

## **Gbaha Katoo, Makala<sup>1</sup>**

The family Gbaha (Gbaha Katoo) supplies the Twafourhene of the Banda Paramount Chieftancy. The Twafourhene is also the chief of the village of Makala. At present [1986], there is no Twafourhene as the occupant of the stool is recently deceased (1985) and a new candidate has not as yet been selected. The linguist of Makala (Siembo Gyamfi) is currently acting in the capacity of Chief of Makala.

The Twafourhene acts as the forerunner of the Omanhene (Paramount Chief) of Banda. In times of war, the Twafourhene is responsible for traveling ahead of the main forces and reporting on the activities of the enemy. The Twafourhene also plays an important role in peacetime, serving as one of the Kingmakers who selects the Omanhene and playing a primary role in the installation ceremonies of the Omanhene. The term Twafourhene is an Akan (Twi) name; the elders reported that this was a recent convention. At the time that the Traditional Council was established, officials, including the first Registrar, decided that the Nafana should use Asante Twi terms so that their positions would be recognized by people outside of the Banda area.

The ancestors of Gbaha Katoo originated in the town of Kakala which is today in Côte d'Ivoire. During their time at Kakala, the Nafana were living with the Jimini people. The Nafana were in the habit of cheating the Jimini people--for example, if a Nafana man wanted a sheep, he would simply go and take one. This is why their current village is called Makala (originally "Makaala") which means 'eaters of sheep'. A customary practice in Kakala was that when a Jimini man died, his wife was cared for by the Nafana, and conversely, upon the death of a Nafana man, his wife should be cared for by the Jimini. Although the Jimini were to care for the wives of deceased Nafana men, it was not permitted that the Jimini should take these women as their wives; rather, by Nafana custom, the woman became the wife of the dead man's sister's son. It happened that upon the death of a Nafana chief (name not given), the Jimini attempted to violate this taboo. The wife of the dead chief was very beautiful, and the Jimini wanted to take her as a wife. A quarrel ensued between the Nafana and the Jimini, and the Nafana resolved to leave Kakala.

The land surrounding Kakala was heavily populated and there was no free land in the area. It was a long time before the Nafana were able to find open land on which to settle. The ancestor of Gbaha Katoo, named Gbahe, was a great hunter, and it was he who found the place east of the Banda Hills where the Nafana now live after spending a long time searching for a new place. Gbahe did not encounter any people living east of the Banda Hills at the time that he first visited the area.

Upon locating this new land, Gbahe returned to get his people and brought them to settle east of the Banda Hills at the place of Makala. When they came they encountered a woman living on her own who spoke an unrelated language (Dompou/Kuulo). They told her to come and live with

them, but she refused. So Gbahe sent some of his men to go and put out her fire. Without fire, she could not cook, so was forced to go and live in Makala, where she became a wife of Gbahe.

#### Past chiefs of Makala

1. Gbahe, founder of the village
2. Ladjaa
3. Abo Kofi
4. Sie Kwaku
5. Kwadwo Gbaha
6. Sie Jo
7. Yaw Krah (died 1985)

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Interview held July 17, 1986 with Siembo Gyamfi (linguist) and Richard Kofi Aboabo (Krontihene of Makala).

Interview conducted by Dr. Ann B. Stahl and Mr. James Anane.

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