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MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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## **Cultural Diversity in Ghana**

Memoir Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as a Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for the Master Degree in Literature and Civilization

**Presented by :**

- Miss. Fatima Zohra BENADLA
- Miss. Zineb YAHIAOUI

**Supervised by :**

Dr. Rahmouna ZIDANE

**Co-Supervised by:**

Mr. Mohammed KAMECHE

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## **DEDICATION 1**

I wish to thank, first and foremost, ALLAH the Most Grateful for leading me to realize this work.

This memoir is dedicated to my mother Yamina HARIAT my sweet heart, my darling, the source of tenderness and unselfishness who has believed that I can do it.

To the memory of my beloved father Mohamed BENADLA who gave me the opportunity to study in better schools and support through my life who dreamt to see me in this position.

I cannot find words to express my gratitude to my sister Samah.

To my entire primary, fundamental, secondary cycles and university teachers.

Fatima BENADLA

## DEDICATION 2

Every challenging work needs self-efforts as well as guidance of elders especially those whose were very close to our heart.

I dedicate my humble effort to my sweet and loving.

Father and Mother

whose affection, love, encouragement and prayers of day and night make me able to get such success and honour.

To all members of my family and all my best friends

Teachers

All the teachers of the English Department

Zineb YAHIAOUI

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# *General Introduction*

## **General Introduction**

Ghana is a West African country. It is small in area and population. Ghana was the first place in Africa where Europeans arrived to trade in gold and slaves. It is one of the main countries of Africa because of its natural wealth. Also, it took the first step as a black African country to get independence from the colonial rule.

This research work tries to provide the background information of Ghana and its culture including food, music, dance and festivals. It seeks to describe all the elements that make it different from other Western African countries in order to give a better idea about it. This research work attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are the elements that characterize Ghana from the rest of Western African countries?

The present research work is divided into two chapters. The first one is devoted to the geography and location of Ghana as well as its history, population, language, education, religion and welfare. The second chapter discusses the culture of Ghana including food, music, dance, festivals and attitudes.

# *Chapter One*

**The Background Information about Ghana**

# **I. Chapter One: Background Information about Ghana**

## **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter concentrates on the background information of Ghana. It speaks about its geography and location. Also, it deals with the history, population, language, education and religion as well as government and welfare in Ghana.

## **1.2. Ghana**

Ghana was known as the Gold Coast. It changed to Ghana after independence by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and Dr. Joseph Kwame Kyeretwie. Boakye. Danquah. Its name came from the Ghana Empire of the Sudan-Mali area. This name was adopted through research into its history. The name Ghana was chosen to reflect the ancient empire of this region. Ghana was adopted by Daniel Imadii as the legal name for the gold coast on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1975. Some believe that G.H.A.N.A means God Has Appointed Nkrumah for Africa. (GYANFI 2012, 1)

Others believe that the name was changed from Gold Coast to Ghana because Ghana has similarities with certain cultures. Some think that Ghana is a compound word. In this view, [Ga-na] means a warrior king; it is a word derived from Ouagadougou. This means that Ghanaians are originally from Burkina Faso where the traces of these semantic phrases can be found. (1).

Ghana is situated in West Africa on the coast of the gulf of Guinea as it is shown in the following map.



Map 1.1-Ghana (IBP 2009, 11)

Thus, Ghana is located between the Ivory Coast and Togo; The Northern border is the country of Burkina Faso and the Southern border is the gulf of Guinea. It is the geographic center of the world as the prime Meridian (0° longitude) passes through its territorial waters. (Salm and Falola 2002)

Ghana's landscape consists of plains and low plateaus covered by rain forests in the West and the Lake Volta in the East. It stretches 672km from the North to the South and 536km from the East to the West. It composed of a flat terrain and rolling hill. The Southern coastal region is drier and flat. It has forested hills. Ghana is very famous for its tropical climate with high temperatures all the year. There are two distinct rainy seasons in the Southern region and central area. The first one is from April to June. Then rains come in September, October and November. The Northern Savanna area is hotter and drier. There is only one rainy season from May to October. Also, there is one dry season. The central areas are forested. (Salm and Falola 2002)

The timber industry and cocoa farming cover a large area of the country. The Northern part of the country is Savanna and woodland. Various rivers and streams cross Ghana. In the 1960's, president Kwame Nkrumah planned to build the Akosombo Dam a hydroelectric project, to meet Ghana's electricity needs and allow the export of hydroelectric power to neighboring countries. The dam was completed in 1964 and is still in operation. The other important rivers are the Pra, the Tano, the Ankobra, the Birin, the Offin and the Densu. (Salm and Falola 2002)

Ghana is affected by a hot dry wind that blows south from the Sahara Desert between November and March this wind is known as the Harmattan. In this context, Belda claims that:

*The Harmattan winds are another noteworthy phenomenon in Ghana. They blow from the Northeast during the dry season and bring dust from the Sahara, which can reduce visibility to as little as 1km. They generally come in late November or early December and continue until sometime in March (2004, 20)*

This weather creates a difficulty in breathing; it is characterized by low temperature (3 degrees Celsius or less), a chilly night. Moreover, farming is impossible because there is no rain at all. Thus, making the majority of people unemployed leading famine to become a serious threat to their life.

*The Harmattan can be devastating. In 1983 it blew across the entire country, disrupting the rainy season and causing a major drought that resulted in serious food shortages. Famine was narrowly avoided by the arrival of food donated by other countries (Levy and Wong 2010, 11)*

Moreover, Ghana has a rich history starting from the beginning of the empire of Ghana to nowadays.



### **1.3. History of Ghana**

The history of Ghana emerged from the III century. It knew the arrival of European colonizers to its land among which the Portuguese.

It is well known for gold and ivory. This is why colonizers called this country the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast. The Europeans arrived in the region in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese were the first to settle in the Gulf of Guinea in 1496. In the seventeenth century, gold and ivory were the main goods to be exported from Ghana. From 1625, slavery started. It became the most important business for Europeans and African slave kings in the 1650's. (Favreau et al 2015).

