

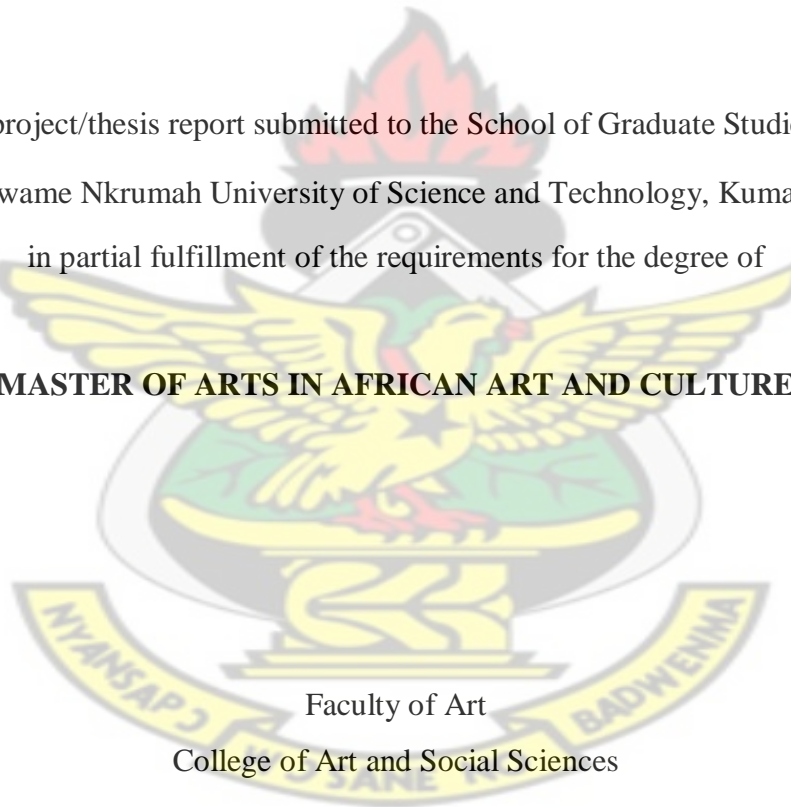
VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF SELECTED AKAN PROVERBS IN GHANA: THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the MA degree and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the university, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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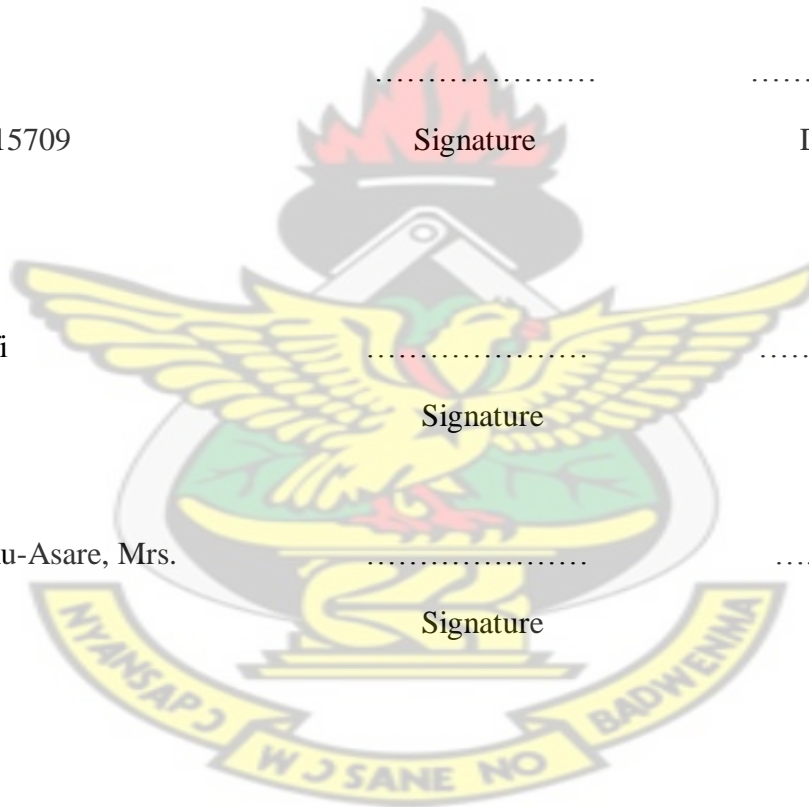
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to identify forty Akan proverbs that are used in daily activities for communication and education in the Ghanaian traditional environment. The selected proverbs were visualised into symbols and explained. Fifteen of the symbols were used to produce textile pieces (pictorial batik), wood carvings and clay work to demonstrate their use in the African handicraft. The descriptive technique of qualitative research methodology was employed. The descriptive method was used to explain the philosophical and daily applications of the proverbs. The Art-based method was used to illustrate the proverbs into symbols. The research found out that proverbs, which constituted major components of the Ghanaian communication skill in the 19th and 20th century is fast falling into the background in this 21st century. Also, creativity in the creation of symbols by students and artisans is also declining drastically. Therefore, this research recommends that more symbols should be created using the numerous proverbs and wise sayings that are in existence to salvage the declining image of Akan proverbs as an important component of African art. These symbols should be made available to the craft industry as well as to serve as educational materials in Ghanaian schools.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter deals with the introduction, the statement of the problem, the objectives, importance and the methodologies to be implemented in the thesis. The chapter also talks about the delimitations and research questions of the study.

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1.2 Background to the Study

There seems to be a gradual introduction of different types of Western symbols and signs in the Ghanaian tradition that is over shadowing and collapsing the conventional symbols and signs that were being cherished before. These signs are increasingly making their ways into the production industries as well as the traditional cottage industries as they are being presented in forms of textiles, carving, modelling, and to mention a few. The introduction of these signs is posing great threats to the culture of the Akans as most of the youths turn to neglect the traditional signs totally. Asare (2009) was worried about the neglect of the culture of Ghanaians left in the rear in the educational curriculum; he called on authorities to include these beautiful values into the educational reform programme in order to help children to learn about the cultures of the land.

This can be traced to the fact that the conventional symbols are not made easily available to the youth of today as compared to the foreign signs. This project is therefore aimed at regenerating new symbols and designs from the traditional proverbial sayings to support the few available ones and also aid in educating the youths as well as use it in the art and craft cottage industries in Ghana.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The uses of proverbs were common among our traditional people a few decades ago in the Ghanaian society. These creatively crafted speeches made the local language beautiful, rich in values and easily appreciated. Proverbs made lengthy statements short and spoken in a cultured way that every initiated listener understood. Because of the major roles proverbs play in our society, our forefathers have created symbols to depict these proverbs which make identification easier for them as well as to precede any action they want to take or say during a gathering. Such examples are 'se *wo werefi na wo sanko fa a, yenkyi*' meaning if you forget and goes back to take, is not wrong a taboo. This proverb was represented with the.... bird which takes its egg and carries it at the back. When a chief sits in public, such symbols are carved onto the linguist staff carried by the spokesman or in the cloth of the chief. These symbols give the idea of what is on board to be discussed.

The excitement in learning and using foreign languages and symbols by the people of Ghana has contributed to the decline in standards of Ghanaian indigenous linguistics, cultural values and craftsman's skills. The youth consider these proverbs and symbols as outmoded and that they belong to the old folk. Others also consider the use of these proverbs as unrefined to their status. These factors have led to the situation where proverbs and their symbols tend to be limited to our traditional homes. It is common to visit a home and find parents teach their children the western canons and arts, the values and ethics of the Diaspora ignoring the indigenous way of life. If these problems are not corrected early, future generations will have nothing that is indigenously Ghanaian to show.

A few of such symbols have existed from antiquity and are being faded out of the system because of lack of documentation and misinterpretations and sometimes the elders have attached some spiritual beliefs to these symbols, while these adinkra symbols are still being used by artists and craftsmen without or with little effort to generate new ones to unburden these symbol. Some of these illustrated proverbs of the Akans have been documented by Prof. Ablade Glover in his collection titled Adinkra symbolism; examples of these are *Gye Nyame*, *Nyame bewu ansa na mewu*, *Batakari adɔɔso ama yennhu kramo papa*. Besides these, there are several proverbs that have not been illustrated, such as *ɔkɔtɔ nnwo anoma*, *baanu soa*, *emmia*, *Kwaseabuo nti na yesi hene*.

In view of the above mentioned problems, the goal of the thesis is to identify and document forty Akan proverbs, visually illustrate these proverbs and produce a demonstrative designs samples in textiles, ceramic, and wood works with the created symbols. These will be recommended for use in the craft industry and the educational sector.

1.4 Objectives of the Research

1. The research sought to identify and document forty (40) dying proverbs and give their philosophical meanings.
2. To develop symbols out of these proverbs.
3. To produce demonstration artifacts in clay, woodcarving and textiles with fifteen of the symbols for. The craft industry.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the importance and philosophical values of proverbs in our traditional culture?
2. How can we develop symbols from proverbs and make available to the craft industry of Ghana?
3. In what ways can proverbs be appreciated by the younger generation?

1.6 Delimitation

This project is limited to the Asante Twi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana and the illustrated symbols are also limited to pen and ink.

1.7 Limitation

Due to time constraints and difficulties of getting the traditional elders to give their vivid accounts and interpretations of some proverbs have caused the researcher not being able to come out with more illustrated symbols.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Visual representation: The creation or generation of an icon or image from the stated proverb as a result of pictures created in the mind's eyes.

Symbols: Something visible that can be in a form of two or three dimensional objects that represents something else that is invisible

1.9 Importance of the Study

1. The project has brought out forty (40) new symbols to aid in day to day applications.
2. It has also revived some of the dying proverbs in the Akan society.
3. The illustrated symbols will go a long way to help the general public to understand these proverbs better by the use of the symbols.
4. The demonstration artefacts serve as a teaching and learning aid to the craft industry and other designers
5. The project report will also serve as teaching and learning reference to educators.

1.10 Organisation of the rest of Text

Chapter One covers the introduction containing background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, delimitations, and limitations, definition of terms, importance of the study and organization of text.

Chapter Two covers the literature review which deals with theories of various authors in connection with how they view proverbs and symbols. The following areas are considered.

Definition of proverb, creation of proverbs, classification of proverbs, uses of proverbs in traditional communities as education device, the significance of proverbs in Ghanaian languages, translation and interpretation of proverbs, pictorial representation as a source of knowledge, the role of visual representations in education and others.

Chapter Three deals with the research methodology and it's relation to the study. It includes the research design, library research, population, data collection instruments, primary and secondary data, data collection procedure, data analysis plan and summary of discussions. It also deals with the identification, observation of conventional symbols and signs.

In **Chapter four**, the valid data have been assembled, discussed, analyzed and presented.

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Chapter five being the last chapter of the whole thesis basically deals with the summary of the contents of the chapters, summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and proposed innovations.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

This chapter is divided into two sections, namely theoretical and empirical review. The researcher will deal with literature relevant to the study under theories available on the topic. In this the researcher has reviewed areas that cover definition of proverbs, origin of proverbs, types of visual representation and the role proverbs play in oral traditions or verbal art.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Definition of proverb

According to Microsoft Encarta Dictionary and Microsoft Student 2009, a proverb is a short well-known saying that expresses an obvious truth and often advice. A Proverb is concise statement, in general use, expressing a shrewd perception about everyday life or a universally recognized truth. Again, Dictionary Word Web also defines a proverb as a condensed but memorable saying embodying some important facts of experience that are taken as true by many people. The Standard Dictionary defines a proverb as a short saying in common use that strikingly expresses some obvious truth or familiar experience. Paczolay (1996) states that proverbs express a relationship, which is a general principle, or a characteristic of a certain category of static or dynamic systems. Addo, (2001) also says that proverbs in Africa are wise philosophical expressions, generally short and sometimes very funny yet makes the language rich, picturesque, and expresses a hidden or obvious wisdom.

Kaplan (2002) explains that the nature of proverbs allows them to be interpreted again and again, across time and in different situations. He said they are interesting because they not only tap into universal themes in the human condition, such as the physiological system of the human life cycle, but they also vary in ways that appear to reflect specific cultural differences. In the home and in other community settings alike, proverbs are used to pass on rich cultural traditions, to transmit folklore, and to communicate expected codes of behaviour. This practice cuts across most of the societies, clans and communities in Africa, especially West Africa and Ghana is not an exception.

Soares (1997) agreed with (Birnbaum 1987) in saying that, in the home and other community settings alike, proverbs are used to pass on rich cultural traditions, for transmitting folklore and communicating expected codes of behaviour across generations. They further affirmed that, proverbs also have played prominent roles in oral traditions of resistance to dominant cultural values and political ideals. Proverbs also serve as effective educational tools in the classroom. For example, Cruz and Duff (1996) discussed how selectively chosen proverbs can be used to facilitate literacy skills development and help to bridge school- and home-based learning. Schnurer (1995) also opines that proverbs can be included in secondary-school curricula to promote greater intercultural tolerance and understanding. Proverbs can be used to heighten our sensitivity to how other people view the world and to stimulate critical thinking of our own normative frameworks.

