

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, GHANA**

**A HISTORY OF  
KUMASI PUBLIC SCULPTURAL ART**

**CELESTINA CLETUS TIMBILA**




**M.PHIL ARTS & CULTURE**

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA - GHANA

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A thesis in the Department of Music Education,  
School of Creative Arts, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
University of Education, Winneba  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for award of the Master of Philosophy in Arts and Culture degree.

**AUGUST, 2017**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

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

Signature: 

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2017

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this Thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Principal Supervisor's Name: Dr. Ebenezer K. Acquah

Signature: 

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2017

## **ABSTRACT**

The main objective of this thesis was to document public sculptural art works in Kumasi in Ghana for posterity. A descriptive research method of qualitative approach was employed to compile, analyze, interpret and discuss the findings. Histories behind individual art works that were hidden or getting lost due to unawareness and generational gap were unpacked and documented. Art forms such as sculptures which were made to represent the oratory of the people were found at strategic locations such as the Okomfo Anokye roundabout in Kumasi. These public sculptural art forms represent past records and events, however only few people in the Ashanti Region could associate their history with the art form that represent them. It was also observed that there seem to be a disconnect between art historians and artists – collaboration in the promotions and preservation of art is an issue. It is recommended that historians and artists should not see themselves as different people but should work together to promote and preserve art in Ghana. Also, educators at the various tourist centres in the region should use artefacts in telling the history of the Asantes and other stories to tourists.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
DECLARATION ... ..	ii
ABSTRACT ... ..	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ... ..	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS ... ..	v
LIST OF FIGURES ... ..	ix
LIST OF TABLES ... ..	xi
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b> ... ..	<b>1</b>
Overview ... ..	1
Background to the Study ... ..	1
Statement of the Problem ... ..	2
Objectives of the Study ... ..	4
Research Questions ... ..	4
Significance of the Study ... ..	5
Delimitation ... ..	6
Limitations ... ..	6
Definition of Terms ... ..	7
Abbreviations Used ... ..	8
Organization of the Rest of Text ... ..	8
<b>CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b> ... ..	<b>9</b>
Overview ... ..	9
Culture ... ..	9

The Cultural Turn	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Cultural History of Kumasi	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Map of the olden days Asante Kingdom	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Map of the present day Asante Kingdom now Ashanti Region	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Clans of the Asantes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
Art in public places	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
Public Art in Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
Art forms used in the Ashanti Region of Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
The role of art in cultural heritage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	45
History Preservation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
Preservation of culture through art	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	51
Preservation of the Public Art forms in the Ashanti Region of Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
The impact of foreign culture	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	55
Tourism	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	57
Summary	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	61
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
Overview	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
Research Design	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
Library Research	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	63
Archival research	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	63
Population	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	64
Accessible Population	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	64
Sampling Techniques and Description	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	66
Data Collection Instruments	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	67

Data Analysis Plan	...	...	...	...	...	...	71
--------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

**CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
Overview	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
Historical analysis of sculptural, public art works in Kumasi.	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
A cultural history of the Okomfo Anokye effigy at the Bantama roundabout:							
Kumasi – Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	72
A cultural history of the Yaa Asantewaa effigy at Ejusu – Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	76
A cultural history of a man standing on a leopard in front of Kumasi Prisons,							
Kumasi – Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	79
A cultural history of the statue of Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyeman Prempeh II,							
Adum – Kumasi, Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	82
A cultural history of the effigy of Otumfuo Opoku Ware II, at Suame,							
Kumasi – Ghana.	...	...	...	...	...	...	85
A cultural history of the effigy of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Kumasi – Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	87
The fountain of Transition at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi – Ghana	...	...	...	...	...	...	89
The site specifications of the sculptural public art works	...	...	...	...	...	...	90
Analysis and Discussion of questionnaire and interviews	...	...	...	...	...	...	92

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND**

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	...	...	...	...	...	...	95
Overview	...	...	...	...	...	...	95
Summary	...	...	...	...	...	...	95
Conclusions	...	...	...	...	...	...	99



Recommendations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	101
References	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	104
Appendix A	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	108
Appendix B	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	113
Appendix C	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	114



**LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. A Map of Africa showing Ghana ... ..	15
2. A Map of Ghana indicating Kumasi. ... ..	16
3. A Map of the Ancient Asante Kingdom ... ..	17
4. A Map of Ashanti Region indicating ... ..	17
5. The <i>Pomposuo</i> sword ... ..	22
6. Clans of the Asantes ... ..	25
7. The Asantes Flag ... ..	25
8. The Porcupine ... ..	26
9. The Manhyia Peacock ... ..	27
10. Artist Alliance ... ..	28
11. Red Townscapes II by Ablade Glover ... ..	28
12. Some Art works found in public places ... ..	29
13. Effigies of Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyeman Prempeh II and Nana Amma Serwaah Nyarko (Asantehemaa) ... ..	29
14. Nana Opoku Ware II (Asantehene 1970-1999) and Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa Ampem II (1977 current Asantehemaa) ...	30
15. Nana Prempeh I and Nana Yaa Akyaa ... ..	30
16. Nana YaaAsantewaa ... ..	31
17. A straw cap ... ..	37
18. A cap ( <i>Obi Nkaa bi a Obi nka bi</i> ) ... ..	38
19. A Replica of Worosa’s head ... ..	39
20. A Stool (Asesedwa) ... ..	40

21. Guns and Specimen used by some Asante Kings during their rule ...	41
22. Traditional iron necklace ... ..	41
23. Traditional Wrist-beads ... ..	42
24. Traditional Gold Wrist-beads ... ..	43
25. The Manhyia Palace Museum ... ..	44
26. The building housing the Okomfo Anokye Sword ... ..	45
27. The effigy of Okomfo Anokye Mounted at Baantama roundabout ...	45
28. The Effigy of Nana Yaa Asantewaa, mounted at Ejusu roundabout ...	45
29. The Effigy of a man standing on a leopard in front of Kumasi Prisons	54
30. The Effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh II Mounted in front of ECG, Adum-Kumasi ... ..	55
31. The Effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh II Mounted at CNC, Kumasi ... ..	72
32. The Effigy of Otumfuo Opoku – Ware II mounted at Suame roundabout in Kumasi ... ..	76
33. The Effigy of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, mounted at Airport roundabout, Kumasi ... ..	79
34. The Effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh II Mounted in front of ECG, Adum-Kumasi ... ..	82
35. Effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh II at CNC, Kumasi	84
36. Effigy of Otumfuo Opoku – Ware II at Suame roundabout in Kumasi	85
37. Effigy of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, at Airport roundabout, Kumasi ...	87
38. The fountain of Transition, mounted at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi ... ..	89

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
1. A Map of Africa showing Ghana	... ..	23
2. Clans of the Asantes	... ..	24
3. The results from respondents on the use of art as a medium of Preservation of history and the relationship between art and history		65



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Overview**

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, definition of terms, abbreviations used and the organization of the rest of text.

#### **Background to the Study**

Art is a vital indispensable part of human growth and development throughout the world. Art is life and life is full of art, therefore art works are found everywhere. Art forms such as sculptures in the form of statues which are usually made to represent the oratory of the people are found at strategic locations - like Okomfo (Fetish Priest) Anokye roundabout in Kumasi, Ghana. These works are mostly referred to as public art works because they are mounted at places where the public has access to. People that live in or visit communities with art works mounted publicly may take time to observe and appreciate them.

The works of art which are seen in Ghana have examples such as graphics symbols, textiles, music, dance, sculptures, paintings, leatherworks, jewelry, pottery, and ceramic works among others. In sculpture, monumental works can be found in some places in the country. In spite of the outdoor sculptural works that exist, there is little documentation on comprehensive description of these works and publicity in the

media. Only a few could be seen through television indents such as the Independence Arch and National Theatre on GTV.

For centuries, the arts have helped to develop human culture in their desire to communicate (Dennis & Jenkins, 1991). Historians gather facts about places and people in a community through excavations and carbon-dating. Most of the hidden articles identified through excavations were artifacts, and most of these items were produced by artists. Some of these artists did not even realize that they were artists at the time they were producing the works. Objects of art produced and mounted publicly at vantage points in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, for instance, are linked to the cultural practices of the people. I reckon that art works in the form of statues play significant roles in people's lives and those in the Ashanti Region of Ghana are no exception. In fact, the need to understand and preserve the art works that are essential feature of awareness creation are significant motivational prompts for the study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Ashanti Region of Ghana is well noted for its cultural heritage as the histories of most towns and villages are enshrined in the various forms of art. Art is indisputably an integral part of culture, and culture constitutes the fundamental dimension of the developmental process which helps to strengthen the identity of nations.

A pilot study conducted by the researcher in 2015 in Kumasi on selected sculptural public art works revealed that, people living in Kumasi and its environs had little knowledge on these publicly mounted art figures. The few people with little knowledge about these works did not also understand the concept behind the works.

Art forms such as statues that are usually made to represent the oratory of the people are found at strategic locations such as the Okomfo Anokye roundabout in Kumasi. The history surrounding the arrest of a disturbing lion in the vicinity of Kumasi some decades ago is also represented in a public sculpture piece in the Kumasi Metropolis, while other art forms exhibiting cultural practices among the Asantes are also represented. The story behind all the Ashanti states coming together under one umbrella, thus depicting how the golden stool descended into the Asante Kingdom to unify them under one great King, is represented in the sculptural figure of Okomfo Anokye. All these public sculptural art forms contain rich historical information that the people in the region should be abreast with and passed on to tourists who will be wondering what they stand for. But, only few people have knowledge and understanding of these cultural art forms that relate to their life and history.

Again, studies on art forms of the Ashantis pay little attention to public sculptural works in Kumasi and its environs to be precise (Rattray, 2016; Sei'dou, 2015; Edusei, 2004; Johnson, 1970). It is therefore difficult for students who are ready to learn about these publicly mounted figures to lay hands on authentic documented histories surrounding them. The researcher therefore decided to investigate and document selected public sculptural art forms in the form of statues in Kumasi and its environs which help in the preservation of their history and culture. The project report is intended to be published for public consumption after certification.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

- i. To identify the different public sculptural art forms used by the people of the Ashanti Region of Ghana.
- ii. To find out how public sculptural art forms could be preserved in the Ashanti Region.
- iii. To investigate how public sculptural art forms are recognized in the Ashanti Region.
- iv. To document the historical information associated with the public sculptural art works in the Ashanti Region of Ghana?

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

- i. What are some of the public sculptural art forms used by the people of the Ashanti Region of Ghana?
- ii. How are the public sculptural art forms preserved in the Ashanti Region of Ghana?
- iii. How are public sculptural art works recognized in the Ashanti Region?
- iv. What is the historical information associated with the public sculptural art works in the Ashanti Region of Ghana?



### **Significance of the Study**

This research is to help document the cultural history and essential narratives about the sculptural public art works in Kumasi and its environs in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. For this reason, the historical ramification and values of selected sculptural public art works were identified and documented. The hidden cultural histories surrounding the selected works were brought to light, therefore breaking the generational knowledge gap, which is in a way ignoring the upcoming youth from knowing their past. Recommendations from the research report, when published in books and brochures, will be a resource material for policy makers on culture, libraries, and the general public as well as centres for national culture in Ghana.

To some extent, the research will promote the rich culture and history of the Ashanti Region and also educate the inhabitants of the land to understand and appreciate them. The documentation by means of this research will expose the rich culture and history to people, both local and foreigners who have access to the various museums, Art centers and cultural libraries.

It will strengthen the discourse on the need to preserve our cultural heritage which is supposed to be the engine of our developmental drive as Ghanaians. The selected sculptural public art works provide spaces for tourism and if proper attention is given to them, people from all walks of life will recognize their worth. The research also serves as a reference material for students studying Art, Culture and History, as much light is thrown on the public sculptural art works in the preservation of history among the natives of the Kumasi and its environs in Ghana. It will again

serve as a thread for further research into the topic, and replicated in other regions of Ghana.

### **Delimitation**

The study was based on some selected public sculptural art works in Kumasi and its environs in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. For the purpose of this thesis, public sculptural art forms that are related to the cultural history of Kumasi were selected. The general manager and Curator at Kumasi Centre for National Culture, the Manhyia Palace Museum's Curator, one lecturer at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) a student and Professor Emeritus Peter Kwasi Sarpong, were interviewed. In addition, questionnaires were given out to a sample of 35 people living in Kumasi and its environs.

### **Limitations**

The researcher had difficulty in obtaining information on the producers of some of these public art works, and the dates the works were mounted. In maintaining some of these public sculptural art works, the plaques that contain information about these works were removed, and this led to the difficulties in tracing the specific dates and producers of the works. Lack of appropriate documentation on the works made it very difficult for the researcher to gather that information in specific terms, which could have enriched the research.

### Definition of Terms

<i>Adinkra</i>	:	A collection of traditional symbols among the Akan in Ghana
Aduana	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
<i>Adumfuo</i>	:	Ashanti land's Executioners
<i>Abrafoo</i>	:	Ashanti land's Military
Agona	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
Akofo Asafo	:	Ashanti land's Warriors / Professional Soldiers
<i>Asesedwa</i>	:	A stool
Asenie	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
Asakyire	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
Asona	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
Bretuo	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
<i>Dawuro</i>	:	Gong gong
Ekoonaa	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
<i>Fofie</i>	:	Festive Friday
<i>Gye Nyame</i>	:	A name of one of the Adinkra symbols
<i>Kyeretwie</i>	:	Victory over a leopard
Literate	:	Well educated
<i>Obi Nka bi</i>	:	No one should bite his/her neighbor
Ohene	:	Chief
<i>Omanhene/Obrempon:</i>		Paramount chief
Okomfo	:	Fetish Priest
Otumfuo	:	The title for the Asantehene

<i>Oyoko</i>	:	A name of one of the Asante clans
<i>Sese</i>	:	A type of soft wood for carving
<i>Sunsum</i>	:	Spirit

### **List of Abbreviations**

CNC	:	Centre for National Culture
GES	:	Ghana Education Service
KNUST	:	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
PETRAUGA	:	Performers of Traditional Arts Union of Ghana
UN	:	United Nations
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

### **Organization of the Rest of Text**

The thesis is made up of five chapters. Chapter One of the research report has been presented in this chapter. The Chapter Two involves the review of related literature. Articles, textbooks, books and electronic sources are the areas where information was gathered and reviewed based on the research topic. Chapter Three explains the methodology that includes the research design employed in conducting the study and an outline of the data analysis plan. Chapter Four is data analysis, the presentations of findings and discussions while Chapter Five includes the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. This is followed by references and appendices.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Overview

This chapter discusses literature from scholars and other authorities about public art works, the influence they have on cultural practices and how public art works promote and preserve cultural histories globally. Topics reviewed under this section are culture; the cultural history of Kumasi; Ghanaian public art; art forms used in the Ashanti Region of Ghana; The role of art in cultural heritage; preservation of culture through art; and the impact of foreign culture and tourism. Major scholarly materials reviewed were from Zimmermann (2015), Banks and Banks (2010), Osei (2002), Sarpong (2007), Hoffman (2006), Akunor (2007), Danquah (2008), Mirzoeff (2009), Gillman (2010), Gombrich (2005), and Manhyia Palace Museum Guide (2003) among others.

#### Culture

The word culture has assumed a rhizomatic definition since many scholars define it within diverse contexts. For instance, Zimmermann (2015) defined culture as the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts, while Barnouw (1985) states that culture is the set of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours shared by a group of people, communicated from one generation to the next via languages or some other means of communication.

The anthropologist Tylor (1870) also defined culture as a diverse set of activities characteristic of all human societies. This view paved the way for the modern understanding of culture. Cultural differences manifest themselves in different ways and differing levels of depth (Li & Karakowsky, 2001). From the different observations above, it is very much outstanding that culture has to do with the total life of humans. All the things that are found within the setting of a group of people therefore form part of their culture. The way they eat, dress or even take decisions depicts their culture. Triandis (1992) also shares the idea that, culture is also not nationality just as culture does not necessarily conform to race or racial stereotypes; culture also does not conform to nationality or citizenship. This is to say wherever one finds himself or herself; there is the need to conform to the norms and values of that particular society no matter his or her origin or race. This is supported by Banks and Banks (2010) in their five dimensions of multicultural education. They explained that, if we're going to have people participate as citizens in a democratic society, they have to have the skills and knowledge and the racial attitudes needed to work with people from diverse groups. For Banks and Banks (2010), culture involves common beliefs, symbols, and interpretations within a human group, the larger shared culture they refer to as 'macroculture' and smaller ones that characterize the mainstream one as 'microculture' (p. 7). The use of symbols tends to be popular among the people of Ashanti Region.

