

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ODWIRA AND OHUM FESTIVALS AMONG
THE AKWAPIM**

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**A thesis in the Department of Music Education, School of Creative Arts,
submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment**

of the requirements for the award degree of

Master of Philosophy

(Arts and Culture)

in the University of Education, Winneba

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Isaac Boamah declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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SUPERVISORS' CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with guidelines and supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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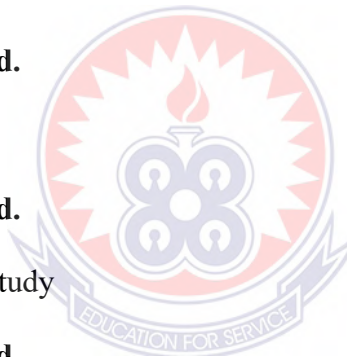
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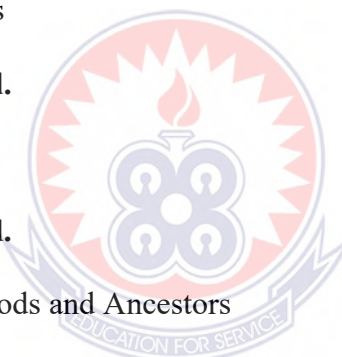
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE	PAGE
DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
ABSTRACT	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER ONE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
INTRODUCTION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1 Background to the Study	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.2 Statement of the Problem	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.3 Purpose of Study	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.4 Objectives of the Study	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.5 Research Questions	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.6 Significance of the Study	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.7 Justification	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.8 Delimitation	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.9 Organisation of the Study	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	



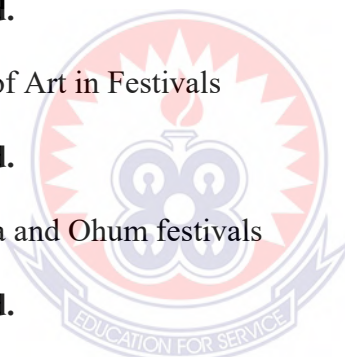
CHAPTER TWO	Error! Bookmark not defined.
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1 Conceptual Framework	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.2 Culture as a Concept	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.3 Belief in Spirit	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.4 Belief in the Supreme Being	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.5 Belief in lesser gods	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.6 Communal Spirit	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.7 Remembering the gods and Ancestors	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.8 Symbols and Symbolism in Ghanaian Society	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.9 Types of Ghanaian Indigenous Symbols	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.9.1 Religious Symbols	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.9.2 Ritual Symbols	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	



2.11 The Etymology of Akuapem	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.12 The Ethnography of Akuapem	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.13 Ghanaian Traditional Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.14 Types of Festivals in Ghana	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.14.1 Religious Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.14.2 Traditional Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.15 Major Traditional Festivals in Ghana	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.16 Characteristics of Ghana's Festival	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.17 Significance of Ghanaian Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.18 Innovation	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.19 Odwira Festival in Akuapem Traditional Area	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.20 Activities of Odwira Festival	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	



2.21 Ohum festival in Akuapem Traditional Area (The Asafosa Peace Ritual)	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.22 Activities of Ohum Festival	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.23 Socio-economic life in Akuapem	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.24 Involvement of Arts in Ghanaian Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.25 The Role of Arts in Ghanaian Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.26 The Significance of Art in Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
2.27 The arts of Odwira and Ohum festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	



CHAPTER THREE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
METHODOLOGY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1 Overview	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.2 Qualitative Research	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.3 Research Design	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	

3.3.1 Descriptive Method	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.4 Population	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.5 Sampling and Sample Size Method	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6 Data Collection Instruments	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6.1. Observation	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6.2 Interviews	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6.3 Types of Data	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6.4 Primary Data	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6.5 Secondary Data	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.6.6 Administering of Instruments	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
3.7 Data Analysis Plan	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
CHAPTER FOUR	Error! Bookmark not defined.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	Error! Bookmark not defined.



4.1 Overview	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.2 Path Clearing on Monday	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.3 Tuesday	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.3.1 Outdooring of New Yam	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.3.2 Cleansing of White Stools	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.3.3 Ushering the Ancestors to Town	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.3.4 Lifting of Ban on Noise Making	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.4 Wednesday- General Mourning	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.5 Thursday- New Year's Day	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.5.1 Cleansing of the Black Stools	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5.2 <i>Okuapehene</i> Visits the <i>Odosu</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5.3 Outdooring of New Chiefs	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5.4 General Feasting	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.5.5 Oath of allegiance to the Ofori Stool	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.6 Friday Ritual-Durbar	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.6.1 Asonahene Feed the Ancestors	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.6.2 The Grand Durbar	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.7 Saturday	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	

4.8 Sunday-Thanksgiving Service	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.9 The ‘Ohum’ Festival	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.10 The Asafosa Peace Ritual	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.11 The Asafonsa Ceremony ‘Before and After’	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.12 Sunday	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.12.1 Path Clearing (Dawn)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.12.2 Asafosanom Ceremony	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.13 Monday - Day of Remembering the Dead	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.14 Tuesday - General Meeting	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.15 Wednesday - Amansem	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.16 Thursday - Youth Day	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.17 Friday - Day of Worship and Adoration	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.18 Saturday - The Grand Durbar	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	

4.19 Sunday - Thanksgiving Service and Harvest **Error!**

Bookmark not defined.

4.20 Monday - “Adwira” Purification Ceremony **Error!**

Bookmark not defined.

4.21 The Artistic Elements in the Festivals of the Akuapem **Error!**

Bookmark not defined.

4.22 Visual Arts in the Akuapem Festival **Error!**

Bookmark not defined.

4.22.1 Bead work **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.2 Textiles (Costume) **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.3 Traditional Umbrellas **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.4 Body Arts **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.5 Leather work **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.6 Sculpture **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.7 Metal work **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.8 Graphic Design **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.9 Architecture **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.22.10 Pottery ‘Akatakyiwa and Ahina’ (Palm wine and Water pot) **Error!**

Bookmark not defined.

4.22.11 Earthenware Bowl **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.23 Performing Art in Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals **Error!**

Bookmark not defined.

4.23.1 Music **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.23.2 Drama **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.23.3 Drumming **Error! Bookmark not defined.**



4.23.4 Dance	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.23.5 Verbal Arts	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.24 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Cultural Elements	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.25 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Religious Aspects	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.26 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Social Aspects	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.27 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Economic Aspect	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.28 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Political Aspect	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.29 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Health and Medical Aspect	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.30 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Educational Aspects	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.31 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Impacts on the People and their Culture	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.32 The importance of Akuapem Odwira and Ohum Festivals to the people.	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.33. Similarities and Differences between Ohum and Odwira festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
4.33.1 Similarities in Ohum and Odwira festivals	Error! Bookmark not defined.

4.33.2 Difference between the two festivals	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.34 The Educational Aspects for Preservation in Odwira and Ohum Festivals	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
CHAPTER 5	Error! Bookmark not defined.
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1 Overview	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
5.2 Summary of Findings	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
5.3 Conclusions	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
5.4 Recommendations	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
5.5 Suggestion for further studies	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
REFERENCE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
APPENDICES	Error! Bookmark not defined.
APPENDIX I	Error! Bookmark not defined.
APPENDIX II	Error! Bookmark not defined.



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1: Krubiihene give out yams	70
2: Outdooring of new yam	71
3: Youth groups struggle to break the new yam	71
4: Roasted yam	72
5: White stools arranged to be cleansed	74
6:Nkonguasofo cleaning the white stools	74
7: Taking the cleansed white stools to the inner court of the palace	75
8: Return from amanprobi with the Odwira symbol	78
9: Schnapps and palmwine for making libation after Returning from Amanprobi	78
10: Banmuhene and his team sit as queen mother addresses them	78
11:Banmuhene eating nnoma at krubiihene residence	79
12: Queenmother and the people in the court in dark cloths	79
13: People in Mourning costume	81
14 : Making libation at the Okuapehene’s palace	81
15: Queenmother, sit in state to receive guests and well-wishers	81
16: Queenmother, elders and sub chiefs sit in state to receive guests and well-wishers.	82
17: Gathering in front of the palace	83
18: Queenmother, going round greeting and offering condolences to all occupants of stools in the town.	83
19: Libation is made at the evil stone in front of the palace by Banmuhene.	88
20: Adumhene in patched smock leads the procession to nsorem.	88
21: Possessed maidens in a procession to nsorem.	89
22: Schnapps poured on the feet of a possessed maiden to move	89

23: Adumhene at nsorem.	89
24: Banmuhene sprinkling food and drinks to nananom.	90
25: Queen mother on her way to church.	93
26: Queen mother in the church room	94
27: Queen mother on her way to church	94
28: A gathering at the durbar grounds for the ceremony	101
29: Asafohene sits behind the big pot to receive the drinks	102
30: Mamfehene presenting his drink to Asafohene	102
31: A clan presenting their drink to Asafohene	102
32: Asafohene announcing the names of the donors.	103
33: A display of drinks donated to Asafohene.	103
34: The drinks been mixed thoroughly by Asafohene	103
35: Asafohene making libation for the drinking to start.	104
36: Mamfehene and his sub chiefs drinking from the pot	104
37: The brass band displaying.	107
38: Queen mother rides in a palanquin dancing.	108
39: The Mamfehene rides in a palanquin dancing.	108
40: Sword bearers at the durbar ground.	108
41: Mamfehene sits in state with his sub chiefs.	109
42: Queen mothers and Sub chiefs sitting in state	109
43: Mamfehene sitting in state for service	110
44: The clergy and some dignitaries at the thanksgiving service.	110
45: Mamfehene and clergy after the thanksgiving service	110
46: Maidens in a procession to nsorem wearing beads.	112
47: Queen mothers wearing beads to church service on Sunday	112
48: Banmuhene dressed in his traditional military attire clad with leaves.	113

49: People of Mamfe dressed in their clothes as they walk through the principal street at Mamfe	113
50: Mamfehene covered with umbrellas and goes through the principal street at Mamfe	114
51: Chiefs covered with umbrellas at the durbar grounds during Asafosanom at Mamfe	115
52: A maiden covered with umbrella in a procession to nsorem.	115
53: Maidens in procession to nsorem had their bodies painted white.	117
54: A youth group have body painted white as they performed during the Ohum at Mamfe	117
55: The chiefs and queen mothers wearing ‘Ahinma’ at durbar grounds	118
56: The chiefs and elders wearing ‘Ahinma’ to perform rituals.	119
57: Okuapemehenmaa sits in public with her feet on the pouffe.	119
58: Chief carried in a palanquin.	120
59: Mamfehene carried in a palanquin and paraded through the principal streets of Mamfe.	121
60: Akra sitting on stools while rituals are been performed during the festival.	122
61: Stools placed behind the pot during the festival.	122
62: Asafohene sits on Stool behind the big pot during Asafonsa.	123
63: Spokesmen staff paraded during the Akuapem festival.	124
64: Mamfehene dancing with the sword.	124
65: Nana Akwagyiram Opambo II danced with the sword.	125
66: Fontomfrom and Atumpan being played.	125
67: Asafo group playing the Atumpan and fontomfrom at the durbar grounds.	126
68: Umbrella tops at the durbar grounds.	127
69: A queen mother and a chief wearing rings	128
70: Two sub chiefs displaying their rings.	128
71: A man playing Gong gong.	129

72: A bowl of water with eggs and leaves meant for rituals	130
73: A bowl of food for ancestors.	130
74: A brochure of Akropong Odwira	131
75: The pot for Asafonsa ceremony	132
76 : Mashed yam prepared in Earthenware bowl	133
77: Banmuhene eating from Earthenware bowl	133



ABSTRACT

Ghana is endowed with rich traditions and cultures. Some of these traditions and cultures are normally showcased during festivals. Each year festivals are held in various parts of the country to celebrate the heritage of the people. A festival is considered as one of the vital elements in the advancement of culture. Hence, in order for a community to facilitate its cultural growth agenda, it must pay much attention to the activities undertaken during festivals. The Odwira and Ohum festivals, which are celebrated by the people of Akuapem, possess educational, social and religious benefits and more importantly serve the function of transmitting traditional knowledge within the ethnic group. Most people, especially the youth who participate and observe the festivals, have little or no idea about the similarities and differences between these two festivals as far as the activities, arts and cultural values attached to these festivals are concerned. This project aims at a comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festivals which are celebrated by the people of Akuapem in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The study sought to give an account of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals as well as the artistic aspects of the two festivals and the effects they have on the people of Akuapem. The research also sought to establish the similarities and variations in these two festivals (Odwira and Ohum) and recommend the educational aspects contained in them for preservation. The research adopted the qualitative research design in gathering data for the study by using purposive sampling method in selecting the respondents of the study, whereas interviews and observations were the instrumentation used in collecting the data. The descriptive and analytical designs were employed in describing, analyzing and interpreting the data collected based on the objectives of the study. It recommended for the younger generation to visit the various palaces and residences of the chiefs and queen mothers to find out the philosophies and significances of the various rites and rituals that characterize the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals. It was recommended that the Akuapem Traditional Council should have a museum or gallery to keep the artworks used in these festivals and train personnel to educate people about the role such artefacts play in the festivals and the artistic elements in relation to their culture. These and other recommendations are meant to encourage the study of the artistic aspects of the two festivals (Odwira and Ohum) their effects on the people of Akuapem and the similarities and variations in these two festivals and the need for the educational aspects in them to be preserved.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Throughout the world annual celebrations are observed to commemorate some great transitions of life and passages. In Ghana, all the various regions and their ethnic groups are so rich, and sophisticated in culture which is unique and peculiar to each community. Unique cultural practices are exhibited in the community and the people who engage in it uses varied visual art forms for religious and secular activities.

The survival of a society's existence is said to ring around their ritual arts, ceremonies and their arts forms. Ghanaian traditions also greatly depend on and emphasize the performing and visual arts as an integral part of the life of indigenous inhabitants. Victor, Ginsburgh and Throsby (2006) state that, one of the most attractive aspects of Ghanaian culture is the colourful traditional festivals and durbars which are held annually or bi-annually in all parts of the country. The festivals reveal some common features and beliefs of our society. Through the festivals, the people remember their ancestors and ask for their protection. Festivals are also held in order to purify the whole state so that people can enter the New Year with confidence and hope.

Ghana is gifted with rich traditions and culture in which festivals form an essential part. Each festival has its own unique style and take place at different times of the year. Festivals are institutionalized in Ghanaian culture. They are identified as particular institutions and are performed within the doctrines of institutions (Kemevor, 2017). The words 'culture' and 'festival' have been defined in several ways by different scholars. Culture is seen as a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits

acquired by man as a member of society (Peoples & Bailey, 2000). Culture is the sum total of signs, beliefs, artifacts, social arrangements and customs created by human beings (Adams & Goldbard, 2001). Culture is defined as ‘the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group.’ It includes not only arts and letters but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO report, 2010 as cited in Bempong, 2015). This opinion includes almost everything about people’s overall way of life, from their knowledge to their habits. It is observed that culture is something individuals acquire as a member of society. Culture is seen as a medium through which individuals expressed their ability to fulfill themselves. It therefore forms an integral part of individuals life which is seen through social practices including language, religion, education, family practices, decision-making systems, and institutional processes.

Festivals are social events that occur in various societies across the world occasionally. Festivals are defined as a sacred or profane time of celebration, marked by special observances. Festivals celebrate community values, ideologies, identity and continuity (Falassi, 1987 as cited in Getz, 2010).

Festivals are manifestations of the practices and beliefs of a people. They are promoters of culture and builders of one’s identity. Festivals perform many functions in the society. They serve as a means of commemorating and remembering important events in the history of a people. In the process, they perform other functions, both intended and unintended. As they involve re-creation of the past, they provide occasions for transmission of traditional cultures and values from one generation to the other. They help in uniting the people in expressing confidence in themselves and loyalty to their leaders (Selase, 2013).

Festivals are yearly celebration that is observed in honour of gods and ancestors. Aside the custom or the ritual aspect of the occasion, various art forms are exhibited during the celebration. It also marks the beginning of some events in the year

Ghanaian festivals are colourful and vibrant part of the culture. Each year festivals are held in various parts of the country to celebrate the heritage of the people and the Akuapem are not left out of the celebrations. The Akuapem traditional area is geographically located in the Eastern Region of Ghana and on what could be described as the Akuapem ridge.

The Akuapem traditional area comprises of some ethnic groups. They are the Akan, Kyerepong and Guan communities. Abiriw, Dawu, Awukugua, Adukrom, Apirede, Aseseeso, and Abonse making up the Kyerepong communities. The Guan communities comprise of the following; Larteh, Obosomase, Tutu, Mampong and Mamfe. The Akan communities are Aburi, Ahwerease, Amanokrom and Akropong.

The two main festivals that are celebrated annually by the communities are Odwira and Ohum festivals. Towns in Akuapem which celebrate Odwira festivals are Amanokrom, Larteh, Adukrom, Akropong, Ahwerease and Aburi. The towns that celebrate Ohum festivals are Larteh, Obosomase, Tutu, Mampong, Mamfe and Abiriw.

In terms of festivals, Akuapem are noted for their Odwira and Ohum festivals. Although the Odwira festival of the people of Akropong, Aburi and Larteh appears to be more popular, the Ohum festival also has its own attraction. This work gives an account of a comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festivals among the Akuapem and discussing the account of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals; study the artistic aspects of the two festivals and their effects on the people of Akuapem,

establishing the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among the Akuapem and recommend the educational aspects for preservation in both festivals.

The celebration of the Odwira and Ohum festivals involves the entire Akuapem state and involves a great deal of arts. The arts are actively and inseparably interwoven in the festival. Performing Arts, Body Arts, Verbal Arts and Visual Art play major role in the celebration of the Odwira and Ohum festivals. The study will also look at how visual and performing arts that has been employed in celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals of Akuapem state. In this light, the celebration of the Odwira and Ohum festival could be regarded as a means of unifying the arts of the Akuapem people. It is during the occasion where the citizens have the opportunity to display their art in all forms and shades.

A great number of literature on Ghanaian festivals indicates that Ghanaians including the Akuapem people uphold their culture. In spite of the popularity of Odwira and Ohum festival of the people of Akuapem, researchers and scholars have given minimal attention in comparing the two festivals of the Akuapem. These festivals of the Akuapem possess an educational, social and religious character and its celebration serves the function of transmitting traditional knowledge within the ethnic group. Festivals create bonding among the scattered families and authorities in the Akuapem traditional area.

Many of the traditional activities of Ghanaian are linked to their annual festivals which are celebrated with pomp and pageantry. Festivals are themselves a performance art form which serves as a medium of the people's self and emotional expression. Festivals provide fulfillment and entertainment which are very important requirements for living a meaningful life. The visual arts and the performance arts are therefore not to be ignored in festivals as they have global effects.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Everyone belongs to a particular ethnic group in Ghana. One's knowledge about the roots makes him/her feel a sense of belongingness. This help people to hold on to their culture and protect the heritage of their forefathers (Marfo, 2015).

The Akuapem originally celebrated Ohum. They, however, celebrated Odwira after the Akatamanso war. Festivals represent various forms of art and other cultural aspects. The Odwira and Ohum festivals which are celebrated by the Akuapem are of no exception.

A comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festivals of Akuapem are been overlooked. Researchers have given minimal attention in comparing the two festivals of the Akuapem. These situations create an avenue for a comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festival among the Akuapem to be brought to light. The arts and culture also provided a platform to showcase the culture of the people. Ghanaian rich festivals like Odwira and Ohum of the Akuapem people of Ghana have lost their focus of achieving the well-being of the people, to a simple entertainment marred with impunity, conflict and massive de-acculturation. The rich cultural values like dance, music, drama, visual arts work, verbal arts performance embedded in these festivals are of no importance to the people in the various localities in which they occur.

During Odwira and Ohum festival celebrations, the arts and the culture of the people are displayed. However, the youth or most elders who participate and observe the festival may have little idea in comparing the two festivals of their activities, arts and cultural values involved in the celebration of the festivals.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this reseach was to give a comparative study in the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals among the Akuapem.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. To give an account of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals.
2. To study the artistic aspects of the two festivals and their effects on the people of Akuapem.
3. To establish the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem.

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How are Odwira and Ohum festivals of the Akuapem celebrated?
2. What are the artistic aspects of the two festivals and their effects on the people of Akuapem?
3. What are the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study has added to scholarly works in the area of festivals. It has served as wake-up call to the chiefs, elders and community members to observe the two festivals to compare the activities to impart positively on the Akuapem people. Again, it has served as a source material for stakeholders both in the areas of education, arts and non-governmental organisation. Through this education, the cultural heritage of the people is maintained, protected, preserved and transmitted to the next generation for enhancement.

1.7 Justification

Giving an account of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals will help identify the activities in both festivals. Besides, the studying of the artistic aspects

of the two festivals will help identify the arts used in the celebration of the festivals.

Also, the establishing of the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem will help bring out the uniqueness in each festival.

Lastly, recommending the educational aspects for preservation will help identify the importance of the activities in the festivals.

1.8 Delimitation

Odwira and Ohum are annual festivals celebrated by the Akuapems. In Ghana there are different types of festivals. The mode of celebrating these festivals and the details vary from one traditional area to another. There are a number of traditional festivals celebrated among the Akans and the Guan to this day which are of interest. Geographically, this work therefore looked at the Odwira and Ohum festivals celebrated by people at Akropong -Akuapem and Mamfe Akuapem. This was due to the fact that the celebration was done by almost all the Akan speaking and some Guan communities.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

This research study was in five (5) chapters. This first chapter was an introduction to the identification of the problem and the setting of the research. The second chapter expanded the topical issues and reviewed various related literature for the research study. Chapter three focused on the methodological approach employed for the work. Chapter four dealt with the account of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals, the artistic aspects of the two festivals and its effects on the people of Akuapem, the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem. The final chapter which is chapter five was on summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Framework

When people come together for a common purpose, to pursue an agenda in order to maintain their focus over a period of time and to benefit from their efforts, it can be said, they have established an institution. During the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals the Akuapem people have common purpose, to pursue an agenda in order to maintain their culture. The rich history in festivals are known to exist in virtually all human cultures.

Festivals are institutionalized in Ghanaian culture. They are identified as particular institutions and are performed within the doctrines of institutions. Festival is considered as one of the key ingredients in culture development. (Kemevor, 2017). The study was based upon the concept that, the people are custodians of their culture which are embedded in their festivals.

The indigenous Ghanaian cultural arts are a bona fide property of the cultural heritage of the people. Having been linked and bound to the social structure of the Ghanaian society, these indigenous arts are the most visible and revealing aspects of culture through which the ideals, beliefs, and values of the people of Ghana are expressed, communicated, and transmitted from one generation to another (Blocker, 1988 cited in Ayiku, 1997).

The effort for the Akuapem people to meet its cultural growth agenda, attention is placed on the festival activity. Self-expression and emotional expression of the Akuapem culture are done through their festivals. Festivals provide the opportunity for the Akuapem community to participate in collective experiences as well as demonstrate community solidarity. The Akuapem people are not only identify

themselves and associate meanings with the places they live in, but also are interpreted by others according to where they live. Festivals contribute to a sense of belongingness with the community as well as strengthen an individual's sense of place identity, as in the cases of Odwira and Ohum festivals in Akuapem. These symbolic products, with their social and cultural significance, create a sense of identity for those in quest of cultural pursuits. The Odwira and Ohum festivals have several rite and rituals that commence with an extensive preparation to welcome the ancestors for the celebrations. The culture provides fulfillment and entertainment and those are very important requirements for living a meaningful life.

The indigenous Ghanaian cultural festivals were essentially made up of structures that embodied the cultural knowledge. These cultural knowledge are made up of rite and rituals which are designed by the actors in the cultural festivals which include the aesthetic principles of the people of the area. The people being reservoirs of the Ghanaian cultural knowledge, the activities, rites, rituals, dance, drumming in Odwira and Ohum festivals are used by the Akuapem people to portray and interpret various aspects of their cultural activities in the festivals, practices, and live experiences. Using this conceptual framework, the study identified and explored the unique cultural arts design by the people and which are imbedded in Akuapem festivals.

2.2 Culture as a Concept

According to Tyler, 1870 (cited in Spencer - Oatey, 2012), culture may be seen as the complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, custom and any other capabilities and habits required by man as a member of a society. Culture encompassed all the things; physical, mental and emotional that one does, which are in total fusion with what the society does. In this, culture transcended the borders of

what one believed and how he acted. It centred on what a whole people did and has therefore been understood as their way of life.

Gyekye (2003) viewed culture as the integral system of learned patterns of behavior ideas and products that are characteristics of a society. He introduced a new phrase, learned patterns of behavior which connotes that culture is not what is introduced but something that is already in existence; a way of life that has been tried and tested and has withstood the test of time because the people understands it. He therefore, saw culture as the correct and advanced way one acted, based on common knowledge and practice.

Gyekye (2003) believed in culture as the entire life of a people; their morals, religious beliefs, social structures, political and educational, forms of music and dance and all other products of their creative spirit. He pointed out certain elements of culture. These are morals, religion, social structures, politics, educational system and arts. He relates culture to a people while the others relate culture to a society.

Culture is precisely the medium through which individuals expressed their ability to fulfill themselves. It is therefore an integral part of development which is seen through social practices including language, religion, education, family practices, decision-making systems, and institutional processes. Practices and processes of inhabitation which are rooted in local knowledge accumulates over time, include practices, knowledge and technology of farming, nutrition, health, childbirth, building materials, natural resource use, and environmental management.

