

THE 'AKIM' OR 'ACHIM' IN 17TH CENTURY AND 18TH
CENTURY HISTORICAL CONTEXTS: WHO WERE THEY?

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Modern Akyem territory comprises over 3,120 square miles of land.¹ Its boundaries are marked by river Pra and Asante to the west, to Asante, the north-west, Asante-Akyem and Kwawu to the north, New Dwaben and Krobo to the east, and Agona to the south. Modern Akyem consists of three sub-divisions: Abuakwa, Kotoku and Bosome. The largest sub-division, Abuakwa, occupies about two-thirds of Akyem territory.² Kotoku and Bosome share the remaining one-third to the west.

Traditions of the three sub-divisions point to Adanse as their aboriginal home. According to Kotoku tradition, Adanse was ruled in the 17th century by three independent kings: King Korangye ruled at Fomena over the ancestors of the modern Adanse; King Danso Brepong ruled at Ahwiren, a few miles south-west of Lake Bosumtwi, over the ancestors of the modern Kotoku who were originally immigrants from Twifo Atoam; while King Aninkwatia ruled at Sebenso over the ancestors of the modern Abuakwa.³ The ancestors of Bosome 'lived in close connection with the Kotoku near Ahuren [Ahwiren]'.⁴

In the 19th century the Kotoku nostalgically recalled that they, as well as the Abuakwa, 'originally came from Adansi' and that 'King Inkansah and his people [i.e. the modern Adanse] are of the same tribe as we are'.⁵ Adanse tradition provides confirmation. In a testimony before Justice Roger Evans Hall at Nsawam in 1929, Akwasi Kyere, linguist of Adansehene Kwabena Fori, declared that the ancestors of the Akyem Abuakwa people were an integral part of Adanse society before their migration.⁶ We may agree with Ward's remark that it was only after the migrants from Adanse settled in Akyem country 'in some cases long after, that they organised themselves into new states'.⁷ In other words, the three sub-divisions of modern Akyem only assumed a new ethnic (tribal) identity subsequent to their migration from Adanse.

Researchers seem to be agreed that in the 16th century and the early 17th century the modern sub-divisions of Akyem were part of Accany, which was either 'a loose confederation of states with kinship ties'⁸ or 'a general geo-political term' that referred to 'a congeries of states' in the 'heartland of the Twi-speaking or Akan peoples'.⁹ Early in the 17th century intense commercial rivalry and an increasing incidence of inland

wars triggered a dispersion of Accany peoples in several directions. One of the earliest waves of migrants which moved eastward towards river Pra, then probably 'the eastern boundary of Adansi',¹⁰ laid the foundations of the premier Akyem state.

The 1929 Dutch map¹¹ lists 'Akim or Great Acanij' among forty odd states on the Gold Coast littoral and its hinterland. The exact territorial limits of 17th century Akyem, however, remain obscure. While John Barbot speculated that Akyem extended as far north as the area of the Niger Bend¹² and Bosman doubted that Akyem's northern frontier could possibly be contiguous with Mandinka territory,¹³ Ivor Wilks is of the opinion that Akyem's 'boundaries must have included parts of present Adansi'.¹⁴ Besides, the term 'Akim' as used, particularly in 17th century contexts, makes no distinction whatsoever between Abuakwa, Kotoku and Bosome, as when Bosman describes Akwamu power as being 'very terrible to all neighbouring countries, except Akim'.¹⁵ These two puzzles of territorial delimitation and ethnic identity constitute intriguing problems in the historiography of Akyem. This paper is a contribution to the resolution of these puzzles.

WHERE WAS 17TH CENTURY AKYEM LOCATED?

The 1629 Dutch map identifies the neighbours of Akyem as Akan to the north, Inta to the north-west, Acanij to the west, Aqua and Songway to the south, Agona to the south-east, and Akwamu and Kwawu to the east. Ivor Wilks has concluded from his study of Akwamu that the Atewa hills 'formed the spine of the original Akwamu homeland';¹⁶ that by 1646 Akwamu territory extended far beyond the river Densu eastwards into Akuapem;¹⁷ and that at the death of Ansa Sasraku in 1689, Akwamu's authority extended over the coastal peoples from Agona in the west to the Volta river on the east, and north to include the hill country of Aburi, Kamana, Larteh, Akrade as well as Tafo further north.¹⁸ It may be deduced from the foregoing that 17th century Akwamu territory lay mostly between the Akuapem ridge to the east, the Kwawu scarp to the north and the river Pra to the west.

