

A K W A M U

1650 - 1750

A STUDY OF THE RISE AND FALL
OF A WEST AFRICAN EMPIRE.

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I. THE EXPANSION OF AKWAMU

1640 - 1710

i. The Consolidation of the Akwamu State.

Little is known of the origins of the Akwamu state. It is not until Akwamu emerges as a coastal and imperial power, in the second half of the seventeenth century, that there commence numerous references to Akwamu in the series of reports on local affairs written by servants of the Danish, Dutch, and English trading companies operating along the Gold Coast. From that time onwards it becomes possible to reconstruct the history of Akwamu in considerable detail. Nevertheless, a few isolated references to Akwamu in its pre-imperial period survive, and enable one to attempt a tentative outline of the consolidation of the state in that period.

A Dutch 'Map of the Lands of the Gold Coast of Guinea', dated 1629, describes the Akwamu as diefachtich volck, 'a predatory people'¹. At this time Akwamu was shown lying in the immediate hinterland of Agona, across the trade routes leading inland from the coast to Kwahu, Akim, and the further north. Doubtless the uncharitable remark of the Dutch cartographer is to be associated with forms of taxation imposed by the Akwamus upon merchants using the routes passing through their territory.

Correlating the evidence of the Dutch map with other relevant material², it becomes possible to determine with some confidence the extent of the Akwamu state before it entered into that phase of expansion that was to make it the centre of a large empire extending far to the east of the Volta. It would seem that in the early decades of the seventeenth century Akwamu lay athwart the Atewa Hills, a long densely forested range culminating in peaks

1. Chart 743 dd. 25 December, 1629, in the State Archives, The Hague.

2. It will be shown later how, without any drastic re-organisation of boundaries, the original Akwamu homeland became transformed into Akim Abuakwa between 1730 and 1775.

of about 2400 feet above sea level, and running from the neighbourhood of Asamankese in the south to that of Anyinam in the north, where the valley of the Birim separates the Atewa Hills from the main line of the Kwahu Scarp. East of the Atewa Hills it is likely that the middle reaches of the Densu¹ River formed the Akwamu border, for this section of the river still serves as the modern boundary between Akwapim and New Juaben on the one hand, and Akim Abuakwa on the other. West and north of the Atewa Hills, however, the limits of the original Akwamu state do not suggest themselves so readily. Certainly the state must have extended as far as the upper Birim River, for towns like Akwatia still acknowledge their Akwamu origins, whilst Kwabeng in the north is mentioned as an Akwamu town as early as 1710¹. On the other hand, the Akwamu domains may have extended still further westwards, into the area between the Birim and the Pra, for a number of towns in this area belonging to Akim Abuakwa or Akim Kotoku also maintain traditions of a former allegiance to Akwamu.

The Dutch map of 1629 unfortunately gives no indication of the Akwamu capital at the time. Akwamu traditions name first Asamankese², and second Nyanaoase, near the modern Nsawam, as successive capitals. The location of both places in the extreme south of Akwamu accords well with the coastwards orientation of Akwamu policy. Yet these traditions must refer to the pre-imperial period of Akwamu history, for by the beginning of the eighteenth century the capital had been moved yet again, this time beyond the borders of Akwamu proper, and into neighbouring Akwamu-dominated territory to the east. Finally, in the middle of the same century yet another change was made, when it was moved into the eastern, trans-Volta part of the empire, to its present location locked in the wooded hills of the Volta Gorge. There thus seems to have been a tendency for the Akwamu capital, for commercial reasons, to be located in the south, at no great remove from the sea, but, for military reasons, to be moved continually eastwards, so becoming increasingly insulated from the sudden inroads of enemy raiders from Akim

1. J. Rask: "Kort og sandferdig Reisebeskrivelse til og fra Guinea", (Trondhjem, 1754), p. 156. The identification of 'Kobang' with the modern Kwabeng seems reasonably certain.

2. Asamankese, i.e. Asare-mankese, 'Asare's capital'. Asare is said to have been an early ruler of Akwamu.

in the west.

The distinction between Akwamu proper, and the Akwamu empire, was one quite familiar to early writers. Rømer, a Danish factor who left the Gold Coast in 1749, makes the distinction in his usual quaint manner. In the greater Akwamu "there were millions of inhabitants", he informs us, but "Akwamu or the place where the true Akwamus lived, was no bigger than that their King could call together the nobles of his kingdom with a cannon-shot if he wanted to summon them before council"¹. The details of the growth of the empire are reasonably clear from 1677 onwards. The obscure period, the Dark Ages of Akwamu history, is that during which the inland state straddling the Atewa Hills (where a cannon-shot could summon the chiefs!) attained an initial accumulation of power sufficient to challenge the Accra kingdom in 1677, and within the next quarter of a century to thrust its dominion eastwards until it marched with that of Dahomey.

One might conjecture that initially Akwamu embarked upon its bid for empire by assuming the leadership of a military union based upon the political association of geographically contiguous states, - as Kumasi was to do a few decades later. Unfortunately any attempt to trace in detail the development of such a union is made particularly difficult by the fact that in the few European records of any relevance to this early period, Akwamu (or Aquamboe as it was usually written) appears to be referred to sometimes by another name, Oquie or Oquy. In the present state of our knowledge of the processes of compound formation in early Twi, and in the absence of any study of the regularities in the rendering of African names into European scripts, it would be dangerous to argue for any linguistic connection between the names Akwamu (or Aquamboe) and Oquie. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that the state referred to as Oquie in seventeenth century records was identical with that more usually called Akwamu².

In 1646 the kingdom of Oquie is described as lying three or four Dutch miles north of Great Accra³. Since the latter may be located with some

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1. L.F. Rømer: Nachrichten von der Küste Guinea (Copenhagen and Leipzig, 1769), p. 102. This work is a German translation of the Danish Tilforlæd-elig efterretning om Kysten Guinea (Copenhagen, 1760).
 2. This problem is considered at length in Appendix II.
 3. WIC o.c. 11: 'Elmina Journal - continuation of the journal sent by the yacht Postpaert, departed 2 April, 1646', entry for 27 October, 1646.

confidence near the modern Gã village of Ayaso, some twelve (English) miles north-west of the present Accra, this description accords well with the supposition that the present Akim border in the south near Nsawam corresponds with the old Akwamu frontier. To the west Oquie is described as bordering on Fanti; the reference must be taken as being to the south-west. In the east, however, by 1646 Akwamu must already have thrust its power far beyond the Densu River, for Oquie was described as "running to the east of Accra as far as Aquimena", and as including "Latebe, which the King of Oquie claims to be his". It is in this expansion in the east that one detects the earliest extension of the power of Akwamu beyond its own proper frontiers. Aquimena, despite the oddity of its description as east of Accra, is to be identified with the Kammana of the Dutch map of 1629, then shown as a small state lying north of Aburi¹. D'Anville's "Map of the Gold Coast", dated 1729², shows Kammana as an integral part of Akwamu, so perhaps reflecting its early incorporation into the Akwamu hegemony. The Kamana, Kamra, or Kwamana people remain to this day a distinct section within the Akwamu state. Latebe, also shown upon the Dutch map of 1629, is unquestionably represented by the modern Larteh division of the Akwapim state.

That the Larteh and Kamana peoples had been drawn into the Akwamu power complex by 1646 creates a presumption that the other peoples lying between Akwamu proper and Larteh and Kamana - other divisions of the modern Akwapim - had likewise joined Akwamu by this date. The map of 1629 shows two small states, Eunu (Dutch Boenoe) and Equea, and one larger state, Abura (Dutch

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1. Many of the early topographical accounts of this area were inaccurate due to the failure to allow for the sweep to the west of the Volta River. Thus, if the Dutch writer was informed that Kamana (Aquimena) was bounded by the Volta, which it was, he would assume that its longitude was much more easterly than that of Accra, which it was not.
 2. The map of 1729 is derived from an earlier one, but is "somewhat improved and corrected, as well as the names of the places accommodated to the English orthography". It would seem that D'Anville's principal informant for the east of the Gold Coast must have been on the coast after 1680 but before 1689, and may therefore have been Barbot.
 3. In Akwamu names frequently occur in both kw- and k- forms. The former appears to be the older Twi form, and the latter is possibly due to the influence of non-Twi languages, especially Ewe which was the language of the eastern part of the Akwamu empire.

Aboera), in this position. Abura is the modern Aburi. There is no direct evidence of the nature of the association between it and Akwamu. There was probably a political fusion, for sometime before 1703 Akwamu had established its imperial capital at the town now known as Nsachi, within the old Aburi state and the modern Aburi division of Akwapim. To this day the Aburi stool, despite the severance of all political connections with Akwamu, is referred to as an Akwamu stool, a nephew, as it is put, of the paramount stool of all-Akwamu. Of Equea nothing is known. Bunu, however, is doubtless the place referred to in a report of 1658 that tells of an elder of "a place called Bon situated inland behind Accra" who went to Akwamu to greet the king, but was seized and sold as a slave at Accra, the King of Akwamu having "specially ordered him to be sold to the Whites so that he should be carried out of the country"¹. The inference is that Bunu was Akwamu-dominated at this time.

It seems clear then, that by the middle of the seventeenth century, Akwamu had already extended its dominion, in one form or another, over the area of the modern Akwapim. Indeed, the Akwapim state may be regarded as a surviving memorial of this first phase of Akwamu's bid for empire. For after the collapse of the western half of that empire in 1730, whilst the old Akwamu territory proper was ultimately transformed into Akim Abuakwa, with a ruling dynasty of Akim origin established at Kibi, the smaller states that had early been associated with Akwamu, - Aburi, Larteh, and the rest, were combined together into the new state of Akwapim, with a ruling dynasty of Akim origin established at Akropong.

The main direction of Akwamu expansion at this time was clearly determined in part by matters of political expediency. Akwamu was bounded on the west by Akim, alternatively known in the seventeenth century as Great Akan, at which period it must have embraced much of the present Adansi. Bosman, a Dutch factor, commented that the Akwamu power is "very terrible to all their neighbouring countries, except Akim"², so that the

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1. KVG 81: "Journal of Director-General Jan Valckenburgh beginning 21 Dec., 1658", entry for 31 Dec., 1658.
 2. W. Bosman: "A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea", (London, 1705), p. 65. This work is a translation of the Dutch "Nauwkeurige Beschryving van de Guinese Goud-, Tand-, en Slave-kust", (Utrecht, 1704).

might of Akim must have been sufficient to thwart any ambitions that Akwamu might have entertained in that direction. Between Akim and Akwamu lay the probably disputed area west of the Birim River, and the series of impressive earthwork fortifications that still survive on both sides of that river may represent the Akwamu attempt to strengthen its western frontier against Akim aggression¹. If Akwamu expansion was thus impossible in the west, so it was in the south-west also, where lay the Fanti peoples, considered of all the coastal nations second in military power only to Akwamu itself². Political expediency thus dictated that the main direction of Akwamu expansion should be to the east. What was politically expedient, however, also happened to be economically attractive. At Accra, to the south-east, no less than five European nations were competing for the large volume of trade that that place had to offer.

The Portuguese had previously built a fort at Accra, but this had been destroyed in an uprising in 1576³. A Portuguese force under one Martyn Afonso subsequently took reprisals against the Accra people, but the fort was never rebuilt. The Portuguese henceforth carried on their trade from the beaches⁴. By 1633 the Dutch had broken the Portuguese monopoly of the Accra trade, and in that year signed an agreement with the King of Accra which gave them sole trading rights in his territory, which at the time extended along the coast from Small Bereku to Nungua⁵. In 1642 the Dutch consolidated their position further by an agreement through which they obtained land at Small Accra on which to build a lodge, house, or fort, for a monthly payment to the King of Accra of two ounces of gold⁶. The lodge, Crèvecoeur, was built in the same year. Five years later the English were trying to obtain a foothold in the Accra trade,

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1. See e.g. H.J. Braunholtz: "Archaeology in the Gold Coast", *Antiquity* X, 1936; O. Davies: "Excavations at Kokobin and the Entrenchments in the Oda Area", forthcoming Occasional Paper of the Dept. of Archaeology of the University College of Ghana.
 2. Bosman, 1705, p. 181.
 3. P. de Marcees: "Beschryvinghe ende Historische Verhael van het Gout Koninckrijck van Gunea", 1602. Edited by S.P.L'Honore Naber for the Linschoten Society (Gravenhage, 1912), pp. 88 and 211-12.
 4. St. Gen.: Secreete Kas WIC 1. Report of Valckenburgh, 1659. See J.K.J. De Jonge: "De Oorsprong van Nederland's bizittingen op de Kust van Guinea", (Gravenhage, 1871), App. VIII.
 5. WIC o.c.11: letter from Sticker to Assembly of XIX, dd. 3 Feb., 1634.
 6. WIC Verspreyde Stukken 1162, pp. 69-72: Agreement with the King of Great Accra dd. 30 August, 1642.

and by 1650 had erected a lodge. It was abandoned in 1653¹. In 1652 the Swedes established a lodge at Osu², but by 1660 it had passed into Dutch hands, and a year later the Danes seized it. In the same year, 1661, the King of Accra, Okai Koi (Danish Kanckoy), formally ceded the beach of Osu to the Danes, who thereupon commenced building Christiansborg³. Meanwhile in 1659 the English were once more negotiating to build a lodge on the site of the old Portuguese fort⁴. To make the whole situation still more complex, the Portuguese began to show a renewed interest in the area⁵, although it was not until 1679 that they were to regain a foothold in Accra, with their brief occupation of Danish Christiansborg.

* That the interests of the trading companies of five European nations should converge upon Accra in the mid-seventeenth century testifies to the peculiar importance which that place had as a terminus for the trade in gold and slaves from the interior. It is thus not unnatural that Akwamu should likewise turn its attention to Accra. Initially Akwamu policy appears to have been directed less to obtaining direct access to the coast than to achieving control of the trade paths leading from the interior to Accra. Control of these paths would guarantee a flow of money, from tolls, into the Akwamu state treasury, and it must be borne in mind that the very possibility of conducting extensive military operations depended upon the possession of a treasury from which gold pawns or payments could be offered to the European merchants against guns and gunpowder. Thus in 1646 Akwamu was receiving payments in gold from Accra in order to allow merchants at Larteh to pass through to Accra. On this occasion, however, the exasperated Accras unwisely

1. St. Gen: Secretee Kas WIC 1. Valckenburgh's report of 1659.

2. Ibid.

3. VGG: copy of agreement with the King of Great Accra dd. 18 Aug., 1661.

4. KvG 81: Valckenburgh's Journal, entry for 20 Jan., 1659.

5. WIC o.c. 10: Letter from Assembly of XIX to Valckenburgh dd. 16 Aug., 1656.

attacked Larteh in the same year, in order to force open the paths, and Akwamu responded with an economic blockade of Accra. All the paths from the interior that Akwamu controlled were sealed. Trade at Accra was so seriously affected that the Dutch fiscal Caerloff paid several visits in person to the king of Akwamu in an attempt to persuade him to open the paths for the Akim and Kamana merchants¹.

In the mid-seventeenth century Akwamu had thus already extended its power eastwards over the small states that form the present Akwapim. This hill country was highly fertile, and so then, as now, densely populated. There was thus a gain to Akwamu in food supplies and manpower without which it is unlikely that Akwamu could ever have entered into that phase of extensive territorial conquest that was to follow. Moreover, as these small states were introduced one by one into the Akwamu power complex, so the Akwamu control of the trade routes to Accra must have become more and more complete. In this way Accra was rapidly being reduced to economic dependence upon Akwamu, and the way was being prepared for the second phase of Akwamu expansion, - its emergence as a major coastal power with the conquest of Accra in 1677-81.

ii. The Emergence of Akwamu as a Coastal Power.

The dispute over Larteh of 1646 does not appear to have developed into open warfare between Akwamu and Accra. It is likely that Akwamu was as yet unprepared to offer any direct challenge to the military power of Accra. Römer reports what he had heard of the Accra attitude to a possible attack from Akwamu:

"The King of Accra who heard of this despised his enemies, because he had many thousands of archers, spear throwers, and swordsmen. Each of his eighty generals had a musket with ten charges of powder and lead. He knew that Akwamu and all its allies did not have one tenth as many men as he, and no muskets at all".²

1. WIC o.c. 11: 'Elmina Journal, etc', entries for 16 Nov. and 15 Dec., 1646. Also WIC o.c. 11: letter from Fiscal Caerloff dd. 12 Jan., 1647.
2. Römer, 1760, p. 119; 1769, p. 100. The German translation is corrupt at this point.

If, however, Römer accurately reflects the attitude of the Accras, then their failure to allow for the rapid build-up of Akwamu manpower and armament may well have involved an element of miscalculation that was to become a decisive factor in the defeat of Accra. Certainly only some twenty years after the final Accra defeat, Akwamu was able to put a larger army into the field than any other coastal power¹, and possessed such an array of cannon that the English Governor Sir Dalby Thomas thought the days of the European forts might well be over².

\ In 1646 Akwamu appears to have been prepared to exercise restraint. The Accra kingdom was already seriously weakened by internal conflicts. In 1643 the king (variously named in European sources Ouchy, Oussy, etc.) had been murdered by one of his own chiefs ('groot Meester'), and civil war had broken out³. Four years later the situation was still unsettled. Three sons of the deceased king contended for power. The people had chosen a successor, - probably Okai Koi, but he was unable to make effective his authority. Instead power was wielded by a 'governor' or 'commander'⁴. Nevertheless, in response to an external threat, it was still possible in 1646 for an army of nine thousand men to be drawn from Great and Small Accra⁵. Akwamu doubtless anticipated that the dissipation of Accra strength in internal conflict, together with the effects of the economic pressure exerted through the Akwamu blockade of the trade routes, would guarantee the ultimate collapse of Accra. But it was to be thirty years before this strategy was to be shown sound.

Akwamu launched its major offensive against Accra in 1677, under the able leadership of the great Akwamuhene, Ansa Sasraku. Römer gives an account of what may just possibly have been the immediate justification for the attack. An Akwamu prince, named Akotia, had been sent to the Accra court, - where it may be presumed that he was expected to learn

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 181.

2. PRO, Records of the Africa Companies, T/70/175: letter from Sir Dalby Thomas dd. 13 May, 1705.

3. WIC o.c. 58: letter from J. Ruyghezaer to Count Mauritz and Council in Brazil dd. 1 Feb., 1643.

4. WIC o.c. 11: letter from Fiscal Caerloff dd. 21 May, 1646.

5. WIC o.c. 11: 'Elmina Journal, etc', entry for 27 Oct., 1646.

the ways of the European trade and something of the Portuguese language, then the lingua franca of the coast as it was to be until late in the eighteenth century. The Accras, after their fashion, had the young prince circumcised, which was not only contrary to Akwamu custom, but would automatically debar him from any Akwamu stool. The Akwamus ironically demanded the return of Akotia's foreskin, "with a fetish priest to replace it in its proper place". The Accras appear to have been unable to satisfy this demand, and thus Akwamu determined upon war¹.

The initial offensive was directed against Great Accra, the capital, which lay some ten miles inland near the modern Ayaso. The Accra king, Okai Koi, offered resistance, but was captured together with his eldest son by the Akwamu forces. Both were beheaded². The capital was sacked and burned³. Akwamu thus seems to have attained its first objective with comparative ease. This may have been due in part to the numerical superiority of the invading forces, for Akwamu reinforced its own armies with mercenaries drawn from the Agona and Akron states to the west⁴. Much help was also received from the 'Crophyse', a people probably to be identified with those later known as the 'Graffis', i.e. the Agave, who in the seventeenth century were in possession of both banks of the Lower Volta⁵. Even the old alliance between Accra and Akim broke down on this occasion, for Akim gave considerable material assistance to Akwamu⁶. Basically, however, the Accra collapse must have been due to the persistence of the old internal disorders. Rømer had heard that certain Accra army commanders "had secretly arranged with the enemies of their king that they

1. Rømer, 1769, pp. 99 et seq.
 2. The skull of Okai Koi was subsequently displayed by the Akwamus before the Accras in 1830. See Welman, "The Native States of the Gold Coast - Peki", 1924, p. 11.
 3. E. Tilleman: "En liden enfoldig Beretning om det Landskab Guinea", (Copenhagen, 1697), p. 103. Also VGK: letter from Magnus Prang dd. 7 April, 1681.
 4. Rømer, 1769, pp. 100, 102 ff.
 5. VGK: 'Forrige Vice Gouverneur paa Fortet Christiansborg Nicholai Fensman's Bøgger', entry for 19 Oct. 1688.
 6. Koninklijk Instituut 65: report by Valckenburgh to the Assembly of XIX dd. Sept. 1659. Also WIC 124: letter from J. Rohart dd. 10 March, 1700.

should desert him as soon as the battle commenced, and deliver him and his children into their hands"¹. Rask, a Danish chaplain who was on the coast from 1709 to 1712, noted that the King of Accra had treated his chiefs and people harshly, and so found himself "helpless and hated by them, and therefore had to lose both country and life"². Reindorf records Gã traditions of the unpopularity of Okai Koi, and associates this with the mis-rule of Okai Koi's mother, Dode Akabi, who he describes as an Obutu woman³. Reindorf puts his own particular construction on the Obutu ancestry of Dode Akabi and Okai Koi. It is, however, significant that contemporary writings report that Okai Koi was closely related to the ruling dynasty in Afutu or Fetu, a state that lay east of, and included part of, Elmina⁴. The probable explanation of the Gã tradition is thus that Okai Koi's mother was from the Afutu royal family. Many of the ruling dynasties of the coastal areas appear to have had close links with Afutu, for earlier the Portuguese had planted, and maintained in power, groups of Elminas at such places as Boutry, Sekondi, Shama, Anomabu, Apam, and Accra⁵. As late as 1659, for example, the king of Agona, a state bordering Accra to the west, still acknowledged the Elmina origin of his family⁶, and we shall see that the Afutu connection significantly recurs in Accra history at even later dates.

Twenty years after Great Accra had been sacked and destroyed by the Akwamu armies only the ruined walls were to be seen by the passing traveller⁷. The victory of 1677, however, was only a limited one, for by this time Ansa Sasraku must have determined upon wresting control of the beaches, where the trading companies were established, from the Accras. Gã resistance was not ended by the loss of the capital however. A younger son of Okai Koi had escaped from the sack of Great Accra, together with his mother⁸. His name

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1. Rømer, 1769, p.101.
 2. Rask, 1754, p. 93.
 3. C.C.Reindorf: "History of the Gold Coast and Asante", (Basel 1895), p.18.
 4. J. Barbot: "A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea", in Churchill's "Collection of Voyages and Travels", Vol.V, 1732, p. 182.
 5. St. Gen.: Secreete Kas WIC 1 - report of Valckenburgh of 1659.
 6. Koninklijk Instituut 65: Valckenburgh's report of Sept., 1659; also KvG 81: Valckenburgh's Journal, entry for 4 Feb., 1659.
 7. Tilleman, 1697, p.103.
 8. VGK: letter from Frang dd. 7 April, 1681. Rømer, 1769, p.101, reports that a sister of the king escaped, with two children.

was Ofori¹. Moving the state capital to Small Accra, beneath the walls of Dutch Crèvecoeur, Ofori assumed leadership of the Accra people in succession to his father². Anticipating that the European merchants would prefer the known to the unknown, the Accras to the Akwamus, Ofori sought the assistance of the Danes, Dutch, and English in holding back the Akwamu armies from the coast. He became, as Barbot has it, a great friend of the Europeans. By this time sizeable Gã towns had already grown up around each of the forts, and these must have received the refugees from Great Accra. Tfoko, or Socco as it was then rendered, lay a little west of the English Fort James. Dutch Crèvecoeur dominated Apreg, or Small Accra, where Ofori established his capital because of its central position and because the Dutch were considered the most powerful of all the Europeans on the coast. To the east Osu likewise lay in close proximity to Danish Christiansborg. Finally, further east still, lay Labadi, formerly the principal town of a small independent state, but long reduced to dependence upon the Accra king, who at this period is styled "King of Great and Small Accra, Osu, Labadi, and other villages and districts under his Royal Government"³.

The events of the few years following the fall of Great Accra are not as well documented as one might wish or expect. Certainly, there was some pause in the Akwamu offensive after the attack upon the capital, for in 1679 Ofori was still ruling in Small Accra⁴. It is likely that Akwamu hesitated to launch an attack upon the Gã towns beneath the forts, being unsure of the extent to which the cannons mounted by the forts might be used against them. They made one assault upon Osu and found that the guns of Christiansborg were indeed active in the Accra interest. After an encounter with the Danes, their armies were forced to retire⁵. This attack upon Osu must have occurred between 1677, when Great Accra fell, and 1679, in which latter year the Danes lost possession of Christiansborg to the Portuguese. That the Danes were prepared actively to support Ofori and the Accras, something for which they were later to pay

1. Barbot, 1732, p. 182.

2. Ibid, p. 182.

3. VGK: copy of a letter from Cornelis, ten to Okai Koi dd. 16 Oct., 1680.

4. Barbot, 1732, pp. 182 and 291-92.

5. Tilleman, 1697, p. 104.

dearly, could not have been entirely unexpected. Relations between the Danes and the Accras had been particularly friendly during the preceding decades. In 1661 an agreement had been made between Okai Koi, King of Accra, and the Honourable Jost Kramer, governor at Frederichsborg, representing the Crown of Denmark and the Danish Africa Company. By the terms of this agreement Okai Koi ceded the beach at Osu to the Danes for 50 Bendas in goods (i.e. the equivalent of 100 ounces of gold, valued at the time at about £330 sterling), on condition that the Danes built there at the earliest possible time and of the best possible materials, a stone house or fort. In return Okai Koi undertook to defend the fort against all comers, European or African. Okai Koi sealed the pact by eating fetish in the presence of Ahen, son of the deceased King Hennequa of Afutu, who had been sent from Afutu on oath for this very purpose, - another interesting example of the persistence of the connection between the Gã and Afutu royal families¹. Christian Cornelisen was sent to Osu as Chief Factor in 1661, and was largely responsible for the construction of the fort. His factorship was noteworthy for the excellent relations he established with the Accra people. It was said that when Cornelisen was recalled to Denmark in 1667,

"the King of Accra in person, with all his queens and councillors, came further down the country towards the sea-shore than ever before (it being against the custom of the land, and a sin against their fetishes, for a king to come so far from his town as he had, and to the sea-shore), and he did it this time only to bid him, Cornelisen, farewell, and to express sorrow at his departure. He regretted that he himself could not come right down to the beach, but he ordered all his queens, councillors, and musicians to do so, which was very costly for Cornelisen, as he had to give them all presents for the honour they had done him"².

The worthy Cornelisen continued in the employment of the company, and in 1680, unaware of the fate that had overtaken Okai Koi and his kin, is found sending greetings to "Okai Koi the King, with all his wives and eldest son, sons, and children"³.

" Since the Danes had forced the Akwamu armies to retreat from Osu, it may be supposed that as long as the Danes and the Osu people could constitute a

1. VGK: copy of an agreement with the King of Great Accra dd. 18 Aug., 1661.

2. Tilleman, 1697, pp. 93-4.

3. VGK: Memo. signed by Cornelisen dd. 16 Oct. 1680 "sending salutations to all the inhabitants of Cabo Cors, Fredericksborg, and Accra who know his name".

hostile left flank, for that time would Akwamu hesitate to launch any frontal attack upon Small Accra itself, where Ofori and the remaining Gã forces were now based. Indeed, it seems that in 1678 and 1679 Ansa Sasraku diverted a part of his war force into the area east of Accra, and effected the conquest of the Kingdom of Ladoku in 1679, of which more shortly. In the same year, however, the situation in Accra changed radically in favour of Akwamu, and Ansa Sasraku concentrated his whole resources upon the complete reduction of that kingdom once more. This change was brought about by the loss of Christiansborg, by the Danes. Considerable mystery surrounds the episode. It appears that the Danish garrison was discontented, and a section led by the Greek factor Pieter Bolt mutinied, seized the fort, and then negotiated its sale with Juliam de Campos Barreto, a former governor of São Thomé who was acting for the Crown of Portugal. Juliam de Campos in person commanded the force that sailed from São Thomé to garrison Christiansborg, or Fort S. Francis Xavier as it was to be renamed¹. It is difficult to know whether Akwamu had any direct part in the Danish downfall, though Ansa Sasraku must certainly have welcomed it. It was reported that John Ollricks, the Danish governor, "was inhumanly murdered by the Blacks at the instigation of a Greek who lived under him"², yet the Gã people of Osu insisted that they had had no part in the seizure of the fort, and that indeed one of their own chiefs had been shot by Bolt³. It is thus possible that the Akwamus had given some assistance to the mutineers. What is certain, however, is that the loss of Christiansborg by the Danes opened the way for the Akwamu conquest of the remaining Accra territories. Unlike the guns of Christiansborg, those of S. Francis Xavier were not to be used against Akwamu.

Römer says that the Akwamu armies "delivered three battles within a year, all of which ended to their advantage", and adds that "an astonishing number of Accras remained on the battle field, so that the remnants had to subject

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1. For this episode see, e.g., Barbot, 1732, p. 183; Tilleman, 1697, p. 95. Also VGK: letters from Prang dd. 7 and 19 April, 1681, and report by J. van Tetz dd. 18 Feb., 1681.
 2. Barbot, 1732, p. 183.
 3. VGK: report of J. van Tetz dd. 18 Feb., 1681.

themselves to Akwamu¹. Tilleman reports that after the overthrow of Great Accra, "there were some years of war, in which the coast fortresses suffered greatly"². Barbot, who was on the coast at the time, noted that "the Accras have at last been overcome by the Akwamus, and their country ruined and reduced to a province in the years 1680 and 1681"³. Apart from perhaps offering asylum within the forts to some of the Accras there is nothing to suggest that the Dutch, English, or Portuguese did anything to assist them more⁴. The Gã towns suffered heavily. Small Accra was burned, and only about sixty houses were left standing. Osu, under S. Francis Xavier, suffered a similar fate, and was greatly reduced in size⁵. For some reason Tsjoko, near the English fort, appears to have been spared, for it was reported to have received refugees from the other towns⁶. Most refugees, however, preferred to seek asylum further afield, and resettled at various places along the leeward coast, especially at Little Popo and Whydah⁷.

For a second time Ofori, the Accra king, escaped his enemies. He fled to Afutu where the king, 'Ahen Panyin Ashrive' (who had witnessed the Accra-Danish agreement of 1661) was a close relative⁸. Furthermore, the Danes had their headquarters in Afutu, at Frederichsborg, and here Ofori and the Danish governor Magnus Prang sympathised with each other over the loss of their Accra interests. They agreed to afford each other every assistance, and Magnus Prang placed it on record that he had much confidence in the Accra king-in-exile⁹.

Success was to crown the efforts of Prang, but not those of Ofori. In

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1. Römer, 1769, p. 101.
 2. Tilleman, 1697, p. 103.
 3. Barbot, 1732, p. 185.
 4. Barbot, 1732, p. 294, refers to an Akwamu attack upon Accra in 1687, when the Dutch assisted the Accras. 1687 may well be a misprint for 1681.
 5. Barbot, 1732, p. 182.
 6. Bloome's Memoirs, printed in the Supplement, Book I, to Barbot, 1732, p.448.
 7. See Bosman, 1705, pp. 69 and 332; Barbot, 1732, p. 182; V GK: "Dag-Journal, holden paa Castellet Christiansborg i Guinea, 1699-1703", entry for 10 April 1702; "Biørns Beretning 1788 om de Danske Porter og Negerier", in Thaarups Archiv, (Copenhagen, n.d.), p. 225.
 8. Barbot, 1732, p. 182; also "Biørns Beretning 1788", p.225.
 9. V GK: letter from Magnus Prang dd. 19 April, 1681.

1681 the Danes negotiated unsuccessfully with the Portuguese for the return of Christiansborg¹. In 1682, however, the Portuguese garrison revolted, and imprisoned Juliam de Campos, and in the following year the King of Portugal ordered the evacuation of the fort². The Danes re-occupied it, and not wishing to antagonise Akwamu further, appear to have withdrawn recognition from Ofori. After some time Ofori became reconciled to the loss of his kingdom and like so many of his subjects, retired to Little Popo.³ He is probably to be identified with the Aforri mentioned by Bosman as a former king of Popo, "on account of his valour very much feared and respected". Rømer noted that the ruling dynasty of Little Popo was derived from that of Accra⁴.

With the removal of the dynasty to Little Popo, the old kingdom of Accra, the kingdom of Cussy and Okai Koi and the greatly reduced kingdom of Ofori, vanished for ever. By the end of the seventeenth century, it seemed to Bosman "improbable that the Accras will ever return to possession of their country"⁵. Bosman was, in a sense, right. After the major Akwamu defeat of 1730, the Gã people were to recover something of their former independence. But the new Accra polity was to consist of a number of small, semi-autonomous stools, linked by ties of kinship, culture, and self-interest, but without the politically unifying force of a common sovereign ruler⁶. In the meantime, however, Accra was to be for fifty years "a province of Akwamu", as Barbot has it, and its social and political structures were to be greatly changed by the impact of the Akwamu administrative system. For those fifty years, Akwamu was to enjoy the economic benefits of the Accra trade, - the fruition of an ambition that had dominated Akwamu policy for several decades before 1677.

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1. VGK: letter from Prang dd. 19 April, 1681, and report of J. van Tetz dd. 18 Feb., 1681.
 2. Tilleman, 1697, p. 95. In Barbot, 1732, Supplement Book I, p. 448, it is reported that the Danes redeemed the fort for money. This seems incorrect.
 3. For a possible settlement between Accra and Akwamu see I. Wilks: "Tribal History and Myth" in Universitas, June and December, 1956.
 4. See Bosman, 1705, p. 332. Rømer, 1769, p. 101.
 5. Bosman, 1705, p. 332.
 6. Isert: "Reise nach Guinea und den Caribaischen Inseln in Columbien", (Copenhagen, 1788), recognised the political change: "Akwamu was once the royal power which overcame the Accras in the preceding century and obliged them to take refuge in Popo; it is since this time that the Accras have formed a republic".

iii. The Growth of Empire.

The Akwamu conquest of the Accra kingdom, from the sack of the capital in 1677 to the annexation of the remaining coastal areas in 1681, was far reaching in its consequences. Fixed sources of revenue, such as the rents from the forts, and variable revenues such as the tolls taken from the local merchants, accrued to Akwamu, and permitted the formation of a treasury sufficiently large to finance those major campaigns that were to extend the power of Akwamu eastwards to Dahomey and northwards into the spacious Afram plains. Nevertheless, Akwamu's imperial ambitions had already become manifest before the conquest of Accra. The extension of the Akwamu hegemony over the area of the modern Akwapim, as far east as Larteh, has already been noted as a feature of the preliminary build-up of Akwamu power. By this means the hinterland of Accra, through which passed the trade routes from the interior, appears to have fallen under Akwamu control as early as 1646. Sometime between 1646 and the final conquest of Accra in 1681, however, Akwamu appears to have extended its rule over large areas of the plains lying west of the Volta and south of the Akwapim scarp.

In the seventeenth century most of this area, now apportioned between the modern states of Ada, Kpone, Osudoku, Ningo, Prampram, and Shai, appears to have constituted one kingdom, known as Ladoku. A narrow strip of land on the west bank of the Volta, however, was held by an Ewe speaking people, the Agave, part of whom were later to be incorporated into the Ada state as the Kudzeragbe clan. In the seventeenth century the Agave probably had political affiliations with other Ewe peoples east of the Volta, rather than with Ladoku, though Barbot does comment that some authors consider ^{at} this country a part of Ladoku¹. Ladoku itself, which extended along the coast westwards from the Agave owned Volta-side as far as Temma or thereabouts, was an Adangme speaking area. It is not clear from Barbot, who describes the kingdom, where the capital lay, but it was probably at the now deserted site marked on some early nineteenth century maps as Laidoku, situated a little inland mid-way between Great Ningo and Lay (the modern Lepongungo)². When Barbot wrote both

1. Barbot, 1732, p. 319.

2. See e.g. "Kort over de danske Besiddelser i Guinea", reproduced in K. Larsen, "De Danske i Guinea", (Copenhagen, 1918). Lepongungo means 'Le on the ridge' and the village did lie on a small hill, - see Barbot, 1732,

Ningo and Lay were noted as important trading centres. Ningo had a brisk trade in slaves and gold, but at Lay, where the king found it necessary to employ his own broker, Santi, the trade was mainly in the former commodity¹. Earlier the Portuguese had probably traded at either Ningo or Lay, - they knew the place as O Palmar - whilst a little further east, on the border between Ladoku and Agave, they had another trading post, Aldea da Barca, 'the village of the barracoon', a name which subsequently appears in non-Portuguese sources as Berku and Tuberku and which may be identified with the modern Togbloku in Ada². Togbloku acted as a terminus for trade from the interior passing down the Volta, since the Volta bar prevented easy access to the river from the sea.

The relations between Akwamu and Agave are obscure. We have already noted that the Agaves (Agraves, Graffis, Crophyse, etc.) are probably the people said to have afforded Akwamu help in the conquest of Accra, and if this is so then they must have been brought within the Akwamu sphere of influence sometime before 1677. This is likely, for Barbot, who left the Coast just after the final overthrow of Accra, notes that the 'Keta people immediately east of the Agave were already in some wise dependent upon Akwamu:

"The nation (i.e. Keta) is in some sort of confederacy with that of Akwamu, which will now and then on occasion assist them with some forces in time of war"³.

It may be supposed that the relationship between Akwamu and Agave was of this same sort, and that on the occasion of the Akwamu attack upon Accra Agave reciprocated the help it had previously had from Akwamu. Presumably the main reason for the early Akwamu interest in both Keta and Agave was the desire to control the extensive salt lagoons in those areas.

To the same phase of pre-1677 expansion, one should perhaps also attribute the extension of Akwamu rule over the peoples east of Larteh and north of Agave, such as the Akraide who occupied the country between Larteh and the Volta around Senchi and Kpong. The Akraide are shown on early maps as incorporated within the Akwamu state⁴, and in the Senchi area still own

1. Barbot, 1732, p. 186.

2. See, e.g. the Alonzo De Santo Cruz map of 1542, reproduced in Dahlgren: Map of the World by Alonzo De Santo Cruz, (Stockholm, 1892); also the Diego Homem Atlas of 1558, British Museum Add. MS. 5415 A.

3. Barbot, 1732, p. 321.

4. D'Anville's Map of the Gold Coast, English version of April, 1729.

allegiance to Akwamu to this day. The conquest of Ladoku, on the other hand, appears to have taken place somewhat later, in the lull in the campaign against Accra between the fall of Great Accra in 1677 and that of Small Accra in 1680 and 1681. The main offensive against Ladoku was probably launched in 1679, for in this year it was reported that whole communities from Ladoku fled before the Akwamu onslaught, and that some re-settled as far away as Agotime, beyond the Volta some distance east of Ho¹. By 1682 it could be said that the King of Akwamu

"extends his power over the Blacks along the sea for above twenty leagues, notwithstanding that these have a king of their own; and therefore they are adjoined to this country of Akwamu"².

Elsewhere Barbot speaks of the Kingdom of Ningo, "called Lempi by the French and Alampoe by the English", whose "prince bears the title of King of Ladingcour" (i.e. Ladoku), and Barbot notes that the king and his subjects

"have an entire dependence on the King of Akwamu, who lords it over them so absolutely, that the slightest faults are often punished with death"³.

The multiplicity of names is in some need of comment. Ladoku, which means 'old La', may strictly have been the name of the capital, so called to distinguish it from the town of Labadi to the west, or more likely from Lay, the trading port mentioned by Barbot, now Lepongung. The equivocation between La and Le (Barbot's Lay) probably indicates a change in vowel quality from Old Adangme 'a' to Modern Adangme 'e'. The French and English forms Lempi and Alampoe also reflect this vowel change, the English form not only preserving the older vowel sound but also an older prefix. Such European renderings as Lempi, Alampoe, Alampi, Lampi, etc., presuppose a hypothetical Adangme Lē-bi, and Old Adangme Alā-bi, 'La people' (see Modern Adangme bi meaning 'children, descendants'). In its older form Alā-bi, the name appears to have been influenced by Twi, in the early eighteenth century, to give

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1. "Bjørns Beretning 1788 om de Danske Forter og Negerier", in Thaarups Archiv, (Copenhagen, n.d.), pp. 223-4.
 2. Barbot, 1732, p. 181. Barbot wrote shortly after leaving West Africa in 1682, but the work was not published until 1732, when various additions were made.
 3. Ibid, p. 185.

Adã-bi, from which derives the eighteenth century European form Adampi, and so the recent literary form Adangbe or Adangme which has come into use as the name of the people (and language) of the area of the old Ladoku.

Compared with the severity of the Akwamu policy towards Accra, where Okai Koi was beheaded and his successor forced into exile, that towards Ladoku appears to have been moderate. It was a policy of indirect rule. The King of Ladoku was, for a time, left unmolested, though a small part of his kingdom was incorporated into Accra, and so brought more directly under Akwamu control¹. This was Little Ningo, the modern Nungua, lying only a few miles east of Accra. The remainder of the kingdom was left intact, though it must be supposed that the king was required to pay annual contributions into the Akwamu treasury, and to supply fighting men as and when demanded. The Akwamu overlordship, however, was to prove burdensome in ways other than this. The vagaries of Akwamu justice referred to by Barbot are depicted again by Bosman, twenty years later, who writes that the Lampi people

"have a King of their own, with the title of King of Ladingcour; though in reality he and his subjects (if they may be so called) depend entirely on the King of Aquamboe, according to whose will and pleasure he is obliged to regulate himself; for upon the least disgust, which he or his people give to those of Aquamboe, they are so severely punished that the remembrance of it remains for several years; which is yet styled a mild and merciful chastisement; for whenever the King of Aquamboe takes a fancy to it, he makes nothing of cutting them a foot shorter; which punishment they are forced to submit to without murmuring; he having at least as despotic power over them as his own subjects"².

Ladoku also appears to have felt adverse effects from the centralisation of trade at Accra, where the King of Akwamu found that it could be more easily controlled by his officers. In July of 1688 the King of Ladoku in person travelled from Great Ningo to Osu, and, bringing gifts of sheep to the Danes in Christiansborg, requested a renewal of trade with the company³. Perhaps partly because of the king's temerity in approaching the Danes directly (and a son of Ansa Sasraku happened to be in Christiansborg at the time), and

1. Tilleman, 1697, pp. 100-01.

2. Bosman, 1705, p. 327.

3. V GK: Nicholai Fensman's *Bøger*, entries for 11 and 13 July, 1688.

perhaps partly because of the general unrest in Ladoku, Akwamu threatened a punitive expedition later in the year. In the face of this threat many of the people of Ladoku, including those of Kpone and Prampram, and the Agave people, once more temporarily abandoned their lands and crossed the Volta to the relative safety of the east bank¹.