According to Henrich (2005) traditional livelihoods related to cultural forms and local practices, skills and knowledge may be passed on from generation to generation, distinctive cultural forms and artistic expressions including buildings and architecture, literature, art, dance, music, crafts, storytelling, and films, global ethics

that celebrate cultural pluralism and dialogue while promoting human rights, equality for all individuals and groups including gender equality, and democracy and the dissemination of knowledge that fosters on creativity, innovation, and the intellectual development of individuals and groups while discarding harmful practices contrary to global ethics. Nurturing and safeguarding of the distinctive cultural forms as well as the processes of their production (Guiso & Zingales, 2006).

2.3 Belief in Spirit

The Akan believe in lower spirit powers often called 'Asuman'. Asuman may take the form of amulets, talisman or beads which may be worn around the waist, neck or the wrist (Omenyo, 2006 cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013). Among the Akan, it is the belief in these spirit powers that give them vitality, hope and eventually make their life meaningful Awuah-Nyamekye, 2009 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013).

2.4 Belief in the Supreme Being

The Akan regard the Supreme Being as the one who brought the world into existence and in recognition of this; he is given attributes such as the creator (*oboadee*) and owner of the world (*asaase wura*). He is believed to be active in the lives of mankind. Opoku recalls an Akan myth about the creative powers of the Supreme God. According to Opoku, 1978 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013), the Akan have a myth about how God created the world. In the myth, *Odomankoma* the creator first created the sky which is followed by the creation of the earth, rivers and plants in that order. God is regarded as the highest among the pantheon of spirits and as such must be approached directly without any intermediary. Rattray, 1923 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013) claimed, he found *Onyame dua* in almost every compound of an Ashanti village he visited. It is a three forked branch set upright in the ground with a bowl resting on it. This served as an altar for the Supreme Being (*Onyame*).

2.5 Belief in lesser gods

The Akan believe in deities called (*abosom*) as personified spirits. The *abosom* are believed to be the children of God and they have their respective jobs assigned to them by God and it is being monitored by the gods. The deities are believed to inhabit natural objects like water (*nsubosom*) rocks and caves (*bosombo*), house (*fiabosom*). Each of these divinities has their area of competence such as agriculture, morality and fertility, wealth Omenyo, 2006 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013). Some of these gods specialize in healing people who are barren or those suffering from impotence. Others are good at combating the negative influence of witches on individuals or on the entire community. The gods are normally associated with natural objects such as rain, mountains, and as such are offered wine, rum, goats, fowls as sacrifice for the general wellbeing of the community Wilks, 1988 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013). Furthermore, the gods are means to an end and not an end in themselves because they were created by God to fulfil specific functions Opoku, 1978 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013). The gods are believed to have powers and they are placed above human beings. Opoku, 1979 (cited in Oduro-Awisi, 2013) argues that the gods abhor actions which upset the harmony of the community or ruin family life and are believed to administer punishment to those who infringe upon the moral code.

2.6 Communal Spirit

Gyekye (2005) argued that the collective role of a festival is directly connected to values that a community looks upon as vital to its ideology, such as social identity, historical continuity and physical survival. It is seen that festivals develop around the marking of unique occasions and around the festivity of important events. A festival may be considered as the cultural resources of an area that make reliazable the successful hosting of festival attendees (Oteng-Yeboah, 2005). One of the key

characteristics of the celebration of a festival is the sense of community created. Festivals and cultural events provide and create a forum for cultural values and traditions and shared purpose. It also provides a unique opportunity for cultural development (Getz, 1997).

Festivals could enhance a community's cultural values and help share them with other communities. Derret (2003) assimilated this position in a research into community festivals and their sense of place in which she commented that, if directed in the right path, festivals can perform a useful community service by enhancing both group and place identity.

Festivals are celebrated in order to bring together members of a town or village who have travelled from their place of abode to come back and reunite with the families back home. Most indigenes use it as an opportunity to find life partners. They are also use this occasion to reconcile differences, quarrels and disputes among groups or individuals.

2.7 Remembering the gods and Ancestors

Almost all festivals are celebrated in remembrance of the gods and the ancestors of the traditional area. Most traditionalists in Ghana are of the conviction that the gods and the ancestors are alive and need to be recognized as such. As a result, sacrifices are made in a bit to show appreciation to the gods of the land for protecting them from hunger, feud, sicknesses and other calamities. Examples of such festivals are *Odwira*, *ohum*, *Fetu Afahye*, *Kundum*, *Adae kese*, *Apoo* among others (Asihene, 1980).

Rituals and ceremonies pervade the rhythm of the earthly life of Africans as they provide Africans with time honoured and well tested means by which they seek the advice, protection, guidance and favours from supernatural and other forces which

are beyond their control and which have, in their belief, tremendous influence on their well-being (Bame, 1991).

The rites and rituals as deduced from the above enable Africans to seek directly the blessings of God through their various divinities and ancestral spirits. Thus, most traditional societies and communities in everyday life communicate with the lesser gods and ancestral spirits through the medium of libation making, prayers, chants and sacrifices to solicit their blessing and protection. Members of a whole tribe or community may meet at special occasions, at specific times and at special locations to pray and give offerings to their ancestor spirits and the lesser gods and through them to the Supreme Being for protection, good health, children and general well-being.

This assertion is also shared by Busia (1962) who observed that there are seasonal and elaborate occasions when in addition to offerings and prayers to ancestors, there are elaborate ceremonies involving rites of purification, drumming, dancing, singing of the recital of tribal history and the reaffirmation of the values the ethnic group shares and cherishes.

2.8 Symbols and Symbolism in Ghanaian Society

Symbol as described by Deacon (2011) is exclusively applied to spoken utterances, inscriptions, or other culturally generated meaningful artefacts and actions created specifically for representational purposes. These cultural phenomena include talismans, ritual performances, religious relics, military insignias, spoken words, and typographical characters, among innumerable other forms. Deacon further observes that, symbols are usually linguistic. However, there are also nonverbal symbols such as flags which stand for countries.

According to Ofuafo, 2013 (cited in Marfo, 2013), symbol is ‘an overt expression of what is behind the veil of direct perception’. He explains that, it is quite usual for a perceiver to express his inner experience, sight or visions and mystical or religious experience in symbols. Words, myths, proverbs, parables, icons and masks are powerful and enduring symbols for conveying religious truth. Symbol can also be described as something such as an idea, object, conventional or nonconventional that is used to represent something else. It could be abstract or real. Abstract symbols are those that do not depend on their concrete material substance.

These are abstract entities that are capable of abstracting themselves, freeing themselves, purifying themselves from their possible concrete substance (Marfo, 2013). In this case the real symbol can be easily identified or recognized by any person. Symbol is also considered as a material expression or form conventionally standing for an idea, a belief, process or act Ayiku, 1997 (cited in Marfo, 2013). Amate (2011) emphasized that, Symbols are something visible and can be in a form of two or three dimensional object that represents something else that is invisible.

Turner (1967) cited in Marfo (2015) opines that a symbol is a blaze or landmark and something that connects the unknown with the known. Agbo (2006) posits that, symbol is a mark, sign; object looked upon as representing something. He further stresses that it can be anything that serves as an outward sign of something spiritual or material. Thus, the ‘cross’ is to Christians the symbol of salvation because of its connection with the crucifixion; the ‘circle’ in medieval thought, was the symbol of almighty because like alternate, it has neither a beginning nor an end. Lumor (2009) agreed to this assertion that symbols are images or objects that suggest or refer to something else. For instance, the cross is a symbol of Christianity.

Marfo (2015) also enlightens that symbol is something such as idea, object (conventional or non-conventional) that is used to represent something else. This is confirmed by Encarta's (2009) definition that, a symbol is something that represents something else, especially an object representing an abstraction; a sign with specific meaning that is written or printed characters that represents something in specific context; example, an operation or quantity in mathematics or music.

Marfo (2015) also sees symbols as 'agents which are impregnated with messages and with invitation to conform and to act when decoded in their social and cultural context. They are found to have both cognitive and emotional meaning. For example, the axe or the meteorite stones found in most of the cults of God and solar divinities in West Africa convey the meaning and idea about the wrath of God and it also shows the purity of God and His impartial justice. The sign of such artistic objects remained and urges the devotee to lead a pure and honest life of order to avoid the wrath of God.

Symbolism on the other hand is the representation of ideas by the use of signs, literary and artistic invention to express ideas, emotions and abstractions in place of realism (Agbo, 2006). It can also be explained as the act of using a word, place, character, or object in such a way. Appiah, 2011 (cited in Marfo, 2015), states that, symbolism plays an important role in African art and in Akan society in particular, it is found in every aspect of life. He further maintains that Akan symbolic designs are all pervasive, meaning they appear everywhere such as on funerary grounds, in plaster designs on old shrines, on chiefs' appliqué cloths, on linguist staffs, umbrella tops, swords, jewellery, and all other items of stool paraphernalia. They are printed on the textiles so popular in Ghana today, on pottery, bracelets and on Adinkra cloth.

Symbolisms in Ghana until recently have had no written documentation because they are assumed to be part of the people's oral tradition (Glover, 2004).

Symbols and symbolism as discussed is usually a sign, a shape, or an object which may represent a person, a group or an authority; it can also express an idea, value, or quality. This is seen in every religion be it Christianity, Islam or Traditional sector. These religions have symbols in the form of logo, emblem, totem and colour which has a significant link to the formation or the history, the vision and mission of the union. From the discussion, it is clearly shown that symbols are something that helps to identify religion, agency, and group of people and also in communicates information.

2.9 Types of Ghanaian Indigenous Symbols

Ghanaian symbols are the forms in indigenous Ghanaian art that are primarily a translation of thoughts and ideas expressing and symbolizing the values and beliefs of the people among whom they occur (Agbo, 2006). He further explained that in a number of cases, the images have become symbolic by having certain ideas or proverbs arbitrarily imposed on them. Several traditional symbols have definite explanation. However, the significance of others is a matter of opinion while of quite a few nothing at all seems to be known. The objects that are represented in symbolic art forms among the traditional ethnic groups in Ghana are the textiles, pottery, stools, umbrella tops, linguist staff, gold weights, jewellery, architecture and many more. The evolution of these symbols dates back to the prehistoric periods when men drew images on walls in caves for visual communication. In Ghana, the most prominent among traditional symbols are the Adinkra symbols.

Amate (2011) classifies Ghanaian symbols into two types, the natural and artificial or man-made symbols. These symbols can be seen around the environment

especially the natural symbols. They consist of animals both in the sea and on the earth. Examples include plants, human beings, moon, stars, river, fire and others. The elephant which is believed to be the biggest animal in the forest is considered greater and stronger while the lion is considered as being the king of the jungle due the strength comparable to the other animals on the jungle. Therefore, whenever any chief or king uses one of these animals as a symbol, it symbolizes his greatness and how large or wide his kingdom is. The artificial symbols are the ones created by man both in real object and abstract form, they do not form parts of conditions which they naturally signify, but are used randomly by the culture to impart specific agreed-upon information. The, Agama symbols in Adinkra are for Ewes, the canon and anchor symbols of both the Gas and the Fantes are all examples of artificial symbols.

Ifeanyi (n.d) asserts that, there are six major groups of symbols in Ghana. These six groups are; Adinkra symbols, stool symbols, linguistic staff symbols, religious symbols and oral literary symbols. Each of the symbolic groups has information to convey concerning the way of life of the people at every situation they are presented or the history of the society it represents. Adinkra, for example, is a Twi (Akan) word and derived from one of the popular national cloths of Ghana called Adinkra, which means "to say goodbye" to a departed soul. The cloth is adorned with black colour background and many artistic motifs such as Owuatwedee, 'the ladder of death', which means, everybody will die one day to meet his or her creator. It is a traditional mourning cloth won in many communities in Ghana at funerals and memorial services to commensurate with the bereaved family and equally send forth the dead person to the land of ancestors.

From the various explanations given by the various authors, one can clearly say that symbols are object made to stand for or represent something else, which can

be made from proverbs, wise sayings, colour, natural and artificial images of animals, human and abstract. It can also be a word, phrase, character, or object that means something beyond what it is on a literal level. These are used to identify a group of people, ethnic group, and country or used as signs to show direction to places. These symbols are usually locally or internationally accepted and recognized, depending on the symbol in contention. It could be established that, mathematical symbols, health symbols, travelling or transportation symbols and others are international symbols that are recognized as such. National symbols like flags, coat of arms of specific countries, and that of international organizations like the Red Cross, Rotary Club, the medical profession etc. are recognized internationally. But symbols representing localized cultural groups can be recognized by the local people, which any foreigner will have to be taught what they signify.

2.9.1 Religious Symbols

Religious symbolism implies the use of unique symbols by a particular religion, that describe anything pertaining to its culture and psyche, including archetypes, events, natural phenomena or even the art that evolved in that land over a period of time. Nevertheless, all religions of the world, irrespective of how ancient or modern use symbols to help create resonant ethos, which in turn, reflects the moral values, teachings and culture of that society Swami, 2011 (cited in Marfo, 2015). Swami further states that, adhering to this religious symbolism also helps foster solidarity among the followers, keeping them secure as a unit and helping them focus better on their object of worship. The concept of religious symbolism is very ancient and may well have had its roots from the start of mankind itself.

2.9.2 Ritual Symbols

Ritual is a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests. However, rituals may be seasonal, hallowing a culturally defined moment of change in the climatic cycle or the inauguration of an activity such as planting, harvesting, or moving from season to the other or they may be contingent, held in response to an individual or collective crisis Turner, 2012 (cited in Marfo, 2015). Turner further stresses that ritual symbols are multifocal, that is, each symbol expresses not one theme but many themes simultaneously by the same perceptible object or activity.

2.10 Education in African Art

One important aspect of every society or human institution is to disseminate useful information concerning their concepts and philosophies to both the present and subsequent generations. The core of this information is usually the various ethics and norms that have helped the culture of the society to survive throughout the ages.

The indigenous African society developed a systematic way of educating generations to embrace and imbibe the various essence of the culture to which they belong. There were various training centres dubbed 'Bush school' by anthropologists. These 'bush schools' had a mode of instruction that was aimed at communicating knowledge, which invariably helped in developing and disciplining both the intellect and moral faculties. Teaero (2002) is of the view that this reinforced the underlying factor that indigenous education was concerned with the maintenance and continuation of the culture of the people.

Another important element was the enforcement of conformity among members of the young generations to the cultural norms, values and practises. It is therefore

demanded that the 'truth' is not actively and openly challenged as it is in the Western education system. Such knowledge were a sum total of the thought and practises of the society. It could therefore be said that the indigenous African societies had functional, meaningful and relevant education systems before the introduction of the western system of schools (Thaman, 2002).

2.11 The Etymology of Akuapem

Akuapem as name has been given two meanings. According to Reindorf (1966), as cited in Marfo (2015), the term Akuapem is derived from 'Nkoa apem' (thousand subjects) since they were once under the rule of the Akwamu kingdom. He added that, Ansa Sasraku, the man described as the famous warrior of the Akwamu Kings gave out the name to the Akuapem. Akwamena-Poh (1972) also states that Akuapem means 'Akuw apem' (thousand companies). This is because they were in the companies of thousands (Akuw apem). According to him the name was not given by Ansa Sasraku but the rebel forces that fought to liberate the Guan and Kyerepong from the Akwamu. He wrote that when the Akyems joined the war, the leadership of the combined forces adopted the name "Akuw-apem" (thousand companies). Also, akuw apem sounds more like Akuapem than nkoa apem does, moreover, no group would like to be called subjects (Nkoa) especially after its independence. Reasonably, the name 'Akuw apem' turns out well than 'Nkoa apem' since the Akuapem were victorious over the Akwamus in the war and drove them away from the land. Hence, there was no way the Akwamu could have taken them slaves resulting in giving that name to them.

One can end that the thousand companies (Akuw apem) suit the Akuapem since even though the Akuapem were under the Akwamu, they were conquered and

drove out of the land therefore there is no reason to be called slaves (Nkoa). It now establishes that, the name of the people is call Akuapem.

2.12 The Ethnography of Akuapem

The history of the Akuapem state can be traced as far back as the beginning of the seventeenth century. According to Kwamena-Poh (1972), records from European sources show that the current Akuapem area was inhabited by the Europeans, in what was known as Equea, Aboera, Bunu, and Latebe as far as 1629. The Equea, Aboera and the Latebe are readily identified as present- day Atweasin Aburi and Larteh respectively. Bunu is believed to be a fusion of people who settled at Damurukuso (Obosomase) and now occupying the town of Manfe. In 1646 records show that Larteh came under the authority of the Akwamu. According to oral tradition most of the Akuapem Ridge was first invaded by Akan communities of the Akwamu and Akyim-Abuakwa origin. It is said that, the history of Akuapem state is related to the ancient Greece; both communities were dominated to a large extent by the character of its mountains separating the people for some time from their neighbours making it difficult to see each other from the eastern and western side. According to a Danish writer in 1760, if one asks the Negros in Accra; ‘who lives on the high hill, which one can sometimes see from the far as the seashore,’ the answer given was ‘No one’ and that no human being can or has ever endeavoured to climb the hill. This clearly indicates, they were cut out of the gold coast making them lack amenities (Labi, 2002).

Moreover, one major handicap of the early Guan-speaking people for that matter the Akuapem, was the language barrier; the difficulty of their internal communications, which was partly the cause of their incapacity to form a political unity (groups). Another challenge was that, the early Guan communities were

predominantly a farming population. The farming communities up to date have seldom political ambitions and been usually dominated by immigrants well versed in the institution of political authority (Kwamena-Poh, 1972). Also, the lack of minerals such as gold, diamond, bauxite, provided no incentives for the establishment of a political unity to the outflows of these commodities of trade so vital in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. This factor makes it difficult for them to form a united front to fight their enemies and at the same time protects themselves from the terrorizations of the Akwamu (Oduro-Awisi, 2013 cited in Marfo 2015)

History shows that it was due to such factors that led to the creation of the politico-military state of the Akwamu and the Asanti which was necessary to control the trade with the Europeans. Finally, the political leadership at that time (Priest ship) did not promote unity of a wider area; as compared to the Ga peoples and the Guan communities who were theocracies (Kwamena-Poh, 1972).

2.13 Ghanaian Traditional Festivals

Festivals in Ghana are annual or biannual event celebrated by different tribes, towns in various parts of the country in commemoration of a past event or in recognition of some personalities. A notable feature of the Ghanaian society, and one that is of great interest to travelers, is the enormous number of traditional festivals that take place in various parts of the country throughout the year. This makes for an all year-round celebration of festivals which are different from each other in their meanings, history and activities undertaken. According to Falassi. (n.d) as cited in Marfo (2015), the word festival is derived from a latin word ‘Festivus’, meaning, a feast, joyous or mirthful.

O’Sullivan and Jackson (2002), define festival ‘as celebration of something the local community wishes to share and which involves the public as participants’. In

other words, festivals are special times set aside by a community in order to commemorate some event of historical, cultural or religious significance and by the performance of certain rituals, such events are re-enacted giving both individuals and their communities a sense of meaning and cohesiveness.

Levi (2003) as cited in Marfo (2015), opines that, festivals rise up from the fibre of communities to create celebrations of scale, depth, and gravity. He stresses that festival captures the best that communities create and put forward, it provides extraordinary opportunities for artists to interact, inspire and enrich audiences with volume and variety of work. Getz (2005) defined a festival as public celebrations. However, Cole (1975) sees festival as a relatively rare climatic event in the life of any community. It is bounded by a definite beginning and end, and is unified thereby, as well as being set apart from and above daily life. Festival is also considered as an annual gathering which brings together the whole community to remember, honour and give thanks to God, the divinities, and the ancestors for their help and protection (Oduro-Awisi, 2013).

Traditional festivals are seen as seasonal propitiatory, sacrificial and laudatory ceremonies by means of which African ethnic groups acknowledge the blessings of the supreme creator, the lesser deities, and the ancestral spirits, manifested in good health, good harvest, and abundance of children (Bame, 1991). Smith (1991) also see festivals as special occasions in which a community gathers annually to remember, honour and give thanks to God, the gods and the ancestors for their help and protection; more also to exhibit its creative skills. The dates for the observance of most festivals vary, according to the purpose for which they were instituted. The date for the celebration is fixed to suit the harvesting and marketing of their crops to enable them to be financially sound for the occasion (Opoku, 1970).

The assertions above could be recognized that festivals are yearly celebration that is observed in honour of gods and ancestors. Aside the custom or the ritual aspect of the occasion, various art forms are exhibited during the celebration. It also marks the beginning of some events in the year. Festivals are therefore, occasions for cultural spectacles, ritual observances, and social entertainment. It is clear that festival is central to the Ghanaian individually and collectively. It is deeply embedded in the Ghanaian culture ethos are religious beliefs and traditional festivals. Every festival has a design with which it follows. It has a beginning and an end. It takes into consideration the programmes, physical settings, space, period of celebration, ban on society, rituals, durbar, arts, etc. Its structure is built up on a core of ritual.

Festivals can be classified into harvest festivals, commemorative festivals and festivals for the gods. Some festivals, especially those of the northern region of Ghana are celebrated to mark the beginning of the farming season. Most farmers believe that the success of the crops is dependent on God or gods or ancestors, so they start by asking for the blessing of God or gods for more rain for their crops. There are also occasions which serve as a platform to unite all farmers as they move into the farming season. There are other festivals that are celebrated to mark the end of the farming season. This is occasioned by the bringing together of various farm products to show appreciation to God or the ancestors for a successful farming season. Sacrifices are also offered to the gods of the land in order to ask for their intervention in the next farming season. During such occasions, various neighbouring communities, especially paramount chiefs are invited to share in these great celebrations. The important role of traditional festivals was that it provided opportunities for the collective renewal of the arts as a form of community experience. The importance of it is that several ways, it teaches the people to be aware of their history, acts as a means of communicating with

the ancestral spirits, reuniting family members, assessing the efficiency of their leadership, a platform for the display of the wealth of the culture the promotion of good citizenly.

Different types of festivals are celebrated in the Ghanaian society to mark such historical seasons such as the Ohum (name of a spirit) celebrated by the Akuapems, Odwira (purification) by the Akuapems, Bakatue (opening of a lagoon) by the Edena, Akwambo (path clearing) by the Gomoa, Ajumako, Ekumfi and Agona, Aboakyere (deer hunting) by the Efutu, Homowo (hooting at hunger) by the Ga, Kotoklo and Nmayem (eating millet) by the Krobo, Agbeliza (honoring cassava) by the Avenor, Hogbetsotso (migration) by the Anlo, and Damba (birth and naming of the Prophet Mohammed) by the Dagomba and Mamprusi. Every festival presents a unique attribute that distinguishes it from the other, such as creating room for the renewal of friendship, and socializing with relations.

2.14 Types of Festivals in Ghana

2.14.1 Religious Festivals

Nwinam, 1994 (cited in Gyasi, 2013), says, religious festivals are religious rituals or ceremonies observed by religious groups such as the Christians and Muslims in Ghana. According to him Christian festivals are the rituals observed and performed by members of the Christian society. They are celebrated to remember certain special events in the life of Jesus Christ such as Christmas, Easter, Palm Sunday, Ascension Day and the Pentecost Day as Christian festivals. Important Islamic festivals include the yearly celebration of the birth day of the prophet Mohammed and Idr Fetir and Idr Adha

2.14.2 Traditional Festivals

Attah Fosu, 1986 (cited Gyasi 2013), is of the view that, traditional festivals are divided into two different types. That is, the harvest and ancestral festivals. He explained that harvest festivals are celebrated by traditional believers to mark the end of a year and the beginning of another. During such festivals, the first fruits of their labour are offered to the gods who helped them in their agricultural ventures. The Odwira and Ohum festival of the Akuapem, the Homowo Festival of the Gas, the Yam Festival of Aburi, the Bakatue of Edina and the Aboakyer Festival of the Effutues are all examples of harvest festivals in Ghana.

2.15 Major Traditional Festivals in Ghana

There are different types of festivals celebrated in Ghana. These festivals differ from community to community. Some of these festivals are the 'Odwira' which is celebrated by Akuapems, 'Ohum' by the people of Akuapem and Akyem, Aday Kese by the Asante, 'Akwambo' by the people of Gomoa Ajumako, Enyan, Ekumfi and Agona, all in the Central Region. There is also 'Aboakyere' festival which is celebrated by the people of Winneba (Effutu), 'Kotoklo' and 'Nmayem' by the Krobo, 'Homowo' by the Ga, 'Hogbetsotso' by the people of Anlo, 'Kundum' by the Nzema and Ahanta, 'Akyempim' by the Agona, 'Fetu' by the people of Cape Coast, 'Damba' by the Northern and Upper Regions and many more (Sheilah, 1997 cited in Marfo 2015).

2.16 Characteristics of Ghana's Festival

Festivals are seen as very important in the lives of the people of Ghana. It's rich and diverse events assets base can be developed to expand on her tourism product, thereby increasing tourist arrivals and hopefully, expenditure and revenue. Seidu (2002), says festivals are collective rituals of both religious and historical importance and

characterized by such activities as the pouring of libation, sacrifices to the gods, washing and cleansing of ancestral stools and shrines, mourning the dead, feasting, drumming and general merry-making depending on the circumstances surrounding a particular celebration or festival. Most traditional festivals in the country are celebrated once a year and in the same location, they usually span a period of one week, with the last but one day being the most publicised (Amenumey and Amuquandoh, 2008).

