

Key challenges in the Formation of the Ashanti's and Zulu's Institutions

التحديات الرئيسية في تشكيل مؤسسات الأشانتي والزولو

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ABSTRACT:

ملخص البحث

Abstract

This study deals with the identification of state institutions that emerged and evolved among the Ashanti of West African and the Zulu of South Africa. It argues that the study of the formation of institutions in pre-colonial era compared with colonial Western and Southern Africa can help the understanding of the root causes of problems that abound in the continent today. Additionally, we found that both case study states experienced surprisingly similar aspects and some different paths to statehood. From the historical aspect, this study is of pressing importance to the ethnic people of Africa and to those who are responsible of governing them.

Keywords: Ashanti; Zulu; leadership; Eurocentric views; state maintenance; social integration.

ملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة تحديد مؤسسات الدولة التي نشأت وتطورت بين أشانتي في غرب إفريقيا وزولو جنوب إفريقيا. وهي تجادل بأن دراسة تشكيل المؤسسات في عصر ما قبل الاستعمار مقارنةً بإفريقيا الغربية والجنوبية الاستعمارية يمكن أن تساعد في فهم الأسباب الجذرية للمشاكل التي تنتشر في القارة اليوم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، وجدنا أن كلتا دولتي دراسة الحالة واجهتا جوانب متشابهة بشكل مدهش وبعض المسارات المختلفة لإقامة الدولة. من الناحية التاريخية، تعد هذه الدراسة ذات أهمية ملحة للشعب الاثني في إفريقيا ولمن يحكمها.

كلمات مفتاحية: أشانتي. الزولو: القيادة؛ وجهات نظر مركزية؛ صيانة الدولة؛ الاندماج الاجتماعي.

1. Introduction:

The enclosed study attempts to bring into focus one of the major problems in African history. Many dogmatic opinions are held on the subject of African institutions in general and the formation of the political, military and economic institutions in specific in order to analyze the aspect of the African society on a broad comparative basis. This study will then, we hope, prove the need for and indicate some of the possibilities for such an investigation. Many of the problems it brings to the foreground can find solutions by future research.

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The study analyzes the first step for a wider inquiry into the nature and development of the African state during the pre-colonial era. Besides, for further research into the autochthones' systems, such inquiry would include the study of the development of these systems under the influence of European rule i.e. colonial rule. We will use inductive reasoning by examining two different case studies through the analysis of pre-colonial formation of the African institutions and look for answers to issues that today's states are incapable of solving. Thus, far from several Eurocentric views, this paper deals with the existence of states in the pre-colonial era as a general aim for the enclosed research and makes the post-colonial one on the same level of analysis to understand nowadays African systems. Thereby, the focus of our research will now turn to determine main theories for the word '*African institution*' and then move to the examination of the enclosed African states.

2.Pre-Colonial African Institutions: Main Theories for African Formation

The African people, initially viewed as primitive people, were scattered in few small ethnic groups and devoid of any definite system of a state organisation. Most of European explorers, governors, and political leaders who engineered the conquest of Africa in the nineteenth century believed that they were ambassadors of innovation and progress on a continent mired in timeless savagery¹. They propagated the image of Africa as a 'dark continent'. Any historical process or movement in the continent was explained as the work of outsiders, whether these be the mythical Hamites or the Caucasoids. European presence in Africa was therefore justified, among other things, by their ability to place Africa in the 'path of history'². Europeans, by the time of the advent of colonial rule in the nineteenth century, perceived only the primitive aspects of an impoverished material culture rather than the generations and centuries of steady increasing political highly developed and sophisticated organization, which gave birth to institutionalized states in the form of kingdoms. Consequently and contrary to many European views, historical and anthropological research demonstrated that several kinds of societies emerged with developed political, military and economic systems³.

First, we argue, that pre-colonial West and South Africa did experience state formation and that this formation resulted in outright states that existed before the Scramble at the end of the 19th century. This is in direct opposition to scholars such as Robert H. Jackson who argues that these states were mere 'loosely defined political systems' and 'societies rather than states'⁴. Jackson argues that 'vague ...overlapping' boundaries between states and 'lacking centralized authority structures and institutions' meant that it is impossible to define these societies as states. The aim is to prove exactly the opposite: defined territorial boundaries were not needed for states to exist in pre-colonial Africa, and diffuse nature of authority structures created the environment for states to emerge in the region.

Second, the other aim is to show that the analysis of pre-colonial African institutions can illuminate the current problems that African institutions face. By problems, we do not mean the widely discussed obstacles such as corrupt leaders, shortage of financial muscle or political insurgency. Instead, we intend to focus on the state itself as an institution and as a means to ameliorating the general negatively perceived economic, political and social situation in West and South Africa. As Jeffrey Herbst points out the study of 'state consolidation in Africa is not merely an academic issue but is, instead, critical to the future of tens of millions of people who are at risk from the insecurity that is the inevitable by-product of state decline and failure'⁵.

