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Unknown to most people, hundreds of smaller kingdoms have popped up throughout Africas history, with some eventually growing into powerful empires. These vast nations united Africa, managed wealthy trade routes, and controlled a potluck of cultures.10 Axum Empire While a Christian revolution was occurring in Europe, a powerful kingdom emerged on the African continent. In present-day Ethiopia, the Axum Empire became one of the largest markets of northeastern Africa with its epic trading and naval strength. As traders from this country were going past the Nile River and into Alexandria, Axum dominated the coast of the Red Sea until the seventh century. Besides influencing other superpowers in Africa, Europe, and Asia, this empire created Geez, Africas only original written script, and had throngs of foreign visitors. One Persian writer hailed Axum as one of the four greatest powers of the world. Still, little is known about this impressive African civilization. 9 Benin EmpirePhoto credit: Giulio FerrarioA unique settlement in what is now present-day Nigeria, the kingdom of Benin began when the Edo people cut down trees in the West African rain forest. By the 1400s, the little settlement had developed into a mighty kingdom.The rulers of Benin, called the Oba, had an unusual taste for brass in their stunning palaces. The Benin people also used brass in artwork, statues, and plaques depicting gory battle scenes. As for trading, Benin found wealth due to its location near the Niger River, which allowed merchants to trade with African kingdoms in the north. On the south end of the empire was the Atlantic Ocean, which permitted ships to exchange goods such as coral beads, pepper, and leopard skins. European trade commenced during the 14th century.The Benin Empire came to an end when the British invaded to take Benins resources and burned the empire to the ground. 8 Kingdom Of GhanaPhoto credit: Answersafrica.comAncient Ghana, which sat on an immense gold mine, was so rich that even its dogs wore collars made of the precious metal. With strategic planning, powerful leaders, and an abundance of natural resources, Ghana soon became another big African influence.Trading with Europeans and North Africans, Ghana imported books, cloth, and horses in exchange for gold and ivory. Salt was also in high demand. Arab businessmen often struggled for months to reach the kingdom and trade. If someone was accused of breaking the law in Ghana, that person was forced to drink an acrid blend of wood and water. If he threw up the mixture, he was considered innocent. Otherwise, he was considered guilty and punished by the king. Despite holding off many invasions, Ghana eventually collapsed in 1240. Isolated from trade and weakened by its rivals, the kingdom was absorbed into the growing Mali Empire.7 Mali EmpirePhoto credit: Andy GilhamThe Mali Empire was a major African civilization that thrived between the 13th and 16th centuries. Founded by a man named Sundiata Keita (aka the Lion King), the empire was located near present-day West Africa.While the Lion King was an impressive ruler, the empire flourished the most under Mansa Musa, who holds the title of the richest man in history. His fortune was worth a whopping $400 billionan amount that puts Bill Gates to shame. Musa also made Timbuktu, the Mali capital, the main center for education and culture in Africa, allowing scholars from all over the continent to come and study. Like Benin, Mali was successful in trade because of its location by the Niger River. However, it was plundered by invaders from Morocco in 1593. This weakened the empire, and Mali soon ceased to be an important political entity. 6 Nok Civilization The first traces of this mysterious civilization were discovered in 1928 by a group of Nigerian tin miners. As archaeologists uncovered bits of pottery, rock paint, and tools, they were shocked to realize how advanced this previously unknown civilization was.During their existence from 900 BC until AD 200, the Nok culture created a complex judicial system centuries before modern ones were invented. Using several different classes of courts, they dealt with matters such as theft, murder, adultery, and family disputes.The Nok people were also the earliest makers of life-size, terra-cotta statues. Their statues depicted alien-looking people with long heads, almond-shaped eyes, and parted lips. The Nok were also advanced in metalworking, forging small knives, spear points, and bracelets.In AD 200, the Nok population rapidly declined for no apparent reason. Famine, overreliance on resources, and climate change has all been proposed as explanations. 5 Kingdom Of KushPhoto credit: Fabrizio DemartisRelatively unknown outside of Africa, the kingdom of Kush was located in present-day Sudan. This civilization was strikingly similar to Egypt and once ruled like Egyptian pharaohs. The Kushites also mummified their dead, built pyramids as burial grounds, and worshiped crazy gods. However, there were several key differences between the two cultures.Iron had become a huge resource for Kush while the Egyptians were still discovering the wonders of this metal. Women also played a much bigger role in Kush society, and queens often succeeded the kings. In fact, one of the biggest pyramids in Kush was built to honor a female ruler.Kush was also famous for its archers, who were often depicted in artwork. However, its theorized that their culture declined after Kush was invaded by Ezana from Axum and then taken over by a new society called the X-Group (aka the Ballana culture). 