Kumase allowed both inner (i.e., Gyaman, Nkoranza) and outer provinces (Gonja, Dagomba) to pull away, and the resulting warfare between neighboring provinces produced captives.

Metropolitan Asante expanded demographically by incorporating war captives and slaves (Morrison 1982; Wilks 1975:84–86). Although many captives belonged to the underprivileged, there was a degree of upward mobility as captives and their descendants were absorbed into Asante society (Wilks 1975:705–709). Former identities were submerged, a process facilitated by an Asante law that forbade inquiry into another's origins (Wilks 1975:86).

Asante commerce was international in scope and involved several distinct networks that predated its consolidation as a state. Kea (1982:12) distinguished four commercial spheres that are unevenly glimpsed through documentary sources. International spheres included: the Atlantic or overseas trade; the coastal (cabotage) trade; and the Muslim-dominated Sudanic trade. The fourth network was local and bound up in the internal distribution of products between towns and villages. Any discussion of these networks must pay attention to temporal context, for their importance varied through time. So too did the character of each network, as for example that of the Atlantic trade before and after British abolition (1807; McCaskie 1983a:33; Wilks 1993:169).

Insights into trade prior to 1807 are provided by the papers of Richard Miles, an officer in the English Company of Merchants (Metcalf 1987). Miles commanded three forts between 1772 and 1780, and his papers touch on the trade preferences of Akan peoples during this period. He traded with Fante middlemen, who exchanged their wares to inland customers. Early in the period, the cost of slaves along the Gold Coast escalated considerably, coinciding with a short-lived scarcity of European goods due to shipping disruptions associated with the American Revolution (Metcalf 1987:379). Miles paid for slaves in gold, a reversal of the pattern that initially brought Europeans to the Gold Coast. An analysis of Miles' barters suggests that a small range of manufactured goods were in demand on the Gold Coast at this time. Of overwhelming importance were fine textiles, both East Indian and European – silks, satins, chintz, and linens (see also Yarak [1990:46]). Other commodities included pewter or brass basins, pots and tankards, guns, gunpowder, empty cases, iron and lead bars, rum, Brazilian tobacco, silver, and unworked brass and pewter. Conspicuously absent were trivial objects like glass beads (Metcalf 1987:379).

Asante benefitted from the presence of multiple European nations along the Gold Coast. This prevented any nation from achieving a monopoly and enabled Asante to maintain favorable trade conditions by playing the interests of one nation against another. Asante had close ties with the Dutch, who maintained forts at Axim, Elmina, and Accra during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Yarak 1990:126). This enabled Asante to obtain firearms and other manufactured goods during periods when the British tried to isolate it through embargoes (Yarak 1990).

The importance of the Atlantic trade has diverted scholarly attention from the continued importance of the northern trade, in part because it is less visible in the documentary record (cf. Arhin 1970, 1979, 1987). Yet the northern trade was of greater economic significance to the ordinary Asante citizen than the Atlantic trade (Arhin 1987:57; see Weiskel [1978] on east–west trade), and grew in importance when the Atlantic trade faltered (Wilks 1975:262–263). Kola, a forest product, was the focal point of the northern trade. Valued as a stimulant by Muslim inhabitants of the savanna and Sudanic zones, it was a focus of the caravan trade into the nineteenth century. The kola trade largely accounted for the continuity in the placement of important market centers, termed transit markets by Arhin (1979:1–2). Located within short distances of 8° north latitude, a series of transit markets dotted the Volta basin from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries, including Bonduku, Begho, Techiman/Bono Manso, Kintampo, Atebubu, and Salaga (Fig. 3.1; Arhin 1979:2). Here forest traders exchanged kola, brass, and imported rum for a wide variety of northern products, including: slaves; salt; shea-nut butter (produced from the savanna tree *Butyrospermum parkia*); yams; livestock and their byproducts, including leather; elephant tusks; iron tools; cotton thread and cloths; and silks, obtained through trans-Saharan networks (Arhin 1987:52). Many of the material symbols that differentiated chiefs from commoners derived from the northern trade (leather, cloth, and elephant tusk; Arhin 1979:10–12). Multiple currencies operated here: iron bars or rods, which fell into disuse by the eighteenth century (Garrard 1980:3); cowries, which had considerable value in the north but were not used in metropolitan Asante; and gold dust, valued in part because it could be exchanged for European armaments in the aftermath of abolition (Arhin 1995:98–100). Europeans fueled the growth of cowries as currency, with five French and German companies importing 36,000 tons of cowries (an estimated 14 billion shells) into Africa between 1851 and 1869 (Guyer 1995a:7). Yet cowries were not convertible: "Billions of cowries were used by European traders to purchase goods from Africans, but were unacceptable to purchase goods from Europeans" (Guyer 1995a:9).

British interests on the Gold Coast 1844–1874
The British first established themselves on the Gold Coast in 1645 (Lewin 1978:41), and later made their headquarters at Cape Coast Castle, 20 km east of Dutch headquarters at Elmina. From 1827 to 1844, authority over British possessions on the Gold Coast was vested in the London Company of Merchants (Grier 1981:24). Though Dutch and Asante interests often coincided (Yarak 1990), British interests were more often defined in opposition to those of Asante (Wilks 1975:167–168), and Britain's growing entrenchment on the Gold Coast was sparked by conflict with Asante (the establishment of the British Protected Territory of the Gold Coast in 1844, and the Crown Colony of the Gold Coast in 1874).

British merchants adopted a policy of non-intervention and accommodation during the period of early Asante expansion. So long as commerce flowed, European nations resisted the expense of direct political domination (Wallerstein 1986:112). Early British efforts to mediate disputes between the coastal Fante and the Asante

were ineffective (Fynn 1971:102–103), and the treaties that resulted from Anglo-Asante negotiations were frequently abrogated by the British. Bowdich negotiated one such treaty in 1817 on behalf of the Company of Merchants. British non-compliance led to a breakdown in Anglo-Asante relations (Wilks 1975:399–403), and a second delegation traveled to Kumase in 1820. Led by Dupuis, an envoy of the British government, the mission aimed to renegotiate the terms of the 1817 Anglo-Asante agreement (Wilks 1975:149). Anglo-Asante relations deteriorated further with the outbreak of the Asante–Fante war in 1823, culminating in an Asante attack on Cape Coast in 1824 (Yarak 1990:46). British defeat of Asante troops at Katamanso in 1826 (Wilks 1975:183–184, 1993:169) marked a turning point in Asante–British relations, and culminated in the 1831 Anglo-Asante treaty that ceded Asante's authority over its southern provinces to what would soon become the Gold Coast Protectorate (1844). The treaty, negotiated by George Maclean, hired by the Company of Merchants in 1830 to restore trade, ostensibly dealt with issues of commerce. However, Maclean's implementation of the treaty effectively extended British jurisdiction over southern territories, resulting in de facto colonial rule over the Fante (McCarthy 1983:144). The influence of Maclean's policies was greatest in the coastal towns, where by 1844:

> British-appointed courts were readily available and soon became a convenient and inexpensive forum for the settlement of personal disputes, even those of a somewhat trivial nature. The courts of the chiefs and headmen required extensive gift giving, fees and fines, while the only payment required in the Magistrate's court before 1850 was a small sum for the delivery of a summons if necessary. This meant that people with fewer material resources could bring cases as often as they wished, and (judging from the number of cases) it appears that they welcomed the opportunity. (McCarthy 1983:146)

The attitudes of British administrators changed mid-century. Whereas representatives of the Company of Merchants were geared toward diplomacy, establishment of the Protectorate signaled a shift toward dominance. Later officials disregarded local custom and displayed greater racial arrogance than their predecessors. This is consistent with changes in European and, more specifically, British attitudes toward race in the second half of the nineteenth century (Lorimer 1978). Greater efforts were devoted to regulating the daily practices of townspeople that proved offensive to the governor and his staff (McCarthy 1983:154–166; also Bly [1982]).

Establishment of the Protectorate, with its fluid boundaries, was associated with British efforts to expand trade. They purchased Danish possessions on the Gold Coast in 1850 (Lewin 1978:43), limiting their competition to the Dutch. Steamships, introduced to West African routes in the 1850s, regularly served the Protectorate, facilitating communication with the metropole. Importing and exporting by small-scale entrepreneurs – both European and African – expanded as frequent and rapid transport cut the cost of small shipments (Grier 1981:31; McRory 1980:9–10). The British further consolidated their Gold Coast holdings in 1868 when they swapped

a series of forts and settlements with the Dutch. The Sweet River, east of Elmina, marked the new division between Dutch and British domains. Neither Dutch nor British consulted the polities whose lands were affected, and anger over the division led to the formation of the Fante Confederacy in 1868. The Fante viewed the Dutch as allies of Asante, fueling concerns of another Asante invasion (McCarthy 1983:166–168).

Long-standing animosity over the status of coastal provinces culminated in Asante efforts to reoccupy them. In 1873, Asantehene Kofi Kakari invaded British protected territories, reclaiming the southern districts. After months of occupation, however, he withdrew his forces because of changing political circumstances in Kumase (Wilks 1975:235–238). The British responded by mounting an attack on Kumase, the Asante capital. They occupied the city for a day, looting and burning it, and subsequently retreating (Lewin 1978:45–47; Wilks 1975:238–242). Although the invasion was short-lived, it struck a fatal blow to Asante, for it signaled the irretrievable loss of its southern provinces (Wilks 1975:242), and increased British control over Asante's access to the Atlantic trade.

British entrenchment and the disintegration of Asante 1874–1896

The 1874 occupation of Kumase set in motion a series of events that culminated in a second military campaign that toppled Asante in 1896. Asante was in crisis, for no sooner had they lost hope of reclaiming their southern provinces than they faced problems in the north. News of the 1874 attack on Kumase spread quickly and revolt in the north ensued (Arhin 1979:28; Tordoff 1965:21). Metropolitan politics were chaotic as well: Asantehene Kofi Kakari abdicated in 1874, facing threats of destoolment due in part to his failed campaign (Wilks 1975:512–513). The reign of his successor, Mensa Bonsu (r. 1874–83), devolved into a reign of terror as the sovereign adopted draconian measures to bolster revenues and purge the state of his enemies (Wilks 1975:527–543). His destoolment resulted in an interregnum (1883–84), followed by the brief reign (44 days) of Kwaku Dua II (1884), who died suddenly, perhaps of smallpox (Wilks 1975:560). A more substantial interregnum ensued from 1884 to 1888, ending with the installation of Agyeman Prempe (Prempe I, 1888–1931; Wilks 1975:579–582). He embarked on a campaign to regain the loyalty of northern provinces to the capital, crucial in reestablishing the northern trade that had been seriously disrupted by rebellion among the northern provinces.

Circumstances in Europe fueled territorial expansion in Africa during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Britain dominated the European market in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars. Mechanization increased industrial capacity, and stimulated demand for raw materials. Productivity of cotton spinning increased on the order of 100–200 times, making finished goods more affordable, and prompting increased demand for raw cotton (Isaacman and Roberts 1995:4–5). During the first half of the nineteenth century, European nations pursued a "relaxed imperialism" (Wallerstein 1986:165–166) in which African polities retained considerable autonomy. Beginning in the 1870s, however, the world economy stagnated as Britain faced growing competition from newly industrialized nations. Nations responded by

passing protectionist economic measures. Expansion of empire was seen as a viable solution to economic stagnation – access to protected markets and sources of raw materials would allow renewed expansion of the metropolitan economy (Isaacman and Roberts 1995:8–9). Joseph Chamberlain, British Secretary of State from 1895 to 1903, was particularly committed to imperial expansion, which he saw as a solution to Britain's domestic unemployment and social unrest (Constantine 1984:10–12). Britain was not alone in seeing empire as a solution to the economic doldrums, and both Germany and France attempted to establish territorial claims that would exclude Britain from trade with large areas of Africa. A "scramble for Africa" ensued. The Berlin Conference (1884–85) codified European territorial claims, allowing individual nation states to develop trade monopolies (Wallerstein 1986:16). A shift from informal to formal imperialism followed in which European and African trade partners who had operated in separate but linked political economies were now cast in an unequal relationship between European administrators and African subordinates who were part of a single colonial political economy (Wallerstein 1986:17).

The British, increasingly entrenched on the Gold Coast after 1874, had limited knowledge of the interior, yet were convinced that it would provide raw materials and markets that would contribute to the well-being of empire. Exploration of the Asante hinterland was a priority. This was accorded greater urgency in light of British fears that French and German rivals might claim territory in the Asante hinterland by moving in from the west or east respectively (CO879/38 No. 448, nos. 5, 10, 65; CO879/43 No. 490, no. 46). In 1882 the British dispatched Captain R. Lonsdale on a mission to Asante and Gyaman to restore trade by forestalling hostilities involving Banda (see Chapter 7; CO879/19 No. 249, nos. 26, 56; Wilks 1975:294–295). George Ekem Ferguson, a Gold Coast official of Fante descent (Sampson 1956), was dispatched to the north on several missions between 1892 and 1897 with the goal of concluding treaties of friendship and trade with polities north of Asante (Agbodeka 1971:166–168; Arhin 1974). His papers, primarily dispatches sent to the colonial governor, provided some of the earliest direct intelligence regarding Asante's northern provinces (Arhin 1974).

Ferguson traveled with a stock of formula treaties and British flags. These treaties were agreements of friendship and free commerce only – they did not guarantee British protection (CO879/38 No. 448, nos. 10, 18; CO879/39 No. 458, no. 45). Ferguson's mission was to get as many polities as possible to sign the treaties, a mission that met with considerable success. Trained at the London School of Mines, Ferguson was a talented surveyor and geologist. For several decades colonial maps drew on his groundwork, and his reports supplied crucial intelligence on the cultural and economic character of Asante's northern provinces.

Before the ink had dried on Ferguson's treaties – and in some cases before they were signed – British trade interests lobbied the Colonial Office to ensure that upheavals in the Volta basin did not diminish potential trade. One memorandum from the London Chamber of Commerce (CO879/38 No. 448, no. 1) urged the Colonial Office to find ways to attract the caravan trade to British territory. Their complaint that trade was being diverted to the French via Bonduku, or the Germans via Salaga,

because of political unrest shows that merchants were privy to intelligence regarding affairs in the Asante hinterland.

Growing intelligence about the movements of Imam Samori lent additional urgency to British efforts to extend their control over Asante's hinterland. Samori and his mounted Sofa army engaged in wars of conquest throughout the savanna and wooded savanna from 1861 to 1898, forging an empire that included areas extending from northern Sierra Leone to northern Ghana (Holden 1970; Muhammed 1977). His state initially focused on eastern Guinea and southwestern Mali. Forced eastward under growing French pressure early in the 1890s, he became a factor in Gold Coast politics after he shifted his base of operations to Bonduku, center of the Gyaman kingdom. Gyaman initially resisted Samori's overtures, but, unable to secure support from either the French or the British, it succumbed to Samori in 1895. From his new base in Bonduku, Samori dispatched troops further east under the command of his son, Sarankye-More, to lay claim to the western Volta basin (Wa and Gonjaland). Samori's occupation of Bonduku, and his claims on Gonja and Wa, presented an additional threat to British territorial ambitions in the Asante hinterland (CO879/43 No. 490, no. 221). Moreover, the British were alarmed by rumors that the Asantehene had sent a delegation bearing gifts to Bonduku to convince Samori to join Asante in resisting the British (CO879/44 No. 500, no. 54). Governor Maxwell responded by issuing a dispatch to the Almami, informing him of British plans to attack Kumase, and urging him to cease trade relations with Asante. As always, commercial issues were paramount (CO879/44 No. 500, no. 77): "I am anxious to be on friendly terms with you, and when fighting at Kumasi is finished the roads will be opened and mohammedan traders may come and go in peace. But at the present time you must not allow your people to come to Ashanti, for Ashanti is English territory . . . When the war is finished, traders can come and go."

Trade was a primary issue between the British and Samori. After receiving news of Britain's victory over Asante, Samori forwarded a message to British officials assuring them that "The news of the capture and downfall of Kumase was as pleasing to him as the taste of honey . . . He wishes to impress on the English that he loves them as he does his own life" and wishes to inquire whether the Kumase–Bontuku road is now open for commerce (CO879/45 No. 506, no. 72). Despite Samori's professed peaceful intentions (e.g., CO879/45 No. 506, nos. 2, 38), the British were wary of his influence over trade routes that linked Asante's hinterland with the Niger River. British merchants perceived him as a threat, and urged the Colonial Office to put an end to Samori's disruptive actions "and to the evil caused thereby" (CO879/45 No. 506, no. 156).

Intelligence reports collected from members of the Gold Coast Constabulary and traders from late 1895 to mid-1896 kept British officials apprised of Samori's troop strength and movements (CO879/45 No. 506, nos. 3, 67). By the end of 1896, Samori and his Sofa troops controlled a chain of posts across the Asante (now British) hinterland – including Banda, Bole, Buipe, Boniape, and Debre (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 17). His troops reportedly raided villages for food and slaves, and caused significant dislocation throughout the western Volta basin. Food was in short supply,

and there were numerous refugees (CO879/50 No. 538, no. 592; CO879/48 No. 529, no. 489; see also Fell [1913]). With the Asantehene now safely deported (CO879/49 No. 530, no. 4), Gold Coast colonial officials turned their attention to Samori. Using Bui in the Banda area as a base (CO879/52 No. 549, no. 102), the British launched an offensive against Samori's forces north and east of the Black Volta River. During March 1897 British troops were attacked at Dawkita in the vicinity of Wa. One officer described the enemy as formidable, estimating their troop strength at 7,000 men, 400 of whom were mounted, and 1,000 of whom bore arms (CO879/50 No. 538, no. 136). One British officer was captured, but later released (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 256), and George Ferguson, the man who had pioneered the British thrust into the northern territories, was reportedly beheaded (CO879/50 No. 538 no. 136).

Samori's scorched earth policy left an indelible mark on the western Volta basin (e.g., Gonja, Haight 1981; CO879/48 No. 529, no. 393; CO879/50 No. 538, no. 131; CO879/52 No. 549, no. 7), leaving in his wake "ruined towns and tenantless pastures" (Northcott 1899:16). Grain, sheep, and cattle were scarce, and large game, including elephants, were reportedly "exterminated . . . by Samory's hordes" (CO 879/ 52 No. 549, no. 172). Thus, on the eve of formal British control over its newly acquired hinterland, many of its inhabitants were hungry and homeless. Areas less thoroughly devastated by Sofa armies acted as magnets for those in search of a new beginning. But European expeditions too put a strain on local resources. Late nineteenth-century travelers carried tinned provisions; however, the carriers and servants who accompanied them were expected to live "off the land," placing a considerable burden on local food supplies. For example, an 1888 mission to Bonduku chronicled by Freeman (1898) included 3 Europeans, 100 Hausa constabulary, a band, a gunners' party, a hospital orderly, and 200 carriers (Freeman 1898:15). Freeman (1898:174–175 [see also 1898:310–311]) acknowledged the problem this posed for villagers:

> Our little army entering a small village required an amount of provisions that would have lasted the inhabitants for weeks, and although there were strict orders against looting, of course the men had to get food, and they did get it, very often, I am afraid, without paying for it. In any case the hamlet was cleared out after our visit, and the natives must have suffered great inconvenience in consequence.

In order to avoid detection, villagers hid food on bush farms, out of the reach of British forces (CO879/50, No. 538, no. 530; CO879/48 No. 529, no. 206).

The colonial political economy 1897–1930
Britain formally annexed Asante's hinterland in 1897, establishing the Northern Territories as part of the Gold Coast Protectorate. The Northern Territories were defined as the area north of Asante proper, but, because Asante's northern boundary was poorly defined, the southern boundary of the Northern Territories remained ambiguous. In the west, it was defined by the Black Volta River (Bening 1973; Northcott 1899:7).

Throughout the sixty years of its formal control over the northern Gold Coast,

British officials were concerned to minimize the cost of administration while max-imizing revenues. From the outset, the cost of colonial administration was an issue. Colonies, while important to the well-being of the domestic economy, should be self-supporting. The Treasury scrutinized colonial investment (Gann and Duignan 1978:45–70), and was reluctant to go to Parliament to rescue overdrawn colonies (CO879/58 No. 585, nos. 10 and 19). Colonies were encouraged to devote funds to infrastructural projects that would attract private investors to develop colonial resources (i.e., gold; Kay 1972).

Trade resumed, and probably expanded, with imposition of British control. Asante trade restrictions on the movement of traders were no longer in force (Arhin 1976/77:456–457), and, with the ousting of Samori, peaceful conditions prevailed. The government's priority was to establish infrastructure – telegraphic communica-tion and well-maintained roads with bridges. It was hoped that private investment would develop the resources of the new territories (Constantine 1984:10). At the same time, opening of the interior was to expand the market for British manufac-tured goods; however, systematic expansion of trade necessitated a uniform currency (Carland 1990). British officials were anxious to substitute British coinage for the local currencies circulated at the end of the nineteenth century (primarily cowries and gold dust; Grier 1981). Colonel Northcott, first administrator of the Northern Territories, reported that

> At first there was some difficulty in persuading the natives to accept the new
> medium as an equivalent for a specific number of cowries. They were
> disposed to regard the coins as curiosities, or to convert them into rings and
> other ornaments, but the necessity of paying taxes and fines in English coin
> and of employing it in the purchase of trade goods, soon familiarized them
> with its use.
> (CO879/58 No. 585, no. 96)

Yet colonial monetary policy restricted the flow of currency – colonial issues had to be backed with 100 percent sterling reserves, limiting availability of cash and credit (Guyer 1995a:11; Hopkins 1970).

The British agonized over the slow pace of mercantile expansion in the northern hinterland; government stores were established at Gambaga, Wa, and Kintampo in order to "pioneer ordinary commerce [and create] a demand for goods which did not before exist" (NWU A339 1901:12–13) and to stave off competition from German manufactures that were finding their way into the Northern Territories through Togoland (NWU A339 1904:7). With time, an increasing array of manufac-tures were brought into the Gold Coast hinterland by independent traders, making the government stores unnecessary. By 1906, officials of the Northern Territories reported a growing demand for trade goods, including "looking glasses, combs, beads, good pieces of coloured silk and velvet, good cloth printed both sides, ena-melled basins, needles, reels of cotton, sewing machines, fish hooks, handkerchiefs, and enamel ware" (NWU A339 1906:9). Goods valued as prestige objects in the nineteenth century were redefined as necessities through the early twentieth century

(Arhin 1976/77:459–460). Rural inhabitants found themselves inexorably drawn into a market economy, with the terms of exchange established in the metropole. Manufactured goods were increasingly substituted for local crafts, escalating the need for cash, and undermining local production of cloth, iron, and ceramics (Grier 1981:24; cf. Isaacman and Roberts [1995] on the uneven effects of manufactured goods on craft production). Monetization weakened links between social position and access to goods, reshaping access to goods and services (Berry 1995:305), though not diminishing the importance of social payments in legitimizing and defining social relations (Arhin 1995:102–107). But the process of monetization and, more generally, participation in extraregional exchange, was a long-term one, with no clear "before" and "after." Instead, West African communities long lived at the interface of "econo-logical zones" (Guyer 1995a:2).

The process of monetization and production for an export market began earlier in the forested regions than in the north. From the mid-nineteenth century, farmers in the south were increasingly drawn into the production of crops valued in the industrial marketplace – palm oil from mid-century until the 1880s, rubber during the 1880s and 1890s, and finally cocoa from the turn of the century. As a result, an increasing amount of sterling was absorbed by the domestic economy in the final years of the nineteenth century, signaling increased monetization of the internal exchange economy (Hopkins 1970:104–105).

Cocoa accounted for 83 percent of the colony's exports in 1920, yet the British had done little to encourage expansion of cocoa production. Instead colonial officials, perhaps following the lead of more prosperous colonies like South Africa, invested in mineral resources, most especially gold. Thus the commodity that first brought Europeans to the Gold Coast shaped infrastructural development in the early decades of the colonial period. Ghana's most productive gold reserves lie deep in the forest, more than a hundred miles from the coast in areas formerly controlled by Asante. The subjugation of Asante was a necessary first step for colonial officials anxious to expand the gold trade (Kay 1972:4); however, exploitation of the deeply buried deposits required heavy machinery that could only be transported by rail. Thus Gold Coast officials embarked on a campaign of railway expansion during the period 1898 to 1919 to link gold-rich areas of the interior to the coast (Kay 1972:41). Later policies ensured rail's monopoly by forbidding construction of motor roads alongside rail lines (Dickson 1961:40). Bridges were removed from some existing roads to discourage lorry traffic (Heap 1990:26–27). Thus, through transportation policy, colonial officials exercised relatively direct control over the economy. Cocoa produced by rural African capitalists (Hill 1963) was head-loaded or trucked to the railheads, and subsidized British capital investment in mines (Kay 1972:13–28, 135–138).

Labor was needed to exploit gold reserves, but cocoa production competed for a limited supply. In 1907, the Gold Coast government responded by adopting a forced labor policy that would compel northerners to migrate south and take up wage labor. Northern chiefs were given quotas to be filled, and many migrants ended up working in Gold Coast mines. The policy was abandoned in 1927, but, by then, a well-

established pattern of migrant labor had led to declining food production in the north, thus increasing the dependence on wage labor to meet subsistence needs (Grier 1981:38).

Within two decades, Northcott's prediction that levying taxes and court fines in English coin would speed adoption of colonial currency had come to fruition. By the end of World War I, taxes throughout Africa were collected in cash (Guyer 1995a:15). But other hopes were dashed, namely that the Northern Territories would blossom into a productive province, supplying needed raw materials for British manufacturers. Early surveys of the north expressed optimism that cotton, tobacco, and indigo might be productive cash crops in the drier reaches of the Gold Coast hinterland (CO879/58 No. 585, no. 96). While agronomic conditions may have been suitable, the cost of transporting raw materials proved unprofitable (CO879/84 No. 745, no. 15). Initial hopes of profits from gold reserves in the north were also dashed – concessions were granted to private syndicates to exploit gold reserves near Wa and Banda (CO96/400); however, both syndicates abandoned their claims in 1903 as they proved unprofitable (CO98/13:4).

Predictably, the infrastructure for transportation was developed more rapidly in the south than the north. The decision to invest in motorable roads was an economic one – while head-loading cost 5s. ton/mile, lorry transport cost 2s. 6d. (Heap 1990:21). From 1902, motorable roads were constructed between coastal towns and gold-producing areas of the interior. The first motor vehicle was imported in 1902 for the use of Governor Nathan (Heap 1990:21; cf. Dickson 1961:37); however, cars were not in general use until after World War I (Dickson 1961:37–38). Some villagers relocated farms and homes near newly built roads (Tordoff 1965:191), while others opted to construct feeder roads to connect their cocoa plantations with main trunk roads (Dickson 1961:39). The next several decades witnessed considerable investment in road construction. A major road to the north (Kumase–Tamale) was completed in 1919, cutting travel time to a mere twelve hours (Heap 1990:30–32). By 1936, the basic pattern of road transport was in place (Dickson 1961:41), and the use of carriers in long-distance trade virtually ceased (Heap 1990:21). Motorable roads largely followed established trade routes, mirroring the system of Great Roads that linked Asante's provinces to its capital (Wilks 1975:1–18, 1993:191–195).

Britain rapidly extended its dominion over large areas in the final decade of the nineteenth century, but implementation of administrative control proceeded more slowly. Attention was directed first to metropolitan Asante, and only later to its former northern provinces. While Anglo-French boundary commissioners argued over the precise demarcation between the Gold and Ivory Coasts, Gold Coast administrators tinkered with the boundaries of the Northern Territories and its districts (e.g., CO879/61 No. 609, no. 12; CO879/62 No. 623, no. 26; CO879/67 No. 649, no. 31; CO98/16; Bening 1973, 1978, 1983). The British were committed to a policy of indirect rule, requiring fewer colonial officials, thereby reducing administrative costs of empire. In 1905 a staff of only eighteen British officers administered the Northern Territories (NWU A339 1905:4). But indirect rule also served to divert power and prestige from the newly emerging educated African elite by bolstering the

prestige of traditional authorities[9] – thus indirect rule was a "complex convergence of ideological assumptions, pragmatic political calculations and resource constraints" (Adas 1995:296). In Asante, especially after the short-lived Yaa Asantewaa rebellion, British administrators assumed the prerogative of the now absent Asantehene to elevate and reduce stools or positions (Tordoff 1965:145). Villages were reassigned to new chiefs, some of whom were elevated to paramount status by the British. Ambitious individuals took the opportunity to improve their status by making exaggerated claims to the British (Tordoff 1965:147–150). Other positions were invented to facilitate communication between chiefs and district commissioners (Arhin 1972).

British intervention in Asante eroded existing authority, creating administrative problems for the British. Asantehene Agyeman Prempe I returned from exile in the Seychelles in 1924 to find many of the metropolitan chiefs claiming privileges and status to which they were not entitled (McCaskie 1986:10–11; Tordoff 1965:227). Villagers refused to pay homage and taxes to stools which traditionally had no claim on their allegiance (Tordoff 1965:396). Yet the British worried that reinstating Prempe as Asantehene would cause more damage than good; accordingly in 1926, he was installed in a newly invented position, "Kumasihene" or Omanhene of the Kumase division (Tordoff 1965:219–234). Following his death in 1931, his successor, Agyeman Prempe II, was also enstooled as Kumasihene; however, within a year, colonial officials were soliciting reactions from various Amanhene to the idea of restoring the Asante Confederacy along "traditional" lines (Tordoff 1965:333).

On January 31, 1935, the Asante Confederacy was officially restored and Prempe II installed as Asantehene (Busia 1951:165–195). The next several years witnessed considerable reshuffling of authority and position as some government-appointed Amanhene were stripped of office, and a Committee of Privilege struggled with the customary status of individual stools and families (Tordoff 1965:353–354). Guided by an essentialist view of African culture (Adas 1995:294), Rattray's monographs provided colonial officials with a blueprint as they struggled to sort out contemporary practice from the idealized image of Asante governance distilled from Rattray's "greybeards" (see von Laue [1976] and McCaskie [1983b] for critiques of Rattray's methods and representations, and more generally Vansina [1987]). Also influential were Rattray's reports that Asante's northern provinces were organized along similar lines. When the degree of anticipated standardization did not meet British expectations, they created it (Kuklick 1979:64–65, n. 55), imposing Asante Twi terminology on the internal organization of chieftaincies (Stahl 1991:262; Warren and Brempong 1974:76; Chapter 7). In the final analysis, the process fossilized practices in some instances (Adas 1995:305), and invented them in others (Goody 1990).

Yet for the majority of Gold Coast inhabitants the colonial government was a remote presence (cf. McCarthy 1983), especially in the north where British officials were few. The front-line of colonial administration was the district commissioner (DC) – the "man on the scene" (Kuklick 1979:108; also Arhin [1971]). Surveillance was crucial to the colonial enterprise (Bening 1983:327). The towns where DCs resided received greatest scrutiny; however, a good DC was expected to spend much

of his time touring his district, visiting outlying villages, inspecting roads, and reporting on the state of the countryside (see Chapter 6 in Allen [1979]). The DC's duties most clearly intersected with the daily life of northern citizens in his capacity as tax collector, census taker, and controller of public works and sanitation. In these arenas we see concern to control colonized bodies, for, as the Comaroffs observed, "conquerers and colonizers seem typically to feel a need to reverse prior corporeal signs, often making bodies into realms of conquest" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:40). Worlds were remade, bodies counted and clothed, domestic space restructured, in the "body work" of colonial production (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:40–42, 69–91, 215–233; see also Anderson [1995], Hendrickson [1996], Thomas [1990, 1994:117–125], Vaughan [1991]). In 1924, the Acting Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories reported with evident satisfaction that

> Civilization advances apace, if the standard of progress can be judged by the number of natives who now wear clothes and carry walking sticks or spears, in preference to the old order of perhaps nothing or at the best a sheep or goat skin hung over the back, the bow in hand and the quiver under the arm. The people of the bow and arrow used to meet the Commissioner on his arrival perhaps two miles from the rest house, and would take great trouble to hide themselves behind tufts of grass or any other object which afforded cover and on the arrival of the Commissioner abreast of them would leap out with twanging bows and blood-curdling yells, in apparent ecstasies of joy. Now they are a much more sedate crowd, 75 per cent at least being clothed, many of them in European clothes, all wearing some kind of headgear, who meet the Commissioner a few hundred yards from the rest house.
> (NWU A339 1923–24:21)

Colonial concern with "body work" is reflected in the regular entries on sanitation and public health in the Annual Reports of the Gold Coast government. Under the rubric of sanitation, officers reported growing success through the early 1900s in their efforts to improve village layout – encouraging villagers to dig pit latrines, establish cemeteries on village margins, and lay out villages on a grid system (CO98/18:14; CO98/30:20). Early on, constant supervision was required for "If this is relaxed for any length of time the people soon return to their insanitary habits" (NWU A339 1910:11). A decade later, however, officials reported that "some village Chiefs are so progressive in this respect as to have asked the District Commissioner to replan their villages, and are quite prepared to pull down houses, dig drains, etc., in the cause of sanitation" (CO98/34:16). In many instances, replanning involved relocation, with new sites cleared and whole villages rebuilt (Chapter 7; cf. Harkin 1993:24; Moore and Vaughan 1994:13). In 1932, officials reported that especially good progress had been made in Asante where

> very many villages and townships have been laid out on modern lines with ample provision for lanes, open spaces, sanitary sites and recreation fields, the houses themselves being built in solid swish rendered inside and out with

cement, and with well-ventilated rooms of adequate size with cross
ventilation and louvred windows.
(CO98/60:16)

Officials encouraged northerners to adopt a rectangular 60 x 80 foot Asante-type
compound and were pleased to report that it had "been adopted to a large extent
even in backward areas in the Colony proper, and every endeavour is made to
educate the local community to appreciate the advantages of this type"
(CO98/60:17).

   How did individual officers encourage village planning and road maintenance?
While the official reports are mute, the diary of Laura Boyle (1968), who joined her
DC husband in the Gold Coast in 1916, lends insight. David Boyle was the second
DC to serve in Wenchi, a district headquarters roughly forty miles southeast of
Banda. The Boyles traveled by foot and hammock from Kumase to Wenchi, and in
her chronicle of that journey, Boyle comments repeatedly on the state of the roads
and villages. On August 11 they spent the night at Chichiwere, "which David said
was the dirtiest and most uncared for [village] he had ever come across – not even
the road was kept properly open" (Boyle 1968:5–6). Next day, they took a break at
Eyemasu,

> where the road was once more in splendid order – a broad red track with
> pleasant green trees and bushes on each side, full of sunlight. We stopped at
> one end of it and sat on camp chairs in the middle of the road to drink some
> welcome tea from our thermos flasks, and talk with the Chief congratulating
> him on his road work. At the other end the women of the village were all out
> cleaning the road, many with their babies on their back or beside them.
> (Boyle 1968:6)

Next day in Secheredumasi David complimented the chief and assembled elders "on
the good road, and the clean village" (Boyle 1968:7). On their final day before arriv-
ing at Wenchi, they found the road "wide as Piccadilly," and soon encountered "a
huge group of the natives working on the road; they were stripped to the waist and
wielding pickaxes and looked like demons in Dante's inferno" (Boyle 1968:14–15).

   Laura Boyle's diary entries provide insight into the strategies employed by her
husband to "encourage" village planning. On a tour of the district west of Wenchi,
the Boyles passed through Debibi, which she described as "a typical Jaman village,
all the houses in a clump together with the main road running through it and an
enormous baobab tree in the middle" (Boyle 1968:30). Her husband was annoyed
by the disorderly array of buildings. "Drastic methods obtain here. David found the
road blocked by the beginnings of a house . . . so after asking how the people had
dared to build it to sprawl half over the road, without sound of trumpets he pushed
the walls down flat with his stick like those of Jericho and passed on" (Boyle 1968:31).
Next day they passed through Duadaso, "rather a large, squalid, depressing place,
full of very black old men and pigs to match" (Boyle 1968:31). One of Boyle's aides
was left behind to instruct the chief and his people to tidy the place up. That evening

on a walk through Sikassiko (Sampa) David stopped "some men from digging a grave in the middle of the street. After that David nosed around the outskirts to hunt out standing water, stagnant pools and unweeded patches of overgrown ground and so on" (Boyle 1968:32–33). They returned to Wenchi after passing through Sunyani, established as a district headquarters more than a decade before Wenchi. Upon their return,

> These last days of September have seen David galvanized by the Sunyani visit to awe-inspiring activity in further improvements here. Out betimes [*sic*] with the Clerk striking terror into the hearts of the inhabitants, condemning waste and dirty places, levying fines for ditto, and in visions seeing Wenchi as a kind of Utopian garden city with stone-lined and cemented drains for carrying off water, burning ghats for rubbish, and avenues of beautifully grown trees.
> (Boyle 1968:47–48)

In other instances Boyle described how her husband dealt with untidy villages – when residents of a village destroyed by fire outlined their plans for rebuilding, the DC "solemnly produced a compass which is 'very big medicine' indeed, and amid an awed hush took the bearing of the street; it ran just about N.N.W., but for all it mattered, it might have been due S.W.!" (Boyle 1968:50). He then offered "a prize of £2 for the best built, neatest and cleanest house." On another occasion, Boyle casually related:

> It was a lovely sunny morning when we got up at 6 o'clock, rather like a very bright autumn one at home, sunshine tipping the surrounding bushes and gilding the tree tops. We burnt a small house down before we left that had to be destroyed. The roof was a bit damp, but once the thatch caught it blazed and smoked fiercely and eventually fell in. We were under way about 7 o'clock.
> (Boyle 1968:58)

Disposal of the dead came under stricter regulation, although enforcement in outlying villages was difficult. A 1929 ordinance specified that the dead should be buried within 24 hours after a death registration was issued, and that chiefs must "set apart, clear and fence a piece of land approved by the District Commissioner as a cemetery . . . and shall make a gate . . . and a path not less than six feet wide leading from the town"; moreover, the chief must keep the cemetery clear of "weeds, long grass, prickly pear, wild bush" and rubbish, and must see that graves are dug to a minimum depth of 4 feet. Should officials suspect that a corpse had been "buried in any dwelling house or in any other place," the DC was authorized to issue a warrant to exhume the body (CO849/1).

These attempts to mold the practices of African villagers were rationalized as part of the Pax Britannica, the civilizing commitment of Britain to its colonies. Yet in the long term, the empire was viewed as a solution to economic difficulties in the metropolis – especially recurrent cycles of unemployment and economic depression

that peaked in the late 1920s. Posters developed by the Empire Marketing Board displayed throughout Britain stressed the unity of Britain and the empire, and encouraged British consumers to "Buy British, create employment" (Constantine 1986:13). But the 1930s saw increased challenges to the optimistic assumption that there was a natural harmony of interest between British and colonial economies (Constantine 1984:228). Burgeoning nationalist movements and domestic impatience with empire eroded support for the colonial project during the 1930s. Yet despite impatience with colonial governance, the colonized of the Gold Coast had crossed the threshold – manufactured goods became necessities rather than luxuries. When cocoa producers held up their crop and boycotted European goods from November 1937 to April 1938 to protest poor prices (Milburn 1970), the economy of the colony was brought to a standstill; however, the organizers exempted sugar, kerosene, sardines, matches, and other necessary commodities from the list of boycotted items, signaling the extent to which they had become necessities (Grier 1981:40; see Arhin [1995]). So too had the British insinuated themselves into political practice – using chiefs as their agents, they bolstered the authority of chiefs, at the same time that they eroded the basis of chiefly legitimacy (Kuklick 1979:113; see also Moore and Vaughan [1994]). At the same time, they encouraged changes in the handling of local disputes – by actively intervening in chiefly succession, the British created a legacy in which "parties to local conflicts have sought to influence their outcomes by enlisting outside allies, and successive national governments have attempted to intervene to resolve persistent tribal debates" (Kuklick 1979:151).

This in broad outline is the political-economic canvas on which sociopolitical processes in Banda played out. I turn now to history in Banda – interrogating multiple sources to "coax up" (Ortner 1995:190) images of the lived past at the same time as I explore the saliency of that past in the present. Chapter 5 examines local life in the context of the Niger trade (c. 1300–1700); Chapter 6 in the period of Begho's demise and the early period of Asante hegemony (c. 1725–1825); and Chapter 7 the period when Asante ascendency was eclipsed by a growing British presence (c. 1825–1925).

5

Local life in the context of the Niger trade
c. 1300–1700

The archaeological site of Kuulo Kataa lies 1.5 km west of Dumpofie, a small village home to the majority of Kuulo people today (Fig. 5.1). Kuulo Kataa marks where Wurache, the Kuulo ancestress, descended to earth on a chain from the sky. Although there are minor variations in the Wurache story, it is one of the few local oral histories told in narrative form. In this sense it approximates what Vansina (1985) distinguishes as oral tradition. I was told the story in 1986 by the senior female elder of Kuulo Katoo (Stahl and Anane 1989; Stahl 1991). The woman spoke deliberately, pausing occasionally to be certain that my research assistant and I were up to speed. It was a story she had told many times before, presumably to instill a sense of identity in Kuulo children around the hearth, an identity no longer marked by the Kuulo language (Chapter 3).

> Grandmother Wurache descended to this place from the sky. She was accompanied by her husband, Sie Dafa, and her daughter Akosua Yeli. They had a horse with them when they came down from the sky. They established a village, but there was no water there. Wurache went in search of water on her horse. At one point in the bush, the horse began to scratch the ground with his foreleg. Water immediately came to the surface, and this place came to be know as *Gbanga* in the Kuulo language.

Wurache, her daughter, and the horse are invariable elements of the Kuulo origins story, though in some versions the husband, Sie Dafa, is absent. The association of a female figure with a horse – commonly linked to military imagery in West African traditions – is unusual in West Africa. So too is the association of the horse with a claim of autochthonous status. Horses were typically taboo among autochthones who claimed a special relationship with the earth (Goody 1971:57–72). The northern imagery suggested by the horse is also echoed by a series of sacred objects curated by the Gape family of Bofie – a brass basin, a circular brass object, an iron knife, and a heavy iron bangle, said to represent one of the links in the chain on which their ancestor, Buari Kojo, descended from the sky. These objects serve as a physical link and a set of mnemonics to invoke the Gape past. Kuulo elders too possessed similar objects in the past; however, they tragically disappeared, and Kuulo elders expressed hope that archaeological excavations at Kuulo Kataa might locate them.

After establishing how Kuulo people came to live in Banda, the Kuulo elder recounted how other groups found their way there (Stahl and Anane 1989:19; Chapter 6). Her story ended with the death of Wurache, who lived to be a very old
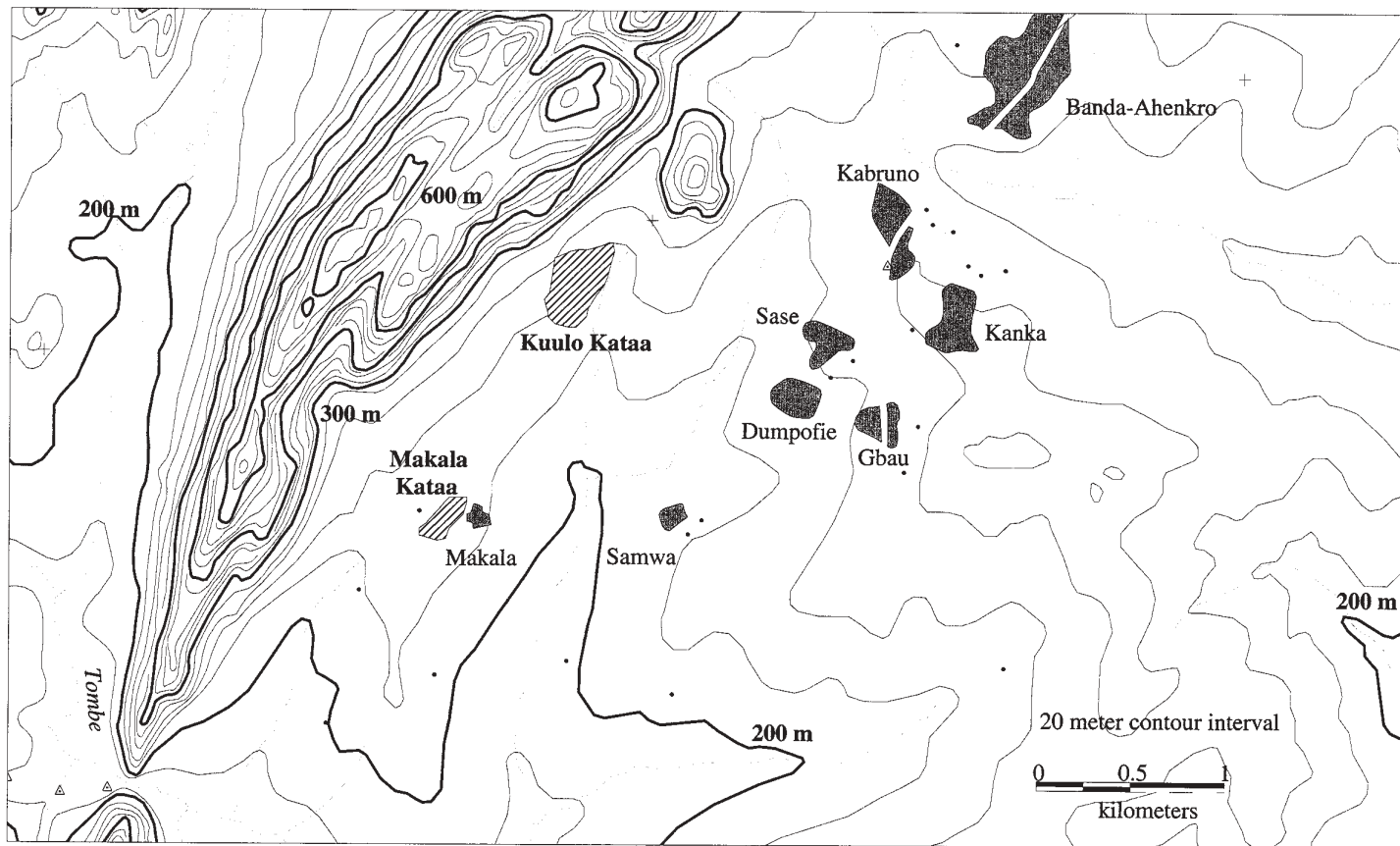
Figure 5.1. Location of Kuulo Kataa and Makala Kataa. The archaeological sites are indicated by cross-hatching, and contemporary villages by dark shading

Plate 6. Baobab on the outskirts of Dumpofie where the Kuulo ancestress (Wurache) sank into the ground. Kwesi Millah, the elder responsible for propitiating shrines on Kuulo Kataa, stands in front of the tree. Photo by A. Stahl, 1995

woman. One day after people had left for their farms, Wurache was sitting on her stool with her eating bowl when she sank into the earth. People returned from farming to find a baobab seedling where Wurache sank. The tree grows today on the western margins of Dumpofie, and is an ancient and remarkable specimen (Plate 6). The trunk of the tree split long ago; its remains grow recumbent along the ground, then jut into the air at sharp angles. A new trunk grows from the ancient center, rising majestically above the twisted remnants of the older trunk. Sacrifices are made at the base of this tree, and it was here that we gathered with Dumpofie elders to offer a goat to clear the way for our archaeological investigations at Kuulo Kataa.