Selecting a specific ideology for the word *institution* here is not compulsory but instead, we will attempt to create a definition of the institution that suits on the evidence and circumstances that were present in pre-colonial and colonial Africa. Therefore, it will be a region-specific definition, although not necessarily time-specific. Herbst and the ideas that he expressed in his book heavily influence the way we view the institution, "*States and Power in Africa: Comparative lessons in Authority and Control*".⁶

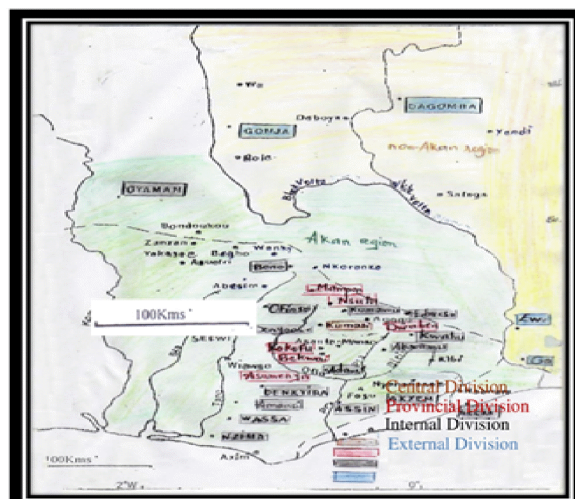
3. The Ashanties and Zulus: An Ethnic Profile

Among the most powerful and dominant Akan-speaking and Nguni speaking people are respectively the Ashanties of the Gold Coast (Ghana nowadays) and the Zulus of Southern Africa. Both seemed to have emerged within the forest and savannah regions of western and southern Africa to make up well-organised groups of people able to control, to direct and to manage their day-to-day activities. The identification of the Ashanties and Zulus groups of people and the brief examination of their main aspects of life before 1824 will contribute best for the sake of the enclosed research paper up to the 1920s.

The Ashanti's empire (or the Asante's empire), also known as the Ashanti Confederacy or Asanteman (independent from 1701-1896), was a pre-colonial West African state created by the Akan people of what is now the Ashanti region of Ghana. Their political and military power, which came from the usage of effective war strategies and an early adoption of rifles, created an empire that stretched from central Ghana to present day Togo and the Ivory Coast, bordered by the Dagomba kingdom to the North and the Dahomey to the East. In the eighteenth century, the Ashanties were identified as people resulting from the amalgamation of five ethnic groups known as the Akans, the Ga, the Ewe, the Guan and the Mole-Dagbani who spread over three different Gold Coast regions of the West, South and East (See Map n°1).

The first Ashanties migrated from the vicinity of the North Western Niger River after the fall of the Ghana empire in the thirteenth century⁷. The Akans counted eighteen clans including the royal Oyoko clan (considered as the Ashanti's royal clan) namely, the Aduana, the Agona, the Asakyri, the Asenie, the Asona, the Bretuo, the Ekoona, the Dako, the Asokere, the Tena, the Dwum, the Atwea, the Adaa, the Kuona, the Atena, the Toa and the Adrade clans. In 1669, most of the Akans spread over the core of the forest region called the Tafo country.

Map1: The Ashanti Empire (1695-1750)



Source: Gérard Pescheux, "Le Royaume Asante (Ghana)", Parenté, Pouvoir, Histoire :XVII^e-XX^e siècles", Paris, Editions Karthala, 2003, p.29.

The members of the Oyoko royal clan were located in Kumasi, Dwaben, Kokofu, Bekwai, Nsuta. Thirteen other non-Oyoko clans were situated in Mampon, Asumanya, Ofinso, Adansi, Edweso, Kumawu, Denyaase, Kwahu, Akwamu, Denkyira, Wassa, Nzima, and Assin while other four Akan clans were situated in the South East and the North West of Kumasi in Akim, Accra, Gyaman and Bono, respectively. The other four ethnic groups namely the Ga and the Ewe consisted of small communities while the Guan and the Mole Dagbani included respectively the Gonja and Dagomba tribes.