4 Songhai EmpirePhoto credit: nairaland.comThe Songhai Empire spanned thousands of miles across much of Western Africa. Lasting nearly 800 years, the kingdom was considered one of the greatest empires in the world from the 15th to the 16th centuries. As with other African civilizations, Songhai derived most of its wealth from tradingwhich was extremely safe due to the 200,000-person army placed along its provinces. Several thousand cultures were under its control, all held together by a centralized government bureaucracy. A new currency was also created, which allowed the diverse cultures to blend and unite. The size of this empire was its downfall, with its enormous territory too difficult to control. Songhai tumbled into civil war, and by the end of the 16th century, the once-mighty empire had fractured into smaller, squabbling kingdoms.3 Land Of Punt Located in present-day Somalia, Punt was considered the Atlantis of Africa. Unlike most African civilizations, the people of this land of the gods were described as having dark red complexions and long hair, and citizens lived in reed huts suspended on stilts above the water.Trading missions between Egypt and Punt were common, including the first-documented flora exchange when Queen Hatshepsut traded trees during her famous expedition. All sorts of goods were exchanged with Puntfrom incense and ivory to human dwarfs and pygmies.Although the exact location of Punt is still debated, it was described as being lush and green. Sailors most likely reached it by traveling through the Red Sea or drifting down the Nile in small sailing boats. Many people believe that Punt had a huge influence on Egyptian culturefrom their literature to their religion. Despite this, some historians question whether Punt even existed. 2 Zulu EmpirePhoto credit: Charles Edwin FrippThe rise of the Zulu Empire wouldnt have happened without wedlock. The start of the kingdom was spurred by Shaka Zulu, the illegitimate son of Chief Senzanganoka. After dodging several attempted murders and bloody family disputes, Shaka became chief of the Zulus. Using his groundbreaking military tactics, Shaka helped the empire rise to its rich and famous heights.The Zulu Empires biggest accomplishment stems from being one of the most feared African civilizations during the colonial period. By introducing the iklwa spear and creating the bull formation, Shaka trained his warriors so well that they eventually defeated the British invasion. The Zulu grew into a powerful but violent empire. However, by the 1900s, it had been absorbed into the Cape Colony. Today, parts of Zulu form the modern country of South Africa. 1 Ancient CarthagePhoto credit: Patrick VerdierAn early Phoenician settlement, the ancient city-state of Carthage was located in modern-day Tunisia and covered much of the Mediterranean. Its strategic placementand abundance of tradeallowed Carthage to grow quite wealthy. As the Carthage people were extremely skilled in furniture crafting, Punic cushions, mattresses, and beds were an expensive luxury. At one point, their Roman rivals unsuccessfully attempted to copy their designs. Carthage also created an intricate system of governmental checks and balances, wrote a constitution, and managed an extensive library. Unfortunately, most of their literature was destroyed or given as gifts to Numidian kings. Only one book remainsa manual on agricultural technique that was translated into Greek.Eventually, Carthage was burned and plundered by the expansion of the Roman Empire. However, the Carthage city-state left an indelible mark as a rich trading empire and a powerful commercial force in Africa.Sylvia is a writer just getting into freelancing. If youd like, check out her blog at www.atouchofsea.com. fact checked by Jamie Frater There were many kingdoms and empires in all regions of the continent of Africa throughout history. A kingdom is a state with a king or queen as its head.[1] An empire is a political unit made up of several territories, military outposts, and peoples, "usually created by conquest, and divided between a dominant centre and subordinate peripheries".[2]In Africa states emerged in a process covering many generations and centuries. Most states were created through conquest or the borrowing and assimilation of ideas and institutions, while some developed through internal, largely isolated development.[3] Economic development "gave rise to a perceived need for centralized institutions and 'territorial' leadership that transcended older bonds of kinship and community". The politicoreligious struggle between the people and the king sometimes saw the people victorious and the establishment of sacred kings with little political power (termed "adverse sacralisation"), contrasted with divine kings equated to gods.[4] Kings and queens used both 'instrumental power', the employment of direct influence to achieve a desired outcome, and 'creative power', the use of ritual and mythology.