Symbols represent the most superficial and values, the deepest manifestations of culture, with heroes and rituals in between. Symbols are words, gestures, pictures, or objects that carry a particular meaning which are only recognized by those who

share a particular culture. New symbols easily develop, old ones disappear. Symbols from one particular group are regularly copied by others. This is why symbols represent the outermost layer of a culture. Heroes are persons, past or present, real or fictitious, who possess characteristics that are highly prized in a culture. They also serve as models for behaviour. The public sculptural art works mounted in Kumasi and its environs in Ghana represent great heroes of the past and present. The core of a culture is formed by values. They are broad tendencies for preferences of certain state of affairs to others (good-evil, right-wrong, natural-unnatural).

Symbols, heroes, and rituals are the tangible or visual aspects of the practices of a culture. The true cultural meaning of the practices is intangible; this is revealed only when the practices are interpreted by the insiders. Each time a language or culture is lost, people lose an irreplaceable and exquisite way of being. Culture is an expression of what it means to be human. It is a measure of peoples' part to planetary biodiversity. Cultural preservation therefore emphasizes the need to protect, restore, and honour all forms of cultural varieties. In a community, culture is preserved in spoken languages, stories, songs, dances, sacred sites, and artifacts. A culture of a people is preserved through its practices, history and environment. According to Osei (2002) culture is dynamic and keeps on changing according to the needs of the people at a given time. Such changes are usually effected by the governing body at that particular time. Sarpong (2007) summarizes culture as what makes people what they are. He continues to explain that, it is the sum total of all the activities, ideas, religious beliefs, norms, customs, linguistic tradition, musical legacy that are passed

on from one generation to another in a given society. Culture therefore constitutes the entire lifestyle of a people that is the way of life of a particular group of people.

The next section presents a review of the cultural turn in history.

### **The Cultural Turn**

According to Wikipedia (2016), Jameson (1998) and Valentine (2001), the cultural turn predominantly describes a movement beginning in the 1970s among schools in humanities and social sciences to make culture focus of contemporary debates. It also describes a shift in emphasis towards meaning and away from a positivist epistemology.

The cultural turn can be seen to encompass a variety of different shifts in the practice of history. The culture turn, though has received scholarly discourse in the Western world, it also affect the cultures of other countries all over the world including Africa. Rather than political or economic histories based on straightforward readings of state papers and economic data, meaning is instead looked for in a culture's language (hence the connection to the linguistic turn) and systems of representation. Thus, the same materials may be used, but read against the grain, looking for contested meanings and omissions. In addition, histories may no longer be written as supposedly objective narratives, but may contain different rhetorical strategies and voices.

The cultural turn is described by Spillman and Jacobs (2005) as one of the most influential trends in the humanities and social sciences in the last generation.



The cultural turn in the late 20th century is interpreted as referring to either a substantive shift in society or an analytical shift in academia. The former argues that culture plays a more significant role in advanced societies, which fits with the notion of post-modernity as a historical era in which people emphasizes the importance of art and culture for education, moral growth, and social criticism and change. The latter is movement within academia to place the concept of culture, and the related notions of meaning, cognition, affect, and symbols at the center of methodological and theoretical focus. Some argue that the analytical shift is endogenous to the substantive shift.

Hoffman (2006) specifies that cultural identity is essential for the peaceful cooperation of civilizations. If people have a strong sense of self-identity through culture, they are more likely to cooperate peacefully with other cultures with respect to diversity of value system and religious beliefs as well as the tangible aspects of culture. As different cultures become more intertwined, these cultural identities may change. The fluid nature of culture can sometimes be negative, leading to a breakdown of fundamental human values. Culture can be defined as, the social process whereby people communicate meanings, make sense of their world, construct their identities, and define their beliefs and values.

Culture plays a very vital role in people's lives. Our working environments have individuals from many different ethnic groups with many different cultures. Work and productivity can smoothly move on when a "me culture" is turned into a "we culture". It becomes too much of a problem when a "me" individual is appointed to manage an organization. "Me" managers tend to be less effective at leading teams

and bringing people together. Culture is seen as universally constitutive of social relations and identities; and the 'historical' case in which culture is seen as playing an unprecedented role in constituting social relations and identities in contemporary society.

Jackson (2008), in an article stated that, the rise of the 'cultural turn' has breathed new life into the practice of international history over the past few decades. Cultural approaches have both broadened and deepened interpretations of the history of international relations. Culture can subsequently be used as a tool to study international history. These histories manifest in most of the public art works of a people. Therefore in an attempt to come out with the actual history, there is a realization that an artifact is the tool with which to trawl a history.

### **Cultural history of Kumasi**

Kumasi is a city in Ghana predominantly occupied by Asantes (Ghana Statistical Services, 2010). The Asantes are located in West Africa, and are habited in the central portion of the present day Ghana and with a vast tropical forest zone endowed with rich mineral resources with an abundance of gold. People living in this region are mostly traders. According to Osei (1994), legends have it that, some clans of Asante Nation originated from a hole at Asantemanso near Asumagya. The clans were Oyoko and Aduana. Some other clans of the Asantes also state that, their ancestors descended from the skies. Osei again explained that Historians such as Dr. J. B Danquah revealed that the Asante nation was among the group of people called Akans. These Akans migrated from Mesopotamia to Africa. He continued to state

that, the Akans either shared the same boundaries with the Israelites before they migrated to Africa or they formed part of the Ancient Empire.



Figure 1: A Map of Africa indicating Ghana

Source: Wikipedia (2016).

Ghana is located in the continent of Africa and covers 227,533 square kilometers of land and 11,000 square kilometers of water, making it the 82nd largest nation in the world with a total area of 238,533 square kilometers (Wikipedia, World atlas 2016).



Figure 2: A Map of Ghana indicating Kumasi in the Ashanti Region.

Source: Wikipedia (2016).

The Ashanti Region of Ghana is located in the Southern part of the country, the region shares boundaries with the Brong Ahafo Region, Central Region, Eastern and the Western Regions of Ghana. It forms part of the forest belt in the country, and it is one of the highest producing sector of cocoa and gold, hence its name, The Garden city.

**A representation of the olden days Asante Kingdom, now Ashanti Region.**



Figure 3: A Map of the Ancient Asante Kingdom

Source: Wikipedia (2016)

**Map of the present-day Asante kingdom (Ashanti Region)**



Figure 4: A Map of Ashanti Region indicating Kumasi

Source: Wikipedia (2016).

Sarpong (1971) says, what now Asante is, was composed of little independent tribes. Twum and Antwi were said to have been the first chiefs of what is now the

district of Kumasi whose capital was called Kwaman. Their fifth successor was Nana Osei Tutu and he succeeded Nana Obiri Yeboah as the chief of Kwaman state later known as Kumasi state. Nana Osei Tutu and Okomfo Anokye were enstooled at the same time, Osei Tutu as Kwamanhene, Okomfo Anokye as Agonahene. His enstoolment to the Kumasi stool was about the year 1697 and during the next thirty-four years, he was destined to turn the district of Kumasi into the Asante Kingdom.

Before the reign of Nana Osei-Tutu, Kumasi was subject to the Denkyira nation and had to pay annual tribute to their king in the form of gold dust and wives. Nana Osei Tutu was determined to bring an end to this. He first sought to form a loose confederation with the nearby chiefs through conquests, persuasions and treaties. When he realized he had enough strength to withstand the might of Denkyiras, he therefore declared war against Denkyira by mutilating the tribute collectors and sending them back with stones.

Sarpong (1971) further says that in 1701, the Asantes defeated the Denkyiras at the famous Battle of Feyiase. Their king Ntim Gyakari was captured and beheaded. This was achieved with the help of his greatest friend and counselor, a man he had met in his boyhood while he was a servant at the palace of the king of Denkyira, Okomfo Anokye. Okomfo Anokye had a great talent for directing the affairs of state beside his great achievements. He was therefore described as the Cardinal Wolsey of Asantes. Many laws and customs are referred to as Anokye's injunctions (Sarpong, 1971).

The Asantes are peace-loving people, but would always love to fight to defend themselves. They are therefore likened to the porcupine that defends itself with its

quills. Hence the slogan “*Asante Kotoko, wokum apem a apem beba*” to mean when you slay down a thousand, a thousand more will surface.

During the enstoolment of Nana Osei Tutu, he promised his people that he would take up the great task of uniting the Asante states (Antwi, 2011). He was helped to achieve this aim by the great priest and chief of Agona, Nana Okomfo Anokye. According to oral tradition, a meeting of the chiefs of Asante states was called by Nana Osei Tutu to Kumasi. The main agenda was to unite them under one of the chiefs. His stool would be greater than all the other stools, and then the question of who would be chosen as head appeared (Wikipedia, 2016).

It was at this juncture that Okomfo Anokye explained that the problem would be solved by the ancestors and the gods. He would pray to the ancestors and the gods. At the end of the prayer, the ancestors and the gods would send a stool from the skies and the chief on whose laps it would descend and rest would be the chosen chief. According to oral tradition a festive Friday “Fofie” was chosen to be the day that they would meet for the gods and ancestors to choose their king for them. When they agreed on the day, they were told by Okomfo Anokye to fast and pour libation to their ancestors and the gods until the chosen day, then they dispersed to their various states.

Oral tradition has it that, on the appointed day, the chiefs met, each waiting to be the paramount chief elect. The atmosphere looked calm. Okomfo Anokye appeared amidst drumming and dancing. After some magical dances he paused a little, jumped here and there and began to call something from the sky. Drumming

started again and the priest conjured. The sky became tense and a deafening noise was heard. Mock (2011) also adds that a stool studded with gold descended on the laps of Nana Osei Tutu. It therefore meant that he had been chosen by the ancestors and the gods as the unquestionable king of the kings of the Asante Nation. Finger nails and a small collection of hair from each chief were collected, all burnt and the ashes, some smeared on the stool and the rest mixed in palm wine for all to drink (Wikipedia, 2016).

Okomfo Anokye told them that the stool contained the spirit (*Sunsum*) of the Asante nation (Wikipedia, 2016). The potion they drank meant that they had sworn to the gods, which meant they had taken an oath to unite and forget their past individual histories. Osei Tutu took the oath of allegiance to the stool and the chiefs, and each chief in turn took an oath of allegiance to Nana Osei Tutu and an oath never to raise arms against the Golden Stool. That was the beginning of Asante Kingdom. Nana Osei Tutu was therefore made the first king of the Asante kingdom. Kumasi was captured by the British army in 1873 (as a result of which much of the magnificent Asante gold regalia can be seen in London in the British Museum).

Mr. Justice Brobbey (the Curator at the Manhyia Palace Musuem) explained that in 1896, the British demanded a great amount from the Asantes after they had defeated them in 1874. Nana Prempeh 1, who was the thirteenth Asante King, was seized when payment was not made, he was therefore imprisoned in the Elmina Castle for a while before he was exiled to Seychelles Island.



In 1900, the British governor Sir Frederic Hodgson demanded for the golden stool and this perceived insults which resulted in the Yaa Asantewaa War (Akunor, 2007). Yaa Asantewaa, a great Queenmother, led the Asantes in a fierce battle. Yaa Asantewaa was captured and imprisoned. She was finally exiled to Seychelles where she died. Asante came under British protection and finally became a region of the Gold Coast colony. In 1957, after a period of internal self-government, the Gold Coast became the first African colony to achieve independence under the charismatic leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.

In a documentary directed by Akunor (2007), it was stated that the Asantes are led by their Kings with their territories stretching into Togo and Cote D'Ivoire. The Asantehemaa holds the second highest position in the Kingdom. It is the matrilineal heritage which gives a person his or her right status and membership within the lineage. She acts as an advisor to the King on matters of tradition. She also has her own court of arbitration where she settles problems among the women folks. She is the mobilizing force among the women. It is the queen mother who nominates the King for confirmation when the stool becomes vacant. When one is selected Asantehene, he swears the oath of allegiance with the "Pomposuo" sword, he goes on to swear to protect the golden stool. When someone is chosen a chief, he first swears the oath of allegiance to his people before he swears to his superior chief. The "Odikro" swears his oath of allegiance to the Omanhene or the Obrempon, then the Omanhene or the Obrempon swears his oath of allegiance to the Otumfuo (Wikipedia 2016).



Figure 5. “Pomposuo” sword used in taking the oath of allegiance

Source: Wikipedia (2016)

The ancient Asante Kingdom was full of brevity that led to the defending of their Kingdom. According to Anti (1974) it was a proverbial saying in ancient Asante that it is only the King that has a knife. The explanation is that the King had power of life and death over his subjects. Even condemned prisoners could not be executed without the King's order. In Asante about fifty percent of offences brought before the King merited the death penalty, but execution could be performed in several different ways, depending on what was ordered by the King. Methods most often used were simple decapitation and death by torture.

Most offences against the King were considered illegal. Offences such as touching any part of a King's wife, especially the most delicate and dangerous parts (the breast, the nose and the buttocks) were considered criminal and punishable by death. Anti (1974) adds that, to seduce a wife of the King into physical love was a serious crime that was punishable by first degree death by torture. To swear an oath on the King's head merited capital punishment, to steal some property of the King

was punishable by restitution or fines, and to intrigue with any of the female attendants of the royal household was punishable by emasculation. A habitually incontinent person in the royal household could be punished by castration. All the rules above were put in place to monitor the behavior of each individual within the Asante Nation.

The following are the reign of Ashanti Kings from Nana Osei Tutu up to date.

**Table 1.**

*The Reign of Ashanti Kings*

<b>NAME OF KINGS</b>	<b>DURATION RULED</b>
Nana Osei Tutu	1680 to 1717
Nana Opoku Ware I	1720 – 1750
Nana Kusi Obodum	1750-1764
Nana Osei Kwadwo	1764-1777
Nana Osei Kwame	1777-1798
Nana Opoku Fofie	1798-1799
Nana Osei Bonsu	1800-1823
Nana Osei Yaw Akoto	1824-1834
Nana Kwaku Dua I	1834-1867
Nana Kofi Kakari	1867-1874
Nana Mensah Bonsu	1874-1883
Nana Kwaku Duah II	1884-
Nana Kwaku Duah (Nana Agyemang Prempeh I)	1888-1931
Nana Osei Tutu Agyemang Prempeh II	1931-1970
Otumfuo Opoku Ware II	1970-1999
Nana Kwaku Dua (Nana Osei Tutu)	1999-date

Source: Wikipedia (2016).

## Clans of the Asantes

Anti (1974) defines clans as the largest family groups, members of which believe in their common descent, by birth, from a common, though unknown, and nameless ancestor or ancestress. Amongst the Akans, greater social importance is attached to descent from women than from men, clans folk claim common descent from an ancestress, and they practice matrilineal systems of succession and inheritance. Members of lineages, unlike those of clans, trace descent from a known ancestor or ancestress.

The Asantes are made up of eight different clans and each clan has its totem. The clans determine the origin of a group of people within the Asante community.

**Table 2.**

*Clans of the Asantes*

CLAN	TOTEM	ORIGIN
Oyoko / Adanko	Hawk	Kumasi
Ekoonaa	Buffalo	AdansiFomema
Asenie	Bat	Kumasi Amakom
Aduana	Dog	Asumegya
Asakyire	Vulture /Eagle	AdansiAkrokyere
Asona	Crow / Snake	Denkyira
Agona	Parrot	Denkyira
Bretuo	Leopard	AdanseAyaase

Source: Manhyia Palace Museum (2003)

## The Porcupine

The porcupine is a symbol of the Asantes. It symbolizes their readiness to defend themselves at all times just as the porcupine always defends itself with its

quill. It is the source of their popular slogan which is “Asante Kotoko, Wokum Apem a, apem beba”.