Kuulo Kataa is a large site covering roughly 28 hectares (more than 69 acres), marked by a series of mounds, many of which are low rectangular or L-shaped mounds rising no more than 0.5–1 m. Yet Kuulo Kataa, along with other sites that share its distinctive pottery, also has large mounds, some more than 25 m across, and rising 4 m above the ground surface. The site is locally known as Kuulo Kataa; *kataa* is the Nafaanra term for an old place (referred to as "Banda 7" in Stahl 1985a). Ceramics on mound surfaces were similar to those from the Hani Begho sites (Posnansky 1976b, 1979, 1987; Wilks 1982a). At the end of our 1994 field season, I met with the Kuulo elders to discuss the possibility of excavating the site in 1995. At that time, we had worked for three seasons (1989, 1990, and 1994) at the neighboring site of Makala Kataa (Chapters 6 and 7), 1.5 km southwest of Kuulo Kataa. Makala Kataa is claimed by the Nafana as their first site of occupation after migrating to the Banda area. I explained to Kuulo elders that we wished to do similar work

at Kuulo Kataa, with the aim of learning something of local life in the period when the Niger trade predominated. They listened carefully to my request, conferred briefly, and told us that they were pleased to have us excavate at Kuulo Kataa. They expressed concern about whether we would hire village workmen, but made no other demands. Rather, the elders expressed the view that our work at the site would help them learn more about their history. A question remained and remains in my mind: what benefit did Kuulo elders expect to gain from allowing us to turn the soil on their ancestral site? There are several plausible answers, to which I return below.

We returned in 1995 to begin work at Kuulo Kataa. After offering appropriate sacrifices, the Kuulo elders gave us final approval to begin our work. Our crew consisted of Nafana men from the paramount chief's village, where we resided, a number of whom had worked with us since 1989. In addition we hired ten men from Dumpofie who were selected by the Kuulo elders. We agreed that the Kuulo elder who is keeper of the shrines on Kuulo Kataa would oversee our work; we would seek his approval of areas to excavate, and he would be present on the site as needed.

Our first task was to assess the size and limits of the site, and in this we were guided by the elder. The rains in 1995 were early and heavy, so by June the grass on the site was waist- to shoulder-high. The elder proved to have a remarkably detailed knowledge of the site, quite unlike our experience with the Nafana elders with whom we had worked before. He led us through a sea of grass, pointing out large and small mounds. Each was flagged and numbered, and in subsequent weeks the men cleared paths to facilitate mapping. We continued to look for additional mounds but identified few in addition to those shown to us by the elder. The final site map (Fig. 5.2) closely mirrors the elder's comprehensive knowledge of the site, and graphically illustrates his familiarity with the physical features of this ancestral place.

Portions of the site were off-limits to us; we had to maintain considerable distance from a shrine in a grove of trees. Assisted by the elder, we flagged the boundary which he vigilantly patrolled, suspicious that we would violate his trust. One day as a Nafana assistant and I took measurements for a topographic map, we approached, but did not cross, the boundary. Seemingly from nowhere, the Kuulo elder emerged, expressed his concern that we would violate the boundary, and monitored us for the rest of the day.

After our preliminary survey, we targeted a series of mounds for excavation along the southern edge of the site. Each area was approved by the elder in charge of the site, and our excavations were often visited by him and other elders and Kuulo villagers. As our excavations proceeded we came across human remains interred in a house mound. We had encountered burials at Makala Kataa in previous seasons, and it had been our policy to contact the Nafana elders and follow their wishes in dealing with such chance exposures. Makala elders agreed that we could minimally expose burials, just enough to assess the orientation of the skeleton, after which the remains were covered and excavations in those units or portions of units ceased. We supplied drinks, and Makala elders poured libations to complete the reburial.

The first burial at Kuulo Kataa appeared at the end of the work day. We covered it and next day discussed with the elder how to proceed. His response was similar to

50 cm contour intervals
elevations arbitrary

100

LEGEND

N

▲   Mounds with Kuulo phase pottery
on the mound surface.

101   Excavated mounds (see Fig. 5.4)

Footpath
to farms

95

138▲

118   **101**

119

Footpath to Dumpofie

0   50   100

meters

90

Footpath to farms
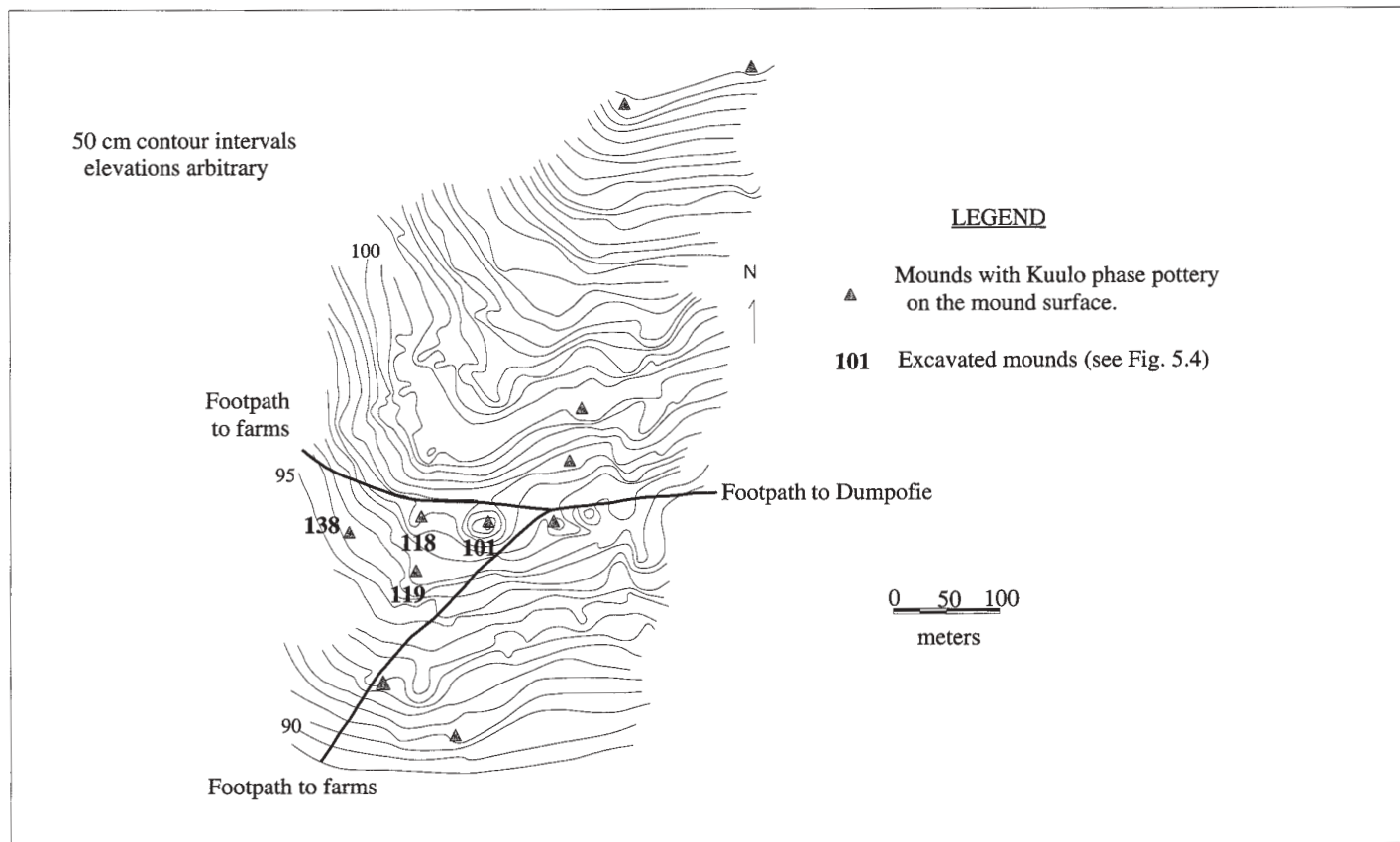
Figure 5.2. Plan map of Kuulo Kataa

that of the Nafana elders – the remains should be left intact, covered, and libations poured. Several days later, we encountered another burial in a second mound, and similar procedures were followed. By this time – coincidentally to our minds – two American crew members had fallen ill. One had been ill off and on since her arrival in Ghana, and another, who had been supervising a unit where a burial was encountered, contracted malaria. Our Kuulo workmen and the elders saw a link; speculation abounded that the students fell ill because the Kuulo ancestors had been disturbed. I met with elders and gave them my explanation of the illnesses, observing that one student had been ill before working on the site, and that the other had elected not to take the malaria prophylactic that the rest of us were taking, accounting for his susceptibility to the disease. While speculation probably continued, the recovery of one student and the return of the other to the US in time allayed local concerns.

I relate these vignettes for they offer an entry point into a dilemma that must have confronted the Kuulo elders as they contemplated allowing us to work on Kuulo Kataa and, in effect, opened the way for a foreign researcher to engage in making their history. Clearly there was risk involved – the risk that we might violate the sacred shrines, which we assiduously avoided, and the risk of disturbing the ancestors, which we in fact did. Again the question arises, given the apparent risks: what did the Kuulo elders perceive as the benefit? What made the risks worth it? While I cannot fully answer this question, conversations with two Kuulo elders who staff the local schools provide some insight. These middle-aged men (roughly my contemporaries) occasionally visited the excavations and questioned us about what we were learning. As teachers, they were influenced by western models of history, and in our conversations stressed the partialities of oral histories, and the possibility of learning new things about their past from archaeology. Unlike many passers-by, who were bemused by our bags of broken and dirty potsherds, these men wanted to know what we could learn from the sherds, and especially how we could know their age. Both men expressed concern that the Kuulo people were in danger of losing their identity and being swamped by the Nafana. They seemed to conceive of our work as a means of fleshing out a fuller history of their people, presumably one that would contribute to a revitalized sense of the Kuulo as a people with deep roots in Banda. On a number of occasions, we discussed the problem of linking particular groups with specific sites; I pointed to how a homogeneous ceramic style in the area today masked contemporary ethnic-linguistic variability. We discussed differences between the ceramics at Kuulo Kataa and those made and used in the area today, and the difficulties of linking contemporary producers of pottery to potters in the past. They listened politely, yet I suspect that my caveats were and will be ignored. Their sense that they can learn new things about their past from archaeology draws on a western scientific discourse; but a different discourse is invoked regarding identity. They, like all Kuulo elders, conceive of their identity in "primordialist" terms – they are descendants of Wurache, their identity reinforced by a series of distinctive ritual practices. They have no doubt that their ancestors inhabited Kuulo Kataa, and to them any

knowledge that derives from excavations at Kuulo Kataa is knowledge about the Kuulo people. I revisit the implications of this for the process of making history in Banda in a concluding section of this chapter, but turn now to what we have learned through archaeology of the lived past in the period when local social fields were framed by the Niger trade.

Settlement of the Banda area c. 1300–1700

Our knowledge of the period when the Niger trade framed the subcontinental relations of the western Volta basin derives largely from excavations at the historically documented site of Begho described in Chapter 4. In 1966, Bravmann and Mathewson (1970) conducted a week-long archaeological and oral-historical survey to assess whether Banda, immediately north of Hani/Begho, was home to comparable commercial settlements. Their investigations focused on Old Bima, a site in the southern reaches of Banda, along the Chɛn River (Fig. 5.3). Located a short distance south of a contemporary Ligby village (Bima), Old Bima covers an area estimated at a mile in diameter. The site extends along both sides of the Chɛn, with large refuse mounds confined to its southern banks. Like Kuulo Kataa, this was home to a Dumpo shrine belonging to the Gape of Bofie (Chapter 3). Here, Bravmann and Mathewson were told, their people descended from the sky at a place called Buyaa. This was the site of an annual propitiation ceremony, which they took as evidence "that the mounds south of the Chen represent the original indigenous settlement of the Buyaa quarter" (Bravmann and Mathewson 1970:136). They tentatively linked Buyaa with Bahaa, referred to in a sixteenth-century Portuguese source: "The merchants of Mandingua go to the fairs of Beetuu and Banbarranaa and Bahaa to obtain gold from these monstrous folk" (Pacheco Pereira, cited in Bravmann and Mathewson 1970:137). Pottery on the site was characterized by exaggerated carinations, abundant cord-roulette impression, distinctive pie-crust rims, and a chevron design created by rolling a carved object (roulette) across the vessel surface. Red-painted pottery decorated with geometric motifs was found on one mound north of the Chɛn River. Based on oral-historical sources, Bravmann and Mathewson (1970) argued that Old Bima was a Dumpo site, but took the red-painted pottery to signal the presence of Mande people as well. Informants related that Old Bima was forced to submit to Asante in the aftermath of the Asante–Techiman war (c. 1723), but joined the rebellious Banda chieftaincy in a war with Asante during the reign of Asantehene Osei Kwadwo (1764–77; Yarak [1979] pinpointed the Asante campaign against Banda to the dry season of 1773–74). Old Bima was the site of an initial encounter with the Asante, and was destroyed in the process, leading to a dispersal of its inhabitants (Bravmann and Mathewson 1970:143–144).

A site with stylistically similar ceramics several kilometers northeast of Begho (Namasa, Fig. 5.3; Nyama Gboo in Posnansky [1976b:3]) was reputed to be the Dumpo quarter of Begho. Test excavations sampled 8 feet of stratified contexts, revealing a series of superimposed floors that attested a "long and continuous occupation" (Bravmann and Mathewson 1970:139). Several of the six radiocarbon dates
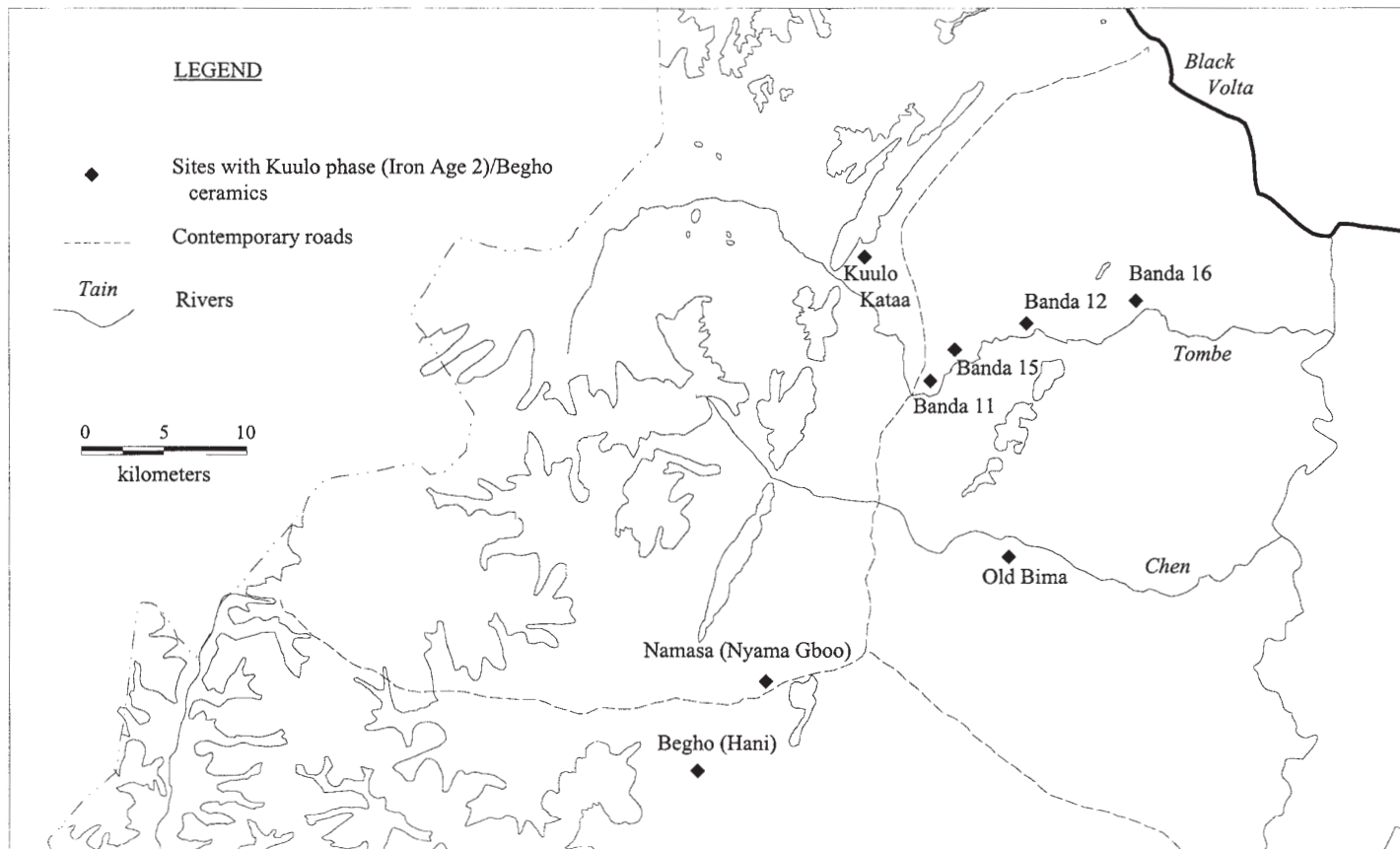
Figure 5.3. Location of Begho and Kuulo phase (Iron Age 2) sites in the Banda area

were anomalous or stratigraphically inconsistent (Willett 1971:364)[10] and though Bravmann and Mathewson (1970:145) were reluctant to speculate on the precise temporal relationship between Namasa and Old Bima, they were confident that ceramics signaled a link between the sites.

Bravmann and Mathewson's brief foray into Banda never materialized into the expanded archaeological investigations they envisioned (1970:148). Attention over the next decade centered on the Hani Begho sites, focus of the West African Trade Project (Chapter 4). My 1982 site survey again raised the issue of whether sites throughout this part of the Tain basin shared in the "Begho phenomenon." We located five sites that shared distinct ceramic forms and decorative treatments that I labeled "Iron Age 2" (IA2), implying that these sites were older than the Iron Age 1 (IA1) sites that oral histories linked to the nineteenth century, but without attributing them to a particular ethnic-linguistic group (cf. Bravmann and Mathewson 1970). The variability in IA2 pottery was comparable to that described for Old Bima (above). The sites generally covered a large area, and were associated with large middens, several meters in height. Our excavations at Kuulo Kataa confirm the contemporaneity of so-called IA2 ceramics with those from Begho. Radiocarbon age estimates from Kuulo Kataa (which yielded typical IA2 pottery) cluster in the period from roughly the early fourteenth to mid-seventeenth century while thermoluminescence dates ran slightly later (Stahl 1999a:13–16).

Although I am reluctant to generalize from the 1982 survey because of sampling problems, several possible patterns emerge from the distribution of IA2 sites on the landscape (Fig. 5.3). A notable feature of the IA2 sites is their association with the Tombɛ River, a perennial tributary of the Tain. Kuulo Kataa (formerly Banda 7) is located farthest from the river (c. 2.5 km), but within a short distance of springs that emerge from the base of the hills. The absence of IA2 sites in the low-rolling hills between the Volta and Tombɛ Rivers does not reflect a sampling problem. This area is heavily farmed, and farmers showed us a number of sites here, all of which yielded later IA1 ceramics (Chapter 6). Neither did a transect survey of this area reveal any sites with distinctive IA2 ceramics. Generalizing from the five IA2 sites located in the 1982 survey (Stahl 1985a), we find that they are considerably larger than IA1 sites, and are characterized by very large midden mounds quite unlike anything noted at the later IA1 sites.

Leith Smith recently completed an intensive archaeological survey of more than 800 km^2 focused on two areas: one west of the Banda hills and south of the Black Volta River; the other east of the hills between the Tombɛ and Chɛn Rivers (L. Smith 1998). His survey documented hundreds of sites ranging from the ceramic Late Stone Age (c. 3,500 years old) through the so-called IA2 and IA1 periods. Smith documented a number of IA2 sites (now Kuulo phase, see below), many of which are located in the Banda hills. They range in size from small hamlets to large towns, and his preliminary results show a widespread and varied occupation in the period of the Niger trade. Banda Research Project test excavations at these sites during 2001 promise to yield important new information on Kuulo phase settlement size, variation, and dynamics.

Establishing contemporaneity with Begho

A corpus of eighteen radiocarbon dates from excavated contexts in and around Begho can be compared with the nine radiocarbon and six thermoluminescence dates from Kuulo Kataa to assess contemporaneity (for details see Stahl [1999a:13–16]). A number of dates overlap in the period cal AD 1400–1650, and establish the broad contemporaneity of Kuulo Kataa with the zenith of the Begho occupation. Yet a frustration we face is understanding precise temporal relations between sites. Often, as is the case here, we can come no closer than a 200–300-year time span within which a constellation of sites was occupied. We might collapse temporal variability into a flat plane by assuming that all of the sites were occupied simultaneously, and formed part of a single regional system. But the sites might not have been occupied for the full range of time; some may be early, others later. The corollary is that they did not necessarily form part of a single interacting system.

   Nonetheless, Kuulo Kataa is broadly contemporary with Begho. The range of calibrated radiocarbon dates (Stahl 1999a:13–16) spans the period encompassing Mansa Musa's famous 1324–25 pilgrimage (Wilks 1993:7), the Portuguese founding of Elmina, sixteenth-century dislocations associated with wars in Akan country that closed trade paths to the coast (Wilks 1993:28), and the founding of the Gonja state by Naba'a in the 1550s (Haight 1987:60). The ranges of both the Kuulo and Begho dates commonly end c. cal AD 1650, shortly after the Dutch wrested control of Elmina from the Portuguese (in 1637, Yarak 1990:95), but decades before Asante's first significant display of strength against its southern rival, Denkyira (in 1701). Thermoluminescence dates suggest a somewhat later occupation that postdates Columbus' first transatlantic voyage and spans the period of Portuguese involvement on the Gold Coast, but again predates the rise of Asante. Clearly, Kuulo Kataa lay in the orb of Begho, which occupied an interstitial position between the emerging Akan states to the south and the nascent warrior kingdom of Gonja to the north. What can we discern of daily life during this period when the transit market at Begho occupied a space in the imaginations of Moroccans (Wilks 1993:14) and Dutchmen (Kea 1982:26) alike?

Daily life at Kuulo Kataa

Not all mounds at Kuulo Kataa reflect the early Kuulo phase occupation associated with IA2 ceramics that show affinities to "Begho Ware" (Crossland 1989; Crossland and Posnansky 1978). In 1995 we collected pottery from the surface of each mound to assess temporal affiliation. The results suggest shifting occupation, with some mounds yielding Kuulo phase pottery (Fig. 5.2; similar to Old Bima and Begho), and others ceramics similar to those first defined at Makala Kataa (both Makala phases 1 and 2; Stahl 1999a; Chapters 6 and 7) that postdate Begho (i.e., the Kuulo phase).

   Our excavations sampled five contexts in an area between footpaths that crosscut the site (Fig. 5.4): a large deep midden mound (mound 101); two house mounds (mounds 118 and 119); a low mound associated with abundant slag (mound 138); and a depression between mounds 101 and 118. Excavations encompassed 89 m^2 of
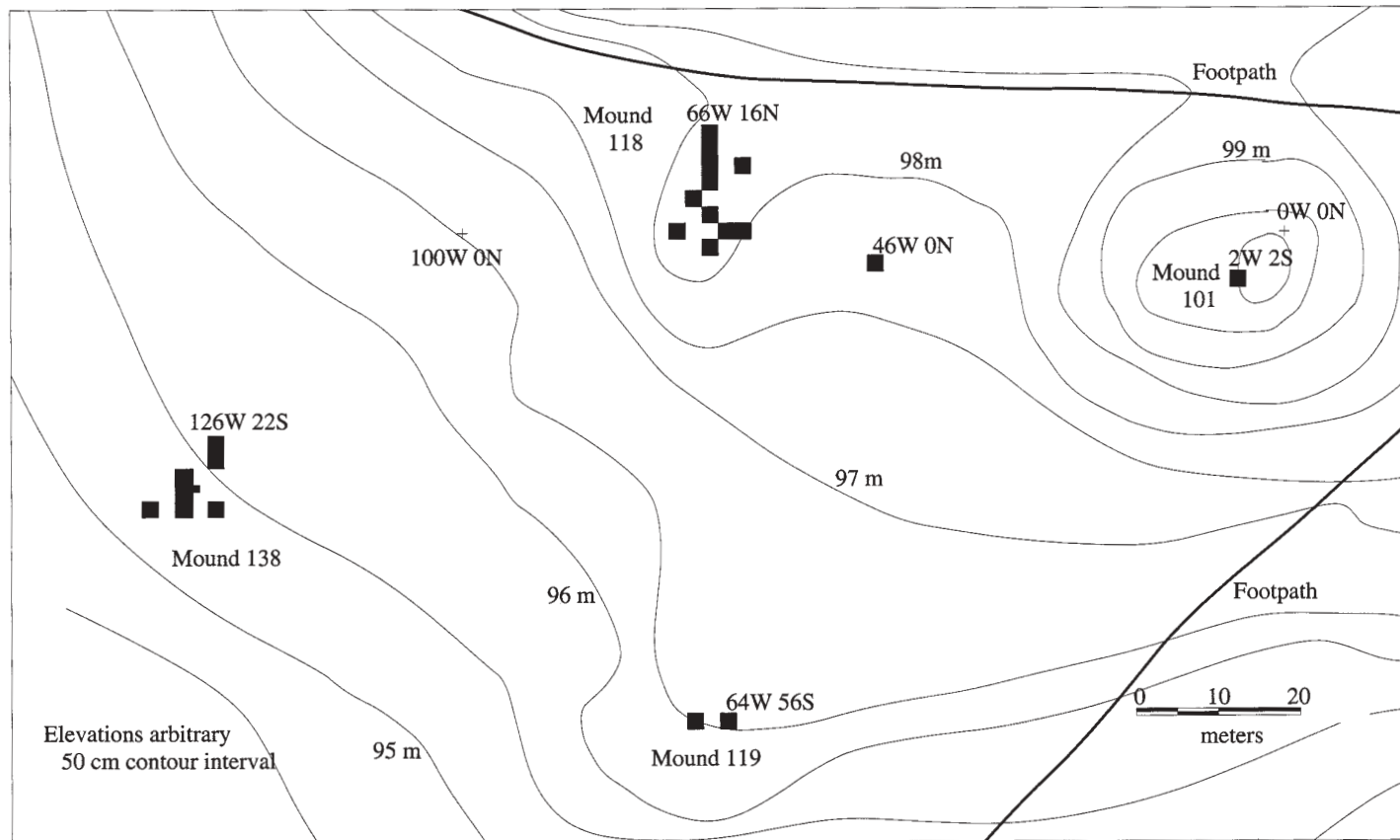
Figure 5.4. Location of excavation units at Kuulo Kataa, 1995

deposit with a volume of 83.1 m^3 – in simple terms, a small window into a large site. Nonetheless, we endeavored to sample contexts comparable with those at Makala Kataa (midden, occupation areas). While more work needs to be done, these excavations provide initial comparative insight into the character of daily life in the context of the Niger trade.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Kuulo Kataa is the sheer quantity of material remains left by the site's early occupants. The large midden mounds (3.5–4.0 m high and covering more than 90 m^2 each) represent a tremendous quantity of discarded material. Although we have tested only one of these mounds (mound 101), the high density of surface material leaves little doubt that they accumulated primarily as midden or trash deposits. On average we recovered more than 5,400 sherds/m^3 of excavated deposit in our mound 101 test unit, in addition to significant quantities of slag and bone. This stood in marked contrast to midden contexts at Makala Kataa, which yielded on average 3,450 sherds/m^3 at Early Makala, and only 238/m^3 at Late Makala (Chapters 6 and 7). Upper levels of house mounds (mounds 118 and 119) at Kuulo Kataa also yielded high artifact densities compared to similar contexts at Makala.

Housing and settlement dynamics

There is a temptation to assume that all Kuulo phase habitation mounds were occupied simultaneously. But there is no a priori reason for assuming this. Our radiocarbon dates hint that materials at mound 138 and mound 118 accumulated at different times (Stahl 1999a). Although we cannot draw a clear correlation between midden depth and length of occupation, the depth of accumulation in mound 101 suggests the site was minimally occupied for two or three generations. Based on the scale of the site and the size of mounds, the impression is of a village occupied for a considerable period. Yet judging from the number of mounds with Kuulo phase ceramics on their surface, the site did not approach the size of Old Bima or the Hani Begho sites. Though some of the mounds with later pottery on the surface may turn out to have buried Kuulo phase deposits, the site would still not be more than a modest-sized village. This makes the quantity of refuse generated by the site's inhabitants even more intriguing (see below).

By narrowing the focus of our inquiry to a single mound, we can learn something of the settlement history of the site. Mound 118 is the most intensively excavated house mound to date, and it provides insight into architectural patterns and the history of individual structures. Mound 118 is roughly rectangular (c. 20 m across) and rises less than a meter above the surrounding landscape. We excavated eleven 2 x 2 meter units in the mound (Fig. 5.4), which revealed a series of variably preserved floors, hearths, and other structural features as well as considerable refuse.

Identifying structural features poses a challenge for archaeologists in West Africa as earthen-walled structures are difficult, though not impossible, to find. As walls collapse, they appear as low mounds of sediment or "wall melt." The inclusions and sediment size in collapsed walls may differ from surrounding soil, and can be iso-

lated through careful excavation (McIntosh 1976). Floors are easier to identify since they are often made of packed gravel introduced to the site. House floors are often made today from laterite gravel, packed in place and topped with a thin layer of slurry or plaster. The slurry used to finish floors and lower walls is made of clay and ash (and perhaps dung) suspended in water (or if people can afford it today, cement). A fine coat of gray slurry is applied in several layers (Chapter 3). Through careful excavation, we were able to identify thin (c. 0.5 cm) slurry layers at both Makala and Kuulo Kataas.

Earthen-walled structures and thatched roofs require regular maintenance (Chapter 3). Archaeologically, we would expect this type of maintenance or refurbishment to be associated with relatively long-lived settlements (cf. Chapter 7). Our best evidence for architecture at Kuulo Kataa comes from the southernmost units of mound 118 (62W 4N, 64W 4N, and 66W 0N; excavation units are designated by the coordinates of their northeast peg, and indicate the number of meters west and south of a zero point that anchors the arbitrary grid; Stahl 1999a). Unit 66W 0N yielded evidence of a single, thin gravel floor covered with fine plaster. Units 62W 4N and 64W 4N revealed stratified floor deposits (Figs. 5.5, 5.6). The lowest occurred c. 90 cm below the ground surface, and took the form of a packed deposit, clearly differentiated in both color and texture from the underlying soil (Fig. 5.6). This thin layer comprised a series of plaster lenses superimposed on one another, suggesting periodic renewal of the floor surface. This floor was capped by 10 cm of sandy soil, containing chunks of hardened, oxidized soil. A later floor composed of a thin layer of laterite gravel topped with thin plaster was built atop this fill level. Some of the overburden on this floor appears to be the remains of collapsed walls that were never cleared away. We have not yet excavated a sufficiently large area to discern the pattern of house layout at Kuulo Kataa; however, there was more than one structure at the southern end of mound 118, suggesting a compound layout. We cannot at present locate the kitchen area of mound 118 – a handful of grindstones and a complete vessel in one of the northern units suggest a food preparation area. It may be that the kitchen area remains buried under unexcavated soil. Alternatively, the lack of useable kitchen equipment could signal that the mound was abandoned gradually, with people relocating close enough by that they were able to take useable pots and hearthstones along. Although we have sampled only a small portion of the site, the evidence suggests gradual abandonment (Cameron and Tomka 1993), inconsistent with historic scenarios of an apocalyptic end to Begho and surrounding sites (i.e., Old Bima, above). This pattern of gradual abandonment contrasts with Early Makala, where abandonment was rapid and unplanned (Chapter 6). In sum, the architectural evidence suggests that Kuulo phase buildings were durable rectangular structures, probably with tauf walls, that were occupied long enough to require refurbishing and rebuilding.

The domestic economy

Archaeologists are interested in modeling past household production and reproduction; however, their reconstructions often rely uncritically on ethnographic sources.

64W 4N   62W 4N

Yellow-brown
silty sand

Wall

Wall

Gravel floor

Gravel floor

Medium-brown
sandy silt

Wall

Limits of gravel floor at 100
cm below datum

Wall deposit at 110 cm below datum

Limits of slurry/plaster at
110 cm below datum

Postholes

50 cm

Figure 5.5. Plan view of mound 118, Kuulo Kataa, 1995. Units 62W 4N and 64W 4N, composite view of deposits 100–110 cm below datum

66W 4N

64W 4N

Level line, 20 cm below datum

62W 4N

Very dark grayish brown sandy silt

Wall collapse
Brownish yellow with laterite gravel

Wall collapse? Light yellowish brown with some gravel

Light yellowish brown sandy silt

Compact brownish yellow sandy silt

LEGEND

Floor. Compact yellowish brown sandy soil

Wall stub. Concentrated laterite gravel in brownish yellow soil matrix

Brownish gray slurry

Whole pot

Boundaries between soil colors

50 cm

Figure 5.6. Profile of mound 118 structures, Kuulo Kataa, 1995. Depicts the north wall of excavation units 62W 4N and 64W 4N

This has especially plagued efforts to "engender" production (Stahl and Cruz 1998) – on one hand, scholars acknowledge dramatic changes in gender relations wrought by growing involvement in market production over the last century (Etienne 1977; Roberts 1984), yet this recognition has not impacted methodology, as scholars continue to use recent sources to model past patterns (the problem of "mapping on" ethnographic sources discussed in Chapter 2). Yet by "tacking back and forth" (Wylie 1989) between late twentieth-century practice and the archaeological remains of earlier periods, we can begin to glean relationships of continuity and change in production past and present.

Today we observe that, although men dominate cash-crop production in Banda, women are by no means excluded from establishing farms to produce market crops (e.g., tobacco, Chapter 3). The goal of both men and women in this case is to produce a surplus in order to access cash, necessary for household reproduction today. Yams are today both a subsistence and a cash crop. Calabash are certainly used in domestic contexts, but are produced in excess of a household's needs. Tobacco is purely a cash crop today – smokers purchase cigarettes rather than smoke locally grown tobacco. The degree of monetization within households varies accordingly – yam farmers consume a portion of their crop, but sell some to generate money to pay for consumables (cooking oil, kerosene, condiments), durables (tools necessary for household reproduction, i.e., farm and kitchen utensils, as well as cloth, clothing, and shoes), labor (i.e., to assist in preparing fields), and school and medical fees. By contrast, the households of tobacco farmers are more fully monetized. Tobacco farming is labor-intensive, and precludes involvement in food crop production. Thus, the proceeds are used to purchase staple foods in addition to the items listed above. All households, however, confront periods when foodstuffs are relatively scarce, and cash becomes increasingly vital to subsistence. Local food supplies diminish as the dry season progresses. The early rainy season (April–June/July), before new crops can be harvested, is especially difficult in years preceded by poor harvests. Today, maize and cassava help to plug this "hungry season" gap. The maize harvest in areas to the south (e.g., Wenchi) precedes that in Banda, and many families purchase both maize and maize meal from the Wenchi and Techiman markets at this time of year.

We know from the outset that the dynamics of a more distant past must have differed. First, the character and pace of monetization have changed dramatically over the past century, and rural people throughout Africa have altered their production strategies to access cash. Monetization is only one dimension of a market economy, for equally important is the locus of production. Production of certain goods may shift outside the household (cf. Guyer and Peters 1987; Wilk and Netting 1984) as the domestic unit comes to rely on others to produce items that may be prerequisites for household reproduction (e.g., domestic and agricultural tools). Second, we know that New World crops are today hungry-season staples with important demographic implications. Although this alerts us to the kinds of changes to anticipate, the challenge remains to use the material remains of the archaeological record to illuminate the broad question of how subsistence patterns

reconstructed from archaeological evidence compare with late twentieth-century ones. This may be broken down into more specific questions like: which goods were produced by the household for its own consumption, and which were produced outside the household, and presumably obtained through exchange? What are the implications of the locus of production (intra- or extra-household) for the role of material culture in social reproduction? What was the balance of hunting, collecting, cultivation, and stock-rearing? When were New World crops adopted, and with what effect on the predictability of food supplies, and therefore demography?

Household vs. extra-household production Our baseline data suggest that textile production was a household activity during the first half of the twentieth century, and played an important role in creating and maintaining gender relations (Stahl and Cruz 1998). As elsewhere, cloth production drew on the reciprocal labor of men and women, often, but not exclusively, husbands and wives (Etienne 1977; Roberts 1984). Oral sources are unanimous in suggesting that virtually all women were involved in preparing cotton thread (cleaning, carding, and spinning). Weaving too was a household activity, the province of men. Dyeing was reportedly a specialized task undertaken by Muslim men in villages west of the hills, while one elder from a village on the east side of the hills recalls that dyeing was a household activity (Cruz 2001). Early twentieth-century sources agree that weaving was ubiquitous in Banda villages (KA 168, KA 2063). Cloth played (and plays) an important role in social life, as gifts in wedding rites and a material means of creating and maintaining distinction (Chapter 3; Stahl and Cruz 1998). By contrast, production of domestic tools was often an extra-household, extra-village activity. Historically spindle whorls were a specialized product of Kokua, a Muslim village several kilometers south of Sampa (Crossland 1989:52, 78–79). Other ceramic goods were also the product of specialists – potting is today practiced by women in three villages west of the Banda hills (Chapter 3). Iron tools (i.e., knives, hoes, etc.), used for a variety of domestic and agricultural tasks, were also obtained from specialist producers – reportedly from smiths in Brawhani, a village on Banda's southern margins. How do these patterns compare with production at Kuulo Kataa?

Because looms are made from perishable materials, among the few durable objects associated with textile production are spindle whorls. While the evidence for textile production at Makala Kataa is meager (Chapters 6 and 7), it is virtually non-existent at Kuulo Kataa. We recovered a single fragment of a spindle whorl from 83.1 m^3 of excavated deposit. It was found within 10 cm of ground surface on mound 119, and cannot therefore be reliably linked to the Kuulo phase occupation. The 4 m deep unit in the mound 101 midden deposit did not yield a single spindle whorl, despite the high density of materials in those deposits. Negative evidence is notoriously slippery – we cannot infer that textile production was absent based on a lack of spindle whorls; however, if textiles were being produced, their production was focused elsewhere on the site, or was on such a small scale as to be invisible archaeologically. This stands in marked contrast to the ubiquitous textile production observed by

early twentieth-century colonial officers, and to oral accounts that stress the importance of textile production as a household activity.

The apparent absence of spindle whorls in Kuulo phase contexts contrasts with their ubiquity at Begho. Although none were recovered from the Nyarko quarter, thought to be the earliest of the Begho occupations, "A fairly large number of spindle whorls were recovered from all levels at the Brong (B1, B2), Kramo (K1) and Dwinfuor (D1, D3) sites of Begho" (Crossland 1976b:48). Moreover, a meter-deep hole at the Kramo (Muslim) quarter of Begho is interpreted as a possible dye hole used in the production of indigo cloth, a possibility that is strengthened by a 1629 account from the coast that identifies "Insoco" (Begho/Nsoko) as an important source of textiles (Posnansky 1979:28–29). Thus, at least some Begho residents appear to have been involved in the production of textiles, a marked contrast to the lack of evidence for textile production at Kuulo Kataa. I return to the significance of cloth as a material means of social distinction below.

Today and in the recent past, women relied on extra-household production for pots used in everyday activities. Recall that pottery is produced today only in villages west of the Banda hills, though elders recall a time when women east of the hills potted. Abandoned clay pits east of the hills attest the former scale of this activity. A goal of our archaeological investigations was to discern the source of pottery consumed by villagers at each of the archaeological sites we have sampled. The technique of neutron activation analysis (NAA) has proven useful in addressing this problem. Cruz (1996) collected clay samples from pits east and west of the Banda hills, as well as contemporary pots whose source is known. NAA determined the chemical signature of these clays, which were then compared with archaeological ceramics. Cruz's analysis demonstrated that clays east and west of the Banda hills possessed distinct signatures and that the technique could sort among different clay sources west of the hills.

The pottery from Kuulo Kataa is distinguished by diverse decorative treatments and vessel forms (Figs. 5.7–5.9). The pottery was expertly made, perhaps by specialists who devoted considerable time to their craft. Many of the vessels are thin-walled, showing careful control over clays and firing conditions. Vessels can be broadly categorized as either bowls or jars. Bowls are generally shallow vessels whose orifice is smaller than its greatest circumference. Jars were of two forms: everted rim forms with a constricted neck that opens into an outward flaring orifice (Fig 5.7); and globular jars in which the maximum constriction of the vessel coincided with the vessel lip (Fig. 5.8). Jars and bowls were commonly carinated at the shoulder, a feature shared with pottery from Old Bima and Begho. While the broad range of vessel forms is similar at Kuulo and Makala Kataas (Chapters 6 and 7), several forms distinguish the Kuulo assemblage. These include shallow bowls with radical carinations, often augmented with added clay and embellished with decoration. Globular jars were common at Kuulo Kataa, but absent at Makala. These differences in vessel form combined with differences in decorative treatments suggest that there was discontinuity between the Kuulo and Makala phase ceramic assemblages (Stahl 1999a:47–48), and that craft production was disrupted in the wake of Begho's decline (Chapter 6).
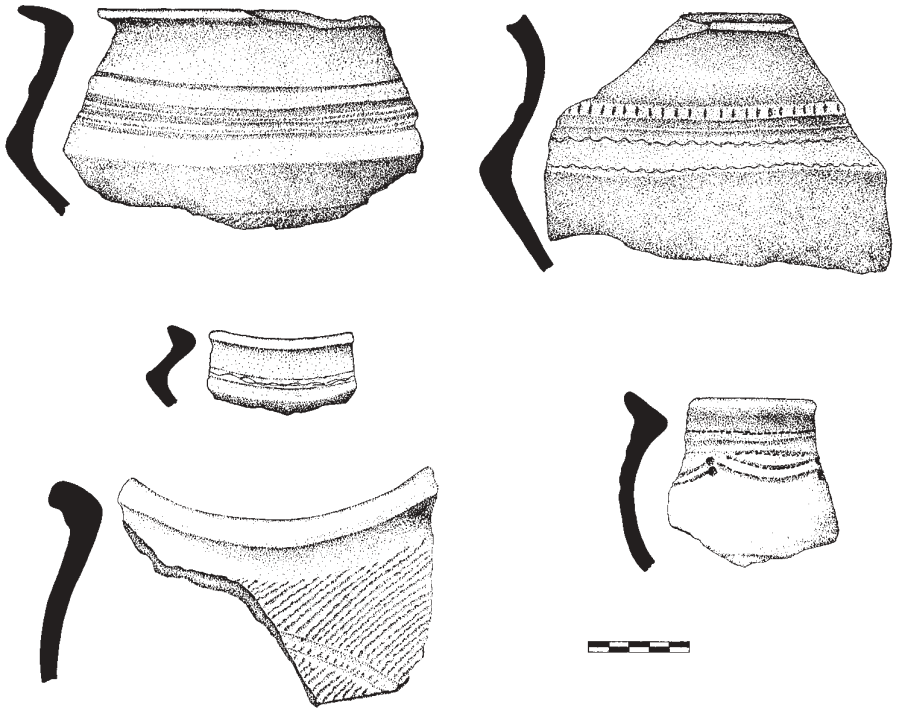
Figure 5.7. Kuulo phase ceramics: everted rim forms. Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

We presume that bowls were used primarily in serving, and jars with everted rims for cooking and storage. Globular jars were probably used to store and serve liquids, perhaps sorghum beer. Many were severely pitted and eroded on their interior surface, a pattern that Leith Smith (personal communication, 1995) observed in contemporary Zairean pots used as chamber pots or beer containers. Both bowl and globular jar rims were commonly decorated, whereas everted jar rims were far more often plain (Stahl 1999a:23–27). The increased decorative load on bowls and globular jars seems consistent with the idea that they functioned in contexts of consumption rather than food preparation. A small proportion of vessels – mainly bowls – were elaborately decorated with bands of red paint and a distinctive "mica" slip applied in bands to the exterior surface of a vessel, giving it a reflective, sparkling appearance. A variety of other decorative treatments characterized Kuulo phase ceramics. Jars were commonly surface-treated with cord-wrapped roulette (Soper 1985) or a carved roulette, typically applied below the carination and separated from undecorated areas of the vessel surface by a shallow groove. Fine comb or dentate stamp was common, and a wavy-line roulette ("stamped wavy line") was distinctive but less common. But variation in decorative treatment within vessel categories was underwritten by a shared grammar of design in which specific elements were routinely placed on discrete areas of the pot. Other household necessities were also
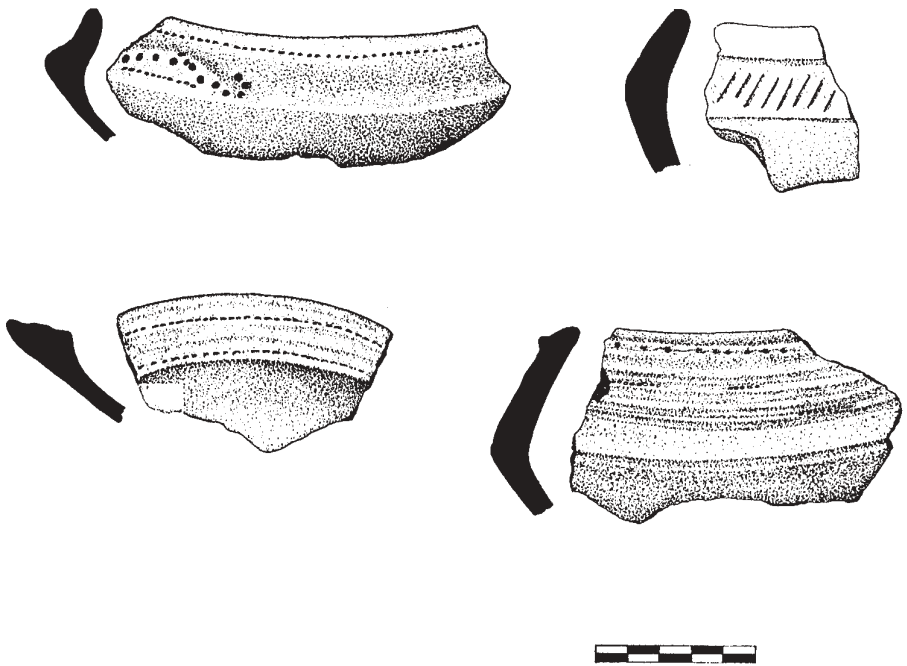
Figure 5.8. Kuulo phase ceramics: bowls and globular jars. Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

fashioned from clay, including shallow-basined oil lamps, probably used to burn shea butter which was historically used as a source of illumination.