By 1699 friendly relations between the king of Akwamu and his vassal, the king of Ladoku, appear to have been re-established, for in this year the former was under attack from Akim, and fearing for the safety of his capital, took the precaution of sending his gold to the king of Ladoku for safe-keeping². It was obviously considered unlikely that any Akim army could penetrate the imperial domains as far as Ladoku. Nevertheless, the situation remained unstable, and the Ladoku king served as a focus of discontent and anti-imperialist agitation. Early in 1702 it became necessary for Akwamu to put another army into the field against Ladoku, and an English ship that anchored at Great Ningo found "everything in such alarm and confusion that there had been no trade at the place"³. Yet again the people of Ladoku moved with their families, slaves, and cattle across the Volta, and for a time their fighting men successfully opposed the Akwamu crossing of the river. Ultimately, though not without great loss, the Akwamu armies forced the crossing, and the Ladokus retired to Little Popo, where so many Accra refugees had fled twenty years before⁴. This campaign of 1702, which ended in complete victory for Akwamu, appears to have marked the end not only of the power of the king of Ladoku, but also of the kingdom itself. Henceforth Ladoku was to be divided into a number of small vassal states, Ada, Ningo, Kpone, and the rest, each with its own constitution modelled on that of Akwamu, and often controlled by stools transferred from Akwamu. In this way the kingdom of Ladoku, like that of Accra earlier, vanishes from history.

Meanwhile in the west Akwamu was confronted by a situation requiring skilful handling. Here, upon its frontiers, Akwamu was threatened by its ancient enemy, Akim. One of the major difficulties with which Akwamu had long had to contend was the proximity of its capital, and its own proper

1. V GK: Nicholai Fensman's *Böger*, entry for 19 October, 1688.

2. V GK: 'Dag-Journal, 1699 - 1703', entry for 10 October, 1699.

3. Ibid, entries for 25, 26, and 28 February, and 1 March, 1702.

4. Ibid, entries for March, 1702.

territories, to the Akim border, in consequence of which there was an ever present danger of Akim raids into the Akwamu homeland whenever the Akwamu armies campaigned in the east. Even the Akwamu conquest of Accra was jeopardized by Akim activity, and immediately after the collapse of Small Accra an army of twelve thousand men had to be sent to the interior to oppose an Akim army of the same size that had invaded the north of Akwamu¹. It was said that "when the Akwamus, on their oath and fetish, say they are going to make war in the east, it is then that they will generally turn to the west"². Mere subterfuge, however, was not sufficient to preserve the frontier inviolate, nor, it seems, was the system of fortified sites that Akwamu had constructed along the border, for in 1699 and 1700 Akim ravaged three Akwamu towns in the area³. Because of the continual danger from Akim it became a task of the utmost importance for Akwamu to negotiate the support, or at least neutrality, of the other states to the west, especially of Agona which bordered on Accra, but also of the various Fanti peoples, the military power of whom at the end of the seventeenth century was considered second only to that of Akwamu itself of all coastal powers⁴.

Agona, like Akwamu, was traditionally opposed to Akim, and as early as 1659 Agona is found in alliance with Akwamu, and in conflict with Accra and Akim⁵. Twenty years later Agona forces assisted Akwamu in the overthrow of Accra⁶. It may be that the subsequent treatment of the Agona troops by Akwamu severely strained the alliance, for it was reported that Akwamu paid them with a chest full of stones instead of gold⁷. Certainly the relations between the two states deteriorated so markedly that in 1688 the king of Akwamu, Ansa Asaraku, was greatly concerned at the rumours of an impending

1. Barbot, 1732, p. 294.

2. Tilleman, 1697, p. 114.

3. V GK: 'Dag-Journal 1699 - 1703', entries for 10 Oct. 1699 and 28 Jan. 1700.

4. Bosman, 1705, p. 181.

5. Koninklijk Instituut 65: Valckenburgh's Report dd. September, 1659.

6. Rømer, 1769, p. 100.

7. Ibid, p. 102.

Agona and Akim alliance, which would have endangered the security of the whole western frontier¹. Ansa Sasraku decided to strike before the alliance could materialise. He ordered the seizure of uncircumcised boys from Accra, Osu, Labadi, or Nungua, who were to be sacrificed for the intercession of the war gods for an Akwamu victory². The offensive against Agona was then launched, and the Winneba area rapidly overrun. Akim, however, took this opportunity of amassing an army in the north of Akwamu, and Ado, who was to become Akwamuhene a few years later, had to be withdrawn from Winneba with his troops and sent to meet the threat in the north. Ado appears to have dealt with the Akim raiders rapidly and effectively, but in the meantime the main campaign in Agona was in danger of failure, for although the depleted Akwamu forces were avoiding any major battle, nevertheless they suffered heavily in a series of skirmishes. One factor favourable to Akwamu, however, was that the Fantis were remaining neutral, and indeed, might even be induced to assist Akwamu³. To offset this, disturbances broke out in the east, in Ladoku and Agave⁴.

By the end of 1688 the situation had become so serious for Akwamu that Ansa Sasraku, a very sick man at the time, was forced to revise his policy radically. Halting military operations, he sent envoys to the Queen of Agona proposing a marriage between them, and offering Agona the protection of Akwamu. The move was ill conceived. Bosman, the Dutchman, obviously understood the nature of the queen of Agona better than Ansa Sasraku, for the former described her as:

"so wise, that to keep the government entirely in her own hands, she lives unmarried. But that she may not remain a perfect stranger to the soft passion, she generally buys a brisk jolly slave, with whom she diverts herself; prohibiting him on forfeiture of his head to intrigue with any other woman. And when the youth hath lost his charms, or her passion palls, he is exchanged for another"⁵.

The queen was clearly not the marrying type. Confronted with Ansa Sasraku's

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1. VCK: Nicholai Fensman's *Böger*, entry for 6 July, 1688.
 2. *Ibid*, entries for 6 and 10 July, 1688.
 3. *Ibid*, entries for 13 and 29 July, and 4, 7, 18, and 26 August, 1688.
 4. *Ibid*, entry for 19 October, 1688.
 5. Bosman, 1705, p. 63.

ingenuous proposals, she had the envoys beheaded and sent the heads back to her suitor. The gesture was splendid but not prudent. Ansa Sasraku recalled his forces from the north, and in a series of battles completely overthrew the Agonas. Early in 1689 the queen herself was captured, and taken into Akwamu¹. The Agona nation appears to have been left relatively intact, probably as a tribute paying vassal, but a coastal strip that included the trading post of Bereku (i.e. Senya Bereku) was annexed to Accra, and so brought more directly under Akwamu control².

There is no indication that Akwamu ever deliberately sought expansion westwards. The campaign against Agona, for which the Akwamu armies were obviously ill-prepared, was forced upon them by the fear of an Akim and Agona alliance. Akwamu's imperial aims were first and foremost in the east, and later in the north. After the defeat of Agona, Akwamu made no further moves in the west. Indeed, the situation in that direction appears to have been stabilised on the basis of an Akwamu and Fanti agreement, or pact of non-aggression, and when in 1726 the Dutch were prepared to offer the Akwamuhene sixty to eighty ounces of gold for his assistance in an expedition against the Fantis, it was said that "the Akwamus would not dare to march against the Fantis, because of the close alliance these two countries have with each other", and that "not only are these two districts bound by oaths and otherwise, to inform each other of such matters, but they are also so closely allied that if one is attacked, the other is bound to help him"³. In this way Akwamu balanced the hostility of Akim in the west against the friendship of the Fantis in the south-west. From 1689 until the Akwamu defeat in 1730 the situation remained virtually unchanged. Agona indeed revolted from time to time, but on at least one such occasion, in 1724, when the Akwamu armies were in the field against Akim, the Fantis acted in the Akwamu interest, and suppressed the revolt⁴.

Ansa Sasraku, who had so ably led his people from victory to victory,

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1. VGK: Nicholai Fensman's *Bjger*, entries for 21 October, 6 and 16 November, 1688, and 6 February, 1689.
 2. Tilleman, 1697, pp. 86, 101.
 3. KvG 93: letter from Director-General Valckenier to Pranger dd. 30 May, 1726, and from Pranger to Valckenier dd. 1 June, 1726.
 4. *Ibid*, letter from Pranger to Valckenier dd. 1 June, 1726.

and who had laid the foundations of Akwamu imperial policy, died shortly after the campaign in Agona. He left a nation that had extended its rule over the coastal peoples from Agona to the Volta, that had gained control of the major trading centre of Accra, and that commanded the allegiance of the heterogeneous peoples of the hills to the north, of Aburi, Kamana, Akrade, and the rest. In addition the Tafo people, lying still further north, had been taken under Akwamu protection in 1687¹. The small inland state of the mid-seventeenth century had become, after fifty years of diplomacy and warfare directed to the one end, the centre of an empire so powerful and rich that Bosman could write of it:

"The King and his Nobles, or rather favourites, are so rich in gold and slaves, that I am of the opinion this country singly possesseth greater treasures than all those we have hitherto described taken together",

and adds -

"the chief employments of the inhabitants are merchandise, agriculture, and war; to which last they are particularly addicted"².

* iv. The Zenith of Empire.

It is perhaps not surprising that the succession to the Stool of Akwamu following the death of Ansa Sasraku should have been a matter of some dispute. Tilleman states that Ansa Sasraku's successor should have been Ado, but as he was too young a brafu or general ('feldt-herre') named Bansiar, i.e. Basua, was enstooled until Ado should come of age. Tilleman adds, however, that at the time of writing Ado had long since come of age, but the people would not remove Basua from the stool because of his great age³. Bosman, in a somewhat obscure passage, notes that:

"some time past the Akwamu government was administered by two, viz. the Old and Young King, though the latter is excluded on pretence of his minority, by his father's brother, assisted by his own mother; so that the uncle reigned in conjunction with the father"⁴.

1. VGK: Nicholai Fensman's Bjger, entry for 28 July, 1688.

2. Bosman, 1705, p. 70. Barbot, 1732, p. 245.

3. Tilleman, 1697, p. 104.

4. Bosman, 1705, p. 65.

In the absence of additional information it is impossible to understand the situation clearly. What seems definite, however, is that after the death of Ansa Sasraku there occurred a division of power in Akwamu, and that it was not until the death of Basua in 1699 that Ado was able to assume full leadership and restore unity¹. In contemporary records Basua is sometimes described as King of Akwamu, and Ado as Prince²; in others Basua appears as Upper King and Ado as Under King³. Bosman, above, refers to an Old King and a Young King.

This division of power appears to have been not without effect upon Akwamu policy in the decade between the death of Ansa Sasraku and that of Basua. Both Upper King Basua and Under King Ado lived in the Akwamu capital, though some way apart. Each had his own army, and it was said that Ado, with his chiefs, could raise more fighting men than Basua, though their training was inferior⁴. To Bosman, Basua was "a man of a wicked, abject temper, and an inveterate enemy to the Europeans", but Ado was "a more intelligent and rational Negro, as well as a friend to the Europeans"⁵. It is therefore to Basua rather than to Ado that one must attribute one of the most spectacular and novel of all the Akwamu gains, - the capture of Christiansborg from the Danes in 1693.

The part played by the Danes at the time of the Akwamu conquest of Accra, 1677-81, had doubtless not been forgotten by the Akwamus, who must have been chagrined by the Portuguese evacuation of the fort in 1683, and the subsequent Danish re-occupation. "The King", says Bloome, "studied revenge"⁶. An opportunity had presented itself in 1688, when the French were showing considerable interest in Accra. Negotiations were opened with Du Casse, then on the coast at Commenda, and Ansa Sasraku had it made known that he would welcome a French settlement on his territory. He drew the attention of Du Casse to the fact that the Danish garrison in Christiansborg was reduced to three, and he made a number of suggestions for securing the fort for the French. Du Casse was interested, and sent back one of his

1. Bosman, 1705, p.65; also V GK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entry for 26 March 1699.

2. Ibid, entry for 10 Jan. 1699. Also Tilleman, 1697, p. 108.

3. WIC 97: letter from J. van Sevenhuysen dd. 8 May, 1699.

4. Tilleman, 1697, pp. 105-6 and 108.

5. Bosman, 1705, p. 65.

6. Bloome's *Memoirs*, in Barbot, 1732, Supplement Book I, p. 448.

ship's company to Accra, who reported that the garrison was indeed reduced to three, that the king was treating with the Osu chiefs to deliver the fort to him, and that he was also trying to arrange for the company slaves inside the fort to open the gates to him. The king took the opportunity of suggesting to the Frenchman that one of his children might profitably be sent to France for education.

Another Frenchman, the Chevalier Damond, was sent by Du Casse, bearing presents for the king. He found that Christiansborg had not been taken by the king, who said that the Osu chiefs had refused to help him, - for which he was resolved to have their heads - but that he would march on Christiansborg with his own army if the French would assist him with their cannons. The French explained that they were unable to do this, as France and Denmark were not at war, and shortly afterwards Du Casse set sail for the lower coast¹.

Five years were to pass before Basua determined to try once more to arrange for Christiansborg to be handed over to him. The Danes were known to place much confidence in one Asameni, an Akwamu broker who brought them much trade. It was arranged with Asameni that he should inform the Danes that he would shortly be bringing to the fort a number of Akwamus who wanted to purchase firearms. This Asameni did, cordially inviting the Danes to raise their prices in the face of this demand. Early in June, 1693, Asameni came to the fort, accompanied by about eighty Akwamu 'buyers', who were apparently unarmed, but who had concealed powder and shot in the folds of their cloths. The gates of Christiansborg were opened to the Akwamus, and they were allowed to inspect the guns. Rapidly loading them, the Akwamus attacked the Danes, and in the skirmish that followed killed the second-in-command and several of the garrison. The Danish governor himself escaped by leaping out of a window, but the remainder of the garrison surrendered and were taken captive into Akwamu. The large store of merchandise that was in the fort, together with the fifty marks of gold (the equivalent of about £1,333 sterling at the time) that the Danes had in their coffers, were also removed to Akwamu. Asameni was rewarded for his services by being appointed first Akwamu governor of Christiansborg. The Akwamu flag was hoisted over the fort, - a black figure brandishing a sword imposed upon a

1. "Memoire ou relation du Sr. Du Casse sur son voyage de Guynee avec 'La Tempeste' en 1687 et 1688", in Roussier: "L'Etablissement d'Issiny 1687-1701", (Paris, 1935), pp. 34-36.

white background. For a year Asameni governed the fort in the name of the Akwamuhene, and encouraged trade with all comers. He donned the former Danish governor's uniforms, and scrupulously observed the European etiquette of the time. When an English ship's captain died at Accra, it was reported that two English ships lying off Accra fired thirty and twenty-six guns salutes respectively, James Fort twenty guns, and the "Dutch and Blacks' forts 16 guns each". Another English captain, Thomas Phillips, was invited to dine with Asameni, and has left an appreciative description of the occasion.

A year later, after negotiations with the Danes, and following the intercession of the Dutch, the Akwamuhene decided to sell the fort back to the Danes, perhaps attracted by the prospect of another immediate release of money into the Akwamu treasury and of the resumption of the monthly payments of rent. The Danes had to enter an agreement to quit all pretensions of reparation or satisfaction for the seizure of the fort and for the loss of their merchandise and gold, and in addition had to pay a further fifty marks of gold upon delivery of the fort¹.

Quite apart from the profits on trade, the Akwamu treasury had thus been enriched by one hundred marks of gold from Basua's venture. Some idea of the importance of this sum, by contemporary standards, may be gained from Bosman's estimate that in a good year the Dutch West-India Company, from the whole Gold Coast, might export about 1,500 marks of gold, and Bosman is careful to add that in the preceding years only about half of that quantity had been taken². If any party had cause for discontent, other than the Danes, it was Asameni, who had been deprived of his governorship. But Asameni was nothing if not resourceful. On Basua's death in 1699, presumably relying on the noted tolerance of Ado, Asameni moved with his followers to Labadi, and there established a trading post of his own. The Danes in nearby Christiansborg found this affront to their dignity intolerable, and sent out a force of soldiers to

1. The fullest printed accounts of the Akwamu governorship of Christiansborg are: Captain T. Phillips, "Journal of a Voyage in 1693-4", in Churchill's "Collection of Voyages and Travels", Vol. VI, pp. 211 - 13; Bloome's Memoirs, in Barbot, 1732, pp. 448-49.

2. Bosman, 1705, p.89.

seize Asameni's camp and canoes, but after a skirmish they were forced to retire. Thereupon the Danes sent a protest to the Akwamuhene, Ado, who ordered Asameni to leave Labadi and promised the Danes that he would be punished. Asameni's response was to send some of his own men to Christiansborg, and they peppered the walls with shot, a gesture that occurred, as if to greet a new century, on New Year's Eve, 1699-1700. It was not until a month later that Asameni left Labadi, when he moved his business to Great Ningo, but shortly afterwards, not daring to incur Ado's displeasure further, he returned to Akwamu¹. It is likely that he is the Asameni who, three years later, was the chief of a village near the Akwamu capital, where he welcomed Dutch envoys who were paying a visit to the Akwamuhene².

Ado made the fostering of the European trade the cornerstone of his whole policy, for upon this trade depended the economic prosperity of Akwamu. It is therefore unlikely that he approved of Basua's attitude towards the Danes. There are, however, clearer instances of the conflicting attitudes to the European companies adopted by Ado and Basua. In 1697 and 1698, for example, Ado was urging the Dutch to renew trade at Kpone, in Ladoku, where there were said to be good supplies of ivory as well as slaves. The Dutch, impressed by the forces at the disposal of Ado, and bearing in mind that Ado would succeed Basua, viewed the proposition favourably. Basua, however, with the support of the English factor in Fort James, warned the Dutch not to attempt to build at Kpone³. The Dutch decided to ignore the warning, and to rely upon Ado, but when their ship arrived at Accra with building materials, it was learned that Ado and his army were away in the field, and so the Dutch abandoned the enterprise⁴. It was also reported at this time, that when Basua closed the trade routes between Accra and the interior, those from Kpone would remain open on the authority of Ado⁵.

1. VGK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entries for 30 and 31 December, 1699, and 26 January and 3 February, 1700.

2. WIC 98: letter from Dir.-Gen. William de la Palma dd. 10 October, 1703, enclosure Y, annexure 2 (report of van den Brouke and du Bois dd. 27 March, 1700). 1703

3. WIC 97: letter from J. van Sevenhuysen dd. 8 May, 1699.

4. Bosman, 1705, p. 66.

5. WIC 97: letter from J. van Sevenhuysen dd. 8 May, 1699.

The conflict between Basua and Ado appears to have extended further than the question of the European trade. It may be supposed that after the death of Ansa Sasraku in 1689, Basua saw the problem facing Akwamu as essentially that of building up an administrative machinery capable of controlling, and exploiting the resources of, the newly won territories; Ado, on the other hand, whilst prepared to foster trade by allowing the European companies a free hand, was more concerned with the acquisition of still further territories. Probably using Kpone as his base, Ado strengthened his control over the peoples of Keta and Anlo, immediately east of the Volta. Basua, fearing the growth of Ado's power, responded by giving assistance to the people of Little Popo, still further east, in their wars against Keta and Anlo. In a series of conflicts between these two countries, Ado and Basua appear to have put their relative strengths to the test¹. The result was in Basua's favour, and at the end of the century Little Popo was ascendent. But, as Bosman remarked, "how it will go with them when the Old King is dead, time will inform us". Nevertheless, whatever the position in Keta and Anlo and Little Popo, Akwamu troops were still sent to fight much further east, in Whydah and Little Ardra, whose rulers seemed oblivious of the dangers of employing the Akwamus as mercenaries².

Basua died in 1699, and Ado attained to complete power, thus ending the division of authority that had so hampered the attainment of his ambitions in the east. For a time, however, Ado found himself unable to send his armies far from the capital, for the death of Basua had been the occasion of renewed attacks from Akin. The immediate cause of these attacks was an annual tribute which Akwamu had failed to render to Akin. Barbot and Bosman both regarded the tribute as a feudal due³, but R/mer gives a quite different, and complicated, explanation in which the tribute appears as compensation in settlement of a dispute involving six women of the Akin nobility who had been married into Akin households⁴. The actual explanation, however, appears to have been much

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 329.

2. Ibid, p. 395-96.

3. Ibid, p. 69; Barbot, 1732, p. 182.

4. R/mer, 1769, p. 105.

simpler. When Ansa Sasraku had launched his offensive against Accra, he had borrowed gold from Akim, presumably for the purchase of guns and gunpowder. He had subsequently failed to repay the gold to the satisfaction of Akim. Upon his death the Akims transferred their claims to his successor, Basua, who likewise refused to acknowledge their validity¹. On Basua's death the demands were again renewed, and as if to show their determination to obtain redress, Akim sacked two Akwamu towns late in 1699, taking one hundred prisoners, and early in 1700 followed this by the capture of another town². Ado was impressed. He opened negotiations with Akim shortly afterwards, and sent a gift of thirty slaves, spirits, and other commodities. The Akim reply was to demand the whole estate of the deceased Basua in payment of the debt, or, failing this, large annual payments. Ado made an immediate offer of three hundred bendas, or nearly forty pounds weight of gold, and with this Akim seems to have been, for a time, satisfied³.

Ado spent the early months of 1701 in Accra, where he paid courtesy calls on all the forts, arriving at Christiansborg, for example, on 14 May with "twenty eight of his wives, some of his principal chiefs, and a large following of horn blowers, drummers, and armed slaves"⁴. He also spent some time in Dutch Crèvecoeur, where the surgeon treated him for cancer⁵. The later months of the same year were spent in preparations for war⁶, for the pacification of Akim had now freed the Akwamu armies for a campaign in the east.

In mid-February, 1702, an Akwamu army, which included contingents from Accra, took the field and marched into Ladoku. An assault force was sent in advance to establish a bridgehead on the east bank of the Volta, but met with severe resistance and suffered heavy casualties, including several chiefs. There arose considerable differences of opinion between the Akwamu divisional chiefs about the wisdom of continuing a campaign that had begun so disastrously

1. WIC 124: letter from J. Rohart dd. 10 March, 1700.

2. V GK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entries for 10 Oct. 1699 and 28 Jan. 1700.

3. Ibid, entry for 6 June, 1700. WIC 124: letter from J. Rohart dd. 10 March, 1700.

4. V GK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entry for 14 May, 1701.

5. Ibid, entries for 10 and 13 April, 1701. Also Bosman, 1705, p. 66.

6. Ibid, entry for 20 August, 1701.

for their armies. Desertion became common, particularly from the Accra contingents. Food was scarce. In the face of the mounting discontent, Ado compromised, and withdrew his forces to a temporary camp at Lay, one of the larger coastal towns of Ladoku. Supplies of corn and other provisions were hastened to the camp by canoe from Accra. The morale of the army slowly improved, and late in March Ado moved the war force up to the Volta again. This time the crossing was successfully forced, and the Keta and Anlo areas were re-occupied. The Ladoku forces, which had opposed the Akwamu crossing, retreated to Little Popo, the country which had previously enjoyed Basua's support against Ado. This time they could expect no help. Ado urged his forces on to Little Popo, and again encountered strong resistance. Small-pox broke out in the Akwamu ranks. Food supplies became uncertain, for the armies now lay more than a hundred and fifty miles from the Akwamu capital. Nevertheless, under adverse conditions in mid-April the Akwamus overran Little Popo, and its king fled. In May the armies entered Whydah, in southern Dahome, apparently without opposition, and the king of Whydah invited Ado to launch an attack upon Offra or Little Ardra, a state lying east of Whydah which had long resisted its efforts to reduce it to dependency. For a few weeks the armies lay in Whydah, resting before attempting further gains, but then the arrival of disturbing news from Akwamu led Ado to abandon the campaign and commence with all speed the two hundred miles march back to the capital¹. A song of praise for the Omanhene may still be heard in Akwamu, that must refer to this period. Woadi Dahome ade amnee wo, the drums beat out, 'You have eaten Dahome, but it hasn't satisfied you'.

Despite the premature termination of the campaign, in three months Ado had successfully established Akwamu supremacy far to the east of the Volta, so that he now controlled nearly two hundred and fifty miles of coastline, from Agona in the west to Whydah in the east. Furthermore Ado appears to have made reasonably secure and permanent the foundations of his empire in the east, for Whydah was to remain dependent upon Akwamu for a quarter of a century despite the distance between the two places. In 1706 for example, envoys are found arriving from the king of Whydah to ask the king of Akwamu to send a canoe to Whydah to collect various gifts. The Dutch, who at this time were closely bound by treaty to Akwamu, prevailed upon the king to treat the envoys harshly because of some injury the Dutch had recently suffered in

1. VGK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entries from 25 February to 22 July, 1702.

Whydah. The Akwamuhene summoned the envoys before him, threatened to put them in irons, and, sword in hand, declared that if the Dutch were troubled further in Whydah, then he would send an expedition there. Finally, however, he allowed himself to be persuaded into sending a canoe to Whydah for the gifts¹. The gifts were obviously some form of tribute. Thus in 1722, to take another example, the Dutch are found sending messengers to Whydah, on behalf of the king of Akwamu, to inquire about forty-six ounces of gold which the Whydah king claimed to have sent to Akwamu, but which had never been received. Although the king assured the messengers that he had sent the gold, he nevertheless took the opportunity of sending a further sixty ounces, with other gifts, together with the request that Akwamu troops might be sent to Whydah to help him against his enemies². The enemies were doubtless the Dahomey people to the north. Akwamu, however, was by this time much pre-occupied with the growing unrest amongst the subject peoples and with the incessant pressure from Akim upon the western frontier. There was no possibility of sending an army far east of the Volta. As a result, in 1727 Whydah was overrun by Dahomey and so, a quarter of a century after Ado's campaign, passed for ever from the Akwamu sphere of influence.

The campaign of 1702 established the supremacy of Akwamu east of the Volta as far as Whydah. Whatever ambitions Ado may have entertained still further east, the campaign had to be broken off abruptly, in its fourth month, for reasons beyond Ado's control. Early in May, when Ado and his forces lay in Whydah, a chief was sent from the Akwamu capital to Labadi with the news that Denkyera had recently inflicted a defeat upon Ashanti. The feeling in the capital was that Denkyera, in alliance with Akim, might next advance against Akwamu, and it was therefore considered a matter of the utmost urgency to inform Ado of the situation. Fortunately the captain of an English ship lying at anchor off Labadi agreed to lend the Akwamu chief a longboat, and so the bad news was carried from Akwamu to Whydah. Ado decided to march back. By 29

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1. KvG 59: letter from Dir.-Gen. P. Nuyts to Assembly of X dd. 25 May, 1706.
 2. KvG 90: letters from De Swaite to Dir.-Gen. Houtman dd. 22 and 30 November, 1722, and from Dir.-Gen. Houtman to De Swaite dd. 27 November and 7 December, 1722.

June the Akwamu armies were at the Volta, and two weeks later had all crossed that river. By 17 June Ado was back in his capital¹. The threat from Denkyera and Akim, however, does not seem to have materialised, and most of August was spent in obtaining redress from the Accras for their desertion from the Akwamu ranks at the beginning of the campaign².

That Akwamu should have been so concerned by the Denkyera defeat of Ashanti has its roots in another but not well documented aspect of Akwamu policy. During the reigns of Ansa Sasraku and Basua, Akwamu appears to have given considerable material assistance to the rising Ashanti Union, presumably seeing in a strong Ashanti another balance to the might of Akim. It was one of Akwamu's more successful diplomatic ventures. The Akwamu and Ashanti alliance was one that was to persist in various forms and with occasional lapses until Akwamu joined the Gold Coast Colony in 1886. Perhaps the most noteworthy results of this alliance were to be seen after the overwhelming Akwamu defeat of 1730, when it was only a series of Ashanti attacks upon Akim that enabled the Akwamus to effect a partial recovery and to save some parts of the empire in the east.

* Whilst the fruits of the Akwamu policy towards Ashanti are clearly discernable, the details of its operation are obscure. Since the relationship between Akwamu and Ashanti had no immediate effect upon trade at the coast, the reports of the European factors say little of it. Fortunately the Ashanti cycle of sagas associated with Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye help to fill the gap in our knowledge. Of these two saga heroes, the first is certainly known to history as, for example, "the great Asiante Caboceer Zaay" whom the Dutchman Noyendaal was sent to contact in 1701, taking gifts that included a looking glass and a plumed helmet³. The second, Okomfo Anokye, the priestly adviser of Osei, is a typical folk-hero, like Arthur's Merlin, but may be none the less historical for that. The whole saga, which differs greatly in character and sophistication from the usual type of 'tribal

1. VCK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entries from 4 May to 9 August, 1702.

2. Ibid, entries from 11 August to 22 August, 1702.

3. KvG 233: Instructions given to Under-factor D. van Noyendaal for his journey to the interior, dd. 9 October, 1701.

traditions', is a cycle of tales connected with the rise to power of Ashanti in the second half of the seventeenth century. For Akwamu history only certain of these tales are relevant. Into this group fall some of the earlier ones, which are located in Akwamu. One tells how Obiri Yeboa, Kumasihene sometime after the middle of the seventeenth century, had no brothers and only one sister, who was childless. Obiri Yeboa was thus without an heir. The sister was therefore sent to Tutu, a renowned shrine in the Akwapim Hills, and then in Akwamu territory. At Tutu she made offerings for a son, and subsequently brought forth Osei, or Osei Tutu as he was named for the greater glory of the shrine. Another ^{saga} ~~tale~~ takes the tale up from the time when Obiri Yeboa sent his nephew and heir, the youthful Osei, to the court of Denkyera, a state to which ^{part} ~~much~~ of the later Ashanti was then subject. At the Denkyera court Osei relieved the burden of his training with an intrigue with a sister of the Denkyerahene, as a result of which he had to flee. He went to the Akwamu court, to resume his studies if not his intrigues. There Osei first met Okomfo Anokye, who was, according to some versions of the sagas, a native of Awukugua, and thus a subject of Akwamu. The two men were attracted to each other, Osei the future king and man of action, Anokye the priest and wise counsellor. It was while Osei was in Akwamu that his uncle, Obiri Yeboa, died, and Osei was called to the vacant stool of Kumasi. Okomfo Anokye agreed to return to Kumasi with Osei, as his chief adviser, and the Akwamuhene provided them with a body of Akwamu troops, thirty according to some versions of the sagas, three hundred or seven hundred according to others¹.

Subsequently, in a series of wars that belong to Ashanti and not to Akwamu history, Osei established the independence of the Ashanti peoples from Denkyera, and laid the foundations of the great Ashanti Union. Bosman dates the defeat of Denkyera by Ashanti to the beginning of 1701, and mentions that

"of the negroes of Akim only, who came to the assistance of the Dinkirans there were about 30,000 killed; besides that a great Caboceer of Akim, with all his men, were cut off"².

It was this same coalition between Denkyera and Akim that inflicted a defeat - though it was only a temporary reversal of Ashanti fortunes - upon Ashanti a year later, and so caused Abo to march his armies back from Whydah to Akwamu.

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1. For the sagas see, e.g. Rattray: "Ashanti Law and Constitution" (Oxford, 1929), Ch. XXIV; Ward: "History of the Gold Coast" (London, 1948), p. 178.
 2. Bosman, 1705, pp. 75-6. This letter may be dated to late 1701 by its reference to Neyendaal's mission to the interior.

The sagas throw some light on the nature of this connection between Akwamu and Ashanti. It would seem reasonable to infer from them that Osei in fact spent some time at the court of Akwamu, and there learned something of the Akwamu military organisation and system of civil administration. Since parts of Ashanti were subject to Denkyera, and since Denkyera was in alliance with Akim and thus opposed to Akwamu, Osei doubtless saw in Akwamu a potential ally in Ashanti's struggle against the Denkyera overlordship. Akwamu, in turn, saw in Osei a potential ally against Akim. It is thus likely, as the sagas relate, that when Osei was called to the vacant Kumasi stool, the Akwamuhene would provide him with Akwamu troops. There may indeed be an interesting survival of this in the military organisation of Ashanti to this day, for in most Ashanti states the second-in-command of the army is still known as the Akwamuhene, 'the Akwamu chief'¹. It is possible that when Osei was drawing together various states into the Ashanti Union, and establishing a co-ordinated military system, he attached to each state an Akwamu stool drawn from those Akwamu forces that had accompanied him to Kumasi. However this may be, the alliance between Akwamu and Ashanti continued almost unbroken to 1886, so that in 1742 for example, Osei's successor, Opoku, could make war against Akim on the grounds that it had ravaged Akwamu, could promise to help the Danes because they had helped Akwamu, and could threaten the Dutch because they had assisted Akim².

At the close of Ado's campaign of 1702, Akwamu had thus extended its power for two hundred and fifty miles along the Gold and Slave Coasts from Agona in the west to Whydah in the east, and inland over the peoples of the Akwapim scarplands, and furthermore had won a powerful ally in Ashanti. Ado died a few months after the end of the campaign and was succeeded by his brother, the warlike Akwonno, who was to reign for twenty-three years, and who must be ranked, with Ansa Sasraku, among the most able and great of all the rulers of Akwamu.

Akwonno's first act was to negotiate a treaty with the Dutch that was highly favourable to Akwamu, for by it the Dutch bound themselves to assist Akwamu in any just war with one hundred fully armed men, three thousand pounds

1. Rattray, 1929, pp. 88-9 and 57, 59, 77, 94, 113, 115, 380.

2. PRO. T/70/1515: letter from Graves at Accra to Cape Coast dd. 3 April, 1742.

of gunpowder, three hundred pounds of bullets, and other like materials. This treaty, concluded on 3 April, 1703, between the High and Mighty Lords States-General of the United Netherlands and the West Indies Company of the one part, and Akwonno, King of Akwamu, and his councillors and head chiefs of the other, also acknowledged the dominion of the king of Akwamu over Accra, and bound the Dutch not only to pay the usual monthly rental for Crèvecoeur, but also an additional one ounce of gold for every twenty pounds of gold traded at the fort. In return Akwonno agreed to keep open the trade routes from the interior, to forbid his chiefs to make 'palavers' that might affect trade unless he himself had given permission, to prevent his subjects trading with European interlopers and to punish those who did, and finally not to engage in wanton wars that might destroy trade¹.

Having in this way obtained the support of the Dutch, who were at this time the most powerful of all the European nations on the Gold Coast, Akwonno was in a position to resume once more that policy of territorial expansion that was the legacy of Ansa Sasraku and Abo. Further expansion in the east, however, had become tactically unwise, for the lines of communication between the Akwamu capital and the easternmost limits of the Akwamu power in Whydah had already been stretched to the full. Only had Akwamu been prepared to move its capital from the western confines of the empire to a more central position, - something it was to do later, but too late - could the limits of expansion reached in the east in 1702 have been exceeded. As it was, Akwonno turned his attention from the east to the north and north-east.

In February of 1707 Akwonno fitted out a large army, and marched to the Volta as the start of what was to prove one of the longest campaigns in Akwamu history. The army spent some time in Ladoku, suppressing the unrest there, and in April a town near the Volta, probably Togbloku, was sacked. It was not until July that the army finally crossed the Volta, but this time, unlike Abo's campaign of 1702, marched not along the coast, but struck inland to the north, into the inland Ewe or Krepi districts. These districts were rapidly overrun, and the army made its camp there during the rainy season. In September, seven months after its departure from Akwamu, the army still lay in Krepi. To this

1. WIC 98: letter from Director-General William de la Palma dd. 10 October, 1703, enclosure Y, annexure 5 (copy of the treaty of 3 April, 1703).

campaign must be attributed the subjection of the Ho and Kpandu areas¹, though there are no clear details of the full extent of the Akwamu conquests, except in such cases as that of Peki, which is known not to have recovered its independence from Akwamu until 1833².

Having accomplished the reduction of the inland Ewe peoples to dependency upon Akwamu, and the rains having finished, Akwonno next moved his army westwards in Kwahu, crossing the Volta somewhere above the Volta Gorge. In a series of battles the Kwahu resistance was overcome, and its armies pursued to the borders of Ashanti. There, unexpectedly, the seemingly defeated forces reformed, turned, and inflicted a serious defeat upon the battle-worn Akwamu troops. Akwonno decided to withdraw. In mid-February, 1708, the Akwamu forces arrived back in their capital, a year after the start of the campaign. The supremacy of Akwamu over the Krepi peoples of the north-east had been established, but Kwahu remained unsubdued³.

Within three months Akwonno had fitted out a new army, and had moved it into Kwahu. Once again, however, the Kwahus succeeded in repulsing the invaders, and the Akwamu army arrived back in the capital on 9 July, 1708⁴. For a time Akwonno had to be content with despatching small expeditions to harass the Kwahu borderland, and none of the battles fought were, or could have been, decisive⁵. Indeed, early in 1710 the Kwahus retaliated and destroyed a large town, Kwabeng, in the north of Akwamu⁶. Akwonno reacted immediately. He made large purchases of gunpowder from the Accra forts, mobilised his war forces, and in February, 1710, moved the army northwards. This time the outcome was not in doubt. A series of defeats was inflicted upon the Kwahu forces, and the Akwamu army returned home in triumph on 1 July, 1710⁷. Akwamu had added Kwahu to its other vassal states⁸.

1. For this campaign see WIC misc. archives, Aanw. 1902, XXVI, 115: 'Diary of P. Nuyts, 1706-07', entries for 21 March and 28 April, 1707. Also VGK: letters from Ligaard to the Directors dd. 18 Sept. 1707 and 23 Feb. 1708.
2. C.W.Welman: "The Native States of the Gold Coast: Peki", (London, 1924), p.8.
3. VGK: letter from Ligaard dd. 23 February, 1708.
4. Ibid, letter from Ligaard dd. 14 July, 1708.
5. Ibid, letter from Ligaard dd. 8 October, 1708.
6. Rask, 1754, p. 156.
7. Ibid, pp. 155-6 and 162. Also VGK: letters from Ligaard dd. 14 April, 12 May, and 2 August, 1710.
8. Rask, 1754, p. 93.

The conquest of Kwahu marked the end of Akwamu expansion; the empire was at its fullest extent. Under Ansa Sasraku and his predecessor, Akwamu asserted its control in the mid-seventeenth century over the various peoples of the Akwapim Hills as far as the Volta Gorge, and over the Agave people of the lower reaches of that river. In a series of battles between 1677 and 1681 Ansa Sasraku added the whole of the Accra kingdom to his dominions, and reduced Ladoku to dependence. In the campaign of 1688-89 Agona shared the fate of Ladoku. During the joint reigns of Basua and Ado, from 1689 to 1699, Danish Christiansborg was seized, and for a year was under the governorship of Asameni. In the same ten years the power of Akwamu made itself felt beyond the Volta, in Keta, Anlo, and Little Popo, where Basua and Ado tested their relative strengths. After the death of Basua, Ado enjoyed a short reign during which he consolidated the Akwamu interest east of the Volta, and thrust the frontiers of the empire to the very border of Dahomey by incorporating Whydah within the imperial domains in 1702. Assistance had also been given to Ashanti in its struggles against Denkyera, and a powerful ally thus secured in the interior. Finally Ado's successor, Akwonno, extended the power of Akwamu inland on both sides of the Volta, bringing the Krepi peoples into the empire by the campaign of 1708-09, and the Kwahus by that of 1710. By 1710 Akwamu thus found itself master of an empire extending well over one hundred miles on each side of the Volta, and an indeterminate way inland over the Afram plains and the hill country beyond the Volta to the east. (see Plates II - V).

Only in the west had expansion been limited, where the powerful and hostile Akim shared a common frontier with Akwamu. Thus it was that along this frontier Akwamu concentrated its defences, and built a series of fortified settlements some of which may still be seen. Nevertheless it was across this very frontier that the Akim armies finally swept to victory in 1730, when, acting in concert with rebellious subjects of Akwamu, they were to overrun the whole western half of the empire, including the original Akwamu country, which was thus lost for ever to the Stool of Akwamu.

II. IMPERIAL AKWAMU:
ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT.

i. The Seats of Government.

Tradition names Asamankese and Nyanaoase as the sites of successive Akwamu capitals prior to the loss of the western empire in 1730. After this defeat the capital was re-established at Akwamufie, its present location in the Volta Gorge.

Asamankese, i.e. Asare-man-kese, 'Asare's capital town', is situated in the western part of what is now Akim Abuakwa, at the southern end of the Atewa Hills, the wooded chain of peaks that formed the spine of the original Akwamu homeland. Meyerowitz was given the name Otumfo Asare as that of an early Omanhene of Akwamu, but it is possible that the name has simply been derived by deduction from Asamankese¹. The Akwamu regnal list, at least in the version obtained by Meyerowitz, bears very little resemblance to the list that may be composed from documentary sources. It seems likely that the cults of the deceased kings of the pre-1730 period were translated into the post-1730 state only in a fragmentary form, few of the stool custodians having survived the débâcle.

Asamankese must still have been the Akwamu capital within the 'historical' period, i.e. for Akwamu, from the mid-seventeenth century, when relevant documentary material becomes available. Unfortunately, however, no descriptions of the capital appear to survive, even though it could not have been unknown to Europeans on the coast, - the Fiscal Caerloff, for example, visited the king as early as 1646². It seems clear nevertheless that the capital would not have been transferred from Asamankese to Nyanaoase prior to the overthrow of the Accra kingdom between 1677 and 1681, for the latter site was on the very borders of Accra, between which state and Akwamu there existed continuous tension and

1. Meyerowitz: "Akan Traditions of Origin", (London, 1952), p.137.

2. *Supra*, p. 8.

occasional warfare¹.

Nyanaoase means '(the town) under Nyanao'. Nyanao is the name of the shapely 1,618 feet peak that dominates the Nsawam region, twenty-two miles north-west of Accra. Before the Akwamu conquest of Accra this area appears to have enjoyed a somewhat unusual status. A Dutch map of 1629 shows what looks like a small independent state bearing the curious legend, abc de marckt van acara, 'abc the market for Accra'². Dapper describes what is obviously the same market town, two hours journey beyond Great Accra, but calls it Abonze, - hence doubtless the abc of the Dutch cartographer³. He describes how Akwamu ('Ackwenboe') and Kamana ('Akinmera') merchants arrive at Abonze from the interior, but are unable to proceed further since the King of Accra forbids all but his own subjects to pass through to the beaches. There were, says Dapper, three markets a week, and great trade was done; the King of Accra appointed an overseer to represent his interests there, with power to tax the merchants and to close the ways if necessary.