Figure 6. The Porcupine

Source: Googleimages, 2016

### The Asante Flag



Figure 7. The Asante Flag Source: Googleimages (2016)

The flag of the Asantes is made up of the colours Yellow, Black and Green with the symbol of the Golden Stool that strengthen their Unity in the middle. The colour yellow found in the flag represents the richness in abundance of gold in the Asante Kingdom. The green represents their rich forest that produces cash crops such as Cocoa and Timber that are used profitably for the betterment of our country Ghana

and the world at large. The black represents the physical looks of an African and it certifies their hope as Africans, hence “the rich black man in the Forest”.

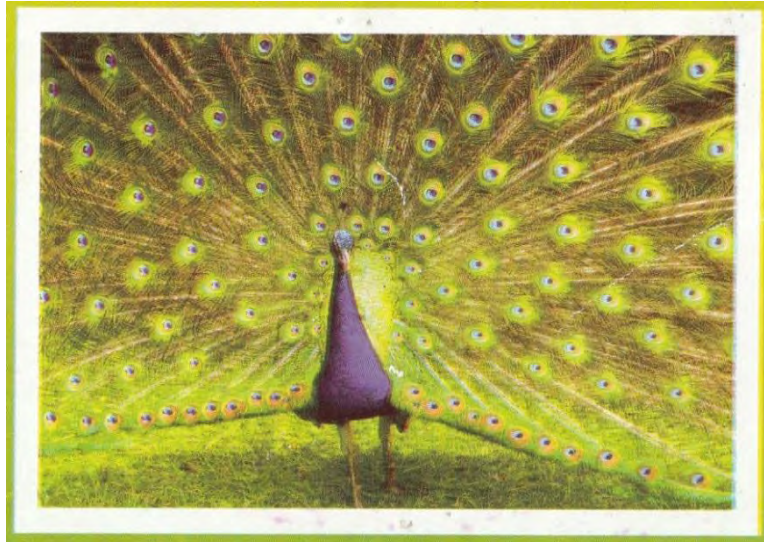


Figure 8. A picture of the Manhyia Peacock

Source: Researcher's field study

### **Art in public places**

Art works are found at all public places across the world. In Ghana, a lot of art works portraying the lifestyle of the people are found in public places. In most times some of the art works displayed talks about the happenings within the places where they are found. Neilson (2015) states that African art is a good investment. *New World Map* by El Anatsui, a Ghanaian artist recently appointed as the first African Royal Academician, sold in 2012 for £541,250, a record for contemporary African art. The works of renowned African painters are valuable: for instance Ghana's Ablade Glover, had a recent solo exhibition at the October Gallery in London, and has long gained acclaim internationally. However, locally, the art prospect is now

struggling to get off the ground. This is because, the significance of Art around us is not highly recognized even though, art in public places serves as identification, gives directions to the general public and also creates an awareness of social cankers around us.

The significance again does not stand out in the minds of people because of the difficulties in identifying artifacts. When few people are able to identify some artifacts, the concept behind the work becomes another problem. Is it because art in Public places are not done right or positioned well?



Figure 9. Artist Alliance Source: Wikipedia (2016)



Figure 10. *Red Townscapes II* by Ablade Glover Source: Wikipedia (2016)

The hugely respected Ghanaian artist Ablade Glover established this renowned arts gallery, which has become one of the most important of its kind in Ghana. Works of art displayed in this gallery for public consumption include works by well-known artists, such as Owusu Ankomah and George Hughes, whose paintings are reminiscent of Jean Michel Basquiat and Willem De Kooning, while others are by new and upcoming artists like Ebenezer Borlabie. Market, rural and urban scenes are interspersed with political satires. There are also the shrouded figures and staccato crowd scenes by Glover himself.

Some Art works found in Public places.



Fig. 11. Art works on a wall Source: Researcher's field study





Fig. 12. A beach painting Source: Researcher's field study



Fig. 13. A community entrance Source: Researcher's field study



Fig 14. Ceramics bowls

Source: Researcher's field study



Fig. 15. Directional post

Source: googleimages (2016)



Fig. 16. A sod-cutting ceremony Source: Researcher's field study

### Public Art in Ghana

Traditional Art is always expressed in some object of utility in Ghana. Most of the indigenous art in Ghana are generally expressed in the form of sculpture, carving, pottery, smithing (i.e. silver, gold and brass work), leatherwork, and cloth weaving or dyeing (Danquah, 2008). In the world, the word art immediately brings a mental picture of someone drawing with a pencil. Art scholars have propounded many theories on art, to some; art is intuitive, ethological or ritualistic. However, the scope of art is still a mind boggling quest among philosophers to be determined. Art is broader than just drawing, painting and sculpture. Art is the creative expression of thoughts and feelings. Public art is a vital part of people's culture because it exists where people work and live, in schools or public transportation, and in our

neighborhoods. Public art in Ghana are usually art in any form that has been planned and executed with the aim of being presented in physical public domain, usually outside and reachable to all.

Public art is important within the art world, amongst curators, commissioning bodies and practitioners of public art, to whom it signifies a working practice of site specificity, community involvement and collaboration. Traditional sculpture is a major art form that influences the works of most Ghanaian artists as compared to the other art forms such as pottery, textiles or painting. A good appreciation of traditional sculpture then opens one's eyes to contemporary Ghanaian art as well. Knight (2008) states that art's publicness rests in the quality and impact of its exchange with audiences, at its most, public art extends opportunities for community engagement but cannot demand particular conclusion. It introduces social ideas but leaves room for the public to come to their own conclusions.

In recent years, public art has increasingly begun to expand in scope and application, both into other wider and challenging areas of art form, and also across a much broader range of what might be called our 'public realm'. Such cultural interventions have often been realized in response to creatively engaging a community's sense of 'place' or 'well-being' in society. As said by Sanie (1992), the imaginative life addressed by art is a benefit that should be accessible to all. It is a significant factor in physical and mental health. She further explained that, this is not to say that recent public art has successfully fulfilled its potential, almost sited in the public realm, it has often appeared mute to the very public it had hoped to address.

The artist's intentions in producing the public art work may in one way or the other conflict with the public perception. Sanie (1992) asks so many questions in an attempt to define public art. She said the problem endemic to public art in democracy begin with its definition. How can something be both public (democratic) and art (elitist), who is the public? What defines art or sculptor today, for that matter? What makes it public, its essence, its patron or its location? Instead of "public art" we say "art in public places": we acknowledge site as the determining, and perhaps the only public factor. But what makes a site public, access or amenities? In a very large society, art work is not expected to appeal to all the people even though it attracts and promotes attention. Varied popular opinion is inevitable, and it is a healthy sign that the public environment is acknowledged rather than ignored. An art work is a product for the community and as such the general public must be able to evaluate them to the slightest. Ashanti Regional sculptural public art works are full of historical ramifications. Art works such as the Okomfo Anokye statue found at the Okomfo Anokye roundabout in Kumasi contains a great history of the Ashanti Kingdom, but due to generational gap, most of the youth see that as just a symbol. Even though people see the prominence of a figure mounted in the heart of Kumasi, a few of the general population will be able to say a little about it. Reflections that I had after conducting a pilot study around Bantama in Kumasi include:

1. How many people know about Okomfo Anokye?
2. Does it mean people are not aware that Okomfo Anokye is not an Asante ?
3. How many people know that Okomfo Anokye was only a friend to Nana Osei Tutu and not a brother?

4. What is the cause of this lack of information and can it be associated with generational gap?
5. How can this be addressed?

Public art is a part of people's public history; part of people's evolving culture and people's collective memory. It reflects and reveals society and adds meaning to cities. As artists respond to our times, they reflect their inner vision to the outside world, and they create a chronicle of our public experience (Balm, 1992).

Public art can therefore be defined as any art which is exhibited in a public space. The relationship between the content and audience is just as important if not more important than its physical location. This is because the art work is made for a purpose and that purpose must be known by the public, that is, what the art is saying and to whom, is more important in public art.

Public art is not confined to physical objects, sculpture intended as public art is often constructed of durable, easily cared-for material, to avoid the worst effects of the elements and vandalism. However, many works are intended to have only a temporary existence and are made of more ephemeral materials. Public art works altered the relationship between the artist and society by making art accessible to all people. In December 2013, The Bristol, a UK based organization published *The New Rules of Public Art*. The Bristol reimagines what public art can be and where and when it can take place. They like to think and reflect on what happens when the spark of an idea is lit. These rules open up the potential for artists to make extraordinary ideas happen in unusual and surprising places, through which audiences and participants are inspired to explore new horizons, public art sometimes proves

controversial. A number of factors contribute to this: the desire of the artist to provoke; the diverse nature of the viewing public, with widely varying degrees of familiarity with art and its syntax; issues of appropriate uses of public funds, spaces, and resources; issues of public safety and civic oversight (Wikipedia, 2016).

### **Art forms used in the Ashanti Region of Ghana**

The Ashanti Region of Ghana is well-adorned with art forms ranging from textiles, basketry, pottery, sculpture works and many others. Products from all these art forms are made to depict the great traditions of the people. The region has rich history in performing art, museums, monuments and historical sites. The Ashanti kingdom is one of the greatest in the world, with the Manhyia palace as an important tourist attraction point. Bonwire is a town in the Ashanti Region well noted for Kente weaving which is very much outstanding in art. Ashanti Regional public visual art forms are enshrined with their rich histories and cultures. Critical observation of these public art forms explains most of these histories and cultures, like Mirzoeff (1990) said, Visual culture is concerned with visual events in which information, meaning or pleasure is sought by the consumer in an interface with visual technology. In the olden days among the Akans, the Adinkra symbols were forms of writing. In an interview with Professor Emeritus Peter Kwasi Sarpong on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2016, he also explained that, in the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century, the King of Gyaman in Ivory Coast (now Cote D'Ivoire) made a copy of the Golden stool, so when the Asantes got to know, they organized themselves and went to over-power him and cut off his head (K. Sarpong, personal interview, July 2016). The Asantes then took the Adinkra symbols

from the place and brought them to Kumasi. They have proverbial meanings and are mostly used in the production of cloth.

Sculptural art forms are also very popular among the Asantes. Sculptural art pieces are mostly made and mounted publicly or indoors to represent the oratory of the people. Prominent people in a community are represented by sculptural pieces and they are sometimes mounted in front of their properties left behind, within the communities in which they come from or on top of their tomb. At the Manhyia Palace Museum, effigies of Asante Kings and Queens are systematically mounted and it is opened to the general public. According to the Curator at the Manhyia Museum, all the effigies were made in the United Kingdom by Madam Tusword. The Manhyia Palace Museum is unique in Africa, because it has been created by a single group of people, the Asante Nation to commemorate their own leaders, and to bequeath the riches of their history and culture to future generations and ever – increasing number of visitors who come to Ghana from all over the world. Public sculptural art works could further be effectively used to narrate some histories of the Manhyia Palace and for that matter the Asante Kingdom.

Pictures of some effigies at the Manhyia Palace Museum are in the next eight pages.



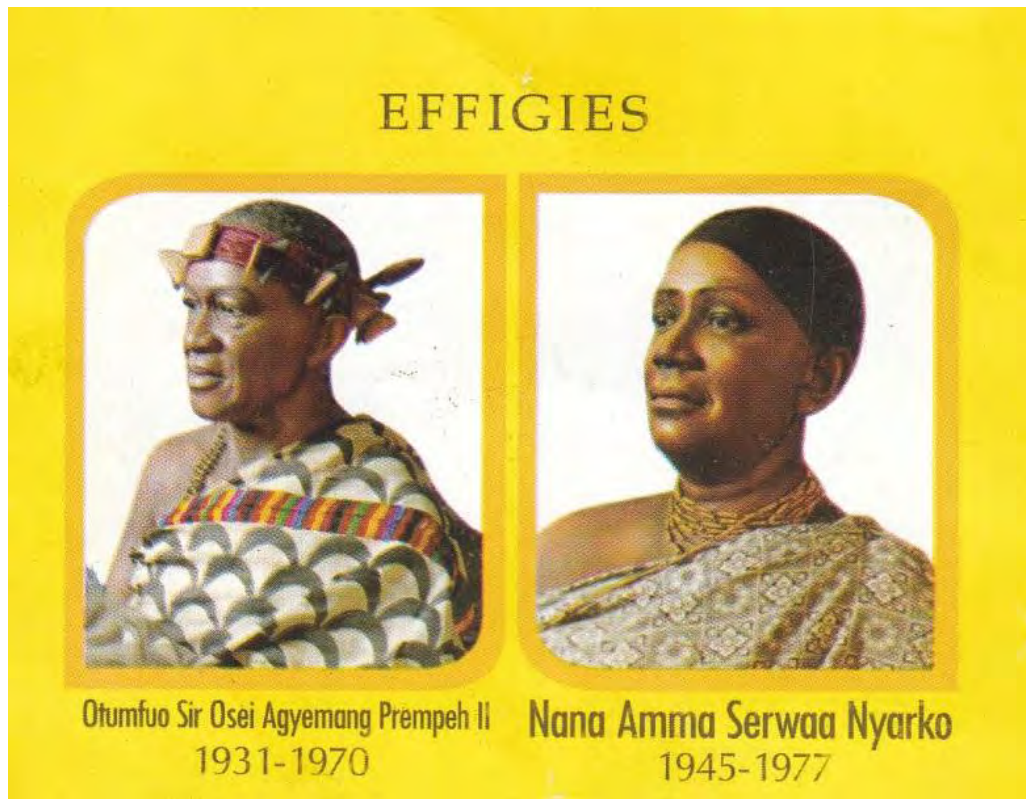


Figure 17. Images of Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyemang Prempeh II (*Asantehene* 1931 -1970) and Nana Amma Serwaah Nyarko (*Asantehemaa* 1945 - 1977). Source: Researcher's field study

A life size effigy of Nana Agyeman Prempeh II has been placed exactly at the place where he used to sit and receive guests. The effigy of Nana Ama Serwaah Nyarko , the *Asantehemaa* (1945 – 1977) has also been placed beside him.



Figure 18. Pictures of Nana Opoku Ware II (Asantehene 1970-1999) and Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa AmpemII (1977), current *Asantehemaa*. Source: Researcher's field study

Figure 18 represents Nana Opoku Ware II (Asantehene 1970-1999) and Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa Ampem II (1977), current *Asantehemaa*. The great hall in the Manhyia Palace Museum contains the effigies of Nana Opoku Ware II and that of the present Queen, Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa Ampem II, whom he installed as *Asantehemaa* in 1977. The site specification of these sculptural pieces at the museum is in a way telling the history that Nana Opoku Ware II installed Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa Ampem II as a Queenmother in 1977. It again indicates that, the two once ruled together as the King and Queen of the Asante Kingdom between 1977 and 1999.

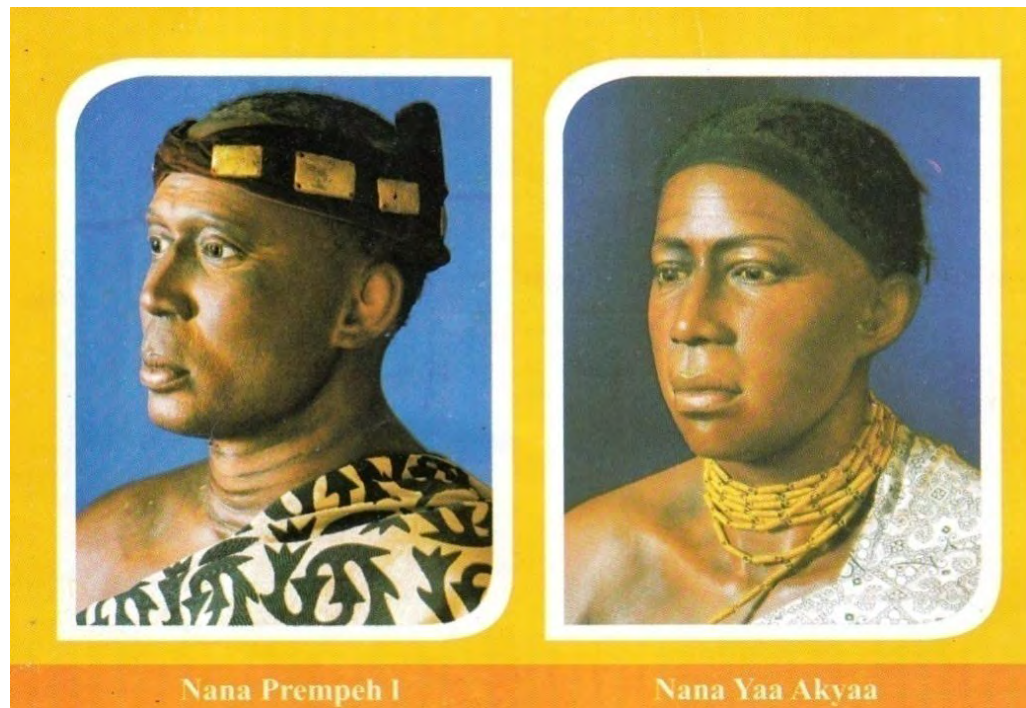


Figure 19. Images of Nana Prempeh I and Nana Yaa Akyaa.