The researcher agrees with the above definitions about proverb as short but well condensed statements that are commonly used in man's daily activities to advise, correct, educate and entertain people. Proverbs are a form of verbal art handed down from generations to generations in oral tradition. History of a group of people may be embedded into proverbs in order not to forget about it as

time goes on. These proverbs are guarded meticulously among the royals or beneficiaries of the history of the society. Proverbs can also be used as a channel of educating people both at literary and non-literary educational levels. Also proverbs are formed out of a lengthy oral tradition for easy remembrance and translated.

Although most people would have little difficulty in quoting a proverb if asked, the matter of precisely defining a proverb is much more problematic. The Oxford Dictionary's offering of a "short pithy saying in general use" is neither sufficiently comprehensive nor accurate. Proverbs need not be "in general use", and "short pithy sayings" is ill-defined to the point of being meaningless. Taylor's 1931 definition of a proverb extended to over 200 pages, and concluded that it was impossible to give a meaningful definition that was also brief. Part of the difficulty with defining proverbs is that they do not conform to a neatly categorised genre. Their form, origins, content, purpose, structure, application, and a range of other aspects are so varied as to sometimes give the impression that there is no such single entity as a proverb. In some cases, a proverb can be something as basic as a moralising generalisation, while at the other end of the scale, it can be a complex and extremely culture-bound metaphor, conforming to an intricate structure, and containing several layers of encoded meaning. The constraints of space here prohibit a comprehensive analysis of what constitutes a proverb. Consequently, for all its shortcomings, an intuitive, popular understanding of a proverb is relied upon in this thesis. The ability to understand and interpret proverbial sayings has been of great interest to researchers in many areas of psychology and psycholinguistics, attempting to account for the representation and processing of figurative language. Psycholinguists have researched proverb comprehension with the aim of uncovering the unconscious mental processes employed in understanding non-linearly language.

As Gibbs and Beitel 1995 rightly noticed that the practical attempts to define proverbs have resulted in as many as 55 different definitions. However for the purpose of this thesis, the researcher will adopt to Gibbs' (1995: 134) view of proverbs, under which proverbs are familiar, fixed, sentential expressions

that express well-known truths, social norms, or moral concerns. While most proverbial expressions are metaphorical in nature (for an example, the fish rots from the head first, charity begins at home), some of them may be based on personification (misery loves company), hyperbole (it's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God), or paradox (the nearer the church, the farther from God), the presence of meter (as in the proverb you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink), rhyme (haste makes waste), slant rhyme (a stitch in time saves nine), alliteration (live and let live), assonance (a rolling stone gathers no moss), and parallelism (a penny saved is a penny earned), (Gibbs and Beitel 1995). To this list, Kemper (1981) adds other important characteristics of proverbs, namely the fact that these expressions exhibit a general syntactic form, whereby the use of the imperative mood or the subjunctive present tense is very common.

2.2.2 Creation of Proverbs

In the case of traditional proverbs, no trace has generally been left on the historical landscape to indicate when they were originally created or by whom. In an interview with Owusu Ansah (personal communication 2009) it became clear that legends do not name the creators of proverbs, although proverbs are frequently included in these legends. Even in contemporary society, he said it is only rarely that a proverb can be seen to be in the making. Proverbs come about for several reasons, and in many ways. Some may arise from simple apophthegms and platitudes which over time are elevated to the status of a proverb. Others emerge from the symbolic or metaphoric use of an incident; some are based on a story or fable, while others are simply variations on existing proverbs. In non-literate communities, it is virtually impossible to even approximately date proverbs, and in the case of pre-European Maori communities, there are too few chronological signposts to hint at periods even as broad as centuries (Moon, 1997).

The origin of any proverb has usually been a concise, brief or figurative statement usually from speeches of a wise or elderly man, in a particular situation or context. If it impresses his audience as rich and weighty with wisdom, anybody may quote it in a similar situation and as time goes on, it becomes a popular expression in the language of the people. Proverbs with moral significance become fashionable and popular and are adopted into the social ethics of the people (Ackah, 1988).

About how proverbs are formed, Halm (n.d.) says that proverbs are rooted in folklore and have been preserved by oral tradition. An example of such commonplace wisdom is 'A rolling stone gathers no moss.' Some proverbs have literary origins, as in the case of Benjamin Franklin's adaptation of Aesop's proverb 'The gods help them that help themselves.' Franklin himself originated the proverb 'Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.' Proverbs are appealing because they are brief and they use simple rhyme ('A friend in need is a friend indeed'), irony ('Physician, heal thyself'), metaphor ('Still waters run deep'), and comparison or contrast ('Feed a cold and starve a fever'). Proverbs can be formulated by anybody by the choice of his words of interest that contains wisdom and carry information to warn, advice and appraise a situation, or a person.

2.2.3 Classification of Proverbs

It is not easy to group Ghanaian proverbs under particular headings. However, a careful study of proverbs from various communities may suggest the following classification as proposed by Borkor, (2004).

- (a) Proverbs that mention God, the gods, mother Earth, rivers, and other spirits of the universe.
- (b) Proverbs about animals and men.

(c) Proverbs that deal with historical explanations or stories.

(d) Proverbs in which parts of the body such as ears, hands, eyes, and brain are mentioned.

(e) Proverbs about animals.

(f) Proverbs which deal with objects of nature and art, e.g., domestic or wild animals, plants and minerals.

(g) Proverbs which refer to the general state of man, his fate, and his destiny.

(h) Proverbs that deal with the domestic, social, and political life of the people.

(i) Proverbs which refer to the intellectual conditions of man, e.g., wisdom, foolishness, rudeness, etc.

(j) Proverbs that refer to moral values, e.g., patriotism, love, unity, hard work, patience, justice, truthfulness, loyalty.

2.2.4 Use of Proverbs in traditional Communities as Educational Device

Moon (1997) says traditional proverbs clearly served a didactic purpose, despite the absence of Western-styled institutions of learning. The educational value of proverbs has a broad basis. Proverbs "...awaken and enlarge reflections on the world and the nature of man, to suggest subjects for conversation, or to provide themselves with comment appropriate to situations in daily life. Such purposes are obviously closely allied to the essence of the moralising proverb". The preservation of proverbs in their 'original' form would almost have certainly been guaranteed in traditional Maori communities by the means of transferring knowledge. One of the purposes of the traditional Maori wananga, as described by Elsdon Best, was to "...hand the teachings of old down succeeding generations

in an unchanged form. Any deviation from such teachings was a thing to be carefully avoided. To deny the truth of any such teachings was an abominable act". Proverbs are also used by speakers for a variety of purposes. Sometimes they are used as a way of saying something gently, in a veiled way (Obeng 1996). Other times, they are used to carry more weight in a discussion; a weak person is able to enlist the tradition of the ancestors to support his position. Proverbs can also be used to simply make a conversation/discussion livelier. In many parts of the world, the use of proverbs is a mark of being a good orator.

As with most oral cultures, proverbs fulfilled an important function in traditional communities. They could serve as a generalised code for establishing standards in ethical and moral behaviour. This was particularly so in traditional Maori communities, where many proverbs emerged which had widespread application, and became almost part of a moral code: *Awhato kai paenga* (The caterpillar eats round the edges of the leaves) likens a greedy person to a caterpillar and therefore denounces greed. Likewise, *Waiho mate tangata e mihi* (Let someone else acknowledge your virtues), gives guidance for individuals in the community (Moon, 1997). Some proverbs offered advice or reflections on adversities that people encountered: *He manga wai koia kia kore e whitikia* (It is a big river indeed that cannot be crossed) suggesting that if difficulties are made light of, they will disappear, while others simply gave practical advice: *He toa piki rakau he kai na te pakiaka* (A brave man who climbs trees is food for their roots). These few examples indicate a more significant theme relating to the association between proverbs and culture in traditional Maori society: as with *waiata* (songs/chants) and the rituals of *pohwiri* (welcoming), *tangi* (funeral) and others, culture was transmitted by formula. Again these statements are true with proverbs among the Akans as well. A proverb such as 'ε *aboa preko ano so a, ɔde didi nsuo ano na ɔnnfa didi ntwā nsuo* meaning if the pig has a big mouth, it uses it to eat around the river not to cross the river; this is just to suggest that the mouth is meant for eating and saying

things that are within one's domain not to cross his boundaries where he will get troubles with what he will say. Proverbs formed an integral part of this formulaic transmission of this culture. Proverbs can also be seen as a device for providing guidance for people's lives. The proverb "...summarises a situation, passes a judgement, or offers a course of action. It is a consolation in difficulties large and small and a guide when a choice must be made (Parker, 1978). It expresses morality suited to the common man. It is cautious and conservative in recommending the middle way....It is not a call to high adventure. In oral cultures, proverbs can also assume the function of a legal code and are easily used in passing judgement. Proverbs such as *He hono tangata e kore e motu; ka pa he taura waka e motu* (A human bond cannot be severed; unlike a canoe rope, it cannot be severed) convey almost legalistic overtones, and serve to guide community and individual behaviour.

2.2.5 The Significance of proverbs in Ghanaian Languages

Proverbs play a very important role in the everyday language of the Ghanaian. Our languages have beautiful proverbs which cover all aspects of our life. They are drawn from careful observations of social events, the lives of people and animals. Some are also drawn from experiences in occupations such as farming, fishing, hunting, and weaving. We have proverbs that talk about family and human relations, good and evil, poverty and riches, joy and sorrow.

When a speaker uses proverbs well, we say he really knows the language. Instead of a long speech, a good speaker sometimes uses proverbs or wise sayings to express the same ideas (Bokor, 2004). Some of the functions of proverbs are the following:

- (a) they adorn the speech and make it rich and beautiful,
- (b) they bring out the main point of the matter for clear understanding,

- (c) they make an otherwise long statement short,
- (d) they make listeners pay attention to what is being discussed,
- (e) they educate and teach morals.

There are different proverbs for different situations. The Akan usually say: '*Asem ba a, na abebu ba*' (important matters or occasions call for their own proverbs). For instance, a proverb that will be used when a lazy child is being advised will be different from when a hardworking child is being praised. Sometimes two or more proverbs may convey almost the same meaning. So although there are different proverbs for different situations, sometimes one proverb may be used for different situations. Most of the Ghanaian ideas about virtues are expressed in our proverbs; therefore, each proverb has a moral teaching. When a proverb is given, the listener tries to find out what lesson it is meant to teach. Most communities have proverbs which say, 'We speak to the wise man in proverbs, not in plain language.' This means that the wise man is intelligent enough to understand proverbial language (Bokor, 2004 and Afoakwa, 2010 (personal communication)).

Again, proverbs are used in the Ghanaian educational syllabus to educate both at the formal and the informal sector of our society.

2.2.6 Translation and interpretation of proverbs

The appealing aspect of proverbs is that they are down-to-earth and practical. However, that does not mean that they are easy to interpret. In fact, because a Proverb is so true-to-life, it is possible to find contradictions such as in the books of Proverbs 26:4-5 'Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Answer the fool according to his folly....' (Hahn, n.d.) Figures of

speech, vivid comparisons, alliterations, and other rhetorical devices are freely used in proverbs. In order to understand proverbs correctly, one must use imagination to enter the world created by the figures of speech. Trying to draw theoretical statements or philosophical logic from the proverbs misses the point. This means that proverbs need to be interpreted from the words of the imagery to the meaning of the imagery to similar meaning in our cultural context. Finally, Proverbs must be read as a collection as no single proverb can express all the truth about any given subject.

In recent times most written collections of proverbs appear in the local and English translation. This has certainly made the proverbs accessible to a larger readership, but by the same token, has had implications for the status of the proverbs themselves. Stylistic and cultural problems can emerge during translation and are often difficult to resolve. Since proverbs are necessarily part of traditional culture, they tend to characteristically use the ordinary manner of speech. If there is any such thing as an English proverbial vernacular, then the translation of proverbs into English has the potential to distort the manner of speech used in their original local or native version. The use of the compound relative pronoun, such as 'He who...' in proverbs like: *Nia Ogina ho ti ase, nia wada ewu* (He who stands, lives, he who sleeps, dies), uses a form largely limited in the English language to proverbs, and therefore are not part of everyday speech for speakers of English.

Traditional approaches to interpreting proverbs and other kinds of figurative language are based on the assumption that, literal language is a true reflection of thought and the external world, while figurative, or non-literal language distorts reality and aims at serving special rhetorical purposes. As Bock and Brewer (1980) observe, such approaches assume the existence of special mechanisms for figurative language comprehension, generally proceeding from the recognition of semantic variance at the literal

level. Bock and Brewer refer to those approaches as multiple process accounts of proverb comprehension in that, under these views, figurative meaning computation depends on and follows from the earlier, obligatory recognition of literal variance.