[a][6]:2123Despite this, popular understanding often claims that the continent lacked large states or meaningful complex political organisation. Whether rooted in ignorance, Eurocentrism, or racism, famous historians such as Hugh Trevor-Roper have argued that African history is not characterised by state formation or hierarchical structures. In fact, the nature of political organisation varied greatly across the continent, from the expansive West Sudanic empires, to the sacral Congolese empires akin to confederations or commonwealths, and the immensely hierarchical kingdoms of the Great Lakes.[7]The vast majority of states included in this list existed prior to the Scramble for Africa (c. 18801914) when, driven by the Second Industrial Revolution, European powers rapidly invaded, conquered, and colonised Africa. While most states were conquered and dissolved, some kings and elites negotiated the terms of colonial rule,[6]:15 and traditional power structures were incorporated into the colonial regimes as a form of indirect rule.[8]In the mid-late 20th century decolonisation saw Africans inherit the former colonies,[9] and many traditional kingdoms still exist today as nonsovereign monarchies. The roles, powers, and influence of traditional monarchs throughout Africa varies greatly depending on the state. In some states, such as Angola, the local monarch may play an integral role in the local governing council of a region.[10] On the flipside their powers may be curtailed, as happened in 2022 with Wadai in Chad,[11] or their positions abolished, as happened in Tanzania in 1962,[12] and in 1966 in Uganda with Buganda, which was later restored in 1993.[13] In this list they are labelled (NSM).There are only three current sovereign monarchies in Africa;[14] two of which (Lesotho and Morocco) are constitutional monarchies where the rulers are bound by laws and customs in the exercise of their powers, while one (Eswatini) is an absolute monarchy where the monarch rules without bounds.[15]:15 Sovereign monarchies are labelled (SM).There have been a number of autocratic presidents in Africa who have been characterised as "disguised monarchs" due to the absence of term limits,[16] as well as those who have invoked hereditary succession in order to preserve their regimes,[17] such as the Bongos of Gabon,[18] Gnassingbs of Togo,[19] or AptidonGuelleh of Djibouti,[20] attracting the terms monarchical republic and presidential monarchism.[18][16] These haven't been included.Only polities that were once independent and described as kingdoms or empires by reliable sources are included. The intercontinental Islamic empires that covered parts of North and Northeast Africa are not included, and should be discussed as part of the Muslim world, however the residual fragments that had their capital on the continent of Africa are.Oral traditions rarely incorporate chronological devices,[21]:29 and dates in this list are often estimates based off of lists of rulers.[22] Dates have [one date for loss of independence] / [one date for loss of nominal rule]. Additional information such as notable articles may accompany entries.Historian Jan Vansina (1962) discusses the classification of SubSaharan African Kingdoms, mostly of Central, South and East Africa, with some additional data on West African (Sahelian) Kingdoms distinguishing five types, by decreasing centralization of power:[23]Despotic Kingdoms (D): Kingdoms where the king controlled the internal and external affairs directly and personally appointed overseers. The king kept a monopoly on the use of force. Examples include Rwanda, Nkore/Ankole, and Kongo of the 16th century.Regal Kingdoms (R): Kingdoms where the king controlled the external affairs directly, and the internal affairs via a system of overseers where most local chiefs kept their positions but not their autonomy after conquest. The king and most of his administration belonged to the same religion, group and/or family.Incorporative Kingdoms (I): Kingdoms where the king only controlled the external affairs and the nucleus with no permanent administrative links between him and the chiefs of the provinces. The local chiefs of the provinces were left largely undisturbed after conquest. Examples are the Bamileke, Luba and the Lozi.Aristocratic Kingdoms (A): The only link between central authority and the provinces was payment of tribute which symbolised subordination. These kingdoms were kept together by the superior military strength of the nucleus. This type is rather common in Africa, examples include Kongo of the 17th century, Kazembe, Kuba, the Ha, and Chagga states of the 18th century.Federations (F): Kingdoms where the external affairs were regulated by a council of elders headed by the king, who is simply primus inter pares, such as in the Ashanti Union. (Confederations are not included; see "List of confederations").Classifications not given as examples by Vansina are open to scrutiny (here). Ones where two classifications are given and joined by an "and" mean that the kingdom had elements from both present; [a] refers to the king's place and power, particularly in the nucleus, whilst [b] refers to the relationship between king and administration.This is a dynamic list and may never be able to satisfy particular standards for completeness. You