History shows the rivalry of European nations to trade in the Gulf of Guinea. Only small territories comprising the gold coast resisted the English invaders in 1750. The Ashanti kingdom remained the best resistance to British troops. In the Eighteenth century, the Ashanti had their own kingdom with its administration. From 1807, they controlled the Fulani tribes. They confronted the British forces. The Ashanti were defeated in the Battle of Akatamanso in 1827. In 1851, the Ashanti abandoned their claims.

Their situation was complicated and the gold coast became a British colony. In 1925, the signs of independence appeared. The British organized elections in Ghana to elect a legislative council composed local leaders (22).

After the Second World War, England became weakened. Thus, India got its independence in 1947. In 1951, Kwame Nkrumah and his party, the People's Convention, participated in the Pan-African Movement. The negotiations for independence lasted six years. Ghana's independence was proclaimed on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1957; Kwame Nkrumah became minister (Favreau et al 2015, 23)

The Ghana flag was officially adopted on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1957. The flag used the Pan-African colors of red, yellow, green and black (23). This flag is shown in the following figure:



Figure 1.1- Ghana's Flag (World Map: Ghana Flag and Description)

Red represents the blood shed by freedom fighters during the struggle for independence. Yellow mean the mineral wealth of the country. Green is a symbol of the country's forests; the black star means the African freedom. (Favreau et al 2015, 23)

*if there is a name in the world of Ghanaian politics to remember, it is his: Kwame Nkrumah main leader of Ghana's independence movement in the 50's, he also contributed to the rise of Pan-Africanist movement in the 60's for many Africans, Kwame Nkrumah was one of the greatest hero of modern history (Favreau et al 2015, 27).*

At the head of the state, Nkrumah decided to draft a new constitution for the country. In April 1960, the first elections designated him as president. Kwame Nkrumah believed that the socialist model fits the African condition at that time and helped the development of the continent. He refused Marxist theories. He decided to industrialize the country. Unfortunately, the cocoa market went through a crisis. Ghana became one of the poorest countries in Africa (27).

Kwame Nkrumah was re-elected in 1965. He managed a coup in February 1966. In 1969, the elections were competitive. The progress party (PP) led by Kofi Busia confronted the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) of Komla A. Gbedemah. The PP won the elections. Kofi Busia made a law limiting foreign investment in small businesses. A new coup happened on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1972.

The economic difficulties were the main causes of this incident. Colonel Acheampong Kutu led the coup. Nkrumah and a multi-party system tried to understand the priorities necessary for the development of the country (Favreau et al 2015, 26).

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1981 the economic situation decreased, Jerry Rawlings became president. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) support contributed to the finances of Ghana. Rawlings was re-elected four years later. Political stability returned to Ghana. After the election of John Kufuor in 2000, the economic situation improved. In December 2004, he won the majority of votes and he promised to introduce several amendments related to education in order to allow each child to receive education degree worthy of their. (Favreau et al 2015, 28).

In 2002, the candidate of the National Democratic congress, John Atta Mills succeeded. John Dramani Mahama succeeded him in the presidential elections of December 2012. (Favreau et al 2015).

Ghana is a multiparty democracy. Currently, the president is John Kufuor. He is Chief of State and Head of the Government. The parliament has 230 seats. Election for president, vice president and members of parliament are held every four years. The voting age is 18. Ghana is divided into ten regions and one hundred and ten administrative districts. (Culture World Grams 2008, 4)

#### **1.4. Population and Languages**

The population of Ghana is a patch work of many ethnic groups. Ghana is a country of 24.6 million people, comprising dozens of native ethnic groups, such as the Akans, Guan, Ewes, Dagombas, Gas, Gonjas, Dagabas, Walas and Frapras (Oppong 2003, 48)

The Ethnic Groups play an important and vital role in Ghana. Belda claim that:

*Ghanaians are comprised of different ethnic elements, diverse in their personality, cultural and historical back-grounds, welded effectively into a unitary state. The reason for this diversity is most likely due to the migration of ethnic groups from other places to settle on the land (2004, 21).*

There are many groups in Ghana including Ga-Adangbe and Ewe spread Keta and Aflao Mole Dagbani Mamprusi, Mossi, Dagombas and Gonja. Further, some minority groups exist in the North as they were pushed away by the wars or the persecutions like Dagani, Kusasi, and Lobi (34).

The human travels or movements in Ghana resulted from conflicts or slavery. The ethnic dimension of Ghana decreased due to the improvement of the road network and the attraction of the urban areas. (Favreau et al 2015, 35)

The ethnic classifications are based on Linguistic differences.. The group of Akan represents the majority of the half population in Ghana. It exists in the West Central Region, the Center and the Southwest of Ghana. It has five administrative regions which are split into groups. Those groups have common points regarding politics society, and education. The Bono is considered as the cradle of the ancestors of the Akan. It is represented in the administrative region of Brong Ahafo. (Favreau et al 2015, 35).

The group of Mole Dagbani represent 16.5% of the population. They have a common ancestor coming from the Hausa country to the North of Ghana in the XII century. They possess science and developed military structures. (35)

The Gonja are a sub-group of Mole Dagbani. Their history goes to the conquerors taken by Ndewura Jakpa who arrived in the Northern region. The city of Salaga became the capital of the state of Gonja. (35)

The Ewe came from the East of the Niger River. They lived in the oriental extremity of the Coast of Ghana and the region of Volta. The Ewe established many small kingdoms in the precolonial time. Today, many of them live in Togo and Benin (Favreau et al 2015, 35).