Akwamu territory bordered upon that of Akyem in the west.¹⁹ John Barbot who left the coast in 1682 remarked that 'for many years past' migrants from Adanse had been encroaching upon Akwamu territory, 'making several inroads into Aquamboe, destroying all with fire and sword'.²⁰ Indeed the Akyem are known to have fought several wars against Akwamu in the second half of the 17th century. In 1659 they fought a major war against Akwamu as allies of the Ga; in October 1682, the year of Barbot's departure, an Akyem force of 12,000 confronted an Akwamu army of identical strength 'some thirty miles north of Accra';²¹ in 1699 and 1700 the Akyem army ravaged three Akwamu towns on their common border forcing Akwamuhene Ado to send his

gold to the King of Ladoku for safe-keeping.²²

In 1675 Heerman Abramsz described 'the Akimse Akkanists', i.e. the Akyem, as settled 'behind Craa [Accra]'.²³ By the turn of the 18th century Akyem was 'a rich country lying mostly on the backside of the Quamboes and Unguennas'.²⁴ Considering the fact that Kwaben was still an Akwamu town in 1710,²⁵ as were Akwatia, Asamankese and Apapam before 1730,²⁶ it may be reasonably concluded that 17th century Akyem territory comprised the lands bordered on the east and south by the Birem and on the west by river Pra. It was into this territory that waves of dispersed Accany had drifted in the course of the 17th century in search of security from the upheavals in Accany country.

Historically the Pra and Birem valley has been well known for its richness in gold, and the postulate that it was the homeland of the Akyem state of the 17th century is consistent with repeated references in European records to Akyem territory as a principal source of gold. Bosman remarked that Akyem 'furnishes as large quantities of gold as any land I know ...'²⁷ and that 'sometimes more gold is received' at Accra alone, 'than on the whole coast besides'.²⁸ That the main source of this supply of gold was Akyem territory may be inferred not only from Akyem's geographical position vis-a-vis Accra and from the fact that when Ansa Sasraku launched his offensive against Accra in 1677 he borrowed gold from 'Akim' presumably for the purchase of guns and powder,²⁹ but also from a Dutch Report of 1716 (from Apam) which described Akyem as

... the fountain from which the trade in gold must flow into these countries, and this being stopped all the leeward factories must necessarily suffer on that account ...³⁰

Another Report in 1717 asserted that the Akyem country 'alone provides gold along the whole of the leeward coast'.³¹ A Dutch Report of 1701 described Asante, Denkyira and Akyem as the 'three mightiest and richest countries from which practically all the gold has come'.³² Inguira and Akyem were described in 1703/4 as 'the two gold-bearing countries ... the only two districts which possess gold at its source ...'³³ Speculating about a possible outbreak of war between Asante and Akyem in 1711, Director-General Haring expressed the fear that 'if fortune wills that the Akims get the worst of them the principal gold mine comes to a standstill...'³⁵

We conclude that 17th century Akyem was located in the auriferous lands of the Birem valley west of modern Bansa. By the end of the first decade of the 18th century, the southern extremity of Akyem was the modern town of Akyease.³⁶

**WHICH OF THE PRESENT SUB-DIVISIONS OF AKYEM
INHABITED THE TERRITORY DESIGNATED AS 17TH
CENTURY AKYEM?**

The Kotoku, according to their tradition, originally lived at Twifo Atoam till after the rise of Denkyira, when a growing sense of insecurity forced them to escape to Ahwiren in the Amansie area under the leadership of their King Ofosuhene Apenten (?Danso Brepong).³⁷ The migration to Ahwiren is said to have occurred in the reign of Owusu Bore, the third King of Denkyira, who probably reigned between 1620 and 1632.³⁸ On the evidence of the 1629 map Akyem already existed at that time as a distinct state in the environs of the Pra; and was said to be 'already strong when Denkyira increased in power',³⁹ presumably in the last quarter of the 17th century.⁴⁰ At that time the Asante state was still in womb of the time; Kotoku and Bosome were still settled in the Amansie area.⁴¹

The rise of Asante in the Amansie area in the 1680s and 1690s created a serious problem of national security and survival for the Kotoku state whose people were turned into 'a wandering tribe' roaming the territory enclosed by the Pra and Anunu rivers, the area known to-day as Asante-Akyem.⁴² The Kotoku remained in the modern Asante-Akyem area till after the Asante-Denkyira war (1699-1701) when, in their anxiety to escape Asante retribution for aiding her enemy, they crossed the Pra.⁴³ They settled successively at Edweso, Mmerayem, Bomfa and Kotoku Adukow whose 'ruins lie further south on Agogo-Dwansa road in the locality of Hwidiem'.⁴⁴ From Kotoku Adukow, a section of the refugees moved south to Dampong before finally crossing the Pra to establish a permanent settlement at Da near modern Afosu.⁴⁵ As far as it is known, Da is the first permanent settlement built by the Kotoku east of the Pra and outside modern Asante territory and it cannot have been built prior to 1701.