Abonsi (Abonze, abc, etc.), though under the jurisdiction of the Accra king, thus seems to have functioned as a free market, to which traders from all the states of the interior might come, but beyond which they could not proceed. This situation was changed by the Akwamu conquest of Accra, 1677-81, for it was to the area of the free market, if not to the town itself, that Ansa Sasraku decided to move his capital a few years after the termination of hostilities. Akwamu would derive two main advantages from moving the capital from Asamankese. First, the seat of government would be at twenty miles further remove from the turbulent western frontier, and thus more effectively insulated from the danger of sudden enemy inroads from Akin. Second, the location of the capital in an area of great commercial importance has its obvious advantages, both

1. See e.g. WIC o.c. li: 'Elmina Journal, etc.', entry for 16 Nov. 1646.

2. Chart 743 dd. 25 Dec. 1629, in the State Archives, The Hague.

3. O. Dapper: "Umständliche und Eigentliche Beschreibung von Africa, etc." (Amsterdam, 1670), p. 448.

permitting a high degree of control over trade, and guaranteeing the prosperity of the capital itself, for by far the greater part of the trade from the three European forts in Accra would pass northwards to the capital before fanning out along the various routes into the interior. The natural tendency for trade to seek the Nsawam gap would be artificially strengthened by legislation enjoining the use of this route. By moving the capital to this new location, Akwamu was able to take advantage of patterns of trade already established by the Accra kings, and the well-being of the capital was secured. Its prosperity was obvious a few years after the move, when a French party visited it in 1688 to negotiate with Ansa Sasraku, "one of the most grand lords in Guinea", for a French trading lodge on the coast¹. The Frenchmen reported that there is 'nothing more beautiful' than the capital, which was described as laid out in shaded streets thirty feet broad. It was stated to be three leagues long, i.e. seven and a half miles,-as will be seen not the exaggeration one might suppose. The town was 'fairly well policed', and the king had there in his retinue six hundred officials and numerous soldiers. The king expressed the wish that one of his sons might be taken to France for education.

The French made inquiries about the amount of gold passing through the capital to the forts. They estimated that each year the king sent to the beaches about 1,500 marks of gold, a quarter going to each of the forts and the remaining quarter to the interlopers and other nations. It is possible to form some idea of the magnitude of this sum from Bosman's estimates, which relate to a period only ten years later. Bosman calculated that in a good year, from the whole Gold Coast, the Dutch West Indies Company took no more than 1,500 marks of gold, and that the total export to all nations, including interlopers, did not exceed 7,000 marks². Unless there was any marked change in the gold trade in the intervening ten years, which seems unlikely, then it would appear that something approaching a quarter of the total export of gold from the Gold Coast was passing through the Akwamu capital.

1. "Memoire ou relation du Sr. Du Casse sur son voyage de Guynee avec 'La Tempeste' en 1687 et 1688", in Roussier, "L'Etablissement d'Issiny 1687-1701", (Paris, 1935), pp. 13 and 34.

2. Bosman, 1705, p. 89.

The prosperity of the capital undoubtedly found reflection in its size. Tilleman, a Dane from Cristiansborg who visited the capital only a few years after the Frenchmen, claimed to have measured its length himself, and found it to be two Danish miles.¹ This agrees exactly with the earlier report. Tilleman explains that the capital consisted virtually of one main, straight street, with houses on either side, so that although the town was over seven miles long, it was no more than 160 feet broad². The king, Basua ('Bansiar'), lived near the centre of the town, and the Prince Ado a good half (Danish) mile north-north-west. Each had his own free negroes and slaves with him. Between the palaces of Basua and Ado were the council houses, Rade-huuse, which is presumably to be taken to mean public buildings of various kinds, courts, stool rooms, treasury, shrines of state deities, and so forth. The centre section of the town thus seems to have formed the government quarter, beyond which would presumably lie the quarters of various divisional chiefs and clan elders, the town houses of the merchants, stranger quarters, and slave settlements.

Tilleman mentions that the town, though never really situated in Accra, had to pay contributions to that kingdom until 1677; this comment lends some support to the supposition that Ansa Sasraku did in fact choose to locate his new capital at Abonsi, 'the market for Accra'. No attempt has been made to locate the site of the capital, or market, from the ground; the town was overrun by the Akim armies in 1730 and sacked, and now awaits the attention of the archaeologist. Its location may, however, be surmised from Tilleman's description; the town was dominated by Nyanao, but from the south rather than the north, for south of Nyanao was Accra territory proper. Tilleman gives the orientation of the main street as north-north-west, and a glance at the map suggests immediately that the present Adwajiri-Krabo road marks the line of the ancient capital. This

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1. Tilleman, 1697, p.102. Tilleman says the capital is three good Danish miles from the coast. This is an error; he presumably means from Great Accra. He adds that the ruins of Great Accra may be seen half way to the Akwamu capital, and Ayaso, the site of Great Accra, is indeed about half way between Christiansborg and the Nyanao area.
 2. For a description of the structure of ancient Akan capitals, see Meyerowitz, "The Sacred State of the Akan", (London, 1951), Ch. XI.

possibility is further enhanced by the existence, along this road, of several small villages still bearing the name Akwamu¹.

The "great, cosmopolitan, and ancient city"² established by Ansa Sasraku as his capital, and maintained as such by Basua, was to enjoy its elevated status for a very short time. When a party of Dutchmen visited the king of Akwamu in 1703 it was no longer in Nyannoase that he was to be found; the capital had been moved yet again, though of this tradition is silent. The party was headed by the Dutch factor from Crèvecoeur, the secretary, and the renowned Pieter Pasop, chief broker for the Dutch and brother-in-law of the king of Akwamu. It was charged by the Director-General with the negotiations preliminary to the Akwamu-Dutch treaty of 1703. Leaving Crèvecoeur at 4.30 a.m., by hammock, the small group travelled to the north-east through wild uncultivated country, - the legacy of the wars of 1677-81. At mid-day it reached Fetoubercou, "inhabited by poor people". Marked on later maps as Fetubereku, this place is to be associated with the present Bereku, a 1,200 feet peak in the Akwapim hills sixteen miles north of Accra, beneath which lie the town of Berekuso and the hamlet Feta. The Dutchmen noted that the road they had taken from Accra was planted, at a distance of twelve feet on either side, with shade trees. It must therefore have been the road via Legon that the Danes were later to utilize to link Christiansborg with their plantations at Bibiase, when it was still well shaded³. Now only the occasional tree survives along what is no more than a bush track.

After resting in Fetoubercou for an hour and a half, the party journeyed for a further half hour to reach Ouma where the chief, Asameni (possibly ex-governor of Christiansborg), greeted their arrival with three musket shots. The name Ouma is now unknown, but the village can be confidently identified with the present Asamenikrom, 'Asameni's town', a

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1. See Ordnance Survey, Africa, Sheet North P-30/R.II. The writer has since visited the area, and has noted extensive occupation sites. The local people still point out the site of "the king's bathroom", a matter of some interest in view of the ritual significance (purification) of bathing for the Akan.
 2. Letter from the Omanhene and Osomanyawa of Akwamu dd. 4 November, 1957.
 3. See H. Debrunner: "Notable Danish Chaplains on the Gold Coast", in Trans. Gold Coast and Togoland Historical Society, Vol.II, i, 1956, p. 15, and C.D.Adams: "Activities of Danish Botanists in Guinea 1783-1850", in Trans. Historical Society of Ghana, Vol.III, i, 1957, pp. 43-4.

depopulated settlement somewhat over a mile north of Berekuso by a very rough and precipitous track. From Asameni's village the party proceeded straight to "the large square in the crom of the king", where it awaited the king's pleasure. Investigation in the field leaves no doubt that the capital was centred on what is now Nsachi, about one mile from Asamenikrom by a pleasant wooded track. Nsachi still wears an air of its former importance, and moreover remains to this day the capital of the Aburi division of Akwapim. It is interesting in this context to note that the Aburi stool is regarded as an Akwamu royal clan stool in origin, and that the Aburi state is considered to be one of the Akwamu divisions of Akwapim. There is thus a continuity, in that the old state capital of Akwamu immediately prior to the defeat of 1730 was, after that defeat, retained as the capital of a remnant group of Akwamus who had chosen to transfer their allegiance from Akwamu to the new state of Akwapim.

In Nsachi the Dutchmen drank copiously of the excellent palm wine of the country, witnessed the execution of slaves on the occasion of the death of a queen-mother, and succeeded in persuading the king to travel to Crèvecoeur in person in order to conclude the treaty with the Dutch¹.

By 1703 the seat of government in Akwamu had thus been moved from Nyanaoase to Nsachi. The event can be dated from one reference in a Danish source to 1701, for in this year the king of Akwamu, then Ado, is found sending a messenger to inform the Danish commandant in Christiansborg that his, Ado's, new palace had now been completed; a gift was solicited to mark the occasion². It is likely that Ado, who was particularly friendly with both Danes and Dutch, - he had even entrusted himself to the surgeon in Crèvecoeur for a cancer operation, - had hired masons from the forts to build his palace. The present palace in Nsachi, a greatly decayed storey

1. See WIC 98: letter from Director-General William de la Palma dd. 10 Oct., 1703, enclosure Y, annexure 2 ("Report of what happened to us, the undersigned (Jacobus van den Brouke and Nicholas du Bois), on the journey to Aquamboe".)

2. VGK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entry for 12 March, 1701.

building of considerable antiquity, shows features comparable with those of early eighteenth century buildings in Accra. It may well be, in part, the building of 1701.

The motives governing the move of the capital from Nyanaoase to Nsachi were probably much the same as those governing the earlier move from Asamankese to Nyanaoase. Ado must certainly have considered Nyanaoase still insufficiently shielded from the dangers of Akim attacks, for at the very beginning of his reign, in 1699, Akim had successfully penetrated the Akwamu frontier defences and sacked two towns. Ado promptly sent most of the gold from his treasury into Ladoku for safe-keeping, fearing a sudden offensive against Nyanaoase itself. Three months later another town fell, and a Dane who went to visit Ado found that he had already left the capital¹. Nevertheless, the main reason which decided Ado to move the capital ~~must~~^{must} have been economic rather than strategic.

The advantage of Nyanaoase as a capital derived from the canalization of trade through the area that was the seat of government. It has been seen that something approaching a quarter of the total gold exports from the Gold Coast may, at the end of the seventeenth century, have been passing through Nyanaoase. In consequence, the king of Akwamu gained a high degree of control over the European trading companies on the coast at Accra. In the event of any dispute between the king and one of the companies, the king could order that the routes through Akwamu be closed, so that no traders could reach the forts. Thus, for example, in 1705, when Ligaard had just taken over command of Christiansborg, the king was dissatisfied with the present of two anchors of liquor, tobacco, and pipes, which Ligaard had sent him. The king quietly hinted that the trade routes might be closed if some more fitting present was not sent; Ligaard immediately despatched goods to the value of over three ounces of gold, i.e. in the sterling equivalent of the time, over £10². In the face of such

1. V GK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entries for 10 October, 1699 and 28 and 31 January, 1700.

2. V GK: letter from Ligaard to the Directors dd. 1 September, 1705.

threats the depleted garrisons in the forts were helpless; their effective range of operation was restricted to the vicinity of the forts, and even the settlements under the forts were recognized as under the ultimate jurisdiction of the king of Akwamu, as were, indeed, the forts themselves¹.

It was undoubtedly to preserve this advantageous situation that Basua, in 1697 and 1698, so strongly opposed the Dutch plan to build a fort at Kpone, even though Ado, then under-king, had given the Dutch every encouragement², for the routes from Kpone to the interior would not pass through the Nyanaoase capital. The gravity of the differences between Basua and Ado at this time may be adjudged from the pleased comment of a Dutch factor that "when the routes to Accra are closed by the Upper King, those to Ponni remain open on the authority of the Under-King"³. It is in this context that it becomes significant that, upon the death of Basua and Ado's assuming full leadership, Ado chose to move the capital from Nyanaoase to Nsachi. The friction between Basua and Ado may have resulted in part from a difference of opinion about the relative importance of the trade in gold and in slaves. Nyanaoase was ideally situated to dominate the gold trade, which came down to Accra from Akwamu, Akim, and Ashanti, all to the north-west, but not to dominate the slave trade. Some of the principal slave routes followed the Volta from the interior as far as the gorge, and then passed to Accra along the Akwapim scarp. Assuming that Ado was aware of the growing importance of the slave trade, and the declining importance of the gold, then this might adequately explain not only his earlier concern to develop Kpone as a commercial centre, but also his later decision to move his capital from Nyanaoase to its new location at Nsachi, in the Akwapim hills. This would be to suggest a high, though not improbably high, degree of responsiveness

1. See, e.g. WIC 98: letter from Director-General William de la Palma dd. 10 Oct. 1703, enclosure Y, annexure 5 - copy of Akwamu-Dutch Treaty of 1703, item 2, "That the Accra people shall be under the dominion of the Aquamboe King.....".

2. *Supra*, p. 29.

3. WIC 97: letter from J. van Sevenhuysen dd. 8 May, 1699.

to changing commercial conditions on the part of Ado, for within a few years the pattern of trade had changed so radically that at the Accra forts the Akwamu merchants were demanding payment in gold for the slaves they were bringing to the beaches, and the trading companies were obliged to import gold from Brazil, through the agency of Portuguese vessels, in order to maintain their supplies of slaves¹.

ii. The Army.

For Akwamu war was not the extreme limit of political action, - as we are apt to regard it today, but rather its principal mode. The army was the chief instrument of foreign policy. It was by direct military action, rather than by any process of negotiation and treating, that Akwamu established its ascendancy over many kingdoms of the Gold and Slave Coasts and their hinterlands. Indeed, diplomacy and not war sometimes appears to have been regarded as the extreme limit of political action. Thus for example, in 1688, it was only when Ansa Sasraku's campaign against Agona was threatened with failure, and when the king himself was very ill, that he recalled his armies from the field and made diplomatic overtures to the queen of Agona for her acceptance of protectorate status under Akwamu². The queen returned to Ansa Sasraku the heads of his envoys, borne by the sole survivor; Akwamu diplomacy lacked finesse and the justification of success. Only in the case of the understanding reached between Akwamu and the nascent Ashanti Union does Akwamu appear to have been satisfied with a negotiated agreement, - and it is not without significance that the alliance between Akwamu and Ashanti was one that was to survive long after most of the conquered peoples of the Akwamu empire had recovered their independence.

Although the army was the main instrument of Akwamu foreign policy, nevertheless a certain delicacy was attained in its use. One recalls Bosman's comment on the warring states of Keta and Popo, that:

"Aquamboe, who would keep them both on foot, takes care that neither be destroyed, by sending assistance of Forces to the weakest side"³.

1. See, e.g. VGK: letter from Boye at Christiansborg to Directors, dd. 13 November, 1714; Rask, 1754, p. 81.

2. *Supra*, p. 23.

3. Bosman, 1705, p. 329.

The same writer notes how the peoples of Whydah and Ardra

"never Fight against each other with their own Forces, but hire the Gold-Coast Negroes for that purpose, of which the Natives of Aquamboe are generally first at Hand"¹,

which can scarcely have been fortuitous when one remembers that within a few years Whydah was to find itself subject to Akwamu, and Little Ardra threatened.²

Contemporary accounts unfortunately contain only brief references to the army of Akwamu. Bosman, who gives a fairly detailed account of the war organisation found in the Fanti areas, was never resident in Crèvecoeur, and so has little to say of that of Akwamu. He was, however, well aware of the military propensities of the Akwamus, characterising them as "very Haughty, Arrogant and War-like"³, and remarking that "the chief Employments of the Inhabitants are Merchandise, Agriculture and War; to which last they are particularly addicted"⁴. Tilleman, a few years earlier, had noted the same point succinctly: for Akwamu, he wrote, war was heel saedvanligt, 'wholly usual'⁵.

The Akwamu forces which achieved such spectacular successes in the campaigns of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were not, in the main, regular troops:

"If I have before talk'd of Negroes who followed the Wars, you must not from thence infer that they make that their whole Employment: No, it is but one part, I assure you; and all the Negroes in general are Soldiers as long as the War continues, if at least they are but able to buy Arms, or their Masters bestow any on them; and the War ended each Man applies himself to the Exercise of his particular Calling"⁶.

Nevertheless, there were some whose sole calling was war:

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 395.

2. -Supra, p. 32.

3. Bosman, 1705, p. 65.

4. Ibid, p. 70.

5. Tilleman, 1697, p. 113.

6. Bosman, 1705, p. 70.

"If there happens to be any of such a turbulent Nature that they cannot live out of the Camp, they go to serve in the Neighbouring Wars; and these are in a stricter sence called Soldiers"¹.

Bosman probably had in mind the small standing armies that seem to have been concerned principally with maintaining the king's authority in the conquered territories, to which he refers elsewhere:

"The Nations under their Power, are miserably tormented with the daily plundering, or robbing Visits, the Aquamboean Soldiers make them, they not daring to oppose 'em in the least, for fear the King, who never fails severely to revenge his Soldiers Quarrels, should hear of it"².

Similar small regular war forces were probably also employed to advance the Akwamu interest beyond the frontiers of the empire. Mention has already been made of the peoples of Whydah and Ardra who never employ their own forces against each other, "but hire the Gold-Coast Negroes for that purpose, of which the natives of Akwamu are generally first at hand"³. It seems unlikely that these Akwamu 'mercenaries' were strictly free lance, for those that were fighting in Whydah when Bosman wrote at the end of the seventeenth century were shortly to be followed, in 1702, by a major Akwamu war force that completely over-ran Whydah and reduced its status to that of a tribute-paying vassal of Akwamu. That the Akwamu soldiers were "generally first at hand" would seem to have been a matter of Akwamu policy, not of chance.

In addition to the regular troops employed in maintaining the king's authority in the imperial domains, and in initiating the Akwamu interest in territories marked out for conquest, a nucleus of regular soldiers was also based upon the capital itself. The Frenchmen who visited Nyanaoase in 1688 reported that the king had numerous troops there⁴. The majority of these particular soldiers were probably slaves specially selected for the purpose,

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 70.

2. Ibid, p. 65.

3. Supra, p. 49.

4. Supra, p. 42.

for Tilleman describes the king of Akwamu as having the privilege of:

"having the best and most skilled slaves in the whole land for war"¹.

These formed the personal bodyguard of the king, and accompanied him everywhere. Thus, for example, when Ado visited the Danes in Christiansborg in 1701, he had with him "twenty eight of his wives and some of his principal caboceers, together with a large following of horn blowers, drummers, and armed slaves"². The low level of material culture³ of the garrisons occupying the fortifications along the Akim frontier suggests that these too may have been largely recruited from among the slave population of Akwamu.

Nevertheless, despite the existence of regular troops used for specific purposes, there is no doubt that the large Akwamu armies, which were the main instrument of expansion, were not standing armies, but were mobilised as and when required, every stool supplying its quota of men according to the over-all requirements of the projected campaign. Estimates of the size of the Akwamu war forces consequently vary. In terms of manpower Bosman considered Akwamu to have the greatest war potential of any coastal state:

"A National Offensive War may very well be managed here with four Thousand Men in the Field; but a Defensive requires more. Sometimes the number of what they call an Army does not amount to more than two thousand. From whence you may infer of what force the Monarchies and Republicks on the Coast are, Fantyn and Aquamboe only excepted; the first of which is able to bring an Army of twenty five Thousand Men, and the latter a much larger"⁴.

Earlier Barbot refers to an actual Akwamu army of twelve thousand men which, in 1682, was drawn up against an Akim army of like size some thirty miles

1. Tilleman, 1697, p. 108.
2. VGK: Dag-Journal 1699-1703, entry for 14 May, 1701.
3. See O. Davies: "Excavations at Kokobin and the Entrenchments in the Oda Area", forthcoming Occasional Paper of the Department of Archaeology of the University College of Ghana. At Kokobin, an elliptical hill-fort measuring about 340 by 260 yards, dwellings were probably of light timber, lath and plaster, or grass. Pottery was competent but not highly ornamented. No objects of European origin were found. There were however, plentiful signs of iron smelting, and presumably armourers worked there.
4. Bosman, 1705, p. 181.

north of Accra¹. Rask, writing of the time of the campaigns against Kwahu, thought that Akwamu could "muster 10,000 men and more"². When Akwonno sent an expedition against Accra in 1723, the Dutch assistant factor and surgeon in Crèvecoeur estimated that an army of between ten and twelve thousand men had been used³. Two or three years later the Chevalier Des Marchais was informed that the king of Accra, - which at this time can only mean of Akwamu - could raise fifteen or sixteen thousand men⁴. There seems nothing inordinately wrong with these estimates, and even allowing for exaggeration by taking the lower figures, it seems clear that the king of Akwamu could, and did, put armies into the field of over ten thousand men. When necessary, every other activity was subordinated to that of war. During the campaign against Agona of 1688-89, for example, Akwamu farmers were retained in the army even though they claimed it was time to plant yam and corn, and a special edict was made forbidding anyone to leave the army in order to trade⁵. The main Akwamu armies were joined by levies from the subject territories to swell the numbers further, though these additions often proved unreliable. Thus, in Ado's campaign of 1702, contingents from Accra joined the Akwamu forces, but upon the crossing of the Volta proving unexpectedly hazardous, many deserted and returned to Accra, - for which Ado was subsequently to make heavy claims against Accra for damages⁶. These unwilling levies were probably recruited largely from the fishing communities along the coast, which Bosman considered unlikely to nurture good fighting men:

"Amongst the Fishermen there are very few Soldiers; for they living upon the Shoar and under our Protection, are not frequently attack'd by Enemies; and therefore are

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1. Barbot, 1732, p. 294.
 2. Rask, 1754, p. 150.
 3. KvG 90: report on the seige of Crèvecoeur by van de Meer and de Lange dd. 29 June, 1723.
 4. Labat: "Voyage du Chevalier des Marchais en Guinee, Isles voisines, et à Cayenne, fait en 1725, 1726 et 1727", (Amsterdam, 1731), Vol. I, p. 272.
 5. VGK: Nicholai Fensman's *Bpger*, entries for 18 August and 16 Nov. 1688.
 6. Supra, pp.31-32 and *K*VG: *Dag-Journal* 1699 - 1703, entries for 16 and 17 August, 1702.

seldom furnished with Arms"¹.

Such levies should not be confused with the regular Akwamu forces stationed in the conquered territories, such as the one at Accra under the command of Pieter Pasop, brother-in-law of the king of Akwamu and broker for the Dutch, about whom a Dutch factor commented that he "esteemed Pieter Pasop with his men as good as any white men in the event of fighting"².

The high availability of men for war purposes was one vital factor in the Akwamu military successes. Another was armament. The loss of the Accra capital in 1677 was, as has been seen, partly due to the failure of the Accra king to take account of the rapid increase in Akwamu armament and manpower. Römer had heard it said how the king of Accra had

"despised his enemies, because he had many thousands of archers, spear throwers, and swordsmen. Each of his eighty generals had a musket with ten charges of powder and lead. He knew that Akwamu and all its allies did not have one tenth as many men as he, and no muskets at all"³.

The situation could scarcely have been more thoroughly misjudged; the king's appraisal must have been largely conditioned by the contempt which the coastal peoples appear to have had for those of the interior at the time⁴. When the attack upon Accra was made in 1677 not only did the invading forces have muskets, but also cannon⁵; Great Accra fell an easy prey to the Akwamu forces. The noise of the guns was probably more effective than the fall of the balls; at any rate, twenty eight years later Sir Dalby Thomas, governor of the English settlements on the Gold Coast, was not very impressed by the

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 71.

2. WIC 97: Report by Factor Jean de Pré dd. 16 April, 1701.

3. Römer, 1760, p. 119.

4. For example, Tilleman, 1697, p. 105, says that the coastal peoples regarded the Akwamus as "coarse peasants"; he adds, however, that they dare not express this opinion openly.

5. The writer himself has found cannon balls in the top soil on the site of Great Accra. These can scarcely be later than 1677, for Great Accra was sack and destroyed at that time, and was never rebuilt. It is unlikely that they are much earlier.

133 *the crew*
factional arm

skill of crew

local knowledge of gunnery:

"The King of Whidah and the King of Quamboo have a great many fine guns. The King of Saboo has two; 'tis true these people do not at present understand how to use them, but how soon they may none can tell; nor is it impracticable to think that they may take it to be their Interest to hire a White man to make them masters of gunnery, and there is seldom wanting a Renegado White man to instruct the worst of enemies, when well offered; and when that's done, farewell to Forts and Castles, the Trade on this Coast, and everything else but cruelty and inhumanity"¹.

Akwamu appears to have cautiously kept its field guns in the interior; there is no record of them ever having been employed against a fort, as Sir Dalby Thomas feared. Twenty five years later, however, the king of Akwamu is to be found asking the Danes in Christiansborg to lend him cannon with which to bombard Crèvecoeur, and the Danish commandant politely suggested that the king should bring down some of his own cannon out of Akwamu, in which case he, the commandant, would be pleased to help with the placing².

Although Akwamu possessed artillery, the main strength of the army undoubtedly lay in the infantry, - musketeers, bowmen, and spearmen. The musketeers, although the newest arm, commanded the greatest prestige. Great importance was placed upon maintaining a superiority in the possession of muskets. It was made a capital offence for an Akwamu merchant to sell arms or powder to Akim³. In 1700 Ado stopped merchants from passing to Danish Christiansborg because he had received a report that a Danish Company ship at Winneba had sold muskets to the enemies of Akwamu⁴. On the other hand, the European merchants in the Accra forts appear to have set no limit to the quantities of guns and powder that they would sell Akwamu. Indeed,

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1. PRO: Records of the Africa Companies, T/70/175: letter dd. 13 May, 1705.
 2. WIC 109: Pranger's despatch of 9 July, 1730, enclosure K - letter from de la Planque to Pranger, n.d. Three ancient cannon are still preserved in Asamankese, erstwhile capital of Akwamu.
 3. R/mer, 1769, p. 106.
 4. VGK: Dag-Journal 1699 - 1703, entry for 21 May, 1700.

the Dutch, by the treaty with Akwamu of 1703, bound themselves, in the event of the king of Akwamu being compelled to wage "a just war against wanton people who wish to disturb trade", to supply the king with one hundred fully armed young men, with three thousand pounds of gunpowder, and with three hundred pounds of bullets¹.

A comparatively small expedition sent against the Accras in 1717, to press for the payment of a debt, could consist of one thousand musketeers². Nevertheless, despite the prestige attached to the possession of muskets, the real strength of the Akwamu army probably lay with its bowmen. The skill of the Akwamu bowmen was renowned:

"Their other Weapons are first a Bow and Arrow, but these are not much in vogue amongst the Coast Negroes, those of Aquamboe alone excepted, who are so nicely dexterous in shooting, that in Hare-hunting they will lodge their small fine Arrows in what part of the Hare's Body is desired. These Arrows have Feathers at their Head, and are pointed with Iron"³.

The seeming invincibility of the Akwamu armies during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries may have been in no small measure the result of their retention of the bow after it had been abandoned by most of the surrounding peoples. Musketeers, using the muzzle-loading guns of the time, could not be relied upon to sustain a heavy volume of concentrated fire. In combination with bowmen, however, this disadvantage might have been overcome, the superior power of the muskets being complemented by the rapidity of fire attainable by the bows.

1. WIC 98: letter from Director-General William de la Palma dd. 10 October, 1703, enclosure Y, annexure 5, (Copy of the treaty with Akwamu of 3 April, 1703).
2. KvG 84: letter from Fordwyn at Accra dd. 2 June, 1717.
3. Bosman, 1705, p. 186.

Musketeers, bowmen, and spearmen fought on foot. A few Akwamu chiefs may have gone into battle mounted, and Akwamu was probably not totally unacquainted with the use of cavalry. There was, for example, commercial contact between Akwamu and certain of the great states north of the forest, such as Dagomba, whose cavalry forces were the main instrument of a vigorous expansion eastwards into free Konkomba territory in the seventeenth century. On several occasions the king of Akwamu sent horses, as gifts, to the forts in Accra, once commenting that the horse, with its saddle and bridle, had been sent to him from "the far interior"¹. A forest state like Akwamu, however, would not be likely to develop to any great extent a mounted arm of its army, due to the unsuitability of the forest for the movement of horsemen. Unlike Dagomba, the strength of the Akwamu army lay with its infantry.

The possession of a large army, and its successful employment as the instrument of rapid territorial expansion, presupposes a fairly highly developed system of military organisation. Unfortunately contemporary European sources give singularly little information about the nature of this system. Rattray has investigated in some detail the military organisations of the states of the modern Ashanti², all of which are clearly derivative from one basic model. It has already been suggested that the model was the Akwamu war organisation, which was deliberately introduced into Ashanti from Akwamu during the reign of Osei Tutu, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when Akwamu military advisers were appointed to each of the states of the Union³. The initial re-organisation of the armies of these states having been accomplished, the post of military adviser subsequently evolved into that of deputy army commander, and to this day in every Ashanti state this officer is still known as Akwamuhene, 'the

1. VGK: Dag-Journal 1699 - 1703, entries for 30 November, 1702 and 8 June, 1703.

2. Rattray, "Ashanti Law and Constitution", (Oxford, 1929), Chapters XI-XXIII.

3. Supra, p. 36.

Akwamu chief'. Rattray, of a typical Ashanti state, wrote:

"The next (i.e. after the Omanhene and Queen Mother) most important official - or rather officials, for they generally appear bracketed together - are the Ko'ntire and Akwamu Chiefs. The word Ko'ntire is probably derived from ko (fighting) and tiri (head), for he was commander of the army in the event of the Chief himself not going to war. The Akwamu Hene is his confrère and second in command, the offices of these two being almost inseparably linked. In the latter title we have an interesting reminder of Osei Tutu's association with Akwamu. Originally, probably, the two senior advisers and supporters of the Chief, after the reorganization of Ashanti on a military basis they became the most important of the war captains"¹.

Had Rattray been aware of the political power and sway of Akwamu at the time of the formation of the Ashanti Union, he might have considered the possibility that the Akwamu stool in each Ashanti state was quite literally an Akwamu stool, and not merely so called because - and this is surely a somewhat unlikely suggestion - Osei Tutu wished to make an overt and permanent expression of his debt to Akwamu.

There is a tradition, which Meyerowitz elaborates, that the system of military organisation which is now common to almost every Akan state was first developed in Akwamu:

"The system of state organized on the basis of seven clans first broke down in the Akwamu Kingdom when, during the incessant wars with the aboriginal population and their neighbours, a territorial military organization was established, under Saseraku Ansa I (about 1600) whereby the Akwamu State ceased to be a confederation of clans and became instead a confederation of the towns of the kingdom, irrespective of their clan affiliation. Seven of the most important chiefs of towns in the state were given military titles and were appointed to command five battle formations and two sub-divisions..... The Akwamu State, based on a confederation of towns instead of clans, and headed by generals instead of

1. Rattray, 1929, p. 88.

paramount-clan chiefs, was called oman, and the king took the title of Omanhene. Its rallying point in war was no longer the akyeneboa or totem of the abusua, but the ancestral stools of the Omanhene and his generals"¹.

The earliest written sources for Akwamu history lend no support - or otherwise - to this tradition; they are not early enough. There is perhaps just a hint in Rømer of the way in which, in the mid-eighteenth century, Akwamu was still regarded as having been an innovator in affairs of war. Writing of the custom of cleaning, polishing, and preserving the skulls of slain enemies, Rømer notes that:

"the Negroes are of the opinion that these evil customs are not more than one hundred years old amongst them, and that the Akwamus and their neighbours first started them.....So it is likely that the Akwamus made this their practice, and other nations have developed a taste for treating their enemies in like manner, so that they make themselves more terrible, and their enemies more despicable, disgraced, and injured"².

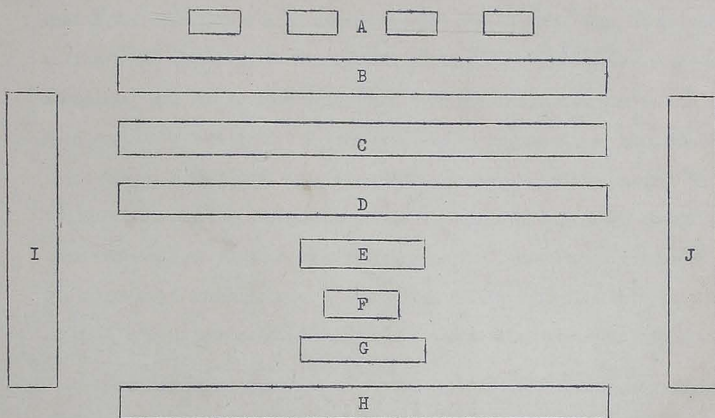
The Akan system of military organisation has been described by Rattray in considerable detail for the Ashanti states of Asumegya, Bekwai, Juaben, Kokofu, Kumawu, Mampon, and Nsuta³. The military structure of each is sufficiently similar to that of the others to preclude the possibility of their having independent origins, but sufficiently different to indicate a considerable period of separate development. The military structure of Akwamu is likewise of the same basic pattern, although, as one would expect, the military office of Akwamuhene is non-existent. There is certainly nothing inherently implausible in the supposition that the military organisation of each of the Ashanti states investigated by Rattray is derivative from an Akwamu prototype, as a comparison of that of, for

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1. Meyerowitz, "The Sacred State of the Akan", (London, 1951), p. 33.
 2. Rømer, 1760, p. 132.
 3. Rattray, 1929, Chapters XVII - XXIII.

example, Kumawu with that of Akwamu will show.

K U M A W U

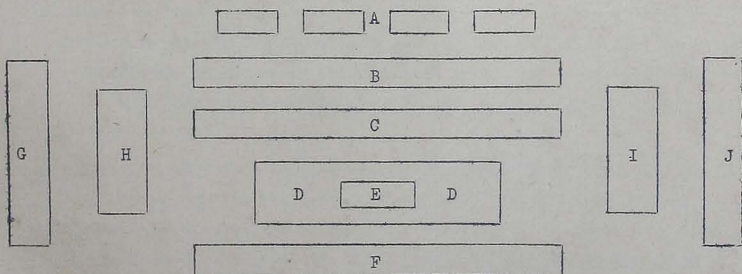
after Rattray -



A. Okwansrafo (scouts). B. Twafo (advance guard). C. The Akwamu, who are really part of the Adonten, marching in front of the Ko'ntire Hene. D. The Adonten (main body), with whom is the Ko'ntire Hene. E. The Gyasefo. F. The Omanhene (chief). G. The Ankobe - he only accompanied the army when the chief was himself in command, otherwise he remained behind with the chief. H. The Kyidom (rear guard). I. Benkum (left wing). J. Nifa (right wing).

A K W A M U

information from the Omanhene in Council -



A. Okwansrafo (scouts). B. Twafo (advance guard). C. The Adonten (main body). D. The Gyasefo with the Apesemakafo and Ankobe. E. The Omanhene. F. Kyidom (rear guard). G. Benkum (left wing) under the Benkumhene. H. Benkumnaase (left wing reinforcement) under the Osonanyawa. I. The Nifannaase (right wing reinforcement) under the Krontihene. J. The Nifa (right wing) under the Nifahene.

The similarity between these two war formations¹, and the general trend of the evidence, leaves little doubt that this particular type of formation was introduced into Ashanti from Akwamu in the formative years of the reign of Osei Tutu. Osei Tutu was an extremely aged man in 1706, when he voluntarily relinquished authority to Amankwatia, Ko'nti ~~thene~~ ^{of Kumasi} ~~and keeper of the royal~~ ~~mausoleum~~, who was to rule until Osei died and the succession to his stool had been decided². Osei Tutu's return from Akwamu to Kumasi, to take the vacant stool there, - the first step towards the formation of the Ashanti Union - can therefore be confidently placed within the reign of the great Akwamu king Ansa Sasraku, who died in 1689. To this period, when Akwamu influence was at its maximum in Ashanti, may be attributed the introduction into that kingdom of that type of war organisation that had proved so successful in Akwamu.

There seems no good reason for accepting Meyerowitz's suggestion that the Akwamu military organisation had only been established in that state since the beginning of the seventeenth century when, as she supposes, "seven of the most important chiefs of towns in the state were given military titles and were appointed to command five battle formations and two sub-divisions"³. The system may well have been of much greater antiquity. On the other hand Meyerowitz is probably right in believing that some change of a revolutionary nature occurred in Akwamu early in the 17th. century, and in associating this with developments in the military sphere. In the nature of this change might lie the explanation

1. Between the war formation of Akwamu and that of the Ashanti Union army the similarity is even more striking, the latter possessing, like Akwamu, a Benkumnaase and Nifannaase. See Fuller, A Vanishing Dynasty: Ashanti, (London, 1921), p. 14.

2. KvG 2: letter from Landman at Axim dd. 28 October, 1706. The usually accepted date for the death of Osei Tutu, viz. 1731, is certainly wrong. The event occurred in either 1712 or 1717. For reasons I have given elsewhere I incline to the earlier date (A Note on the Chronology of Early Ashanti: in preparation).

3. *Supra*, p. 57.

See M. Priestley and I. Wilks, The 18th. century Ashanti kings: a revised chronology, in Journal of African History I, i.

of how Akwamu was able to engage in the great wars of expansion from 1640 onwards.

What was the nature of this change that we may suppose occurred in the early seventeenth century? It seems unlikely that new military offices were simply created, pace Meyerowitz, for this would involve an improbably paradoxical situation in which the constitution of the state was deliberately remodelled, presumably by the clan heads and the paramount chief, in such a way that the former found themselves shorn of most of their powers, and the latter found his authority greatly curtailed by that of the newly created military officers. What seems much more likely is that the existing military leaders, by a virtual coup d'état accomplished perhaps with the concurrence of the paramount chief or king, succeeded in seizing power from the clan heads, the abusuahene, and thereby extended their sway, hitherto purely military, into the civil sphere. Thus, by a familiar pattern of revolution, the army became not merely the instrument of warfare, but the force of internal law and order also. Sovereignty was vested in the paramount chief in council, but the council was now composed not of clan heads, Oyokohene, Twidanhene, and so forth, but of military leaders such as the Adontenhene, Benkumhene, Nifahene.

By the later seventeenth century the power of the army in Akwamu appears to have been absolute. When Ansa Sasraku died, in 1689, his natural successor Ado was considered too young or inexperienced to assume the stool, and Basua was chosen to rule in his stead. Basua, if an obscure passage in Bosman may be trusted, was not of the royal clan, being Ado's paternal uncle¹. Tilleman specifically describes Basua as having been Ansa Sasraku's brafu, which he glosses as feldt-herre, i.e. field-marshal or general². In modern Twi brafo has taken on the specialised meaning of executioner, but in the seventeenth century this was not so. Bosman writes of:

"the great Officers under the King, which consist of Braffoo's, or Ensigns, Sabre-Bearers, Tie-Tie's, that is, publick Cryers or Proclaimers, Attendants on their

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 65.

2. Tilleman, 1697, p. 104.

Wives, Horn-blowers or Trumpeters and Drummers: Which Offices the following Lines will elucidate. That of Braffo I have already explained to be a sort of Marshal, who is to charge first in Battle, which if he have but courage enough he always does....."¹.

Bosman's 'braffoo's' are clearly the commanders of the various army divisions. Basua, it may be supposed, occupied one of the senior army commands in Akwamu, and it was in virtue of this rather than of any relationship to Ado that he was created regent². Basua was an old man when Ansa Sasraku died, veteran of the campaigns against Accra, Ladoku, and Agona. Even when Ado was quite able to take over the government of Akwamu, the people would not eject Basua because of his great age³. Perhaps he was something of a national hero. In any case, although Ado could raise more fighting men than Basua, the training of Basua's soldiers was acknowledged to be superior⁴.

The military commanders, and not the clan elders, had become the dominant force in the internal politics of Akwamu in the seventeenth century. Their supremacy, it has been suggested, was achieved by a revolutionary coup carried through in the early years of the century. Power was wrested from the clan chiefs, and the army extended its jurisdiction into the civil sphere. The immediate result of this was that it became possible to direct the whole resources of the state, resources of manpower and wealth, towards the one end, - territorial expansion through direct military action. From about 1640 onwards the Akwamu armies campaigned to the north, east, and west, bringing kingdom after kingdom under the suzerainty of the king of Akwamu, who, by the end of the century, had become "one of the most grand lords in Guinea"⁵.

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 193.

2. A similar case was Osei Tutu's choice of Amankwatia as regent in 1706. Amankwatia was Ko'ntirehene of Kumasi, and not a member of the royal clan.

3. Tilleman, 1697, p. 105.

4. Ibid, p. 108.

5. Supra, p. 42.

iii. State finance.

There nowhere survives any detailed account of the financial structure of Akwamu as it was when that state was at the height of its power in the early years of the eighteenth century. By the use of scattered references, however, it is possible to form some picture of the major sources of revenue accruing to the king. Most of these revenues, as will be seen, were of an extremely inconstant nature.

Perhaps the most regular of all the revenues was that derived from the European trading companies established along the coast. Each of the three forts in Accra, for example, yielded a monthly sum known as custom, or to the Dutch as kostgeld. The Danes, Dutch, and English alike paid to the king 2 oz. of gold, the equivalent of 32 Rigsdalers in the Danish currency of the time, or £6 13s. 4d. in sterling¹. From the three forts together the king thus derived an annual income of 36 bendas, or 72 oz., i.e. the equivalent of £240 sterling². In addition, custom was also drawn from the trading centres of lesser importance. The Dutch paid 1/2 oz. of gold per month for Kpone³, though the king was not satisfied with this, and in 1712 was claiming that the same custom should be paid for Kpone as for Crèvecoeur. The Dutch informed the king that they would rather close down the lodge at Kpone than pay 2 oz. per month for it, since not enough trade was done there to bear that expense⁴. In addition to the customs derived from the forts and lodges within his domains; the king also appears to have secured the custom of lodges situated beyond his territory, presumably in return for the offer of Akwamu 'protection'. Thus the chief of Akron had ceded the custom for the Dutch lodge at Apam to Akwamu⁵.

1. Barbot sets the amount at 1 oz. for each fort. In this he was misinformed. Du Casse, Tilleman, Rømer, and several archive sources, all prove that the figure was constant at 2 oz.
2. For purposes of comparison, at the end of the 17th. century a small cow was valued at about 2 oz. gold in Accra, and a fat sheep at 1/2 oz. These prices were considered high. See Tilleman, 1697, p. 112.
3. KvG 2: Minutes of Council, 4 January, 1706.
4. WIC 124: Minutes of Council, 23 December, 1712.
5. KvG 92: letter from Valckenier to Bereku dd. 1 September, 1725.

The legal nature of the payments known as customs was never very clear. Sometimes they were considered as ground rents for the forts, and sometimes as regular gifts to retain the goodwill of the king. The ambiguity is present in the earliest contracts made between the trading companies and the Accra kings. The original agreement between the king of Accra and the Dutch, for example, made in 1642, grants the Dutch the right to build a lodge, house, or fort at Small Accra in return for a gift of 1 lb. 4 oz. of gold ('8 large Bendas calculated at 2 oz. 8 engs. to the Benda'), and for a monthly payment of 2 oz. to the king, and 3 oz. 2 engs. to the subordinate chiefs¹. In time it appears to have become standard practice on the part of all the trading companies to pay chiefs, linguists, and elders in the vicinity of the forts a monthly sum of $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. gold. This was regarded as a salary, and the recipients as servants of the companies. The 2 oz. paid to the king himself, however, tended to be treated as a rent rather than a salary. Thus in 1711 the king of Akwamu is found making a claim that, in addition to the 2 oz. of gold paid to him monthly by each fort, he ought also to receive, as sovereign, an additional monthly payment of $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. such as was paid to certain subordinate chiefs².