These groups reflect a mixture of different characteristics like rites, languages and customs. The most important linguistic groups recognized in the group of Akan including the Fanti along the Coast and the Ashanti, the Guans, The Ga and the Ewe in the south as well as the Moshi-Dagomba the northern and upper regions. (IBP 2009, 24)

The region of the central forests is occupied by the Ashanti. Before the colonial period their empire spread over the territory of the Ivory Coast and Togo. A powerful African civilization was developed by the Ashanti based on the trade of gold and slaves. Now, they are famous for their crafts like stool and sculptures. Ga Adangbe and Ewe came from Yoruba in Nigeria and settled in the South and the East of Ghana. (33)

Seventy five tribes are spread throughout the national territory. The famous ones are the Akan with 44% of the population among them the Fanti and Ashanti who live on the West of the Volta. They are followed by Mole-Dagbani representing 16% of Mossi who live in the North and 13% of Ewe living in the East as well as 8% of Ga-Adangbo living in the South around Accra and in forests in the North. In addition, there are the Gourma 3.5% and the Guan, representing 3.7% (Favreau et al 2015, 33). In this respect, Belda states that:

*The majority of the population is concentrated in the Southern and Central parts of the country with the Greater Accra Region being the most densely populated. The Northern regions hold only 25% of Ghana's population, despite covering more than 40% of the national surface area (2004, 20).*

In 1957, the politicians took into account ethnic differences. Today, the Traditional Leaders have an important role in the Political Life (Favreau et al 2015, 33).



Ghanaians are a friendly, amiable and sociable people; they welcome their guests with a tremendous smile and an incredible happiness in which it helps in the improvement of tourism in the country. Hospitality in Ghana makes the tourists get a memorable and exceptional experience. According to Belda,

*The predominantly vivacious spirit of the people is clearly manifested in their music and dance. The proverbial Ghanaian hospitality radiates in the welcoming smiles on the faces of the people, and their cries of 'Akwabaa' which translates as 'you are welcome' (2004, 20)*

Ghana is home for about 20000 whites and more than 400 000 inhabitants of French expression coming from Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Niger and Benin. In the past, the fertility rate was very high in Ghana, in other words, women in Ghana have many children. (Oppong 2003, 44)

In rural communities programs are developed. Welfare and economic matters are handled by the National Government. In the urban areas, welfare service focuses on work and youth activities through voluntary organization wage employees have a government-sponsored pension plan. (Fage 2016, 4)

Linguistically, although that There are three main languages in Ghana known as Dagbani, Kwahu and Ewe but the official language is English as a result of the country's long link with Britain. (Oppong 2003, 49).

The generic name of about forty spoken languages in Ghana is (Kwa) which includes: The Ewe, The Gen, The Fon, The Ashanti and The Agni. (33)

Most people of the North speak the voltaic languages. The Grusi is spoken by the Dagarti people in the Northwest. The Gonja include two groups: Wagala and Guang. Wagala speak Grusi; Guang speak an Akan dialect (Favreau et al 2015, 34).

In Ghana, There are two linguistic mainstreams: the first one is the Twi which is the mother language of the Akan group and also, it is the first language to the majority of the population. It is used mainly by the people of the inside. Then the second one is the Fanti that employed by the people of the Coast. (Briggs 2014, 33)

Christianity is the chief and the dominant religion in the country. Ghana is home to a mixture of diverse religions. Approximately 69% of the population are Christians; 16% are Muslims; 8% belong to indigenous religious beliefs while 7% of the population includes those who have no religious beliefs (33).

In Ghanaian culture, the Religious beliefs and rituals are very significant to the Ghanaian people. They play a great role and affect every area of their daily activity as working, dancing, travelling as well as eating and drinking. (Belda 2004, 22)

Religious roles are revealed during festivals in which people prepare some activities that renew and strengthen relations with their ancestors.

Islam is very wide-spread in the North of the country; its influence comes from those people who left Mali and settled in Ghana. Catholicism exists because of the European Conquest (Favreau et al 2015, 34)

### **1.5. Economy**

Ghana has an economy which is as a mixed economy, including government and private industries. Ghana's economy depends on rural agriculture and export of raw materials. Cacao, timber, Pineapples and mining (mainly gold) are the very important sources of foreign exchange. The products of industries sectors include fruits, and cocoa products. These contribute to the gross domestic product (GDP). (Oppong 2003, 90)

In this context, Favreau et al state that *“Ghana has adopted measures allowing for GDP growth for the first time in 1993 reached the symbolic threshold of 5%. The population benefiting from this growth mainly due to rising prices of cocoa production and trade liberalization cash crops”* (2015, 31)

They add that,

*Inflation remained at a high level. Agriculture remains the dominant sector and yet realized, in 2007, 33.2% of GDP. More than half of the population is employed in this sector. However, the agricultural sector remains vulnerable, as subject to fluctuations in market prices of raw materials. The services sector represents 41% of resources and employs 29% of the workforce (2015, 30).*

In fact, the economy of Ghana is based on agriculture since more than 50 percent of the labor forces are employed in agriculture. Cocoa is the most important crop. It represents 45 percent of exports. Other crops are corn, root, crops, sorghum, millet and peanuts. They are produced for local consumption. (Culture World Grams 2008)

According to Favreau et al, “*Industry accounts for 25.8% of GDF and absorbed 15% of jobs. Compared to other countries in West Africa, this sector has experienced a significant development*”

They add that,

*The economic stimulus program aims to develop this sector. But trade liberalization measures had the effect of weakening local industry against foreign competition. Many economists believe that Ghana will be eaten alive by the Americans and especially Asians (Favreau et al 2015, 31).*

Industries include fishing and timber; Gold, aluminum and diamonds exist in Ghana. Briggs claims that,

*In recent years, mining has become the most important source of foreign revenue: renewed development in the goldfields of the South means Ghana is now Africa's largest gold exporter after South Africa, and the ninth largest in the world with production having risen from a mid-1980s nadir of around 300.000 ounces to one million ounces in 1992 and 3.2 million ounces in 2011.*

He adds that,

*Diamonds exports have topped 700.000 Carats annually since 1991, and the country is also a major producer of bauxite and manganese. For now, however, tourism is the country's third-largest earner of foreign revenue (after gold and cocoa) (2004, 33)*