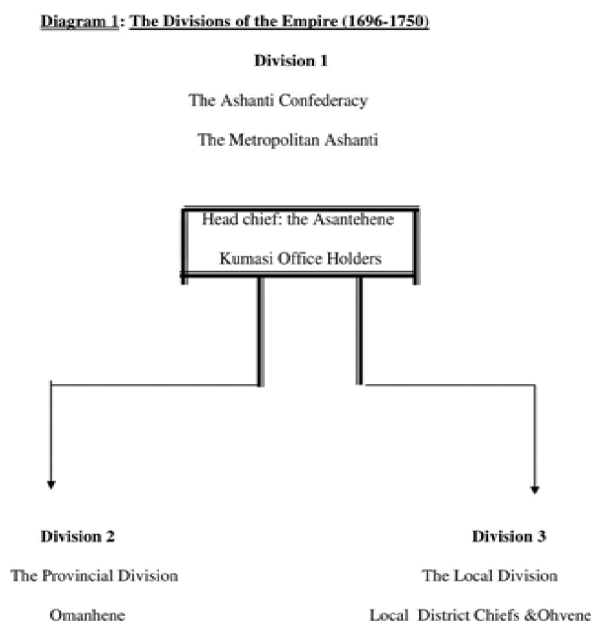
3.1. The Ashanties' Institutions

The political limelight comprised three divisions namely, the Central, Provincial, and Local one known as the Metropolitan Ashanti or the Ashanti Confederacy, the Provincial Ashanti (with its Internal and External Provinces) and the Local Division. Inside the three divisions, a certain hierarchy was greatly instituted among the main authority holders. The Metropolitan Ashanti included the king and his eight Office Holders (the king's local advisers). The Provincial Ashanti included seven Omanhene (known as sub-chiefs leading the Akan States) and the Local Ashanti division comprised the Local District Chiefs (in the Akan States) and the Ohylene (the Lineage-Heads in the Ga and Ewe communities) (See Diagram1).

The king was the head of the empire within the Metropolitan Ashanti; he was eligible to such a position through Akan's established criteria. First, the election was set up by a body of king makers in the capital of Kumasi. They comprised lineage-heads considered as traditional elders residing in Kumasi. They counted five members known as the Krontihene, the Adontenhene, the Kydomhene, the Benkumhene, and the Oyokohene together with the members of the Oyoko royal family that is, the Queen mother and the king's maternal uncles whose attendance was of a great importance

A system of matrilineal hereditary succession insured election whereby only the former king's brothers and nephews from the mother's side could inherit property and be entitled to succession. The reign of two Ashanti kings marked the late seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century: Osei Tutu (1695-1731), commonly considered as the founder of the Ashanti's political institutions, with the help of his fellow chiefs and Apoku Ware (1731-1750) who followed his predecessor's work and developed the political organization of the empire notably Osei Kwadwo (1824-1850) till the Prempehs (1910s).

Osei Tutu or Tutu the conqueror was the main candidate for royal succession. In 1695, he inherited his sovereignty after the death of his uncle Obiri Yeboa (1663-1695). Born about 1645, he spent his youth in the royal court of Denkyira, and prior to his return to Kwaman (North of Kumasi) in the late 1670s to take over from Obiri Yeboa. Henceforth, tracing O.Tutu's moves after his rise to power furnished



important insights into a state formation in Ashanti. Osei Tutu was a political strategist. He was a strong thoughtful conqueror who acquired a large political and military experience during his stay in both Denkyira and Akwamu neighbouring states to become a military leader. He began by establishing control over the region as he grouped other clan chiefs around his court, using Kumasi as his base. Later, he conquered the surrounding Akan chiefdoms. In doing so he took the title of Asantehene.

Within the empire, the Asantehene held a sacred position. Through the creation of the Golden Stool by the priest Akomfo Anokye, the Asantehene was the most venerated living person in Ashanti. The people of the empire, mainly the Akans feared and believed that the Stool embodied the spirit or soul of the whole Ashanti nation. By the institution of the Golden Stool, the Asantehene gained the support of the religious chiefs and became the center to which all the authority holders of the Ashanti empire were connected⁸.

The empire subordinate members were eight lineage heads known as traditional elders. They consisted of the five electing members during the Asantehene's succession and three other Kumasi elders who reigned over eight divisions of the Kumasi State and were distinguished according to the name of their lineages. They were respectively known as the Oyokohene, the Krontihene, the Kidomhene, the Benkumhene, the Adontenhene, the Nifahene, the Akwamuhene, and the Gyasehene.

In Metropolitan Ashanti, mainly in the capital Kumasi, the eight traditional elders were given the name of Office Holders and had definite stools (special Ashanti's wooden chairs) that differentiated them from other authority holders in the exercise of their functions close to their king. The Office Holders regularly collaborated with the Asantehene in the establishment of new Ashanti's laws. They were engaged in making Akan and non-Akan people respect their king as the supreme authority over the whole empire and to give their entire reverence, contribution and allegiance to the king's sub chiefs as members of the royal court. Besides, in the provincial division, other six sub-chiefs called Omanhene together with the Asantehene ruled the Provincial Ashanti (See Diagram 2).

Inside the local division, District Chiefs and Lineage-Heads were appointed in the Local Division of the empire. The District Chiefs given the control of the internal provinces and the Lineage-Heads ruled the external provinces. In the internal provinces, the District chiefs were subordinate Akan hereditary chiefs who had the direct supervision of the local Akan states. They were helped, in their rule by other sub-chiefs who were in their turn assisted by the village-head chiefs.