It was usual for the king to send a messenger to the forts each month to collect the customs. Sometimes, however, they were allowed to accumulate, possibly because the king found it an advantage to have a credit balance at the forts upon which he could draw in an emergency. In 1717 the English owed some years customs to the king³, and this amount seems to have been claimed in the following year, when it totalled 60 oz. of gold, i.e. thirty months customs equivalent in value to £200 sterling. On this occasion the king demanded payment in order to undertake a punitive expedition against Agona⁴. In 1719 the king likewise demanded the payment of ten months customs owed to him by the Dutch in Accra⁵. Sometimes the delay in payment

1. WIC Verspreyde Stukken 1162, pp. 69-72. Agreement dd. 30 August, 1642.

2. VGK: letter from Ligaard to Directors dd. 6 March, 1711.

3. KvG 84: letter from Perdwyn dd. 2 June, 1717.

4. KvG 85: letter from Bereku lodge dd. 11 May, 1718.

5. KvG 86: letter from Laudman dd. 26 July, 1719.

may have been the fault of the companies, for at this time, as will be seen later, Akwamu was hoarding gold, and the companies often had none whatsoever. It was therefore not always possible for the custom to be paid in gold should this be demanded. In 1729 the Dutch factor in Accra informed his headquarters that if the Akwamu king insisted on being paid his custom in gold rather than in cowries, then it would be necessary to send to Elmina for the gold¹.

In addition to the regular payment of customs by the European trading companies, the king derived additional revenue from them in the form of dashes, - gifts given to secure some particular advantage. In 1723, for instance, the Danes were said to have given Akwonno over 100 Bendas (more than £666) to encourage him to attack Dutch Crèvecoeur. The king swore an oath that he would be "master of the Holland fort", and with a force estimated at between ten and twelve thousand men beleaguered it for over three weeks, until he was obliged to move his army into the interior because of an Akim attack². Three years later the Dutch offered Ansa Kwao, who had succeeded Akwonno in 1725, 30 or 40 bendas to assist them in a war against the Fantis, though this particular transaction was never completed.³

Most dashes, however, were of a more modest nature, designed to secure more modest ends. In 1705 the Danes, for example, sent two anchors of liquor, pipes, and tobacco as a gift to Akwonno, but this was considered too paltry. The king threatened to stop trade at the fort unless more generous gifts were forthcoming. The Danes quickly sent additional gifts to the value of over 3 oz. of gold⁴. In 1714 the Danes sent Akwonno one flintlock gun, two pairs of pistols, and a gold embroidered hat "with the request that he would be diligent in seeing that trade might come here (i.e. to Christiansborg)"⁵. In 1717 the English had the novel idea of presenting

1. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 30 September, 1729.

2. KvG 90: report of van de Meer and de Lange dd. 29 June, 1723.

3. KvG 93: letter from Valckenier to Accra of May, 1726.

4. VgK: letter from Ligaard to Directors dd. 1 September, 1705.

5. VgK: letter from Franz Boye to Directors dd. 3 April, 1714.

Akwonno with "a very costly bed and fittings"¹. Such gifts as these were in the nature of personal presents to the king; they can scarcely be considered as in any way augmenting the state treasury. The Dutch, however, who frequently complained that the giving of dashes seldom secured the donor any advantages, attempted to introduce instead a bonus system, - a bonus being paid on the amount of trade actually done at the fort. This idea was embodied in the Akwamu - Dutch Treaty of 1703, in which the Dutch agreed that the king of Akwamu should receive, in addition to his monthly custom of 2 oz. of gold, an additional 2 oz. for every 40 Marks worth of trade done at the fort (i.e. a bonus of 1 oz. in 160 oz.)². Such bonuses may be considered as contributing to the state income. It is impossible, of course, to form any accurate idea of the total income derived annually by the king from the European trading companies; it must in any case have varied greatly from year to year.

Considerable revenues were derived by the state from the legal actions for damages instituted by the king himself in cases of offences contra pacem regis. Tilleman writes that the king of Akwamu himself

"is judge in all cases arising between the natives, which usually occur not among the poor, but among the rich, who do not easily get away free unless they make large payments in order not to lose their heads"³.

Tilleman's comment is brief, but the meaning is clear. Cases of disputes between poor subjects of the king did not often come before the king. This was not, for instance, because poor people could not afford to pay court fees, but simply because such disputes were, in the eyes of the king, usually unimportant and trivial, and unlikely to affect the peace of the realm. They were matters for negotiation and settlement between the families concerned. On the other hand cases of disputes between rich and powerful subjects, or subject bodies, were brought before the king on the grounds that an offence contra pacem regis was involved. The party judged in the wrong in the dispute was considered to have committed a public delict, an

1. KvG 84: letter from Van Alsen dd. 17 December, 1717.

2. Supra, p. 37.

3. Tilleman, 1697m p. 107.

offence against the state. The king could thus claim either damages or, as Tilleman suggests, might in some cases demand the death penalty. Damages awarded for offences contra pacem regis were usually high, often disproportionately so in relation to the nature of the original dispute. In Akwamu law, however, the paramount consideration appears to have been the maintenance of political stability, and consequently high damages were usually awarded, for their deterrent effect, in any offence construed as involving a breach of the king's peace. That the state treasury would benefit from the vigorous prosecution of all such cases was an important, though incidental, consideration. Public order had to be preserved first and foremost, and as we shall see, offences of a very serious nature, i.e. against the king's person or family, were dealt with not by the recovery of damages but by the removal of the party judged guilty from the body politic by execution or banishment. Such cases were dealt with as falling without a law of torts. Bosman seems to have this distinction in mind when he writes of how,

"upon the least disgust, which he (i.e. the king of Ladoku) or his People give to those of Aquamboe, they are so severely punished that the remembrance of it remains for several Years; which is yet stiled a mild and merciful Chastisement: For when-ever the King of Aquamboe takes a fancy to it, he makes nothing of cutting them a foot shorter"¹.

The severe punishments which remained in the memory for several years were presumably the fines imposed by the king; the foot by which offenders were cut shorter was, on the other hand, the topmost foot of the body, - the head.

An idea of the size of the damages awarded in cases involving offences contra pacem regis may ~~be~~^{be} formed from a few examples, the first of which also illustrates something of the nature of the judicial processes. It was a case of Rex v. the Accras in 1716. It appears that the king, Akwonno, had been fitting out an expedition against the Akims, and had called upon Amu, his governor for the conquered province of Accra, to join the Akwamu

1. Bosman, 1705, p. 327.

armies with the Accra forces. The Dutch factor in Accra, however, ordered Amu to remain there, - Amu, it must be understood, also occupied the office of Chief Broker for the Dutch. Whilst Amu was still reasoning with the Dutch the Akwamu armies took the field and the Akims retired. Akwonno demanded compensation from the Accras for their failure to answer his call, and fixed the amount of damages at 200 Bendas (i.e. over £1,300 sterling). So far the judicial processes had worked without the Accras having had any opportunity to state their case before the king. They had, however, what seems to have amounted to a right of appeal against the amount of damages awarded against them. First it was necessary to pay a fee of over 2 oz. of gold to the king for the 'sheathing of the sword', - i.e. to restrain the king from immediately seizing the amount of the damages by force. A second fee of 2 Bendas was then paid in order for the right of appeal to be exercised. Finally a third fee of over 3 Bendas was paid for the privilege of actually stating the case before the king. The details of the subsequent transaction are missing, but apparently the king refused to reduce the amount of the damages. The offence was clearly viewed as a serious one, involving matters of state security. Four months later the Accras still owed 63 Bendas but were hoping for some reduction in the remaining amount¹. Three years later Accra was to be startled by another case, Rex v. Ama Kuma. Ama Kuma, a rich trader, was charged with having committed adultery with one of Akwonno's wives. This was obviously considered very much contra pacem regis, and Akwonno imposed a fine of 1,500 Bendas (£10,000) which needless to say Ama Kuma could not pay².

In such cases as these the European companies were in the equivocal position of wishing to protect their own interests and those of the Accras living in association with the forts, and yet at the same time having to acknowledge that Akwonno's jurisdiction extended to the Accras since "they

1. For this episode see KvG 82-83: letters from Van Dyk at Accra dd. 8 March, 19 April, and 13 and 27 May, 1716, from Snoek at Accra dd. 8 September, 1716, and from Dir.-Gen. Haring dd. 13 March and 21 April, 1716.

2. KvG 86: letter from Accra (?Laudman), dd. 15 September, 1719.

all belong under Aquambo, having been subdued by them by force of arms"¹. Indeed the European companies themselves were by no means withdrawn from the Akwamu king's jurisdiction, and were frequently fined. In or about 1726, for example, the English brought to the attention of the king a dispute that they had with the Dutch, and ruefully found that the king judged them to be the offenders and condemned them in the sum of 90 Bendas (£600) for having made 'a false palaver' that disturbed the peace of the realm and the state of trade.² It is important to realise that such cases as these were prosecuted as offences against the state. The damages therefore went to the state treasury, and not to the party adjudged innocent in the original dispute. Whether the innocent party might subsequently recover any damages would depend upon the king's pleasure. The companies, accepting the basic principles of Akwamu law, tended to argue that since they paid customs to the king they were entitled to his protection, and if found innocent in any dispute, they should be compensated accordingly from the state finances.

Two interesting cases arose in Accra in 1727. It appears that at this time Accra was particularly disturbed by a dispute between the people living in ~~the~~ association with the English fort and those with the Dutch fort. There was also an outstanding disagreement between the Danes and the king himself over an Akwamu pawn who had been left in Christiansborg and who the Danes had subsequently sold. The king, Ansa Kwao, arrived in Accra in 1727 to settle these matters in person. He demanded compensation from the Danes over the matter of the pawn, which they refused. The people of Osu under Christiansborg were then advised to seek refuge elsewhere, and three hundred Akwamu soldiers were posted in the town. The Danes thereupon rapidly acceded to the king's demands, and paid the amount of the damages awarded against them³. The sum involved appears to have been 100 Bendas (£666)⁴.

1. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque at Accra dd. 10 August, 1727.
 2. Ibid.
 3. VvG: letter from Pahl and others to Directors dd. 10 September, 1727.
 4. WIC 109: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. Pranger, n.d., in enclosure K to Pranger's despatch to the Council of X dd. 9 July, 1730.

The king next turned his attention to the more serious affair, - the disturbances in Accra resulting from the Dutch and English disputes. He held an inquiry into the origins of the troubles:

"Last Saturday the king sat to determine which of the people was the originator of the disputes, and as the right has fallen (as the natives put it) on the side of the Hollands subjects, it is to be feared that the English will be sorely fleeced by the Akwamus, all the more so as they have been recently condemned in a sum of 90 Bendas on account of a false palaver which they brought against the Hollands subjects before the King of Akwamu"¹.

The Dutch Director-General in Elmina, however, was dissatisfied with the proceedings, since he considered that the king should not have taken up the case at all, it being a matter between the Dutch and the English. Since the king had decided the case, however, he maintained that the damages should be paid to the Dutch. The people of Small Accra were therefore ordered by the Dutch not to accept the king's judgement, but to consider the disputes still unsettled. The king of Akwamu proved surprisingly restrained, stating that he wished "only to reconcile the people with each other" and to see "the Hollands natives behave according to the laws and customs of their Crooms", and even agreed that the Dutch might be paid "all the expenses they had incurred". Pressure was brought to bear upon the Accras to accept the king's judgement, however, and the Dutch factor in Accra represented the attitude of the Accras thus:

"The Accras say that it is true that for some time they have lived in discord and hostility with the English Crom people; but it is also true that there is no hostility so great that it cannot be pacified and set aside, and that it is always found that if one has engaged in war with another long enough, then one seeks to come to an agreement and make peace. As for themselves, they would like, and indeed greatly desire, that this dispute be terminated, not only because the Accras as a whole are mostly related to each other, but also because a settlement is extremely necessary for the preservation of their country, families, and goods, since the King of Akwamu has taken this affair so much to heart. For although the King of Akwamu is not

1. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque dd. 10 August, 1727.

making war on them openly, as he did four years ago - the memory of which is still thorny for them, most of them having been completely ruined, - yet the King is in a strong enough position to make it as bad for them in Accra as any war could make it. For although they know that they could hope for protection if the Akwamus attacked them under the fort, yet if the trade routes were closed, and the water hole, which is beyond the range of the Dutch guns, was occupied by the Akwamus, and all the traders stopped from coming down, then they could expect nothing but the complete ruination of their Crom, themselves, and their wives and children"¹.

In the event the Accras decided to accept the king's judgement, whereupon the Dutch Director-General informed them that henceforth he would leave them prey to the plundering of the Akwamus, and furthermore had Ansa Kwao informed that the Dutch could accept neither his mediation nor his offer of expenses².

The truculent attitude of the Director-General contributed greatly to the deterioration in Dutch-Akwamu relations that occurred about this time, the king of Akwamu naturally taking a serious view of this challenge to his power. In the following year, in the case of the death of Oti, the king was to make a claim of 2,000 Bendas (over £13,000) against the Dutch. The details of this case are discussed later³. In making such a claim as this, or that of 1,500 Bendas against Ama Kuma, it is unlikely that the king had any expectation of recovering the amount. Rather must the award of such impossibly high damages be taken as tantamount to a declaration that no sum of money would be considered as compensating for the offence. The king required instead that the guilty party be removed entirely from the community. In other words, a case theoretically within the law of torts was made in practice into a criminal case; since the offender could not possibly pay the damages awarded against him, then the king had the right of disposal of his body and property. Thus in the case of the death of Oti, the king made it public that his real purpose was to visit

1. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque dd. 12 September, 1727.

2. For this episode see KvG 94: letters from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd. 7 July, 10, 19, and 29 August, and 12 September, 1727, and from Dir.-Gen. to de la Planque dd. 3 and 18 September, 1727.

3. See part III, section ii.

Accra "to ruin the fort and to send the Factor, and his subordinate Whites also, to the next world"¹. It is noteworthy that both in this case and in that of Rex v. Ama Kuma the offences involved were offences directly against the royal family of Akwamu, the former of the murder of a member of that family, the latter of adultery with one of the wives of the king.

Through the vigorous prosecution of cases that could, in one way or another, be construed as involving offences against the king's peace the Akwamu state thus gained considerable revenues. The majority of disputes were decided without ever coming before the king's courts. Disputes involving the rich and the powerful, however, were considered a matter for the king, who first inquired where guilt lay and then imposed heavy fines upon the party judged guilty. Unless additional fees were paid for a right of appeal against the amount of the damages to be exercised, the damages were usually recovered by the king's officers by force. In effect, this would often involve the use of the army, which was, as we have seen, not only the main instrument of foreign policy but also of internal security. The innocent party in such disputes (when it was not the king himself who was in this position) might or might not receive compensation, depending upon the king's pleasure. When such compensation was paid the king was considered to have bought the case. Perhaps Tilleman may be allowed the last word on such matters:

"For as soon as anyone, according to a bare report or in other ways, can find that he, or someone belonging to him, has been abused or has met with some injury from others, whether such occurred recently or many years before, then, if he can revenge such things without letting the matter come before the Akwamu government, he will go to work by night and day, practising one means or another, until at last he has his wishes complied with. But if the cases are of such an important nature that they must be delivered before the Akwamu magistrates (authorities), then the latter may be willing to buy them, and subsequently, after their fashion, given time and the opportunity, will make a cunning and roguish war against those who by now are thinking themselves wholly safe and free from all danger"².

1. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque dd. 2 February, 1728.

2. Tilleman, 1697, p. 113.

Tilleman gives a concise summary of the basic features of the economic life of Akwamu:

"The people in this kingdom have six ways by which they mostly make a living; the first by fishing; the next by salt-making; the third by cultivation of the soil for grain and fruits; the fourth by rearing cattle for sale; the fifth by trading with the Christians on behalf of other negroes who cannot themselves understand trading methods nor converse with their Christian customers; and the sixth by war. And even there will be found some negroes who work in iron and gold, and others who apply themselves to hunting, but these are few compared with those living by the other six means"¹.

The remaining sources of state revenue may best be considered in relation to these different facets of the economic life of the country.

In Akwamu there was a basic imposition upon all productive activity; farmers, fishermen, hunters, miners, salt-makers and so forth yearly had to render a tax to the king. Payment was usually made in kind, but could presumably be converted into one of gold dust. The payment of this tax appears to have been regarded as an act of homage to the king, a yearly renewal of allegiance². In this context it is important to realise that the economy of Akwamu, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, had already developed far beyond the subsistence or home-consumption level. Corn and other crops, mostly grown in the fertile forest lands of Akwamu, were brought down to the coast and sold. Cattle and sheep were purchased in the eastern parts of the empire and then driven to Accra where they were fattened prior to sale³. The expansion of Akwamu had created conditions of stability and relative security over large areas, within which trade could flourish and the economies of the component countries expand. Production thus became related not to the demands of a locality alone, but to those of all the associated territories. In addition, there was also production for external

1. Tilleman, 1697, p. 109.

2. Ibid, pp. 107-08.

3. Ibid, pp. 110-12.

markets, i.e. those beyond the confines of the empire. Rask, writing of the period around 1710, notes that daily parties of from forty to fifty Akwamu traders would leave the coast carrying salt and dried fish, and journey for eight or ten days into the interior where they would exchange their goods at great profit for cloth and slaves¹. In this way Akwamu was in constant commercial contact with the southernmost markets of the great states north of the forest, Dagomba and Gonja.

Basic production was thus taxed. Akwamus engaged in commercial activities, however, appear to have escaped any such imposition. It was presumably thought that part of the burden of the tax on basic production would automatically be passed on to merchants trading in such commodities. Foreign traders bringing their goods into Akwamu, on the other hand, suffered under severe handicaps. Rask commented how Akim traders coming into Akwamu were treated "as a wise owner deals with a good milch cow that gives richly"². Akim traders were usually not allowed to pass through Akwamu territory down to the coast. They brought their goods into the inland Akwamu markets, from which point the Akwamu king arranged for his own officers to take them to the coast whilst the Akims awaited their return. When the transactions at the European forts and lodges were completed, the king's officers would bring whatever merchandise they had obtained back to the inland markets. A proportion of the merchandise was then retained by the king, as a duty, before the traders were allowed to return to Akim with the remainder. The king's duty was said to be often almost half³. The Akim authorities sometimes found it expedient to make a general payment to the Akwamu king in order that Akims might pass through to the beaches in person, but this was a rare procedure. On one occasion, in 1715, such a payment amounted to 200 Bendas (over £1,300), but there is no indication of the period of time such a sum might guarantee the traders access to the coast⁴. The Akwamu treatment of Akim traders was always one of the basic sources of friction between those two states.

1. Rask, 1754, p. 126.

2. Ibid, p. 152.

3. WIC 99: letter from Nuyts to the Assembly of X dd. 24 April, 1706.

4. KvG 82: letter from Van Dyk dd. 31 December, 1715.

In addition to the basic tax upon production, whenever need arose extraordinary levies might be raised from the various divisions of Akwamu and from those conquered territories ruled directly by Akwamu through a provincial governor. In 1706, for example, the king was thought to be preparing for war, and was known to have levied contributions from "all the distant Crows to leeward", i.e. east of Accra¹. In 1719 a similar levy, described as 'subsidiary income', was raised from all the coastal towns, including Accra². Conquered territories ruled indirectly through their own authorities, such as Agona and Whydah, would be exempt from such extraordinary levies in virtue of their payment of annual tribute³.

Apart from various systems of taxation, the king himself had certain direct sources of revenue from what might be termed state enterprises. "All the best plantations to be found in Akwamu", writes Tilleman, "belong to the king"⁴. The king also engaged in trading activities on his own account⁵. Römer states that the Akwamu kings maintained their own bands of slave raiders, despite the illegality of such in customary law⁶. From the point of view of profits, however, by far the most important of all the state enterprises was war. It seems unlikely that war was often determined upon purely from the profit motive. Nevertheless when the king did go to war for whatever reason it was in the number of prisoners taken "that according to the custom of the country his greatest profit and victory should consist"⁷. Prisoners of war could legally be enslaved, and they undoubtedly constituted the bulk of the slaves who were sold to the European companies for shipment across the Atlantic. War brought riches, however, not only in the form of prisoners who could be sold, but also in plundered

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1. WIC misc. archives, Aanw.1902, XXVI, 115: 'Diary of P. Nuyts, 1706-07', entry for 10 October, 1706.
 2. KvG 86: letter from Laudman (?) at Accra, dd. 15 September, 1719.
 3. For the Whydah tribute see above, p. 32-33.
 4. Tilleman, 1697, p. 108.
 5. WIC 98: letter from de la Palma dd. 10 October, 1703, enclosure Y, entry for 3 April, 1703.
 6. Römer, 1769, p. 122, and see below, Part III, section i.
 7. VGK: 'Dag-Journal, 1699 - 1703', entry for 18 July, 1702.

goods, some of the richest prizes being gained when the European trading companies were the objects of the king's expeditions. Thus when Danish Christiansborg was captured a large store of merchandise was seized by the king, together with 50 Marks of gold dust (£1,333). Furthermore the Danes had to pay an additional 50 Marks a year later in order to resume possession of the fort¹. The English were involved in a similar misfortune in 1713. An Akwamu punitive expedition was sent against Agona in that year with the additional commission to destroy the English lodge at Shidoe, for word had reached the king that the English were planning to convert it into a fort without his permission. The merchants escaped either to the ships or to nearby Senya Bereku, but all their goods fell into the hands of the Akwamus, being valued at about £500. The English asked the king for restitution, and stopped payment of the 'ground rent' for their fort in Accra, but no doubt the king had the final word as always².

The Akwamu treasury was located in the capital, but on at least one occasion was removed elsewhere for safety when the capital seemed threatened³. It is impossible to form any idea of the amount of gold that might have been held in the treasury at any one time, but it must have been substantial. The king appears to have exercised a general control over the trade in gold⁴. In 1688 it was estimated that each year he sent to Accra about 1,500 Marks, or £40,000 sterling⁵. The rest was retained in the treasury so that a few years later Bosman could write that:

"this Country (i.e. Akwamu) singly possesseth greater Treasures than all those we have hitherto described taken together",

the countries hitherto described being "all the Gold-Coast besides"⁶. The same writer elsewhere comments that on the Gold Coast he had never met

1. Supra, p. 27-8.

2. T 70/5: letter from Grosvenor and others at Cape Coast dd. 6 October, 1713. WIC 102: letter from Haring to Assembly of X dd. 4 March, 1714.

3. Supra, p. 21.

4. For the importance of gold in Akan cosmologies see Meyerowitz: "The Sacred State of the Akan", (London, 1951), Chapter XII.

5. Supra, p. 42.

6. Bosman, 1705, p. 70 and index under Aquamboe.

"any King but what after having sold all he had in the world to raise such a Sum (i.e. £5,000), would find himself not (sic) able to do it: But when I talk at this rate, I would except the King of Aquamboe, and according to reports also him of Acron; which two being joined, possess more Gold than all the rest together"¹.

From about 1705 onwards the policy of hoarding gold became more definite, and most of the gold that entered Akwamu from Akim and Ashanti, and that was produced in Akwamu itself, was fed into the state reserves. In 1705 the Danes in Christiansborg complained that they could obtain scarcely enough gold to meet their own expenses². The trouble was thought to be the wars in the interior. A year later the commandant informed his directors that he considered it unlikely that the gold trade would ever flourish again in Accra³. By 1712 the real reason for the change had become generally recognised, for it was reported that over the last four and a half years the Akwamus had been keeping all their gold in their own country⁴. So great was the Akwamu demand for gold at this time that Rask reported that at the ports east of Accra Akwamu traders were selling slaves and goods to the Portuguese and others in return for Brazilian gold⁵. In 1714 the Danes complained that the Akwamus had sent eighty-seven slaves to Christiansborg, but that they were unable to purchase them because no Portuguese had been on the coast for a long time with Brazilian gold⁶.

One effect of the hoarding of gold was to strengthen the tendency for gold to become a currency, rather than remaining a simple marketable commodity as hitherto; in the early eighteenth century Akwamu traders were buying goods with gold, and selling goods for gold. This effect may have been intended. The main purpose of the gold reserve, however, was undoubtedly to enable the king to withdraw, without delay, large amounts of

1. Bosman, 1705, pp. 205-06.

2. VGK: letter from Ligeard to Directors dd. 1 September, 1705.

3. VGK: letter from Ligeard to Directors dd. 9 March, 1706.

4. WIC 101: letter from Dir.-Gen. Harin~~g~~ and others to Assembly of X dd. 15 August, 1712.

5. Rask, 1754, p. 81.

6. VGK: letter from Boye to Directors dd. 13 November, 1714.

gold as and when need arose, instead of having to rely upon the slow processes of extraordinary taxation. Thus in 1715, when there were very strong indications of a major Akim offensive, considerable quantities of gold were released from the treasury for the purchase of firearms and gunpowder. The Dutch in Accra and Senya Bereku took 80 Marks of gold (over £2,100) in two months¹.

Associated with the formation of a gold reserve was the development of a system of gold pawning designed to avoid excessively heavy losses from the reserve. Thus if the king intended to fit out a military expedition, he might send to the forts for guns and gunpowder, and for security would leave with the merchants a gold pawn from the treasury of the value of the goods. After the completion of the campaign the pawn might then be redeemed for slaves or for other goods plundered during the hostilities. In this way the merchants gained security whilst the Akwamu gold reserves remained undiminished if only the campaign was successful. The importance that was attached to the return of such gold pawns may be judged from an event of 1705. A cask of "nuggets belonging to the Crown of Akwamu" had been left as a pawn with the Dutch factor in Accra, who had used it to pay a private debt to his Director-General in Elmina. The Director-General had it put on board ship to be sent back to Holland, but died before the ship sailed. Members of the Dutch council examined the property of the deceased and discovered the nuggets, which they decided to seize, commenting that it was certain that the king of Akwamu would demand the pawn back, "and if unable to have it would stop at nothing either to recover it or twenty times its value, even to the ruin of the company's fort at Accra, which would be an unspeakable injury, it being the best of all the company's forts on the coast". The pledge was valued at only 6 Marks (£160)².

The main demands upon the Akwamu state treasury must have been for war purposes. Armies had to be equipped with guns, ammunition, and

1. KwG 82: entry for December, 1715.

2. WIC 98: letter from Nuyts to Assembly of X dd.13 November, 1705.

gunpowder, and maintained in the field with food and other necessary supplies. Frontier garrisons had to be manned and maintained. Mercenaries had to be paid. The neutrality of neighbouring states might have to be purchased whilst the Akwamu armies campaigned elsewhere¹. Because of this it is unlikely that any true budgetary system was developed in Akwamu, for military campaigns are difficult to plan ahead, so much depending upon unforeseeable circumstances. In this respect the Akwamu treasury probably resembled those of western Europe in early medieval times, as it did also in its failure to make any clear distinction between state revenues and the personal incomes of the king. Unfortunately not enough is known of the detailed workings of the Akwamu system to make such comparisons worthwhile.

1. See e.g. KVG 91: letter from Valckenier dd. 3 October, 1724. This payment was made to the Fantis and consisted of one gold morion, gold arm rings, a string of beads, and forty head of cattle.

III. THE COLLAPSE OF AKWAMU, 1730.

i. The Eve of Collapse.

In the middle months of 1727 there was little to suggest that the stability of the Akwamu empire was in any wise seriously threatened. Ansa Kwao, the reigning king, had been on the stool for two years. His predecessor, Akwonno, had enjoyed a long reign of twenty-three years, during most of which time further territorial expansion had been eschewed in favour of a policy of economic development. A workable system of administration had been evolved for the conquered territories. The demand of the European trading companies for the commodities that Akwamu had to offer was greater than ever. Even the threat from Akim seemed less serious than ever before, for Akwamu influence was strong in the new Ashanti federation that had grown up in the forest country north of Akim.

When rumour had it, early in July 1727, that Ansa Kwao would shortly visit Accra in person in order to settle various disputes that had arisen in that province, admittedly the Dutch Director-General in Elmina thought this extremely unlikely "as the King was at war on all sides"¹. But the Director-General was wrong, and it is some measure of the confidence that Ansa Kwao felt in the general situation that he not only visited Accra, but stayed there for four months during which time by diplomacy backed by threats of force he succeeded in restoring tranquillity. Nevertheless the Dutchman's estimate of the situation was not without foundation. In the early months of 1727 there had been strong rumours that Akim intended to purchase Ashanti neutrality before launching a new offensive against Akwamu². In April Ansa Kwao felt constrained to maintain his forces in the west at full strength, for Ofori, ruler of that section of Akim represented by the

1. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd. 7 July, and reply dd. 12 July, 1727.

2. KvG 94: letter from Roems at Apam dd. 10 January, 1727.

later Abuakwa, had died, and it was feared that his successor Bakwante might march against Akwamu immediately¹. The danger passed, however, and the fortified Akwamu frontier posts on both sides of the Birim river were probably still considered adequate to prevent any major invasion through that area.

In the far east of the empire the situation must have looked in some respects more serious, though the danger less immediate. There the rising state of Dahomey had, apparently without opposition, replaced Akwamu as the dominant power in Whydah during the early months of 1727. Whilst the loss of one tribute paying vassal state, especially one as distant as Whydah, was not in itself a major catastrophe, the real danger lay in the possibility of further Dahomey inroads into Akwamu controlled territory. As it happened, however, it was not until ten years later that Dahomey attempted to extend its influence westwards to the Volta, and by that time Akwamu had suffered heavy defeats in the west and was thought to be in alliance with Dahomey².

Both in the east and west Akwamu thus faced threats from external neighbouring powers. The major threat to the stability of the empire, however, undoubtedly stemmed from the spread of discontent amongst its subject peoples. Römer, who left the coast in 1749, had been informed that "the rule of the first Akwamu kings was, in the opinion of the Accras and all the vanquished peoples, very mild"³. Rask, a Danish chaplain who was on the coast from 1709 to 1712, also suggests that after earlier excesses⁴, the Akwamus had found it prudent to rule more mildly⁵. But if in the early years of his reign Akwomno had ruled mildly, as his reign lengthened so his severity increased. "The Akwamus behaved more and more harshly towards the Accras and others under their dominion as time passed"⁶, wrote Römer, and he gives an interesting and detailed picture of the breakdown of the rule of law in the

1. VgK: letter from Pahl at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 14 April, 1727.

2. KvG 102: letter from Dir. Gen. de Bordes dd. 21 July, 1737.

3. Römer, 1769, p. 103.

4. For which excesses see, e.g., Bosman, 1705, pp. 185 and 327.

5. Rask, 1754, p. 93.

6. Römer, 1769, p. 106.

Akwamu dominions.

The deterioration in the relations between the Akwamu authorities and the governed - whether subject peoples or the Akwamu commonalty - at this time is undoubtedly to be associated with the increasing demand for slaves by those engaged in the trans-Atlantic trade. In particular, the rivalry between the Danish, Dutch, and English merchant companies appears to have become especially fierce after the English secured the Asiento in 1713. In order to take advantage of this growing demand the Akwamu merchants were obliged to seek new sources of supply of slaves, in which venture they had the backing of the Akwamu authorities who realised that the prosperity of the state had become linked with the export of slaves rather than of gold, and who were, in any case, concerned to discourage the export of gold¹.

In customary law strict rules governed the processes of enslavement; furthermore, such basic aspects of the legal code as enslavement, or recovery of debts, had already achieved an area of application wider than the political boundaries of the individual sovereign states; what could be described as a "general native custom" was in process of evolution². Within this body of law various grades of slavery were recognised, distinguished on the basis of the different modes of enslavement. The awowa or pawn was one who had been placed, as security, in the hands of others; he could always be redeemed by payment of the debt, fulfillment of the promise, or completion of the contract, as the case may have been. It follows, therefore, that a pawn could not be sold by those in whose hands he had been placed. There were no such restrictions, however, upon the sale of an akoa pa, who ^{may} might have been enslaved for criminal or other anti-social activities, or who may have placed himself voluntarily in slavery in order, for example, to wipe off a

1. *Supra*, p. 77.

2. Even in times of war the law might retain its force and, in certain spheres, continue to determine the conduct of warring parties. See, for example, WIC 149, letter from Van Hensen and others dd. 29 September, 1777: "We must observe that matters of debt between the natives take their ordinary course both in war and peace according to general native custom".

debt. Nor were there restrictions upon the sale of the domum, who had usually been enslaved through having been taken captive in war, or else had been received as part of a payment of tribute. A slave who was sold in the open market appears to have suffered a further reduction in status to become an odonko, though this term tended to become restricted to those slaves purchased in the large markets of the northern grasslands. Slaves of any status might be employed on the farms, on public works (e.g. building fortifications, keeping roads cleared), as domestic servants, or, in the case of a select few, as regular troops within the army. Tilleman reported that the king of Akwamu had "the best and most skilled slaves in the whole land for war"¹. There can be little doubt, however, that the greater part of the slave population of Akwamu was employed upon the food farms.

Throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century one may suppose that Akwamu traders met the demand for slaves at Accra and on the leeward coast by selling members of the saleable grades of the Akwamu slave population, i.e. nkoa pa, nomum, and nnonko. This would have the effect of denuding the farms of Akwamu of their labour, so that the basis of the economy would tend to shift still further from agriculture to commerce, - a trend that had presumably not been reversed since the early days of commercial contact with the Portuguese. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Akwamu thus found itself confronted by an increasing demand for slaves at the European forts and lodges on the coast. The prosperity of the Akwamu state depended largely upon the satisfaction of this demand. It was under these circumstances that it may be supposed that Akwamonno's policy both towards the subjects peoples of the empire and towards his own Akwamu subjects began to change.

Within the Akwamu territories, in the second and third decades of the eighteenth century, good government changed to bad. The rule of law gave way to tyranny. Everywhere power was abused. The change manifested itself most clearly in the growth of organisations concerned purely and simply with the illegal enslavement of freemen and with their secret sale to the trading companies on the coast. These organisations were known to the Europeans as

1. Tilleman, 1697, p. 108.

✓ Siccadingers, a name derived from the Gã fika diŋ, 'black gold'. Bands of Siccadingers terrorised the countryside at night, seizing any unfortunates who might be abroad, and conveying them secretly to the coast where Accra middlemen arranged for their sale either to the merchants in one of the forts or to one of the numerous interlopers. The Accra middlemen, writes Rømer,

"always had one or several bottles of brandy in readiness, and permitted the Akwamu and his people to drink as much of it as they desired. He caused water to be fetched, so that the Akwamus could wash. For, because the goods were stolen, they had been unable to use the public paths, but instead had had to crawl through the bush, so that the skin was much injured by thorns"¹.

Akwonno, who ruled from 1702 until 1725, appears to have done little to check this growing abuse. Indeed, Akwonno employed his own bands of Siccadingers to raid into neighbouring territories, notably Akron². His successor, Ansa Kwao, went even further, and sent his bands

"to steal Hill Negroes and Adampis from his own nation, though not the Accras because they were useful to him in getting goods for the slaves"³.

Nor were the Akwamus themselves free from the attentions of the Siccadingers who, having been on raids into neighbouring territories,

"often returned with empty hands and often with bloody heads; but in order to have some reward for their pains they took their own countrymen and fellow-citizens and sold them to the Accras, who would have been glad if all the inhabitants of Akwamu had been sold as slaves"⁴.

Side by side with the rise of these slave-raiding organisations occurred an increase in the deliberate manufacturing of 'palavers' designed to give a pretext of legality to proceedings concerned with the same end, i.e. the reduction of freemen to servile status. An interesting example of this is again given by Rømer, whose interests had obviously been oddly captivated by the ruthlessness and barbarity of this era of the Siccadingers. The Dane tells

1. Rømer, 1769, p. 108.
2. Ibid, p. 122.
3. Ibid, p. 122.
4. Ibid. p. 106.

how the king of Akwamu and his nobles,

"in every town, took some wives, three or four according to the size of the town, and left them there to stay. Then every year they would travel from place to place, and make these wives eat fetish, so that they would confess what men had had contact with them. These disclosures were made willingly, since the women would get part of the fines, and the gallants then might be sold as slaves unless their friends would ransom them"¹.

On a larger scale such palavers might be manufactured against whole communities. Kpoti, the priestly ruler of Labadi, told Rømer how on one such occasion the Akwamus had carried off more than two thousand of his people, - kinsfolk, children, slaves, and slaves' children².

In such ways as these the Akwamus were able to meet, partially at least, the growing demand for slaves for shipment across the Atlantic, so that Rømer could note that,

"up to this time a fine trade in slaves had continued at Accra, and people in Europe could not understand where all the black people could come from. They thought that the "egroes in Africa begot children for no other reason than to sell them to the Europeans, or that there, as in the East Indies, many places often fell upon times of famine, so that people would sell themselves rather than die of hunger. But I hope now that Africans will not be accused of selling their children"³.

More slaves were passing through the Accra forts than ever before; Rømer considered that each of the three Accra forts was sure of being able to send off a ship every month with five or six hundred slaves on board⁴. The period was one of prosperity for Akwamu, but the prosperity was only won at a price. Unrest and discontent spread not only among the subject peoples of the empire, upon whom the burden of exploitation principally though not entirely fell, but also among sections of the Akwamu people themselves. So

1. Rømer, 1769, p. 110.

2. Ibid, p. 118.

3. Ibid, 122.

4. Ibid, p. 103.

long as Akwonno lived the dissatisfaction does not appear to have taken any very definite form. The prestige of the aged king was sufficient to retain the allegiance of his subjects, who, whatever their present condition, had doubtless in the past materially gained from the masterful policies of Akwonno and his predecessors. After Akwonno's death in 1725, however, the situation deteriorated rapidly for Akwamu. Symptomatic of the hardening of the opposition was the action of the Berekuso people in 1726 in killing a sword-bearer of the deceased king. When the new king Ansa Kwao¹ prepared a punitive expedition against the Berekuso, they took the desperate course of killing all their wives and children and fleeing into the forest rather than allow anyone to fall into the hands of the king's soldiers². A story still told in nearby Aburi may perhaps also be associated with this era of the Siccadingers:

'We have a saying in Aburi - Aburi wɔw a ekum Oteɔ, "the Aburi cold that kills Oteɔ". It happened like this. Once when the Akwamus ruled over Aburi they did things against us that should never have been done. One day a tax collector came to Aburi in order to collect money. His name was Oteɔ. The people of Aburi asked him to wait a time for the money, but he would not listen to their request. So one day the debtors said to the man with whom Oteɔ was staying, "Forbid Oteɔ to sleep in your house tonight, but do not tell him this until it is evening time". When evening came the man told Oteɔ that he would not allow him to sleep in his house that night. So Oteɔ tried to find somewhere else to sleep, but he was refused wherever he asked. So finally Oteɔ lay down in the street to sleep. Then, in the night, when he was asleep, the Aburi people came and strangled him, and in the morning his dead body was found in the street. And everyone said, "It was the cold of the night that

1. Römer states that Acondo died in 1726 and that Aquando was his successor. Strictly contemporary accounts show that Aquando died in 1725 and that Ansa Kwao was his successor. The names Aquando and Acondo are variants of the one name, represented by the modern Akwonno or Akonno. One may suppose that Akonno (or Akwonno) was a stool name and that Ansa Kwao took this name on coming to the stool in 1725. Thus, whilst Römer came to know of him as Akwonno, Europeans at the time continued to refer to him by the name they had previously known, Ansa Kwao.

2. KvG 93: letters from Accra dd. 20 and 25 September, 1726.

killed him", and so now the Aburi people still say, "the Aburi cold that kills Oteŋ".

Early in 1727 open revolt flared up in the coastal regions between Accra and the Volta. Here had formerly flourished the kingdom of Ladoku, which had been conquered by Akwamu in 1679 and incorporated into the empire as a tribute-paying vassal state. Subsequently, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the old native dynasty had been swept away by Akwamu administrative reforms, and Ladoku had been divided into a number of small puppet states, the overall responsibility for which rested with a governor appointed by the king of Akwamu. In 1727 the governor appears to have been one Amega¹, son of a powerful Akwamu divisional chief Asumansu and of a sister of the king. Amega thus not only held an important post in the imperial administration, but also, since succession was determined matrilineally, was a possible successor to the paramount stool. The trouble in 1727 appears to have arisen as a result of Amega's depredations in the areas under his control, and a number of towns combined together in opposition to him. Amega considered the situation sufficiently serious to ask for reinforcements for his own forces, and he applied to Ansa Kwao for help. The king, however, was too preoccupied with affairs in the west to render assistance. Accordingly Amega appealed to his father who not only came to his aid, but also succeeded in enlisting the support of many of the other Akwamu chiefs in suppressing the revolt. Amega's conduct displeased the king greatly, for his action in obtaining the assistance of the Akwamu divisional chiefs threatened the delicate balance of power maintained between the divisional chiefs on the one hand, who had a considerable degree of independence within their own territories, and the administrators on the other hand, who, like Amega, were theoretically under the king's direct control².

1. The name Amega may, in fact, have been a title; it appears to be Ewe, meaning literally 'big man'. Ewe influence was of course strong in the eastern parts of the empire. The title is exactly equivalent to the Portuguese homem grande, still in common use at the time along the coast to denote one who was a councillor or administrator rather than a chief or cabocero. A paramount chief was always styled king.

2. V GK: letter from Pahl at Christiansborg dd. 14 April, 1727.

In 1726 and 1727 tension was thus mounting in both the hill country north of Accra and the coastal plains to the east. The Accras themselves, on the other hand, seem to have been concerned more with their own internal disputes than with any overt manifestations of hostility towards Akwamu. This was partly due to the fact that the Accra merchants had escaped the worst excesses of the illegal slave raiding that went on in the area, and indeed, as middlemen for the Akwamas, had in some cases amassed considerable fortunes¹. Furthermore the Accras must have remembered vividly the punitive expedition that had been sent against them by Akwonno in 1723, when an Akwamu war force estimated at between ten and twelve thousand men plundered and burned the town under the Dutch fort and then laid siege to Crevecoeur for four weeks until the Dutch were forced to surrender all the Accra women who had been sent into the fort for safety². It was therefore probably with some trepidation that the Accras heard rumours, in mid-1727, that Ansa Kwao would shortly visit Accra in person in order to make a 'palaver' with the Danes, and also to settle a dispute between the Dutch and the English which he considered threatened the peace of his realm.