Some are also characterised by a ban on drumming (noise making) in the period preceding the festival, typical examples are the Odwira and Ohum Festival by the Akuapem people in the Eastern region of Ghana, Homowo Festival by the people of Ga-Adangme in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This is a source of conflict between the demands for the festivals to remain true to spirit and merry-making. Also, there is a lot of patronage for traditional festivals from domestic visitors and that attendance peaks on the penultimate day (friday) on which durbars are held. Most visitors on this day tend to be excursionists, who leave the same day either because of the limited stock of commercial accommodation beds, cost of decent commercial accommodation or the lack of activities of interest worth sleeping-over for. Also, days preceding the grand durbar of chiefs have little to offer in terms of social (publicity), leisure and recreational activities of interest to attract the general public to attend or participate. Another feature is that there tends to be little or no packaged tours for domestic visitors to traditional festivals. Most visitors make their own individual travel arrangement to these festivals. Traditional festivals tend to enjoy limited sponsorship, but in the few cases when sponsorship is attracted, it is usually a monopoly by one brewery company or the other. However, Odwira and Ohum Festivals attracts a number of sponsors including telecommunication networks, and

assorted food and beverages sponsors because of the activities attached to the festival celebrations.

2.17 Significance of Ghanaian Festivals

Festival is a very important occasion which has a lot of significance to the people of Ghana. Festivals in Ghana have historical, religious, political, economic, social, cultural and moral significance. Festival is celebrated to remind the people of Ghana about their history, especially their ancestors. For instance, the Odwira festival reminds the people of Akuapem about their joint defeat over the Asantes of which their war god was captured and became the property of the Akuapems. Also, the Homowo Festival reminds the people of Ga-Adangme about how they have come out of hunger by settling at their present-day area. It enables the people to recollect the noble past of their ancestors, and to express their gratitude to them. The people believe in the existence of the ancestral spirits; hence they ask for forgiveness of offences committed, and petition the supernatural powers for material prosperity, peace and long life. There is continuity between the dead and the living. Nowadays Christian activities are become part and parcel of the celebration (Marfo 2015).

Opoku (1970) indicates that the people of Ghana have evolved various rites and rituals for all the important events in life. There are the rites of child naming, of puberty and initiation, and of marriage and death. But far more important than these rituals, which are performed only by the little family or clan circle, are annual and seasonal festivals which bring together a whole people of a town or community. He continues giving a vivid description of some of the festivals in Ghana. He goes ahead to reveal some of the common features and beliefs such as the belief in life after death and the nearness of ancestors to the living descendants, the fact that through festivals, the people remember their divinities and past leaders and ask for their help and

protection, to end with, the use of these festivals purify the whole state to enable the people enter the new year with confidence and hope.

Bame (1991), categorizes African or Ghanaian festivals into three closely related types. The first category he says are those which are associated with agricultural occupation and harvest known as harvest festivals. The second group of festivals, he termed commemorative festivals. This group of festivals, he says are festivals whose central focus is characterised by the activities aimed at honouring the memory of the dead and giving offering to the gods and ancestor spirits for their protection as well as the future well-being of the participants. The ones he placed in the third category comprise festivals which may simply be called ‘the festivals of the gods’. These he says are special festivals celebrated annually in honour of specific tutelary gods. He gave the *Apoξ* festival celebrated in Wenchi and other towns of Brong-Ahafo region of Ghana in honour of *Ntoa*, a tutelary god of the ethnic groups in the area as an example. He goes ahead to state that the categories are, however, interrelated and interlocked, so much so that very often the dividing line between one type and another becomes very thin indeed. He adds that often, the only distinguishing criterion is the focus of emphasis of essential elements, and some instances, the elements seem to be so equally emphasized that their classification into one or other category depends on the observer’s fancy.

Bame (1991) categorizes the numerous inter-related activities which give traditional festivals their structure into two broad components, which he says cannot escape the notice of an observer. They are the religious component, comprising rites and rituals, and the recreational aspect, comprising singing, dancing and general merry-making. He explains that the religious component and recreational aspects are carefully arranged so that they do not interfere with one another, although two or

more can take place simultaneously. This he indicated is because some of them do not only take place in different locations, but also involve different individuals and groups. Thus, the different groups can and do perform their diverse activities in distant places at the same time. He says various rites and rituals which are performed by select groups and individuals in special locations such as homes, stool-houses, sacred groves, the shrines of gods and the banks of rivers, and singing and dancing can take place concurrently without interfering with each other.

Amoako-Atta (2001) writes that festivals are seen as very important in the lives of the people of Ghana. In view of this, festivals are celebrated all over the country. He adds that festival celebration is necessary to the Ghanaian in that, it is during this period of time that the indigenes or people from a particular geographical area come from all walks of life to their hometown to contribute their quota to the village/town's development. He also points out the fact that the people believe in the closeness of the ancestors to the living beings, so it is this time that libation and other prayers are said for the protection and help of the living souls. During this period the people ask the ancestral spirits to prevent and protect them from epidemics, famine and to help them ensure bumper harvest in the subsequent years.

Festival also serves as reunion of family members, relatives and loved ones. During the period, quarrels and misunderstandings are settled. It provides a forum where marriages among people within a particular geographical area can be transacted. It mostly brings citizens together in order to help initiating developmental projects and to contribute financially towards these projects. Visitors, tourists and political figures who attend the festivals contribute economically to the locality. Politically, festivals afford paramount chiefs the opportunity to reassert their authority over their sub-chiefs and the local citizenry. During this period all sub chiefs and the

people renew their allegiance and loyalty to the paramount chief by paying homage to the palace. The paramount chief, the sub-chiefs and the elders also use the occasion to discuss political issues affecting the welfare of the community. Petty disputes between the paramount chief and any sub-chiefs are settled (Sheilah, 1997 cited in Marfo, 2015).

It also gives the people the chance to assess the efficiency of their chiefs. Most citizens who have left the town for long periods of time return to see whether the traditional ruler (the chief) had implemented development projects agreed upon. Government ministers take advantage of the festival to announce or highlight developmental projects, and government policies to the people and to educate them on important issues affecting the locality, town or area and even sometimes use the occasion to seek their support when it is close to election seasons.

The rich cultural heritage of the people of Ghana is usually manifested during festivals. It is at this period that the chief's elders and the opinion leaders showcase their cultural tradition and wealth through regalia, and paraphernalia. Oral tradition, visual art, drumming and traditional dancing is always at its peak during the festivals. Traditional symbols become so vital during festival seasons because they help to identify one clan from the other and also show the status of the chiefs especially during the durbar day. Ghanaian hospitality can also be seen in this regard through the way people speak and interact with one another especially with tourist.

Festivals are also meant to strengthen Ghanaians to play their roles as good citizens by providing platform where the chief must be more effective, morally upright, and accountable to the people. For instance, the Apoo festival celebrated by the chiefs and people of Techiman traditional area gives the people chance to talk about the inefficiencies of the chief as well as his ill doings. It again reminds the

youth to lead morally acceptable lives so that, they may grow to become good people with lives worthy of emulation by the future generation (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 2006 cited in Marfo, 2015).

2.18 Innovation

According to the Chambers (1996) to innovate is to make changes or to introduce new ideas and methods. Consequently, innovation is something new which is introduced or introducing a new idea or method. An innovation may have occurred when something already created endures alteration and changes. The factors that attributed to the transformation are both external factors which represented sources outside the cultures and outside the individual. In contrast, the external forces represented the values found within the culture and instilled within the individual. These forces of change moved almost unnoticeable when examined through the lenses of tradition. Once touched by innovation, the basic formation of the tradition may remain the same. However, close examination revealed minute difference reflected in the actual practice. As the culture reacts to outside forces and influences and interacts among nuclear community, the gradual process of adaptation occurs. Often, many overlook these minute differences when they concluded that tradition exists devoid of innovation and change.

Wilson (1987) critically assessed the common belief regarding the role of innovation within tradition when he recognized the assumption that nationality, history and progress have superseded tradition and the allied idea that tradition was an impediment to change and the claims that tradition stultifies innovation and stultifies creativity. It is largely a consequence of such thinking that, forms of collective life which we labelled tradition are thought of as primitive natural culture characterized by fundamental absence of aversion to innovation.

2.19 Odwira Festival in Akuapem Traditional Area

Odwira is an Akan word which means purification. It is a festival which according to Adams (2002) was established in 1717 by the first Asantehene, Osei Tutu. He enlightens that, it was an annual festival where chiefs come together to reaffirm their allegiance to the state under the leadership of the Asantehene. Odwira festival was celebrated annually by the Asantes until the colonial period where the Asante kingdom was conquered by the British colonial Government, and subsequently sent the Asantehene Prempeh I into exile in Seychelles. However, it is believed some elements of Odwira festival survived and found in localized religious festivals such as 'Awukudae' and 'Akwasidae' (Adams, 2002). Labi (2002) on the other hand opines that Akuapem Akyem allies went into an alliance with some coastal states and with support from the English and Danes fought the Asante at Nsamankow and Akatamanso in 1824 and 1826 respectively after the return of the Asante chief from Seychelles. He stresses that, during the Akatamanso war, the Akuapem army captured the Asante war god which is Odwira Apafram and the stool regalia connected with the celebration of Odwira festival. In addition, the accompanying Odosu, the war deity or magico-religious objects which provide abode for the spiritual entities to inhabit when invoked was also captured from the Asantes. This gave the Akuapem the spiritual authority to celebrate the Odwira festival. Odwira festival therefore was first celebrated in October 1826 by the 19th Okuapenehene of Akropong, Nana Addo Dankwa I. Its significance was to celebrate the victory over the invincible Ashanti army during the historic battle of Katamansu near Dodowa in 1826 and also to cleanse them and ask for protection from their gods (Cole, 1975).

2.20 Activities of Odwira Festival

The Odwira is a weeklong festival with series of traditions and rituals performed to purify the town, the people and most importantly, the ancestral stools of the chiefs. It also earmarked the harvest of 'new Yams' (Oduro-Awisi, 2013). The Akuapem Odwira festival is one weeklong festivity thus, it starts from Monday and end on Sunday. Each day has its tradition and cultural functions.

Monday is 'Akwammo' which means clearing the path royal cemetery (Amamprobi). This is to enable the ancestors to be invited to the festival. Libation is poured in the morning to seek permission from the ancestors to lift the ban on drumming which has been imposed six weeks earlier called 'adae butuw', in preparation for the Odwira. Adumfo, security officers, Banmufu, custodians of the royal mausoleum and Asenfo pour this libation. This facilitates the invitation of the ancestors to join them in celebrating the festival (Labi, 2002).

Tuesday is the ushering in of the new yam, washing of stool and bringing of the Odwira into the Palace. Early in the morning, the past Okuapehene's stools are washed and lined up in the palace for a while. Later in the morning, there is procession with sacrificial offerings to Amamprobi led by Banmuhene or Adumhene the chief responsible for the security of the person of Okuapehene as well as head of abrafo, (executioners), Nkowasuafohene, chief of stool carriers, Ankobeahene, chief of traditional counsellors and Osodohene, who is the chief cook in the stool house or palace. The usually dark smock, a battle dress or dark coloured clothing is used to signify the importance of the ceremony. It is on this day that the 'Odosu' (the Odwira god) is brought to the town to mark the beginning of Odwira festival. In the evening there is a small gathering in the palace for the Omanhene to perform 'Dapaa tu', preparation and announcements for the celebration of 'Adae kese' or the ninth Adae,

(Big Adae) and 'Adae bue'. The lifting of the ban is done during the period which allows drumming, dancing and noise making imposed six weeks earlier to take place (Cole, 1975; Labi, 2002).

Wednesday is the ninth Awukudae, which is the day for mourning the dead. The traditional dress used on this day is coloured black, dark brown, red or other dark patterned cloths. Families cry and mourn their dead relatives of the past years. It is also devoted to feed the ancestors in the stool room, a sacred indoor rite. The Omanhene sits in the palace to perform Adae kese and later join in mourning by visiting homes of past leaders.

Thursday is declared as the feasting day. With these, delicious meals are prepared in almost every house. The ancestors also participate in the feast (Amoako, 2001). Bowls of mashed yam and boiled eggs are carried in a procession from the Chief's palace to the ancestors at a shrine called 'Nsorem'. It is believed that most of the ancestors were buried at this place. According to Oduro-Awisi (2013), it is on this day that, the Asona clan eats yam, and the stool occupants of the town also offer food and drinks to the ancestors at Nsorem, the original site of Akropong. The colour of clothing used on this day changes from black, red or dark brown used in mourning and worn during the first three days of the festival for rituals to colours such as green, blue, yellow and white to mark the festive mood. This is a day of celebration and the predominant colour of clothing worn is white, signifying joy and peace. The black stools are placed upright and fed with pieces of meat and mashed yam. The Omanhene also performs rites for the Odwira 'suman' at 'Banmuhene' house, after which the public may consult 'Banmuhene' for a ritual bath with a concoction of sacred water and herbs. At the end of the day, the Omanhene receives the various groups from Nsorem, with the Banmuhene presenting the Omanhene's empty food

container by placing the container three times on the laps of the Omanhene and then taken away to the stool room. After this, the carrier of the food is also placed three times on the lap of the Omanhene. The last activity for the day is ‘Sesadompe’ during which leaves and other sacrificial items on the Odosu are removed and deposited at Nsorem under the cover of darkness. This rite is finalized with three resounding gunshots.

There is a curfew and lights turned off for some customary rites to be performed in the night. A curfew is imposed and the public is strictly warned to stay indoors since the blackened stools of past Okuapehenfo, (past chiefs) are taken to the Adami River by the Adumfo and Abrafoto for the ceremonial cleansing. The purification which gives the festival its name ‘Odwira’ is then performed. The ritual is a symbol of the cleansing of the traditional area and the people. This is one of few occasions when the Black stools are taken out of the stool room. Before the stools are taken out, the gong gong is beaten to warn people to stay indoors. This is because it is a taboo for anybody to see the Black stools. The end of the ceremony is marked by the firing of musketry. After, the chiefs go to the stool room to renew their allegiance to the paramount stool.

On Friday, a grand durbar brings together all chiefs and the people of the seventeen communities within Akuapem, spear headed by the paramount chief (Okuapehene) is held. The ceremony takes place in the afternoon. The Paramount Chief, the Queen mother and senior chiefs of Akuapem traditional area are carried in state palanquins in a procession through the principal streets of Akropong. They are mostly accompanied by drumming, dancing, firing of musketry (rifle) and a lot of merry making. At the grand durbar, the Senior State Linguist pours libation for the prosperity of the state. Preceding to this the ‘Asonahene’, (head of the Asona clan) in

the morning sends his food, mashed yam and water to Nsosem before the durbar commences. All the communities, their chiefs as well as government officials and well-wishers join in the celebration. In addition to the ritual, military, social and political aspects, there is also a display of elaborate art forms. By the fifth day, the dark coloured clothing, military attire and seriousness attached to the festival has changed to that of bright colours and the use of gold and silver and wearing of elaborate ornaments (Oduro-Awisi, 2013, Labi, 2002 and Gyasi, 2013).

Saturday is mostly dedicated to the youth for games and merry making while Amanokrom, the Gyaase division holds their durbar since they celebrate concurrently with the Omanhene of Akuapem (Oduro-Awisi, 2013).

On Sunday, thanksgiving church Service is then held, where the Omanhene, his chiefs and people attend church service to give thanks to the Almighty God and take part in an Odwira Harvest. Part of the proceeds that come out of the Service is used in financing developmental projects in the traditional area (Labi, 2002).

2.21 Ohum festival in Akuapem Traditional Area (The Asafosa Peace Ritual)

According to Shaw-Taylor (n.d), the Asafosa Peace Ritual is closely tied to the history of Mamfe Township in the Akuapem District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. According to oral tradition, the people of Mamfe used to live at Damurukuso, located near present-day Obosomase in the Akuapem District. In those days, about 1511, the people of Mamfe were farmers who lived in the forest and could easily be killed by wild animals. There was lack of water where they lived and the hunters of the tribe would go far and wide to search for water because, though they would sometimes bring in a kill, they did not have water with which to cook it.

The Asamoah family were said to be expert hunters, and it was during one of their hunting expeditions from Damurukuso that they saw rivers and streams flowing

from a big rock, water in abundance in the area. They returned often and soon realised that the rivers and streams in the area flowed continuously. They discovered other sources of water not far from the original and, when they realised that the soil was good for farming, they decided to inform the other four families about what they had found. The heads of the other families, namely Kwadwo Toku, Abe, Agyarko and Akote decided to go and see the land for themselves prior to making the decision to move. After visiting the location, they agreed with Asamoah that it would be better to relocate.

After some discussion, five of the families decided to move and make a home at the new location. The five families that settled at the present day Mamfe Township were Kwadwo Toku, Abe, Asamoah, Agyarko and Akote. They never went back to Damurukuso. The five families parceled out land for each other, settling not too far from each other, but far enough to feel separate. Each farmer and his family lived in a particular area and farmed the land, but they shared the use of essentials such as water and grazing land. By the end of the first year, they realised that they had made a good choice, and called the area Kwaade, and the name has remained till today.

In order to ensure that they would live in harmony, the heads of the five families decided to set aside a specific time to settle disputes that had arisen between individuals and families during the first year of their settlement. On an appointed day, the head of each family was requested to bring a pot of palm wine to a meeting for sharing. To demonstrate that no one bore any ill will towards anyone else, they poured the drinks they had brought in one common pot and each of the five family heads drank portions of the mixed wine. The remainder was then shared among the members of the five families, accompanied by merry making, to symbolise the togetherness of the families. Every year thereafter they met to socialize and discuss

what had happened to their families within the past year, to settle any disputes between clans, to share sympathy with those who had lost members of their families, and to celebrate any good news. Every clan head would bring palm wine, a local wine made from the sap of the palm nut tree.

After all disputes had been settled, everyone would share the drinks they had brought and would celebrate the festivities together. This demonstration of togetherness was called '*Asafosa Nom Da*'. The name means clan drinking day, or the day of communal drinking.

This tradition continued for several years. At every meeting, some of the hunters began to report seeing an apparition: a very tall man with a big white dog standing in front of him. The man held a staff in his hand, but did not harm the people. Several hunters reported seeing this apparition at many meetings, until a daughter of one of the families became possessed by the spirit of the apparition. The spirit said that his name was Kwadwo Topré, and that he was a spirit, not a god. He desired peace and justice, and did not like blood. If the people who had settled on his land kept the peace, he would protect them and make sure no harm came to them. It was said that when someone became very ill, Topré would appear and put his hand on the person, who would then immediately recover. They began to revere him. Those who became possessed by the spirit of Topré were called Akomfo, and they lived to serve him. The people also built a house for the priest of Topré. The priest of Topré would take the palm wine from the heads of the clans and pour it into the communal pot. The priest would then mix the drinks together and, taking the first cup of the mixed palm wine, he would pray to Onyankopong (God) and through Topré, ask for protection for the people, as well as for peace, prosperity, happiness, long life and good health. After the prayers, the priest would put the mixed wine in the pots of the

different clan heads and every member of the clan was to take a drink. This would go on until all the wine was finished.

Through the obosom, Topré would warn the people of misfortune, and tell them how to prevent it, so the people of Mamfe grew prosperous. There was much intermarriage between the original five families, and the community grew. There was a yearly ritual for Topré as well. Prior to the Asafosa Peace Ritual, the elders of the town would go to the farm to prepare special wine, and they would bring offerings of yams, cocoyam, plantains, tomatoes, drinks, and firewood to Topré. The Topré Okomfo would perform the necessary rites before the Asafosa Peace Ritual and in so doing, they would be silent participants during the ritual. Every year, the ritual would conclude the celebration. (The festival continues to this day, and as the community has grown, so has the community pot, which is now similar to a large cauldron). A clan that had not been able to settle all disputes within its family could not partake of the Asafosa Peace Ritual unless it was understood that, by participating in the Peace Ritual, the dispute was at an end, and could never be discussed again. Partaking in the ritual meant that all had been forgotten and forgiven.

Prior to the Peace Ritual, there were certain other rituals that had to be performed by Topré's priest. For three weeks before the ritual, there was to be no drumming, no unnecessary noise and no misbehaving. The priest and his elders would go to the farm and, as they went, they would form a line that no one was permitted to cross. If you happened to be going to the farm around the same time, you would have to wait until the entire entourage had passed. When they were returning to the village, they also formed one line, led by the priest of Topré. No one was allowed to look back; anyone who did ran the risk of not living to see the next year.

From there, they went directly to Topré's house to meet and to receive gifts. After receiving the gifts, they went to their homes to bathe and then returned to the house to begin the ritual. The sub chiefs would meet first and wait for the chief, who is called *Osabarima*. When *Osabarima* was seated, the peace ritual would begin and *Osabarima* would call the heads of the families to pour their wine into the cauldron. The order of the families was as follows: Mankradohene, Gyasehene, Enyiresihene, Ponehene, Tufuhene.

The *Osabarima* was the last to bring his wine to the pot. The Asamoah family did not participate in the bringing of the wine, but they did participate in the drinking thereof because they were seen as the ones who had brought the Mamfe family to the settlement. The *Osabarima* mixed the drink and gave it to the heads of the families from the communal pot. After the priest had prayed for the township, everyone drank the wine. The priests of Topré became the chiefs (or *Osabarima*) of Mamfe because they understood the spirit of the community and its protector. If a clan could not resolve an issue prior to the peace ritual, they would go to the priests for resolution. It was a disgrace to the clan and the families involved if they could not participate in the peace ritual, and so the heads of the families would make sure that their disputes were resolved beforehand. Everyone was invited to take part in the ritual, including the children. The festivities surrounding the Asafosa Peace Ritual are known as the Ohum festival of Mamfe, Akuapem.

2.22 Activities of Ohum Festival

On Sunday, the Asafosa Peace Ritual start. Every clan head would bring palm wine, a local wine made from the sap of the palm nut tree. The *Osabarima* was the last to bring his wine to the pot. The priest would then mix the drinks together and, taking the first cup of the mixed palm wine, he would pray to Onyankopong (God) and

through Topré (priest) ask for protection for the people, as well as for peace, prosperity, happiness, long life and good health. After the prayers, the priest would put the mixed wine in the pots of the different clan heads and every member of the clan was to take a drink. This would go on until all the wine was finished. The name means clan drinking day, or the day of communal drinking.

Monday is a day of mourning for the dearly departed of the previous year. Visits are made to all who have experienced death in their families. On Monday, the people wear black and red to show their sorrow to the departed. The elders pour libation for the ancestors and go to the palace where the mourning for the dead ancestors go on with drumming and dancing. Also, the chief of the state linguists pours libation.

Tuesday is a day for feasting. Each family cooks meals and shares them with friends and relatives.

Wednesday is a day for discussing developmental issues

Thursday is a day for discussing developmental issues that will enhance the well-being of all families. The discussions take place while the merry-making continues.

Friday is a day of communal labour. This is day set aside for the cleaning of town prior to durbar on the next day.

Saturday this is the day the chief and elders sit in state at the durbar. The Chiefs and the Queen mothers of traditional area are carried in palanquins in a procession through the principal streets of Mamfe. They are mostly accompanied by drumming, dancing, firing of musketry (rifle) and a lot of merry making. At the grand durbar, the Senior State Linguist pours libation for the prosperity of the state. The communities, their chiefs as well as government officials and well-wishers join in

the celebration. In addition to the ritual, military, social and political aspects, there is also a display of elaborate art forms.

Sunday is a day for a non-denominational thanksgiving service. On Sunday, thanksgiving church Service is then held, where the chiefs and people attend church service to give thanks to the Almighty God and take part in an Ohum Harvest. Part of the proceeds that come out of the Service is used in financing developmental projects in the traditional area (Shaw-Taylor n.d).

2.23 Socio-economic life in Akuapem

Regarding the economic life of the people of Akuapem community, agriculture, industry and service are the most sectors which contribute to the economic growth of the district. It must be stated here that the inhabitants are predominantly farmers. Subsistence farming seems to be the common system of farming practice of the inhabitants. Major crops produced are cassava, cocoyam, plantain, banana, yam, potatoes, maize and other produce like cabbages, carrots, pineapples, lettuce, and water melon among other vegetables. Cash crops like cocoa, coffee, pawpaw, oranges are also produced but not on large scales. Others also engage in livestock and poultry, and other economic activities like services and industry. The service sector can therefore be used in the fight against poverty in the district if it is promoted.

With regards to the social life of the people, cultural practices like *bragoro* (puberty rites) an initiation that passes a young girl into womanhood was in practice but presently, it has coincided with the Christian confirmation with the latter seeing highly patronage than the former which seems to be relegated to the background but customary marriage is still under strict observance. Again, Akuapem traditional area is noted for the celebration of the famous *Odwira* and *Ohum* festivals (a period of cleansing and purification) where various rituals are performed to mark the beginning

of a traditional year, to offer thanks to the Supreme God for His care and protection, and also to the ancestors and the spirits for their protection during the past year and to perform the customary purification of the land and the people by the chiefs and the traditional priests. This purification is to strengthen them spiritually and socially to enable them to face the coming year successfully. Other social programmes of the people that have remained over the years include; funeral rites, out-dooring and naming ceremony. Due to modernity and technological advancement, programmes like video games, internet cafes, television have taken the place of traditional social gathering and entertainment like, *anansesem* (folktales), *ampe* (women 's game) among others.