We may conclude then that the Kotoku state did not share 'Akyem' territory before 1700; that until then it was established in what is today Asante-Akyem territory, i.e. the territory enclosed by rivers Pra and Anunu. Indeed it cannot be far-fetched to identify the 17th century homeland of the Kotoku with Akan or Akam which was contiguous to Asante in the west and Akyem in the south-east. Barbot who was on the west coast in 1678-2 remarked that the territory of Akam

has Inta or Assiante on the west; Akim on the south; unknown lands on the north and on the east Quakoe and Tafo. The Europeans on the coast are utter strangers to the natives of this country...⁴⁶

Akan or Akam was certainly not the same as Akyem. Barbot comments with reference to the 'Akanefo' traders (which in this context applies to the Akyem as well).⁴⁷

...The Akanefo trade also with their other neighbour

nations, as Asiante and Akam, this latter lying north, the other north-west from them (i.e. Akyem).⁴⁸

Akam was sandwiched, more or less, between Asante in the north-west and Akyem in the south-east and corresponds to modern Asante-Akyem. Afrifah has in fact identified Akan or Akam as the 17th century homeland of the Kotoku.⁴⁹ Adu Boahen has also reached the same conclusion in a recent study. He writes:

The second area referred to as Akan on the 1629 map must obviously be the Cocoriteese Akan of Abramsz which can quite readily be identified as present-day Akyem Kotoku... though Akyem Kotoku is now situated south of Akyem Abuakwa with the modern town of Akyem Oda as its capital, it is quite clear from their oral traditions that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Akyem Kotoku was rather in the area of modern Asante Akyem that is to the north of Akyem Abuakwa or Great Akani with its capital town in the region of the modern towns of Agogo and Bompata. According to Daaku, while they were there the Akyem Kotoku were known as 'Kwadukro' which sounds nearer to Cocoriteese than even Kotoku... There cannot be a shred of doubt then that Akan shown north of Great Akani on the map of 1629 and referred to as Cocoriteese was Akyem Kotoku.⁵⁰

For some two centuries after they first quit Asante-Akyem, Kotoku's connection with that territory remained sentimentally strong. Kotoku Kings continued to claim parts of Asante-Akyem as integral parts of their new state east of the Pra.⁵¹ In June 1888, King Attafua described himself (in a statement at the Colonial Secretary's Office) as

...King of the Kotoku people who inhabit that part of the Protectorate named western Akim as also the country north of the Pra named Ashantee Akem...⁵²

A sub-chief of Attafua told the Assistant Colonial Secretary the following month that except for 'the Obogoo people [who] have declared their independence' of Attafua 'all the other towns [i.e. in Asante-Akyem] belong to King Atta Fua' and had all joined the King and Sir John Glover to fight Asante in the Sagrenti war.⁵³

By 1888 there were thirteen towns with an estimated total population of 12,540 in 'Asante Akim over the Pra' which duly acknowledged the authority of King Attafua. These included Amooso (500), Krofa (2,000), Dwansa (400), Domeabra (1,600), Dampson (1,000), Adomfe (100), Asankare (500), Fiakwa (40), Kyekyebiase (600), Wankyi (500), Bompata (3,000) and Asuboa (700).⁵⁴ As late as 1908 Attafua was sending messengers to Asante Akyem periodically to collect revenues from ferries operating on the Pra as well as tribute in kola nuts, rubber and cocoa from people living 'on his land there'.⁵⁵ His attempt to appropriate tolls from the ferry over the Birem at Nsuaem as

well, provoked the anger of the Akyem stool of Wankyi, owner of that stretch of the Birem river, and nearly precipitated a war between the Abuakwa and Kotoku states in June 1888.⁵⁶ On that occasion 'all the ... towns' in Asante-Akyem subject to King Attafua were alleged to have demonstrated readiness to offer military support to their king.⁵⁷

For a short period in the 1890s the Kotoku seriously considered the possibility of returning to settle in Asante-Akyem. King Attafua and his elders appealed to the Colonial Secretary in October 1893 to allow them 'to return to their old country' most of which, they claimed, was unoccupied.⁵⁸ Eight years later, King Attafua wrote to the Government on the subject of his 'again acquiring or rather returning to his own lands at QUAHO and ASHANTI AKIM...'⁵⁹

As far as the Bosome are concerned, their tradition says that they were settled near Ahwiren 'before ever the Abuakwa left Adansi',⁶⁰ a reference, probably, to the migration of Ofori Panin's party c.1659.⁶¹ In spite of their clan affinity to the Kotoku and the close proximity of their settlements to those of the Kotoku in the Ahwiren area the ancestors of the Bosome 'did not share in the Kotoku wanderings' of the last quarter of the 17th century.⁶² According to Ward, the Bosome remained behind in the Amansie area and served Ashanti faithfully right up to the Adinkera war of 1818' when they migrated directly south under their chief Koragye Ampaw to re-establish their state on Abuakwa soil.⁶³

In a recent work, however, Ivor Wilks dates the foundation of the Akyem Bosome state in its present location to the first decade of the 18th century. According to Wilks, a faction of the Bosome appears to have joined Denkyira in their war with Asante at the end of the 17th century, and following their defeat, became integrated into the small state of Boaman near Lake Bosomtwe whose ruler was Nto Koroko. Around 1706 the Asantehene was forced to despatch a military expedition to end the predatory activities of Nto Koroko and his allies against traders and miners in the region of Manso Nkwanta. Nto Koroko survived the destruction of his state and managed to take refuge deep inside the forest where he founded a small state, that of Akyem Bosome.⁶⁴ It is possible that the state founded by Nto Koroko existed in complete isolation and obscurity till c.1818 when it was strengthened by the accession of the immigrants from the Amansie region, an event more popularly remembered in Bosome tradition. We conclude then that neither the Kotoku nor the Bosome state was a territorial part of the district generally referred to in 17th century European records as Akyem.