Ansa Kwao arrived in Accra in July, 1727, and established his court in Little Accra, the headquarters of Amu, Akwamu governor of the former Accra kingdom. Amu, like the governor of Ladoku, Amega, was of the Akwamu royal family, his mother having been a sister of Akwonno. By demonstrations of superior force Ansa Kwao succeeded in obtaining a settlement from the Danes, with whom he then took oaths of friendship. The Dutch proved less amenable to the king's threats, but nevertheless, as has already been seen, were obliged to accept his judgement³. In November the king was able to return to his capital after having spent four months in restoring tranquillity to Accra, the most valued of all his possessions in virtue of its great commercial importance. At the end of the year the political situation thus looked reasonably settled. If, in both east and west, external enemies, Dahomey and Akim, were threatening the frontiers of the empire, there was as yet nothing to suggest that those threats could not be met. Nor was there

1. Rømer, 1769, p. 122.

2. See e.g. KvG 90: statement of van de Meer and de Lange dd. 29 June, 1723.

3. Supra, pp. 69-71.

any reason for thinking that the internal unrest could not be kept within manageable proportions; Accra, in particular, appeared thoroughly subdued. Certainly nothing indicated that the early weeks of 1728 would see set in motion a sequence of events that would ultimately culminate in the disintegration of the empire.

ii. The Defection of Amu.

In the first few days of 1728 there took place a murder that might have been of little consequence, - or so the Dutch at first hoped. The victim was Oti, a sister's son of Ansa Kwao¹, and almost certainly an uterine brother of Amega, the governor of the old Ladoku kingdom. Oti was thus one of the possible successors of Ansa Kwao. He was also very much a man of his time, of the era of the siccadingers, and Ansa Kwao had received many complaints from those who Oti had deprived of goods and slaves². For this reason the king conceived the idea of having his nephew imprisoned in Dutch Crevecoeur for a few days and nights, in order to curb his depredations. The Dutch factor in Accra appears to have entered into the plan whole-heartedly, and had Oti put in irons and cast into a slave dungeon³. Amu, however, Akwamu governor of Accra and broker for the Dutch, and himself a member of the Akwamu royal family, may have seen in Oti's incarceration a chance to rid himself of a rival claimant to the stool. All that we know for certain is that a slave in the dungeon somehow possessed himself of a knife and killed Oti. Conveniently, the slave then cut his own throat: being dead, he could not talk. The Dutch were unable to understand how the whole thing had happened, and regarded it as a most unfortunate accident. Amu perhaps knew otherwise.

It is a curious feature of the affair that for a time nothing happened. The Dutch notified Ansa Kwao of the event, and some three or four weeks later a messenger arrived from Akwamu charged with finding out

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1. Most reports say 'cousin', a term of ambiguous connotation in the 18th. century. But the following is specific; V GK: letter from Waeroe and others at Christiansborg to the Directors dd. 16 May, 1730.
 2. V GK: letter from Wellemsen at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 10 Feb. 1728.
 3. Ibid, and Kv G 94: letters from de la Planque at Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 9 and 16 January, 1728.

what had happened. Optimistically, the Dutch factor sent the messenger back with a small gift of spirits in order "to have no further difficulties over the occurrence"¹. It is possible that Ansa Kwao himself, for whatever reason, had contrived with Amu to kill Oti. Certainly the king showed little inclination to act until events in Akwamu overtook him. Amega brought his forces up from the Volta area to Great Ningo and "made a palaver against the king" over the death of Oti². Ansa Kwao was forced to modify his attitude. He sent back the gift to the Dutch in Crèvecoeur and "in the name of all Akwamu" had the factor informed that as soon as the funeral customs for his deceased nephew were over he would come to Accra in person and would overthrow the Dutch town and fort and "send the factor and all his subordinate Whites to the next world"³. Not unnaturally the Dutch took this as a declaration of war, even though Ansa Kwao subsequently announced that he would be satisfied with a payment of 2,000 Bendas (over £13,000 sterling)⁴. The factor, de la Planque, in reply, called together the Akwamu envoys who had made the claims on Ansa Kwao's behalf, showed them heaps of gunpowder and shot, and intimated that that was the only form in which they would get payment. The envoys in turn took this as a declaration of war⁵.

The Dutch began to prepare against a siege. Provisions and soldiers were sent to Accra from Elmina, and arrangements made to obtain more from Senya Bereku if necessary⁶. In these circumstances the attitude of Amu became a matter of vital concern, since as Akwamu governor of Accra he might be expected to represent his king's interests; only a year earlier, for instance, Ansa Kwao had called upon Amu to assist him in an expedition against Berekuso, and Amu had informed the Dutch "that he was bound to do this through the oaths which he had taken with Akwamu in the time of Aquando"⁷. Furthermore, in his secondary capacity as principal broker to

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1. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque at Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 2 Feb. 1728.
 2. VGK: letter from Wellemssen to Directors dd. 10 Feb. 1728.
 3. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque dd. 2 Feb. 1728.
 4. VGK: report from Waeroe at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 30 August, 1730.
 5. Ibid.
 6. KvG 94: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd. 2 Feb. and reply dd. 5 Feb. 1728.
 7. KvG 93: letter from Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 20 September, 1726.

the Dutch Amu was well acquainted with the state of the Dutch garrison, information which the Dutch presumably did not want conveyed to Ansa Kwao. Accordingly the Director-General in Elmina advised the factor in Accra to take precautionary measures against Amu, and the factor replied that, "as regards the Broker Amu I shall go to work with him as cautiously as possible, in order to prevent him doing any injury to the fort or to the subject people"¹.

Unexpectedly, at this critical juncture, Amu withdrew allegiance .. from Ansa Kwao, thereby breaking one of the vital links in the Akwamu administrative system. Whilst it was not unknown for divisional chiefs to take up arms against the king², the loyalty of such high level administrators as Amega and Amu was thought to be guaranteed in virtue of their membership of the royal family. Yet in 1727 Amega had come into conflict with the king over the handling of the revolt in Ladoku, and likewise in 1728 over the death of Oti. Now, also in 1728, Amu had taken the much more damaging step - from the Akwamu point of view - of completely renouncing his allegiance to Ansa Kwao.

The reasons for Amu's decision are complex and have been treated by the writer at length elsewhere³. Briefly however, Amu's allegiance was unwavering whilst his mother's brother Akwonno ruled over Akwamu. Akwonno died in 1725, an aged man, being survived by no brothers and in Amu, so it seems, by a lone sister's son. Succession to the throne being matrilineal, Amu clearly expected to succeed Akwonno as king, but in fact the kingmakers of Akwamu passed over him and chose instead a sister's daughter's son of Akwonno, namely Ansa Kwao. The reasons for their choice are nowhere documented, but it seems certain that Ansa Kwao was preferred in that he had been continuously resident with his matrilineal kin in the Akwamu capital, whereas for some fourteen years Amu, as governor of Accra, had been resident in that town, so prejudicing his claims to the throne. Rights of succession do not exist in vacuo but are inextricably bound up

1. KVG 94: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd. 12 Feb. 1728.

2. Rask, 1754, p. 92.

3. Wilks: Akwamu and Otubluhum: A Study in Akan Cross-Cousin Marriage.

See Appendix I.

with, among other things, residence. One might say that the kingmakers of Akwamu regarded Amu as having exchanged, in or about 1711, his long-term and uncertain prospects of the throne for the immediate and definite offer of the governorship. Amu's mortification in 1725 at being left in the subordinate position of governor whilst his nephew succeeded to the throne was further and subsequently increased by the fact that Ansa Kwao proved an injudicious ruler whose policies, as we have seen, contributed much to the spread of discontent among his subjects. The rift in the relations between the Dutch and Akwamu in 1728 precipitated the crisis in Amu's affairs, and, confident in his assessment of the situation, he chose rebellion. Thus it was that whilst in the early months of 1728 Ansa Kwao was pressing his claims for compensation for the death of Oti against the Dutch, Amu was "consulting privately with the Dutch factor on how they could best harass the King of Akwamu and in what manner they could bring about his complete ruin"¹.

Using his authority as governor of Accra, Amu sent out his collectors to levy taxes from all the Accra quarters; the Accras were informed that contributions were required to protect them against Akwamu and to bring about peace and concord². Amu then travelled into the hills north of Accra to solicit support from those usually described as "Hill Negroes", i.e. the Aburi, Berekuso, Larteh, and so forth. The Danes claimed that Amu used the taxes he had collected from Accra to bribe these peoples into joining forces with him³. However this may be, the hill people were probably in any case predisposed in Amu's favour as a result of Ansa Kwao's policies, who it will be remembered sent his own bands of slave-raiders "to steal Hill Negroes and Adampis from his own nation"⁴. It was arranged that the allies should foregather in Accra in March 1729 in order to take oaths with the Accras, to collect powder and ammunition, and to

1. VGK: report from Waeroe at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 30 August, 1730; KvG 97: Dutch translation of a letter from Waeroe to Dir.-Gen. Pranger at Elmina dd. 30 August, 1730.

2. KvG 97: letter from Waeroe to Pranger dd. 30 August, 1730.

3. VGK: Waeroe's report dd. 30 August, 1730.

4. *Supra*, p. 84.

agree upon a plan of action¹. It must be borne in mind that in supporting

1/2 or lie bed! Amu the hill peoples were not seeking to assert their independence of Akwamu: their material prosperity was too closely linked with the fact of their association with Akwamu for this to be likely. Their actions amounted rather to a transfer of allegiance from Ansa Kwao, whose depredations they had suffered, to Amu, another member of the royal family who they hoped to see established on the throne and whose rule they anticipated would prove milder.

In March Amu's allies from the hills duly arrived in Accra. The Dutch fired a seven-gun salute for them, and the English followed suit². The Danes made no such gesture. The people of Little Accra and Tfoke took oath with the hill people to combine together against Ansa Kwao. A delegation led by Ayi Kuma, a member of the old Gã ruling dynasty, approached the Danes in Christiansborg to solicit their support for the campaign. The Governor, Waeroe, sturdily asserted his neutrality, and refused to fire a salute for the delegation. He was unable to prevent the people of Osu from joining Amu however, and finally relented to the extent of "handing over to Caboceer Tette of Osu an old silk flag, on the understanding that when he got to the hills he would send corn to the fortress, at the company's expense, which he promised he would do"³.

The hill peoples left Accra in April, 1729 after it had been arranged that the Accras would join them in the hills by July. The general plan seems to have been for the combined forces to establish their war-camp in the hills only a short march from the Akwamu capital. Lying there during the rains, they would then close the paths from the coast and so attempt to prevent Akwamu from obtaining war materials from the Danes in Christiansborg, who were suspected of being sympathetic towards Ansa Kwao. On 15 July, 1729, the forces of Little Accra, together with those of Labadi and Temma, left for the hills⁴. They were followed a week later

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1. KVG 96: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd. 24 Feb. and reply dd. 1 March, 1730. KVG 97: letter from Waeroe to Pranger dd. 30 Aug. 1730. VGK: Waeroe's report dd. 30 August, 1730.
 2. VGK: Waeroe's report dd. 30 August, 1730.
 3. Ibid. Also VGK: report of Waeroe and others to Directors dd. 16 May, 1730.
 4. KVG 95: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd. 18 June, 1729.

by those of Osu, and on 1 July by those of Tɔko. The paths from Accra to Akwamu were closed, and trade came to a standstill¹. The allied forces took the name Akuw-apem, 'the thousand companies'; the name was subsequently given to the new state created in the hill country, the modern Akwapim².

Akwamu was naturally not unaware of the mustering of the rebel forces. The main Akwamu troops were doubtless deployed around the capital, but one force, probably that of Amega, advanced along the coast and fell upon the Accra towns as the Accra contingents left to join the Akuw-apem. Teshi was plundered on 12 June and its people massacred³. Eight days later Labadi suffered a like fate⁴. The people of Little Accra flocked into Crèvecoeur for safety, and the Dutch evacuated many of them to their lodge at Senya Bereku, much to the discomfort of the factor at that place who wrote to the Director-General in Elmina apologising for having failed to submit his accounts for May and June but explaining that "he was so occupied with the Accra people that he does not know where to shelter his own body, these being the numerous women and children who the Accra people have sent to him for shelter until the war with Akwamu is over"⁵. Unexpectedly, however, the Akwamu forces did not enter Little Accra, possibly because it was beyond Amega's jurisdiction or possibly because of reports that contingents from Little Popo and the lower coast were making their way through Keta to join the Akuw-apem, the Akwamu force being withdrawn from Accra in order to intercept them⁶.

iii. The Course of Rebellion.

Throughout the months of July and August, 1729 the Akuw-apem and the

1. Vgk: Waeroe's report dd. 30 August, 1730.

2. Ibid. Also Vgk: Waeroe's letter to the Directors dd. 24 Dec. 1730. It is clear from these sources that the commonly accepted derivation of the name Akwapim from Twi Mkoa apem, 'the thousand subjects', is incorrect.

3. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque at Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 18 June, 1729.

4. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque at Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 21 June, 1729; also Vgk: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.

5. KvG 95: letter from Raams at Bereku dd. 9 July, 1729.

6. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque at Accra dd. 30 July, 1729.

main Akwamu army lay within a short distance of each other. Ansa Kwao, perhaps unsure how far his own divisional chiefs were in sympathy with the rebels, was content to wait whilst building up his stocks of guns, ammunition, and powder. Amu's attempted blockade of the capital was not proving very effective, since the paths from there to the coast east of Accra, passing through the territory under Amega's jurisdiction, remained open. By this route, on 10 August, Ansa Kwao was able to send an envoy to the Danish governor in Christiansborg, to inquire how the Danes fared. The governor indicated his goodwill by sending presents of brandy, pipes, and tobacco to the king¹. The Dutch factor, de la Planque, on the other hand, was uncompromisingly hostile towards the king, and was reputed to have offered 48 ounces of gold to whomsoever should bring him Ansa Kwao's head to set upon his flagstaff, from which he was nicknamed Akwamu-wura, - the (would be) master of Akwamu².

During the period of inactivity Amu was attempting to induce the Akims to assist him in his bid for the throne. At this time the Akims were ruled by 'the three great Caboceers' Frempong Manso, Bakwante (who had succeeded Ofori in 1727³), and Owusu. It is not clear what political association, if any, bound these three rulers together in this period. Earlier Akim, or Great Akan as it was also called, appears to have been a unified monarchy; Bosman noted that:

"this Country, for as far as it is known to us, was formerly under a Monarchal Government; but the present Successor being yet but young, and betraying but too palpable Signs of a cruel Nature, hath not been able to make himself Master of the whole Land, but is obliged to be content with a part: For the Governing Men of the Kingdom fearing he will prove a great Tyrant, to restrain him, have taken a part of the Administration into their Hands: So it is a sort of Commonwealth...."⁴.

This refers to the late seventeenth century. By 1729, far from the status quo having been restored, the fissionary tendencies appear to have increased so that Frempong, Bakwante and Owusu were virtually independent

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1. VGK: Waeroc's report of 30 Aug. 1730. The messengers were captured by the Accras after leaving Christiansborg.
 2. Ibid.
 3. VGK: letter from Pahl at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 14 April, 1727. Ofori is often said to have taken part in the war against Akwamu, but this is incorrect.
 4. Bosman, 1705, p. 78.

rulers. Frempong's division is represented by the modern Akim Kotoku, Bakwante's by Akim Abuakwa, whilst Owusu, although heir-apparent to Bakwante, being his sister's son, appears to have possessed his own forces and a high degree of independence of action¹. It was, as we shall see, Frempong Manso who finally took the lead in supporting Amu, but initially he showed considerable reluctance to commit his armies to battle. It was probably Frempong's hesitancy that caused Amu to postpone his attack on the Akwamu capital which had been planned for the 'great good days'² beginning 21 August, 1729³. The delay was disastrous for the Akw-apem. On 7 September Ansa Kwao took the offensive and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the rebel forces⁴. The Accra contingents offered little resistance but retreated to their towns; they straggled into Little Accra on 8 and 9 September⁵. Amu, his own warriors, and many of the hill peoples were cut off from the coast but extricated themselves by retreating into Akim⁶. The Akwamus suffered heavy losses, including several chiefs⁷. Reports reached the Dutch Director-General in Elmina that Amu and his Akwamu supporters had deceived the Accras and had in fact turned and fired upon them. Although the report was shown to be false - even the Accras admitted that Amu had "received the Akwamus well" - yet it reflects the suspicion that surrounded this Akwamu provincial governor who had so unexpectedly assumed the role of rebel leader⁸.

Since the Akwamu forces did not follow up their victory by a punitive expedition against the Accras it may be assumed that the danger from Akim was considered too great (and all the more so since Amu was now there) to allow any reduction in the size of the army in the area of the capital and along the Akim frontier. The Accras however fully expected that the wrath of Ansa Kwao would now be directed against them. When Amu sent messengers to them offering powder and shot and requiring them to rejoin him, they declared that they would remain in their towns and fight there if the Akwamus should come⁹. The Akwamus, on the other hand, clearly

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1. Vgk: letter from Waeroe and others to Directors dd. 22 January, 1733.
 2. For a contemporary account of the Adaduanan or forty day calendar see Bosman, 1705, p.160. He associates the calendar particularly with Akwamu, as does Meyerowitz recently, The Sacred State of the Akan, 1951, p.142.
 3. Kvg 95: letter from de la Planque to Dir.-Gen. dd 18 August, 1729.
 4. Vgk: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.
 5. Kvg 95: letters from de la Planque dd. 9 and 13 September, 1729.
 6. Kvg 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 13 September, 1729.
 7. Kvg 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 21 September, 1729.
 8. Kvg 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 30 September, 1729.
 9. Vgk: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.

believed that the Accras would cause no further trouble, and sent there on 12 September an embassy carrying the jaw-bone of one of the slain enemy captains, which was to be presented to the Danish Governor in token of the victory, with the message that the king would shortly visit Accra in person and would then tell the Governor how things were in Akwamu. As soon as the party arrived in Osu, however, it was attacked by the Accras; seven of the escort were seized and two who offered resistance beheaded. The remaining members of the party escaped into Danish Christiansborg, and two of them were sent back to Akwamu to report what had happened. The people of Osu were alarmed, and knowing that the Danes would give them little protection, sought refuge in Little Accra. At this time there commenced that long blockade of Christiansborg that lasted from mid-September until January, 1730. The Accras made a pact "that nothing in any manner should be let come to the Danish fort, neither bread nor corn, under great penalties"¹. Some to whom Waeroe, the Governor, sent cowries for food returned them with the message: "Tell your Governor that he will get nothing at all from us; if he wants anything let him take his fort on his back and go with it up into Akwamu. He can buy there"².

Whilst in October, 1729 the Danes were busily trying to escape the effects of the blockade by sending canoes up and down the coast in search of foodstuffs, events in the interior made the position of Akwamu still more insecure for at the beginning of that month Amu, now assisted by Akim troops, attacked and defeated an Akwamu army that lay in the northernmost parts of the country. A section of the defeated army under three 'principal caboceers' retreated eastwards but were pursued by a rebel force of hill peoples and overtaken whilst trying to cross the Volta. In the resultant fighting further casualties were inflicted upon the retreating Akwamus; the rebels sent a number of heads to the Akims to mark their victory, and three were received in Accra³. It seems likely however that a number of the loyal Akwamus did succeed in crossing the Volta to the relative safety of the east bank, where they established a town that was later to become the new (and present) Akwamu capital. Although the Volta is usually very high in October it is not impossible that a crossing was effected

1. VGK: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730. KvG: letter from de la Planque dd. 10 October, 1729.

2. KvG 97: Dutch translation of Waeroe's letter to Dir.-Gen. Franger dd. 30 Aug. 1730. 3. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 10 October, 1729.

by the Senchi rapids. Akwamu traditions tell of a time when an Akwamu army, closely pursued by the enemy, arrived at the Volta near Senchi only to find no canoes available for the crossing. When all seemed lost a bush pig was seen to make its way to the opposite bank, and the whole army was able to follow. There is to this day a shrine to the god Ayesu - for he it was who had taken the form of the bush pig - in the centre of the modern capital.

iv. The Neutralization of Accra.

Late in 1729 Ansa Kwao found himself in an unenviable situation. Amu's rebel forces, with Akim support, had inflicted a crushing defeat upon one of his armies, and now occupied parts of his territory in the north. In the south-west Agona remained outwardly loyal to Ansa Kwao, but the Dutch factor in Senya Bereku had little doubt that it would change sides should it seem advantageous to do so¹. The Accras, considering it unlikely that Ansa Kwao could spare any of his forces to molest them, maintained their blockade of Danish Christiansborg, potentially the king's principal source of war materials. Furthermore, at this time the character of the Accra opposition began to change. Initially Amu, Akwamu governor of Accra, had induced the Accras to support his bid for the throne of Akwamu, but, as we have seen, they soon retired to their towns. Late in 1729, however, with Amu in Akim, the Accras began to think less in terms of assisting Amu to gain the throne, but rather of completely freeing themselves from Akwamu domination. Symptomatic of this was the emergence of Ayi Kuma as leader of the Accras, since he was a member of the old ruling dynasty that had been deprived of power by the Akwamu conquest of 1677-81². To the growing authority of Ayi Kuma must be attributed the refusal of the Accras to rejoin Amu after the defeat of the Akw-apem in September, 1729. Ayi Kuma also appears to have been responsible for the more hostile attitude adopted towards the Danes early in 1730. On 8 January Ayi Kuma attacked Christiansborg and carried off the company slaves, goatsherd, and goats. In the night his men attempted to seize the company canoes, but retired when two grenades were thrown at them. The next morning they returned, occupied the deserted Osu, and from there directed sporadic fire against the fort³. The Danish Governor

1. KvG 95: letter from Guicherit at Senya Bereku dd. 19 October, 1729.
 2. *Supra*, pp. 9-16.
 3. WIC 109: despatch from Dir.-Gen. Pranger & Council to Assembly of X dd. 9 July, 1730 (enclosure K: letter from Waeroe to Pranger dd. 21 March, 1730).

Waeroe considered the situation sufficiently serious to ask for Akwamu assistance. As the paths from Christiansborg to the capital were much too dangerous to use he sent a canoe to Great Ningo, then apparently the headquarters of Amega, Akwamu governor of the former kingdom of Ladoku, and asked for Amega's assistance¹. Before any reply could be received from Amega, on 12 January a small force of Akwamu troops from the capital unexpectedly succeeded in getting through to Christiansborg; they conveyed Ansa Kwao's regrets that he was unable to come in person to Accra, but suggested that Waeroe might accompany them back to the capital. The Governor accepted the suggestion but unfortunately there seems to be no record of his discussions with the king. Presumably Ansa Kwao made it clear that he could not divert any of his forces to Accra because of the imminent danger of an Akim attack.

Waeroe arrived back in Christiansborg on 15 January and the following day the canoe returned from Great Ningo with the message that Amega could not enter Accra without the king's permission but that he would send a messenger to request the necessary authority². On 15 January the Accra attacks upon Christiansborg were stepped up, and Ayi Kuma's soldiers harassed the fort continuously. In desperation Waeroe sent his canoe back to Amega to urge him to obtain the king's permission to enter Accra without further delay. On the 16th. hope returned when an Aburi farmer and his wife came into Christiansborg bringing maize, and was able to inform Waeroe that help might be expected from Akwamu very soon³. Confirmation was received when the canoe returned from Great Ningo on 18 January with a message from Amega that although he was still unable to enter Accra, help might be expected from the king in three or four days⁴. It may be assumed that, with Amu's defection in mind, Ansa Kwao felt certain misgivings about Amega who had already opposed his will on two occasions⁵, and therefore decided to deal with the situation in Accra lest Amega might be tempted to take the initiative.

Amega's information was accurate. On 22 January 1730 the first Akwamu

1. VGK: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.

2. Ibid.

3. WIC 109: Pranger's despatch, encl. K, letter from Waeroe dd. 21 March, 1730; VGK: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.

4. VGK: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.

5. Supra, pp. 87 and 90.

troops entered Accra, under five captains, and were joined three days later by another two captains and their forces. This proved to be only an advance guard. A day later the main body of the army arrived under the command of Kwesi Bibri, a brother-in-law of Ansa Kwao who may have been chosen as the new governor of Accra in Amu's stead. This brought the total number of Akwamu soldiers in Accra to about two thousand¹. The Danish Governor was said to have given the Akwamus thirty or forty kegs of gunpowder and muskets upon their arrival; the Dutch also accused him of informing them that the English fort was short of water, its rain water tank having fractured, and suggesting that if besieged the fort would be forced to capitulate².

Despite the size of the force at his disposal, Kwesi Bibri found his task no easy one. Whilst his forces were safe under the guns of Christiansborg, the Accras were equally safe under those of Crèvecoeur. A number of skirmishes occurred in the intervening bush but no advantage was secured by either side. Twice the Akwamu forces attacked Little Accra but on both occasions were driven back by the Dutch guns³. On one such sortie they suffered seventy-five casualties, dead or wounded⁴. Kwesi Bibri sent messengers to the king informing him of the situation. Ansa Kwao was faced with a dilemma. On the one hand the defence of the Akim frontier was of the utmost importance, the danger from that quarter being perhaps greater than ever before. On the other hand this very fact made it all the more essential that Accra should be pacified, the possibility of an attack from the rear eliminated, and the supply of war materials from Christiansborg guaranteed. Ansa Kwao decided to turn his attention to Accra. It may have been the only reasonable decision in the circumstances, but it was certainly one fraught with danger for Akwamu.

Ansa Kwao entered Accra on 14 February 1730 with the main Akwamu army. The result could not be in doubt. In the face of cannon fire from both Dutch and English forts Little Accra and Tsjoka were immediately

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1. V GK: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.
 2. WIC 109: despatch from Dir.-Gen. Pranger and Council to Assembly of X dd. 9 July 1730 (enclosure K: letter from de la Planque to Pranger, n.d.).
 3. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 2 February, 1730.
 4. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 27 April, 1730.

overrun, plundered, and set on fire. Ansa Kwao then laid siege to the two forts¹. When the Dutch Director-General in Elmina received the news he reprimanded the factor in Accra, saying that now one saw the result of "a hare aggravating a sleeping lion"². He had, however, misjudged the situation. Ansa Kwao, despite his show of strength, was concerned only with the rapid pacification of Accra; his intention was not to bring the Accras into the war on his side, but only to ensure their neutrality. To this end Ansa Kwao, whilst keeping the forts besieged, made offers of peace to both Dutch and English. The English accepted the overtures and, after negotiations, finally entered into an agreement with the king on 20 March, the siege of their fort having been raised some time before³. The Dutch, on the other hand, insisted that they would negotiate with Ansa Kwao only after he had withdrawn his troops from Accra⁴, a presumptuous attitude since in principle they were still bound to Akwamu by the Treaty of 1703 which among other things acknowledged that "the Accra people shall be under the dominion of the King of Akwamu"⁵. Ansa Kwao accordingly maintained the siege of Crèvecoeur. The Danes supplied him with arms and gunpowder, and with water from their own tanks. When Ansa Kwao asked Waeroe for the loan of cannons with which to breach the walls of Crèvecoeur however, the Governor politely suggested that the king should bring down his own guns from Akwamu in which case he, Waeroe, would help with the placing of them⁶.

The Dutch were confident that they could hold out longer than Ansa Kwao dare stay in Accra. Their guns maintained a steady fire upon the attackers, one chance shot killing twenty-five of them after which the Akwamus developed "an uncommon dread of the fort". A messenger from Akim managed to get into the fort on 18 March and assured the Dutch that Akim was on the point of launching its offensive against Akwamu⁷. Obviously

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1. KvG 95: letter from de la Planque dd. 16 Feb. 1730; VCK: letter from Waeroe and others to Directors dd. 16 May 1730.
 2. KvG 96: letter from Dir.-Gen. Norri to de la Planque dd. 1 March, 1730.
 3. KvG 96: letter from Gawron at Accra to Dir.-Gen. dd. 22 March, 1730; VCK: letter from Waeroe and others to Directors dd. 16 May, 1730.
 4. KvG 96: letter from de la Planque dd. 24 February, 1730.
 5. *Supra*, p. 37.
 6. WIC 109: Pranger's despatch of 9 July, 1730 (enclosure K: letter from de la Planque to Pranger, n.d.).
 7. KvG 96: letter from Gawron dd. 22 March, 1730.

Ansa Kwao also heard of the impending Akim attack for on the night of 21/22 March, after having occupied Accra for five weeks, he quietly raised the seige of Crèvecoeur and by morning the Akwamu forces had been withdrawn from Accra¹. Ansa Kwao was probably satisfied that he had achieved all that was possible there; Danish Christiansborg had been relieved, the English had taken oaths of friendship with Akwamu, the Accras had been disciplined, and even the Dutch had expressed their willingness to negotiate once the Akwamu forces were withdrawn. Furthermore, the return of the army to the capital averted the immediate threat of an Akim invasion though the situation continued to be grave, all the more so since the Fantis, who had long maintained a pact of non-agression with Akwamu², were beginning to consider the advantages of an Akim alliance³.

From his capital Ansa Kwao endeavoured to complete the neutralization of Accra. He sent messengers with gifts to the Dutch and to Ayi Kuma, requesting that old friendships should be renewed, and even with offers of compensation for the recent attack upon Crèvecoeur. The Director-General in Elmina welcomed the overtures and suggested that the king should send two chiefs to Accra to negotiate with the factors de la Planoue and Blittersdorp, who he deputed to act in his name⁴. To this Ansa Kwao agreed, his messengers arriving in Accra on 19 May to say that on the coming 'good days' the two chiefs would arrive in Accra with the authority to settle all the outstanding disputes there⁵.

v. The Entry of Akim. ✓

On 18 May events occurred that made the final pacification of Accra a matter of minor importance. The long threatened Akim offensive materialised, and an army crossed the Akwamu frontier, breached the line of fortifications, and overran and sacked six Akwamu towns. Akwamu forces engaged the attacking army but had to retreat after a sharp engagement in

1. KvG 96: letter from Gawron dd. 22 March, 1730. VgK: Waeroe's report of 30 August, 1730.

2. Supra, p. 24.

3. KvG 96: letter from Guicherit at Bereku dd. 5 March, 1730, and Pranger's reply, n.d.

4. KvG 97: letter from Pranger to Gawron dd. 27 April, 1730 and reply of the same date, and Minutes of the Council for 30 April, 1730.

5. KvG 97: letters from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 21 and 31 May, 1730.

which there were heavy casualties on both sides¹. It was generally expected that this was only the prelude to a more strongly mounted attack. Ansa Kwao decided to try to hold the Akim invasion whilst destroying the rebel forces of the Akuw-apem that still lay in the north of his territory. The Accras, it will be remembered, had defected from the Akuw-apem ranks during the earliest fighting, but the hill peoples had retired with Amu into Akim and had subsequently invaded the north of Akwamu, with Akim assistance, early in October, 1729. Amu's leadership of the Akuw-apem, however, had been weakened since the Akims had seconded one of their own war-lords, Ofori Dua, to the rebels. To Ofori Dua the akims were later to entrust the government of the newly created state that joined together the Aburi, Berekuso, Larteh, and other hill peoples, - a state that not unnaturally took the name of the Akuw-apem to become the modern Akwapim. Ofori Dua thus appears to be the same person as the Ofori Kuma traditionally remembered as the founder of the ruling house of Akwapim and said to have been the brother of Ofori Panyin who ruled over the Abuakwa section of Akim until his death in 1727 when he was succeeded by Bakwante². It thus seems likely that it was the Akims under Bakwante, i.e. the Abuakwas, who assisted the rebel Akuw-apem, whilst it was those under Frempong, i.e. the Kotokus, who were responsible for the main invasion of Akwamu.

It was then to the Akuw-apem that Ansa Kwao decided to direct his immediate attention, once again as in the case of Accra preferring to deal with the rebels already within his territory rather than to concentrate upon defending his frontiers from attacks from beyond. Late in May, 1730 he sent messengers to the Dutch in Accra apologising for not having completed the settlement with them but announcing that first he would fight the hill peoples to see "who will be master". The messengers left two freeborn Akwamus in pawn with the Dutch as a token of the king's good faith³. In mid-June the Akwamu forces took the field against the Akuw-apem. The fighting was particularly fierce and the Akwamu losses heavy at first. Ofori Dua was credited with especial bravery and was reputed to have taken personally "quite fifty heads of the Akwamus". An

1. KvG 97: letters from Blittersdorp dd. 21 and 31 May, 1730.

2. See e.g. B.S. Akuffo, *Ahemfi Adesua*, (1950), p. viii.

3. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp dd. 31 May, 1730.

Akwamu victory was assured however when a chief of the hill peoples deserted from the Akw-apem and, although he himself was slain in the attempt, most of his followers succeeded in rejoining the loyal Akwamu armies¹. This was not to be the only rebel group to return its allegiance to Ansa Kwao during the later stages of the fighting. The hill peoples had been subjects of Akwamu for something like a century. They had undoubtedly benefitted greatly from their incorporation into the larger polity; under the pax Akwamu the conditions of relative stability necessary for the growth of trade were established throughout large areas. When Ansa Kwao succeeded to the stool of Akwamu in 1725 however, the hill peoples suffered severely from the depredations of the slave raiders who the king tolerated and even encouraged. They were therefore ~~among~~ the first to support Amu, Akwamu royal governor of Accra, in his bid to usurp the throne, and constituted the main body of the rebel army, the Akw-apem. By 1730 however, the struggle had assumed a very different character; Amu's leadership of the rebel forces had given way to that of the Akim chief Ofori Dua, and the Akw-apem had become little more than an auxiliary of the main Akim armies that were now committed to a war aimed at the total destruction of Akwamu power. Under such circumstances a number of rebel chiefs, disinclined to contribute to this end, saw fit to return their allegiance to Ansa Kwao. The remaining rebel forces, weakened by the defections from their ranks, were overwhelmed by the main Akwamu army in June 1730. On the 27th. of that month messengers from Ansa Kwao arrived in Dutch Crèvecoeur carrying gifts of jawbones as a token of his victory; they informed the Dutch that there were three hundred or more captives in Akwamu ready for sale². The new Dutch factor, Blittersdorp, was more sympathetically inclined towards Akwamu than his predecessor de la Planque who, it will be remembered, had given Amu his support in the early days of the rebellion. Blittersdorp forbade Ayi Kuma and the Accras to trouble the messengers, pointing out that if they were attacked "the law of nations would thereby be violated, for all ambassadors had the liberty to pass to and fro unobscured"³.

1. KVG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 24 June, 1730.

2. KVG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 28 June, 1730.

3. Ibid.

At this time Ayi Kuma appears to have gained complete control in Accra, and on his own initiative had sent messengers to both the Fantis and Agonas to urge them to join in the struggle against Akwamu¹. This was a matter of some importance to the Akims, since they (and particularly the Akim Kotokus) hesitated to commit their main forces to battle whilst the attitude of the Fantis, with whom they shared a southern frontier, was in doubt. Furthermore there was the fear that the Ashantis, who were well-disposed towards Akwamu, might take an Akim attack upon that country as a pretext for invading Akim². In such circumstances the Akims preferred to delay a little longer but, lest their conduct be thought a result of indecision, on 8 July they sent pawns to the Dutch factor at Apam, assured him that they still intended to take possession of Akwamu, and requested him to keep available large supplies of guns and gunpowder³.

In July fighting broke out again between the Akw-*apem* forces and an Akwamu army, and lasted for eight or more days. The Akwamus were surrounded and so cut off from the main army in the capital. Scouts were sent through the bush to inform the king of their position and to ask for reinforcements. The king however did not dare reduce the size of the forces around the capital, and reconciled himself to the loss of the surrounded men⁴. Ansa Kwao must have taken this decision in the light of the latest disturbing news concerning Akim, for in mid-July it was learned that Akim (presumably Kotoku) had made a final payment of gold to the Fantis in order to secure their goodwill during the pending invasion of Akwamu⁵. Furthermore it must have been about this same time that Akim arrived at an agreement with Ashanti by promising to pay the king, Osei Opoku, five hundred slaves in order to secure his neutrality. Osei Opoku, thinking it unlikely that Akwamu would be easily defeated, agreed to allow Akim five months within which to complete the war, after which time, whatever the outcome, the five hundred men were to be

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1. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 28 June, 1730.
 2. KvG 97: letters from Gawron at Apam dd. 10 and 12 July, 1730. Also R/mer, 1769, p. 130.
 3. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 10 July, 1730.
 4. Ibid.
 5. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 12 July, 1730.

handed over¹.

Ansa Kwao adopted a purely defensive strategy. The Akim offensive was to be met and held along the western borders. If this proved impossible, and the capital was seriously threatened, then the Akwamu armies were to fall back on the coast and the court would be re-established in Accra. In the light of this policy it thus became more necessary than ever to eliminate the possibility of serious opposition from the Accras. To this end two war-lords, Ansaku and Abokan², with their forces, were instructed to be in readiness to enter Accra³. Not wishing to antagonise the Dutch once more, however, the king first decided to re-open negotiations with them. The Dutch Council in Elmina was disposed to effect a reconciliation⁴. Its factor in Accra, Blittersdorp, was sceptical of the Akim threat to invade Akwamu and took the view that "the Akwamus are warriors, and would not let themselves be hunted out of their nest so easily"⁵. An embassy from Ansa Kwao that arrived in Accra on 15 July, however, was attacked and all but three of its members seized, much to the annoyance of Blittersdorp. Eleven days later the king sent a further two messengers, who first sought the protection of the Danes in Christiansborg. Word was then sent to the Dutch that they should send a whiteman to speak with them. The Dutch sent their surgeon, and the Akwamus complained that although there were many slaves in Akwamu ready for sale it was impossible to bring them to the coast because of the turbulence of the Accras and especially of those around Crèvecoeur⁶. The Dutch expressed their willingness to make a final settlement with the king, and agreed to curb the hostility of the Accras as far as was within their power, whereupon Ansa Kwao sent a more important emissary to treat with the European factors in Accra. This was **Boakye** ('Batje'), a son of the late king Akwonno. Considering

1. Römer, 1769, p. 130.

2. Abokan may possibly represent Abekai or Bekai, to this day the stool name of the Akwamu chief next in rank to the Omanhene or king.

3. Kvg 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 11 July, 1730.

4. Kvg 97: letter from Dir.-Gen. Pranger to Gawron at Apam dd. 15 July, 1730.

5. Kvg 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 20 July, 1730.

6. Kvg 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 27 July, 1730.

the recent hostilities involving the four powers in Accra, Akwamu, Danes, Dutch, and English, the events of 29 July have a Gilbertian quality. In the morning a party which included the Danish Governor Waeroe and the Akwamu ambassador Boakye left Christiansborg by canoe for the English fort where they were greeted with a fifteen gun salute. The English factor then joined the company and all proceeded to Dutch Crèvecoeur for discussions about an Accra settlement. The Dutch factor entertained the company. Waeroe and Boakye drank copiously and the latter was soon asleep in his chair. Later, at 3 p.m., it was decided that the whole party should adjourn to the English fort for dinner, after which it returned once more to Crèvecoeur to drink tea. Tea was naturally followed by somewhat more intoxicating refreshments, and it was evening before any suggestion of business was made. By that time however, Boakye was so drunk that it proved necessary to postpone any serious discussion until the next day. On the 30th. discussions were opened, and Boakye insisted that before any final settlement was made the king must be given compensation for the injuries his subjects had suffered at the hands of Ayi Kuma. Ayi Kuma was called in and the preliminary matter settled, whereupon Boakye announced that he must now report to the king but would return to Accra shortly¹.

Whilst Boakye was wining and dining in Accra yet again Ansa Kwao fell upon the hill peoples, who presumably had heard rumours that this was to happen since on 17 July they had sent a deputation to Ayi Kuma in Accra begging him to seek the permission of the Dutch for their womenfolk to be given refuge under the fort². The attack was launched on 29 or 30 July, 1730, and the rebels, who had borne the brunt of all the previous fighting, were able to offer little resistance. Many deserted, some handing over their leaders to Ansa Kwao in order to effect a reconciliation. Two captains, Ampon and 'Etoe' (?Adu), escaped into Accra with a large number of their despondent followers³. Ayi Kuma, fearing that Akwamu troops would be sent against Accra again, without waiting for Dutch permission started to

1. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 31 July, 1730.

2. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 18 July, 1730.

3. KvG 97: letters from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 31 July and 9 August, 1730.

construct an embasured outwork between Crèvecoeur and the beach behind which his people would make their final stand¹. On 6 August, while this work was in progress, Boakye arrived back in Accra with word from Ansa Kwao that he was prepared to receive an emissary from the Dutch, for whom he would guarantee safe conduct. Blittersdorp accepted this suggestion, but Boakye and the Dutch envoy were unable to depart for the capital since it was learned that, at the instigation of the Accras, arrangements had been made to ambush it. Blittersdorp reported that it was obvious that the Accras wanted to prevent him making any settlement with Akwamu, but he believed that the king was sincere in his desire for such a settlement².

A number of Boakye's followers, with escorts provided by the Dutch and English, managed to pass through to the capital, and returned to Accra in three days with a body of Akwamu warriors who were to escort Boakye and the Dutch emissary in safety to the king. Unexpectedly in the evening Boakye, without taking his leave, departed for Akwamu with his soldiers, leaving behind not only the Dutch emissary but also all his goods and five of his personal servants. Blittersdorp could only assume that the king had been deceiving him and had sent Boakye to Accra only 'to spy out what was going on'³. What seems much more likely is that Boakye was extremely surprised to observe that the Dutch were allowing Ayi Kuma to build an outwork adjoining the fort, considered this an act of treachery, and was only too thankful to escape from Accra even if it meant abandoning his goods and servants.

Boakye's return with the news of the failure of his mission in Accra presumably led Ansa Kwao to abandon his plan for retreating there should it be impossible to contain the expected Akim attack on the capital. Yet the situation had improved in other respects. The rebel forces of the Akuw-apem had been severely punished and although parts of the extreme north of the king's lands may still have been under their control they could no longer be counted a serious menace. The Accras, if not submissive, were at least concerned solely with their own defence, and would only become dangerous should Ansa Kwao try to re-occupy their towns. Frempong Manso of Akim Kotoku

1. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 9 August, 1730.

2. Ibid.

3. KvG 97: letters from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 17 and 27 August, 1730.

was purchasing considerable quantities of war materials from the Dutch at Apem¹, but there was considerable scepticism as to whether his projected invasion of Akwamu would ever materialise; as the Dutch Director-General remarked, "the Akims have put off offering battle to the Akwamus for three years"². In fact Frempong, having purchased the neutrality of the Ashantis and Fantis, still felt the need for allies; the forces at his disposal were too small to 'involve themselves in a formal war against the Akwamus' though they might 'try to attack some of the small cross (villages) of the latter'³. More than anything he wanted to secure Fanti assistance but, despite Fanti promises, he finally fought without them. It is certain that he obtained the alliance of the Assins, an Akan people lying west of Kotoku⁴, but of other allies documentary evidence is silent. Tradition is confused, but in general suggests that, apart from the part played by the rebel Akuw-apem and Accras, Akim Abuakwa was involved only to the extent to which it gave support to Amu and the Akuw-apem, and that the main offensive against Akwamu was indeed the work of Frempong Manso of the Kotokus, assisted principally by the Assins but also perhaps by smaller contingents from Agona and elsewhere⁵.