Outside the internal provinces, seven non-Akan Lineage-Heads called Ohyhene of the South Eastern regions were given control of the external provinces. They were the native traditional chiefs of the Ga and Ewe regions. They were attributed more autonomy than the Akans (without any district chief or village head control) and they often depended on the supervision of the king's intermediaries and messengers and this rather showed the absence of the Ashanti's direct supervision⁹.

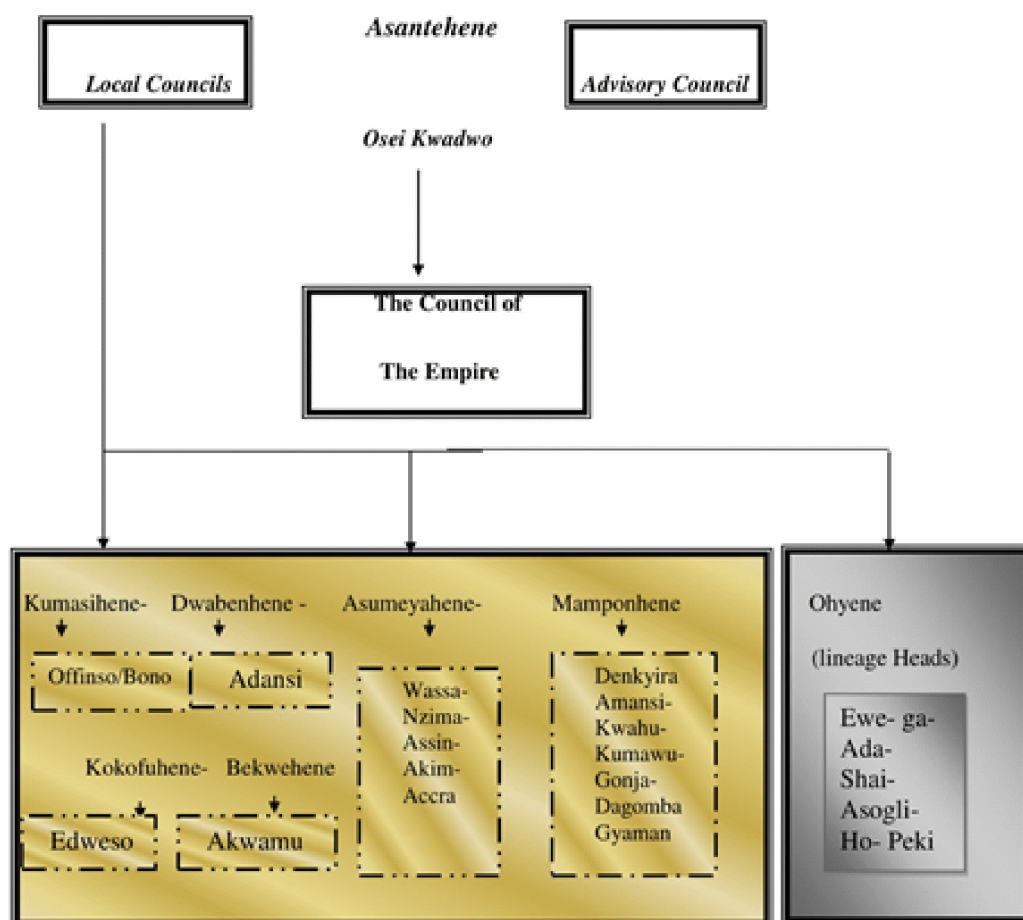
To supervise his sub-chiefs whether under a centralized or decentralized control, the Asantehene Apoku Ware held a third council called the Council of the Empire. The latter annually gathered the main authority holders and sub-chiefs that is the six Omanhene of the different Akan States, the

Asantehene's intermediaries in the southeastern communities, the eight Office Holders, the Ashanti dignitaries in addition to the chief of the council, the Asantehene.

Osei Kwadwo's political position was to continue his predecessor's achievements. He stood at the head of his kinship unit in Kumasi and came to articulate the kin solidarity of his own clan, the Oyoko. He sought to augment his power with that of an ascribed status with the help of the Office Holders, the Omanhene, the District Chiefs and the Ohyhene in leading political control, the Ashanti's political structure was subsequently organized and political control was distributed following a pyramidal structure strengthened by subordinate kin members and political institutions that made up its basis.

From the Metropolitan through the Provincial to the Local Ashanti in each Akan state, every Omanhene, District Chief and Village-Head chief reproduced the pattern of the authority exercised in the centre of the Ashanti empire as they were organized in a way that showed the centralized Asantehene's control. However, the south-eastern division of the empire was left under the decentralized Asantehene's control since the Ohyhene's communities were rather remote areas but situated in a region which was to open later on routes for further conquests and trade especially with the Europeans on the coast. Every Office Holder, Omanhene, District Chiefs or Ohyhene inherited their offices through their own respective lineages to which they belonged. That is to say, their lineage members appointed them in any succession or destoolment made by the Asantehene.