Tourism is an important source of foreign revenue. Ghana has modernized its economy. The currency is the new cedi (GHC). The main resources are gold, diamond, bauxite and manganese raw. The country's energy is based on timber, hydrocarbons and hydropower. Akosombo is the central and the main source of electricity. It is exported to Togo, Benin and the Ivory Coast. Even if 6% of the rate growth is good, the economic indicator is still far from 10%. Ghana faces the concept of poverty which is linked to almost 30% of the population. (Favreau et al 2015, 33)

**1.6. Education**

Education is a very important tool because it enables people to achieve a better career and understand different cultures. Ghana has a reputation of good in terms of the quality of education. This state has four of the top and largest universities in West Africa including The University of Ghana, Legon North of Accra, the University of Science and Technology Kumasi, University of Cape Coast and the New University of Development Studies in Tamale. (Favreau et al 2015, 36)

Ghana has developed its educational system, in which there are three levels of education in the country. The first and second cycles then the tertiary level. (Belda 2004, 23)

The levels of Education in Ghana looks like the Algerian system. It consists of six years of primary education, beginning at the age of six, followed by three years of secondary education and three years of senior secondary education that prepares students for university studies. University education is supplied at various institutions. In addition, there are many technical colleges in Ghana. Also, there is the National Film Television institute in Accra (1978). There are private schools in addition to government-funded schools. Ghana's literacy rate is low by world standards. Due to the extensive use of the audio and visual media; English is widely spoken especially in the urban areas. (Culture World Grams 2008, 4)

In recent decades and with the development of the educational system in Ghana, the literacy rate has doubled in relation to adults. The government's goal of all this is to give greater opportunities for education in all aspects of the country.

Among the ways that she used to increase the quality of education, is the use of the Bridges to the Future Initiative (BFI). It seeks to provide Internet in schools as well as literacy and knowledge development. Also, it plays a great role in helping the people who never had the opportunity to attend schools. (Oppong 2003, 109)

### **1.7. Conclusion**

As a conclusion, Ghana has an optimistic present and a hopeful future. This chapter has presented the place and history of Ghana as well as all the elements that make this country very interesting. The next chapter will be devoted to the culture of Ghana including food, music, dance, festivals and attitudes.

# *Chapter Two*

## **Culture in Ghana**



## **2.1. Introduction**

Ghanaian culture expanded and developed. It is an amazing culture including its unique music, theatre, traditions, art and cuisine. All these cultural elements provide Ghana with diversity. This chapter deals with the cultural diversity in Ghana including food, music, dance, festivals and attitudes.

## **2.2. Definition of Culture**

Culture can be defined as the characteristics and knowledge of a specific group in a country, including language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. In fact, “*Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society*” (Tylor 1884, 145)

According to Tylor (1884), culture is learned and acquired, it cannot be considered as a biological sign.

For Aimé Césaire “*Culture is everything. Culture is the way we dress, the way we carry our heads, the way we walk, the way we tie our ties -- it is not only the fact of writing books or building houses*”(1913, 1) .Thus, Aimé Césaire considers culture as everything related to our daily life including dress and ties.

On the other hand, Williams claims that:

*Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, and its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. (1958, 1)*

Hence, Williams defines culture as an ordinary shape and gives purpose and meaning by every society. Art institutions are the means through which every society expresses its culture.

### **2.3. Arts in Ghana**

Ghana has a rich heritage that differs according to regions and ethnic groups. It is famous for a musical style relative to the Rumba. In the 1970's, despite Ghana had a political instability but guitarists continued to play everywhere. Among the big celebrities who denote the Ghanaian culture are Alex Konadu, K-K Kabobo, Kawjo Antwi and Lumba Brothers. Folk music is a kind of music that can be heard in festivals and celebrations made by traditional leaders. (Favreau et al 2015)

Music is an essential part in Ghanaian culture. For instance, drums are essential to music in order to convey messages. If the persons who knock on the drums are skilled, they can reproduce the sounds of proverbs, or praise songs through a specialized drum language. (Oppong 2003)

Music is a necessary component in Ghanaian culture. The major themes of music are related to happiness, sorrow and war. Other themes are conveyed by the way the drum is beaten.

The most popular traditional and somehow primitive instruments used in Ghanaian music include wooden atenteban flutes, balafon xylophones and various types of drums. (Culture World grams 2007)

Like hip-hop and rap, highlife music is much known; there is another thing that also defines art in Ghana; it is dance. In Ghana and especially in Accra, enthusiasts spend Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings dancing in the city or on the beach. The animation dances in Ghana stick to the rhythm and the traditional dances. (Favreau et al 2015)

In addition to this, Ghana has a rich tradition of written literature. Among the Ghanaian writers, fifty writers are specialized in poetry, novels and drama. For example, Atukwei Okai; the secretary General of Pawa House (Pan African Association) is a poet who is famous for his writing in several languages. There is also, Kofi Awoonor, who is a poet and an author of short texts denouncing the evils of colonization. (Favreau et al 2015, 42)

In 1975, Amu Djoletto wrote a novel entitled Money Galore in which he denounces the abuse of the social system. Other great Ghanaian novelists are: Maya Angelou, Ama Atta Aidoo, Joseph Casely-Hayford, Amma Darko and Efua Sutherland. (Favreau et al 2015, 43)

Regarding Cinema, Ghana competes with most African countries as it is known in the international festivals and starts to become a winner of award for African produced films. Some famous directors include Sam Aryeetey who produced, No tears for Ananse (1968) and Nii Own Kwatey who directed You Hide Me (1971) and Struggle for Zimbabwe in 1974. (Favreau et al 2015)

## **2.4. Festivals in Ghana**

Festivals are part of culture and tradition; Ghanaians celebrate the cultural heritage of nations and highlight various social aspects. The traditional festivals held yearly in different places of Ghana constitute the most prominent features of the Ghanaian culture. They are held to remember the ancestors. There are various festivals celebrated throughout the year because of the existence of numerous religions in Ghana (Favreau et al 2015, 47)

