

CHAPTER 3

SOCIALIZATION IN AN ACCRA SUBURB: THE ZONGO AND ITS DISTINCTIVE SUB-CULTURE

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This paper examines the socialization process in an Accra Zongo. It is divided into two parts. The first part contains a descriptive account of the informal patterns of socialization whereby children are trained unconsciously in the values and behaviour patterns of their community by participating in the life of the family and neighbourhood. The second part looks at the formal patterns of socialization, the more consciously directed formal educational process which children undergo.

The term 'Zongo' is used throughout Ghana to refer to the residentially segregated quarters where strangers settle. They are a feature of all Ghanaian cities and towns.

Sabon Zongo in Accra—the Zongo under consideration in this paper—is part of the larger suburban complex of Kaneshie, Mamprobi, Lartebiorkorshi and Abose Okai, situated west of the Korle Lagoon and within the Accra Municipal Area. It was first settled in 1909 when many of the Hausa were moved there by the then colonial Administration at the time of the Bubonic Plague. They had previously been living in the highly congested Zongo Lane area, adjacent to James Town, in the centre of Accra, where their ancestors had first settled on coming down to the Coast in the 1880s. Some northern ethnic groups such as the Gonja and the Mosi moved in the 1910s and by the 1920s some Islamized Ga, Yoruba and Kanuri were also established there in. By 1970 a large number of southern Ghanaians were living there, having moved in towards the end of the 1960s.

Though the Zongo is ethnically¹ highly heterogenous it is, nevertheless, argued that the Hausa of northern Nigerian origin, the oldest settlers in the area, are the dominant cultural group. Many Hausa cultural traits have also been adopted by other ethnic groups living there. This process of acculturation within the Zongo, however, is not random—the borrowing of Hausa customs and assimilation with the dominant Hausa group seems to be dependent on a common membership of Islam. In fact many Hausa customary traits are borrowed by other ethnic groups in the belief that they constitute the more orthodox Islamic practice. Islamic ritual provides a common social pattern not only in a specifically religious context but also in the application of its laws to other areas of social organization, to many shared familiar economic and educational patterns. Membership in this common faith appears to be the major cohesive factor drawing people as geographically and culturally diverse as the Zabrama, Kotokoli, Kanuri and Gonja together in an intensive system of social relationships and common behavioral patterns in the Zongo.

In many ways the culture of Sabon Zongo differs from that found in the wider social milieu. Their religion—Islam—distinguishes them from their predominantly Christian and Animist

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added. In practise, a child may be known by this day-name or a nickname he assumes early in life, usually given him by a grandparent. This playname may refer to a physical characteristic of the child, as for instance the one with the (long) neck, the ugly one and so on or the child may be known by the occupation of the mother, for example, the one who sells kola. Children bearing such play-names are very common and the custom may be related to the extensive system of name avoidance which is practised. (Smith, 1955). Mutual name taboos are observed in all cases between parents and their first born child.

The child stays indoors with the mother for the next forty days. (Trimingham, 1959:158) Bathing, dressing, the application of antimony to the child's eyes, is done by some elderly female relative whose role is well defined and formally recognised. On the day of the name-giving she is allotted the head, legs, and skin of the animal slaughtered.

The mother usually goes to her own mother's home for the birth of the baby—particularly in the case of her first child and especially if there are none of her own female kin living in the husband's home who can take care of her. Hot rich food is prepared for the mother and is considered essential for her well-being. Bathing in hot water and massage is also done for the mother by the elderly female relative. The mother does not pray or, if it is the fasting period, fast until the forty-day period has passed. The husband can ask for the wife's return any time the forty-day period has passed. Great variation, however, has been observed in this—some mothers stay for up to nine months before returning, during which time the child is cared for by his maternal relatives.

For the next two years, the child is cared for by his mother. A woman is under strong social pressure not to conceive during the period of breast-feeding—especially during the first year—though sexual intercourse is permitted.⁷ No attempt is made to discipline the child at this stage—he is given the breast when desired.

Weaning takes place anytime after the first eighteen months. It is not done abruptly until the child has been introduced to other food items gradually; he then comes to rely less and less on breast feed. At weaning a child is usually given to an older relative and separated from the mother until such time as he has forgotten his mother's breast. From this time, it is the custom that if he is the first-born child of the mother, she will cease to have much effective control or relationship with him. Parent child avoidance is practised, especially with the first-born child, but sometimes also with the second and even the third child. The child is usually given to a foster parent, an older relative of the father's or the mother's for subsequent raising. (cf. Smith, 1954:146 & Cohen, 1969:65-6) (This may be cited as an example of a custom borrowed from the Hausa and adopted by other ethnic groups and explained by informants as orthodox Islamic practice).

Much of the early disciplining of children is based on principles of reciprocity—if a small child bites another he may himself be bitten; if he takes food from another, he is likewise deprived of his food. Girls are more directly under the control of their mothers than are the boys. The father's occupation usually takes him outside the house so he cannot directly control their behaviour much of the time. But from about the age of three or four, the father begins to take a greater interest in the activities of his son—he will send for him on his return from work, they will eat together, etc. Some differentiation of authority, therefore, can be observed in the home, the boys increasingly coming under the control of the father, whilst the girls remain under the domes-

tic jurisdiction of the mother. Ultimate responsibility, however, for the conduct of children lies with the father in accordance with the tenets of Islam but Hausa tradition modifies this and the father's father and mother have also some authority. (Trimingham, 1959:126).