Even though, agriculture has been the traditional occupation of the people of Akuapem, increase in population size has taken parts of the lands meant for agriculture for housing projects. Again, due to re-demarcation of Regional and District boundaries by the Central Government, majority of their fertile lands in the plains around Dodowa has been demarcated for the people of Great Accra.

Hence making the people of Akuapem loose much of their agricultural lands. Much has also affected the social lives of the people in the traditional area on the grounds of people preferring for example Christian baptism and confirmation in place of initiating the young ones into adulthood. The joyful celebrations of the major festivals being *Odwira* and *Ohum* are no more seen as compared to how they use to celebrate in the olden days.

2.24 Involvement of Arts in Ghanaian Festivals

The nation Ghana is made up of different ethnic groups. Every ethnic group has a culture, and festivals form part of the elements of culture. These groups and settlements have annual events and celebrations (festivals) to pacify their gods, purify

themselves and in remembrance of their ancestors. Ghana has many local festivals that are dated back to the time before the arrival of the major religions, and are still occasions for arts, drumming, singing and dancing.

Festivals are special events in every human culture and bring together people from all walks of life, be it the living or the dead (ancestors). A festival is defined as a celebration, with a public theme, where the social and symbolic meaning of the events are closely related to series of overt values that the community recognize as essential to its ideology and world view, to its social identity, historical continuity and to its physical survival (Hall, 2000).

Cole (1974) submits that people activate this time, rendering it extraordinary by their own unusual actions and looks. He further points out that these people march in processions and crowds, they dance and pray and gesticulate, carrying art and becoming art forms themselves. Cole (1975) writes: Multitudes of objects, decorated people, dances, skits and sacrifices transform a once quiet space into an arena of colour, sound and motion. The festival embraces the community, raising both people and place onto a plane marked by aesthetics, spiritual and social values.

Gbadegbe (2013) says festivals are celebrated with the arts. These arts are seen from the beginning of the celebration till the end. These arts are symbolic and identify the people, their culture, norms, customs, traditions and history. Arts dominate in the celebration of festivals and the popularity of a festival is attributed to the artistic elements involved. Okai-Anti (2010) also wrote that 'Festivals rely on art forms like sculpture, dance, ritual objects, drums, etc. to preserve and impress their key beliefs, ideas, and values in the mind of successive generations of society'.

From this, art is a reservoir for festivals in Ghana. It is manifested through the offering of sacrifices, incantations, Asafo companies' parade, processions and the

durbar. These activities are made up of sections. For instance, the procession is made of the chiefs, priesthood, Asafo groups, etc. which in one way or the other exhibit different forms of arts. The unit of festival is art and this is showcased in the form of visual or environmental, verbal art, body arts and performing arts.

Some art forms used in the celebrations of festivals in Ghana run through certain ethnic groups and others differ due to history, beliefs and tradition. For instance, southern chiefs sit in palanquins during processions while chiefs in the northern parts sit on horses. The nature of festivals also influences the choice of art forms used in the celebration.

Ododo (2001), stated that festivals are arts with functional responsibilities to the society. To him, festival in its entirety is art and does not concentrate on only the artistic elements found in it but considered the whole celebration as art.

Gbadegbe (2009) says a festival in itself is art, because it starts at a point and ends at another point, which is a clear display of aesthetics. Artistic programs such as festivals are grassroots organizational displays that attempt to use the arts as a tool for human or material development (Costello, 1998). Community arts programs almost universally involve community members in a creative activity leading to a public performance or exhibit (Guetzkow, 2002). For this, festivals are regarded as art. The whole celebrations are considered as art from the begin to the end. Chiefs sitting in their palanquins during processions, and priesthood and Asafo groups exhibiting their creative skills in public during the festivals attest to the fact that festivals in its self are art.

2.25 The Role of Arts in Ghanaian Festivals

Arts and festivals in Ghana are intertwined. They move together as a unit and separating them will be a hard nut to crack. The inclusion of art is a necessity rather

than liability in Ghanaian culture irrespective of the ethnic group or location. This is as a result of man trying to live comfortably in his domain since the genesis of creation. Man found ways and means of living thereby improvising tools and materials. These tools and materials were used to create simple designs and forms which made life comfortable and the end product is what we see in our celebrations today. Art became a necessary commodity in human existence throughout the rites of passage of mankind. Therefore, the role of art in festivals cannot be overemphasized.

Asihene (1978) said art plays a pivotal role in all the acts of veneration intended to cleanse or purify the people during festivals. The role arts play reflects on the social, political, religious and economical lives of Ghanaians. This is also seen in the rites of passage and other customary rites.

Vrettos (2006) also wrote that: 'festival is enhanced with more forms of art such as plastic arts and a broader content of visual & performing arts (digital videos, slam poetry, etc.)'. To Vrettos, arts in festivals enrich and improve the celebration. It makes the celebration more colourful and appealing for public consumption and satisfaction.

Ododo (2001) also pointed out the functionalities of art in festivals even though he considered the festival as art in its entirety. The arts in the festivals are functional thus 'art for life sake'. This falls under the instrumentalist theory of aesthetics which sees art as something that aids someone to do something easier or perform a specific task aside the beauty or taste. This bears out that in the history of African arts, functionality was a hallmark of every work of art they produced; tracing it down to prehistoric arts where images or works of art were created for magical or spiritual purposes. There are certain beliefs, traditions, myth, wise sayings and history embedded in the works of art in the celebration of festivals in Ghana and these are

used as a form of keeping records, history and maintaining the tradition of the people or passing it on to generations.

Gbadegbe (2009) revealed that festivals are days set aside for communal merry-making and that the day is marked with artefacts, chieftaincy regalia, cultural displays and other tourist attractions. According to him, chiefs and other traditional leaders attached significance to their art forms and amongst the Akan people for example, leadership regalia and prestige items for royals and others of high status represent an important area of artistic activity. He emphasized that festivals in Ghana are characterized by intensive use of art forms. Examples of art forms he listed are stools, skins, linguist staffs, amulets, bracelets, gold rings, special *kente* cloths, masks, decorative local weapons like bows and arrows, shields, palanquins and the performing arts such as the various traditional drumming, dances, and music.

2.26 The Significance of Art in Festivals

Art is a distinctive expression of ideas, beliefs, experiences and feelings presented in a well-designed visual or audio format. Quantifying the worth of art in the celebration of festival will not be a difficult mantle. This is because it is so glaring and obvious during festivals in Ghana, Africa and the world at large. Festivals with fewer arts are not as popular as the ones with lots of arts dominating the celebration.

Festivals are important cultural activities in Ghana and they are very substantial and aboriginal to the very people who celebrate them. It is an event that presents the traditional leader of the community to give accounts of the past year and plans for the future (Gbadegbe & Mensah, 2013). Art in festivals serves as a mirror for traditions and culture of the people. The way of life of the people, canons and philosophies are inculcated in their arts and these arts are seen throughout the

celebration of a festival. The arts are used to sell the identity and culture of the people to the rest of the world.

The use of arts in festivals is important in the educational sector of a country. Since the use of art in festivals is very immense, it serves as teaching aids (teaching and learning materials) to facilitate the teaching and learning of arts, history and social studies.

The artistic elements in festivals serve as a source of reference to certain festivals that are not celebrated any more thereby serving as evidence of the existence of the events. They aid in record keeping. These records are seen in museums, cultural centers, traditional council offices, palaces and archives of the nation.

It is the art in festivals that attracts people from all over the world to a destination. Festivals with little or no artforms suffer patronage. There is nothing persuasive about such events and makes the celebration unattractive to visitors and indigenes.

Furthermore, when a chief goes out with his retinue, whether in a procession or sitting in state, there is an act of drama and also, an art exhibition of his regalia: “for these clothing, stools, swords, drums, rings, staffs etc. were not limited to function, they were also meant to express the emotion and ideas of beauty and ugliness (Kukah, 1977). In view of this, without the arts the chiefs will look ordinary in the eyes of people. The arts give them class, status and identity thus royalty comes with the arts whether visual or environmental, verbal and performing arts.

2.27 The arts of Odwira and Ohum festivals

In this work what is said to be artistic should be viewed from the functionality of the art work being discussed. Works of art in the celebration of the Odwira and Ohum festivals are religious and symbolic. Indeed, the celebration involves a great deal of

art. The artefacts in the celebration must be viewed from the external manifestations of the art works have on the celebrants. In line with this, (Sesonske, 1965 as cited in Nortey, 2009) says, 'Art is the external manifestation, by means of lines, colours, movements, sounds or words of emotion felt by man'.

To portray the Odwira and Ohum festivals in Ghana, Cole, 1977 (cited in Nortey, 2009), stated under the heading, *The arts of festivals in Ghana*, as being full of art. He was view that, 'The arts serve as a vehicle which carry the celebration to achieve its main objective'. The interpretation could be drawn that the objective of the festivals is to unite the celebrants. The artistic aspects of festivals cannot be over - emphasized. They help observers to know about the culture of the people in question and help to appreciate the indigenous culture, with some of its interpretation.

Arts are the symbolic touchstones of the values of culture Kaufamn, 1966 (cited in Kemevor, 2017). The good making of these symbolic touchstones (sounds, images, movements, tools and materials) is been also referred to as art Read, 1970 (cited in Kemevor, 2017). The Odwira and Ohum contains the major elements constituting an artistic presentation of stools, state swords, drums, emblems, kente, chiefs' sandals, finger rings, linguist staff and tops, amulets, bangles, jewelries as well as the flamboyant umbrellas that enhance the pomp and pageantry at the festival. These objects which play unique roles, permeate every aspect of the festival celebration. So, art presents a dominating factor, since it triggers off other associated and complimenting elements. The artforms possess certain intrinsic artistic qualities which characterize all good works of art. Such artistic qualities are visual. This is to high light the fact that it takes viewers with high artistic sensibilities to discern such artistic impressions. In this sense the imagery is not chosen for their own sake but are functional.

Egunor and Okolo (2002), see art as the study and creation of things in forms, texture, lines and colour which give pleasure to the mind and satisfy our sense of beauty. This philosophy of art seeks to answer this very interesting and complex question of the study of Owdira and Ohum. It further considers the definitions of beauty, taste, symbolism and representation. Kemevor (2017), the functions of art is to reinforce beliefs, customs, and values within a society, often within the context of rituals. The arts also serve to create an atmosphere for the successful transmission of information, significant to culture. They offer some of the most rewarding ways of dealing with the differences and similarities inherent in the approaches and products of different cultural groups. Festivals in Ghana are a form of theatrical expressions that contain all elements of artistic productions such as visual, performing and sonic.

A study of the art forms in their cultural context offer not only a corresponding understanding of the art forms or products themselves, but also valuable insight into the way of life of the people who produced them. Festivals, such as the Odwira and Ohum event, are a social phenomenon, used to achieve social cohesion that results in deep sense of communion with each other. This also enables members of that community to be both observers as well as mental participants of the unfolding event.

Osborne (1970) and Cole (1975) assert that multitudes of objects, decorated people, dances, skits and sacrifices transform a once quiet space into an arena of colour, sound and motion. The festival embraces the community raising both people and place onto a plane marked by aesthetics, spiritual and social values. Cole (1975) draws attention to the artistic representation of festivals when he stressed that the totality of a festival cannot be conveyed in printed words and pictures. Cole succeeds in drawing reader's attention to art and festival as being linked. He states that ostentatious five-crafted symbols of regal wealth and grandeur are formally positioned

or ceremoniously carried by specially-appointed bearers. Umbrellas, state swords, guns, staffs, stools and jewelry display the opulence of the ethnic group, the symbols on them detail the powers and responsibilities of chieftaincy. This is a clear indication of the indispensability of art in festivals.

Opoku (1970) cited in Kemevor (2017) also confirms that, the paramount chief and the principal chiefs are borne in palanquins, flanked on either side by large gold-plated swords and muskets. He points out further those multi-coloured state umbrellas are made to flutter rhythmically to the beats of accompanying drums. This is a very good explanation of the indispensable role of art as witnessed in Odwira and Ohum which portrays a more unique description of art.

Labi (2002) agrees that works of art found among the Akuapems may be viewed as man-made objects, which exhibit skill and order, and convey meaning as such almost every object of political, religious and social importance is decorated. These decorations were consciously added to an original work, and could be subjected to aesthetic comment and judgments. Consequently, they express the identity as well as values of the people acquired over a period of time to be used for both private and public functions.

It is therefore appropriate that a study about the Odwira and Ohum be carried out to inform the general public about the important role of art in the festivals and make bare its socio-economic significance to the development of Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter discussed the research design, research population, the sample size and the sampling techniques, the sources of data, data collection instruments administered to the sample population, data collection procedures, data treatment, the nature and the form of the data presentation, and the analysis of the data. The sequence of the research activities was outlined.

3.2 Qualitative Research

Wyse (2011) stated that qualitative research is primarily an exploratory research. It is used to gain understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. Qualitative research is also used to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions and dive deeper into the problem. This research was based on qualitative research method principles. The researcher had close relationships with the very few purposively selected participants that enriched the research work with their deep knowledge of information and personal experiences.

List (2006) as cited in Afrifa (2009) noted that conclusions are drawn in qualitative research however; such conclusions are based on words not on figures. The end-product of qualitative research is usually to appreciate the understanding of the participant, and not to measure the validity and reasonability of the responses. Hence, such findings are often not generalized since the sample sizes are too unrepresentative and accounts are more situated in individualistic contexts posing challenges for the spreading of such ideas and thoughts. The foregone discussions clearly show that, qualitative research methodology is preferable when a study requires intense details in order to unveil issues to aid comprehension. Creswell

(2014) was of the view that conducting a qualitative study meant that researchers get as close as possible to the participants being studied. In practice, qualitative researchers conducted their studies on the field of activity in localities where the participants lived and worked because it was important in contexts for understanding what the participants were saying and doing. The longer researchers stayed in the field or got to know the participants; the more researchers got first-hand information.

The qualitative approach afforded the researcher to focus attention on perceptions and interpretations of those directly involved in the performance acts in order to unearth the actual meanings and relevance, since it sought to uncover historical and contextual inclinations from key participants in the study.

An important consideration for the qualitative approach stemmed from the fact that a hands-off and distant research would not delve below the surface understanding and meanings of these performances. Additionally, the seemingly persistent acculturation and modernization of the youth and community members pushed the researcher to enquire deep into searching for a closer contact and interaction with custodians of the culture.

In view, it was therefore important to be in sufficient contact with the research subjects and the setting to understand fully issues inherent in the system. Qualitative approach also helped the study and provided a platform that led to the discovery of deeper levels of meanings into the subject been studied. It helped in investigating the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials associated with the complex cultural settings and patterns.

The origin of the Ohum and Odwira is actually based on oral tradition and this has paved way for critical interviews with custodians of the various rites, old indigenes of the traditional area and on site observations of the two festivals.

The study considered a range of research approaches focusing on qualitative analysis and employed personal interviews, participant observations, and accounts of individuals and personal accounts. The study was therefore field oriented as the field was the natural setting of Akropong Odwira and Mamfe Ohum Festivals. Several visits were undertaken to the Akuapem Mountains and its environs where the Odwira and Ohum festival were performed. The emphasis of the research was on observables, including observations on informants thereby making the research realistic.

The method of participatory observation was also employed since it appeared there was not much written literature on the comparative study of the celebration of the Ohum and Odwira festivals. The method of participatory observations in the celebration of the festivals paved way for the researcher to fully examine comparative study of Odwira and Ohum Festival among the Akuapem

3.3 Research Design

From the view point of Creswell (2013), research designs are plans and routine for research that span the choices from wide assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The research design allows the researcher acquire answers to the questions posed. The study focused on a comparative work of the Akropong Odwira and Mamfe Ohum which required in-depth interviews and critical observation on the field for exploratory study.

3.3.1 Descriptive Method

Descriptive study was chosen by the researcher to describe and interpret events. Descriptive research method is a form of research that specifies, describes or reports the nature of a particular situation or phenomenon (Turkson, 2011). This method was used to throw light extensively on the chronological occurrence of events at the Odwira and Ohum festival celebration as well as the artistic elements seen during the

celebration. It helped the researcher to bring out the procedures and meaning of activities as they unfolded during the festival.

3.4 Population

Blaikie (2013) defined population as an aggregate of all cases that conform to some designated set of criteria. This study was centred at Akropong and Mamfe Akuapem. The participants in this research was selected Chiefs, Linguist, ‘Abusuapanyin’, Secretaries to Divisional Chiefs, Church elders and Clergy. Two Divisional Chiefs one from each town, one Linguist, two ‘Abusuapanyin’ one from each town, one Secretary of Divisional Chiefs, one Sub chiefs, one Church elder and a Clergy.

3.5 Sampling and Sample Size Method

Sampling is the use of a definite procedure in the selection of participants for the expressed purpose of obtaining from its description or estimate certain properties or characteristics of the whole (Kumekpor, 2002). Blaikie (2013) further expatiated that a sample is a selection of elements from a population and may be used to make statements about the whole population.

The researcher chose purposive sampling technique to get the various respondents for the study. The researcher selected the respondents to be included in the sample on the basis of their knowledge on the phenomenon under study. The purposive sampling lessened the burden of the researcher considering the size of population. It helped the researcher to identify specific sites and participants, who could understand the research problems and gave leading and thoughtful information in addressing the research objectives. The techniques helped the researcher to carefully select the sample that reflected the purpose of the study and the objectives of the investigation. Purposive sampling method was used in the selection of the Chiefs, Linguist, ‘Abusuapanyin’, Secretaries to Divisional Chiefs, Church elders and Clergy

in Akuapem Traditional Area. It was used to access the people with the in depth knowledge about the festivals of the Akuapem. In all ten (10) people were sampled for the study.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The data gathered for the research were made possible by conducting interviews, participant observations, taking of photographs and recordings. These instruments were necessary due to the nature of the study.

3.6.1. Observation

Twumasi (2001) considered participant observation as a method of data collection whereby the researcher participates in the daily activities of the people he is studying. From there he starts to observe situations in order to find answers to his research questions. The researcher participated in some activities of the people which allowed him to get a relevant insight into the problem. The researcher acquainted with the people and acquired a position in the setting.

The researcher stayed in Mamfe and Akropong throughout the festival period and followed proceedings from the beginning of the festival to the end of most of the ritual performances.

This approach allowed a full social awareness that was achieved only through understanding the subject's point of view through process identification with their lives which could be attained only through complete participation in their daily lives. The researcher interacted continuously and directly with the subject being studied in their natural environment. Observation was guided by setting, the ritual activity and the mode of presentation and developing trends. At some stages the researcher was a participant observer and at times a non-participant observer. The researcher was not allowed to enter some ritual setting because it was reserved for certain people

connected to those stools. Normally, during festive occasions where most of the ritual activities take place it is better to be a participant observer as the carnivals and parades move to take real pictures. The researcher in this case followed the trail by moving briskly, sometimes running and at times slowly.

In the case of the durbars, the researcher comfortably turned himself into a non-participant observer to capture sites and sounds. Participant observation got me closer to the natural realities and context. The approach also served as a way of validating and member checked data obtained from interviews and documents from several sources because participating and observing personally was a first-hand undiluted primary data and provided a fuller picture and perspective to the study.

Kumekpor (2002) noted that observation is an effective means of recording what is observed more precisely and with a greater reliability, because judicious observation directs the attention of the researcher to research question under investigating. The researcher made efforts to follow ritual activities to record and capture activities that were necessary for the study.

Observation took place at the shrine, through the principal street when the deities were being outdoored, the durbar ground, and the procession of chiefs (of both Akropong and Mamfe), dance, preparation of ancestral meals, clearing the path for ancestors. At this stage, the researcher became mostly a passive observer. There were certain periods where the characters involved in the ritual activities had to go through rituals by drinking certain concoctions and sprinkling of animal blood to cleanse themselves from evil so that they can immerse themselves into the activity sometimes deep in the night. The researcher at these situations was not allowed to go and observe but was just told what happened. The researcher did not only observe but also went through a deep philosophical thought to get a deeper understanding of such activities.

On the other hand, it gave the researcher the probability to actually come into contact with the artefacts used during the celebration of the Ohum festival and Odwira festival.

3.6.2 Interviews

Givens (2008) has viewed that, interview is a data collection method in qualitative approach and is characterized by a conversational practice where knowledge is produced through the interaction between the interviewer and an interviewee or a group of interviewees.

Interviews took a major part of the field research and also were able to produce the bulk of data for the study. The interviews produced very relevant data because, the respondents gave very useful and confidential information which were crucial to the research. A semi-structured interviewing approach was used to gather information and data in the participants' own words to help in drawing an insider perspective from them. Kumekpor (2002) also expressed similar view that, structured interviews are characterised by open ended questions, flexible in terms of sequence, interviewer can pursue certain questions further, take cues for additional questions he did not originally plan to ask from a respondent's answers. This approach enhanced the opportunity of all participants to tell their personal stories in their own words. The approach provided an open field to both interviewees and interviewers. It enabled the researcher to further seek clarification and asked follow up questions when answers were ambiguous and possibly probed and expanded interviewees' reactions. Also, interviewees had the opportunity to seek further explanation when the questions asked were not too clear. The platform and the environment for the interview made it more relaxed, friendly for conversation and also afforded the interviewees who introduced their own agenda with regards to the line of questioning.

The face-to-face technique of interviewing offered the researcher the opportunity to study direct experiences, perceptions, passions, empathies, and emotions during the interview session. This was used as a check for truth in data collection during field work. The researcher also relied on key informant interview; that is interviewing members or a member of the group being studied who had special knowledge or perception that was not readily available and again perspectives which are different from other group members.

The researcher used interviews and conversations in addition to participant observation throughout the research study. The researcher also used semi-structured and unstructured interviews because they provided a free and a greater freedom due to its qualitative nature. It allowed the interviewees the freedom to express and digress into areas of interest. The type of questions asked did not limit those answering from veering off. In view of that it enabled the researcher to pursue a range of topics and offered the participants the chance to answer and tell their stories interestingly and personally in their own words. The researcher asked questions from participants when they were participating in ritual activities in their natural setting without any inhibitions.

During the interview and data collection in Akropong Akuapem and Mamfe Akuapem the researcher identified chiefs, linguist, 'abusuapanyin', secretaries to divisional chiefs, church elders and clergy among others who were useful in providing content information on the Odwira and Ohum festivals.

It was realized the participants expressed themselves on the activities without inhibitions and limitations when the activity was on going, because it was within the natural setting of the people. More information were given from the participants in participating and observing with all protocols associated with the rituals.

3.6.3 Types of Data

3.6.4 Primary Data

This is a first-hand information gotten from the series of interviews conducted and the observation made by the researcher. The researcher interviewed the chiefs, linguist, ‘abusuapanyin’, secretaries to divisional chiefs, church elders and clergy of Mamfe and Akropong- Akuapem and senior citizens in the two towns who have witnessed the festivals over a period of time. It gave the respondents the free will and urge to express themselves freely thereby giving their views and opinions about activities and visual art used during the celebration of the festivals. This was recorded with a camera and mobile phone. The camera was used for the photographs and the mobile phone for recording verbal intercommunication with the respondents.

3.6.5 Secondary Data

The library served as a reservoir for data from experts in the field of festivals and visual art elements used thereby supporting the research in the Chapter Two of this study. Sources including books, articles, journals, publications, e-books, unpublished theses and other open educational resources available online were also used.

3.6.6 Administering of Instruments

The researcher used personal interviews with chiefs, linguist, ‘abusuapanyin’, secretaries to divisional chiefs, church elders and clergy. The researcher arranged meetings with the respondents at different times. The interview sessions were recorded with a smart phone and some phrases were written in the form of notes.

The researcher through series of observations was able to witness all the activities that took place during the celebration of the festivals. These were examined physically and photographs taken for documentation. The researcher bought videos of past celebrations till present to get a wider coverage of all the artforms used during the

celebration of the festivals. These videos were transcribed into textual facts which were useful in the chapter two and four of the study.

3.7 Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis is an integral part of qualitative research and constitutes an essential stepping stone toward both gathering data and linking ones finding with higher order concepts (Given, 2008).

The focus on this study was on a comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festival among the Akuapem. The researcher had to really immerse himself to study the historical and philosophical perspectives on the celebrations, the importance of the festival in the present age and the artistic aspects of the two festivals and their effects on the people of Akuapem. Data were therefore collected and categorised according to the related activities based on the celebration of the festivals. This largely influenced the thematic approach to analysis due to the relative density of contextual data underpinning interpretation from respondents and participants.

Since the field notes and interview transcripts came from several sources, the researcher had to do a thorough reflection on data, distilled and categorised the data for easy comprehension. The researcher took time to examine data and arrange images, phrases, words, events and pattern of behaviour that had repeated itself and stood out as topics and themes for reflection. Again, with a great number of themes generated as a result of huge data collected, the researcher categorised them in relation with the research questions as a way of generating themes for analysis.

The researcher also had an arduous task of examining, sorting and arranging hundreds of pictures from different localities to differences and similarities. This really helped in the creation of generalisation in the Odwira and Ohum festivals of the people of Akropong Akuapem and Mamfe Akuapem and their effects on the people.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview

Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals are celebrated annually with pomp and pageantry. The culture of the people is expressed through these festivals. The focus of this is to examine the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals, the artistic aspects of the two festivals, the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals and the educational aspects for preservation. This chapter entails presentation and discussion of the findings from the field in the course of the study at Akuapem Traditional Area during Odwira and Ohum festivals.