Source: Researcher's field study

Nana Prempeh I was the first literate and Christian King of Asante. He learned to read and write and was baptized into the Anglican faith in the Seychelles. Nana Yaa Akyaa (the mother of King Prempeh) was exiled with her son to the Seychelles and she died there in 1917. She was also the first Queenmother to become a Christian.

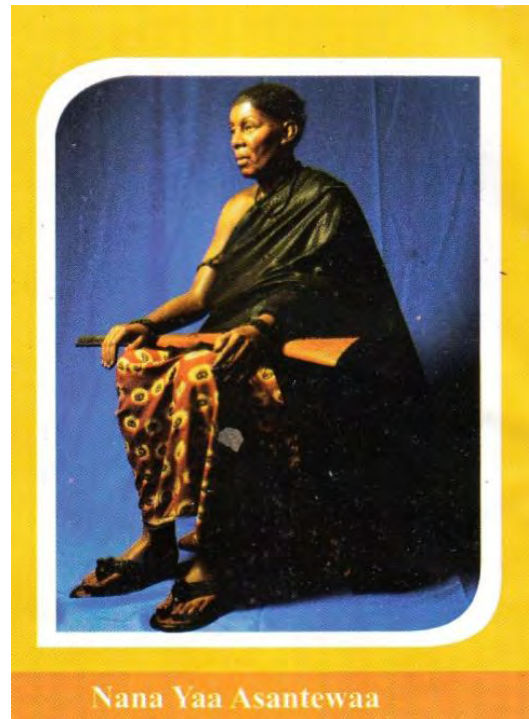


Figure 20. Nana Yaa Asantewaa Source: Researcher's field study

Nana Yaa Asantewaa was the Queen Mother of Edweso who led the 1900 Asante war with the British. She was about sixty five years old when she declared the war. After the war on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1900, she was exiled to the Seychelles where she died on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1921 (Manhyia Palace 2003). In an interview with Mr. Justice Ampofo (the curator at the Manhyia Palace), he stated that, sculptural art forms are very significant among the Asantes. He again said that basketry and woodworks are also art forms that are used traditionally.



Figure 21. A straw cap used by Nana Osei Kwadwo whenever he celebrated the Odwira festival.

Source: Researcher's field study



Figure 22: A cap (*Obi Nkaa bi a Obi nka bi*) Source: Researcher's field study

Designed under the instruction of Nana Osei Kwadwo

This cap, in Figure 22 is also called “Obi Nka bi” literally meaning no one should bite his/her neighbor. The cap has paintings of two fishes in pool with head of one at the tail of the other so that if one bites, the other will retaliate. According to oral history, Worosa (chief of Banda) offended Nana Osei Kwadwo, and that explains why Nana

Osei Kwadwo fought the Banda Nation in 1764. The cap was taken to Britain during the 1874 war. It was brought back by Nana Opoku Ware II, during one of his visits to Britain. History has it that, once a powerful chief of Banda named Worosa, terrorized Asante traders travelling through his territory to Gyaaman and Bonduku. These traders were robbed of their monies and goods and in some were even killed. Nana Osei Kwadwo, the Asantehene between 1764 and 1777 sent Asomfo and Nsenie (servants of the King), they were also maltreated and this resulted in another fight between the Asante and Banda. Worosa was defeated, and he was beheaded.

When the head was brought to Kumase, the King instructed the Artisans to make a replica of his head attached to the sword that was used to behead him. (A Guide to Manhyia Palace Museum, 2003) This is an art work that has been made in order to preserve an incidence that happened many years ago.



**Figure 23.** A Replica of Worosa's head on the sword that was used to behead him

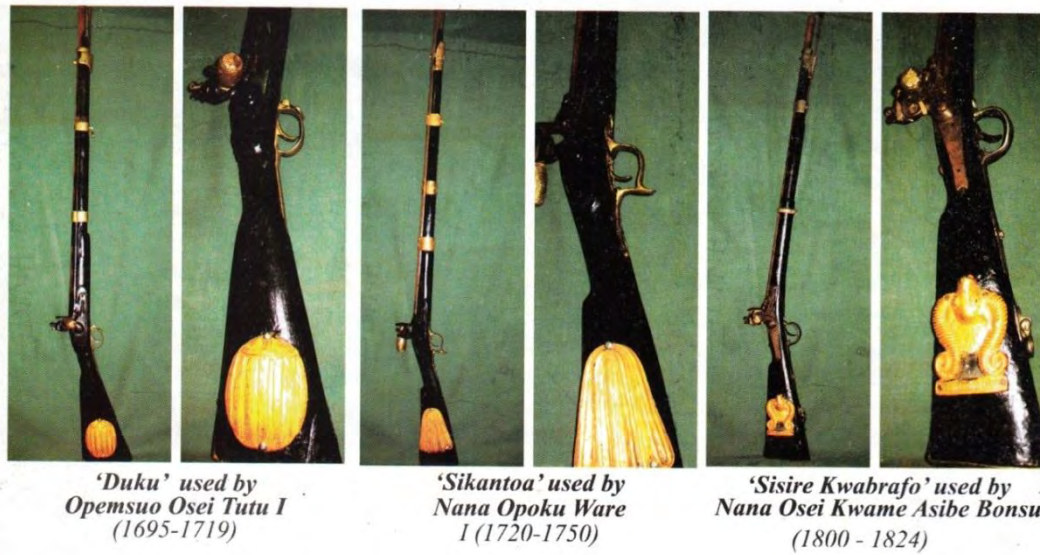
Source: Researcher's field study

Wood works that are also art forms used traditionally in the Asante culture include stools carved from the “sese” tree which is blackened in memory of a dead chief or Queen mother within the Asante culture. Professor Emeritus Kwesi Sarpong in an interview on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2016 confirmed that, in the olden days, there were no pictures to identify one dead chief from another, therefore different design of stools were used (K. Sarpong, Personal Interview, July 2016). These stools are known as *Asesedwa*. The blackening of the stools is done at a special private ceremony. Stools are again used by Asante chiefs and queenmothers when they are in state.



Fig. 24. Stool (Asesedwa)

**Source:** Wikipedia (2016)



Wooden and metallic specimen gun were employed by Asante Kings in most of their wars in the olden days.

Figure 25. Guns and Specimen used by some Asante Kings during their rule

Source: Researcher's field study

These guns were sold to the Asantes by the Netherlands through barter system of trading. According to Mr. Ampofo (the Curator at the Manhyia Palace Musuem), they are over 200 years and are still working.

Other art works used by the Asantes include ceramics, leatherworks and jewelry, ceramic containers are used as containers for the King's palm wine. During durbars, the King's palm wine tapper fills the container with palm wine which is served to some of the chiefs present. Leather money bags help in keeping the King's gold and silver. Rings, bangles, anklets, armbands, necklaces and others are beautifully made from gold, silver, diamond and beads. These are used to gracefully adorn the Kings and Queenmothers of Asante.





Fig. 26. Traditional iron necklace



Fig. 27. Traditional Wrist-beads



Fig. 28. Traditional Gold Wrist-beads

These are some of the adornments that are used to beautify Kings and Queemothers of Asante.

### **The role of art in Cultural Heritage**

Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present

and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Tangible heritage includes buildings and historic places, monuments, artifacts, etc., which are considered worthy of preservation for the future. These include objects significant to the archaeology, architecture, science or technology of a specific culture. Tanselle (1998) says that cultural heritage is often special and exceptional, which places the duty of preservation on the present generation. Heritage creates a perception of something handed down, something to be cared for and cherished. These cultural manifestations have come down to people from the past; they are our legacy from ancestors (Gillman, 2010). Sculptural art works publicly mounted go a long way to preserve cultural heritage of a people. Such art works are mostly maintained by people who did not produce them, all because they are no more and this is done by the present generation and bestowed for the future generation.

Artworks and objects are important to the study of human history and culture because they provide a concrete basis for ideas, and can validate them. Their preservation demonstrates recognition of the necessity of the past and of the things that tell its story. Preserved objects also validate memories and the actuality of the object, as opposed to a reproduction or surrogate, draw people in and give them a literal way of touching the past. This unfortunately poses a danger as places and things are damaged by the hands of tourists, the light required to display them, and other risks of making an object known and available. The reality of this risk reinforces the fact that all artifacts are in a constant state of chemical transformation, so that what is considered to be preserved is actually changing, it is never as it once was. Similarly changing is the value each generation may place on the past and on the

artifacts that link it to the past. The preservation of artifacts acknowledges the necessity of the past and things that tell its story. Lowenthal (1985) supports Tanselle saying, preserved objects also certify memories.

In Akan art, the lion and leopard are symbols of leadership and used on regalia of chiefs and personalities in the chief's palace (Ross, 1981). Therefore, since art works tell their stories, they play an important role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage.

### **History Preservation**

Brain (2004) defines History as the discovery, collection, organization and presentation of information about the past events. From this definition, history can therefore be attained through excavations of earliest art works that were not recognized as artifacts and were also produced by artist who never knew they were. In an attempt to discover or find out the story behind a publicly mounted sculptural art work, a history of an event that led to the building of the piece shall be given and by so doing, a compilation of history will be written. Like Evans (2001) said, History can mean the period of time after writing was invented. This is to say art works were in their own ways used in the preservation of history before the introduction of writing.

According to Munslow (2001), history is a field of research which uses a narrative to examine and analyze the sequence of events, and it sometimes attempts to investigate objectively the patterns of causes and effect that determine events.

The fine line between reality and illusion, and the discourse that God created reality while artists create illusion have given rise to traditions equating artists with God. Both are seen to be creators. The Artist makes replicas of nature while God makes nature itself. The nineteenth-century American painter, Whistler (1885) declared that Artists are chosen by God. In most situations, Artists are compared with God and God is represented as an artist. In Ancient Babylonian texts, God is described as the Architect of the world and in the Middle Ages, God is sometimes depicted as an architect drawing the universe with a compass.

Legends in the Apocrypha, the unofficial books of the Bible portray Christ as a sculptor who made clay birds and breathed in them the breath of life. Therefore, when artists are able to create human figures and other lifelike objects, they are again compared to God the creator who made human beings with clay and kept the breath of life in man. It is implied from the philosophies above that God knows the beginning and will determine the end, he knows everything that is within the world so if the artist is associated with God, then it is obvious that the artist is a great historian and is also capable of preserving all the histories around the world.

An object considered as art today may not have been perceived as such when it was first created. The artist that brought that object into existence too was not really regarded as an artist. The concept of art and that of an artist are modernized; this is to say Art has not constantly been what we think it is today. Art works and their histories teach us about our own creative expressions and those of our past. Sculptural public art work created and positioned at vantage points are the true replica of the events that happened within the community at a particular point in time.

Peterson (2008) said many of the objects we know as art today like the Greek painted pottery, medieval manuscript illuminations and others were made in times and places when people had no idea of “art” as we comprehend the term today. The term art really has no fitting definition. When art is described as the way something is done or the use of skills and imagination to bring something into existence, putting into consideration how beautiful the object must appear and its usage, others tend to understand it easily. Probst (1990) also said that, however art may also be conceptualized to include literature, theatre and media generated art forms such as advertisements, movies, and television among others.

The idea of an object being a work of art emerges together with the idea of the artist in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries in Italy. During the Renaissance era, the word art emerged as a collective term encompassing painting, sculpture, and architecture, a grouping given currency by an Italian artist and biographer Giorgio Vasari in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequently, this grouping was expanded to include Music and Poetry which became known in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as the fine Arts. Duchamp (1998) said during the Renaissance, there emerged a more dignified perception of art, and a concomitant rise in the social status of the artist. The painter and the sculptor were now seen as subjects of motivation and their activities equated with those of the poet and musicians.

The latter half of the sixteenth century brought in the first academies of Art, which was first in Italy, then France. Academies took on the task of educating the artist through a course of instruction that included such subjects as geometry and anatomy. Duchamp added that the early twentieth century discusses that all

traditional notions of the identity of the artist and of art were thrown into disarray. In an ironic mockery of the Renaissance tradition which had placed the artist in an exalted authoritative position, Duchamp, as an artist, declared that anything the artist produced is art. For the period of the twentieth century, this position has complicated and destabilized how art is perceived but at the same time it has fostered a broader, more inclusive assessment of art.

Gombrich (2005) says traditionally, the term art was used to refer to a skill or mastery. This idea changed during the Romantic period, when art came to be seen as a special faculty of the human mind to be classified with religion and science. This helps summarize art as the production of an object, with the intention of stimulating thoughts and emotions. Tomaskova (1997) also defines art as the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others. Considering this definition, the terms “art” and “artist” have been in existence as long as humankind. The drive of a work of art may be to communicate ideas such as in philosophically motivated art. Politically or spiritually to explore the nature of perception, for pleasure, etc. Art has gone through many faces and it is still difficult to define it but it can be best defined depending on the situation on the ground.

Art is one of the mainstays in the history of humanity. Life is full of Art. People have expressed events, daily life, opinions, moods and religion through art. Through Art, our past is revealed to us and we are again able to read into our future. Sculptural Public Art works of the olden days reveals to the current generation the

beliefs of early cultures. The works in their own ways exemplify the variety of creative expressions from one culture to the next.

### **Preservation of Culture through Art**

Traditionally, there is a school of thought that art imitates life; this can be portrayed in the practices of artist such as the painter representing what he sees by producing a scene on a canvas, while the sculptor does the same with bronze or stone. Gillman (2010) says, cultural stories make a significant contribution to the construction of heritage. Cultural symbolism derives from relationships between people, values, practices, places, events, memories, records, stories and objects creates these cultural stories. Various or mixed cultures of communities can be portrayed through art works. Objects and figures found in communities tell the cultural stories of the communities. Archeologists go through excavations to trace the rich but hidden cultures of a community. After their excavations, art works are normally found.

Gillon (1984) explains that the exploration of Africa Art with their ethnographical and historical background is barely as old as this century, while archaeological research into the subject is even more recent. On the other hand, art changes the way we view the world and so life sometimes imitates art rather than the vice versa. Art has the power to change the society. The cultures of the people in Ghana are to be valued and preserved. Cultural activities address issues pertaining to national identity in conjunction with various sectors such as education, tourism, textiles, external relations etc. Art plays a vital role in all the sectors that seek to preserve culture. Gombrich (2005) explains that, traditionally, the term art was used

to refer to a skill or mastery. This idea changed during the Romantic period, when art came to be seen as “a special faculty of the human mind to be classified with religion and science” (p.55). In general, art is made with the intention of stimulating thoughts and emotions.

Museums keep cultural records through art and objects of extreme historical importance and this can help bridge generational gap when it comes to culture preservation. When a sculptural work such as the Okomfo Anokye figure mounted in the middle of Bantama roundabout in Kumasi is spotted by a young person for the first time, a lot of questions will run through the person’s mind, and getting answers to the questions will educate him on how the golden stool got into the Ashanti kingdom. Viewers are able to bring alive the layers of history underneath an art work. One sign of a healthy community is its simultaneous ability to preserve and invent its culture that is; to conserve its history and heritage while developing new expressions for current times.

