

A critical survey of Akan (Ghanaian) collections in the Natal Museum

by

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is the unaided work of the candidate. It has not been, nor is submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lawrence Amoako Asare', written in a cursive style.

Lawrence Amoako Asare

Pietermaritzburg, 1998

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ABSTRACT

This thesis surveys the Akan collections in the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg.

Chapter one of this thesis gives a historical overview of Akan cultural traditions. The second chapter introduces the main focus of the thesis by surveying two collections of Akan works accessioned into the Natal Museum during the first decade of the twentieth century. Chapter three analyses contextually the Akan collections on the basis of their social and symbolic functions at their African place of origin. The fourth chapter focuses on the Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum and discusses their historical traditions, methods of production, and contextual use.

PREFACE

This dissertation critically surveys two collections of Akan material culture in the Natal Museum. A contextual analysis and data are provided to broaden the understanding of the collections in their place of origin. The research includes a detailed examination of the goldweights in the Akan collections.

The following procedure has been adopted.

- (i) References appear in the text accompanied by page numbers.
- (ii) A glossary of Akan (Twi) words used in the text appear at the end of the text. Akan words have been translated from J.G. Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Twi*, London: Basel Mission Press, 1933, and are not accompanied by individual references.
- (iii) A list of references cited in the text appears after the glossary
- (iv) Illustrations and appendix are indicated in the text in bold type. A list of illustrations and appendix appears after the list of references.

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INTRODUCTION

Objects of material culture carry messages of proverbial and symbolic meanings in the socio-cultural setup of the Akan people of Ghana. For a variety of reasons, such as trade, colonialism, and wars, a considerable number of Akan works were displaced and found their way (often as booty) into museums and private collections. The Akan collections in the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg appear to be consistent with this.

Prior visits to the Natal Museum suggest that two collections of Akan material culture have little or no proper documentation, despite the fact that they have been in the Museum for nearly 90 years since accessioning in 1908 and 1910. A survey and detailed studies were needed to investigate their mode of acquisition, utilitarian functions and African contextual meanings in order to arrive at a proper understanding of the collections.

The first chapter of this thesis will give an overview of Akan cultural traditions. This is presented in sections, dealing generally with the make-up of the Akan people of Ghana, their internal political arrangements, and spiritual beliefs. The last section in this chapter outlines the material culture production of the Akan people; where necessary to compliment the discussion, attention is drawn to adjacent West African ethnic groups.

Chapter two is concerned more specifically with the two collections of Akan works accessioned into the Natal Museum during the first decade of the twentieth century. Divided into three sections, the first section reviews the historical dimensions of the Akan collections in the Natal Museum. This is followed by a summary of the major features of the Akan collections. The final section critically examines the museum processes of documentation pertaining to the Akan collections.

Chapter three provides contextual analyses of the Akan collections on the basis of assumed social functions at their place of origin. For organisational purposes four main categories are adopted in the survey. These are:

- Utilitarian objects (such as pottery, baskets, spoons, pipe bowls, and goldweights).
- Sacred items (such as charms, talismans, fertility objects, and ritual objects).
- Items of dress (relating to public display involving hierarchical rank and social status such cloth, and regalia).
- Items of entertainment (consisting mainly of objects for entertainment such as musical instruments for both private and public use).

Data produced in the survey is presented in the form of a graph linked to several spreadsheets in which the museum items are categorised and analysed. The four groups surveyed are summarised and compared.

The fourth chapter of this thesis, on Akan goldweights in the collections, is presented in three sections. The first part discusses the origins and historical development of goldweights (*mmrammo*) in relation to the Akan peoples. The second section reviews production techniques; the third investigates the social significance (both oral and material cultural) of the Akan goldweights with reference to some of the representational and geometrical forms manifest in the collection.

Finally, a conclusion summarises the research undertaken.

CHAPTER 1

Overview of Akan cultural traditions

An overview of Akan cultural traditions is presented in two major sections. The initial section deals with the historical make-up of the Akan people of Ghana, their internal political arrangements, and spiritual beliefs. The concluding section outlines the material culture of the Akan people; where necessary, attention is drawn to adjacent West African ethnic groups.

The Akan people of Ghana

The Akan people of Ghana (formerly known as Gold Coast) migrated from the western Sudan towards the end of the 10th century, (Asihene 1978:13). The Akan people constitute the largest linguistic and dominant political group among the people of Ghana. They comprise of Akuapem, Fante, Akwamu, Kwahu, Asante, Bono, Guan, Akyim, and Agona. The Adansi and Denkyira were originally a distinctive section of the Akan people but were later subjugated by the Asante. The Akan people are located in central and southern Ghana. Despite their broad geographical displacement they share similar cultural and historical roots.

Asante, the most well-known among the Akan states, was a conquest state of semi-autonomous chiefdom under a paramount chief whose symbol of office was the Golden Stool. According to Warren (1970:6) the Asante confederacy was established in 1701 and was finally broken by the British in 1900. During this period the Asante people became the most powerful among the Akan people of Ghana.

The Akan state, as described by Garrard (1984:40), is divided into numerous political units. These units are small states (towns) many of which are independent, usually consisting of a town ruled by a king who receives the loyalty of the heads of nearby villages. In the past, frequent warfare between these units often resulted in either a conquest or agreement to consolidate the units into larger confederations of towns, whose kings (that is, the confederated heads) owed their allegiance to a paramount king.

As depicted in **fig A**, the Akan region extends about four hundred and eighty kilometres along the Ghanaian coast, and almost the same distance inland. Until recently, the vegetation of this region was thick tropical rain forest with several important rivers such as the Tano, Ankobra, Pra, Ofin and Birim.

The Akan region extends north into the savannah grasslands of the Brong Ahafo region where the earliest Akan towns and states such as Begho, Wenkyi and Tekyiman began to emerge during the fourteenth century (Gerrard, 1984:41).

The location of these towns made them the natural focus for trade between forest and savannah dwellers. They attracted merchants from faraway and as a result many foreign traders also became permanent residents.

According to Asihene (1978:13) the interregional warfare of the Akan people happened as a result of trade between the Akan people and early European explorers or traders. Awoonor (1990:60) explains that states or nations and families noticed that there was money to be made through the slave trade. They then became ardent intermediaries and partners of the Europeans in the trade. The conflicts for slaves were accompanied by kidnapping carried out by both African and Arabic middlemen. There are also stories of people who sold their own children for rum, gunpowder, silk or a bundle of velvet or horse tails (Awoonor, 1990:60). The result was the devastation of the basis of the local African economy, and a state of chaos that was indisputably necessary for the capturing of slaves.

Settled communities abandoned their towns and emerging cities to become rash companies of nomads. Chiefs sent out expeditions to ravage and capture people for sale. African chiefs, and the whole of the African political and economic system became corrupted in order to benefit from this trade. The Akan people were no exception to the resultant chaos and confusion which was characterised by tribalism with its nasty implications. Although they were divided up into various independent political units, they had a unified democratic form of local traditional government.

The 19th century saw the foundation and establishment of British rule in the southern part of Ghana. Following the British annexation of the western part of the former German colony of Togo as mandatory territory, the territorial frontiers of Ghana as known today had been acquired by the British (Buah, 1982:76). During the late 19th century, pressure from the business houses in the United Kingdom urged the British to expand trade links and this was one of the causes of the scramble for territories in Africa. In addition, European powers, persuaded the British to plan for the annexation of Asante (Buah, 1982:69). By the middle of late 19th century the European trading centres in southern Ghana were solely controlled by the British (Buah 1982:77). They then declared the states to the south of Asante a crown colony. The implementation of the plan to annex Asante led to a series of British military expeditions in this region.

Internal political arrangements

The Akan people of Ghana have a unified democratic form of local traditional government. The nuclear family (which involves parents and children) headed by the parents is seen as the basic small unit with the extended family or *abusua* system on which the social structure is based. Buah (1982:8) explained that the Akan people have seven matrilineal 'clans', called *abusua*. The clans

are: *aduanya*, *asona*, *ɛkoɔna*, *oyoko*, *bretuo*, *agona*, and *aseneɛ*. There are eight patrilineal groupings, called *nton* or *kra* (animating spirit) of the father namely, *bosommuru*, *bosompɔra*, *bosomtwe*, *bosommmram*, *bosommmketɛa*, *bosomakyɛm*, *bosomafi*, and *bosompon*.

A child in a family is educated informally in all aspects of Akan culture and customs. A male child helps the father (*agya*) on the farm or with his career activities and a female child learns domestic affairs from the mother (*ɔna*) such as cooking, cleaning and washing. This training is complemented with many traditional games designed to improve the physical and mental efficiencies of the children until they are due for initiation into adulthood.

The Akan family is defined as those who are linked through blood ties beyond the immediate parentage of father and mother (Asihene, 1978:14). An individual in a family is therefore part of the spiritual chain of a universe that includes both immediate and distant relations (Awoonor, 1990:3).

In the wider society, politically, there are some five categories of people who help regulate societal functions. At the head is the super-paramount chief (*otumfoɔ*), paramount or divisional chief (*ɔmanhene*), chief (*ɔhene*), subchief (*odikro*), and clan head (*abusuapanyin*). Elaborate objects of material culture are made to serve as regalia, which can identify the rank and purpose of the bearer at the courts of these regulatory bodies. These objects include headgear, clothing, gold nuggets attached to sandals, stools, and swords. Examples are found in the Akan collections at the Natal Museum.

Within the Akan community the head of a clan or *abusua* is called the *abusuapanyin*, that of the village is known as *odikro*; the head of the town is the *ɔhene*, whilst the state is headed by the *ɔmanhene*. The *abusuapanyin* is customarily, an elected older member of the family or clan; he is responsible for maintaining law, order, and peace in the *abusua*. His responsibility is not only to the welfare of his relations but extends even to those who are dead. These include the duty of thatching the ancestral shrine, providing periodic drinks and offerings for the continuing good life and success of the living (Awoonor, 1990:4). The *abusuapanyin* assists in organising social activities, such as marriages, initiations and festivities. He also acts as a counsellor, settles disputes and squabbles in the clan and has a right to endorse the enstoolment and destoolment of a chief, or of a member of the village council. He is therefore the link between his family group and the *odikro*. An *abusuapanyin* (clan head) from a lineage family could be an *odikro*.

The *odikro* is an elected personality from the lineage family (*adehyeɛ*) of the village or a small town. The electoral process here confirms the *odikro*'s authority over the affairs of the unit, indicating that the basis of this authority is a mandate from the people through their representatives (Awoonor, 1990:18). He attends courts and sees to the settlement of the cases which are outside the immediate family orbit. He also helps in the decision-making of a *ɔhene*. An *odikro* owes allegiance

to the queen mother or the *ɔhene*. A queen mother or *ɔhemaa* is a maternal relation of a *ɔhene* in the family lineage, and can act as regent. Kyeremateng (1972:29) summarised the role of the queen mother as follows: she assumes responsibility for the royal household (that is, providing daily market money from the palace coffers, seeing to the well-being of the *ɔhene*'s personal attendants and wives).

Like the *odikro*, a *ɔhene* of a town is elected from the lineage family. An individual is eligible to become a *ɔhene* through his maternal lineage, which makes it possible for his nephews, brothers, or sisters to succeed him, but not his own children (Asihene, 1978:14). A *ɔhene* is regarded as a political and religious leader as well as the custodian of ethnic traditions and culture. Custom requires that a chief rules with the advice of his council of elders. He is responsible for the maintenance of overall peace, order and stability in the community. A chief owes loyalty to the paramount chief, who is the head of the *abusua* and the state chief. Awoonor (1990:30) explains that leadership in Akan society is both elective and selective. The *ɔhene*, either of the village or state is an ultimate symbol of the community or state, reflecting its beliefs, moral system and traditions. His power exists only within the council, an administrative and advisory body for the purposes of supervising the affairs of the community. In religious matters, the *ɔhene* usually becomes the intermediary between his people and the gods.

The social structure of the Akan people of Ghana constitutes basically the *abusua* and in wider society, four categories of people who assist regulate societal function. In religion matters, they often serve as the intermediaries between the living and the dead.

Akan social systems, and spiritual beliefs

The Akan culture is based on conventional religion, which is metaphysical. MacCaskie (1995:102) commented that life in the Akan world is religion and religion is life. That is, beside God, the various gods and spirits form a unified and ordered system of thought. This makes order out of the experiences and forces one meets in daily life.

Cosmogonically, the Akan people perceive a supreme deity as the 'God of existence' hence he is given the name '*onyame*' in Akan. The acknowledgement of God's existence is manifested in Akan proverbs and sayings. Parrinder (1961:15), reported that the existence of God is shown by references to the sky God in proverbs and sayings such as: 'of all the wide earth the supreme being is the elder', 'when God gave sickness he also gave medicine', 'God needs no pointing out to a child', 'there is no short cut to God's destiny'. The Akan believe that *onyame* is the creator, originator, inventor, architect, and provider of all things. MacCaskie (1995:104) emphasised that *onyame* was acknowledged by the Akan to have created the visible world.

Titles in Akan language such as *Ɔtweduampon* (the almighty overseer, the dependable one), *toturobonsu* (progenitor and bringer of rain), *Ɔdomankoma* (eternally abundant), *Ɔboadeɛ* (creator), *onyankopon* (supreme embodiment of the shining expanse of the sky), *atoapem* (unsurpassable), *brekyerɛhunyadiɛ* (all knowing) are used to demonstrate the unlimited power of *onyame*. In Akan mythology, according to Asihene (1978:17), *onyame* created the heaven and sky with himself as the ruler. He further created the moon, sun, star, earth, rivers, vegetation, man, and animals. *Onyame* is symbolised in the sky by the moon and the sun. The earth and the underworld are ruled by a goddess of procreation known as *Asaase Yaa* (mother earth). Permission is therefore sought from *Asaase Yaa* before any form of activity is done on or in the earth.

Next to *onyame* in the Akan cosmological hierarchy are the spirits of the dead or ancestors. It is believed that the spirits of ancestors possess the power to mediate and communicate with *onyame* on behalf of the living. They are therefore revered and remembered from time to time. Usually stools are carved in wood and kept in a designated stool room in remembrance of a deceased chief or ancestor (Asihene, 1978:37).

Traditional Akan religion is based on ancestral veneration and worship, and the worship of *onyame* (directed through the spirits of ancestors and other intermediaries) is manifested by the use of fetishes. Worship involves the offering of prayers, food and drink, and the sacrifice of animals to the spirit of the dead. The belief in reincarnation also intensifies ancestral worship. The worship and adoration of the ancestral spirits are aimed to ensure prosperity, long life and protection from evil spirits. In order not to offend the ancestors in this process, taboos are also set for the people by the regulatory body of an Akan society, comprising the chief and his subjects, high priest, and clan heads.

Marfo (1978:111), defines taboo as a prohibition of a special kind. In Akan society certain behaviour and actions are considered taboo, and members of society are warned against indulging in such behaviour or actions since they bring misfortune to individuals or the entire society. These include actions like stealing, rape, and murder, which most often carry severe punishment, including banishment from one's village or town. Other taboos include the rule that one must not talk when eating and the prohibition to sweep or weep at night. Often taboos in the Akan community are linked with supernatural powers in order to achieve a smooth and peaceful running of society. There are also certain clan taboos which are set to prohibit the eating of certain creatures and foods considered to be sacred. Among the Asante people, for example, the members of the *bosomtwe nton* group refrain from eating tortoise and monkey since they are considered totem animals.

Totem refers to the use of certain images or emblems of some animals as group or clan symbols. According to Marfo (1978:108), the animals used as symbols are held to be in a special

relationship with the clan or group. For example among the Akan people of Ghana, the crow (a symbol of wisdom) is the totem animal for the *Asona* clan. The buffalo, a symbol of uprightness, is the totem animal for the *Ekodon*. The totem animal for the *oyoko* clan is the falcon and symbolises patience. For the *asene*, it is the bat, a symbol of diplomacy. The dog, a symbol of skill is the totem for the *aduan* clan. Both *birɛtuo* and *agona* clans have the leopard, a symbol of aggressiveness as their totem animal.

Other minor deities that are believed to possess spiritual powers are the fetishes or *abosom*, witches, dwarfs and nymphs. Witchcraft has been defined by Marfo (1978:34) as the idea of some supernatural power of which man can become possessed, and which is used for both malevolent and benevolent purposes.

The *abosom* are believed to be created by *onyame* and are imbued with spiritual powers that enables them to communicate with *onyame* and the dead. *Abosom* are usually made in the form of living things, such as trees, lakes, rocks, rivers. Others are in the form of objects put together by man and are worshipped at shrines. Man in his wish to obtain protection, prosperity and domination over all living things, strengthens his relationship with *onyame* by soliciting the help of the ancestor spirits or *abosom* who are mediators between him and *onyame* and hence traditional religion.

To maintain the Akan traditional religion and strengthen the temporal bond of relationship with *onyame*, the ancestral spirits and other spiritual entities, festivals of various types are frequently celebrated. These festivities also aim to attain spiritual renewal from God through the ancestors and other deities.

The *aboakyere* festival celebrated by the Fante people for example, signifies the death and resurrection of the Antelope god worshipped by the Efutu people. Before the commencement of the festival day which is usually on a Friday night in April, the priests of all the gods in the town pray for the spirits of the members of the *dentzefo* and *tufuafo* companies to ensure protection against the dangerous *wansan* or deer that incarnates the *obosom Penkyen Otu*. The *tufuafo* god is represented by an antelope carrying a bird's nest between its horns. The next morning the chief and elders sit in state for the *asafo* company to greet them. The chief then pours a libation to the ancestors for blessings and protection. The two companies then set off to the bush to capture a live deer. As they move along some of the people wear antelope masks or carry carved ancestral figures. They sing war songs while playing percussion instruments to frighten the deer from their hiding places. The first company to catch an incarnated deer of the god *Penkye Otu* presents it to the chief to be used in the ritual. The sanctification of the first deer is done by the chief touching it with his toes. As the people drum and dance the winning company carries the deer shoulder-high to the sacred grove of *Penkye Otu*, where the high priest receives it and sacrifices it. The hide is taken to the sanctuary and

the head is placed under the *Penkye* sacred tree. The rest of the meat is shared among the priests of the gods. This signifies that the soul (*kra*) of the *Penkye* god is cleansed or resurrected. On the following day which is a Sunday, the high priest of *Penkye Otu* foretells the future by throwing red, white, and black balls, painted by a local artist, on a board. The two hunting companies dance to express their thanks to the *ɔmanhene* and the elders for the success of the festival. Throughout this festival objects of material culture of various kinds are carried around to display their artistic values and the people's concern (Asihene, 1978:21).

Objects of material culture form an important element in the social and cultural life of the Akan people. As Asihene (1978:53) observed, an Akan object of material culture should be attractive, and good. These objects can be analysed aesthetically in terms of their design, craftsmanship, and function. Customarily, objects of material culture are used to stabilise the relationship between the living and the dead as well as being emblematic aids to attain spiritual maturity and social order. An object of material culture is therefore considered complete when finished with meaningful and intricate designs or symbols. These enhance the usefulness of the objects. Symbols used in the creation of material culture are mostly formed out of language, actions, conceptions of colour, and ideas expressing human value or ideals such as peace, unity, and power.

Colours are used symbolically to enhance the function and meaning of an Akan object of material culture. The colour red (*kɔɔkɔ*) is associated with danger or bloodshed, warfare, death, unrest, and melancholy (Asihene 1978:53). Blue is associated with serenity, tenderness, love and could probably be linked to the blue sky. Yellow or gold is related to wealth, gaiety, royalty, and status. It is also linked to chicken fat or gold (*sika futuro*). Green is connected to puberty, fertility and youthfulness. It is usually identified with the fresh green leaves of healthy plants. Black (*tuntum*) and brown are allied to death, sadness and depression of the soul. They are also associated with night and sometimes ancestors, an example of which can be seen in the form of blackened stools. White is made up of holiness, purity, happiness, victory and divinity. The meaning of the colour white (*fitaa*) is manifested in times of victory or happiness. For instance, when a new chief is sworn in or when a person is acquitted in a court case, he wears a white outfit. Occasionally white clay or powder is smeared on parts of the body of the acquitted person as a sign of joy. These ideas of colour ordain the cadence and mood of a cultural activity. (Antobam 1963:78).

Geometrical shapes also have symbolic meanings in Akan society. Basic formal elements, such as lines, are manipulated into zigzags representing snakes; round and crescent shapes represent beauty and divinity respectively. The square represents boldness, and crossed lines are associated with bad luck or evil charms (Asihene, 1978:54).

There are strong colour associations or symbols in Akan material culture. For instance,

during birth and naming ceremonies of a new born baby, considered to be a happy occasion, white is the predominant colour of fabrics worn by the families. The new born child is also dressed in white and often white clay is painted on parts of his or her body to signify joy and holiness. The newly born child is considered holy because it is believed that he or she is a reincarnated ancestor, therefore he or she must be given due respect.

Red, brown, and black are considered dark colours by the Akan and as such they connote war, death and loss. During funerals, the families involved wear black or brown cloth with red bands on their heads and wrists. Red clay is occasionally painted on the kitchen hearth since it is associated with fire. The smearing of red clay on limbs, face and dress betokens a person in hazardous contact with and exposure to ambiguous natural powers. It could therefore be said that the Akan people, use bright and lively colours for occasions associated with joy, happiness, wealth, and youthfulness. Dark colours are used in times of death, war, and sudden calamities.

Cultural activities among the Akan people are represented visually and amplified by the use of colour. Akan material culture, like other related African material culture, is therefore functional.

Material culture and utilitarian function

For a long time, Akan and related African material culture have been used as objects of representation. Objects of material culture are functional items that carry messages and proverbial themes of the communities from which they originate. In connection with West African art, Fisher (1984:87) commented that bronze casts of animals and insects are also sometimes worn as pendants or rings. The choice of animals for these objects (often used as weights) is due to their symbolic attributes. For instance, in some of the Akan societies of Ghana, the mudfish represents help, nourishment and protection; the crocodile is the symbol of the queen mother and sometimes the king. The catfish with its sharp serrated spines is associated with danger, from the proverb 'the river fish's game is no safe game' (Fisher 1984:87) .

Sculptures in many African ethnic societies serve more than a single purpose - to the African they are mostly assumed to possess protective powers. In Sieber and Walker (1987:28), Cole suggested that:

‘Sculptured matched pairs, male and female, are seen as catalysts for much desired large families, and argues that they are fertility images in a general sense.’

Among the Dogon and the Senufo for example, pairs of figures appear as primordial ancestors. According to Wassing (1968:53,56) functions of African material culture can be broadly categorised socially, religiously, economically, and politically. Although Wassing’s proposed classification may have come about as a result of the continuous evolving nature of African material culture, it allows

individual elements under these proposed headings to be examined. Asihene (1978:53) commented that in social, political, and religious life, objects of material culture of the Akan people of Ghana are used for amplifying rituals and ceremonies.

Akan objects of material culture have two spheres of production: either in the private or public domain. These should not be seen as mutually exclusive or inflexible spheres of production and use: as there are sometimes overlaps. On the basis of Wassing's classification, Akan items of material culture within these two broad spheres of production could be further subdivided into socio-functional categories:

- utility
- dress
- sacred items
- entertainment

Utilitarian items are domestic functional objects for use in the day to day affairs of the household and community as a whole. In most cases they are used for carrying proverbial messages in the communities. Sacred objects are the focus of veneration for ancestors, who are believed to be mediators between the living and the gods. They are therefore items used to ensure the well being of the living. Akan dress could symbolise political arrangements and social status. In many cases they are used emblematically as political and ceremonial objects. Lastly, some of the objects of material culture are considered as objects for entertainment facilitating societal functions. For instance utilitarian items, such as cloth or fabric works may be used for everyday dress, court display or military regalia: social functions that involve both private and public spheres to some extent. Other items could be associated with social activities such as birth, initiation, marriage, and death.

At this point it should be stated that this classificatory device is useful -in its brevity- mainly in expanding the limited museum documentation available on Akan items of material culture. As an organisational device it also gives some contextual clarity on the utilitarian roles or activities associated with the use of Akan objects of material culture.

The next section discusses the various Akan items in the museum collection in terms of the classifications outlined above.

Utility

Significant events common in Akan society include rites of passage such as birth, naming ceremonies, initiation, marriage and death. Objects of material culture are invested with these social institutions in most African societies (Wassing 1968:56).