A variety of tempering agents were included in the pastes of Kuulo ceramics (including crushed laterite, various grits, and, notably, crushed slag). The variety of tempers and pastes (based on color and texture) led me to suspect that the pottery consumed at Kuulo Kataa derived from multiple sources. However, NAA analysis of a sample of seventy-six sherds from a range of vessel forms and decorative categories showed remarkable homogeneity in the chemical composition of Kuulo phase pottery, suggesting that all or most of it derived from a single clay source. Fifty-eight (75 percent) of the analyzed specimens were assigned to a single compositional group that cannot at present be linked to a provenienced clay source. Neff and Glascock of the Missouri University Research Reactor (MURR) suggest that compositional group K-1, as they named it, probably derives from east of the Banda hills, based on similarities with the securely provenienced K-2 group that encompasses the three sources that are known on the east side of the hills (Stahl 1999a). Significantly, the sherds assigned to the K-1 source included all vessel forms and a range of decorative treatments – bowls, everted and globular jars, oil lamps, red-painted and mica-slipped sherds. The remaining eighteen sherds could not be assigned to the seven compositional groups discerned by NAA; however, none diverged sufficiently from known groups to suggest an origin outside the Banda area.
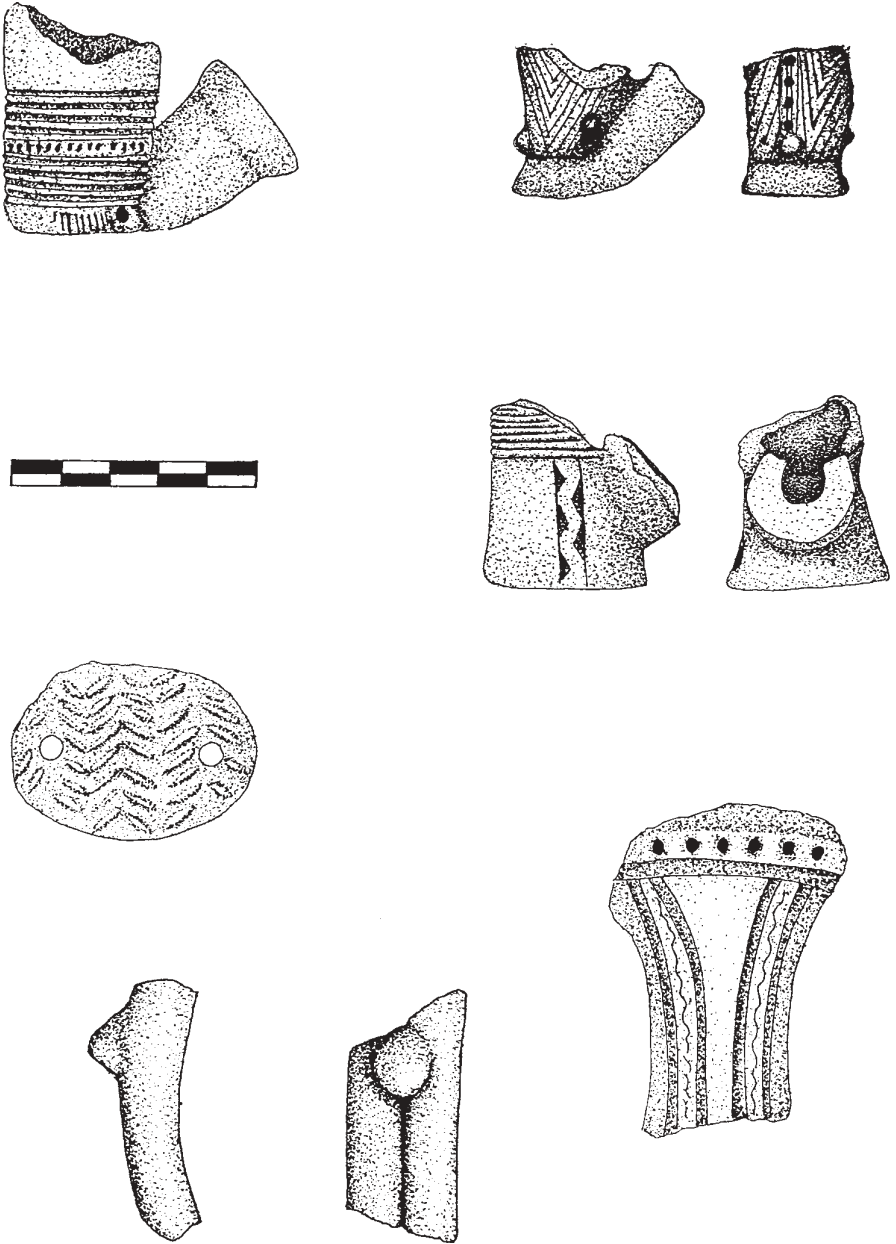
Figure 5.9. Smoking pipes and miscellaneous ceramic objects from Kuulo Kataa. Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

The NAA data strongly suggest that consumers at Kuulo Kataa obtained their pottery from local sources, east of the Banda hills (Stahl 1999a:23–26). Whether pottery was produced on site remains unclear. We have no evidence of on-site manufacture in the form of wasters (bloated sherds) or firing features; however, the open-air firing characteristic of local potting today leaves little in the way of durable traces. The sheer volume of pottery consumed at Kuulo Kataa leads me to suspect local on-site production. The very high density of ceramics on a moderately sized village settlement suggests a village occupied by potters who produced finely made pottery in large quantities, some of which entered the middens because of production mishaps. On-site production is not necessarily equivalent with household production, though, for some villagers may have obtained the ceramic objects required for household reproduction from specialist producers within the village. Neither should a model of specialist production be taken to signal full-time craft specialization: potters may have pursued their craft on a seasonal, part-time basis (see Guyer [1996] on the significance of "part-time" occupations). If residents of Kuulo Kataa did not produce pottery on site, they obtained it from producers who exploited local clays, suggesting that this vital tool for household reproduction derived from nearby sources. The available evidence hints at a production model in which some villages produced for a broader regional market. I suspect that Kuulo Kataa was such a village, although further NAA is required at other sites to assess whether villages and towns in a broad regional catchment, including Begho, consumed pottery derived from the k-1 source east of the Banda hills. We know that by the end of the eighteenth century a different model of ceramic production and consumption prevailed in which villagers east of the Banda hills consumed pots produced on the west side (Chapter 6).

While the case for on-site manufacture of pottery is equivocal, the case for iron production is less so. Virtually every excavated context at Kuulo Kataa yielded considerable quantities of slag – most of it presumed to be a byproduct of iron smelting, though some may derive from forging activities and some perhaps from working copper alloys. The midden deposits in mound 101 were particularly rich in slag; 10 cm deep excavation levels (1 x 2 m) yielded as much as 31 kg of slag. Mound 138 also yielded concentrations of slag and chunks of oxidized sediment. Excavations revealed a burned feature that consisted of thick, hard-packed oxidized sediment that had been fired in place (Stahl 1999a:19–21). The thickness of the fired clay feature suggested that it had been exposed to high temperatures for a prolonged period; however, there was very little charcoal in direct association, and no evidence of tuyères – the ceramic tubes through which air is introduced into furnaces. The feature suggested a collapsed furnace, though whether a smelting furnace or smithing forge remains unclear.

While direct evidence for metal-working features is limited to the single feature in mound 138, the large quantities of slag suggest on-site iron production on a scale that probably exceeded the needs of Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants. Like the pottery, the sheer quantity of slag stands in contrast to the moderate size of the village, suggesting that residents produced for a regional market. This contrasts markedly with later occupations at Makala Kataa where we have no evidence for on-site production of
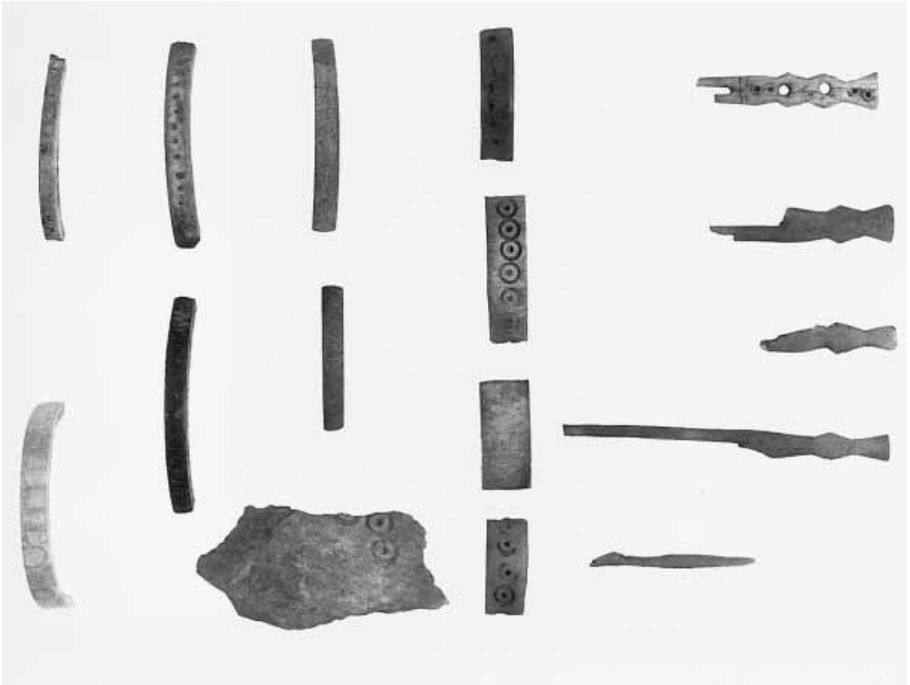
Plate 7. Ivory artifacts from 1995 excavations at Kuulo Kataa. Perforated ivory pin (top right) is 4 cm long. Photo by D. Tuttle, 2000

iron (Chapters 6 and 7). Thus, like the site outside Namasa, Kuulo Kataa may have produced iron for the Begho market and regional exchange. Most of the finished iron recovered from our excavations consisted of small scraps of corroded metal, although a small number of tanged blades of varying sizes were recovered from a variety of contexts on the site. One unusual "serpentine" projectile was deliberately twisted back and forth (Fig. 5.10). Iron was used to produce a variety of tools and weapons that would have been used during the course of daily household tasks, as well as for defense and hunting. But iron was also used for ornaments witnessed by a small number (7) of ornaments including finger and ear rings.

A variety of other finely crafted small objects may have been produced on site. Most of the small sample of beads (total = 22) recovered from Kuulo phase contexts were made from locally available materials including bone (n = 4), stone (n = 2), and fired clay (n = 10). Although the clay beads varied in shape, all were decorated with circular indentations of dimples, and identified by local women as beads that were formerly considered sacred (Caton 1997). Today, sacred beads consist almost exclusively of imported European forms, a point to which I return in Chapter 6. A small but distinctive collection of ivory ornaments was probably also produced on site. Their lamellar morphology is consistent with hippopotamus ivory (Krzyszkowska 1990:38; Penniman 1952:Plate VI). They included two forms (Plate 7): curved fragments ranging from 0.5 to 1 cm wide (n = 20); and carved pins (n = 5), some with

Figure 5.10. Metal objects from Kuulo Kataa (top, iron; bottom, brass/bronze). Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

two prongs, and some perforated. The curved ornaments were decorated with precisely executed incised circles and dots. A fragment of partially worked ivory provides hints at production techniques: several circles and dots were etched onto the ivory before it was shaped into its final form (Plate 7). This, combined with the fragmentary state of the ivory, suggests that the ivory recovered from Kuulo Kataa was from pieces that broke as they were being made. Though ivory may have been consumed on the site, it seems likely that it was being worked for exchange.

Feeding the family Our understanding of subsistence at Kuulo Kataa derives primarily from an analysis of more than 16,000 animal bones (details in Stahl 1999a:27–37). The vast majority of these bones were fragments that could not be more specifically identified than "unidentified mammal" (n = 11,988, i.e., not identifiable to zoological class or higher). Fish were uncommon in the collection (Number of Identified Specimens [NISP] = 134); however, their bones may have been ingested, as they commonly are today. Fish remains included large head shield fragments of catfish, found in large rivers like the Volta, up to 20 km distant. Many of the freshwater bivalves and univalves (NISP = 205) probably also derive from the Volta, as do a small quantity of reptile and mammal remains including crocodile (NISP = 6) and hippopotamus (NISP = 1). The reptilian, avian, and mammalian faunas attest exploitation of diverse habitats. In addition to the riverain species noted above, Kuulo Kataa yielded taxa associated with the wooded savanna and canopied forest. The assemblage contained large quantities of turtle/tortoise, most of which probably derive from the genus *Kinixys*, a savanna-dwelling tortoise. Other savanna-dwelling species include monitor lizard (*Varanus* sp.), hornbills (*Bucorvus* sp.), python (Boidae), baboon (*Papio* sp.), hyena (*Crocuta* sp.), lion (*Panthera leo*), warthog (*Phacochoerus* sp.), hare (*Lepus* sp.), giant rat (*Cricetomys* sp.), and grass cutter (*Thryonomys swinderianus*). Some are species attracted to disturbed areas (e.g., agricultural clearings). Porcupines (*Hystrix cristata*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), and vervet monkey (*Cercopithecus* cf. *aethiops*) may be associated with either wooded savanna or more forested settings, including fringing forests along rivers. Other taxa at Kuulo Kataa are more firmly associated with stratified forest, including Diana monkey (*Cercopithecus* cf. *Diana*) and Colobus monkey (*Colocebus polykomos*).

While the foregoing list makes it clear that wild fauna played a role in the subsistence economy of Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants, it is impossible to assess the relative reliance on wild and domestic fauna. Fragmentary bird and mammal bones (the vast majority of specimens) may derive from either wild or domestic animals. Ambiguity remains even for some specimens assigned to more specific levels – suid bones could represent either domestic pig or warthog, both of which were identified at Kuulo Kataa. Small (size class 2–3) artiodactyls and bovids could derive from either sheep/goat (ovicaprids) or wild species, while large ones (size 3–4) could be cattle or wild species. Reliably identified domesticates account for a small proportion of the sample; ovicaprids and cattle are represented by a single specimen each, perhaps unsurprising since identification rests on relatively complete skulls or teeth. Domestic chicken, domestic pig, and domestic guinea fowl were also present, though in small numbers. Two specimens derive from horse or horse/ass, and provide a tantalizing glimpse into the savanna connections of Kuulo Kataa; however, the striking feature of the domestic fauna at Kuulo Kataa is the predominance of domestic dog. Canid remains were common in the assemblage (NISP = 440), and most probably derive from domestic taxa. These remains were disarticulated, and often bore cut marks, suggesting significant butchery. In one context (mound 119; unit 64W 56S, level 12) a series of five domestic dog mandibles (3 left, 2 right) were laid out in fan-like fashion (Plate 8), suggesting ritual treatment. Thus dogs were being butchered

Plate 8. Array of dog mandibles exposed in mound 119, unit 64W 56S, level 12, Kuulo Kataa, 1995. Photo by A. Black, 1995

in some quantity, a striking contrast to the later assemblages at Early and Late Makala. Although the ubiquity of other domesticates is masked by bone fragmentation, the large quantity of dog stands in marked contrast to later occupations at Makala Kataa. The careful treatment of dog mandibles in mound 119 suggests that dogs were sacrificed, a practice uncommon in Banda today but documented for other areas of northern Ghana (Apentiik 1997).

A striking feature of the wild fauna at Kuulo Kataa is the variety of species exploited. Some (lion and leopard) may have been valued for their skins, while others were probably exploited for their meat. Though many of the wild species may have been locally hunted or collected by non-dedicated hunters (tortoise, varanids, rats, porcupines, grasscutter, giant rat), a number of the more formidable (hyena, lion, leopard, hippo, warthog) or less accessible (e.g., monkeys) likely represent the prey of skilled hunters. Yet the diversity of the Kuulo Kataa faunal assemblage appears to be a function of sample size; the larger a sample, the more likely it is that rare taxa will be included. Based on an analysis of diversity measures, the taxon richness (number of taxa) of the Kuulo fauna falls within expected limits given sample size,

although it is less evenly distributed (based on evenness measures; Kintigh 1992) across those taxa than expected for sample size (Stahl 1999a:33–35). This unevenness is accounted for by large quantities of several taxa – turtle/tortoise; size 2–3 bovids (sheep/goat size); and canids, most of which are probably domestic dog. These taxa are represented by durable bone – fragments of turtle/tortoise carapace and dense dog mandibles, for example – that are more likely to survive than less dense bone. Thus we cannot read this pattern as a direct reflection of the activities of Kuulo Kataa villagers; nonetheless, the predominance of turtle/tortoise and dog contrasts with patterns at Makala Kataa (Chapters 6 and 7), suggesting that cultural as well as taphonomic variables contributed to this pattern.

In sum, we can suggest that the inhabitants of Kuulo Kataa used multiple strategies to exploit a variety of fauna. It seems likely that the importance of domestic animals is masked by fragmentation, and the importance of dog is perhaps exaggerated because is it represented primarily by durable mandible fragments; nonetheless, the large quantity of butchered dog stands in striking contrast to the later assemblages at Early and Late Makala, and hints of their ritual connotation suggest a discontinuity in belief systems with later occupations where dogs are uncommon. Hunting, trapping, and collecting played an important role in the Kuulo economy as well. The range of taxa suggests diverse hunting strategies: many of the smaller, slower species and those attracted to clearings may have been the result of casual hunting, trapping, and collecting activities associated with other tasks (e.g., farming). Other taxa probably represent the product of devoted hunting/fishing by skilled people. In an era before firearms, the presence of large, dangerous, or inaccessible animals like crocodile, baboon, various monkeys, hyena, lion, leopard, hippopotamus, and warthog suggest considerable skill that was probably not evenly distributed among individuals, although cooperative hunting or scavenging remain possibilities. The presence of large fish whose nearest source is the Volta River suggests devoted fishing, and Kuulo inhabitants may have accessed these fish through regional exchange. Finally, the recovery of two horse/ass bones provides a tantalizing glimpse into the savanna connections of Kuulo Kataa (see below).

As villagers at Kuulo Kataa pursued the daily routines that sustained themselves and their families, inhabitants of West Africa's coastal regions were coming into direct contact with Portuguese, and later Dutch, French, and English traders. The apparent material focus of early trade – gold, cloth, and later humans – had little direct impact on interior West Africans early in the Atlantic trade; but as in other world areas, new crops were among the first imports to reshape the lives and livelihoods of West African peoples. Archaeologists have shown remarkably little interest in the history of New World crops in Africa, a disinterest shaped by their focus on the problem of origins and the primacy of African domesticates (Chapter 1). Alpern is one of the few historians who has systematically explored the history of New World crops in Africa. According to him (Alpern 1992:25, 30), New World maize (*Zea mays*) was known on the Gold Coast by 1555, while tobacco, another New World import, was recorded in Timbuktu as early as the 1590s, and along the West African coast by the 1600s. Cassava (manioc; *Manihot esculenta*) was a later introduction,

reaching the Gold Coast early in the eighteenth century (Alpern 1992:26). Its diffusion was dependent on a knowledge of processing techniques that made the crop digestible. The Ghanaian historian Kwame Dickson (1964) suggested that maize remained a supplementary crop in coastal areas around 1700. Within a hundred years, it had become "a major element in the agricultural landscape in 1800" as a result of its use as a war ration, being more durable and portable than yams or plantains (Dickson 1964:26). European observers noted maize in Asante in 1818, and Dickson (1964:24) suggests that the Asante learned of its advantages during the Asante–Fante wars of 1806.

Archaeological evidence is one of the few means that we have to address the timing and impact of New World crops on African cuisines. Although root crops like cassava leave few durable traces, maize kernels and cob fragments may survive in archaeological contexts if carbonized. At Kuulo Kataa we systematically collected soil samples for manual water flotation, a procedure that allows small pieces of carbonized plant material to be recovered. Sorting and analyzing of flotation samples is a time-consuming process not yet completed for the Kuulo samples; but another line of evidence confirms the presence of maize at the site. Phytolith analysis of soil samples from Kuulo Kataa demonstrated the presence of maize cob body and leaf phytoliths throughout the stratigraphic sequence in house mound 118 (Stahl 1999a:35–36). Associated thermoluminescence dates range from 1625–1725, 1535–1655, and 1555–1675 at two sigma. Calibrated radiocarbon dates on these deposits are somewhat earlier, but overlap the TL dates at two sigma (cal AD 1395–1505, 1595–1620; cal AD 1420–1650; and cal AD 1435–1650). While I would not take the early range of calibrated radiocarbon dates to support a pre-Columbian diffusion of maize (cf. Jeffreys 1963), maize phytoliths are present in contexts dated to the sixteenth–seventeenth century, well before the eighteenth-century Asante military campaigns to which Dickson (1964) attributed its diffusion. Perhaps, as he observed, the storability and portability of maize made it an attractive staple, but first for traders rather than warriors (Austen 1987:16). The important question of which variety(ies) of maize was present remains (see Miracle [1963]).

Maize thus represented the thin edge of the Atlantic trade. This New World domesticate was valued as a durable and portable staple on Atlantic voyages. Although introduced to coastal West Africa as a crop to provision the ships that carried enslaved Africans to the horrors of New World plantations, it was rapidly adopted by African agriculturalists well beyond the frontiers of European contact. It may have remained a novelty for the inhabitants of Kuulo Kataa, but its presence attests a process of experimentation that began as early as the sixteenth century. At this point we are unable to say with certainty what mix of crops was grown by Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants. Based on contemporary analogues, both yams and sorghum may have been grown, along with a variety of vegetables and condiments. Yams are unquestionably the preferred food in the area today, but the harvest cannot sustain people for the entire year. Maize and cassava are important staples during the hungry months of the rainy season before the yam harvest. Sorghum, a marginal crop in the area today, may have played this role in the past. Sorghum is today used primarily to brew *pito*, a local

beer brewed primarily by the wives of northern immigrants who have come to Banda in search of waged farm labor or as civil servants. The plethora of globular jars with interior pitting at Kuulo Kataa hints that some grain was consumed as beer. And phytolith data suggest that the nutritional ecology of local peoples was already being reshaped by Atlantic connections, despite the fact that Kuulo Kataa's subcontinental connections were framed primarily by the Niger River.

Disposing of the dead The body of the deceased plays a relatively minor role in contemporary funerary practices of Banda peoples (Chapter 3; cf. Arhin 1994; Manuh 1995). Bodies are buried quickly, within a day of death, and without elaborate ceremony. Thus, the disposition of the body is not at the center of funerary practices today. Judging from contemporary practice, the remains of the deceased in archaeological contexts inform on the disposition of the body but probably tell us little about funeral practices.

The few chance exposures of human remains that we encountered at Kuulo Kataa were barely exposed and rapidly reburied (above). Human interments were found in three of the four mounds that we sampled (118, 119, and 138). Two burials were encountered in house mound 118; one was relatively shallow, only about 30 cm below the ground surface (unit 66W 6N). There was no clear burial pit and the articulated human bone was associated with pottery sherds and animal bones that characterized the midden-like upper levels of the mound. The body was interred on its left side with the top of the head oriented to the southeast and the face looking southwest. This shallow interment occurred well above the floor levels of adjacent units (e.g., 62W 4N and 64W 4N), and thus postdated abandonment of the mound 118 structures. The second burial in mound 118 was 125 cm below the ground surface and appeared as disarticulated lower limb elements interred in a pit feature filled with an ashy matrix. An immature left tibia and the distal end of a femur were minimally exposed. The pit was superimposed by a small corner of laterite gravel, probably the remains of a packed gravel floor that extended into an adjacent unexcavated unit. In this case, then, the human remains were interred in a pit overlaid by a floor that occurred at approximately the same depth as the more fully exposed floors in units 62W 4N and 64W 4N.

A single burial was encountered in mound 119, presumably formed by the collapse of a house. The mound was disturbed by termite activity. The burial occurred roughly 60 cm below the ground surface though the outlines of a burial pit could not be discerned. Here a young child less than two years old (based on dental eruption) was interred on its left side with the top of the head oriented to the southeast. Another burial of an immature individual characterized by unfused epiphyses was encountered in mound 138, the same mound where a metallurgical feature was excavated. It occurred in an oval pit (c. 75 x 50 cm) dug into the surrounding laterite gravel. This burial was minimally exposed; judging from its lower limbs, this individual too was buried with the top of the head oriented toward the southeast.

While we can say little based on the small sample of minimally exposed burials, several characteristics stand out. Of the three articulated burials, all appear to have

been interred with the top of the head oriented to the southeast, and in two cases with the body resting on the left side, the face looking southwest. Although we cannot necessarily associate the interments with the primary occupation of the house mound, it is clear that burials occurred within the confines of the village. Houses were sometimes built over the top of burials, while other burials were dug into abandoned house mounds. Three of the burials were dug into relatively soft substrate, though one burial pit extended more than 50 cm into the hard laterite substrate that underlies the site. But perhaps most striking is that three of the four individuals interred in these mounds were immature, one a young child. The unfused epiphyses of the lower limbs of burials in mounds 118 and 138 suggests individuals less than 18 years of age (Krogman 1962:28–51). The preponderance of immature individuals in this small sample raises questions of health and demography, especially in the case of the two subadults, an age category that we expect to see underrepresented in mortalities. While statistically these human residues tell us little about demographic processes, they are cogent reminders of the lived experience of Kuulo's inhabitants – a mother losing a young, possibly still nursing or recently weaned child; a family losing pubescent girls or boys on the brink of social adulthood. Each was interred within the village, though their lives and deaths were celebrated and mourned in ways that we can only imagine.

The productive activities that shaped the rhythms of daily life – and death – at Kuulo Kataa provided the canvas for the immediate social fields of Kuulo villagers. Though we cannot model them precisely at this distant time, we can assume that these practices shaped relations of gender and generation in a daily context. We cannot say whether men and women cooperated in the production of iron, pottery, and foodstuffs, or whether these were taken as separate gendered spheres. But we do have hints that at least one of the productive practices that was historically bound up in household reproduction was *not* in place at Kuulo Kataa. The virtual absence of spindle whorls suggests that textile production was not a household activity at Kuulo Kataa, and that cloth in this period was an object of distinction (Bourdieu 1984; below) that circulated in the broader social fields in which villagers at Kuulo Kataa were enmeshed.

Market activity and subcontinental exchange

Historical and archaeological sources attest Begho's importance as a transit market linking Middle Niger and forest trade (Chapter 4). Although Kuulo elders do not mention Begho in their oral traditions, they identify a large area devoid of mounds in the center of Kuulo Kataa as a market. In a fragmentary account, they linked the market to Wurache, who was confronted one day by a man who wanted to trade. They agreed on a spot where trade could take place, and for some time the man returned each Sumbɔɔ (day in the six-day cycle; Table 3.1), accompanied by other traders who brought cloth to trade for local foodstuffs. Kuulo elders traced the demise of the market to Nafana efforts to control trade. We have not as yet excavated in this area, and have no basis for linking the so-called market with any one of the several periods of occupation at Kuulo Kataa. Yet our excavations elsewhere on the site attest that early residents of Kuulo Kataa participated in both regional and long-distance exchange.

Our working hypothesis is that villagers at Kuulo Kataa produced pottery and iron in excess of their needs, and presumably exchanged these goods for resources that were not locally available (e.g., Volta fish). Ivory too appears to have been worked on the site. Yet cloth does not appear to have been produced on site. If Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants consumed cloth, they may have accessed it through exchange of locally produced pottery and iron; however, woven textiles may at this point have been a luxury good, not consumed by all. Bark cloth, still produced in the Begho area into the 1970s (Posnansky 1984a:151), may have been more widely used than woven textiles. The absence of spindle whorls at Kuulo Kataa suggests that cloth production was not the household-based activity that it was to become in later periods, suggesting that ethnographic models that posit an important role for textile production in household reproduction are inadequate for this period.

Yet the social fields of Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants extended beyond the regional exchange through which they may have accessed supplemental foodstuffs and regionally produced luxury goods. A range of exotic goods attest that villagers were linked to broader subcontinental exchange, whether directly or through intermediaries at larger town sites like Begho or Old Bima. A small number (NISP = 10) of marine shells (ark, oyster, and turret) attest coastal connections, more than 360 km distant. Objects made from copper alloys (brass/bronze) suggest Niger connections, for there are no native sources of copper in this region. Most of the brass/bronze objects from Kuulo Kataa were items of personal adornment: simple finger rings (n = 5) and earrings (n = 2), as well as a more elaborate finger ring composed of a thin wire, about the thickness of a coat hanger, folded back and forth to create an undulating design (Fig. 5.10). Other brass/bronze objects included a piece of thin wire, a pendant fragment, a bracelet fragment, a small round bell, and a 15 cm-long thin tube created by rolling a thin sheet of brass/bronze. Many of the ornaments at Kuulo Kataa were recovered from overburden atop the remains of collapsed structures and cannot be directly associated with the occupation of houses. Nonetheless, the Kuulo data minimally suggest that finished objects moved beyond the bounds of metropolitan Begho, or alternatively, that settlements like Kuulo Kataa participated directly in the trade, bypassing centers like Begho.

The small sample of imported glass beads (n = 5) recovered from Kuulo Kataa probably also arrived at the site through Niger connections. These few beads pale in comparison to the number of beads reported from Begho: 372 from the B1 site; 57 from the Dwinfuor sites; while other quarters (e.g., B2) yielded very few (Crossland 1976a:87; Posnansky 1979:29). Three of the Kuulo beads were monochrome drawn glass (two blue and one green), while another drawn glass bead, red in color, had inlays of brown and white. A wire-wound bead had inlaid eyes of blue and white on a blue core, a type that may be Islamic in origin (Caton 1997:63). Again, we cannot say whether Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants accessed these exotic ornaments directly, or through intermediaries at larger town sites. But however they arrived, these beads, along with ornaments made from imported copper alloys, speak to changing practices of taste that inscribed subcontinental exchange on the local bodies they adorned (below).

Gold was an object of desire in the trans-Saharan trade that is known to have passed through the transit market at Begho. Although gold reserves exist in the Banda hills, prospectors in the colonial and postcolonial period were repeatedly disappointed by their depth and concentration, deemed insufficient to merit commercial mining. Shallow pits in the hills and narrow valleys attest small-scale mining of unknown age. While gold may have been locally prospected, most of the gold that passed through Begho probably derived from Akan gold fields to the south (Wilks 1982a). The Akan and their neighbors historically used a variety of objects to weigh the gold dust that was a standard of exchange in the Akan world: seeds; modified potsherds; stones, especially white quartz pebbles (Garrard 1980:1, 29–30, 180); as well as the brass weights that are today the focus of a brisk antiquities trade. Weights took a variety of forms – most were cast in imported brass, although examples in iron, lead pewter, copper, and European bronze are known (Garrard 1980:2). Many were figurative, but geometric forms were also common.

Archaeological evidence of Begho's involvement in the gold trade was limited to a small collection of modified, rounded sherds that correspond, according to Garrard (1980:21–22, 29, 42, 221), to the North African *mitkal* and *uqiya* weight standards. These standards had eroded by the end of the nineteenth century as the gold trade diminished in importance. A French captain visiting Kong, northwest of Banda, reported old men using "odd scraps of copper, old lumps of wax, pieces of locks, and cows' teeth, whose weight was known only to the owner" (Garrard 1980:23). Nonetheless, Garrard argued that whole rounded sherds from three sites (Begho, n = 10; New Buipe, n = 5; and Amuowi, n = 13) represent fractions of the 27g North African trade standard (¼, ½, and ¾), leading him to suspect that they, along with more abundant fragmentary rounded sherds, served as gold weights. Kuulo Kataa too yielded a number of rounded sherds (n = 40), including the largest sample of whole rounded sherds (n = 22) from any site to date. But unlike the small samples from Begho, New Buipe, and Amuowi, these do not conform well to the trade ounce intervals adduced by Garrard; more than half of the Kuulo sherds were distributed between Garrard's ¼, ½, and ¾ standards (Stahl 1999a:38–40). This suggests either greater variation in the standards than recognized by Garrard, or, perhaps more likely, that rounded sherds were used for purposes other than as weights.

Yet Kuulo Kataa has yielded firm evidence of involvement in the gold trade. A single figurative brass gold weight recovered from excavations in mound 118, 30–40 cm below the ground surface, speaks to the involvement of Kuulo Kataa's inhabitants in the gold trade (Plate 9). This is one among a small number of brass gold weights that have been recovered from archaeological contexts. The meager collection of provenienced weights includes nine from nineteenth-century contexts at Elmina (DeCorse 1989:181–184), and several from Asantemanso in the Asante heartland (Brian Vivian, personal communication, 1996). The Elmina and Asantemanso weights are geometric (Garrard 1980), making the weight from Kuulo Kataa the only figurative weight recovered to date. The weight is virtually complete – a small thin corner of the weight is missing. The object (weighing 13.15 grams) depicts two seated figures with triangular-shaped heads and bulging eyes, reminis-

Plate 9. Figurative gold weight recovered from mound 118, unit 62W 4N, level 3, Kuulo Kataa, 1995. Weight is 3.3 cm in length and weighs 13.15g. Photo by D. Tuttle, 2000

cent of a praying mantis. The arms and legs are long and bent. The figures are joined at the hips. A similar figure is illustrated in Hutchinson (1979:86). The weight was recovered from deposits 30–40 cm above contexts dated by TL and radiocarbon dates to the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries (Stahl 1999a) and is thus the oldest figurative weight recovered from secure provenience to date.

A small collection of fragmented clay smoking pipes (n = 21) also attests subcontinental connections (Fig. 5.9). Although the pipes are presumed to have been locally

made, they, like the earliest smoking pipes throughout West Africa, are imitations of native New World pipes that were introduced to Africa alongside New World tobacco (Ozanne 1969; Philips 1983; Shaw 1960). We cannot assume that tobacco was the only substance smoked (Lebeuf 1962); yet the taste for tobacco spread rapidly. Tobacco was in Europe by the mid-sixteenth century, in Timbuktu as early as the 1590s, and along the West African coast by the 1600s (Alpern 1992:30). Tobacco may thus have spread to the northern forest margin from the coast, or from the Middle Niger. Smoking pipes were common at Begho (n = 481 fragments), a site with strong connections to the Middle Niger. Though highly variable in style and shape, Afeku (1976) suggested that the earliest examples at Begho were locally produced imitations of Malian pipes. Pipe fragments were concentrated in the Dwinfuor (artisans') quarter (n = 202), while the Brong quarter yielded only half as many specimens (n = 102) and the Kramo (or Muslim) quarter a mere fraction of the total sample (n = 38; Afeku 1976:37). It is hard to interpret these numbers without knowing the volume of deposit excavated at different areas of Begho, but they suggest that smoking was a practice enmeshed in social distinction.

Archaeological studies of smoking pipes have focused on temporal and stylistic issues, with insufficient attention to smoking as a social practice (cf. Vivian 1998). The small number of pipes at Kuulo Kataa suggests that smoking was not a widespread practice at this point – that its meanings and associations were being actively negotiated. If tobacco was imported rather than locally cultivated, we can imagine that its consumption was bound up in practices of distinction. The small sample of pipes is quite diverse, as is the much larger sample of pipes from Begho. Their diversity suggests a degree of individuation in this artifact class that is not shared by other ceramic media, a diversity that presumably communicated distinctions among those who smoked them. Again, the bodily practice of smoking – presumably of tobacco – inscribed subcontinental connections on local bodies, though their users were probably unaware of the newly emerging Atlantic world from which these innovations derived – one that was to impinge more directly on the social fields of their descendants in the centuries to come.

A question of taste

The material remains unearthed at Kuulo Kataa hint at a dynamics of "taste" that was intimately bound up in the larger social fields that conditioned daily life of the site's inhabitants. We need to move beyond the observation that residents at the site consumed new material forms of exotic origin or inspiration (e.g., glass beads, copper alloys, pipes, maize, and, plausibly, tobacco), to examine the potential social and political-economic consequences of that consumption and how they framed further "colonial entanglements" (Dietler 1990, 1998; Thomas 1991). Here archaeologists might draw inspiration from the emerging concern with material culture among historical anthropologists, and their efforts to understand its role in the making of "lived worlds." But as I have suggested in Chapter 2, we should be cautious about emulating the concerns of historical anthropologists. The questions framed in one context with respect to particular forms of evidence may be disabling

in another, and we need to be cautious about embracing a meaning-centered approach to interpretation of contexts in which we lack the temporally proximate language-based sources that make meaning accessible. Although archaeological context can help us identify objects or patterns of objects that are *meaningful*, discerning meaning is fraught by the limitations of analogical argument outlined in Chapter 2 – meanings drawn from other times and places are projected into the past, with limited means for assessing their veracity. I have suggested that "taste" may be more accessible than "meaning" as we work to gain a sense of the lived past (Chapter 2; Stahl n.d.). The objects recovered from an archaeological site like Kuulo Kataa manifest the practices of taste, and allow us to develop a sense of the "cartographies of taste" (Hebdige 1983) that shaped the recontextualization of new objects. As Thomas (1991) observed, recontextualization of objects is shaped by the "autonomous preconditions" into which the objects are received, and archaeological contexts provide the only independent insight into those preconditions. What can we learn of the contours of taste in this period when the world of Kuulo villagers was framed by its connections with Begho and the world of Niger trade?

Bourdieu's (1984) discussion of the relationship between practices of taste and practices of distinction provides a springboard from which to consider the dynamics of taste at Kuulo Kataa. Bourdieu observed that statistical summaries (in the case of Kuulo Kataa, of imports) capture and freeze a moment in the social, symbolic struggles over taste, distinction, goods, and practices, and he urges us to avoid a "balance sheet" approach to the problem of taste. But to work with the concept of taste, we need to explore its dimensions, the variables that shape taste-making through time. Taste may be shaped by *proximity to source*. The dynamics of taste-making will be different if consumers interact directly with producers, than if they consume objects produced thousands of miles distant. Another dimension of taste is *diversity* – the homogeneity or heterogeneity of object classes and their relationship to social practices of distinction. Archaeologists are accustomed to thinking about the *quantitative* dimension, linked to rarity, in relation to goods that wield the power of distinction. And finally, *production*, whether household, specialized craft, or industrial, contributes to the dialectics of taste through time. By interrogating the Banda archaeological assemblages through the lens of taste, I hope to understand something of the politics of value in these changing political-economic circumstances (Appadurai 1986:30); whether exotic objects were used in familiar ways, thereby forging links with the past, or whether they were associated with novel practices; whether adoption of new forms was associated with a diminishing taste for local goods – in other words, to understand the consequences of Banda's changing entanglements (Thomas 1991) with broader subcontinental and intercontinental exchange.

The small sample of beads from Kuulo Kataa hints at an important difference in the dimensions of taste for locally produced compared to imported glass beads. Beads have long been valued by West African peoples – the earliest examples of beads in Ghana are simple shell disks that litter Kintampo complex sites occupied during the middle of the second millennium bc (Davies 1980:219; Stahl 1985b:138). A portion of the beads made from marine shell speak to long-standing interregional connections

(Stahl 1993b:267). Stone beads have been recovered at Kintampo complex sites as well (Anquandah 1976). The presence of rough-outs and unmodified raw materials suggests that, although the raw materials were exotic, beads were fashioned on the sites where they have been recovered. Despite the use of non-local sources, these early bead assemblages were very homogeneous. When we look to the small bead assemblage at Kuulo Kataa, it is dominated by bone, stone, and fired clay beads. The two stone beads are white and finely polished; one is rectangular in cross-section, the other round. The single shell disk bead is also white, as are three of the four tubular bone beads. The fired ceramic beads are shades of gray to reddish brown; if decorated, they exhibit multiple dimples on the bead surface. The assemblage is thus rather homogeneous, which stands in marked contrast to the small but diverse sample of glass beads. Moreover, the bright blues, the deep red with brown and white swirls, and the emerald green of the glass beads stand in marked contrast to the stark white of the bone, shell, and stone beads and the subdued grays and browns of the fired clay beads. Though we cannot access what these contrasts meant to those whose bodies these beads adorned, the consumption of imported glass beads suggests a changing dynamic in the practices of taste – small numbers of brightly colored, diverse glass beads produced thousands of miles from the site now augmented modest quantities of subdued, homogeneous local beads. It is difficult to compare the number of imported beads recovered from Kuulo with those from Begho since we cannot compare the volume of deposit excavated. Similarly, it is difficult to interpret the variable number of beads recovered from different quarters at Begho (see above); however, the concentration of beads at some quarters, combined with their apparent paucity at others, and at Kuulo Kataa, hints that imported beads were bound up in practices of distinction that were new to the period of the Niger trade.

A changing dynamic of local taste is also witnessed in the adoption of smoking pipes. Though we lack firm evidence as yet that tobacco was smoked in these pipes (but see Chapter 6), the similarity of West African pipes to New World forms suggests that pipe style and tobacco probably diffused together. As at Begho and other early sites where smoking pipes have been recovered (Shaw 1961; Vivian 1998), the small sample of pipe fragments from Kuulo Kataa shows morphological and stylistic diversity. Archaeologists are well aware that assemblage diversity is related to sample size (Kintigh 1989); however, in this case I suspect that the small number of pipes is a factor of novelty, and their heterogeneity underscores the distinction of – perhaps even individuates (Vivian 1998) – the smoker. If tobacco was imported rather than locally cultivated, we are seeing the residues of a practice in which wealth literally went up in smoke.

More mundane, but perhaps more profound, changes in taste are hinted at by the presence of maize phytoliths at Kuulo Kataa. We can but imagine the impact of this new crop on a cuisine based largely on African crops – yams, sorghum, cowpeas, okra, bambara beans, and various pot vegetables – that were likely augmented by Asian domesticates like yam, onions, eggplant (or garden eggs), and plantain. The fluorescence of cooking pots associated with mid-second millennium bc Kintampo complex sites suggests that boiled starches and stews were long the focal point of local

cuisine. Despite the continued emphasis on starches and stews today, indigenous cuisines have been profoundly transformed by New World crops – staples like maize and manioc, as well as pot and sauce vegetables like peanuts (groundnuts), tomato, and chili pepper.[11] In the case of maize, the technology of processing (pounding or grinding) was likely transferred from indigenous grains, quite unlike the processing of manioc, which required new detoxification technologies that slowed diffusion of the crop (Stahl 1989). Maize meal is used today to prepare porridge, and – like sorghum or millet – is typically fermented, a process that improves digestibility, augments nutritional value, and inhibits spoilage (Stahl 1989:178–181). Assuming this is an ancient processing technology, fermentation too may have been transferred from existing to introduced crops.[12] But considerable experimentation both on the farm and in the kitchen is implied in the adoption of new crops, and their success is dependent on people acquiring a taste for them. Maize may have slotted easily into the repertoire – the plant resembles sorghum in its growth habit, but has the advantage of an enclosed fruit that makes it less susceptible to predation by birds. Its compact florescence and large seeds yield more grain per plant than indigenous sorghums or millets, and importantly it ripens during the hungry months between the sorghum/millet and yam harvests. We can then envision villagers at Kuulo Kataa experimenting with this new staple that had as yet unimagined demographic implications.

Despite these newly acquired tastes for objects of exotic origin or inspiration, villagers at Kuulo Kataa produced most of what they required for household reproduction on the site. Their ability to produce beyond their needs probably provided the means by which they accessed the small number of exotic goods recovered from the site – their transformation of ore to iron and clay to pots probably fed regional demand for crafts at centers like Begho and Old Bima. Through these regional connections the village was drawn into a world of taste-making beyond its boundaries; trade connections with the Middle Niger accessed a world of objects – copper alloys, cloth, beads – that contributed little or not at all to productive activities, but contributed to the politics of adornment and fueled the imaginative possibilities for practices of distinction.