can help by adding missing items with reliable sources.A list of known kingdoms and empires on the African continent that we have record of:Further information: History of North AfricaProtodynastic period in Egypt: (preceded by various cultures in which it is unclear if the institution of kingship existed) (preceded by nomes and nomarchs)Lower Egypt Kingdom (35003100 BCE)Upper Egypt Kingdom (34003150 BCE)Early Dynastic Egypt ((D)[a] and (A)[b])[24] (31502686 BCE)Old Kingdom of Egypt (((D) to (R))[a] (4th dynasty) and ((R) to (A))[b] (6th dynasty)) [25] (26862181 BCE) Old and Middle Kingdoms of Ancient EgyptKingdom of Kerma (25001500 BCE)First Intermediate Period in Egypt: (21812055 BCE)HeracleopolisThebesMiddle Kingdom of Egypt ((D) in 12th dynasty)[26] (20551650 BCE)Second Intermediate Period in Egypt (17001550 BCE)14th dynasty at Xois (17001650 BCE)15th dynasty and the Hyksos (16501550 BCE)Abydos dynasty (16401620 BCE)16th dynasty (16501580 BCE)17th dynasty (15711540 BCE)New Kingdom of Egypt (15501077 BCE)Third Intermediate Period in Egypt: (1077664 BCE)21st dynasty (1077943 BCE)22nd dynasty (943716 BCE)23rd dynasty (837728 BCE)24th dynasty (732720 BCE)Kingdom of Kush (1070 BCE 350 CE) and the 25th dynasty of Egypt/Kushite Empire (754656 BCE)Ancient Carthage (814146 BCE)Late Dynastic Egypt (664525 BCE, 404343 BCE)Battiadae Kingdom (631440 BCE) (List of kings of Cyrene)Garamantes Kingdom (pre 5th century BCE 7th century CE)Kingdom of Blemmyes (600 BCE 3rd century CE)Ptolemaic Kingdom (30530 BCE)Kingdom of Numidia (20246 BCE) (preceded by Massylii Confederation)Kingdom of Mauretania (202 BCE 25 BCE/44 CE)Kingdom of Nobatia (350650 CE) (absorbed into Makuria)Kingdom of Ouarsenis (430735 CE) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Kingdom of the Vandals and Alans (435534 CE)Kingdom of the Moors and Romans (477599 CE)Kingdom of the Aurs (484703 CE) (Kahina) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Kingdom of Makuria (5th century1518 CE) (Dongola as an interchangeable name prior to 1365? "[27]" and Qalidurut, in which there are contrasting titles for the same king) (its rump state after the 1365 civil war is often conflated as Dotawo and it is unknown whether the other polity in the civil war continued to hold Dongola prior to Funj conquest)Kingdom of Hodna[28]:508 (5th century7th century CE) (Hodna) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Kingdom of Capsus (5th century6th/7th century CE) (Gafsa) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Nemencha Kingdom (5th century7th century CE) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Lagautan/Tripolis/Cabaon Kingdom (5th century7th century CE) (Cabaon) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Kingdom of Dorsale[29] (5107th century CE) (RomanBerber kingdoms) (mentioned in Vandal Kingdom#Later years)Kingdom of Altava (578708 CE) (Kusaila of Awraba) (RomanBerber kingdoms)Principality of Tingitana[28]:508 (6th century7th century CE) (Mauretania Tingitana)Kingdom of Alodia/Alwa (6th century1504 CE)Dar Sila 'Wandering Sultanate'[30] (619? CE)Emirate of Nekor (7101019 CE)Barghawata/Tamasna Kingdom[31] (7441058 CE) (Salih ibn Tarif)alRahman's Ifriqiya (745755 CE)Ifranid Emirate of Tlemcen (757790 CE) (Algeria) Almoravid EmpireEmirate of Sijilmassa (759976 CE)Rustamid Imamate of Tahert (767909 CE) (Algeria) (Tahert)Idrisid dynasty (789974 CE) (Morocco)Imamate of Nafusa (8th century911 CE)Aghlabid dynasty (800909 CE) (Tunisia)Sulaymanid dynasty (814922 CE) (Algeria)Tulunid dynasty (868905 CE) (Egypt)Fatimid Caliphate (9101171 CE) (born from Danha Confederation)Banu Khattab dynasty (9181172/1177 CE) (Zawila) (Libya)Ikhshidid dynasty (935969 CE) (Egypt) (Abu alMisk Kafur)Banu Kanz dynasty (9481365 CE) (Egypt/Sudan)Maghrawa dynasty (9881069 CE) (Morocco)Banu Khazrun dynasty (10011146 CE) (Libya)M'zab (101216th century/1882 CE)Hammadid dynasty (10141152 CE) (Algeria) (born from Danha Confederation)Almoravid dynasty (10401147 CE) (Morocco and Western Sahara) (born from Aznag Confederation)Zirid dynasty (10481148 CE) (Algeria) (born from Danha Confederation)Khurasanid dynasty (10591128 CE, 11481158 CE) (Tunisia)Banu Ghaniya dynasty[32] (11801212 CE) (Tunisia)Almohad dynasty (11211269 CE) (Morocco) (born from Masmuda Confederation) (Tinmel)Ayyubid dynasty (11711254 CE) (Egypt) Fatimid CaliphateGuanches Guanartematos: (pre15th century CE) (Gran Canaria)TeldeGldarDaju kingdom (12th century15th century CE) preceded by Tora (overthrown by Tunjur)Emirate of Banu Talis (12281551 CE)Hafsid dynasty (12291574 CE) (Tunisia) (born from Masmuda Confederation)Zayyanid Kingdom of Tlemcen (12351556 CE) (Algeria) (born from Zenata Confederation)Marinid dynasty (12481465 CE) (Morocco) (born from Zenata Confederation)Mamluk Sultanate (12501517 CE)Bahri dynasty (12501382 CE)Burji dynasty (13821517 CE)Banu Makki dynasty (12821394 CE) (Tunisia)Hafsid Emirate of Bjaa/Bougie (12851510 CE)Kingdom of alAbwab (13th century15th/16th century CE)Hafsid Emirate of Qusantina/Constantine[33] (CE 13th/14th century1528) (Constantine)Banu Thabit dynasty (13241401 CE) (Libya)Zab Emirate (mid 14th century1402 CE)Sultanate of Tuggurt (14141854/1871 CE) (vassal of Algiers (CE 15521812/1827)) (List of rulers of Tuggurt)Wattasid dynasty (14701554 CE) (Morocco) (born from Zenata