That 'Akim' or 'Great Acany' in the 17th century referred exclusively and unequivocally to Akyem Abuakwa, there can be no doubt. First, modern Akyem Abuakwa occupies the same area to-day

as that designated as 'Great. Acany' or Akim on the 1629 map. Kyebi, the modern capital of Akyem Abuakwa, is situated barely eight miles south east of the original capital, Bansa founded in the 17th century. Except for Akwamu which was contiguous to Akyem Abuakwa in the east in the 17th century the neighbours of modern Akyem Abuakwa are virtually the same as those of 'Great Acany' of the 1629 map. Second, the oral traditions of Kotoku and Bosome confirm that by mid-17th century when 'Akim' existed east of the Pra as a fully-fledged state, they were still settled in the Lake Bosomtwe area. Third, 'Affory' the first Akyem chief ever to be mentioned by name in European records in 1704 was described as 'head chief' of the 'district of Akim'.⁶⁵ 'Affory' was certainly Ofori Panin who is known to have ruled at Bansa as King of Akyem Abuakwa till his death in April 1727.⁶⁶ Adanse tradition remembers him as a youngman and an Odikro at the time of his migration to Akyem, about the time of the Adanse-Denkyira war (c.1659).⁶⁷ By the second decade of the 18th century 'Affory' ruled over Akim territory whose southern extremity was the modern Abuakwa town of Akyease. In 1716 he was reported to be 'staying with the greater part of his army at the extreme boundary of his country in a village named Tacqua...[i.e. Akyease]'.⁶⁸

The inference is that by the opening decade of the 18th century Akyem Abuakwa extended from the neighbourhood of Kwaben and Akyem Akropong in the north to the borders of Agona in the south.⁶⁹ By this date the Kotoku state had only recently been established at Da some 30 miles from the Abuakwa capital of Bansa, while a faction of the Bosome under Nto Koroko was in the process of migrating from Asante southward into the forest.

By the middle of the 17th century the Akyem Abuakwa state was organised as a centralised state ruled by a monarch. Villault who was on the coast in the 1660s referred to

the King of Acanis le Grand which is called Akim whose internal town is situated 90 leagues North of the Mina and may be called Emperor.⁷⁰

In 1669 he reported that

Abramboe is a domain which has under it six villages independent of the Kings, and dependent only on the Emperor of Achim or Acanis-Grande...⁷¹

Although Villault did not disclose the identity of this 'Emperor of Achim', he might well have been referring to Aninkwatia, the earliest Abuakwa King remembered to have ruled at Bansa in the 17th century.⁷²

Bosman who was on the coast in the closing decade of the 17th century confirmed the monarchical character of Akyem Abuakwa government although he noted that it was passing through difficult times:

This country as far as it is known to us, was formerly

under a Monarchical Government; but the present successor being yet young, and betraying too palpable signs of a cruel nature, had not been able to make himself Master of the whole land... 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 own hands...⁷³

The King of Akwamu is said to have exploited this crisis by employing 'fair words and presents to sow Dissension betwixt the governing men of Akim'⁷⁴ as a means of preserving 'his country in peace, and in a condition to enjoy a beneficial trade'.⁷⁵

Daaku and others have interpreted Bosman's comment on Akyem politics to mean an inter-state conflict between Kotoku and Abuakwa.⁷⁶ This is misleading. As argued above, Abuakwa alone of the present sub-divisions of Akyem occupied the territory known as 'Akim' in the 17th century. Barbot makes it clear that in the 17th century, Europeans were 'utter strangers' to the people of Akim whom we have identified with the Kotoku state. Bosman could therefore not possibly have had any other Akim state in mind besides Abuakwa. Accordingly the crisis noted by him must be construed as a domestic succession crisis within Akyem Abuakwa. *Ipsa facto*, 'the governing men of Akim' must be understood in terms of 'king-makers', 'Stool Elders' or 'councillors'. Albert Van Dantzig's rendering of the original Dutch text as 'Grandeers of Akim' rather than 'the governing men of Akim', adds weight to such a conclusion.⁷⁷

The crisis in the Government of Akyem Abuakwa must have occurred in the 1680s and 1690s as a sequel to the death of King Aninkwatia. By the turn of the 18th century, however, the crisis seems to have been resolved by the removal of the 'young' and 'cruel' king in favour of the 'old sagacious and experienced' ruler known to history as Ofori Panin.

WHEN, AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES, DID KOTOKU AND BOSOME BECOME SUBSUMED UNDER THE 'AKIM' TRIBAL LABEL?