Much care is taken of the personal cleanliness and appearance of children. A child seldom misses being bathed, twice daily powdered and having antimony applied to her eyes. Earrings are worn and most girls wear waist beads beneath their cotton clothes. Girls frequently have their hair plaited and dyed and their nails varnished. Thus girls from an early age are being introduced to their feminine role and encouraged to take an interest in their appearance.

With regard to place of residence, where a child's father has more than one wife, each wife has a separate apartment. The father may or may not have his own room. The ideal is that they should all live together in the one house. This is not always possible because of the pressure on available accommodation due to the practice of letting out large portions of the family houses in Zongo to tenants. Also some husbands choose to keep their wives separate to avoid quarrels so even where accommodation is available, they may prefer to rent rooms in other houses for subsequent wives. The husband has absolute authority to decide where the wife/wives shall live according to Islamic regulations. (Trimingham, 1959:177).

Children are encouraged to have the same relationships with all 'mothers'—real and classificatory. If the wives are living in separate houses, children are expected to visit their 'senior' or 'junior' mothers. All are called by the same term and it is only when wishing to be more explicit in tracing out a relationship further removed, that the 'junior' or 'senior' terms will be attached. It is often difficult to discern the true biological relationships involved by observing the behaviour patterns of mothers and their children in an harmonious polygynous household. Where one finds the large family houses, it is usual to find children above the age of four or five, all sleeping together in one room with some old woman.⁸ Otherwise, children, when they get older, will sleep together in the small ante-rooms adjoining the bedroom of their mother when it is her turn to sleep with her father.

The practice of fostering children is found widely. As already mentioned, the first child of the mother is usually fostered by some older female relative of the husband, either his mother or an older sister, while some member of the mother's family usually fosters the second. The mother may or may not keep the remaining children. Especially close and friendly relations exist between alternate generations⁹ and many parents are pleased that the child is released from the strict discipline he receives in his parental home and prefer him to be raised in the more relaxed atmosphere of his grandparents. On the other hand, there are also cases where parents allow their children to be fostered with reluctance for precisely this reason and only because kinship norms require it. They object to the practice because of the pampering and spoiling they know they will receive from grandparents.

Another form of fostering widely practised is that whereby a child—usually a girl—is placed with some distant kin member or acquaintance who subsequently rears the child.¹⁰ Usually such children are placed at a later age. Perhaps the real parents are in financial need and would like to be relieved of the burden of raising the child. Or they may wish their child to become apprenticed to a successful trader or somebody skilled in preparing the specialized traditional food dishes. If there is any kinship relationship, no payment is made to the real parents. If not, there may or may not be. Thus, for example, young Kotokoli girls being fostered

by Basillas in Zongo—both being from the same traditional area in Togoland—receive monthly payments of approximately £4 which is remitted to their parents. Though the real parents remain legal guardians, if the girl stays for a number of years with her foster parents, the woman may arrange her marriage, provide her dowry, etc. The real mother, however, can recall the child at any time.

No systematic data on the incidence of fostering was collected but it appears to be very high. An example from one house may give some idea of the way in which the system operates but it cannot be taken as being representative. All women and children in the house are included.

- a. *Fati*: Married, fostered eldest daughter of her younger brother from Kumasi since the child was three years of age; girl now 14 and the foster mother is presently making arrangements for her marriage; her own first-born son has been fostered by her husband's mother since he was weaned; he is living in Central Accra; he occasionally visits the house of the mother but rigid avoidance is practised between him and the mother; now the boy is about ten years of age; her second-born child, a daughter, is four years old and living with the mother.
- b. *Lahdi*: Married; fostered girl—unrelated but of the same ethnic group—since she was five years of age; the girl is now twelve; the parents of the girl who are in Togoland have not seen the girl for the last seven years; Lahdi herself is childless.
- c. *Shata*: Presently unmarried, fostered two sisters unrelated but of the same ethnic group; the girls are now ten and twelve years of age; they have been with her for about three years; the mother of the girls is in Sabon Zongo but seldom visits.
- d. *Maimuna*: Married; fostered girl—unrelated but of the same ethnic group—since she was of three years of age; the girl is now eight; the parents of the girl are in Togoland have not seen the girl since she was brought to Accra; her own first-born son by a former marriage is being raised by his paternal grandparents in Togoland; he is now ten years of age and has not been seen by his mother since he was taken to Togoland five years ago; her second-born son—also by her former marriage—is being raised by his maternal grandmother since weaning in a village in the Eastern Region of Ghana; he is now eight years of age; he seldom comes to Zongo though the grandmother frequently does.
- e. *Iyee*: Married; fostered girl—unrelated but again of the same ethnic group—since she was eight years of age; the girl is now 13, the girl's own mother is in the Ashanti Region; the foster mother remits £3 to her monthly; she has also fostered the second son of her youngest sister since he was weaned; the boy is now eight years of age; the real mother is in Sabon Zongo; she visits the elder sister but avoidance relations are observed with her son. The older brother of the boy—the first-born—has been with his paternal grandparents in Niger for the past eight years. The real mother has not seen him during this period. Iyee herself is childless.
- f. *Amina*: Presently unmarried; fostered girl—unrelated but of the same ethnic group—since she was seven years of age; the girl is now nine; the mother of the girl is in Sabon-Zongo but does not visit her; Amina's own three children are with the family of her former husband in Nigeria; she has not seen them for over ten years.