4.2 Path Clearing on Monday

During *Adae Butuw*, *Ancestral Spirits* are sent home to rest for the period of six weeks preceding the Odwira festival. The ancestors cannot come to town during this period. For all these weeks therefore, it is believed that there should not be any flow of 'traffic' between *Amamprobi* (supposed burial place dead of chiefs) and the town of *Akropong*. People believe that the path joining the two places is over-grown from non-usage. If these noble ancestors are to travel without any hindrance to join in the celebration, then the path must be cleared for them. It is thus a rite that marks the coming to an end of the period of seclusion. Also, this annual clearing is a ritual meant to keep the lines of communication between the living and the *Nananom Nsamanfo* open, enabling them to always travel home without hindrances.

At about eight o'clock in the morning, a drummer, standing in-front of the *abonsambo* crossed the street from the entrance of the palace and sounded the *Nkrawire drum*. He repeated these three times. After the third sounding, the *Adumfo*, *Banmufo*, *Apesemaka Nkonguasofo*, *Soodofo* and *Akyeame* went to the palace of

Okuapehene to declare their intention to go and clear the paths from the old site of the town, *Amamprobi*, to the new site *Akropong*. Okuapehene made preparatory sacrifices at stool house (*Nkonguafie*) and blessed them and officially assigned the job to them. The group left to perform the assignment in the following order: the *Nkrawire* drummer led the delegation; followed by the *Adumfo* ringing the little bells, then followed the carrier of the pot of palm wine, followed by the young men who were going to do the weeding and the elders. When they left the palace, they went to the residence of the *Banmuhene*, to prepare for the journey.

Before finally setting out on the journey, the *Nkrawire* is sounded. An elder of the *Banmuhene's* house then offered a prayer and made a libation of water at the entrance of *Banmuhene's* house for the delegation on the task they are about to undertake. After this, the team set out on the sound of the drum. Most of the members of the team were clad in smocks over knickers while a few of them dressed in round neck T-shirts over knickers or cotton jumpers over knickers. On their feet, they wore anything that they deemed suitable for the occasion. As they left the town, the people of the town especially the women, came out to hail them and shouted the New Year greeting of *Afehyia pa*. These towns' people asked for prayers for the town from the elders at *Amamprobi*. While some of the people hailed them from their doorsteps and windows, others followed them to a point and then turned back. They waved their cover-cloths and handkerchiefs. The group moved until it came to the place known as *Asen Nkwanta*. This, according to Bekoe, (2017) the *State Secretary*, was the place where in the olden days, people were executed, and the torso was thrown after the person had been beheaded. It is deemed a special place. Here, the *Banmuhene* says a prayer and made a libation. After using the palm wine for the libation, some schnapps

was poured into a glass. He used this also for libation for *Nananom* who may prefer that to the palm wine.

When the libation was done, all the members of the delegation were served. Then one of the men handed the *Banmuhene* a cutlass. He poured some palm wine on it making some incantations which were not audible to the people present. He then weeded a small portion of the ground on which the libation was poured. He cut three times with his left hand and three times with his right. After this, the group continued the journey with the young men clearing the path as they went along. At *Odum Anim*, they stopped, the *Odum Anim* thus, the front of the *Odum* tree is a small open area lying in the midst of trees. Very prominent in this area is a very tall tree called *Odum*. From oral tradition, when the *Akyem* warriors and settlers at *Amamprobi* were moving from there to Akropong they came to this place with the big *Odum* tree. They stayed here for about two weeks and sent out people to scout out the land which had been prepared for them. It was from there that they moved to Akropong. The *Odum* tree is therefore now considered to be the *Okyeame*, thus linguist, of the *Nananom* in *Amamprobi*. It is thus referred to as *Odum Kyeame*. Any time the elders visit *Amamprobi* they have to go through *Odum Anim*. It is believed, the living, cannot go before *Nananom* without consulting *Odum Kyeame*.

When the group arrived at this venue, they did some weeding around. The *Adumfo* then prepared an offering and presented it to the *Odum Kyeame*. They presented before the *Odum*, some bathing-sponges, chewing sponges, some lime, plantains, twenty-one palm nuts, roasted corn-on-the-cob, and cocoyams. These were items for cleansing and for food. It is believed that during *Adae Butuw* period, the *Nananom* have been resting and sleeping, they are going to come into town, and they must first wash down, clean themselves. The plantains and cocoyams are offered

since the new yams would not have been out-doored yet, with this presentation, the *Banmuhene* presented a pot of palm wine and a bottle of schapps to the *Adum Priest*. Some palm wine was poured into a calabash for him to then ask for permission from the *Banmuhene* to make a libation. The group then moved away and sat in the clearing as some of the drinks used in the making of the libation was served to the elders present and most importantly the *Banmuhene*, the *Adumhene*, the *Sodofohene*, the *Nkonguasuafohene* and lastly the *akyeame* in that order. Each of these important personalities must use part of the served drinks to say a prayer for the *Akuapem* state for the *Odwira* to be successful before drinking the rest of the drink he or she has been served.

After the people have all been served, the group discusses issues that are important to them. Then they perform the last rite known as *puu tu*. In this rite, all the drinks that were sent along with the group for the path-clearing are used for prayers before the *Odum Kyeame*. All the drinks must finish in this rite. This means that the groups are not to bring into town any of the drinks taken along on the path clearing trip. From the researcher's observation, the *Odwira* path-clearing is not done only up to the *Odum Anim*. Some groups of workers go beyond this point to *Amamprobi* and even to the *Powmu* (Royal mausoleum). So that while some clear the path from *Asona Nkwanta* to *Odum Anim*, others clear from *Odum Anim* to *Amanprobi*.

The team that went to clear the *Odwira* path then set out on the journey back to *Akropong* in the evening. They went straight to the *Okuapehene (Acting)* to inform him that they have completed the job they went to do in the forest on his behalf. The *Sanaahene* on behalf of the *Okuapehene (Acting)* thanked them and presented drinks to them for the making of libation. The *Banmuhene* took the drinks and used them to pray for the state especially with regard to the *Odwira*. He first used the palm wine

and then the schnapps. When he finished with the palm wine, he used the schnapps. The *Banmuhene* was then served some of the schnapps. He poured some on the ground and drank the rest. After that, the *Okuapehene (Acting)* was served. He used it first for prayer. He poured some of it on the ground in front of him, then on his right, on his left, and behind him. He did say some incantations which were not audible. This activity was done to ask Nananom that were in front, on his right, left and behind to protect and see them through the festivity as they have come home to witness the occasion. When he finished, he drank what was left in the glass. The other people in the palace were also served. Each of them poured some of the drink on the ground before he drank. After the prayer, the *Okuapehene (Acting)* addressed the gathering of elders. He talked to them about things that needed to be done to make the celebration successful. When he finished, the delegation was dismissed and that ended the rites for the Monday which is supposed the first day of the *Odwira* week.

4.3 Tuesday

According to Bekoe, (2017) on this day four significant activities were performed; the lifting of the ban placed on the eating of yams and then, outdoorizing the new yam six weeks before the *Odwira* festival, the washing of the white stools, *ancestral spirits* and the *Odwira* are ushered in and the lifting of the ban on noise making. The day was named *Kwabena Ayesu Dapaa*. The day was named *Kwabena Ayesu Dapaa* because of the following reason as narrated by Bekoe that before the establishment of *Okuapeman*, a group of Asantefo who belonged to the Asona clan had migrated from the *Asante* kingdom to settle at a place below the hills of *Akuapem* on the way to present day Koforidua. These people were farmers who cultivated yams. When they later heard that some *asona* from *Akyem* had become the leaders of the *Akuapems* they came to *Akuapem* to pay homage and asked for protection from the new leaders. They

were accepted and integrated into the community. Because they were yam cultivators, they were given the responsibility of dealing with all issues that had to do with yam. They were given the responsibility of launching the new yams during the *Odwira* festival. The day was named after the leader of this group, hence the name *Kwabena Ayesu Dapaa Benada*.

4.3.1 Outdooring of New Yam

According to another oral tradition as narrated to the researcher by a member of this family by name Obaapanyin Challote Amponsah, a male member of this family named Kurankye went into the wild and found the root crop, yam. He brought it home and showed it to the *Omanhene*. The *Omanhene* did not know what it was. Kurankye however said that he was prepared to find out if it was edible or not. He said he would eat the crop; if he died from eating it, then, the people would know that it was not edible. If on the other hand he survived, they would have found food. He ate the crop and did not die. As a result of finding the crop and being prepared to take a risk for his people, he and his household were honoured with the privilege of launching or outdooring yams every year during the *Odwira* festival.

The *Kwabena Ayensu* or *Krubii* family is responsible for performance of the rituals to launch the new yam. This ceremony was observed by the researcher in 2017. At about seven o'clock in the morning, people gathered in the house of the *Krubiihene*. The Okyeame stood and called for attention by saying: "*Agoo!*" Then he informed the elders and the gathering what Nana Sanaahene has presented as he does every year, some tuber of yams, bottle of palm oil, tomatoes, pepper, eggs, garden-eggs, onions, a bottle of schnapps, and a sheep to be used for the ceremony to launch the new yams (figure 1). After the presentation, a man took the schnapps meant for

the young men who were to scramble for the yams and started singing the *Krubii* war-song and the people responded.

The people then went out of the house onto the principal street in front of the *Krubii* house to perform the ritual of outdoorizing the new yam. The ritual started with the performance of making a libation by the *Krubiihene*. When he had finished, the group went out to the entrance of the house of the *Krubiihene*. Some tubers of yam were brought out of the house. A man stood in front of the *Krubiihene*, who at this time was standing in front of his house, holding a tuber of yam in the middle with the end pointing away from him. The *Krubiihene* pronounced blessings on the yam asking that nobody suffers in any way from eating them. He then used his fist to break off a bit of the yam. As the young man with the yam went through the streets of the town, people, mainly young men, followed him shouting: '*Kurow bi e, ode ni, bɔ no ε*' (*break some, here is yam, hit it*) (figure 2, 3). The young men competed in breaking pieces of the yams with their fists. They were free to take home whatever they are able to break. Due to the nature of the performance ceremony, bits and pieces of the yams were scattered along the main streets of the town. The struggle went on until all the yams that were brought out onto the street for the rite were finished. With the performance of this rite, the way was opened for the people to eat the new yam (figure 4). Through this ceremony, the people give thanks to God and the ancestral spirits for the good harvest and also sought their blessings to ensure that there will be



Figure 1. Krubiihene give out yams. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 2. Outdooring of new yam. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 3. Youth groups struggle to break the new yam. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 4. Roasted yam. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.3.2 Cleansing of White Stools

While the struggle for the breaking of new yams was going on in the streets of the town, the *nkonguasofo* were performing another ritual which was the washing or cleansing of the 'sitting-stools' in the *Omanhene's* palace. These were the stools of the chiefs who had reigned over the *Akuapem* people since the establishment of the *Akuapem* state. At the moment, there are six of them. These were brought out to the fore-court of the palace. They were arranged in the order in which the various chiefs reigned (figure 5). Some water from the *Adami* stream had already been fetched to the palace and placed in a brass pan. This was placed in front of the stools. The sponges to be used for the washing were placed in front of the stools. Between the bowl of water and the stools, the *nsɔmmɛ* (leaves) used as sponges were placed. The *nkonguasofo* who were going to wash them stood behind them. The *nkonguasofohene* first made a libation with schnapps and informed the ancestral

spirits of what was about to be done. Then one of the young men fetched water from the brass bowl using a calabash and poured on all the stools. The young men then took some *nsɔmmɛ* leaf and sand from a bowl placed between them and the stools. Using these materials, they scrubbed the stools (figure 6). When the scrubbing was thoroughly done, they took the stools one by one to the brass bowl. Water was taken from the bowl and poured over the stools until all the sand that was used in the scrubbing was washed off. When the washing was completed, the rest of the water in the brass bowl was poured into a bucket and sent away. The *nsɔmmɛ* that was used for the washing was then put into the brass bowl. The young men who washed the stools then put on their smocks and stood behind the stools. The *nkonguasoafohene* then said amidst the ringing of the bells on the stools:

'Happy New Year! Happy New Year! Happy New Year! Happy New Year!' (Bekoe 2017).

As he cried, one of the young men who washed the stools lifted up the brass bowl containing the *nsɔmmɛ* and carried it, with the others following behind, to the entrance of the palace. When he got there, he turned facing the entrance and shouted:

'Elders, by your grace, hear what the Omanhene says: He says that the evil person who thinks evil you should put a basket over like a hen' (Bekoe 2017).

Upon these words, he turned the brass bowl over right at the entrance and stepped on it. The contents of the bowl were left at the entrance and the empty brass bowl was sent into the palace. The washed stools were then carried into the inner court of the palace amidst the ringing of the bells on the first two (figure 7A, B). This rite of washing the stools is done on every *Benada Dapaa* which is the Tuesday preceding every *Awukudae*. This rite is therefore not peculiar to the *Odwira* week as are the other activities that take place on that day.



Figure 5. White stools arranged to be cleansed. (Source: Field work data 2017)



Figure 6. Nkonguasofo cleaning the white stools. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 7. Taking the cleansed white stools to the inner court of the palace.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.3.3 Ushering the Ancestors to Town

Another important ritual activity that took place on this same Tuesday was the bringing in of the *Odwira* in the evening. The *Banmuhene*, *Adumhene*, *Apssemakahene*, *Nkonguasofohene*, *Sodohene*, *Akyeamehene*, and their members go to *Amamprobi* to bring home the royal ancestors. First, members of the families responsible for the activity gathered together in the *Adumhene's* house. During this meeting the groups get to know which chiefs will go on the trip personally and which ones will be sending representatives. From this meeting, rites of purification were performed. The *Banmuhene* cleansed the team from his household accompanying him on the trip in his house. The group then went to the *Nkonguafi* at the *Omanhene's* palace. The whole group was ritually cleansed here for the task ahead. The researcher

is using the term '*ritually cleansed*' to translate '*wɔ kɔ guare wɔn*'. The statement could also signify a fortification for the duty. When all had applied the mixture to their- bodies, the group left for *Amamprobi*. On this day, they did not stop at *Odum Anim* but went straight on to *Amamprobi*.

At the village, after all courtesies had been observed, the *Banmuhene* made libation in which he mentioned the reason for the trip, being to take the *Odwira* to the *Omanhene*. They went to the royal mausoleum at *Amamprobi* early in the morning. There, they performed some rites and prepared a concoction, a purifying and strengthening mixture which was brought to the chief later in the afternoon. The researcher was told that, the rituals performed on this trip were not to be disclosed to anybody as a curse of blindness, deafness and others will be put on anybody who disclosed anything. The researcher also observed that all those who went on this trip returned with leaves stuck in their mouths; perhaps to signify their intention not talk to anybody. They also brought other sacred materials, which together with the concoction is believed symbolized the *Odwira* (figures 8, 9). The researcher was also informed of the fact that, on their way to the sacred grove to bring the *Odwira* they must not meet anybody. In the olden days, they had the right to behead anyone they met on their inward or outward journey. These days however, they take any goods the person may be carrying.

When the *Omanhene (Acting)* who was sitting in state at the palace with the elders was informed by one of the messengers from the *Pow mu* (sacred grove) that the group was on its way back, the drummers beat first, the talking drums, then the *fonfomfrom*, to summon all the elders to the palace of the *Omanhene*. Most of the people of the town also were gathered in the palace while others lined up along the streets to welcome them. When the group from the sacred grove arrived at the palace,

they greeted all gathered and then informed the *Omanhene (Acting)* and the elders that they have perfectly accomplished their task. To testify to the fact that they have really accomplished their task, they presented the symbolic items from the sacred grove to the *Omanhene (Acting)*. This presentation was made in a special way. The *Omanhene (Acting)*, who on this occasion did not sit on the dais, was covered up with a big cloth so that nobody can see him and nobody can see what was done under the cloth. The *Banmuhene* and the *Adumhene*, the carriers of the items, enter the cloth with them. The researchers' informant, Nana Adu (2017) disclosed that they touched the forehead, the chest, the waist and the feet of the *Omanhene (Acting)* with what they have brought. This is the *Odwira* blessing which they bring. The *Omanhene (Acting)* and his elders then thanked them and gave them drinks (figure 10).

All this while, the drummers were beating the *fontomfrom* drums and making merry. The *Banmuhene*, who had a special message for the *Omanhene*, did it in a dance form with symbolic gestures which the *Omanhene* or his elders must understand. The group from the sacred groves after performing their rituals at the palace moved from here to the residence of the *Krubiihene*, who served them food made from yam, *nwoma*, a traditional *Akuapem* staple food prepared by boiling the yam in the soup, and roasted yams (figure 11).

It is important at this point to stress on the dressing and mood of the *Omanhene (Acting)* and his people on this occasion. The *Omanhene (Acting)* is deemed to be receiving ancestral spirits who are above him. He must therefore appear humble before them. He therefore wore a dark old cloth and as has already been mentioned but did not sit on the dais. The umbrella that was held over his head on this day was dark-coloured and old. Most people in the court also wore dark coloured cloths; black, red or brown symbolising the seriousness of the occasion (figure 12).



Figure 8 Return from amanprobi with the Odwira symbol (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 9 Schnapps and palmwine for making libation after Returning from Amanprobi. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 10 Banmuhene and his team sit as queen mother addresses them (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 11 Banmuhene eating mnoma at krubiihene residence. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 12 Queenmother and the people in the court in dark cloths (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.3.4 Lifting of Ban on Noise Making

Immediately after the symbolic presentation of the *Odwira* to the *Omanhene (Acting)*, the ceremony to lift the ban on noise-making imposed six weeks earlier was performed officially. The big *fontomfrom* drums as well as the other drums were beaten and people danced to signify the end of the ritual preparation period

4.4 Wednesday- General Mourning

Beginning at dawn in every household, there is mourning for people who died during the previous year or during the six-week period of ban on funerals and noise making. Libations are made for departed souls and loved ones. The general costume on this day is black or red mourning clothes (refer to figure 13). There are weeping and wailing and the drinking of alcoholic beverages. *Fontomfrom*, *asonko*, *adenkum*, *akagya* and *wuroko* are played to remember family members who have departed this world. This is the Remembrance Day. People gathered in their family homes and the heads of the various families made libation to those who had moved on to the other world (figure 14). The mourning goes on throughout the day.

The researcher's observation in 2017 revealed that, at about eleven o'clock, Queenmother, Nana Afua Nketiaa Obuo II, sat in state together with her elders to receive greetings and condolences from people who may have lost family members and would want to inform him formally (figures 15,16). She also received condolences and greetings from all who would want to bring him such. Gifts and donations of all kinds were presented to the Queenmother, (Nana Afua Nketiaa Obuo II.). About two o'clock in the afternoon, the Queenmother, accompanied by the *Asafo* groups and *Ankɔbeafo* went round greeting and offering condolences to all occupants of stools in the town (figures 17, 18). She visited homes of, for example, the *Kurontihene*, *Asonahene* and others. This Wednesday was *Awukudae*. However, the *Queenmother (acting Omenhene)* did not go to *Nkonguafie* as she normally does on *Awukudae* as this meant that the black stools were not fed on this day.



Figure 13. People in mourning costume. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 14 Making libation at the Okuapehene's palace. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 15. Queenmother, sit in state to receive guests and well-wishers. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 16. Queenmother, elders and sub chiefs sit in state to receive guests and well-wishers. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 17. Gathering in front of the palace. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 18. Queenmother, going round greeting and offering condolences to all occupants of stools in the town. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.5 Thursday- New Year's Day

About five significant activities take place on this day. They are, cleansing of the black stools, Okuapehene visits the odosu, outdoor of new chiefs, general feasting, oath of allegiance to the Ofori stool.

4.5.1 Cleansing of the Black Stools

This ritual takes place at about midnight, just as the dawn of Thursday begins. It is performed under circumstances of prohibitive secrecy and tight security. No one is to see it, apart from those who have cleaned to do so. In times past, anybody who the delegation met while on this assignment was killed. The town is therefore placed under curfew from about 10pm on Wednesday night.

It is on this sacred day that the *Okuapeman* black stools are taken from the palace to the site of the main waterbody known as *Adami*. Before the stools from the palace were sent to be washed, the *Aboasahene* went to *Adami* to perform what is known as *bo nsu no ani* (striking the face of the water). He did this by taking his stools to be washed in a river at *Adami*. The purpose of going first was to ensure that the area surrounding the water body was safe from any persons who may be hiding in the bushes waiting to capture the stools. When the *Aboasahene* had finished washing his stools and was sure that all was safe, three gun-shots were fired. This was to inform the palace that it was safe to send the black stools to *Adami* to be washed.

The seven *Nkongua Tuntum* of *Okuapeman* were then taken to *Adami* for purification and washing. Each *Akongua Tuntum*, covered in calico, was placed in a brass bowl and carried on the head of a young man from the palace. The *Banmuhene* and the *Adumhene* led this ritual delegation. When they arrived at the waterbody, the young men sat and put the basins containing the stools on their laps. The *Banmuhene* then prepared the cleansing mixture for the washing. He fetched some of the water of the *Adami* into a brass basin, puts *afare* and *odwen* leaves into it. He then prayed by making libation. The drink as libation was poured into the basin containing the water from the *adami*. After that a sheep for the ritual was slaughtered and the blood added to the cleansing mixture in the basin. The *Banmuhene*, using a specially made broom-

like material called *fe* sprinkled the mixture on the stools. In this way, the stools symbolising *Okuapeman* spirit of unity are cleansed. Some of the mixture was also sprinkled onto the young men who carried the stools. All the other people in the group were also cleansed with the mixture. When the cleansing was over, the *Banmuhene* put the stools back on the heads of the young men. They walked in a single file from the river to a point in the town known as *Kye Kurotia*. This spot is just a few metres away from the palace of the *Omanhene*. When they reached this point, the *Okuapehene* who all the while has been waiting, came from the palace to meet them. He circled round the file of young men carrying the *Nkongua Tuntum* seven times. As he circled them, he muttered certain words which were not audible. At the end of each circle, a gun-shot was fired. When he finished circling the *Nkongua Tuntum*, he joined the group and they all walked quietly back to the palace. It must be noted that this revelation was done under strict anonymity by the person who narrated to me this ritual activity. Even though he was part of the team who did this he would not want his name to be disclosed. The researcher in strict confidence provided some money and drinks for this information to be disclosed by the informant. The researcher did not take part in this ceremony in the night as he would not be allowed under any circumstance.

4.5.2 Okuapehene Visits the Odosu

This activity starts at about seven o'clock in the morning until about four o'clock in the afternoon. All the chiefs within Akuapem traditional area came to the palace in the morning. Each chief at this meeting went to the stool room and renewed his oath of allegiance to the paramount stool. Before this happened however, the *Okuapehene* (*Acting*) went to pay his respects to the *Odosu* in the house of the *Banmuhene*. He did

not walk on this occasion but was carried on someone's back. He took with him a brown sheep. This sheep was sacrificed on the *Odosu* for its fortification,

4.5.3 Outdooring of New Chiefs

Immediately after the ceremonial ritual visit to the *Odosu* there was a special ceremony at the palace. The *Okuapehene (Acting)* sat in state and amidst drumming and dancing people who had newly been elevated to the status of chiefs were presented to him. These new chiefs swore the oath of allegiance. It was at this same time that well-wishers of the *Omanhene (Acting)* and *Okuapeman* came to the *ahenfie* with various gifts.

4.5.4 General Feasting

This day is also marked as the general feasting day. There is communal feasting and general merry-making. Goats, sheep and poultry were slaughtered and meals prepared and served to household members and guests. The researcher was fortunate to be part of the guests at the *Asonahenes'* palace in 2017.

The ancestral spirits who were part of the community were not left out of the feasting. This was symbolised by the visit to *Nkonguafie* by the *Okuapehene (Acting)* and some Elders. There the specially made food and drinks were sprinkled in a walled shrine believed to house the ancestral spirits (refer to figure 19). The procession from the palace through the principal streets of *Akropong* took a long time to arrive at *Nsorem* as the carriers got possessed by the ancestral spirits. According to the *Adumhene*, these spirits show their appreciation of the procession and manifest their presence by possessing the carriers (figures 20, 21 A, B). Sometimes, the carriers showed these spirits filled signs by acting strangely and refusing to move. When this happened, leading men from the stool-houses from which the carriers affected carrying food pour schnapps on their feet. When they still do not move, these men put

schnapps into their mouths and blow into the faces of the possessed carriers (figures 22 A, B, 23). The *Banmuhene* would usually do this for the carriers from the *Okuapehene's* palace and also for those from his own stool-house. At times the carriers turned and run in the direction opposite to where they are headed. Strong young men then chased and followed them, held them and brought them back to the former direction they were headed. When they finally arrived at the gate of the final destination which was the *nsorem*, the *Banmuhene* then collected the items from the carriers and took them into the sacred area. The *Nkonguasofohene* poured libation using water and said:

“Elders here are some water, elders here are some water, are you listening? We are offering you water as the edges of the year have met and chief and his elders are calling you and all the children to come and dine”.

Then he collected some of the mashed yam, both the white and the red types and scattered it on the ground saying:

“Elders, young ones, here is food! Here is food! Here is food! Those who eat white and those who eat red come and eat” (figure 24 A, B).