Fynn has suggested that Kotoku and Bosome were originally part of a unitary Akyem state, but that they seceded to become independent states at the beginning of the 18th century, as a result of internal conflicts. He writes:

It is probable that initially Akyem was under one monarch, but by the beginning of the eighteenth century the country was governed by a number of chiefs.⁷⁸

This view is untenable. The evidence so far shows that already Abuakwa, Kotoku and Bosome were historically separate states in the 17th century with the former established east of the Pra and the latter two in the Lake Bosumtwi area. On the other hand, Fynn is not far from right when he states:

By 1715 it was clear that Akyem had been constituted into the modern states of Akyem Abuakwa and Akyem Kotoku under

Ofori Panin and Ofosuhene Aparenten respectively.⁷⁹

In 1714, ten years after Ofori Panin had been mentioned for the first time in European records and described as 'head chief' of the 'district of Akim', 'Apintin', king of Kotoku, was also mentioned for the first time in European records and described together with Ofori Panin as 'Akim Caboceers'.⁸⁰ This was a reflection of the close political and military ties which had been developing between the Abuakwa and Kotoku states since the first decade of the 18th century as a result of their common resistance to the Asante-Akwamu axis.

In the 17th century the military pre-occupations of Abuakwa and Kotoku diverged. While the former's pre-occupation was with Akwamu to the south-east, the latter's primary concern was with the rising power of Asante to the north-west. Beginning from about 1702, however, the two states found themselves conscripted between Asante and Akwamu, two closely allied states. Common sense and the instinct of self-preservation dictated that the two states must co-operate in a sort of confederation, for as Daaku points out, they realised that their interests would be better served by co-operating against their common enemies.⁸¹

By the end of the first decade of the 18th century the Kotoku state was firmly re-established at Da, some thirty miles west of the Abuakwa capital of Bansa. Unaware of the separate political and tribal identity of Kotoku, Europeans on the coast assumed from her close association and alliance with the more familiar state of Abuakwa that the former was tributary to, or a section of, the Akyem tribe. Thus Bosman recorded that the Akyem lost 30,000 men in the Asante-Denkyira war (1699-1701), 'besides that a great caboceer of Akim, with all his men, were cut off'.⁸² The supposed 'great caboceer of Akim' was in fact Ofori Korobon, king of Dampson in Asante-Akyem.⁸³ In 1711 the Dutch reported from Elmina:

The Cabes Terras, old enemies of the Fantyns and Akannists, and allied with Akim, a powerful people, are to-day taking up their stand to receive the other party [i.e. Asante]. To them come the Dinkiraes who, about a year ago, withdrew themselves from subordination to Asjantyn and fled with all they held dear to Akim, not only increasing the number but (being good fighters) bringing great weight to that side; to which lastly, the Agonnas and others tributary to Akim who are not known to us have joined...⁸⁴

In May 1714 the English Factor at Commenda reported that

... the Akims were preparing to make war against Aquamboe. The Agonnas had taken oath with Caboceers Offory and Apintin (Akim) not to close the paths but to sell the Akims all the power and muskets they required...⁸⁵

In October of the same year it was reported from Elmina that

... the Akims would advance against the Agonnas and Akwamu. The two (Akim) Caboceers Apintin and Affory having come to an agreement, have spent so much for that war that the Akwamus could not persuade them to a truce.⁸⁶

Reporting the death of Osei Tutu, Van Alsen remarked that '... on the side of the Akims one of their first caboceers named Apintin has been killed...' ⁸⁷ Apenten, of course, was the King of Kotoku.

In 1731, Danish records mentioned Bang (obviously Ba Kwante, Ofori Panin's successor) as one of three 'caboceers' of Akyem, the others being Frempong (i.e. Frempong Manso, Apenten's successor) and Abroqua.⁸⁸ Abroqua was in fact the chief of Otumi and the commander of the vanguard of the army of Frempong Manso, king of Kotoku.⁸⁹

CONCLUSION

In the first three decades of the 18th century the political fortunes of Akyem Abuakwa and Kotoku became inextricably linked owing to a shared sense of insecurity arising from Asante and Akwamu expansionism. By collaborating militarily, Abuakwa and Kotoku avoided permanent subjugation and integration into the Asante state. Through joint action, they reversed the Asante victory of 1701 by temporarily defeating Asante in 1702.⁹⁰ In October 1717 co-operation won them another signal victory when their forces ambushed and killed Osei Tutu, a victory which 'inflicted on Asante the greatest disaster in its history'.⁹¹ Again in 1730, their joint effort succeeded in overthrowing Akwamu and driving its people beyond the Volta river.

Co-operation and solidarity must not, however, be confused with political or tribal integration. As far as it is known Akyem Abuakwa and Kotoku did not at anytime before the 19th century constitute a single, integrated tribal or political community, any more than Asante and Akwamu can be described as a single political community on account of their well-known friendship and co-operation. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries 'Akim' (Abuakwa) and Kotoku remained historically separate political entities. Oral traditions of both states are consistent in regarding the two as separate tribal communities from time immemorial. Besides, the founding fathers of the two states did not share membership of a common clan. Historically the paramount rulers of Akyem Abuakwa and Kotoku belong to the Asona and Agona clans respectively.