Temple and Honeck (1999), in turn, employ the term multistage model of figurative language understanding, in order to capture the primacy of literal meanings that, on the traditional view, must be developed before figurative meanings. The multistage model, as described by Temple and Honeck (1999) presupposes three stages in which the listener processes figurative expressions. Confronted with an utterance, the listener tries to infer the speaker's intended meaning, assuming, in accordance with Grice's cooperative principle that the speaker intends to convey truthful and relevant information. Accordingly, the first stage of the model presupposes the computation of the literal meaning of the utterance. In the second stage, the listener determines if this literal rendering is appropriate, taking into account various contextual constraints, such as for example, knowledge of the immediate situation or other relevant background knowledge. If the literal meaning is found to be appropriate, then further processing is stopped. If, however, it is determined to be defective, processing continues into stage three, in which the listener attempts to construct a new, figurative meaning for the utterance, consistent with the context provided.

In this instance, the researcher agrees with Gibbs and Beitel (1995) that in order to understand proverbs well, there is the need to identify three implications that follow from traditional approaches to proverb understanding. First of all, determination of a figurative meaning of any proverbial expression is obligatorily preceded by the analysis of the sentence's literal meaning. Secondly, comprehending proverbial expressions requires identification of a defective literal meaning before searching for a figurative meaning. If the literal meaning of a sentence makes sense in context, figurative meaning will

be ignored and not searched for. It is only the failure to provide the right context in which the literal meaning might make sense that triggers the listener to seek an alternative, figurative interpretation.

Finally, the traditional view demands that the derivation of figurative meanings requires additional work and special cognitive processes, by means of which the listener determines what the speaker might mean. This is in contrast to literal language comprehension, which, traditionally viewed, requires very little cognitive effort. Under the traditional view of proverb processing, according to which figurative language understanding necessitates the earlier literal analysis of proverbial expressions, these expressions should take additional effort to be processed compared with literal speech. Numerous recent reaction-time studies have repeatedly shown that figurative language utterances need not take longer to understand than literal utterances. But the researcher disagrees with these writers that in this modern world, it is very difficult for people to understand figurative languages because most of the native languages have been corrupted by the Western dialects, literary education and standard of living have also change. These have contributed to a rapid breakage in the chain of understanding figurative speech. But in the case of literal utterances, both the traditional and the contemporary listener pick what is said and the meaning at once.

2.2.7 Proverbs as a source of knowledge

According to Gyekye (1996), wisdom, like knowledge, is conceived in traditional African societies as having a practical as well as a theoretical dimension, but theoretical wisdom must have direct relevance to practical problems of life, to dealing with concrete human problems. The intellectual activities of the traditional African sages, or thinkers, are of course theoretical, even though the basis of their wisdom is in human experience. African maxims, which are generally the creations of the sages, are intended to convey truths that are profound and abstract.

Gyekye argues further that, wisdom, both practical and theoretical is, in the Akan culture, contrasted with foolishness or stupidity. The fool is a person who not only cannot comprehend or disentangle theoretical matters but also cannot apply his mind to dealing with practical issues, even issues concerning his own life. Regarding the theoretical uselessness of the fool, there is an Akan proverb that contrasts foolishness with theoretical wisdom: “It is only the fool to whom a proverb is explained.” Another Akan proverb says that the wise person, however, has the intellectual ability to grasp the profound meaning of a proverb to comprehend the implications of such pithy sayings: “*oba nyansafo ye bu mo be na wonka no asem*” The fool is constantly confused, unable to sort out the practical issues that affect his own well-being. He is careless with his life, not giving the required attention or concentration to what he wants to do.

The researcher agrees with Gyekye’s view that, it is evident to draw the inference that, in African societies, the influence of proverbs is pervasive. Wisdom is expressed in proverbs. A wise person must understand proverbs and be able to use these wise sayings to solve some of the overwhelming issues of life. Invariably, one of the intimidating tasks confronting humanity is how to perceive him or her self and how to conduct life as either male or female.

2.2.8 The progression of African Proverbs from the colonial era to the contemporary era.

It may be difficult to arrive at a universally accepted definition of proverbs, we know what it is, because proverbs are a universal phenomenon, (Fasika 2006). What differs from one culture to the other is the meaning that is attached to proverbs. Hence, “proverb must be analyzed in each of its unique social contexts”. In other words,

The proverbs of a community or nation is in a real sense an ethnography of the people which if systematized can give a penetrating picture of the people’s way of life, their philosophy, their

criticism of life, moral truths and social values” and in Africa, proverbs ‘have a different function and level of theoretical meaning that make them key components, as well as expressions of a culture’s viewpoints on a variety of important topics and problems.

From the above it has become evident that proverbs are an integral part of most African society and it forms an essential component of the sum total of the achievement of the society or the people. It is composed of ingredients that are imbedded in the culture of the society or the people. It is a revelation of the philosophy of the people and the moral values that the society holds on to. It is a system that educates a people and gives them a guide for their future life. It constantly serves as a reference point for their philosophy of life.

Proverbs in most African communities were in certain cases found to have lost its meaning and the value of their effects they had on the community. The knowledge of these proverbs was also found to have dwindled creating vacuum in the social and moral life of the people in the communities. The introduction of formal system of education, and new ways of living aided in the eradication of traditional African approach to living and these were factors that made irrelevant the use and preservation of traditional proverbs of the society, which formed a vital part of the moral and the social fibre of the society of Africans. Mushi, (1996) saw the dangers ahead of African proverbs due to the introduction of foreign cultures and expressions therefore partnered together to collect some proverbs from Chagga, a community in Tanzania. In this project, 100 proverbs and sayings were collected and explained as well documented. In the same way, some researchers in Ghana have also made collections of such proverbs but without explanation. Nkansa-Kyeramateng (1999) documented 547 proverbs.

Moon (1997) explained that proverbs and tradition seem to be inextricably connected. Age, among other factors, appears to give proverbs a heightened level of credibility and even respect. Often, the spoken delivery of a proverb is prefixed by phrases such as "There's an old saying...", "Our old

people used to say...", and so forth. Proverbs have a life that extends beyond the person using them. An example of the use of a proverb by parents to direct a child's actions indicates how this works in practice. A child knows that the proverb used by the scolding parent was not made up by that parent. Moon (1997) opined that it is a proverb from the cultural past whose voice speaks truth in traditional form. It is the "One", the "Elders", or the "They" in "They say", who direct. The parent is but the instrument through which the proverb speaks to the audience'. Thus, the success of a proverb performance must depend ultimately on the listener's ability to perceive that he or she is being addressed in traditional proverbial terms. If the listener is unable to reach that conclusion, then the performance of the proverb *as a proverb* has failed, even though the speaker's opinions and comments may have had the desired effect for these reasons. In the case of the twenty-first century, people hardly use proverbs in their daily utterances in the same way do not incorporate this act into the coming generation and this is causing the break down in linkage of the use of proverbs.

The researcher may suggest that cultural markers whose voice are powerful and contribute to the development of society should make this a burden on them and try to bring back this beautiful art. Collections of proverbs, in which the proverbs themselves are isolated, therefore risk being interpreted as self-contained units of meaning, rather than in their broader cultural matrix. The isolation of proverbs can also affect the perception of proverbs itself.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 What is representation?

Representation as defined by Childs, 1999 is to represent an artistic likeness or image by a statement or account made to influence opinion or action, an incidental or collateral statement of fact on the faith of which a contract is entered into dramatic production or performance.

The online Oxford English Dictionary (2011) also define representation as an image, likeness, or reproduction in some manner of a thing; A material image or figure; a reproduction in some material or tangible form; in later use, a drawing or painting. (of a person or thing); The action or fact of exhibiting in some visible image or form; The fact of expressing or denoting by means of a figure or symbol; symbolic action or exhibition.

Representations then can never really be 'natural' depictions of the orient. Instead, they are constructed images, images that need to be interrogated for their ideological content.

2.3.2 The role of visual representation in education

Fang (1996) supports the use of illustrations in children's literature, proposing that pictures provide benefits such as motivation, increased creativity, mental scaffolds, and aesthetic appreciation. In a study by Rubman and Waters, first graders demonstrated increased story recall when they were allowed to construct relevant pictures while listening to a story (2000). There is an advantage for a text/picture combination when compared to a text-only combination. There is a propose that a person has certain ways of gathering, concentrating, processing, internalizing and remembering new and difficult academic content (Dunn and Griggs, 2000). According to Dunn and Dunn (1993), the brain processes information in one of two ways globally or analytically. Individuals who process globally tend to be holistic learners, requiring information in a larger framework (the bigger picture). Analytic processors require a detailed, sequential, step-by-step delivery before they can truly grasp the

information being presented. In addition to a cognitive style, individual has a preference for the method of information delivery or perception (audio, visual, or tactile, or kinesthetic) (Dunn and Griggs, 2000).

The effective use of illustrations (pictures, charts, graphs, and diagrams) in instructional materials is an important facet of instructional message design. Fleming (1993) defines a message as a pattern of signs (words, pictures, gestures) produced for the purpose of modifying the psychomotor, cognitive, or affective behaviour of one or more persons. We define pictures as illustrations that have some resemblance to the entity that they stand for, whereas nonrepresentational graphics including charts, graphs, and diagrams are more abstract but do use spatial layout in a consequential way.

Some key advantages that is evident from the use of visual objects or representations in education as:

- Improving behaviour and motivation, creating greater independence and giving access to the curriculum and learning. It is often difficult to separate these strands as they are necessarily related. There are many cases, other than the descriptions here, where teachers have seen much greater motivation through the use of symbols.
- Symbols have also been shown to have a role in managing behaviour by creating more effective ways of communicating with people. Many are not able to understand or remember verbal instructions and information. Holding up a symbol card to reinforce a spoken instruction or request, can help a student fully understand what behaviour is required.
- Symbols can give children and individuals a voice to express themselves when words fail them.
- By illustrating words, symbols can help a people to recall information. This is particularly true for those students who operate more visually and whose visual memory may help to recall

facts. It is also true that symbols can help to remind individuals of a concept. The symbol itself cannot teach the concept, but once a concept has been understood, symbols can reinforce that understanding and help make the comprehension more permanent.

- Visual representation is used purposefully to include a wide range of visual meaning-making devices and symbols. Although visual representations are considered important as meaning-making devices across theoretical constructs, little has been done to examine their role in the assessment and evaluation of learning in all areas of the curriculum (Bustle, 2004).

Symbols are pictorials that represent knowledge in other forms. Symbols therefore force the mind to connect the pictorial to the relevant represented knowledge. As such, the mind in constant search for meaning constantly and actively explores, processes, and analyzes symbolic content. This increases comprehension rates and retention of information.

Asare 2009 was worried about the neglect of the culture of Ghanaians left behind in the educational curriculum. He called on authorities to include these beautiful values into the educational reform programme in order to help children to learn about the cultures of the land. Students should be exposed to some of the Akan non-verbal traditions and practices, their significance and why the youth should learn to enable them become creative for rapid development. Many of the drums used by the Akan tradition had special role that included entertainment and advice to the people through the sounds they produced. An example as the *Fontomfrom* which is a collection of different drums urged the Akan society to be united always because where there is unity there is progress. Visual forms of communication like tribal marks, emblems of clans and the Adinkra symbols in the Akan culture also transmitted special sacred messages and were forms of identification. Giving an examples of the signs

such as the chameleon and a hand holding an egg signified that in life there are limits to human possibility and further advised politicians that power is fragile like an egg and need to be handled with utmost care, Adinkra symbol called the ladder of death also teaches people to support one another in times of adversity (Asare, 2009).

2.3.3 What is Pictorial Representation?

Bantinaki (2004) said that pictorial art can have cognitive value, that it can enhance our understanding of the world and of our own selves, has had many advocates in art theory and philosophical aesthetics alike. It has also been argued, however, that the power of pictorial representation to convey or enhance knowledge, in particular knowledge with moral content. Pictorial representation can be seen to exploit knowledge of the world and of the system of representation itself, shared within the generating culture. Given that it is generally not possible for an artist to depict all that there is to depict about her chosen subject, artists commonly rely on audiences to draw on their knowledge and experience and, thereby, fill-in those aspects of pictorial content that are not being given explicitly. Thus, to be rightly appreciated, pictures often have to be seen under the light of information that the artist had reasons to regard as shared knowledge among the anticipated audience. These can be seen clearly in the Adinkra symbols of the Asantes. All of these symbols originated from proverbs such as *'akokɔ nan tia ban a enkum ba'* translated in English as the hen steps on the chicks but does not kill it, *'se wo werefi na wosan kɔfa a yennkyi'* also in English it is not a taboo to return to take back what you forgot, these are illustrated into pictures and it made it easy for identification and remembrance. In the case of non-narrative pictures, as I shall illustrate, this interpretive strategy allows

pictorial content and created forms of interpretation to sayings of a traditional system to expand beyond appearances, thus enabling moral function.

2.3.4 What are symbols and their uses?

When we communicate, we often forget that there is more to it than words. There is a body language that says more than the words say. There are numerous types of symbols that surround us, powerfully moving us into involuntary behaviours. Symbols are communications that have specific meaning. Usually visual, symbols act as communication short-cuts that convey one or more messages that have been previously learned by both the sender and the recipient. Symbols have been used since time immemorial to communicate ideas and convey deeper meanings. Symbols may be universally recognized (by a group of people) or personally significant (to an individual). Symbols have the ability to be used for practical purposes or by abstract means. One can use the following as symbols to represent something else; sign, sound, emblem, objects, picture, image etc. Symbols may be used as an identifier, a language of concepts, an iconic representation, express intangible truths, carry particular meanings, express something unknown, simply to represent something else, pass on stories from generation to generation, convey a deeper meaning than the words themselves and as a source of connection between members in a group Lipinski (2001).