Parents who have given their child out in fosterage are not expected to visit the child too frequently as it is felt to be an intrusion into the rights of the foster parents and would seem like snooping.¹¹ Thus, though the real parents may stay in Sabon Zongo and their child is being fostered in another household there, they seldom visit the child. If stories of ill-treatment reach the mother, however, she will withdraw the child on the pretext of her being needed elsewhere.

In some ways, this institutionalised system of fosterage serves as insurance for parents in time of need. For the fostering parents, on the other hand, the labour services of the child are exploited but real obligations exist for the foster-mother to treat the child well, send her to Qu'ran school, etc., and raise her like her own child. In the case of female relatives who have no children, it enables them to play a maternal role and lightens their work burden.

It is also the practice for the men of some ethnic groups, particularly the Zabrama from Niger to send their children, whether male or female, once they have reached the age of three to four years of age back to their own villages to be raised by their parents there. With the great mobility of many of these people and the high rates of marriage breakdown, mothers may lose touch with their children. They believe that the child's curiosity when older to search out his own mother will lead to their reunion.

At divorce, in accordance with Islamic law, the children of divorced parents stay with the father, but great variation in this practice can be observed. (cf. Trimmingham, 1959:176) The Hausa custom of fostering modifies this in many cases. The man must recompense the foster-parent the maintenance costs of the child while in her custody and as this may have been over a number of years, quite a large sum of money may be involved. The father may be unable to pay this lump sum to retrieve the child so the child stays on with the mother's relative who has fostered the child. The Zongo chief arbitrates in such cases. To a large extent, therefore, the custody of children in the case of divorce is dependent on the financial resources of the husband. On the other hand a man may decide to leave some of the children in the custody of the mother.

It is, therefore, difficult to arrive at any general principle of residence or custody for children. They may remain in the house of the father with his co-wives or, they may be fostered by kinsmen or by unrelated foster parents either elsewhere in Zongo or outside Ghana. Also at divorce, a child in theory goes to the father in accordance with Islamic law, but in practise often remains with the mother or her kin.

A child—fostered or otherwise—starts going to Qu'ran school—usually in the company of an older brother or sister—by the age of four. From that time also the child is expected to play a greater part in the mundane running of the household. By the age of six, a girl is expected to clean out her mother's room, sweep the courtyard, carry rubbish to the communal Zongo rubbish dumps and make several trips to the water taps before going to school by eight o'clock. After school she can expect to be sent to the local markets or other households in Zongo to buy raw foodstuffs or, as frequently, cooked dishes. If the mother trades, the child sells the goods from house to house throughout the area. Most women trade or specialize in cooked food though in Islamic law the husband has a duty to support his wife and children. (Trimingham, 1959:164). Some husbands will not allow their wives to trade openly and may forbid them even to go to market so in many cases this kind of child labour is essential.

Apart from the endless errands, a girl is expected to perform all the more arduous task in cooking—the lighting and fanning of the charcoal fires, the constant washing of utensils and also

assists in the grinding and pounding of the food. In many instances, elders are merely in the role of supervisors, while the younger adolescent children do all the work. They will seldom, however, be allowed to cook themselves. It is also the girl's responsibility to do much of the household washing on her days off school.

Young boys will be sent on errands, to take rubbish to the dump and to carry water. Both boys and girls look after younger siblings, but the girls are more regularly assigned the task.

Children are expected to follow the instructions of their parents and elders without question. Physical punishment is threatened as a deterrent to misbehaviour. Also the wrath of the bush spirit the "Dodo"—a pre-islamic Hausa spirit—is especially effective with young children. The appropriate behaviour is impressed on the child by all elders, but especially by the parents and kin. Disobedience, stealing, loitering while on errands, disrespect for elders are the most frequent offences. The right to physically punish a child is the prerogative of the mother, as she is usually responsible for discipline in the first few years, or a member of her kin; in the case of a foster child, it rests with the foster mother and her kin. Small children are beaten with the hand but the older ones are caned severely. Relatives and elders usually intervene on the child's behalf pleading with the mother to be lenient with the child, to have more patience with her, etc.

Respect and deference are always required of children in the presence of elders. They should not engage in conversation with their elders unless directly addressed or encouraged to do so. Elaborate rules of etiquette—greeting, curtesying, etc., are expected. Also special forms of respect are required with various categories of relatives such as name avoidance. The relationship between siblings is generally one of companionship and respect. (cf. Smith, 1954). The same relationships are observed whether siblings are real or classificatory but this is modified if children are living apart. Seniority, however, is an important hierarchical factor and the elder expects obedience in the carrying out of errands, chores, etc., by juniors. Certain manifestations of respect must also be observed by the younger siblings in respect of their seniors which become increasingly important as the child gets older. Though seniority as a general principle holds, the tendency is for girls to discipline and demand obedience from junior sisters and boys younger brothers, but this results mainly from the sex differentiation observed in the performance of tasks. In later life this principle further becomes modified by considerations of economic status of the respective siblings.

Between the rounds of errands and chores, the recreational activity of Sabon Zongo children is rich and varied. As the child participates in the play groups both within and outside the large houses and in the communal activities with which the Zongo abounds, he is also absorbing unconsciously the behavioral norms of his community. In many respects it is difficult to realise that the Zongo is within a large metropolitan area. Its once laid out streets are now impossible to motor traffic due to over-run drains, erosion, gullies, etc., and the open roads and the alleyways between the houses, provide spacious if unsanitary playgrounds for the children.