Birth in Akan society is regarded as an important occasion for both the living and the dead. It is believed that the newly born is a reincarnated member of the family (Asihene, 1978:25). His advent on earth is therefore marked with social ceremonies involving the use of material cultural objects. Among the Akan people of Ghana, an object such as a miniature scythe is placed in a boy's hand to symbolise that he must become a good farmer to be able to maintain his family. Conversely, a female child is allowed to handle a vessel, a pot, or a basket lightly to signify that she should become a hard worker and a good housewife. During birth and naming ceremonies, relatives and friends present gifts such as a casket (*forowa*), a metal or wooden spoon (*eta*), a carved comb (*afe*), a mat (*ketε*), and stools (*adwa*) to the child (Asihene 1978:28). Patton (1979:74) stated that stools (*adwa*) given as a gift during the initial stages of the rites of passage have special meanings. For example, a father may give a stool to his child who has just begun to crawl, signifying that he has survived the dangerous early period of infancy. That is, the stool symbolises the continuity of life.

Relationships between boys and girls in many Akan societies are marked with the exchange of gifts. Antiri (1974:32) commented that young carvers often carve small items like combs for themselves and as gifts for their girlfriends and mothers.

Marriages are also associated with specific objects of material culture. For example, many of the presents or gifts that are given out during a marriage ceremony are usually carved combs, pots, vessels, and stools. In Akan society, when a bridegroom presents a stool to his new wife, it symbolises permanency (Patton 1979:74). Patton further commented that stools have varied functions in Akan society and are generally classified as utilitarian objects in every household. Anyone, child or adult, may own any number of stools. Stools used during initiation signify admission to womanhood.

After burial, the family pot (*abusua kuruwa*), a lidded vessel with a surface decoration of images in relief, and containing hair and finger nails of the family and close relatives, is placed on the grave for some weeks. This signifies the maintenance of the link between the living and the dead. Babies who die in the first few weeks of their birth are buried ritually in an earthenware pot made for this purpose by a woman potter. Such a deceased child is called a ghost child or pot child (*kukuba*). The bereaved mother is then fed from a wooden spoon (*eta*), the handle of which is carved in the form of the head of an ancestor (Asihene 1978:25).

Items of material culture associated with trade and agricultural production can also be

classified under utility. According to Fisher (1984:87), objects associated with trade consisted mainly of bronze weights, which were used for measuring gold dust (which was the traditional currency of the Akan people). Originally, the weights were geometric in form: later they came to represent animals, insects, and humans, while others illustrated scenes from Asante proverbs. Mcleod (1971:8) writing on the goldweights of Asante explained that

‘At the great courts of Asante monarchs, or those of other states like Akwamu or Akyim, the royal treasury officials would hold as state property one or more sets of weights covering a wide range of value-far more than the dozen or so needed by the ordinary commoner periodically involved in trade.’

Mcleod’s comment underlines the fact that, weights and associated equipment were carefully protected and highly valued since they were considered crucial to effect the financial operations of the various Akan courts.

Dress

Dress concerns mainly items worn for display and regalia. Political leadership in traditionalist African society ranges from the small-unit clan-head to the kings of the centralised chiefdoms or Kingdoms. Akan power is consolidated in strict ceremonial procedures, which are followed by the King and the aristocracy, who consist of his relatives.

The King is considered as a founder of the kingdom, and succeeding generations trace their lineage back to this founding. He possesses divine power that mediates good and happy lives for his people. The political leaders are often tied up to their constituencies in spirit and in many secular ways (Wassing, 1968:156). Chiefs are both sacred and secular heads of state, responsible for civil order and spiritual security.

In conventional African society the status of an individual was manifested by a variety of external signs. These could take the form of scarification, wearing of some particular beads or amulets, hair arrangement, and the use of special objects (Sieber and Walker 1987:100). The gold pectoral disc or *akrafokonmu*, worn by the young male officials of the Akan court of Ghana, for example, identifies them as the soul washers (servant in charge of cleansing the soul of an Akan king) of the Asante King. In the traditional Yoruba society, prestige bowls carved from fine wood are used for storing valuables, or carrying gifts to visitors, or storing divination equipment for a diviner-priest.

Ceremonial stools in Akan society have a special political significance. When a chief is inducted, he is said to be enstooled in the office, and during his rule he is said to ‘sit upon the stool,’ and when he dies, an Akan will say, ‘the stool has fallen.’ The Golden Stool of the Asante of Ghana

is believed to house the collective soul of the Asante kingdom (Sieber and Walker, 1987:86). In Patton (1979:74), Hagan said that it represented the widest expanse of political authority, enshrined common fundamental values, and is the focus of collective Asante sentiments. Patton (1979:74) further commented that, there are other political stools but those of the chiefs are the most important in Akan society, aside from the Golden stool (which is the symbol for the Asante kingdom). In commenting on the political function and significance of the various stools found in the Akan court, he said that the chief (*ɔhene*) is the crucial political unit in Akan society. He is the decision maker, and regarded as a descendant of the founding ancestor of his office. He may also be the symbol of clan or lineage unity and continuity. Every chief has one or more stools which he uses to identify and legitimate his rank.

In Ghanaian custom, stools are dignified emblems of political, judicial, and social leadership and therefore the most important of the chief's regalia. In no other West African culture is this object accorded such significant value. Its strong political associations are evidenced by the fact that the term 'stool' may denote the office of a *ɔhene* and also of subordinate officials such as the *ɔkyeame* (linguist) or *gyaasehene* (household chief). Such Akan stools, owned by a clan head, a chief, a captain of a militia, a queen mother or a king are blackened commemoratively after the death of their owner.

Swords or *afena* also play an important political role in Akan culture. According to Ross (1972:16), *afena* are second only to stools as crucial items of Akan regalia, and even today they perform numerous important functions in Akan ritual life. Their notable political function is in the enstoolment of a *ɔmanhene*. When a *ɔmanhene* is elected, he holds a specific sword while taking his oath of office. Chiefs hold a different sword while establishing their loyalty to the new leader. Swords are also used in rituals purifying the chief's soul and the black state stools. The black state stool (owned by every Akan chief) refers to the stool of the reigning king. The stool is chosen by the king in a special ceremony at his induction; in this way he is named after a stool of his royal forbears (at his death the stool is taken back to the stool room, where it is stored for the future use of succeeding kings). A new stool is commissioned for the king's use as an emblem of royal office; at his death, his personal stool may be blackened and added to those in the stool-room.

A stool is carved from a single piece of wood. It is made up of a rectangular base from which a central column rises to support a rectangular seat, which curves upwards at each end. The central support may be figurative and have geometric motifs covering much of the other surfaces. Metal (precious metals are associated with privilege and status) strips and sections are often attached to portions of the stool. Patton (1979:74), discussing the sacred function of the stool explains that

‘In an everyday context, it is imbued with the being of its owner, as if the persons essence or spirit (*sunsum*) is absorbed into it upon each sitting. Consequently, the sacredness of the stool increases with contacts with its owner, to prevent another persons *sunsum* from entering it, a stool is placed on its side when not in use.’

The stool is also a sacred object when in association with prestigious persons, and it is used in ancestor veneration. Hence people establish and maintain contact with their ancestors using the stool for the successful functioning of their society.

It may be noted that other minor stools are carried by the chief's official messengers or envoys during public ceremonies. Chiefs are entitled to use their own stools; they have the same symbolic attributes but are not equivalent to the king's stool. For the coastal Akan people sword-bearers are important court officials. These are seen as being special posts by the gentlemen delegated this responsibility. Bosman (1907:194,188) notes that a King visiting his subjects is generally accompanied by a swordbearer. Hence, the major function of the sword is as an object that symbolises the office of a chief and his military strength. This symbol is often exhibited at the chief's court, carried by bearers in a procession with hilts resting on a palanquin, or propped against the bed of a deceased chief as he lies in state. Swords therefore, in both glory and number manifest the power and dignity of the *omanhene*.

In Akan custom, death is believed to be the beginning of a new spiritual life in which the living and the dead are involved. In recognition of this, the Akan of Ghana mark this occasion with organised funeral ceremonies involving the use of material cultural objects. The mourners and sympathizers wear *adinkra* or *kuntunkuni* cloth which is dyed and stamped with Akan designs. The dead are buried with objects such as gold dust (*kra-sika*), jewels, cloth and food. It is believed that similar honour will be given to the dead on his arrival in the land of the dead to maintain his status in the clan.

There are also necklaces of coral, glass beads and cowrie shells, some of which are worn by the women to indicate their status. For example, married women, widows, and mothers have different special objects they wear (Johnson, 1994:48). Married women usually wear bracelets and anklets of brass and silver, or brass spirals that are worn around both arms and legs (Johnson, 1994:48).

In most African societies, the earth is considered to be the provider of good harvests. Conversely, in times of drought, it is deemed to be the cause of empty storerooms and famine. To the farmer, the earth (due to its providence) is viewed as a symbol of female fruitfulness (Wassing, 1968:178). Conventionally, sacrifices are made in some African societies to the ‘mother earth’ (*asaase yaa*) who is believed to be the provider of food for humankind. The connection with the

earth is expressed with great spectacular feasts among some ethnic groups in West Africa. The Akan people of Ghana celebrate the *odwira* or Yam festival which is marked by the use of numerous objects of material culture; these include representations of ancestral figures, and staffs or carved figures of sacred animals and stools (Cole 1975:12). Some of the carved figures of sacred animals in **fig. 4** are examples of *odwira* festival items to be found in the Natal Museum.

Sacred items

Traditional Akan religion is predicated on the idea that one's destiny is in many ways governed by actions and activities involving both spirits and ancestors. It is believed that the well being of an individual and the community as a whole depends on the ancestors and spirits (Fisher, 1984:108). After all the necessary ceremonial rites have been fulfilled and the cosmic order re-established through death rituals, the Akan believes that a strong link is established between the living and the dead. Life and death are, therefore, considered as two complementary aspects of one universal existence. The living and the dead are dependant on one another. The dead require regular sacrifices from the living so that their souls may be content and be ready to give advice, support and protection (Wassing, 1968:110).

The various stages of human transition are associated with rituals of some kind to ensure the well-being of the individual and the society at large. During these rituals, items of material culture are used as representations of the spirits and others are worn for protection (Sieber and Walker, 1987:51). Examples of these objects, are known by the Senufo of the Ivory Coast as the bronze 'rings of silence'. These rings are usually decorated with the head of a buffalo. These rings are worn by the novitiates immediately after their reception into the Lo society of the Senufo. New members wear the rings in their mouths to prove that the newly acquired secrets of the society would be protected and would never be disclosed to outsiders.

Parrinder (1961:160) explained that the horns or parts of wild and domestic animals are worn or kept in houses as protection. These horns are often stuffed with leaves and powders, and spells are uttered over them. Teeth of lions, crocodiles, snakes and other creatures, commonly wrapped in leather, are tied in pairs and worn around the neck or waist. In Zeitlyn (1994:42), Schneider believes that his collections of animal figurines made from wood or pith and terracotta, such as carvings of dogs, snakes and hippopotamuses, hold protective or totemistic powers.

Traditional religious worship by the Akan of Ghana entails prayers said while pouring a libation to *onyame*, the spirits of the living, and the spirits of other beings (Asihene, 1978:18). To make a prayer pragmatic, an object of material culture is used by the members of a family or a clan as the embodiment of their wishes. A carved figure is used not only as a physical illustration of the

ancestor, but also as a spiritual vehicle to commune with living kinsmen. A carved figure of a mythical animal of a clan can also be used for invocation.

Fertility in African custom is an important social issue. It is considered to be the primary factor underpinning the continuity of an African society. As a result, the production of many African material cultural items reflect various aspects of fertility. Associated objects range from single figures representing a male or a female image to multiple figures representing, mother and child, or a group of family members. Although the specific meanings of these images of reproduction vary from group to group, they are all associated with deities of nature, ancestors or divination (Sieber and Walker 1987:31).

African girls often carry figures around during their pre-marriage period, indicating their desire to become mothers in the future. These figures are usually constructed in a variety of materials such as, hollow reeds, maize cobs, and wood. For instance, the Dan of the Ivory Coast carve their figures out of raffia palm-wood and decorate them with poker-work.

Dan figures are believed to be imbued with a special kind of magical power, which can bestow high levels of fertility on girls who carry them (Wassing 1968:59). They are, therefore, to be protected and cherished if they are to fulfil this important function. Because of this, many young girls often carry dolls until they get married and begin to bear children. Among the Asante people of Ghana, for example, a woman who wants beautiful children always keeps an *akuaba*, usually carved from wood (Sieber and Walker 1987). Asihene (1978:25) also commented that a pregnant Akan woman carries an *akuaba*, symbolising fertility, productiveness, and fruitfulness. Dagan (1990:70), discussing the purpose of African dolls, mentioned that the purpose of these *akuaba* figures is not only to foster fertility, but also to safeguard the successful delivery of a healthy child with a beautiful large round head. A mother carries the image in the hope that her expected child will acquire charming features, such as a beautiful round head with a broad face, a long feminine neck and attractive shoulders as represented by the sculpture. Childless women also usually carry an *akuaba* with them in the hope and belief of becoming a mother one day.

Initiation in Akan culture is similarly regarded as a rebirth marked with ceremonies through which lessons are given to the initiates, concerning their future roles as responsible adults in society. Masks are worn by each of the male initiates. The wearing of a mask connotes the acquisition of the image or bravery of the ancestor for whom it was originally made. During prayers, a carved ancestral figure is placed in the midst of the initiates to invoke the spirits of the ancestors to bless the youth (Asihene 1978:29). Beyond the initiation ceremony the initiates are exposed to adulthood which allows them to put into practice the teachings of the initiation school.

Entertainment

Objects intended for public entertainment among the Akan people form an important category. Objects including staffs, drums, flutes, horn, and dance costumes as well as ornaments, are material expressions of a unified world of ideas (Wassing, 1968:146).

The most common of these objects are drums. The big drums of the Baule people of the neighbouring Ivory Coast are usually mounted on male or female figures, which are finely carved. The wooden bodies of such drums are incised with geometrical motifs and are usually decorated with mythical animals, such as snakes, lizards, hornbills and riders. Themes are usually based on myths and totemic beliefs associated with the animals represented.

Like the big drums of the Baule people, the *atumpan* drum of the Akan people, always in pairs, are made up of a male (*atumpan nini*) and a female (*atumpan bereɛ*). The drums, when being played with two sticks, are propped against four bow-like sticks (*nnyawa*) to give the drums the correct angle. The body of the *atumpan* drum is usually decorated with engraving directly on the wood or on beaten brass wrapped around the body (Kyeremateng, 1964:62).

The overview outlined in this chapter has shown that the Akan people of Ghana, have a unified democratic form of local traditional government consisting of four regulatory groups, whose function is mainly to maintain law, order and peace in the society. In Akan cosmology, God is perceived as omnipotent and equal reverence is given to his creations such as the celestial bodies, the earth and its embodiment. Next to *onyame* are the ancestors and minor deities, who are sporadically pacified in differing cultural activities. Cultural activities among the Akan people are represented visually and amplified by the use of colour.

For organisational purposes in this thesis, Akan items of material culture within these two broad (private and public) spheres of production could be further subdivided into socio-functional categories:

- utility
- dress
- sacred items
- entertainment.

As a result of late 19th century colonial conflict and trade, considerable numbers of Akan works were displaced and found their way (often as booty) into museums such as the British Museum, Berne Historical Museum, and the Natal Museum.

The following chapter discusses the Akan collection in the Natal Museum, expanding on and applying the functional categories outlined in the text above.

CHAPTER 2

The Akan collections at the Natal Museum

This chapter is concerned more specifically with two collections of Akan works accessioned into the Natal Museum during the first decade of the twentieth century. Despite their early acquisition, it should be noted that the collections have so far escaped the attention of scholars; existing museum documentation is scanty and/or contentious (usually both), it would appear that the collections have not even been photographed; hence, the study attempts to describe and contextualise the Akan collections.

The first section of this chapter reviews the historical dimensions of the Akan collections in the Natal Museum. The second section surveys the major features of the Akan collections. The final section critically examines the museum processes of documentation concerned with the Akan collections.

Historical dimensions of the collections

For most of the twentieth century the museum practices of the Natal Museum can be traced to the historical dimensions of the colonial era. Calder (1995:86) recorded that the establishment of, and the rationale of major collections of material culture by the Natal Museum, were closely attendant on the intertwined colonial histories of Natal and Zululand.

The origins of the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg have been traced to the Natal Society of the 1850's (Brookes in Calder, 1995:86). As a means of colonial education, the society aimed to gather information concerning the regions physical and cultural resources for the information and benefit of its settlers (Calder, 1995:86).

Though the display of natural materials like minerals, fossils, and creatures like insects, birds and animals far outnumber objects of material culture in the Natal Museum, public donations have contributed mostly to the collection of items of material culture from the African diaspora. Among such public donations are the Akan collections of Captain CH Armitage and Sir Mathew Nathan, encompassing spectacular objects of Akan material culture from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

In writing about goldweights Fox (1988:26) emphasised that the late nineteenth century saw the extension of British influence in the Gold Coast. British forces led by Wolseley sacked Kumasi, the capital of Asante, demolishing its buildings and demoralising its citizens; they later seized and exiled the then Asantehene (Prempeh I) and many of his senior chiefs and advisors. Gold dust which was then the medium of exchange was halted, and the use of goldweights was forbidden. The

occupying forces curtailed or interfered with many other social institutions.

In pursuit of their design to annex Asante, Buah (1982:96) emphasised that the British considered all that remained was to strip Asante of all vestiges of sovereignty by demanding the surrender of the Golden Stool. Buah (1982:96) commented that the war which ensued (*Yaa Asantewaa* war of 1901), resulted in the final defeat of the Asante. Ultimately in 1902, the British government formally annexed Asante as a crown colony under a resident commissioner responsible to the governor in Accra.

In contextualising the history of British military expeditions of this colonial period Coombes (1994:7) reported that:

‘In 1897, a series of events took place in Benin city, in what was then the Niger coast protectorate, which ended in wholesale looting of royal insignia from the court of Benin.’

This incident was similar to that of the Asante; the British government consequently exiled the Oba’s vassal, Nana (a noble of Benin strongly opposed the military expeditions). Coombes went on to discuss Kumasi, the capital of Asante, as an adjacent African region where the skill and fineness of cultural production was incompatible with certain of the British derogatory racial stereotype of the Asante. She commended the artistic standard of their material culture as follows

‘their material culture, (consisting mainly of the *cire perdue* gold casting) subsequently served for British ethnographic collections, was of a complex manufacture requiring a high degree of skill comparable to the material from Benin and, crucially, not usually associated with Africa.’

Consequently, it seems likely that the military expedition in Kumasi (following similar incidents in Benin) resulted in the availability of material culture, to become what could be termed ‘war booty.’ In the absence of definitive historical documentation about one of the Akan collection’s major donors, as shall be seen, it is inescapable to deduce that some of the items were probably collected by Captain Armitage *in situ* whilst on a tour of duty in West Africa. (Field Research, Natal Museum, 1997).

Commenting on military events Captain Armitage’s contemporary Maxwell noted (1928:25) that:

‘another military expedition was despatched to Kumasi, which reached the capital without fighting and Prempeh, with the Queen mother ... deported. Ashanti thus came under British protection and a resident was appointed to Kumasi. The Golden Stool and much of the regalia were removed by the Ashantis and were not captured.’

At this point it may be useful and interesting to note that Maxwell’s report suggests that many items taken away and stored did not fall into British hands, items which had not been put away

were removed by the British.

Some biographical information about Captain Armitage is necessary. Ansa and Mcfarland (1975:40) reported that Cecil Hamilton Armitage was a Colonial Officer from 1869 to 1933, entering Gold Coast service originally in 1894.

He took part in the British expedition against Asante in 1895-1896. After this time Armitage served as a secretary to Governor Frederic Hodgson for a time, and in 1900 he was sent to Kumasi to find the Golden stool; Armitage ultimately failed in this mission. He became an acting resident of Kumasi during the siege of the Fort in Kumasi in 1900, a time when he was well placed to 'receive' Akan items from the British forces to which he was adjunct.

Between 1910 and 1920, Armitage became chief commissioner of the northern territories, during which time he was criticised by Governor Hugh Clifford for his failure to prevent excesses in the way his subordinates sometimes dealt with people under their control. While in the northern territories, Armitage wrote several valuable reports on military and African social conditions.

There is no museum documentation on other circumstances surrounding Armitage's donations, but the military link with early twentieth century acquisitions of African material culture is indisputably a major factor in its world wide dispersion to museums. The Natal Museum was no exception as an instrument of the British empire.

One of the central pieces in the Natal Museum collection is the so called 'Ashanti Stool,' and this item also has a British military connection. According to Davies (1971:475), who was an honorary keeper and research associate in archeology at the Natal Museum (University of Natal PhD citation, 1979:56), the Pietermaritzburg Akan stool was obtained by Mathew Nathan (Governor of the Gold Coast from 1900-1903), probably in March 1901 when he visited Kumasi to mollify and form the colonial Government following the annexation of Asante after the recent war.

Nathan's interest in building up an African ethnographic collection is evident in the spectacular collection of Akan material culture -including collections representing other neighbouring West African states as well as southern African peoples- in the Natal Museum. In providing contextual information about Nathan's role in bringing the stool, along with other Akan items to the Natal Museum, Davies (1971:475) affirmed that

'While Nathan was Governor of Natal 1907-9 he presented this stool, along with a leather war-dress of Kofi Kofia and a leather chair from Gambaga-Ghana, to the Natal Museum. He was interested in building up an African ethnographical collection, and much new Ashanti material was collected and shipped to the Museum by Captain CH Armitage.'

Clearly it was whilst in his position as Governor General of Natal and Zululand that the stool was presented to the Natal Museum. It is interesting to note that according to Edgerton (1995:226), Kofi Kofie -recorded in the museum's record card as Kofia- was a regional commander from the Asante Atwima district, which is to the north of Kumasi.

However the exact circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the stool itself from Asante are not recorded in the museum. Davies (1971:475) went on to report that:

‘At the end of the last Ashanti War in 1901 the British demanded that the Golden Stool be handed over to them as a token of Ashanti submission. The stool was accordingly taken to the Resident Commissioner at Kumasi, but the principal Ashanti chiefs to whom it was shown declared that it was only an imitation.’

It appears that the Asante people did not want to hand over their national ‘soul’ -believed to be enshrined in the Golden Stool- but rather provided an imitation of the Golden Stool to the resident British commissioner of Kumasi. It could be speculated that the golden overlay on the museum stool might have been hurriedly applied to lend it ‘authenticity’ when the Asante chiefs realised that the original stool was about to be confiscated. A copy was out of the question; it was considered disloyal to own any other stool similar to the Golden Stool - it is worth noting that in 1818 the Gyammanhene (king of Gyamman-a state in Cote d’Ivoire in the nineteenth century) was defeated and beheaded for daring to make a replica of the Golden Stool (Ablade, 1971:1).

The wisdom displayed by the Asante of ‘old’ is repeatedly used in present day speech of the Akan proverb that *‘praye a ebom no emubu ye buna’* literally meaning that it is difficult to break a broom which consists of a number of bristles. In other words despite military oppression the Asante people united in protecting one of their most central cultural icons, and by stratagem successfully avoided the capture of their *sika adwa kofi* - Golden Stool.

Features of the Akan collections

The Akan collections at the Natal Museum (based on the museum's record cards) number 441 items. The survey shows that 80% of the collection is stored and the remaining 20% is on display at the Museum's Cultural Hall.

In general the collections comprise mainly metal objects (which form the largest proportion of the entire Akan collections), also included are carved wooden items, some ceramics, horn, and woven fibre. They are mainly domestic items of utility, but the collections include some sacred or public display items (such as the ‘Ashanti stool’ referred to above) and dress such as leather; some woven fabrics including parts of a war dress are also represented.

Perhaps disappointingly (from the ceramist's perspective and in view of their everyday usage and availability) the collections include only few ceramic objects. These are items made of fired clay with a uniformly dark surface finish which include serving, storage and eating utensils: mainly dishes, bottles, and pots. Known in Akan as *asanka/ayowa*, large serving bowls for food are included; they are flat bowls with rounded bases, with decorated wide-edged flanges. The rims are elaborately decorated with either impressed, incised, rouletted or indented patterns. A few figurative pipe bowls for smoking tobacco are also in the collection.

Examination of the pottery shows that there are also large round-based water vessels (*ahina*) with elaborate decorations well beyond the point of functional usefulness. The most elaborate of these pots are family pots or matrilineal cups (*abusua kuruwa*). These are upright vessels with curvilinear sides narrowing to a neck that flares outwards; sitting within a gallery at the rim of each pot is a small lid topped by a small sculptural handle. The sides and neck of these pots are decorated in low relief with images such as crocodiles, snakes, ladders, pod-like motifs, human figures, fish, and lizards. The iconography and the modelling of reliefs are similar to that of metal weights in the collections (**fig 1**).