Diagram 2: The Council of the Empire



The Ashanti's political organization performance reached the administrative organization that linked each council with the daily and diplomatic network divisions by the formation of other officials named as the Nhenkwahene and Gyasehene in charge of the diplomatic and international issues within the main provinces¹⁰. Those officials were responsible of the gold and slave trade in the central forest region and managed the gold dust currency that made the flourishing of the whole empire.

3. 2. The Zulus' Institutions

Within the Southern part of the black African continent, the Zulus were the dominant Nguni speaking people belonging to a South African Bantu clan located in what is today northern KwaZulu-Natal. According to historical records, they emerged from a small branch of the main migratory trunk¹¹. Just like many groups of cattle herders and farmers, the Nguni migrated from East Africa to the southern part of Africa in the beginning of the sixteenth century to the Natal region in search for a land.

Historically speaking, the Nguni people lived nearby the Great Lakes region from two to three thousand years ago, it resulted in a time of plenty for the Bantu, and the population exploded and was fuelled by their advantage in agriculture and livestock. This expansion of both people and livestock inevitably led to the quest for more land, and triggered what is today famously known as the Bantu migrations. The story is told that the Nguni groups that peopled the region were made up of clans. From archaeological evidence and European mariners' records, it is possible that by the seventeenth century, a patchwork of numerous clans were living under chiefs in the land that was known as Zululand. Throughout their different settlements and wars of conquest, the Zulu people proved their strategies and rules to create an empire stretching their sphere of influence over the northern Swaziland till the Southern state along the Mzinkulu River (See Map n°2).

In the eighteenth century, a patchwork of numerous clans lived in the Zululand. They belonged to the Zulu empire also known as The Zulu confederacy (independent from 1709-1879). They involved eight clans within the confederacy including the Zulu royal clan under its founder, the king Zulu Kantombela. They were named as follows Xhosa, Tswana, Pedi, Sotho, Tsonga, Swazi, Venda and Ndebele. They spoke variations of the same language known as the Bantu language and observed the same customs and common roots and traditions of Zulu ancestors.

Each of them descended from the first ancient ancestor. His name was Zulu Kantombela son of Ntombela Makandela, the founder and chief of the Zulu clan from in 1709. When his father Ntombela died, the eldest brother Qwabe claimed for the father's land and obliged his younger brother Zulu along with his mother Nozinja to set out to find land of his own. To avoid any disputes Zulu Kantombela gathered his followers from his own clan and started their migration south to the Mkhumbane river basin on the white Mfolozi River (what is nowadays known as the Mozambique territory)¹².

In the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, eight other clans were incorporated into the Zulu empire known as the Ndlambe, Gcaleka, Thembu, Mpondo, Mpondomise, Bhaca, Hlubi, Mtethwa, and the Nguni were divided into a number of political entities. Each clan had its own chief, who was drawn from any of a number of recognized chiefly lineages that had both political and ritual powers. Those chieftaincies extended from the Great Fish River, in what is now Eastern Cape Province, northward to Kosi Bay, near the border of KwaZulu/Natal province and Mozambique that paralleled the Indian Ocean. That country was then destined to

become the symbol of the first Zulu chieftaincy to be known under the name of KwaZulu territory (known as the place of heaven in Nguni language).

The formation of the Zulu kingdom started with the reign of Jama kandaba (1745-1763), chief of the Kwabulawayo state, a Nguni-speaking group of the Bantu population from South-eastern Africa. During his reign, he conquered several chiefdoms surrounding the Zulu territory. The main drive was Kandaba's wars of conquest was his desire to end the internecine fighting between different communities and to bring them under a single government¹³.

Similar to the Ashanti confederacy, political divisions started to form and hierarchy was clearly instituted among the main authority holders and two principal divisions were distinguished notably the Central or the Metropolitan Division and the Provincial Division. The first division included eight Kwabulawayo Officeholders considered as the king's permanent advisers and the second division involved the traditional sub chiefs who used to rule the Nguni and non-Nguni subdued people.

In Metropolitan Zulu, the king or Zulu Nkosi was the supreme head over the Metropolitan Zulu; he was eligible to such position via a system of patrilineal succession in the capital Kwabulawayo. Besides, traditional lineage heads from the Nguni royal clan and royal family relatives had to select the Zulu king. In this way, Jama kandaba was elected and started to form his own kingdom by gathering all traditional elders of the Nguni royal clan who consisted of the traditional chiefs of Xhosa, Tswana, Pedi, Sotho, Tsonga, Swazi, Venda and Ndebele.