Humanity has to do with the study of different cultures through what they left behind and art constitute the greatest part of culture, this makes art and humanities inter dependent. Culture is an expression of what it means to be human. It is a measure of our species. Cultural preservation emphasizes the need to protect, restore and honour all forms of cultural variety. It is the cornerstone of community and art is molded by society. It can be repressed or encouraged by governments, for example. It can depend on how the people that make up a society are willing to express themselves. The relationship between art and society varies all over the world and during different eras of time. Art has also molded society throughout the ages. Art is



the way in which people choose to express themselves; Art forms include writing, music, drawing, painting and many others. Images help humans to use their imaginations to reshape and build on their ideas. They also help to pass on these ideas to future generations, therefore preserving our great culture.

### **Preservation of the Public Art forms in the Ashanti Region of Ghana**

Public art works in Kumasi have the potential of telling a lot about their cultural history. It includes a narration of their history and what the culture of the people is all about. This makes it very necessary for the various public art works in Kumasi and its environs to be preserved. Art works publicly mounted goes through a lot of strains from the weather. Heavy rains and sunshine have great effects on these works, and for them to be preserved, the maintenance culture needs to be adopted.

Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (1997) defines historic preservation as an endeavor that seeks to preserve, conserve and protect buildings, objects, landscapes or other artifacts of historic significance. Significantly, these public art works contain the histories of the communities in which they are found. Old buildings such as the Manhyia Palace Museum which is of great historical interest and importance does not only house the museum exhibits, but it is itself an exhibit. It was created within the old residence of Otumfuo Agyeman Premeh I and Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyeman Prempeh II, the thirteenth and fourteenth Kings of Asante respectively. The historic building was built in 1925 for Asantehene Agyeman Prempeh I by the British Colonial Government as his private residence when he returned from Seychelles after twenty- eight years in exile as plain Edward Prempeh.

(Manhyia Palace Museum Guide, 2003). It was from this palace that he ruled, for the people kept his stool the *Asikadwa* (the Golden Stool) vacant during the twenty- eight years he was in exile and welcomed him back as Asantehene.



Fig 29. Manhyia Palace Museum, A historic building that exhibit itself.

Source: Researcher's field study

In a personal communication with Mr. Mustapha Issah (Curator, CNC Musuem), on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, he stated that, the building that houses the Okomfo Anokye sword is a historical landmark where the legendary Okomfo Anokye sword was planted. The site at Okomfo Anokye Teaching Hospital is the exact place where the famous Golden stool of Asanteman descended onto the lap of Opemsuo Osei Tutu I, founder of Asante nation.

Preserving sculptural public art works in Kumasi and its environs will help strengthen historical events that lead to the compilation of important histories of the people. Producers of the various sculptural public art works are to cultivate the

maintenance culture, and this will help them keep their works in good conditions, and will therefore serve its purpose.

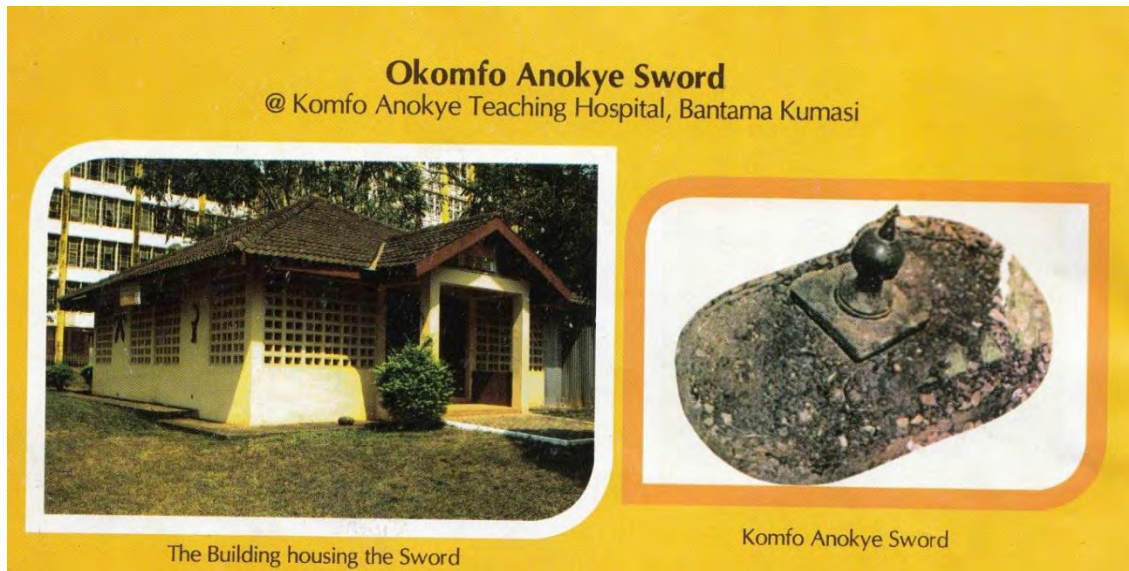


Figure 30. The buiding housing the Okomfo Anokye Sword

Source: Researcher's field study.

Okomfo Anokye again predicted that, the place will be a healing place for millions of people and the site happens to be the exact place where the Okomfo Anokye Teaching Hospital is situated. One fascinating fact about the sword is that since it was planted around 1697, some attempts had been made to remove it but to no avail (K. Sarpong, personal interview, July, 2016).

### **The Impact of foreign culture on the people of Ghana**

Ghanaians tend to lose some important and inevitable portions of their traditional and cultural values due to the adoption of foreign cultures. The youth have developed the attitude of not doing things *the Ghanaian way*, which is relegating our

rich culture to the background. It is important to note that culture is the pivot around which development of a nation revolves. The practice of parallel cultures are mostly discouraged in our Ghanaian societies because, it leads to re-duplications, unfair competitions and mostly cumbersome.

In spite of a proliferation of foreign religions, the country is witnessing improved communications which makes it easier to know what is happening in other countries in a fast manner. The country benefits from inventions and other forms of technology from foreign cultures such as computers and televisions. The use of some of these technologies in our various homes does not permit some of the non-literate elderly ones in the society to be able to transfer oral traditions and histories in a particular society to the younger ones. Unlike the olden days when children were gathered under trees for traditional education, they now gather in front of the television set to watch foreign television novels that are of foreign influence.

It is however realized that, a nation that seeks to progress must have a dynamic culture but not a permanent or static one. A dynamic culture is one that is subject to changes suited to the needs and prevailing circumstances. According to Baafi (2008), change in culture means adaptation and shift in social, economic and general culture life to be able to cope with development around us. Dontoh (2014) said at the inauguration of the Central Regional Performers of Traditional Arts Union of Ghana (PETRAUGA), that, the youth are gradually losing their sense of identity and belonging because they compare themselves with their western counterparts, forgetting that the youth of the West have different cultural values which might not be compatible with the Ghanaian culture. He said again that, culture, being a defensive

mechanism that protects the values of people, must be revisited, studied and understood properly and called on traditional leaders to help in its renaissance and preservation. Foreign culture has a great influence on the Ghanaian culture, because no genuine respect and legitimacy is given to non-western cultures. Reinfield (2003) says cultural dialogue is of use only when each recognise views the other as equal. The juxtapositioning of cultures will continue to present more of a threat to non-western culture if much regards are not given to the local.

Hoffman (2006) states that, cultural identity is essential for the peaceful cooperation of civilizations. If people have a strong sense of self-identity through culture, they are more likely to cooperate peacefully with other cultures with respect to diversity of value system and religious beliefs as well as the tangible aspects of culture. As different cultures become more intertwined, these cultural identities may change. The fluid nature of culture can be positive, leading to stronger societal structures and values, but also can destroy minority or less-powerful cultures, leading to the breakdown of fundamental human values.

### **Tourism and the preservation of the arts**

Baafi (2008) defines tourism as an activity involving travelling to see and enjoy facilities and services in other places. Ghana abounds with places of tourist attractions: these include mountains and escarpment, waterfalls, coastal features, lakes and lagoons among others. Sculptural art figures that are mounted at public places in Kumasi and its environs also serve as great tourist points. Some of these works of art are also placed at museums and art centres across the country.

Economically, the growth of local craft industries such as sculpture works, wood carving, straw works, textiles and leather works are grown through tourism. The increase in foreign trade between Ghana and other countries helps promote commodities such as kente (*Wall Street Journal*, 2012), textiles in general, wood carving and sculpture pieces which are mostly used by tourists as souvenirs. Tourism serves as a great source of employment for hotel managers, accountants, taxi drivers and many others.

The arrival of the Europeans in the fifteenth century had profound effects on all aspects of African life including Arts (Gillon, 1984). The Portuguese were the first Europeans to come to Africa. The profound influence that this first European intrusion had on the social, religious and commercial life of Africans was evident in the field of visual arts. The first major step in the formal development of tourism in Ghana was an evaluation of the country's tourism resources in 1970, 13 years after independence in 1957 (Obuarn Committee, 1972). The objective was to catalogue and classify the potential tourism resources for a five-year development plan covering the period 1972-1976. As a result of this study, the government issued a White Paper on Tourism, which identified investment areas for foreign participation, including various concessions and incentives for investors. Between 1972 and 1978, a number of important studies were carried out on various aspects of Ghana's tourist industry. Due to financial limitations as well as local technical constraints, most of these studies were funded and conducted by foreign agencies and personnel. Protecting, preserving and promoting culture includes aspects of human right, tolerance, development and protecting cultural sites and artifacts as well as

intellectual property rights for culturally specific language and art. There is a multitude of contact points between western and non-western cultures. Tourism is a powerful vehicle for cultural exchange. Through tourist host exchanges, the west meets the rest of the world through the agents of Cultural Revolution. Ironically, tourism is often driven by a search for variation in an increasingly homogenized world, yet tourism itself is an instrument for the expansion of homogeneity.

In agreement to the above discourse, Inskip (1991, p. 20) explains this happening as the “submergence of the local society by the outside cultural pattern of seemingly more affluent and successful tourists”. Cultural pollution is characterized by the neglecting of local traditions and values and the indiscriminate approval of foreign cultures. As part of preserving Ghana's heritage; several museums have been opened besides the Ghana National Museum. The latter nevertheless remains the most significant effort in the field. The museum started in the Archaeology Department of the University College of the Gold Coast. Subsequently, a permanent home for it was found in Accra where the collections were brought. There remains however, at the Archaeology Department, a small museum which is worth visiting because of the unique collection based on the activities of the university's archaeology staff.

In spite of the use of English as an official language in Ghana, local languages have not been neglected. Indeed, one of the organizations under the National Commission on Culture is the Bureau of Ghana Languages. This has paved way for a lot of foreigners growing to love the study of Ghanaian languages as part of their tour in the country. The use of Ghanaian Languages at the various centres for culture in

Ghana symbolizes the importance of language in the promotion of culture. Different cultural groups think, feel, and act differently. There are no scientific standards for considering one group as intrinsically superior or inferior to another. Studying differences in culture among groups and societies presupposes a position of cultural relativism. It does not imply normalcy for oneself, or for one's society. It, however, calls for judgment when dealing with groups or societies different from one's own. Kumasi Cultural Centre which has now been turned into the Centre for National Culture (CNC) contains issues on the cultures of the whole country.

Information about the nature of cultural differences between societies, their roots, and their consequences should precede judgment and action. Negotiation is more likely to succeed when the parties concerned understand the reasons for the differences in viewpoints. Through tourism, the history of a group of people is expressed through their artistic inventions. The tourist, in the absence of an interpreter, is able to read meanings of what an artifact portrays, like Colleen (2006) said symbolism is mankind's oldest form of communication. This also adds to the reason why signs, symbols as well as works of art people see around them provide their own interpretations to the viewer. Agbo (2006) says symbolism is the representation of ideas by the use of signs, literacy and artistic invention to express ideas, emotions and abstractions in place of realism.

According to Sanford (2001) protecting and preserving culture includes aspects of human right tolerance, development and protecting cultural sites and artifacts as well as intellectual property rights for culturally specific language and art. The protection and preservation of diverse cultures of the world is one of the



foundations on which the United Nation was built. The United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the primary body of the UN to protect and preserve culture. At the core of UNESCO's work is acknowledgement of the links between culture and the broader aim of people throughout the world. Respect, tolerance and protection of cultures are central to the UNESCO mandate of "advancing, through the educational, scientific and cultural relations of the people of the world, the objectives of peace and common welfare of mankind" (UNESCO Constitution, 1945, p.11).

### **Summary**

In summary, the review of related literature has revealed that, various sculptural public art forms could be used in the preservation of history. It has again elaborated on how the preservation of art works that helps in the preservation of our culture can also contribute to the development of the country. The review of related literature has brought out how art relates to the culture and history of a society. The next chapter presents the methodology of the study that is how the whole research was conducted.

## CHAPTER THREE

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Overview**

This chapter highlights the procedures used in obtaining and analyzing the information obtained from the study. The methods and techniques that were adopted for the study are explained. It describes the various techniques employed by the researcher to collect the needed data in order to contribute well to the evaluation of information in the field of history preservation through art. The population studied, sampling designs as well as processing methods would all be found in this chapter.,

#### **Research Design**

A research design refers to the overall plan adopted by the researcher to obtain answers to the research questions and for testing the hypotheses formulated (Agyedu, Donkor & Obeng, 2007). The study was based on descriptive method of qualitative research approach. This method was adopted because the research basically focused on the description of how public sculptural art forms, mounted in Kumasi and its environs are used in preserving the history of the Asantes. Interviews, questionnaires, observations and field notes on the various art forms were employed in putting together, the needed data.

The histories surrounding the selected sculptural public art forms are greatly based on oral tradition which needs verifications and examinations. Therefore, on-site observation and thorough interviews were conducted with custodians of the land, the Director and the Curator for Centre for National Cultural, Kumasi) the curator for

Manhyia Palace Museum, a Lecturer at KNUST, Kumasi, an MFA student at KNUST, Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong, and a public sculptural artists. Other indigenes of the Asante traditional area were also given questionnaire. The number is specified in the sampling section of this thesis report. These participants have helped in achieving the descriptive and historical methods of research employed in writing this thesis. It appeared that, not much documentation on sculptural public art works with particular reference to statues and heroic figures in preserving the history of the Asantes are in existence. A personal observation method was used in most cases. This enabled the researcher to examine fully the various public art works selected for this study.

### **Library Research**

In conducting this research, the library served as the secondary source for the researcher in the collection of data. The University of Education Winneba, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and The Ashanti Libraries were used in collecting information. Books, journals, magazines, unpublished thesis on history and public art were also examined and reviewed.

### **Archival Research**

The researcher visited various archives where relevant information to the topic could be acquired. These places include the Manhyia Archives, National Archives, Kumasi, and the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA). Among all these places, not much information on public sculpture works in Kumasi was retrieved. The date and

producers of some of the public art works in Kumasi could not be traced at any of these places. After going through their catalogues, workers at the places visited rather attacked each other for the lack of the needed information for the researcher. Yet the little information gathered was still relevant to the research. Informal interviews were also conducted with the general officials (Archivist and Assistant Archivists) and the interviews enabled the researcher to obtain some vital information that had to do with the objectives of the thesis.

### **Population**

The population for the study included scholars in the field of art and culture in Kumasi and people living in Kumasi and its environs, particularly, those found within the various communities, where the selected sculptural public art forms are located.

It also included officers in charge of the Centre for National Culture, artists, lectures, teachers, traders, and students in the Ashanti Region. The pulic sculptural art works in Kumasi and its environs all form part of the population.

### **Accessible Population**

Out of the 35 people that the researcher targeted, only 30 were accessible to the researcher. These include teachers, artists, lecturers, students, civil servants and traders just to mention a few.

Table 3 shows the results from respondents on the use of art as a medium of Preservation of history and the relationship between art and history, further discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 3.

The results from respondents on the use of art as a medium of Preservation of history and the relationship between art and history,

Age Range In years	Sample Size	Art considered as a medium of preservation	Percentage of Art <u>considered</u> as a medium of preservation	Art not considered as a medium of preservation	Percentage of Art <u>not</u> <u>considered</u> as a medium of preservation	Art and history are related	Percentage of art and history related	Art and history are not related	Percentage of Art and history not related
17 -19	4	3	75%	1	25%	2	50%	-	0%
20 -39	12	11	92%	1	8%	10	83%	2	17%
40 – 60	10	10	100%	-	-	9	90%	1	10%
60 and above	4	4	100%	-	-	4	100%	-	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>25</b>		<b>3</b>	

Table 3 represents the distribution of the sample for the study. The figures have been translated into percentages. It is perhaps evident that the people of Kumasi have most of their cultural histories enshrined in the various sculptural public art forms.