A bottle in the collection, known as *toa* in Akan or Asante is a replica in clay of a glass Schnapps bottle. It has been documented in the museum record card (catalogue number 965) as 'an imitation of a square-face bottle.' Schnapps is a gin mostly used in Akan ceremonies such as initiations, festivals, marriage and in traditional law courts.

Pipe bowls or *abua* (which form the largest number of the ceramic objects) are finely modelled into representational forms. They are made of burnished clay, which has been fired and blackened. The bowls of the pipes are modelled into creatures, in one a human form is shown in a sitting pose. Creatures portrayed include a bird, locust, scorpion, snail, pupa, leopard, jackal, and tortoise (**fig 2**).

Wooden items include carvings of mythical and savannah creatures, and fertility figures, or utilitarian objects such as umbrella tops, combs, drums, stools, spoons, calabashes, basins and vessels, sandals, and a cap. Carved objects are mainly made of white wood such as *odum* (*funtumia* species), *nyamedua* (*alstoria gongensis*), *wawa* (*triplochiton selerozylon*), and *sese* (*funtumia* species), Sarpong (1971:9).

Hair combs, (numbering four) vary in size from 21cm to 32cm in length, 6.5mm to 10.5mm in width and 1mm to 1.5mm in depth. The handles of the combs are carved to accommodate Akan designs and motifs. Two of the combs have the motifs carved structurally as part of the comb in the form of *akuaba* figure (**fig 3**). Antiri (1971) noted that this style is prevalent among the Asante people of Ghana. The combs have a minimum of seven and a

maximum of eleven teeth. Some of the combs maintain their original colour of the wood while the others are stained brown and black.

Carvings of totemic creatures such as the crab, tortoise, elephant, bird, leopard, scorpion, crocodile, mudfish, and snake are notable among the wooden objects. These creatures are carved in the round, usually from light-coloured wood, presumably *osese or wawa*. The sizes of the carvings vary from 4.5cm to 20cm in height. Most of the creatures are stained black or red. The remaining carvings have either been stained in checkered patterns of black and white (white being the colour of the wood) or not stained (**fig 4**).

The most finely carved is the *Sankɔfa* bird with its head turned backwards. This is a popular mythical symbol that signifies 'learn from past experience' (**fig 5**). Among these totemic creatures is an elephant with a tree on its back (in relief), cut out from a flat section of wood (probably with a jigsaw) and painted black.

Fertility figures designated as dolls in the museum record cards are four in number. They, like all other carvings are carved from light-weight wood and stained black or blue black. They are generally in heights from 28cm to 30cm. Typically, the head of the figures (*akuaba*) is a thin circular or oval disc, set tilted slightly backwards on a short neck. Proportionately, the head dominates the carving forming about 60% of the height. Some of the museum figures have straight cylindrical necks while in others the neck is carved into segmented rings stacked one on top of the other. The diameter of the neck is usually constant, and the torso is cylindrical or slightly narrower towards the top. Two small tapering horizontal protrusions, on the sides of both shoulders, represent the arms. The breast and navel are represented by small raised areas. V-shaped marks on some of the figures just below the navel may represent the sexual organ. The feet of these figures are represented as stubby truncated cones a few centimetres deep; they are carved from a flat cylindrical base on which the figure stands upright (**fig 6**).

Among the carved wooden items, are two umbrella finials. These are usually fitted on the top of the king's umbrella. Like several other wooden objects in the collections, they are carved in light coloured wood. One depicts a coiled snake and the other is in the form of a drum; both objects are represented on a pedestal with flat base. The height of the carved snake is 27.5cm and that of the drum is 32cm. In use, the carvings would have fitted on the top of the umbrella of chiefs, as one of their badges of office (**fig 7**).

There are eight wooden spoons also carved in soft wood. They vary in sizes from 30cm to 45cm in length. The basic shape of these carved spoons consists of a rounded bowl and handle. The form of the handle is carved into double tapering cylinders, the broad end is used for crushing peppers or condiments for soup or stew. On the upper surface of the handle are two

breast-like projections; the large bowl of the spoon is in the form of an oval.

There are two variations in the handles; one is carved in the form of a gun with the barrel end attached to the bowl - it is decorated with incised patterns (an example is catalogue number 933A). Attached to the opposite end of the bowl of one of the carved gun handles is a miniature carved cock, which could signify the saying 'the ladle never rests so long as the cock crows at dawn' (Opanyin Kwabena Asare, August 1997) (**fig 8**). The elaborate form of this spoon suggests display and possibly festivity; the proverbial message conveys a sense of a special function above that of everyday domesticity.

The forms of the other wooden spoons in the collection are much plainer. The heavier and more economical carving suggest an everyday function; they have narrower, shorter handles carved closer to the bowl. The bowl of the spoon is used for ladling soup; the cylindrical handle widens as it gets to the tip end where it is stubbily carved and rounded as a pepper-crusher. Three of the spoons exhibit small breast-like projections close to the stubby end of the spoon. Examples are catalogue numbers 933D and 6740. It seems likely that these spoons with their breast-like projections, were used to feed the mother of a diseased child in the hopes of re-fertilisation (**fig 9**) (Asihene, 1978:25).

Like all Asante stools, the two examples in the Natal Museum have the same basic form with variations in detail. They comprise a rectangular base, from which a central column rises to support a slightly bigger concave rectangular seat. These stools were probably carved from one piece of wood (usually *Nyamedua/osese/wawa*). They vary in height from 30cm to 39cm.

The tallest stool (museum catalogue number 6642), has the central support carved into an elephant; a carved 8-shape at each corner links the base and the concave seat. A similar stool with this feature has been described by Sarpong (1971:24) as *esonodwa* or elephant stool. According to Sarpong the elephant symbolises the great powers of the king of Asante. An elephant is considered to be one of the strongest and most fearful creatures in Asante. The popular saying is, '*wodi esono akyi a hasuo nya wo*' (literally, when following the elephant in his early-morning trail through the bush you do not get wet by the dew). On another level of meaning, the metaphor refers to followers of the stool (that is, the king) with the figure of an elephant being free from any attack and unlawful provocation (**fig 10**).

Connecting the base and seat, a feature of the shorter stool (catalogue number 919) are the supporting arcs that frame the central cylindrical column (**fig 11**). The outer surfaces of the arcs are carved onto serrated projections; the column is actually perforated with geometric motifs. This particular stool is similar to one described by Sarpong and Ablade (1971:20 and 1995) as a *kotokodwa* or porcupine stool, used by the Asante king and his council. Thought to be

invulnerable to any animal, no matter how ferocious and carnivorous, the porcupine is the Asante state emblem. The Asante believe that the porcupine not only shoots quills at its attackers in self-defence, but also that as soon as one quill is shot off another grows in its place. They view this animal as a perfect specimen of their own moral, physical and numerical invincibility in war. Accordingly the national motto is, ‘*Asante kotoko, wokum apem a, apem bɛba*’ (Asante porcupine, if you kill a thousand a thousand will come). In this context the juxtaposition of this emblem on the stool may be interpreted as signifying the power of the king and his council to repel any enemy who seeks to destroy the Asante nation.

A carved wooden drum is included in the collection. Apart from ceramics, other Akan vessels represented in the collections are made from gourds. The vessels were generally constructed from a large calabash which was cut into two equal halves to form bowls. Small calabashes are decorated with engravings of proverbial symbols and creatures such as a snake and bird; the motifs also portray celestial symbols like stars, a cross and the moon.

Unique among the Akan calabash-vessels at the Natal Museum is catalogue number 925, a small bowl inlaid with metal strips (**fig 12**). This important piece manifests the use of woven strips and threads of metal (probably gold and silver); the precious metals are in keeping with high office, and suggest that the bowl was probably used exclusively by chiefs in pouring libations during sacred ceremonies. Kyeremateng (1964:88) mentions a similar calabash used to libate ceremonial stools.

Metal objects, forming the largest of the Akan collections at the Museum comprise spoons, swords, an iron cymbal, goldweights, a weighing scale and bells. The spoons, most of which are gold dust measuring equipment, have a rounded bowl and handle. They are made of sheets of brass. The handles are beaten into flat shapes and decorated with an impressed pattern of stylised creatures and lines, as well as two dimensional *adinkra* symbols. *Adinkra* symbols are conventional Akan motifs usually used in making a type of cloth.

Next are swords which are three in number. They consist of a metal blade to which is attached a handle. The iron blades are corroded probably as a result of age and usage. A sword such as catalogue number 920 was probably used ceremonially; although it has not been possible to determine the context of its use. Unlike the others, which have a sabre-like shape, this example has a scimitar-like form with its blade flaring dramatically at the sharp end (**fig 13**). Numbers 921A and 921B have much narrower blades; it is not possible to see whether both edges are sharpened as the swords cannot be withdrawn from their scabbards. These swords were usually kept in a sheath made of goat skin, and were originally used as a fighting weapon by men in war (**fig 14**) (Kyeremateng 1964:34).

Cast metal objects in the Akan collections are usually brass or bronze, and were designated as goldweights due to their function in the nineteenth century as weights for measuring gold dust and nuggets. Due to their popularity and collectibility it is not surprising that they form the largest group of the entire Akan collections.

The weights (numbering 232) are miniature in scale, ranging from 0.5cm to 10.5cm in height. They are crafted into shapes and forms, broadly either cast from real life objects (such as groundnuts and beetles) or representing abstract or geometrical motifs. Also represented is African wildlife such as the crocodile, antelope, and smaller creatures like fish, beetles, crabs, and scorpions. Humans are shown going about their daily activities; associated are some weights in the form of weapons and farm implements.

The more abstract weights in the collections are mainly geometrical shapes; these represent conventional Akan *adinkra* symbols, pyramids, and celestial shapes. Among the metal objects in the Akan collections are weighing scales in the form of a simple beam balance with flat circular pans; these appear to have been included to augment an understanding of the original functional context of the goldweights. Unfortunately, the fibre strings connecting the pans to the balance beams are badly decomposed.

An iron finger cymbal or castanet in the collection (**fig 15**), is a component of a musical instrument (called *firitwiwa*) usually found in pairs; worn as rings the instruments would have fitted on the forefinger and the thumb. Struck together they produce a percussive sound. The half instrument in the collection was worn on the fore-finger; it is a cone shaped form with lateral perforations across the widest point to fit the finger. The absent component is a circular ring worn on the thumb; its plain form was possibly not considered worthy of collecting. On the other hand the presence of the 'exotic' component of the cymbal in the Natal Museum (without its other half) suggests a highly selective, idiosyncratic form of collecting. This appears to demonstrate a great lack of contextual understanding on the part of those who originally assembled the collection.

Other musical items in metal include a small bell, usually used by a fetish priest in shrines, and an iron gong probably used by a towncrier to draw the attention of an audience or as a percussion instrument in an orchestra.

Clothing in Akan society was one of the most obvious and important marks of distinction; this aspect of dress permeates through all the various Akan people. Although not observed at first hand there is among the Akan collections at the Natal Museum a specimen of Asante weaving in silk thread. The silk thread of the yarn (as documented in the Museums record card) is of British manufacture. It seems possible that the cloth is an example of a hand woven

adinkra. It has its origin linked with the defeat of *adinkra*, King of Gyamman in 1818, and is usually made by hand stamping carved blocks - shapes of the blocks are cut from a piece of calabash or gourd- or by drawing a wooden comb dipped in a dye across the surface of the cloth.

These hand stamps (known as *mpetia* in the Akan language) used for printing the designs are sometimes engraved with *adinkra* symbols. On the whole the hand stamps represent the more commonly known *adinkra* symbols. Not all the *mpetia* in the Akan collections are in good state, for instance catalogue numbers 912A and 912B are damaged, probably as a result of age and usage.

Although not observed at first hand the war dress in the collections is significant because it represents an element of social history following the time of war when the Akan collections were assembled. It is highly significant that the war dress is ascribed to Kofi Kofie; he was a commander of the northern forces of the Asante against the British expeditionary forces, probably led by Captain Armitage. Together with the so called 'Ashanti Stool,' and Kofie's war dress these items represent the most emblematic war booty in the Akan collections.

The remainder of the collections includes a few minor ritual items such as fetish charms, some animal horns (used not as musical instruments but as display items: sources of the animals have not been identified), fans used in public ceremonies involving the king or chiefs, woven strainers for liquids and woven fibre baskets for storage and transport.

Museum processes: some ^{irregularities} anomalies

A notable feature of the Akan collections is that items were accessioned into African ethnographic collections then just beginning at the Natal Museum. It may be noted that ethnography was in its infancy in the developed Western centres, and that the Natal Museum, as a colonial institution did not have direct access to the fundamental ethnographic practices of the great museums. It was primarily a colonial museum of Natural Science, with a small staff - Director Warren was trained, not in the Human Sciences, but as an animal scientist. These factors, and the overriding colonial ^{environment} milieu and its institutions of power affected the nature of collecting practices - including the Akan collections- at the Natal Museum.

Common museum practice at the time involved public donations, a passive way of acquiring ethnographic items, rather than the active policies that governed Art Museums. This is no exception in the Akan collections. The major part of the collection, numbering four hundred and nineteen pieces, was donated by Captain Sir C.H Armitage in 1908. This is followed by Sir Mathew Nathan's donation of twelve items in 1910. Actively purchased items are relatively very few, with only six Akan items documented in the museum's record cards in 1909; these were

exchanged with items from other museums but this circumstance is not clear.

The cataloguing system used in the documentation of items of material culture in the Natal Museum consist of a series of entries on record cards. The record card has been divided into twenty-two sections, as illustrated in **Fig B**. Provision is also made in the record card for details such as accession number (corresponding to the accession register), correspondence entered into, place for a photograph (it should be emphasised that the collections have not been documented in this way, however, since accessioning), method by which the item was obtained, space for cross references, conservation history, literature references, and additional comments.

Scrutiny of the museum's record cards reveal several anomalies. Of the twenty-two spaces for entry in the cards, generally only eleven have their sections completed. These tend to be the English (rather than Akan vernacular) name of the object, cultural affinity, catalogue number, card number, location, source, provenance, raw material, and method obtained. The many incomplete sections are probably due to lack of available information or contextual knowledge about the items. Since the items were donated, rather than actively acquired, it can be assumed that the scanty documentation reflects both the donor's and the museum's lack of knowledge. As suggested above, trained ethnographers were probably not available at the time of accessioning, and it seems likely that a volunteer enthusiast or amateur accessioned the Akan items into the museum collection.

It is obvious then that the lack of documentation has placed the Akan collections beyond the reach of local researchers for most of the century at least. Even a mother tongue Akan speaker finds it difficult to renegotiate meaning in the collections.

Some of the limitations and inaccuracies of the museum system include a 'scientific' ethnographic classification, which the Natal Museum rightly or wrongly was unable to subscribe to. Hence a researcher is subject to wrongly ascribed vernacular names and non-standard spelling of names of objects, misidentified raw materials, generalisation of entries, and lack of documentary information about the original mode of acquisition.

Visual inspection indicates that 80% of the Akan items are generally in good condition. The remaining 20% consisting mainly of ceramics have undergone some degree of deterioration (works are fractured or completely broken and not repaired) probably due to the fragile nature of the ceramics. Breakages also indicate a lack of responsiveness and knowledge about the ceramics on the part of handlers and curator.

Scientific classifications

The Natal Museum's accession register uses a 'scientific' system of classification based on (for

example) botanical and zoological specimens in the Natural Sciences; from the earliest records the ethnographic accessions have been at odds with this system.

The names given to items in the Akan collections were mostly confined to utilitarian terms (such as ‘pot’, ‘vessels’, ‘model’, ‘doll’, and ‘basin’); such rigid classification (a ‘blunt instrument’) points to a lack of contextual information and knowledge about the items. Names of items have been generalised. An example is a group of figurative wood sculptures which have been designated too simply as ‘carvings’; this displaces the point about their functional utility.

More specific details involving authorship are lacking in the records.

Vernacular Names

Vernacular names are mostly not provided by the museum records and where stated the spellings are usually incorrect, although it should be emphasised that spellings in Akan had been standardised as at the time of the accessioning.

Some of the items recorded in the Museum’s catalogue (and classified as utility objects) have been given the vernacular name *kura* which should be *kuruwa* or *bonsua*, synonymous words in Akan for a cup. The term ‘pot’ should have been entered with the vernacular name *ahina* or *kukuo* instead of *ashina*; spoon should be *eta* instead of *ettah*; a dish, called *ayowa* or *asanka* in Akan has been recorded in the register as *aiewa*. It seems likely that an *ad hoc* phonetic scheme was used when the Akan items were originally collected; again this is speculative in the absence of any records about the documentary circumstances of the collections.

Among the items without any corresponding Akan names are lamp (*kanea*), bottle (*toa*), vessel (*apekyie*), comb (*afe*), tobacco pipe (*abua*), and weight (*abrammo*). In the case of the weights the lack of a vernacular name in the records is particularly strange, given their large number in the collections, and the wide spread popularity of these items following the British military expeditions.

Functional items listed in the records

With entries listed as functional items, one finds a description in place of a utilitarian classification. For example, accession number 937 is listed as a ‘covered vessel’ (the Akan term is *apekyie*); the actual function is not recorded at all. Catalogue number 958J is entered as a ‘carving’ but is described in addition as an ‘elephant and a tree’. This particular anomaly is not only confusing but irrelevant to the intended classificatory scheme.

The functions of some items have not been described (or guessed) at all: these include a serving

vessel (number 958), a stool (*adwa*), a lamp (*kanea*), and weighing scales (*nsania*).

Raw materials

Raw materials used for the various objects are sometimes given but without any regard for their finished product or its processes of manufacture. With clay-based objects for example, there is no information indicating whether the clay has been pit-fired and painted or blackened.

Comments in the record cards

There are few additional comments entered in that section of the record cards. This suggests that curators were at a loss when it came to interpret the Akan items, or that very few scholars (other than Oliver Davies in his capacity as honorary keeper) visited the collections with a view to augmenting the record cards.

On one of the record cards for goldweights for instance, it has been helpfully but insubstantially stated that ‘some of the weights have tales attached to them or illustrate Ashanti proverbs.’ There is no specific reference to any of the goldweights in the collections.

Modes of acquisition

Information about modes of acquisition, that is the circumstances by which objects were obtained is also lacking. For the most part in the collections it has only been documented that the Akan items were donated by Captain C H Armitage in 1908 or Sir Mathew Nathan in 1910. As stated elsewhere in this dissertation, the histories appear to be lost; there is no information recorded in either the Natal Museums Annual Reports nor in contemporary records in the museum.

The documentary and other anomalies of museum practice cannot be removed or undone. A more informative system of documentation of the Akan material culture is needed, and the intention in a subsequent chapter is to attempt to fill some of the gaps in the existing documentation.

In conclusion, the brief overview of the early practices of the Natal Museum at the time when the Akan collections were acquired show that there are close connections with the historical dimensions of the colonial era.

It was pointed out that the late 19th to the early 20th centuries saw the extension of British influence in West Africa, and that the annexation of the Gold Coast (present day Ghana) resulted in the acquisition of many items of Akan material culture. The Akan collections donated by Armitage and Nathan are amongst the finest representing the peoples of West Africa in the

Natal Museum.

Although Natal and the Gold Coast are widely separated on the African continent, they shared common histories to some extent during the inception of the British colonial era. In effect, it was institutions of colonial power that brought the Akan collections to Natal's premier museum.

The Akan collections at the Natal Museum are shown to number 441 items, most of which are extremely poorly documented. This is partly the result of an accessioning system based in the natural sciences and misapplied to material culture: 'scientific classification' at the basis of ethnography is in this context, obstructive and misleading. The museum's record cards also reveal several anomalies such as wrongly ascribed vernacular names, inappropriate entries about utilitarian categories, generalised and uninformed comments. The fact that the mode of acquisition for material culture was a uniformly passive collecting policy involving donations resulted in a great lack of information about the sources and makers of objects.

A contextual analysis is provided in the following chapter with the intention of reviving an understanding of the Akan collections at the Natal Museum.

CHAPTER 3

Contextual analyses of the Akan collections

In this chapter a contextual analysis aims to provide a clearer understanding of the social role of the various objects at their place of origin, even though the items have been withdrawn from their original context. As was outlined in the previous chapter, the museum context (mainly museum practices of accessioning and documentation) obstruct an understanding as very little information was provided by donors. The museum recontextualises meaning, locating a new meaning within a colonial era of imperial expansion in Africa; as such specific contemporary histories were considered unimportant.

Davison (1991:102), commented that ‘cataloguing systems and categories [of museum records] are constructs that are culturally and historically specific.’ This clarifies the view that arbitrary and incorrect museum documentation conceals the original African social meaning of the ‘museum specimens.’

The historical data given in the museum records are interpreted in the text of this chapter; where possible useful contextual information about the items is given by a mother-tongue speaker of *Akan-Twi*. The text features interpretive details; objects are identified and ascribed Akan (vernacular) names, raw materials and product of material culture are contextualised and critically discussed. Dimensions of most objects in the collections have been given where none were established before the survey.

For organisational purposes the text is divided into four sections; these will consider in turn socio-cultural roles of the Akan items in the Natal Museum. Four main categories based on Wassing’s classification are discussed:

- Utilitarian items (this category includes utilitarian objects such as pottery, baskets, spoons, pipe bowls, and goldweights).
- Dress items (relating to items of public display involving hierarchical rank and social status such as cloth and regalia).
- Sacred items (including sacred items such as charms, talisman, fertility and ritualistic objects).
- Entertainment items (referring mainly to objects for entertainment such as musical instruments for both private and public use).

It should be pointed out that these divisions are artificial constructs in that their only use is in organising the data to be surveyed. There are overlaps between categories most often involving social dimensions of the private and public spheres. With domestic items, for instance the spoon

(catalogue number 933A) could be used in both household and for public display. Some of the cultural items in the collections were used in trade transactions (for example goldweights) involving mainly the public domain. In this instance the goldweights carry proverbial messages in Akan communities.

Sacred items also may involve at different times both the private and public arenas; sacred items (such as an elephant tail fly-whisk in the collection) are used during commemorative rituals and for ancestor-communications, the aim of the ritual being to bring protection to the people of a community. An example of a talismanic item in the collection is a leather pouch, catalogue number 910A (**fig 16**), and that of a ritual item is the cup used in matrilineal ceremonies (*abusua kuruwa*, catalogue number 964A, **Fig 1**).

Items of Akan dress (catalogue numbers 812B-812I) in the collections are taken to represent political status and power relations, hence in many cases they are items of public display. Other examples of items that symbolise a political *status quo* are the stools (such as catalogue number 6642), and swords (such as catalogue number 920).

There are a few items used originally for entertainment among the Akan collections. These include a drum (catalogue number 946), a finger cymbal, a single and a double gong, and a hunting horn (**fig 17**).

Items in the four categories have been tabled in order to survey and compare the numbers collected in each; it was hoped that a numerical survey would indicate something about the relative 'collectibility' of the various categories and reveal the preferences of the collectors for certain kinds of Akan objects of material culture. The categories are separately listed in the appendix I, II, III, and IV. An accompanying graph depicts the relative statistical values (in percentage) in the collections.

Utilitarian items

Note: Material referred to in this section is sourced in Appendix I

Appendix I shows the various Akan utilitarian objects. These are mainly common domestic objects like combs, a mat, cups, spoons, baskets, dishes, a lamp, vessels, bottles, pots, pipe bowls and a hunting trap, and rope. Included in this category are goldweights and gold-handling equipment such as scales, and spoons for ladling gold-dust.

The survey indicates that utilitarian items of which there are 347, form the largest component of the Akan collections. The large number of Akan utility items may be ascribed to their common daily usage but may also be due to the particular interests of the collectors. Their prolific production means that such utilitarian items could be easily collected or commissioned

from a local craftsman.

The museum records mostly do not provide vernacular names for this group in the collections. The Akan names of common utility items are provided here to give a clear idea of the mainly domestic nature of much of the collections:

- storage or drinking calabash (*korowa*)
- beer strainer (*sonyeɛ*)
- wooden spoon for peppers (*ɛta*)
- woven basket (for carrying foodstuffs for example (*kɛntɛn*))
- ceramic serving dish for foods (*ayowa*)
- carved wooden bowl (*apekylie*)
- upright pot for serving, drinking, and storing liquids (*kukuo/ahina*)
- hair comb (*afe*)
- woven sleeping mat (*kɛɛ*)
- pipe bowl for tobacco (*abua*)
- goldweights (*mmrammo*)
- hunting trap (*agyokuo*)

The *abua* or tobacco pipes (numbering 20) are amongst the bulk of the Akan utility objects donated by CH Armitage to the Museum in 1908. Mcleod (1981:85) stated that until recently, the Asante people made clay pipes and gold pipes to be carried in public by rulers and senior officials of the Asante court.