Confederation)Tunjur kingdom (15th centurymid 17th century CE) (overthrown by Darfur)Abdallabi Kingdom (15th century1504/1821 CE) Senussi Order including sphere of influence circa 1880Kingdom of Fazughli (15001685 CE)Sultanate of Sennar/Funj (15041821 CE)Saadi Principality of Sus and Tagmadert (15091554 CE) (Sous) (at times ruled separately from Saadi Sultanate)Kingdom of Beni Abbas (15101872 CE)Kingdom of Kuku (15151638 CE)Regency of Algiers (1516/16591830 CE) (Odjak of Algiers Revolution)Fezzan Sultanate (15561804/1912 CE)Saadi dynasty (15541659 CE) (Morocco)Regency of Tunis (1574/1591/16131705 CE) (Muradid dynasty) succeeded by Beylik of Tunis (17051881 CE) (Husainid dynasty)Naqsid Principality of Tetouan (15971673 CE)Sultanate of Darfur (16031874 CE, 18981916 CE) (Keira dynasty)Republic of Bou Regreg (16271668 CE) (Elective monarchy?)Dila'iya Sultanate (16371668 CE)Alaouite dynasty (1666 CEcurrent) (SM of Morocco) (Makhzen)Dar Tama Sultanate[34][30]:450 (17th century CE?) (Tama people)Tazerwalt (17th century CE)Regency of Tripoli (1551/17111835/1912 CE) (Karamanli dynasty)Taqali Kingdom (17501884 CE, 18891969 CE) (Tagale people)Emirate of Abdelkader/Mascara (18321847 CE)Dar Qimr Sultanate[34][30]:450 (1850?/1945 CE) (mentioned in Sultan#West Asia and North Africa)Mahdist State (18851889 CE)Dar Masalit Sultanate[34] (19th centuryearly 20th century CE)Muhammad Ali dynasty (19141951 CE) (Egypt)Emirate of Cyrenaica (19491951 CE)Senussi dynasty (19511969 CE) (Libya) preceded by Senusiyya (1837 CEpresent)Kingdom of Tunisia (19561957 CE)Further information: History of East AfricaSee also: List of African Great Lakes kingdomsKingdom of Punt (2500980 BCE)Ancient Somali citystates (1000 BCE various CE)Opone, Mundus, Mosylon, Malao, Nikon, Sarapion, Mudun, Damo, Miandi, Qandala, Botiala, Essina, Bosaso, Gondershe, Hannassa, Salweyn, Bulhar and MercaMacrobian Kingdom (1000500 BCE)Kingdom of Dmt (980650 BCE)Azania (?1st century CE) (Rhapta) (Southern Cushitic people and the Bantu expansion)Aksumite/Axumite Empire (R)[35] (50960 CE) (List of kings of Axum) (preceded by various city-states)Harla Kingdom (5011500 CE)Sultanate of Dahlak (7th century16th century CE)Swahili city states (8th centuryvarious CE) (Bantu expansion and Zanj) (List of historic Swahili coast settlements)Kilwa, Kunduchi, Mbuamaji, Tongoni, Kimbiji, Kaole, Malindi, Gedi, Pemba sultanates[36] (Hadimu), Tumbatu, and MombasaSultanate of Shewa/Shoa (8961286 CE) (List of rulers of Shewa)Hubat (9th century14th century CE)Gidaya (9th century14th century CE)Hargaya (9th century14th century CE)Mora (9th century14th century CE)Giddim[37] (?17th century CE)Beja Kingdoms:Bazin (9th century15th century CE)Belgin (9th century15th century CE)Jarin (9th century15th century CE)Qita'a (9th century15th century CE)Nagash (9th century15th century CE)Tankish (9th century15th century CE)Mezega/Belew/Bellou/Kelew[38] (15th century CE?) (Balaw)Tunni Sultanate (9th century 13th century CE)Malindi Kingdom (9th century15th century CE) Sultanate of Kilwa 1310 CEKilwa Sultanate (9571513 CE)Shirazi dynasty (9571277 CE)Mahdali dynasty (12771495 CE) succeeded by 3 Portuguese coups until 1513 CEKingdom of Semien/Falasha (9601137 CE) (Beta Israel) (only according to legend)Kingdom of Damot (10th/13th century1317 CE) (possibly same as Wolaita)[39]:59 neighbouring Bizamo[40]Empire of Kitara (D) in oral tradition, disputed by modern scholars whose accounts align with (A)[41][42][43][44] (10th century15th century CE) preceded by Bugangaizi[45] (Tembuzi dynasty/Batembuzi followed by Chwezi dynasty/Bachwezi)Fatagar Sultanate (11th century14th century CE)Wj[37] (?? CE)Ganz[46] (?? CE)Kingdom of Gisaka[fr] (11th century1854 CE) (Gesera clan), splintered into Busozo and Bushiru[47]:517Zagwe dynasty (11371270 CE)Sultanate of Arababni (12th century16th century CE)Wanga Kingdom (12th century1895/present CE) (NSM of Kenya) (List of rulers of Wanga)Pate Sultanate (12031895 CE) (List of rulers of Pate) subordinate sultanates?:LamuSiyuMandaKingdom of Wolaita/Welayta (12511896 CE) (possibly same as Damot)[39]:59Ethiopian Empire (12701974 CE)Sultanate of Ifat (12851415 CE) (Walashma dynasty)Dawaro Emirate (pre13th century/18th century CE)Dankali Sultanate (13th century18th century CE)Ugweno/Upare Kingdom (D)[48]:414 (13th century15th century/1881/1962 CE) (Shana dynasty followed by Suya dynasty) (Pare people)Hadiya Sultanate (13th century15th century CE, 17th century19th century CE)Sultanate of Dara[46][49]:349 (?? CE)Sultanate of Sara/Sarha[49]:349 (?? CE)Sultanate of Mogadishu (13th century16th century CE)Sultanate of Bale/Bali[50]:86 (13th century16th century CE)Dobe'a[51] (?? CE)Kingdom of Rwanda (D)[23]:332333 (13501897/1962 CE) (NSM in Rwanda) (Gihanga) (Nyiginya) (preceded by Singa, Zigaba and Gesera as the oldest, Banda, Cyaba, Ongera and Enengwe)[47]:516Ajuran Sultanate (14th century17th century CE) preceded by the Garen Kingdom [citation needed]Sharkha Sultanate[46][50]:86 (pre14th century CE)Gonga kingdoms: (Gonga languages)Kingdom of Kaffa (13901897 CE)Ennarea/Inariya Kingdom (14th century1710 CE) succeeded by Kingdom of LimmuEnnarea (18011891 CE) (List of rulers of Ennarea)Kingdom of Garo/Bosha (15671883 CE) (List of rulers of Garo)Bizamo[52][53] (?? CE)Konch kingdom[52][53] (?? CE)Boro kingdom[52][53] (?? CE) (Boro