He put every chief's water and the mashed yam on the ground for him at the sacred grove. Then he returned the containers to the carriers. While the carriers of food from the other houses went straight back home, the group carrying the food for the *Okuapehene* moved to *Nsoreso* at *Mpeniase* and repeated the process of giving water and food to the departed elders. From here they went to the old *ahenfie* *Banmu* at *Boronmu*, *Bogyawee* (special sacred shrines) and the present *ahenfie* and performed the same ritual. After this they went back to the palace where the food was taken off the head of the *Ohene Yere*. She was placed three times on the lap of the *Okuapehene*; water was then poured at her feet to take away the possession and then was taken away to her home.

4.5.5 Oath of allegiance to the Ofori Stool

While the procession was going on to give food to the ancestral spirits at *Nsorem*, the *Okuapehene (Acting)* continued to receive blessings and good wishes from his elders as he continued to sit in state. This signified the solidarity of the elders of the Ofori stool (*Ofori Agua*) and its occupant as the researcher was later told.

During the night, beginning from about eight O'clock, all divisional chiefs met at the stool house to renew their allegiance to the *Ofori Kuma Stool*. The *Okuapehene (Acting)* prayed by pouring libation and then slaughtered a sheep. The blood of the slaughtered sheep was then sprinkled on this great stool. According to *Mr. Bekoe*, this is the act that seals the purification of the state and the people. Thursday night, the researchers' participation in the Odwira festival in 2017 witnessed a curfew placed on the town on Thursday. On this day one can only hear and listen to the sound of drums in the darkness of locked rooms.



Figure 19. Libation is made at the evil stone in front of the palace by Banmuhene.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 20 Adumhene in patched smock leads the procession to nsorem.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 21. Possessed maidens in a procession to nsorem. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 22. Schnapps poured on the feet of a possessed maiden to move.
(Source: Field work data, 2017) 90



Figure 23. Adumhene at nsorem. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 24 Banmuhene sprinkling food and drinks to nananom.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.6 Friday Ritual-Durbar

Early on the morning of Friday in 2017 and witnessed by the researcher, the *Benkum* (section of chiefs called the leftist) linguist led a team of elders to *Mpeniase* (under the *mpeni* tree) for a very important sacrifice before the durbar was held. The *Mpeni* tree named *Mpeni Kofi* is believed to be the protecting spirit of *Akropong*. This tree stands right at the centre of the town. It is believed that *Akropong* town started under this tree. It is under this tree that large and important gathering of the state are usually

held. This sacrifice was some thanks offering to the great *Mpeni* tree for protecting the town throughout the whole year. It is also meant to cleanse *Mpeniase*. The *Benkum* linguist took to the site, a piece of calico, a white sheep, and some bottles of schnapps. First, water was poured on the roots of the tree and into a pot placed among the roots. The *osofa* (priest) of the *Benkum* division house said a prayer by making libation. In the prayer, he gave thanks to the *Mpeni* tree for protection throughout the year. He also informed the sacred tree of the purpose for their coming and asked for blessings for the state and the people. After this, he slithered open the throat of the sheep and dripped the blood on the roots of the tree and on the stones around the tree. Two men then held the sheep by the limbs, one held the fore limbs and the other the hind limbs. They swung the dead animal sideways three times and then they threw it away from the tree. The head, the stomach and bits of the intestines were placed in front of the tree. The rest of the meat was cut up and cooked right at the site of the sacrifice.

Next the priest took the calico and tore it into three pieces of differing sizes. He tied the big part of the calico round the big *Mpeni* tree after removing the old one. Then he tied the smaller piece around the smaller tree said to be the wife of the bigger one and then he tore what remained into strips and gave them to the people around. This is done to signify a new beginning and blessings for the town and the members in it.

4.6.1 Asonahene Feed the Ancestors

This is the description of what the researcher observed and participated in during the 2017 *Odwira* festival. Whilst the *Benkum* division and their linguist were making their sacrifice at *Mpeniase* and on the *abonsambo* (evil stone) in front of the *Okuapehenes* palace, the *Asonahene* and his household also set out in a procession to

feed their ancestors at *Nsorem*. On October 10, 2017, at about eight o'clock in the morning, the family set out from the *Asonahene's* house. There were three ladies dressed in cloths with white backgrounds. They wore traditional sandals known as *ahenemma* on their feet. Each of them carried something wrapped in white on her head. Umbrellas were put over their heads. On either side of these ladies were young men whose duty was to support the ladies who walked gracefully to the sound of drumming and the singing of the *Asona* war songs amidst firing of musketry. The procession was led by a traditional priestess who had a calabash of water with some leaves in it. From time to time, she took out the leaves and used it to sprinkle some water on the path and the people in the procession.

The ladies carrying the food items were most of the time possessed by the ancestral spirits just as had happened the day before. When the procession finally arrived at *Nsorem*, the mashed yam, water and palm wine were taken into the shrine by the *Asonahene*. When the ritual was done at the shrine, the procession headed back home and prepared for the durbar. They did not go straight back to the house from which the food was taken, but they visited three of their ancestral homes and gave food to the ancestors before finally going home. It must be noted that, the *Asonahene* is the last and the only royal who goes into the shrine on Friday, and that this ritual must be done before the grand durbar by the *Omanhene* can take place.

4.6.2 The Grand Durbar

There was no durbar and procession of chiefs riding in decorated palanquins through the principal streets amidst drumming, dancing and firing of musketry on Friday 2017 at Akropong. This happen because the Akuapem traditional area had no paramount chief (*Omanhene*). The old one had passed on and has not enstooled a new *Omanhene*. The Akropong chief double as the *Okuapehene*. The 2017 Odwira

festival incidentally coincided with the first appearance of the newly enstooled Queen Mother of Akuapemman Traditional Area Nana Afua Nketiaa Obuo II to Odwira and the special guest invited on this occasion was the President of The Republic of Ghana Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo who is a native of the town. But the day was used for fontomfrom competition. Groups from all the division of Akuapem were to compete in the dancing to fontomfrom.

4.7 Saturday

This is the day on which the *Amanokromhene*, who is also the *Gyaasehene* of *Akuapem* also holds his durbar. The *Okuapehene* normally sends a delegation to represent him at Amanokrom. The durbar is similar to that held in *Akropong*.

In *Akropong* itself various societies and clubs held meetings that had to do with the development of the town. The youth of the town also held meetings. Family and clan houses also held meetings and gatherings and discussed on welfare issues and to settle squabbles among family members. All these gatherings and meeting were aimed at drawing the people of the town together for development. These meetings also led to the youth getting to know each other so that marriages can be arranged. The evenings were always taken up by various forms of entertainment - dances, get to together, Miss, Odwira and other competitions.

4.8 Sunday-Thanksgiving Service

One thing was added to the celebration of the *Odwira* festival was the Thanksgiving service held on the Sunday of the *Odwira* week. On this day, all the *ahenfo* dressed up resplendently and amidst drumming processed to the Church Service which was held at the chapel of the Christ Presbyterian Church of Ghana, this service incorporates within it a communion service and a fund-raising. A thanks offering is presented by

Okuapeman to God for His care and providence in the year. At the end of the service, there was a procession of the chiefs through the principal street of the town to the palace. (figures 25, 24, 26)



Figure 25. Queen mother on her way to church. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 26. Queen mother in the church room. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 27. A group picture after church service. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.9 The ‘Ohum’ Festival

Ohum is one of the three main festivals which is celebrated annually by the chief and people of Mamfe, beside “Ohum Kan” and “Ohum Kyire” which are celebrated in June or July and September or October. The “Ohum” festival of the chief and people of Mamfe (Amntoo in Akuapem). The festival officially starts on the Sunday succeeding the ninth and the last Akwasidae in every calendar year which falls in December or January. It is the last of festivals that are celebrated annually in Akuapem. The festival covers a period of one week during which manage-long traditions and customs which had been instituted by forefathers are observed. There are special days for one kind of event or personality from that Sunday through one weeks. The Friday directly succeeding the Sunday being the ahwie or Odwira day.

It is during this “Ohum” literally means purification festival that the Mamfehene and his sub chief of Adadientan “purify” their Black stools by sacrificing of sheep to feed their ancestors. The ancestors and gods are thanked for the blessings bestowed on the people during past year and prayers are offered for food and drink, prosperity, health and increase in the ensuing year. It is a time of ritual purification and stressing of unity.

Though it is during the festival that our forefather who, through wars and diverse ways, laid down their lives to save Mamfe and for that matter Akuapem are remembered. It is also a unique occasion for family and friendly re-union, the

patching up of long-standing rifts, feuds, petty quarrels and scores. It also affords the people the opportunity for jollity. The festival is celebrated with every pomp and pageantry that portrays our rich cultural heritage and evitable traditions and customs.

4.10 The Asafosa Peace Ritual

The Asafosa Peace Ritual is closely tied to the history of Mamfe Township in the Akuapem District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. According to oral tradition by Mante Yaw the *secretary to Mamfe chief*, the people of Mamfe used to live at Damurukuso, located near present-day Obosomase in the Akuapem District. In those days, approximately 1511, the people of Mamfe were farmers who lived in the forest and could easily be killed by wild animals. There was lack of water where they lived and the hunters of the tribe would go far and wide to search for water because, though they would sometimes bring in a kill, they did not have water with which to cook it.

The Asamoah family were said to be expert hunters, and it was during one of their hunting expeditions from Damurukuso that they saw rivers and streams flowing from a big rock, water in abundance in the area. They returned often and soon realised that the rivers and streams in the area flowed continuously. They discovered other sources of water not far from the original and, when they realised that the soil was good for farming, they decided to inform the other four families about what they had found. The heads of the other families, namely Kwadwo Toku, Abe, Agyarko and Akote decided to go and see the land for themselves prior to making the decision to move. After visiting the location, they agreed with Asamoah that it would be better to relocate.

After some discussion, five of the families decided to move and make a home at the new location. The five families that settled at the present-day Mamfe Township were Kwadwo Toku, Abe, Asamoah, Agyarko and Akote. They never went back to

Damurukuso. The five families parceled out land for each other, settling not too far from each other, but far enough to feel separate. Each farmer and his family lived in a particular area and farmed the land, but they shared the use of essentials such as water and grazing land. By the end of the first year, they realised that they had made a good choice, and called the area Kwaade, and the name has remained till today.

In order to ensure that they would live in harmony, the heads of the five families decided to set aside a specific time to settle disputes that had arisen between individuals and families during the first year of their settlement. On an appointed day, the head of each family was requested to bring a pot of palm wine to a meeting for sharing. To demonstrate that no-one bore any ill will towards anyone else, they poured the drinks they had brought in one common pot and each of the five family heads drank portions of the mixed wine. The remainder was then shared among the members of the five families, accompanied by merry making, to symbolise the togetherness of the families. Every year thereafter they met to socialize and discuss what had happened to their families within the past year, to settle any disputes between clans, to share sympathy with those who had lost members of their families, and to celebrate any good news. Every clan head would bring palm wine – a local wine made from the sap of the palm nut tree.

After all disputes had been settled, everyone would share the drinks they had brought and would celebrate the festivities together. This demonstration of togetherness was called “*Asafosa Nom Da*”. The name means clan drinking day, or the day of communal drinking.

This tradition continued for several years. At every meeting, some of the hunters began to report seeing an apparition: a very tall man with a big white dog standing in front of him. The man held a staff in his hand, but did not harm the

people. Several hunters reported seeing this apparition at many meetings, until a daughter of one of the families became possessed by the spirit of the apparition. The spirit said that his name was Kwadwo Topré, and that he was a spirit, not a god. He desired peace and justice, and did not like blood. If the people who had settled on his land kept the peace, he would protect them and make sure no harm came to them. It was said that when someone became very ill, Topré would appear and put his hand on the person, who would then immediately recover. They began to revere him. Those who became possessed by the spirit of Topré were called Akomfo, and they lived to serve him. The people also built a house for the priest of Topré.

The priest of Topré would take the palm wine from the heads of the clans and pour it into the communal pot. The priest would then mix the drinks together and, taking the first cup of the mixed palm wine, he would pray to *Onyankopong* (God) and through Topré, ask for protection for the people, as well as for peace, prosperity, happiness, long life and good health. After the prayers, the priest would put the mixed wine in the pots of the different clan heads and every member of the clan was to take a drink. This would go on until all the wine was finished.

Through the *obosom*, Topré would warn the people of misfortune, and tell them how to prevent it, so the people of Mamfe grew prosperous. There was much intermarriage between the original five families, and the community grew. There was a yearly ritual for Topré as well. Prior to the Asafosa Peace Ritual, the elders of the town would go to the farm to prepare special wine, and they would bring offerings of yams, cocoyam, plantains, tomatoes, drinks, and firewood to Topré.

The Topré Okomfo would perform the necessary rites before the Asafosa Peace Ritual and in so doing, they would be silent participants during the ritual. Every year, the ritual would conclude the celebration. The festival continues to this day, and

as the community has grown, so has the community pot, which is now similar to a large cauldron. A clan that had not been able to settle all disputes within its family could not partake of the Asafosa Peace Ritual, unless it was understood that, by participating in the Peace Ritual, the dispute was at an end, and could never be discussed again. Partaking in the ritual meant that all had been forgotten and forgiven.

Prior to the Peace Ritual, there were certain other rituals that had to be performed by Topré's priest. For three weeks before the ritual, there was to be no drumming, no unnecessary noise and no misbehaving. The priest and his elders would go to the farm and, as they went, they would form a line that no one was permitted to cross. If you happened to be going to the farm around the same time, you would have to wait until the entire entourage had passed. When they were returning to the village, they also formed one line, led by the priest of Topré. No one was allowed to look back; anyone who did ran the risk of not living to see the next year.

From there, they went directly to Topré's house to meet and to receive gifts. After receiving the gifts, they went to their homes to bathe and then returned to the house to begin the ritual. The subchiefs would meet first and wait for the chief, who is called *Osabarima*. When *Osabarima* was seated, the peace ritual would begin and *Osabarima* would call the heads of the families to pour their wine into the cauldron. The order of the families was as follows: Mankradohene, Gyasehene, Enyiresihene, Ponehene, Tufuhene.

The *Osabarima* was the last to bring his wine to the pot. The Asamoah family did not participate in the bringing of the wine, but they did participate in the drinking thereof because they were seen as the ones who had brought the Mamfe family to the settlement. The *Osabarima* mixed the drink and gave it to the heads of the families from the communal pot. After the priest had prayed for the township, everyone drank

the wine. The priests of Topré became the chiefs (*Osabarima*) of Mamfe because they understood the spirit of the community and its protector. This is similar to the part played by church ministers today. If a clan could not resolve an issue prior to the peace ritual, they would go to the priests for resolution. It was a disgrace to the clan and the families involved if they could not participate in the peace ritual, and so the heads of the families would make sure that their disputes were resolved beforehand. Everyone was invited to take part in the ritual, including the children.

4.11 The Asafonsa Ceremony ‘Before and After’

The Asafonsa ceremony- This ceremony is performed officially on the Sunday succeeding the ninth and last Akwasidoe in every year which normally falls in December or January after a twenty-one days *Adaebutuw* of the Okyenhene. This is observed as a prelude to the main “Ohum” festival. The celebration of the festival lasts for one week, during which days there are special days for one kind of event or personalities. For a week preceding the Sunday which marks the start of the “Ohum” festival the chiefs and Elders of Mamfe must be at home to hold meetings to settle all long-standing rifts, feuds and petty quarrels among families or between wives and husbands or between individuals; in order to pave way for Sunday’s unity drinking or sacred communion.

4.12 Sunday

About two major activities take place on this day. First, there is what can be said to be symbolic Path Clearing which is done at dawn. Asafosanom Ceremony which also happens around 2pm in the afternoon. It is a day for the Asafohene.

4.12.1 Path Clearing (Dawn)

After preparatory sacrifices and rituals, the paths leading to the Royal mausoleum and the sacred “*Kwadwo Tɔprɛ Pɔw*” are cleared in order to open the gates of Mamfe to

the gods and ancestors to come home and eat and drink and also to clear the lines of communication so that they travel home without hindrance to reaffirm the integrity of the life under the living occupier of the great 'Agyekum Sepe' Black stool of Mamfe.

4.12.2 Asafosanom Ceremony

After the Tɔprɛ House rituals, feverish preparations are made by the Asafohene and the Asafomma towards the 'Asafonsanom' the highlight of the festival. The kyirem Asafo Group led by the Asafo Siripi parade the principal streets of Mamfe chanting Asafo songs.

About 2:00pm the Asafo Siripi and his other Asafohene invite the Mamfehene, his Adadifo, elders and the entire people of Mamfe to converge on the 'Gwabobea' (durbar grounds) for the Asafonsanom ceremony amid booming of Asafo drum clang of gang-gongs, chants of Asafo songs, recitation of panegyrics and traditional history and appellation in praise of Nana Mamfehene and ensemble for dances. (figure 28)

There comes after this the placing of a large pot "Opoodo" at a sport specially prepared for the purpose (figure 29). Fresh palm wine in assorted pots and sizes are presented to the Asafohene by the Mamfehene and his Adadifo, Mankrado, Gyase and Ankobeahene, elders, prominent personalities, Akyeame and "mpoa ne mma" (refer to figure 30). All these pots of palm wine presented are poured into the big pot "Opoodo" after announcing the names of the donors (figures 31, 32, 33). The stuff is mixed thoroughly and after that, prayers are said to be followed immediately by pouring libation by the Asafohene to invoke the spirits of the ancestors, for health, plenty, long life, prosperity, unity, peace and harmony for the people during the ensuing years (figures 34, 35). The pouring of libation over all the people present are served with the palm wine drink from the "Opoodo" for the annual "Asafonsanon" by

the Asafokyeame with intermittent cultural displays, recitations and dancing at its best (figure 36).



Figure 28. A gathering at the durbar grounds for the ceremony.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

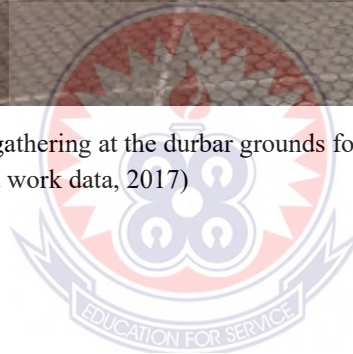


Figure 29. Asafohene sits behind the big pot to receive the drinks.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 30. Mamfehene presenting his drink to Asafohene.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 31. A clan presenting their drink to Asafohene.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 32. Asafohene announcing the names of the donors.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 33. A display of drinks donated to Asafohene.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 34. The drinks been mixed thoroughly by Asafohene.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 35. Asafohene making libation for the drinking to start.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 36. Mamfehene and his sub chiefs drinking from the pot.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.13 Monday - Day of Remembering the Dead

From dawn to dusk, there is general mourning in almost every house in remembrance of dead relatives. Beginning at dawn in every household, there is mourning for people who died during the previous year or during the period of ban on funerals and noise making. Libations are made for departed souls and loved ones. The general costume on his day is black or red mourning clothes. *Fontomfrom*, *asonko*, *adenkum*, *akagya* and *wuroko* are played to remember family members who have departed this world. This is the Remembrance Day. People gathered in their family homes and the heads of the various families made libation to those who had moved on to the other world. The mourning goes on throughout the day, drinking of wine and spirits, weeping, waiting and fasting is the order of the day.

Mamfehene sat in state together with his elders to receive greetings and condolences from people who may have lost family members and would want to inform him formally. He also received condolences and greetings from all who would want to bring him such. Gifts and donations of all kinds were presented to Mamfehene at this gathering. In the afternoon, Mamfehene accompanied by the Asafo groups and some elders went round greeting and offering condolences to all occupants of stools in the town.

4.14 Tuesday - General Meeting

In almost every house, there is communal feasting and general merry-making. This day is also marked as the general feasting day. Goats, sheep and poultry were slaughtered and meals prepared and served to household members and guests

4.15 Wednesday - Amansem

A day of planning, discussions of matters of interest including present and future plans geared at the development and progress of Mamfe town and present of accounts by various standing committees of the town.

4.16 Thursday - Youth Day

It a day set aside for the youth of Mamfe to have merry-making with Mamfehene. General merry-making, social meetings and tribal and folk dances with Mamfehene and his elders in attendance. The best player and dancers are awarded with prizes and are mostly presented by the Mamfehene. In the evening another important activity is also done. Thurs, Fire lighting ceremony.

4.17 Friday - Day of Worship and Adoration

Feeding the ancestors and customary Blessing of Mamfehene. Early before dawn, the Black Stool of Mamfe is taken to “Kwadu Afua” stream for purification. This ritual of purification is done under light security precautions. Soon after this a live sheep, drinks and other food items are presented by the Mamfehene for the preparation of food to feed the gods and the ancestors.

The Mamfehene thereafter sit in state at the Ahenfi to receive blessings and good wishes from his stool elders and the people signifies their solidarity to the great “Agyekum Sepe stool” and its occupant.

4.18 Saturday - The Grand Durbar

The grand durbar is preceded by Social greetings in the morning and followed with a brass Band parade in the afternoon (figure 37).

Shortly after 12:00noon a grand durbar is held at the ‘Gwabobea’ durbar grounds. A durbar of this nature is a privilege reserved only for guests of great distinction. From early dawn, thousands of people of Mamfe Akuapem and various towns and villages in Ghana are seen streaming into Mamfe. The Chiefs are seen in their magnificent festival attire of locally woven, stamped, embroidered and applied clothed and imported fabrics of silk, velvet, brocade and damask; de-decked with glittering jewellery of silver and gold and precious beads canopied under large state umbrellas of brilliant colours. Staking to the rhythm of traditional processional music and having carried before and after them, several items of their regalia.

The other Chiefs, elders and Atrankongua of Mamfe are later turned in a procession, some riding in gaily decorated palanquins and hammocks through the principal streets of Mamfe amidst drumming, dancing and firing of musketry (figure 38).

The principal figure of the day is the Mamfehene, the traditional head of Mamfe. He appears in all tradition splendor and majesty who occupants of the great “Agyekum Sepe” stool have built up and preserved over centuries, riding in a Palanquin (figure 39). Hovering over him and swung to the rhythm of accompanying fontomfrom music is a state umbrella made of varying richly coloured materials with symbolic gilt top.

The Mamfehene, the Ohenemea and all other tradition rulers later sit in orderly formation on a dais, facing the dais specially prepared for the dignitaries and the scene is set for the durbar proceedings (figure 40, 41, 42). Meanwhile there is

booming of drums, mooring of horns, whistle of flutes, clang of gong-gones, chants of minstrel, recitation of panegyrics, traditional history, ensembles for dances and cultural display.



Figure 37. The brass band displaying. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 38. Queen mother rides in a palanquin dancing.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 39. The Mamfehene rides in a palanquin dancing.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 40. Sword bearers at the durbar ground.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 41. Mamfehene sits in state with his sub chiefs.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 42. Queen mothers and Sub chiefs sitting in state
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.19 Sunday - Thanksgiving Service and Harvest

One thing was added to the celebration of the Ohum festival was the Thanksgiving service held on the Sunday of the Ohum week. On this day, all the ahenfo dressed up resplendently and amidst drumming processed to the Church Service which was held at the durbar grounds. Mamfehene and his people attend a non-denominational thanksgiving service at which an 'Ohum' harvest is organized in aid of development project (figures 43, 44, 45). This service incorporates within it a fund-raising for development projects for the Mamfe town. A thanks offering is presented by Mamfehene to God for His care and providence in the year.



Figure 43. Mamfehene sitting in state for service
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 44. The clergy and some dignitaries at the thanksgiving service.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 45. Mamfehene and clergy after the thanksgiving service
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.20 Monday - “Adwira” Purification Ceremony

The purification of the township ceremony is performed on the Monday to mark official end of the festival and the past year and the beginning of the New Year’s.

4.21 The Artistic Elements in the Festivals of the Akuapem

The Akuapem can boast of lots of artefacts linked to their festivals thus Ohum and Odwira. From their point of view art is an integral part of their culture and without art they do not have any form of identity. They are identified through their emblem, black stool, royal stool, festivals, rites of passage and certain customs and beliefs. These are

all coupled with lots of artefacts ranging from textiles, sculpture, paintings, bead work, leather works, body arts, verbal arts, architecture, metal work, graphic design and performing arts.

4.22 Visual Arts in the Akuapem Festival

Visual art works in the celebration of the Akuapem festivals plays an integral role and its benefits are huge. Akuapem are noted for their aesthetic impact in their celebrations. They have a great sense of beauty and this reflects in their culture and traditions. It is this visual art that makes the festivals more enjoyable, captivating and more educative. It is during the celebration of these festivals that the artefacts which until that time perceived as static art forms in the various palaces are transformed into dynamic arts. This means the arts become highly functional. For example, umbrellas are swirled in rhythmic rotation by the holders while dancing

4.22.1 Bead work

The beads are ornaments made with glass, stone, paper or similar material that is threaded with others to make a necklace worn during the Akuapem festivals. Individuals wear beads according to their status and also for identification. The beads are worn around the neck or the wrist during the Ohum and Odwira festivals of the Akuapem people (figures 46 A, B, C, 47). There are other forms of beads worn during the Ohum and Odwira festivals. Queen mothers, chiefs, traditional priests and priestesses wear special type of beads for medicinal, identification, and protective purposes. Dignitaries and visitors wear beads for aesthetic purposes. Beads are worn around the neck, arms and ankles.