Mcleod (1981:85) also pointed out that the majority of these ceramic pipes are made into representational forms. The Natal Museum collections are consistent with this view in the many representational pipe bowls. They are made of burnished clay, which was fired and subsequently blackened by carbonisation. The bowls of the pipes draw parallels between functional parts of the pipe and figurative aspects of people. Catalogue number 961J is an example of a pipe modelled in the form of a seated male figure with his chin resting in the palm of the right hand, possibly representing an Akan elder. Young people are often asked not to pose like that, since such a pose suggests elderliness and responsibility.

Modelled creatures portrayed by the tobacco pipes include a locust, a snail, a pupa, a scorpion, a bird, a tortoise, a leopard, and a jackal; the forms are all delicately modelled as a pipe bowl and their surfaces are either impressed or incised into geometric patterns. These patterns are made to represent herring bone, zigzags, minute circles, and straight lines; which form highly tactile contrasts to the smoothly burnished surfaces (**Fig 4**). Dimensions of the pipes ranges from 9.5cm to 5.5cm in height.

There are 232 goldweights made of metal which form the largest component of the Akan utility objects in the Natal Museum. There are two main groups of goldweights: representational and abstract or geometric forms. The first group could further be subdivided into four groups representing

- human and animal images,
- horticultural products,
- farm or guild implements, and
- ceremonial regalia.

Under the first group, the human figures are made up of predominantly males, engaged in ritual and domestic activities such as, scraping the bark of a tree for medicine, and slaughtering a bird, holding a walking stick and carrying a load of firewood on his head, blowing a horn, and carrying a drum-like load while smoking a pipe (**fig 18**). Female figures are represented as maternal images, for example a woman carrying a baby on the back. Images in the form of animals include representations of bushbuck, birds, chickens, porcupines, monitor lizards, tortoises, snakes, crocodiles, mudfish, crab claws, beetles, and a scorpion. A combination of animal and human figures representing activities from daily life are also depicted as weights. This is exemplified by a dog accompanying a hunter or the owner.

Representations of horticultural products include a bunch of pepper fruit (catalogue numbers 943EF and EK), aubergines, palm fruit (catalogue numbers 943DV and GE), groundnut shells (catalogue numbers 943X and EY), and various plant seeds (**fig 19**).

Goldweights in the form of implements and regalia consist of knives, mallet, hoes, axes, bellows (catalogue number 943IA), an adze, a cannon, a club (catalogue number 943EG,HL and CW), swords, and cast sheaths adorned with decorative *abosode* (ornaments for adorning regalia) (**fig 20A and 20B**). Others are large wicker fans, stools, a decorated gun, horns, drums, elephant-tail whisks, shields, and stools (which have not been adorned).

The second group of goldweights are abstract or geometrical forms. Here one could observe many shapes and sizes of weights, from elaborately designed rectangular blocks to triangles, circles, discs, paired double cones, and rectangles. According to Charlotte and Graffenried (1990:78) round and double-conical shapes are probably derived from Islamic models. Most of these geometrical shapes have *adinkra* symbols inscribed on their upper surfaces.

Adinkra literally means 'farewell to the departed'. Ablade (1971), reported that *adinkra* was originally the name of a king of Gyamman (a state in Cote d'Ivoire in the nineteenth century) who was beheaded during the reign of the Nana Bonsu Panyin of Asante for making an imitation

of the Asante Golden Stool.

The remaining items in the utilitarian group are made up of objects associated with hunting. There are a few examples of Akan hunting traps, a rope and climbing support in the collection. A variety of fish traps are still used in Akan society, mainly for catching crabs and fish in rivers. A rope in the Armitage collection was used for climbing trees, especially the rubber and the palm tree; unusually this functional aspect is stated in the record cards. Agricultural implements as such are not actually represented in the collections; this is perhaps surprising given British imperial interests in this aspect of African production.

Sacred items

Note: *Material referred to in this section is sourced in Appendix II*

The group of Akan sacred items in the Natal Museum collections include ritual, talisman, mythical, and fertility figures. The composition of this group is shown in **appendix II**.

In use these items would normally be considered sacred in context; their inclusion and mode of collection at source can only be speculated since Akan people would not easily be persuaded to part with them. However as rituals are common in Akan society, it is not surprising that such items are represented largely in the collections; it is proposed that they were collected when the belief in their efficacy waned after use.

Unusual sacred items in the collections include:

- hammered metal bells (*adoma/ɛdɔn*) used in fetish shrines
- many calabashes (*kɔntoa* or *korowa*) used for ritual libations
- leather charms (*suman*) used as a talisman
- animal horns (*mmɛn*) used as wind instruments in rituals
- ceramic pots of upright form (*abusua kuruwa*) used in family death ceremonies
- totemic wood carvings (*mmaduama*) used by member of a family.

A basic ritual of worship for the Akan involves the pouring of a libation to *onyame* (God), the spirit of the ancestors and the spirits of other beings. To make a prayer effective objects are used associatively by the members of the family or a clan. For example, the use of a calabash in pouring of libations to *onyame* through the ancestors (sometimes represented with a carved object or a stool) or the wearing of certain pendants or talismans (worn on the neck or the wrist) that have been blessed by a fetish priest. The Akan believe that people can approach *onyame* through the *ɔkɔmfo* (fetish priest), who is regarded as the direct link between nature and ancestors or *abosom*.

The physical intermediaries between the ancestors and the living are objects blessed by a

fetish priest. These ritualistic items include sacrificial regalia or items which protect a person from evil spirits. Items such as these are not commonly represented in public collections and the Natal Museum is fortunate to have them.

Dress items

Note: *Material referred to in this section is sourced in Appendix III*

Objects of political significance (dress) play a vital role in the distinction of social order in the Akan society. **Appendix III** shows dress objects, which include regalia such as stools, sandals and cap, swords, umbrella tops, ornaments and actual parts of a war dress.

War garments (in Akan, *akotadie*) are usually worn by chiefs and their militia (*asafo*) in times of war. Among the regalia items, parts of a war garment represented in the collection are few in number. This may be due to the fact that these items in context are mostly considered to be protective charms; they were so valuable that they were sometimes inherited in a family or clan. Mcleod (1981:147,148) noted that the wearing of talismanic war garments was validated in the nineteenth century. He went on to say that the Asante use of these garments could only be understood within the framework of perceptions about mysterious or hidden powers for protection and wealth which were always sought for from the unknown. For instance, the savanna people of Ghana, predominantly Muslim groups who by cultural affiliation are considered different from traditionalist Akan people, are believed by the Asante to have enhanced spiritual powers. Hence the use of the protective *batakari*-garment (associated mainly with savannah Muslims), worn during rituals and ceremonies is similar to the Akan war garment; the gown and associated cap is often worn with attached talismans and charms like bells, mirrors, and animal horns. During a chief's initiation, the wearing of *akotadie* signifies the role of leadership. Only parts of a war garment are represented in the Natal Museum collections.

Dress regalia refers to outfits worn exclusively by Akan governors; the items are still not easily parted with, except as a personal souvenir from an *ɔhene* or *ɔkyeame* (linguist), usually only with the approval of the traditional council (personal communication with Nana Obiri Yeboah: 1997). Hence it is not surprising that there are so few of these individual items in the Natal Museum's Akan collections. Associated items of regalia are among the dress objects in the Natal Museum's Akan collections. These are elaborately-worked objects like the swords (*afena*), stools (*adwa*), umbrella finials (*kyinie akyi*), sandals (*ahenema*), and precious items of adornment (*abosodeɛ*). These function as badges of office in identifying the rank and purpose of the bearer as well as expressing ideas of political and moral relations. Umbrella finials with the catalogue number 915A and number 915B for example, made of carved wood, are symbols of

the chief's wisdom and power, and often allude to an Akan proverb (fig7).

Attention is drawn to the Asante stools in the collections; these two pieces of material culture belong in the group of dress items. Although their cultural 'authenticity' is questionable in terms of the text discussed in the previous chapter, the historical fact of their inclusion in the context of the Akan collections is in itself significant. As discussed in chapter two they may be 'fakes' (albeit made by Akan people as a device to prevent capturing of the original) they still represent the highest level of Akan social institutions. As a whole this group of Akan items are probably amongst the most culturally valuable treasures in the Natal Museum; in this light it is surprising that they have not received more scholarly attention.

Entertainment items

Note: Material referred to in this section is sourced in Appendix IV

Items for social entertainment form the smallest group of Akan items in the Natal Museum collections (Appendix IV). This may be due to the difficulty in acquiring such items outside the domestic sphere, or it may reflect the collector's lack of interest in this cultural area. The difficulty in collecting the items could also be attributed to the unwillingness of owners to part with such items, because of their particular cultural affiliations or intimate personal meanings attributed to them.

Entertainment items in the collection include

- iron finger ring (*firitwiwa*), a component of a set of percussion instruments (details of which were discussed in chapter two)
- single (iron) gong (*dawuru*) used by a town-crier to attract attention, or by a musician
- double (iron) gong (*nawuru*), used in similar ways
- dancing skirt (*doso*), made of raffia and used by adults of both sexes (the exact context is not known)
- drums such as *adendema*, *apentema*, *donno*.

The above mentioned drums, casually observed, are all of the open type of Akan wooden drums, with the exception of the *donno* which is a closed type of Akan drum. That is, the *adendema* and the *apentema* (recorded in the museum's card as *apirintima*) are single-headed drums with an opening at one end, whilst the *donno* have both ends closed. They are all cylindrical in shape, with their drum surfaces made out of animal skin probably duiker (*ɔtwe*) skin. A little below the drum surface of the *apentema* and the *adendema* are sockets with pegs around the drums; these sockets with pegs are for holding the skin drum surface to the required tension. Below the sockets of these two drums are incised decorations.

A critical observation of the *apentema* drum (**fig 21**) shows that it has got two rows of saw-edged decorations about 2cm in width. From this point are vertical-line decorations covering the whole of the remaining body of the drum. The *apentema* drum narrows slightly at both extremities. According to Nketia (1963:7) these drums are usually played independently or as part of an orchestra.

Comparisons between the four groups of Akan items in the survey

Fig C shows that items of utility were collected in greater quantities (79%). This may be due to the ease in transporting them as well as their range of material innovations, their popular demand, and the conspicuous craftsmanship involved in the production of these objects.

Sacred objects are comparatively few in the collections (12%), probably because Akan people were not willing to part with sacred cultural objects. For instance, the *abusua kuruwa* (**fig 1**), used in death rituals as a link between the living and the dead and charms (like the *bodua*) used to protect a household, family, or clan are not usually given out to collectors.

Entertainment and dress objects comprise a moderate number in the collections, but even the total of both is not comparable to the volume of utility objects.

On the basis of the graph indicating the relative proportions of items collected in each category one can conclude very broadly that Akan utilitarian objects appear to have been more easily acquired by collectors. The fact that most of these utilitarian objects are secular may have contributed to their collectibility, notably in comparison to the sacred objects associated with religious practice, political activity, and domestic ritual activities. On the surface it would seem that such items may have been out of reach of the collectors in that a deeper knowledge and appreciation of Akan cultural practices was integral to their meanings and functions.

Forming the largest proportion of the entire Akan collections in the Natal Museum are the Akan or Asante goldweights. Their association with gold as a precious metal as much as their spectacular appeal - the specialised craft manifest in their intricate surfaces and miniature cast forms - contributed to their collectibility and may account for their significant numbers in the Akan collections. The next chapter focuses on these items specifically and accounts for methods and materials of their production, and contextual meanings.

CHAPTER 4

Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum collections

This chapter discusses Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum collections; as outlined in previous chapters these items collectively represent a substantial portion of the Akan material culture donated by Captain Armitage in 1908. He appears to have been solely responsible for the donation of goldweights in the collections.

The text is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the origin and historical outline of the development of Akan goldweights (*mmrammo*), and equipment used in association for handling gold (such as weighing scales). The second section reviews the techniques used to manufacture the goldweights themselves and the third section examines the social significance and contextual meaning of the Akan goldweights with reference to some representational and geometrical forms.

Origin and historical developments of Akan goldweights

In the course of their history the Akan people of Ghana have had various forms of currency. Kyeremateng (1964:43) mentions that some of the currencies included either iron (*dutu*), brass (*yaawa*), cowries (*sedee*), silver (*dwetee*), and gold dust (*sika futuro*).

The exploitation of massive gold resources (one is reminded that Ghana was formerly known as the Gold Coast) featured predominantly in the rise and expansion of the Asante kingdom. Before the colonial period when gold dust was in use as the currency, great care was taken to ensure that only the proper quantities were traded or parted with. Central to this system was the widespread use and production of Akan goldweights; all aspects of trade were regulated by *mmrammo*.

It is still believed by the Akan people that goldweights are products of their ancestral wisdom. According to oral tradition, Osei Tutu (one of the Asante Kings) introduced goldweights (together with gold currency) to Asante around the 1700's, after having encountered them in Denkyira (one of the prominent Akan kingdoms before the dominance of the Asante). It is therefore unlikely that the Asante or the Akan people developed the technique of lost wax casting since these methods were then known globally.

Charlotte and Graffenried (1990:70) reasonably assume that goldsmiths from North Africa, where this profession flourished, migrated along the trade routes and settled in places like the kingdom of Ghana and Mali. In these early kingdoms gold was traded and the royal courts patronised the profession of gold-workers. Charlotte and Graffenried's assumption presupposes

that the migrants taught their art to local metalworking artisans of neighbouring kingdoms. Hence the production of Akan goldweights is traceable to the North African cultural diaspora.

Akan goldweights and all the gold handling equipment were produced by goldsmiths, who because of royal and noble patronage enjoyed a high social position. Additional objects produced by the goldsmiths include royal ornaments and regalia made: these objects were produced primarily by casting. Because all these items were produced by the same artisans, courtly objects and goldweights are frequently similar in style, subject matter, and meaning.

The Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum collection have a good example of Akan gold handling equipment. The scale (*nsania*) is made from hammered brass sheet; the cross-piece is an ornate flat bar of metal, probably brass, 12cm in length, and the brass weighing pans are 5.5cm in diameter. Each of the pans is suspended on each end of the cross-piece by three cords. The cords have deteriorated and so the scales cannot be seen as they were intended.

Other gold-equipment well represented in the collection includes two hammered brass-sheet spoons or *saawa* measuring 15.7cm and 11cm in length, a collecting-pan or *famfa*, probably made of brass, (with small open end and an enclosed back) measuring 16.5cm in length, and 232 brass weights (**fig 22**). The *famfa* was used to collect fine gold-dust particles during trading operations.

Including the gold-dust, the goldweights and weighing accessories (all of which are made of brass) are usually stored in improvised containers. Materials used for the containers include animal skins like *fotoo* or *sanaa* and *nkotokwaa*, or metals like *kuduo*. The *fotoo* and *sanaa* are broad pieces of folded animal skin. According to Kyeremateng (1964:43) the *fotoo* is the skin of an African civet cat (*kankane*) or Diana monkey (*boapeaa*) and the *sanaa* from elephant ear. The *fotoo* contained weights, Kyeremateng mentioned that none of the weights exceeded a *piredwan* (£8) in value; these are weights used in ordinary trading, and the *sanaa* contained weights of the same denomination as the *fotoo* but also larger ones; with values exceeding *mpiredwan du* (£80), (Kyeremateng 1964:43). The larger weights were used in weighing gold dust for state functions such as the *Adae* festival, royal funerals, ransom fees, or an indemnity fee required of a defeated chiefdom, (Kyeremateng 1964:43). Sometimes the whole *fotoo* is placed in another bag known as the *nkotokwaa*, which was made of fine leather with embroidered decorations.

The Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum collection were not collected with the accompanying bags such as the *fotoo* or the *sanaa* described by Kyeremateng. It can be assumed therefore that the goldweights are possibly within the range of items used both in court and in ordinary trading by average citizens.

The production of Akan goldweights was prolific- probably over a period of five centuries- from about 1400-1900 (Fox, 1988:9). The earliest Akan goldweights, as analysed by Fox (1988:9), were simple geometric forms, being fairly close copies of types from the Islamic world, often with delicate engraved decorations on their surfaces. Stylistic elaboration took place thereafter, and perhaps by the 16th century Akan forms appeared in the form of bold designs, often of swastikas and bars. Fox (1988:9) further commented that decorative techniques involving designs formed with applied wax threads first appeared in a middle period. The Natal Museum collection includes several goldweights made with wax threads but their age is not known; on the whole it seems unlikely that the goldweights are unauthentic as there are several features that indicate their usage. These features are: amputations, the presence of different styles which characterised the periods mentioned above, and the measured weight of some of the bigger goldweight to mention a few.

The Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum collections are made up of a number of geometric or abstract forms. Simple geometric forms especially may be taken as examples of those described by Fox as close copies of types from the Islamic world. Other goldweights in the collections are those with delicate engraved decorations; some of the geometric weights in the collection, are possibly examples of those described by Fox as 16th century Akan forms, usually bold designs in the form of a swastika, diamond shape designs, and rectangular bars (**fig 23**).

In the seventeenth century, Fox (1988:9) felt that a radical departure from previous traditions occurred, and a high stage of development in weight production and techniques was reached. As a result abstract shapes as well as figurative and other representational forms were created.

The greater number of representational weights in the Natal Museum collection reflects the collector's interest, rather than a numerical balance between the two types of weights collected. These tend to be either abstract or representational. Some of the figurative weights in the Natal Museum collection, for instance the *sankɔfa* bird on a pyramid, 3.2cm high (catalogue number 943CH), may be assumed to be of Islamic derivation synthesised with an Akan form.

During this phase of production stretching over several centuries the mastery of goldweights was remarkable. The era of rise and expansion of the Asante empire was accompanied by the development of skilled and ingenious smiths; social and political dynamics extended the production of goldweights in an astonishing corpus of representational and abstract goldweights. In this respect Charlotte and Graffenried (1990:76) confirmed that the elaborate shapes of Akan goldweights could be ascribed to technical as well as socio-cultural reasons.

Again with goldweights it should not be overlooked that symbolism has always been important to the Akan, an amazing variety of shapes of Akan goldweights were produced to illustrate proverbs and sayings. Certain figurative forms manifest a well defined significance not only in context with religion but in daily life as well. These aspects are discussed in the appropriate section of the text below.

The rise of the Asante empire saw a proliferation of many different regional types of goldweights involving ornate forms requiring complex techniques of casting. According to oral tradition, many goldsmiths were formerly taken from strong Akan kingdoms like Takyiman and Akyim to work in Kumasi. Asante increasingly became the centre of cultural innovation resulting in the production of the finest brass weights. In their connection with gold as the central currency within the Asante sphere of political and cultural influence, goldweights became emblems of power and status and were co-opted as the material signifiers of the social order. Mcleod (1981:72) commented that the Asante Kings required that their status be reflected in art forms of the highest quality, and skilled goldsmiths were sought from every corner of the empire for the purposes of the court.

Until early 1870, goldweight production and casting techniques in Asante were at a climax; a great variety and proliferation of forms resulted. However the 1870s with attendant colonial expansions into Africa saw the beginning of disastrous political conflicts in Asante. Kumasi was entered and sacked by Sir Garnet Wolsley and his troops in 1874, leading to the disintegration of the old Asante empire as well as the decline of artistic standards (Fox, 1988:11). The use of Akan goldweights subsequently became illegal in 1896. These developments spelt the doom of the precolonial age of Akan goldweights. Although close to extinction since that time, Asante brass casting has survived and in recent years the realisation of commercial possibilities has promoted a revival. **Fig 24** Shows a (photograph taken during my recent visit to Kumasi, Ghana) goldsmith with recently made goldweights for commercial purposes.

Mcleod (1971:14) observed that lack of chronology for these weights makes it difficult to trace the evaluation of styles and forms in the methods and materials used in casting. However, one could argue that colonial demand and domestic development gave rise to basic styles and designs which compliment Fox's analysis of styles and design over the periods stated.

Goldweight production and techniques.

There is an Akan belief that apart from the ancestral spirits, other things in nature such as mountains, rivers, animals and trees have spirits. The artist therefore has to respect his raw

materials as elements of nature. Before any material is used the artist usually prays to the spirits, ancestors, or the gods for protection, and pacifies the spirits connected with the materials and tools used. This form of peace-making also includes the hope that the artist will be free from bodily or spiritual injury during the course of his work (Asihene, 1978:48). This exercise is carried out by every well known traditionalist Akan craftsman.

A personal communication with a local Asante goldsmith (Kofi Agyeman Prempeh, in Kumasi during August 1997) disclosed that Akan weight-makers are obliged to use the same material and equipment as their forefathers, except for a few of the tools which have been replaced with modern tools. Prempeh stated that the minimum equipment required for making goldweights are as follows (in the absence of other records these items are listed here to give an idea of the likely sorts of equipment used to produce the goldweights in the Natal Museum collections):

- a work-board (50x20x5cm in size)
- block of wood (15x10x5cm)
- set of bamboo modelling tools
- bamboo paddle (1.5cm in thickness and 26cm long)
- porcupine quill
- iron rod inserted into a wooden handle
- poker
- knife
- beeswax
- charcoal burner
- pair of bellows
- pair of tongs
- furnace
- brass

Akan goldweights are manufactured by two major techniques, namely, the direct casting and lost wax (or 'wax model') techniques. Of the two methods lost wax is the most frequently used.

As summarised by Gerrard and Mcleod (1984 and 1971), there are a number of variations of the lost wax casting process. The basic technique of solid casting is as follows; a solid wax model is made of the object to be cast by means of small knives, wooden spatulas and fingers. The completed model is built up by a combination of cutting, carving, rolling and incising with a warm blade. The wax used is softened, to enhance manipulation, over a coalpot

(*kropɔt*, the name commonly given to a charcoal brazier in Akan) or in warm water and, or hardened by dipping in cold water as needed. The sprue is formed by a thread of wax about two millimetres in diameter attached to the base of the model. This is invested in one or more coats of slip made from finely pulverised charcoal and clay.

It is presumed that the fineness of this slip enables all corners of the wax model to be filled, thereby enhancing detail in the execution of the cast. The charcoal in the slip, on the other hand burns away to form pores in the clay. This structure enables the clay to withstand the thermal shock of the heat processes involved in the firing.

When the initial coating is thoroughly dried, the invested model is firmly encased in a mould made from coarser clay mixed with donkey dung or palm-nut fibre. After drying, the mould is heated and inverted over a pot of water or melted out by heating in a furnace. The molten wax drains away through a small duct formed by the sprue. This leaves an empty cavity inside the mould in the exact form of the object to be cast. Molten metal is then poured manually from a crucible into the mould, or a crucible containing pieces of metal is attached to the mould, heated and inverted, to let the liquid metal fill the cavity. The cast is then formed when the liquid metal solidifies.

Once cooled, the mould is destroyed to reach the cast model and its sprue. The sprue is clipped off and the casting cleaned and polished, completing the process. Examples of lost wax cast in the Akan goldweights collection in the Natal Museum are an *oware* gameboard (catalogue number 943GQ), the mudfish and stylised mudfish (catalogue number 943AV, JL), and the ornate sword (catalogue number 943BR).

The *oware* (fig 25) goldweight represents a game board usually carved out of wood. This consist of two rows of similar sized bowls separated by a central linear beam. Facing each other are two rows of bowls, six in each row. At the ends of both set of rows are single bowls (one on each end of the rows) bringing the total number of bowls to fourteen.

Close observation of the *oware* goldweight in the Natal Museum (4.7cm in length, 0.7cm high, and 1.5cm wide) reveals mould seams and irregular treatment of the back. This is consistent with the lost wax method of production. The lip of each bowl reveals its origin in the wax coil used to form the raised edge. The smoothness of the object manifests the care taken to polish and refine the surface of the object after it has been cast. The corners and edges are rounded and blunted to accommodate easy handling. The entire object appears to have been filed and polished after casting, perhaps with palm nut fibre and rough sand as described by Fox (1988:101). However the museum example manifests some damage; a few bowls are squashed, probably due to production faults or accidents during transportation.