Ghanaian festivals are season-oriented (summer, winter, spring and autumn) or regional festivals (South, North, East and West). Some of the popular ones are as follows:

**The ADAE Festival:** is a show full of colorful umbrellas, drummers, dancers and singers. It is held in the month of January and the first week of February in honor of the ancestors of the Ashanti. (Festivals)

**The ABOAKYIR (Deer hunting) Festival:** is one of the festivals celebrated in the month of April by the Efutu of Winneba who live in an area along the Coast of Ghana. This festival represents a game with a winner and a present. It involves the mission who is hunting an Antelope very quickly and the group who presents its catch first to the chief is considered as a winner who is given a gift.(Favreau et al 2015,47)

**The Environmental Film Festival:** is a festival held in Accra annually on the month of June. It is an interesting event that takes place in the Holy Gardens in an open-air Venue. Its aim is to entertain and inform the audience by screening movies and documentaries dealing with distinct themes varying each year. (Ghana holidays and festivals)

**The Kudum Busua Festival:** is a festival that takes place in Busua between August and September. It lasts for a week. It is a traditional festival which is organized specially to give people a diverse knowledge about the Fanti folklore and make them familiar with it. It attempts to make them discover the traditions of Ghana. (Favreau et al 2015, 47).

**The Fetu Afahye Festival:** is a festival celebrated annually in Cape Coast which is an area in the Central Region of Ghana. This wonderful festival includes dance, music and a slaughter of a cow under a tree guard of the city Afahye. It refers to Harvest as well as commemorating the first contact with the whites. (Favreau et al 2015, 47)

**The Damba Festival:** is celebrated only by the Muslims in North Ghana. It is two days celebration of the Prophet's Birthday (Mohammed); it is like the Mouloud Festival in the Arab World. Spectacles, Showmanship and Horse riding are presented in this Festival. (Festivals of Ghana)

**The Kobine Festival:** is a festival that occurs every year around October in Lawra. It refers to a harvest celebration as well as a welcome to people who left Lawra and have come back home. This Festival involves shows of music and dance. (Kobine festival in Lawra)

**The Hogbetsotso Festival:** is held annually by the Ewes in Hinloga on the first Sunday of November. This festival concerns the story of the Ewe migration from Togoland. It involves men, women and children walking backwards. (Festivals of Ghana)

## **2.5. Tourism in Ghana**

The African continent is known as a touristic destination. If a person plans to visit Ghana he /she will have to pick a suitable time for doing this trip.

Ghana is hot during the whole year, but the period from November to April is more comfortable since it experiences cooler months and lesser humid. The dry season in Ghana means fewer mosquitos, a decreased risk of contracting Malaria, and a better road conditions and movement inside the country, leading tourists to enjoy the charming beaches and the beautiful nature. (Briggs 2014, 53)

The main disadvantage of the dry season is that the period from December to February is characterized by the Harmattan which is a hot wind that leads to a dusty weather full of sands that cut off visibility and may interfere with travel journey. In addition to this, beaches and mountain sceneries will lose much of their beauty and elegance. (Briggs 2014, 53)

Ghana is one of these countries witnessing a new era in tourism. It has a Coastline, National Parks and Tourism Sites.

It is a country that is home to animal and plant species, beaches, mountains and landscapes. In addition to this, it is rich with mineral wealth such as gold, manganese and diamonds. When travelling to Ghana, the best places to visit are: Cape Coast Castle, Accra, Kakum National Park and Mole National Park.

### **a) Cape Coast Castle**

It is the largest castle built by the European powers during the 17th century. Now, this Castle is viewed as a historical Museum that provides the visitor with useful information about the history of Ghana, Slave Trade, Local Culture and Ghanaian arts (Favreau et al 2015, 98)

### **b) Accra**

It is the Capital of Ghana and the biggest city of the country. It is one of the African Capitals characterized by its architecture reflecting its colonial history. *“It is a famous city with different Monumental Buildings, Shanty Towns, Museums, Libraries, Galleries and Traditional Markets”* (Favreau et al 2015, 56)

Accra is known for its National Museum which represents the culture of Ghana. It is famous for the Makola Market where people can buy anything they desire. Ghana is famous for its beaches. The most popular one is the Kokrobite Beach. It attracts people who want to be entertained by musicians and acrobats. In addition, it has Beaches like: Labadi Beach, Coco Beach and Bojo Beach (56).

**c) Kakum National Park**

The National Park of Kakum is the most beautiful one in Ghana.

*The Park is home to distinct plants and animals around 40 species of larger Mammals including Forest Elephants, Forest Buffalo, Mona-Meerkats and Civets, in addition to an exotic Bird Life with over 250 species living in the forest.* (Favreau et al 2015, 105)

The Canopy Walkway which provides a beautiful viewing is the best way to reach the Park (105).

**d) Mole National Park**

It is the biggest one; it is famous for natural reserves. It is located in the Northwest of Ghana. This Park is home for elephants and other species like The Antelopes, The Bears, Monkeys, Buffalos, Deers, Leopards, Hyenas, Jackals, Baboons and Crocodiles (Favreau et al 2015, 184)

**e) Kumasi**

It is the former capital of the Ashanti Kingdom in Southern Central Ghana. It was established by Asantehene, Osei Tutu in 1695. It is the second largest city in Ghana. It is characterized by the British Colonial Buildings. It is famous for its cultural centers where there are gold jewelry, trinkets, cloth and wood-carved stools made by the Ashanti artisans (Favreau et al 2015, 152)

**f) Busua**

The City of Busua is located in the Western region of Ghana. It is considered as one of best beaches attracting people from all over the world. It reflects the beauty of the nature. The beach is surrounded by luxurious and comfortable hotels as the Busua Beach Resort, Busua Inn and The African Rainbow Resort (Favreau et al 2015, 116)

**g) Nzulezo**

Nzulezo which means the village on Water is located in the Western region of Ghana. It is a beautiful and calm place in this village. The Wetlands are wonderful. The only way to reach this village is to rent a canoe and make a trip.(Tanson 2012,1)

**h) Lake Volta (Volta Lake)**

Lake Volta is a man-made lake situated in the South East of Ghana; it covers 8.502 km<sup>2</sup>. It is classified as the fourth largest reservoir in the world. The role of this Lake is to provide electricity and fresh water; it offers economic opportunities to the people of Ghana (Favreau et al 2015, 136).