language)Kingdom of Anfillo[53] (late 16th century-late 19th century) (Anfillo language)Kitagwenda Kingdom (13901901 CE) (incorporated into Tooro)Early Luo Kingdoms:[54] (9 states by 1750 CE)Tekedi Kingdom[47]:507 (early 15th centurymid 16th century CE)Palwo/Paluo/Biito/Babito kingdoms (subset of Luo) [55]Pawir Kingdom[54]:381393[47]:508512 (pre 15th century CE?) (later a province of Bunyoro)(Lira Paluo, Paimol; not primarily Palwo/Paluo states: Padibe, Patongo, Alur/Alero and Koc)[54]:381393Wipac Kingdom[54]:392393 (pre 15th century CE?)Kingdom of Bunyoro (D)[23] (14th century1899/present CE) (NSM in Uganda) (Omukama of Bunyoro) (not to be confused with Empire of Kitara, its predecessor)Busongora Kingdom[56] (14th century/17251906/present CE) (NSM in Uganda) (Songora people) (incorporated into Ankole)Adal Sultanate (14151555 CE)Kingdom of Karagwe[57] (14501890s/1963 CE)Shilluk Kingdom (A)[23]:332333 (14901861/present CE) (NSM in South Sudan)Nkore/Ankole Kingdom (D)[23]:332333 (14301901/1967CE) (NSM in Uganda) (called Nkore before 1914 when, under British administration, it was combined with several states to form Ankole)Angoche Sultanate (1485/15131910 CE)Alur Kingdom (R)[23]:332333 (1490/1630?/present CE) (NSM in Uganda) (Alur people#Alur Kingdom) African Great Lakes Kingdoms, c.1880Yamma/Janjero Kingdom (15th century1894 CE)Sultanate of Tadjourah[fr] (15th century1884 CE)Mubari Kingdom (15th century16th century/18th century CE) (Zigaba clan)Busigi Kingdom[47]:517 (15th century?/early 20th century CE)Kingdom of Buzinza[58] (15th century? CE)Kingdom of Buganda ((D) in 19th century) [54]:393395[23]:332333(13th/14th century1884/present CE) (NSM in Uganda) (Kabaka of Buganda) (Lukiiko)Maore Sultanate[59]:436438 (15001832/1835 CE) (List of sultans of Maore)Ndzuwani Sultanate[59]:436438 (15001866/1886/1912 CE) (Anjouan) (List of sultans of Ndzuwani)Agky (15121888/1895 CE) (Kikuyu people)Vazimba Kingdoms (pre1547 CE) (uncertain regarding total) (Andriandravindravina) (Twelve sacred hills of Imerina):AlasoraAmbohidratrimoImerimanjaka[mg]Menabe Kingdom (15401834 CE)Kingdom of Imerina/Madagascar (15401897 CE) (NSM in Madagascar) (List of Imerina monarchs) (4 states emerged in the civil war, to later be reunited): (17101787 CE)Imerina Avaradrano (AntananarivoAvaradrano)Ambohimanga (won the civil war with King Andrianampoinimerina)AmbohidrabibyAmbohidratrimoMombasa Sultanate (15471826 CE) (List of rulers of Mombasa)Gadabuursi Ughazate (1575/16071884)Imamate of Aussa (15771734 CE) succeeded by Sultanate of Aussa (17341865/1975 CE, 1991 CEpresent) (NSM in Ethiopia)Mzga/Slwa[60] (pre-16th century CE) (Ga'ewa) (conquered by Ethiopia)Busoga kingdoms ((D) for the constituents and in 16th century when it was one entity)[23]:332333 (CE 16th centurylate 19th century/present) (NSM in Uganda) (only formed a federation in 1906 under British administration, some of its federates (32) are also NSMs in Uganda) (Kyabazinga of Busoga) (Lukiiko):Group of 6 kingdoms:Busiki (1683?/present CE)Bugweri (1728late 19th century/present CE)Bunya (pre 1737 CE?/present)Bukooli (pre 1737 CE?/present)BunyoleButembeGroup of 5 principalities:Bulamogi (1550 CE?/present)Bukono (pre 16561896/present CE)Luuka/Luzinga (pre 1737 CE?/present)Kigulu (17371896 CE)KiguluBuzimba (18061899 CE) (split from Kigulu, later reunited under British administration)BugabulaKingdom of Bugesera (16th century1799 CE) (partitioned between Rwanda and Burundi)Teso Kingdom[61] (A)[23]:332333 (16th century CE?) (Teso people)Kayonza Kingdom[62] (16th century CE?)Kingizi Kingdom[62] (16th century CE?)Grande Comore Sultanates[59]:436438 (16th century19th century CE): (united into Ndzuwani /Anjouan in 1886)Bambao, Itsandra, Mitsamihuli, Washili, Badgini/Bajini, Hambuu, Hamahame, Mbwankuu, Mbude and DombaAntemoro Kingdom (A) ((R) in 1800s)[59] (16th centurylate 19th century CE) (Antemoro people)Sultanate of Rehayto[fr] (16001891/1902 CE) (Rahayta)Antankarana Kingdom[63][64] (16141835/present CE) {Antankarana)Bara/Zafamanely Kingdom[65] (16401800 CE) (Bara people) (fractured into 3 major kingdoms and 24 minor kingdoms)Emirate of Harar (1526/16471875/1884 CE)Majeerteen Sultanate (16481889/1927 CE) (NSM in Somalia)Mahafaly Kingdoms[59] (pre 1650 CE?) (Mahafaly) (previously united?)[59]:426Sakatovo (1650 CE?)Menarandra (1650 CE?)Linta (1670 CE?) (split from Menarandra)Onilahy (1750 CE?) (split from Menarandra)Kingdom of Mpororo/Ndorwa[62]:17 (16501753 CE) (Hororo people) (Muhumusa) (created as buffer state between Rwanda and Busongora) succeeded by: (all were incorporated into Nkore/Ankole)Igara (17531901 CE)Nshenyi (17531901 CE)Rujumbura (17531901 CE)Kajara (17531901 CE)Obwera (17531901 CE)Rukiga/Bushengyera (17531901 CE)Gojjam (16201855 CE)Kingdom of Burundi/Urundi (R)[23]:332333 (16751890/1966 CE) (List of kings of Burundi)Boina/Iboina Kingdom (16901820/1840 CE)Guingemaro (pre-17th century CE)Bukunzi Kingdom (pre 17th century CE?)Kinkoko/Cyinkoko Kingdom[54]:398 (pre 17th century CE?)Buhoma Kingdom[54]:398 (pre 17th century CE?)Bahavu Kingdom[54]:398[66] (pre 17th century CE?) (NSM in Democratic Republic of the Congo)Rusubi/Ussuwi Kingdom[54]:398[67] (pre 17th century CE?,? early 19th century CE) (seceded from Buzinza)[54]:402 (appears to have split in two?)Kimwani Kingdom[68] (pre 17th century CE?) (seceded from Buzinza) (near Biharamulo, so not the Mwani people?)