## **Sampling Techniques and Descriptions**

For the purpose of this research, the purposive and snowball sampling techniques were employed. Due to the reasons below, the purposive and snowball sampling techniques were chosen.

### *Purposive Sampling*

This is the selection of people based on the particular purpose of the experiment. With this, the target population was found in the communities where the public art forms were located. Therefore, the researcher visited the places where relevant information could be found.

### *Snowball Sampling*

Snowballing sampling technique was adopted as serendipity when it was observed that, though it was not part of the initial research methods, the researcher found it necessary to use it. In the process of searching and putting together information, the informants directed the researcher to other persons for further information, verification or clarification. Thus, the researcher also asked to be directed to other authorities that could be of help. This enabled the researcher to cross-check gathered information, reconcile, and come out with the most important facts that were reliable to this research.

## **Data Collection Instruments**

The researcher used picture-cued instrument and observation as the instruments, and whiles on the field, the personal interview technique was used to solicit data from respondents so as to collect the history behind the selected public art works.

### *Observation*

Observation of the selected public art forms plays an important role in this research. With the observation, the researcher sees, touches, and studies the art forms critically and asks questions as well. According to Nisbet (1977), observation is not a 'natural gift' but a highly skilled activity for which an extensive background knowledge and understanding are required as well as the capacity for original thinking and the ability to spot significant events.

Most of the observations took place at the various places where the Public sculptural art works are mounted, museums and other places where similar works are placed. Through the observation, the researcher had the opportunity to test the validity of answers and opinions gathered through interviews conducted. It also enabled the researcher to come into contact with physical art forms and the individuals who had the first hand information. In some other cases through the observation the researcher met the producers of some of these public art works. This helped the researcher to be able to compare some studio works as at the time they were produced to the one mounted publicly. Digital camera was used to take photographs whiles the voice recorder helped in recording personal communications conducted. This gave the researcher ample time to write down reports from interview. As such, a method of triangulation was adopted.

### *Interview*

Formal and informal interviews were conducted. The willingness of the interviewees to talk helped made the interview conducted interesting, while lots of facts were also revealed. Prior to the interview, the researcher sought the consent of the participants after presenting her introductory letter to disclose her identity.

The people interviewed include, The Director of the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi, Eric T. Martey, the head of the research department of the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi, Mustapha Issah, and their other colleagues that showed much interest in giving out their best contribution to the researcher. Others include Mr. James Boakye, a sculptor at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi), Mr. Justice Brobbey, (Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum), Mr. Livingstone Amoako (MFA Student, KNUST), Mr. Kwame Opoku Bonsu (Sculpture lecturer at KNUST), and Professor Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong were also interviewed.

Both closed and open-ended questions were asked using an interview guide. Information obtained from the interview includes name, age, whether they are from the Ashanti Region, and how the histories in their hometowns are preserved. Interviewees were also asked to name the producers of some sculptural public art works in Kumasi and to state whether they are in anyway preserving the history of the Ashanti Region. They were again asked to state the relationship between art and history and whether it is necessary for artist and historians to work together. Knowledgeable people in the area of the research were given direct questions and most of them responded accordingly. The open-ended questions helped the



respondents to bring out the significance of the sculptural public art works in the preservation of Asante's history.

At the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi, it took the researcher about three days to conduct the interviews. This was because, on the first visit, the Director was not given a notice and the head of the research department was not also available. Despite all the inconveniences, the director granted the researcher about forty (40) minutes of his time for the interview before the reschedule. On the second visit, the researcher spent about three hours to interview the Director for the second time, Mr. Mustapha Issah (Head of the research department) and Mr. James Boakye (a sculptor). Three hours was spent because they were at work while the interview was also going on. This created a relaxed and conducive atmosphere for them to come out with answers to all the interview questions.

At the Manhyia Palace, about one hour was spent. Over there the curator, Mr. Justice Brobbey took the researcher round to see the effigies that tell their own stories. The cultural histories behind each of the effigies were told to the researcher at each point. The interview with Mr. Kwame Opoku Bonsu a lecturer at KNUST also took twenty five minutes as he was fast and brief in answering the questions.

Professor Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong also spent about an hour in answering all the interview questions as much time was used in narrating the histories behind almost all the selected sculptural art works and even those that were not selected for this study.

### **Art forms and artworks selected**

Sculptural Public art forms mounted at vantage point in Kumasi and its environs were selected for the study. A pilot study was conducted on the Okomfo Anokye effigy at Baantama roundabout in Kumasi. After the pilot study, it was realized that most of the people around the area did not know the cultural history behind the effigy. Through observation, sculptural public art forms were identified at specific locations in Kumasi and its environs. With the help of a digital camera, 15 pictures of sculptural public art forms were taken at different locations. Out of the 15 pictures, 6 of them contained the cultural history of the Asantes, therefore they were selected for the study.

They include the Okomfo Anokye Statue at Baantama roundabout in Kumasi the man standing on a leopard opposite the Central Prisons, Kumasi, Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyeman II mounted at the front of The Electricity Company of Ghana, Adum, Kumasi (Fig.34); Otumfuo Opoku Ware II at Suame roundabout (Fig.36); Otumfuo Osei Tutu also at Airport Roundabout(Fig.37); Kumasi and the Fountain of Transition at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi (Fig 38).

All the above-mentioned public sculptural art works were selected for the study based on their historic significance. They were the most outstanding sculptural art forms that were mounted at specific locations in Kumasi and its environs. They are very close to the people and there is therefore the need for them to understand why they have been poised at those places. This will help in the preservation of history by use of art, and to pass it on to the future generation.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The information on the result as well as analysis and discussion of data collection used for the research are thematically and descriptively presented, a few in statistical tables. The descriptive method was used to elaborate the preservation of history through sculptural public art works in Kumasi and its environs. It also helped in the breaking down of large information gathered into sections for easy interpretation and understanding. The primary information was put together through observation, personal communications and by the use of questionnaire. The secondary information was also gathered mostly from charts, publications, thesis, and brochures and from the internet.

### **Summary**

The main purpose of this chapter has to do with how the whole research was conducted and the reason why a kind of methodology was employed. It is very clear in this chapter that a qualitative approach was adopted in conducting this research. Selected Public art works for the research were critically observed and noticed. Photographs of these works were also taken from their public stands. Needed information for the research were gathered from dependable informants They include custodians of the land, curators, Director for the Center for National Culture, Heads of research Departments and some senior citizens.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### Overview

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the various findings on selected cultural public art works in Kumasi and how these art forms preserve the history of the Asantes. The narrative and descriptive techniques are employed for the processing and analyzing of data after organizing them thematically. The focal point of this chapter dwells on examining the selected public art works that are related to the cultural history of the Asantes. It therefore takes a look at the preservation of history through these public art forms.

#### Histories behind the selected sculptural public art works in Kumasi and its environs

*A Cultural History of the Okomfo Anokye's effigy at the Bantama roundabout, Kumasi - Ghana*



Figure 31. The effigy of Okomfo Anokye at Baantama Roundabout

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

According to Mr. Mustapha Issah, the head of research department at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi, in a personal interview on the 12th of April, 2016 said, oral narratives reveal that, Nana Osei Tutu promised his people at his enstoolment to take up the great task of uniting the Asante states. With this thought at the back of his mind, asked his close friend Okomfo Anokye to assist him. In the year 1693, Okomfo Anokye therefore used the golden stool to appoint the first Asantehene in the person of Nana Osei Tutu I to begin the Asante Kingdom. The incident happened at the same place where the Okomfo Anokye statue is positioned. The golden stool was not a Kingly throne, but the resting place of the Asante nations' soul. The sacredness of the golden stool does not permit anybody to sit on it. It is kept very strict under security and precaution. It is taken out only on exceptionally grand occasions; it lies on its own throne and must not touch the ground. It specifies the actual place where the Asantes were united and the beginning of the Asante kingdom. The golden stool represents the soul and spirit of the Asantes. This was also confirmed by Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong in a personal conversation on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2016.

This public art figure was done by the late Professor E. K. Azzii-Akator who was a lecturer at KNUST. It is a typical cement work, a popular medium by Azzii-Akator, being a direct-modeller (sei'dou, 2015). Functionally, it reminds the general public of an event that took place at its location many years ago in the Asante traditional area. The figure was made to depict an Asante traditional fetish priest in action. It is believed that the golden stool descended from the sky, hence the facing upwards of the figure with the stool in the right hand also upwards-a sign of receiving

or bringing down the stool from the sky. The figure stands on one leg with the other one hanging. The whisk found in the left hand of the fetish priest suggests the leadership role he was playing at that particular moment. The position of the figure therefore portrays the moving nature of the priest at the time the stool was descending. According to the narrator, he chanted for some time before the stool came in to appoint the King of Asantes. There are strips of cowries crisscrossing at his back and chest of the Fetish Priest; this is also a representation of how the Asante traditional priest is supposed to dress.

According to Sarpong (1971), two incidents display how Asantes attach importance to the golden stool. The first one has to do with the Gold Coast governor, Sir Frederick Hodgson demanding for the surrender of the golden stool in March, 1909.

Where is the golden stool? He asked. Why am I not sitting on the golden stool at this moment? .....why did you not take opportunity of my coming to Kumasi to bring the golden stool, to give it to me to sit upon..... (Sarpong, 1971, p 32)

This was a mistake that could have arisen as a result of ignorance of the symbolism or significance of the golden stool. Nobody is supposed to sit on the golden stool; therefore the Governor's demand to sit on it meant that, he wanted to create a problem for the Asante nation. This led to the war between the British and the Asantes in which the Asantes were defeated but they claimed victory because they only fought to protect the golden stool.

The second event occurred when some road builders incidentally came across the hiding place of the golden stool and made away with some of its golden ornaments. When this happened, all the people of the Asante nation wore their morning cloth and there was a great terror in the whole Asante community. The culprits were arrested and sentenced to death, but the British realized the death sentence to be too much for them. They therefore sentenced them to eternal banishment from the Asante nation.

*Historical Meaning of the Okomfo Anokye effigy*

In a personal interview with Mr. Mustapha Issah (curator, CNC, Kumasi) in April 2016, he narrated that, Kumasi was once known as Kwamang. Kwamang became Kumasi when Okomfo Anokye planted two “Kum” trees in Kumawu and Kwamang respectively. After sometime, the Kwamang “Kum” tree geminated while the Kumawu one couldn’t germinate. Therefore he changed Kwamang to Kumasi, which is now the capital city of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. At the sight of the Okomfo Anokye effigy, it reminds the Asantes of a great historical piece of information that is how Okomfo Anokye was able to unite all the Asante states under one umbrella with the help of the Golden stool (Sikadwa Kofi) on that festive Friday (Fofie). This marks the day the first Asante King, Otumfuo Osei Tutu was appointed. Before the Golden stool came in, the Asantes were under the Denkyiras’ and had to pay tribute to their King. They therefore needed strength to fight them. In 1701, the Asantes defeated the Denkyiras at the famous battle of Feyiase. The effigy points to them the exact place where the incidence took place. It again brings to the minds of the Asantes that the golden stool represents the soul and spirit of the Asantes. This

was confirmed by Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong in a personal conversation on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2016.

*A Cultural History of the Yaa Asantewaa effigy at Ejisu roundabout – Ejisu Ghana*



Figure 32. Effigy of Nana Yaa Asantewaa, at Ejisu roundabout

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

The public art figure in Figure 31 represents Obaapanin Nana Yaa Asantewaa. It is located at Ejisu near Kumasi. She was the Queenmother of Ejisu. According to the Mr. Justice Brobbey the curator at the Manhyia Palace Museum) when the British demanded the golden stool from the Asantes, the men were afraid and were even



about handing it over to them, but she stood and mobilized men to fight in order to retain the stool.

The work was produced by a renowned sculptor in the Kumasi Metropolis, Mr James Boakye. In a personal communication with him on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2016, he explained how he became a great sculptor. He was not born a cripple but became one at age four through an injection. While at home, his elder brothers and sisters would come home from the farm with smaller animals such as dogs, goats, etc. and he was able to create the shapes of these animals with clay. Gradually, he started creating human figures and these figures were exactly the pictures of the people around him. This led to his people branding him a witch. A man living in the same community with them saw his effort and therefore advised his father to send him to school. After his senior high school education at Kumasi Academy, he enrolled at the College of Art and Industry where he was taught by Mr. Jot Ansah to develop what he already knew. He then started his work as a sculptor at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi in 1984. He has produced a lot of sculptural public art figures across the country. Aside the Yaa Asantewaa statue located at Ejisu roundabout, he has also worked on the great King Azantilo of Sandema in the Upper East Region, Okomfo Kwadjei at Bredi, near Nkoransah in the Brong Ahafo Region, presented the busts of former President Kuffour and Nkrumah during the Ghana at 50 celebration, which are now found at Accra National Museum. All the sculptural art figures found at the Children's Hospital, Accra and many others were done by him. According to him, almost all his sculptural art works are publicly mounted.

In his interview, he agreed to the fact that, artist and historians must work together since public art works have facts and histories of the communities in which they are found. Mr Boakye also explained that, site specifications were considered in the mounting of the sculptural public art figures. According to him, he mounted the Yaa Asantewaa piece with its face towards Accra and to depict her readiness at the time to fight the British right at the Kotoka International Airport. The left foot is moved forward to also suggest the moving nature of the statue. Pure Portland cement, an aggregate of sand, metal for the formation of the armature and water were used in building the form. It was then sprayed in bronze with the impression that, statues are normally not painted. The sculptural piece is in a woman form, with a cloth around the waist. On top of the cloth is a *Batakari* war attire literally known as “Akotade” in the Twi language. He placed talismans in the war attire, and these were designed in cement. The gun in her hands was also made of cement with a metal frame inside. This signifies how she mobilized men for the war. The figure again has a war crown “akokye” covering the head, and it is to protect the head from gun shots.

#### *Historical Meaning of the Yaa Asantewaa effigy*

The Yaa Asantewaa effigy mounted at Ejusu roundabout brings back the memories of the historical disputes between the Asantes and the British in 1900. Nana Yaa Asantewaa was 65 years and was the Queen mother of Ejusu. She was at the same time acting as the chief of Ejusu. The men were afraid and were even about handing over the Golden stool to the British when they demanded it. She stood and mobilized men to fight in order to retain the stool. She said, “Is better to die than to allow the British to take the stool” The Asantes were defeated and she was humiliated and

exiled to the Seychelles Island where she died in October 5<sup>th</sup> 1921. (J. Brobbey, personal interview, April, 2016).

*A Cultural History of a man standing on a Leopard in front of Kumasi Prisons- Kumasi-Ghana 1974 by Francis Anani*



Figure 33. The Effigy of a man standing on a leopard in front of Kumasi Prisons

A renowned sculptor named Francis Anani, who has majored in sculpture, works within the Kumasi Metropolis. He was once an art master at the Kumasi Academy Senior High School. One of his works is the famous work of a man standing on a leopard. This work is found at the roundabout in front of the Kumasi Prisons, Adum in the heart of Kumasi.

The work which is about nine feet tall has a man bare-chested with a cloth on his waist standing on a leopard and beating a “dawuro” (gong gong) with one leg on the head of the leopard and the other leg on the back of the leopard. The cloth on the man is yellow with black “Gye Nyame” symbols in it. This work which was commissioned in 1974 is a representation of a historical event that happened in the life of the inhabitants or the Asantes who lived in this area of Adum many decades ago.