Summary

Archaeological data suggest that Kuulo Kataa was a sizeable village whose inhabitants engaged in craft production: iron metallurgy certainly, probably potting and ivory-working, but probably not textile production. The people of Kuulo Kataa probably engaged in regional exchange in foodstuffs and crafts, linking the site to larger towns like Old Bima and the Hani Begho sites.

Although a full analysis of L. Smith's (1998) survey data is awaited, it is clear that sites with pottery related to the Kuulo phase occupation of Kuulo Kataa and Begho range in size from small hamlets to modest-sized villages (Kuulo Kataa) through large town sites (Old Bima, Begho). We cannot assume contemporaneity among all these sites, and a finer grained ceramic analysis may provide us with a means of assessing contemporaneity on a finer scale. Although it is clear that occupation shifted across Kuulo Kataa through time, a degree of residential stability is suggested

by the refurbishment and rebuilding of structures witnessed in mound 118. Despite the sizeable community, wild resources (i.e., fauna) played a considerable role in the diet, and New World crops had already begun to impact the subsistence practices of the site's inhabitants. Judging from the presence of smoking pipes, tobacco may have been known, and the presence of New World crops marks the beginning of a long period of experimentation that would result in considerable dependence on them. We are on less firm ground as we speculate on craft production – but the dearth of spindle whorls suggests minimal involvement in textile production. This stands in contrast to Begho. We are on firmer ground in suggesting exchange of other crafts. Hippo ivory may have been worked for exchange. Iron was produced on site, and probably in quantities that exceeded village needs. Thus, some households produced beyond their needs, while others, perhaps in both this and surrounding settlements, acquired iron implements through exchange. Judging from the remarkable density of broken pottery at this modest-sized site, it was consumed in vast quantities at Kuulo Kataa. It was probably the product of practiced specialists (though not necessarily full-time) who produced beyond their immediate needs, while most women acquired their pots through exchange, perhaps of surplus foodstuffs.

The evidence for involvement in metallurgy and potting resonates with an ethnographic model of transformer specialists,[13] an arrangement in which husbands smelt and wives pot. Such transformer groups are typically imbued with considerable ritual power, and may be charged with handling burials as well. While it might be tempting to import such a model into a distant past, using ethnographic insight to flesh out less accessible aspects of the past, we need to gain a better understanding of the recent history of these transformer groups, examining variability among them and working to assess the extent to which the phenomenon of transformer groups was shaped by the later history of West African populations.

Residents of Kuulo Kataa were also enmeshed in the subcontinental trade that has been the focus of much historical writing. Sociologically, their involvement in this trade assumes a changing politics of value as residents developed a taste for goods of exotic origin or inspiration. Ornaments made from copper alloys, a few beads, and paraphernalia associated with the gold trade attest involvement in a subcontinental trade that probably still focused on Saharan networks at this early period. We cannot say whether the site's inhabitants accessed these goods directly, or whether they obtained them through intermediaries in large towns. But several bits of evidence suggest more direct involvement – the remains of horse and the figurative gold weight are items we associate with traders. Although subcontinental links looked to the Niger, the effects of the Atlantic trade were beginning to be felt, hinted at by the presence of smoking pipes and maize phytoliths. The material signatures of long-distance trade imply a degree of security along the roads linking Begho and its hinterland with the Sudanic emporia. As we shall see, this contrasts with later periods when political-economic dislocation led to contracted trade (Chapter 7). Yet our excavations remain mute on the causes of Kuulo Kataa's demise. The large village settlements characteristic of the Kuulo phase disintegrated into smaller villages associated with Makala phase 2 pottery, and there is evidence for disruption of craft pro-

duction and trade; however, we have no evidence of site destruction or rapid aban-
donment that would signal an abrupt end to this period of village life in Banda.

The imagining of Golden Ages

For the Kuulo people who claim Kuulo Kataa as an ancestral site, the site embodies
a "Golden Age." It was a time when the Kuulo, and people with whom they express
affinity (like the Gape of Bofie), lived on the land without conflict. Friendly relations
prevailed among these autochthones. The arrival of other peoples – the Ligby, and
more particularly the Nafana – upset this mythic balance, and introduced conflict and
an unequal balance of power (of which more below). Coincidentally, though for
different reasons, postcolonial archaeologists and historians too have constructed the
period of the early Niger trade in which Kuulo Kataa was involved as a Golden Age.
For the Kuulo this distant time is marked by their singularity on the land; but for
archaeologists and historians the period fulfills two criteria of the progressive devel-
opmental model that shaped value in European visions of Africa's past: it was con-
strued as indigenous, and it was relatively early. Where colonial historiography saw
Niger trade as a byproduct of Arab contacts with the Middle Niger, archaeology in
the postcolonial period documented the deep roots of regional and interregional
trade, suggesting that North African merchants tapped into preexisting trade net-
works (McIntosh 1993; McIntosh and McIntosh 1984, 1993). Emphasis was on town
sites and the founding of early states (Anquandah 1993; Boachie-Ansah 1986; Effah-
Gyamfi 1985). Scholars celebrated the artistic and technological sophistication of
these early African civilizations – notably Begho (Anquandah 1993; Posnansky 1973,
1976a, 1987) – as a necessary corrective to an image of Africans as technologically
impoverished and culturally backward. Thus, the history of Niger trade was con-
structed in relation to a progressive developmental model which valued town sites,
complexity, and prestige goods. To some extent, these studies – understandably
enough – fell into the Trevor-Roper trap (Fuglestad 1992), working to demonstrate
that Africa's past deserved respect because it was more or less the same as Europe's.

Locally, the study of town sites and their associated societies has relied heavily,
though implicitly, on a direct historical approach in which social relations are
modeled loosely, if implicitly, on the contemporary groups that claim ancestral links
to these sites (Boachie-Ansah 1986; Effah-Gyamfi 1985; Posnansky 1979, 1987).
Scholars have varied in their willingness to speculate about the political organization
of these towns: whereas Effah-Gyamfi was confident that Bono-Manso was the
center of an early state, Posnansky was more cautious, expressing his skepticism that
Begho was the focus of a "state." Yet the literature is imbued with a sense that other
organizational features of contemporary societies are relevant to the interpretation
of these early sites – particularly principles of kinship and ethnicity. In particular,
"durable" features of Akan societies have been used to construct an image of life in
these early African towns – the importance of elders, of lineage, of hereditary privi-
lege, all viewed in functionalist, consensual terms. Relatively bounded and distinct
ethnic-linguistic groups are portrayed as cooperating in the orderly exchange of
forest products for northern goods. It is only a slight exaggeration to suggest that this

is posited as a halcyon era in which commerce flourished in the context of an orderly civilization, an era brought to a close by the rise of Asante with its clear links to the Atlantic trade.

Politically there were – and are – important reasons for sustaining such a model. Gaining respect for Africa's past on the stage of world prehistory required a countering of negative images, framed in claims to universal criteria of civilization.[14] By framing the origins of civilization in Ghana as an Akan phenomenon, these studies worked to create pride, and possibly unity, among the diverse Akan groups who populate the southern half of the country. But at the same time, they excluded other ethnic-linguistic groups, who remained invisible in Ghana's precolonial history, and effectively silenced their role in Ghanaian history. As such, these models naturalized the social and cultural dominance of the Akan by rooting it deep in Ghana's past.[15] Moreover, the emphasis on a functionalist, consensual model of society diverted attention from other aspects of complex, hierarchical societies – power, inequality, contradiction, and conflict. Power, insofar as it is present, appears as a positive force to which people defer.

Viewed from a political economy perspective, the consensual emphasis of these models minimizes differentials of power and wealth: Who within society controlled the wealth that flowed from the Niger trade? How did power and wealth differentials shape the social relations between towns, villages, and hamlets? Do the relations that historically existed among the Muslim Mande and local chiefs – the relative independence of Mande traders and their provision of spiritual power (through divination and preparation of protective amulets) in times of crisis (Levtzion 1968) – provide an adequate model of their interrelations early in the period of the Niger trade? Or should we imagine these relations as ones that were actively negotiated, not yet solidified in their historic form in which they were captured/concretized in documentary sources? Ekeh (1990) offers a provocative argument that even historically documented (concretized) kinship relations and lineage structures cannot be assumed to be enduring features of African societies (Chapter 2). Documents attest that captives were consumed by the Niger trade, and imply that a demand for captives framed the social relations within and between groups from an early period. Ekeh's (1990) perspective introduces an element of dynamism and negotiation into an aspect of social structure perceived as relatively fixed.

At present, our limited excavations at Kuulo Kataa do not allow robust speculation on these sorts of issues. In some cases, these questions are probably unanswerable based on the material evidence of archaeology. The social relations of kinship in particular are resistant to archaeological inquiry (e.g., Deetz 1970; Longacre 1964). Yet *archaeology is no more (and perhaps less) disadvantaged than anthropology and history*, which rely on analogical, often structural models in imagining a deeper precolonial past. One of the most powerful tools that archaeology has to offer is a comparative approach to the material expressions of extinct societies, particularly in cases where we discern differences that may alert us to discontinuities. While kinship may be inaccessible, what of proxy measures, such as aspects of production that historically were structured by kinship relations? A tantalizing example is that of textile production,

which historically was household-based, linking men and women through their recip-
rocal labor (Stahl and Cruz 1998). The virtual absence of spindle whorls at Kuulo
Kataa, compared to their apparent abundance at Begho, suggests that the historic
model does not apply. Later sites yielded spindle whorls in quantities consistent with
household production (Chapters 6 and 7). What then might this change in the
material record signal? While it may simply represent a sampling bias, it opens imag-
inative possibilities about the nature of household production, leading us to ask how
former prestige items may have become embedded in household reproduction. What
new dynamics emerged when the production of tools required for household repro-
duction (iron, pottery) were transferred from the household and village to outside the
settlement (as at Makala Kataa, Chapter 6)? What do differences in site size and the
involvement of their residents in production and consumption reveal about regional
differences in wealth, and presumably power? How were these differences inscribed
both in and by taste-making and practices of distinction? As our work at Kuulo Kataa
and neighboring sites proceeds, it is these questions that we will pursue. There are
hints that wealth, and presumably power, differentials shaped the social landscape of
Banda peoples in the period of Begho. Access to locally produced (e.g., woven tex-
tiles) and imported prestige goods (beads, copper alloys) may vary between sites,
though it is significant that beads, copper alloys, and evidence of direct involvement
in the gold trade are present even at moderate-sized village sites like Kuulo Kataa.

The resolution of our understanding of life at early sites like Kuulo Kataa will
never reach that which can be achieved for later periods where the overlapping
sources of history, anthropology, and archaeology can be brought to bear in supple-
mental fashion on interpretation. Yet the material remains of past societies provide
powerful, if partial, insights into the lived past. While we construct that past in rela-
tion to current preoccupations – today an interest in wealth, power, and inequality,
twenty years ago a concern with the orderly functioning of indigenous complex soci-
eties – the material evidence of archaeology shapes and constrains those imaginings
(Wylie 1992:25–29). Importantly, some of that constraint is in the direction of
differences that, when interrogated and not swept under the carpet of structural
coherence, help us retrieve a dynamism in African history, one first silenced by the
Hegelian image of Africa as outside history (Holl 1995:187–188), and more recently,
by an emphasis on structural coherence thought to place limits on endogenous
change until the disruptions of European contact in the last century or two.

6

The changing social fields of Banda villagers c. 1725–1825

This chapter takes up the story of Banda life between c. 1725 and 1825. It opens in the waning years of Britain's "Old Empire," fifty years before American colonists declared their independence in a movement shaped by their experience of the "baubles of Britain" (Breen 1988). It encompasses the peak of the slave trade, the Napoleonic wars, and the beginnings of the industrial revolution. Several European nations had by now established trade forts along the Gold Coast, and Asante aggressively expanded into its northern hinterlands. Asante's sacking of Begho (1722–23) marked the emergence of a new political-economic order in the Volta basin, one that reshaped the social fields of Banda villagers. Immigrants and autochthones forged a new social order in the power vacuum created by Begho's decline. I begin by considering ethnogenesis and settlement in this frontier setting. I then draw on evidence from the archaeological site of Makala Kataa to envision how trade, production, and consumption were reshaped by these changing political-economic circumstances.

The end of a "Golden Age"
Kuulo traditions suggest that their ascendancy on the land was diminished by the arrival of the Ligby and the immigrant Nafana. Kuulo history recounts how Wurache, the Kuulo ancestress, was approached by a Mande trader who wanted to trade cloth for foodstuffs (Chapter 5). Other versions suggest that Muslims traveling through the area decided to stay after Wurache settled a quarrel among them (Stahl and Anane 1989:19). But Kuulo and Nafana histories provide a more robust account of the Nafana immigration. Though the Nafana hunter, Gbaha, and the Kuulo ancestress, Wurache, are central figures in both, accounts differ in detail and emphasis. According to the Kuulo, Gbaha arrived one day, saying that he was a Nafana emissary from Kakala. He begged fire from Wurache. She obliged and he went away. Three days later Gbaha returned to Wurache's settlement while everyone was away. He took fire, extinguished her hearth, and left. When Wurache returned and discovered her cold hearth, she wept for she had no fire on which to cook. God sent a messenger to ask why she wept. Wurache told her story and the messenger provided a chain that carried her to the sky. She was given fire and returned to earth. Some time later Gbaha returned to Wurache's settlement to fetch fire again. Wurache asked if he had put out her fire, and he admitted that he had. Wurache allowed him to take more fire, but cursed him by saying "you will never be out of trouble" (*ma kala la* in Nafaanra), which became shortened to "Makala," the name of Gbaha's village. Subsequently, cordial relations prevailed between Wurache and Gbaha's people, and

Wurache gave her daughter, Akosua Yeli, to Gbaha in marriage. As the population of Nafanas grew from continued immigration, Wurache and the leader of the Nafanas met to decide positions of authority. Because Wurache was a woman and could not, therefore, be chief, it was agreed that the Nafana leader would be chief, though Wurache retained ownership of the land (Stahl and Anane 1989:19).

This Kuulo version of the encounter between Wurache and the Nafana leader was the focus of controversy when the "blue book" family histories were delivered in 1989 (Chapter 3). The paramount chief and his advisers took measures to silence it. Though they agreed that Wurache had primacy on the land, Nafana traditions present a different view of the encounter. Nafana elders dispute the claim that Wurache deferred the position of chief to the Nafana, for the Nafana were chiefs before coming to Banda. They also dispute the Kuulo claim to have played a role in the installation rites of the chief. The most detailed version of the Gbaha story among the Nafana was provided by elders of Makala village (Gbaha Katoo), descendants of Gbaha (Stahl and Anane 1989:7). Gbaha came from Kakala where the Nafana were embroiled in a dispute over the treatment of their dead chief's wife by the Jimini people (see Ameyaw [1965]). The land around Kakala was heavily populated, and it took the Nafana a long time to find open land. Gbaha (Gbahe) was a great hunter, and he found an uninhabited place east of the Banda hills. He returned home and led his people east of the Banda hills, where they settled at Makala. Only then did they encounter a woman living on her own who spoke a different language (Dumpo/Kuulo). They told her to come and live with them, but she refused. Gbaha sent men to put out her fire. Unable to cook, she was forced to live in Makala where she became a wife of Gbaha.

Though they differ in emphasis and detail, these oral histories work to account for the contemporary ethnic-linguistic complexity of Banda. While it is impossible to anchor them in time, they capture a period of uncertainty when power relations were being renegotiated and solidified in the wake of population movement. These varying histories collapse and epitomize what was surely a complex process of negotiation between groups, and suggest processes characteristic of Kopytoff's (1987) internal African frontier – a society constructed from the "bits and pieces" of neighboring societies, with intensely negotiated outcomes. Claims of autochthones like the Kuulo and Gape are linked to archaeological sites occupied during Begho's ascendancy (Kuulo Kataa and Old Bima), and presumably these stories took on new meaning as the Banda area became a refuge for individuals or groups breaking away from their societies of origin. Informed by oral history, we can imagine a small group of Nafaanra-speaking people (cf. Bravmann 1972:160) settling in this frontier zone created by the waning of Begho in areas that did not as yet owe homage to the emerging states around them.

Thus it seems likely that these epitomizing stories refer to social processes that ensued in the wake of Begho's decline. Asante's aggressive forays into its northern hinterlands threatened regional security. In 1711–12, Asante captured Ahwene Koko, capital of Wenchi (Wankyi); in 1722–23, Bono Manso (later Takyiman/Techiman) fell to Asante, and Begho was reportedly sacked. Though Begho and its environs

were not abandoned (Garrard 1980:45–46; Posnansky 1987), oral sources give an overwhelming impression of population dispersal. Traders fled westward, many settling in Bonduku; artisans moved (forcibly or not) to Kumase, the Asante capital. Though Nafana traditions make no reference to Begho, other local histories stress the role of its decline in the dispersal of Mande-speaking Ligby people (Ameyaw 1965; Fell 1913; Goody 1964, 1965; Levtzion 1968:11). We know little about Begho's political organization, but the breakup of its mercantile economy surely left a political-economic vacuum in this part of the Volta basin.

The *Kitāb Ghanjā* or Gonja Chronicles suggest that the polity later known to Europeans as Banda existed by 1751. First compiled around 1751 (Wilks 1966:27), seven surviving manuscripts of these local chronicles have been compared and evaluated by Wilks, Levtzion, and Haight (1986). Banda was known to Juula (Jula) peoples as Fulla (Fula), and the Gonja Chronicles note the death of the Fughlā king SHYTAQ (Sie Taki) in July 1751. Both Goody (1965:13, footnote p. 89) and Wilks et al. (1986:98, 141) take this to be a reference to the Banda chief Sielɔngɔ (Table 3.5). The Gonja Chronicles suggest that SHYTAQ reigned for about thirty years before his death in 1751, implying that the Banda polity existed as early as 1720, which is consistent with the notion that it took root in the uncertain conditions of Begho's demise.

Banda traditions of ethnogenesis epitomize the negotiated outcomes of this period of considerable change. The historical claims of different groups are in some senses complementary, but contain a supplemental element in that the competing claims of their historical narratives (Trouillot's [1995] historicity 1) destabilize one another, making it impossible to sort out what "really happened" (historicity 2). Yet thematic consistencies remain. Kuulo stories represent the Nafana as usurpers of resources (stealing fire, wanting land), but accept the notion that the Nafana had rights to political power. Yet Kuulo people retained power of the land embodied in the *kahole wura* or earth priest, a position they held until their unsuccessful land claim against the Nafana (Chapter 3). The Ligby remained outside formal positions of power, yet, according to traditions, offered spiritual and monetary support to the Nafana chief when called upon. But to reiterate a point made in Chapter 2, we need to avoid the temptation in an upstreaming exercise to assume that (1) our contemporary cast of ethnic groups adequately mirrors past diversity, or (2) that the content associated with these ethnic labels remains unchanged. Nafana traditions are full of references to movement – successive abandonment and reoccupation of sites and indeed the entire area (below). We do not know whether all Banda peoples abandoned their settlements and accompanied the chief on his sojourns in Buna, Longoro, and elsewhere (Ameyaw 1965), or whether groups of people remained behind. Neither do we know whether the area was reoccupied by groups not found in Banda today (i.e., Gyaman, Bono). Agbodeka (1971:164) reported that, during 1893 hostilities between Nkoranza and Asante, the entire Nkoranza population moved into the Banda hills for safety, where they suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Asante. Thus we cannot assume a connection between settlement traces in Banda and the peoples associated with the contemporary Banda chieftaincy. To reiterate, we need

to maintain an analytical distinction between present-day Banda peoples and the geographic area today known as Banda.

The Banda polity

Evidence adduced from the *Kitāb Ghanjā* suggests that the Banda polity took root in the political-economic vacuum created by Begho's demise during the 1720s. How might we model the structure of this apparently multiethnic chieftaincy, especially in it nascent form? As Amselle (1993) argued, we might expect such societies to be hybrid systems characterized by *logiques métisses* (Chapter 1). Today there are extensive similarities between the structure of the Banda chieftaincy and its Akan counterparts. Bravmann (1972) argued that Asante engaged in a deliberate policy of "Akanization" (also Fraser [1972]), signaled by gifts of regalia to the Banda Nafana: a stool during the reign of the Banda chief Sielɔngɔ (Table 3.5); a gold-handled state sword as a gift from Asantehene Osei Bonsu to the Banda chief Habaa for service in a war against Gonja; and a palanquin, six gold-hilted state swords, and a set of arm bangles from Asantehene Osei Bonsu to Banda chief Wulodwo for service in the Fante war, as well as a white stool to the Banda queen mother for spiritual assistance (Bravmann 1972:163–164, Figs. 9.2, 9.3; also Ameyaw [1965]). Bravmann (1972:164) believed that this signaled wider patterns of cultural borrowing, particularly of rituals like the New Yam Festival and the installation ceremony of the paramount chief. He surmised that the Banda chieftaincy adopted Akan military titles at an early period so that "by 1750, when Sielongo died, a number of Akan features had already become fully assimilated into the context of politics – and art – in the Banda Nafana state" (Bravmann 1972:162).

Yet we must be careful in an upstreaming exercise to avoid treating configurations of ethnographic traits and practices as packages, the presence of one element automatically implying the presence of all others. I have argued (Stahl 1991:263) that the process of Akanization proceeded more gradually, and the historic gifts of regalia were not necessarily linked to adoption of an Akan political structure. The *detailed* correspondence with an Akan structure arose from colonial efforts to align Banda political practice with an Asante model (Chapter 3).

What, then, can we glean from documentary sources about the organization of an earlier Banda chieftaincy? The first written description of a Banda chief appears in Dupuis' (1966) account of his 1820 visit to Kumase, almost four decades after Asante had been incorporated into the Asante confederacy (below). Dupuis recounted that

> The king, or tributary chief of Banna, a monarch subordinate to the sovereign of Ashantee, happened to be at this time at Coomassy, and was stationed at no great distance from his liege lord. His retinue was splendid and numerous, comprising, besides his own people, several moslems of inferior rank, and their slaves. The vassal prince was simply attired in an African cloth, decorated with amulets, &c. sheathed in gold and the skins of beasts. Gold rings ornamented his fingers and toes, and little fillets of gold

and aggry beads encircled the thick parts of each arm . . . A warlike band, who guarded the person of this tributary, were martially habited in the skins of beasts, chiefly the hides of leopards, and panthers; their weapons were bows and poisoned arrows, javelins, guns, sabres, clubs and case-knives. Many were in a state of nudity, excepting the shim or girdle, three or four inches wide, that passes between the thighs.
(Dupuis 1966:76–77)

According to Dupuis (1966:139), the Banda chief was referred to as Ahen ("king"), and was in Kumase to gain his share of the war spoils from the campaign against Adinkra of Gyaman. Based on intelligence from Muslim residents of Kumase, Dupuis (1966:xxxviii) estimated the size of the Banda force in the Gyaman campaign at between 20,000 and 25,000 men "armed with tomahawks, lances, knives, javelins and bows and arrows."

Dupuis' account suggests that Banda's paramount ruler was able to mobilize a large army (though his estimate is perhaps exaggerated), armed principally with local weapons. Though Dupuis noted that members of the Banda contingent wielded guns, mention of guns is conspicuously absent from the intelligence he gathered regarding Banda forces in the Gyaman war. This is consistent with Arhin's (1987:54–55) claim that Asante carefully controlled the flow of firearms into its northern hinterland. It is unlikely that Banda had a standing army, and, based on the genealogies of past stool holders, it also seems unlikely that Banda had adopted the Akan system of military organization at this time (Table 3.4). Thus the formal organization of the chieftaincy probably differed in the nineteenth century, though its earlier structure remains unclear.

If we agree that the Akan model of chieftaincy was imposed in detail by the British to facilitate indirect rule of Asante's former provinces, how can we model the organization of the Banda chieftaincy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? In this case, upstreaming points to *dissimilarities* between Banda and Akan chieftaincies. With the exception of Gyaman (Agyeman 1966:38; Terray 1977), the paramount stools of Akan chieftaincies *do not* rotate among families; however, oral history suggests that a rotational principle has long governed succession to office in Banda. That principle stood at the center of the contentious chieftaincy dispute described in Chapter 3. Installation of a chief from Sielɔngɔ Katoo in 1985 violated the rotational principle that had prevailed in the selection of chiefs over the last century and probably more (Table 3.5). Though Petele was the first chief from the Kabruno house, this does not mark the beginning of the rotational principle. Rather, family histories suggest that several families were formerly included in the stool rotation. Gangoolo Katoo, from Samwa village, identify themselves as descendants of Nafana immigrants from Kakala. They trace descent from a sister of the first Banda chief's (i.e., Kralɔngɔ's) mother. Their ancestor, Shie Shie, was in line to inherit the stool upon Kralɔngɔ's death, but on the advice of his mother, declined it (Stahl and Anane 1989:6). As a result, they were cut from the stool rotation, and another branch of the Kakala Nafana took their place (Nyawaa Katoo). Pehzoo, the first chief from Nyawaa Katoo, also descended from a

sister of Kralɔngɔ's mother. During Pehzoo's rule, a Mo man and his sister sought refuge in the Banda area, fleeing their home because of accusations of witchcraft against the sister. The man (Petele) proved to be a brave hunter who supplied the royal house with meat. As Pehzoo neared death, he expressed the opinion that, because Petele had distinguished himself, he should be considered for the stool. Because it was a time of war, the elders agreed and enstooled Petele, the first paramount chief from the Kabruno house, whose members now consider themselves Nafana. Because Pehzoo had recommended an outsider for the stool, Nyawaa Katoo forfeited its place in the stool rotation (Stahl and Anane 1989:22). In addition, the Nafana trace their exodus from Kakala to a dispute over inheritance and the rotation of the paramountcy (Ameyaw 1965:2–3). Thus, a rotational principle appears as a long-standing feature of the Nafana chieftaincy; however, the precise pattern of rotation was subject to negotiation; some families lost privilege of access, and others gained it through time. Viewing this through the lens of Kopytoff's (1987) frontier model, it is significant that Petele and his family were non-Nafana immigrants, but were included in the rotation by virtue of their distinguishing skills. This is just one example of how immigrants came to be incorporated into this frontier chieftaincy.

   Chieftaincies founded by immigrants in frontier settings simultaneously confront two problems: legitimizing their rule over conquered peoples, some of whom may be autochthones; and legitimizing their rule in the eyes of neighboring polities. In the first instance, Banda authorities appear to have followed a frontier logic, incorporating non-Nafana immigrants by awarding them positions or responsibilities within the chieftaincy (Stahl 1991). In the second, Banda rulers appear to have embraced some Akan practices, particularly Akan regalia and state festivals. As Bravmann (1972) and Fraser (1972) argued, periodic gifts of regalia from the Asantehene during the course of the nineteenth century contributed to the prestige of the Banda chief. These authors stressed the integrative role that regalia played as part of a strategy of "Akanization"; yet they view regalia from a metropolitan point of view. From a local perspective, we can imagine that the regalia had a powerful impact *within* the chieftaincy as well, enhancing the power and prestige of the Banda chief in the eyes of his subjects. I have argued (contra Bravmann [1972]) that the original group of Nafana immigrants was small, and that they augmented their numbers through systematic incorporation of refugees and captives (Stahl 1991). Drawing on Bourdieu (1977:178, 1984), we might imagine a small immigrant group drawing on the symbolic capital of Asante in their efforts to solidify their emerging chieftaincy. Adoption of Asante regalia and state ritual (i.e., the yam festival) would have underscored the authority of the Banda chief and his links to the powerful Asante state – in this sense regalia and ritual were bound up in practices of distinction, creating and maintaining the authority of the chief. By embracing Asante regalia, the Banda state gained legitimacy in the eyes of its Akan neighbors as well (Kopytoff 1987:17). At the same time as they drew on Asante symbols to underscore their legitimacy and distinction, the Nafana appear to have used ritual as an incorporative practice to create and maintain allegiances among the variety of immigrants and autochthones in this frontier setting (Kopytoff 1987:17).

Oral histories of the Banda New Yam Festival provide insight into the integrative dimension of ritual practice. The yams offered as sacrifice during the festival are supplied by members of Chokoe Katoo in Gbau village (Chapter 3). They also supply the requisite earthenware vessels and calabashes. Chokoe Katoo is one of the families who self-identify as Nafana today, but whose ancestors were Gonja. The family traces its origins to Bole, which it left in the wake of a chieftaincy dispute. After seeking refuge with the Banda chief, the family distinguished itself as outstanding farmers and was invited to supply the yams at a time when the paramount chief was unable to. The story goes on to suggest that, after several years, Chokoe Katoo was not invited to supply the yams. The Tano shrine repeatedly refused the sacrifices offered by the chief, and only when Chokoe Katoo was asked to provide the yams and other supplies were the sacrifices accepted. From that point forward, Chokoe Katoo has supplied the requisite items (Stahl and Anane 1989:3). The story underscores the dependence of rulers on an immigrant family for supplies crucial to a festival that underwrites the chief's legitimacy, and encapsulates the role that state festivals play in establishing and underscoring interdependence between immigrant and ruling families.

Another example of the incorporative character of state ritual is provided by the sorghum harvest festival (Yualie). Oral histories describe how the Jafun shrine, to which sacrifices are offered during the Yualie festival, was brought to Banda by founding members of Loobia Katoo. Though members of Loobia Katoo self-identify as Nafana today, they trace their origins to the vicinity of Senyon, site of a powerful shrine in western Gonja (Goody 1971:58–62). Founding members joined the Nafana during the reign of the Banda paramount chief Dabla (Table 3.5), and brought the Jafun shrine with them from their homeland (Stahl 1991:265; Stahl and Anane 1989:21). From this time, the Yualie festival was incorporated into the round of state festivals celebrated by the Banda chieftaincy. Propitiation of the shrine remains the province of the immigrant Loobia Katoo, whose northern garb worn during Yualie rites embodies the northern resonances of this ritual practice (Chapter 3). Yualie is thus another example of how Banda state ritual incorporated immigrants, in this case embracing/elaborating a ritual with links to the powerful Senyon shrine in western Gonja.

In sum, the twentieth-century structure of the Banda chieftaincy reflects an intensely negotiated outcome, one that incorporated ritual practice and symbolic capital drawn from neighboring polities and ethnic groups over a period of two centuries. Though this process began after c. 1720 in the frontier context created by Begho's demise, improvisation and innovation continued through the nineteenth century as Banda witnessed an influx of refugees caused by dislocation in the central Volta basin. Oral histories hint at the dynamism of practice – new families were incorporated into the rotational principle of chieftaincy as others were excluded; Nafana elites embraced new state festivals that drew on the power and prestige of neighboring groups, and simultaneously underwrote the relationship between ruler and ruled, immigrant and autochthone, chief and refugee. We cannot model precisely the structure of the Banda chieftaincy at any particular moment in the past.

As Table 3.4 reveals, external understandings of its "traditional" structure were partial at the same time as they were formative – terms imposed by British officials were locally embraced and used to elaborate political practices in the twentieth century. Instead, the partialities of oral and documentary sources suggest a chieftaincy in motion – one that was improvisational, that embraced new principles to meet the changing circumstances of a world in which the gravity of politics was shifting. This is not to say that Banda peoples faced the future without precedents; as Chanock (1985:15) observed, we back into the future, drawing on our understanding of the past in making the present intelligible. But twentieth-century practices are a complex palimpsest of historical experimentation, not a reified structure that people doggedly reproduced in the face of changing political-economic circumstances. Viewed supplementally, our sources suggest that, while some practices were recent innovations (the details of an Akan structure), others were probably more durable (the rotational principle). Other practices presumably fell by the wayside; because they did not persist into the present (as a memory, in written form, or as material residues on archaeological sites), they are irretrievable, part of a silence that frustrates our totalizing impulse to "know the past."

Banda settlement in the wake of Begho's demise

We lose our material trail of Banda life in the period from the mid-seventeenth through the mid- to late eighteenth century (below). Without archaeological evidence to inform on this period that historic sources suggest was one of uncertainty and shifting power relations, we can only speculate on the character of daily life. It seems likely that it was a time when the dynamics of household reproduction were unpredictable. Asante worked to extend its control northward throughout the eighteenth century. In 1740, Asante invaded Gyaman, and in 1744, captured its capital, Bonduku. In 1744–45 Asante waged successful campaigns against Gonja and Kong (Arhin 1979:23; Fynn 1971:101; Wilks 1975:22). Arhin (1987:53), following Reindorf (1966 [1889]), claims that Banda was invaded by Asante in 1733 for maltreatment of Asante traders. Wilks (1975:19) concurs that Asante mounted a major campaign against Banda in the 1730s, but does not elaborate on the supporting evidence. Later European documents suggest that Banda was forcibly incorporated into the Asante confederacy in the dry season of 1773–74 (Yarak 1979). So although the Nafana chieftaincy of Banda was founded in the frontier circumstances created by Begho's demise, it soon found itself under pressure from an expanding Asante state.

Oral-historical and documentary perspectives

Warfare (Table 6.1), though perhaps periodic and exaggerated in oral accounts (Ameyaw 1965), would have disrupted the daily routines associated with food and craft production. The accounts of wars associated with Banda's incorporation into Asante are particularly vivid. Banda accounts (Ameyaw 1965:3–4) link the Asante attack to a demand for gold, which the Banda chief refused. Histories of other polities cite the murder of Asante traders in Banda as a precipitating event (Wilks 1975:246), although this may refer to an earlier dispute. A crucial battle was fought

Table 6.1 *Conflicts involving Banda*

Conflict with	Date; Banda ruler	Comments	Source
Asante	1733	Reindorf (1966) reported that Asante attacked Banda in retaliation for the murder of Asante traders in Banda	Arhin 1987:53
Nkoranza	Sielɔngɔ	Nkoranza people under Baffo Pim defeated Banda, and took Sielɔngɔ to Kumase to pay homage to Asantehene Osei Tutu	Bravmann 1972:160; cf. Ameyaw 1965:2–3
Asante	1773/74; Sakyi	Asante invaded Banda, establishing its hegemony over Banda peoples	Ameyaw 1965:3–5; Yarak 1979
Bole	Habaa	Nafana invaded Bole in a day-long skirmish, taking many captives, who were sold into slavery	Ameyaw 1965:6; see also Fell 1913
Gonja	before 1802	Forces from Gbuipe (Ghofan) and Daboya (Ghobagho) razed Banda capital; prompted retaliation by Asantehene Osei Bonsu (1800–23)	Goody 1965:11
Fante	c. 1806; Wulodwo	Asantehene Osei Bonsu (1800–23) "asked for the assistance" of Banda in the war against Fante; family histories recount significant loss of personnel; Fell (1913) was told that only 7 out of 700 warriors survived	Ameyaw 1965:6; Fell 1913; Stahl and Anane 1989
Gyaman	1818–19; Wulodwo	Asantehene Osei Bonsu (1800–23) "sent for assistance" of Banda to quell rebellion in Gyaman (1818–19); Banda accused of cowardice, and, fearing Asante reprisal, fled to Bona	Ameyaw 1965:7–8; KA 985:57
		March 1820 the Bandahene was in Kumase to collect his share of the spoils of the successful Gyaman campaign	Dupuis 1966:76–83
Bona	Wulodwo and Dabla	War broke out between Bona people and Banda people when Banda tried to establish its authority over the town; with help of Gyaman, Banda people took refuge on lands outside Bona	Ameyaw 1965:8; see also CO879/19 No. 249, no. 26, enclosure 2 (1882)
Gyaman	Sahkyame (Wurosa)	Banda people (now back on their lands) attacked by Gyaman in retaliation for the murder of a Gyaman official; Banda, dispossessed of their land, settled among Mo at Longoro	Ameyaw 1965:8
	Feb. 1882?	These are probably the hostilities referred to by Lonsdale (CO879/19 No. 249, no. 26, enclosure 2)	Wilks 1975:294

Table 6.1 (*cont.*)

Conflict with	Date; Banda ruler	Comments	Source
Mo	Sahkyame (Wurosa)	Banda attacked by Mo forces at Gyama (Jamma, north of the Volta?); Banda driven off Mo lands	Ameyaw 1965:10
Nkoranza	1892–93 Sahkyame (Wurosa)	Asante seek allegiance of Banda in war against Nkoranza, who were asserting their independence after signing a treaty with the British; Nkoranza defeated, but later attacked Banda, forcing Banda people to flee. Some sought refuge at Akomadan, others settled on the southern bank of the Black Volta at Bue (Bui)	Ameyaw 1965:10; Lewin 1978:171

on the banks of the Chɛn River, at the site of Old Bima (Chapter 5). The Asante were rebuffed, but regrouped and attacked, this time on the Sindɔɔ, two miles south of present-day Banda-Ahenkro. As their impending loss became evident, the Banda chief, Sakyi, sent word to the old men, women, and children to flee into the mountains and take refuge in the caves on the western face of the Banda hills above contemporary Banda-Ahenkro (see frontispiece of Rattray [1929] for a photograph of the Banda cave). Sakyi and his troops retreated into the mountains, positioning themselves on the crest of one of the hills, while the Asante occupied the deserted Banda town(s). Food was short, and famine ensued, forcing Banda peoples to surrender to Asante forces. The Banda tradition collected by Ameyaw (1965) makes no reference to the death of their leader; however, oral histories of other polities suggest that Sakyi was killed, his head taken as trophy by the victorious Asante. Bowdich, who visited Kumase in 1817, was told that the Banda chief's skull was one among several that adorned the state drums (Wilks 1975:670; for a listing of skulls see McCaskie [1995:214]; also Rattray [1929:Fig. 16]). Wilks (1970:43–44) noted that by the time of Dupuis' visit to Kumase in 1820, the story of Sakyi's fate was suppressed. Dupuis was "assured by Ashanti and Muslims alike that there had been no such war against Banda and that the information about a skull was quite wrong" (Wilks 1970:44). Wilks attributes this to the fact that Banda had proved its loyalty in the Gyaman campaign, making stories of hostilities "dysfunctional" (Wilks 1970:44). But the stories still circulated in some quarters. Fell (1913) was told that Sakyi was killed and his head taken as trophy to Kumase, and Bravmann (1972:163) recounted that a gold miniature of Sakyi's head (Wurosa as he was known to the Asante)[16] adorned the sheath of a state sword displayed at major state festivals "to serve as a permanent reminder of the war."

In 1994 we visited the cave where Banda people allegedly sought refuge during the Asante assault. Pottery, similar to that from Makala Kataa (see below), is strewn

about the cave floor. It is difficult to estimate the size of the rockshelter because the roof has exfoliated. Large blocks of roof now overlie what was probably habitable area in the late 1700s. The ascent to the cave is very steep, and the path to its entrance well hidden. Although the cave is visible from many points on the western side of the hills, there is only one approach along the edge of a steep slope. Water formerly flowed from a hole in the rock wall roughly 200 meters south of the rockshelter, but again, the descent to the water source is steep and treacherous. A loss of footing would result in a precipitous fall, causing certain injury and possible death.

Although excavations at this and other mountain-top sites could shed light on the character of daily life in this period when Banda peoples were under siege by Asante, we currently have no archaeological data to help in our historical reconstruction. But we might use our historical imaginations, informed by a knowledge of frontier dynamics, to envision something of the concerns and challenges that faced Banda men and women as they struggled to meet the needs of their families. As I, in reasonably good physical condition, struggled to make my way up the steep incline to the cave, scrambling across rocks and between scrubby trees, I imagined women burdened with head loads of provisions and babies on their backs, making that same journey, but under pressure of attack by hostile Asante forces. I wondered how old people, some perhaps suffering from the endemic river blindness that disables many elderly villagers today, survived the struggle to flee hostilities. Documentary sources suggest that families suffered considerable loss of personnel during the Asante siege, for it was in noting the large number of captives generated by the Banda conflict that Dutch personnel signaled their awareness of the conflict. On February 16, 1774, the Dutch Director-General at Elmina reported "That the trade here at the Chief Castle has now for some time been better than usual is principally the result of the King of Adsiantijn [Asante] having marched to war against, and defeated, the Benda. The King has sent to us a considerable number of the Slaves captured by him" (Yarak 1979:58). Thus some of the Banda kinsmen captured during these and other hostilities over the next few decades found themselves in coastal ports, awaiting the horrors of the middle passage; others were consumed by the internal market for captives. Their loss meant demographic imbalances at home, especially among small, dispersed groups for whom the loss of even a handful of men or women would have dramatically affected the household's ability to carry out required tasks. Oral sources that reference later, nineteenth-century events describe Banda families augmenting their losses by purchasing captives (Stahl 2001; Chapter 7), and households struggling in the aftermath of Begho's demise and Asante's attack may have done the same. Thus, the personnel of Banda families was probably augmented by captives, further complicating the "ethnic brew" in this frontier zone.

After its traumatic incorporation into Asante, oral and documentary sources suggest a period of quiescence, however brief. By the early decades of the nineteenth century, Banda was counted among Asante's inner provinces (Wilks 1975:54–55; Chapter 4). The Tartar Wargee provided crucial evidence of this – detained in Banda by Asante officials in 1821 or 1822, Wargee identified Banda as Asante's frontier when he related the story of his capture to British officials (Wilks 1967:188).

Archaeological perspectives

During the 1982 survey we located a number of sites east of the Banda hills character- ized by "Iron Age 1" (IA1) ceramics that show stylistic affinities to the ceramics con- sumed in the area today (Stahl 1985a). IA1 ceramics are commonly roulette-impressed with a cord-wrapped stick or a maize cob. Triangular punctates (York's [1965] dog- tooth impression), shallow grooving, and several patterns of incision are also typical. IA1 ceramics have been more fully documented through our excavations at Makala Kataa (below). There is some overlap in vessel morphology and the grammar of dec- orative treatment with IA2 ceramics (i.e., from Kuulo Kataa; Stahl 1999a); however, the contrasts between assemblages are more marked than the similarities (cf. Crossland 1989; Crossland and Posnansky 1978). The pronounced carinations char- acteristic of bowls from Kuulo Kataa are not found on Makala ceramics. Large glob- ular jars, a characteristic Kuulo phase form, are uncommon at Makala. While Kuulo and Makala ceramics share cord rouletting as a common surface treatment, the dis- tinctive herringbone roulette decoration common at Kuulo Kataa disappears. Other decorative treatments, including mica paint, stamped wavy line, and appliqué also dis- appear. The overwhelming impression is one of disjuncture between the ceramic assemblages (below). To date, we have no sites that show a transition between these two stylistic traditions, or clear evidence that both were used simultaneously.

IA1 ceramics were recovered from a number of village sites abandoned early in the colonial period when an official, locally known as the "breaker of walls," convinced Banda villagers to rebuild their villages on adjacent sites (Chapter 7). These sites had local names, typically the name of the contemporary village with which they were associated and the word *kataa* (old; e.g., Makala Kataa, Wewa Kataa). Other sites were not so named, and local people had no knowledge of when they were occupied. This suggested that some IA1 sites were occupied earlier in the nineteenth century, beyond the memory of living people. Excavations at Makala Kataa (below) have confirmed this.

IA1 sites are more numerous and widely distributed than the IA2 sites that were ceramically similar to Begho (and Kuulo Kataa; Fig. 6.1, cf. Fig. 5.3). Sites no longer cluster along the Tombɛ River. The apparent clustering of IA1 sites along the eastern margins of the Banda hills probably reflects a sampling bias in the 1982 survey. This area was more intensively surveyed than were the low-rolling hills to the east because of logistical constraints. Smith's survey of sites east of the Banda hills and south of the Tombɛ River will yield more robust insight into their distribution. Though there appear to be more IA1 sites than earlier IA2 sites, site size apparently decreased through time.