[57]:7Bukerebe/Ukerebe[54]:398402[69] (pre 17th century CE?)Betsileo Kingdoms:[70] (Betsileo people)LalanginaIsandraFandrianaFisakanaManandriana (17501800 CE)Antaisaka/Tesaka Kingdom[59]:849 (17th century1853 CE) (Antaisaka people)Anosy/Zafimanara Kingdom[59]:849 (17th century19th century CE) (Antanosy people) (Zafiraminia)Sakalava Empire[71] (17th century1896/present CE) (Sakalava people) (fractured into NSMs in Madagascar)Sultanate of the Geledi (late 17th century1902/1908 CE)Milansi[72][73] (17th century1700) succeeded by Nkansi and Lyangalile[73] (Fipa people and Twa)Haya Kingdoms (R):[74][23]:332333 (17th centurylate 19th century CE) (Haya people) (Kagera Region)Kyamtwara (prelate 18th century CE) succeeded by Maruku, Bugabo and Lesser Kyamtwara (late 18th century1890/1961 CE)Kiziba (pre1890/1961 CE)Ihangiro (pre1890/1961 CE)Kianja/Kiyanja/Kyanja/Kihanja (pre1890/1961 CE)Chagga states (A)[23]:332333 (CE 17th century1886/1961) (37 in total):Orombo's empire[75]:50 (19th century CE)Kingdom of Siha/KibongotoKingdom of MachameKingdom of MasamaKingdom of MaranguKingdom of MambaKingdom of MwikaKingdom of Old MoshiKingdom of KiruaKingdom of Kibosho (Battle of Kibosho)others: Uru, Mbokomu, Mochi, Kilema, Arusha Chini, KaheBetsimisaraka Kingdom (I)[59]:433434 (17101817 CE) (Betsimisaraka people) (preceded by Antavaratra and Antatsimo/Betanimena) Horn Of Africa 1915Kingdom of Kooki (17201896/2004/present CE) (NSM in Uganda)Isaaq Sultanate (17491884/present CE) (NSM in Somaliland)Habr Yunis Sultanate (17691907/1917/present CE) (NSM in Somaliland)Shambaa/Shambala Kingdom (D)[48]:414 (1730s1885 CE) (NSM in Tanzania) (Shambaa people) (Kilindi dynasty)Kingdom of Gumma (17701885/1902 CE) (List of rulers of Gumma)Kingdom of Jimma (17901884/1889/1932 CE) (List of rulers of Jimma)Buha Kingdoms[76] (A)[23]:332333 (18th centurylate 19th century CE): (Ha people)Heru (called Oha initially by outside traders)Nkalinzi/ManyovuBushingo/UshingoMuhambweBuyunguLuguru/RuguruBujiji/Ujiji (Jiji people)Bushubi[77][54]:381393Buzimba Kingdom (pre 18th century1870/1901 CE) (incorporated into Ankole)Buhweju Kingdom (pre 18th century1901 CE) (incorporated into Ankole)Bunyaruguru Kingdom (pre 18th century1901 CE) (incorporated into Ankole)Tandroy/Zafimaniry Kingdom[78][79] (early 18th century1790/? CE) (Antandroy) (same as/separate from the Anosy Kingdom?)Habr Awal Sultanate (18th century1884/present CE) (NSM in Somaliland)Antaifasy Kingdom[59]:849 (18th century1827/1896 CE) (Antaifasy)Sultanate of Goba'ad[fr] (18th century1885/? CE)Zafirambo/Tanala Kingdom[80][81] (18th century CE) (Tanala) (split into Manambondro and Sandrananta)Kingdom of Isandra (18th century? CE)Benzanozano Kingdom[59]:879 (late 18th century CE) (Bezanozano) (only had one king)Bassar Kingdom[82] (1800 CE?/present)Tumbuka Kingdom (18051891/present CE) (NSM of Malawi) (Tumbuka people)Wituland (18101885/1923 CE) (List of rulers of Witu)Ibanda Kingdom (18141902 CE) (incorporated into Ankole)Kingdom of Gomma (early 19th century1886 CE) (List of rulers of Gomma)Tooro Kingdom (R)[83] (18301876/present CE) (NSM in Uganda)Mwali Sultanate[59]:436438 (18301886/1909 CE) (Mohli) (List of sultans of Mwali)Kingdom of Gera (18351887 CE) (List of rulers of Gera)Nkhotakota Sultanate (18401894 CE) (Nkhotakota)Sultanate of Zanzibar (18561890/1964 CE)Sultanate of Hobyo (1880s1888/1927 CE)Leqa Neqemte[84] (19th century CE)Leqa Qellem[84] (19th century CE)Uhehe Kingdom[85][86] (19th century1898 CE) (Hehe people)Usangi Kingdom (19th century?/1962 CE)Uvinza/Buvinza (19th century CE) (Vinza people)Nyamwezi Kingdoms:[87] (19th century CE) (Nyamwezi people)UnyanyembeUlyankuluUsukuma (R)[23]:332333 (NSM in Tanzania) (Sukuma people)Mirambo (18581895 CE)Sultanate of Biru/Girrifo[88][89] (?early 20th century CE) (Bidu (woreda)) (Afar people#Aussa states)13thcentury Africa Map of the main trade routes and states, kingdoms and empires.Further information: History of West AfricaGhana Empire/Wagadu (3501240/15th century CE) (Kaya Magan Ciss) (institution of kingship was very likely to exist in Mali at this time, and in West Africa well before, due to large tumuli)[90]Takrur Kingdom (6th century1456/1526 CE)Gao/Kaw Kaw Empire (D)[91] (7th century1430 CE) (Za dynasty)Bainuk kingdom[92] (7th century13th century CE) (Bainuk people)D (pre-11th centurypre-18th century CE)Malel/Kiri/Mande[93]:127128 (pre-11th century13th century CE)Mma Kingdom (8th century1450 CE)Silla (pre-11th century13th/14th century CE)Hausa KingdomsDaura (7001805/present CE) (NSM in Nigeria) ("mother city")[94]:13 succeeded by Daura-Baure and Daure-Zango[95] (18251903 CE)Kingdom of Kano (9991349 CE) succeeded by Sultanate of Kano (13501805 CE) (