Many people regret the fact that, besides Egypt, the rest of Africa has not invented an alphabetic system of writing, they overlook the fact that Africans have developed and were using both visual and oral "picture words" for a considerable time to express, convey and store their

thoughts, emotions and attitudes. All over Africa, visual images and ordinary objects are used *symbolically* to communicate knowledge, feelings and values. Examples can be made mention of the Adinkra symbols of the Asantes, the Vai syllabary of the Vai people of Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Nsibidi writings of the Ejagham people of Nigeria. These symbols are embedded into works of art, such as appliqué, paintings, leather and textiles works to encode the history of their lives. (Wahlman 1993 and Dzobo 2009). Symbols play such an important role in the African conception of reality, a sound understanding of African patterns of thought and feeling requires an appreciation of the nature and function of symbolism as a medium of communication in African culture.

A symbol serve as a powerful instrument of thought and abstract idea that vehicle for the conception of an object, enabling us to conceive or form a view of an object. Symbols help in giving clear information about the environment and about intentions and feelings of people, and bring out the appropriate reactions as well as hide and protect some important secrets as well. In the same way as they give information, when they are not properly used, they may turn to misinform the individual and can lead one to a serious danger.

There are two types of symbols, the natural and artificial or man-made symbols that can be seen around the environment. *Some examples of the natural symbols are names of animal plants human beings, fire etc. The elephant is considered the biggest animal in the forest so at the mention of an elephant, the idea of greatness and largeness comes into mind, also the lion is known as the king of the jangle so when one hears of the lion, immediately there is a thought of a king or greatness.*

The Ghanaian culture is predominantly influenced by symbolisms. In every situation and cycle of our lives, there is a level where we make use of symbols. During the birth and naming ceremonies, initiation rites and marriages as well as funerals, there are various symbols that accompany such occasions examples can be the types of cloth and designs that we put on, the choice of words and even the artificial symbols that we create to commemorate the event. Symbolisms in Ghana until recently have had no written documentation because they are assumed to be part of the people's oral tradition (Glover 2004). In Ghana and African as a whole, we produce artificial objects and actions and connect them with important ones that serve as their meanings. For examples in the stool for the Akan traditional council system and the skin for the Northern sectors; the golden stool is the symbol of the highest authority and kingship and so it is related to the Asante king. At the mention of the golden stool, then there is a reflection of the ruling king and his authority as also the leopard's skin or lion skin are also the highest of all the skins in the North. The Adinkra symbols of the Ashanti, the Agama symbols of the Ewes, the canon symbols of both the Gas and the Fanti are all examples of artificial symbols that are created by a group of people and thus their meanings are understood by these people. It may be that a common meaning and interpretation may run through some of these symbols as well as there may be contradictions in the meanings of the same symbol but to different groups of people, Dzobo (2009). Although the use of these symbols may be somewhat confusing in the process of information delivery, the indigenous peoples of Africa overcame these challenges and this made the foreigners appreciate their acquisition of knowledge and values of the indigenous symbols. Symbols can be identified into two main types.

Colours are also used arbitrarily to mean many different things. Thus in the indigenous Ghanaian culture *brown, red and black* are associated colours for mourning while the white is for jubilation

and the green and blue are for labour activities, therefore these clothes are customarily worn to indicate the mood or situation at hand.

Similar artificial symbols abound in other African cultures. They do not form parts of conditions which they naturally signify, but are used randomly by the culture to impart specifically agreed-upon information. There is no limit to what such symbol may mean. A symbol can be taken or designed to mean so many things and these may be that the group of people who uses them are aware of their meanings and their interpretations. Symbols may be very important or have a different meaning to others; such as 'a stick-up thumb' in Ghana is an insulting and vulgar sign, but in America it is used as a way of asking for a lift. Even within the same Ghanaian culture the left hand is ritually an unclean sign; but because it is not used normally to do evil as the right hand sometimes is, it has also become a sign of peace among the Ewe of Ghana.

Glover (1994) also states that Adinkra symbols are visual symbols in abstract expressions of proverbs which traditionally serve to warn, encourage and counsel people. Adinkra motifs are said to be carriers of specific message. As stated by Fosu (1993), these messages may be expressed in philosophical, allegorical or satirically to depict religious, social or political concerns as well as stimulate reflection on issues in relation to beauty or morality. The Adinkra symbols are literary and non verbal illustrations of proverbs, parables or wise sayings. Below are some examples of indigenous African symbols and the conceptions they evoke in the mind:

1. *The elephant*: symbol of power and kingship
2. *The lion*: symbol of ferocity, danger and royalty
3. *Woman*: symbol of peace, productivity, creativity, life and growth

4. *Rugged Triangle*: symbol of stability and inner repose; true life is secure, stable and lasting or has safe and stable foundations; life that has a solid basis (see figure 1).

5. *The ram and its horns*: symbol of pacific disposition combined with strength and power.

Some symbols and their proverbial sayings.



Fig. 1. *Funtunfunefu*

Symbol of unity in diversity, democracy, and unity of purpose

The symbol is also referred to as *odenkyem mmemu* - Siamese twin crocodiles joined at the stomach.

From the proverb: *Funtumfunafu, denkyemfunafu, won afuru bomu nso wodidi a na wɔrefom efiri se aduane ne de ye di no mene twitwi mu.*

Literal translation: Two headed crocodiles fight over food that goes to a common stomach because each relishes the food in its throat.

This symbol stresses the oneness of humanity in spite of cultural diversity. It also emphasizes the need for unity in the family or state. Members should not quarrel or fight for selfish interests, for what each

gains is for the benefit of all. It also emphasizes the reality of individuality in relation to one's membership in a society. Much as the community interests are to be pursued for the common good, individual rights, interests, passions and responsibilities cannot and must not be trampled on.

This symbol, in essence, depicts the Akan notions about the inherent difficulties of reconciling individual and group interests in a democratic system.

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Fig. 2. *Tumi Te Se Kosua* - Power Is Like an Egg

Symbol of the delicacy of political power, fragility of democracy, and restraint

From the saying: *Tumi te se kosua, woso mu den a, epae; na se woanso mu yie nso a, efiri wo nsa bɔ famu ma epae.*

Literal translation: Power is as fragile as an egg, when held too tightly it might break; if it is held too loosely, it might fall and break.

The symbol points out the fragile nature of political power. As a symbol of democracy, it suggests the virtue of sharing political power. Power held in one hand is not safe. Power wielded by a chief is not absolute, nor is it expected to lead to tyranny. A chief is expected to exercise the power he wields cautiously and judiciously, or else he incurs the wrath of his subjects.



Fig. 3. *Ohene Tuo* - King's Gun

Symbol of adaptation, authority, power, strength, protection, defence, and greatness

From the proverb: *Tuo nya otiafoɔa, na odi abaninsem.*

Literal translation: It is only when a gun has a man to cock it that it performs warlike deeds. The gun has been incorporated in Akan ceremonies such as the swearing of the king-elect into office and gun salute at funerals. In using the gun as part of the king-elect's swearing-in ceremony, it gives him the opportunity to demonstrate he is capable of carrying out his role as the commander-in-chief of the **asafa**. He fires the gun to demonstrate that he is capable of ensuring national defence and security during his rule (Dzobo 2009).

The Reiki does also have three types of symbols that are being used in their worship and other activities to enhance their lives. These symbols are considered holy and persist in the old Reiki tradition that they must be kept secret. The symbols should only be available to those who have been initiated at the Reiki 2 level. These are: the Power symbol (Choku Rei), the Mental/Emotional symbol (Sei He Ki) and the Distance symbol (Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen). The power symbol can be used to increase the power of Reiki. It can also be used for protection. The symbol can be used any time during a treatment but it is especially effective if it is used in the beginning of a session to empower the Reiki energy or when used at the end of a session to close the session and seal off the Reiki energies. The horizontal line represents the Reiki

source. The vertical line symbolizes the energy flow, and the spiral that touches the middle line seven times represents the seven chakras (Lipinski, 2001).



The Sei He Ki has a general meaning of: 'God and man become one'. The Mental/Emotional symbol brings together the 'brain and the body'. It helps people to bring to the surface and release the mental/emotional causes of their problems. This symbol can be used to help with emotional and mental healing. It balances the left and right side of the brain and gives peace and harmony. It is also very effective on relationship problems. The Sei He Ki symbol can also be used on diverse problems like nervousness, fear, depression, anger, sadness etc. The left part of the symbol represents Yang and our left side of the brain (logic, structure and linear thinking etc.) The right side of the symbol represents Yin and our right side of the brain (fantasy, feelings, intuition etc.) When you are facing another person and draw the symbol the left side of the symbol, i.e. the Yang part of the symbol ends up on the receiver's right side of the brain and the Yin part on the left side thereby helping to balance the two sides.



Fig. 5 Sei he ki

The Reiki Distance Healing symbol – Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen

The symbol has a general meaning of: 'No past, no present, no future' or it can have the meaning of 'The Buddha in me contacts the Buddha in you'. The form of the Distance symbols is complex and probably this is the symbol with most variations. It is a Japanese Kanji and represents the human body



Fig. 6 Hon sha ze shō nen

Agbo (2006) explained that proverb can be variously defined and that proverbs are composed with the skill of careful observation and reflection on the ordinary events of life. Traditional symbols in Ghanaian art are primarily translation of thought and ideas, expressing in visual representations the values and beliefs of the people among whom they occur. He explained that the evolution of symbols dates back to the prehistoric period and Ghana, the most prominent is the Adinkra Symbols. In Ghana symbolism has in the past been a way of documenting the philosophy of the society. These symbols served as educative materials that part on information to viewers who at a glance are reminded of the norms of the society and the values of life. Today these works although are, to some extent, being produced in the craft villages in Ashanti, Volta and some areas in Ghana proper symbolic documentation and interpretation is not done to keep alive the ingenuity of the Ghanaian symbols.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the research design, population of study with reference to sampling, data collecting instruments as well as data collecting procedures used in the study.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher employed qualitative research methodology as the main method of gathering data. The researcher used descriptive, visual research method and arts based research of qualitative research to collect and analyse data for this work.

3.2.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is the study of symbolic discourse that consists of the study of texts and conversations. Qualitative research can also be referred to as the study of the interpretive principles that people use to make sense in their symbolic activities. Qualitative research can also be said as the study of contextual principles, such as the roles of the participants, the physical setting, and a set of situational events that guide the interpretation of discourse (Ting-Toomey, 1984). Qualitative research methods were developed to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena. Such methods are action research, case study research and ethnography.

Qualitative research seeks out the 'why' of its topic through the analysis of unstructured information – things such as interview transcripts, emails, notes, feedback forms, photos and videos. It does not just rely on statistics or numbers, which are the domain of quantitative researchers.

Qualitative research shares the theoretical assumptions of the interpretative model, which is based on the notion that social reality is created and sustained through the subjective experience of people involved in communication (Morgan, 1980). Qualitative researchers are concerned in their research with attempting to accurately describe, decode, and interpret the meanings of phenomena occurring in their normal social contexts (Fryer, 1991). These include four main types of inquiry; ethnography and microethnography, phenomenology, educational criticism, case study and social critical theory. Zimmerman and La Pierre (1997) defined ethnography as both process and product, a picture of group of people's way of life. Ethnography is an inquiry carried out by a person from a point of view based on experience and knowledge of prior research. They continued to define microethnography as the study of a smaller aspect of everyday reality of a group of people; a process of data collections, content analysis and comparative analysis of life situations for the purpose of formulating insights.

3.2.1.1 Advantages of Qualitative Research to the researcher

The researcher used qualitative research method in order to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles as attached to proverbs and symbols and how these values really contribute to the livelihood of the Asante people and at the same way to curb any bias and personal emotions. By the help of the qualitative method, any information gathered was treated independently and reconsidered for fairness. Descriptive and arts-based method of qualitative method were selected to provide a systematic approach in generating new symbols for the craft industries and the African studies of Ghana. Qualitative research answers questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participant point of view (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). Willie (1978) also asserts that, in qualitative studies, the logic of inference is one of directly observed, resulting in new insight and reclassification, rather than strict numerical comparison and classifications'

Qualitative research was selected because it gave the researcher a systematic process of describing, analyzing and interpreting the proverbs and the symbols that were generated, allowing the researcher the flexibility to probe initial participant responses and also provided information about the human side of an issue – such as the behaviours, beliefs, opinions of the indigenes and the craftsmen about the sacredness of the old symbols, nature of the already existed symbols and emotions of foreigners and tourists about the over used of and miss interpretation of the conventional symbols.

- the qualitative method was also used to explore the avenue of creating ideas from verbal situations that has not been fully studied as well as using qualitative methods to seek a deeper truth.