Our excavations at Makala Kataa (below) have helped us to develop a ceramic chronology for IA1 sites. We have discerned two temporal periods of occupation at Makala Kataa: Makala phase 1 (Late Makala) and Makala phase 2 (Early Makala). These are associated with related, but slightly different, ceramic styles (Stahl 1994a; 1999a). Later ceramics (Makala phase 1) show less diversity of decorative treatment than do early ones (Makala phase 2), and some decorative treatments drop out of the repertoire. Everted jars at Early Makala often display diagonal slashing on the lip

LEGEND

◆ Unnamed sites with "Iron Age 1"
   (Makala phase) ceramics

▼ Named sites abandoned after c. 1920

- - - - Contemporary roads

Tain ∿ Rivers

Topographic line 300 m contour

0   2.5   5
kilometers

Black Volta

Tain

Tain

Tombe

Bui▼
Kataa°

Broni Kataa

▼ ▼
Makala Welee
Kataa   Kataa

▼ Wewa
  Kataa   ▼ Sabiye Kataa
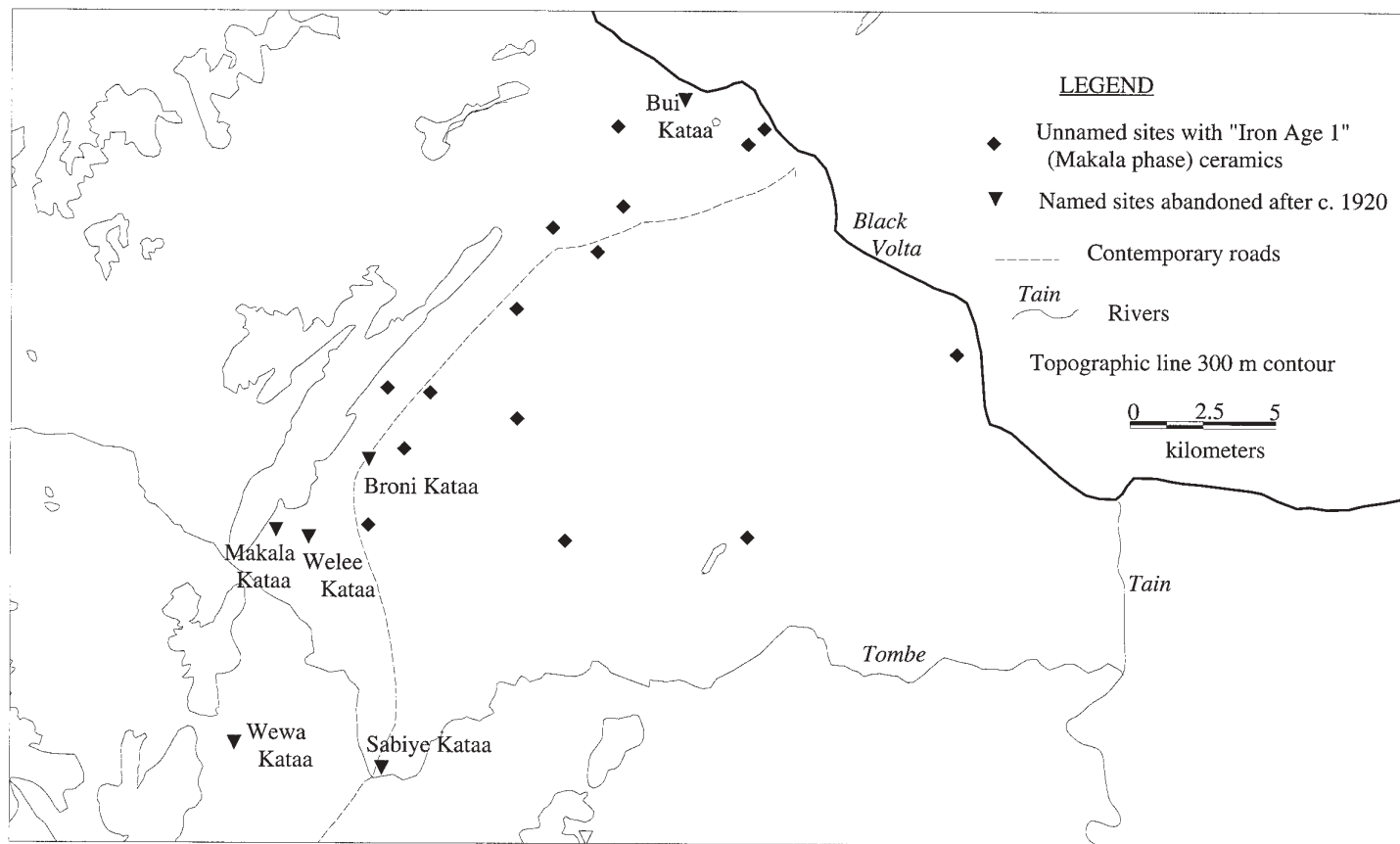
Figure 6.1. Location of Iron Age 1 (Makala phase) sites. Depicts sites located during the course of a 1982 survey (Stahl 1985a)

and neck area; this is uncommon at Late Makala. Criss-cross incision was commonly applied to vessel carinations at Early Makala, but was rare at Late Makala. Maize-cob roulette impression became more common through time, while the use of cord-wrapped stick roulette diminished. And finally, the proportion of plain, undecorated sherds increases through time (Stahl 1999a). Associated thermoluminescence dates and dateable imports suggest that ceramics associated with Makala phase 2 (Early Makala) date to the mid- to late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Stahl 1999a:13), while imports and oral sources suggest that Makala phase 1 (Late Makala) was occupied at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Chapter 7).

There is an apparent gap of 100–150 years between the latest dates at Kuulo Kataa and the earliest dates on the subsequent Makala phase occupation (Early Makala/Makala phase 2). This gap may: (1) reflect the limits of our chronological tools; (2) signal that sites were abandoned in the aftermath of Begho's decline; or (3) reflect a change in settlement that makes sites of this period difficult to find. Whereas coastal sites can be dated by the large volume of imports (DeCorse 1989), this is not the case in the coastal hinterlands, especially in periods when trade connections deteriorated, as in the aftermath of Begho. Here we are dependent on archaeometric techniques. But radiocarbon dating is virtually useless in the last three centuries because of dramatic fluctuations in the concentration of atmospheric radiocarbon. Calibrated dates adjusted to account for these fluctuations may reduce precision to a period of several hundred years at best, allowing us to claim only that a site was occupied sometime between Columbus and Churchill. In sum, the gap between Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala may reflect the limits of our chronological tools. Though the demise of Begho must have reverberated throughout its hinterland, I suspect that Banda was not altogether abandoned. Instead, occupation probably continued, although almost certainly on a more dispersed and smaller scale. Such settlements may be less visible archaeologically. A related possibility is that Banda residents dispersed into the hills, where historically they fled in times of trouble, seeking refuge in caves or on mountain tops (Ameyaw 1965:3–4; cf. Gleave 1963). Small hamlets tucked in between the high hills would be relatively invisible to passers-by. At this time we cannot sort among these possibilities with any precision. The most likely scenario is that larger settlements of the Begho period (e.g., Old Bima, Kuulo Kataa) broke apart. Although some population dispersed – some inhabitants moved to neighboring towns like Bonduku – others probably stayed behind, living in smaller hamlets (perhaps comprising several households), reproducing their households outside the subcontinental exchange networks that had shaped the contours of earlier life in the area. Again, such a period of uncertainty would leave a minimal archaeological signature. Only when people began to aggregate in larger settlements – which was clearly the case by the mid- to late eighteenth and early nineteenth century – do we have significant archaeological visibility in the form of Makala phase 2 occupations (e.g., Early Makala). By this time, the historic Banda polity was subject to Asante, and the trauma of its incorporation fixed to geographical markers in the Banda area – the rivers where battles were found, the caves where elders, women, and children sought refuge.

The material record of Banda life

Makala Kataa is adjacent to contemporary Makala village, and my interest in the site was piqued by two claims: that it represented the first site of Nafana occupation after their migration to Banda (Ameyaw 1965); and that it was abandoned when colonial officials pressed a relocation scheme on Banda villagers. When I first began work on the site in 1989, elder residents of Makala village recalled living on one part of the site as children. The site is situated roughly 1.5 km southwest of Kuulo Kataa (Fig. 5.1). The closest sources of reliable water are the Tombɛ River (2.5 km to the south), and a spring that emerges from the base of the hills north of the site. This site is today under continuous grass cover, dotted with baobab and *Ceiba* trees. Low-growing savanna woodland trees keep much of the site under continuous shade. It is not cultivated today (unlike Kuulo Kataa), though cattle regularly graze the site and goats forage areas adjacent to the contemporary village.

I began investigations here in 1989, working with a small group of men from Banda-Ahenkro, the paramount chief's village. Although the site plays a role in Nafana oral history, Makala elders, the descendants of Gbaha, were not knowledgeable about the physical features of the site – its dimensions, limits, or locations of mounds. One elder who had lived on the site as a young boy walked the site with us, identifying the remains of one small structure marked by standing wall stubs as the house of Gbaha, the founder of Gbaha Katoo. We sought permission from Makala elders to excavate on the site and offered drink for libations. After a brief conversation, libations were poured, and permission given to work on the site. By contrast to our later experience at Kuulo Kataa, no sacrifices were required, and there were no areas of the site that were off-limits to us. In fact, we worked in an area immediately adjacent to a shrine associated with a masking cult formerly based in Makala, now housed in Dorbour west of the hills (Chapter 3). The shrine remained active, yet Makala residents seemed unconcerned by our proximity to it. While Makala elders occasionally ventured on to the site, they did not keep a watchful eye on us, nor did they seem concerned with what we hoped to learn by turning the soil on this ancestral site. Rumors abounded in the 1989 season that my real purpose for digging was because I knew how to turn potsherds into gold, but the Nafana of Makala, where we worked, and Banda-Ahenkro, where I lived, seemed little concerned with the role of archaeology in making history. Only when we encountered buried human remains did elders become involved by coming out to the site to pour libations (as described in Chapter 5).

In 1990 I returned with a graduate student to pursue further excavations at Makala Kataa. Again, our excavations were relatively small-scale (Stahl 1994a). We worked with the 1989 crew, now augmented with men from Makala village. Again we requested permission from the elders to excavate, offered drink for libations, and were given local clearance to work. Children from Makala village were on the site more often now because we were working in an area adjacent to the village; however, Makala elders showed no more than passing interest in the excavations. In 1994, I returned with several graduate students and two representatives of the Ghana National Museum to conduct larger scale excavations at Makala Kataa. The logis-

tics of this season were more difficult. Whereas previously I had hired a small local crew – mainly young men who were ridiculed for digging holes in the ground instead of farming – we hired more than twice the number of men in 1994. Unlike 1989 or 1990, the rains in 1994 were poor, and by the time we arrived in June farmers were anticipating a poor harvest. Demands were made that I hire all new men because those who had worked previously had "had their turn." Makala elders demanded that I hire more men from Makala because the site belonged to them, while officials in Ahenkro demanded that I hire men from Banda-Ahenkro because it was the paramount chief's village. A negotiated outcome resulted in a crew that included our former workmen with additional crew members divided between Ahenkro and Makala and selected by local officials. While there was intense interest in who would receive the economic benefits of employment on the site, elders and Nafana people in general showed relatively little interest in what we were learning about Banda history from our excavations.

Thus our experiences working with the Nafana at Makala Kataa differed considerably from those working with the Kuulo at Kuulo Kataa. Although Makala Kataa is an important place in the sense that it marks the first settlement of the Nafana in Banda, the site does not seem to embody the same sort of connection to the past as does Kuulo Kataa. Our work on the site seemed to create less anxiety, and at the same time held little relevance or power to make history in the eyes of Nafana elders. This may change as knowledge of our work becomes more widely disseminated; the results of our archaeological investigations will likely become incorporated into local histories, perhaps in ways that I cannot imagine nor would support. Conversely, Kuulo elders showed some anxiety as well as considerably more interest in the results of our work, wanting to know what could be learned about the past from the discarded remains of an ancient settlement. It is easier to imagine how Kuulo elders might use archaeological knowledge in making Kuulo history, though again, not necessarily in ways that I would support. I return to the saliency of our archaeological work for local history-making in Chapter 8, but for now turn to what we have learned from Makala Kataa about the lived past of its residents.

The settlement history of Makala Kataa

Makala Kataa is characterized by low mounds of varying shapes and sizes (Fig. 6.2). They represent a form of horizontal stratigraphy; occupants of the site moved laterally, building their houses in formerly unoccupied areas. For the most part, then, the mound deposits represent relatively discrete time periods. The area immediately west of the contemporary village is marked by low mounds (30–50 cm high), no more than several meters across, that represent the remains of collapsed houses occupied early in the colonial period (Chapter 7). There are no large midden mounds. This late nineteenth-century settlement occupies a relatively confined area of the site (c. 250 x 300 m; 7.5 hectares; 18.5 acres), and is referred to as Late Makala (Makala phase 1). Mounds to the west are larger, linear, often L-shaped, rising 1.0–1.5 m above the landscape. Those that we sampled were formed by the collapse of structures. Two relatively large, amorphous midden mounds were located on the south-
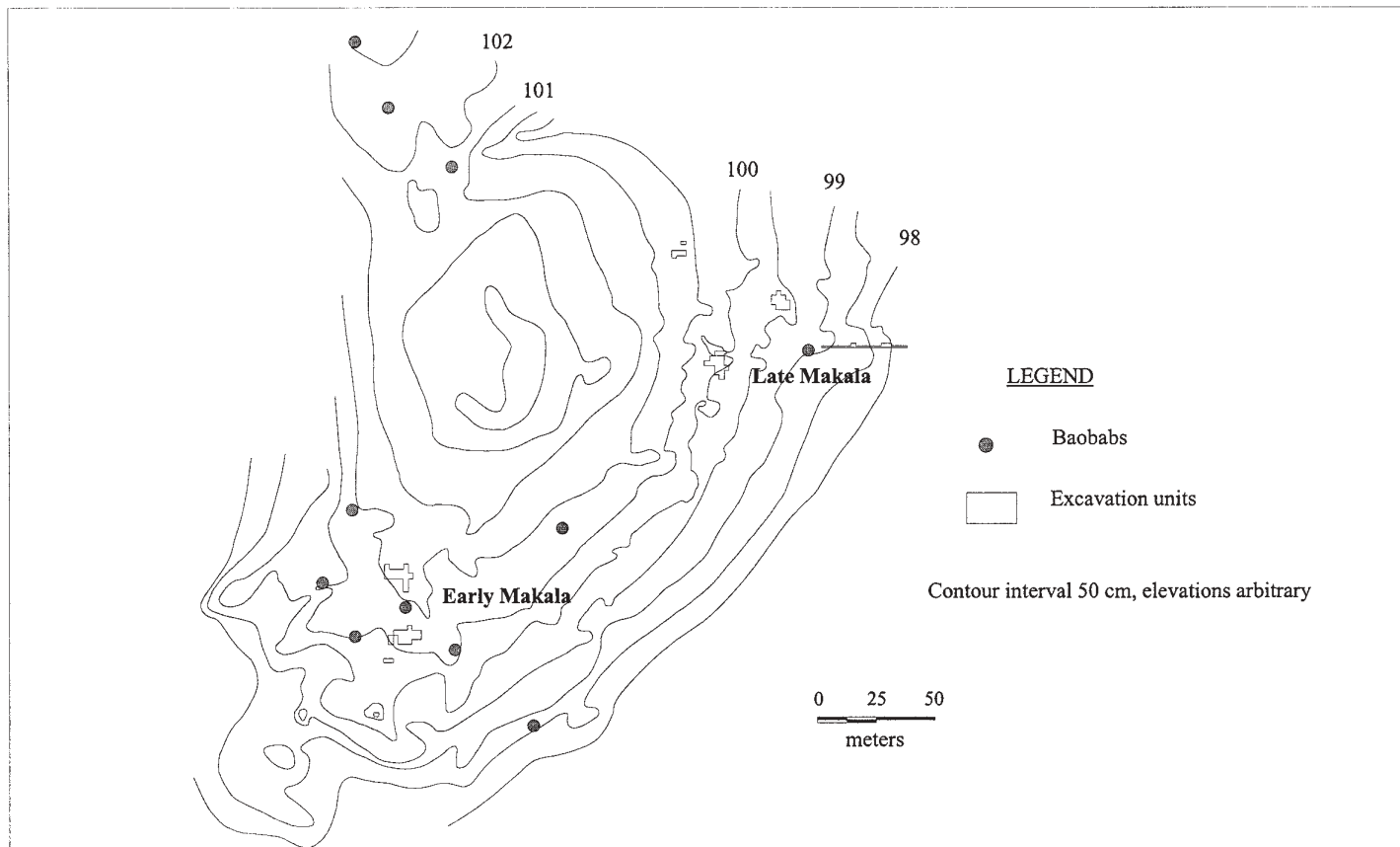
Figure 6.2. Plan map of Makala Kataa

western end of the site. Our excavations were confined to the southwestern portions of this area, which we call Early Makala (Makala phase 2). Based on the similarity of surface ceramics, the mounds north of this excavated area probably represent part of Early Makala, though without subsurface testing we cannot be certain. Regardless, Early Makala represents a larger settlement than Late Makala, covering roughly 18 hectares (44.5 acres) exclusive of the northern mounds, or on the order of 26 hectares (64.3 acres) including them.

The remainder of this chapter focuses on what we have learned through excavations at Early Makala (Fig. 6.3). Here we excavated a total of 156 m^2 with a volume of 132 m^3, sampling two house mounds (mounds 5 and 6), a depression between mounds, and a midden mound (mound 4; Stahl 1994a, 1999a). We recovered few dateable imports here, all of which are consistent with a nineteenth-century occupation. The dearth of imports contrasts with Late Makala where they were ubiquitous (Chapter 7). Thermoluminescence dates on pottery from mound 5 suggest an occupation in the second half of the eighteenth and first decades of the nineteenth century (Stahl 1999a:13).

Daily life at Early Makala

Oral sources suggest that daily life regained a degree of normalcy after Banda's submission to Asante, so long as trade was not disrupted and obligations to the metropole were met. But what can we glean from the archaeological record about the practices of daily life during the first half-century of Asante dominion over the Banda area?

Our excavations at Early Makala suggest that Banda peoples were living in relatively stable village settlements by the end of the eighteenth century. The upper levels of excavated mounds comprised a dark soil that contained mixed occupational debris, none of which appeared to be in primary context. In lighter soil c. 25 to 35 cm below the ground surface we began to encounter architectural features and objects that appeared to be in primary context (left where they were used; Schiffer 1987:58–64). Excavations of mound 6 revealed a series of floor and wall deposits (Fig. 6.4). Floors comprised more or less compact laterite gravel, some associated with clay slurry or plaster. They varied in distinctness, the boundaries of some more diffuse than others. Walls appear to have been constructed of coursed earth and were distinguished from the surrounding subsoil by color and texture differences. Structures were rectangular and comprised adjoining rooms. Mound morphology suggests an L-shaped compound comparable in size to contemporary Banda houses. Postholes associated with wall and floor deposits presumably represent the supports for gabled roofs, although others probably represent non-structural features like racks or stands. As at Kuulo Kataa, the structures show signs of refurbishment/rebuilding. Several areas of stratified floor deposits in mound 6 suggest three episodes of reconstruction. Individual floors are separated from one another by hard-packed deposits that may have been intentionally introduced to seal older floors, or may represent the leveling of collapsed walls (Fig 6.5; Stahl 1999:42–44).

We located no obvious kitchen area in the northern compound, though a cluster
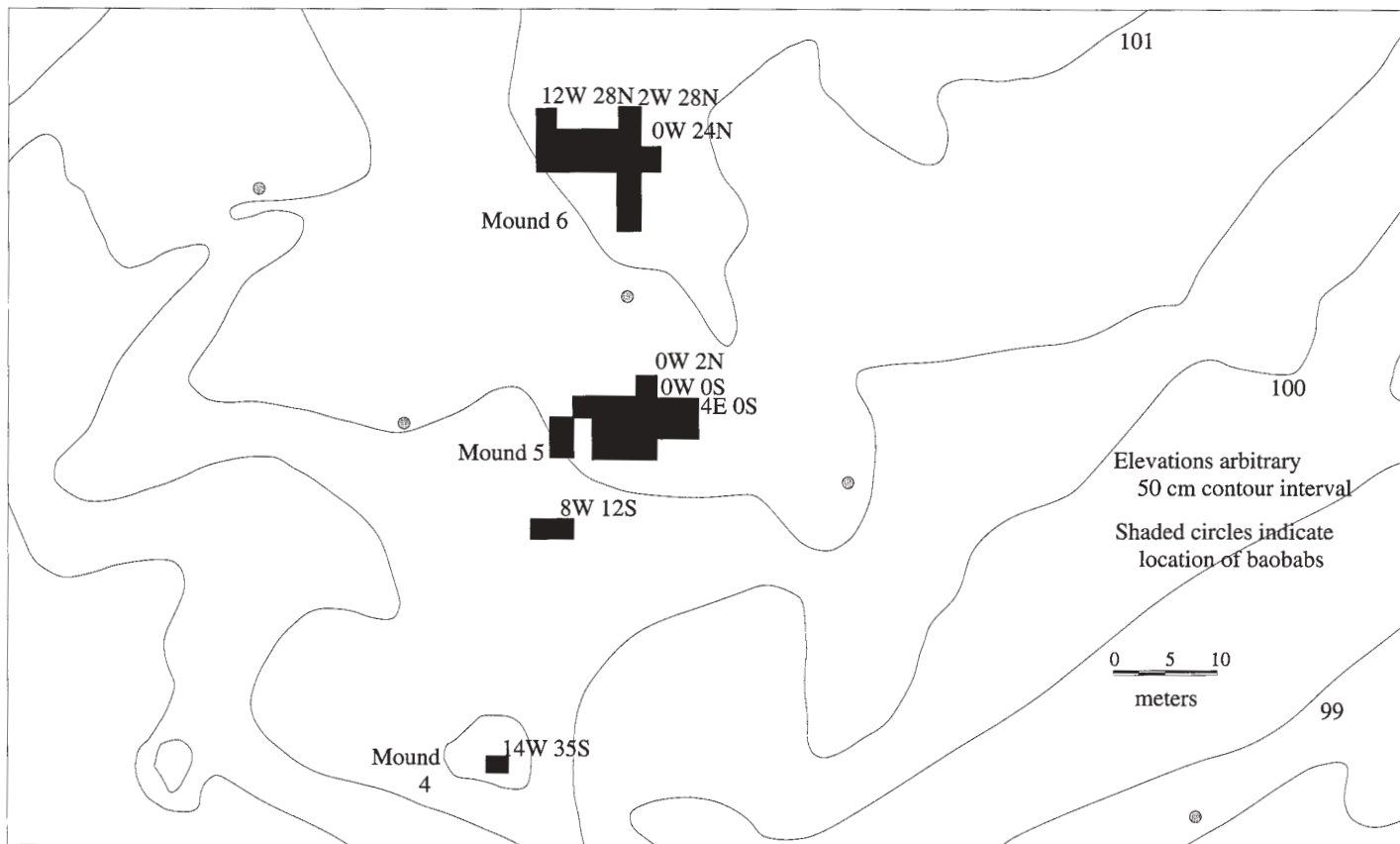
Figure 6.3. Location of excavation units at Early Makala. Depicts units excavated in 1989, 1990, and 1994
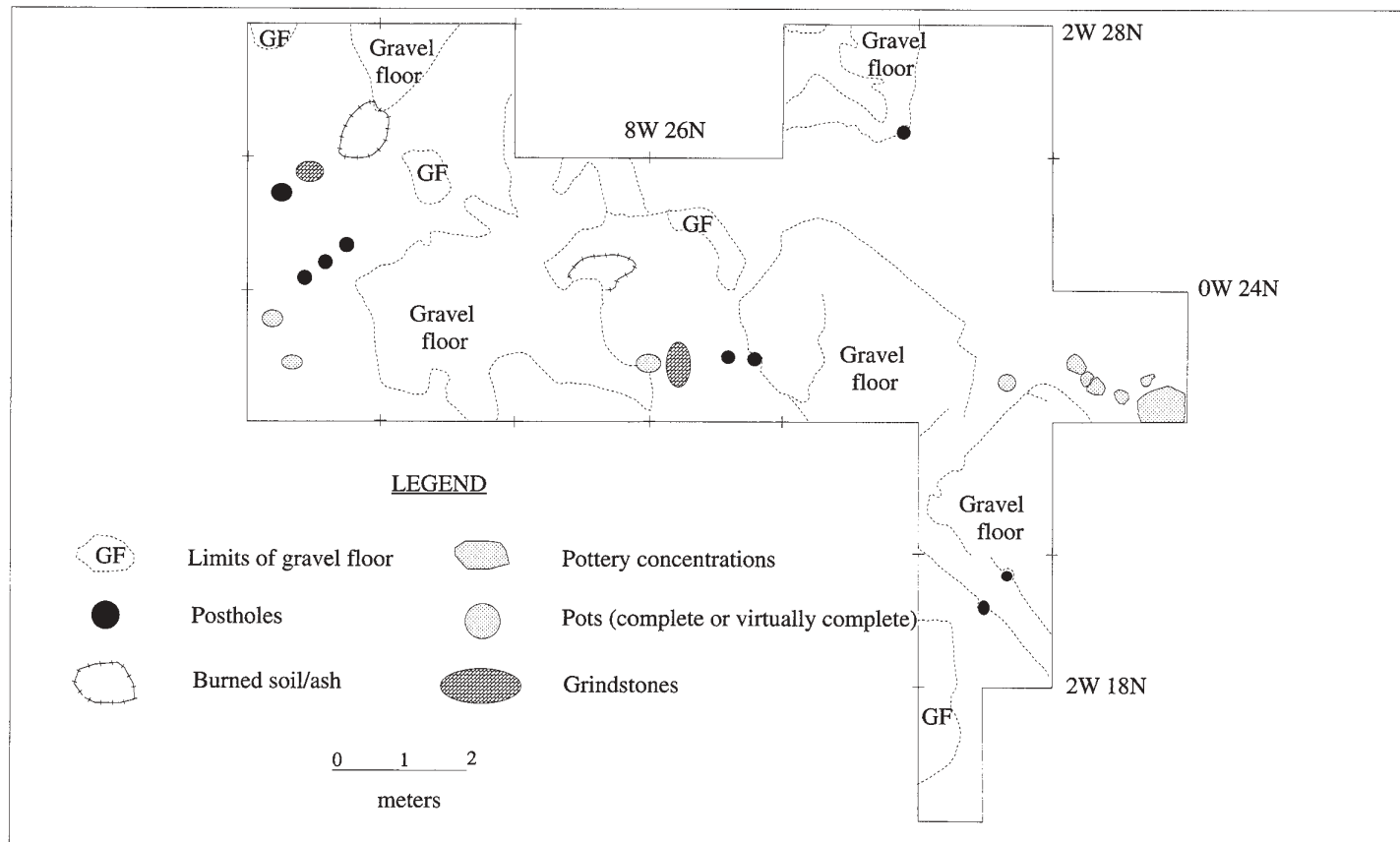
Figure 6.4. Plan view of mound 6, Early Makala, 1994. Composite view of levels 4–5, 80–90 cm below datum

4W 16N   4W 18N   Level line, 28 cm below datum   4W 20N

Very dark grayish brown sandy silt

Dark gray sandy silt

Dark grayish brown sandy silt

Hard-packed brown, clayish   Yellowish brown silty sand

LEGEND

Gravel floor   Boundaries between soil colors

Slurry or plaster lenses   Posthole

50 cm

Figure 6.5. Profile of mound 6, Early Makala, 1994. Depicts the west wall of units 2W 20N and 2W 18N

of ceramic vessels in unit 0W 24N hints that the kitchen may have been in an unexcavated area to the northeast. Five large jars – probably storage vessels – appear to have been destroyed in place here. We recovered far fewer useable vessels here than in mound 5 (below), though this may simply be a function of the fact that our excavations focused to a greater extent on structural features. Several isolated bowls and small jars were interspersed with the architectural remains, as were occasional large grindstones (Fig. 6.4).

Excavations in mound 5 revealed extensive kitchen deposits that appear to have been abruptly abandoned judging from the quantity of useable goods left behind (Fig. 6.6). Remains of at least two hearths were associated with an array of kitchen paraphernalia – pots, grindstones, and so on. One hearth was associated with two upright laterite blocks. Today hearths consist of three upright laterite blocks, on top of which cooking pots rest. Fires are fueled with long pieces of wood, inserted through the gaps between the blocks. A number of whole or virtually complete vessels and grinding stones (both basal stone and handheld grinders) surrounded this hearth. The pots included a large storage vessel (pot 20), two smaller jars probably used for cooking (pots 17 and 18), one trimmed jar rim probably used as a stand for round-based pots (pot 16), and the base of an additional pot (pot 19). Several large fragments of grindstones were clustered together with two bowls that contemporary women identify as women's eating bowls (pots 12 and 13). Pot 11 represented the remains of a crushed jar. Minimal ash was associated with this hearth, and there was little evidence of burning, suggesting that the hearth was little used or thoroughly swept. The other hearth was associated with extensive burning. There was a concentration of oxidized, hard-packed burned sediment surrounding a cluster of three stones that may have served as hearth supports. A large well-made eating bowl (identified by contemporary women as a man's eating bowl [pot 6]) rested upside down on the stones. To the south was a series of stacked vessels (pots 2–5, 7). Three were substantially complete jars (pots 2, 5, and 7), while pots 3 and 4 were jar rims, carefully trimmed several inches below the neck constriction, presumably as stands for round-based pots. The base of a large, crushed storage vessel (pot 1) rested on the surface defined by the depth of the hearth. Flotation of its interior contents yielded sorghum grains. The soil in pot 7 also contained carbonized sorghum, in addition to several fish bones. Several smaller vessels were recovered from the north side of the hearth: pot 14, a small pedestaled bowl; pot 15, a small globular jar; and pot 10, a trimmed jar rim presumably used as a pot stand. Several ceramic oil lamps with elongated stands were recovered from this area. Grindstone fragments, some probably associated with food preparation activities, were scattered about, occurring in almost every excavated unit. Much of the area immediately north of this hearth was burned, signaled by concentrations of charcoal and carbonized grain (Fig. 6.6, areas of burned soil and ash). Postholes in the basal levels of this area suggest that the second hearth was roofed, perhaps walled with organic material. There was no evidence of mud-wall collapse, and the pattern of burning suggests uncontrolled conflagration such as might be caused by a relatively flimsy shelter catching fire. The pattern of two hearths, one apparently roofed and the other not, is consistent with
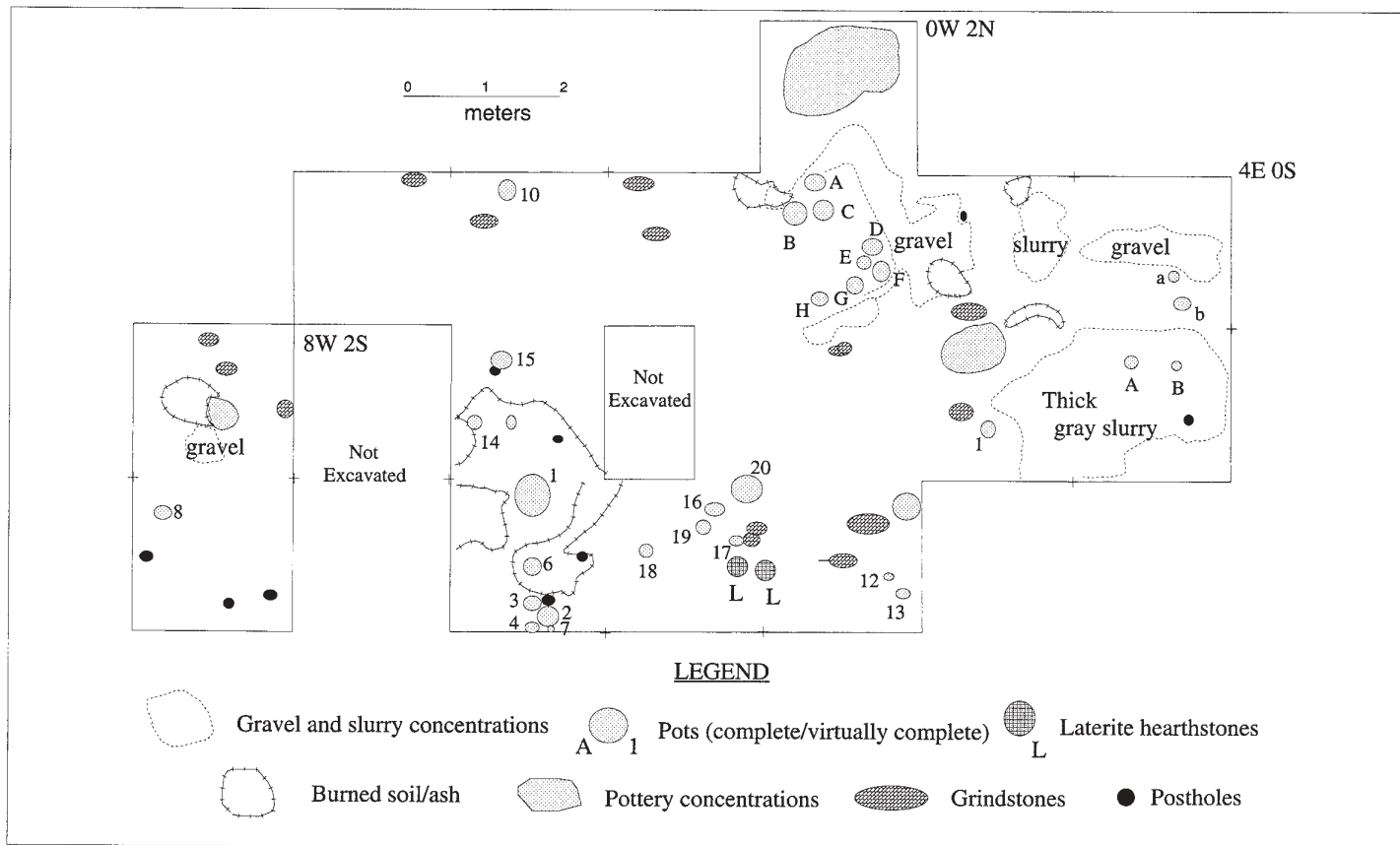
Figure 6.6. Plan view of mound 5, Early Makala, 1989 and 1994 excavations. Composite view of levels 6–8, 80 to 100 cm below datum

the layout of contemporary domestic space with designated wet and dry season kitchens.

An additional cluster of pots was associated with a structural feature in excavation unit 0W 0S. Here eight trimmed jar rims (A–H) were embedded in the soil, their uppermost edges at a relatively consistent depth below datum. They rested on a thin layer of laterite gravel that appeared to be part of a minimally prepared floor, apparently intentionally placed as pot stands (Plate 10). Concentrations of laterite gravel and thin layers of slurry (below) on three sides of this ceramic cluster suggest that it was an open veranda, with the primary structure located to the east. The concentration of pot stands suggests a storage area.

Kitchen deposits probably continued into the unexcavated area in the center of our excavation unit, as well as into the unexcavated units separating the westernmost units excavated in this mound (8W 2S). This area was badly disturbed by a termite nest. Unexcavated units to the west had small to medium-sized trees growing on them. Units to the west also yielded fragments of grindstone strewn about their middle levels, small areas of laterite gravel that may be the remains of prepared surfaces, and a series of postholes in the southern half of 8W 4S. A small globular pot was recovered from this area (pot 8). Flotation of its interior contents yielded an array of unusual objects – two beads, and a series of unusually shaped sherds of different sizes. The sherds were convex in shape, pointed at the ends, and widest in the center. In addition, several rim sherds from a single vessel were carefully laid around the interior rim of pot 8, and may belong to the same vessel as a basal sherd found inside the base of pot 8. Based upon a simple analogy with current practice, this may represent a shrine bundle as they are sometimes housed in pots.

It is difficult to discern a clear pattern of rooms or individual structures in mound 5. Discontinuous packed gravel throughout units 0W 0S, 2E 0S, and 4E 0S probably represents the remains of a floor. Patches of gray slurry lay both above and below the laterite gravel and suggest refurbishing of structures. The extensive area of slurry in units 2E 2S and 4E 2S suggests a living surface, but it was not associated with a gravel floor. Because both gravel and slurry were discontinuous, we cannot discern with any confidence the size or shape of this structural feature.

In sum, the architectural evidence suggests that these mounds at Early Makala were occupied for a considerable period – long enough for the relatively substantial coursed earthen wall structures to undergo deterioration, refurbishing, and in some cases rebuilding. While it is difficult to gauge the life-history of a house, we are surely looking at structures that saw a generation – and perhaps more – from infancy to adulthood. The midden accumulation at Early Makala is consistent with a relatively long-lived occupation. A unit in one of the midden mounds (unit 14W 35S) ran to a depth of over 1.5 m, and yielded considerable refuse – an average density of 3,450 sherds/m^3, compared to 194 sherds/m^3 in the southern mound. While there is no formula that can help us link depth of midden formation with length of occupation, common sense dictates that the amount of refuse represented by the two large midden mounds in this area of the site likely accumulated over a period of decades rather than years.

Plate 10. Pot stands left *in situ* in mound 5, unit 0W 0S, level 7, Early Makala, 1994. Photo by B. Thomas, 1994

The domestic economy

Household vs. extra-household production How do patterns of production and consumption of subsistence and craft items at Early Makala compare with those from the earlier Kuulo phase and with our understanding of historic and late twentieth-century patterns?

The archaeological evidence for textile production at Early Makala is meager, yet exceeds that from Kuulo Kataa. We recovered nine spindle whorls from 132 m³ of excavated soil at Early Makala – this hardly suggests production on a large scale, and is even difficult to reconcile with small-scale household production. Five of the spindle whorls were broken, and the remaining four probably entered the archaeological record by accidental loss. The fact that many women curate spindle whorls today, though none produce thread, may account for the minimal archaeological signature despite historical sources that claim that spinning and weaving were ubiquitous. Conversely, textile production may have taken place on a smaller scale early in the nineteenth century than documented for the early twentieth century. Nonetheless, the presence of spindle whorls suggests broader involvement in thread and perhaps textile production than current evidence from Kuulo Kataa admits.

These meager data hint that textile production became more widespread in the aftermath of Begho's decline. If so, they suggest that textile production was no longer the exclusive province of specialists resident in large towns. Triangulating from historic descriptions, the small collection of Early Makala spindle whorls may reflect greater involvement in textile production at the household level, and perhaps,

stretching our imaginations a bit more, new patterns of textile consumption. Again, we know historically that men and women, typically husbands and wives, cooperated in the production of textiles consumed by the household. Transfer of textiles often took place in ritual context (e.g., as gifts at marriage, as funerary shrouds, and so on). Viewed from the perspective of earlier patterns, this involved a recontextualization of woven textiles from a prestige commodity, consumed by a subset of the population, to a form of material culture made and consumed within households and bound up in household reproduction. In other words, this pattern hints at a growing taste for cloth that would have simultaneously altered its role as a mark of distinction (Bourdieu 1984). As production of local cloth shifted "downward," into the household, cloth production became intimately entwined with household reproduction, contributing to the historic observation that "every woman was a spinner" (Stahl and Cruz 1998). The gifting of woven textiles that created and objectified household social relations may thus be rooted in this period. We can only imagine the meanings and associations of woven textiles in this period: whether they substituted for other forms of cloth (e.g., bark cloth) that perhaps earlier played a similar role in household reproduction, or whether practices associated with the production and consumption of woven textiles were forged in changing circumstances shaped by the uncertainties of the frontier created by Begho's demise. Neither can we gauge the impact of immigrants on the changing dynamics of taste without comparative historical data. But the presence of spindle whorls at Early Makala hints at a growing taste for cloth that subsequently framed colonial entanglements, fueling the desire for cloth and the process of monetization in the twentieth century.

Dupuis' brief description of the Banda chief gives our only insight into dress in the early nineteenth century. Recall that Dupuis described the Banda chief as "simply attired in an African cloth, decorated with amulets, &c. sheathed in gold and the skins of beasts" (Dupuis 1966:76). By African cloth Dupuis presumably meant the strip-woven cotton textiles that were historically produced throughout the region. The reference to amulets suggests war attire; *batakari* smocks, northern-style garments, were widely worn in war during the nineteenth century by the Asante and others. The leather-encased talismans, typically produced by Muslims and consisting of passages from the Koran, offered bodily and spiritual protection to their wearer (McLeod 1981:145–148). The Banda chief also wore animal skins, as did members of his retinue (Dupuis 1966:76–77). Outfitted for war, they wore garments that could have been locally produced – made from woven cotton, animals found within Banda, adorned with leather that may have been locally produced, and gold that was perhaps locally mined. Yet included among the gifts presented to the Banda chief at this meeting were imported brocades and damasks that speak to the changing political economy of cloth, to which I return below.

Though our insights into textile production are based on meager evidence, that for ceramic production is more robust. We recovered close to 80,000 sherds from 132 m^3 at Early Makala, a density of roughly 600 sherds/m^3, considerably higher than at Late Makala (see below), but far fewer than at Kuulo Kataa (Stahl 1999a). The pottery was less diverse in vessel form and decorative treatment than pottery from
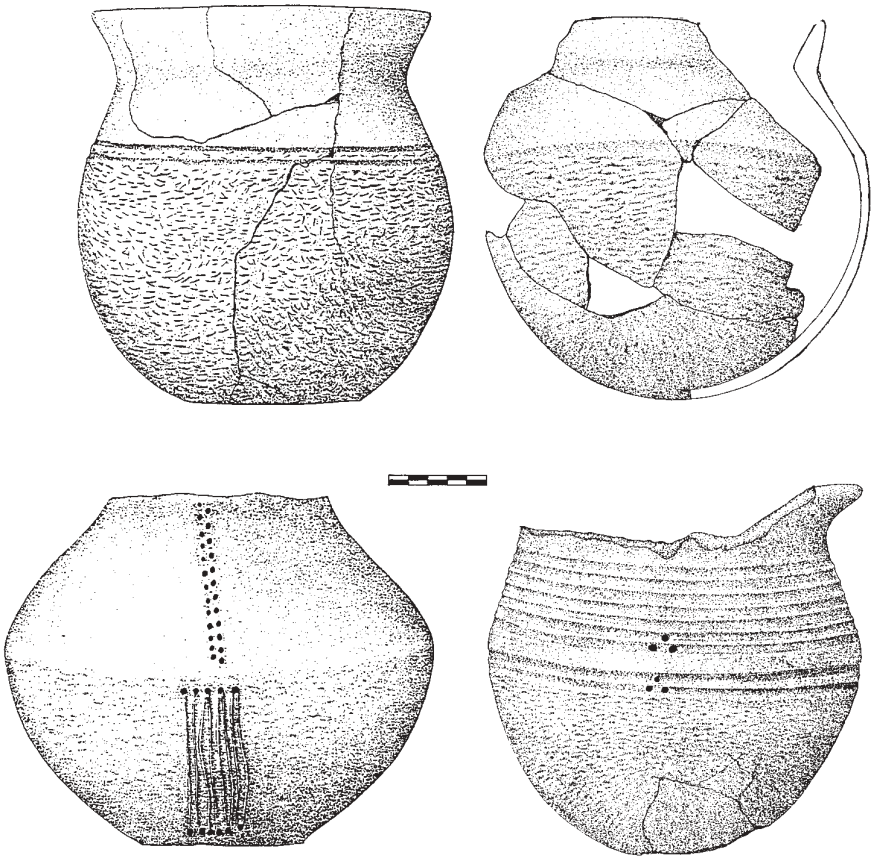
Figure 6.7. Early Makala ceramics: jar forms. Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

Kuulo Kataa (Figs. 6.7, 6.8). The distinctive globular jars used to contain beer or ferment cereals at Kuulo Kataa dropped from the repertoire. Red paint and mica paint/slip also disappeared, as did dentate stamp and a variety of roulette impressions. These discontinuities suggest changes in production, an insight confirmed by chemical characterization of clays. Fifty clay objects were submitted for NAA from Early Makala. Cruz (1996) analyzed a sample of forty vessel fragments stratified by vessel form (small bowls, large bowls, small jars, large jars), which was later augmented by a sample of pipes (n = 7) and spindle whorls (n = 3). The chemical signatures of these archaeological samples were then compared to contemporary and historic samples as outlined in Chapter 5 (Cruz 1996, 2001; Stahl 1999a: 47–50). Although the sample represents a tiny percentage of the total ceramic assemblage, the results suggest a different pattern of consumption than Kuulo Kataa. All of the jars from Early Makala – large and small – were made from so-called "L group" clays (Cruz's West Side Group) associated with the contemporary potting villages of Dorbour and Adadiem west of the Banda hills (Fig. 3.2). A small number of bowls
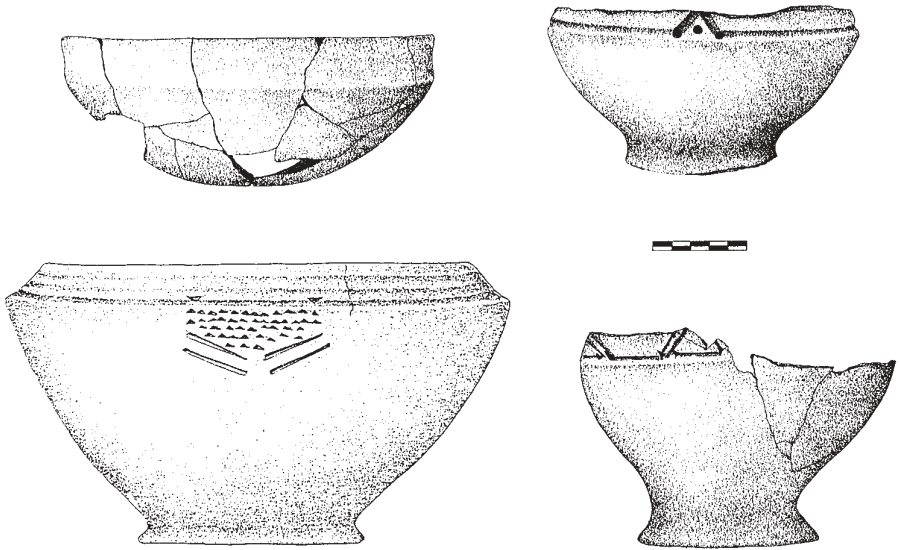
Figure 6.8. Early Makala ceramics: bowl forms. Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

(n = 3) were also made on L group clays. But bowls, both large (n = 8) and small (n = 6), came disproportionately from another clay source (H-1; Cruz's Bondakile group) that is as yet unprovenienced but appears to lie east of the hills, based on compositional similarities to provenienced sources (Stahl 1999a:48). Two remaining bowls showed compositional affinity to provenienced sources east of the hills (K-2; Cruz's East Side Group). Six of the vessel fragments could not be assigned to any of the compositional groups, but only one was sufficiently distinctive to suggest an origin outside the Banda area. The pipes were compositionally diverse: two derived from L group clays west of the hills; one was made from the K-1 source that dominated ceramics from Kuulo Kataa; three were made from K-2 clays, associated with provenienced pits near Bui, Bungasi, and Sabiye, east of the hills; and one could not be assigned to a compositional group. The three spindle whorls were homogeneous in their origin, and were assigned to their own, as yet unprovenienced, source. While they displayed compositional affinities to sources east of the Banda hills, they were sufficiently distinctive to suggest that they were made from a different clay source than other ceramics.

This pattern contrasts markedly with the homogeneity of sources in Kuulo Kataa ceramics; residents of Early Makala consumed clay objects made from diverse sources, both east and west of the Banda hills. Jars and bowls derived from different sources, west and (probably) east of the hills respectively. A small number of bowls were made from clays similar to those from now abandoned clay pits east of the Banda hills (Bui, Bungasi, Sabiye; K-2 group). The pipes consumed at Early Makala derived from a variety of sources east and west of the hills, while the small sample of spindle whorls was uniformly made from a distinct source east of the hills. This

contrasts with contemporary and historic patterns of spindle whorl production confined to the west side of the Banda hills (Crossland 1975, 1976b, 1989:78–79; Crossland and Posnansky 1978:81). Again, triangulating from recent and historic patterns, this suggests that local production of spindle whorls gave way to more restricted production – restricted in fact to a single village (Kokua). This pattern may be relatively recent, stemming perhaps from changes in transportation that made Sampa and its environs (Fig. 3.2) more accessible, combined with the relative decline in local textile production over the last half dozen decades.