In the evenings when the daily chores are finished, children of similar age drawn from their own and neighbouring houses play together. Boys and girls have their own distinctive games—the girls being more likely to indulge in singing and dancing and the boys such games as Ludo. Younger children imitate the dancing of the older girls that they have observed in the Market Square during the festivities organized by the Qu'ran schools at the time of the Prophet's birthday.¹² Wandering musicians may visit the houses and young children are encouraged to

dance. Occasionally one of the older girls will recount some Hausa folk stories, the "Ga Tana"¹³ which embody much Hausa moral philosophy and contain many of the precepts of their culture. Appropriate relationships between siblings, the rules of incest, the prescribed behaviour of a step-mother towards the children, the deferential behaviour required of children in the presence of adults, etc., are brought out in many of these tales. The animals in the stories—hyenas, spiders, vultures, etc., are personifications of types of character which evoke considerable rapport in the form of admiration or revulsion in the listening children. There is also a cinema in the Zongo which the children occasionally attend.

Apart from their own unorganized play, much festivity takes place openly in Zongo at which the children are spectators. On the occasion of outdoorings and marriages, Hausa traditional drumming and dancing is held in the open streets outside the houses concerned; for during the week preceeding the first marriage of a girl there is nightly drumming while the relatives and friends perform the traditional pre-marriage dances and songs.¹⁴ On the eve of the marriage day, very elaborate ceremonies and dances are organized attended by several hundred persons. Boys especially—but girls also in a trading capacity—attend the Sunday wrestling matches which are organized on an inter-Zongo basis, with teams competing from all over Ghana and occasionally, visiting teams from other West African countries. Much traditional ceremony is observed at these competitions which are held in a special playing ground in the Zongo.

In addition to these forms of traditional Hausa custom which are kept alive and highly visible by the older members of the community, the natural atmosphere in which the children are growing up is that of a Muslim area. The public nature of much Islamic ritual, the presence of many mosques and prayer grounds, the calling of the Muezzins at prayer time— all accentuate the Zongos essentially religious nature. In addition, at the time of the Prophet Mohammed's birthday, each of the larger Qur'an schools in the Zongo organizes its own celebrations. Attendances range up to a thousand in the crowded Zongo Market to watch the plays and dancing of the children. Children, individually or in small groups, perform small sketches to highlight the more important rulings of their faith—the necessity of the five daily prayers, for girls to marry, for the wearing of their veils in public, etc. Each of the women's Singing Groups in Zongo—the 'Ishriniyyat' groups have their own celebrations also at this time at which they sing songs of praise about the Prophet.¹⁵ Similar groups from other areas also visit the Zongo at this time.

Several nights weekly but especially on Fridays, visiting preachers hold public sermons—the 'Waz'—at which the Qur'an is interpreted. (cf. Trimmingham, 1959:72) Groups of small children have their special preachers, also, who lead them in recitation of the Qur'an and the singing of praise songs.

But not all is orthodox Islam in Zongo. The pre-islamic cult of spirit possession—'bori'—is practised by women.¹⁶ Bori sessions are usually held in the evenings and performed by women practitioners, occasionally, however, on Sundays, from all over Ghana. Children are discouraged from watching but their ability to act out in their play the behaviour of those who become possessed reveals their interest in the practice.

Thus a child continues, participating in the life of his family, play groups and the wider neighbourhood, learning the roles that will fit him for adult status in the community. The child assumes a different range of roles when married which for girls usually takes place before they have reached their fifteenth-year and for boys, in their mid-twenties.

Community life can be seen, therefore, to be in many respects an extension for the child of life in the family. One's familial role dictates ones recreational and economic roles and all are articulated within the framework of the highly pervasive religious system. Islam emphasizes the close relationship between religion and the institutional arrangements of society. Islamic prescriptions can be seen in the familial, political, economic and recreational orders. Each reinforces the other resulting in a highly integrated system. So far as personal, familial economic and religious needs are concerned, there is, for many, no need to go outside of the Zongo. Many adults in Zongo have been born there, received their schooling, found their marriage partners and, made their livelihood—all within the confines of the Zongo. This results in a limited network of relationships with the surrounding areas and enables the community to perpetuate its own distinctive culture. Just how effective this isolation from their neighbouring host society has been can be seen in the phenomenon of fifth generation immigrants having no knowledge of the local Ghanaian language and speaking only Hausa and a smattering of Arabic. This immunity also accounts for the survival of other traditional aspects of their social structure. Much of what is evident in the forms of relationships, behaviour patterns, etc., in present day Sabon Zongo is similar to that documented for Northern Nigeria—the traditional area of the Hausa—over fifty years ago.

One possible means of entering this closed system, would be through the educational institution. For a long time it has been known that Zongo children were not availing themselves of modern educational facilities which were available to them. In the next section, therefore, when we treat the formal aspects of socialization, we will examine this question and see to what extent the State schools are being used. We will also examine the process of education in the community's own distinctive schools, the Qur'anic schools.

Formal Patterns of Socialization

In this section material collected in the course of the sample survey mentioned earlier will be drawn upon. Interviews also took place with the teachers in the seven Qur'an schools and the State Primary School adjoining Sabon Zongo. For reasons mentioned earlier, only data obtained on Muslims will be used. Children under five years of age are also excluded.