The goal of qualitative research is to develop an understanding of a social or human problem from multiple perspectives; qualitative research was employed to find the answer to questions which began with why? how? in what way? Such as why are the youth of today not conversant with proverbs, how can the crafts industries be made to adopt to the use of new designs in the production of art?.

3.2.2 Descriptive Research

According to J. W. Best (1991), descriptive research can be either quantitative or qualitative. It can involve collections of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form, such as scores on a test or the number of times a person chooses to use a-certain feature of a multimedia program, or it can describe categories of information such as gender or patterns of interaction when using technology in a group situation but for the purpose of this thesis, the descriptive method of qualitative method was employed. Descriptive research can take the form of case study, ethnographic studies and it exposes fact or exploratory observation studies, among others. The term descriptive research refers to the type of research question,

design, and data analysis that will be applied to a given topic. Descriptive statistics tell what is, while inferential statistics try to determine cause and effect, it involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Glass and Hopkins, 1984).

Descriptive studies, primarily concerned with finding out "what is," might be applied to investigate the following questions and often uses visual aids such as graphs and charts to aid the reader in understanding the data distribution. Because the human mind cannot extract the full import of a large mass of raw data, descriptive statistics are very important in reducing the data to manageable form. When in-depth, narrative descriptions of small numbers of cases are involved, the research uses description as a tool to organize data into patterns that emerge during analysis. Those patterns aid the mind in comprehending a qualitative study and its implications (Borg and Gall, 1989).

Descriptive research is unique in the number of variables employed. Like other types of research, descriptive research can include multiple variables for analysis, yet unlike other methods, it requires only one variable. Three main purposes of research are to describe, explain, and validate findings. Description emerges following creative exploration, and serves to organize the findings in order to fit them with explanations, and then test or validate those explanations (Krathwohl, 1993).

3.2.2.1 Importance of descriptive research method

The descriptive method brought to bare knowledge that the researcher did not otherwise notice or even encounter. Because descriptive research spans both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, it brought the ability to describe these proverbs into details and explained the created symbols in greater

depth as needed, this also helped to focus on various elements of different research techniques. The descriptive studies helped to yield rich data that led to important recommendations. Descriptive research also on the other hand, described data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied and therefore answers the questions who, what, where, when and how (Wallen and McGraw, 1994). The idea of selecting descriptive research method was that, the procedures employed for creating the symbols and the vividly explanations of the proverbs needed to be described chronologically. The researcher therefore recorded, described, analyzed and interpreted the findings, drew conclusions and came up with recommendations.

3.2.3 Visual research

Qualitative research focuses most readily on spoken and written words. This preoccupation with the complexity of language was evoked by Alan Peshkin, who described the task of the qualitative researcher as 'making words fly.' Similarly, visual research focuses on non-linguistic images, Pink 2006. Pictures may be used as a source of data, as a method of data analysis, and as a means of data representation. There are multiple research methodologies for conceptualizing such work. There is a field of methodological approaches in which visual in qualitative research can be used. At one side of the field which may be called **objective**, is the use of images as a form of data collection. At this point, photographic images, or ethnographic films, considered to be objective renderings of reality. Analysis of these images, through language, reveals layers of semiotic meanings. At the other end of the field, which may be called **generative**, are images that are created by the researcher through the process of data collection and analysis (Sullivan, 2005). These images may be autonomous and require no further explication through language. The midpoint could be called **formative**, which applies strategies for reading hidden images to lived experience.

For the purpose of this thesis, the researcher focuses on the generative approach of visual research to analyse the data collected. Visual research can be conducted through a variety of visual media, including painting, sculpture, and performance art, drawing, illustrating and digital art. Art making may include the researcher and/or research participants maintaining visual articles that record constructed reflective visual images rather than simply reflective words. Sullivan (2005) argued that the act of creating a work of art can be research by engaging three domains of significance: empirical, interpretive point of view, and critical. In the empirical domain, the work of art is assessed by its correspondence to an external reality that can be referenced and compared. In the interpretive domain, work is assessed by its ability to convey personal meaning to both the creator and the viewer.

Visual research naturally explores the implications of creating, documenting, and analyzing data. Visual research reminds us that data are not found; rather, they are constructed. The researcher employed visual research in order to have

- Flexibility to follow unexpected ideas during research and explore processes effectively,
- Understanding to appropriate factors in the social and cultural phenomena of the study area,
- Ability to study and create new symbol and give their social meanings and values,
- To increase the opportunities for the craft industries and academic field, for more relevance and further researches. The researcher uses an inductive mode, letting the data speak while the researcher tries to correct to avoid bias.

The visual research makes use of the arts based method in analyzing data.

3.2.4 Arts based Research

Art-based research is an aspect of visual research that can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process, the making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts, as a primary

way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they are involved in the studies (McNiff, 2004).

Art, as Aristotle said is a way of knowing. It is *poetries*, knowing by making, as contrasted with *theories*, knowing by observing, and *practice*, knowing by taking action. To base our research in the arts means to engage the imagination in the forming of our concepts and in the carrying-out of the project itself. Not only may the initial inspiration come into an encounter with an image, but the conduct of research should itself be imaginative. There is faith that the imagination can inform us, that art is not non-cognitive but that it binds together both feeling and form in a way that can reveal truth.

Art based research make use of element of design, these elements (which vary according to art form) are important for their usefulness in recasting the contents of experience into forms with the potential for challenging beliefs and values (Barone, 2001 p.26).

This research method is particularly noteworthy in that it ensures that both the modes of inquiry and the forms of dissemination include an action-oriented interactive approach.

3.2.4.1 Importance of arts based research method to the research

1. *Reflexivity*: By its very natural, artistic self-expression taps into and reveals aspects of the self and puts the researcher in closer touch with how she really feel and look and act, leading, potentially, to a deepening of the self-study. Such acts as drawings of or by the researcher. Therefore the researcher was able to exploit her imaginative and creativity power as shown throughout the creation of the symbols.
2. *Can be used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words*: Eisner (1995) views the aesthetic as natural to our need to make sense of experience, and argues that visual forms

afford us an “all-at-once-ness” that reveals what would be hard to grasp through language and numbers alone. By the use of this method, the researcher was able access put forward what will be difficult to explain into codes for easy identification.

3. *Makes the ordinary seem extraordinary—Provokes, innovates, and breaks through common resistance, forcing us to consider new ways of seeing or doing things:* These symbols come as a relief to Ghanaian artisans who have difficulties in creating new symbols to supplement the existing ones. These also give the idea that more research can be done into such area to help the society.
4. *Can be more accessible than most forms of academic discourse:* The researcher agrees with Williams & Bendelow (1998) that artistic forms of representations provide a refreshing and necessary challenge to prevailing modes of academic discussion. The use of widely-shared cultural codes and popular images make some visual expressions far more accessible than the usual academic language. Generating of these new symbols is a demonstration that what was once known to the artist/researcher is now common to all to know and they are no more a private symbols.

The researcher adopted the concept and theory of the arts based research and, in the illustration process as these proverbs were created from the interpretation, consideration and visualizing the words into pictures or symbols for easy identification and remembrance by all people.

3.3 Library Research Activities

Library research forms an essential part of the study. These are some of the libraries that the researcher made use of, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Libraries, the Ashanti library

and Centre for Cultural Studies Library, both in Kumasi and Cape Coast. The researcher also made use of journals online and online libraries for more information toward this research.

3.4 Population for the study

The scientific method of population identification was adopted in this thesis and the population is homogenous. This is that all the resource persons had ample knowledge in proverbs and symbolism.

3.4.1 Target Population

In this study the researcher targeted proverbs from all the Akan language in Ghana. There are four dialects of the Akan language namely Asante Twi, Fante Twi, Akyem Twi, and Akuapem Twi that are written and formally recognized and studied in the Ghanaian school's curriculum.

3.4.2 Accessible population

The accessible population is the quantity or size or a portion of an entire aggregation of items which are capable of being reached for the research purposes. The Asante community was selected as the accessible population. The selection was based on the fact that the Asante population is larger and their proverbs run through the other three groups. The researcher interviewed four (4) traditional chiefs, eight(8) weavers, twenty (20) students, five (5) carvers and three (3) educationists.

3.4.3 Sampling techniques

A sample is done when information is collected from a fraction of a population of study. For the purpose of the research, the sampling group was taken out of the accessible group.

After identifying the population, convenience sampling was employed to gather the information because the researcher has numerous proverbs from the Asante Twi dialect but due to time and facility, just the few needed once were selected to execute this thesis. Forty proverbs were selected in all from the Asante Twi dialect and used to accomplish the thesis. The proverbs were grouped under, at least, five categories as identified in the literature review and may not be in any order of quantity but as available to the researcher.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

Data was collected for the work through observation of existing work of art such as photographs, sketches, drawing and illustrations of existing and non existing records anecdotal records, interview and observation were used in collecting data at the traditional court at the Manhyia palace, Bonwire, Adanwomaso craft village and other resourced persons.

3.5.1 Observation

Observation in philosophical terms is the process of filtering sensory information through the thought process. Input is received by hearing, sight, smell, taste, or touch and then analysed through either rational or irrational thought. With the passage of time, impressions stored in the consciousness about many related observations, together with the resulting relationships and consequences, permit the individual to build or construct about the moral implications of behaviour.

The defining characteristic of observation is that it involves drawing conclusions, as well as building personal views about how to handle similar situations in the future, rather than simply

registering that something has happened. However, observation does not necessarily imply drawing conclusions and building personal views instead of the accumulation of knowledge.

The researchers observed and studied the philosophy behind the creation of the *Adinkra* symbols of the Akan, the *agama* symbols of the Ewe, the canon symbols of the Ga traditional area and other artificial symbols. The linguist stuffs, umbrella top emblems, stools and the kente motifs were also considered for this purpose as well as visual interpretation of these proverbs, the researcher observed the use of proverbs and symbols of different kinds at various occasions. The researcher also visited customary marriage ceremony, and witnessed the *Akwasidae* festival of the Asante traditional area in order to learn more of the tradition and the appropriate use of proverbs in such situation. This helped the researcher to accumulate ample knowledge about symbols and their interpretations and their uses in our daily activities.

3.5.2 Anecdotal records

The researcher also observed candidates during proverb competitions at Garden City Radio and Kumasi Cultural Centre while they competed on proverbs and a number of these proverbs were recorded, analysed and used.

3.5.3 The Interview

Interview is defined as the questioning of a person (or a conversation in which information is elicited); often conducted by journalists. Frey and Oishi (1995:01) define it as a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent). This is done to gain information on a particular topic or a particular area to be researched.

The researcher interviewed a group of people who participated in proverbs competition on Garden City Radio for some proverbs and their general view about these proverbs. A renowned educationist and a member of the Bonwire weavers council, Mr. Osei- Bonsu Sarfo Kantanka, was interviewed and, Mr. Anane Afoakwa, a tutor at Wesley College of Education in charge of Akan language and the deputy chief examiner for Ghanaian languages for both BECE AND WAEC was contacted and interviewed as well as some royals were also interviewed for this thesis. Eric Kwarteng, secretary of the Bonwire Weavers Association, was also interviewed. The researcher used both structured and unstructured interviews in collecting data needed for the study from respondents. A linguist carver who carved for the *Asantehemaa* (queen mother) was also consulted for the symbols that he carves and the proverbial sayings that accomplish them, when they are used and their effect on the time of use.

In carrying on the interview, an interview guide was made. The purpose of the guide was to direct the researcher get access to the needed information for the study.

The researcher made use of the two main types of interview structures. They can be either structured (closed interview style) or unstructured (open-ended interview style). Open-ended or unstructured interviews are defined by Nichols (1991:131) as an informal interview, not structured by a standard list of questions.

For convenience, the researcher chose to use both the structured and unstructured interviews in order not to deviate from the needed information and at the same time to give room for respondents to express themselves and feel free of tension. By this, other information was tapped unaware. In the unstructured interviews, the researcher just had normal conversation with respondents and jotted down summarized information deduced off the scene of conversation. Because it was not made formal, the respondents talked freely and contributed with ease. This method was used when talking to people with little or no education background because they get scared with book and pen. With the structured interviews, the researcher prepared interview guide plan for specific information from respondents. In

all the interviews and observation made, the researcher had tape recorder for audio only, digital camera for still pictures and surveillance camera in hide to pick both audio and video. These instruments served as backup of information for the research.

Interviews were conducted in English and Twi and later transcribed the Twi into English for analysis.

3.5.4 Advantages of the Interview

Interviews are achieved in the form of questioning of a person (or a conversation in which information is elicited. The purpose and benefits achieved in interviews are that, when the respondent lacks reading skills to answer a questionnaire, the researcher equally got the needed answers from the respondent. The interview also helped the researcher to untangle complex topics and giving the respondent the freedom to express himself easily. In the interview process, the researcher was able probe deeper into a response given by the interviewees while the interviews produce a higher response rate when done as expected.

The interview allowed questioning to be guided as the researcher wanted it and clarified points that needed to be made clearer much more easily than in something like a mailed questionnaire.