The NAA data clearly indicate that potting was *not* a household craft at Early Makala. Extrapolating from the analyzed sample, women east of the Banda hills obtained some pots from producers west of the hills. Moreover, Early Makala consumers obtained jars from one set of producers, bowls from another. Because our samples come from a site of consumption, rather than production, we are unable to sort out whether producers west of the hills made the entire range of vessel forms; however, it is clear that potters in villages 20 km distant (e.g., Dorbour and Adadiem sources) produced for a regional market in this period. Early Makala villagers thus depended on regional exchange to obtain these critical tools for household reproduction. Recall that production at Kuulo Kataa was on a scale that suggested regional exchange, though in this case our working hypothesis is that pots moved out from Kuulo Kataa to other settlements; the flow was reversed at Early Makala. As we will see, consumption patterns at Late Makala differed yet again (Chapter 7).

Although we recovered scraps of iron and occasional iron tools throughout the Early Makala deposits, there was no evidence that iron production took place on site. We recovered slag in very small quantities, and nowhere did it occur in concentration. Again, this contrasts with Kuulo Kataa, where slag was abundant and ubiquitous, and where we encountered an iron-working feature. Early Makala villagers thus smelted off-site, or obtained tools required for defense and agricultural production through regional trade. Most of the sixty-eight pieces of finished iron recovered from Early Makala were amorphous fragments. The few recognizable tools included several blade fragments and spear/arrowpoints. A small number of iron ornaments (four finger rings) were the only non-utilitarian iron objects. Again, as with ceramics, regional trade is suggested for both Early Makala and Kuulo Kataa, with the difference that Kuulo villagers probably *produced* crafts for exchange while Early Makala residents relied on regional exchange to access the tools required to sustain households on a daily basis.

Several classes of small objects that appear to have been crafted at Kuulo Kataa dropped out of the material repertoire of Early Makala (e.g., ivory). There was little worked bone at Early Makala (3 pieces of polished bone, possibly awls). Beads from Early Makala (n = 65) were dominated by imported glass forms (below); the 18 beads that were perhaps locally produced were made from shell (n = 7), metal (n = 7), and clay (n = 4; Caton 1997:64). These suggest continued production of beads, though growing taste for imported glass beads may have diminished taste for locally produced ones.

In sum, Early Makala villagers depended on extra-village production for a variety

of household needs – certainly pottery, and probably iron tools. Consumers obtained pots produced some 12 to 20 km away. Archaeological data are mute on the issue of marketing – we cannot say whether women east of the hills traveled to the producing villages, or whether potters head-loaded their wares to villages east of the hills as they do today (Cruz 2001). In either case, however, the movement of goods across the hills implies a level of security and freedom of movement in the area that was to disappear later in the century (Chapter 7). Smoking pipes, now a common element of material culture, were produced at a variety of sites, and were presumably accessed through exchange by Early Makala residents. Although villagers relied on extra-village contacts to access a variety of products, textiles may have been produced on site. The small sample of spindle whorls distributed across the site suggests a recontextualization of textiles from a prestige commodity to one produced within the household for its own consumption. The social relations implied by these patterns differ considerably from Kuulo Kataa, where villagers controlled production of ceramics and iron, but not textiles. The material pattern at both sites, however, suggests relatively vibrant regional exchange, a point to which I return below.

Feeding the family Excavations at Early Makala yielded a far smaller sample of faunal remains (n = 2,434) than Kuulo Kataa, and the majority of these were unidentified mammal (n = 1,414). Shell was more numerous at Early Makala despite the much smaller sample size, though most came from locally available land snails which were historically collected but are rare in the area today. Fish bones occurred in small numbers (NISP = 24), though a paucity of durable head fragments of large Volta catfish (NISP = 1) hints at changing consumption patterns compared to Kuulo Kataa.

The wild reptilian, bird, and mammalian fauna from Early Makala attests exploitation of a range of habitats. A small sample of crocodile remains (NISP = 2) suggests access to perennial rivers, perhaps the Volta; however, the majority of wild fauna derive from more or less open wooded savanna. These include species that frequent cleared areas (baboon, rodents like grass cutter and squirrel, and hares) and may signal garden hunting. Tortoises frequent streams and temporary water sources, while other savanna-dwelling species were probably culled in areas away from human settlement (e.g., waterbuck, duiker, warthog). Primates were uncommon and, unlike Kuulo Kataa, there were no primates associated with stratifed forest.

Wild fauna clearly figured in the diet of Early Makala villagers. The sample of wild fauna was dominated by durable turtle/tortoise carapace fragments (Stahl 1999a:52–54); however, they accounted for a smaller proportion of the wild fauna than at Kuulo Kataa. Lizards, snakes, and rodents accounted for a larger proportion of the Early Makala fauna. The mix of wild fauna at Early Makala suggests that residents pursued a variety of hunting, collecting, and trapping strategies. Many of the species could have been captured around the village and farms with minimal equipment or skill (e.g., tortoise, grass cutter). The range of large, dangerous fauna is small compared to Kuulo Kataa, yet the presence of crocodile, baboon, jackal,

warthog, and buffalo again suggests the activities of skilled hunters who ranged beyond the local setting. The availability of wild bovids (buffalo, duiker, kob, and waterbuck) would have varied seasonally as species moved toward the Volta River during the dry season and ranged further afield during the rains.

The number of reliably identified domesticates at Early Makala was small, but included chicken, guinea fowl, dog, sheep/goat, and cattle. Fowl were proportionately more common than at Kuulo Kataa. There was no domestic pig at Early Makala. Again, bone fragmentation probably masks the importance of domestics (Stahl 1999a:55); however, the small number of dog (canid) remains (at NISP = 9) stands in marked contrast to their abundance at Kuulo Kataa.

Despite its small size, the faunal sample from Early Makala is relatively diverse. It includes more taxa than expected given its sample size, and is more evenly distributed among those taxa than the fauna from Kuulo Kataa (Stahl 1999a:54). Like villagers at Kuulo Kataa, Early Makala residents exploited a wide range of species (wild and domestic), but their diet appears to have been less dominated by a small number of taxa than at Kuulo Kataa (Chapter 5).

While comparison is frustrated by differences in sample size, disjunctures between the Early Makala and Kuulo Kataa faunal assemblages hint at differences in faunal exploitation. The relatively larger proportion of land-snail shell, the increased proportion of rodents and lizards, combined with the decrease in large/dangerous or inaccessible animals suggest changes in hunting strategies. Garden hunting and casual collecting played a role in both economies; however, the increased reliance on opportunistic garden hunting suggested by the Early Makala fauna could account for both the increased diversity and greater evenness of the Early Makala assemblage. Villagers may have more intensively hunted/collected a wide variety of species that were reliably attracted to garden clearings, water sources, and other settings frequented by people in their daily rounds. There may also have been changes in specialized hunting. Skilled hunters appear to have focused on bovids in the savanna woodland rather than the diverse array of carnivores, artiodactyls, and primates from diverse habitats represented in the Kuulo Kataa fauna. Although we cannot assess the relative contribution of wild compared to domestic fauna, there is a dramatic reduction in dog remains compared to Kuulo Kataa. In light of the ritual connotations of dog consumption in other parts of Ghana, and the evidence for special treatment of dog mandibles at Kuulo Kataa, this difference hints at discontinuities in ritual practice.

Three lines of evidence provide insight into the plant food component of the diet at Early Makala: carbonized plant remains; phytoliths; and plant impressions on pottery. While the macrobotanical remains have not been systematically analyzed, preliminary sorting documents the ubiquity of sorghum. Large concentrations of sorghum were recovered from the burned kitchen deposits in mound 5, and soil samples from across Early Makala contain sorghum. Whether maize is present in the Early Makala macrobotanical samples remains unknown. But other lines of evidence document the presence of maize in the region at the close of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Pottery made in the area today is commonly

surface-treated by rolling a maize cob, stripped of its kernels, across the surface of a leather-hard clay vessel. Maize-cob roulette-impressed sherds are found at Early Makala, though they are unevenly distributed through the vertical layers of mound deposits (Stahl 1994a). Their distribution suggests a substitution of maize-cob for cord-roulette impressed pottery over time. The presence of leaf and cob body phytoliths from maize confirm the presence of this New World staple on the site as well (Stahl 1999a:54–55). These traces attest continued experimentation with New World crops, although the ubiquity of sorghum suggests that maize was grown alongside this indigenous grain.

We can of course only speculate on how maize impacted the nutritional ecology of Banda peoples. Its resistance to predation by birds (though not baboons!), its large durable seeds, and the timing of its harvest presumably made it an attractive cultigen. The ubiquity of carbonized sorghum in mound 5 deposits at Early Makala suggest that maize played a complementary role in this period, expanding the diversity of cultivated crops (cf. Guyer 1996). By boosting caloric intake during the nutritional bottleneck of the hungry season, maize would have made the difference between life and death for vulnerable members of the population. Yet demographic gains from enhanced nutrition were likely offset by losses to the cruelties of war and slaving, of which there are poignant reminders in family histories (Stahl 2001).

Disposing of the dead

Early twentieth-century colonial officials worked to control the disposition of the dead, colonizing bodies (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:40) even in death. A 1929 ordinance (CO849/1) authorized officials to exhume bodies buried outside the mandated cemeteries on the village outskirts. We encountered human remains in a variety of contexts at Early Makala that attest the extent to which colonial mandates departed from local practice. None of the interments at Early Makala was directly associated with architectural features; rather, burials occurred in a depression between mounds or in midden deposits. In all cases, individuals were buried in shallow, narrow pits. Three burial features were dug adjacent to one another in the depression between mounds 4 and 5 (units 8W 12S and 10W 12S). Although not completely parallel, the burial pits were oriented northwest–southeast. One burial was a subadult, less than 18 years old judging from the incomplete epiphyseal fusion on the proximal tibia and distal femur. A second was only minimally exposed, and, judging from the fusion of cranial sutures, represented a mature adult. A third feature in the depression was unexcavated, but was surely another interment. The head of Burial 1 rested in the northwestern end of the burial pit, with the face positioned southwest. The body was interred in a partially flexed position, the legs drawn up slightly, the arms flexed against chest and the torso resting on the side. There were no associated objects. The burial pit was shallow, only 20 cm deep from the point where the pit became visible (c. 40 cm below the surface) to the top of the burial. Burial 2 was interred with the head resting at the southeastern end of burial pit. Again, the face was turned to side, facing southwest. All three pits were located quite close to one another. Burials 1 and 2 were roughly 40 cm apart from one

another, while the distance between Burials 2 and 3 was only 15 cm at their point of greatest proximity. Their close placement hints that these individuals were buried at the same time.

We encountered a fourth burial in a shallow pit dug into midden deposit in unit 14W 35S. This adult burial intersected the southeastern corner of our unit, and was thus only partially exposed. The body was interred in a pit that must have trended northeast–southwest, with the head resting in the southwestern extent of the pit. The body rested on its left side, with the face looking northwest. The left arm was flexed, the hand positioned by the face. The ribs were friable and crushed. Several pieces of broken pottery were recovered from inside the rib cage – probably intrusions from the overlying midden. Our workmen claimed this was a woman, based on the orientation of the body: women are buried facing the setting sun, while men are buried facing the rising sun. The outline of a shallow pit was clear along the northern margins of the burial, but its boundaries were unclear to the south. The burial occurred at a depth of roughly 110 cm below the surface, although the pit was visible only about 20 cm above the burial, suggesting that much of the midden deposit built up after the burial took place. We also noted a human cranial fragment in the southern profile of unit 14W 35S some 70 cm below the ground surface. It was unclear whether this was part of a burial that extended into the next unit (to the south), or whether it was an isolated bone.

This small sample suggests that residents were interred within village limits, though we found no burials associated with architectural features (e.g., floors). With present chronological resolution we cannot say whether mound 5 was occupied at the time that the burials in the depression took place, but it appears that the deceased were interred within the province of the living. The burial of at least one individual in a midden context suggests that there was no single special-purpose site for burials at this time. The shallow burial pits characteristic of the Early Makala burials contrast with contemporary practice, presumably shaped by colonial legacy, in which graves are dug to more than a meter.

Early Makala in the regional and subcontinental economy
The social fields of Banda villagers in the Begho period were framed by subcontinental trade with the Niger. How did the historically documented southward shift in trade reframe those social fields? For the period before Early Makala's founding, we must rely on our sociological imaginations augmented by meager documentary sources. Asante's expansion in the north was motivated in part by an effort to capture the northern trade. Though its importance is often overlooked (Arhin 1970, 1987), the northern trade was an important element of the subcontinental economy even at the height of the Atlantic trade. The north provided an outlet for kola, and was a source of copper alloys, salt, and captives. The growing Atlantic appetite for slaves intensified the demand for captives throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Lovejoy 1983). As we contemplate the local effects of the slave trade, we need to recognize that its regional impact varied through time. A society might be involved in multiple capacities at different points in time – as a source of slaves, an interme-

diary, or a consumer of slaves (Van Dantzig 1982). We might anticipate that certain forms of social and political organization made some societies – or individuals within those societies – less vulnerable to the slave trade. Strong lineages may have provided individuals some measure of protection in the absence of strong states (Ekeh 1990; see also Hart [1978]). A variety of West African settlement forms have been interpreted as responses to the pressures of the slave trade (Goody 1998; Hart 1978; Peel 1983:55–70). While slaves may have passed through the Begho transit markets, I suspect that Banda was not a source of slaves in the Begho period. The relatively large settlements of this period would have offered people a measure of protection. The robust trade in this period implies a degree of security and social control along the caravan routes that probably declined with Begho's demise. This is not to suggest that slavery was a benign institution in the context of the northern trade; rather, that locally, in the Begho period, the threat of enslavement was perhaps minimal for regional inhabitants. Of course, individuals may have been pawned or sold into captivity, though probably in limited numbers.

Though Asante's attack on Begho did not wield a death blow, it surely disrupted the regional economy and diminished local security. In turn, the risk of enslavement in this newly created frontier probably increased, especially in light of increasing demand for slaves in the western hemisphere. Banda's population probably became more vulnerable, and, as I have speculated, the hills may have offered a measure of protection to inhabitants living in small dispersed settlements. The historic Banda chieftaincy probably took root in such conditions, though we know that it was unable to protect its citizens from being enslaved, as is poignantly evident in the Dutch document that makes first mention of Banda (Yarak 1979).

Banda's incorporation into Asante, though traumatic, probably eased the threat of enslavement for its population. The period of Early Makala's occupation appears to have been one of relative stability judging from the longevity of settlement and the trade in crafts that linked villages east and west of the Banda hills. Unlike outer provinces (Gonja and Dagomba), Asante did not levy tribute in slaves against Banda in the nineteenth century (Wilks 1975:68–69). There do not, therefore, appear to have been external pressures to produce slaves. In fact, Banda was allegedly awarded 4,700 captives in the wake of Asante's successful campaign against neighboring Gyaman (Dupuis 1966:81). But Dupuis' visit to Kumase was a decade after British abolition, when Asante was coping with a glut of slaves for which it had no market.

Banda family histories document the local consumption of captives; some families purchased them to offset the loss of family members killed in war; others describe purchasing the freedom of enslaved family members (Stahl and Anane 1989:28), underscoring the importance of family connections in obtaining freedom (McSheffrey 1983; Peel 1983). Captives were used to augment household numbers, and presumably contributed to differential growth of families and lineages. The offspring of captives were free, and belonged to the *katoo* within which they were born. Captives thus augmented the Banda population, although their origins were masked as they became subsumed within Nafana identity (Stahl 1991).

Although one of our thermoluminescence dates extends to the mid-eighteenth

century, I suspect that Early Makala was established after Banda's incorporation into Asante in 1773–74. If so, Early Makala was occupied during a period when Asante's control over northern provinces had been solidified. Trade and tribute were crucial to Asante's political economy in this period, material practices that created and sustained links between Asante and its provinces. Archaeological data provide some insight into the objects that expressed these links, but I turn again to Dupuis' brief account of his encounter with the Banda paramount chief for insight into how these links potentially reshaped the political economy of value (Appadurai 1986:30) in this period.

Among the gifts bestowed on the Banda chief by the Asantehene in 1820 were several lengths of imported cloth: "two pieces of brocade, some damask and fine cotton goods" along with five kegs of rum and ten kegs of powder (Dupuis 1966:164). This passing observation captures a moment of taste-making that we must view in relation to the broader political economy of the time. First, these gifts objectified the changing relationship between Banda and its new master; vanquished less than forty years before, humiliated by the capture of their dead chief's skull and its display as a trophy of war, Banda's loyalty in the Gyaman war demanded recognition. The gifting of imported cloth speaks to its power to reshape political relations at the same time as it supplied a new means for the Banda chief to distinguish himself at home. During the twentieth century, cloths of distinction in Banda derived from the south – strip-woven kente cloth produced in Asante, or imported velvets, brocades, and other sumptuous textiles. Thus we see an important shift in source over time – away from the locally or regionally produced strip-woven cottons for which Begho and environs were known (Chapter 5) – to more distant and ultimately international sources that Banda chiefs accessed through ties first to Asante, and later to the British. This emerging taste for imported cloths of distinction shaped an altered politics of value that drew Banda chiefs, and ultimately commoners, increasingly into subcontinental exchange (cf. Sahlins 1994). Our evidence hints at a confluence of local and global dynamics in this reshaping; the growing taste for imported cloths of distinction probably developed in a context in which the prestige cloths of old were becoming embedded in household production. In other words, as cotton cloth became a household product, social distinction was created anew through consumption of imported fabrics that simultaneously forged external dependency. Though the Banda chief would have been unaware of its broader significance, the gift of rum from the Asantehene objectified the triangle of trade that inextricably linked Europe, Africa, and the western hemisphere (Mintz 1985). Enslaved Africans in the diaspora produced the sugar that was distilled into rum that found its way back to the homeland of the captives in a bleak parody of the rhyme about Jack's house. The ten kegs of gunpowder, a commodity whose northward flow Asante carefully controlled, spoke powerfully to Banda's value as an ally. Loyalty in the Gyaman war was rewarded with a gift of the "means of destruction" (Goody 1971:39–56), one that altered democratic access to weaponry. As Goody (1971:43) observed, "The bow and arrow is essentially a democratic weapon; every man knows how to construct one; the materials are readily available, the techniques uncomplicated, the missiles

easy to replace." The "tomahawks, lances, knives, javelins and bows and arrows" with which Banda forces were armed in the Gyaman war (Dupuis 1966:xxxviii) were weapons that drew on local or regional expertise for production; the limiting factor here was iron. But gunpowder was the lifeline for the new means of destruction – the guns that Dupuis (1966:76–77) observed among the Banda chief's retinue were useless without it. We can imagine that each of these gifts – cloth, rum, and gunpowder – shaped taste-making in Banda, drawing its people further into the Atlantic trade that dominated the century.

Material remains from Early Makala also provide insight into Banda's links with regional and subcontinental economies. A limited array of imported manufactured goods were recovered from Early Makala: 43 glass and 3 carnelian beads; a fragment of whiteware, hand-painted with a polychrome decoration; 3 ball-clay pipes from superficial contexts on the site; 3 pieces of glass (from the surface or uppermost 10 cm of soil); and 4 gun-flints, probably English in origin (Christopher DeCorse, personal communication). The gunflints seem to corroborate Dupuis' (1966:77) intelligence that Banda possessed guns, though the flints may also have been used as strike-a-lights. The small collection of glass beads was diverse, including a variety of multicolored drawn (n = 28) and wire wound (n = 12) beads (Caton 1997:64–66). No two of the glass beads were alike – they differed in size, shape, color, and decorative treatment. Their diversity is similar to that represented among sacred bead assemblages used in female rites of passage among the Nafana today (Chapter 3). Caton (1997) interviewed elder Banda women about bead use and documented the varied collections of imported glass and stone (often carnelian) included in the sacred assemblages. Glass beads include chevrons, millefioris, striped as well as simple white beads (Caton 1997:36–43). These curated assemblages show considerable overlap with the range of beads recovered from Early Makala. The archaeological assemblage suggests a growing taste for imported beads, only a portion of which entered the archaeological record. We cannot say whether these were used in familiar ways, in effect substituted for locally or regionally produced forms, or whether they were associated with novel practices. Their increased quantity and diversity speak, however, to a growing taste for more heterogeneous beads that could only be accessed through international trade networks.

A number of scholars have persuasively argued that the impact of European trade goods depended on their recontextualization: how they were perceived and used in local context. Did they, as Sahlins (1993) suggests, enable people to become more like themselves as they put exotic goods to local uses, forging continuities despite apparent change; did they transform society, materially altering social relations; or did they have both of these effects simultaneously? If we imaginatively augment the small collection of European goods at Early Makala with Dupuis' meager 1820 observations, it seems likely that manufactured goods entered Banda through chiefly networks before the middle of the nineteenth century. Their flow was presumably controlled by and enhanced the position of the paramount chief. Yet Dupuis (1966:76) also noted that the Bandahene's retinue included "several moslems of inferior rank, and their slaves" who, on historical analogy, might have been traders. The

range of goods either documented by Dupuis or evidenced at Makala Kataa includes cloth, beads, rum (in kegs), gunflints, a painted whiteware dish, and a glass sherd. Other glass sherds and ball-clay pipes occurred in surface contexts and cannot be reliably linked to Early Makala's occupation. Among these artifact categories, cloth, beads, and drink were known to Banda peoples in local forms, and it seems likely that imported forms were substituted for local ones and put to similar uses – to create and maintain social distinction, as sacred objects used in rites of passage (e.g., beads in female initiation), and so on. Yet imported beads and cloth were considerably more diverse than their locally/regionally produced counterparts. The heterogeneity of shapes, colors, and decorative treatment among the glass beads stands in marked contrast to the homogeneous, locally made shell, clay, and bone bead assemblages at Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala. The changing taste for imported objects – in the case of beads, heterogeneous ones – may have been shaped by their power to distinguish or a perception of greater efficacy; but changes in local production may have operated as "push" factors in taste-making as well. As households embraced textile production, the efficacy of cotton cloth as a mark of distinction was reduced, perhaps fueling new tastes. But by substituting imported for locally or regionally produced prestige goods, relations of production and access to these socially powerful objects were altered. Although imported goods may have been used in similar ways to create and embody distinction, their adoption removed production from the local sphere, making continued access to these prestige-making and -maintaining objects dependent on external networks.

But such a diagnosis looks forward from Early Makala to what was to come and is shaped by a retrospective gaze that easily slots these objects into a story whose twentieth-century outcomes were as yet uncertain. Based on evidence in hand, the flow of European goods into Banda was at this point rather minimal. These goods were probably used in familiar ways, working to make Banda people "more like themselves" (Sahlins 1993:17), at the same time that they may have intensified processes of social differentiation. But this process of becoming "more like themselves" was surely complicated by the frontier setting of Banda – "themselves" in this period arguably encompassed people of varied ethnic-linguistic backgrounds who had not as yet forged a "common system of intelligibility" – an area characterized perhaps by Amselle's (1993:15) *logiques métisses*. To reiterate a point developed in Chapter 2, though we can reasonably hope to explore the changing dynamics of taste, recovering meaning depends on analogical arguments that cannot be corroborated. Yet we can observe that imported goods in this period were restricted to adornment and the technology of destruction (guns). They posed no threat to local craft production – of pottery, iron, or probably of textiles – suggesting minimal impact on social reproduction in late eighteenth- to early nineteenth-century Banda.

The copper alloys used to fashion the small collection of brass/bronze objects (n = 7) from Early Makala may have derived from either the European or Niger trades. Six objects were probably fashioned by regional craftsmen, while only one may be a European design (a curved ornamental plate with two small holes, perhaps affixed to a trunk). Four of the brass/bronze objects were ornaments – two finger/toe rings,

an earring, and a cast bell pendant. The remaining objects may relate to the gold trade. A severely damaged and twisted cast brass box-like object may be a portion of a gold dust box (Garrard 1980:185; Stahl 1999a:56). A spatulate tool fashioned from sheet metal resembles gold dust spoons that were commonly included in the paraphernalia of traders. Mound 6 yielded a series of ten small, dark brown, cuboid stones similar to those described by Garrard (1980:182 and Fig. 23), used as touchstones to distinguish gold from copper alloys. Touchstones were a standard element of a *futuo*, or weight bag. These suggest continued involvement of Banda peoples in the regional and perhaps interregional gold trade during the period of Early Makala's occupation.

While the impact of European manufactures appears limited, the ubiquity of smoking pipes at Early Makala suggests that smoking, presumably of New World tobacco, was by this time routine. While we cannot assume that tobacco was the only substance smoked by Early Makala villagers, a residue analysis (using gas chromatography) of several pipes supports the interpretation of these as tobacco pipes (Sean Rafferty, personal communication). Pipes were locally made, although produced outside the household at a variety of regional sites based on NAA results outlined above. We recovered 175 pipe fragments (compared to 21 at Kuulo Kataa), which were broadly consistent with nineteenth-century pipe forms (Stahl 1992:126–128), but stylistically quite diverse. The majority of pipes were finely crafted. Decoration was well executed, and the pipes were often highly burnished. Clearly, these were objects of beauty, valued for display (Fig. 6.9). Stylistic heterogeneity, expressed in placement and combinations of decorative treatments, suggests that variation was valued in this ceramic medium, in contrast to domestic pottery, which was homogeneous in both vessel form and decorative treatment (Stahl 1994a). What are the social implications of this contrast? Despite its crucial role as a tool of household reproduction, domestic pottery does not appear today, nor does it appear on the basis of oral-historical sources in the recent past, to be an avenue for social display (Dietler and Herbich 1994; cf. David et al. 1991; MacEachern 1994; McIntosh 1989; Sterner 1989, 1992). In contrast to Asante (MacLeod 1981:157–161), where ceremonial and elite ceramics were elaborate and stylistically distinct, ceramics from Makala Kataa show no such distinction. Pipes contrast with domestic ceramics in their heterogeneity and investment in decorative detail, suggesting that they served as a vehicle for social display. This individuation of locally produced pipes at Early Makala (cf. Vivian 1992, 1998) stands in marked contrast to the homogeneity of imported ball-clay pipes at Late Makala (Chapter 7).

Summary

The material remains at Early Makala give the impression of a stable village occupied for several decades. Early Makala villagers depended on regional networks to access the tools required for household reproduction (metal implements for farming, pottery for food preparation). Pottery derived from sites upwards of 20 km distant; thus the catchment from which villagers obtained items required for household reproduction was relatively wide. At the same time, there are hints that textile
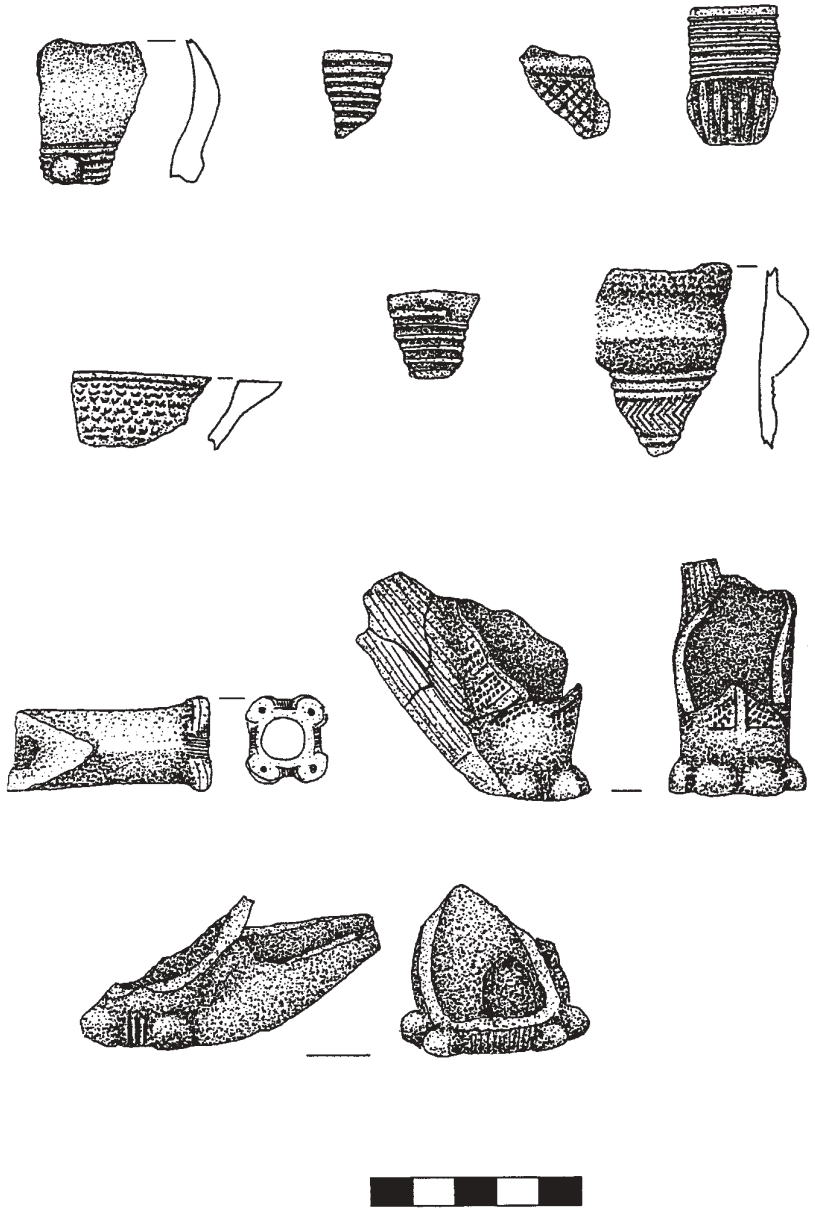
Figure 6.9. Smoking pipes from Early Makala. Scale in cm. Drawings by Alex Caton

production became embedded in the household, a pattern that departs from our current understanding of Kuulo Kataa. We can imagine that increased local production reduced the value of local textiles as objects of distinction, perhaps encouraging consumption of imported textiles by Banda's elite. Although regional exchange appears vibrant, the evidence for supraregional, subcontinental exchange is limited to prestige objects and weapons of destruction. This suggests minimal impact on daily routines. Here intercontinental connections were manifest primarily in the use of New World crops – certainly maize and likely tobacco. Documentary and oral sources provide some insight into Banda's role as a source of slaves on some occasions, and a supplier of slaves on others (Stahl 2001). But it seems likely that enslavement was not an immediate threat to Banda peoples during the period of relative stability represented by Early Makala. While daily life at Early Makala was probably punctuated by episodes of warfare (based on oral-historical and archival sources), it does not appear to have threatened the overall stability of village life, at least initially. Villagers refurbished and rebuilt houses, engaged in regional exchange, hunted and collected in a variety of settings, and probably experimented with new crops. Yet extraregional events brought this relative stability to an abrupt end – signs point to a rapid abandonment of Early Makala. Useable material culture was left in place, suggesting that villagers relocated some distance from the site, far enough away to discourage residents from scavenging useful items. The end of this period of relative quiescence may be inscribed in the memory of conflicts with Gyaman, attested in both oral and written testimony (Ameyaw 1965; Dupuis 1966).

Reflections

The period c. 1725 to 1825 witnessed dramatic changes in the circumstances that conditioned daily life in Banda. Our archaeological data provide a glimpse into local life in the final decades of the eighteenth and early decades of the nineteenth century. Oral-historical and archival evidence helps to animate the broader regional and subcontinental setting in which those lives were lived, and provides insight into processes of ethnogenesis and political formation only indirectly expressed in material remains. The period began as the large settlements of the Kuulo phase, linked to Begho, broke apart. We cannot with certainty attribute any of the sites located through survey, nor any excavated remains, to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. Settlements may have consisted of small hamlets, difficult to identify archaeologically; the area may have been virtually abandoned; or our dating tools may simply be inadequate. By the end of the eighteenth century, Asante had exerted its control over the area. The extension of Asante hegemony over Banda was traumatic, marked by the death of their chief, abandonment of their homes, and loss of family to the slave trade. By the end of the century, however, Banda peoples were again living in relatively large, stable villages. The economic scenario is one of local production supplemented by regional exchange – but the material evidence suggests that long-distance exchange networks were incidental to daily life.

The apparent stability of Early Makala ended abruptly; the material signature at mound 5 suggests that occupants abandoned the site rapidly, perhaps under threat

of attack. From the point of abandonment (c. 1820) until the end of the century, we lose our material trail – people may have quit the area altogether, as suggested by oral sources, or they may have returned to the site or its surroundings, settling in areas that we've not yet tested through excavations, or that our crude chronology cannot identify. The generation that resettled Makala Kataa late in the nineteenth century had lived through considerable political-economic upheaval from the time their grandparents and parents fled the site. The next chapter takes up the story of Banda life in this period, c. 1825 to 1925.

7

The changing social fields of Banda villagers
c. 1825–1925

A shift to so-called "legitimate" trade occurred in the aftermath of abolition, though the internal slave trade continued – and perhaps intensified – with cash crop production. European industrial output increased dramatically because of the steam engine; but an economic downturn in the last quarter-century prompted Europe to seek protected outlets for its manufactured goods. Thus Britain consolidated its "New Empire," expanding control over the Gold Coast and its hinterland. Asante's control of its northern provinces waxed and waned with changing circumstances in its capital. Trouble in Kumase translated into rebellion in the north. British officials, anxious to eliminate Asante's influence, and fearing encroachment from Germany to the east and France from the west, sent George Ferguson on several missions from 1892 to 1897 to conclude treaties with Asante's northern provinces (Arhin 1974). At the same time, Asante's northwestern provinces felt the effects of Samori's expansion into the Volta basin. In 1896 the British invaded Kumase and ousted Samori from the Volta basin. The Northern Territories of the Gold Coast were established in 1897, but colonial administration of the north was delayed by Britain's preoccupation with Asante. Nonetheless, this marked the beginning of colonial rule that became ever more present in the lives of Banda villagers in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

I begin by considering the lives of Banda peoples in the wake of Early Makala's abandonment. Because we have no material traces from roughly the 1820s to almost the end of the century, insights into this period are based on documentary and oral-historical sources viewed through the lens of our sociological imaginations. We pick up the material trail of Banda life in the 1890s, when villagers once again reoccupied Makala Kataa. Late Makala, occupied between roughly 1897 and 1920, provides a window into the character of daily life in the years when Banda villagers were being brought under closer colonial scrutiny.

Migration and assimilation: oral-historical and documentary perspectives
Ameyaw's (1965) Tradition of Banda provides the fullest account of the political history of Banda during the nineteenth century. This lengthy account can be cross-referenced with the more partial histories collected by Fell (1913) and Owusuh (1976) and an account of Banda history provided by Kofi Gyatoe (Kyeame) in the Asantehene's court (KA 985:54–59; Chapter 3). Our family history project collected important supplemental information from non-royal families that provides a more variegated and complex history of migration and ethnic process than official state histories that trace

the Nafana to their ancestral settlement in Kakala (Stahl and Anane 1989). Four of the seven founding families of Banda-Ahenkro trace their origins to different ethnic-linguistic groups (i.e., Kulango, Gonja). These families recounted how their ancestors fled their homelands over inheritance disputes, accusations of sorcery, and so on, under conditions that Kopytoff (1987:17–22) describes as systematically producing frontiersmen. These and other families sought refuge with the Nafana, and later adopted Nafana customs (including matrilineal descent and female initiation rites) and the Nafaanra language (Stahl 1991). Thus we must distinguish the political history of the Banda chieftaincy from the history of its constituent people, many of whom appear to have joined the Banda Nafana during the course of the nineteenth century.

War and migration: political history of the Banda chieftaincy
Banda traditions suggest that the nineteenth century was a period of considerable turmoil for the polity (Table 6.1). Documentary sources and oral traditions of neighboring polities agree on a broad outline of events. Banda's participation in Asante's campaign against Gyaman, Banda's western neighbor, marked a new round of dislocation. Whereas Dupuis claims that the Bandahene was rewarded for loyal service (Chapter 6), Ameyaw (1965:8) was told that Banda was accused of cowardice in the aftermath of the Gyaman war, a claim that Kyeame Kofi Gyatoe also made before the Asantehene's court in 1936 (KA 985:57). In skeleton form, the Ameyaw history recounts that Banda people fled the area under Asante demands that they pay a massive fine in gold.[17] They took refuge in Bona, in eastern Côte d'Ivoire, where they quarreled with Bona people. Although Banda initially prevailed, Bona people retaliated with the help of neighboring peoples and inflicted heavy losses on Banda people. The battle is commemorated in the Banda state oath, *kobene*, which recalls the color of mourning cloth worn by the Banda chief as they fled Bona. Banda people next took refuge in Gyaman, west of the Banda hills, and sought Gyaman's support in retaliating against Bona. With the aid of Gyaman, Banda defeated Bona, but was entreated by Asante to return to the Banda hills. Sometime later, Banda was attacked by Gyaman in retaliation for the murder of its emissary. Banda was defeated and its dispossessed people fled the area. They settled north of the Black Volta River, at Longoro, a Mo town subject to Nkoranza. Ameyaw (1965:10) describes a series of disputes with the Mo, and Banda's allegiance with Asante in its (1893) campaign against Nkoranza (also Agbodeka [1971:163–164]). Some time later, Nkoranza reoccupied its devastated town, and attacked Banda people, now living at Gulubo. Banda people were defeated, and fled in several directions, some settling with their chief in Akomadan (south of Wenchi), others at Wenchi, and still others at Bue (Bui) on the Black Volta. The Banda chief Sahkyame died at Akomadan, and was succeeded by Sie Yaw (Sie Yaw Dwuru; Ameyaw 1965:10–11). Under Banda Regent Sie Yaw Dwuru (whose name is entered on the British treaty of 1894 [CO879/41 No. 479, no. 57, enc. 2]), Banda people reoccupied their former lands, settling at Bue (Bui), and later Samianko (Banda-Ahenkro). Oral history holds that Sie Yaw was forced to negotiate for Banda lands with the King of Gyaman, who held lands captured during an earlier dispute under the Banda chief Sahkyame (Ameyaw 1965:9–11).

Some of this skeleton outline of Banda political history is confirmed by documentary sources, especially toward the close of the nineteenth century. In April 1882 Captain R. Lonsdale was sent by the British authorities to intervene in an ongoing dispute between Gyaman and Asante (CO 879/19 No. 249, no. 56). Approaching Bonduku, the Gyaman capital, Lonsdale reported that villages on the southern margins of the Banda area were in ruins (e.g., Menyeh [Menji; Fig. 3.2]). The Gyaman king told Lonsdale that uncertain conditions prevailed from Gyaman through Banda to Kintampo and Salaga.

> From four to five years ago the King of Bona fought with and drove the (now) Banda (or as it is sometimes pronounced, Banna) people from their country, which appears to have been considerably further north than the town of Banda . . . The people sought an asylum with the King of Gaman, and received from him as a settlement the small strip of country surrounding the town of Banda . . . in return for this they were to "serve" Adjiman, King of Gaman . . . Some time after these people had become settled in their new country, a Chief named Inkrunsima, of Bedu (a place situated roughly speaking east of Bontuku and southeast of Banda), who had, it appears . . . been playing fast and loose with both the Kings of Ashanti and Gaman, either took up residence in Banda, or payed it a protracted visit.
> (CO 879/19 No. 249, no. 56)

Inkrunsima incited the Banda people to renounce Adjiman, and encouraged them to trouble Gyaman traders on their way to and from Kintampo and Salaga. According to the Gyaman chief's testimony, Gyaman attacked Banda. Ashanti allied itself with Banda in an effort to reconquer its former vassals. "King Adjiman expressed his opinion that the Bandafo were a troublesome lot, not worth the attention given them, and as far as he was concerned, they might take themselves off anywhere they pleased . . . the King of Gaman wants Banda removed from his land" (CO 879/19 No. 249, no. 56).

George Ferguson's 1892 correspondence (Chapter 4) echoed the theme of instability, reporting that "the political relations of the larger states with the weaker tribes are constantly changing, and . . . the boundaries of these inland territories become unsatisfactory and ill-defined" (Arhin 1974:74; CO879/38 No. 448, no. 45, enc. 1). In October 1893, word reached the British that Banda had been attacked by Nkoranza and that Asante had come to Banda's aid (CO879/39 No. 458, no. 38). Ferguson provided intelligence on the context of this dispute in November of 1893:

> Between all these several tribes [Banda, Gyaman, Asante] there are also accounts of great and bloody wars, and shortly before the Kumase war of 1873–4 one of these ensued betwen [*sic*] Gaman and Banda, in which war the inhabitants of the latter country were driven from their ancient habitat to take refuge in Nkoranza territory. The Bandas then formed an alliance with the Kumasis.
> (Arhin 1974:35; CO879/39 No. 458, no. 45, enc. 1)

After the 1892–93 war between Nkoranza and Asante, Nkoranza attacked Banda to punish it for its alliance with Asante. The British feared that an Asante/Banda victory, fueled by a rumored alliance with Bole, would result in Asante gaining control of the important Nkoranza trade town of Atebubu (Fig. 3.1; CO879/39 No. 458, no. 38). In January 1894 it was reported that Banda and its Asante allies had been defeated by Nkoranza and its Mo allies (CO879/39 No. 458, no. 43), and that the Banda chief Seidu Nji had been killed (Arhin 1974:55). Ferguson was sent to Bole to subvert Banda/Asante efforts to gain Bole's allegiance in the war against Nkoranza/Mo (CO879/39 No. 458, no. 58). On January 16, 1894, Ferguson reported that the market town of Kintampo (Fig. 3.1) had been destroyed, and numerous towns and villages abandoned: "The men of Mo were encamped against the Bandas and the women were concealed in little farms on the banks of the Volta" (CO879/39 No. 458, no. 69, enc.).

Ferguson met with Banda officials sent by heir apparent Sie Yaw on March 14, 1894, at "Jramma" (in Nkoranza territory; Arhin 1974:134). Here Banda representatives reportedly applied for British protection. Ferguson considered Banda strategic because of its proximity to Gyaman and the base of French operations (CO 879/41 No. 479, no. 57). Early in December 1894, Ferguson traveled to Lawra (Bui) on the south bank of the Volta, which he fixed at latitude 8°16′22″N. "Here the Bandas have gathered and built houses after the Ashanti–Nkoranza war" (CO 879/41 No. 479, no. 57). Banda was in an interregnum, with the heir apparent, Sie Yaw, not yet enstooled. On December 5, Ferguson executed a Treaty of Friendship and Freedom of Trade and gave Banda representatives a British flag to signal their new alliance; Sie Yaw was absent, but represented by his sword-bearer Asamyina (CO879/41 No. 479, no. 57, enc. 1; and see Arhin [1974:112]). As a result of the treaty, Ferguson claimed that formerly closed trade roads were now open (Arhin 1974:113).

Ferguson recognized the power of symbolic objects in cementing the friendship and allegiance of Britain's allies: "A state umbrella, or a state sword, some native insignia of office such as those worn by 'oseng' (breastplates), are all powerful means of cementing friendship when presented by the superior power to the inferior, and is much valued. At least this can be done until the state of Ashanti does not require such soft policy with our allies" (CO879/41 No. 478, no. 40, enc. 3; Arhin 1974:63).

Throughout his correspondence, Ferguson referred to Banda as the "country of Banda, or Ligbi, or Fula," signaling his uncertainty about the name of the polity, and reflecting his reliance on an interpreter, Sergeant-Major Mama Gimalah, a native of Timbuktu who spoke "Moshi," "Wangara," and Twi. Gimalah acted as interpreter for the Banda treaty (CO879/45 No. 506, no. 73), and probably communicated with Ligby subjects of Banda in "Wangara" or Fula, a Mande language, an insight that is strengthened by Ferguson's impression that the "Bandas" spoke "Jila" (CO879/45 No. 506, no. 130; Arhin 1974:117). Ferguson had a positive impression of the Banda "Jila" or Ligby – as an "industrious people" (Arhin 1974:129) and "enterprising Mahomedan race" who undertook gold-mining (Arhin 1974:122). Ferguson

remained unaware of the ethnic-linguistic complexity of Banda peoples and of the Nafana dominance of the chieftaincy. Judging from descriptions of Gimalah's linguistic competence, he could have conducted negotiations in either Twi (the Asante language) or Ligby/Jila. Banda had for some time been an Asante province, and the Banda chief must have had linguists proficient in Twi. Moreover, the few names that can be definitively linked to the late nineteenth century show that Akan day names (Chapter 3) had begun to be used in Banda, albeit in combination with Nafaanra names indicating birth order. For example, Ferguson and Banda histories (Ameyaw 1965) agree that the regent at the time of British treaty negotiations was Sie Yaw. Sie indicates a first-born male in the Nafaanra system of day names, while Yaw is the Akan name for a male child born on Thursday. We cannot determine whether the choice of Ligby/Jila as the language of negotiation was made by British or Banda representatives; however, it simultaneously elevated the visibility of Ligby peoples and diminished that of other resident linguistic groups. So too were the Asante connections that had conditioned life in Banda for more than a century diminished by the choice of intermediary language. Like Ferguson, later British authorities viewed the "Mohammedans" as a civilizing force that would help bring about trade and prosperity. In 1905, the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories observed that the "Mohammedan" presence "has done more to bring about order, decency, and a local cleanliness than years of our administration has effected" (NWU A339 1905:7).