Fig 26 shows goldweights representing the mudfish (*pitire*) which represents help, nourishment and protection (see page 10) and a stylised mudfish. The mudfish (catalogue number 943AV) is more realistic in appearance than the other. Both appear to be cast in brass using the lost wax technique. They are dull 'gold' in patina with patches of brown on them especially their recesses and in their dents - probably due to years of handling and their considerable time left unpolished. Both fishes are shown in a C-shaped pose.

The mudfish measures 5.3cm in length. The underside of the mudfish is irregular but smooth to touch; the museum catalogue number is recorded here with black ink. A close description of this goldweight will give an indication of the great care and attention to detail that went into its production; most goldweights are similarly intricate in surface and form.

With the mudfish physical features have given the artist opportunities to explore decorative and tactile surfaces to each little form. At the sides of the mudfish, the fins are neatly coiled in threadwork. The tail is a flat coiled threadwork motif arranged into a heart-shape with its narrow end joined to the fish. Just before the junction of the body and the tail on the upper surface is another fin vertically raised in the same threaded manner as those on the side.

Striations on the upper surface run from the tail end towards the head; these also form the serrated fin that projects from the back. This fin meets in the middle of two V-shaped linear motifs on the head; these represent the breathing cavities of the mudfish. In front of them are two small projections forming the eyes. On either side of the mouth on the upper surface are two small whiskers tapering to points. Overall these features demonstrate great attention to life-like detail.

The stylised mudfish (4.8cm in length) appears to have no head; the reason for this is unknown. At each end of the fish form are open coils of flat threadwork; in effect these form heart-shapes that join the central body. Attached to each side of the body are coiled loops that form a type of chain. The outer side of the column has eleven of these loops, while the inner side has only six of the loops.

An ornate sword (*afena*), one of the larger items among the goldweights, most strongly evidences the use of the lost wax technique. Rather unusually, this sword in the collection includes its sheath. The sword measures 10.5cm in length and has a narrow blade (7cm long) which tapers to a point and at the other end is a solid semi-circular flat handle with linear raised decorations. The handle of the sword is attached so that the straight side of its semi-circular form is in line with the edge of the blade; at the top corner of the handle is a hook.

Decoration on both flat sides of the blade shows crossed patterns, these reliefs were raised in threadwork. Close to the tip end of the sword on the top surface are three small

additional blades, it can be speculated that they have a decorative function (these barbs enhance a dangerous appearance of the implement) but it should be pointed out that the swords of court dignitaries sported numerous *abosodeε*- attachments in keeping with the social status of their owners. At the opposite end, close to the handle is affixed a cast of a small pointed object - probably a porcupine quill (**fig 27**); this is undoubtedly an Asante symbol of royal authority.

Techniques of hollow casting are also represented in the collection. In these instances, the caster takes a core from his ready-made stock or prepares a core from a mixture of clay and charcoal. He begins by covering this core with a skin of beeswax which is then modelled and decorated until it has assumed the form of the casting required. Objects such as hollow-cast rings and sword ornaments are mostly made using this technique.

An example in the Akan collections at the Natal Museum is a small brass shield (catalogue number 943BX) made by hollow casting. This shield is a rectangular frame; the surface of the shield is divided into six small squares. In each of these squares is a diagonal bar running from left to right on the left half of the shield and right to left on the right half of the shield. The joints of these bars are decorated with raised knots; these and the entire surface treatment of the shield reveals its origin in coiled threadwork of wax. Though the surface of this object is polished to blunt edges (the result of casting) it maintains its irregular surface (**fig 28**) in an interesting tactile way.

Direct casting is also among the techniques used in Akan goldweights production. This involves the use of actual objects (usually combustible) such as hard shelled seeds, groundnuts, flowers, stamens, fruit, snail shells, crabs, dried fish, beetles, insects, locusts, and small lizards. There are many of these examples amongst the Natal Museums Akan goldweights: groundnuts (catalogue number 943X), beetles (catalogue numbers 943JM and IU), and shells (catalogue number 943EF and HW).

In their production the natural objects would have been encased in layers of a paste made from a mixture of finely ground clay and charcoal. Each layer was allowed to dry before the next was added. The mould was fired when it was completely dry; the objects were completely burnt out leaving a hollow space. After this, the ashes of the objects were shaken out of the mould and finally molten metal was poured into the cavity. An exact metal replica of the natural object resulted. Defective weights were usually melted and recast; others were put to use but were not considered of equal importance to a perfect cast.

Although the majority of weights are made in these two ways, a few other techniques such as cuttlefish casting and shaping by hammering are also utilised in Akan goldweights production. Some of these processes are evident in examples from the Natal Museum's Akan

collections.

Of the shaping processes hammering involves the use of various added forms of metal such as pellets, rods, scrap or any other suitable pieces. These would be hammered first to the required thickness and then trimmed to shape by cutting and filing. If necessary the metal is heated and then bent to shape before being added to the core object. More complex ornaments such as tubular beads, hollow pendants, weighing and blowing pans (*famfa*, as described in the text above) and some of the spoons (*saawa*, also discussed above in connection with dispensing gold dust) are made by this technique. Catalogue numbers 943AM, in the form of a rectangular block, 943DV and HF (both in the form of patterned squares) are examples of weights that suggest hammering and other methods of shaping in the museum's Akan collections.

The cuttlefish casting technique, not common among the Akan goldsmiths, makes use of a chalky white 'bone' of the cuttlefish as the basis of the mould. The object to be cast is pressed firmly into the soft side of the 'bone', or a design is carved into the chalk. Molten metal is then poured into the cavity produced. The resultant casting is then scrubbed (sometimes with a patinising mixture of alum, salt and water) and finally polished. The Natal Museum apparently does not have an example of this method of casting, but it is worth mentioning in passing as an example of the wide range of processes associated with the production of Akan goldweights.

In the collection of goldweights it may be observed that some of the figures have missing parts, for example legs, hands, heads, and tails. This raises the issue of Rattray's (1923:303) and Charlotte's (1990:69) discussion of weight controls used to regulate the physical mass of goldweights.

Weight control is simply a process involving the correction of mass after a figure or form had been cast; images are often truncated by cutting or removing components to reduce their physical weight. Likewise the mass of a goldweight may be increased by the addition of lead. Rattray (1923:303) recorded that a goldsmith, having cast a weight in the design he wishes, may find that;

- the mass of his goldweight is exactly correct,
- or that the goldweight is under or over the required standard. In this event over-weight objects are corrected by filing or cutting some parts of the weights, whereas under-weight objects are compensated by the addition of rings or an application of lead to hollow parts.

The Natal Museum's collection of Akan goldweights has good examples of 'amputated' weights. Examples are a tortoise with a missing foot (catalogue number 943CT and DG), a lizard without its two forelegs (catalogue number 943DI), and a crocodile with one fore and one hind leg

amputated (catalogue number 943AB).

These amputations suggest that the goldweights in the Natal Museum are authentic Akan examples that were actually intended for transactions during the late 19th century (fig 29).

Social significance and uses of Akan Goldweights.

Over centuries, the production of goldweights was prolific; historical factors enhanced their use and significance among the Akan people of Ghana. Mcleod (1971:8), writing on the goldweights of Asante, enumerated the role and uses of goldweights. He explained that to weigh out gold nuggets and dust the Asante people used small brass or bronze castings portraying animals, insects, objects and situations from their daily lives. This general observation is consistent with the Natal Museum's examples.

Davidson and Buah (1967:148) emphasised that the Akan people used their own weights and measures and are cautious as to how they use them. As a medium of exchange as well as its importance for the functioning of the financial operations of the Akan court, it was necessary for every authority frequently involved in trade to possess a set of weights. Appiah (1979:64) also reported that a collection of goldweights could be owned by a family; officials of the Akan state used them institutionally.

Mcleod (1971:8) explained that at the great courts of Akan state monarchs, such as Asante, Akwamu or Akyim, weights were held by the royal treasury officials as stool property. As such they were held in perpetual trust for the royal ancestors who had previously governed and continued to govern through their living descendants.

Institutional practices associated with goldweights are still observed in contemporary royal circles. Kyeremateng (1964:44) recorded that the use of weights still persists among certain Akan rulers. However, they are only used to weigh gold dust required for the burial of someone connected with the ruler or the chief.

Within the contemporary domestic sphere of a family, goldweights still have a role in most Akan regions. When a boy comes of age his father used to give him a quantity of gold dust, a set of weights, scales, spoons and scoops so that he could learn the customary ways of handling gold dust (Mcleod 1971:8). Although these customary practices are now less current than before goldweights are still highly valued and carefully protected cultural and domestic assets, as is the equipment associated with goldweights.

In the commercial sphere, gold transactions required the establishment of the trader's *bona fides*. Charlotte (1990:71) remarked that 'a purchase with gold dust as a rule was rather a complicated procedure,' and explained that before transactions the weights sometimes had to be

compared with a beam balance for partners to agree on the use of certain goldweights. This amplified the importance of each trader owning a wide variety of weights for transactions.

Besides their broadly material cultural value, an aspect of goldweights were their strong association with Akan oral traditions. One of the most important functional dimensions of goldweights in this respect was their connection with proverbial messages.

In Akan oral customs, proverbs and aphorisms are significant elements in the language of everyday life as well as religious rituals. Sophisticated knowledge of idiomatic sayings and proverbs is essential for a person to negotiate status in Akan society. Akan proverbs, as reported by Mcleod (1971:15), refer to sayings which are used metaphorically in many situations to embody commonly understood Akan wisdom. There are sayings that express the social and cultural philosophy of the Akan, and are used particularly in legal cases, disputes or policy discussions at courts or within senior village family groups. Hence the verbal knowledge and the exercise of proverbs is a sign of seniority and wisdom and is used as such by the chiefs, especially their *akyeame* (linguists) who are the intermediaries between a chief and his people. In the context of Akan social and institutional interactions goldweights form an integral part in conveying subtle but potent cautionary messages.

Most of the images used in goldweights are associated with the department of animals, birds and fishes in particular; the growth and functions of the various natural objects portrayed are also significant. For instance, a plant may be admired for its visual and or tactile attractiveness, fragrance or toughness (the *abrane atu ata* or *ceda acuta* is known for its toughness). Some animals are known for their might (such as elephant, lion, and leopard), or attributes of prudence (ant) or tolerance (tortoise). As reported by Ross (1977:18) these images are mostly linked with oral traditions involving proverbs and sayings. Often more than one proverb is associated with a particular object or image.

Examples of typical proverbial sayings are:

- *sɛ pitire memene adeɛ a ɔmemene ma ne wura ɔdenkyɛm*, an image of a crocodile with a fish in its mouth refers to the proverb stated here which means that if a mudfish grows big it is ultimately to the benefit of the crocodile (Mcleod (1981:129)
- *ɔbaako wirɛ aduru a ɛgu*, an image of a man scraping the bark of a tree may be interpreted proverbially as ‘tree bark falls to the ground if one man collects it’
- *afidie kye anomaa a osu sononko*, an image of a bird caught in a trap symbolises the proverb that ‘a bird in a trap sings a different song from a free one’
- goldweights depicting antelope with long horns represent the saying that ‘had I known ...’ (*me hunu yɛ a nka ...*) meaning that regrets expressed after an event (has literally

‘grown long horns’) are in vain. The Akan collections has an example of such a goldweight in catalogue number 943BF. This is a goat-like image with long horizontal horns and two missing legs.

Examples of weights that illustrate proverbs in the Natal Museum collections include the *sankɔfa* bird (cat. # 943FK) 3.7cm high, that cautions everyone to learn from the past (‘to look over one’s shoulder’). This symbol appears not only in the goldweights but also on umbrella tops and linguist staffs (as discussed in a previous chapter). The *sankɔfa* bird evokes feelings of mutual respect and unity in a shared past for both Akan ruler and subjects (**fig 30**).

Further examples selected among the representational goldweights in the Natal Museum are presented below with their associated meanings and proverbs as explained in Kyeremateng (1964:48-53).

Scorpion (fig 31) NM Cat.# 943L	<i>Ana ka wo yayaya a woku no yayaya</i> When the scorpion stings you mercilessly, you have to kill it in the same spirit. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
A shield (Fig 32) NM Cat.# 943BX	<i>ɛkyɛm tete a ɛka ne brɛmo</i> When a shield wears out, the framework still remains Men die, but the works or words may live for ever
A man with a bundle of firewood on his head (Fig 18) NM Cat.# 943CQ	<i>ɛtire ntee a yɛnnyae ade ɛ soa</i> As long as the head remains, one cannot avoid carrying loads about. A worthy cause must be pursued to the end
A cockroach which has fallen among fowls (Fig 32) NM Cat.# 943K	<i>Tɛfrɛ ato nkokɔ mu, yɛdi no aprɛtoɔ</i> Fowls will not spare a cockroach that falls in their midst. He who falls victim to his enemies can expect little mercy.
Wisdom Knot (Fig 33) NM Cat.# 943HM	<i>Nyansa po ɔba dwenma na ɛsane</i> A knot tied by a wiseman cannot be undone by a fool.

The Natal Museum records do not document or give interpretations of the goldweights as carriers of Akan proverbs. This is surprising in that the oral dimension of the images was known although it is not certain to what extent this had been documented at the turn of this century; the capacity of the donor, Captain Armitage to have access to this kind of vernacular information is unknown in this regard. If he knew about this dimension of goldweights at all the museum's failure to record them is a matter of speculation. The complete blank in this area of expertise remains.

In view of the popularity of goldweights in the context of Akan oral traditions, it is perhaps surprising that more examples of proverbs and metaphors could not be decoded in the museum's collections. However this view may be due partly to oversight on the part of the researcher or more likely attributable to a lack of contemporary currency in the Natal Museum's images surveyed.

Goldweights depicting activities in daily life are also found in the collection. For instance catalogue number 943CQ is a figure (5.4cm high) shown carrying a load of firewood and a hoe on the head; these *accoutrements* suggest a person from a farm. Another interesting example is catalogue number 943BT, also a figure probably a woman from the farm with *machete* and a load under her arm, with a separate load on her head: suggesting the toil of a caring mother in Akan society (**fig 18**).

The verbal dimension of goldweights extended its usage in the naming ceremony of a child in Akan society. During the naming of a child, Asihene (1978:28) elaborated on the use of goldweights in the past;

‘to find what work a child will do in the future, I have been told, the elders sometimes put gold weights in a bowl of water containing some herbs. If the child dips the hand into the water to touch or to draw out a goldweights made in the form of a man holding a gun, this means that he will be a good warrior, a good hunter, or a good farmer in the future.’

This use of goldweights is now only known by word of mouth. In the recent past, the use of similar miniature items (wooden carved objects rather than cast metal goldweights) illustrate a more contemporary form of Asihene's (1978:28) observation.

Earlier accounts about Akan peoples suggest the possibility that cast metal objects -like goldweights- were worn. Mcleod (1981:9) recalled Bowdich's written account that ‘small circles of gold like guineas, rings, and casts of animals, were strung round their ankles’. Mcleod's recitation in this context makes it appear that weights similar to those used in commercial transactions were also used for adornment of an Akan king.

In contemporary times goldweights have also found other uses as adornments. During a

home visit to Kumasi Cultural Centre (August 1997) a personal observation of contemporary Akan goldweights reveals that similar cast objects are used both as jewellery (such as pendants) and *abosode* (sword ornaments). Both in the foundry and in the museum shop visited, the most common geometric motifs used in making jewellery were triangles, crosses, circles, chevrons, spirals, crescents, and stars.

This contemporary decorative vocabulary continues the traditional motifs observed in the Natal Museum's collections: broadly speaking natural and figurative forms seen at the Kumasi Cultural Centre were similar to the Akan historical collections at the Natal Museum. Although it was not possible (because of time constraints) to find out exactly what sort of clients purchase contemporary forms of Akan goldweights, local and foreign tourists seem to be the main clientele. The intricate detail and interesting historical and cultural nature of goldweights appeals most to local Ghanaian peoples; to what extent the original purpose of goldweights is observed in a popular contemporary sense is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The presence of Akan goldweights in the Natal Museum collections may be attributed to several factors, some of these predating the colonial era in West Africa.

The predominance of the precolonial exploitation of gold resources in the era of rise and expansion of the Akan kingdom of Asante led to expansion in trade activities and by association the widespread use of goldweights. Colonial pressures changed the cultural and economic focus of the goldweights and created new demands for them: the Natal Museum's collections of Akan goldweights are significant because they represent a point of historical rupture marking goldweight production and traditional use before the colonial era.

Until the turn of the 19th century the socio-cultural importance of goldweights was basically inherent in their use as measures for weighing gold-dust and nuggets by the Akan people of Ghana. The use of goldweights as a medium of exchange enhanced the degree of its importance to an extent that they were held by some of the Akan courts as stool property (which were considered as assets and wealth through the lineage of the reigning king). Not only were goldweights used as weights as such they were also used as items for adornment; a function which exists in contemporary Akan goldweight production.

The Natal Museum's collections reveal that the production and manufacture of goldweights were mainly in direct casting and lost wax (*cire perdue*) methods of manufacture. Although these two techniques of manufacture mentioned were prominent generally and are represented in the Natal Museum, there are other methods of manufacture, such as shaping by hammering and cuttlefish casting (although this specific technique is not represented in the collections).

The Natal Museum's collections comprise representational and abstract or geometric forms of goldweights. On the whole it has been observed that representational goldweights far outnumber the other forms: this could probably be attributed to the interest of the collectors themselves rather than the makers of the goldweights or their Akan users at the turn of the century.

The lack of appropriate goldweight containers in the museum such as *sanaa* or *fotoo*, suggest random attitudes to goldweight collecting and inattention to (or ignorance of) Akan cultural practices regarding their transport and storage.

The lack of any contextual information in the goldweights' museum records is a tribute to the enigma which the images probably represented to their Western collectors and the Natal Museum at the time of their accessioning.

CONCLUSION

An overview of the historical dimensions of the Akan people of Ghana reveal that migrations from the Western Sudan towards the end of the 10th century contributed to settlements of several related linguistic and political groups in the large area formerly known as Gold Coast. The Akan peoples include many subgroups known now as Akuapem, Fante, Akwamu, Kwahu, Asante, Bono, Guan, Akyim, and Agona.

Akan regulatory social mechanisms are strongly traditional; four main social groups function to maintain law, order and peace. In the religious sphere aspects of Akan cosmology explored in the thesis reveal that God is perceived as omnipotent. Equal reverence is given by Akan peoples to his material creations such as the celestial bodies, the earth and its embodiment. These beliefs are expressed in human relations and especially in their associated power relations. Next to *onyame* are the ancestors and minor deities, who are sporadically pacified in a variety of spiritual rites. These social and spiritual institutions are often expressed in productions of material culture.

An overview of cultural activities among the Akan people reveals a range of visual representations, these are often amplified symbolically by the use of colour. It was emphasised that like most other African cultures, the meanings of Akan objects of material culture are strongly integrated within social institutions and functions.

The main body of the thesis proceeded to survey and critically investigate two Akan collections in the Natal Museum. On the basis of the analysis of Akan culture explored at the outset of the thesis - two broad spheres of private and public use were assumed - four socio-functional categories were proposed for organisational purposes to survey the Akan collections in the Natal Museum. These categories were:

- utility
- dress
- sacred items
- entertainment

It was cautioned that these categories were not to be viewed as definitive but rather as classificatory tools in the survey and subsequent analysis of the museum's Akan collections. Corresponding tables were devised for each of these categories and on the basis of the individual (piece by piece) inspection and visual analysis of approximately 450 items in the Akan collections it became possible to define the major areas of focus in the collections. The tables in

which this data is detailed are presented in the appendix I, II, III, and IV at the end of the thesis. This was considered a highly significant process of research as anomalies in the museum processes of accession, storage, and display had previously obscured such findings.

Consistent with collections of West African art elsewhere it was found that the Natal Museum's Akan collections were assembled as a result of late 19th century colonial conflict and trade. The view that considerable numbers of Akan works were displaced around the turn of the century and found their way as booty into museums (such as the British Museum and the Berne Historical Museum) is applicable to the collections in the Natal Museum. In this instance there were found to be incidental links between people connecting the old Natal colonial government of its day and the Gold Coast military expeditions. Captain Armitage's and Sir Mathew Nathan's donations of Akan material culture to the Natal Museum in 1908 and 1910 were the outcome of their respective tours of service in West Africa and specifically Ghana.

Despite their early acquisition in the Natal Museum and fairly substantial size of the collections, it was noted that the Akan collections have been ignored by scholars to date, with the possible exception of Oliver Davies. Without examining the reasons for this however (as this was considered beyond the scope of the thesis) it was found that several anomalies existed in museum practices which may have frustrated potential efforts to come to terms with the collections. It was ascertained that this was partly the result of an accessioning system based in the natural sciences and misapplied to material culture ('scientific classification' at the basis of ethnography) and that in this context this was obstructive and misleading.

The Museum's record cards revealed several anomalies in the Akan collections such as wrongly ascribed vernacular names, inappropriate entries about utilitarian categories, generalised and uninformed comments. The fact that the mode of acquisition for material culture was a uniformly passive collecting policy involving donations was thought to have resulted in the lack of information about the sources and makers of Akan objects (these shortcomings were not however unique in being applied to this sector of the ethnographic collections). It appears that the Akan collections have not been photographed nor yet items measured or otherwise documented in keeping with current museum practices.

The remaining study subsequently surveyed, described and contextualised the Akan collections. In the process a clearer understanding of the social role of the various objects at their place of origin was arrived at, even though it was acknowledged that the recontextualisation of Akan items in terms of museum processes had obscured their socio-historical meanings.

In comparison to the sacred objects associated with religious practice, political activity, and internal domestic activities it was concluded that Akan utilitarian objects were easily

acquired by collectors: their secular function probably made them more accessible to collectors.

The largest proportion of Akan items in a single category surveyed were the goldweights donated by Captain Armitage in 1908. The last chapter was devoted to these items specifically, and in accounting for their historical origins and 19th century developments general methods and materials of their production were discussed. Where possible contextual meanings were sourced for selected *mmrammo* in the collection.

It was emphasised that the use of goldweights as a medium of traditional exchange enhanced the degree of their importance to the extent that they were held by some of the Akan courts as stool property, considered as assets and wealth through the lineage of the reigning king. It was pointed out that not only were goldweights used as weights as such but they were also used as items for adornment; this function -existing in contemporary Akan productions- was briefly mentioned (although beyond the immediate scope of the thesis) to emphasise an element of late 20th century continuity in traditional Akan productions

The Natal Museum's collections revealed that the production and manufacture of goldweights were mainly in direct casting and lost wax (*cire perdue*) methods of manufacture. Although these two techniques of manufacture mentioned were prominent generally and are considered to be well represented in the Natal Museum, there are other methods of production such as shaping by hammering and cuttlefish casting, but this last technique is not represented in the collection.

The goldweight collection comprises representational and abstract or geometric forms. On the whole it was observed that representational goldweights far outnumber other forms; this was attributed to the interest of the collectors themselves rather than the makers of the goldweights or the requirement of their Akan users at the turn of the century.

The lack of goldweight *accoutrements* was noted. Appropriate goldweight containers in the museum such as *sanaa* or *fotoo*, suggested random attitudes to collecting the material and ignorance of Akan cultural practices regarding their specific needs in transport and storage.

The lack of any sort of contextual information in the goldweights' museum records was attributed to an enigma which the images probably represented to their western collectors and the Natal Museum at the time of their accessioning.

It will be interesting to continuously pursue advances in our current knowledge of the Akan material culture, and whatever techniques have been gained could be extended to other collections that hold great promise for research. Notwithstanding the problems encountered in this study, it has provided a unique opportunity for a more detailed and exact classification of the Akan collections.

GLOSSARY
and
NOTES ON TWI PRONUNCIATION

The Akan words have been sourced in J. G. Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Twi*, London: Basel Mission Press, 1933, and are not accompanied by references.