Every traditional elder had under his control the rule of their respective states under their charge. That is, every traditional chief ensured the application of the king's rules that consisted mainly of the respect of a set of rules introduced by the king Jama kandaba and his successor Senzangakhona Kajama (1781-1816) with the help of their royal traditional elders. These rules are cited as follows: the king had total control over his people. He was the chief judge and controlled the court system and his court was the highest and the final court of appeal. In case of revolts and non-assistance in times of war, the king confiscated every property especially cattle. He is also considered as the national religious and sacred king leading the main traditional ceremonies of the whole empire.

Inside Provincial Zulu, there were many chiefs, each ruling on his own. Each lived separated from the others including Senzangakhona. The Mbata, Butelezi, Ntombela, Mthetwa, Ndwandwe, Qwabe, Ilangeni, Mpungowe, and Embo together with the people of many other territories (*izifunda*) all lived separately under their respective chiefs. Senzangakhona fathered at least nineteen children, the most famous being Shaka and his half-brothers Dingane, who succeeded him in 1828, and Mpande who succeeded Dingane in 1840. Shaka spent at least part of his early years living among his half brothers and sisters but there is general agreement that Shaka spent most of his childhood living among his mother's people because she was the daughter of the neighbouring eLangeni chief.

Map 2: ZULU and NATAL (1878)



Source: Wikipedia.com
https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royaume_zoulou#/media/File:Zululand_1878

Just like Osei Tutu, Shaka lived far from his motherland and learned a lot from being far from his relatives in the neighbouring Mthethwa state. As a first initiative in his leadership, he started to join each chiefdom belonging to the royal clan and formed his first confederated states that shared the same political life established in his own capital named Kwabulawayo located in the Nguni territory. King Shaka Zulu started to gather all members of his true royal clan who formed the royal descendants of the capital in his own kraal or village composed of the traditional elders and his mother's kraal was never far from him. Those elders consisted of the Council of elders or the advisory council of King Shaka Zulu. Besides, the council of main sub chiefs in the capital was not far from gathering during each official ceremony to gather all the council of provincial chiefdoms(see Diagram3).

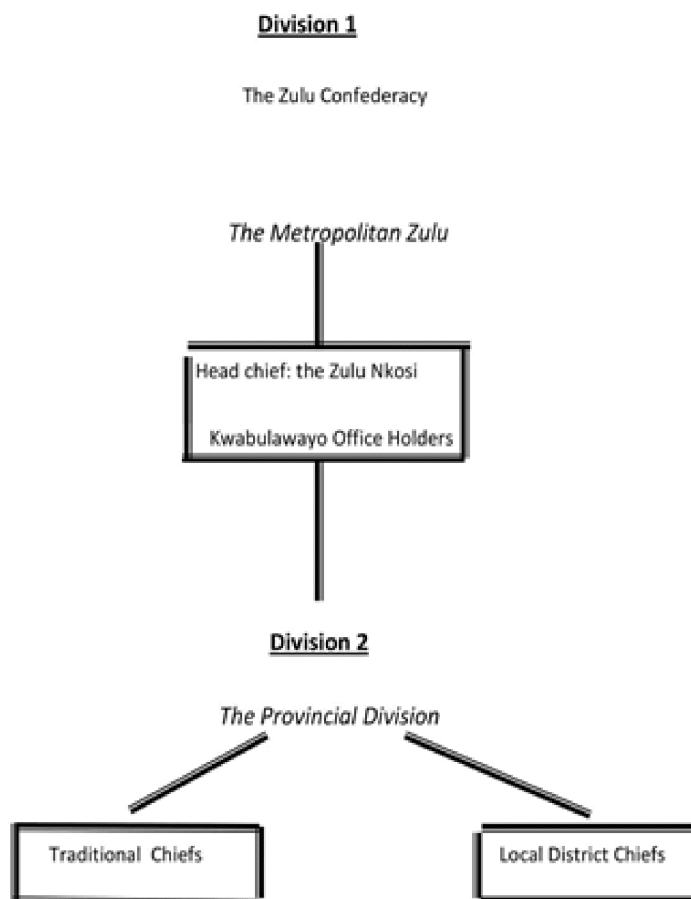
In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Shaka Zulu reigned over the huge territory of the Zululand. He formed the Zulu army and was keen on reinforcing the main companies in each state under his control. The Shaka's Military expertise witnessed a highly developed army with military tactics almost similar to the Ashanti troops and their company officials. The latter, belonged to the king's faithful servants who acquired training among the royal Zulu clan members. Economically speaking, the Zulus were first hunters and gatherers who later on, notably in 1850s performed a system of cattle breeding and staple production of maize and rice that competed Ashanti's agrarian

system. All Zulu institutions came then to revolutionize the whole empire. In this way the name of the main authority holders will show how Shaka sought to gain supreme power over all neighbouring states and making them his own tributaries just similar to Asantehene Osei Kwadwo's model in state formation and maintenance.