According to the Mr. Justice Brobbey (curator at the Manhyia Palace Musuem) a leopard happens to terrorize the inhabitants of that vicinity for many years. Efforts to hunt down the leopard proved futile. In 1892 a young boy was born in the palace of the then Asantehene. The birth of this young boy from the royal family came along with a blessing. In the afternoon of that fateful day that the royal was born, a young man called Kwame Boakye came into contact with the leopard and in the struggle he was able to overpower the leopard and killed it. Kwame Boakye then called members of the community to witness his success over the leopard. The message was then carried to the Asantehene’s palace. The success over the leopard was then attributed to the newly born royal. In a personal conversation with Emeritus Kwasi Sarpong on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2016 added that, naming a child after an event in which the child was born, is one of the ways of naming a child in the Asante’s culture. For instance, a child born on a Christmas day that fell on Friday is named “Kofi Bronya”. He therefore confirmed that, the boy was then named Osei Kwame Kyeretwie which means Osei the victor over a leopard. His birth thus signifies the

slaying of the leopard. The boy then grew to become the fourteenth Asantehene with the stool name Otumfour Sir Osei Agyemang Prempeh II.

The sculptural public art figure therefore is a very symbolic art work in the history of the Asantes. It reminds them of the bravery of Kwame Boakye and the symbolic birth of Osei Kwame Kyeretwei. The art work for that matter serves a repository of history to the people of Adum and Asantes in general. The man on top of the leopard represents Kwame Boakye, the *dawuro* represents the announcing of his success over the leopard and his leg over the leopard also signifies his authority over the animal. The yellow cloth around his waist represents the riches of the Asantes and the *Gye Nyame* symbol within the cloth also represents the protection of God on the Asante people.

The Asantes cherish their history and for that reason try every means to protect their history. This sculptural public art form is a true representation of a defeat over a leopard but the artist got it wrong by molding a lion. Secondly, in real life situations, it will be very difficult for a man to stand on a live lion or leopard. Therefore the leopard in the scene should have been made to lie dead, and then the man could place the leg on the head of the leopard.

#### *The Historical Portrayal of the man standing on a leopard*

At the sight of the figure, a mental picture of a historical event that happened in the lives of the inhabitants of Adum many decades ago is painted. The people that lived in Adum at the time were terrorized by a leopard. Adum was occupied by the “Adumfuo” (Executioners) and there is a perception that Mr. Kwame Boakye who was able to arrest the leopard could be one of the executioners. The figure

commemorates how the birth of a royal on that fateful day led to the arrest of a leopard that terrified the Adum community many years ago. The royal grew up to attain a stool name Otumfour Sir Osei Agyemang Prempeh II, and was the fourteenth Asante King (K. Amoako, personal interview, April, 2016).

*A Cultural History behind the effigy of Otumfour Sir Osei Agyemang Prempeh II in front of Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) building Adum-Kumasi-Ghana*



Fig. 34. The Effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh II Mounted in front of ECG, Adum-Kumasi. Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Otumfour Sir Osei Agyeman Prempeh II was the 14<sup>th</sup> Asante king and the second literate king of the Asantes. He ruled from 1931 to 1970. It was during his time that the Asantes confederacy which was abrogated by the British, following the arrest and banishment of Nana Prempeh I was restored (Osei, 2002).

In a personal interview with Mr. Justice Brobbey (curator Manhyia Palace Museum) on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2016, it was revealed that, Nana Prempeh II was enthroned at age 39 and he ruled for 39 years staying in the present day Museum. He had 21 children with 8 wives. He was such a great man, and his greatness led to the receiving of four medals which are as follow:

1. President Nkrumah of Ghana – The Order of the Volta ( OOV)
2. Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia - The Lion of Judah
3. President William Tubman of Liberia – The Love of Liberty
4. King George V of Britain – Knight of the British Empire (KBE)

The figure of Otumfour Sir Nana Agyeman Prempeh is located at Adum ECG roundabout in Kumasi. Another image of his is also found in front of the Centre for National Culture's Museum, Kumasi. A life - size effigy of Nana Sir Osei Agyeman Prempeh II has been positioned exactly at the place where he used to sit and receive guests. The area where the effigy of Nana Prempeh II is mounted reminds the Asantes of their settlement in Adum. It explains that, no matter where the Asantes go, they will never forget of places where they have settled before. The present day Armed Forces Museum was once the palace for the Kumasi *hene*. Adum came from the word "Adumfour". The Adumfour lived at Adum and they were the "Abrafour" people that killed for the King. The Asantes were very brave people. They had and

still have a traditional court to judge cases mostly on chieftaincy and land issues. In the olden days, when one is found guilty at any of these courts, that person could be killed, therefore going to the court, one is compelled to put on mourning cloth, in order to mourn oneself before one is killed. These days, the killing has stopped, but the culture of wearing mourning cloth to the court is still practiced. Every Tuesday and Thursday, this court is held at the Manhyia Palace.



Fig. 35. Effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh II at CNC, Kumasi.

Source: Fieldwork, 2016



Artistically, the effigies of the Kings publicly mounted are skillfully adorned in the Asante regalia. Their crowns, rings, bangles, and their use of cloth show the great value that is exhibited in the Asante culture, and therefore tell how beautiful the regalia are. They are normally sprayed in bronze to signify how the Asantes cherish bronze.

*The Cultural History behind the Effigy of Otumfuo Opoku-Ware II at Suame Roundabout, Kumasi-Ghana*



Figure 36. Effigy of Otumfuo Opoku – Ware II at Suame roundabout in Kumasi

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Otumfuo Opoku-Ware II was the 15<sup>th</sup> Asante King and he ruled from 1970 to 1999. He was a lawyer by profession, and was even appointed by the National

Democratic Congress (NDC) Government as an ambassador to Italy at the time he was due to become King. He therefore dropped the appointment and took up the mantle as the Asante King. The Manhyia Museum was created within the old residence of Otumfuo Agyemang Prempeh I and Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyeman Prempeh II, the thirteenth and fourteenth Kings of Asante. He ruled in the historic building which was put up in 1925 by the British Colonial Government for Asantehene Agyeman Prempeh I. Otumfuo Opoku-Ware was the last King to have lived in the building. He lived there shortly and rehabilitated the place into a Museum in 1995 and he officially opened the Museum on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1995 as part of the activities or events marking the Silver Jubilee of his ascension to the Golden stool.

The figure of Nana Opoku-Ware II mounted at Suame roundabout was created by the sculpture Department of KNUST. They were commissioned by the Asante Traditional Council. It was done between 1995 and 1997, which was before the death of the King. Mr. J. K. Andrews, Mr. J. K. Asare Tettey and Mr. Emmanuel Bonsoo were the lecturers that supervised the students during the production of the work at that time. It is a cement work. In a personal communication with Mr. Justice Brobbey (curator, Manhyia Palace Museum) on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2016, he said, the figure is made to face the road towards Bremang where the Asante Kings are embalmed. This is a way of telling people that, Bremang is a very important place in Kumasi. It also tells that, the King is dead physically but spiritually, that is where he can be found. Mr. Kwame Opoku Bonsu (sculpture lecturer, KNUST) also ascertained that, when a person is alive, the mounting of his figure plays a supervisory and guidance role, but

mounting a dead person's figure plays a commemorative role. He again agreed with Mr. Brobbey that, the figure facing Bremang is to inform the public about the importance of the place and that is where he can be found.

*History behind the Effigy of Otumfuo Opoku Ware II*

The effigy has been positioned with the face towards Bremang, which is the place where Asante Kings are embalmed. At the sight of the effigy, it connotes that, the King can be found at Bremang, which means he is dead.

*The Effigy of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, at Airport roundabout, Kumasi-Ghana*



Figure 37. Effigy of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, at Airport roundabout, Kumasi.

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, son of the Asantehemaa, Nana Afia Kobi Serwaa Ampem II was born on the 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1950. His father was Nana Boakye Danquah of Nkyenkyire. At an early age, he was adopted by his uncle, Ohene Mensah Bonsu,

Hiahene, one of the leading chiefs at the court of Manhyia. His aim was to groom the young royal for the future.

Otumfuo Tutu II was sent to the late Omanhene of Sefwi Wiawso, Nana Kwadwo Aduhene, who had him enrolled at Sefwi Wiawso Secondary School in 1964. He came back to Kumasi to complete his 'A' levels at Osei Kyeretwie Secondary School. He became a member of the Institute of Personal Management in the UK in 1985. Otumfuo Osei Tutu worked as a finance officer at the food processing company, Oxo in London and as a Personal administrator at the Manpower Service commission attached to Brent Council. He again worked with the Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company of Toronto. He returned to Ghana in 1989 to set up his own business Transpomech International (Ghana) Limited of which he remains the Executive Director. The company supplies mining equipment to mining companies.

Otumfuo Osei Tutu II is the sixteenth occupant of Asikadwa Kofi (the golden stool). He is the current ruling King of the Asante Kingdom, a very significant aspect of the Asantes governance is the judicial system. Nana Osei Tutu II was enstooled in April 1999. His first year saw a long stride in education culture which also created a history. He was made the Chancellor of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. His achievement has won him a lot of honorary degrees with one from the Glasgow University, where he was awarded alongside Prince Charles.

Considering a statement made by Mr. Kwame Opoku Bonsu (sculpture lecturer at KNUST) on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016, when a person is alive, his figure is mounted to play a supervisory role. As such, the figure of Otumfuo Osei Tutu is playing a great

supervisory role and this stands out in the outstanding way the figure has been exhibited. The two images at the sides of the King represent servants to the King and it depicts the services rendered to a king as he is not expected to do any work for himself. The image is mounted with the face towards the Manhyia Palace to tell that, he can be found in the Palace as the ruling King of the Asantes.

*The fountain of Transition, at the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi-Ghana*



Figure 38. The fountain of Transition, mounted at the Center for National Culture, Kumasi

In an interview with Mr. Eric Matey (Director of Centre for National Culture, Kumasi) on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 he explained that, the Kumasi Cultural Centre was established in 1951 by Dr. Alexander Atta Yaw Kyeremateng. His aim for the establishment was to outdoor only the rich cultures of the Asantes. Mr. Matey agreed

that Public art works in Kumasi are really preserving the history of Asantes, and also said artists and historians must work together.

The fountain located at the central part of the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi was established in 1963 by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. It represents the transition of the Asante Cultural Centre to the Ghana National Cultural Centre. In 1990, it then became the Centre for National Culture. The cultural centre serves as an institution where culture can be experienced; it aims at promoting, preserving and projecting the culture of Ghana. In the fountain, the four swords pointing to the four cardinal points of Ghana represents the country's fight for freedom and the protection of our culture from all the four corners of the earth. The weighing balance also signifies the justice of our country and culture. The artist used Brass metal in producing this work.

#### *Historical elements of the Fountain of Transition*

The fountain represents the transition of Asante Cultural Centre to Ghana National Cultural Centre and currently to Centre for National Culture in 1990. Its existence remind the people of a place where culture can be experienced. The four swords of the fountain remind us again of the country's fight for freedom and protection of our culture and the weighing balance replenish us with the justice of our country and culture (E. Matey, personal interview, April, 2016).

#### **Site Specifications of the Public Sculptural Art Works**

The monument of Otumfuo Sir Agyemang Prempeh II mounted in the ECG roundabout Adum, is made to face the road towards Adum, Melcom area because the

Asantehene's palace was once located around that area. In mounting the various Public art forms, Site specification was considered. Comparing the statue of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II (the 16th reigning Asante King) at airport roundabout in Kumasi to that of Otumfuo Opoku-Ware II (15<sup>th</sup> Asante King) at Suame roundabout, there is a realization that, each work has a reason for its position. Mr. Kwame Bonsoo (lecturer, KNUST) in an interview on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016 said, when a person is alive, his figure is mounted to play a supervisory role, therefore, the figure of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II is mounted in a giant form and he is made to face the road towards the Manhyia Palace to signify that, he is the reigning King and can be located at the palace. Otumfuo Opoku Ware is also mounted to face Bremang to signify that Bremang is the place for the embalmment of Asante Kings and as a dead king of Asante, that is where his remains can be found. The situation of the Okomfo Anokye's statue is a historical landmark where the Golden stool of Asanteman descended unto the lap of Opemso Osei Tutu I, founder of Asante nation. Okomfo Anokye also planted a sword at this same area and predicted that, the place will become a healing place for millions of people; therefore the site happened to be the exact place where the Okomfo Anokye Teaching hospital is situated. One fascinating fact about the sword is that since it was planted around 1697, some attempts had been made to remove but to no avail. The statue of Nana Yaa Asantewaa is located at Ejusu roundabout because she was the Queen mother of Ejusu, who led the 1900 Asante war with the British. She was about sixty five years old when she declared the war. She was on exile to the Seychelles after the war on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 1900 where she died on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1921. The man

standing on the leopard in front of Kumasi Central Prison is mounted at its location to depict the community or area in which the leopard was disturbing.

In conclusion, it is very much fascinating that, the public art works in Kumasi and its environs have the histories of the Asantes enshrined in them. Through the questionnaire and the various face to face interviews conducted, it was clear that people are aware of art works containing histories, but knowledge of the particular history was a problem. The researcher tried in her own way to educate the people she came into contact with.

Narrations of the histories behind selected works were given to respondents and they also accepted the fact that, art is not only about drawing because they have a lot of histories surrounding them. It was also clarified that, most art works are mounted at specific place for specific reasons. For instance, the location of the Okomfo Anokye statue was verified to be the exact location where the meeting for the descend of the golden stool was organized.

The next chapter which is the last for this thesis presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the whole work.

### **Analysis and Discussion of questionnaire and interviews**

The Table 3 indicates that, out of the 35, people expected to respond to questionnaires only 30 of them were met. Twenty-eight individuals representing 93% percent of the total sample agreed that medium of history preservation is an art. Whiles two of the respondents representing 7% of the total did not agree to the view that medium of history preservation is an art. Twenty-five respondents accepted the



fact that art and history are related, 3 of them said they are not related and 2 of them were not sure as to whether they are related or not, representing 83%, 10% and 7% respectively.

Even though a greater number of the sample agreed to the fact that the selected Public sculptural art works preserves the histories of the Asantes, a hand full of them could say something small on the figures. Majority of the total sample did not know about the histories surrounding the art works. It was very easy narrating just the histories about the selected sculptural art works to the majority that agreed to the fact that, they preserve history. This is because; they were already convinced that the works preserve history.

The respondents that were not able to come out with the fact that the selected sculptural public art works are used in the preservation of cultural history were given enough education on the various forms publicly mounted. They were given instances that will let them agree that they are art works and they preserve histories as well. The histories surrounding them were also narrated for them to fully accept and understand that, art and history are related

The findings revealed that, seven (7) people interviewed were within ages 30 and 85. Five of the interviewees were Asantes living in Kumasi and its environs. The remaining two were not Asantes, but had lived in Kumasi throughout their lifetime.

In the interview, all the seven interviewees could not state how the histories in their hometowns are preserved. Mr. James Boakye the sculptor at the Centre for National Culture agreed that, the preservation of history is the main issue behind his products. The interviewees were again able to identify some sculptural public art

form that tell the cultural histories of the Asantes but did not know the producers of most of the works.

Professor Emeritus Peter K. Sarpong, the Curators at CNC, Kumasi and Manhyia Palace were able to narrate the historical events surrounding all the selected sculptural art works for the study while the others could say something small about some of the works. Six of them agreed that Art and history are related and there is therefore the need for Artists and Historians to work together. On the contrary, Mr. Kwame Opoku Bonsu (Sculpture lecturer, KNUST) said, even though art and history may be related in some areas, he however opines that Artist and Historians must not work together, because Art is autonomous and History is democratic.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Overview

In Chapter Four, the selected public art forms were examined and analysed. The various histories behind the forms were looked at, while the producers of some of the works were also discussed. Through critical observation and analysis, it was brought to light that, the selected Public sculptural art works are mediums for the preservation of cultural values and the history of the people of the Ashanti region of Ghana. The site specifications of the works were also discussed. There was a realization that, most of the figures mounted at some vantage locations within Kumasi and its environs were there to also stress on the importance of the area or community.

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the project report. It outlines the data discussed by the researcher in this thesis and based on the discussions; useful recommendations are made to help solve the problem the research sought to address.