A total of 482 Muslims five years of age and over turned up in the sample.¹⁷ 56 per cent were male and 44 per cent female. Akans, Gas and Ewes accounted for less than 13 per cent of this category; 25 per cent were ethnic groups originating outside of Ghana. e.g. Kyambas, Kotokoli, Kanuris and Yorubas; 26 per cent were northern Ghanaians mainly Mole-Dagbani and 37 per cent were Hausa.¹⁸ Nearly 70 per cent had been born within the Accra Capital District, 43 per cent actually in Sabon Zongo and a further 9 per cent in another Accra Zongo, e.g. Zongo Lane in the centre of Accra, Sukura, etc.¹⁹ A further 19 per cent had been born outside of Ghana—in Nigeria, Niger, Upper Volta, Togoland and Dahomey. The remainder came from the various regions throughout Ghana.

One hundred and thirty seven persons were between the ages of 5 and 15. Of these, 15 per cent (21) were not attending any type of schooling whatsoever; 42 per cent (57) were attending Qur'an school only; 35 per cent (48) were attending both Qur'an and State schools and only 8 per cent (11) were attending State school only.

Twenty-seven persons above the age of 15 were still attending school; 30 per cent (8) attending Qur'an school, 52 per cent (14) attending Qur'an and State schools and 18 per cent (5) attending State school only.

An analysis of the 65 persons who were attending Qur'an school only reveals that 48 per cent were male and 52 per cent female. Almost 75 per cent were under 10 years of age. The Hausa and northern Ghanaians comprised almost 50 per cent of this category. Over 75 per cent were born in Zongo. 82 per cent had spent between 1-4 years at school; 17 per cent between 5-9 years and 2 per cent over 10 years.

Of the 62 persons who were attending both Qur'an and State schools, 66 per cent were male and 34 per cent female. 40 per cent were between the ages of 5-9; a further 37 per cent between 10-14 and the remaining 23 per cent over 15 years of age. 68 per cent of this category had spent between 1-4 years at the Qur'an school and the remaining 32 per cent between 5-9 years. 63 per cent were still at Primary level; 29 per cent at Middle and 8 per cent had got as far as Secondary School. The Hausa formed over 50 per cent of this category; the Central Togolese a further 30 per cent and the Ga-Adangbe 10 per cent. The remaining 10 per cent was distributed over the other major ethnic groups excepting the Ewes who did not figure in this category. Over 85 per cent had been born in Zongo.

With regard to the 318 persons above the age of 15 who were not attending school and whose formal educational career can be presumed finished, 21 per cent (67) never attended any type of school, 65 per cent (206) had attended Qur'an school only, 11 per cent (35) attended Qur'an and State schools and 3 per cent (10) attended state school only.

Again, if we analyse these categories separately, of the 208 persons who attended Qur'an school only in the past, 55 per cent were male and 45 per cent female. 35 per cent had spent between 1-4 years at the school; a further 52 per cent from between 5-9 years; 11 per cent over 10 years and 2 per cent did not know. Seventy-five per cent of this category belonged to the foreign origin population; a further 21 per cent were northern Ghanaians and only 3 per cent southern Ghanaians. Forty-one per cent had been born in Sabon Zongo or another Accra Zongo another 29 per cent in countries outside of Ghana. The remainder came from the various regions throughout Ghana.

Of the 36 persons who attended Qur'an and State schools in the past, 86 per cent were male and 14 per cent were female. Twenty per cent spent between 1-4 years at Qur'an school; 69 per cent between 5-9 years and the remaining 11 per cent over 10 years. Twenty per cent didn't progress beyond Primary school; 64 per cent reached Middle school and 17 per cent went beyond that level—11 per cent to Secondary school and 3 per cent to Technical school. Thirty-three per cent of this category were Hausa; a further 25 per cent Mole-Dagbaj; 19 per cent Ga-Adangbe and the rest was distributed over the other major ethnic groups. Fifty per cent had been born in Sabon Zongo or another Accra Zongo; a further 22 per cent elsewhere in Accra; 15 per cent outside of Ghana and the remaining 13 per cent were born in various regions throughout Ghana.

If one compares past school attendance with present, it is seen that a greater percentage of the population are now attending some type of schooling—85 per cent now as compared to 79 per cent in the past. Those combining both educational systems—Qur'an and State—has increased from 11 per cent in the past to 35 per cent now. The figures for those attending State schooling only has also risen—from 3 per cent in the past to 8 per cent now. The percentage attending Qur'an school only, however, shows a decrease—from 65 per cent in the past to 42 per cent now.

This increased tendency to attend State school, especially in conjunction with Qur'an school, is found with both males and females. Sixteen per cent of the males attended Qur'an and State

schools in the past while 51 per cent are now attending. The figures for females are 3 per cent and 34 per cent. Males, however, are less likely to attend Qur'an school only at present than are the girls.

Attendance at both systems does not appear to affect the level of schooling reached in the State system. Overall the level of education is low. Only a very small percentage reached Secondary or Technical school level. If one compares the level of attainment of those who attended Qur'an school only and those who attended a combined Qur'an and State system in the past, the level attained by those who combined was higher than for those who only attended Qur'an School. Again, though they are still in attendance, if one looks at the present school attendance, a greater number have already reached middle and secondary schools amongst those combining both forms of schooling, than have those who are only attending Qur'an school.

It is the Hausa who show the greatest tendency to combine both systems. In the past 75 per cent of the Hausa had attended Qur'an school only and 10 per cent had combined both systems. The corresponding figures for present school attendance is 38 per cent and 62 per cent. Not a single Hausa child is only attending State School. There is no noticeable change for the Central Togolese and miscellaneous group originating outside of Ghana.