<i>abaduaba</i>	Wooden doll
<i>aboakyere</i>	Festival celebrated by the Fante people of Ghana.
<i>abosode</i> ɛ	Money carried in a belt, Precious items for adornment
<i>ɔbosom</i>	(<i>abosom</i> , pl.) Guardian spirit of a town or family
<i>ɔbrafo</i>	(<i>abrafo</i> ɔ, pl.) Executioner, hangman.
<i>abrammo</i>	(<i>Mmrammo</i> , pl.) Goldweight
<i>abua/aburobua</i>	Tobacco pipe
<i>abusua</i>	Family, kindred
<i>abusuapanyin</i>	The head of a family
<i>ɔdedifo</i>	(<i>adedifo</i> , pl.) Heir
<i>ɔdehye</i> ɛ	(<i>adehye</i> ɛ, pl.) Member of the king's family
<i>adinkra</i>	Linen worn as mourning cloth
<i>adonten</i>	The main body or centre of an army
<i>adwa</i>	Stool
<i>adendema</i>	Type of Akan drum
<i>afe</i>	Comb
<i>afena</i>	Sword
<i>agya</i>	Father
<i>agyenamoa/ɔkra</i>	Cat
<i>ahenema</i>	Sandals
<i>ahina</i>	Pot
<i>akrafokonmu</i>	Pectoral disc or breast plate
<i>akuaba</i>	(<i>akuamma</i> , pl.) kind of figure carved out of wood
<i>akuapem</i>	Subgroup of the Akan people
<i>akyim</i>	Subgroup of the Akan people
<i>ankobra</i>	Name of a river

<i>anomaa</i>	Bird
<i>apekyie</i>	Vessel made from calabash
<i>apentema</i>	Type of Akan drum
<i>asaase</i>	Earth
<i>asaase yaa</i>	A byname for earth (mother earth)
<i>atifi</i>	The crown or top of the head
<i>atoapem</i>	Unsurpassable
<i>atu</i>	To move or remove
<i>benkum</i>	Left wing
<i>bonsua</i>	Drinking cup
<i>bra-gorɔ</i>	Puberty rite
<i>brekyerɛhunyadiɛ</i>	A byname of God 'all knowing'
<i>dawuru</i>	(<i>nnawuru</i> , pl.) Town-crier's bell, gong
<i>dentzefo</i>	Militia
<i>donno</i>	Type of drum
<i>dua</i>	Tree or stick
<i>forowa</i>	Round brazen box for storing shea-butter or gold dust
<i>gyaasehene</i>	Household chief
<i>kanea</i>	Lamp or light
<i>kra</i>	The soul of man
<i>kukuo</i>	Pot or earthenware vessel
<i>Kuduo</i>	Lided metal container
<i>kukuba</i>	Dead child - buried in an earthenware pot
<i>kuntunkuni</i>	cloth used during funeral ceremonies
<i>kuruwa</i>	Cup
<i>kyidom</i>	The rear of an army
<i>kyinii-akyi</i>	Umbrella top
<i>kɛntɛn</i>	Basket
<i>kɛtɛ</i>	Mat
<i>mpetia</i>	Hand stamps
<i>mrrantehene</i>	Chief of the youth
<i>nananom</i>	Forefathers
<i>nifahene</i>	Chief commanding the right side of the State
<i>ntama</i>	Cloth

<i>nton</i>	One of the ancient families, worshipping a particular spirit
<i>odikro</i>	Head of a village
<i>odwira</i>	Yam festival
<i>onyame</i>	The supreme being, God
<i>onyankopɔn</i>	The apparent arch, or vault of heaven
<i>otumfo</i>	One who has the great power or strength
<i>ɔtweduampon</i>	A byname of God
<i>penkye-otu</i>	A shrine god of the Efutu people
<i>poma-akyi</i>	Top of the linguist staff
<i>sasabonsam</i>	Mythical figure
<i>sewaa</i>	Aunt
<i>sika-futuro</i>	Gold dust
<i>sonyeɛ</i>	Mesh
<i>sumiɛ</i>	Pillow
<i>sunsum</i>	The soul or spirit of man
<i>totorobonsu</i>	He causes rain to fall copiously
<i>tufuafo</i>	militia
<i>wansan</i>	Deer
<i>wɔfa</i>	Uncle
<i>ɔbɔadeɛ</i>	The creator
<i>ɔdomankoma</i>	God the creator
<i>ɛdon</i>	Bell
<i>ɔɛnkyɛm</i>	Crocodile
<i>ɔhemmaa</i>	Queen mother, a woman who is the sovereign of a town
<i>ɔhene</i>	King, chief
<i>ɔkyeame</i>	Speaker, linguist
<i>ɔkɔtɔ</i>	Crab
<i>ɔmanhene</i>	Paramount Chief or king
<i>ɛna</i>	Mother
<i>ɔsono</i>	Elephant
<i>ɛta</i>	Ladle
<i>ɔtwe</i>	Duiker
<i>ɔwɔ</i>	Snake

PRONUNCIATION OF TWI WORDS

The following note on the pronunciation of Twi words has been taken from J G. Christaller, *Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Twi*. London: Basel Mission Press, 1933.

Grammatical details; the sounds:

- **vowels**

a sounds like a in *Shah*.

a is narrow as in *hat*; in Fante as in *gay*.

ɛ is an open e as in *let*; French *e*.

e (narrow) is between *e* & *i*; in some Fante dialects approaching to *i* in *pit*.

i is like *believe* or *revine*.

ɔ has the sound of *o* in *not*.

o (full) sounds like *o* in *November*; French *mot*.

o (narrow) is between *o* & *u*; in some F. Dialects approaching to *u* in *put*.

u is sounded like *u* in *rule*.

- **consonants**

	Plosives		Fricatives		Affricates		Semi-vowels	
	voice- less	voiced	voice- less	voiced	voice- less	voiced	voice- less	voiced
velar	k	g	(hy)	h			n	
palatal	ky	gy	hy				ny	y
dental	t	d	s		ts	dz	n	r(i)
alveolar	t	d						
denti-labial			f					
bilabial	p	b					m	w
labio-velar	kw	gw		hw			nw	
	ku	gu		hu			nu	
palato-velar	tw	dw	hw=fw				nw	w

This is intended as a brief guideline only. Full details may be found in the reference work cited at the outset.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Note:

- *Natal Museum accession numbers are given where appropriate, in the order from left to right of the picture. The abbreviation NM = Natal Museum*
- *All Akan items illustrated are from the NM collections*
- *Original photographs were taken by Theresa Giorza (BA Hons in ceramics candidate, UNP) and the author in 1997 at the Natal Museum.*

- Fig 1** Akan family pot or matrilineal cup (*abusua kuruwa*),
- Fig 2** Pipe bowls (*abua*), NM 961A, 961B, 961C, 961J.
- Fig 3** Carved combs, NM 995A, 995B.
- Fig 4** Carvings of creatures, NM 958A, 958G.
- Fig 5** Carved *sankɔfa* bird, NM.
- Fig 6** *Akuaba* fertility figures, NM 959A, 959B.
- Fig 7** Umbrella tops, NM 915A, 915B.
- Fig 8** Wooden spoon, NM 933A.
- Fig 9** Breast-like wooden spoons, NM 933D, 933C, 6740.
- Fig 10** Elephant stool, NM 6642.
- Fig 11** *Kotoko* stool, NM 919.
- Fig 12** Calabash inlaid, NM 925.
- Fig 13** Scimitar-shape Akan sword, NM 920.
- Fig 14** Sabre-like swords, NM 921A, 921B.
- Fig 15** Iron cymbal, NM 955.
- Fig 16** Leather Pouch talisman, NM 910.
- Fig 17** Hunting horn, NM 1825F.
- Fig 18** Figurative goldweights.
- Fig 19** Horticultural goldweights.
- Fig 20A** Goldweights representing implements.
- Fig 20B** Goldweights representing Akan Regalia.
- Fig 21** *Apentema* drum, NM 946.
- Fig 22** Gold-handling equipment.
- Fig 23** Geometrical goldweights.

- Fig 24** Gold caster and some of his recently made goldweights for commercial purpose
- Fig 25** *Oware* goldweight, NM 943GQ.
- Fig 26** Mudfish and a stylised mudfish goldweights, NM 943AV, JL.
- Fig 27** Ornate sword goldweight, NM 943BR.
- Fig 28** Shield goldweight, NM 943BX.
- Fig 29** Amputated goldweights
- Fig 30** *Sankɔfa* goldweights
- Fig 31** Scorpion goldweight
- Fig 32** Cockroach fallen among fowls
- Fig 33** Wisdom knot
- Fig A** Map of Ghana showing the Akan people of Ghana
- Fig B** A photocopy of the record cards used in the Natal Museum in conjunction with the accession register
- Fig C** Graph showing percentage values of the four groups of the Akan collections
- Appendix I** Table showing Akan utilitarian items in the Natal Museum
- Appendix II** Table showing Akan sacred items in the Natal Museum
- Appendix III** Table showing Akan dress items in the Natal Museum
- Appendix IV** Table showing Akan entertainment items in the Natal Museum



Figure 1

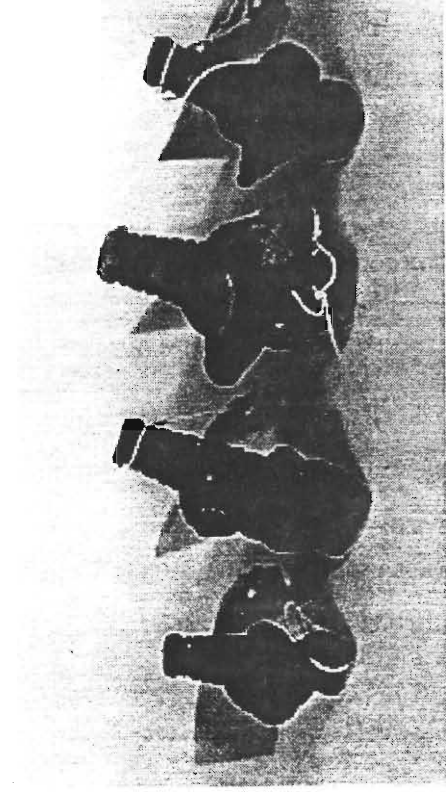


Figure 2

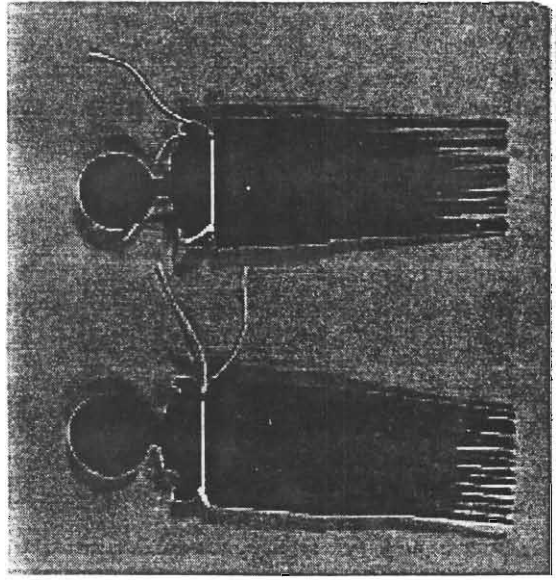


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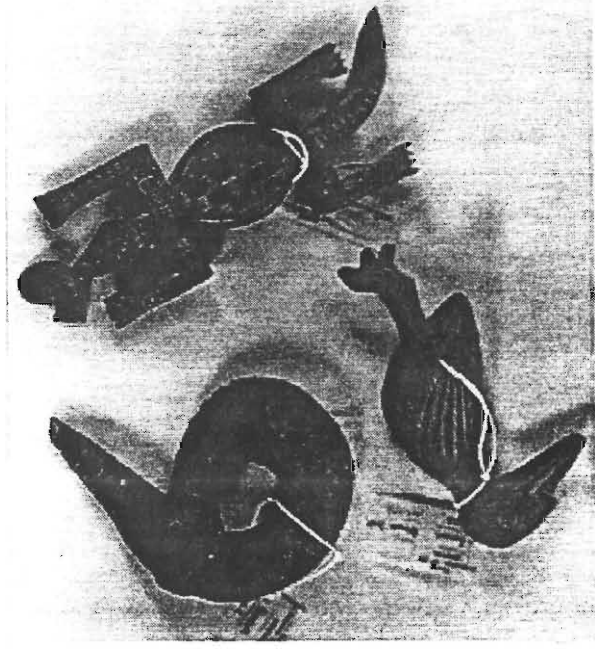


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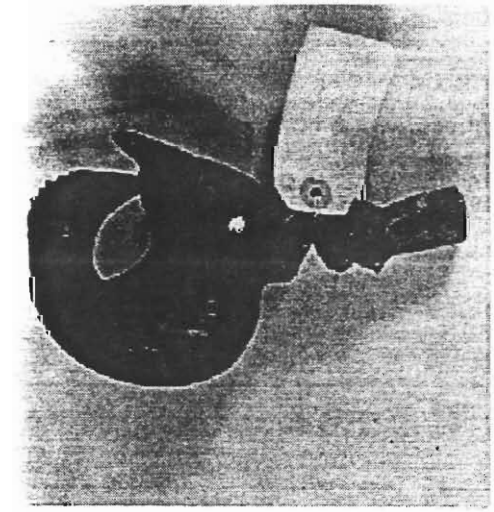


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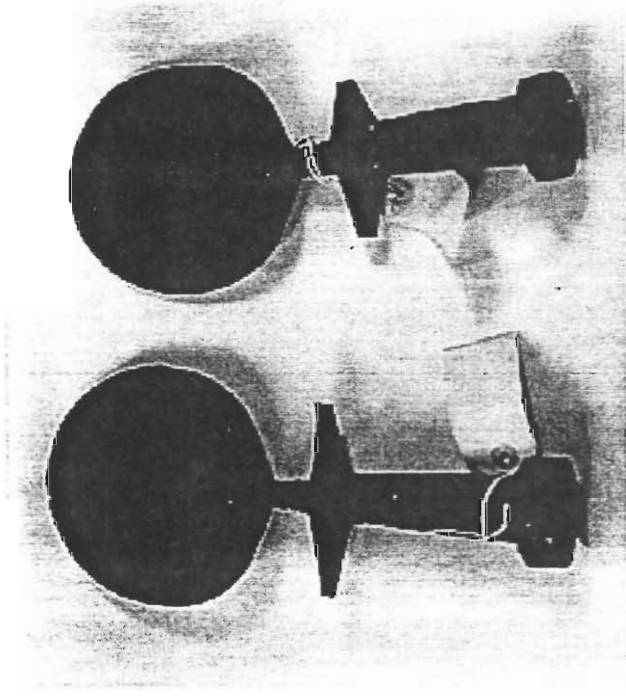