3. The Nineteenth and beginning Twentieth centuries: The Evolution of Core-Periphery Relations

From both states institutional formation and as convergent points of view, it is useful to look at how regional administration evolved before the Ashanti and Zulu empires were taken over during the Scramble. In the first part of our research, we have made clear that we will not focus on administration as part of state formation, but we do believe that a brief explanation of Wilks' and Fortes's ideas about the bureaucratization of Ashanti and Zulu governments is helpful to both general aims of the paper.

Diagram 3: The Zulu Divisions of the Empire (1696-1750)



Wilks and Fortes developed points of views stating that during the nineteenth century, Ashanti developed a 'centralized and largely appointive bureaucracy, capable of exercising a high degree of social control and of organizing the man-power and other resources of the areas under the king's authority'. One of the ways he came across this important development is by identifying a revolutionary change that was happening from late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries: the

kings at the time, Osei Kwadwo (1764-1777), Osei Kwame (1777- 1801) and Osei Bonsu (1801-1824) "...have artfully enlarged the royal prerogatives, at the expense of original constitution [by raising their] favourite captains to vacant stools [i.e. important positions]"¹⁴.. This was the observation of Bowdich at the time in 1821. The implications of this development meant that skill and favour were beginning to displace right of birth as paths to high positions of authority, which is symptomatic of the formation of a bureaucratic system.

As we have alluded to previously, the centre-periphery relationship has undergone changes during the nineteenth century as well, and now that the emergence of a bureaucratic culture has been identified, it is possible to contextualize these changes. The new system encouraged the kings to use administrative means in order to minimize attempts at rebellion and maximize the central authority's efficiency at dealing with those that could not be prevented.

Therefore, the appointment of resident-chiefs in the nineteenth century that we discussed above when dealing with provinces was part of a 'superimposition of a new structure of provincial administration'. This new structure saw the kings appointed men that they could trust, therefore not necessarily high aristocrats, but men who proved their worth to the king, to deal with problems in the provincial areas and exercise a general superintendence over them

The overall significance of these developments is that they reaffirm the statehood of Ashanti and that they again make clear that an intricate core-periphery relationship was important for Ashanti's kings to uphold. As it was analysed in the Zulu case study part, focus on the military institution was of paramount importance and the Zulus had to leave other tributaries under their deliberate functions. Thus, modern African leaders are not encouraged to pay enough attention to this relationship, and a rethinking of this attitude is important in order to ameliorate the condition of the African state.

4. Conclusion

On the whole, The formation of the Ashanti's and Zulu's kingdoms from 1824 up to 1914 is considered as a methodological and thoughtful effort employed by the main authority holders of both empires to strengthen the beginnings of a centralized political system through hereditary attribution of political control over each state and community under entire control. This strengthened system witnessed numerous processes of state formation and consolidation under famous founders in both empires namely the Asantehene Osei Tutu (1695-1731) and Nkosi Jama Kandaba (1763-1781) to become integrally tied up by the newly devised constitutional, traditional and military institutions. Mainly among the Ashanties and under O.Kwadwo (1750-1828) till the Prempeh's (1910s) the consolidated empire was coterminous with the existence of a functionally discrete political centre. The latter, regulated activities in order to firmly enlarge the bases of the central government by the association of an increasing number of people of different origins (either Akans or non-Akans) indirectly left to their deliberation and responsibilities.

The arguments that we propagate in this paper do not assume that pre-colonial African formation of institutions can simply be mapped into the post-colonial experience. Nor do we dispute the fact that European colonisation did have a disruptive effect on the progression of African state building, and that it undoubtedly prepared the foundations for nowadays-African institutions within state formation. Instead, the point that we are making in this paper is to say that a look back to pre-colonial experiences may prove fruitful in the search for answers to problems that today's states are unable to solve because of their inherently European foundations. The understanding of the African experience before the Scramble is vital to understanding today's Africa.

The example of the Ashanti empire was a great regional power that was not only able to conquer and hold a plethora of societies and states in the region but also hold back the British colonialists, even winning some battles against the Europeans. Overall, Greater Ashanti can be described as an empire that had a turbulent political life and a state that required “unremitting attention” in order for it to survive. In light of the history of empires, it is possible to say that its collapse was inevitable. However, since its life was cut short by British colonial rule in the late nineteenth century we cannot be sure of how the Ashanti state would have developed. The one thing that is certain, in our opinion, is the complex story of the formation of this state and its intricate design.