**i) Larabanga**

In Ghana, every region has its own cultural identity. For example Larabanga is a small village with a population of 4,000 inhabitants. It contains the oldest mosque that is considered as the preferred destination in the North of Ghana because of its beauty. It is also the gate to the Mole National Park that is the largest natural reserve in Ghana. (Olympio et al 2004)



Larabanga is situated in the centre of the West Gonja district in the Northern of Ghana. It is located 120 Km to the South East of Tamale, 15 km to the West of Damongo, nearby to the Mole National Park. In this town, a small Muslim society has settled and taken advantage of the suitability of the land for cultivation and animal rearing (cows, goats, sheep, chicken and guinea fowls). (Olympio et al 2004)

This place has a traditional architecture. In fact, the inhabitants of this village claim that its origin goes back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century ad when Yidan Braimah settled in Larabanga to read verses from the Koran. (Olympio et al 2004)

Larabanga mosque belongs to the Sudano-Sahelian style associated with Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. This beautiful symbolic style is characterised by the incorporation of the vernacular construction technique with the architectural basics which have to be respected when building a mosque. (Olympio et al 2004, 18)

## **2.6. Sport in Ghana**

Sport is an important practice. It is both a mental and physical activity that is necessary for human development and health. Playing and watching sport are important aspects of Ghanaian leisure.

*Ghana is a sports crazy nation, the most popular spectator sports being; soccer, boxing, field hockey, table tennis, cricket, netball, volleyball and basketball. Soccer (Football) is the king and the father of all the sports and has a huge following in Ghana. (Salm and Falola 2002, 157)*

The sport of Football (Soccer) started in Ghana in 1903; it was introduced by a group of students in the Cape Coast. It became well known by all the Ghanaians; it spread through the country. As a result, there was the creation of the first Football Club called (Accra Hearts of Oak) which is considered as the oldest and famous Football Club (Salm and Falola, 2002, 157)

In Ghana, Football is the best weapon to solve the political problems in the country. In fact, Nkrumah Kwame benefited from the popularity of Football and used it as a tool to unite people from the internal divisions such as Tribalism. (157)

The First national Football Team which is called (The Black Stars) has been created by Nkrumah. It is considered as a multi-tribal team and a sign of African Power. Women National Football Team was created in 1989. However, Ghanaians view Football as a masculine sport. (157)

The Second Sport having a great number of fans in Ghana is boxing. It began during the Colonial Period as it was introduced by some missionaries; it helped them to keep young men off the streets (157)

In this context, Salm and Falola state that:

*The good appearance of the Ghanaian Champions in the International scene allowed the development of this sport. They reached a great success and won lots of medals in the Commonwealth and Olympic games. (2002, 158)*

The famous Ghanaian Champion of Boxing is Azumah Nelson ;he is also known as( The Terrible Warrior) ; he has been a three time World Boxing Champion in the Featherweight and Super-Featherweight divisions ; he retired in 1998 (Favreau etal 2015,50)

**2.7. Food**

Ghanaians like to celebrate. Also, they like good food. They like to do it and they enjoy feeding the ones who appreciate it. Fruit is very common in Ghanaian food. Some of the favourites are pineapples, bananas, and mangoes.

The most important food in Ghana is rice which is popular in this country as it is easily cooked, and sold. It is made for fast meals at any time of the day. In Ghana, Nutritious grain are eaten fried, or with soup. Another famous food in Ghana is called Fufu which is a very vital food. It claimed that if an Akan man has eaten a meal, without Fufu, he will feel he has not eaten.

Fufu comprises of cassava, yam, or plantain that has been cooked and powdered. It can be used with a hot sauce or it causes with as a companion to a main meal. Fufu is always present in Ghanaian meals.

Ghanaians eat stuffed meals. Thus, it is not necessary to eat again for many hours. Most Ghanaians prefer to eat at home, other enjoy eating in an open-air area where people sell local food. (Oppong 2003)

Ghanaians like hot food; hence their meals are joined by a pepper sauce. Ghanaian diet relies on primarily of yams, cassava and rice. Boiled yams or plantains with sauce are common meals in the north; the average family eats two or three daily meals with porridge of corn, while Fufu is the dish of citizens in the south.

Soups and sauces are made from palm or peanut oil. Fisher chicken meals are too expensive for people to be eaten regularly. In addition to this, Ghanaians eat a variety of tropical fruits.(Culture World Grams 2008)

## **2.8. Clothes in Ghana**

Ghanaians have a rich elegant culture. Fashion and clothing are very necessary in their daily life. In fact, “*Fashion simply can be referred to as clothing styles and its accessories (covering and decoration for a person’s body) as seen in appearance*” (Dzramedo 2009, 1)

Ghanaians give a great importance to clothing which is a symbol of development and civilization, as they care of how they dress. (Naylor, 2000, 65)

Clothing in Ghana is divided into two categories the old generation who wore traditional clothes and stick to this kind of clothes, despite the influence of Western Style. On the other hand, the younger generation are influenced by universal fashion of youth like Jeans t-shirt. (65)

Ghanaians select cheaper clothes for their frequent wear. However, they keep their new expensive dresses for the special occasions; in this respect, Naylor claims that:

*For everyday wear, most Ghanaians have to rely on second-hand clothes imported from Europe or North America, which are cheaper. In Akan, stalls selling these clothes are known as ‘broni UaWa’ or ‘dead white men.’ (2000, 65)*

There is a traditional cloth in Ghana which is known as 'The Kente'; it is a hand woven from a mixture of cotton and silk produced by the communities of Akan and Ewe.