The researcher was able to pick up nonverbal clues from the respondent. Any discomfort, stress and problems of the respondent were detected through frowns, nervous tapping and other body language, unconsciously exhibited by anyone.

This would have been impossible to detect in a telephone interview or through questionnaire.

3.5. 5 Validation of Interview Guide

For the researcher to ensure that the prepared interview questions were free from errors the researcher made other researchers vet the questionnaires, secondly to his colleagues and finally submitted to the

supervisor for vetting and final corrections were made. The interview guide served as a pattern of questions set by the interviewee to achieve expected results from conducting an interview. In conducting the interview, the researcher drafted interview questions to serve as an interview guide during the interview period. Interview guides were prepared by considering the following issues:

- Can the questions be easily understood?
- Are the questions biased?
- Will interviewees be willing to provide the information needed?
- Are the questions applicable to all interviewees?
- Do the questions allow interviewees to offer their opinions/expand on basic answers?
- Will the questions be straight forward to analyse?

3.6 Types of Data

3.6.1 Primary data

The primary data were collected from interactions with respondents and their environment. The data comprise of all the interviews, discussions, direct personal observation, sketches and the personal communications.

3.6.2 Secondary Data

The secondary data comprised of the entire literary materials sought, cited and used from books, articles and published unpublished thesis, internet, journals, magazines and others that were related to this study.

3.7 Administration of Instruments

The researcher prepared interview guides and observation check list to collect data. The interview guides were directed to three different groups, namely the kente weavers at Bonwire and Adanwomaso, to some carvers at Ahwia and Asante Newtown and a sub- chief and an elder person at the Manhyia Palace as well as other resource persons who were available to the researcher. The researcher focused on these centers because the research is to generate new and more symbols for the craft industry of Ghana and also in order to create dynamism and creativity in the African artefact on the market, while at the same time it will serve as an educative material for art education in our societies.

The interview guide for the weavers and carvers were made up of nine questions and the others contained seven questions in all.

The researcher also listed five observational check list during observation a traditional marriage ceremony and also at the Manhyia Palace during an arbitration.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher, after having prepared the data collection instruments, visited the various sites to see the respondents and introduced herself, the proposed project and the information needed to accomplish the work. The researcher then officially booked suitable appointment dates with the respondent. The researcher made a working schedule to guide the success of the work.

The researcher adopted the face-to-face structured and unstructured interview to collect data. There were three types of interview guide used for three groups of people involved in this work. The first group was people from Bonwire weaving centre and the neighbouring township that involved in waving kente, these people make use of proverbs a lot in naming the cloth and designs as well as constant use of adinkra symbols in production. The second group is wood carvers at Awhia and linguist staff carver at

Asante New Town and the third group were selected elders and kinsmen of the Manhyia palace as well as Twi tutor and Chief examiner at Wesley College of Education.

The interviews were conducted mainly in the Twi language since most of the people are used to proverbs in Twi and they express themselves well in Twi. All interviews conducted were tape-recorded, and transcribed into English. The interview guide for the Bonwire group was made up of nine (9) questions with some minor questions asked in the process of interviewing. The carvers group had eight (8) questions and the third group who are the selected elders and kinsmen of manhyia had nine (9) questions to consider.

The work started with the weavers at Bonwire and Adanwomaso respectively. The researcher interacted with the secretary and vice president of the weavers' council at Bonwire and individual weavers at Adanwomaso any information gathered were recorded and later on transcribed.

The next point of contact was Awhia carving sheds and a linguist staff carver at Asante New Town and then to the individual respondents.

3.9 Data Analysis Plan

After getting the needed proverbs, the researcher assembled these proverbs under some developed headings and then analysed them individually, bringing out possible ideas from each statement and then interpreted them in the form of illustrations. The researcher drew conclusions and recommendations on the entire data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

The study explores and generates new symbols to support the old existing symbols in Akan tradition. This chapter presents the data that were gathered during observation and interviews. The data collected from the observation and interviews are analysed and explained.

The use of proverbs was very common in Ghanaian traditional society a few decades ago. The art made the local language beautiful, rich in value and easy to appreciate. In recent times, the art is seen as outmoded and antiquated. This modern trend has made speeches unduly raw and lengthy. Ghanaians have developed a high taste for Western canons and it is endangering the Ghanaian traditional speech and symbol systems. These factors have led to the situation where the use of proverbs and their accompanying symbols are limited to our traditional homes.

The few conventional proverbs and symbols that have existed from antiquity and have survived are also fading out because of lack of documentation and misinterpretation and sometimes the attachment of negative spiritual beliefs and taboos to these symbols. Besides, even though these traditional symbols are still being used by artists and craftsmen, there is little or no effort to create new ones to unburden the old, over-used ones.

In order to curb the above mentioned trend, the researcher worked at three objectives in this thesis:

- To identify and document forty Akan proverbs,
- Illustrate these proverbs with visual symbols and
- To produce demonstrative design samples in textiles, wood carving and ceramics with the

created symbols.

These will be recommended for use in the craft industry and the educational sector.

These created symbols, emulating the Ghanaian symbols of our heritage, are presented in black –and – white silhouette. The researcher adopted this format to conform to the philosophy of African traditional art. This is where emphasis is based on:

- Boldness and flatness of colour and
- Simplicity of form

Many of the symbols are in abstract rather than realistic format. Sometimes animals are used to represent the ideas even though the sayings may refer to human beings. Again, the researcher discussed the socio-cultural values of these proverbs under each proverbial saying as depicted as when to use them.

The remaining pages of this chapter document the sayings and accompanying symbols. In naming the figures, the researcher gave a shorter version or part of the proverbs as the names of the symbols just as it is normally done with other *Adinkra* symbols such as *funtunfunefu* to represent *funtufunefu*, *denkyemfunefu*, *won efunu bom nso woredidi a na woreko*.

4.1 The philosophical and socio-cultural values of some Akan proverbs

1. **Twɛ:** *Aboa k]k]sakyi kasa kyere obonukyerefo a,]te no abɛbuo mu.*

English: If the vulture speaks to the hyena, he understands it in euphemisms.

Literal meaning: The hyena and the vulture communicate with each other in proverbs.

Philosophical meaning: The use of indirect expressions is to be preferred over the use of direct expressions in certain diplomatic situations.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used to illustrate a situation where, due to the presence of a third party who must not know what is at stake, an issue is discussed in insinuations, innuendoes and euphemisms.



Figure 1: *Aboa k[jk]sakyi kasa kyere abonukyerefo a...*

The idea is composed of a *vulture* and a *hyena* with both heads facing each other and talking to each other. The researcher developed the symbol from the primary objects outlined in the proverb. In this situation, the main objects are the *vulture* and the *hyena* and they are in a conversational mood. It is appropriate for the two animals to look at each other downward since they must be seen to be conversing undertones about an important subject.

2. Twi: *Baanu soa a, emmia.*

English: If two people carry a load, it does not weigh them down.

Literal meaning: Many hands make light labour.

Philosophical meaning: Sharing of responsibilities makes tasks less tedious and faster to complete.

Time to use the proverb: It is used when there are responsibilities to be shared.



Figure 2: *Baanu soa a...*

The main ideas available in the proverb are a *load*, on top of two different *people*. The symbol is composed of two *men* carrying a common object. Their heads are joined together to show oneness in goal or thought. The idea is that when a load is shared among many people, it is lightly shared and easily done.

3. Twi: *Akok]ba a]ben oni na]we abeɛɛ srɛ.*

English: The chick that is nearest the mother hen gets the thigh of the grasshopper.

Literal meaning: The chick that stays closest to the mother hen always gets the biggest share of the available food.

Philosophical meaning: The most devoted and obedient child gets the best of things from parents.

When you are close to someone, he shares whatever he gets with you.

When to use this proverb: This proverb is used to counsel truant children. Sometimes chiefs use it to give advice to other royals who distance themselves from the responsibilities and events in the palace.

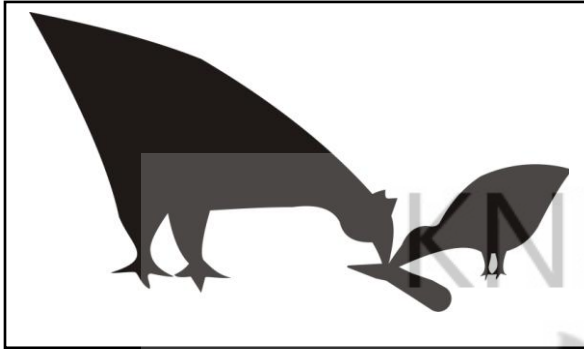


Figure 3: *Akok]ba a]ben oni...*

The main theme of the proverb is the hen, the chick and a meat. The chick is close to its mother hen and therefore the researcher chose to represent the hen sharing the meal with its chick.

4. Twi: *Mmerantee mienu te nsuo ho a, eb].*

English: If two young men sit beside the water pot, it breaks

Literal meaning: If two selfish and irresponsible young men sit by the water pot, the pot is endangered because if it inclines, neither of them takes the trouble to straighten it. It may eventually roll over, break and lose the water in it.

Philosophical meaning: If two people are responsible for a task or piece of work, it is never done well or it is neglected because each one assumes the other person will do it.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used when advising the youth about their duties. It counsels parents to give specific duties to each child so as to make each one of them responsible.



Figure 4: *Mmerantee mienu te nsuo ho a...*

The main theme of this proverb is two young men and a broken pot. The idea of the proverb is illustrated by two young men who are sitting unconcerned about the water pot therefore leading to the final breakage of the pot. This symbol can also represent another proverb that is translated into English as 'a man with many wives dies with hunger.'

5. Twi: *Aberewa hwe akok] na akok] ahwe aberewa.*

English: The old woman feeds the chicken and the chicken feeds the old woman.

Literal meaning: Elderly persons do not have much to do at home, so for a pastime, they are fond of rearing livestock which, in turn, supplement their source of income and meat needs.

Philosophical meaning: Parents bring up their children and the children help their parents in their old age.

When to use this proverb: It is used when children fail in their duty to their parents.



Figure 5: *Aberewa hwe akok]...*

The theme of the proverb is taking care of each other. The old woman feeds the chicks in order for them to grow for the old woman to sell for income and use them as meat. In the same way this idea is transferred into our daily activities where parents nurture children and at their old age the children also

take care of them. This is another form of a proverb that is translated into English as ‘if someone cared for you to grow teeth, you also have to care for the person as he or she loses his or her teeth.

6. Twi: *Obi mmfa ne nsa benkum nnkyere ne se amanfoo.*

English: One does not point to the ruins of his father’s hometown with his left hand.

Literal meaning: One does not make disparaging remarks about one’s father’s humble beginnings.

Philosophical meaning: One should not belittle one’s own people or despise their culture, especially with regard to the outmoded aspects of the culture.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to counsel persons who have had foreign education and experience look down on their ancestral culture or use unfit expressions to describe the culture of their ancestors.



Figure 6: *Obi mmfa ne nsa benkum...*

The main idea as figured out from the proverb is despising one’s humble beginnings. The researcher illustrated this idea by pointing to dilapidated homes which are used to represent a village or a cottage. The left finger is used since in Akan chieftdom, the left hand is considered unclean and the use of it is associated with insult and disrespect.

7. Twi: *Obi mmfa ne nsa nnto obi anomu na]mmpae n’atifi.*

English: One does not put one's hand into another person's mouth and then hit the top of that person's head at the same time.

Literal meaning: One does not put one's hand into an open mouth and then strike the head otherwise the mouth will close and the teeth will automatically bite the hand.

Philosophical meaning: One should not offend a person on whom one depends. If one offends his bread winner, he can easily retaliate. Do not bite the hand that feeds you.

Time to use the proverb: This proverb is used to warn someone who is misbehaving towards his benefactor. This is a warning against indiscretion.



Figure 7: *Obi mmfa ne nsa nnto obi anomu...*

The main idea of the proverb is a man with his hand in another man's mouth and then hitting the top of the head. The composition is fixed in squared borders in order to make a single composition.

8. Twi: *Abofra b] nwa na]mmm] akyekyedee.*

English: A child may break the shell of a snail but not that of the tortoise.

Literal meaning: The shell of the snail is soft and easy to break by everybody, even a child can do that but the tortoise has a very hard shell which is not easily broken. Therefore the elders say the child may break the shell of a snail but not that of the tortoise.

Philosophical meaning: Do not attempt things that are beyond your abilities.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used to advise people when they try to bite what they cannot chew or take on responsibilities that are beyond their limits.



Figure 8: *Abofra b] nwa...*

The composition is made up of a *snail* with a crack at its back mounted on top of a *tortoise*. The idea is a child breaking the snail because the snail has a soft shell while the tortoise has a harder shell which makes it difficult for a child to break it. The snail is mounted on top of the tortoise because the emphasis is on the snail being easily broken by the child.

9. Twi: *Ab]sobaa na ema ogya pae.*

English: The continual hitting of the wedge with a mallet eventually causes the wood to split.

Literal meaning: By continual effort, every obstacle is eventually overcome.

Philosophical meaning: Persistence wears down resistance.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used to encourage people to persist when they are getting discouraged.