Britain turned its attention to Samori after Asante was forced to submit in January 1896. Rumors of an alliance between Samori and Kumase circulated late in 1895, and raised British concerns about the flow of trade from the north (CO879/44 No. 500, no. 42). In January 1896 a Banda messenger reported to the British that Samori's troops had occupied Banda (CO879/44 No. 504, no. 101, enc. 1). In April 1896, Captain Davidson-Houston passed through Banda leading a company of Gold Coast Constabulary from Kumasi. He reported that Sofa troops had taken 112 captives and commandeered foodstuffs; Davidson-Houston encountered several stores of food which were broken open and returned to Banda people (CO879/45 No. 506, no. 114). By December 1896, British intelligence suggested that Samori commanded a chain of posts across Asante's hinterland: Banda, Bole, Buipe, Boniape, and Debre (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 17). In January 1897 Lieutenant Henderson arrived in Lawra (Bui), where he was told that Samori had respected Banda territory because of the British flag in their possession. Before their attack on Bole, Samori's people had warned Banda people on the north bank of the Volta to cross the river before fighting commenced or they would be assumed to be friends of the Bole people. A number of Banda people ignored the warning until Bole fell, after which Samori demanded that they be given up as his prisoners. Reportedly 110 Banda men were given over to Samori to forestall an attack on Lawra (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 52). Henderson estimated that 500 men with guns would be required to drive Samori out of Bole, though supplying such a large force with food would be difficult since "There is practically none between Lawra [Bui] and Buale [Bole] and there is none within a 15 mile radius of Buale" (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 52). From Banda, Henderson proceeded to Wa, accompanied by

George Ferguson, where in April they were attacked by Samori's troops (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 161). Henderson was reportedly taken prisoner, and Ferguson wounded. Early reports claimed that Ferguson perished after being abandoned by the carriers who were conveying him in a hammock (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 395, enc. 1). According to a later report filed by Henderson, Ferguson was found by Sofa soldiers who shot and beheaded him after he refused to be taken to see their prince (Arhin 1974:162; CO879/50 No. 538, no. 136). The attack prompted British officials to station troops in Banda where they could cut off the flow of trade goods to Samori (CO879/48 No. 529, no. 254, enc. 4).

Samori's troops had pursued a scorched earth policy that left areas north and west of Banda devastated (Haight 1981; Northcott 1899:16; Chapter 4). British accounts suggest that the Banda area was relatively unscarred, and provided one of the few sources from which the British could provision their growing military presence. By August 1897, troops under British command were garrisoned at Lawra (CO879/50 No. 538, no. 131), which was supplying British troops in Bona with provisions; Lt. Col. Northcott reported severe food shortages from Bona for seventy miles along the Lawra road. Northcott's troops took eighty loads of grain from Lawra, and Northcott instructed the "King of Lawra to send further consignments of grain" (CO879/52 No. 549, no. 102). British documents are silent on whether Banda people were compensated for the grain, and on how the burden of provisioning British troops affected their ability to feed themselves. We might imagine that the burden of provisioning prompted movement out from Bui – the riverside settlement where Banda peoples had congregated and where British troops were encamped. By 1898 the threat of Samori had been eliminated, and oral sources claim that Banda peoples moved back to their "former village sites." It was in this period that the village settlement at Late Makala was founded and other abandoned sites reoccupied. The Banda countryside was unknown to British officials; in 1902 the officer commanding Kintampo District referred to the area as "Foulah Country, at Banda" (GNA ADM56/1/457, Report of 4 January, 1902). In 1903 previously unvisited portions of Banda were toured and sketched (GNA ADM56/1/459), though the frontispiece map in the *Gold Coast Civil Service List* for 1907 still showed the area as "Ligui, Fugula or Banda" (NWU A403 1907). The frontispiece map in the 1908 List (NWU A403 1908) labeled the area "Banda" and showed the location of a number of Banda villages, but not until 1917 did a relatively complete inventory of Banda villages appear in the *Gold Coast Civil Service List* (Table 3.4). Thus it seems likely that villagers who moved back to villages like Makala were less subject to British demands, first for food and later for labor.

By mid-1898, Samori's troops had been expelled from British territory, and officials turned their attention to administrative matters – establishing the boundaries of districts, funding local administration, and facilitating trade (CO879/58 No. 585, no. 10). The Anglo-French Convention of June 1898 delineated the international boundary of the expanded Gold Coast Colony (Bening 1983:326). Banda was initially part of the Northern Territories, delineated from Ashanti province by the 8th parallel (CO879/67 No. 649, no. 59), and administered from Kintampo after

1902 (Bening 1983:327–328). In 1906, the Kintampo District was incorporated into Ashanti, whose northern boundary was newly demarcated by the Volta River (NWU A339 1906). Banda continued to be administered from Kintampo even after a new district headquarters was established at Wenchi in 1914 (Bening 1978:136). Though Banda villages fell primarily in the Kintampo District, Adadiem west of the Banda hills and Jinini, Laura, and Obuasi on Banda's eastern margins were administered from Wenchi (KA 168). Wenchi station was closed down in 1916 to release officers for military service, and later reopened after the Great War. The economic crisis of the early 1930s prompted an amalgamation of the Kintampo and Wenchi districts in 1932, after which Banda was administered from Wenchi (Bening 1978:143).

Eight years after its establishment, the Northern Territories was administered by a small British staff (eighteen officers in 1905) who performed both civil and military duties (NWU A339 1905:4). Needless to say, officers were thin on the ground, and surveillance of newly subjected territory was limited, despite Lt. Col. Northcott's guiding principle laid down in 1898 that "The whole scheme of administration, foundation and superstructure, is dependent for its success on the ubiquity of the white man" (Northcott, quoted in Bening [1983:327]). The South African war of 1899 contributed to a shortage of officers, and the Asante uprising of 1900 focused administrative attention on the south (Bening 1983:330–331). In 1905 Governor Rodger called for an expanded civil administration "under which there will be a sufficient number of Commissioners . . . to travel frequently through their respective Districts and make themselves personally acquainted not merely with every chief, but with every village headman" (Rodger, quoted in Bening [1978:129]). In the words of an earlier chief commissioner of Ashanti, the secret of effective administration of people governed by tradition and superstition was "a healthy and constant intercourse between the governing and the governed" (quoted in Bening [1978:130]). At the same time, however, fiscal constraints limited administrative expansion; the Treasury expected colonies to be self-sufficient, and the disappointing economic potential of the Northern Territories translated into a small staff that was expected to generate sufficient revenues to cover administrative costs (Bening 1983:334).

Banda showed commercial promise as a source of gold, though explorations by the private Wa Syndicate in 1902–03 showed reserves to be commercially unviable, in part because of the cost of river transportation to the coast (CO96/400). Transportation costs also foiled British ambitions to make cotton a mainstay of the Northern Territories economy (CO879/84 No. 745, no. 15).

In their efforts to "pioneer ordinary commerce" in the north, the colonial government established government stores stocked with cloth, pomades, looking glasses, basins, and pipes (NWU A339 1901:11–12) – all objects that inscribed colonial connections on colonized bodies through bodily practice (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). Thus the government engaged in the process of taste-making – exposing newly colonized people to the civilizing objects that they hoped would become objects of local desire. But the government did not intend to stay in business long – this short-term strategy was intended to stimulate commerce only until private

traders established themselves (NWU A339 1901:13); indeed, officials reported in 1901 that the store at Kintampo had been closed "as owing to its proximity to the coast a considerable number of traders had already established themselves there" (NWU A339 1901:12). By 1905, traders from the coast and Hausa merchants had "increased very considerably," though wares in most northern markets were being brought in from German Togoland or from French territory (NWU A339 1905:8). A 10 percent tax on imports from neighboring colonies established in 1906 proved difficult to enforce (NWU A339 1906:7). At the same time, French officials were plagued by an influx of British goods into Bonduku which they confiscated (Bening 1978:124).

Despite its relatively remote presence in the daily lives of Banda villagers, the colonial administration imposed new demands on labor and resources, however sporadic. Banda farmers were expected to send foodstuffs to Kintampo, the district headquarters, though they did not always comply (GNA ADM56/1/457). The Banda chief was required to provide carriers to serve the district officer in numbers ranging from forty-two to eighty per month. In 1901 the Banda chief complained to the district official that his "men were away a month at the time carrying for the government, that the farms suffered in consequence of their absence, and that they themselves returned very thin and pulled down, unable to do a day's work for a considerable time afterwards, and when they were fairly fit and recovered they were sent off again" (GNA ADM 56/1/415). In April 1902 Banda sent forty-six carriers who were dispatched by the DC for the months of April and May (GNA ADM56/1/457). Sources from 1926 suggest that demands increased through time; Banda had met its obligations to supply food for a substantial number of locally garrisoned colonial troops. The soldiers at Bwe (Bui) required "400 [yams] per diem or half a yam per man" (KA 491:7) and the touring officer reported a three-day reserve of yams; "Banda has done extraordinarily well for no other Division had given any assistance" (KA 491:7). The troops were scheduled to decamp in mid-March and Banda was ordered to supply 250 carriers to accompany them. Anticipating resistance from Banda officials, the commissioner instructed his DC "not to make any fuss" should the Banda chief refuse to comply: "simply inform him that if the carriers are not forthcoming the troops cannot go, and he must carry on with the provision of food. The odds are that there will be more carriers than required" (KA 491:7).

As the early decades of colonial rule proceeded, officials began to make their mark more fully on the terrain of their colonial subjects. As outlined in Chapter 4, attempts to mold the daily practices of African villagers were conceived as part of the Pax Britannica, Britain's civilizing commitment to its colonies. By 1908 Sanitary Committees had been established at district centers including Kintampo (NWU A339 1908:18). Officials envisioned a "system of scientific sanitation" in which "no sacrifice can be too great to inaugurate an era of effective hygiene such as hitherto has been undreamed of in West Africa" (NWU A339 1909:4). In 1909, the governor reported that "Sanitary Committees are at work at all headquarter stations, and new and severer measures have been introduced for the general sanitation of native villages" (NWU A339 1909:16). Early efforts focused on water, sewage, and refuse dis-

posal, but the first decade of the twentieth century witnessed a growing preoccupation with village planning, which district officers attacked with particular vigor. By 1913 (NWU A339 1913:17), administrators reported "There was during the year a movement amongst the native chiefs to get their villages improved. This improvement consisted in laying out a broad centre street, with wide streets at right angles. Though depriving the villages altogether of their picturesqueness, it has doubtless added much to their ventilation and sanitary condition." Doubtless too, the wide streets opened villages more completely to the gaze of colonial officials (cf. Moore and Vaughan 1994; Thomas 1990).

The meager documentary record on Banda provides little insight into how Banda villagers were convinced to abandon their existing villages and relocate to "laid-out" villages oriented on a grid. A concise observation under "Sanitation and Climate" in the Annual Report for 1913 (NWU A339 1913:17) suggests that drastic means were at times taken: "The town of Kintampo was burnt down in January and was rebuilt with wide straight streets; the same course was adopted at Ejura." Official documents suggest that pressures were brought to bear on villagers during the 1920s (Chapter 4). In 1926, the touring commissioner of Ashanti's Western District complained to the Chief Commissioner (KA 491:6) that while "Dumori" (Dumboli) founded by Tembi refugees three years before was "well laid out and the best I have seen," the neighboring village of Kojeh was "nearly as filthy as the French ones." Although "A start had evidently been made to lay it out . . . it remained at that," prompting the touring officer to report that "I gingered up the chief and people and informed them that they would have to build as good a village as DUMORI, we would not allow such filthy villages in British Territory. They promised to get a move on and lay out the village." On a softer note the officer observed, "I cannot altogether blame them for this is the first time a Commissioner has visited these villages. I have informed the District Commissioner KINTAMPO of my displeasure at this and instructed him to visit these villages and show some interest in this part of his district." The Kintampo DC was instructed to visit Banda prior to the departure of troops in mid-March 1926, and spend his time "visiting the villages and getting the layouts completed, and in licensing guns" (KA 491:6). Our next glimpse of village planning in Banda comes in 1931, when A. C. Russell, acting DC of Kintampo, observed that all Banda villages had been "laid out," though the "Mohammedan Luigbi" (Ligby) villages were "in a filthy condition" (KA 168). Thus, villages like Late Makala, founded in the aftermath of the Samorian campaign, were abandoned sometime between 1926 and 1931 as the British official known locally as the "breaker of walls" convinced Banda villagers to relocate/rebuild.

In sum, chieftaincy histories and colonial documents provide a picture of considerable flux and uncertainty through the second half of the nineteenth century in the central Volta basin that impacted settlement. Banda peoples were enmeshed in a series of regional wars, prompting some to flee the area and relocate north, west, and east of the Banda area. Other people (i.e., from Nkoranza; Agbodeka 1971:164) may have temporarily occupied Banda, though this claim may have been shaped by a land suit brought by Nkoranza against Banda between 1919 and 1922 (KA 879). By the

mid-1890s Banda people were concentrated at the riverside settlement of Bui/Lawra, presumably as a defensive strategy against Samori's mounted soldiers. These regional wars provided the context for colonial interference as Britain's emissary, George Ferguson, worked to create paper and cloth alliances with treaties and flags. The ousting of Samori by colonial troops further entrenched the British in the central Volta basin, with the immediate effect that Banda peoples now had to provision a different army – first Samori's, now the British. The onset of relatively peaceful conditions and the burden of provisioning colonial troops may have prompted Banda people once again to disperse, resettling their former village sites, establishing new hamlets like that at Late Makala. Yet those who settled at Late Makala – the children and grandchildren of Early Makala's inhabitants – had lived through a period of considerable turmoil that had reshaped the political economy of the central Volta basin.

The event history outlined thus far presents Banda as a unity – as a political, social unit whose members experienced a common history of turmoil. The use of the term "Banda people" obscures the specifics of the ethnic-linguistic complexities of the area, but in its plural form ("Banda peoples") allows us to imagine a multiethnic/multilinguistic landscape similar to today. Yet even if we increase the number of people – to peoples – our sociological imaginations are constrained by assumptions of cultural coherence and continuity – the history outlined above is one of billiard-ball cultures, moving about the landscape, coming into contact, but remaining substantially the same. But as Wolf (1984:396) reminded us, "neither societies nor cultures should be seen as givens, integrated by some inner essence, organizational mainspring, or master plan. Rather, cultural sets, and sets of sets, are continuously in construction, deconstruction and reconstruction, under the impact of multiple processes operative over wide fields of social and cultural connections." Documents hint at some of the processes in play at the end of the century; a broad pattern of political-economic uncertainty produced refugees driven from their homes by food shortages and warfare. Some regions suffered demographic losses, due in part to emigration (e.g., Bole; Haight 1981), whereas other regions must have gained, Banda among them. I turn now to consider the social processes by which immigrants were absorbed, and their legacy for cultural construction in Banda.

Immigrants in a frontier setting: perspectives from family histories

During a 1926 inspection tour through Jaman (Gyaman) and Banda, a British officer repeatedly noted the low population density. Refugees from "French territory" were common, and viewed as a welcome supplement to the sparsely populated Banda area: "the country is thinly populated, so we can do with all the French refugees who come over. I estimate that about 400 have settled there [Banda], and am informed that others intend coming" (KA 491:6). Refugees were common north of the Black Volta River in the aftermath of Bole's devastation by Samori's troops (Chapter 4), and less affected areas were magnets for those left hungry and homeless by the dislocations of the final decades of the nineteenth century.

The Banda chieftaincy – and more particularly the Nafana – grew demographi-

cally by absorbing refugees. The family histories collected in 1986 (Stahl and Anane 1989) were filled with references to ancestors who sought refuge in Banda as they fled disruptions in their homelands. As previously outlined, four of the seven founding families of Banda-Ahenkro trace their origins to different ethnolinguistic groups. These families fled their homes for a variety of reasons and sought permission from the Banda chief to settle on Banda lands. They subsequently adopted the language and customs of their new home, though Nafana customs did not remain unaltered in the process (Stahl 1991:264–267).

Less visible are those who were incorporated into Banda society as captives. In 1820 Dupuis (1966:81) observed that the Bandahene's entourage included slaves, and reported that the Asantehene awarded him 4,700 captured men, women, and children from the Gyaman campaign. As in other West African societies generally, and Asante in particular (McSheffrey 1983; Roberts and Meiers 1988), captives in Banda were gradually assimilated. Banda oral histories suggest that war captives were adopted into the Gyase family, which was directly under the paramount chief. Rattray (1929:90–92) first described the Gyasefo among the Asante. *Gyase* is an Akan word meaning "below the hearth," and the Gyasefo among the Asante were the "people around the hearth." They included retainers and servants of the chief, whom Rattray (1929:57) characterized as "slaves and pawns." The Gyasefo were headed by the Gyasehene whose stool was inherited through the male line (Rattray 1929:90–91), an anomaly, for virtually all other positions were reckoned through the mother's line. New recruits came to the Gyasefo through enslavement, or by birth to a Gyase woman. The Gyase family is today one of the largest families in Banda-Ahenkro, which people attribute to the policy of adopting war captives (Stahl and Anane 1989:12). Other families also adopted captives to offset demographic losses due to warfare or disease (Stahl 2001).

While it is difficult to associate these oral sources with a particular period, it seems likely that they relate to processes of dislocation during the nineteenth century. Immigrant families provided relatively short lists of family heads, in contrast to the longer genealogies of families who trace their origins to Kakala, the Nafana homeland (Stahl 1991:266). These shorter genealogies are consistent with a nineteenth-century founding. Other families relate joining the Banda chieftaincy to events or chiefs linked to the nineteenth century (e.g., Dabla, Wurosa; Table 3.5). Again we are reminded of Kopytoff's (1987) frontier – I have argued that the Banda chieftaincy was founded in frontier conditions created by Begho's demise more than a century earlier (Chapter 6). But sources suggest an influx of captives and refugees during the nineteenth century as well, one with the potential to alter the political balance in Banda. Gyase Katoo, under the direct control of the Gyasehene, was considered a subfamily of Sielɔngɔ Katoo, the Nafana royal family. Notably, the position of Gyasehene (Jasihene) was one of the few named positions in early Gold Coast Civil Service Lists, first appearing in 1918 (Table 3.4). The chief's control of the Gyase family placed considerable labor at his disposal, and the absorption of refugees and captives by the Nafana swelled their numbers in relation to the other ethnic-linguistic groups that comprised this multiethnic chieftaincy.

Documentary and oral sources thus hint at a long period of political and economic dislocation that had significant consequences for the composition of the Banda chieftaincy. While immigrants and captives seemingly adopted Nafana identity, we cannot assume that Nafana social practice remained unaltered by this influx of personnel. New state festivals (like the Yualie festival described in Chapter 6) were associated with immigrants, and there are hints that ritual practices were altered as well (Stahl 1991:266). Yet these sources are silent as to how the daily routines of household reproduction were reshaped by dislocation in the Volta basin. Only when villagers resettled at Late Makala, sometime after 1896, do we again pick up the material trail of Banda life that can provide insight into daily practice.

Daily life at Late Makala

The hiatus separating the occupations of Early and Late Makala may be as great as seventy years. The abrupt abandonment of Early Makala resonates with oral claims that Banda peoples fled north of the Black Volta after the Gyaman conflict of 1817–18. Late Makala was not settled until the end of the century, probably after 1896, when British troops were stationed in the area. This is consistent with the types of imported objects recovered from Late Makala (Stahl 1999a:12–13). Archaeological sources point to some marked differences in the daily practices of Banda villagers compared to the beginning of the century.

The archaeological deposits at Late Makala lie immediately west of contemporary Makala (Fig. 6.2). Unlike the large L-shaped or rectangular house mounds found at Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala, those at Late Makala were small and circular, only several meters across and rising no more than 40–50 cm above the ground surface. In contrast to Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala, there were no refuse mounds associated with the occupation of Late Makala; midden occurred as thin sheet deposit or as fill in deep pits. Our excavations in 1990 and 1994 sampled several house mounds (mounds 1, 2, and 3), as well as an area of midden beneath which we encountered a deep pit (Station 9 grid, Fig. 7.1). Though we excavated an area of deposit comparable to that at Early Makala (155 m^2 compared to 156m^2 at Early Makala), the volume of excavated deposit is smaller because deposits here are shallow (90 m^3 at Late Makala compared to 132 m^3 at Early Makala).

Unlike Early Makala, where houses were substantial tauf structures joined in compounds that showed evidence of rebuilding and refurbishment, the structures at Late Makala were smaller, less durably constructed units. We sampled five low mounds that represented collapsed buildings. Each mound had packed gravel floors, some overlaid by a thin layer of plaster or slurry (Fig. 7.2; Stahl 1999a:58–61). In no case, however, was there evidence for rebuilding in the form of superimposed floors, or refurbishing in the form of multiple layers of plaster or slurry. Several houses were constructed atop ashy middens, one of which contained a shallow human interment. The presence of postholes, combined with the relatively small amount of overburden (i.e., wall collapse), suggests a less permanent form of architecture than at Early Makala. Rather than tauf or coursed earth construction, these are more consistent with a wattle-and-daub or pole-and-daga construction. This type of structure can be
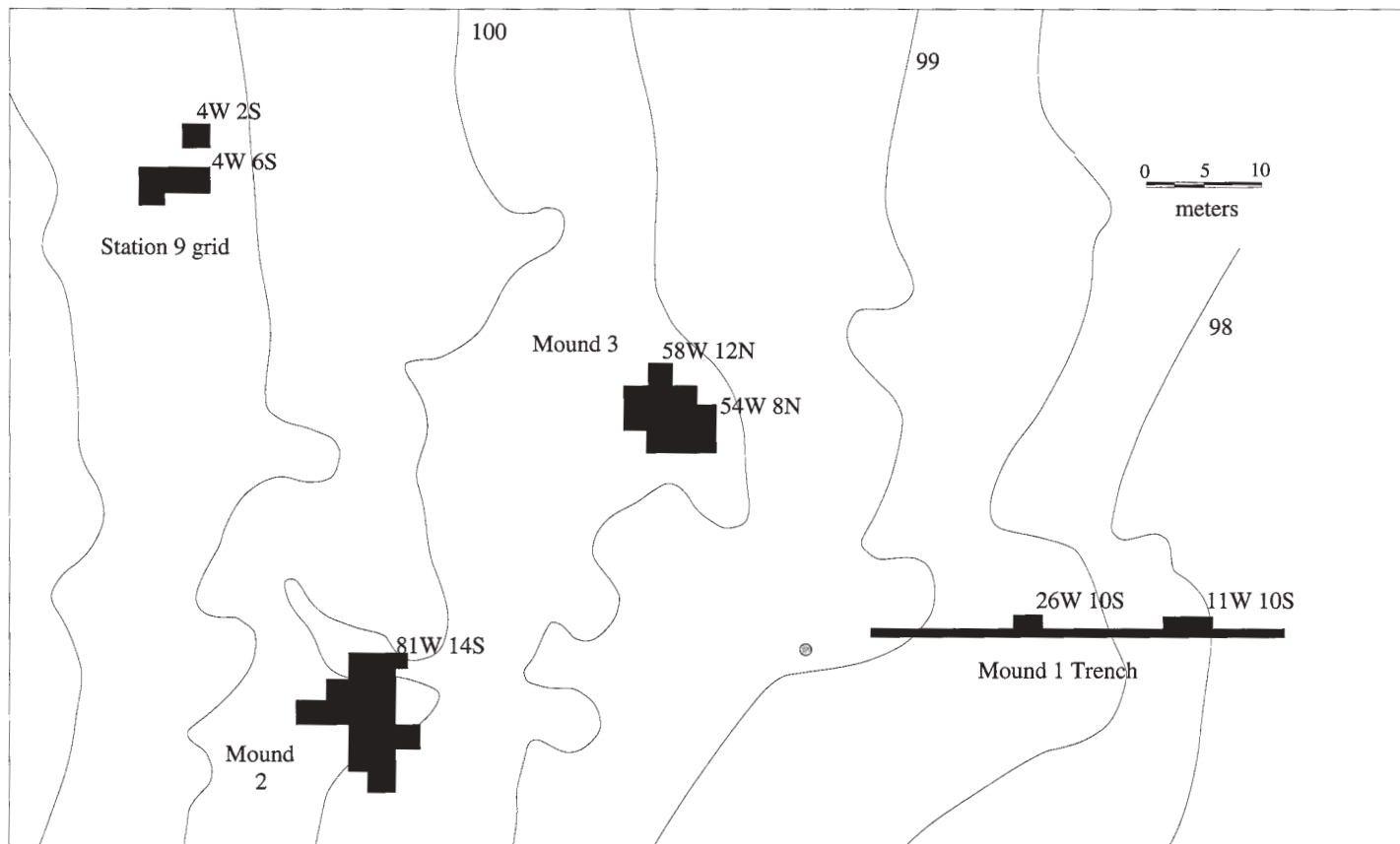
Figure 7.1. Location of excavation units at Late Makala, 1990 and 1994

58W 12N

56W 10N

LEGEND

Gravel

Wall?

54W 8N

60-70 cm
below datum

Gravel floor

Pit
to 110
cm

Wall

Gravel
floor

Limits of gravel floor

Ashy areas

Pit features

Postholes

Pot fragments

0   1

meter
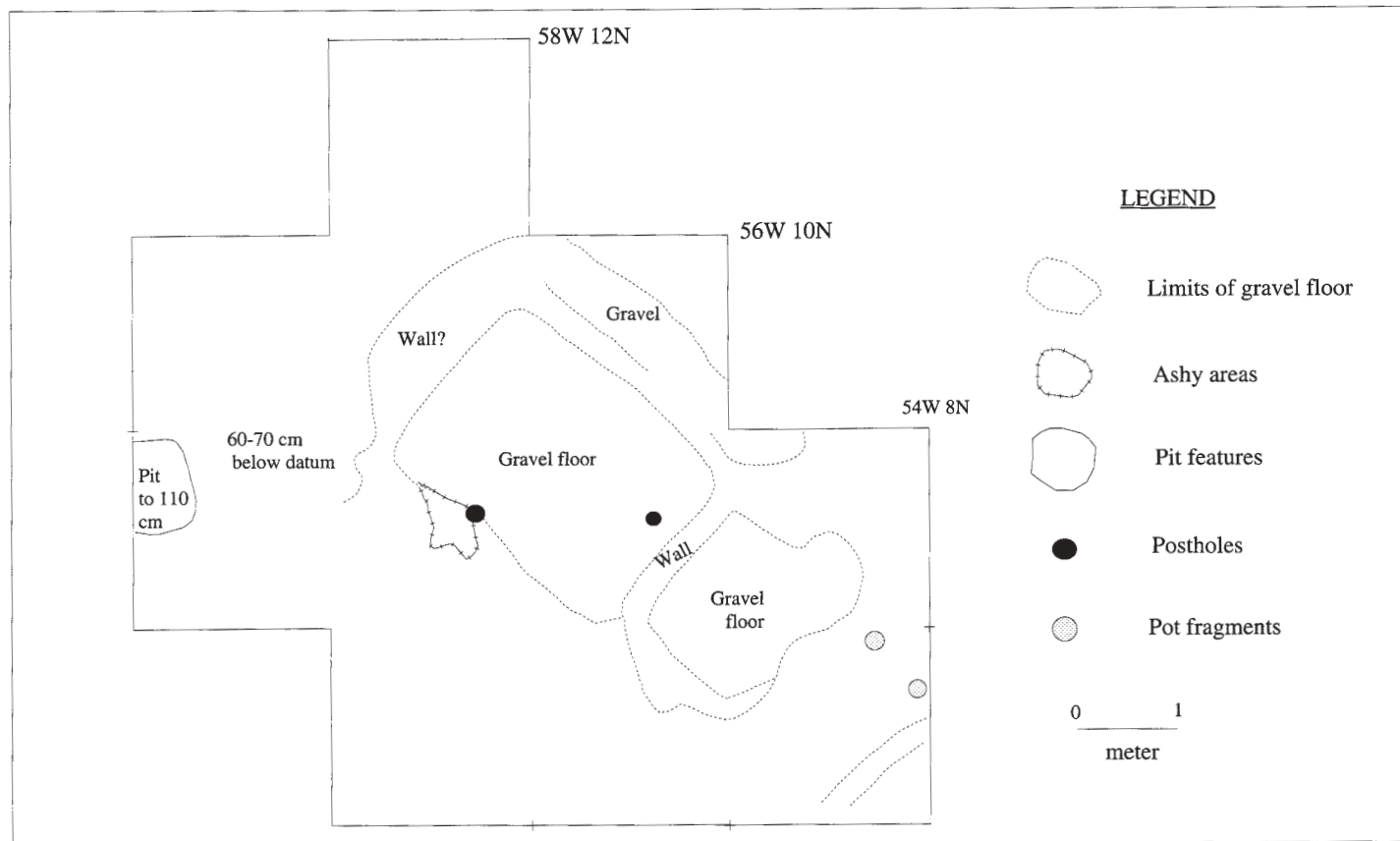
Figure 7.2. Plan view of mound 3, Late Makala, 1994. Composite view of levels 1–2, 56–70 cm below datum

built rapidly using less labor and material than a coursed earth structure, and is typical of contemporary farm shelters and rainy season kitchens. Further, the structures at Late Makala appear to have been free-standing, not joined in compounds. They appear to be minimal residential units (one or at most two rooms). As described in Chapter 3, compounds are accretionary structures; they begin with a minimal residential unit with extra rooms added as needed (Agorsah 1985, 1993; McIntosh 1976). What we may be witnessing at Late Makala are structures raised rapidly as people left Bui to reoccupy their former village sites. Given the dislocations of the preceding decade, Makala residents may have been reluctant to invest in more durable structures until they judged whether the peace imposed by the British was a lasting one. For example, on October 8, 1895, the king of Nkoranza, Kofi Fuah, informed George Ferguson that his people had stopped building houses because of continued threats from Banda and Asante (CO879/44 No. 500, no. 94, enc. 1). Alternatively, the architecture may simply reflect the "life-cycle" of the village – Late Makala was probably occupied for less than twenty years when British officials embarked on their village relocation scheme. British village planning schemes may have interrupted the process of compound construction, the village simply too young to be characterized by compounds. British officials would have taken the character of Late Makala at face value, considering it to be "traditional," "typical," and "backward" – the houses too close together, poorly ventilated, and so on.

In contrast to Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala, middens at Late Makala appear "disorganized." They occur as sheet refuse thinly distributed across the site, rather than confined to well-defined mounds. Shallow ashy deposit was found strewn across the site – between mounds in the area exposed by a trench (Fig 7.1), as well as underneath house floors. There was considerably less volume of refuse as well – the average density of sherds per unit volume of excavated deposit was $238/m^3$ compared to $598/m^3$ at Early Makala. Unlike Kuulo Kataa or Early Makala, we encountered several deep pit features that were filled with refuse – charcoal, broken pottery, bone, and numerous imports – including substantial numbers of ball-clay pipes and bottle glass. The largest of these pits occurred on the northern margin of Late Makala at "Station 9" (Fig. 7.1). Here we encountered a 95 cm deep rectangular pit (2 x 1.5 m), which may have been excavated as a source of building material, though it was filled with trash, including numerous imports. Most of the feature was cut through soil, but the basal 45 cm were cut into bedrock. Two house mounds were associated with refuse-filled pits as well (mounds 2 and 3; Stahl 1999a:59–62). A fourth pit on the northern margins of mound 2 differed – this deep circular pit (1.25 m across and 70 cm deep) was painstakingly excavated into the bedrock beneath the shallow soil cover (c. 15 cm). A small channel excavated in the bedrock upslope from the pit suggests that it perhaps served as a cistern, or possibly a dye pit (Stahl 1999a:62). Freeman (1898:223) described dyeing pits in Bonduku that measured 5 ft across, surrounded by a coping of sun-dried clay 2.5 ft high (plate in Freeman [1898], opposite p. 224). But unlike the other three excavated pits, this pit yielded no European imports, and may date to an earlier occupation of the site. This is consistent with a

deep midden deposit that we encountered beneath the Late Makala structure in mound 3, which was sealed by the floor of the mound 3 structure. The pottery from this midden was distinct in vessel form, decorative treatment, and paste. There were no imported objects recovered here, and it likely represents an earlier, at this point poorly understood, occupation of Makala Kataa with which the cistern/dye hole is likely associated (Stahl 1999a:62).

In sum, the architectural evidence from Late Makala suggests a relatively short-lived occupation in which Makala residents lived in free-standing pole-and-daga houses that represented minimal residential units. The amount of midden accumulation is consistent with a short-lived occupation (i.e., less than twenty years). Yet despite the small volume of refuse at the site, its composition departs dramatically from the pattern of Early Makala, suggesting changes in the domestic and regional economy.

The domestic economy

Sources agree that the two decades preceding British garrisoning of troops at Bui were ones of considerable dislocation in the western Volta basin (Chapter 4). While the Banda Research Project has not yet generated archaeological evidence from this period, we need to consider the implications for daily life and household reproduction. Oral sources suggest it was a period when many people were lost to warfare (Stahl and Anane 1989), though losses were offset in part by the acquisition of captives and refugees seeking protection (Stahl 1991; and Guyer [1999] on implications for "turbulence and loss"). The threat of Samori's mounted Sofa army made travel dangerous, and presumably disrupted local exchange networks, with implications for craft production. Agricultural routines too must have been impacted; sustained warfare – a dry-season activity – would have subverted labor from agricultural tasks, especially early in the dry season when it would have coincided with crucial activities like field preparation. Trees had to be felled, fields burned, and yam mounds dug. Labor subverted from these tasks would have translated into food shortages in the ensuing year. War was primarily the domain of men (cf. A. Jones 1993), and women would have had to take on additional tasks to make up for labor shortages. This process is encapsulated in stories of Yadwo Gongo, fourth queen mother of Banda, who is remembered as a strong woman, able to provision people during periods of war. Additionally, food reserves were siphoned off by military powers in the area, first Samori, and later the British (KA 491; CO879/48 No. 529, no. 18; CO879/52 No. 549, no. 102). Though relative peace prevailed after Samori's troops retreated from the western Volta basin, we should anticipate that the effects of these dislocations were still felt after villagers established new homes at Late Makala.

Household vs. extra-household production How do the patterns of production at Late Makala compare with those described for Early Makala? Again, our understanding is skewed toward durable material culture (i.e., ceramics). We have meager evidence of textile production in the form of spindle whorls (n = 9 from 90 m^3 of excavated deposit). While the evidence is limited, it is consistent with a pattern

of households producing textiles for their own consumption. Russell, a DC who toured Banda in 1931 (KA 168; KA 2063) less than a decade after Late Makala was abandoned, observed that weaving was ubiquitous in Banda villages. This is consistent with an interpretation of small-scale production for household use (Stahl and Cruz 1998), and stands in contrast to other regions where late nineteenth-century textile production became more specialized and an avenue for accumulation (Isaacman and Roberts 1995; Roberts 1984).

Our best evidence for production comes from domestic pottery. We recovered many fewer sherds from Late Makala (less than 20,000). While there is a clear stylistic relationship with ceramics from Early Makala, the pottery at Late Makala was considerably more homogeneous (Stahl 1994a:Table 1). A larger proportion of sherds were plain, and the criss-cross incision common on Early Makala bowls was uncommon at Late Makala. I originally suggested that these changes reflected increasing specialization, as potting came to be confined to fewer locales because of competition with alternative vessel forms (i.e., metal pots; Stahl 1994a:198). But NAA has shown the situation to be somewhat more complicated. Recall that at Early Makala, the vast majority of analyzed samples came from two discrete clay sources, one west (L group clays) and one probably east of the hills (H-1 clays). Moreover, the consumers at Early Makala obtained jars made from one source (L-group) and bowls from another (H-1). The analyzed sample (n = 56) from Late Makala departs significantly from this pattern (Cruz 1996; Stahl 1999a:26, 64). More than half of the analyzed sample – both bowls and jars – derived from K-2 clays associated with abandoned clay pits east of the Banda hills near the contemporary villages of Bui, Bungasi, and Sabiye (Fig. 3.2). A small proportion of the sample (16 percent) was made on L-group clays (west of the Banda hills) that figured prominently in the Early Makala assemblage. The small sample of analyzed spindle whorls (n = 3) was made from the same distinct, as yet unprovenienced, source as those from Early Makala. The remaining sherds (22 percent) could not be assigned to one of the seven compositional groups identified through NAA, though none were so distinctive as to suggest that they came from outside Banda (Stahl 1999a:64). In sum, the NAA data suggest changes in ceramic consumption. Whereas Early Makala villagers obtained bowls and jars from different sites, one west, the other probably east of the Banda hills, Late Makala villagers obtained bowls and jars from the same locales, and favored production sites east of the Banda hills. Of the compositional groups represented at Late Makala, only the L-group clays are exploited today (e.g., by potters from Dorbour; Cruz 1996, 2001). The K-2 pits at Bui, Bungasi, and Sabiye are all abandoned. Though vessels were now produced east of the hills, I suspect that potting still fell outside the domain of household production – the homogeneity of vessels suggests that potting was in the hands of specialists who produced beyond their household needs.

The implications of NAA data for local exchange are striking. The exchange of vessels across the hills was notably curtailed (though I caution that our sample of 56 sherds represents a tiny proportion of the total sherds from Late Makala). Moreover, women in villages east of the hills took up potting on a scale greater than suggested

by the Early Makala data. Several possibilities might account for these changes. It may reflect reduced potting in villages west of the hills, though we are viewing production through the lens of consumption east of the hills. Nevertheless, villages west of the hills were closer to Bonduku, Samori's base of operations in the period after 1895 (Muhammed 1977), and the more immediate threat of Samori surely impacted settlement and production there. Or increased risks of traveling intervillage paths through the hills may have encouraged women east of the hills to take up potting. Despite Ferguson's claim that trade roads to Banda were reopened following the execution of a Treaty of Friendship and Trade with Banda in December 1894, Colonel Pigott reported in November of 1896 that the road to Bonduku through Banda had been closed since the Nkoranza–Banda war of 1892–93:

> all the traffic, not only to Buale (Bole), Bona &c, but also to Bontuku has to cross here [the Black Volta on the Kintampo/Mo border] . . . Bontuku to Kintampo: the direct road between these towns which passed through the Banda country . . . has been closed since the Koranza-Banda war. To reopen it would necessitate the rebuilding of villages, sowing of crops, and the removal of the inhabitants from where they are at present located.
> (CO879/45 No. 506, no. 153)

Changes in potting may also relate to demographic shifts – the influx of refugees and captives may have included potters who took up their craft in their new home, as Frank (1993) has argued in a Malian example. Though we cannot pinpoint the precise cause of these shifts in production, it seems clear that regional political-economic developments impacted local productive practice well before imported alternatives to ceramic vessels posed a direct threat to local potting (Cruz 2001).

Though imported alternatives did not yet threaten local potting, evidence from Late Makala suggests that local production of smoking pipes virtually ceased. The heterogeneous collection of locally or regionally produced clay smoking pipes at Early Makala gave way to homogeneous ball-clay pipes imported from Europe. This was the first craft that succumbed to competition with imported manufactures, a casualty of the growing taste for imports that signaled a changing politics of value (Appadurai 1986:30).

Like Early Makala, there is no evidence for iron production at Late Makala. The amorphous scraps of recovered iron (n = 108) may represent locally smelted iron, or by this period, perhaps reworked scrap from imported sources (cf. Rogers 1994). Historically, the village of Brawhani on the southern margins of Banda (Fig. 3.2) was home to blacksmiths who produced and repaired agricultural implements from scrap metal, though other villages had blacksmiths as well. It seems likely that villagers at Late Makala relied on extra-village production for the metal tools required to till the soil, to hunt, and to protect their families.

Feeding the family British intelligence stressed the heavy toll that Samori's troops took on the food supply of the Volta basin. Staple crops were reportedly commandeered, and large game hunted to near extermination. Reporting on the area

around Gonja, north of Banda, C. H. Armitage noted that "The elephant is rarely seen, but was said to be plentiful . . . around Buipe until exterminated, together with other big game, by Samory's hordes" (CO879/52 No. 549, no. 172). Recall that wild fauna was an important component of the diet at Early Makala – how does the "post-Samori" profile of Late Makala fauna compare with earlier patterns? We recovered a larger sample and more animal bone per m^3 than at Early Makala (n = 3,046; 34/m^3) though a much smaller sample than at Kuulo Kataa. Again, the majority were unidentifiable mammal bones (n = 1,853). Overall, there is broad similarity between the faunal profiles from Early and Late Makala (Stahl 1999a:28–31, 66–67). Birds (both wild and domestic) occurred in comparable proportions, as did turtle/tortoise and domestic artiodactyls (cattle, sheep, and goat). Yet several categories of fauna diverge from the pattern at Early Makala. The frequency of lizard (notably *Varanus* or monitor lizard) increased, as did large rodents which are a valued food source today (giant rat and grass cutter). Domestic species are represented in roughly the same proportions, with the addition of domestic pig (Stahl 1999a:66).

What do these patterns tell us about how Late Makala villagers fed their families? Again, wild fauna clearly figured in the Late Makala diet, a pattern consistent with both Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala, though inconsistent with colonial images of village subsistence that stressed domestic animals and cultigens. Yet the range of wild species at Late Makala suggests more restricted hunting than at either Kuulo Kataa or Early Makala – the predominance of turtle/tortoise, hares/rabbits, rodents, and lizards hints at intensified garden hunting and collecting. Species like tortoise, giant rat, and grass cutter are commonly encountered during routine farming activities. If we view the fauna through the lens of colonial accounts, it seems likely that local subsistence was impacted by colonial demands for labor and foodstuffs. Colonial administrators requisitioned food from Banda peoples as early as 1896 when colonial troops were stationed at Lawra/Bui, and we know that by 1901 Banda was required to supply carriers. This siphoning of male labor was probably exacerbated by the draw of migrant work as young men traveled south to work on cocoa plantations (Cruz 2001; Stahl and Cruz 1998). Opportunistic garden hunting/trapping may have been a response to labor shortages as the wives and elder men left behind worked to provision their families with animal protein at the same time as they engaged in routine farm work. We may also be seeing the effects of political-economic upheavals that made individual travel (i.e., hunting expeditions) into the bush risky. Equally, the apparent focus on small mammals and reptiles could express decreased availability of larger fauna resulting from overhunting, as suggested by colonial documents in the aftermath of Samori. Though problems of sampling and differential preservation frustrate our ability to generalize from the Early and Late Makala archaeofaunas, a scenario of localized hunting and collecting is consistent with evidence of contracted local exchange in pottery.

Preliminary inspection of archaeobotanical samples suggests that sorghum is uncommon, which contrasts with its ubiquity at Early Makala. Maize is clearly evidenced by impressions on pot sherds – maize-cob roulette-impressed sherds were ubiquitous at Late Makala – and in light of the phytolith data for an early diffusion of maize into the

area (Chapters 5 and 6), we can assume that this New World crop was well known to Banda villagers by the end of the nineteenth century. In 1931, the acting DC for Kintampo described the mix of crops in Banda as including yams, corn (in the British sense of grain, as distinct from maize), and cassava (KA 168; also KA 491). He observed that tobacco was commonly cultivated, and groundnuts (presumably New World peanuts) were grown on an increasing scale. Tobacco was sold at the Kintampo market.

The diffusion of cassava (manioc) through West Africa is poorly understood. Though it was introduced by the Portuguese from Brazil as early as the late sixteenth century, it was slowly adopted as a staple crop (Alpern 1992:25; Jones 1959:62). Knowledge of the processing techniques required to make bitter varieties of cassava palatable had to diffuse along with the crop (Doku 1969:1; Lancaster et al. 1982). For example, Ferguson observed that his troops, unfamiliar with cassava, were nearly poisoned on an 1894–95 expedition to the Volta basin when they ate improperly pre-pared cassava. After this "they conformed to the practice of the aborigines by steep-ing it for a long time in water till near decomposition before cooking" (CO879/45 No. 506, no 130). Though we have no archaeological evidence to document its spread, we can anticipate that its acceptance depended on diffusion of processing strategies. Moreover, as Ohadike (1981) has argued, a taste for cassava may only develop in periods of crisis. He linked the spread of cassava in the lower Niger delta to the influenza pandemic of 1918–19. Food shortages ensued from labor losses; yam cultivation was labor-intensive, requiring that fields be cleared, mounds formed, and fields weeded. Cassava cultivation required less labor and could be "left with women and children as the few available men concentrated on yam production and house roofing" (Ohadike 1981:386). In the wake of the pandemic, survivors recognized that

> a cassava field needed little or no weeding; that when growing, the plant needed no staking; and that when mature, it could be left in the soil for up to four years . . . that cassava could thrive on old farmlands that were about to be left fallow, and that, unlike yams, it could be planted and harvested continuously throughout the year.
> (Ohadike 1981:386).

Thus, we must consider disease, drought, famine, and other stress factors that oper-ated as "push" factors that shaped the changing cuisines of African peoples (Miller 1982), though keeping in mind an apparent inclination toward diversity and exper-imentation as well (Guyer 1996). Settlers at Late Makala had experienced disloca-tion due to political upheaval, warfare, and slaving, factors that may have encouraged adoption of this storable and less labor-intensive crop. Today dried cassava is a staple food in Banda during the months before the yam harvest – combined with dried, pounded maize, it is cooked into a thick porridge (*tizet*) that substitutes for yam fufu (cooked pounded yam), the preferred food of Banda peoples.

Disposing of the dead

Our insights into late nineteenth-century mortuary practice are very limited. We minimally exposed one burial at Late Makala that appeared to be the remains of a

young adult (cranial sutures not fully fused). S/he was interred in a shallow pit dug into midden deposit on his/her right side with the face oriented northeast (Stahl 1994a:194). The pit was overlaid by additional midden and wall collapse. We can say little about the mortuary practice of Late Makala villagers based on this single burial, which cannot with certainty be temporally linked to Late Makala. If the interment does date to the occupation of the village, it is significant that burial took place in proximity to living space and it was one of the last times that bodies could be interred within the village margins without violating colonial law (Chapter 4).