It is the Akans, Ga-Adangbes and Mole-Dagbani who make up the category of presently attending State school only. The southern Ghanaians have always shown a preference for State schooling with the majority, if they do attend Qur'an school, combining it with a State schooling. This tendency seems to indicate a more secular approach to their religion. Their overall incidence of non-attendance at any type of schooling is high, especially for the Akans in the sample, but it seems when they do attend school, it is either State school only or State school combined with a Qur'an education.

As regard birthplace and present school attendance record, 45 per cent of those born in Sabon Zongo or some other Zongo in Accra (though those born in Zongo comprise the majority in this category) are still attending Qur'an school only, with a further 47 per cent attending Qur'an and State Schools. Thus 92 per cent of the children who are presently attending school and who were born in an Accra Zongo are having some form of a Qur'an education.

One can see, therefore, the high value still being placed on a Qur'an education. Ninety one per cent of the 137 children between the ages of 5-15 who are presently attending school are going to a Qur'an school—either as their only form of schooling or together with State Schooling. Ninety Two per cent of this category had been born in an Accra Zongo. But an interesting trend to be observed is that now children are beginning to avail themselves of State schooling. Their Qur'an education is not being neglected—especially by foreign origin ethnic groups such as the Hausa and the Central Togolese—but they are now combining it with attendance at a State School. The Islamic prejudice against secular education is beginning to break down.

This value that is placed on a Qur'an education is also evidenced by the fact that the Zongo itself has no less than seven Qur'an schools. Attendances range from 221 in the largest school to 34 in the smallest. A total of 708 children were enumerated in these schools.²⁰

Education in the schools consists mainly in the memorization of the Qur'an. A child starts by learning the Arabic Alphabet. By chanting out each letter and using the Qur'an as a base, the child gradually learns the positioning of the letters, and can then start using his slate. Verses

of the Qur'an are copied out for him on the slate which he then proceeds to memorise. In this way, the child learns to read and chant the Qur'an but without understanding its meaning.

Once the Qur'an has been read, a course in basic Arabic is pursued by pupils who remain; also some arithmetic, Islamic history and perhaps some Islamic law is taught in some schools through the medium of Hausa. Instruction in the formal duties of Islam, the words needed for the five daily prayers, details about the performance of the prayers, and the special ritual required on occasions such as name-givings and funerals, is also given.

This is the programme of education followed in five of the schools. One school undertakes the study of Arabic before the memorization of the Qur'an commences. In another, Arabic language studies are pursued in conjunction with the learning of the Qur'an.

This then is the main emphasis in the school system—the learning of the Qur'an. To quote Trimmingham in this context "The object of the school is not primarily the initiation of the child into community life but simply memorization of the Qur'an by which power is gained in this world and reward in the next" (1959:158).

Two schools have, however, broadened their curriculum and attempted to incorporate more secular subjects, such as, English, History, Geography and Arithmetic taught through the medium of English.

A child takes at least four years to learn the Qur'an (Trimingham, 1959:159). Teachers complain, however, that many students leave before the Qur'an has been completed. Also there appeared to be a high incidence of absenteeism which the teachers attribute to parents keeping the children at home to do household chores. The completion of the Qur'an is formally marked by a graduation ceremony at which children are examined by their teacher and others learned in the religion.

The Qur'an education a child receives, therefore, does not provide him with the skills necessary for administrative or industrial employment. Teachers cited independent trades such as tailoring, butchering, etc., as the most frequent occupations pursued by their male graduates. Girls become traders. Whilst the teachers felt that the Qur'an system was sufficient by way of formal education for girls, they did not consider that this was so for boys. Incorporation of the State school educational programme within their own system was felt, however, to be the most desirable method of enabling a muslim child acquire a secular education. Only one school, however, had achieved this to any extent and even then, only up until Standard 4.

The other schools were faced with the problems attendant on some of their students also attending State school. One teacher had accommodated such students by altering his time-table so that it now coincided with the shift system of the State schools. Even if the State schools do not operate a shift system, however, children can still attend Qur'an school on Saturdays and Sundays. Also, as a different vacation system is followed by the two systems—the Islamic Calendar year dictating the Qur'an schools' holidays, children attending State Schools can attend to their Qur'an education at times when they vacate from State school. As was remarked earlier, attendance at both systems does not affect the level of education in the State schools. Teachers in the Qur'an schools also commented on the favourable performance of these children in their Qur'an studies.

Information on the performance and problems of Zongo children in a State school was obtained from teachers in the State school adjoining Sabon Zongo. This school was built in

1963 to accommodate children from Sabon Zongo and other adjoining areas. Just over a quarter (26 per cent) of the children attending this school are from Sabon Zongo.²¹

Though the overall percentage for attendance of Sabon Zongo children is 26 per cent, it is interesting when it is analysed in terms of each class. Zongo children make up from between 53% 63% in Classes 1, 2 and 3 but under 20 per cent in the remaining three higher classes. There are two possibilities to explain this trend;—either Zongo children are now starting to use the school and entering at the lower grades, or, they tend to drop out before reaching a high level. Both reasons were mentioned by the teachers. Most observed that Zongo children were coming in increased numbers and they felt that parents were beginning to realise the value of a State education for their children. On the other hand, Zongo children were reported by the teachers as having been dropping-out in the school.

Most teachers felt the Zongo children were problematic in some respect. Irregularity of attendance was mentioned as the main problem. Mothers detain the children at home to do domestic chores and, if they travel, the children tend to go with them. Lateness for school was also attributed to the children being sent on errands before being allowed to come to school. Observance of some of their traditional customs, e.g., staying indoors for the forty days after the death of a family member, was also felt to be a factor in the unsatisfactory attendance and high rate of absenteeism noted for Zongo children.