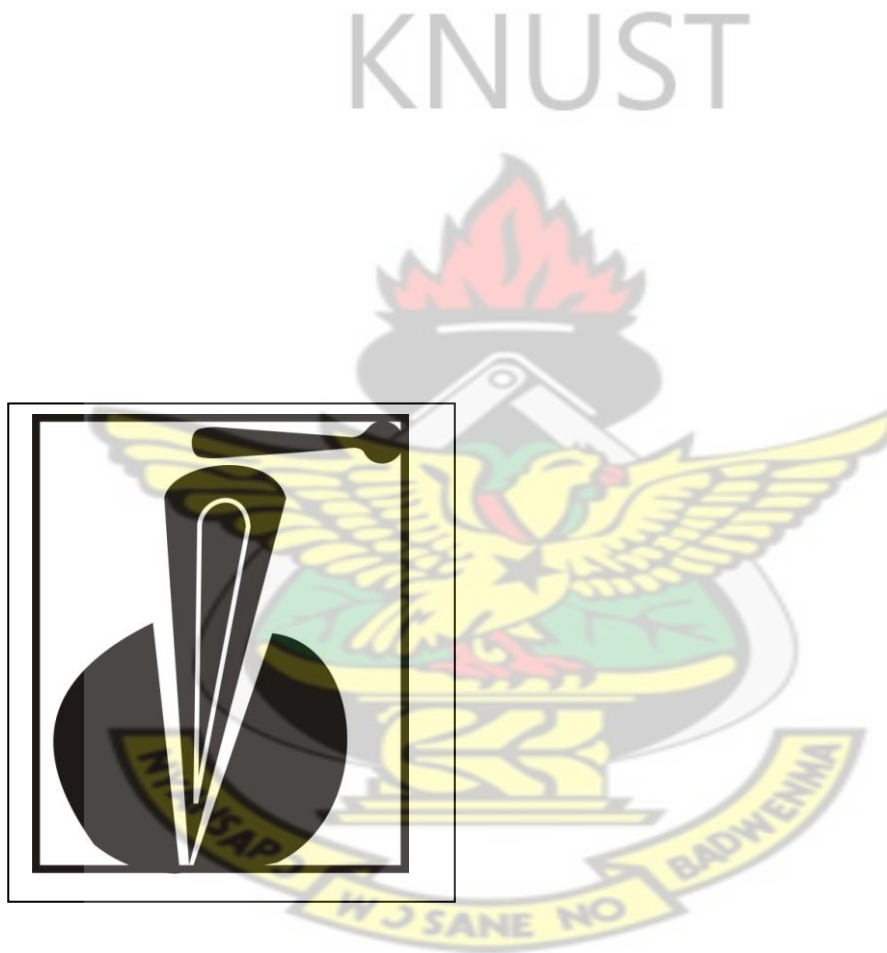


Figure 9: *Ab/sobaa...*

The design is illustrated in the profile format of a log, a peg and then the mallet to drive the peg through the log. As a result of the persistent hitting of the wedge, the log is split.

10. Twi: *Nnua a eben na etwie.*

English: Trees that touch each other also rub against each other.

Literal meaning: People living or working together are bound to brush against each other.

Philosophical meaning: It is said that human beings are enjoyed from a distance and that, the closer you get to them, and the more you take note of things you don't like about them.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used when settling a dispute between two parties who usually live or work together, such as a married couple, neighbouring states, and close friends



Figure: 10 *Nnua a eben...*

The researcher chose to represent the two trees in abstract format and in silhouette form that has crossed each other.

11. Twi: *Akok]nini boro nsa a, na ne were afiri]sansa.*

English: (a) When the cockerel gets intoxicated, it forgets the falcon.

(b) When chicks get intoxicated, they forget the hawk.

Literal meaning: The cockerels and chicks are preys for falcons and hawks, so they do not meet eye to eye but when the cockerel or the chick gets drunk, it forgets about its enemies. The cockerel then goes strutting proudly around, and the chick walks around carelessly around, dazed in a false sense of freedom.

Philosophical meaning: If one gets power drunk or temper-drunk, one tends to behave improperly to one's superiors and later suffers for it.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used to counsel people to be sober when they are provoked to anger, or when they rise to a position of power and influence, be it physical or spiritual, they should keep in mind the Ghanaian saying: 'Until someone stronger than you arrives on the scene, you think no one can beat you.'

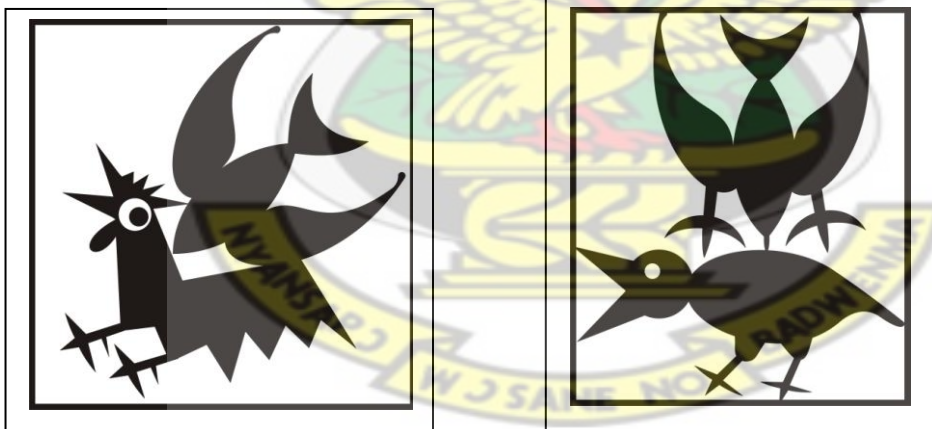


Figure 11: *Akokjini boro nsa a...*

The researcher selected some major key words out of the proverb which aided her to come out with this composition. The keywords are the drunken cockerel and the falcon. The behaviour and reactions of people who get drunk were taken into consideration. For instance, some drunken persons are very

talkative, their eyes bulge out and they are not able to walk with a straight gait. This is depicted in the widely open beak of the cockerel. The legs are not firmly on the ground and the eyeball pop out. Moreover, its demeanour shows that it is not in a position to fight back to defend itself. Another fact to note is that the falcon is very aggressive and snatches away even the grown up hens and cocks.

12. Twi: *Ak]kono de betebetε na εwe abε.*

English: Though the grub is a soft creature, is a soft creature, it can destroy the oil palm tree.

Literal meaning: The grub, soft and vulnerable as it is, can chew an entire oil palm tree down.

Philosophical meaning: However weak a person may be, he can overcome every obstacle and achieve great things by perseverance and industry.

Time to use the proverb: This proverb is used to motivate people who have daunting tasks confronting them and who appear to be unequal to the task.



Figure 12: *Ak]kono...*

The main images available in the saying are the grub and the palm tree. In order to make the symbol communicate to us, the grub has been depicted half way chewing into the palm tree.

This indicates that power does not always rely in size or stature.

13. Twi: *}k]t] nnwo anoma.*

English: The crab does not reproduce a bird.

Literal meaning: The crab will beget a crab and a bird will do likewise and not the other way around.

Philosophical meaning: As a man is, so is his offspring.

Time to use the proverb: The proverb is used to describe the behaviour of people when they follow the steps of their parents, ancestors, mentors, predecessors etc.



Figure 13: *[k]t] nnwo anoma...*

The keywords here are the crab and bird. The researcher selected some aspect of both animals to generate the symbol. The pincers of the crab and the head of the bird were metamorphosed into each other to form the torso of the abstract symbolic creature. This is intentional, to depict the ubiquitous nature of persons born to a set of parents, that make parents fail to understand their child. The

rounded projections on the crab side of the symbol represent the studs present on several species of crabs. This depicts the crabby nature of short-tempered persons, often presented. The curved projections on the bird represent the feathers on birds. At first sight, they look like thorns, but are sweetly soft on touch. This too, visually represents the Ghanaian saying: 'my face represents the hawk, but I don't prey on chickens'.

14. Twi: *Se wokum as]mor]dwe na sraɔɛ nnni mu a, paga w'ani hwe ak]kono anim*

English: If you don't taste fat in the oil palm weevil, try the oil palm grub.

Literal meaning: The weevil in this proverb lays its eggs in the decomposing tissues of the oil palm when the palm wine tappers abandon the palm trees. The larvae are big, fatty grubs that are a delicacy for the West African peoples who live in the oil palm belt. The weevil is not as fatty and tasty as its larva. The grub is therefore preferred to the weevil.

Philosophical meaning: Life is not always pleasant and easy. It has many challenges and obstacles that one has to overcome before reaching success. When you fail or fall in one instance, do not give up but rather try other means and opportunities.

When this proverb is used: It is used to encourage people who are facing difficulties in life or whose business is facing crises.



Figure 14: *S[wokum as]mor]dwe...*

With this proverb, the main objects to consider are the *beetle*, the *grub* and the system of cooking. The researcher chose a traditional cooking pot in which the beetle and the grub are both placed for cooking. The beetle is placed first before the grub because of the order of appearance in the proverb. The pot is given a tripod in order to make it stand either on fire or on bare ground.

15. Twi: *Nea]foro dua pa a na yepia wo.*

English: If you climb a good tree, then you get pushed up.

Literal meaning: It is difficult to climb a tall tree with an unbranched trunk; therefore it is necessary for someone to push the climber up a little in order for him to reach the branches for support to climb higher.

Philosophical meaning: Life is considered to be like a tree that may have no lower branches therefore everybody needs some kind of support when starting life. The need may be financial, moral, technical or religious. It is said that people support a worthy cause, but if what one is doing is only for selfish gain and it will not benefit the society, it is difficult to mobilize support.

When to use the proverb: This proverb is used either to encourage persons pursuing a good cause, or to advise persons who may be looking for help or support towards a no profitable activity.

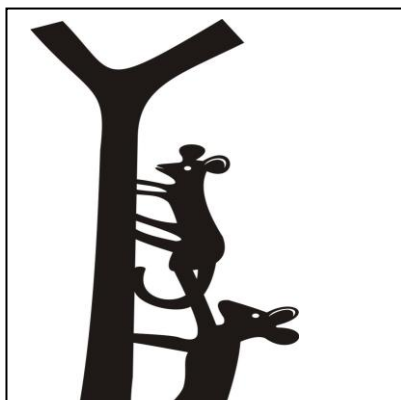


Figure 15: *Nea Jforo dua pa...*

The researcher agrees to the fact that a representation of this proverb exists in human figured forms but in order to bring out other interpretations, this idea was also arrived at. These are two monkeys climbing a tree. The older monkey is pushing the younger one up. They are all doing the right thing but one has more resources or experience than the other so there is the need for the more experienced one to support the younger one in order for both of to reach their goal.

16. Twi: *Prekese Gyaanaadu, Jfiti kurotia a na ne ho b]n afie mu.*

English: *Pr[k[s[(Tetrapleura tetraptera)* the king, his odour is scented in all corners of the village when he sets out at the threshold of a town.

Literal meaning: *Prekese (Tetra pleura tetraptera)* is a kind of fruit tree that belongs to the pea family found in the forest belt of West Africa. The mature fruit is a dark brown pod that is used as a good food spice and is highly medicinal. It is normally used in soups and it has a powerful aromatic scent that is far from where it is used.

Philosophical meaning: As powerful as the scent of the *prekese* fruit, so is the social and political influence of prominent persons who affect society said to be. Persons who qualify to be lauded with this appellation are Ghana's First President Kwame Nkrumah, Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu II (*Asantehene*), Ghana's past presidents, especially President Kuffour and President Rawlings and former United Nations

Secretary-General Dr. Kofi Annan, whose fame have made their names household names even to people who have never seen them before.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used as an appellation for great people. It is also used to praise persons who have done something that is considered to be extraordinary and praiseworthy.



Figure 16: *Prɛkɛsɛ*

The *Prɛkɛsɛ* is a rectangular bean. It is represented in this symbol in silhouette and is given a handle for easy handling and also to wave it in public to show its powers in terms of medicinal purposes. The decorative, spiky projection at the base is characteristic of African royal symbols.

17. Twi: *Akok]bedee nim adekyee nanso]hwe onini ano.*

English: Although the hen knows when it is dawning, but it nevertheless, leaves the crowing to the cock.

Literal meaning: The cock and the hen are always together at dawn, but it is the cock that crows. The hen can also crow by cackling loudly, but it is considered as a bad omen for a hen to cackle at dawn. It is the cock that crows all the time.

Philosophical meaning: In home and society, responsibilities are apportioned to various persons for the smooth running of life. For example, in the home, men take care of the masculine jobs like farming,

fishing and others while women do the housekeeping. One should not interfere with the others' responsibilities. A person in a subordinate position should concentrate on his or her duties and let those in the higher ranks take care of their duties. Likewise, those in line positions must not criss-cross themselves so as to fulfil the *division of labour and specialization* policy of high productivity.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to counsel people who try to usurp the authority of others. It is also used to give advice on division of labour in the home and society.



Figure17: Akok]bedee nim adekyee...