It is also significant to note that the tribal affiliation of the Kotoku remained indeterminate between 1701 and 1824, as their capital alternated between modern Asante and modern Akyem territory. The Kotoku state was situated closer to the centre of Asante power, and although its people 'frequently joined Akyem Abuakwa in its wars against Ashanti...[they] seldom shared its

periods of independence'.⁹² At other times, Kotoku were ranged against Akyem Abuakwa as allies of Asante. In 1731-37 for example, Abuakwa and Kotoku found themselves opposed to each other as allies of Asante and Fante respectively.⁹³ Indeed it is said that Opoku Ware dubbed the Kotoku 'Asante-Akyem' in derision of their 'tendency... to claim allegiance to Akyem and Asante alternatively in order to evade military obligation to either power'.⁹⁴

Osei Tutu regarded the Kotoku as Asante subjects no less than the Adanse, who had fled simultaneously to Akyem after Denkyira's defeat in 1701, and his successor, Opoku Ware ordered them 'to remove from Da and settle over the Pra' at Dampon, after the 1742 war.⁹⁵ When a section of Kotoku exiles in Akyem Abuakwa led by Kwadwo Kuma captured Dampon c.1811-1816, the Kotoku King, Kwakye Adeyefe, took refuge in Kumasi with the stool.⁹⁶ During the brief period that Kwadwo Kuma reigned as King of Kotoku, the Kotoku drifted back to the east of the Pra and collaborated closely with Akyem Abuakwa.⁹⁷ In 1823, however, the Asantehene ordered the new Kotokuhene, Afrifa Akwada to return with his people to the west bank of the Pra in an effort to pre-empt a possible alliance between Kotoku and Sir Charles McCarthy.⁹⁸

A careful consideration of the available European records and oral tradition leaves no doubt that 'Akim' in 17th century contexts referred unambiguously to Akyem Abuakwa. In the 18th century, however, 'Akyem' was applied by Europeans in ignorance to include the Kotoku whose separate tribal status they were unaware of. It was not till 1824 when the Kotoku went into permanent exile in Akyem Abuakwa that they became territorially part of Akyem. Thereafter their categorization as Akyem became a *fait accompli*.⁹⁹ As far as the Bosome are concerned, although there is some evidence to suggest that a nuclear Bosome state had been established some where in the dark recesses of the Akyem forest in the first decade of the 18th century, contemporaneously with the re-establishment of the Kotoku capital at Da, it appears to have existed in oblivion till 1818 when Chief Koragye Ampaw led a new wave of immigrants from the Amansie area into western Akyem.¹⁰⁰ Thus like the Kotoku state, the Bosome state has been represented as an 'Akyem' state only since the early 19th century.

The subsumption of the Kotoku and the Bosome under the Akyem ethnic label is indeed as much an *ex-post-facto* rationalisation of the 18th century historic co-operation between Kotoku and Abuakwa as of the subsequent re-establishment of the Kotoku and Bosome states on Akyem soil in the early 19th century.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. **Population Census of Ghana. 1960. Vol.1. The Gazetteer** p.xxii.
2. Akyem Abuakwa occupies an area of some 2151 sq. miles. See **Population Census of Ghana. 1970. Vol.1. December 1973.**
3. NAG Adm 11/1/1126. Statement of Cudjoe Kotamoah of Insuaim 15 June 1887.
4. Ward, W.E.F. **A History of Ghana.** London, 1967. p.110; Wilks, I. **The Mossi and the Akan States 1400-1800, History of West Africa. Vol.1. 3rd ed.,** Longman, 1985, pp.494-95.
5. NAG Adm 11/1/1126. Statement by Cudjoe Kotamoah, 15 June, 1887.
6. NAG Adm 11/1/1105. Award Published at Nsawam. Monday 9 September 1929 by Roger Evans Hall, Puisne Judge.
7. Ward, W.E.F. **A History of Ghana,** p.109.
8. Daaku, K.Y. **Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast 1620-1720** Oxford, 1970. p.146.
9. Boahen, A. Arcany or Accany or Arcania and the Accanists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries European Records. **Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana** Vol.14.1, June 1973, pp. 105-111; Fynn, J.K. **Asante and its Neighbours 1700-1807,** Longman, 1971, p.18. Fynn thinks that Accany of the 17th century 'was the old Akan state of 'Arcania' whose territorial boundary then embraced the whole of modern Adanse, parts of Akyem and Denkyira and southern Asante'.
10. Jackson's Report: The Commission of Enquiry Ordinance Cap.249) Akim Abuakwa State Affairs 24 April 1958 (Africana Library, Legon); Wilks, I., 'The Rise of the Akwamu Empire 1650-1710', **Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana** Vol.3, part 2, 1957, p.102.
11. See Daaku, K.Y. **Trade and Politics...** p. 199.
12. Barbot, J. **A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea,** London, 1732, p.189.
13. See Daaku, K.Y. **Trade and Politics...** p. 145.
14. Wilks, I. **The Rise of the Akwamu Empire 1650-1710,** p.102.
15. Quoted in Reindorf, C.C. **The History of the Gold Coast and Asante,** GUP, 1966, p.61.
16. Wilks, I. **Akwamu 1650-1750: A Study of the Rise and Fall of a West African Empire.** Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Bangor, 1958, p.40.
17. Ibid., p.4.
18. Wilks, I. **The Rise of the Akwamu Empire 1650-1710,** p.119.
19. Barbot, J. op. cit. p.190.
20. Barbot, J. op. cit. p.188.
21. Addo-Fening, R. **Akyem Abuakwa c.1874-1943: A study of the Impact of Missionary activity and Colonial Rule on a traditional State.** Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ghana, 1980, Legon.
22. Wilks, I. **Akwamu 1650-1750,** p.22.
23. Boahen, A. op. cit. p.106.
24. T70/5 Letter, Sir Dalby Thomas C.C.C. to RAC, London, December 11, 1709.
25. Wilks, I. **The Rise of the Akwamu Empire 1650-1710,** p.100.
26. Wilks, I. **Akwamu 1650-1750** pp.114-115; NAG Adm.11/1/1105 Award Published at Nsawam, 1929, p.14.
27. Quoted in J.K. Fynn, **Asante and its Neighbours,** p.20.
28. Quoted in Ward, W.E.F. **A History of Ghana,** p.108.
29. Wilks, I. **Akwamu 1650-1750,** p.31.
30. Letter from Apam (Hendrix) 19 December 1716 (emphasis added).
31. Despatch from Roberts and Council to Assembly of Ten (62)