*There are two rival claims about the origin of the cloth. One holds that Kente comes from the Ewe village of Kpetoe and that its name derives from the Ewe words Ke and Te 'open' and 'closed' referring to the back and forth movement of the shuttle on the weaver's loom. The other claim is that Kente was first made in Bonwire in the Ashanti region. In Ghana, Kente is worn at festivals and ceremonies. (Naylor 2000, 66)*

Thus the Kente which is worn for distinct occasions comes from two origins which are the Ewe origin and the Ashanti origin.

Concerning women, they pick a long skirt, a short sleeved top, a head wraps and long dresses forgoing out. However, men wear a long smock over pants and a plastic sandal as a common shoe. (Chaya Shepard 2011, 1)

Ghanaians choose carefully suitable colours for their dresses since colors are very important and each color has its special meaning. So, each celebration has its specific clothes with its specific colors. (Naylor 2000, 66)

## **2.9. Greetings**

Greetings play a great role in Ghanaian culture. Strangers or tourists should know some expressions to avoid being seen as impolite.

*Greetings form an important part of any social encounter in Ghana. They range from a lengthy ritual in a traditional court to a short yet vital 'Good morning' in an office environment. Local patterns of greeting vary enormously, depending on the ethnic group, the formality of the occasion, and the relative status of the greeters. (Naylor 2000,36)*

Greetings in Ghana have many forms and styles. Moreover, they vary from one Ethnic group to another. The handshake is the most famous type of greeting, it is considered as a male gesture.

*People greet all present by handshake in anti-clockwise order, starting with the person on the right. When the new arrivals are seated, the hosts then return this greeting. As with giving, receiving and signaling, it is considered polite to shake hands with the right hand only. (Naylor 2000, 36)*

A man is supposed to be the first one to give a handshake when meeting a female member. It is preferable to do it with the right hand only.

Verbal conversations in Ghana start with good morning, good afternoon or good evening which are necessary words for a daily speech. However, they should be followed by Sir or Madame when the person addressed is from a higher position as a sign of respect and must bows slightly with the left hand placed behind the back. (Culture Grams World Edition 2008, 2)

Friends or family members call one another by their names. Children use aunt/uncle or grandma/grandpa to call the older people as a sign of respect and politeness. Adults of the same age call themselves sister/brother. (2)

### **2.10. Linguistic Display**

Ghanaian culture cannot be studied without indicating the Linguistic Diversity which plays a great role in their society. It includes proverbs, riddles and folktales which are told in order to acquire information about the traditional beliefs, customs and taboos of the ancestors. They are also used for the purpose of entertainment and education, as well as develop the imagination. (Naylor 2000,36)

Ghana is famous for: the folktale of the Akan called the ‘Akanse’ stories, the Ewe ‘Gli’ stories, the Ga ‘Adesa’ stories and the Wali ‘H’lima’ stories. (36)

Among the famous stories, we have ‘spider stories’ or ‘Ananse stories’ as they are known in Akan. Ananse which is a Spider is seen as one of the most famous animal tricksters. Sometimes this character is viewed as wise, thoughtful and helpful to humans. In other situations it is considered as selfish and cruel.(Naylor 2000, 37)

The story-teller should be talented and should have the capacity to attract and arouse the interest of his listeners. Moreover, Ghanaians like reading short stories with different characters. In this context, Naylor claims that:

*In Ghana, people read short stories and satirical pieces in the newspapers with great interest. The greatest exponent of short satire is Kwesi Yankah who writes a column entitled ‘Woes of a Kwatriot’. Collections of the pieces are also published in book form, such as Woes of a Kwatriot ‘Reflections on the Ghanaian situations. (2000, 37)*

She adds that “ *Ghana’s most famous novelists include ‘Ayi Kwei Armah, Kojo Laing, and Konadu Asare’ Ayi Kwei Armah’s celebrated novel ‘The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born’ is set in the last years of Nkrumah’s regime”*(2000,37)

Therefore, reading and stories are given importance.

### **2.11. Naming in Ghana**

The naming system in Ghana has specific rules. It is different from other systems in the world. Ghanaians oblige the mother to keep her born son/daughter baby to stay indoors for at least seven days and he/she is not supposed to come outdoors before this period.



The baby is expected to obtain a name on the eighth day because in the past the babies died before their eighth days and therefore the Ghanaians decided to wait until the eighth days to name their children. (Joseph Owusu, 2000, 1).

In fact, Ghanaians give a huge importance to naming their babies; they select the appropriate names with a deep emphasis. According to Oppong et al:

*Every Ghanaian's name has at least two main parts. The first part is the Kradin (Soul's name). This comes from the day of birth and the baby's gender. A baby born on Friday is called Kofi (male) or Afua (female). Similarly, a baby born on Saturday is called Kwame (male) or Ama (female). (2003, 53)*

Therefore, Ghanaian's name consists of two parts; the soul's name relies on the day of birth.

The following table illustrates some of the names of Ghanaian people and the corresponding days on which they were born:

<b>Day of the week</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Monday	Kojo	Adjoa
Tuesday	Kwabena	Abena
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akua
Thursday	Yaw	Yaa
Friday	Kofi	Afua
Saturday	Kwame	Ama
Sunday	Kwesi	Akosua

Table 2.1: Ghanaian Names (Oppong et al 2003, 54)

The second part of the name is known as The Father's name and it is usually chosen by the child's father who usually selects a name of an ancestor whom he most honors. (Oppong 2003, 54)

Ghanaian Family is a sign of support, love and strength, these families celebrate the Naming Ceremonies differently. It is a sacred element for Ghanaians. It does not include only parents and children but it is a huge Family involving uncles, cousins, siblings, aunts and grandparents. (Naylor 2000, 38)

### **2.12. Conclusion**

As a conclusion, Ghana has a rich cultural heritage which mirrors a wonderland. This chapter has highlighted the beauty of Ghana as a place of customs and traditions, festivals and music. It is a country that must be visited.