#### Summary

The main objectives of the study were

- i. To identify the different Sculptural Public art forms used by the people of the Ashanti Region.
- ii. To find out how Sculptural Public art forms could be preserved in the Ashanti Region

- iii. To investigate how Sculptural Public art forms are recognized in the Ashanti Region.
- v. To document Sculptural Public art forms from Kumasi and its environs in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

The research that sought to unveil the neglect of some sculptural public art figures that serve as a history preserving instrument in Kumasi and its environs, identified and examined selected sculptural works mounted publicly, interviewed producers of some of the works as well as officers at the Centre for National Culture, Professor Emeritus Peter Kwesi Sarpong as well as students, and the site specifications of the figures. It was observed that, sculptural public art works are very close to the people of the Kumasi and its environs. From the study, various sculptural public art works are mounted at vantage places in order to preserve the history of the Asantes. For instance, the Okomfo Anokye Statue mounted at the Bantama roundabout depicts how Okomfo Anokye was able to unite the Asantes under one *family* with the help of the golden stool. Therefore the selected Public sculptural art forms are basically used by the people as a tool for the preservation of their history.

Again, the Public sculptural art works in Kumasi are very close to the people, but most of the people had little or no idea on the historical background of the selected sculptural public art figures. Even though, the Ashanti Region of Ghana is well noted for its rich cultural heritage, some natives of Kumasi seem not see the importance of these public art works. In order to create awareness that, history can be preserved in art works, the histories behind the selected art forms were uncovered.

This was to tell scholars and all readers that the sculptural public art forms are not only for decorations, but they also contain great histories of the communities or areas where they are mounted.

It was evident through the use of questionnaire that, 98% of the participants are aware that the figures mounted are products of art and it is preserving the history of Kumasi, but does not know the particular history a figure is preserving. 7% also believed that the figures are art works but do not preserve the history of the Asantes, while another group also said that, they are not art works and therefore does not preserve history. Five people came out that the public art works are only for decorations. All the above came in as a result of generational gap, therefore through this thesis, the upcoming generation would recognize arts that are related to them.

## **Major Findings**

### **Findings for research question 1.**

1. The Okomfo Anokye statue mounted at the Baantama Roundabout in Kumasi, the Yaa Asantewaa Efigy at Ejusu roundabout, Otumfuo Opoku Ware II at Suame Roundabout and others are some of the sculptural public art forms in Kumasi and its environs. It is clarified that the sculptural public art works mounted at vantage points in Kumasi and its environs are not used as “art for art sake”, but rather have a historical background that promotes the preservation of the Asante’s history and culture. Even though, documentation of the producers and date for the mounting of these sculptural public art figures are neglected by the organizations that are supposed to be responsible

of them, preserving the sculptural public art works in Kumasi and its environs is certainly a way of preserving the Asante's history and culture.

**Findings for research question 2.**

2. It is evident in this thesis that products of Sculptural art works mounted publicly in Kumasi denote the histories of the Asantes, and that site specifications were also considered in the mounting of these sculptural public art works, that is most of the figures are mounted at the various places where the historical events took place, while others are mounted at places laying emphasis on some important historical sites in the histories of the Asantes.

**Findings for research question 3.**

3. Narrators at the various tourist centres have neglected how these histories have been kept with the help of art, even though there is literature on Asante history, it is through these sculptural public art works that knowledge has been contributed to the Asante history. It is therefore convincing that art and history are related.

4. It has also been established that artists and historians need to work together, because through the various art forms, authentic histories about people and communities can be traced. It has therefore been unveiled that art is used as a means of preserving history.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, the research has given an account of some selected Sculptural public art works in Kumasi and its environs. The historical aspects of the art works which have been the major findings realized in this thesis include the following conclusions which were drawn based on the objectives.

Considering Objective one the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The sculptural public art works mounted in Kumasi and its environs still stand to speak volumes about the historical life of the Asantes. It therefore becomes mandatory for the individual or citizens of the Ashanti Region of Ghana to protect and project the history through Public art works.
2. Bremang being the place where the Asante Kings are embalmed and therefore an important place to the Manhyia Palace, the fifteenth Asante King, Otumfuo Opoku-Ware's effigy is made to face the road leading to Bremang. This is because, he has joined his ancestors, while the sixteenth ruling King is made to face the road that leads to the Manhyia palace, to mean that he can be found in the palace as the ruling King of the Asantes.

Conclusions from objective two include the following

1. If sculptural public art works in Kumasi under consideration are well understood in terms of their historical background could help preserve the history of Asantes, then informing the future generation of the rich history of Asantes can be greatly achieved through the use of sculptural public art works.

2. The research has again brought to light, the role of sculptural public art works as a means of preserving history, since a lot of people living in Kumasi did not know that the various public art works were preserving their history.
3. Most of the public art works should be protected to avoid deterioration as seen in the field of the research in order that, they would last longer. The sculptors and mounting dates of the works were very difficult to come by.

From Objective three;

1. The research has revealed that Sculptural Public art forms mounted at specific locations in Kumasi and its environs depict their rich cultures and tradition.
2. The histories of the Asantes are preserved in the Sculptural Public art forms in Kumasi and its environs.

Conclusions for objective four include the following;

1. The perception a lot of people living in Kumasi have about the man standing on the leopard in front of Kumasi central prisons as Osei Kyeretwie himself. It was noted through narrations that the man on the leopard is only an announcer but the child that was born on the very day the leopard was arrested, was named after the arrest of the animal that was torturing the lives of the people of Adum at the time. This was confirmed by Emerius Sarpong in a personal conversation on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July, 2016. He further explained that, in the Akan tradition, children are mostly named after the events in which they are born, hence Osei Kyeretwie.



3. It was also revealed that Nana Osei Tutu 1 is the founder of the Asante state. This was achieved by the great effort of Okomfo Anokye when he chanted for the golden stool to descend onto the laps of Nana Osei Tutu 1. This took place at the exact place where his statue is mounted in Kumasi. Therefore site specification is clearly seen in the mounting of the Okomfo Anokye Efigy at Bantama roundabout in Kumasi.
4. The effigy of Otumfuo Sir Nana Agyemang Prempeh mounted in front of ECG, Adum is made to face the old Asantehene's palace which was around the Adum melcom building area.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations came out based on the conclusions drawn from the research.

From conclusion one:

1. Producers of some of these public art works in Kumasi are no more in existence, it is also recommended that proper maintenance is given to these historical figures without disfiguring them, therefore producers of these works who are still alive, must be made to maintain their own works.
2. For the sake of research, the producers of the various works must have their names, phone numbers and dates of display inscribed on their public art works.

From conclusion two:

1. The Ghana Museum and Monument Board together with other allied institutions should make sure that, there are written documents on the public art works mounted at vantage places. This is very necessary because, there is a realization that, observation alone cannot tell the histories behind the public art works due to generational gap, but as the upcoming ones read the histories, they easily recollect what they have read at the sight of the figures mounted. The documentations will also serve as a reference material for academic works.
2. Artists and historians should work together to come out with more creative works. This can also unearth a lot of art works that are erasing so that they can be well documented and preserved for the future generation.

From conclusion three:

1. The Manhyia Palace Museum must be responsible for all the publicly mounted sculptural art forms that tell the history of Asantes. They should seek directives from the National Museum board to be able to maintain the works for the future generation

From conclusion four:

1. The thesis is a documentation of artistic and historical preservation of the histories of the Asantes. It has created a historical awareness and the thesis can be published to promote the culture of incorporating art into history

through public art works. The research will also serve as a reference material for scholars, art historians, educators, artists and researchers.

2. Art is a great field worth of information, it is therefore recommended that historians should consult artist and art historians to ascertain more information on the history of a particular culture.



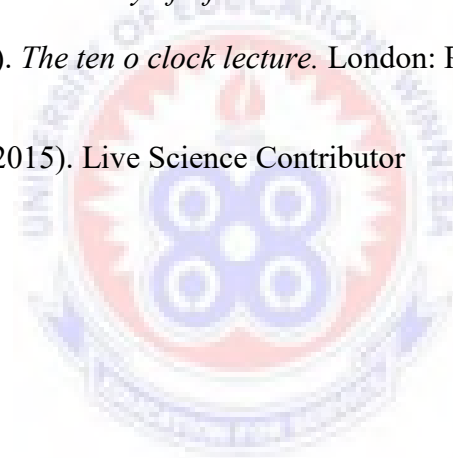
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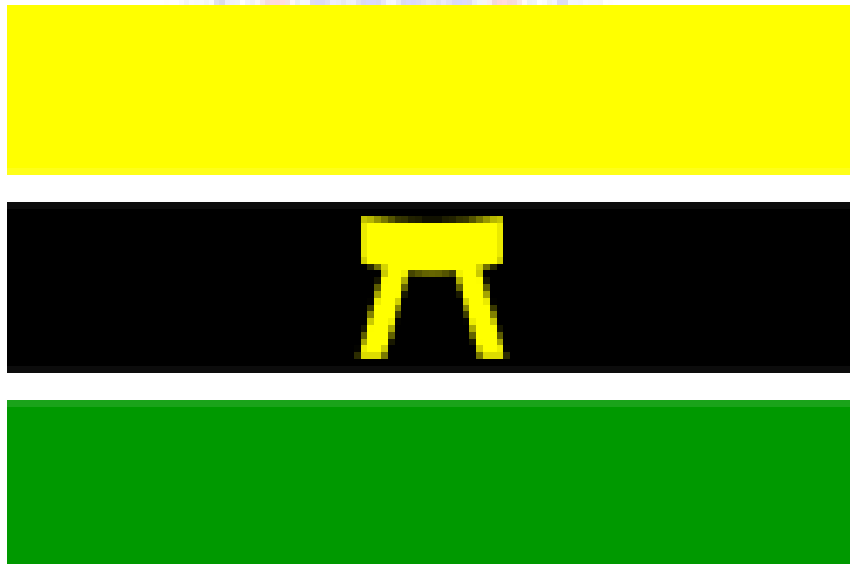
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**APPENDIX A**



**The Porcupine**



**A Flag of Asante**





**The Yaa Asantewaa Effigy at Ejusu roundabout – Ejusu**



**The Effigy of man standing on a Leopard Mounted in front of Kumasi Central Prisons**



**The Effigy of Otumfour Sir Osei Agyemang Prempeh II in front of ECG building**

**Adum-Kumasi-Ghana**



**Otumfuo Sir Osei Agyemang Prempeh II, Mounted in front of the Center for National Culture Museum, Kumasi-Ghana.**



**The Effigy of Otumfuo Opoku-Ware 11 mounted at Suame roundabout, Kumasi-Ghana**



**The Effigy of Otumfuo Osei Tutu 11, Mounted at Airport roundabout, Kumasi-Ghana**



**The fountain of Transition mounted at the Center for National Culture, Kumasi-Ghana**



## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview guide is designed to find out the cultural history of Sculptural Public Art works in Kumasi, Ghana. It is basically an academic work.

1. Name
2. Age
3. Are you from the Ashanti Region?
4. Can you state how the history of your hometown is being preserved?
5. As a sculptural artist, do you consider the preservation of historical works as one of the main issues behind your products?
6. Do you know the producers of some public art works in Kumasi? (Eg. Okomfo Anokye statue, Osei Kyeretwie, etc.)
7. Are the public art works in anyway preserving the history of the Ashanti region?
8. What is the relationship between art and history?
9. Should artists and historians work together?

**APPENDIX C**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

This questionnaire is designed to find out the cultural history of the Sculptural Public Art works in Ghana. It is basically an academic project work. Please your identity will be kept confidential and tick [√] where applicable.

1. Name (optional) ..... Gender:  
Female [ ] Male [ ]  
.....
2. Age Range: (17 -19) (20 – 39) ( 40 – 60) (61 and above)
3. Hometown (Village)  
.....

(Please, I have attached pictures of some sculptural images mounted at vantage places in Kumasi and its environs to the questionnaire. Based on the pictures, questions 4 to 8 will be answered)

4. Why do you think Figures such as seen in page two are mounted at vantages places in Kumasi Township?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
5. Can you identify any of the figures by indicating the name and its location in Kumasi Township?

FIGURE NUMBER	NAME OF FIGURE	DATE MOUNTED	LOCATION IN KUMASI

6. Do you know the producers of the figures? Yes ( ) No ( )

7. Do you consider these figures as public art? Yes ( ) No( )

8. What is the importance of each of these figures

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. Can these figures be considered as Art? Yes ( ) No( )

10. Is it in anyway preserving the history of Kumasi? Yes/No

11. What is cultural history?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

12. What is Art?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

13. Are Art and History Related in any way? Yes ( ) No( )

14. If yes, in what way?

.....  
.....  
.....

15. If No, why?

.....  
.....  
.....

PICTURES OF SOME SCULPTURAL PUBLIC ART WORKS IN KUMASI

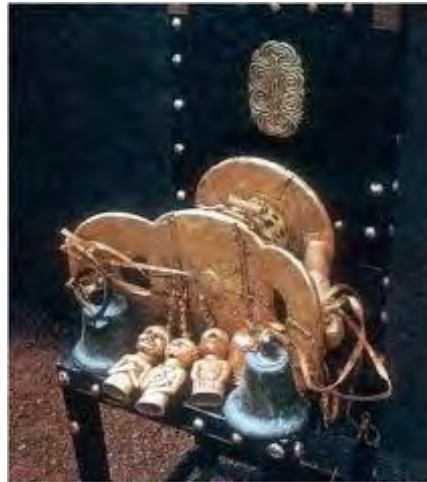


The Golden Stool, that represents the soul and spirit of the Asantes



The Golden Stool in a State March


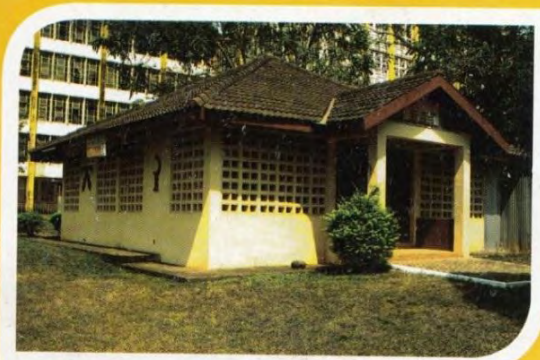




The Golden Stool sitting on its own Throne



**Okomfo Anokye Sword**  
@ Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, Bantama Kumasi



The Building housing the Sword

Komfo Anokye Sword

The Okomfo Anokye Sword and the building that house it



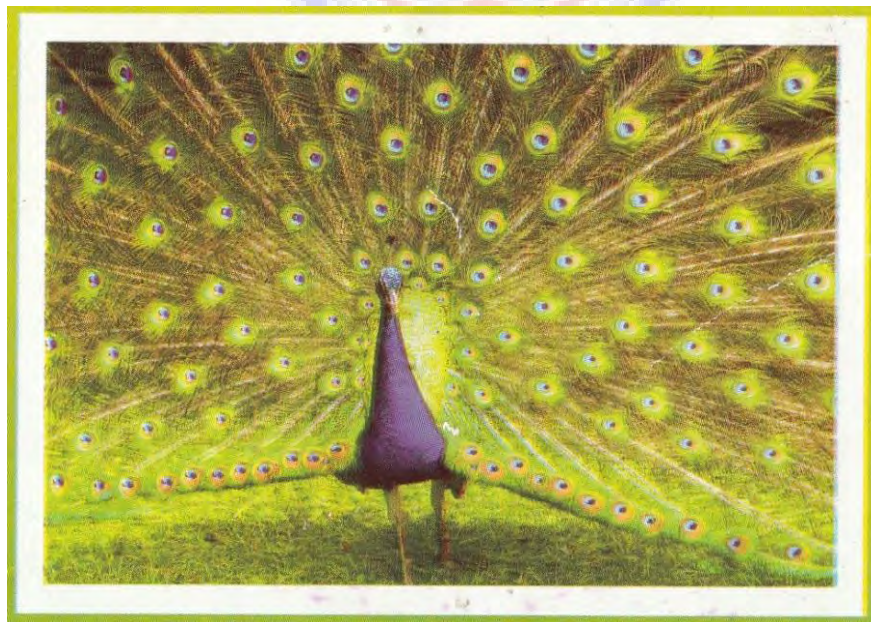
Asante Stool

Some Products of Art used by the Asantes





Beads that are used by the Asantes



The Manhyia Peacock



Traditional Gold Wrist-beads