Into Ansa Kwao's assessment of the situation in mid-1730 there must have entered one other important factor of which little can be learned from literary sources but about which tradition is unanimous. It is certain that various sub-chiefs of Ansa Kwao refused to support him but preferred to remain neutral⁶. The most important of these was the chief of Asemankese, erstwhile capital of Akwamu, who, with his own sub-chiefs, appears to have formed part of the Gyase division of the army, i.e. of the king's personal guard. It is significant in this context that the chief of Asemankese was of the Abrade royal clan of Akwamu, from which it may be inferred that his

1. See e.g. letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 11 August, 1730, KvG 97.

2. KvG 97: letter from Dir.-Gen. Pranger to Gawron dd. 15 July, 1730.

3. KvG 97: letter from Dir.-Gen. Pranger to Accra, n.d. but March/April, 1730.

4. See V GK: letter from Waeroe and others to Directors, n.d. but Dec. 1730.

5. An excellent published source for such traditions, which includes spokesmen for Akwamu, Asemankese, Akim Kotoku, Adansi, Aburi, etc., is: Gold Coast Law Reports, Divisional Court, 1926-29, and Award in Asemankese Akim-Abuakwa Arbitration, 1929, (London), 1930. The Award was delivered by His Honour Mr. Justice Hall on 9 September, 1929.

6. Ibid.

non-participation was primarily a result of his disinclination to take sides in a struggle for power between two other members of the royal clan, Ansa Kwao and Amu. Probably his reluctance to support the rebel Amu was balanced by his lack of confidence in Ansa Kwao, for Rømer states that the king's policies at the time ran counter to the wishes of his nobles¹.

Frempong Manso finally committed his armies to battle early in September, 1730. By the 5th. he had already captured many of the outlying Akwamu villages and so deprived the capital of food supplies². Twelve days later the capital had been encircled, and in the south the invaders were only a march of half a day from Accra. Amu, who was with the invaders, sent to Accra to ask for forty kegs of gunpowder. The Fantis, who had still not risen in support of Frempong, were nevertheless busily engaged in hunting down Akwamu fugitives, whereupon Frempong made it known that unless the Fanti forces joined in the struggle he would order that all the Fantis found plundering in Akwamu should be executed³. The capital soon fell after, according to Akwamu tradition, a number of battles fought along the Nsaki river; by 21 September it was reported that Ansa Kwao had been captured and put in irons⁴. The Dutch factor in Apam speculated that soon 'the whole coast will be at peace, and trade for the Honourable Company will flourish', and informed the Director-General that 'he had done his best for this end and had spared no expense to bring everything to rights'⁵. By 23 September it was known that Ansa Kwao had been beheaded, though it was not until a month later that Amu arrived in Accra carrying with him the head and a hand of the king, his sister's son⁶.

vi. The Aftermath of Defeat.

After the loss of the capital in November 1730, and with the subsequent execution of Ansa Kwao, all semblance of centralised political control over Akwamu affairs disappeared. Everywhere the utmost confusion reigned. Many Akwamus were already surrendering 'to the mercy or

1. Rømer, 1769, p. 131.

2. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 5 September, 1730.

3. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 17 September, 1730.

4. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 21 September, 1730.

5. Ibid.

6. KvG 97: letters from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 23 Sept. and 30 Oct. 1730.

displeasure of the Akims'¹, and Rømer adds that thousands also surrendered to the Accras, commenting that 'one can imagine what was done with them if a bottle of liquor could be obtained for each Akwamu'². One may assume that towns like Asamankese that had refused to assist Ansa Kwao, and those like Aburi that had supported Amu, were flooded with refugees from the areas that had been overrun by the invading armies. On the other hand, Akwamu resistance was not completely overcome. There is evidence to suggest that in mid-October the forces of Amega, Akwamu governor of the province of Ladoku, were still relatively intact, though Amu, with an Akim force, was attempting to surround them³. It seems probable that Amega had brought his troops up from Ladoku to assist the king, but had arrived too late. Furthermore, other sections of the Akwamu forces appear to have escaped the general cataclysm by marching eastwards into the comparatively undisturbed territories beyond the Volta river, converging upon the Volta Gorge where, it will be remembered, a year earlier three Akwamu chiefs had similarly escaped across the river and had established a new settlement that was subsequently to become the Akwamu state capital in succession to Nsachi, Nyananase, and Asamankese⁴.

✓ No attempt was made by Frempong Manso to pursue the retreating Akwamu armies, for which a number of reasons may be adduced. With Akwamu towns like Asamankese still intact, Frempong may have deemed it unwise to campaign far to the east whilst leaving them lying across what would be his lines of communication. ✓ Furthermore there was the possibility that the Ashantis might invade his territories whilst his armies were in the field, - all the more likely since the five months' truce must have almost expired. Secondly, Frempong's relations with the Fantis were becoming strained since, although they had taken no part in the fighting, upon the fall of Ansa Kwao many bands of Fanti marauders had poured into the devastated country and were busily engaged in carrying off prisoners and booty⁵. Some Fanti chiefs were even demanding that Frempong should hand

1. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 17 September, 1730.

2. Rømer, 1769, pp. 131-32.

3. KvG 97: letter from de la Planque at Accra dd. 14 October, 1730.

4. Supra pp. 97-8.

5. KvG 97: letter from Gawron at Apam dd. 17 September, 1730.

over to them a proportion of his booty¹. Finally of course, Frempong and his allies were faced with a number of administrative problems demanding immediate attention, - a policy had to be evolved for dealing not only with the conquered Akwamu territory proper, but also with the former tributary states, Aburi, Larteh, and the other hill countries, parts of the province of Ladoku that had been overrun, and Accra itself, all of which were now considered to have come under an Akim overlordship.

To this time must be attributed the creation of the Akwapim state, perpetuating by its name the memory of the rebel Akuw-apem forces which had contributed so much to the downfall of Ansa Kwao. It is uncertain whether Akwamu had previously brought together the hill peoples into any sort of administrative unit. Akwamu tradition asserts that one Ofei Kwesi Agyeman, a chief whose seat was at Adenya, ruled over the Guan peoples (of Larteh Ahenease and Kubease, Odiha, etc.) and over the Kyerepon (of Adukrom, Awukugua, Abonse, etc.), and the tradition may well have a basis of fact. In the western hills the position was rather different in that there had occurred an influx of Akwamu settlers into the area of Aburi, Berekuso, and Nsachi, - an influx that probably assumed major proportions following the removal of the Akwamu court to Nsachi in 1701². Amu, as we have seen, drew his main support from the hill peoples, but it is not clear whether the Akwamus of the Aburi area, who were subjects of a royal Abrade clan stool, fought with him or not; Aburi tradition asserts that they remained neutral like Asamankese. Ofei Kwesi Agyeman, on the other hand, reputed ruler of the Guan and Kyerepon under Ansa Kwao, must certainly have supported the rebel leader though it seems likely that it was sections of his forces that, in the course of the fighting, renounced the cause of the Akuw-apem and returned allegiance to Ansa Kwao. Indeed, the stool family itself appears to have rent in two, one part supporting the rebels and surviving to this day in the Ofei Kwesi Agyeman stool of Akwapim, and the other part returning allegiance to Ansa Kwao, escaping across the Volta on the death of that king, and surviving in the Ofei Kwesi Agyeman stool of Akwamu. The former stool now supplies the Korantirihene or Osahene, i.e. commander-in-chief

1. KvG 97: letter from de la Planque at Accra dd. 14 October, 1730.

2. *Supra*, p. 45.

of the army, of Akwapim¹. The latter stool supplies the Nifahene, i.e. commander of the right wing, of Akwamu.

Frempong Manso, Bakwante, and Owusu decided upon the creation of a new state in the hills. Ofori Dua, the Akim war-lord who had taken over the command of the Akuw-apan from Amu, was granted the paramouncy and, with his followers, founded the towns of Akropong and Amanokrom and established his capital at Amanprobi. He is remembered in Akwapim tradition as Safori or Kae Ofori Kuma I, founder of the royal dynasty, and is reputed to have been a member of the royal dynasty of the Akim Abuakwas². The new state was constituted on the familiar Akan pattern³. The Ofei Kwesi Agyeman stool, or rather that part that had remained loyal to Amu and Ofori Dua, was rewarded by being given the command of the army and its occupant, as Korantirihene, became the second chief in the state. The Akwamu areas around Aburi became the Adonten, and the occupant of the Akwamu Abrade stool in Aburi became the Adontenhene or commander of the centre of the army. The Kyerepon and Guan towns were allocated to the Nifa, or right wing, and the Benkum, or left wing, respectively.

A second problem facing the victorious Akim leaders was that of the future of Accra and of the adjacent Adanome districts, that is, of the western parts of the former province of Ladoku over which Akwamu authority had now become ineffective. It seems clear that the Akims held the Accra contribution to the downfall of Akwamu in little regard, and considered that they had assumed, as successors to Akwamu, the overlordship of Accra and Ladoku. When, shortly after the Akwamu defeat, the Dutch sent an envoy accompanied by Dako, a son of Amu, to treat with Frempong Manso, both were ill-treated⁴. Shortly afterwards the Akims imposed upon the Accras a heavy tax of 350 bendas (£2,333 sterling) and six strings of conte de terre, a highly valued bead⁵, and, having

1. B.S. Akuffo, Ahemfi Adesua, (1950), pp.90-1.

2. Ibid, p. viii.

3. *Supra*, pp. 58 - 61.

4. KvG 97: letter from de la Plaque at Accra dd. 29 October, 1730.

5. KvG 97: letter from de la Plaque and Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 30 October, 1730.

imposed a time limit within which payment had to be made, then demanded the sum in full within one fifth of the time¹. The Accras felt that they were not being treated with the respect due to them, and their bitterness was not assuaged when Frempong Manso and Bakwante proceeded to divide authority over Accra between them, the former taking charge of the Osu district with Danish Christiansborg, and the latter of Little Accra and Tsaka with the Dutch and English forts. Owusu, heir-apparent to Bakwante, was given charge of the Adangme region and also, so it would seem, had some sort of limiting power over Ofori Dua's sovereignty in Akwapim².

Those areas of the Akwamu homeland that had been overrun by the Akim armies, together with the Akwamu towns that had failed to support Ansa Kwao, presented another and quite different problem to the Akim leaders. The Dutch Director-General Pranger, in reply to his factors in Accra who had expressed the hope that the Akims would annex these areas, wrote that:

"as regards the Akwamu country you say that you want to see the Akims themselves assume the possession and government of it, but that is something that will not occur for it is an old custom of the natives that they always leave a part of their vanquished enemies in their own country, one of whom they put in authority over it, who they then regard as their tribute-paying vassal. The victorious party can settle there if they wish to, but nevertheless they obtain no share in the government"³.

Pranger's assessment of the situation showed extraordinary insight. An area in the extreme north-west of Akwamu, along the Pra river, may have been annexed by Frempong Manso, for a number of Akim Kotoku towns in that district such as Pankese, Nyafaman, Ntronan and Adausena still remember their Akwamu origins⁴. The remainder of the Akwamu homeland, however, was placed under the authority of Kwesi Bibri⁵, though, as we

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1. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 7 December, 1730.
 2. Biörn, 1788, p. 203. Also see VGK: letter from Waeroe and others to Directors, n.d. but December, 1730.
 3. KvG 97: letter from de la Planque and Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 10 Nov. 1730, and Pranger's reply dd. 17 Nov. 1730.
 4. M.J. Field, Akim-Kotoku, 1948, p. 199.
 5. KvG 97: letter from de la Planque and Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 10 Nov. 1730; KvG 97: letter from Pranger to Blittersdorp, n.d. but June, 1731. Danish and Dutch sources have Bibri, but the latter also Dubrie, Bubbeni, Dubra, etc.

shall see, he was not to prove the puppet ruler for which the Akims must have hoped. It will be remembered that it was Kwesi Bibri who had been sent by Ansa Kwao to relieve Christiansborg early in 1730¹, and it is interesting to observe that the Akim leaders preferred to entrust authority to a vanquished enemy warrior rather than to the rebel Amu who might have been thought the obvious choice. Little is known of Kwesi Bibri, who appears to have been forgotten in tradition; he had, however, once acted as a broker for the English², and he was a brother-in-law of Ansa Kwao³ and so, in virtue of the rule of exogamy, not a member of the royal Abrade clan.

As Pranger forecast, there occurred a movement of Akim settlers into the deserted parts of Akwamu, so that Akim towns grew up side by side with the older surviving Akwamu towns of which a long list may be compiled: Akanten, Akwatia, Apedwa, Apapan, Asafo, Asamankese, Kade, Kwaman, Kwantanan, Mbease, Nkronso, Ochereso, Okyinisu, Otumi, Tafo, and many others. The new settlers appear to have been almost exclusively Abuakwas, the reason for which is bound up with the vexed question of the early history of Akim Abuakwa. There can be little doubt that the origins of Akim Abuakwa are to be sought for in Adansi, in the period before that region had been brought within the Ashanti sphere of influence. As the Ashanti power grew during the later seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries, the Abuakwas found themselves constricted between Ashanti in the north-west and Akwamu in the south-west, two closely allied states. One result of this was the incessant Akim pressure upon the Akwamu frontier that, as we have seen, so disconcerted the Akwamu kings throughout the imperial period. It is possible that there was some Akim settlement in Akwamu even before the defeat of Ansa Kwao in 1730. Akwamu tradition has it that Ofori Panin led the Abuakwa people out of Adansi into Akwamu, and that he was given a grant of land by the king of Akwamu on which to settle with his people. This tradition, however,

1. *Supra*, p. 100.


2. KvG 97: letter from de la Planque and Blittersdorp dd. 10 Nov. 1730; letter from Pranger to Blittersdorp n.d. but June, 1731; letter from Blittersdorp dd. 25 June, 1731.

3. V GK: Waeroe's report dd. 30 August, 1730.

may perhaps best be treated as belonging to the post-1730 period, it being a legal fiction by which the de facto Akim colonisation of conquered Akwamu territory was afforded de jure recognition by Akwamu. I have written elsewhere of such legal fictions or myths,

"of basically identical form, found throughout West Africa, in all of which the relationship between a conquering and a conquered power appears to be represented in terms of the latter freely giving land to the former. Despite the superficial appearance of paradox, it will be appreciated that the position of the victorious power is in fact strengthened by the general acceptance of the legal fiction that the vanquished freely gave land. For it is the acknowledgement by the defeated of the right of the victor to be in the territory of the former. It is, in a sense, the final completion of the conquest. It is the ultimate act of submission on the part of the defeated. It is the acceptance of the New Order. Might is translated into Right"¹.

All in all it seems safest to assume that, before 1730, the Abuakwas were still dwelling beyond the frontiers of the empire but that, after the collapse of Akwamu in the west, Abuakwa settlers, eager for lebensraum, poured into the conquered territories and established new towns side by side with the surviving Akwamu towns. The relationship between the newcomers and the remaining Akwamus, however, was to remain an uneasy one even into the present century².



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1. I. Wilks: Tribal History and Myth, in Universitas, vol.2, no. 3, June 1956, vol. 2, no. 4, December, 1956.
 2. See, e.g. Cases in Akan Law - Decisions delivered by The Honourable Nana Sir Ofori Atta, K.B.E., ed. J.B.Danquah, London, 1928, pp.7-10, 71-2, 259-60. Also see the award in Gold Coast Law Reports, Divisional Court, 1926-29, and Award in Asaman/kese Akim-Abuakwa Arbitration 1929, London, 1930

IV. NEW AKWAMU, AND OLD.i. Amu and the Akwamu Succession.

Frempong Manso, for reasons already examined, made no attempt to pursue those Akwamu forces that had escaped across the Volta into the eastern parts of the empire, but instead retired into his own country¹. Amu, however, announced his intention of continuing the pursuit, but the unpredictability of his behaviour, which had contributed so much to the collapse of Akwamu, was now to contribute something to its recovery.

Amu had been led to rebellion in 1728 by, in part at least, an ambition to supplant his nephew, Ansa Kwao, as king over Akwamu. Although originally he solicited the support of the Akims, Amu soon found that he had gained allies bent upon the total overthrow of Akwamu, who would have as little regard for his interests as for those of loyal Akwamus. Thus Amu immediately found himself replaced by an Akim as commander of the rebel Akw-apem forces. After the execution of Ansa Kwao not Amu but Kwesi Bibri was appointed caretaker of the conquered Akwamu territory. Even in Accra, over which Amu had exercised his governorship for almost twenty years, effective power had passed into the hands of Ayi Kuma whilst Amu had been on campaign, and the Akim leaders showed little inclination to restore the status quo. In 1730 it thus seemed that on his bid for the kingship Amu had staked, and lost, all. Nevertheless the ageing rebel was still to make yet another bid to turn affairs to his advantage.

Amu arrived back in Accra from the devastated Akwamu capital on 26 November, 1730, bringing with him the head and a hand of Ansa Kwao².

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1. N.U. Aarestrup: Memorandum on the Danish-Dutch Disputes in Guinea dd. 9 January 1782 and Pro Memoria dd. 16 December, 1783 (MS in Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen, Ulldall: Saml: fol. 130), p. 48.
 2. KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 30 October, 1730. Also Aarestrup's Memorandum, 1782, p. 48.

Throughout the succeeding weeks he was active in raising an expeditionary force with the announced intention of attacking those Akwamu forces that had retired east of the Volta. In this venture he was joined by Akwapim forces under their leader ^{Osee} Gosi Kyame (Sajkyamma)¹, by a number of Bakwante's subjects under one Ofori², and also apparently by the forces of Osu and Labadi under Kpoti³. Kpoti was himself, like Amu, closely connected with the Akwamu royal family,⁴ ~~though by affinal ties⁴~~, and had ruled over Labadi under the Akwamu kings.

On 27 November, 1730 Amu and his allies left Accra, marched towards the Volta, and established their war-camp in what must now be Osudoku⁵. Ayi Kuma, unwilling to see Amu gain any advantage that might restore his position in Accra, commenced preparations for a second expedition against the Akwamus. On 6 February, 1731 Ayi Kuma left Accra, accompanied by only one hundred men, but intent upon securing the alliance of the peoples of the lower Volta ('the Rio Volta Negroes'), to which end he established his war-camp at Togbloku⁶. Ayi Kuma's expedition proved abortive, however, since the expected support in the area was not forthcoming, and on the night of 24/25 April Ayi Kuma arrived back in Accra⁷. This refusal of the peoples of the lower Volta to co-operate with Ayi Kuma is of some importance for an understanding of subsequent events. After the Akwamu conquest of Ladoku in 1679, the native ruling dynasty was later deprived of power, and the kingdom was divided into a number of administrative districts which were usually placed under the authority of Akwamu administrators⁸. One such district was centred upon Togbloku, an old trading centre⁹, and it may be that the western bank of the Volta estuary, occupied by Ewe Agave peoples¹⁰, was brought under Togbloku for

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1. Aarestrup's Memorandum, 1782, p. 48. According to VGK: letter from Waeroe and others to Directors dd. 25 March, 1731, the Akwapim forces were Aburis.
 2. VGK: letter from Waeroe and others at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 25 March, 1731; also KvG 98: letter from Hoeth at Little Popo dd. 14 December, 1731.
 3. VGK: letter from Waeroe and others at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 24 April, 1733.
 4. Rømer, 1769, p. 120.
 5. Aarestrup's Memorandum, 1782, p. 48.
 6. Ibid, pp. 48 and 53.
 7. Ibid, pp. 48 and 53. Also KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 5 May, 1731.
 8. Supra, pp. 19-21. 9. Supra, p. 18. 10. Supra, pp. 10 and 18.

administrative convenience, for in 1731 the Togblokus moved their capital to Ada, in Agave territory, and the Agaves in the area were incorporated into what was to become the Ada state as the Kudzeragbe clan. The Ada state was thus the successor to the old administrative district of Togbloku; with the weakening of the bonds of empire what had been an administrative district evolved into an independent state, and the Akwamu administrators were transformed into sovereign hereditary rulers. Nevertheless at the time when Ayi Kuma sought the alliance of the Ada or Togbloku chiefs their ties with Akwamu were still sufficiently strong for them to refuse 'to meddle in the war'¹.

Ayi Kuma's failure to recruit the Adas or Togblokus to his cause appears to have freed Amu's hands for action. Shortly after Ayi Kuma had returned to Accra Amu and his forces marched into Ada, leaving only the Akwapims under ^{Osee} ~~Osei~~ Kyame to garrison the war-camp in Osudoku. Using the Ada chiefs as intermediaries, Amu then had the Akwamus informed of the position of ^{Osee} ~~Osei~~ Kyame's forces. Thereupon the Akwamus mustered their forces, marched into Osudoku, and in September, 1731, annihilated the unfortunate Akwapims².

Amu's betrayal of his Akwapim allies appears to have amounted to no more than a gesture of pacification towards Akwamu, a mere prelude to his main purpose. When Amu had left Accra in November 1730, supposedly to march against the remaining Akwamus, he had taken into his custody two of his lineage kin, firstly his sister's daughter who had earlier been given by the Akwamu royal family in marriage to her cross-cousin Dako, Amu's son, and secondly the infant offspring of this marriage who was also named Dako. The genealogical facts are complex and have been dealt with in detail elsewhere³; the crucial point, however, is that the infant Dako, Amu's grandson and Ansa Kwao's sister's son, was (by the rule of matrilineal succession prevailing in Akwamu) a possible successor to the Akwamu throne. Following the sacrifice of his erstwhile

1. Aarestrup's Memorandum, 1782, p. 53.

2. Ibid, pp. 48 and 53.

3. I. Wilks: Akwamu and Otubluhum: A Study in Aken Cross-Cousin Marriage.
See Appendix I.

Akwapim allies Amu then placed the infant Dako and his mother under the charge of the Ada or Togbloku chiefs, who he instructed to inform the Akwamus of this¹. Amu, with his remaining allies, then immediately withdrew from Ada, crossing to the east bank of the Volta.

Following the collapse of Akwamu in the west, and the death of the king, unrest naturally spread to the subject peoples east of the Volta, and especially those of Anlo, Keta, and Little Popo. Whidah, the easternmost of all the Akwamu dominions, had already fallen to Dahomey in 1727². For the remainder of his career Amu was to campaign in these eastern territories, and the conclusion seems inescapable that, having arranged for the return of Dako and his mother to the Akwamus, Amu saw his interests as once more identical with those of the Akwamus, and sought to re-assert Akwamu authority over the eastern territories and even to recover Whidah. He first attacked Keta, on 4 November, 1731, and put to flight a force of three hundred Anlo soldiers that had recently entered the town. Keta was plundered, and although Amu was still officially a Dutch broker, the Dutch lodge was destroyed after its factor had managed to escape with his goods by ship to Little Popo³. In December it was learned from Atinkoran, a brother of Amu, that Amu was resolved to march into Whidah and to make war on Dahomey; there was however some difference of opinion between Ofori and Amu on the question of whether first to effect a settlement with the Keta and Anlo chiefs⁴. In 1732 Amu advanced along the coast and established his camp in Little Popo. From there he appears to have entered into negotiations with the ruler of Jacquin (east of Whidah) and with 'the mighty king of Oyo' (the powerful inland Yoruba state) for a concerted attack upon Dahomey. The king of Dahomey took

1. Aarestrup's Memorandum, 1782, p. 53. Bi/m, 1788, p. 211.

2. Supra, p. 33.

3. KvG 98: letters from Hoeth at Little Popo dd. 14 and 15 December, 1731, and from the interloper, Captain Cruysen, at Little Popo dd. 15 December, 1731.

4. KvG 98: letter from Hoeth dd. 15 December, 1731.

the initiative by attacking Jacquin. The Dutch lodge there was plundered and the merchants taken captive, a direct consequence of the fact that Amu was still officially Dutch broker¹. Although the armies of Oyo did eventually invade Dahomey, and for a time drew tribute from its king, Amu was to have no part in the triumph. Early in 1733 he died, and with his death the impetus behind his forces was lost. His allies dispersed. Kpoti and his warriors arrived back in Labadi, which they had left two and a half years earlier, on 17 April, 1733. The Osu forces, now under the command of Amu's son Dako, were expected back shortly afterwards, having apparently fought again with the Anlos on their return through that territory².

In the meantime, whilst Amu was still in Keta, word had reached the Akwamus that the infant Dako with his mother was in the charge of the Ada and Togbloku chiefs, and an army was immediately despatched to retrieve them. The Togblokus and the smaller peoples of the lower Volta, Agaves, Malfis, Tefles, and so forth, unsure of the temper of the advancing Akwamu troops, crowded into Ada and sought the protection of the Danes who had a lodge there. The Danish agent proceeded to construct a rampart and ditch on the landward side of the lodge. A longboat arrived from Christiansborg with the Danish head agent Sparre, who took charge of the defence. Muskets, and between two and three thousand pounds of gunpowder, were distributed to the defenders³, for which supplies, valued at a little over 45 oz. of gold, the Togbloku chief put his brother Kartei in pawn to the Danes⁴. The Akwamu forces arrived in one hundred canoes on 22 November, 1731, and the defenders took up their positions in the fortified encampment surrounding the lodge. For four days the Akwamu forces lay around them, but made no attempt to attack. Negotiations were opened with the Danes, and on

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1. WIC 110: despatch from Dir.-Gen. Pranger at Accra to Assembly of X dd. 16 August, 1733.
 2. VGK: letter from Waeroe and others at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 24 April, 1733.
 3. Rømer, 1769, pp. 242-45.
 4. KvG 221: Dutch translation of a letter from Aarestrup, Biørn, and others at Christiansborg dd. 30 September, 1776.

26 November, 1731, the Akwamus formally relinquished their authority over the Ada area for a payment in goods to the value of seventeen man slaves. The Danes made this payment on behalf of the Ada or Togbloku chiefs, who then handed over to the Akwamus the infant Dako and his mother. The Akwamu forces then retired up the river¹. The former Akwamu administrative district of Togbloku thus became an independent state, the Ada state, as a result of the Dano-Akwamu agreement of 26 November, 1731. The first act of the new state was to confirm the Danes in their trading monopoly over the area by an agreement of 4 December, 1731, which was apparently witnessed by representatives of both Amu and Kpoti².

The young Dako was to become king of Akwamu in 1747 and to rule until 1781. It is odd to reflect that this Akwamu king was the grandson (and, what is more to the point in a matrilineal society, sister's daughter's son) of Amu, Akwamu governor of Accra until 1728 and then leader of the rebellion that was to culminate in the loss of the capital and the execution of Ansa Kwao in 1730. It is even more strange that Dako, the son of Amu and the father of the king Dako, fell into Akwamu hands in 1742 and, despite his offer of 200 ounces of gold for his life, was promptly beheaded so that "he should pay for what his father had done, who was the chief instrument of the killing of the Akwamu country"³.

ii. The Emergence of New Akwamu.

Undoubtedly Amu's campaign in Keta, Anlo, and Little Popo gave the Akwamus east of the Volta the necessary time to re-constitute themselves into some sort of political entity. In 1729, as we have seen, three Akwamu chiefs with their followers escaped across the Volta during

1. Aarestrup's Memorandum, 1782, pp. 53-4. Rømer, 1769, pp. 242-5. Biørn, 1788, pp. 211 and 214.

2. KvG 221: Dutch translation of a letter from Aarestrup, Biørn, and others dd. 30 September, 1776. Biørn, 1788, p. 214.

3. T/70/1515: letter from Graves at Accra dd. 3 April, 1742.

the earlier stages of the fighting, and resettled on the eastern bank in the Volta gorge, some 65 or 70 miles from the mouth of that river¹. A year later, after the fall of the capital, they were joined by other groups that had escaped the general destruction. It was from these miscellaneous bands that the New Akwamu state was to spring. Their number could not have been large, and even to this day the population of Akwamu is small². Römer maintained that only about five hundred families escaped across the Volta, and that these included not more than one thousand fighting men³. This, however, was probably an underestimate, and in any case took no account of the fact that the New Akwamu could also recruit from the subject peoples east of the Volta, especially the Krepis, who still remained under its overlordship.

Until November of 1731, when Dako (who was in any case an infant) was retrieved from Ada, the New Akwamus had with them no possible successor to the throne, most of the royal family having perished with Ansa Kwao in the sack of the capital. Authority was therefore entrusted to a caretaker or regent, and the choice fell upon Akonno (or Akwonno) Kuma who was to prove a leader of outstanding quality. Akonno Kuma (i.e. Akonno the younger) was a son of the former king Akwonno (1702-1725) by a slave woman⁴. His claims to the caretakership of the throne sprang not directly from his paternity, but rather from his slave status. In Akan law the son of a man by one of his slaves was considered as born into slavery, and belonged to his mother's master, in this case his father⁵. Furthermore, in the absence of any matrilineal kin, a slave was entitled to inherit his master's property⁶, and although he could not succeed to his master's office (stool, throne) he might nevertheless have claims to its caretakership. Akonno Kuma's caretakership must have

1. *Supra*, pp. 97-8.

2. According to the 1948 Census of Population only 13,868 people described themselves as Akwamu. The present Akwamus, however, maintain that whole towns were wiped out as a result of the disastrous campaigns of 1869-74, in which they fought as allies of the Ashantis.

3. Römer, 1769, pp. 103 and 134.

4. Römer, 1760, p. 158. (The German edition of 1769 is obscure at this point).

5. Rattray: Ashanti Law and Constitution, 1929, p. 39.

6. Rattray: Ashanti, 1923, p. 42.

rested upon just such a claim.

From the date of Akonno Kuma's assumption of authority, probably some time in 1731, the New Akwamu state may be said to have come into existence. It is called thus in contemporary records to distinguish it from the Old Akwamu, - that is, from the original homeland in the west over which Kwesi Bibri had been granted authority by the Akims. In its first year New Akwamu, far from being sunk in a gloomy aftermath of defeat, showed surprising vigour. In May, 1731, only six months after the fall of the capital, a New Akwamu army marched into Krepi country, presumably to quell revolts there; it was said to have suffered heavy losses through imprudence¹. We have already remarked the Akwamu victory over the Akwapim forces of ^{Osee} Osei Kyame in September of the same year, and in November the despatch of an army to Ada to recover Dako and his mother. The importance for New Akwamu of the acquisition of this unit of the royal family should not be underestimated; by it New Akwamu could claim to be regarded as the true successor state to the Akwamu of Ansa Sasraku, Ade, Akwonno, and Ansa Kwao, and as such the heir to the remaining imperial possessions, and furthermore, ~~as the~~ rightful owners of the former homeland, Old Akwamu.

The theme of the recovery of Old Akwamu was one that was to recur in New Akwamu politics time and time again, initially as a matter of practical policy but latterly as a romantic ideal, a sentimental dwelling upon past glories rather than a clarion call to action. Nevertheless even in Akonno Kuma's time it would be an exaggeration to say that his policies were dominated by the aim of recovering the old homeland. There were other courses that might be followed. The state could be - and in fact ultimately was - fashioned around a new capital in the Volta Gorge, a situation ideally suited to the control of the slave and ivory trades along the Volta. Alternatively, since the possession of a seaboard might seem a matter of prime importance, as it had ever since the early seventeenth century, there was the possibility

1. KVG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 10 May, 1731.

of establishing a new capital on the coast in association with one or other of the European forts, - an idea that had earlier occurred to Ansa Kwao¹.

It may be that this latter possibility was explored first. In January, 1732, the Danes purchased land at Great Ningo from Owusu, the Akim heir-apparent under whose charge it had been placed², and commenced to build a fortified lodge there³. Apparently on information from a Danish deserter⁴, and having in mind the former co-operation between the Danish governor and Ansa Kwao, the Accras were convinced that the fort was being built in order "to assemble and cherish the scattered Akwamus"⁵, stating that,

"the Danish Factor, Sparre, had not scrupled to settle at a certain village known as Great Ningo in order to build a fort there, so that in that way he could give the Akwamus more help, who at that time were still our enemies, the Accra peoples' mortal enemies"⁶.

The Accras attacked Great Ningo without delay, destroyed the buildings, and carried off Sparre to Accra, later ransoming him for 200 ounces of gold⁷. Possibly the Accras were justified in their suspicions, for New Akwamu forces were certainly on the coast east of Great Ningo at the time. Their marauding was disturbing trade in March⁸, and it appears that for some reason they attacked Ada, possibly considering a salutary reminder of the power of Akwamu necessary for this newly independent state⁹. In September, 1732, there is one brief reference to negotiations in progress between the Akwamus and the Keta chiefs¹⁰.

1. Supra, p. 106.

2. Supra, p. 114.

3. KvG 105: letter from van Kuijl at Accra dd. 19 December, 1740.

4. KvG 98: letter from Elet at Accra dd. 5 February, 1732.

5. WIC 109: despatch from Dir.-Gen. Pranger to Assembly of X dd. 3 April, 1732.

6. KvG 291: declaration of Dako and other Accra chiefs made before sub-factor From, 25 April, 1734.

7. Ibid.

8. WIC 109: despatch from Pranger dd. 3 April, 1732.

9. VCK: letter from Waeroe and others at Christiansborg to Directors dd. 26 May, 1732.

10. WIC 109: despatch from Pranger to Ass. of X dd. 14 Dec. 1731, - encl: extract from the diary of Kamper and From for 20 Sept. 1732.

It may be supposed that the survival of Akwamu influence along the coast between Accra and the Volta was mortifying to Owusu, the heir-apparent to Bakwante who had been placed in charge of the Adangme country in 1730, for in November, 1734, he sent a messenger to the Accras to summon them to join him in an attack upon New Akwamu¹. By February, 1735, Owusu's forces had apparently crossed the Volta near the coast, where there would be little opposition, and had being lying around Keta for some time². By March he had moved inland, and it was reported that no ivory was coming down to Keta because all the Krepi peoples had fled before the advancing Akims³. The result of the campaign we do not know; it was probably indecisive, for it was thought that Owusu's forces would have to withdraw because of the lack of provisions⁴. Certainly a year later New Akwamu merchants were trading at Keta freely, and had ivory and an abundance of slaves⁵.

In 1737, probably as a result of Akim aggression, the Akwamus again explored the possibility of establishing their new capital on the coast, and asked From, the Dutch factor at Keta, to suggest to the Director-General that they might settle at Keta (or even in their old homeland) under Dutch protection. From considered this "a big matter and of great interest for the trade of the Honourable Company"⁶. As in the case of Great Ningo, however, the idea proved abortive, for in July, 1737, a Dahomey army marched through Little Popo to Keta, seized the Dutch lodge after a siege of nine days, and captured and later executed From⁷. A report was received in Accra that the Dahomeys were amassing canoes preparatory to crossing the Volta, and the Dutch Director-General who happened to be there ordered supplies to be sent from Elmina to Crèvecoeur in case of an attack upon that fort,

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1. KvG 100: letter from Augier at Accra dd. 12 November, 1734.
 2. WIC 110: letter from From at Keta dd. 17 February, 1735.
 3. WIC 110: letter from From at Keta dd. 18 March, 1735.
 4. WIC 110: letter from From at Keta dd. 17 February, 1735.
 5. KvG 101: letter from From at Keta dd. 27 June, 1736.
 6. KvG 102: letter from From at Keta dd. 10 June, 1737.
 7. A very full account of the Dahomey attack is in WIC 111: declaration by the soldier J.J. Steirmark dd. 4 December, 1737.

writing that:

"it now seems clear that these Dahomeys intend only to kill and rob, and are to be regarded as nothing but barbarians. Consequently we shall do everything possible here to overthrow them. Our idea, which is not without foundation, is that since the Akwamus are living in close collaboration with this marauder, the plan is to defeat the Accras and then to make war upon the Akims so that the Akwamus may settle again in free ownership of their land"¹.

The Director-General also considered the Ashantis to have had some hand in the invasion. In the event the Dahomey armies, apparently suffering from lack of food supplies due to attacks on their lines of communication, did not cross the Volta, but retired. Crossing a river between Little Popo and Whidah they were attacked unexpectedly by a force of Krepis and Little Popo Accras², and it was said that the whole Dahomey Army of 13,000 men was annihilated³.

It is not apparent what grounds the Dutch had for the belief that New Akwamu was in league with Dahomey, though there is nothing intrinsically impossible in the suggestion. On the other hand it seems clear that at this period the Ashantis were contemplating an attack upon Akin with the object, among others, of restoring the Akwamus to their homeland. Early in 1738 rumours were already current that Osei Opoku, king of Ashanti, would make war on the Akims⁴. Not until late in 1741 however were there signs that the invasion was imminent, and the Akims made haste to purchase supplies of muskets and gunpowder from the Dutch. The Old Akwamus began openly to boast that Osei Opoku would make them a present of Accra⁵. The Akims summoned the Accras to join them, but only one small section responded; with considerable

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1. KvG 102: letter from Dir.-Gen. de Bordes at Accra dd. 21 July, 1737.
 2. For the Accras of Little Popo, see supra pp. 15-16.
 3. WIC 111: Steirmark's declaration dd. 4 December, 1737.
 4. WIC 111: despatch from Dir.-Gen. de Bordes to Assembly of X dd. 14 April, 1738.
 5. KvG 105: letter from Kuijl at Accra dd. 4 December, 1741.

optimism the Akims threatened retribution as soon as the war with Ashanti was over¹.

In March 1742 the combined Akim armies were completely routed by the Ashantis. Frempong Manso ^{did,} and Owusu ^{was} were apparently slain, ^{and} Bakwante ^{was} captured alive². A month later the victors were spread along the coast between Accra and the Volta, and were demanding war contributions from every town. Great Ningo alone refused to pay the levy, and the Ashantis plundered the town and besieged but failed to take the Danish fort³. Apart from this one incident Osei Opuku seems to have been well-disposed towards the Danes. He was reported as saying that one of his main reasons for the war against the Akims was to help the Akwamus who had been defeated by them, adding that he would now assist the Danes because they had been allies of the Akwamus, and that he knew that it was the Dutch who were principally concerned in aiding the war against Akwamu, whilst the English had remained neutral⁴.

Osei Opoku's victory certainly had one immediate consequence for both New and Old Akwamus: the European trading companies began vying with each other to secure their favour, and trade. In mid-1743 the Dutch factor in Accra did not "scruple to apply all diligence and expense" to the pacification of the Old Akwamus, and he persuaded them into taking oaths of friendship with the Accras under Crèvecoeur. This accomplished, the factor then sent his messengers to the Volta to invite Akonno Kuma to come to Accra in order to settle all the old disputes. This too caused the Dutch "much trouble and expense" since the New Akwamus considered it nothing but a plot to get Akonno Kuma into Dutch hands. Finally however, after the Dutch had given

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1. KvG 105: letter from Kuijl at Accra dd. 5 December, 1741.
 2. WIC 113: Despatch from Dir.-Gen. de Petersen to Assembly of X dd. 26 March, 1742; KvG 293: narrative of Councillors Raams and Verscheuren of their commission to Accra, 23 March - 18 August, 1742.
 3. Römer, 1769, p. 272.
 4. T/70/1515: letter from Graves at Accra to Cape Coast dd. 3 April, 1742. For the origins of the Ashanti and Akwamu alliance see supra, pp.34-6 and 60.

the New Akwamus a security for their ruler's safe return, Akonno Kuma visited Crèvecoeur in person. Much to the disgust of the Dutch, the English in Accra took the opportunity to conduct their own negotiations with Akonno Kuma, who, having recently suffered some serious accident, was invited to stay in the English fort to be cured¹, - it will be remembered that his predecessor Ado had been treated for cancer in Crèvecoeur nearly half a century earlier. The Dutch, unwilling to let the initiative slip from their hands, countered the English offer of medical attention with the perhaps even more attractive offer of an advance of guns and gunpowder to the value of 60 oz. of gold (£200), which Akonno Kuma wanted for a campaign he was contemplating. The campaign, if not the treatment, was successful, for in December, 1743, Akonno Kuma left Akwamu once more for Crèvecoeur, in order to repay the advance, but the English again interfered and persuaded Akonno Kuma to deviate to their lodge at Prampram, where apparently he soon spent the 60 oz. of gold².

iii. The Disappearance of Old Akwamu.

Whilst the New Akwamu state under the leadership of Akonno Kuma was consolidating itself in its new location east of the Volta, the Old Akwamus were enjoying a precarious existence in the old homeland. In 1730, it will be remembered, the Akims had appointed Kwesi Bibri, a brother-in-law of the late king Ansa Kwao, to authority over the conquered territory, to rule it as their tribute paying vassal. Kwesi Bibri however soon showed an independence of action not altogether pleasing to the Akims. Early in 1731 the Dutch sent presents to Kwesi Bibri, and their factor in Senya Bereku reported, "I am continually doing my best for some business with the residue of the split-up Akwamus again"³. Kwesi

1. KVG 107: letter from Coejmans at Accra dd. 11 July, 1743.
 2. KVG 107: letter from Coejmans at Accra dd. 26 December, 1743.
 3. KVG 97: letter from Guicherit at Bereku dd. 27 February, 1731.

Bibri informed them that he had already sent word to the Akwamus beyond the Volta that if they were in danger of further injury they might return to Old Akwamu. The factor in Senya Bereku thought it unlikely that the New Akwamus would return unless they were offered - as he was prepared to ~~do~~ - Dutch protection¹.

In May 1731 a servant of Kwesi Bibri arrived at Crèvecoeur to say that his master would gladly accept the protection of the Dutch if only the hostility of the Accras could be averted. The Accras who, like the Dutch, were displeased with the Akim attitude towards the peoples they had liberated, were disposed to negotiate, and a Dutch servant and an envoy from Ayi Kuma left Accra for Old Akwamu to explore the possibilities of an agreement with Kwesi Bibri². The preliminary talks bore fruit in June, when representatives of Kwesi Bibri arrived in Accra and took oaths with them in the presence of the Dutch "that hostility was now at an end and that henceforth they would live as good friends". The English hastened to make their separate peace with the Old Akwamus³. The Dutch Director-General in Elmina was sceptical of the whole procedure and recommended Blittersdorp in Accra "not to trust the Akwamus too much, but to exercise caution with regard to them"⁴.

The factor assured the Director-General that,

"to begin with, I shall not trust the Akwamus, realising well what reliance can be placed on a hard pressed and dominated people such as they, but who, so to speak, will seize on the least hope of deliverance or of being released from their servitude. I believe also that these people at some future date will make the Accras pay dearly for what was done unless they use caution and foresight, it being well known that the Accras were the moving cause of their misfortune"⁵.

1.KvG 97: letter from Guicherit at Bereku dd. 27 February, 1731.

2.KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 16 May, 1731.

3.KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 6 June, 1731.

4.KvG 97: letter from Dir.-Gen. Pranger to Blittersdorp dd. 9 June, 1731.

5.KvG 97: letter from Blittersdorp at Accra dd. 22 June, 1731.