## General Conclusion

Ghana was formerly the British colony of the Gold Coast. It is situated in West Africa on the coast of the gulf of Guinea. In 1957, Ghana became the first country in colonial sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence from colonial rule. It is characterized by its history and its rich cultural heritage unifying diverse groups of people.

When the country gained her independence in 1957, it took its new name from The Ghana Empire. Ghana was adopted by Daniel Imadii as the legal name for the Gold Coast on March 6th, 1975. The word Ghana means in English Warrior King.

Ghana is a country of 24.6 million people, comprising dozens of native ethnic groups, such as the Akan (Ashanti and Fanti), the Ewe, the Ga-Adangbe, the Mole-Dagbani, the Guan, and the Gurma. Concerning language, the official language of Ghana is English although many Ghanaians speak two or three tribal languages in addition to English. In terms of religion, there are many Christians and Muslims in the country. Yet, Ghanaians know the importance of freedom of worship.

Regarding economy, Ghana's economy depends on rural agriculture and export of raw materials. The country is the seventh largest producer of gold and cocoa in the world. Also, it has the ninth largest diamond reserve in the world.

Ghana is also famous for its Kente clothes which were limited to noble people. However, nowadays, it is widespread but it is still held in very high esteem by the Akan people.

This research work depicts Ghana as a place of culture and religious tolerance. The first chapter deals with the background information of Ghana. It is devoted to geography and location, history, population and languages as well as religion and welfare in Ghana. The second chapter tackles the topic of culture in Ghana including food, music, dance, festivals and attitudes.

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# *Appendix*

## Appendix

### Time Line

**III century:** The beginning of the empire of Ghana.

**1456:** Arrival of the Portuguese.

**1482:** Foundation of the castle of Elmina

**XVII century:** Competition between the companies of the Netherlands, England, Sweden, Denmark and France; construction of forts on the coast, especially for the trade of gold and slaves.

**1631:** Grip of Elmina by the Dutch.

**1665:** The English people take the castle of Cape Coast.

**1695:** Development of the Ashanti until 1775.

**1756:** French attack of Cape Coast.

**1800:** Decline of the European trade.

**1807-1874:** War of the Ashanti.

**1831:** Ashanti abandon by treaty all their territories of the South.

**1843:** Colonial appropriation of Gold Coast.

**1850:** Departure of the Danes.

**1851:** Ashanti abandon their claims on the territories of the South.

**1865:** Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Lagos are grouped.

**1872:** Repurchase of the Dutch possessions by England.

**1898:** The French colonists and English draw in Paris the outlines of Ivory Coast.

**1901:** The Ashanti becomes a British colony.

**1947:** Dr Kwame Nkrumah is named a General Secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC).

**In June, 1949:** Nkrumah leaves the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC).

**March 6th, 1957:** Independence of Gold Coast which becomes Ghana. Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972) becomes Governor General and Prime Minister.

**July 1st, 1960:** Proclamation of the Republic of Ghana, Nkrumah becomes a president.

**September 1965:** The beginning of the construction of the dam of Akosombo.

**January 26th, 1964:** The party of Nkrumah (CPP) becomes unique party.

**February 24th, 1966:** Nkrumah is knocked. Joseph Ankrah becomes a president.

**April 17th, 1967:** A coup d'état against Ankrah fails.

**August 31st, 1970:** Edward Akufo-Addo is named president.

**January 13th, 1972:** General Acheampong arrives at the head of National the Redemption Party (NRC).

**July 5th, 1978:** coup d'état of Frederick Akuffo.

**May 16th, 1979:** Captain Rawlings is arrested.

**June 4th, 1979:** Rawlings at the head of the Armed Forces of the Revolutionary Council (AFRC).

**June, 1979:** Economic crisis.

**July, 1979:** Hillah Limann becomes a president.

**December 30th and 31st, 1981:** Rawlings at the head of the PNDC.

**1983:** Help of the IMF and the World Bank.

**March 27th, 1984:** a coup d'état fails.

**1985:** Assassination attempts of Rawlings.

**December 7th, 1996:** re-election of Rawlings.

**January 7th, 2000:** election of John Agyegoum Kufuor.

**September 29th, 2006:** Ghana adheres to the Francophony.

**January, 2009:** John Atta Mills, stemming from the opposition party National Democratic Congress, wins the elections.

**2010:** Ghana reaches in quarterfinal during the Soccer World Cup in South Africa.

**December, 2012:** Election of John Dramani Mahama, at the age of 55, Mahama is a writer who took out the same year the first work entitled My First Coup d'Etat.

**March 29th, 2014:** The Ghanaian president John Dramani Mahama takes the lead of the economic Community of the States.

**June 26th, 2014:** Ghana is a part of teams' stars of African soccer.

(Favreau et al 2015, 24-25)

## ملخص

تعتبر غانا مستعمرة من المستعمرات البريطانية سابقا وأول بلد أفريقي استقل عن الحكم الأوروبي عام 1957. عندما حصلت غانا على استقلالها من بريطانيا، قامت بتقديم فرص كبيرة وفعالة من أجل النمو الاقتصادي. ساهم المجتمع الغاني في تطوير جزء كبير من مواردهم الثقافية والبشرية.

## Résumé

Le Ghana est une ancienne colonie britannique et le premier pays Africain à acquérir l'indépendance de la domination Européenne en 1957. Lorsque le Ghana a obtenu son indépendance de la Grande-Bretagne, il a proposé un grand potentiel pour la croissance économique. Les Ghanéens est contribuent de développer leurs ressources humaines et culturelles.

## Summary

Ghana is a former British colony and the first African country to acquire independence from European rule in 1957. When Ghana achieved independence from Britain, it offered good prospects for economic growth. The Ghanaians has contributed to develop their human and cultural resources.