February, 1717.

32. EFC Note book pages, Gold Coast 1701-1715 Director-General J. Van Sevenhuysen Elmina to Association of Ten WIC Amsterdam (WIC 97) 30 May 1701.
33. CCC Memorandum Book January 13, 1703-4 - January 2, 1704/5 PRO T70/1643 Extracts published in Fisher marked "F" Minutes of Council Elmina (G.I.) April 19.
34. (T70/14 Letters Received) CCC 17 and 18 February 1704/5.
35. WIC 101 Letter, Director-General H. Baring, Fiscal Frederick etc. Elmina to Association of Ten WIC Amsterdam, 15 August, 1711 (Emphasis added).
36. Letter from Apam (Hendrix) 19 December 1716.
37. See p.1 above.
38. See Daaku, K.Y., *Trade and Politics* ... p. 156. Amponsem the 8th King of Denkyira died c.1692. An average of 10-12 years reign for each king puts the beginning of Owusu Bore's reign c.1620.
39. Quoted in Reindorf C.C., *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, GUP, Accra, 1966, p.61.
40. Daaku, K.Y., *Trade and Politics*... p. 156.
41. Afrifa, S.F., Akyem c.1700-1874: A study in Inter-State Relations in Pre-Colonial Gold Coast, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1976, pp.20-21; Wilks, I., *The Mossi and the Akan States 1400-1800, History of West Africa Vol.1*, 3rd edition, Longman, 1985, pp.494-95; Boahen, A., Arcany, or Accany or Arcania... THSG Vol.xiv(1) 1973. p.106.
42. Reindorf, C.C. *The History of the Gold Coast and Asante*, p.49.
43. Ameyaw, K., Akim Oda (Kotoku) Traditions. I.A.S. Acc. No. KAP/7, January 1966, pp.2-6.
44. Ibid. p.3.
45. Ward, W.E.F. *A History of Ghana*, p.110; Ameyaw, K. op. cit. pp. 3-4. The Adanse who had refused military assistance to both Asante and Denkyira fled simultaneously to Akyem after the defeat of Denkyira. See Aidoo, A.A. *Political Crisis and Social Change in the Asante Kingdom 1867-1901*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, UCLA, 1975, p.309.
46. Barbot, J. *Description*, 1732, p.190.
47. See OC 2677 Hon. Governor and Company of Merchants Trading for East India and Guinea from Cormantin Castle, 8 ber 23, 1658.
48. Barbot, J. *Description*, 1732, p.190 (emphasis added).
49. Afrifah, S.F. Akyem c.1700-1874, pp.20-21.
50. Boahen, A.A. Arcany or Acoany or Arcania, p.106.
51. After the Kotoku abandoned Asante-Akyem, their lands were placed originally under the authority of Kokofuhene. By the turn of the 20th century, however, Kokofuhene controlled lands on the right bank of Anunu only. The lands between the Anunu and the Pra (i.e. Asante-Akyem) were under a Kumasi chief called Kwame Tua. (See NAG. Adm 11/1/3 Conf. Minute Paper No. 345/1900; also chief Kofi Ntiri of Kokofu to chief of Imbronam 27 March 1902).
52. NAG Adm 11/1/1105 Statement by Attafua, king of Kotokus otherwise styled Western Akims, Accra, 24 June 1888 (emphasis added).
53. NAG Adm 11/1/1095 Statement made by Kwabina Kesse of Insuaim at Colonial Secretary's Office, Accra, 24 July 1888.
54. NAG Adm 11/1/1095 List of Towns and Villages in Western and Asante Akim subject to King Atta Fuaah. Besides the above-mentioned towns there were 12 other towns between