As a result of Kwesi Bibri's policy the Akim leaders Frempong Manso and Bakwante were rumoured to be contemplating a punitive expedition early in 1732¹, but were deterred by doubts about the Fanti reaction. Later in the year the emboldened Old Akwamus were seizing traders on the routes from Akim to Accra and Senya Bereku². There was however little opportunity for a strong and reconstituted state to emerge under the leadership of Kwesi Bibri, partly because it was the concern of Frempong Manso and Bakwante to ensure that just this did not happen, and partly because the immigration of large numbers of Akim Abuakua settlers introduced an alien element that resisted any form of integration with the surviving Akwamus. The Akwamu homeland was thus to remain a wasteland for many years, and the Old Akwamus were to enjoy a precarious existence marked every so often by appeals to one or other of the European trading companies for protection. In 1737, for example, a number of Old Akwamu chiefs and their people came to Accra to assure the Dutch of their loyalty and to ask for a renewal of Dutch protection. The Director-General, who was in Accra at the time,

"for the comfort of these people, who, between hope and fear did not know what they were doing, after a good recommendation and promise, had them presented with spirits, whereupon after a short time they departed joyfully"³.

The Dutch hoped that a settlement with the Old Akwamus might result in the 'old way through Akwamu to Akim' being reopened for trade, so that some profits might once more come to their fort at Accra and lodge at Bereku; one sees clearly how the whole pattern of internal trade became disrupted once the wide framework of law and political stability established under Ansa Sasraku, Ado, and Akwonno was

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1. Kvg 98: letter from Raam at Bereku dd.16 February, 1732.
 2. WIC 109: despatch from Dir.-Gen. Pranger to Assembly of X dd. 3 April, 1732.
 3. Kvg 102: letter from Starckenburg at Accra dd. 22 June, 1737.

destroyed. Without such a wider framework disharmony prevailed. In September 1738 Frempong Manso and Owusu attacked Agona and then marched into Old Akwamu¹. In the succeeding years the rumours of an impending Ashanti attack upon the Akims occasioned fresh outbursts of unrest, and in 1741 the Old Akwamus were boasting that Osei Opoku of Ashanti would give them Accra as a present, in anticipation of which they were lying in the bush around Accra and seizing everyone they could, so that "the Accra people were obliged to go armed whenever they fetched water"².

The Ashanti overthrow of the Akims was, as we have seen, rapid and complete, and the power of "the two principal chiefs of Akim Frimpon and Banquentyn" with "their youngest brother the war captain Oers"³ was destroyed. Frempong and Owusu were slain, and Bakwante taken captive. Before the Ashanti armies came south into Old Akwamu bands of Fanti marauders spread over the countryside and carried off many people⁴. The Fantis, however, suffered heavy casualties themselves, especially some who penetrated too far north and encountered the Ashanti vanguard⁵. Osei Opoku, who the English reported had invaded Akim in order to assist the Akwamus⁶, was said by the Fantis to intend "to set the Akwamus up again in their country, and establish a market there as formerly"⁷. In April 1742 an Ashanti army of five thousand men entered Old Akwamu and established their camp there from which to conduct negotiations with the trading companies in Accra⁸. The Old Akwamus

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1. KVG 103: letter from Kuijl at Bereku dd. 17 September, 1738; KVG 103: letter from Starckenburg at Accra dd. 7 October, 1738.
 2. KVG 105: letters from Kuijl at Accra dd. 4 and 5 December, 1741.
 3. WIC 111: despatch from Dir.-Gen. de Bordes to Assembly of X dd. 14 April, 1738.
 4. KVG 106: letter from Apam to Kuijl dd. 30 March, 1742.
 5. KVG 106: ibid and letter from Janson at Apam to Kuijl n.d. but April, 1742.
 6. *Supra*, p. 128.
 7. KVG 106: letter from Janson to Kuijl, n.d. but April, 1742. For the former market, *supra* pp. 41-2.
 8. KVG 293: narrative of Councillors Raams and Verscheuren of their commission to Accra, note for 9 April, 1742.

nursed their hope of being presented with Accra, and the Dutch factor in Apam warned his colleague in Accra that,

"the Accras should not go out of their Crom at all, however nicely the Akwamus may talk to them about it, for there is rascality behind it, and although they ate fetish (i.e. took oaths, in 1731), one has experienced enough to know how they try to mislead the Accras"¹.

The warning however did not deter the Accra factor from attempting to effect a settlement between the Old Akwamus and the Accras, and in mid-1743 the two parties took oaths not to panyar each other but to allow trade to pass freely between them².

The defeat of the Akims does not appear to have led to any greater political stability in the old Akwamu homeland, and indeed the situation was perhaps even more unsettled as a result of the long series of Akim revolts against Ashanti domination. The Old Akwamus continued to be "regarded by the Akims as their foes, and were many times fallen upon"³. A particularly serious invasion occurred in 1760, and heavy casualties were suffered by the Old Akwamus; their women and children fled to Accra, but the Akims pursued them and forced the Accras to hand them over. One hundred and seven refugees were produced, 'mostly all quite old women and young children'⁴. The blow was one that the Old Akwamus could scarcely withstand. In 1763, in the presence of Fanti chiefs as arbitrators and of the Dutch as witnesses, the Accra and Old Akwamu chiefs met and the Old Akwamus were declared subjects of the Accras. The Accras 'went round under their umbrellas, to the sound of drums, and gave thanks to the Fantis'. The Old Akwamus, accepting the judgement, on 17 June

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1. KvG 293: narrative of Raams and Verscheuren; receipt of letter from Janson at Apam dd. 6 April, 1742.
 2. KvG 107: letter from Coejmans at Accra dd. 11 July, 1743 and supra p.128.
 3. KvG 121: letter from Blydenburg in Elmina dd. 13 December, 1760.
 4. Ibid.

'came with a goat on their head to the Accras and submitted themselves as their subjects and slaves'¹. The submission of the Old Akwamus to Accra is perhaps partly to be explained by the fact that Dako, king of New Akwamu, had considerable influence in Accra at the time, whilst the most powerful of the Accra chiefs, the Dutch broker Ofei, who took the submission, was a son of Amu and paternal uncle of Dako, and was shortly to be succeeded by Dako's half-brother Oto². Nevertheless, it is clear that at this time the Old Akwamus were prepared to relinquish whatever political identity they had retained since the defeat of 1730. The final settlement however was to occur a decade later.

In 1767 Obirikorane, who had recently succeeded to the stool of Akim Abuakua, was pursuing vigorously a policy of expansion, and in that year had invaded Akwapim and Krobo and had fought with New Akwamu³. In 1770 he attacked the Anglos in the lower Volta area⁴. Such military exploits on the part of a vassal ruler were displeasing to the king of Ashanti, Osei Kojo, who, late in 1772 sent an army of 20,000 men against Obirikorane. The Abuakua lands were occupied, and Obirikorane retreated into Old Akwamu and submitted to Osei Kojo⁵. In April, 1773, he asked the Dutch in Accra to effect his reconciliation with the king of Ashanti, that he might return to his kingdom and his people to their homes⁶. Obirikorane was deposed by Osei Kojo, though allowed his freedom⁷. His successor, Ampoforo, affirmed his allegiance to the king of Ashanti, but was obliged to remain with his people in Old Akwamu, where a new Abuakua capital was established at Kibi,

To this time must be attributed the final disappearance of Old

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1. KvG 124: various letters from Nieser at Bereku from 10 January to 23 June, 1763.
 2. See I. Wilks: Akwamu and Otubluhum: A Study in Akan Cross-Cousin Marriage. See Appendix I
 3. KvG 128: letters from Woortman at Accra dd. 28 Feb. and 21 March, 1767.
 4. KvG 132: letter from Kpone dd. 27 July, 1770.
 5. KvG 136: letter from Woortman at Accra dd. 7 December, 1772.
 6. KvG 137: letter from Woortman at Accra dd. 14 April, 1773.
 7. WIC 981: letter from van der Puye at Accra dd. 25 April, 1775.

Akwamu as a political entity. The Akwamu chiefs swore allegiance to Ampoforo, recognising him as their paramount, and were integrated into the Akim Abuakua state. They have remained within the Akim Abuakua state to this day though there have been attempts to secede in the present century¹. Conversely, the New Akwamu - the present Akwamu state - has from time to time made claims on the allegiance of the Akwamu sections of Akim Abuakua; in 1914, for example, the Omanhene of Akwamu, Nana Akoto Ababio IV, informed the chief of Apapam in Akim Abuakua that,

"I am herewith bringing this officially before you, that I am sending my messengers to the Chief of Asamangkese, and I have asked said messengers to inspect all lands in possession of my forefathers. And I have again asked them to inform all the descendants from Akwamu who were left back at Akim Peak (i.e. Nyanao) to stop selling the lands, as I am intending to return to my ancient abode"².

iv. New Akwamu and Ashanti.

The overthrow of the Akim states by Ashanti in 1742 had one unexpected result for New Akwamu that was to prove far-reaching in its consequences. It is reported at length by Römer, who was on the coast at the time. It appears that when the Akims overran the Akwamu capital in 1730 and put to death most of the royal family, including the king, there was one member who was captured but not recognised. In the subsequent division of the spoils of war he was given as a slave to an Akim commoner, but kept his rank secret, knowing well that he would be killed should it be disclosed. During the Ashanti invasion of Akim in 1742 this Akwamu nobleman was forced to fight for his master, and in this way fell into the hands of the Ashantis. Thereupon he revealed his identity, and was taken before

1. See the award in Gold Coast Law Reports, Divisional Court, 1926-29 and Award in Asamangkese Akim-Abuakwa Arbitration, 1929, London, 1930.

2. Ibid.

the king, Osei Opoku, who, so Rømer's account goes, agreed to restore him to his people on condition that he took the name Opoku Akoa, Opoku's subject. Opoku Akoa was received joyfully in New Akwamu but, moderating Osei Opoku's condition, let himself be enstooled as Opoku Kuma, the junior Opoku. The king of Ashanti learned of this change a year later and demanded that Opoku Kuma should revert to the name Opoku Akoa. Opoku Kuma pleaded that he would lose the respect of his subjects if he were to do this, and after prolonged negotiations it was finally agreed that Opoku Kuma might purchase his name for one hundred slaves. In order to meet this demand Opoku Kuma required a few slaves from each of his towns, but the imposition was resisted. Thereupon he gathered together a force of three or four hundred men, plied them with much liquor, and then fell upon an Akwamu village, killed the chief, and carried off all the children and slaves with which to pay Osei Opoku. Rømer, whose emotions could become strangely engaged in local politics, remarked that had Opoku Kuma,

"had such numerous nations under his dominion as his predecessors, he would certainly have restored the slave trade of Accra. It is only to be regretted that he did not undertake deeds of this heroic nature more often, so that soon there would be no Akwamus left"¹.

There seems no reason to doubt the general accuracy of Rømer's account. Akonno Kuma was still ruling in 1743 but it seems likely that Opoku Kuma took over the government in 1744. Although Akonno Kuma had unquestionably ruled well and wisely, the Akwamus appear to have been quite willing to see the caretakership terminated and Akonno Kuma removed from office, which Rømer suggests was done in a rather summary fashion². It seems, however, that Akonno Kuma must either have retained considerable power, or must have retrieved it after the death of Opoku Kuma only three years later, for certain unusual features of the Akwamu

1. Rømer, 1769, pp. 185-7.

2. Ibid, p. 196.

constitution which undoubtedly have their origins in this period suggest strongly that Akonno Kuma was rewarded or pacified by the creation of a special office in the state for him and his successors, i.e. that of Osomanyawa, second in importance only to that of the king¹.

Opoku Kuma did not long survive his return to Akwamu. In the years following the invasion of 1742 the Akims had abandoned much of their land to the Ashantis. Some, presumably the Kotokus, had retired southwards to the borders of Fanti territory, but the Abuakuas under their new king Pobi spread over the countryside and lived by plundering their neighbours, especially the Akwapims and Old Akwamas². The Akwapims responded by entering into an alliance with New Akwamu, and this seems to have occasioned widespread hostilities. Pobi gathered his forces together, marched against the Akwapims, and routed them³. Encouraged by his victory he then turned his attention to New Akwamu. Early in 1747 the armies of Pobi and Opoku Kuma took the field against each other, but the Abuakuas possessed a superiority in numbers. The Akwamu army was defeated and took to flight. Opoku Kuma and one of his chiefs Agyan were shot whilst swimming across a river, and their heads were taken by the Akims. Rømer was especially interested in this episode since he claimed that an account of the battle at the very time it was in progress was given by the Labadi fetish a hundred or more miles away⁴.

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1. The Osomanyawa sits upon the Akonno Stool, to which belongs much of the land upon which the state capital is built. Its occupant is recognised as senior divisional chief, and has "an outstanding and remarkable position in the constitution". The Osomanyawa has his own subordinate chiefs who serve the Omanhene only through him. They are known as Akonno 'Nkoa, 'Akonno's subjects', and form the "opposition group in the constitutional set-up of the State" (Letter from the Omanhene and Osomanyawa of Akwamu dd. 4 November, 1957).
 2. VGK: letter from Platfus, Rømer, and others to Directors dd. 26 Feb., 1747. Rømer, 1769, pp. 194-5.
 3. Ibid, letter dd. 26 Feb., 1747.
 4. VGK: letter from Platfus, Rømer, and others to Directors dd. 18 Jan., 1747. Rømer, 1769, pp. 80-81 and 196.

Opoku Kuma's short reign is perhaps most noteworthy for the change in the relationship with Ashanti, for it seems clear that Osei Opoku restored Opoku Kuma to the stool of New Akwamu only after he had agreed to recognise Osei Opoku as overlord; this, at any rate, appears to be the substance behind Rømer's story of the purchasing of the name. In half a century the balance of power had so changed that Akwamu, that in the days of its greatness under Ansa Sasraku had assisted Osei Tutu to secure the stool of Kumasi, was now being drawn into that very empire that Osei Tutu had founded. In 1744 it may be said that Opoku Kuma confirmed Osei Opoku as overlord by the payment of the one hundred slaves. In the very same year Osei Opoku asserted his overlordship by demanding Akwamu troops to assist him in a war he intended against the Fantis. Three hundred Akwamus were sent to join the Ashanti armies. The announcement that the war was to be against the Fantis turned out to be a mere subterfuge, and late in 1744 Osei Opoku turned his armies northwards. Rømer gives an account of the campaign which is worth quoting at length since it contains the earliest description we have of the hinterland of Ashanti, and was compiled by Rømer from the reports of Danish company messengers, accredited to the Ashanti court, who actually accompanied the expedition¹.

"For twenty-one days they marched through the bush and across rivers, which sometimes hindered them, until they came to a wilderness where neither grass nor a single straw was to be seen; then for fourteen days they had to wade through quicksand, and sometimes the army went for two days without water. For as long as they had been in the bush they had eaten fruit, roots, and game, and had lacked nothing; in the wilderness however, many went hungry. They came at last to a flat land, where they met people with towns or villages (Opoku had among his people many who had travelled to this land and traded there). The Ashantis surprised them and took them prisoner. They advanced further still, and came to a large town in which Opoku and his 300,000 men² encamped,

1. Rømer, 1769, pp. 166 and 169.

2. The German edition of 1769 simply says, "Opoku and his whole army". The figure of 300,000 must be an exaggeration, though perhaps not wholly unreal. Bowdich, who was in Kumasi in 1817 and whose information appears to have been derived from the Keeper of the Treasury (one of whose duties it was to record the numbers of an army) considered that at a moderate estimate Ashanti proper could raise 204,000 fighting men, to which had to be added those drawn from twenty-one tributary states. T.E. Bowdich: Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, 1819.

the inhabitants all having abandoned the town. Opoku's war force however only occupied a small part of the town, from which they concluded that more people lived there than in the whole of Ashanti. The Ashanti traders assured their king that he would pass through many such towns before he came to the seat of the court. They found an abundance of victuals, cows, sheep, goats, fowl and horses. Of the latter there were so many that Opoku provided a thousand of his men with them, and so obtained a force of cavalry.

He sent these riders out to obtain an account of the dispositions of the enemy. They did not return however, and according to the statements of a few prisoners of that nation who they took, all were slain, and it was reported also that many hundreds of thousands of horsemen had opposed them, and had slain all the Ashantis. This nation has the Turkish religion, and we have received many Arabic books in Accra which the Ashantis had plundered from the town mentioned. They also took some Moors prisoner, who had come to this land to trade, without doubt from Barbary, whereof two Moors yet live in Ashanti.

The Ashantis lay for a whole month in this town, and Opoku became afraid to advance further; at last Opoku's enemies came, and surrounded the whole town with an uncountable army. It became necessary for the Ashantis to throw themselves against the enemies, which they did but with considerable losses; the horses became frightened by the shooting, since these horsemen have no guns but lances or spears and sabres. And so the Ashanti army retired, surrounded by cavalry, straight across the wilderness to the Ashanti bush. Thus ended this war for Opoku, who considers himself the greatest king in the world; he had indeed got some hundreds of prisoners and horses, etc., but he and his allies had lost over 40,000 in the wilderness, including one of our messengers who died of starvation. This campaign took eight months: each of the allies returned to his land again, and on Opoku's orders must hasten to a new war....."¹.

Römer had forgotten the name of the country invaded by the Ashantis, but a Gonja chronicle written about 1770 in an Arabic script records the war much more succinctly:

AH 1157 (i.e. 1744/5 AD):

"At the end of this year the infidels entered the country of Gonja, and the Gonja knew them as Imbo (i.e. Ashanti).

They also invaded Gwong (i.e. Dagomba) and the people of

1. Römer, 1760, pp. 218-21.

Gwong took to flight, in the month of Dhul-hijja, the month of prayer"¹.

Osei Opoku's allies who "on Opoku's orders must hasten to a new war" included Akims as well as New Akwamus. Unlike the Akims, however, the Akwamus had not been subjected to Ashanti by conquest, but had freely accepted the overlordship of the king. The distinction was clearly remembered early in the 19th. century, for Dupuis, British Consul in Ashanti in 1820, was informed how Ashanti had extended its frontiers to incorporate as provinces within the empire Accra, Akwapim, and the Adangnes, "whilst Aquambo, the only existing kingdom in that quarter worthy that title, courted the conqueror's alliance, and was received into protection as a confederate of the empire"².

Opoku Kuma acknowledged the overlordship of the king of Ashanti, but there is little to suggest that Dako, the grandson of Amu, who succeeded to the stool of Akwamu in 1747, sought to renounce that allegiance. There was one dispute in 1749 between Dako and Osei Opoku concerning the passage of Ashanti traders to the coast, but the matter was settled amicably³. Indeed, it is probably of Dako's greatness that he realised clearly that in its weakened state New Akwamu could but benefit from Ashanti protection; economic and not military recovery had to be the prime consideration. Certainly the new relationship with Ashanti bore immediate results in the former sphere, and Ashanti traders, shunning the direct but disturbed route to Accra through Akim and Old Akwamu, began to use a longer but safer route from Kumasi along the Kwahu scarp, across the Afram plains, and so into New Akwamu from where they were escorted to the beaches by Akwamu middlemen⁴. The trade was carefully organised and not left in

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1. See App. IV in J. Goody: The Ethnography of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast West of the White Volta (Colonial Office, London), 1954.
 2. J. Dupuis: Journal of a Residence in Ashantee, 1824, p.234. Dupuis rightly attributes this event to the reign of Osei Opoku, although he is mistaken about the dates of that king. Osei Opoku reigned from 1720 until 1750, and not from 1731 to 1742. Bowdich (Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee, 1819) accepts 1742 as the date of Osei Opoku's death and is misled into attributing the subjection of Akwamu to a later reign.
 3. KvG 110: letter from Brummer at Accra dd. 18 September, 1749.
 4. KvG 110: letter from Brummer at Accra dd. 10 November, 1749; KvG 111: letters from Brummer dd. 10 April, 5, 11, 18 and 29 May, 1750.

individual hands. The Ashanti traders came through into New Akwamu in caravans ('passages'), and the Akwamu armed bands who escorted them to the coast received a 'custom' from the European merchants in the forts and lodges. On every slave, for example, the English in Accra paid 8 engs. (on the Coast, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.) as custom to the Akwamu chiefs¹. The Akwamus received their custom, and the Ashantis protection, which was clearly necessary:

"Another passage through of the Ashantis will be here (i.e. Accra) shortly, as the Akwamu Caboceer has now been to the beach to receive their custom for the former trade, and has now returned to his country to escort the second passage though to the beach, as the Ashantis cannot come alone because they are attacked by the Akim and Krobo peoples who stay in large numbers between Akwamu and the beach, which is the reason why the whole troop of Ashantis or traders have to come down together and not as previously when they had free passage. Then they came daily in small bodies, which cannot be done now for the above reason"².

Even at the coast the tribulations of the Ashanti traders were not at an end, and the Akwamu middlemen were not averse to making a little additional profit. Rømer notes that:

"it is ludicrous to see how the Ashanti Kotoko (great Ashantis, as they call themselves) are fooled by the few Akwamus, and not only in trade; thus an Akwamu chief, who might come to us with fifty Ashanti traders, will commonly sell half a score of them before they go away again. He makes them believe that the place where they are going at the sea is peculiarly dangerous, because of sea-devils, which sometimes come on to the land and take back people with them to the sea".

A number of the Ashanti traders are subsequently lured away from their colleagues, seized later to be sold as slaves, and then the Akwamus, "return to the other Ashantis, deploring the fact that they had not been able to overpower the sea-devils, who were too strong for them, and though they had fought with them right down to the beach nevertheless they had carried off some Akwamus and Ashantis"³.

1. KvG 110: letter from Brummer at Accra dd. 3 November, 1749.
 2. KvG 111: letter from Brummer at Accra dd. 15 December, 1750.
 3. Rømer, 1760, pp. 224-5.

Dako ruled over Akwamu until 1781; "he gave his subjects many and good laws" and although a vassal of the king of Ashanti was nevertheless able to reestablish Akwamu hegemony over parts of Kwahu and Osudoku, countries west of the Volta that had slipped from Akwamu control after the collapse of 1730¹. His successors, however, were unable to further this policy of re-conquest, for a quarter of a century later the abolition of the slave trade dealt a blow to the Akwamu economy which it could scarcely withstand; indeed, in a series of wars between 1829 and 1833 the Krepi peoples, who had remained under Akwamu rule ever since their subjection in 1707, established their independence, and with that the last vestiges of the old empire vanished. The most fitting epilogue may perhaps come from an early nineteenth century writer who, seeing events from a distance, saw them in perspective:

"The political state of the Gold Coast has been chiefly marked by a decline of the power of Aquamboe, which, instead of ruling over all the neighbouring states, now scarcely maintains its own independence. The predominance is at present indisputably possessed by Ashantee....."².

1. Biörn's Beretning, 1788, pp. 211-2.

2. Hugh Murray: Historical Account of Discoveries and Travels in Africa, 1818, Vol. II, p. 316.

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(Extensive series of photostats and transcripts of the Dutch materials relating to the Gold Coast were made by the late Mr. J.T. Furley, Secretary for Native Affairs in the Gold Coast between 1917 and 1923. This collection is now in the Library of the University College of Ghana).

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(Extensive series of photostats of the Danish materials relating to the Gold Coast were made by the late Mr. J.T. Furley, and are now in the Library of the University College of Ghana).

iii. ENGLISH.

The records of the Royal African Company are singularly unhelpful for the history of the eastern parts of the Gold Coast, and especially for Akwamu, the attention of the English traders being centred primarily upon the Fanti states and upon Ashanti. The few references cited are to the series of records T/70, - minute books, letters, and accounts of the Royal African Company preserved among the Treasury papers in the Public Record Office, London.

APPENDIX I.

AKWAMU AND OTUBLUHUM:

A STUDY IN AKAN CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The first part of this paper is devoted to a brief review of some of the literature of cross-cousin marriage systems among the Akan of Ghana, and to a consideration of certain general structural features of such systems. The second part of the paper presents a detailed account of a system of patrilineal cross-cousin marriage in use. The example chosen, which is of considerable intrinsic historical interest, linked together the royal family of Akwamu and the ruling family of the Otubluhum quarter of Accra throughout the greater part of the eighteenth century. Akwamu, now a small state locked in the wooded hills of the Volta Gorge in S.E. Ghana, was, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the most powerful of all the Akan polities and centre of an empire that extended for over two hundred miles along the Gold and Slave Coasts of Guinea. Accra, now capital of Ghana, was incorporated into that empire in 1681, but recovered its independence half a century later. The second part of the paper may be taken as a essay in the application of anthropological

theory to other fields, in this case history. Unquestionably a whole series of historical events affecting Akwamu and Accra would be quite incomprehensible without reference to the structural implications of the marriage system maintained between the royal family of the former and the ruling house of the latter.

AKAN MARRIAGE SYSTEMS.

Cross-cousin marriage in Akan societies.

It is well known that the Akan peoples of Ghana practise both patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, i.e. mother's brother's son to father's sister's daughter (the uncle giving his niece in marriage to his son), and father's sister's son to mother's brother's daughter (the uncle receiving his daughter in marriage for his nephew). Fortes suggests that such marriages are becoming less frequent; in a sample of 525 married women from various parts of Ashanti, of those aged 50 or over about 14% had married cross-cousins, but of those under 30 only 2%.¹ Field, however, writing of Akim-Kotoku, states that

1. Fortes, 1950, p. 282.

"marriages between cross-cousins are still enjoined and to-day about half the married people of all ages are married to their cross-cousins."¹ Rattray was carrying out a census in a number of Ashanti villages to determine the relative frequencies of patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousin marriages.² Unfortunately his results were never published.

This paper will be concerned with cross-cousin marriages not as isolated phenomena but only in so far as they occur as constituents of regular systems of marriages maintained, between two or more social groups, over a number of generations. Attention was first drawn to the existence of such systems in Akan societies by Rattray, who wrote of "a perfect system of cross-cousin marriages, which is not feasible in practice", but described this system as resulting "where marriages of brother and sister with sister and brother are carried out consistently."³ Field described the same system from Akim-Kotoku, and like Rattray

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1. Field, 1948, p. 104.
 2. Rattray, 1927, p. 321.
 3. Ibid, chap. xxix.

appears to have considered it an ideal to which "actual facts show a close approximation."¹ It is shown in Diagram I, in the notation that will be used throughout this paper.

The localised succession.

An appreciation of the nature of the verticals A1-A2-A3 and B1-B2-B3 in Diagram I is crucial to the purpose of this paper. Each is of the basic formal structure shown in Diagram II, a genealogical fragment that, by convention, represents the real situation involving X1, X2, and X3 when and only when X2 is sister's son of X1, and X3 is both sister's son of X2 and sister's daughter's son of X1. When used in this way one may ask what interpretation, if any, can be given to the vertical X1-X2-X3. In the case of a patrilineal society the vertical would appear so far devoid of meaning. Where succession is reckoned matrilineally, however, the vertical may then be said to represent a line of succession: X3 will be the successor (to lineage, office, rank, etc.) of X2, who will be the successor of X1. Furthermore, given certain sets of circumstances, but not others, the vertical X1-X2-X3 also becomes meaningful in terms of locality in that X1, X2,

1. Field, op cit. pp. 26 and 110-2.

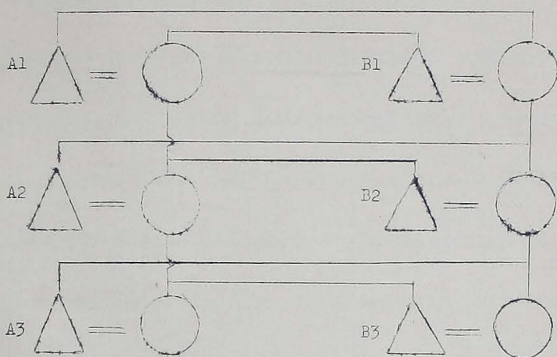


DIAGRAM I.

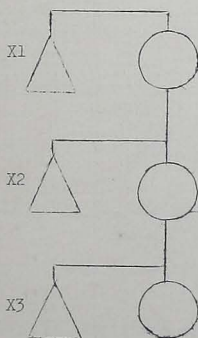


DIAGRAM II.

and X3 will all be resident at the one place. Two such sets of circumstances are given below; in each case it is postulated that X1, X2, and X3 are adult married males.

Set A: Co-residence of husband and wife is practised. Marital residence is virilocal, i.e. the wife joins the husband, and avunculo-local, i.e. the couple take up residence with the husband's male matrilineal kin, with whom he may or may not have been resident previously. In these circumstances X1, X2, and X3 will all be resident at the one place, forming part of a domestic group under a male head.

Set B: Co-residence of husband and wife is not practised, i.e. residence is duo-local. After marriage a man takes up, or continues in, residence with his male and female matrilineal kin. In such circumstances X1, X2, and X3 will again be resident in the one place, X2 for example residing with his mother who, since co-residence of husband and wife is not practised, will herself be resident with her matrilineal kin including her uterine brother X1. X1, X2, and X3 will in fact be members of a non-familial domestic group, which will constitute a segment of a matrilineage under either a male or female head.

We may now say that if the genealogical fragment shown in Diagram II is used to describe a real situation in a society within which succession is matrilineally determined and within which post-marital residence circumstances of types A or B above obtain, then the vertical X1-X2-X3 is to be interpreted as what I shall call a localised succession; X1, X2, and X3 will all be resident at the one place and X3 will be successor of X2 who will be successor of X1. To represent such a localised succession it should seldom be necessary to show more than three generations, for whilst a man, his sister's son, and his sister's daughter's son may all be effective (i.e. adult, respected, etc.) members of a domestic group at one time, it would be rare for a member of the fourth descendant generation to achieve that status before the death of his matrilineal kinsman of the first generation. On the other hand, as a result for example of early deaths, a localised succession may at times span only two generations.

A full domestic group will ordinarily include members other than those of the localised succession. In particular it will have a lateral spread that will include lineage and non-lineage kin and strangers.¹

1. For the composition of such groups see Fortes, 1949, passim.

The localised succession is to be regarded as an unnamed component of such a domestic group, though it will at the same time be the case that within the domestic group a strong and probably decisive influence upon group affairs will be exerted by the members X1, X2, and X3 of the localised succession, the first as a senior male of the group and X2 and X3 as potential successors.

Residence patterns and the localised succession.

The concept of a localised succession could of course be developed mutatis mutandis for a society in which descent is patrilineal and patrilocal residence patterns normal. This need not concern us here, however, since it is well known that in Akan societies, although there exist secondary patrilineal descent groups of some importance, the matrilineal rule in fact prevails. It therefore follows from what has been said that the vertical X1-X2-X3 in Diagram II, may be validly interpreted as a localised succession for Akan societies in so far as post-marital residence circumstances of types A or B above occur, but not when the patterns of residence are patrilocal.

Recent studies of the Ashanti, most numerous of all Akan peoples, have shown that domestic groups that are non-familial segments of a matrilineage (see circumstance set B above) are more common than

had hitherto been supposed, for instance by Rattray, but that where co-residence of husband and wife does occur it is normally virilocal with both avunculo- and patri-local forms, i.e. residence with the husband's male matrilineal (circumstance set A above) and patrilineal kin respectively.¹

It would now be recognised that these three different patterns of residence occurring in Akan society, the duo-, avunculo-, and patri-local, are to be correlated with the different phases in the development cycle of the domestic group.² In particular, the patrilocal pattern, or the incipient patrilocalism when a man with his dependants by marriage and paternity sets up his own house, is to be associated with a dispersive phase in that development cycle. Thus, for example, after marriage younger brothers may continue to reside with their eldest brother in their mother's, or mother's brother's, house. The frequency with which this occurs is one index of the solidarity of the matrilineage. Upon the death of the house-head, however, if not before, younger brothers will often prefer to

1. Fortes, 1948, passim; 1949, passim; 1950, passim.

2. Fortes, 1950, passim.

disperse rather than live under the authority of their eldest brother.¹

In this case each will set up his own house, or preparatory to that could take temporary house-room with his patrilineal kin.

In this way new domestic groups ultimately take shape, and their existence in turn affects the actual course of succession. Thus in Akan society succession passes, in principle at least, first to a surviving uterine brother and only then to a sister's son. In practice the claims of younger brothers are often waived or passed over in favour of those of sister's sons. If for example a younger brother has left the elder brother's domestic group, either by setting up his own house or by taking up residence with patrilineal kin, then he may be considered to have prejudiced his rights to succeed the elder brother, and may in any case be less anxious to assert them. In such a case a sister's son who has remained under the elder brother's authority will usually be chosen to succeed. If a younger brother who has ceased to reside with his elder brother does nonetheless, for whatever reason, succeed him, then clearly it will be necessary for him to abandon his separate residence and so

1. For a graphic description of such dispersion see Opoku, 1958.

to merge once more with his original domestic group; nevertheless, the very fact that he would have to do this would in itself constitute some motive for his neither claiming nor accepting the succession. The actual succession is therefore more likely than not to pass to the sister's son as already described.

Previously no mention was made of the rights of younger uterine brothers, but there is no reason why the triangles in Diagram II should be taken as representing only a single person rather than the whole class of persons who are uterine brothers and who are co-resident within the domestic group of their mother's brother. The same point may be made in respect of Akan inheritance. Beckett found in Akokoaso that of 41 people who had inherited cocoa farms 16 had inherited from a brother and 16 from a mother's brother. Of those who inherited from brothers it is safe to say that most if not all would not have done so had they not previously worked with their brother on his farm.¹

This paper is concerned with marriage systems maintained between established groups. A man who, after marriage, takes up residence with his patrilineal kin or sets up his own house is at that time

1. Beckett, 1944, p. 57.

in no position to enter into marriage arrangements with other but established groups. He will be more concerned to build up his own group by the recruitment of members (by birth or adoption into the group) and by the accumulation of wealth. Furthermore his dependants of the next generation are not likely to be of marriageable age; if they were the growth of the group would be impeded by already present dispersive tendencies. That the concept of a localised succession is inapplicable to such incipient domestic groups need therefore constitute no restriction on its use in this paper.

Akan symmetrical cross-cousin marriage systems.

Three aspects of the Akan type marriage system shown in Diagram I may now be noted:

- a). It is basically an exchange of women in marriage between the two domestic groups containing the localised successions A1-A2-A3 and B1-B2-B3.
- b). The exchange is completed in one generation, i.e. A1's group gives a woman to B1's and receives in return, simultaneously or nearly so, a woman from B1's group.
- c). Not any woman, e.g. a slave or parallel cousin, is exchanged.

The marriage system is initiated by a man of one group being given as wife a woman from another group who is the sister of

his own sister's husband or husband-designate. The system is maintained by a man in the one group being given as wife a woman from the other group who is either his father's sister's daughter or his mother's brother's daughter as well as being sister of his own sister's husband or husband-designate. Such a system of cross-cousin marriage is symmetrical: there is no question of marriage with one cross-cousin being enjoined and with the other forbidden, since within the system a woman who is father's sister's daughter is necessarily also mother's brother's daughter, and vice versa.

Rattray considered such marriage systems to be a matter of 'custom' and attempted a generalised explanation of them in terms of the reconciliation of the conflicting obligations an individual may feel towards his sister's children and his own. Rattray wrote:

"If the maternal uncle and not the father is the dictator in arranging marriages, and if his interests make him anxious to see his nephews and nieces united to his own children, it would seem at first sight that his interests might clash with those of his own children's maternal uncle, who in turn can arrange the marriages of his nephews and nieces."¹

1. Rattray, 1927, p. 322.

Such a dilemma, suggested Rattray, is only to be resolved by a cross-cousin marriage system of the type considered.

At this point Rattray was, so I believe, insufficiently appreciative of the origins of such marriage systems in agreements, made between two or more groups, and designed to secure certain definite, and in the widest sense political, ends. The initial marriages in any cross-cousin marriage system need not themselves be cross-cousin marriages, though they are the indispensable prerequisites of such cross-cousin marriages following. Cross-cousin marriage systems are brought into being to bind group to group because groups agree to be bound together in that way and consequently take the necessary steps to secure such an association. Similarly of course, marriage systems come to an end when the interests of the contracting groups diverge, as sooner or later they surely must, and the arrangement between them is terminated, whether by consent or by unilateral action. In Akan society groups do not become associated because customary patterns of cross-cousin marriage occur between them; such patterns of marriage occur between them because they have agreed to become so associated.

Akan asymmetrical patrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems.

The particular cross-cousin marriage system which will be examined in detail in the following pages is not of the symmetrical (ideal or perfect) type instanced by Rattray and Field, but of the type shown in Diagram III, three features of which may be distinguished:

- a). It is basically an exchange of women in marriage between the two domestic groups containing the localised successions A1-A2-A3 and B1-B2-B3.
- b). The exchange is completed only in two generations, i.e. A1's group gives a woman to B1's group, but only receives back a woman in the succeeding generation.
- c). Not any woman, e.g. a slave, parallel cousin, or matrilateral cross-cousin, is exchanged between the two groups. Initially a woman of one group of status acceptable to the other group is given to a man of that group. The system is then maintained by a man in the one group being given as wife a woman from the other group who is his father's sister's daughter. Such a system of cross-cousin marriage is thus asymmetrical since patrilateral.

It is possible that what Rattray took as impaired (i.e. 'infeasible in practice') symmetrical cross-cousin marriage systems, and what Field treated as 'approximations to the ideal', were in some cases examples of asymmetrical cross-cousin marriage systems. An informant from one group,

so I have found, will describe a marriage system between his group and another in terms of: "We give them our sister and they give us their sister". This might appear to be a description of a symmetrical system. In fact such descriptions have no time depth, i.e. they do not specify whether the exchange is completed in one or in two generations, and may often turn out to be descriptions of asymmetrical systems. In terms of Diagram III, A1's group may give A1's sister to B1's group, but the 'sister' they receive back from B1's group is not B1's, but B2's. It is interesting to note in this

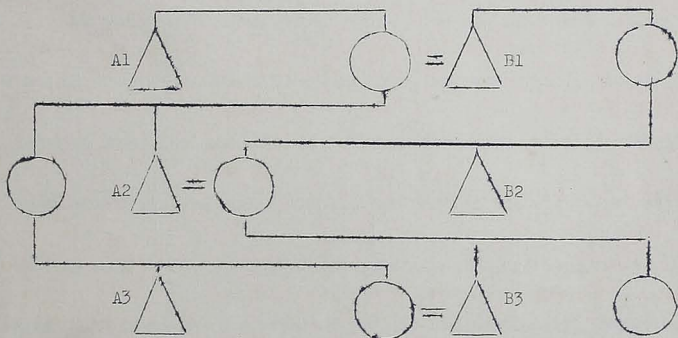


DIAGRAM III.

context that the two marriage systems considered here have a structural relationship. One way of exhibiting this is by considering an asymmetrical patrilineal cross-cousin marriage system involving three groups, A, B, and C, and by treating group A as co-extensive with group C ('marriage in a circle'). The resultant system is one of symmetrical cross-cousin marriage. In other words, logically, symmetrical cross-cousin marriage systems may be treated as limiting cases of asymmetrical

patrilateral (or for that matter matrilinear) cross-cousin marriage between three groups. Functionally, of course, the two systems may nevertheless be quite distinct.

AKWAMU AND OTUBLUHUM.

In the second part of this paper an historical example of an asymmetrical patrilateral cross-cousin marriage system will be examined in detail. The case chosen can only have resulted from an arrangement made between two groups, the one localised in Accra and represented by the modern Otubluhum, and the other in Akwamu, being in fact the royal family. The arrangement persisted through four generations, spanning the greater part of the eighteenth century. Fortunately the period is well documented. The archives of the Dutch West Indies Company are especially full. In particular, sufficient genealogical detail is recorded in the various sources for the pattern of marriage between Akwamu and Otubluhum to be recognised as of the asymmetrical patrilateral cross-cousin type already considered.

Eighteenth century writings having reference to Akwamu and Otubluhum contain no direct account of the marriage system linking these two polities: it would be anachronistic to expect that they would. Bosman, astute observer that he was, considered even

matrilineal succession "so perplexed and obscure, that hitherto no European has been able to obtain a clear description of it, as I am certain they never will"¹. It is noteworthy, however, that Rømer, a Dane who left the Gold Coast in 1750, was heedful enough to write of deliberately contracted marriages designed to achieve certain definite political ends:

"It has already been said, that it seemed as if the Akwamu King Acondo regretted having acted so harshly against the Accras, as one sees from the following, that he let them be called back and all the Europeans at Accra had to be his guarantors that he was well disposed towards them and that he would no more attack and raid them. They came, and as a token of his friendship he gave them back the heads of their leaders. Indeed, what is more, he gave two of the foremost Accra chiefs an Akwamu noble-woman each: Putti received one of them, and a chief under the Dutch fort called Dacon had the other.

Acondo's stratagem in this was very nice; he intended to make one folk of the Accras and Akwamus, which could have happened had the Accras given their noble-women in the same way, though a hundred years would scarcely have sufficed to achieve this. His successors, however, spoilt all"².

Otubluhum origins.

Diagram IV shows what will be taken for the purposes of this

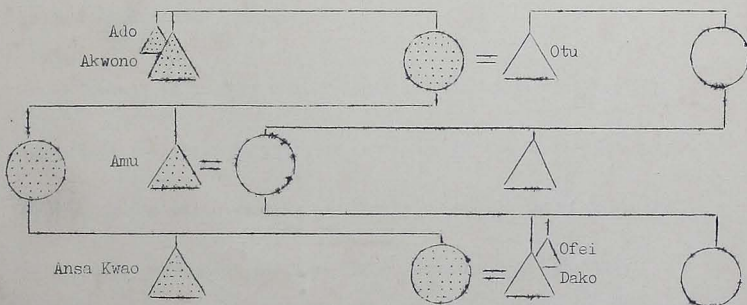


DIAGRAM IV.

1. Bosman, 1705, pp. 203-4.

2. Rømer, 1760, p. 142.

paper as a paradigm of the marriage system between Akwamu and Otubluhum, departures from which will be considered as they arise. The system is one of asymmetrical patrilateral cross-cousin marriage. Shaded figures belong to one abusua or exogamous matriclan and non-shaded to a second. Two localised successions will be seen to be involved, the one headed by Akwono (or earlier by his uterine brother Ado) and the other by Otu. Akwono's group was the royal family of Akwamu and therefore resident in the state capital. Ado was king of Akwamu from 1689 until his death in 1702, when he was succeeded by his sister's daughter's son (Anse Kwao.[?] AKWONNO). Otu was also an Akwamu but had, in the circumstances outlined below, taken up permanent residence in Accra in the area that became, and is still, known as Otubluhum, 'Otu's quarter.'