kingdom/Uteve/Kiteve[183] (15th century?) (possibly preceded by a larger kingdom from the 10th century)[189]Madanda[190][183] (?1820s CE)Manyika kingdom/Manica[190][191]:168 (pre-16th century19th century CE) (Manyika people)Mutasa dynastyNgulube Kingdoms:[188]:300301 (16th century CE?)Ulambya Kingdom[192]:5566 (Lambya people)Ngonde Kingdom[193][194] (A)[23]:332333 (1600 CE?) (NSM in Malawi) (southern Nyakyusa people)Chifungwe Kingdom (Fungwe people in Mafinga District)[188]:309Sukwa Kingdom[194]:135 (Sukwa people)others: (Kameme, Misuku, Mwaphoka Mwambele, Kanyenda, Kabunduli, Kaluluma, and Chulu)[188]:309Lozi Empire[195][95] (I)[23]:332333 (16th century1838, 18641891 CE) (NSM in Zambia) (Lozi people)Ovambo kingdoms (R):[196][197] (16th centurylate 19th/early 20th century CE) (Ovambo people)Ondonga (1650 CE?/present) (NSM in Namibia) (split into Oshitambi and Onamayongo during civil war (18851908 CE))[196]:146 (List of Ondonga kings)Uukwanyama[198] (NSM in Namibia) (Battle of the Cunene) (Mandume ya Ndemufayo)Ongandjera (??/present) (NSM in Namibia)Uukwaluudhi (pre 1850 CE?/present) (NSM in Namibia) (List of Uukwaluudhi kings)Uukwambi (NSM in Namibia)Uukolonkadhi/Uukolonkathi (NSM in Namibia)Ombadja (NSM in Namibia) (Mbadja people)Evale[196]:124130Mbalantu (I)((D) in the short reign of Kampaku)[196]:135137 (NSM in Namibia)May not be Ovambo or kingdoms: Eunda/Ehanda, Ombwenge (shortlived invasion of Ondonga),[196]:116 (Oukwanka/Onkwanka, Okafima, Oukumbi/Onkumbi, Eshinga, Okavango),[196]:122Southern Ndebele Kingdoms: (Southern Ndebele people)Ndebele (16th century CE?) split into:Manala (NSM in South Africa)Ndzundza (NSM in South Africa)Tembe kingdom[184][199][200] (16th century1885 CE) (Maputsu split away c. 1800 to form his own kingdom)[199] (Tembe people)Nyaka kingdom[199][200] (16th century? CE)Belingane kingdom[201][199] (16th century? CE)1747 British map of Mutapa and surrounding kingdomsMbara kingdom[202][203] (?? CE)Singo state[204][205][184][206] (17th centurylate 18th century CE) split into three states (closely associated with the Venda)Maungwe (17th century1889/1896 CE)Swaziland/Eswatini (1745 CEpresent) (SM of Eswatini) (List of monarchs of Eswatini)Tswana kingdoms:[207] (dynasties going back to the 15th century)[95] (Tswana people) (Kweneng' Ruins)Ngwaketse (17501885/present CE) (NSM in Botswana)Barolong (17601885/present CE) (NSM in Botswana)Ngwato (17801885/present CE) (NSM in Botswana)Batlkwa (17801885/present CE) (NSM in Botswana and South Africa) (List of rulers of Tlkwa)Batawana (17951885/present CE) (NSM in Botswana)Batlhaping (18th century CE?)Balete (pre 18051885/present CE) (NSM in Botswana) (List of rulers of Lete (Malete))Xhosa Kingdom[208][209] (17751879/present CE) (NSM in South Africa) (List of Xhosa kings)Thembu kingdom[209] (?1885 CE/present) (NSM in South Africa)Mpondomise kingdom[209] (?? CE) (AmaMpondomise)Ndwandwe Kingdom (17801819 CE)Hlubi Kingdom (c. 1780 CE1800/1848/present) (NSM in South Africa) (c. 1800 split into factions and incorporated into Cape Colony, except for Langalibalele's kingdom, which later migrated into British Natal c. 1848)[210]Mpondo kingdom[211] (1780 CE1867/present) (Mpondo people) (NSM in South Africa)Kavango kingdoms:[212][213] (Kavango people)Okavango[196]:122Gciriku (1785 CE?/present) (NSM in Namibia) (List of Gciriku kings)Mbukushu (NSM of Namibia)Shambyu (NSM of Namibia)Mbunza (NSM of Namibia)Kwangali (NSM of Namibia)Mthethwa Empire (18th century1820 CE)Nkhamanga Kingdom (18th century? CE)Marota/Pedi Kingdom[214][184] (late 18th century1882 CE, 1885 CEpresent) (NSM in South Africa) (Pedi people) (Mampuru II)Balobedu Kingdom[200] (1800 CE?/present) (Lobedu people) (NSM in South Africa) (Rain Queen)Cornelius Kok I's land[95] (18131857 CE)Ngoni Kingdom (18151857/present CE)Zulu Kingdom (D)[215] (18161897/present CE) (NSM in South Africa)Lesotho (1822 CEpresent) (SM of Lesotho) (List of monarchs of Lesotho)Gaza Empire (18241895 CE)Adam Kok's land[95] (18261861 CE)Nxaba's kingdom[216][217] (?1837 CE)Kololo Kingdom[218] (18381864 CE) (conquered the Lozi Empire)[95] (Kololo people)Kingdom of Mthwakazi/Ndebele (18401895 CE) (Northern Ndebele people)History of AfricaList of kingdoms and royal dynastiesList of former sovereign statesList of Muslim states and dynastiesList of current nonsovereign African monarchsList of Nigerian traditional statesMonarchies in AfricaChiefdomConfederationList of confederationsQueen mother (Africa)Category:Lists of rulers in Africa and Category:Lists of monarchs in AfricaCategory:Archaeological sites in AfricaCategory:Archaeological sites in Gran Canaria^ Origin myths serve multiple purposes, helping to define a group's identity and forge sociocultural alliances, and provide the fulcrum on which a group's religious ideology rests.[5]Dynastic oral traditions often have the king as a stranger, situated above or beyond society. They are considered "a source of order, fertility and well-being", but also "volatile, capricious and potentially dangerous."General History of Africa (1981present)Cambridge History of Africa (19751986)Shillington, Kevin (2012). History of Africa. Internet Archive. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN978-0-230-30847-3.Parker, John (2023). Great Kingdoms of Africa. Univ of California Press. ISBN978-0-520-39567-1.Stewart, John (2024). African States and Rulers, 3d ed. McFarland. ISBN978-1-4766-1707-7.Aderinto, Saheed (2017). African Kingdoms: An Encyclopedia of Empires and Civilizations. ABC-CLIO. ISBN978-1-61069-580-0.Shillington, Kevin, ed. (2013). Encyclopedia of African History 3-Volume Set. Taylor & Francis. doi:10.4324/9780203483862. ISBN978-1-135-45670-2. Archived from the original on 2024-04-11. Retrieved 2025-01-13.Ayittey, George (2006). Indigenous African Institutions: 2nd Edition. Brill. 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