A

B

C

Figure 46. Maidens in a procession to nsorem wearing beads.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 47. Queen mothers wearing beads to church service on Sunday
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.2 Textiles (Costume)

The Akuapem festivals are noted for colourful costumes. Clothing and decorations used for ceremonies are either based on myth, or captured during the war, inherited collective property and items created by a reigning chief. A collection of these ceremonial military, historical, political and religious art works and objects are symbolic. Costumes are used during these festivals to show identity and classification, historical purposes and aesthetics. For example, Banmuhene's traditional military attire clad with leaves (dark smock) signify the importance of the ceremony. The traditional chiefs mostly dress in *kente* using gold ornaments. The chief and elders of Akuapem traditional area wear colourful attire or costumes during the period. The

various groups and individuals also put on special costumes for the celebrations. These textiles products add beauty to the ceremonies (figures 48, 49 A, B).



Figure 48. Banmuhene dressed in his traditional military attire clad with leaves. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 49. People of Mamfe dressed in their clothes as they walk through the principal street at Mamfe (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.3 Traditional Umbrellas

Umbrella is one of the key regalia used by any chief no matter the level or the position. It was observed and explained by a linguist that a chief is not supposed to walk in the sun or rain so whether rain or shine chief or queen mother is covered with an umbrella. There are different sizes of umbrellas and these are mostly seen during Odwira and Ohum festivals. At the durbar grounds during Asafosanom ceremony by the people of Mamfe umbrellas are used. On Thursday also when foods are been send

to the ancestral shrines by the people of Akropong during the Odwira festival, the maidens who carry the food to the ancestral home are covered with an umbrella. (figures 50, 51, 52). This art product used protect the people and enhance the beauty of the occasion.



Figure 50. Mamfehene covered with umbrellas and goes through the principal street at Mamfe (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 51. Chiefs covered with umbrellas at the durbar grounds during Asafosanom at Mamfe (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 52. A maiden covered with umbrella in a procession to nsorem. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.4 Body Arts

Body arts refers to the art forms or ornaments worn on the body or using the body as an art form for aesthetics, protection, medicinal or healing purposes. It comes in two forms thus the body as a platform on which art forms are displayed on (carrier of arts) and the body as the art work through paintings, tattoos and scarifications. A body art changes the wearer into an object shaped by colour, movement, texture, patterns and designs. It uses the human as a way to express an individual status, spiritual beliefs and ethnic affiliation. It can be created for wear on the body in the form of garments or jewellery, coiffure, scarifications, and body paintings are the main body arts. The body art is seen on the Asafo Companies, traditional priests, priestesses, the youths,

queen mothers, chiefs and the indigenes. The zeal and enthusiasm exhibited by the indigenes makes the festivals more colourful and joyous.

4.22.4.1 Body Painting

Body painting is a temporary act of applying pigment onto the body for protection, aesthetics and religious purposes. It only lasts for some hours or days or weeks. Body paint can involve just the face or some body parts or it can be a full-body design. The Akuapem during the Ohum and Odwira festivals the actors paint their skin for identification and protection. When the maidens in a procession to nsorem (the shrine) their bodies are painted white. The bodies are painted with white clay thus kaolin, when they are possessed. The bodies become supports for creation and display of art. The clothing is primarily white calico or patterned cloth with white background. (Figure 53) The Priestesses add a variety of beads and other protective materials to their dressing which identifies them as Priestesses. Beads are used extensively both as decor to ward off evil and as professional identification. Mostly, the priestesses who serve the chief priest that perform rituals for the paramount chief and the state decorate their bodies with white clay. The white paints used on Thursday at Akropong Odwira signifies victory over the challenges faced throughout the year. The people of Mamfe, they paint their bodies white to enhance their appearance when performing. (Figure 54).



Figure 53. Maidens in procession to nsorem had their bodies painted white.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 54. A youth group have body painted white as they performed during the Ohum at Mamfe (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.5 Leather work

Leather work is the art of preparing animal skins and hides into leather and using appropriate tools and materials to produce leather articles. Leather can be used for state umbrella, swords, pouffe, whisk, mats, drums, leather-plaited stools, talisman, amulets, bows, arrows, hats, belts, footwear etc. These items mentioned are seen during the celebration of the festival. They are used for religious or magical purposes, aesthetics, body items, defence and protective purposes.

4.22.5.1 Traditional Sandals

The traditional sandals '*Ahinma*' are made from leather, with variety of symbols on it. These symbols are proverbial in nature and they carry a message across. They are motifs carved or casted and sprayed with gold, silver and bronze spray paint. The chiefs and queen mothers wear them during the Akuapem festivals as a protective wear to the durbar grounds since they process on foot to the durbar grounds. (figures 55, 56). They are also used to show identity, class and status during the festival. The sandals are worn primarily to protect the chief's feet from touching the ground. Mpaboahene is the official in charge of the different sandals worn by the Okuapehene. It is his duty to select the appropriate sandals accompanying the chief's cloth. The Ahinma black are worn whenever rituals are been performed during the festivals. The colourful Ahinma are normally used during the durbar day and on Sunday church service to enhance their appearance during the celebrations. The *Ahinma* as a footwear are displayed by the royal families and some prominent people within the Akuapem community during the celebration of the two festivals. (Figures 55, 56)



Figure 55. The chiefs and queen mothers wearing '*Ahinma*' at durbar grounds (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 56. The chiefs and elders wearing ‘Ahinma’ to perform rituals.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.5.2 Pouffes

A large thick cushion used as footstool or as a seat with no back. Footstool pouf is the perfect item to use as a footrest. Decorative piece pouffe can be used as extra seating space. It can be used as a hassock. During Akuapem Odwira festival, the Akuapem Okuapemehenmaa (queen mother) sits in public with her feet on the pouffe. At times when queen mother is addressing her subjects or receiving visitors her feet is seen on a pouffe. (figure 57).



Figure 57. Okuapemehenmaa sits in public with her feet on the pouffe.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.6 Sculpture

The celebration of Ohum and Odwira festivals encompasses variety of three-dimensional artefacts either in the round or relief from materials such as wood, stone, clay, metal etc. These figures and art forms are created by carving, modelling, casting,

assemblage or construction. Most of the sculptures used to perform specific functions are produced purposely to perform specific functions or roles and not for aesthetic purpose only. Some sculpture works used in the celebration of the Ohum and Odwira festivals are the palanquin, linguist staff, stools, rings, umbrella tops, chiefs' sword, drums etc. The objects serving as political, religious and social importance are decorated. The works express the identity and values of the people in the form of religious, social and political functions. The works are subjected to aesthetic comment and judgements.

4.22.6.1 Palanquin

During the procession in the midafternoon on Friday and Saturday many of the chiefs are carried in palanquins and paraded through the principal streets of Akropong and Mamfe on the last day of the festivals, ending in a grand durbar (figures 58, 59). The Chief dances in the palanquin signifying his authority and supremacy over the state and the indigenes.



Figure 58. Chief carried in a palanquin. (Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 59. Mamfehene carried in a palanquin and paraded through the principal streets of Mamfe. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.6.2 Stools

Stools are simple seats with two to four legs made up of wood with no back or arm rest. Some are created by carving and others are constructed. There were several stools used during the Akuapem festivals. The okra sits on stools when rituals are been performed during the festivals (figure 60). Symbols are carved on the stools giving identity and status to the persons who sit on them. In the culture of the Akuapem people, stools symbolize the soul of the society, families (clan) and they play significant roles in the Odwira and Ohum. At the durbar grounds the chiefs, queen mothers, priests, priestesses and clan leader sit on stools and other special seats prepared for them (figures 61, 62). These are symbols of authority to the chiefs, queen mothers, priests, priestesses and clan leader.



Figure 60. Akra sitting on stools while rituals are performed during the festival.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 61. Stools placed behind the pot during the festival.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 62. Asafohene sits on Stool behind the big pot during Asafonsa.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.6.3 Spokesman's Staff (*Akyeampoma*)

The staff is a large heavy stick, rod, or pole with a carved figure(s) used as a symbol of authority in ceremonies. It is made up of wood and sprayed with black, gold or bronze spray paint. *Akyeampoma* thus, Spokesman staff, is the official insignia of the *okyeame*, Spokesman, as well as a symbol of the *okyeame's* status as spokesperson, counsellor and advisor to the chiefs. There is a vast array of *akyeampoma*. Some are used for rituals and others for ceremony. The *Okyeame* serves as a mediator between the chief and whoever wants to speak to the chief. Due to the status and authority of the chief, no one speaks to him directly unless through the *Okyeame*.

During the Friday and Saturday procession of the paramount chief and the divisional chiefs, they are accompanied with the spokesmen and elders. There are several spokesmen staff paraded during the Akuapem festivals (figure 63 A, B). They have different symbols which serve as totems to represent the clan or family the chief emerged from.



A B
Figure 63. Spokesmen staff paraded during the Akuapem festival.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.6.4 Sword (*Akonfena*)

Sword is a handled weapon with a long blade that is sharp on one or both edges and sometimes carved handle. It serves as a weapon (fighting sword) and also symbolizes the state authority. It is made up of the handle and a blade with motifs and symbols incised in them. During the Akuapem festivals most the chiefs dance with the sword (figures 64,65). Showing a sign of authority and supremacy over the indigenes.



Figure 64. Mamfehene dancing with the sword.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 65. Nana Akwagyiram Opambo II danced with the sword.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.6.5 Drums

The drum is a musical instrument consisting of a skin or hide stretched across a hollow frame and played by striking the stretched skin. The drums are used by the royal house to communicate and for a tune for the chief as a talking drum (Atumpan). The drums for the royal families have some relief carvings of adinkra symbols on them. Example is the fontomfrom. These drums are used to enhance the performance the festivals. Every chief is followed by set of drummer drumming (figures 66, 67). During the lifting of Ban on Noise Making the big fontomfrom drums as well as the other drums were beaten and people danced to signify the end of the ritual preparation period.



Figure 66. Fontomfrom and Atumpan being played.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 67. Asafo group playing the Atumpan and fontom from at the durbar grounds. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.6.6 Umbrella Tops

Chiefs in the Akuapem traditional area are taken to the durbar grounds during the Odwira and Ohum festivals on foot through a procession on the principal street. They process under umbrellas. The size of the umbrella determines the status of the chief. At times when chief or the queen mother moves out to perform other functions the umbrella is used. More so, the day of thanksgiving services when the queen mother sits in her Palanquin with umbrella covering to protect her from the sun. The umbrella tops are decorated with carvings made from wood and sprayed with spray paint giving it a golden or bronze effect (figure 68 A, B, C). The symbols on the umbrella tops identify the chiefs and the authority or power they possess, philosophy of the chief and moral lesson. It also shows the families the chiefs emerged from and has symbolic meanings attached to them.



A



Figure 68. Umbrella tops at the durbar grounds. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.7 Metal work

The celebration of Ohum and Odwira festivals encompasses variety of three-dimensional artefacts from media such as bronze, brass, silver, gold etc. These art forms are created by casting, enameling, cutting, welding, annealing etc. Most of the metal works used to perform specific functions are produced purposely to perform specific functions or roles and not for aesthetic purpose only. Some metal works used in the celebration of the Ohum and Odwira festivals are the bowls, rings, trays, necklace, wristlets, bells, gong gong (dawuro-ta) etc. each of the objects perform specific function during the celebrations of the two festivals.

4.22.7.1 Rings

Rings are durable circular bands of gold, alloy, especially a small band worn for decorative, spiritual and medicinal purpose. This is made by casting of heated metals using a mould. Chiefs and queen mothers of the Akuapem during procession to the durbar grounds in the midafternoon on Saturday and Friday put on rings as part of the royal regalia (figures 69, 70). Every ring has a unique symbol on it which has its own meaning attached to it. The rings differ from one chief or queen mother to the other. The rings are for aesthetic purposes, to show class and status and also symbolic in nature.



Figure 69. A queen mother and a chief wearing rings.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 70. Two sub chiefs displaying their rings.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.7.2 Gong gong (*Dawuro-ta*)

This is a metallic casted metal piece with two of them created in one unit. It is used as a musical instrument and it is used by fontomfrom drummer to accompany their performance (figure 71). The priest and priestesses use it also during certain performances of ritual and incantations. The gong-gong is beaten to catch the attention of the people and nananom whenever they want to communicate to them.



Figure 71. A man playing Gong gong. (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.7.3 Bells

Bells are hollow open-ended metallic instrument with a rounded top that produces a ringing sound when struck. Traditionally, they are used for sending signals. They serve as a musical instrument. The bell stool which is in the form of an Elephant is reserved for the Akuapem state, uses the bell when outdoorizing the stool through the principal streets during the Odwira festival. It is carried on the back of the neck by nkonguasofo running up and down through the crowd on that day. The bells are rung for the people to pave way for easily passage of the carrier.

4.22.7.4 Metal Bowls

Metal bowls or brass bowls are traditional bowl used in performing of some important ritual during the festivals. When washing the white stools, the bowl was used (refer to figure 72). Then sending food to the ancestral shrine, it plays an important role, it is where food is put in to be carried to the shrine on Thursdays afternoon (figure 72)



Figure 72. A bowl of water with eggs and leaves meant for rituals
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 73. A bowl of food for ancestors.
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.8 Graphic Design

This is a branch of visual arts which concerns itself with the text and illustration for the purpose of communication. There were several graphic design items found during the celebration of Akuapem festivals. Examples of graphic design products or items seen during the celebration are printed t-shirts, banners, flags and buntings, posters, brochure, etc. The posters were used to advertise the festivals, the brochure gave a brief history about the festivals, and day to day activities in the festival (figure 74).

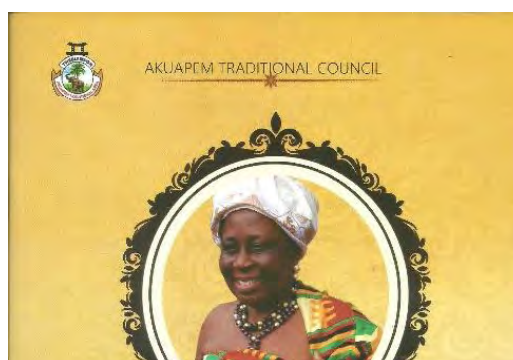


Figure 74. A brochure of Akropong Odwira
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.9 Architecture

This is a branch of visual art which concerns itself with design and construction of building and shelters to serve as a home or a meeting place to the community. Architecture comprises hut, houses, temples palaces, shrines and granaries. There are different types of architecture in Akuapem, including those serving as shrines and residences for the asofo and deities. These buildings may be in linear, semi compound or compound design. The rooms, sizes and styles vary. The abodes for the deities are kept in separate rooms. The ancestral stone seats are kept in some shrines while others are kept in public places. During the celebrations the palaces, the shrines and temples play important roles. The temple is where the thanksgiving service is held on Sunday.

4.22.10 Pottery ‘Akatakyiwa and Ahina’ (Palm wine and Water pot)

Artefact like *Akatakyiwa and Ahina* (palm wine and water pots) of different sizes are used during the celebration of the festivals. It is this pot that asafonsa ceremony is performed with. This artefact really aids in the serving of the palm wine during the celebration. A large pot “Opoodo” is placed at a spot specially prepared for the purpose. Fresh palm wine in assorted pots and sizes are presented to the Asafohene and then mixed thoroughly (figure 75). Palm wine is served from Opoodo to everyone

present at the ceremony. The large pot is seen as a sign of unity, long life, prosperity, peace and harmony for the people. For one to have the above mention then, the person must drink from the pot



Figure 75. The pot for Asafonsa ceremony (Source: Field work data, 2017)

4.22.11 Earthenware Bowl

Earthenware bowl is a native bowl used for grinding and mashing food. The bowl is used to mashed yam with red oil to feast the ancestors on Thursday during Odwira festival of Akuapem (figure 76). On Tuesday evening too, Banmuhene was seen eaten from the earthenware bowl in public. In the traditional setting, items in the shrine related to the deities are sacred. This is an important artefact in the shrine for the celebration of the festivals.



Figure 76 Mashed yam prepared in Earthenware bowl
(Source: Field work data, 2017)



Figure 77. Banmuhene eating from Earthenware bowl
(Source: Field work data, 2017)

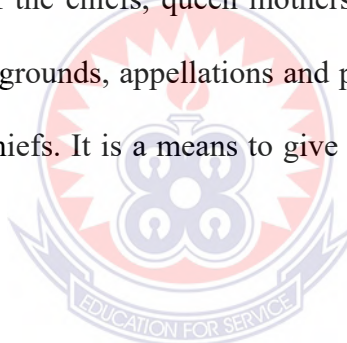
4.23 Performing Art in Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals

Performing art can be described as an art forms perceived by the sense of hearing, seeing and kinesthetic senses and made by skillful display of body gestures. Some are publicly done while others are done in secret. During the Odwira and Ohum festivals, drama, dances, music and verbal art are the modes in which the Akuapem people express their mood. That is whether they are joyful or sorrowful, or whether they love or hate. The Odwira and Ohum festivals are embodied with a lot of music,

dance, drama, speech (verbal art), and drumming. It runs through the various phases of the celebration thus the beginning to the end. Drumming and dances begin on the day the ban on noise making is lifted.

4.23.1 Music

The Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals are full of Music. It plays vitally important role in the celebration. It is as old as the festival. During the festivals the Asafo Companies sung war songs amidst with drumming and chanting. These songs are composed of the past achievements, and victory of battles lyrics. Example been a brass band parade in the afternoon playing music for people, the chiefs in their palanquin performing to the rhythm of traditional processional music of fontonfrom. During the procession of the chiefs, queen mothers, linguists, traditional priests and priestesses to the durbar grounds, appellations and praises are showered onto them in a form of songs to the chiefs. It is a means to give recognition to the chiefs and also make their presence felt.



4.23.2 Drama

Drama in Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals are real life events which are particularly exciting and emotionally involving. It is an important part of the celebration. Drama overspread through the activities of the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals. They manifested in the invoking and outdooring of the deities through the selected routes of the town. Example, the procession from the palace through the principal streets of *Akropong* took a long time to arrive at *Nsorem* as the carriers got possessed by the ancestral spirits. Sometimes, the carriers showed these spirits filled signs by acting strangely and refusing to move. When this happened, leading men from the stool-houses from which the carriers affected are carrying food

pour schnapps on their feet. When they still do not move, these men put schnapps into their mouths and blow into the faces of the possessed carriers.

4.23.3 Drumming

Drumming plays key roles in the celebration of the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals. At about eight o'clock in the morning, a drummer, standing in-front of the *abonsambo* crossed the street from the entrance of the palace and sounded the *Nkrawire drum*. He repeated these three times. After the third sounding, the *Adumfo*, *Banmufo*, *Apesemaka Nkonguasofo*, *Soodofo* and *Akyeame* went to the palace of Okuapehene to declare their intention to go and clear the paths from the old site of the town, *Amamprobi*, to the new site *Akropong*. The *Nkrawire* drummer led the delegation. When the *Omanhene* who was sitting in state at the palace with the elders was informed by one of the messengers from the sacred grove that the group was on its way back, the drummers beat first, the talking drums, then the *fonfomfrom*, to summon all the elders to the palace of the *Omanhene*. Then again, immediately after the symbolic presentation of the *Odwira* to the *Omanhene*, the ceremony to lift the ban on noise-making imposed six weeks earlier was performed officially. The big *fontomfrom* drums as well as the other drums were beaten and people danced to signify the end of the ritual preparation period.

To the durbar grounds, each chief, each queen mother sitting in a palanquin was carried either on the heads of carriers or on their shoulders through Mamfe and Akropong respectively. Each of these personalities had a retinue and was accompanied by a drum orchestra. There were drumming, dancing, singing and firing of musketry. Some groups were accompanied by brass bands. By the time the *Okuapehene* arrived on the durbar grounds, all the other chiefs and sub chiefs were

seated. He went round and greeted all of them. While he was doing this, the *fontomfrom* and the *atumpan* drums were sounding appellations to him.

4.23.4 Dance

At Mamfe on Thursday is a day set aside for general merry-making, social meetings and tribal and folk dances with Mamfehene and his elders in attendance. Prizes to the best player and dancers are presented by the Mamfehene. At Akropong also Thursday which is the day New Chiefs are Outdoor. Immediately after the ceremonial ritual visit to the *Odosu* there was a special ceremony at the palace. The *Okuapehene* sat in state and amidst drumming and dancing people who had newly been elevated to the status of chiefs were presented to him. There is a dance performance by individuals at the durbar. The dance moves accompanied with the *fontomfrom* drum which entertains the people at the durbar grounds.

4.23.5 Verbal Arts

The celebration of the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals requires a series of prayers which are often said in collaboration with the pouring of liquids like palm wine, schnapps and others as libation. As part of the invocations, praise names, attributes and proverbs of the ancestors and deities are mentioned. Appropriate words designed to yield desirable results are artistically employed in composing appellations and singing of praise names which are used to flatter the gods and ancestors during the festivals, for their spirits to protect the people and supply their needs. Prayers in the form libation making are means by which the people of Akuapem communicate with their protective gods and ancestors. The prayers usually consist of invocations, petitions and concluding remarks.

4.24 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Cultural Elements

As it may have been realised by now, the Odwira and Ohum festivals are celebrated by Akuapem people with great pomp and pageantry to remind them of the great exodus of their ancestors. Without the festivals, it would have been impossible for the people and their culture to function perfectly. The Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals, being a social and collective activity, reflects some aspects of the people's beliefs and other aspects of the culture of the Akuapem citizens. Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals ushers the people into a new year with the hope that their objectives will be achieved.

The well-being and continuity of the Akuapem society are always of great importance to them, and that gives rise to their desire for good health, increase in procreation of children, the fertility of the land and animals, and the availability of material means to sustain their society. These needs they believe, can partly be satisfied through the celebration of the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals, which is done to honour the Supreme Being, the other divinities, the ancestors and all other benevolent spirits in Akuapem. This ceremony serves as a means by which the people propitiate the spirits of their dead rulers and their protective gods, by giving them offerings and thanks for both the present and future sustenance.

Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals are occasions for the people to renew their loyalty and allegiance to their chiefs, honouring them where with gifts and services. Many of the people make it a point to go to the chief's palace to participate in the drumming and dancing and other activities of the festival. The presentation of gifts is not confined to chiefs. Exchange of gifts such as clothing, drinks, meat, food items such as yam are given out. It takes place between parents and children, between friends as well as between supervisors and their subordinates. Recreational activities

being a need which the people of Akropong and Mamfe share with other people in Ghana and the rest of the world are not left out during timing and planning of the ceremonies. Currently, aside the singing, drumming and dancing which form an essential part of the festivals, clean ups, get –to-together and beauty pageants are organized to make the celebration more pleasurable and memorable.

4.25 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Religious Aspects

Religious aspects assume a significant place as one of the two major cultural components of this festival. Religious beliefs, rites, rituals and other ceremonies constitute the religious aspect of the festival. The people of Akropong and Mamfe Akuapem believes in life after death and the existence of the spirits of their past rulers and ancestors in the spirit world, their nearness to and influence on the living and the influence of the lesser gods created by the supreme being, God, upon whom the well-being of their society depends. The festival provides occasions during which the people collectively, by means of sacrifice and offerings, reemphasise their dependence on God, ancestral spirits and other gods. In so doing, both festivals reinforce and reaffirms their religious values that inspire the people Akuapem ways of life.

The rites and rituals embodied in the festivals give the participants some psychological guarantee of the blessings and protection of the gods and ancestral spirits, and thus the feeling of security as they enter a new year. The gods and the spirits are appease by means of the rites, by giving them food and drinks and soliciting for blessings and protection, their feeling of security is heightened. Having done this to please the ancestral spirits and protective gods, they entertain the hope that these beings will take care of them. The rights and ceremonies relieve them of any anxiety of a possible famine resulting from poor harvest, diseases, death and lack

of children. The festivals thus arm members of the community psychologically to face the future with a feeling of security.

4.26 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Social Aspects

The generation of social cohesion is an example of the effect the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals have on the people of Akropong and Mamfe. Collective participation of members of the community in public ceremonies such as religious rites, play significant role in social cohesion. This occurs through various elements. The custom of exchanging gifts or gift presentation is featured in these festivals. In addition to making physical objects available to people, these customs unfailingly strengthen social cohesion as a whole. There are the reunion of families and the settling of disputes between families during this period.

Aside strengthening the relationship between members of the community, these festivals offers the people an opportunity to display some of their cultural expertise before onlookers, thus inflating their ego as members of one community. Their self-esteem are enhanced because by exhibiting their rich cultural activities such as drumming and dancing skills, clothing, etc. they gain the admiration of people. These feeling of being an object of admiration and approbation by other people naturally increase their sense of worth. The people sharing such intense pleasure in the sight of admirers naturally increase the feelings of belonging to their society. This social cohesion brings unity among the entire community.

The chiefs and their subjects are given the opportunity to interact freely with one another. In the absence of these festivals, one might find it difficult to see or interact with his chief. Socially, these festivals pave the ways for the people to interact with heads of states, ministers and other people from all walks of life since such

personalities often attend these festivals. Thus, these festivals create the chance for the society to obtain favours from their superiors.

Again, during these festivals, children have the opportunity to socialize with adults from various families, something that rarely occurs. One social event is the opportunity the people get to meet their priests and other traditional people who are believed to be the intermediaries between the visible and the invisible worlds, and through whom the favours of the spirits are thought to be obtained. The people of Akropong and Mamfe also believe that, during Odwira and Ohum festivals the gods and ancestors mingle and interact invisibly with the people.