Late Makala in the regional and subcontinental economy

Though a taste for imported objects was apparent at Early Makala (Chapter 6), I have argued that these objects were bound up in practices of social distinction (Bourdieu 1984). The range and number of manufactured goods was small, and restricted to adornment and the technology of destruction. The artifact assemblage at Late Makala suggests that, by the end of the century, Banda villagers had developed a taste for a broader array of imported objects, suggesting new consumption practices that began to reshape local production. The most abundant manufactured object is glass (n = 217 pieces), mainly fragments of green bottles (Feichtinger in prep.). While we might see this as signaling dramatically expanded trade compared to Early Makala (where there were three fragments of glass), we need to view this against broader manufacturing trends. The growing market for convenience foods and unit packaging was predicated on the availability of containers for distribution. By 1800, glass was established as "a principal material used in unit packaging," and the quantity and variety of glass bottles proliferated through the nineteenth century (O. Jones 1993:38). Viewed through the lens of consumption at Late Makala, goods at the end of the century were increasingly shipped in unit packages, i.e., bottles. The question remains – what was in the bottles? Most of the green glass probably derived from case bottles that contained spirits. Though spirits were known to Banda peoples from at least the early decades of the nineteenth century (Chapter 6), they had previously been gifted in large packages (staved wooden containers) to chiefs. Consumption was presumably controlled by, and perhaps limited to, the chief and his retinue. Unit packaging potentially altered consumption patterns. Minor chiefs or individuals with access to money could obtain spirits directly rather than through the intermediary of the paramount chief.

The smaller sample of clear, milky, and blue glass fragments from Late Makala derived from smaller bottles that perhaps contained medicines and pomades. While we might assume that these manufactured products derived from European nations that sought controlled markets for their products (notably, in the case of Banda, Britain, France, and Germany), several fragments of glass speak to a broader catchment of Banda trade connections. Krista Feichtinger, a Binghamton University undergraduate, undertook a study of the glass from Late Makala, painstakingly conjoining fragments of broken glass. By piecing together the shattered fragments of a clear glass jar from mound 3, Feichtinger was able to discern the embossed letters

"V

CHE (partial S)

NEW YOR (partial K)

Feichtinger (in prep.) identified this as a Vaseline bottle, produced by Chesebrough, New York, comparable to those used by the company in 1908. This artifact, more than any other, conjures up the changing social and political-economic fields of Banda villagers at the beginning of the twentieth century. We might imagine the biography of this object (Kopytoff 1986): a petroleum product refined by industrial workers and bottled in New York, purchased in bulk by merchants, shipped first perhaps to Europe, then to the West African coast where bulk shipments were broken down to be purchased in smaller lots by coastal traders. Though the bottle might have made its initial journey into the interior by rail (the rail line from Sekondi to Kumase was completed in 1904, that from Accra to Kumase in 1917; Kay 1972:41) or lorry, chances are that it was head-loaded from the coast. Whether it found its way into one of the newly established stores in recently founded district headquarters like Kintampo, or whether it was sold by an itinerant petty trader we cannot know. But its acquisition by a Makala villager surely involved a monetary transaction, and a 1911 sixpence coin recovered from Late Makala suggests that the British campaign to extend the use of silver coin had reached Banda (Stahl 1999a:13). It seems likely that Makala villagers accessed silver through crop production – possibly tobacco sold in Kintampo, or cotton for which the Sampa market was known in the early decades of the twentieth century. The Vaseline bottle, passing from hand to hand, traced, and indeed produced, the web of productive relations and merchant connections that shaped the changing social and political-economic spheres of Makala villagers, and late nineteenth-century rural dwellers generally (e.g., Purser 1992, 1999; Stewart-Abernathy 1992). These ramifying webs reshaped local tastes and desires. Assuming that the bottle arrived with contents intact, we might suspect that the unfamiliar petroleum distillate was used in a familiar way, perhaps as a substitute for locally produced shea-nut oil, commonly rubbed on the body to keep the skin moist and glistening; however, we can only imagine its bodily and social effects. Did its sheen and odor differ from shea-nut oil, and with what effect on those who came into contact with its user? Was it perceived as pleasant or unpleasant? Desirable or undesirable? Did this moment of consumer experimentation captured by the lone Vaseline jar fuel a desire for more, or was it deemed an unsuitable substitute for a familiar emollient?

Though the single Vaseline bottle might be viewed as whimsy, Makala villagers had clearly developed an enduring taste for other imported manufactures. Fragments of European ball-clay pipes were ubiquitous at Late Makala (n = 130) and had, by this time, virtually replaced locally made clay pipes (Stahl 1999a:70). The striking quality of the imported pipes is their homogeneity – unlike heterogeneous local pipes, the imported pipes were virtually identical to one another. Thus we see a shift in taste – locally produced pipes individualized their owners through the variety of shape, decorative treatment, and color in a way that the very homogeneous stark white European pipes did not (Vivian 1998). If we consider production as

a component of taste-making, the diversity of pipes at Early Makala suggests that heterogeneity was locally valued; yet this was the antithesis of the logic of mass production that shaped industrialization and is expressed in the homogeneity of the ball-clay pipes. The production of European pipes was driven by a logic of uniformity that simultaneously reshaped European tastes. As Banda consumers embraced manufactured pipes, the value placed on heterogeneity in local production was abandoned. Of course we can only imagine the social effects. If pipes played a role in shaping social distinction, the source of the object's distinction shifted – from the diversity and craftsmanship of local products to the exotic origins of a product that no local craftsman, however skilled, could reproduce. While local pipes could presumably have been acquired through barter, access to European pipes required money, yet another source of distinction. And finally, the adoption of European pipes implies changing smoking practices. Locally made pipes had short wide shanks fitted with reed stems that delivered a powerful dose of smoke quite unlike that produced by a drag on a ball-clay pipe. Thus the tastes as well as the practices of smoking were reshaped by the increased consumption of imported pipes.

Another object class at Late Makala that shows increased homogeneity is imported glass beads. Roughly half (n = 55) of the 106 beads recovered from Late Makala were of European origin. But unlike the multicolored hand-drawn or wire-wound forms that dominated the Early Makala assemblage, most of the Late Makala glass beads were simple monochrome forms (including many seed-beads; Caton 1997; Stahl 1999a:69). Caton (1997) found that women today distinguish beads with sacred connotations from those used for adornment in mundane contexts. Many of the sacred forms are European in origin; however, they are invariably drawn and wire-wound compound glass beads, comparable to those recovered from Early Makala. The increase in monochromatic beads discarded in a variety of contexts across Late Makala suggests changing uses for beads. While sacred beads were, and are, carefully curated and displayed on a limited range of occasions, the less expensive monochromatic varieties are worn more frequently. Because these beads are worn every day, chances of losing them are greater. Contemporary and recent historic middens around Banda-Ahenkro are awash in inexpensive plastic and glass beads (Caton 1997), suggesting that curation is not a priority. A growing taste for industrially produced homogeneous glass beads is thus evidenced at Late Makala. We can assume that these beads augmented the sacred varieties, valued heirlooms carefully curated by elder women. But these homogeneous late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century forms were not incorporated into the sacred bead assemblages, and may well have been used in novel ways, e.g., for everyday adornment. Though put to local purposes, imported beads – like Vaseline, gin, and pipes – simultaneously inscribed intercontinental political-economic connections on local bodies.

Other imported goods occurred in smaller quantities. We recovered only five pieces of imported ceramics, including one piece of salt-glazed stoneware with a cobalt blue decoration, probably a fragment of a tankard (recovered from the site surface); and three pieces of whiteware, two of which probably originate from the same plate. A relatively complete enamelware vessel is the only evidence of metal

vessels recovered from the site. Gunflints occurred in small quantities (n = 4), as did manufactured metal objects (a brass bell, a hinge, etc.; Stahl 1999a:70).

The overall increase in imported goods signals heightened involvement in the market economy associated with increased petty trading that colonial officials applauded. This is what colonial officials had in mind as they worked to monetize the rural economy and expand the markets for metropolitan products. On the face of it, an expanding involvement in the Atlantic trade contradicts the contraction of trade in local products (e.g., potting). Would not the same conditions of insecurity equally have inhibited travel by petty traders? The apparent answer is no, and an explanation might lie in the gendered and ethnic division of local vs. long-distance trading. Today local market activity is in the hands of women, while long-distance trade is primarily the domain of men (especially Ligby men). Petty traders in the historic period were often Akan men. Men, especially foreigners, may have been less threatened by insecure roads, or it may be that major roads were more secure than the bush tracks that connected villages east and west of the Banda hills.

The village at Late Makala was abandoned during the 1920s under pressure from colonial officials. The second decade of the twentieth century saw a concerted effort to implement village planning schemes. During a colonial tour of inspection in February 1925, Wilkinson passed through Banda and visited a number of villages, including "Bakala" (Makala). He noted that "All had been laid out, but were sadly unfinished, and require gingering up" (KA 491). The implication is that, while colonial officers may have laid the grid to orient new settlements, villagers built and relocated at their own pace, removing useable items from their abandoned houses as they went. The archaeological signature of abandonment at Late Makala is consistent with this (Cameron and Tomka 1993) – unlike Early Makala where useable objects were left behind when the site was abandoned, few useable objects remained at Late Makala. Though village relocation may have been consistent with local motivations – a desire to construct more durable houses to replace the rather makeshift wattle-and-daub structures that were raised in the uncertain times during which Late Makala was founded – the local name given to the colonial official who "motivated" relocation – "the breaker of walls" – suggests that force was involved as well.

Summary

Late Makala was founded after a period of considerable political-economic dislocation shaped by war among Asante's northern provinces, the influx of Samori's mounted troops, and European territorial ambitions. The village postdates Samori's defeat but predates a significant colonial presence signaled by village relocation schemes that led to the site's abandonment. While there appears to be a direct historic connection between the people at Early and Late Makala, the character of their daily lives had changed considerably during intervening decades. The local division of labor and exchange was disrupted, altering patterns of production. Women (at least some of them) in villages east of the hills took up potting, perhaps because of the lingering uncertainties of travel on bush paths. This pattern of production lasted for a relatively short time, for we know that the contemporary pattern of potting was

in place by roughly World War II (Cruz 1996; Stahl and Cruz 1998). Consumers in villages east of the hills once again obtained (and obtain) their pots from villages west of the hills (primarily Dorbour). Changing marketing strategies by women west of the hills may have played a crucial role in their recapturing markets to the east (Cruz 1996, 2001; Stahl and Cruz 1998). This probably related to pressures of monetization and increased competition from alternative vessels (i.e., metal and plastic; Cruz 2001). Other productive practices became more localized as well – hunting and trapping appear to have been opportunistically pursued alongside other productive activities (farming/gardening) which may relate again to the lingering uncertainties of bush travel or labor shortages due to British levies and male out-migration. This may have contributed to experimentation with cassava, which early colonial officials identified as a staple crop.

Ubiquitous imports attest Late Makala's links to intercontinental trade. Expanded consumption of industrial products preceded a direct administrative presence. But we should not lose sight of the fact that a similar process affected rural inhabitants elsewhere (Purser 1999; Stewart-Abernathy 1992). This process impacted labor and property relations (Roberts 1984), and we should also explore its implications for taste-making and the politics of value (Appadurai 1986; Bourdieu 1984), asking how new goods were recontextualized by those who consumed them (Miller 1987; also Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 1997; Thomas 1991). While the meaning of these changes is important (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993:xxix; Stewart-Abernathy 1992:120), I have suggested that the specific meanings that social actors assigned these objects can be only dimly viewed through analogical argument (Stahl n.d.). But we can identify changes that were *meaningful*, even though we may be unable to penetrate their meaning. Here is where an interrogation of taste, the embodied preferences that simultaneously shape and are shaped by supply and demand (Bourdieu 1984), can help us to highlight meaningful changes. For example, at some point in the time frame of this study, women (an assumption based on their association with beads today) chose to incorporate new types of beads into their ritual practice, presumably displacing older, local forms made from bone, stone, and shell (i.e., the predominant types recovered from Kuulo Kataa and also common at Early Makala). Yet in the process, women lost control over the production of ritually potent beads, now acquired through intercontinental trade networks. This process probably accelerated during the twentieth century.

Cloth is an element of material culture rich with meaning. We know that locally produced cloth played an important role in puberty and marriage rites (Stahl and Cruz 1998; Chapter 3). As in the case studies described by Etienne (1977) and Roberts (1984), gifts of cloth and reciprocal involvement of men and women, husbands and wives, in textile production created and maintained social ties and obligations. Though cloth retains this role today, the site of production has shifted from the village to the metropole. Now cash is a prerequisite to acquiring cloth, and its high cost can affect the timing of marriage as men struggle to accumulate sufficient cash to purchase the requisite gifts for their prospective wives (Stahl and Cruz 1998). Our efforts to address the nature of textile production are, of course, hampered by

the perishable nature of both the tools used in textile production and the end product. Nevertheless, we need to consider the importance of cloth as a link to the metropolitan economy, and use our historical imaginations (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992) to probe the shifts in production, property relations, and taste that accompanied this change.

The complement of imported goods at Late Makala speaks to growing involvement in the capitalist world system, but the range of goods consumed appears to have had little impact on daily routines of household reproduction, at least initially. Rather, the bottles, beads, and pipes relate to individual bodily practice – adornment or the consumption of intoxicating or medicinal substances. While these objects operated in social context, they did so perhaps more clearly in relation to individuals than households (cf. Vivian 1992). While their contents might have been shared, the unit packaging represented by bottles reshaped accessibility and presumably the social context of consumption. Access to these products fueled changing tastes and desires that contributed to the success of monetization and culminated in a dependence on manufactured goods that today makes it "impossible to be a social adult . . . without the capacity to mobilize sums of money that are quite substantial relative to people's incomes" (Guyer 1995a:24).

The context of village life continued to change in the wake of village planning, though the degree of colonial intervention was minor compared to towns and villages in proximity to the "administrative gaze" (McCarthy 1983). Banda villagers were confronted by colonial demands that reshaped an array of practices, from the organization of chieftaincy to the disposal of refuse. Newly established colonial courts, and later reinvented "traditional" courts, offered new avenues for minority groups to contest Nafana power, though not always successfully (as in the decision by a British official to remove the position of earth priest from the Kuulo). Yet as this and preceding chapters suggest, the imposition of colonial rule was not a watershed that marked a "before" and "after." Although touring officials believed they were observing a "traditional" way of life, these chapters raise the question of what we take to be traditional practice. I have argued that life at Late Makala had a "makeshift" quality about it – people built homes using expedient technology, probably intending to replace them with more substantial dwellings in time. Local economic activity appears contracted at the same time as villagers were inexorably drawn into the broader exchange networks that supplied European manufactured goods. Banda people included refugees and captives who were negotiating their position and identity within Banda society, while at the same time chiefs worked to maintain their power over newcomers and long-time residents alike. Villagers had long experimented with New World crops, and local cuisines had by now been reshaped by maize and probably manioc, and possibly by New World condiments as well. Significantly, all of this preceded the earliest visit by a colonial administrator whose scribblings, hastily written after a debilitating tour of inspection during which he relied on hammock carriers to conserve his strength, mark the beginning of the colonial archive on Banda. The mentions are few, the silences profound, and, as I hope to have demonstrated, archaeological sources are a crucial resource for interrogating those silences.

8

Reflections: historical anthropology and the construction of Africa's past

As anthropologists have turned to history, they have worked to construct their own archives in order to probe colonialism's culture, to interrogate the silences and mentions that flow from European representations of "the other" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:34; Stoler and Cooper 1997). But archaeological sources are typically not part of that archive. Instead, archaeology continues to be a source of insight into a *baseline past*, a past before important changes took place, a *prehistory* tacked on in prefatory fashion to the dynamism of *history* captured by oral and written sources (Lightfoot 1995; Schmidt and Patterson 1995:13). This study was motivated by a conviction that history-making – in pasts proximate and distant – would be enriched by archaeological sources. Rather than a source of last resort, the residues of daily life – house floors, charred seeds, animal bones, broken pots, beads, metal tools – attest to the materiality of history; that history begins "with bodies and artifacts" (Trouillot 1995:29). Moreover, archaeology provides a resolutely local view, a counterbalance to the metropolitan focus of documentary archives. Only local-level studies can inform on the choices people make as they confront the broader political-economic contexts that condition their lives. We've seen that these shaped decisions made by Kuulo and Makala villagers about: where to live (in aggregated or dispersed settlements); investment in housing (what building techniques to use, whether to rebuild or refurbish); and whether to abandon their homes or seek refuge in this frontier area. They also shaped the character of household and extra-household production (potting, metallurgy, textile-making, stock production, hunting, and labor allocation). The broader political-economic landscape provided the context within which Banda became a frontier zone, characterized by social and political processes shared by other frontier contexts (Kopytoff 1987, 1999). Yet the expression of these processes is local, and best understood through a broad array of historical traces.

Few if any of the historical patterns described in Chapters 5–7 are accommodated by the evolutionary model that has underwritten most archaeological inquiry into an African past. To label these sites "Iron Age" is to emphasize their sameness, a lack of significant change for close to a millennium, and their isolation from a broader political-economic context. Thus, archaeological reconstructions shaped by evolutionary categories rest unconformably with historical and anthropological studies that are attentive to historical contingency and change. Yet evolutionary models have shaped our knowledge of the archaeological landscape in subtle ways, directing our attention toward particular kinds of sites (towns, smelting sites), and away from

others (hamlets, villages, peripheries; Stahl 1999b). Because evolution is cumulative, and because of the effects of the "Trevor-Roper trap" (Fuglestad 1992), complexity has become a touchstone of Iron Age archaeology, with evidence for its antithesis (non-complexity? simplicity? independence from hegemonic polities?) seldom sought. This has translated into an interest in periods when complexity flourishes (defined by attributes like hierarchy, long-distance trade, and so on), and a concomitant lack of interest in periods when it breaks down. By privileging the development of complexity, and foreclosing interest in areas or times when evidence for complexity is lacking, evolutionary models straitjacket inquiry, and highlight a limited range of cultural variability. Thus a preoccupation with complexity and evidence of progress has directed historical and archaeological attention to town sites like Begho. Yet there are interesting questions to be asked about life in the wake of Begho's demise. While the answers may contribute little to abstract theoretical debates on cultural complexity, they speak volumes about the choices that one set of communities made in the context of a changing regional and subcontinental political economy, and ultimately inform on processes of change (in this case, processes in frontier settings; Kopytoff 1999). But though I've worked to demonstrate that archaeological sources contribute powerfully to our understanding of the lived past, they too are shaped by power and actively create and maintain a series of silences and mentions (Trouillot 1995:48–49).

Silences and mentions in Banda history

Banda is today small and inconsequential in geopolitical perspective and, like similar regions elsewhere in Africa, the archive on Banda is thin. It is an archive shaped by power through Trouillot's (1995:26) four moments of historical production: the making of facts, archives, narratives, and retrospective significance. Though Banda was known to Europeans from the late eighteenth century, mentions of it were shaped by the mercantile preoccupations of Europeans and the expansionist politics of Asante. Banda appears as a source of slaves and an object of Asante expansion; as a province and ally of Asante; as a troublesome neighbor of Gyaman; as a Fula state dominated by Mohammedans – all images that predate European penetration of Asante's hinterland. When British representatives first visited Banda, they generated "facts" borne of their own preoccupations. (Rarely do we hear Banda voices in these documents; when we do, they appear in spaces shaped by colonial power structures, transmitted through the hand of the DC or court stenographer.) George Ferguson was the first British representative on the scene in Banda, and his facts were shaped by the progressive evolutionary model that he embraced through his British education (Arhin 1974:xi). Charged with creating the first maps of Asante's hinterland, Ferguson charted more than simply the locations of towns, rivers, and mountains. He mentally mapped (cf. Sharpe 1986) the cultural landscape, distinguishing tribes from states, uncivilized from civilized. The military men who followed in Ferguson's footsteps contributed to the archive, mapping Banda as a place with food to provision troops garrisoned in the fight against Samori. Colonial administrators who followed were the frontline in Pax Britannica; they were preoccupied with reformation

– reshaping colonized bodies by remaking lived environments and consumer prefer-
ences (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). The "facts" they generated were shaped by
these preoccupations – facts about the nature of villages, agriculture, and crafts, espe-
cially products with marketable potential or ones that inhibited demand for British
manufactures (cf. Thomas 1991, 1994). The "facts" about chieftaincy were shaped
by a desire to standardize ruling structures to make indirect rule more efficient and
cost-effective. The "facts" about village backwardness were refracted through a pro-
gressive developmentalist lens that conceptualized Africans as a people whose past
was characterized by a poverty of culture and a dreary sameness (e.g., Allen 1979:11).

The "facts" that can today be retrieved are further shaped by fact assembly or
archive-making. Much practical activity in the colonial period was never captured in
written form. A British official from Zanzibar recalled the backlog of cases that con-
fronted him. He therefore took steps to keep the paperwork manageable.

> Now take a very typical offence – a fight which might very well involve ten to
> fifteen witnesses. One knew that at the end of the matter it was going to be
> either an acquittal or a fine of the order of five to ten shillings. But to have
> copied down the evidence of the witnesses would have virtually meant that
> your list was brought to a stop. So I discovered for myself a routine whereby I
> listened in silence to the entire case and if I found the accused guilty I firmly
> entered on the appropriate form a plea of guilty. If, on the contrary, the
> accused was acquitted, I simply wrote on the form, "Charge withdrawn by
> leave of Court," which meant, in fact, that there was no written record of
> these tediously prolonged debates.
> (Allen 1979:69–70)

Thus the colonial paper trail represents a mosaic of silences and mentions about
practical activity.

Of all the paper generated by colonial officials, only a portion made its way
through the administrative filters and entered the Confidential Print series printed
for Parliament that is carefully curated in the Public Records Office, London (the
majority of Colonial Office correspondence cited in this study; see O'Neill [1968]
for insight into the conditions of production and curation of British Parliamentary
Papers). Here they can be efficiently retrieved and studied in comfortable, well-lit
surroundings sponsored by the tax receipts of a prosperous country. Other docu-
ments made it no further than Cape Coast or Christiansborg and formed the basis
of the Ghana National Archives. Still other documents were retained in district
offices, perhaps later finding their way into regional archives like Kumase, or left to
molder in decaying colonial offices. Their accessibility is shaped by the endemic
poverty of a "third world" nation exacerbated by IMF restructuring that dramati-
cally cut civil service positions. These archives are maintained by small, poorly com-
pensated staffs who lack budgets for routine tasks like cataloguing and conservation
(Austin 1986). Catalogued documents are often missing in action. The trajectory of
documents thus shapes their accessibility, and creates a foundation of silences and
mentions on which history-making builds (Trouillot 1995).

So too is the "oral archive" a product of fact creation and fact assembly shaped by power. Here we see the effects of "workshop history" (Cohen and Odhiambo 1989:30). Facts about the past are created in relation to present circumstances. History here has a concrete relation to the present – to solidify group identity or claims to positions of authority, resources, and power. Those with the power to speak have the power to shape historical visions and memories, though not all parties to these performances take away the same visions or memories (Borofsky 1987:106–130). But the power to speak and claims to truth take on a new and more enduring life when they are encoded in writing, laying the foundation of a new archive. The encoding of oral history has been an uneven process in Banda. So far as we know, Fell (1913) first recorded a recounting of Banda history. Here the power to speak and be recorded belonged to the Banda chief, Yaw Sielɔngɔ, then an old man. In 1936 it was Kofi Gyatoe, linguist of Bandahene Kwasi Sinapim, who presented Banda history before the Asantehene's court in the earliest yet encountered verbatim recounting, one captured by the court's secretary (KA 985). Here too is a rare glimpse of an alternative construction of Banda history presented in the words of the plaintiff who claimed autochthonous status in the Bima land dispute. The examination and cross-examination between plaintiff and defendant lays bare the relationship between historical narrative and contemporary advantage; land and people are at stake in these claims to truth that are simultaneously claims to power (Foucault 1980). The cool, narrative tone of Ameyaw's (1965) recording of Banda history eliminates any sense of internal conflict. Though Kofi Dwuru II's voice is obscured by Ameyaw's narrative, it was he who had the power to speak truth to this representative of the Institute of African Studies who was laboring to create a respectable history of African states to counter the Trevor-Roperian view of African history. This telling of Banda history obscures the complex ethnic history and frontier dynamics that are glimpsed through the earlier exchange in the Asantehene's court. More silences entered when Kofi Dwuru II sat for a second interview with a later representative from the University of Ghana (Owusuh 1976). Now the impending chieftaincy dispute led him to suppress the names of Kabruno chiefs in what can only have been a deliberate attempt to undermine the claims of his Kabruno successor. To this point, the written accounts of Banda history were isomorphic with the historical vision of the ruling family. Dean Jordan's attempts in the 1970s to record a broader array of family histories was suppressed by Kofi Dwuru II. A decade later his successor, Kofi Dwuru III, viewed our family history project as a threat to the primacy of royal history. Though these alternative stories had presumably circulated in local workshop history, our encoding of them in the "blue books" was seen by the chief and his advisers as a Pandora's box of historical claims, prompting them to censor portions of the book and control their circulation.

The archaeological archive for Banda is more recently constructed, and it too is shaped by power and the preoccupations of its makers. The decisions of where and what to excavate were shaped by the questions and theoretical preoccupations of contemporary archaeology – funding depends on identifying problems and questions of interest to a broader professional cohort. Though local permission and good

will are required, we cannot underestimate the power of employment in accessing it. Archaeological projects translate into daily wages for a variety of local people, wages that make a crucial difference in lean years (and see Posnansky [1993] on the long-term impacts of an archaeological project on a village community). Though local people may appropriate archaeological insights and put them to work in local "work-shop history," control over those resources is in the hands of academics and state officials. As part of the national heritage, the objects recovered from archaeological contexts belong to the nation state. But it is the archaeologist who perhaps exercises greatest control, for it is s/he who interprets the materials, who makes their retrospective significance through the production of archaeological narratives. But these mentions simultaneously involve silences. As in documentary research, only a portion of the thousands of artifacts and their proveniences are incorporated into our narratives, while other excavated sites remain unanalyzed and unreported. Archaeological publications are often written in a technical language that limits their accessibility, both to the lay people whose past they represent and for professionals who rarely incorporate them into their historical scenarios (Stahl et al. n.d.; Vansina 1995; cf. Robertshaw 2000). These are what I have called source-side concerns in Chapter 2.

On constructionism and the lived past

All of these moments of historical production underscore the fact that we construct history in the present, yet, as I have argued throughout, this recognition does not mean that we should abandon the lived past as an object of inquiry. A danger of con-structivist approaches is that they divert attention from lived worlds, difficult as those may be to access in areas where archives are "thin." A recognition that history is con-structed in the present does not negate the lived past, for just as surely as we make the past in the present, the choices and decisions of the lived past shaped the present. The first Banda villagers who experimented with maize or later cassava made choices that reshaped nutritional ecology and labor allocation among their descendants. Refugees who fled hardships at home and sought permission from the Banda chief to settle in this frontier region remade their children's futures. The changing prac-tices of taste forged through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries laid the foun-dation for the process of monetization that so inexorably reshaped the lives of twentieth-century Africans (Guyer 1995a).

Yet our narratives of the lived past – those aspects of the lived past that we choose to highlight – are shaped by contemporary concerns. Our understanding of how Banda villagers "lived the big changes" of geopolitical restructuring is shaped by my preoccupation with change, a narrative preference that flows from my concern to counter the image of rural Africans living in a temporal vacuum. Standing at the foot of Makala village today, looking down the broad central avenue, an outsider can easily imagine the village as little different from the "Iron Age" past in which rural Africans are thought to slumber (Plate 11). The houses are mostly earthen construc-tions with grass-thatched roofs. The wide street that dead-ends into Makala Kataa seldom sees vehicular traffic. As in the past, women plaster their porches with

Plate 11. Main street of Makala village in 1989. Photo by A. Stahl

mixtures of clay and ash and, at times, cook in earthenware vessels. Cast aluminum pots and the "dead men's" clothes[18] that many villagers wear speak to their involvement in a monetized economy; but it is easy to imagine that an "authentic" traditional culture lies immediately beneath this superficial veneer of manufactured goods. In a methodological sleight of hand the "ethnographic present" becomes the "ethnographic past" (Chance 1996) as we imagine the past as a slightly altered image of the present. In the process, the historicity of Makala village life, and more broadly African rural life, is silenced.

The "breaker of walls" – the colonial official who convinced Banda villagers to relocate in the 1920s – would see contemporary Makala village differently. He would see a village laid out on a grid, open to his gaze, with bodily practices regulated in space – defecation restricted to latrines on the village margins, the dead removed to special-purpose sites, and the disposal of refuse confined in space. He would approve of the use of money and a taste for manufactured goods. These were, to his mind, civilizing improvements over "traditional" practice. For him, village life at *Late Makala* would have stood for the ethnographic past – the way villagers had lived from time immemorial.

But as we have seen, the settlement at Late Makala represented but one historical moment in the lives of Banda villagers, one shaped by the dislocations created by the territorial ambitions of Samori and the Europeans. It was a time when refugees and captives were negotiating their place in Banda society, and Banda officials were struggling to maintain their claim to lands eyed by Gyaman to the west and Nkoranza to the east. When viewed comparatively, Late Makala houses appear

anomalous – these relatively impermanent minimal residential units are quite unlike the durable compound structures at Kuulo Kataa and Early Makala. So too did the practices of household reproduction differ at Late Makala compared to Early Makala. The regional catchment from which villagers supplied their needs appears contracted, and the combined draw of waged labor and colonial demands for carriers shaped changing gender relations (Stahl and Cruz 1998; see Stahl [1999a:Fig. 28] for a summary of changes). Neither does life at *Early Makala* represent a "traditional," "precolonial" baseline; the frontier dynamics that ensued from Begho's demise was associated with a southward shift in the gravity of intercontinental trade, and later violent incorporation into Asante. Early Makala villagers lived in a period of relative stability (judging from the longevity of the settlement) in which households relied on regional exchange to supply their daily needs (e.g., for pottery). Though they did not know it, this stability would be brought to an abrupt end by further political-economic dislocation. The Banda case study thus demonstrates the difficulty in the (ethnographic) present of sorting "precolonial" from "colonial" elements, "prehistoric" from "historic," or durable structure from those dimensions of contemporary practice that are more recent.

My emphasis on change does not preclude continuities; as Chanock (1985:15) aptly observed, people face their futures through their pasts, dealing with new circumstances in terms of familiar ideas (cf. Sahlins 1993). Other scholars have chosen to emphasize such continuities in their narratives of West African historical experience (DeCorse 1989, 1992, 1998a, 1998b). Africans living in the vicinity of Elmina Castle, site of the earliest Portuguese and later Dutch trade forts, lived in stone-walled houses and possessed large quantities of imported goods – crockery, glassware, beads, and so on. Yet DeCorse stresses the durability of an African "worldview" despite the material trappings of European influence. Though Africans at Elmina ate from ceramics manufactured in Europe, their preference for hollow-ware vessels (bowls) suggests African culinary preferences for soups and stews. Though they lived in stone-walled houses that are unique to the settlement, they adopted this novel building technique to familiar house forms – rectangular rooms oriented around a compound. Perhaps in this case the emphasis on continuity is strategically important in light of evidence of overwhelming material change. Here DeCorse seems motivated by a desire to overcome an *assumption of change* in a coastal setting where daily life was visibly altered by the area's incorporation into a global economy.

Though questions of change and continuity are often presented as neutral issues in archaeology – material culture "revealing" a tendency toward one or the other – the foregoing suggests an ideological dimension to our preferences. Questions of change and continuity have ideological significance for consumers of archaeological scenarios as well. My preoccupation with change does not mesh well with local concerns to establish identities or practices as ancient and therefore legitimate. Access to power and resources is legitimized by claims to tradition and authenticity, with little room for discussion of change. These struggles over history in Banda resonate with struggles over African-American history in which archaeologists have become

enmeshed (Leone et al. 1987; McDavid and Babson 1997; McKee 1994; Potter 1991; Stahl 2000a). When competing visions of history emerge, whose vision should prevail – on what grounds do "*we*" sort among such competing visions? By appeals to the empirical? The political? Who is included in and excluded from "*we*"? – does it include the people whose past is at stake? And what of diverse interest groups among those people (cf. Andah 1995)? What should be the relationship between the authoritative discourses of academic history and local discourse of workshop history? These difficult and important questions cannot be ignored by archaeologists (or historians, or anthropologists); but no formulaic approach provides a roadmap for addressing them. Rather, working through them requires us to become reflexive ethnographers, attentive to the concerns of communities with whom we work and to how our backgrounds and preoccupations shape our visions of the past. We need to reflect on how the questions we ask of the past and the answers we generate may be in conflict with the historical *visions* of those who claim that past. I emphasize the plural – *visions* – because we must avoid the assumption that the groups whose histories we study are homogeneous. Calls for alternative histories that challenge dominant history often gloss diversity among dominated peoples (i.e., Andah 1995:180–181; Schmidt and Patterson 1995:3; cf. Blakey 1997). Calls for "authentic cultural history" (Andah 1995) ignore the complexities of power and notions of authenticity at the local level (cf. Ortner [1995] on resistance studies). Cleavages within Banda along lines of ethnicity and power shape perceptions of authenticity, a point amply illustrated by the long-standing chieftaincy dispute. Each group mobilizes silences and mentions, and each inscribes the historical work of outsiders with their own interpretations.

In 1986 I could not have predicted how our family history project would come into conflict with authorized versions of Banda history; when it did, the struggle provided new insight into the dynamics of chieftaincy and ethnicity and a richer understanding of contemporary social and political relations. Cleavages among interest groups became clearer, and I better understood how our research intersected with local issues. This ethnographic understanding framed subsequent research, shaping research questions and emphases, in part by leading me to de-emphasize the issue of ethnicity and political organization in later archaeological research. This awareness shapes my academic writing, leading me repeatedly to emphasize the fluidity of ethnicity and how material culture masks contemporary ethnic diversity. This is not to deny the saliency of ethnicity, but to emphasize its contextuality. When I am drawn into local "workshop history," I am respectful of local views, but reserve the right respectfully to disagree with their historical constructions, just as they do not wholeheartedly embrace mine. But this ability to disagree is shaped by my position – as a privileged foreigner vis-à-vis the people whose history I study. The consequences of disagreeing are quite different for me than for local people – one only need think of those who died in the 1986 and 1994 conflicts over chieftaincy to remember this.

I came to the recognition that history is constructed and has saliency in the present through more than fifteen years of involvement with Banda people. This recognition

did not come theoretically, but rather practically, often uncomfortably, through making history in Banda. Today it is commonplace that history is constructed and has power in the present, but it is a commonplace that threatens to swamp an interest in sociohistorical process and the lived past. This is perhaps especially true in anthropology, where ethnographies of historical production are often little concerned with a lived past. Scholars of the past – whether archaeologists, historians, or anthropologists – cannot choose to be either *interested* or *disinterested* in questions of how the past is made in the present. This is not an optional category of research – but, at the same time that we work to become reflexive ethnographers of history-making, we should retain an analytical focus on sociohistorical process and the lived past (Stahl et al. n.d.). We should not be surprised when local communities disagree – sometimes violently – with our visions of history (see Briggs [1996]), nor should we relegate acknowledgment of such disagreement to a footnote (Lentz 1993:note 97; Stahl 1991:note 6). The challenge is to combine our emerging understanding of how history is made in the present with a wariness of constructivism that loses sight of the lived experience of past people, difficult as that can be to access. Rather than succumbing to an either/or solution – EITHER we focus on the lived past, OR the production of the past in the present – I suggest we need to keep these perspectives in productive tension, just as we must keep our distinct sources of evidence in productive tension to achieve a more textured account of the sociohistorical processes that shape our worlds.

On supplementarity and sources

Early efforts to integrate historical, archaeological, and anthropological insights into Africa's past were sabotaged by incompatible epistemologies, methodologies, and ideas about the questions that count (Stahl 2000b). A more recent experimental moment offers renewed promise of integration, yet I have argued that integration will not flow from each of us pursuing business as usual. Whereas earlier scholars saw multiple lines of evidence as additive, the gaps in one line of evidence being filled in by another, I have suggested that sources are instead supplemental. Drawing on Dirks (1996), Hall (1992, 1994, 1999), and others, I have argued that we need to adopt a comparative approach to multiple sources that is attuned to their contradictions and inconsistencies, what I have called a subject-side concern in Chapter 2. But I have also argued that these comparisons will be neither neat nor isomorphic, and that we must take into account the particular patterns of silences and mentions that characterize different sources. We need to interrogate the "thickness" and "thinness" of sources with respect to different analytical goals, to assess their transparency or opacity with regard to particular research questions. On some level, then, we need to tune our questions to the resolution of our evidence. For example, I've argued that probing *meaning* depends on analogical argument, and is therefore a problematic focus in archaeological contexts where we lack penecontemporaneous oral or written sources. Instead, I've opted for a focus on *practice* that seems more amenable to archaeological exegesis – practices of taste, production and reproduction, and so on. I suspect that the resulting narrative is disappointingly "thin" on culture and

meaning for anthropologists and culturally attuned historians (see McCaskie [1995]). But I would argue that we need to interrogate more closely the "thickness" of historical-anthropological and some historical accounts in this regard. I suspect that on inspection much of the fullness of these accounts flows from the methodological practices that I critique in Chapter 2, practices that generate an ethnographic past in the image of an ethnographic present (Fig. 2.1). But a focus on practice is not a disability in an anthropology attuned to the relationship between culture and practice, one that envisions practice as culture-in-the-making (Dirks 1996). I hope that I've demonstrated that by keeping our sources in productive tension we can achieve more textured accounts of the sociohistorical processes that shaped our worlds. By adopting a supplemental approach – one that interrogates one line of evidence against another, one time period against another, an approach attentive to both source- and subject-side concerns and reflexive about its role in shaping academic and popular historical consciousness – we can navigate a course between the solipsism of some constructivist approaches and the pernicious evolutionism that casts African history as a seamless fabric, undifferentiated through time and across space.

NOTES

1 The term "ethnohistory" developed in North America in the post-war period as anthropologists were forced by their participation in Indian land claim cases to examine documentary evidence. A handful of scholars subsequently became interested in documenting the radical changes that affected Native American societies in the period of European contact (Lurie 1961). The term differentiated the distinct methodological approaches and reliance on non-traditional sources; however, it has also been taken to imply that the history of the non-western peoples upon which it is focused is qualitatively different than history (Mudimbe 1988:175–178). Others found the term useful in distinguishing multicultural history from that focused on a single group (Trigger 1982:3).

2 No ethnographer has made Banda the focus of a study; Jack and Esther Goody passed through the area in September, 1956, and the brief accounts that they published comprise the bulk of the ethnographic record for Banda (Goody 1964, 1965, 1966a). Goody described the survey as follows:

> My wife and I made a brief survey of the area in September 1956, when we visited Kintampo, Bamboi, Wenchi, Menji, Banda, Bui, then back to Namasa, Heni, Sampa (and vicinity), Bonduku. Information about villages off this route was of course not checked on the spot; indeed owing to the shortness of the visit much of the material must be regarded as tentative and in need of further confirmation.
> (Goody 1964:193, footnote 2)

Rene Bravmann, an art historian, worked with the Islamic Dyula and Ligby of western Brong-Ahafo, and visited Banda in the period 1966–68. His work focused on Dyula and Ligby masking cults (Bravmann 1974, 1975, 1979) and the symbolism of chieftaincy (Bravmann 1972). Linguistic research was pursued by Dean and Carol Jordan, who lived in Banda-Ahenkro for a decade (1972–82) translating the New Testament into Nafaanra, supported by Wyckliffe Bible Translators and the Ghana Institute for Linguistics (Jordan 1980).

3 We have not yet found correspondence or court records on this dispute. We know that it took place before 1936 when a representative of the Kwasi Sinapim, the Banda chief, referred to the Kuulo land claim during litigation in the Asantehene's court (KA 985, p. 46).

4 Mustapha Tettey Addy recorded a Nafana masking cult drum song on his album "Mustapha Tettey Addy – Master Drummer from Ghana," released in 1972 by Tangent Records, London. Band 1, Side 1 is identified as Nafana Gbain Drums, and the jacket comments by Drid Williams, Social Anthropology, Oxford University, indicate that "'Gbain' refers to a male cult dance . . . centring around a helmet type mask which resembles the head of a bush cow or crocodile. It is thought by the Nafana that all men have a wild renegade tendency in them, which is what the Gbain mask symbolizes." I played a recording of Tettey Addy's Gbain song to men in the Banda area, which they identified as a Do song. They indicated that they do not know the term "Gbain."

5 The question remains whether these positions existed, and were renamed (with Akan names). Linguistic evidence might help sort this out (Vansina 1990); however, I have neither the evidence nor expertise to address this. In 1986 I tried to elicit Nafaanra terms

for positions, but interviewees argued over the possibilities. In several cases, consensus settled on the name of the family followed by the term *nunu*, meaning "first" or "one." This suggests that formal titles did not formerly exist. In only one case did we elicit a title that was supplanted by an Akan title – Krontihene was formerly referred to as Katoo Lopom ("head of house"; Stahl and Anane 1989:22).

6 Staff at the Ghana National Archives in Kumase were unable to locate the original Fell manuscript when I visited there in 1989 (see Austin [1986] on conditions at the time). Instead, I rely on a transcription of Fell's account by H. Kontright that appears in the papers of R. S. Rattray, available on microfilm in the library of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Museum of Mankind, London.

7 My information on the chieftaincy dispute comes almost exclusively from supporters of the deposed paramount chief, Nana Kofi Dwuru III. Residents of Kabruno and their supporters would no doubt provide a different slant on the events described herein. Bravmann (1972) includes some information from the Kabruno perspective.

8 I formulated an outline of the research that lay at the core of this book during the 1982 field season. Our survey was not yielding the early Kintampo complex sites that were to be the focus of my dissertation research. Desperate to salvage a dissertation out of the project, I began to frame a context in which the recent sites that dominated our survey would have saliency. I drafted a letter to one of my dissertation supervisors, Glynn Isaac, outlining a revised project to explore the relationship between ethnicity and material culture. Shortly thereafter we were able to hire a vehicle which allowed us to travel further afield looking for sites, and to undertake re-excavation at κ6 rockshelter, a Kintampo site that formed the core of my dissertation.

9 For example, Rattray (1929), in the Preface to *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, went to great lengths to demonstrate how cut off educated Africans were from their traditional roots. The repositories of the African past, Rattray says, are the illiterates, who are

> generally inarticulate for practical purposes, except when approached by the European who has spent a lifetime among them and has been able to gain their complete confidence. The literate African, who is the highly educated product of one of our Universities, has had to pay a certain penalty for the acquisition of his Western learning, for he has of necessity been cut off in great measure from his own country, customs, and beliefs. Of these it is true he may have some slight knowledge, but, with rare exceptions, it is only a fraction of what is possessed by the untutored ancients, who are the real custodians of his country's traditions and learning . . . [the educated man] seems to lack that indefinable something which often ennobles his wholly illiterate countryman, and raises him considerably above the common herd. I do not know exactly how to describe what it is that the one often possesses and the other seems to miss. It appears to me like some hand reaching out of the past and linking him with it. It gives the illiterate man confidence in himself at times when a man feels quite alone . . . The cultured man has dropped that friendly contact, and, I believe, feels often lost in consequence, and is never quite at home anywhere, whether in the society of Europeans or of his own countrymen. (Rattray 1929:vii–viii; cf. Busia 1951)

10 A complete report of the Namasa excavations never appeared, so it is not possible to assess further the stratigraphic relationship of dated samples. Incomplete reporting of excavation results has been a common problem in Ghana archaeology, hampering efforts to compare results between sites.

11 West African cuisine is represented in Rombauer and Rombauer Becker's classic (1975:462) *Joy of Cooking* by a single recipe – West African beef stew. Key ingredients are tomatoes and peanut butter!

12 Because fermentation produces acids, we might expect pitting on the interior walls of fermentation pots, though these may be difficult to distinguish from pots used to ferment local beer (see above).

13 Robert Launay made this provocative suggestion during a 1997 seminar presentation at Northwestern University.

14 A glance at the UNESCO criteria for the selection of World Heritage sites demonstrates that this view of the world continues to structure access to World Heritage designation for sites. World Heritage monuments are protected and eligible for UNESCO funds. Significantly, the cultural heritage sites in sub-Saharan Africa are few, and comprise primarily European forts and castles, along with Great Zimbabwe (Stahl 1999b).

15 Tensions have long existed among northern and southern Ghanaians. Northerners, non-Akan peoples, have historically been looked down upon by southerners, mainly Akan people. A discourse of civilization is brought to bear upon northerners by southerners, who characterize them as primitive, uncivilized, "bush" people (see Lentz [1994]).

16 Although contemporary historians note that Sakyi was referred to as Worosa by the Asante, the evidence for this congruence is not cited. Banda traditions do not recognize the congruence. Reindorf (1966 [1889]:131–132) appears to be the first historian to link the name Worosa with the Banda chief who reigned at the time of the Asante invasion. Reindorf (1966:132) related that Worosa, "found nearly dead, was beheaded by a stroke of King Kwadwo's sword. His head was imitated in gold, and placed on a sword which was called 'Worosa-ti'." Because Reindorf did not cite his source, it is impossible to subject his account to source criticism. Yet it seems significant that the reigning Banda chief at the time of the 1892–93 hostilities with Nkoranza was Sahkyamo Wurosa (Table 3.5). Reindorf might then have used the name of a near contemporary in referring to this episode that occurred more than 100 years before.

17 Kofi Gyatoe specified in his testimony that

> After the war, the Bandas were accused of displaying cowardice during the war and so the Ashantis fined us 1000 predwan. This scared the Bandas and we decamped to Bona in the French Territory. The Bonas also fought us and drove us away from their land. We removed and settled at a place called Duma . . . The Bandahene at this time was called Dabilla.
> (KA 985:57).

18 Dead men's clothes is a common appellation for second-hand clothes in Ghana. As it was once put to me, "Who but a dead man would give up such fine clothes?"

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This study draws on documents from the Ghana National Archives, Accra; the Ghana National Archives, Kumasi; microfilm copies of colonial records housed at the Northwestern University Library; and the Public Records Office, Kew, London. Ghana National Archives, Accra, documents are those that begin with a GNA; Kumasi documents are designated by KA; microfilm from Northwestern University as NWU; and Public Records Office documents with a CO (Colonial Office).

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