As Herbst stated, ‘pre-colonial African states developed as logical responses to their physical environments’¹⁵. This thread can be seen throughout Ashanti history, as the availability of gold and opportunities for buying slaves dictated the way the Akan polities developed the new agrarian order in the 18th and 19th centuries. Furthermore, the way clan brother polities’ reaction to Denkyera pressure resulted in a new consolidated Ashanti state is another example of the environment, not physical but political, driving history. Also, The Zulu example shows clearly the effect of the centralisation of the provinces to gain as much control on lands

In addition, Ivors Wilks praises the brilliant Ashanti administrative corp i.e, Gyase and Ohylene officials and their ability to act and ‘bring that vision into reality’¹⁶. Effectively, their actions created all the necessary conditions for the future Ashanti state as they lay the foundations so utterly transformed an Akan future. This serves as another reminder of the complex nature of institutional formation processes in pre-colonial Africa. Once again, we are forced to do away with any simplistic notions of how the reasons behind the barbaric Ashanti warfare in the post-Denkyera conquest period was because of their hunger for gold and slaves.

Economically, the study argues that the Ashanties have succeeded better than the Zulus to manage the empire affairs especially to feed both the interior markets of Africa, as well as markets in Latin America, Europe and North America. In fact, between 1865 and 1874, the northern axis of the Ashanti empire witnessed remarkable growth. Kola exported to northern Nigeria, Bornu, and other parts of Central Sudan and beyond, came mainly from Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, to a lesser extent Akim. These areas constituted the Kola heartland in Ghana in the nineteenth century. From 1920, however, Kola was overshadowed by cocoa as an international crop.

Specifically, the primordial political, economic and military developments of the Ashanti and Zulu institutions were one of the most remarkable and extensively developing case studies in the history of the state and its institutions. The rise of the Ashanties brought an intricate system of bureaucratisation and diplomatic corps never seen before in any other part of Africa. Likewise, the rise of the Zulus in the organisation of the whole empire administration is also an important highly sophisticated system that sealed all institutions of the empire that were reinforced by the military institution revived by the genius of Shaka Zulu.

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- ¹ A.M.Akanba, Revelation: The movement of the Akan People from Kanaan to Ghana, Author House UK Ltd, First Edition, 2010, p.255
- ² K.S. Gordzo, History of African Civilizations, Accra (Ghana), 1998, p125.
- ³ F.Barker, The Politics of Theory, Colchester, University of Essex, 1983, p78.
- ⁴ Robert H. Jackson, Quasi States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World, Cambridge, UK, 1990, p. 66
- ⁵ '...state consolidation in Africa is not merely an academic issue but is, instead, critical to the future of tens of millions of people who are at risk from the insecurity that is the inevitable by-product of state decline and failure'. Jeffrey Herbst, States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control, Princeton, 2000, pp. 3-4.
- ⁶ V. Kritskiy, 'State Formation in Pre-Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa: Paths to Statehood in Asante and Buganda', Broos Press, Geneva, 2012, p8.
- ⁷ 'Evidence of this lies in the royal courts of the Akan kings reflected by that of the Ashanti kings whose processions and ceremonies show remnants of ancient Ghana ceremonies' Kofi Akwabi-Ameyaw, "Ashanti Social Organisation: some ethnographic clarifications", Ethnology, University of Cincinnati, 1989, p.20.
- ⁸ W.W.Claridge, A History of the Gold Coast and the Ashanti, London: Frank Class and Co. LTD, Second Edition, 1964, p172.
- ⁹ Ansa K. Asamoah, Classes and Tribalism in Ghana, 2nd edition, 1998, pp 54-55
- ¹⁰ 'The Nhenkwa were also charged with the responsibility of publicizing all new decrees and regulations throughout Kumasi as they gathered the people of the principal wards and villages by gong-gongs for their announcement'. T.E.Bowdich, A Mission from Cape Coast Caste to Ashantee, 2nd Edition, Cambridge University Press, U.K, 1981, p.256.
- ¹¹ Stephen Taylor, Shaka's children: A History of the Zulu people, First Edition, Harper Collin Publishers, London, U.K, 1994, p26.
- ¹² "Those Nguni ancestors inhabited a broad band of upland. Although the people of this zone originally spoke a Bantu language in common, with only subtle and gradual linguistic variations, distinct (and mostly mutually unintelligible) Bantu languages developed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries-e.g., Xhosa, Zulu, and Swati (Swazi). The Nguni languages are unique among Bantu languages in that they have imploded "clicking" phonemes. These sounds were absorbed into the language through the Ngunis'

intermarriage with the area's earlier, Khoisan-speaking peoples, whose languages were characterized by such click sounds.' Barter, C., *Stray Memories of Natal and Zululand*, Pietermaritzburg, Munro Bros., 1897, p67.

¹³ E.A.Ritter, *Shaka Zulu. The Rise of the Zulu Empire*, London, U.K,1957, p91.

¹⁴ Ivor Wilks, *Forests of Gold: Essays on the Akan and the Kingdom of Asante* , Athens: Ohio University Press, USA, 1993, p56.

¹⁵ Herbst,Op.Cit.p 124.

¹⁶ Wilks,Op.Cit.p 66.