4.27 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Economic Aspect

The celebration of Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals provides opportunities for economic activities to be carried out by certain individuals, groups and companies. One major area where people get the opportunity to earn income and improve their economic status during the celebration of Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals is the catering and hospitality industry. During the period, catering services, way-side food vendors, cooked food, hawkers, drinking bars and spots and fast food joints spring up in areas which are likely to receive a huge number of people. Transportation services are also usually at its peak during the Odwira and Ohum festive season. Bus and taxi drivers use this opportunity to increase their income. This is because a large number of travellers from far and wide come to witness or take part in the various events. In recent times, activities lined up for the festival are widely advertised on the electronic and print media, social media. Banners and posters are produced and placed at vantage points for people to read and be informed. Operators of these avenues take this opportunity to earn some income for themselves.

These festivals offer the opportunities to photographers and video camera persons to ply their trade to earn income. Individuals and groups of people may want to be photographed or captured on video when they are involved in an activity during these festivals. Tailors and dress-makers as well as hair stylists get very busy around the Odwira and Ohum festive seasons. The number of clients who go for their services usually doubles or even triples, thereby enhancing the economic well-being of owners of these businesses.

4.28 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Political Aspect

In the Akuapem traditional setting, the Odwira and Ohum festivals have political undertones. The festivals are instituted upon chieftaincy. These festivals have been seen revolves around chiefs and their elders, who play vital roles in them. As said earlier, the chiefs and their elders sit in state and receive homage from their subjects. The chiefs being the central figures in the celebration dance to the *fontomfrom* and other musical ensembles. During the dance, some of the chiefs' subjects hail and praise them with verbal encomiums and with raised hands in which two fingers on each hand are pointed to the sky to show the highness of the chiefs. During the dance, the chiefs take the opportunity, through gestures, to express that their areas of jurisdiction belong to them.

These traditional political roles of the festivals have taken on a national outlook. The celebration of the Odwira and Ohum festivals provides occasions and opportunities for exchange of messages of goodwill between chiefs whose people are celebrating the festival and the government of the day. The head of government or his representative attends the festivals to express his or her best wishes to the chiefs and people, and unobtrusively solicit political support. The chiefs in turn use the occasion to express their loyalty and support for themselves and their people to the

government, and sometimes seize the opportunity to make their needs known to the head of state of Ghana.

On the durbar days, the hierarchy of Akuapem chieftaincy is reemphasised through the hierarchical arrangement of chiefs. Subjects re-enact their subordinate statuses by paying homage to their chiefs. Even the offspring of chiefs are given the due respect in regard to the roles they play during the festivals. Furthermore, the spirits of the royal ancestors are repeatedly reminded that they are still the spiritual chiefs of the Akuapem chiefdom.

4.29 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Health and Medical Aspect

Akuapem culture provides opportunities and occasions to develop an individual's physical and mental health are in Odwira and Ohum festivals. The festivals provide an avenue for the fulfilment of certain psychological needs of individuals. These encourages the individuals to participate in the festivals. Emotional tension and stresses are always present in human life and festival-goers have their share of them. When the tensions and stresses are not released, the person who has them becomes withdrawn, aggressive and irritable. The Odwira and Ohum festivals enables participants to actively respond to the activities such as laughing, cheering, participating in processions and walking onto stage to offer money or praise to dancers and singers in appreciation of their performances. These release their emotional tensions and stresses and lower the incidence of mental derangement, hypertension, diabetes and other sicknesses.

4.30 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Educational Aspects

Akuapem Odwira and Ohum are commemorative festivals, invariably reminds the people of Akropong and Mamfe of significant past events in their social life. The recital of ethnic histories during the festivals serves its educational functions. In the

traditional societies where in the past there were scarce written records, the seasonal recital of histories helped in the transmission of traditions from generation to generation. In these regards, the festival offers some historical lessons about Akropong and Mamfe. The Odwira and Ohum festivals are viewed as an annual dramatization of important elements in the cultures of people who celebrate them. Probably, there cannot be any better means of educating younger generations of the community, researchers and admirers in the dynamic processes of their culture than their active involvement in such dramatizations. These festivals have offered many researchers, such as the present writer, the opportunity to study and report on it. Today, many students, teachers and lecturers' study to teach about the Odwira and Ohum festivals. Some books, newspapers and other writings have become sources of learning about the Odwira and Ohum festivals. Undoubtedly, the festivals teach about Akuapem traditional religion since it informs the people of the need to worship and honour their gods and ancestors and since the priests and chiefs insist on the performance of religious rituals. These festivals have social lessons to offer since it facilitates social interaction, settling of disputes and family re-union. Again, it offers health education, it offers economic education. Those who trade during these festivals gain experience in trading activities.

4.31 Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals and their Impacts on the People and their Culture

Currently, festivals are considered to contribute significantly to cultural and economic developments all over the world. Festival organisers now use historical and cultural themes to develop the annual events to attract visitors and create cultural images in host communities. Apart from addressing the needs of a group, the hosting of events is often developed because of the tourism and economic opportunities in addition to

social and cultural benefits. There is a growing influence on the behaviour of government and business in general in the developments of event and tourism industries. This suggests that festivals impact on the host population and stakeholders in a number of ways. These factors are primarily concerned with social and cultural, political and economic impacts. There is a revolution in festivals which has been stimulated through commercial aspect to meet the changing demand of the local community groups and increasing business opportunities for the event organisations and local businesses. Festivals help to develop local pride and identity for the local people.

4.32 The importance of Akuapem Odwira and Ohum Festivals to the people.

The Akuapem Odwira Ohum, similar to many other traditional festivals has certain importance to the people. In fact, this importance which may as well be noted as its objectives, motivates the people to celebrate the festival in the first place.

The celebration of Akuapem Odwira and Ohum Festivals gives the people the opportunity to make requests for the satisfaction of their needs and also, give thanks for both past and future sustenance. These ensures a cordial relationship between the people and their ancestors and gods.

The rites and rituals involved in the celebration of the festivals give the people of Akropong and Mamfe psychological reassurance of the blessings and protection of the gods and ancestral spirits and thus a feeling of security as they enter a new year.

The celebration of the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum Festivals offers the opportunity for the people to renew their loyalty and allegiance to their chiefs. They do this in the form of presentation of gifts and services.

The generation of social cohesion is one other importance that the Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals offer the people of Akropong and Mamfe. This is

exhibited through the making of gifts available to people and the reunion of family members during the occasion.

Being a commemorative festival, it reminds the people of significant past events in the social lives of the people and the recital of histories also generate the feeling of oneness among them.

The festivals offer chiefs and their subjects the opportunity to meet and interact with one another. It is during the festivals that most of the people see or interact with their chiefs and other important personalities in the society.

The festivals provide the opportunity for certain individuals and groups to do business. Businesses such as catering services, drinking bars, transportation services, tailoring and dress-making, hairstyling and photography thrive during the festivals. Operators of these businesses take these opportunities to earn income for their sustainability.

The Akuapem Odwria and Ohum festivals enable the participants through their active responses to drumming and dances, songs and showering of praises to release their emotional tensions and stresses.

Apart from singing, drumming and dances which form an essential part of the festivals, health walks enhance the physical and mental well-being of the people today. It is clear from the study that the Akuapem Odwria and Ohum festivals, in all its descriptive form, plays an essential role in the lives of the people of Akuapem people. Its institution has favoured a lot of social bond among the people of Akuapem traditional area.

4.33. Similarities and Differences between Ohum and Odwira festivals

4.33.1 Similarities in Ohum and Odwira festivals

A careful look at the Ohum and Odwira festivals reveals some common features and beliefs in performance of both festivals. Generally, Odwira and Ohum festivals reveal the people's belief in life after death and the nearness of dead ancestors to their living descendants.

Secondly, the Odwira and Ohum festivals provide the platform for the people to remember their past leaders and ask them for protection.

Thirdly, the Ohum and Odwira are used as a medium for purification of the whole Akuapem community so that the people can enter the new year with confidence and hope.

The Odwira and Ohum festivals are used as a period to imposed silence on the people by the chiefs and elders to welcome home the ancestors. That is the ban on drumming, singing, weeping and all forms of noise making by the Akuapem, during the Odwira and Ohum festivals.

In preparation to welcome the ancestors, the path is cleared. The Odwira and Ohum festivals of the Akuapem have the characteristic of clearing of paths leading to the royal mausoleum. Although these rituals are expressed in different ways, they all seem to have a common goal. That is, they all believe that it clears the way for the ancestors to come in and dine with their people without any obstacles.

The Odwira and Ohum festivals have a day for general mourning in remembrance of dead relatives which happened in every home.

The Odwira and Ohum festivals have Sunday set aside, which is within the week of the festival as a thanking service and fundraising for the both towns. Thanksgiving service are organised during Odwira and Ohum festivals on Sunday in

the festival week. This is done to thank God for successfully taken them through the six days of their program. These platforms are also used to raise funds for the community.

During the Odwira and Ohum festivals a day is chosen as sacred where the black stools are taken from the palace to the main stream for purification. Most at times the purifications are normally done at dawn of the day chosen.

During the Odwira and Ohum festivals two days are set aside as days for feasting. These are communal feasting and general merry-making and the ancestral food for the stool house. For the people of Mamfe, the days are Tuesday and Friday. The people of Akropong have the days as Thursday and Friday. On Tuesday and Thursday, the day is term as communal feasting and general merry-making for the people of Mamfe and Akropong respectively. Goats, sheep and poultry were slaughtered and meals prepared and served to household members and guests. It is on the same day that, the ancestors are fed with food. The people of Mamfe and Akropong on Friday, prepare specially made food and drinks which were sprinkled on shrine believed to house for the ancestral spirits for ancestor feed on. For the people of Akropong name it as Asonahene goes to nsorem. It is the day the ancestral food of the Asonahene stool will be sent to Nsorem.

4.33.2 Difference between the two festivals

The people of Akropong during the Odwira festivals clear the paths leading to the royal mausoleum on Mondays, but the people of Mamfe Akuapem during the Ohum festivals clear the paths for the ancestors to come home on Sunday.

The people of Akropong during the Odwira festivals carry the chief and queen mother through the principal streets on Friday, are on the same day grand durbar for

the people at Akropong is held. But the people of Mamfe parade their chief and queen mother on Saturday, and also the day the durbar is held.

The people of Akropong during the Odwira festivals mourn in remembrance of their dead relatives which happened in every home during the year, were done on Wednesday. But People of Mamfe during the Ohum festivals on the other hand mourn in remembrance of dead their relatives on Monday.

The people of Akropong commence the activities in the Odwira festivals with the out dooring of the new yam to the people. While the people of Mamfe commences the Ohum festival with Asafosan Ceremony.

On Thursday, as part of the rituals during the Odwira festival the people of Akropong take the black stools from the palace to the site of the main waterbody 'Adami' for purification. The activities commence in midnight with drum sound warning people not to come out. But, the people of Mamfe as part of the rituals in Ohum festival, early before dawn, the Black Stool of Mamfe is taken to "Kwadu Afua" stream for purification. This ritual is on Friday.

The people of Mamfe during the Ohum festival have named Thursday as youth day. It a day set aside for the youth of Mamfe to have merry-making with Mamfehene. General merry-making, social meetings and tribal and folk dances with Mamfehene and his elders in attendance. But the people of Akropong during the Owdira festival do not have such activities for the youth with Omanhene of Akuapem traditional area.

4.34 The Educational Aspects for Preservation in Odwira and Ohum Festivals

Since the old days, Akuapem traditional festivals have become an indispensable part of people's life. The traditional festivals evoke patriotism, national sense, massive solidarity and exchange of culture. They are also platforms to preserve, pass down the

community's culture to the next generation to learn and participate in them. The festivals help to transmit, maintain, and project the culture of the Akuapem traditional area. There are aspects of Akuapem festivals that need preservation for educational purposes to nurture people's cultural identities as follows:

Firstly, the oral history of Odwira and Ohum festivals of Akuapem people needs to be preserved for educational purposes for people or students to learn. The festivals satisfy people's thirst to return to the roots. The more modern the society is, the more people wish to learn about their original nature and history of the festivals. This will project the Akuapem festivals.

Secondly, the artifacts used during the celebration of the two festivals should be preserved for educational purposes. The craftsman will show the learner how to use tools and media to make artifacts in their work place. Having learned and mastered a few basic techniques and skills, then the learner will be able to make artifacts. In various institution students will learn about the artifacts possibly produced some for their projects.

Thirdly, the traditional dances and drumming of Akuapem people should be preserved for educational purposes. A dance like fontomfrom should be preserved and taught in schools during cultural festivals. The festivals are used to learn the traditional dances, drumming, and art of the area. This is important for Akuapem people not to forget its culture.

Fourthly, the rites and rituals involved in the celebration of Odwira and Ohum should be preserved for educational purposes. Like libation making, purification of the stool, people and the town must be preserved. The rites and rituals in Akuapem festivals give the people and students of art some psychological reassurance of the blessings and protection of the gods and ancestral spirits and thus a feeling of security

as they enter a new year. These was affirmed by the State Secretary at the Akuapem palace. Celebration of the both festivals gives the people the opportunity to make requests for the satisfaction of their needs and also, give thanks for both past and future sustenance. This ensures a cordial relationship between the people and their ancestors and gods.

Fifthly, the regalia and state symbols used during Akuapem Odwira and Ohum should be preserved for people whenever information is needed for education purposes. These regalia are used in Owdira and Ohum festivals; stools, swords, crown, jewelries, umbrellas, clothes, palanquins, and linguist staff. The use of State symbols and regalia will help bring to the fore some of the numerous unknown Akuapem symbols and regalia, understand their meanings and the wisdom behind them. Students and people in academia will thus begin to appreciate the cultural philosophy of the people of Akuapem, since the meanings of these symbols will be used with the names in the designs of the regalia.

Lastly, the Asafosanom ceremony of the people of Mamfe Akuapem should be preserved since is a unique art that one needs to learn. This activity therefore, promotes unity and peace within the family system and the Akuapem community as a whole.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents the summary of the major findings of the study, the conclusions drawn, recommendations and suggestion for further studies.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The Odwira and Ohum festivals of the Akuapem people are celebrated annually to cleanse the town and the people to prepare them towards the coming year. The Odwira and Ohum festivals are a week-long celebration with specific activities designated to each day within the week. The festivals commenced with a path clearing by youth groups on Monday by the people of Akropong and the people of Mamfe on Sunday. On this day, ancestral spirits were symbolically invited into town by way of clearing the path between the ancestral world and the Akropong and Mamfe towns. After the path is cleared, the ancestors are deemed to have been invited back into town to join in the celebration. On same day, the people of Mamfe celebrates Asafosanom Ceremony led by Asafohene, the ban on noise making also lifted. The Monday, the people of Mamfe, declares it as general mourning in almost every house in remembrance of dead relatives. On Tuesday, the people of Akropong, the six weeks ban placed on eating of new yam is lifted. On the same day, the white stool is washed and cleansed and the ban on noise making also lifted. The people of Mamfe, on Tuesday, pronounces as communal feasting and general marry-making.

On Wednesday, the people of Akropong, there is general mourning for dead souls that departed the land of the living the year in review prior to the festival, the people of Mamfe on this day, plan, discusses matters of interest for development and progress of Mamfe town. On Thursday, the people of Akropong, between midnight and dawn cleanse the town and the black stools, the Omanhene goes to pay a visit to the Odosu in the house of the Banmuhene; and later sits in council to receive homage from all the chief of the Akuapem traditional area. Also, on this same Thursday, there is feasting and marry making. The ancestral spirits are also fed on the same day. The people of Mamfe, set that aside for the youth of Mamfe to have merry-making with Mamfehene. General merry-making, social meetings and tribal and folk dances with Mamfehene and his elders in attendance. On Friday, the people of Akropong, there is a durbar for the chiefs and people of the entire Akuapem state. The people of Mamfe, on Friday, early before dawn, the black stool of Mamfe is clean. On this day, feeding the ancestors and customary Blessing of Mamfehene. The Mamfehene thereafter sit in state at the Ahenfi to receive blessings and good wishes from his chiefs and stool elders. On Saturday, in Akropong, the *Okuapehene* sends a delegation to represent him at Amanokrom Odwira. On this day, societies and clubs held meetings. In the evening of the same day, various forms of entertainment - dances, get to together, Miss, Odwira and other competitions are held. On Saturday, the people of Mamfe, there is a durbar for the chiefs and his people. There is a thanks-giving church service on Sunday where people contribute and pledge to support the developmental projects of the impending year in the traditional area.

The Akuapem Owdira and Ohum festivals displays lots of artistic elements ranging from visual arts, performing arts and verbal arts. The Akuapem culture, history and traditions are all inculcated in their arts. The choice of arts used differ

from people to people. These have increased the number of artworks used during the celebration of the festivals. The artworks used were to perform specific functions and for aesthetic purposes. Some were symbolic in their usage.

The arts form major part and play significant roles in the celebrations of the festivals. The existence of the Akuapem are traced through their arts. Their history, philosophies, values, culture and traditions are seen in their arts. The visual, verbal and performing arts serve as an identity to the Akuapem people and leaving the art out makes the festivals ordinary and a common place. The arts in the festivals transform the serene town into a colorful and vibrant environment with lots of artefacts, music, drama, and merry making.

It was obvious from the research study that festivals which is part of our culture, through festivals, the arts play an essential role in the lives of the Akuapem people. Among the Akuapem it is brought up vividly on special occasions for the citizens to be inspired by the glorious past of their ancestors. On the occasion the people rededicated themselves to the ideals of their founding fathers when songs, appellations, idioms, artifacts, costume and other objects depicting the various phases of their history were shown in public. The umbrella tops tell stories of bravely in wars; the horns defiantly flourished the themes and mottoes of kings, chiefs and legends and myths of ancestors dead or alive. The drum language, music and songs all had stories to tell about history, succession of the past to the present which served as an inspiration for the future.

The information gathered has shown that there were similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem. In similarities, the both festivals have day for remembering the dead, a day for purifying the community, banning on noise making, clearing the path for ancestors, day for feasting, washing of the black

stool, thanksgiving service. The researcher attests that there are variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals, the people of Akropong during Odwira carry their chiefs, queen mothers and have their durbar held on Friday Mamfe Ohum is on Saturday, mourning the dead is done Wednesday at Akropong during Odwira, Mamfe Ohum have their mourning Monday. Akropong begins the festival with outdoorings of new yam and Mamfe commence with Asafosanom ceremony, black stool at Akropong during Odwira are purified on Thursday midnight as Mamfe purify their black stool on Friday dawn

From the study, it revealed the Oral history of the festivals, artefacts, dance and drumming, rites and rituals, the regalia, the Asafosa ceremony, dramatizations of the festivals as educational aspects of the Odwira and Ohum festivals that needs to be preserved. These are seen as vehicles for the transmission and learning from generation to generation to safeguard Akuapem culture through the festivals.

5.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, the Odwira and Ohum of the Akuapem people, in itself are significant way through which the culture and history of the Akuapem state is preserved and transferred to generations. It is evident from the information gathered in the study that the researcher has given the account of the Odwira and Ohum festivals. The study has brought out the significance and philosophies behind the various activities that characterized the celebration in both festivals.

The artistic aspects in the two festivals which were among the findings as in the study are subservient to the promotion of the festivals and without arts the celebration might a failure. The study revealed that without the cultural relation to arts in festivals, the arts would be seen as ordinary and discussing them becomes straightforward thereby considering only the physical beauty. It is obvious that the

arts are paramount in the celebration of Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals. The festivals without the artistic aspect would be difficult to achieve main objectives in the celebration of the festivals. The culture of Akuapem people cannot be complete without art forms. It is evident that art plays significant role in Akuapem culture.

On the similarities and variations in the Odwira and Ohum festivals findings made on the festivals attest to that Akuapem festivals (Odwira and Ohum) have similarities and variation in the celebration of the festivals. This research work is a contribution to the documentation of two festivals in terms of their similarities and variation in the celebration of Akuapem culture. The work has really brought to light the similarities and variations in Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals.

The activities in Odwira and Ohum festivals are very significance to the Akuapem people. Their Oral history of the festivals, artefacts, dance and drumming, singing, rites and rituals, the regalia, the Asafosa ceremony, dramatizations of the festivals are so educative and unique to the Akuapem people. These activities reaffirmed the religious values attached the festivals. The study realised that the Oral history of the festivals, artefacts, dance and drumming, rites and rituals, the regalia, the Asafosa ceremony, dramatizations of the festivals, contributes to the educational aspects for preservation. A better means of educating younger generations in the dynamic processes of their culture than their active involvement in dramatizations in the festivals. These activities help in transmitting the educational aspect of the festivals to the Akuapem and for that matter Ghana at large.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the researcher made the following recommendation on Akuapem Odwira and Ohum festivals for the people of Akuapem

which invariably will project and materialize their cultural identity for national, local and traditional state.

With regard to the artistic aspects of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum been brought to light, it is recommended that the Akuapem Traditional Council should have a museum or gallery for keeping the artworks used in their festivals and train personnel to educate people about the role they play in the festivals and artistic elements in relation to their culture.

With regard to the similarities and variation of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals. The Akuapem Traditional Council should create a digital repository for the two festivals which will serve as evidence for the people to compare festivals.

The festivals are educational materials in the traditional society that one has to devote his or her life time to learn. It is suggested that it is important for current generation to learn in their various societies and teaching of culture should be intensify in the educational curricular.

Stakeholders are recommended to create educational platforms that will help to preserve and promote the Akuapem festivals as a national heritage.

5.5 Suggestion for further studies

This research study looked at a comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festivals among the Akuapem. It has given an account of the celebration of Odwira and Ohum festivals.

The artistic aspects of the two festivals and their effects on the people of Akuapem were discussed. The study looked at the similarities and variations in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem. The researcher was of the view that cultures through festivals were lifelong created events that had revolved and continue to bring

unity in the communities. Further research on iconography in Odwira and Ohum festivals among Akuapem or Comparative study of Odwira and Ohum festival in Adukrom – Akuapem, Apriede Akuapem or Larteh Akuapem or The arts in Odwira and Ohum festivals among the Akuapem should be explored by scholars and researchers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

This interview guide is to assist the researcher to have insight information on the Odwira and Ohum festivals as celebrated by the Akuapem.

Name

Age

Sex

Occupation

Social standing

The Origin of Akuapem

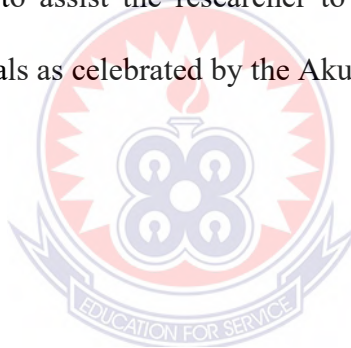
The etymology of ‘’Akuapem’’

What is Odwira?

What brought about the Odwira festival?

Do you know the historical fact and mythological story behind the Odwira festival?

What is the period of the Odwira Festival?



How is the Odwira festival?

What is the duration of the Odwira festival?

What is the significance of the various rituals in the festival celebration?

What is the objective of the Odwira festival to the people of Akropong Akuapem?

Describe the Odwira festival celebration?

What artefacts are used when celebrating the Odwira festival?

What makes Akropong Odwira festival similar to Mamfe Ohum festival?

What is the difference between Akropong Odwira festival and the Mamfe Ohum festival?

What is Ohum?

What brought about the Ohum festival?

Do you know the historical fact and mythological story behind the Ohum festival?

When do you celebrate the Ohum Festival?

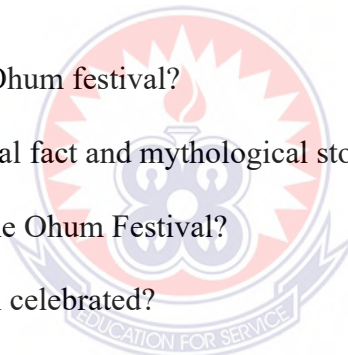
How is the Ohum festival celebrated?

How long is the Ohum festival celebrated?

What is the significance of the various rituals in the festival celebration?

What is the main significance of the Ohum festival to the people of Mamfe Akuapem?

Describe the Ohum festival celebration?



APPENDIX II

Observation checklist used by the researcher for data collection.

Owdira festival

1. Observing the procession to Amamprobi for path clearing on Monday.
2. Observing the outdoor of new yam through selected routes in the town on Tuesday morning, cleansing of the white stools by nkonguasofo, ushering the Ancestors to Town all happen on Tuesday.
3. Banmuhene eating from Earthenware bowl after returning from Amamprobi.
4. Observing general mourning on Wednesday, as the Queenmother, elders and sub chiefs sit in state to receive guests and well-wishers. And also, Queenmother, going round greeting and offering condolences to all occupants of stools in the town.
5. Observing general feasting on Thursday. Especially the afternoon procession of maidens to nsorem through the principal street to feed the ancestors. And, Banmuhene sprinkling food and drinks to nananom.
6. Making libation at the Okuapehene's palace and Libation is made at the evil stone in front of the palace by Banmuhene.
7. Schnapps poured on the feet of a possessed maiden to move.

8. Observing the thanksgiving service as the queen mother procession to Christ Church.

Ohum festival

1. Asafohene sits behind the big pot to receive the drinks
2. Mamfehene presenting his drink to Asafohene
3. Asafohene announcing the names of the donors
4. The drinks been mixed thoroughly by Asafohene
5. Observations and libation prayer at the durbar ground for Asafosa
6. Mamfehene and his sub chiefs drinking from the pot
7. Mamfehene sits in state with his sub chiefs and queen mothers
8. The Clergy and some dignitaries at the thanksgiving service
9. Procession of Mamfehene and Queen mother rides in a palanquin dancing 2.

Preparation of the ancestral meals