Otu was of an Akwamu divisional stool family; his brother appears to have been Nifahene or commander of the army right wing. When young Otu was pawned by his family to the Dutch in ^AAccra and so became a bondman of the West Indies Company. In the later seventeenth century it was not impossible for such bondmen ('Company slaves') to achieve considerable power. A head trading boy

would be provided with the outward symbols of chiefly authority: fine cloths, valuable beads and gold charms adorned his person; horns, drums, and umbrellas were his to use on ceremonial occasions; and his own band of armed retainers accompanied him on missions into the interior to solicit trade, keep open the paths, and conduct parties of merchants in safety to the forts.¹ Otu, a man clearly of outstanding ability, also had the advantage of his contacts with Akwamu, then a powerful and expanding state lying across the immediate hinterland of Accra.² He rose to power rapidly, becoming first a head trading boy for the Dutch in Crèvecoeur at Accra and subsequently Chief Broker for the Dutch settlements on the Gold Coast, a position of considerable eminence. In this way Otu with his dependant kin and slaves came to settle near the Dutch fort in Accra, and were securely established there and in a position of importance when the armies of Akwamu launched their offensive against the Accra kingdom in 1677. In a series of battles between that year and 1681 the entire kingdom was conquered and so became reduced in status to that of a province of Akwamu.

1. T/70/5: letter dd. 26 Nov. 1709.

2. For the expansion of Akwamu see Wilks, 1957, passim.

The initiation of the marriage system.

The victorious invaders found in Otu the obvious choice for governor of the newly won province, which office thus became combined with that of Dutch broker.¹ Whilst Otu appears to have assumed this function immediately, nevertheless the question of the future of the governorship was one that still had to be decided. The office could have been allowed to become heritable within Otu's family, but this was probably considered unwise since incompatible with the necessary degree of royal control over what was, in view of the commercial vitality of Accra, undoubtedly considered a most important post. Furthermore, because Otu was brother of an Akwamu divisional chief, there was the possibility that in the next generation both divisional stool and governorship would pass to that one person who was sister's son of both Otu and his brother, so resulting in an undue strengthening of the divisional stool in relation to the paramount stool itself.

The problem of the future of the governorship thus turned upon the reconciliation of the interests of the Akwamu royal family with

1. Biographical material for Otu is scattered but see principally WIC 97-101, 404, and miscellaneous archives: Nuygt's Diary.

those of Otu and his people in Accra. The royal family could negotiate from a position of strength since Accra belonged to the Akwamu king by right of conquest whereas Otu governed Accra only at the king's behest. Otu's interests, on the other hand, were not to be disregarded, since he had not only the support of his kin in Akwamu but also a powerful ally in the Dutch whose broker he was and with whom the king wished to maintain close commercial ties. In these circumstances a compromise arrangement appears to have been agreed upon. Since Accra belonged to the Akwamu king the governorship naturally remained the royal prerogative. The royal prerogative, however, was to be exercised in such a way that the actual management of affairs in Accra would alternate between a member of Otu's family and one of the royal family, both alike governing in the king's name. This arrangement by itself however achieved merely the representation of the interests of the two groups whilst doing nothing to prevent the growth of political rivalry and antagonism between them. What was further required was an instrument for effecting the reconciliation of those interests and so making practicable the sharing of the governorship. This, so I shall hope to show, was found in the asymmetrical patrilineal cross-cousin marriage system ✓ instituted between the groups, the paradigm of which is that shown in

Diagram IV. In the first generation it will be seen that the royal family gave a uterine sister of Ado and Akwono in marriage to Otu. In the next generation the Otubluhum group reciprocated by giving Otu's sister's daughter in marriage to Akwono's sister's son Amu. Amu's wife was thus his patrilateral cross-cousin. In the third generation the royal family again gave one of its women, Amu's sister's daughter, in marriage to Otu's sister's daughter's son Dako of Otubluhum, whose patrilateral cross-cousin she was. The rule governing this exchange of women between the two groups may, then, be stated in this way:

The wife-giving group gives a sister of one of its members (i.e. 'one of its sisters') in marriage to a man of the wife-receiving group. The sister is so chosen by the wife-giving group that she is the father's sister's daughter of the man in the wife-receiving group to whom she is given.

The principle of the succession to the governorship may now be formulated thus:

A group that is wife-giving in the one generation provides the successor to office in the next generation. The candidates for office are the sons of the woman who was given by the wife-giving group in the first generation, and of the man in the wife-receiving group to whom she was given.

It follows from the application of these rules that a man who holds office is followed in office by his own son. By the rules of matrilineal descent and clan exogamy, however, a son will necessarily belong to the lineage other than that of his father; thus Otu was followed as governor by his son Amu of the Akwamu royal line, and Amu by his son Dako of Otu's line. Certain political advantages would clearly be expected to result from this arrangement. Since any governor must either be a member of the royal family, or a son of a member, the continued allegiance of Otubluhum to Akwamu would seem guaranteed and the arrangement to share the management of Accra workable. In this way too it might have been thought to secure a high degree of continuity of policy and general political stability, - in contrast with the situation had no marriage system been instituted between the two groups, Akwamu simply sending any member of its royal family to Accra in alternate generations. Finally, that the governorship passed from father to son was perhaps considered of some importance in virtue of the fact that the Accra peoples over whom it was exercised were themselves patrilineally organised.

Otu, now brother-in-law of the Akwamu king, continued to exercise his offices of Akwamu governor and Dutch broker until his death. In European records of the time he is met with under the name of Pieter Pasop, - possibly taken from his first Dutch master. He is known to

tradition as Otu Ahiakwa, - ahia is a compassion-name often given to a child born after his father's death; akwa means 'bondman'. In 1701 the Dutch in Accra, who were expecting a French attack, reported that "in the event of fighting Pieter Pasop and his men may be esteemed as good as any white men." In 1703 the Dutch paid tribute to "our great Broker Pieter Pasop, who has made such an impression on the Negroes by his well known valour and knowledge of the arts of war, and by being related to the mighty king of Akwamu." From 1703 until his death in or about 1711 he undertook on behalf of the Dutch a series of important commissions, one being to massacre all the English to be found in the Elmina area.

The secondary localised succession.

Diagram IV which we took as a paradigm served to bring out clearly the identity of the two (named) domestic groups and the two (unnamed) localised successions involved in the cross-cousin marriage system. The death of Otu and the succession of Amu, however, necessarily involved a disruption of one group in that Amu had to leave Akwamu for Accra where he, with those of his lineage kin who accompanied him, claimed house-room with his patrilineal kin in Otubluhum (patrilocal residence). The consequent changes are represented in Diagram V in which successive governors Otu, Amu, and Dako have now been brought into the one vertical. Thus Diagram V, which still shows two and only two domestic groups, viz. the royal household and Otu's, now shows three

localised successions, the two original and primary ones, namely:

- a. The Akwamu royal succession, which will now pass from Akwono to a uterine brother of Amu or, as in fact happened and is therefore shown on the diagram, to Akwono's sister's daughter's son,
 - and b. the Otubluhum primary succession from Otu to his sister's son to his sister's daughter's son Dako,
- and a third artificially created secondary succession, namely,
- c. the Otubluhum secondary succession (to the governorship only) from Otu to his son Amu to his grandson Dako.

The Otubluhum domestic group is thus anomalous in containing two localised successions, and the secondary localised succession is itself anomalous in having members with affiliations to two different matriclans.

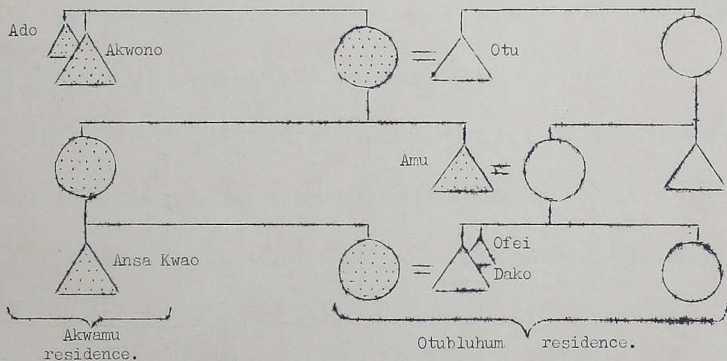


DIAGRAM V.

To talk in terms of domestic groups and in terms of localised successions is to talk at two distinct levels of analysis. To speak of a localised succession from father to son is compatible with asserting the dominance of either the patrilineal or matrilineal rule

of succession. There is no such thing as a rule of succession within the localised succession; the localised succession is the actual course of succession at any one time as determined by sundry factors operating in accordance with a rule of succession. Thus for example the case of a secondary localised succession from father to son instanced above resulted from:

- a. a rule of matrilineal succession,
- b. a political arrangement to vest the governorship in two groups in alternation, and
- c. a patrilateral cross-cousin marriage system between these groups.

Such a localised succession is secondary precisely in that it is contingent upon such general political factors as b and c above, which are not relevant to the determination of the primary succession. The only general factor of relevance to the primary succession is the rule of succession itself, which, when for example matrilineal, yields a list of possible successors in order of the closeness of their womb kinship with the deceased, - uterine brothers, sister's sons, and so forth. Other things being equal the actual succession should follow this order in accordance with a principle of primogeniture, though, since other things seldom are equal, questions of residence, age, character, reincarnation and so forth will all affect the decision as

to which of the possible successors is actually chosen to succeed. In Akan society a rule of succession is, in effect, not a decision procedure for determining who shall succeed, but only for determining who are the candidates.

Primary and secondary localised successions.

Prima facie it would appear that if primary and secondary successions were localised in one place (i.e. were components of one domestic group, which would then be of mixed residential character, e.g. avunculo- and patri-local), then one person might belong to both successions; if on the other hand primary and secondary successions were not localised in one place then a person's membership of the former might at best be sustained by a fiction, the essential residence qualification being lacking. In either case difficulties arise which may be illustrated from Otubluhum history where, as we have seen, the governorship (i.e. the secondary succession) passed from Otu to his son Amu to his grandson Dako whereas the primary succession (to lineage, rank, and wealth) passed from Otu to his sister's son to his sister's daughter's son Dako. Certain of these difficulties may best be represented by reference to the undesirability of the situation in which a man is co-resident with his sister's husband as, for example, Dako was with Okaidza (not shown in the diagrams)

or Otu's sister's son with Amu, since in such circumstances one has what is for the Akan the classic case of conflict between the father and the mother's brother. In Otubluhum this conflict led to the secession of Okaidza from the group and, in 1739, to open warfare between Dako with Dutch support and his sister's husband Okaidza with Danish. Three years later, after Dako's death, it was reported that "Okaidza had obtained two of the upper teeth of Dako for eight dollars and had caused holes to be bored through them, and wore them with similar objects round his neck."¹

Of greater historical consequence were the results of Amu's complicated position as a member of the Akwamu royal family resident in Otubluhum, - where he had moved on the death of Otu in or about 1711, before which date he had already received in marriage Otu's sister's daughter from which union a son, Dako, had been born. The difficulties in this situation did not become apparent until the death in 1725 of Amu's mother's brother Akwono, king of Akwamu, who, being an aged man, left no surviving brothers and in Amu, so it seems, a lone sister's son. Whilst Amu's subsequent actions show beyond doubt that he expected to succeed Akwono as king, in fact the kingmakers of

1. Römer, 1760, p. 101. The career of Amu has been reconstructed from the following principal sources: KvG 43, 82-100 and 291; WIC 109; VGK, letters and correspondence from Christiansborg 1727-31; Biörn, 1788.

Akwamu passed over him and chose instead a sister's daughter's son of Akwono named Ansa Kwao. The reasons for their choice are nowhere documented, but it seems clear that Ansa Kwao was preferred in that he had been continuously resident with his matrilineal kin in the Akwamu capital, whereas for some fourteen years Amu had lived with his patrilineal kin in Accra, so prejudicing his claims to the throne ('stool'). As we have stressed earlier, rights of succession do not exist in vacuo but are inextricably bound up with, among other things, residence.

Amu's mortification at being left in the subordinate position of governor of Accra whilst his nephew succeeded to the throne was subsequently further increased by the fact that Ansa Kwao proved an injudicious ruler whose policies contributed greatly to the spread of discontent among the subject peoples. By 1728 Amu had resolved upon rebellion and first, using his powers as governor, placed the Accra towns on a war footing, levying from them a tax that was then used to secure the support of malcontented subjects of Akwamu such as the Berekuso of the hill country north of Accra. In 1729 the rebel army was joined by a section of the Akwamu people proper - the modern Aburis - who transferred their allegiance from Ansa Kwao to Amu. The combined allies assumed the (Twi) name Akuwapem, 'the thousand

companies'.¹ Late in 1729 and early in 1730 a number of engagements were fought between the rebels and the loyal Akwamu armies in which neither side secured any clear advantage. At this critical time, however, Amu's forces were weakened by the defection of the Accras, who were persuaded to return to their towns by Ayi Kume, a representative of the pre-Akwamu Accra dynasty, who saw in the struggle between Amu and Ansa Kwao a chance to regain the independence of Accra.

Fearing the collapse of his cause, Amu committed what was to prove a serious error of judgement by soliciting support from Akyem, a neighbouring Akan state whose long-standing enmity to Akwamu was even then a matter of history. The result was that what had commenced as an internal rebellion against Ansa Kwao rapidly assumed the character of a general war aimed at the total destruction of Akwamu power. In these circumstances the sections of Akwamu that had supported Amu now returned their allegiance to Ansa Kwao. The remaining rebel forces became little more than auxiliaries of the newly committed Akyem armies, and Amu found himself replaced as commander by the Akyem war-lord Ofori Dua. Late in 1730 the Akyem armies overran and sacked the Akwamu capital, capturing and

1. It is quite clear from contemporary Danish records that this is the origin of the modern name Akwapim and not, as is usually stated, the Twi nkoa-apem, 'the thousand subjects.'

beheading Ansa Kwao.

Amu could have gained but little satisfaction from his nephew's defeat. The surviving Akwamu forces abandoned the western part of the empire and retired into their eastern territories where, under a regent Akwono Kuma, they established a new state capital behind the barrier of the River Volta. Over the conquered Akwamu homeland the Akyems preferred to grant authority to a defeated Akwamu chief, Kwesi Bibri. A new state was created in the hills north of Accra, taking the name of the Akuwapem (the modern Akwapim), but this was given into the charge of Ofori Dua who became its first king. In Accra the Otubluhum quarter, no longer backed by the might of Akwamu, remained as an alien community barely tolerated for the contribution it had made towards the downfall of Akwamu. Henceforth, however, it would supply not a governor for Accra, but only a chief for its own people.

The Akwamu succession.

It will be appreciated that at the time of the defeat of Akwamu neither party to the marriage arrangement that bound Otubluhum to Akwamu had acted in a way that could be specifically interpreted as a repudiation of that arrangement, since Amu, in raising rebellion against Ansa Kwao, had acted in defence of his rights, whether real

or supposed, as a member of the royal family and not as a member of Otubluhum. Nevertheless, as we shall now see, Amu's subsequent activities were ultimately to make impossible the continuation of the cross-cousin marriage arrangement.

Late in 1730 Amu was in Accra raising an expeditionary force for the avowed purpose of destroying the remaining Akwamu forces east of the Volta. The services of Akyem mercenaries were secured, as also the co-operation of an Akwapim chief Osei Kyame. Before leaving Accra Amu took into his custody two of his lineage kin, firstly his sister's daughter who had earlier been given by the Akwamu royal family in marriage to her cross-cousin Dako of Otubluhum, and secondly the infant offspring of this marriage who was also named Dako. These two accompanied Amu when, early in 1731, he led his forces out of Accra to establish a war camp near the Volta. Amu announced his intention of attacking Akwamu as soon as the rains ceased, but during the delay made an unexpected, but clearly premeditated, gesture of pacification. He withdrew his own warriors and the Akyem mercenaries from the war camp, marched south to Ada at the mouth of the Volta, and using the chief there as an intermediary had the Akwamus informed of the location of the war camp. The Akwamu army attacked immediately and the unsuspecting Akwapims were annihilated.

Having thus satisfactorily accomplished the sacrifice of his erstwhile allies, Amu then had the Akwamus further informed that the younger Dako and his mother (i.e. Amu's sister's daughter and her son) were in Ada. An Akwamu army arrived there in November, 1731, and took these two members of the royal family back to the relative safety of the new Akwamu capital. In the meanwhile Amu and his forces had crossed the Volta estuary and, having apparently forsaken the idea of attacking Akwamu, were content to pillage the coastal towns. They sacked Keta late in 1731, were fighting in Little Popo in 1732, and were preparing to attack Dahomey in the same year when Amu's death occurred to cause a halt to their depredations.

The sequence of events is to be understood by reference once more to the marriage arrangement between Akwamu and Otubluhum, which in Diagram VI is shown at that stage in its development immediately prior to the Akwamu defeat of 1730, when Ansa Kwao still reigned over Akwamu and Amu governed Accra. The future succession to the governorship seemed guaranteed and regular. Upon Amu's death Otu's people would supply a successor from among the sons of Otu's sister's daughter by Amu. Of these Dako was senior to Ofei and did in fact subsequently succeed first. Furthermore, by 1730 Dako had already received in marriage from the Akwamu royal family his patrilineal cross-cousin

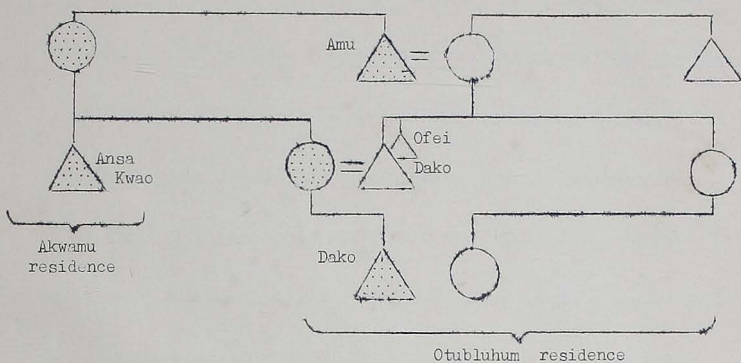


DIAGRAM VI.

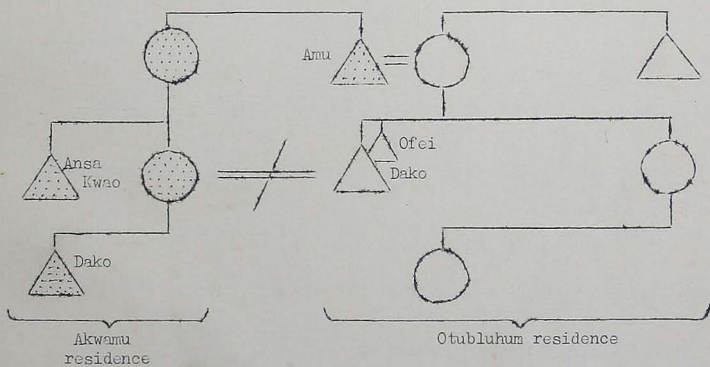


DIAGRAM VII.

Ansa Kwao's sister, Amu's sister's daughter, and by the birth of the younger Dako the succession seemed guaranteed in that next generation when it would be once more the turn of the royal family to supply a governor. The position on the eve of the Akwamu collapse may then be summarised by saying that the secondary succession localised in Otubluhum appeared both stable and strong, having a span of two generations, i.e. Amu and Dako, with a potential third generation replacement for the deceased Otu in the person of the younger Dako. Amu's machinations of 1731, however, completely destroyed this appearance of strength and stability, not only by removing from Otubluhum the younger Dako, but also his mother, a matter of even greater consequence since she alone in her generation could bear sons of the requisite genealogical composition for the Otubluhum secondary succession.

~~The post-1731 situation is shown in Diagram VII, from which it~~
may be seen that Amu, in 1731, was probably acting from much the same motives as those that had impelled him to rebellion four years earlier. His positive aim was not to spoil the Otubluhum (secondary) succession but rather to secure the Akwamu (primary) one. In 1725 Amu's claims to the throne had been set aside because for fourteen years he had been resident with his patrilineal kin in Acora: he was

regarded as having exchanged, in 1711, his long-term and uncertain prospects of the throne for the immediate and definite offer of the governorship. Amu, however, refused to see the matter in quite this light, but his bid to secure the throne by force, though resulting in the death of Ansa Kwao, failed. By 1731 Amu had apparently abandoned hope of succeeding to the throne in person, but nevertheless still sought to secure it for his matrilineal descendants since the infant Dako, his sister's daughter's son and, inter alia, his grandson, would ultimately have strong claims upon it providing these were not compromised, as Amu's had been, by prolonged residence in Otubluhum. Accordingly Amu removed the young Dako from Otubluhum and, as we have seen, arranged his return to Akwamu.

In this venture Amu's judgement was to be proved sound. In 1747 the younger Dako, originally destined for subordinate office in Accra, became instead king of Akwamu. With Ansa Sasraku and Akwono he ranks as one of the outstanding rulers of that state, being curiously described by the Dane Biörn as 'the maker of many fine laws which he enforced tyrannically.' In 1781 he blew himself up with gunpowder - an honourable death - in the course of a dispute with Ashanti over his son, named, perhaps appropriately enough, Amu.

The Otubluhum succession.

The loss of the younger Dako brought about no immediate crisis in Otubluhum affairs since the elder Dako remained there and on Amu's death in 1733 succeeded him in what must now be called the Otubluhum mantfe-ship (Ga man-tfe, literally 'town father', i.e. chief). At this time Accra was under a nominal Akyem overlordship and if Otubluhum retained any semblance of power whatsoever it was only because it still held the privilege of the Dutch brokership. In 1737 Dako was reported to be in league with the Ashantis who were threatening an invasion of Akyem, one of the announced objects of which was "to serve the Akwamus who had been driven away by the Akyems", but when the invasion materialised in 1742 Dako, who was in Akyem at the time, fled into Akwamu territory. There a fellow refugee revealed Dako's identity to an Akwamu chief Popisaa who, despite Dako's offer of 200 ounces of gold for his life, had him beheaded so that "he should pay for what his father had done, who was the chief instrument of the killing of the Akwamu country."¹ So in 1742 perished the Otubluhum mantfe Dako, son of Amu the rebel governor of Accra, and father of Dako the future king of Akwamu. Despite reports that Dako had been detained in Akyem against his will, the victorious Ashantis

1. T/70/1515: letter from Graves at Accra dd. 3 April, 1742.

took the view that he had been there to oppose them. An Ashanti embassy was sent to Accra to demand that Dako's people, and Amu's and Otu's, should all be handed over to them in pacification. The Dutch however, represented the interests of their brokers and the embassy finally agreed to a monetary settlement.

Despite the early death of Dako any crisis in the Otubluhum succession was averted by the choice of Ofei as next ruler. Earlier sources describe him as a brother of Dako senior, later ones as a brother of Dako junior. There was probably a simple confusion of names since the former relationship is alone chronologically possible. For twenty-nine years Ofei ruled Otubluhum, for the last twenty-four of which his brother's son, the younger Dako, was king of Akwamu. Under Dako, and in close alliance with Ashanti, Akwamu became powerful once more and, as a result, Otubluhum too began to recover something of its former importance in Accra affairs. The death of Ofei in 1771, however, raised in an acute form the whole question of the relationship between Akwamu and Otubluhum, for the sole person satisfying the full requirements of the Otubluhum succession was Dako who, as king of Akwamu, was scarcely likely to press his claims. That being so, the secondary (father to son) succession localised in Otubluhum was at an end.

The difficulties of the situation may best be appreciated if we consider how it must have appeared at the time to the two parties to the marriage arrangement, viz. the royal group in the Akwamu capital and Otu's group in Otubluhum. To Otu's matrilineal descendants it might have seemed that in effecting the removal of the younger Dako and his mother from Otubluhum to Akwamu in 1731 Amu, as a member of the royal lineage, had in effect repudiated the cross-cousin marriage arrangement between the two groups, even though the results of that repudiation had not been felt until forty years later. Otu's group might therefore have claimed that the successor to Ofei should be chosen from their number. The Akwamu king, on the other hand, intent upon restoring Akwamu influence in Accra, was scarcely likely to concede such a claim, and in any case probably took an uncompromising view of the matter since the Otubluhum succession had already passed from Dako to Ofei, both of Otu's group, at the time when Akwamu had been powerless to uphold its interests in Accra. Furthermore, it was arguable that in 1731 Amu had acted as an individual and not as a member of the royal family from which he had been estranged by twenty years' residence in Accra and with which in any case he had been in armed conflict.

It must be borne in mind that although Otubluhum was no longer politically subject to Akwamu in 1771, yet nevertheless the active hostility of Akwamu could have serious consequences, more especially in the commercial sphere. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that Otubluhum finally accepted a successor to Ofei from the Akwamu royal family.

Ofei's successor was Oto.¹ From Diagram VIII, which represents the situation immediately prior to the death of Ofei, it will be seen that Amu's sister's daughter, who first had been given in marriage to Dako of Otubluhum and had brought forth the younger Dako, had subsequently been given as wife to another man after her return to Akwamu in 1731, and by this second marriage had brought forth Oto. Oto was therefore a uterine brother of Dako, king of Akwamu. The strength of Oto's claim to the Otubluhum succession lay in the fact that he was Amu's sister's daughter's son; the weakness, that he was not the son of Amu's sister's daughter by the senior Dako. That Oto's succession necessarily involved the end of the system of asymmetrical patrilineal cross-cousin marriage that had linked the two groups for nearly one hundred years may be seen from the fact that

1. Oto is the same name as Otu, the latter form showing Gã influence. The variant forms are retained here to avoid confusion. The principal sources for the careers of Dako of Otubluhum, Dako of Akwamu, Ofei, and Oto are KvG 100-167; WIC 141-150; Römer, 1760; Biörn, 1788; Isert, 1793.

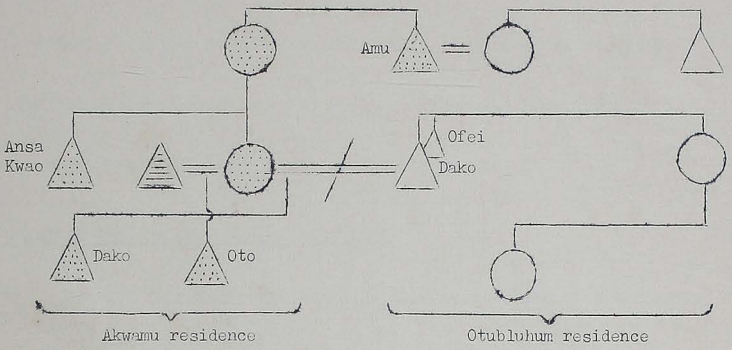


DIAGRAM VIII.

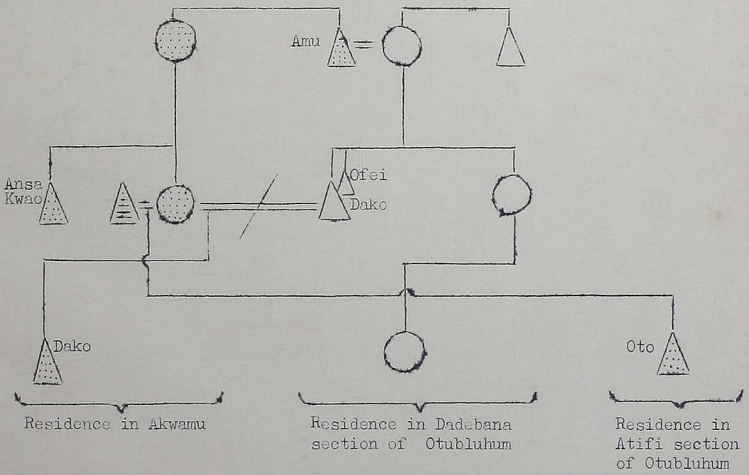


DIAGRAM IX.

even had Otu's group given the senior Dako's sister's daughter in marriage to Oto, in accordance with the agreement to exchange women, nevertheless she would not have been Oto's real or classificatory patrilineal cross-cousin; Oto would in fact have been marrying his mother's mother's brother's son's sister's daughter!

The dissociation of Dadebana and Atifi.

It will be remembered that Amu, upon leaving Akwamu to assume the governorship of Accra in 1711, had been able to claim house-room with his patrilineal kin in Otublulum since he was himself a son of Otu. When Oto left Akwamu for Accra in 1711, however, he was unable to advance any such claim to house-room, since his patrilineal kin were not of Otublulum. Oto was therefore obliged to set up his own house in Otublulum which thus became divided into two sections, Dadebana and Atifi, as shown in Diagram IX. Oto is known in tradition as Oto Braffo, a word that in the eighteenth century had the sense of 'general'. Under his leadership Otublulum regained something of its former importance and in 1784 Oto was chosen to command a combined force of Accras and Akwapims in a war against Ajlo in which capacity he is to be met with in the writings of Isert, Danish senior physician who himself accompanied the armies. Later developments, however, are beyond the scope of this paper, other than to say something of the

progressive dissociation of Dadebana from Atifi, the course of which has been marked by a series of land and stool disputes. The Atifi section rightly regards Otu Braffo as its founder, and still maintains especially cordial relations with Akwamu: the Atifi stool is described as Wofase, 'sister's son', of the Akwamu paramount stool, and Akwamu is notified of all important Atifi events. This section, although in the midst of Accra, has not adopted the Accra custom of circumcision and still adheres to fairly well defined principles of matrilineal succession and inheritance, whereas the Dadebana section practises circumcision and admits a compromise between matrilineal and patrilineal principles. That Dadebana should show a higher degree of assimilation to Accra custom is, of course, to be expected since it was originally founded by Otu some two hundred and eighty years ago whereas the origins of Atifi are to be sought a full century later in its foundation by Otu only about one hundred and eighty years ago. Nevertheless signs are not lacking of positive dissociative processes working to increase the distinctness of each section: Dadebana could be said to welcome, Atifi resist, acculturation.

Such dissociative processes are especially well exemplified in the Dadebana claim to be not of Akwamu, but of Denkyera, origin.

The view that Otu Ahiakwa was Denkyera was first advanced in Reindorf's History of 1895,¹ but did not achieve immediate currency in Dadebana, being recorded from there neither by Crowther in 1907 nor by Quartey-Papafio in 1911.² By 1931 it had become the 'official' Dadebana tradition when, in Reindorf's version, it was stated in evidence before the Supreme Court in Nee Ankrah Quansah v. Manche Amponsah. A curious chance made it possible to transform Reindorf's error into official tradition. A common Akwamu emblem is that of a bird looking backwards, with which is associated the saying: To w'akyiri e fa, which may be rendered, 'If he (the enemy) falls on your rear, seize him'. This emblem is also known in Otubluhum which, lying on the coast, may once have been regarded as the rear of Akwamu. One of the horns of Otubluhum blows: Oto e Oto e, w'akyiri o, with the sense of 'Oto, Oto, face your rear'. An Otubluhum war song tells of Akoto king of Akwamu who, when he went to war, ode akyiri gyaw yen, 'left us in the rear'. In Otubluhum the device of the backward looking bird is associated with the legend dankyirifo, 'the rear facing people'. It would appear that at some time the legend dankyirifo was misinterpreted as dankyirrafo, 'the

1. Reindorf, 1895, p. 28, but see also p. 104.

2. Crowther, 1907; Quartey-Papafio, 1911, p. 435.

Denkyira people', in order to make acceptable the view that whilst the Atifi section was unquestionably of Akwamu origin, the older Dadebana was of Denkyera, and so to assert in a fundamental manner the distinct identities of the two sections. That these dissociative processes took origin only from the arrival of Oto in Otubluhum, i.e. from the break-down of the patrilateral cross-cousin marriage arrangement is interestingly confirmed by the present disposition of the blackened ancestral stools of Otu, Amu, and Dako, which the writer was recently privileged to see. All three stools are housed in the one stool-room in Dadebana, in the custody of the one stool-priest, and all are ritually purified and served in just the same way even though the affiliation of Amu's stool is with one matriclean and of Otu's and Dako's with another. Oto's stool, on the other hand, is kept in Atifi and has its own stool-priest, even though its matriclean affiliation is the same as that of Amu's.

In this paper we have examined in detail the use of an arrangement of asymmetrical patrilateral cross-cousin marriage as an instrument of political administration. It may be mentioned in conclusion that it is clear that this was no isolated phenomena, but exemplifies a standard feature of Akwamu administrative practice. The several

Adangme states which lie between Accra and the Volta, for example, all appear to originate from administrative units of the Akwamu imperial period; they had earlier been integral parts of the old kingdom of Ladoku which was overthrown by Akwamu in 1679 and subsequently partitioned into a number of small administrative units. With the collapse of Akwamu power in 1730 these units became independent states, over which in most cases the Akwamu administrators succeeded in retaining control and thus founded the present ruling houses. Old documentary sources and modern social structure alike suggest that marriage systems were extensively used by Akwamu to make their administrators acceptable to those whose traditional authority they were to appropriate; of this, however, the writer hopes subsequently to publish a detailed study.

Acknowledgements and sources.

I have received much help and courtesy from Nii Amu Nakwa, Otubluhum Mantse and his elders, and from Nii Ankrah of Dadebana and his elders. The assistance of my colleagues Mr. E.F. Collins and Mr. P.C. Gibbons has been invaluable in discussion, as has that of my wife in the field. I am grateful to the University College of Ghana for a grant towards the costs of research. The only published account of Otubluhum is that by Dr. Field (1940); it will be apparent

that I consider it seriously in error. The major sources of the historical material used in this paper are the Archives of the Dutch Possessions on the Coast of Guinea (KvG) and the Archives of the General Chartered West Indies Company (WIC) in the Royal Archives, The Hague. I have also used the records of the West Indies and Guinea Company (VGK) from the Danish Archives and those of the Africa Companies (T/70) from the Public Record Office, London. Extensive series of photographs of, and transcripts from, these records were made by the late Mr. J.T. Furley, and are now in the library of the University College of Ghana. Other references are listed below:

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APPENDIX II.

A NOTE ON TWIFO AND AKWAMU

In a paper on the expansion of Akwamu I noted that in the few European records relating to the pre-imperial period, i.e. roughly before 1650, the Akwamu state is also sometimes referred to as Oquie or Oquy, and I expressed doubts about the significance of the name.¹ It has since become apparent that the existence of this alternative name in the earlier 17th. century is in fact a matter of some historical interest, and in this note I hope to illustrate how documentary evidence in this case supports a tradition that itself refers to the proto-historic (i.e. the more immediate pre-documentary) era.

The earliest reference to Akwamu known to the writer occurs on an anonymous Dutch map of 1629, when the Akwamu state was shown as occupying the area of what is now Akim Abuakwa.² At that time the Akwamu capital was almost certainly at Asamankese, i.e. Asare-man-kese, 'Asare's capital town'; Asare is said to have been an early king. Otherwise conflicting traditions appear to agree that, before its migration to Asamankese, the royal (Abrade) clan of Akwamu had ruled over the Twifo, a people represented by the modern Twifo-Heman lying along the Fra river south of its confluence with the Ofin. In 1895 Reindorf recorded a tradition that "Ansa Sasraku of Tshuforo proper" was defeated by the Denkyera and as a result fled to Asamankese,³ unfortunately we do not know from whom this was obtained, and the question of ownership is a crucial one in handling traditions. Certainly it was the case that in the later 17th. century the Twifo were subjects of Denkyera and were reputed to have been formerly more powerful; they

1. See p. 3 above.

2. Chart 743 dd. 25 Dec. 1629 (State Archives, The Hague).

3. C.C. Reindorf: History of the Gold Coast and Asante, 2nd. ed. p.49.

recovered their independence in 1701 as a result of the Ashanti defeat of Denkyera, in which they participated.¹ This, however, lends no particular support to Reindorf's account, and is equally compatible with the tradition of the Akwamu royal clan itself, as recorded by Meyerowitz:

"After the death of their (i.e. the Twifo) fifth king, another stool dispute is reported which resulted in an eastward movement of part of the royal house, together with a great many followers, under their elected king Otumfo Asare."²

The establishment of Denkyera supremacy over the Twifo may thus have been possible only as a consequence of the dissipation of Twifo strength in internal faction and enmity. However, all that I wish to note for the present purpose is that the royal clan of Akwamu claims to have belonged to the royal clan of Twifo prior to the creation of the Akwamu state in its present form.

Twifo seems to be Twifo, 'the Twi people'; the alternative form Twiforo occurs in some dialects but apparently has no semantic significance. Christaller suggests that Twiforo is Twifo-ro, 'new Twi', but this seems unlikely in view of the equivalence in use of the two forms.³

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1. WIC 97: letter from Director-General Sevenhuysen dd. 29 May, 1701 (State Archives, The Hague).
 2. E. Meyerowitz: Akan Traditions of Origin, 1952, p. 98.
 3. J.G. Christaller: A Grammar of the Asante and Fante Language, 1875, p. XVI n. The extra syllable in Twiforo is an example of a common difference of dialect, cf. Akwapim fi, kye, du, ko, etc. and the equivalent Ashanti forms firi, kyere, duru, korow for which see further I.C. Ward: Report of an Investigation of some Gold Coast Language Problems, 1945, p. 21.

Lying in the gold producing hinterland, the Twifo were constantly referred to in reports from the Dutch and English trading establishments in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, when the Dutch rendering of the name was usually either Juffer or t'Juffer and the English either Cuifferoe or Cufferoe. D'Anville's map of 1729 has Juffer or Quiforo.¹ Of especial interest here is the equivocation between what appears to be a labialized palatal tw- (t'Juffer, i.e. Twifo) and a labialized velar kw- (Cuifferoe, i.e. Kwiforo). In most modern Twi dialects other than Fante labialized velar consonants never occur before a palatal i. Christaller maintained that other Twi dialects diverged from Fante by changing (among other things) labialized velar consonants to labialized palatal consonants before palatal vowels (e.g. "labio-velar kw to palato-labial tw").² It is tempting to think that this change was in fact occurring during the 17th. century, the English retaining the receding form in kw- and the Dutch adopting the emerging form in tw-, and some support is lent to this conclusion by the fact that the late 17th. century Dutch source Kuiforo (Chart 743, etc.), an early 17th. century Dutch source Kuiforo.³ On the other hand, it might equally be suggested that the transition from kw- to tw- had occurred earlier, and that the early 17th. century Dutch Kuiforo and the comparable late 17th. century English form simply show Fante influence. Thus whilst we can reasonably postulate an earlier Kwi-fo and a later Twi-fo, it would be rash though perhaps not wrong to date the transition from the one to the other to the 17th. century. It is interesting to note that Meyerowitz, presumably

1. D'Anville: Map of the Gold Coast, English version of April, 1729.
2. J.G. Christaller: Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language, 2nd ed. 1933, pp. XIV and XIX.
3. Chart 743 above.

relying on tradition, speaks of the Kwifo or Tiewo "who fused with the Guan or 'Akan' and who are known in the Gold Coast as Twifo."¹

It seems reasonable to suppose that the Twi language became known as such because it was originally that of the Twifo. Meyerowitz maintains that the Twi language "spread right through the forest region once the Twifo, or Twi people, were dispersed after the collapse of the three states founded by them - Twifo-Heman, Akwamu and Doma", and considers that "the languages Twi superceded were Guan and Bono (Brong)".² It is clear that the name of the language, unlike that of the people, retained a prefix into modern times. In 1853, in German, Riis rendered the name Odschi,³ and a year later, in English, Oji.⁴ In 1875 and 1881 Christaller preferred the form Tshi but noted the rarer Itshi or Otshi.⁵ In Ga the language is still known as Otsui. It therefore seems that one must postulate an hypothetical Okwi, from which derives:

- i. Kwi-fo and the modern Twi-fo, 'the Twi people'; and
- ii. Otwi and the recent Twi, the name of the language.

The Akwamu royal clan claims to have originated from Twifo. The earliest documentary sources for Akwamu history, however, belong to the 17th. century, when the Akwamu state was already constituted in something like its present form, though at that time was alternatively known as Oquie, i.e. Okwi. The contention of this note is that

1. E. Meyerowitz, op cit. p. 126

2. Ibid, p. 103.

3. H.N. Riis: Elemente des Akwapim Dialects der Odschi Sprache, 1853.

4. H.N. Riis: Grammatical Outline and Vocabulary of the Oji Language, 1854.

5. Christaller: Grammar, p. XV; Dictionary, p. XIII.

documentary evidence here lends some support to the tradition, the supposition being that when a section of the royal Ábrade clan left the Twifo (i.e. the Okwi, later Twi, people) to establish a new dynasty at Asamankese, they carried with them, among other things, the tribal name Okwi, by which the new state of Akwamu was still alternatively known in the 17th. century. But what enabled the new (Okwi) dynasty at Asamankese so successfully to establish its supremacy over various Guan, Kamana, and other peoples, and thus to create the Akwamu state in its present form, is another but intriguing problem.

TOPOGRAPHICAL INDEX TO THE PRINCIPAL PLACES MENTIONED.

References are to the north-west corner of the 5 minute square containing the place mentioned.

- ARONSI (Abawmse): town, 6.00-0.05
ABURI: division of Akwapim, capital Aburi, 5.55-0.15
ACCRA (G3): state, capital Accra, 5.35-0.15
ADA: state, capital Ada, 5.50-0.35
ADANSI: state within Ashanti, capital Fomena, 6.20-1.35
ADENYA: town, 6.00-0.15
ADUKROM: town, 6.05-0.05
ADWAJIRI: town, 5.50-0.25
AFUTU: see PETU.
AGAVE: division, capital Agave 5.55-0.35
AGONA: state, capital Nyakrom 5.40-0.50
AGOTIME: division, chief town Kpetoe 6.35-0.40
AKIM ABUAKUA (Akyem Abuakua): state, capital Kibi 6.10-0.35
AKIM KOTOKU (Akyem Kotoku): state, capital Oda 6.00-1.00
AKROPONG: capital of Akwapim, 6.00-0.10
AKWAMU: state, capital Akwamufie, 6.20-0.00
AKWAPIM: state, capital Akropong, 6.00-0.10
AKWATTIA: town, 6.05-0.50
ANOMABU: town, 5.15-1.10
ANLO: state, capital Anloga, 5.50-0.50
ANYINAM: town, 6.25-3.35
APAM, town, 5.20-0.45
APAPAM, town, 6.10-0.40
ASAMANKESE, town, 5.55-0.45
AWUKUGUA: town, 6.00-0.05
AYASO: site of Great Accra, 5.45-0.20
BEREKU: see SENYA BEREKU.
BEREKUSO: town, 5.50-0.15
DENKYIRA: state, capital Dunkwa, 6.00-1.50
FETU (Afutu): former state with capital near Cape Coast, 5.10-1.15
HO: town, 6.40-0.25
KETA: town, 6.00-0.55
KPANDU: town, 7.00-0.15
KPONE: state, capital Kpone 5.45-0.00
KPONG: town, 6.10-0.00
KRABO: town, 5.55-0.30
KWABENG: town, 6.20-0.40
KWAHU: state, capital Abene 6.45-0.50
LABADI: town, 5.35-0.10
LARTEH: division of Akwapim, capital Larteh, 6.00-0.05
LEPONGUNO: town, 5.50-0.15