figure 6

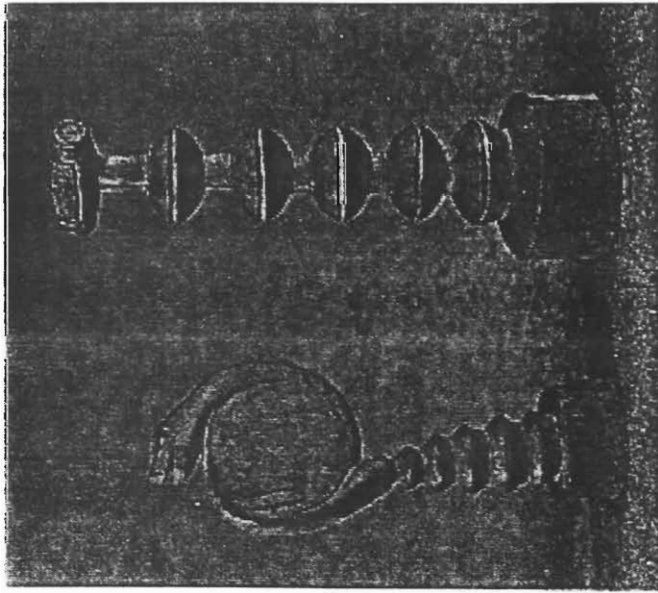


Figure 7



Figure 8

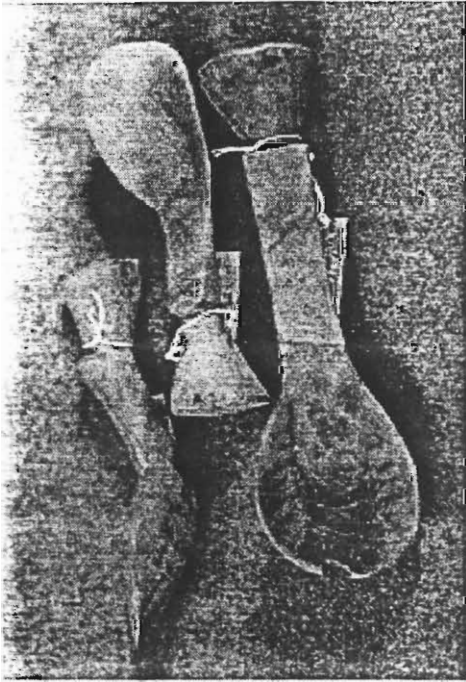


Figure 9

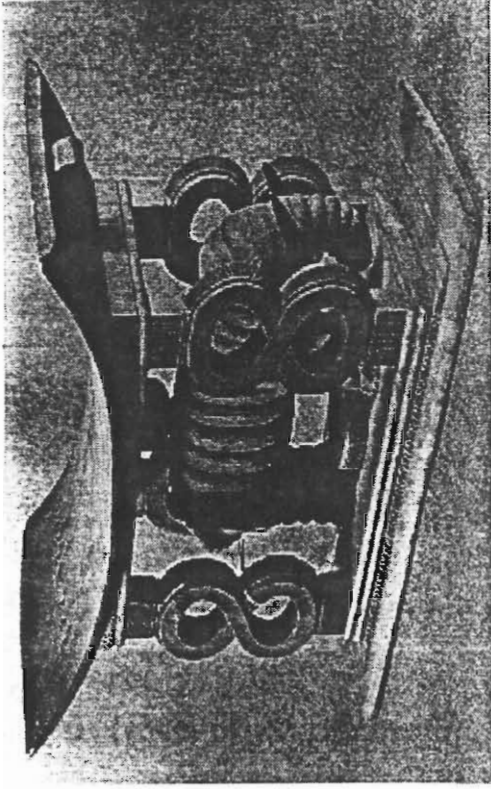


Figure 10

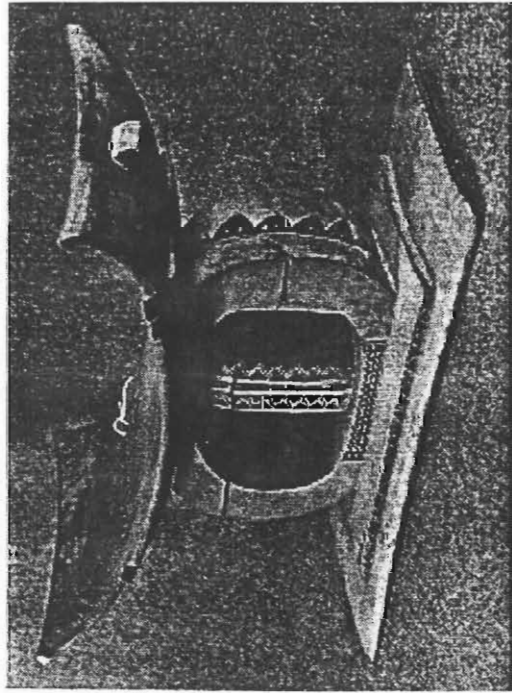


Figure 11

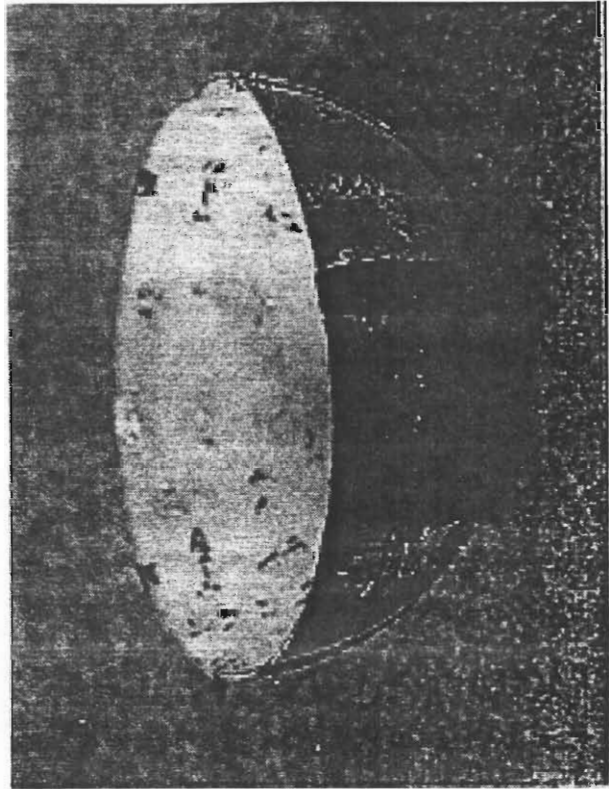


Figure 12

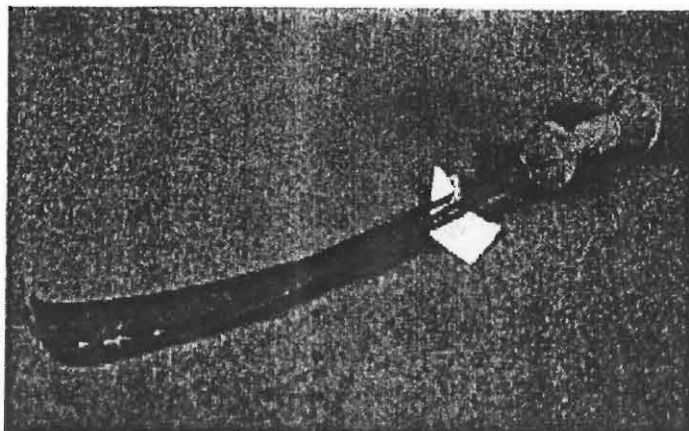


Figure 13

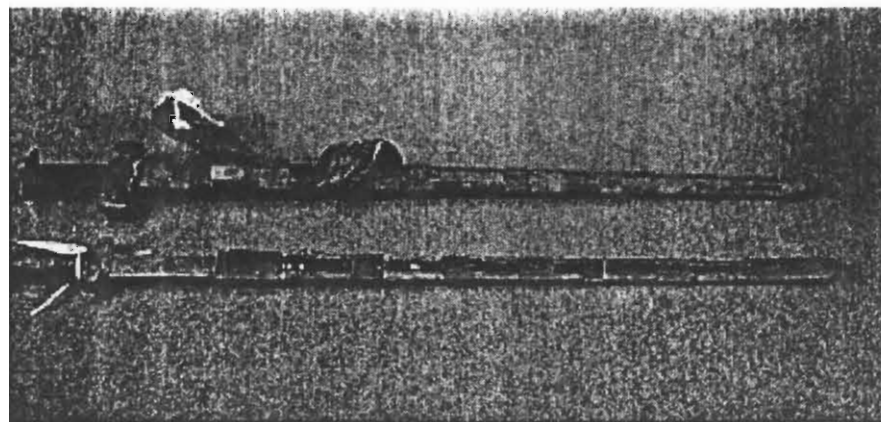


Figure 14

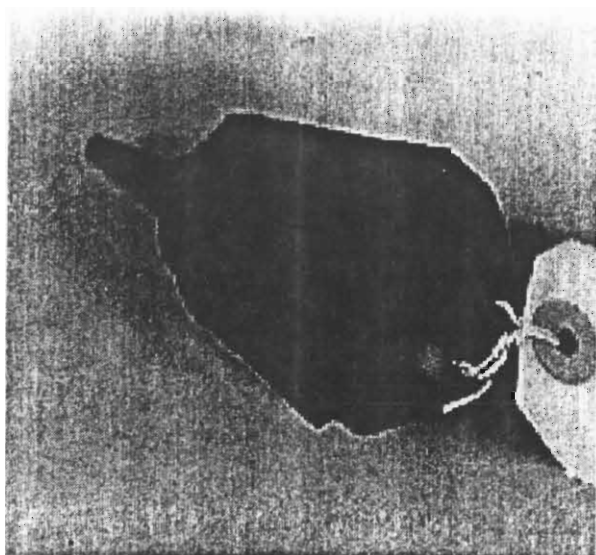


Figure 15

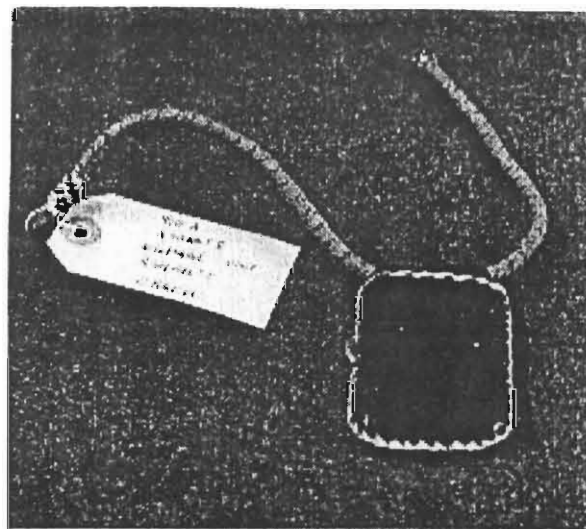


Figure 16

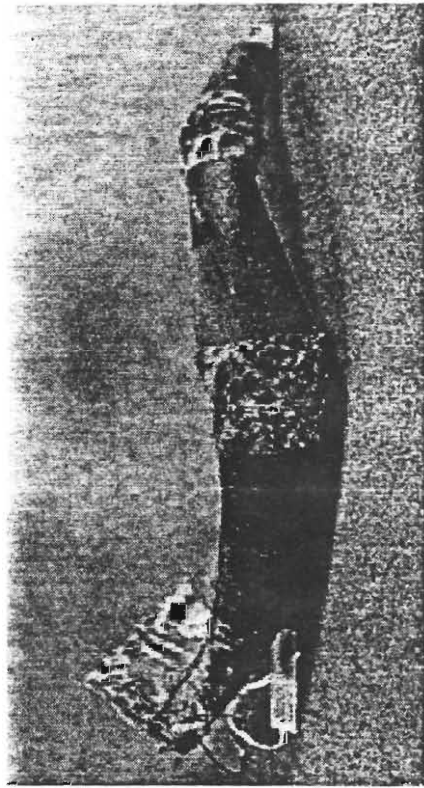


Figure 17

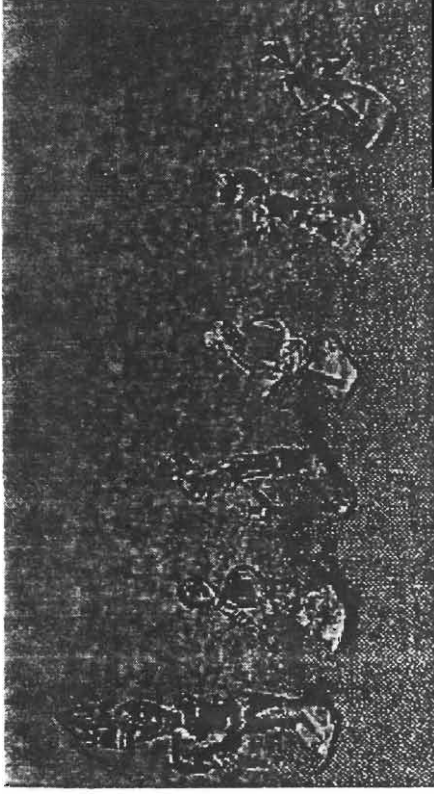


Figure 18



Figure 19

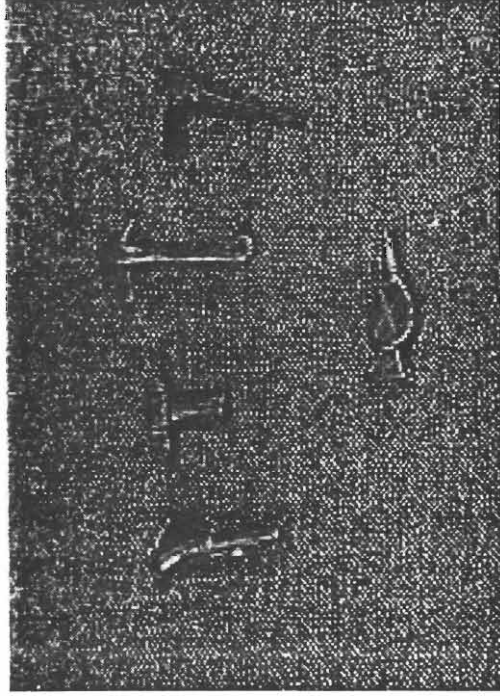


Figure 20A

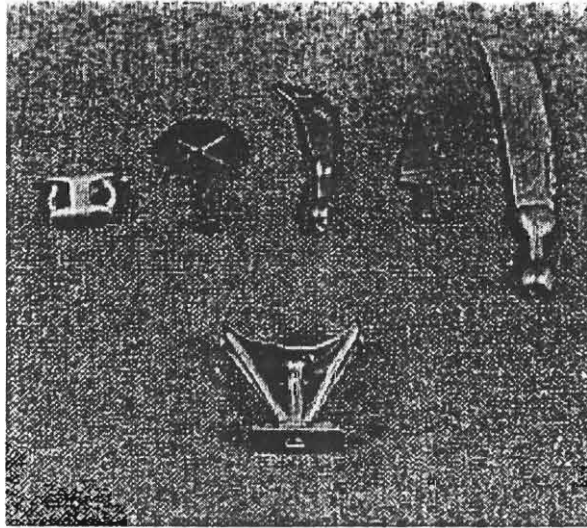


Figure 20B

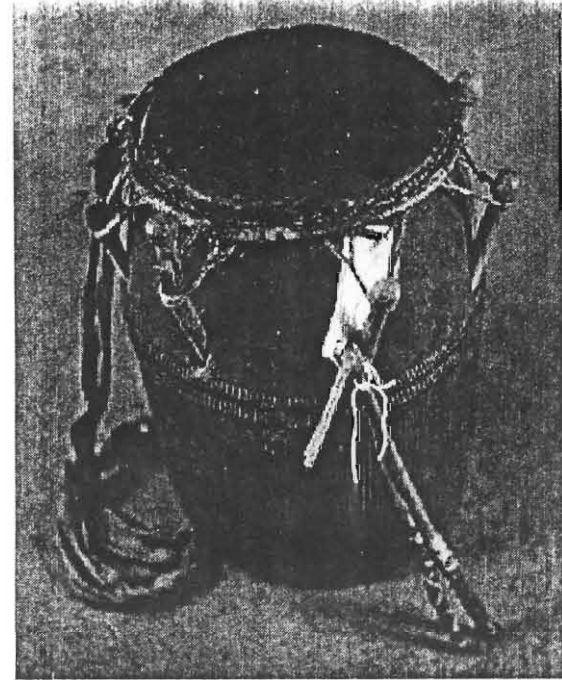


Figure 21

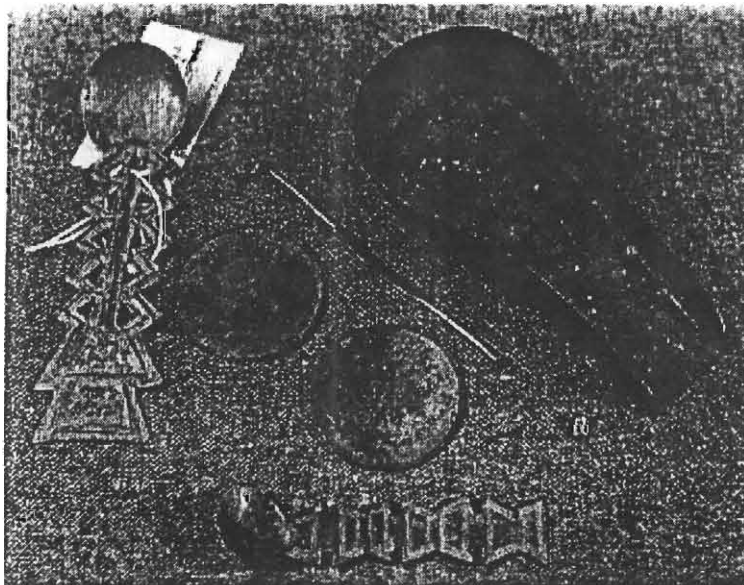


Figure 22

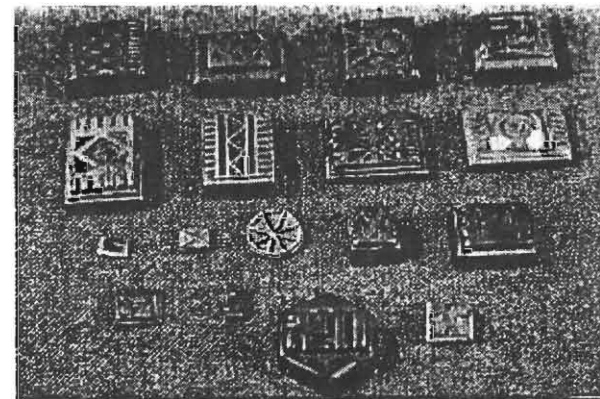


Figure 23

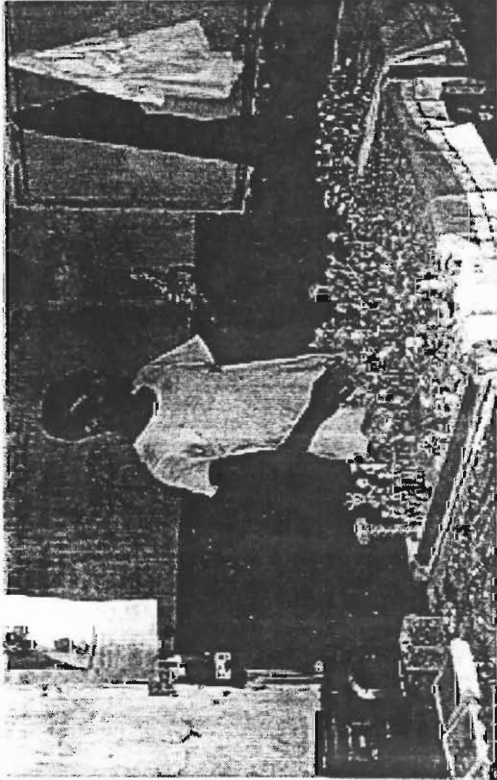


Figure 24

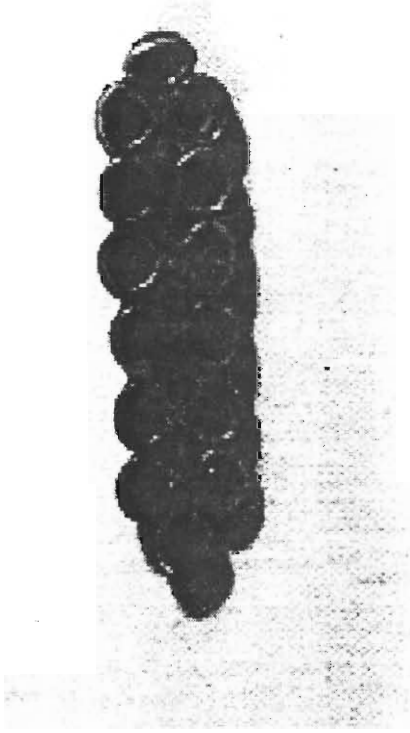


Figure 25



Figure 26

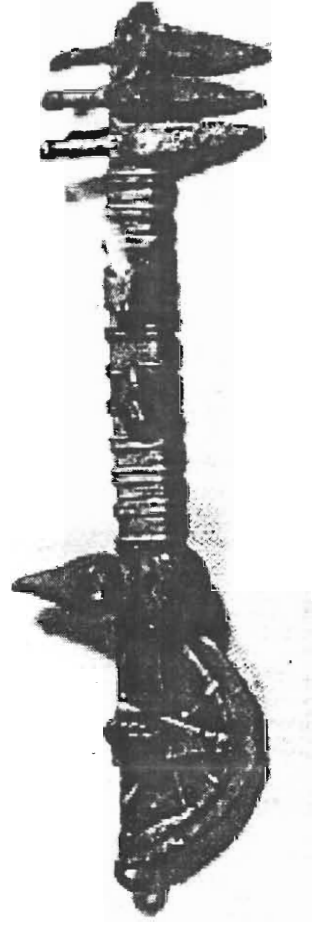


Figure 27

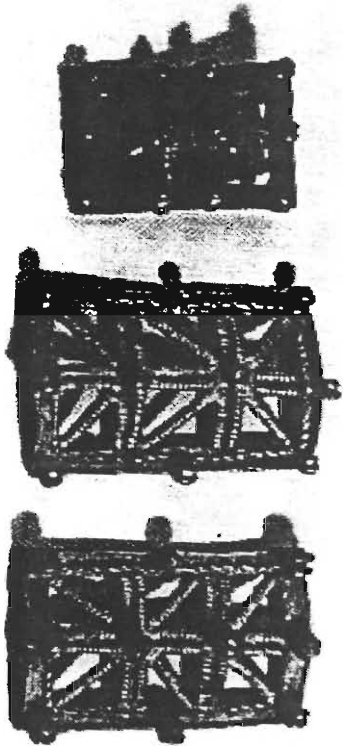


Figure 28



Figure 29



Figure 30

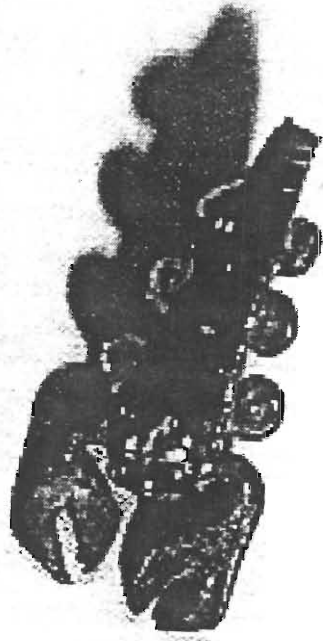


Figure 31

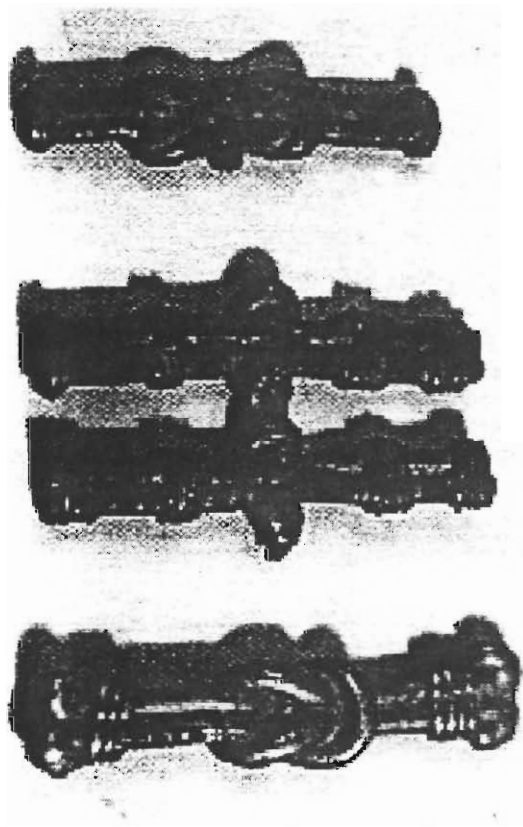


Figure 32

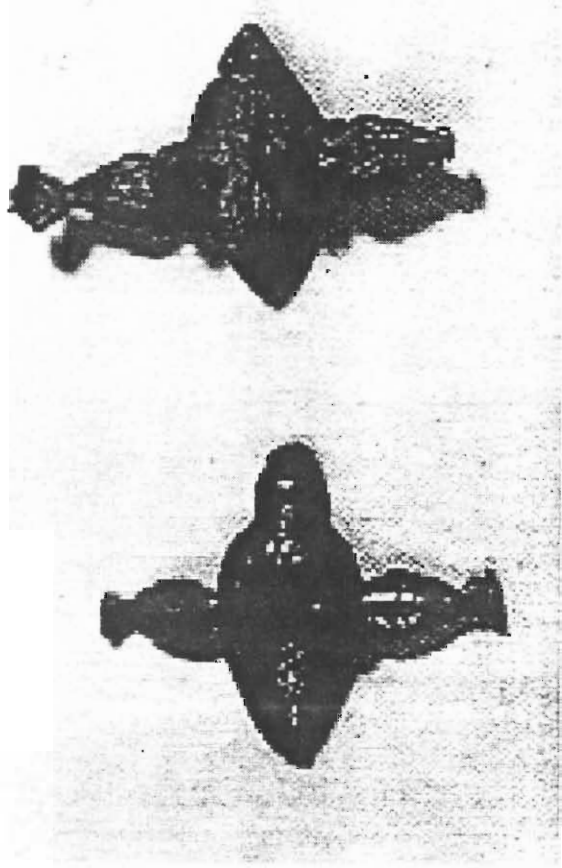


Figure 33

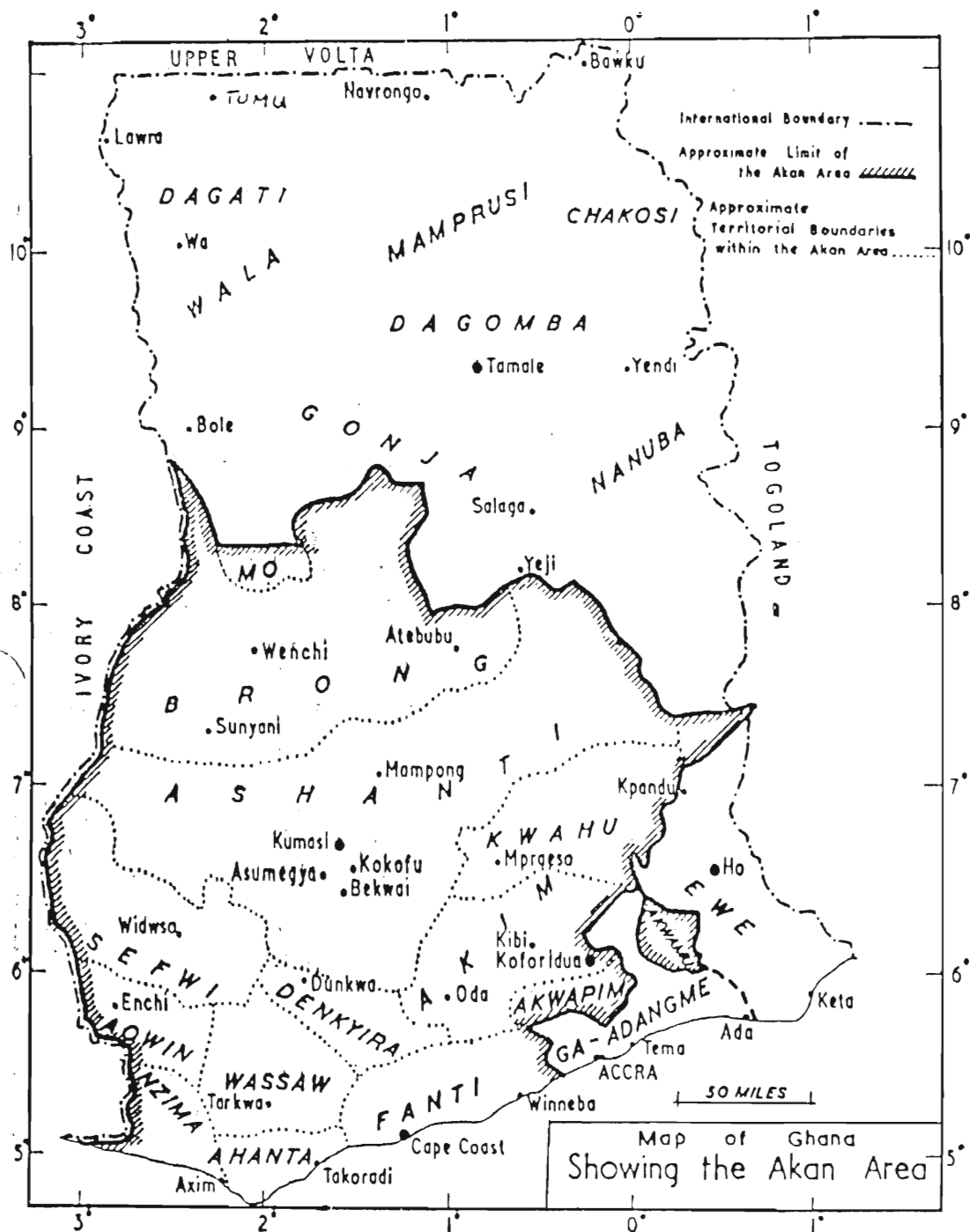


Figure A. Showing the Akan area and people of Ghana (Nketia, 1963)

NAME		CULTURAL AFFINITY		CATALOGUE No.	CARD No.	LOCATION
VERNACULAR NAME		PROVENANCE		DATE MADE	MAKER	SOURCE
PHOTOGRAPH	DIMENSIONS					
	FUNCTION					
	RAW MATERIALS					
NATAL MUSEUM ETHNOLOGY		COMMENTS				
ACCESSION	CORRESPONDENCE	PHOTO FILE	METHOD OBTAINED			
CROSS REFERENCES						
CONSERVATION HISTORY						
LITERATURE						
COMMENTS						

Figure B. A sample of the Natal Museum's record card

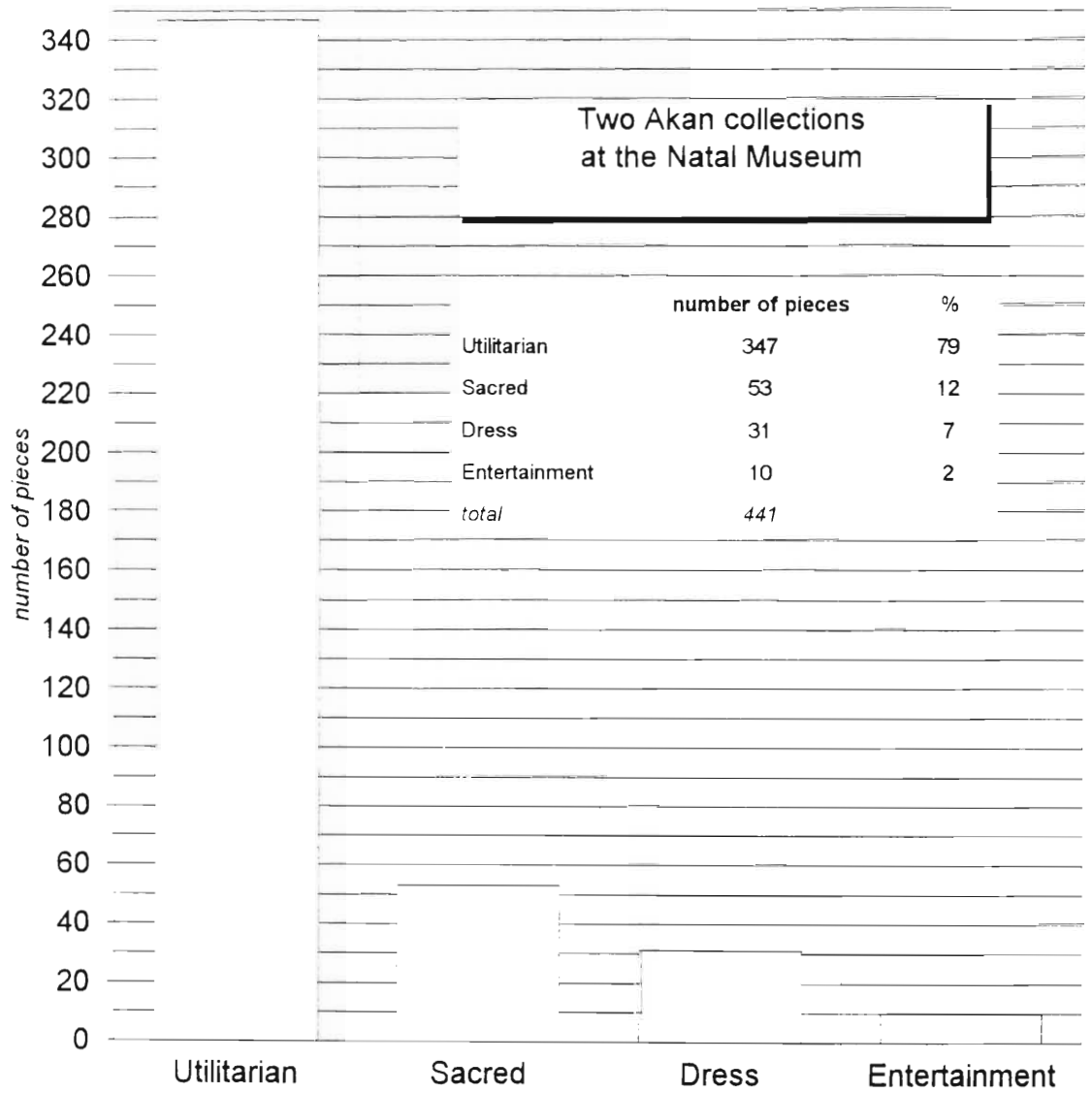


Figure C. Four categories of Akan items compared

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
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Note: Vern. name = vernacular name, Dimen. = Dimensions, Catalog. # = Catalogue number, Card # = card number, Don. CHA/MN/Exc = Donated by Captain CH Armitage/Mathew Nathan/Exchanged