Some also have problems with the vernacular language being used in the school—Ga, the local Accra language. They tend also to go to school at a later age than the other children. This is probably accounted for by the custom of first attending Qur'an schools for a number of years before going on to State school.

Summary

To summarise, therefore, in this paper we have considered the Sabon Zongo community and some of its distinctive characteristics which set it apart from the wider cultural and social milieu. Residential segregation, distinctive forms of social and political organization, unique cultural traits, but above all—a different religion—distinguishes it from the wider society and leads to a lower degree of assimilation with the wider society than one would expect from a community settled in its present location for over sixty years. This membership of Islam also facilitated the uniting of the members of the highly heterogeneous population within the Zongo over and above any claims of ethnicity or territorial origin. It also led to ties with the wider network of Zongos between which close relationships and much interaction is found.

We then examined the socialization process to see if they had forms of socialization which were peculiar to Zongo and which tended to perpetuate their isolation and distinctiveness. We saw in examining the informal process the influence of their distinctive religious system on their social structure. Islamic ritual and social prescriptions were adhered to and the whole atmosphere of the area was that of a Muslim quarter. Role learning was largely dictated by their religion and roles ascribed on the basis of sex and age. The long domestic apprenticeship fitted children for early marriage and economic roles geared to a traditional type of trading economy. In many ways the Zongo provided an example of a highly conservative community where respect for authority, obedience and punishment for wrong behaviour were emphasized. We also noted

that their behavioral norms, kinship relationships, rules of residence, etc., showed remarkable continuity with those documented for the Hausa in their own traditional areas in northern Nigeria.

In many ways their society presented an example of a highly harmonious system with a high degree of internal consistency. The prescribed social, educational, recreational as well as religious forms went together. Each emphasized the same values and thereby acted as reinforcing agents. Most personal, social and economic needs could be satisfied within the Zongo and their own comprehensive cultural system so there was little room for outside values to penetrate.

Their distinctive educational institution—the Qur'an school—is also enjoined by their religion. Past and present records of attendance at these schools reveal the high value placed on them. 91 per cent of those who were receiving any formal education were attending Qur'an school either as their sole means of education or together with a State schooling. 49 per cent were only attending Qur'an school.

Thus one can see that their different scale of values has led to the underutilization of the State educational facilities. But, changes are taking place in their attitudes and the State educational facilities are being used increasingly. The trend is, however, to combine Qur'an and State education and not to neglect their own religious education.

Teachers in the Qur'an schools felt that children needed more than a Qur'an education. Most wanted, however, to incorporate secular subjects in their own Qur'an school system rather than allow muslim children attend secular State institutions. Parents were also beginning to realize the advantages of a modern education for their children, but many traditional attitudes towards a child's role in the home, and the heavy domestic burden which children carry, prevented maximum utilisation of these facilities. Many problems such as absenteeism were encountered when their own traditional customs clashed with the requirements of a regular school attendance.

Notes

1. The system of classification followed throughout was that adopted by the Census Office in the 1960 Population Census of Ghana. See Introduction "Special Report 'E'—Tribes in Ghana (Gil *et. al.*, Accra, 1964). 92 'individual tribes' were distinguished in the Census. As the planners themselves point out "... not in all cases do distinctive names designate separate tribes ..." but they felt the breakdown was justified "... because of the likelihood that they might present distinctive demographic or socio-economic characteristics." (p. xii). The system of classification they used is described as 'multi-purpose' and was based on the three criteria of "... language, traditional or historical classification and geographic affinity or origin" (p. xi). 45 of the 92 'individual tribes' distinguished by the Census Office appeared in the sample drawn in Sabon Zongo.
2. The sampling method adopted is that known as "systematic sampling from lists" (Yates F. *Sampling methods for Censuses and Surveys* 2nd edn. 1953 London) or "systematic random sampling." The sampling frame used was the "Enumerator's Visitations Records" of the 1960 Census which contained a list of all houses in the area and information on the number of households and persons in each house. These records were kindly made available by the Census Office Accra. Each house was weighted in accordance with the number of households within it. Then, having calculated the sampling fraction required for the area and starting with a randomly chosen number less than the sampling fraction, every n th house throughout