- the seaboard and the Birem with an estimated population of 14,380 and another 14 towns between the Birem and the Pra with a population of 13,500; See also Jenkins, Paul, A comment on M.P. Frempong's History of the Presbyterian Church at Bompata, *Ghana Notes and Queries* No.12, June 1972, p.24.
55. NAG Adm 11/1/1095 Akyem Abuakwa Native Affairs No.171/07 Letter from Kwabena Atcherry 17 November, 1908.
 56. Addo-Fening, R. The Nsuaem Ferry Crisis 1888, *Ghana Social Science Journal* Vol. No.41, May 1977.
 57. NAG Adm 11/1/1095 Statement by Kwabina Kesse of Insuaiaam 24 July, 1888.
 58. NAG Adm 11/1/1126 H.M. Hull T.C. to Ag. Governor, 26 October, 1893. (emphasis added).
 59. NAG Adm 11/1/1126 Moses Williams, Solicitor for Attafua to Col. Sec. 7 June, 1901 (emphasis added).
 60. Ward, W.E.F. *A History of Ghana*, 1967, p.110.
 61. See Ins. below.
 62. Ward, W.E.F. *A History of Ghana*, 1967, p.110.
 63. Ibid., p.220.
 64. Wilks, I. The Mossi and the Akan States 1400-1800, *History of West Africa* Vol. I 3rd ed., Longman, 1985, pp.494-495.
 65. Minutes of Council, CCC Memorandum Book January 13, 1703/4 - January 2, 1704/5 (PRO T70/1643) Elmina (G.1) April 19, The Kingdom of Agona was similarly described as 'the district of Agona'. Osei Tutu was often described also as 'headchief the Zay'. T70/4 Letters received Cape Coast Castle 17 and 18 February, 1704/5, Letter from Accra (Van Alsen) 30 October, 1717.
 66. Justessen, Ole, 'Aspects of Eighteenth century Ghanaian History as revealed by Danish sources', *Ghana Notes and Queries* No.12, June 1972, p.10 fn 4.
 67. NAG Adm 11/1/1095, Award published at Nsawam, September 1929.
 68. Letter from Apam (Hendrix) 19 December 1716; Reindorf, *The History...* p.80.
 69. Agona was 'only one day's journey from Breku' which was a favourite resort of Akyem traders. In the 18th century Roemer estimated that it took 14 days to travel from Accra to the Akyem frontier (presumably the northern frontier, via Akuapem), Ward, op. cit. p.221, fn. 24.
 70. Boahen, A., Arcany, or Accanny or Arcania.... p.106.
 71. Wilhelm Johann Muller's Description of Fetu country 1662-9 in Jones, Adam, *German Sources for West African History 1559-1669*, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, Wiesbaden, 1983, p.200, fn.259.
 72. Addo-Fening, R. Akyem Abuakwa c.1874-1943, pp. 7-9.
 73. Quoted in Fynn, *Asante and its Neighbours*, p.20 See also Daaku, *Trade and Politics*, p.172.
 74. Quoted in Daaku, *Trade and Politics*, p.173.
 75. Barbot, John, op. cit. p.182.
 76. Daaku, K.Y. *Trade and Politics*, pp.172-173.
 77. Van Dantzig, A. *English Bosman and Dutch Bosman: A Comparison of Texts* p.95 (translation of Bosman, p.69 para. iv line 3-14).
 78. Fynn, J.K. *Asante and Its Neighbours*, p.20.
 79. Ibid.
 80. WIC October, 1714.
 81. Daaku, K.Y. *Trade and Politics*, pp.172-173.
 82. Quoted in Ward, *A History of Ghana*, p.123.
 83. Reindorf, *The History ...* pp.56, 58.
 84. WIC 101 Letter, Director-General H. Haring etc. Elmina to Association of Ten WIC Amsterdam 15 August, 1711. (Emphasis added).

85. T70/1464 Commenda Diary kept by William Baillie, English Factor, May 24, 1714.
86. Ibid. October 30, 1714.
87. Letter from Accra (Van Alsen) 30 October, 1717.
88. Justessen, Ole, Aspects of Eighteenth century Ghanaian History..., pp.10-11.
89. NAG Adm 11/1/1126 Statement of Misa, Chief of Otumi, December 1892.
90. Daaku, K.Y. Trade and Politics... pp.173-74.
91. Ibid., p.1761.
92. Ward, A History of Ghana, p.221.
93. Justessen, Ole, Aspects of Eighteenth Century Ghanaian History... p.11.
94. NAG Adm 11/1/3 Confidential Minute Paper No.345/00. See also Frempong, M.P., A History of the Presbyterian Church at Bompata in Asante-Akyem (translated by E.A. Kyerematen), Ghana Notes Queries, No.12, 1972, p.20.
95. Reindorf, The History... p.82.
96. Wilks, I., Asante in the Nineteenth Century, Cambridge, 1975, p.212.
97. So complete was Kwadwo Kuma's identification with the Akyem cause that Ward mistakenly regards him as one of the kings of Akyem Abuakwa. See Ward, A History of Ghana, p.159.
98. NAG Adm 11/1/1126 Statement of Misa, Chief of Otumi December, 1892.
99. See Reindorf, The History... p.49.
100. Ward, A History of Ghana, p.220.