Comb	Afe	Asante		Carved wood	H21 W6.5 D1	995 A	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908 CHA	
Comb	Afe	Asante		Carved wood	H22 B6 D1	995 B	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908 CHA	
Comb	Afe	Asante		Carved brown wood		995 C	24/b	Display	Don. 1908 CHA	
Comb	Afe	Asante		Carved black comb	H32 W10.5 D1	995 D	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908 CHA	
Mat (27)	kote	Asante	Adansi/Kumasi	Grass (or palm)		918 A to A'A	24/b	MS8 DR7&6	Don. 1908 CHA	
Cup	Kuruwa/kura	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Earthenware		962	24/b	Display	Don. 1908 CHA	
Cup	Kuruwa/kura	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Engraved Calabash	H7 D13	927 A	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1908 CHA	
Cup	Kuruwa/kura	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Engraved Calabash	H6.5 D13.5	927 B	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1908 CHA	
Cup	Kuruwa/kura	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Engraved Calabash	H6.5 D13.5	927 C	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1908 CHA	
Cup	Kuruwa/kura	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Engraved Calabash	H7 D14	927 D	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1908 CHA	
Beer Strainer	Nsa soneye	Asante	Nothern Asante	Grass		1069	24/b	MS7 DR8	Purchased 1909	
Beer Strainer	Nsa soneye	Asante	Gold Coast	Reed or Palm		1067	24/b	MS7 DR8	Purchased 1909	
Strainer	Soneye	Asante	Kokofu dst	Grass		967	24/b	Display	Don. 1908 CHA	
Basin	Kuro Sayriah	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood		940 B	24/b	MS 49/BTM	Don. 1908 CHA	
Basin	Kuro Sayriah	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood		940 A	24/b	Display	Don. 1908 CHA	
Basin	Kuro	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood		939	24/b	MS 49/BTM	Don. 1908 CHA	
Lid (2)	Apawa	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Light weight wood		938 A B	24/b	MS 3/2	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon (ornamental)	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Brass		941	24/b	Display	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L30 W11.5 H7.5	933 E	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L39.5 W13 H8	933 D	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L31.2 W12 H7	933 C	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L45.2 W9.5 H8	933 A	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood		933 A	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L45 W14 H11	933 B	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L40.5 W11 H8.5	9741 A	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Spoon	eta	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Wood	L30.5 W9 H6	9740	24/b	MS 25/7	Don. 1908 CHA	
Lidded Basket	Kentan	Asante	Kokofu dst	Reed, Cane, woven		932	24/b	MS DC 1/1	Don. 1908 CHA	
Open basket	Kentan	Asante	Bekwai dst	Cane		930 E	24/b	MS BTM	Don. 1908 CHA	
Open basket	Kentan	Asante	Bekwai dst	Cane		930 D	24/b	MSDC 4/2	Don. 1908 CHA	
Basket	Kentan	Asante	Bekwai dst	Cane and Witty		930 C	24/b	MSDC 5/2	Don. 1908 CHA	
Basket	Kentan	Asante	Bekwai dst	Cane		930 A	24/b	MS7 DR2	Don. 1908 CHA	
Basket	Kentan	Asante	Bekwai dst	Cane		930 B	24/b	MS7 DR2	Don. 1908 CHA	
Dish	Ayowa/Asanka	Asante	South province	Earthenware - decorated rim	H14.5 D50	926 A	24/b	MS14 DR5	Don. 1908 CHA	
Dish	Ayowa/Asanka	Asante	South province	Earthenware - plain rim	H14.5 D40.5	926 B	24/b	MS14 DR5	Don. 1908 CHA	
Dish	Ayowa/Asanka	Asante	South province	Decorated rim. Cloth patch		926 C	24/b	GD 17B	Don. 1908 CHA	
Dish	Ayowa/Asanka	Asante	South province	Earthenware decorated rim	H13.5 D49	926 D	24/b	MS14 DR5	Don. 1908 CHA	
Plate	Prete	Asante	Kumasi dst	Ceramic	H10.5 D35.5	923	24/b	MS14 DR4	Don. 1908 CHA	
Lamp	Kanee	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware		968	24/b	MS13 DR5	Don. 1908 CHA	

Appendix I. Akan utilitarian items in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
Bottle	Toa/Perentoa	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware		966	24/b	MS13 DR5	Don 1908 CHA	
Bottle	Toa/Perentoa	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware		961	24/b	Display	Don 1908 CHA	
Vessel	Apokye	Asante	Kumasi dst	Calabash cut in half to form 2 halves		937	24/b	MSDC 5/4	Don 1908 CHA	
Vessel	Apokye	Asante	Kumasi dst	Carved gourd		924	24/b	M3 DR6	Don 1908 CHA	
Barrel and stopper	Toa ne ntuoano	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware (wooden stopper carved)	H32.5 L22	966 A,B	24/b	MS	Don 1908 CHA	
Vessel	Apokye	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware	H18 D16.5(rim)	964 C	24/b	MS13/5	Don 1908 CHA	
Pot	Kukuo/ahina	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware		969	24/b	MS13 DR3	Don 1908 CHA	
Pot	Kukuo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Earthenware	H20.5 D(rim)13	967	24/b	MS13 DR5	Don 1908 CHA	
Pot	Kukuo/ahina	Asante	Kokofu dst	Ceramic	H25.5 D(rim)13.5	922 B	24/b	MS14 DR3	Don 1908 CHA	
Pot	Kukuo/ahina	Asante	Kokofu dst	Ceramic	H24.5	922 A	24/b	MS14 DR3	Don 1908 CHA	
Rope & sup (4)	ntwetwe/ahoma	Asante	South	Cane fibre rope		963 1-4	24/b	MS5 DR6	Don 1908 CHA	
Trap	nsuwa	Asante	Bekwai dst	Cane		964	24/b	Display	Don 1908 CHA	
Scale	nsania	Asante		Brass		9683	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.8 H.9	943 DU	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.4 W2.5	943 A	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L2.9 W2.1 H.9	943 CM	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	restle rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4	943 DT	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	digger
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 FA	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	beetle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.9 H.5	943 FB	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	star
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5 H.4	943 FC	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	pattern (+)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L.5 H2.5	943 FD	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	2 coils on stock
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 H.5	943 FF	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	circular pattern with 4 birds
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 FH	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	pyramid
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L1.6 H1.5	943 FI	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	star(cluster of pyramids)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L2.4 H.9	943 FJ	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	coiled snake
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.4	943 V	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 W3.8 H1.5	943 BX	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	restle curved rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5.9	943 W	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	sword
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	D2.8 H.2	943 BW	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	circular pattern
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 H1.4 W1.2	943 X	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	pearl
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 BV	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 Y	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	canon
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3	943 BU	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird (guinea fowl)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.9	943 Z	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H6.4	943 BT	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man with sword and bundle on head
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L6 W3.5	943 AA	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	curved rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L2.5	943 BB	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	hammerlike object
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L10 H.8	943 AB	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	crocodile
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L10.5	943 BR	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	ornate sword
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.3	943 AC	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	stod
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 BQ	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	flat fish

Appendix I. Akan utilitarian items in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.8	943AD	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man with flute and bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2	943BP	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	2 birds on cage
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3	943AE	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man cutting plant
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5 H1	943ET	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	shield
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.5	943BO	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man with sword
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L2.4 W2.1	943DW	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5	943CO	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	crab daws
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943DL	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	dumbbell
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943HA	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	triangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943HC	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	beetle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943HB	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	cone-like stalk
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.5	943BY	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird with large comb
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H7	943BU	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	3 snake skin pillars with knob
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.8	943U	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	goat with one horn and leg missing
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5.5 H1.4	943H	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	grasshopper
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943J	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangular block
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1.7	943I	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	pedestal
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.7 W2	943 L	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	scorpion
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.3 W2.8	943 M	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HL	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	staff
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L2.8 H1	943 DV	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	square patterned
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 CN	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 N	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.1 H2	943 D	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	trapped bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 DA	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	star and square hole
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 H 7	943 DB	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1.3	943 DC	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	5 squares on of other
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.9	943 DD	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man carrying two implements
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1.2	943 DE	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird on pedestal
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H7	943 DF	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	square
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 H5	943 DG	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	tortoise
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943 DH	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man holding a stick
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 H5	943 DI	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	lizard
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943DM	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	hoe with loops at end
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5.8 H4	943CI	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L8.5 H1.5	943DN	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	sword
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.2	943CH	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird on pedestal
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5 H7	943DO	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	fish
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5.5	943CG	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	canon
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.5	943 DP	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	tennis racquet
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.9	943LG	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	squart

Appendix I. Akan utilitarian items in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2	943 AX	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	2birds on cage containing other
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	5.4 W3.8	943 B	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	rectangular
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 JL	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	semi circle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943AY	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	stool
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	5.1 H3	943 R	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	flat fish
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	D4 1H2	943CF	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	wheel
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943DQ	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	triangular
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.8	943O	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	2birds on plate with fish
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943CE	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	arcJar mat
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3	943 P	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	knotted bird with large comb
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5	943 CD	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	canon
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5.5	943 Q	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	horn with handle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 H0.1	943 CC	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	fish
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.7 H4	943 CB	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	flat lizard
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 W2.3	943 S	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	curved rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 CA	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	canon
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.9	943 T	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	bird on pedestal
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 H1.5	943 CL	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	hexagonal with swastika
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 DS	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	square patterned
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.3	943 CK	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	horn with ornate end
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.5 H4	943 DR	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	thin rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.9 W2.5 H6	943 CJ	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	curved rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 H.5	943 GS	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	smoking pipe
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GR	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	square elevated swastika
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HM	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	knot(plated)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HK	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	small dumbell
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 H8	943GT	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	coiledsnake (bird)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943 HJ	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GU	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HI	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	trellis rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GV	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	goat
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HH	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	locust
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GW	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	knot
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GX	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	smoking pipe
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HG	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	peanut
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HF	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	square and checkered pattern
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GY	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	keylike piece
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.2	943 HE	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1.4	943 GZ	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	rod
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943HD	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	2pole with wire around them
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L9.5	943C	24b	MS2/11	Don. 1908 CHA	sword

Appendix I. Akan utilitarian items in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H 9	943 CZ	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	triangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 CX	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	crab claws
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2 5	943 CW	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	bird with comb
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2 6	943 CU	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	2 spirals with stalk
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 5	943 CT	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	tortoise
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943CS	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	gun(head of animal/fish)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943CK	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	wheel gear with stalk
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H5 4	943CQ	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	man carrying various implement
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943CP	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	trumpet
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 5 H1 5	943 AV	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	ornate fish
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L2 6 W2 6	943AU	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	block (decorated swastika)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 DK	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	patterned square
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 H2 5	943 DJ	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	fish/scorpion
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IE	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	staff with 9 spirals
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IH	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	staff
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 I	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangle(folded)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943J	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	dagger
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IK	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	triangle with circles on end
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943IM	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	small triangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IN	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	beetle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 7	943 IO	24/b	MS2/11	Don 1908 CHA	head of bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IP	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	hand holding object
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IQ	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	feet snake coil
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3	943 IR	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	small circle(imperfect)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943 IS	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	circle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IT	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	backbone
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H6	943IY	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	staff with holes
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H9	943 IX	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	triangle with 3 prongs
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IW	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	log segment
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943IV	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	hoe
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1	943IU	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	beetle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943IZ	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	square
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 JA	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	incomplete rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 JB	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	claws
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 JC	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	flat snake
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L6 5 W5	943 AF	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2 7	943BN	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	bird with comb
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	D6	943 AG	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	circular network
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3	943BM	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3 2 H1 W2 8	943 AH	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 5	943 BL	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	lizard

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English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.7	943 AI	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	2 figures one touching the others head
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.5	943 BK	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	sword and hoe
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.7	943 AJ	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	canon
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 BJ	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	knotted graffe & 2 canons
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943AK	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	3 mounted cannons
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 W2.5 H1	943 BI	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	breisle rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.8 W2.6	943AL	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	decorated tray
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L7.8 H2.8	943 AN	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	crocodile with handle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4 H2.6	943 BF	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	goat with long horn(2 legs missing)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 AO	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	knot
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H9	943 BE	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	plated piece with loops at end
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L6.5 H2.8	943 AP	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	creature with tusks
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4.3	943 BD	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	1 large + 2 smaller birds on pedestal
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1.6	943 AQ	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	bird on pedestal
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.4 W2.6 H.7	943 BC	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	breisle rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4.3	943 AR	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	man with pipe (drum on head)
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943BB	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	man with sticks and bundle on head
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943 AB	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	2 figures shaking hands
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.9 W2.5 H1.2	943 BA	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	curved rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4.4	943 AZ	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943AJ	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	block spiral pattern
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 CY	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	2 round knots with triangular stalk
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5 H.3	943 CV	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	a spiral arranged in a triangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943JC	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	flat snake
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943IZ	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	square
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1.5	943F	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	bird caught in a snare
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L8	943 E	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	sword
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IC	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	pipe with 4 prong bowls
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GB	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	small square with star pattern
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IB	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	long rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GC	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	fish like
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 IA	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	bellows
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GD	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HZ	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	roundish pill
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GE	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	rough cone
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H.3	943 HY	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	pattered diamond
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.5 H1.9	943GF	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	goat
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H.5	943HX	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	small rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GG	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	long rectagle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HW	24b	Safe	Don. 1908. CHA	shell
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GH	24b	MS2 DR11	Don. 1908. CHA	ornate sword

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English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943HV	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	bird
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943 GI	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	round patterned piece
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GJ	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	bird on circular patterned mat
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H2.2	943HU	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	square engraved patterned
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GK	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	2 birds
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HT	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	rectangle
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H5	943 HS	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	hump
weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GL	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	head
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GM	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H4	943 HR	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HQ	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GN	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HP	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 GD	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 HD	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GP	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 H8	943GQ	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943HN	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L1.7 H1.2	943FV	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 FW	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.3 H6	943FX	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.7 H3	943 FY	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5.1 W1.5	943FZ	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 FT	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L5 H1.4	943FS	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 FR	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L1.8 H3	943FQ	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943FP	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L4.6 H3	943 FO	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943FN	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	L3.3	943FM	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943FL	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H3.7	943 FK	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943FG	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943FE	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943 ID	24/b	Safe	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943GA	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze	H1	943 K	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943FV	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Weight	abrammo	Asante	Kumasi dst	Brass, Bronze		943G	24/b	MS2 DR11	Don 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asante	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H6.5 L6.4 W7	961 A	24/b	MS78 DR4	Don 1908 CHA	

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English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H6.5 L6 W4	961 B	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H9 L6.5 W7.5	961 C	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H8.5 L7 W9	961 D	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H8.5 L6.5 W9	961 E	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H6.2 L6.5 W11	961 F	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H5.5 L5 W10.5	961 G	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H7 L6 W7	961 H	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H8.5 L6.5 W9	961 I	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened	H7.5 L8 W4	961 J	24b	MS78 DR4	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 K	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 L	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 M	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 N	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 O	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 P	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 Q	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 R	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 S	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	
Pipe Bowl	Abua	Asarte	Kumasi dst	clay, fired, & blackened		961 T	24b	MS13 DR1	Dan 1908 CHA	

Appendix I. Akan utilitarian items in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(cm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	source	Remarks
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Note: Vern. name = vernacular name, Dimen. = Dimensions, Catalog. # = Catalogue number, Card # = Card number, Don. 1908. CHA = Donated in 1908 by Captain C H Armitage.

Stool	<i>Adwa</i>	Asante		Wood, screws		6642	24/b	MS51 BTM	Don. 1908. CHA	
Stool	<i>Adwa</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Carved wood		919	24/b	MS59 DR8	Don. 1908. CHA	
Cap	<i>ekyew</i>	Asante	Kokofu dist	Leather		916	24/b	MS35 DR7	Don. 1908. CHA	
Sandal (pair)	<i>Mpabua/ahenema</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Leather		917 A B	24/b	MS 36 DR5	Don. 1908. CHA	
Sword	<i>Afena</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Wood,metal,gold, buckskin		920	24/b	MS31	Don. 1908. CHA	
Sword	<i>Afena</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Wood metal leather		921 A	24/b	MS45 DR6	Don. 1906. CHA	
Sword	<i>Afena</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Wood metal leather		921 B	24/b	MS45 DR6	Don. 1906. CHA	
Model	<i>Kyinie</i>	Asante	Bekwai dist	Material, wood	280.4, 100.8	928	24/b	MS40 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Pallanquin	<i>Apakan</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Bamboo, grass		953 1-4	24/b	MS5 DR6	Don. 1908. CHA	
Umbrella Tops	<i>Kyini-etifi</i>	Asante	Bekwai dist	Carved wood bulbs on stick	H32 W10	916 A	24/b	MS26 DR4	Don. 1908. CHA	
Umbrella Tops	<i>Kyini-etifi</i>	Asante	Bekwai dist	Carved wood snake	H27.5 W10 D6.6	916 B	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Ornament		Asante	Kumasi dist	Gold		942 A	24/b	MS2 DR10	Don. 1908. CHA	
3-D Ornament		Asante	Kumasi dist	Gold		942 B	24/b	MS2 DR10	Don. 1908. CHA	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather-skin cloth grass		912 C	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather, horn, cloth, metal		912 D	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Metal, wire, thread, grass		912 E	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Animal, Tail, Leather, metal		912 F	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather, cloth, animal tail		912 G	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather, cloth, cord, animal tail		912 H	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather cloth animal tail, thread		912 I	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather, cloth, wood animal foot		912 J	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather, cloth, animal foot		912 K	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Leather		912 L	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Material, Leather, horn, skin, cord		912 M	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
part of war dress		Asante	Asante	Metal, thread, grass, wire		912 B	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. MN 1907	
Fan	<i>Pappa/tetae</i>	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Carved wood		936	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Fan	<i>Pappa/tetae</i>	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Palm		936 B	24/b	MS11 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Fan	<i>Pappa/tetae</i>	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Palm		936 A	24/b	MS11 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Fan	<i>Pappa/tetae</i>	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Basket work		934 B	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Fan	<i>Pappa/tetae</i>	Asante	Kumasi Dist	palm leaves		934 A	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Cloth	<i>nchirrimu</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist.	silk thread		916	24/b	display	Don. 1908. CHA	

Appendix III. Akan dress items in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
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Note: Vern. name = vernacular name, Dimen. = Dimensions, Catalog. # = Catalogue number, Card # = Card number, Don. 1908. CHA = Donated in 1908 by Captain C H Armitage.

Charm	Bodua	Asante	Kumasi dist	Leather cord		910 A	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. 1908. CHA	
Charm	Bodua	Asante	Kumasi dist	Leather, wood, snake skin, Horn cloth		910 B	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. 1908. CHA	
Charm	Bodua	Asante	Kumasi dist	Leather wool, cloth leopard skin		910 C	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. 1908. CHA	
Charm	Kabrai	Asante	Kumasi dist	Wood leather, cord, animal hair, wire		1827	24/b	MS35 DR6	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn, leather, skin		1826 F	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn cane		1826 E	24/b	GD 17B	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn		1826 D	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn		1826 C	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn		1826 B	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn		1826 A	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn		1826 A	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Horn	Aben	Asante	Kumasi dist	Horn		1826 C	24/b	MS2 DR1	Don. 1910. CHA	
Calabash (fetish equipment)	Arnu	Asante	Kumasi dist	Calabash	H15 W6.5	1818	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1910. CHA	
Calabash (fetish equipment)	Arnu	Asante	Kumasi dist	Calabash		1818	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1910. CHA	
Gourd	Korowa	Asante	Accra	Calabash	H6 D12.5	366 A	24/b	MS26 DR3	Exch.	
Gourd	Korowa	Asante	Accra	Calabash	H5 D10	366 B	24/b	MS26 DR3	Exch. 1905	
Gourd	Korowa	Asante	Accra	Calabash, beads	H7 D16	366 C	24/b	MS26 DR3	Exch. 1905	
Gourd	Korowa	Asante	Accra	Calabash, beads		366 D	24/b	MS26 DR3	Exch. 1905	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal, wire		1826 N	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal, wire		1826 M	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 L	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 K	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 J	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 I	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 H	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 G	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 F	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 E	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 D	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 C	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 B	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Bell	Edon/Adoma	Asante	Kumasi dist	Metal		1826 A	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1910. CHA	
Family pot	Abusua Kuruwa	Asante	Kumasi dist	Earthenware	H25 D15	964 A	24/b	MS13 DR4	Don. 1910. CHA	
Family pot	Abusua Kuruwa	Asante	Kumasi dist	Earthenware		964 B	24/b	MS13 DR6	Don. 1910. CHA	
Family pot	Abusua Kuruwa	Asante	Kumasi dist	Earthenware		964 B	24/b	MS13 DR6	Don. 1910. CHA	
Cup	Kuruwa/kura	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Calabash with strips of gold and silver		926	24/b	MS26 DR3	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (bird)	Anomaa	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood (bird)	H18.5 L11	958 A	24/b	MS 25	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (tortoise)	Akyekyede	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H4.5 L14	958 B	24/b	MS25 DR4	Don. 1908. CHA	

Appendix II. Akan Sacred objects in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. Affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen.(mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	Source	Remarks
Carving (crab)	<i>Okoto</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H4.5 L17	958 C	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (Bird)	<i>Anomaa</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H20	958 D	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (a cat)	<i>Agyenamoa/ Okra</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H7.5 L22.5	958 E	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (scorpion)		Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H6 L15.5	958 F	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (crocodile)	<i>Odenkyem</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H3 L29	958 G	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (fish)	<i>Adwene</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H3.5 L15.5	958 H	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (snake)	<i>Owo</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H5 L20	958 I	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (elephant & tree)	<i>Osono ne Dua</i>	Asante	Asante	Wood		958 J	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Carving (bird)	<i>Anomaa</i>	Asante	Bekwai Dist	Wood	H5 L7.5	958 K	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	
Doll	<i>Akuaba</i>	Asante	Kokofu/Bekwai	Wood, Beads, Cloth, Grass		959 D	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Doll	<i>Akuaba</i>	Asante	Kokofu/Bekwai	Wood and Beads		959 C	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Doll	<i>Akuaba</i>	Asante	Kokofu/Bekwai	Wood	H30.5 W14.5	959 B	24/b	MS25 DR4	Don. 1908. CHA	
Doll	<i>Akuaba</i>	Asante	Kokofu/Bekwai	Wood	H29.5 W13.5	959 A	24/b	MS25 DR4	Don. 1908. CHA	
dol	<i>Abaduaba</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Wood		956 B	24/b	GD DB	Don. 1908. CHA	
dol	<i>Abaduaba</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	Wood	H23.5	956 A	24/b	MS25 DR1	Don. 1908. CHA	

Appendix II. Akan Sacred objects in the Natal Museum

English name	Vern. name	C. affinity	Provenance	Raw material	Dimen. (mm)	Catalog. #	Card #	Location	source	Remarks
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Note: Vern. name = vernacular name, Dimen. = Dimensions, Catalog. # = Catalogue number, Card # = Card number, Don. 1908. CHA = Donated in 1908 by Captain C H Armitage

Dancing belt/skirt	<i>Doso</i>	Asante	Lake Bosomtwe	Grass, cord, bells, shells, metal		914 B	24/b	MS38, DR3	Don. 1908. CHA	
Dancing belt/skirt	<i>Doso</i>	Asante	Lake Bosomtwe	Grass cord (coloured) bells beads.		914 A	24/b	MS38, DR3	Don. 1908. CHA	
Iron King	<i>Nfretwoa</i>	Asante	Kumasi Dist	Iron		955	24/b	MS25 DR4	Don. 1908. CHA	
Single gong	<i>Dawuta</i>	Asante	Bekwai dist	Iron		951	24/b	MS2 DR8	Don. 1908. CHA	
Double gong	<i>Nnawuta</i>	Asante	Agona Dist	Iron Wood		950	24/b	MS2 DR2	Don. 1908. CHA	
Drum	<i>Adendema</i>	Asante	Agona Dist	Wood, Leather, Grass		949 B	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Drum	<i>Adendema</i>	Asante	Agona Dist	Wood, Leather, Grass		949 A	24/b	MS55 DR2	Don. 1908. CHA	
Drum	<i>Apentema</i>	Asante	Asumadwa Dist	Wood, Leather, Sinew		946	24/b	MS29 DR2	Don. 1908. CHA	
Drum	<i>Apentema</i>	Asante	Kokofu Dist	Wood, Leather, Cloth		945	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	
Drum and stick	<i>Donno</i>	Asante	Kumasi dist	cane, cloth, string, Leather, wood		944 A B	24/b	Display	Don. 1908. CHA	

Appendix IV. Akan entertainment items in the Natal Museum