- the lists was chosen. This resulted in a 6.5 per cent sample of houses; 11.1 per cent of Households and 10.1 per cent sample of population. Information was to be obtained on all individuals living within these houses. Clusters of individuals within houses were decided upon to simplify fieldwork and reduce the possibility of selection bias in a randomly chosen household or individual sample where an adequate sampling frame for such a method was not available.
3. This was a larger number than expected from the data provided by the Census Office. The actual figure of 934 persons on whom data was obtained represented a 33 per cent increase over the numbers expected from the sampling frame used. The difference can presumably be accounted for by the fact that the 1970 Census was taken shortly after the Aliens Compliance Order which affected a considerable proportion of the population previously living in Sabon Zongo. Subsequent movement into their vacated places would account for a larger population being enumerated in the Summer of 1971—The time this survey was carried out.
 4. The remainder were—Christian 34 per cent, Traditional/Animist 4 per cent; No Religion 1 per cent.
 5. 'Major Ethnic Groups'—the Census list of tribes comprised 17 "first level" language groups or "Major tribes," the criterion of classification being language, and one miscellaneous group. To facilitate analysis for the much smaller numbers here, these major tribes are combined into seven larger categories. The further grouping was based on criteria of geographic origin and the ability to compare the figures with those of the Census if necessary. The Hausa were retained in a separate category partly because the numbers within the sample justified it and also because it was felt that being the original settlers in the area, they might present some distinctive characteristics. The seven major ethnic groups and their distribution throughout the sample population were:—Akan: 20 per cent; Ga-Adangbe: 7 per cent; Ewe: 13 per cent; Central Togo, Gurma and Tem: 7 per cent; Guan, Mole-Dagbani, Grusi and Mande: 21 per cent; Hausa: 22 per cent and a miscellaneous group—Other Ethnic Groups (originating outside of Ghana); 10 per cent. The place of origin for the vast majority of the Hausa was Northern Nigeria, 29 per cent originated from Sokoto; 19 per cent from Kano; 13 per cent from Katsina and the remainder came from other large cities in Northern Nigeria and a small percentage from Niger. The term Central Togolese is used to refer to the Central Togo, Gurma and Tem ethnic groups which comprise this category. The Gurma and Tem are the most numerous in this category with the Kotokoli and the Kyamba comprising 41 per cent each. The remaining 18 per cent were mainly Basillas and Zugua. The miscellaneous category of non-Ghanaians includes ethnic groups from Nigeria (excluding Hausa), and Mali. Zabrama comprise 32 per cent of this category; Kanuri 17 per cent; Yoruba 16 per cent. The remaining 35 per cent was made up most of Fulani, Bozo, Ibo and Calabari. The numbers in these categories were small. The northern Ghanaians include Grusi: 20 per cent; Guan (Gonjas): 10 per cent; Mande: 13 per cent and Mole-Dagbani 52 per cent; The Mole-Dagbani category is made up largely of Mosi, Dagomba, Frafra and Dagarte, though Wala, Builsa and Kusasi were also found. Of the Ga-Adangbe Gas make up 66 per cent; Krobos 24 per cent; and the remaining 10 per cent were Adas and Adangbes. The Akan comprised Twi-Fante (Twi): 56 per cent; Twi-Fante (Fante); 40 per cent; Nzema 3 per cent and Anyi-Bawle 1 per cent. The Fantes and the Kwawus as 'individual tribes' are by far the most numerous here making up 40 per cent and 28 per cent of the total respectively. Ewes of Ghanaian origin account for 72 per cent of the Ewe. There were 28 per cent of Togolese origin.

6. The term 'foreign origin' was not used to denote birthplace. It was, rather a reference to the traditional area of the ethnic group.
7. For a full discussion of the beliefs surrounding this custom cf. Smith, Mary F. *Baba of Karo: A Woman of the Muslim Hausa*: London 1954 pp. 148-150. This book has been a most valuable source of comparison for many of the customs found in Sabon Zongo. It contains a comprehensive account of Hausa culture in Northern Nigeria during the first half of this century—the time when many of the present settlers or their forefathers left there to come down to Ghana.
8. cf. Smith, 1954:177-178 for an account of how this practice operated in Northern Nigeria.
9. cf. Smith Chap 4 for a full discussion of these relationships.
10. cf. Cohen (1969:89-90) for an account of how the system operates in a Hausa community in Ibadan.
11. Cohen on the other hand found that strong obligations existed for real parents to visit their children who had been fostered. cf. 65-66.
12. This is celebrated in Accra any time from mid April—May ending, depending on the Islamic Calendar year.
13. Also called "Tatsuniya" (Pl. tatsuniyoyi)—meaning fable (Hausa). Cf. collection of these folk-stories in R. S. Rattray *Hausa Folk-lore Customs Proverbs Vols. 1 and 11* Oxford University Press: 1913.
14. A full account is given of these festivities in Smith, F. pp. 89-91.
15. These may be groups of young children from the Qur'an Schools or choirs of older men or women who, on special festival occasions, sing special songs of praise in Arabic led by a Malam.
16. Cf. Smith, Mary F. for a fuller account of this practice, *op. cit.* pp. 226-230. Also Price J. H. "A Bori Dance in Accra" *West African Review Vol. 28: No. 352: 1957.*
17. Out of the total sample of 934 persons, 800 were 5 years of age and over. This figure of 482 Muslims and over represents, therefore, 60 per cent of the total sample population 5 years of age and over.
18. The distribution of these various ethnic categories over the total number of 800 persons who were 5 years and over were Akans, Gas and Ewes: 40 per cent; Ethnic groups originating outside of Ghana: 17 per cent; 'Northern Ghanaians:' 21 per cent. It is, therefore, the Southern Ghanaians who are underrepresented in this category in relation to their overall sample distribution being the least islamized categories in the Zongo.
19. The comparative figures on birthplace for the total category of 800 is 56 per cent for the Accra Capital District with those from Zongos accounting for 35 per cent and 15 per cent being born outside of Ghana.
20. Zongo children may, of course go to Qur'an Schools outside of Zongo. Qur'an schools at areas like Sukura, close to Zongo, or further afield like Adabraka, near the centre of Accra, have Zongo children attending. Sometimes parents are trading in that area and it is convenient to have children nearby so that they can assist in trading when school finishes. Also,

not all the 710 children enumerated in the schools in Zongo came from there. Some came from areas close to Zongo., e.g. Abose-Okai, Town Council Line and Kaneshie but others came from Central Accra, e.g., Zongo Lane and Kokompe.

21. Total numbers enumerated in this school were 244 boys and 259 girls. Again, apart from considerations of proximity, there are no reasons why Zongo children should choose this school. The main area of interest in the case of the State School was to get the teachers' opinions as to how Zongo children were responding to the State School system.

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