The hen and the cockerel are the main figures used. Again the heads of both are used and their bodies are merged together. The female part is decorated with half circles to give it a feel of feminine while the cockerel has triangular shapes around it to indicate the traditional masculine rigidity associated with

African husbands and workplace bosses. The male has a larger wattle and comb on top of its head. The female has its mouth shut, its beak and eye point in the direction of the cock to depict submissiveness and feminine willingness to follow the man. The cock on the other hand, has the mouth widely open to indicate that it is crowing. Its tongue juts out to depict that it is saying 'its daybreak, wake up, everybody!' its eyes point upwards to show that it recognizes the approach of the sun.

18. Twi: *Tikor] nnk] agyina.*

English: One head does not go into counsel. Two heads are better than one.

Literal meaning: One head cannot constitute a council.

Philosophical meaning: One person cannot rule a nation alone; it takes collective thinking to arrive at important decisions that concern a society or community.

When to use the proverb: When a new leader is chosen, it is given as a piece of advice to him to consult the opinion of others, especially other opinion leaders, in his decision making. It is also said to a leader who is autocratic and has no respect for other members in his or her domain.

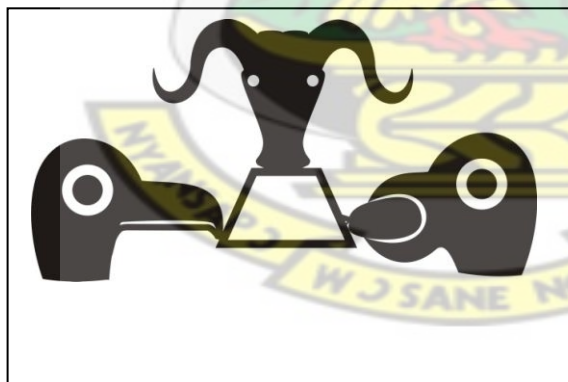


Figure 18: *Tikor]...*

The central idea in this proverb is sharing of thoughts in ruling a nation or society. Three Akan clans with their totems are represented: the Buffalo of the Ko]na clan, the Parrot of the Agona and the Vulture of

the Asakyiri. What the message seeks to say is that one person cannot rule, in a civilized society. There is the need to bring on board ideas of every clan into the decision making process in a democratic manner.

19. Twi: *Etire nni safoa na yeabue mu ahwe deɛ ɛw] mu.*

English: The human head cannot be entered into by means of lock and key and its contents examined by that means.

Literal meaning: The head as it is made up has got no physical opening through which one can see.

Philosophical meaning: Man is a mystical being and his thoughts cannot be easily deciphered. He may be smiling outward but within can be full of evil. No one knows what the other is thinking unless he acts.

When to use this proverb: This proverb is used to advice people who relate to anybody and also consider anyone who looks friendly as a true friend.



Figure 19: *Etire nni safoa...*

An abstract female figure with a key penetrating into the brain is used here to represent the saying. The brain is painted black to represent the evil thoughts that people harbour within them but because there is no key to open up the head, the wicked thoughts cannot be seen even on their faces. A female figure is preferred because society considers women as more secretive, prevaricating and evasive than men.

20. Twi: *Se ɔsono betutu nnua nyinaa a, [nny] ab[.*

English: If the elephant can uproot all trees, it cannot uproot the palm tree.

Literal meaning: The elephant is the biggest and strongest animal in the forest and it can uproot any tree in its way when it gets angry. Even though it can uproot any tree, it cannot pull down the oil palm tree because of the toughness of its stem and the high tenacity of its rooting system.

Philosophical meaning: It is almost impossible for wind or elephant to pull down the mature oil palm tree. The palm tree is used as a symbol for great warriors or a nation that is advancing towards a war target. The proverb is used to warn such an assailant that, they may have defeated previous enemies, but they cannot defeat this one because no one ever has.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to warn goal-blinded persons to look before they leap. It is also used to encourage persons or institutions or societies that are faced with challenges posed by other persons, institutions or societies.



Figure 20: *Jsono*

The palm tree and the elephant are the keywords in the proverb. The palm tree stands taller than the elephant, to show the power of the palm tree over the elephant. Again the elephant has its trunk on the ground, which also signifies submissiveness to the palm tree. The palm tree has five branches, which also mean a perfect number for the power of God or the gods among men on earth. It is believed that the ancestors of the Ghanaian, Ivorian, Burkinabe, Beninian and Nigerian peoples are descendants of the Ethiopian Jews. As they travelled westwards to their present locations, they brought with them certain ancient Jewish values. Five, the Jews say, represent three plus two, which is the integration of Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit with Man and Woman of Humanity. In African traditional thought and belief, it is 'Okorsa' (Trinity carrying the African married couple on his back).

21. Twi: *Obi nnni Jsono akyi mmoro hasuo.*

English: No one follows the elephant (in the bush) and gets wet by the morning dew.

Literal meaning: When you follow the elephant, it shakes off, ahead of you, the wetness of the morning dew from the plants as it walks through them, due to its large size.

Philosophical meaning: The elephant symbolizes a powerful or prominent person in society who gets you out of trouble if you associate with him.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used in reference to a benevolent person of prominence.

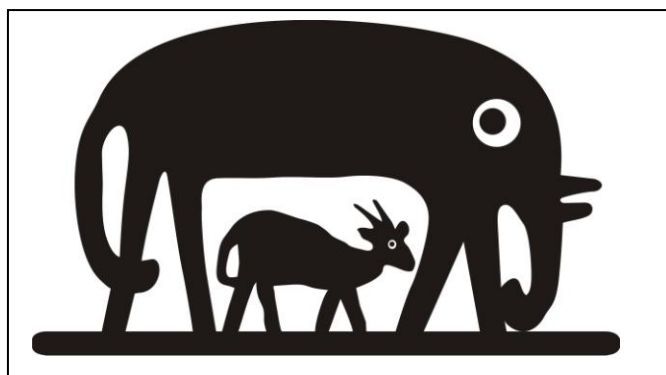


Figure 21. *Obi nnni Jsono akyi....*

The antelope is one of the smaller animals in the bush and the elephant. The antelope is comfortably hiding under the security of the elephant both against the dew and predators. The legs of both animals are depicted in motion to indicate their movement in the forest.

KNUST

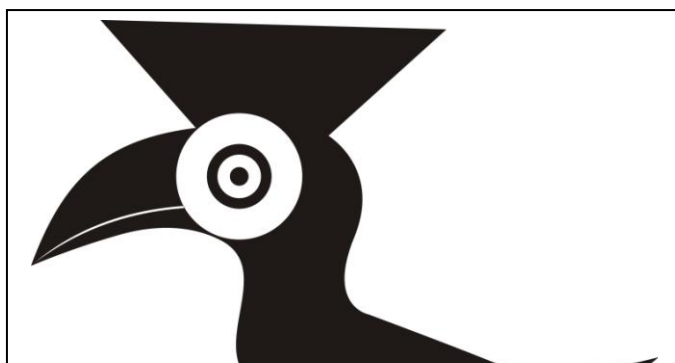
22. Twi: *Seante* [, [ne Jnwam atik] p].

English: Because Jnwam (the great hornbill) did not listen to advice, he developed a lump on his head.

Literal meaning: The (the Great Hornbill) is a large bird of the forest that flies high in the air and hardly lands on the ground. This bird is said in the folk tales to have borrowed money from a puff adder and refused to pay back, defying all the advice given him by the other birds, because he thought the puff adder, a land-bound snake, had no way to reach him. The adder on his part patiently waited until the harmattan, when water got scarce. He went into hiding near a pond where Jnwam would land for water. When Jnwam landed, adder pounced on him. Jnwam managed to escape again. However, in the process, he fell to the ground and developed a lump on his head. This lump has become a distinctive mark for Jnwam, the Great Hornbill.

Philosophical meaning: If one refuses to take advice about bad habits, it will one day land him in trouble and misfortune.

When to use the proverb: This proverb is used as advice to young people who do not respect or take heed to any advice given them.



KNUST

Figure 22: *Seanteε...*

The symbol is made of the *ɔnwam* bird with a lump on top of its head. The emphasis is on the lump.

23. Twi: *Sε woanntia]w] ti,]nnka wo, ana s[,]w]]ka anibrere[so.*

English: The snake stings when it is trampled.

Literal meaning: The snake even though dangerous and feared by man, it does not sting without being provoked. It stings man only when man threatens its life. If you do not step on it or cross its path, it won't harm you.

Philosophical meaning: There are people in the society who do not make trouble unless they are forced to do so by someone else's action. These people may be powerful and dangerous, but they are quiet and always stay away from trouble. If you get in their way, however, it is then that you will get their true colours.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to warn trouble makers in society.



Figure 23: *Sɛ woanntia ɔwɔ ti....*

The main symbol here is the snake. It has been confined into the circle to show how harmless the snake can be if not provoked. The snake is portrayed to be very wild or angered so it has pulled out its long and teeth ready to strike. The emphasis is on the head because of its readiness to take action. Snakes by nature have been associated with healing that is why medical officers and pharmacy societies have used it as their symbol.

24. Twi: *Ani baako nnhwɛ ɔkrawa nnhwɛ asibe.*

English: A hunter cannot be turning his head this way and that way at the grey-haired monkey and the white striped monkey and gauge at both at the same time.

Literal meaning: The grey-haired and the striped monkeys are very alert and apprehensive and move very fast in their habitat. Because of their swiftness, it is unwise for one to attempt to focus one's eyes on both of them at the same time.

Philosophical meaning: One person cannot concentrate on two issues well at the same time.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to advise people who attempt unsuccessfully to deal with more than one important issue at a time.



Figure 24: *Ani baako ...*

The symbol comprises an *eye* on top of two *monkeys*. The idea is that a person is trying to focus on both monkeys at the same time which is impossible because of their swiftness.

25. Twi: *Animu nnye ahina, na wɔapunu mu.*

English: The human face is not a water pot which can be perfumed by smoking it.

Literal meaning: In the traditional society, the water pot or water cooler is used to store drinking water. It is smoked occasionally with the fibre of oil palm fruit. The human face is not a pot, and its looks cannot be altered by applying the wrong influences.

Philosophical meaning: God gave every human being his or her own sense of honour and therefore no one should despise another despite his or her situation social, spiritual or economic.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to rebuke people who try to disrespect their fellows publicly and also to entreat people to show respect to everybody no matter their situation.



Figure 25: *Animu nnye ahina...*

The central idea in the proverb is the human face, water pot and smoke coming out of a fire. The researcher chose to represent these ideas by creating two human faces under an inverted water pot and the smoke billowing over the faces. The human face is portrayed as being angry to show how unpleasant it is to have one's face being smoked with fire or smoke just as in a real life situation, where others who have no respect for others treat them anyhow they feel and thus get people angry.

26. Twi: *Aniwa nnnim awereho*].

English: The eyes do not know times of sorrow.

Literal meaning: Human eyes go to sleep even in times of sorrow.

Philosophical meaning: No one can cheat nature; water always takes its own level.

When to use the proverb:

- a. When a person falls asleep in the midst of pressing duties or emergencies.
- b. When a person dozes in public, especially during a funeral.



Figure 26: *Aniwa...*

The symbol is an eye with a tear dropping from it. The eye is again sunken in its ball to show grief.

27. Twi: *Biribi nni ayowa mu a, anka wɔnntafere mu.*

English: A person does not lick an earthen bowl for nothing.

Literal meaning: The *ayowa* is a clay bowl used in serving food in African traditional society. Children like to lick the bowl for leftover food.

Philosophical meaning: Nobody does anything without the intention of getting some benefit from it. No one invests in a business anticipating a loss. Again, if two people with a grudge between them eat in an *ayowa* it is believed that by the time the eating is over, they would have settled their differences.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to counsel people to live in harmony with each other. It is also used in business situations as an expression of encouragement.



Figure 27: *Biribi nni ayowa mu a...*

The main philosophy of the symbol is hinged on the earthen bowl and the hand being licked. The bowl and the mouth of the man are exaggerated for emphasis.

28. Twi: *Dawuro se, nea]pe m'asem o, nea]mpe m'asem o,]te me nne a]wen n'aso.*

English: The traditional gong says it commands the attention of both the friend and the foe.

Literal meaning: The gong is used to summon a gathering in villages in order to carry messages from the chief or traditional council to the people. When the gong is sounded, both the enemies and friends of the chief or the gong beater come around to hear the message concerned.

Philosophical meaning: When one is in power, one may have both enemies and friends but when one mounts the platform to perform one's official duties, the enemies have no option but to heed to the instruction given in order to avoid punishment. Philosophically, too, the human biological needs such as hunger, thirst, 'nature's call', or the human emotions such as fear, happiness and sorrow, command everybody's attention.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to declare the power that one has over others, to mock the enemies of those in authority, and to counsel humanity that no-one is in absolute control.



Figure 28: *Dawuro* ...

The composition comprises an abstract *gong* and two different *ears*. The ears symbolize different people who are paying attention to what the gong is saying to them. In order for the three icons to be made single, a square block border is put around it.

29. Twi: *Funtum-kok[nini repe dabere nti na]k]faa]seb] adamfo].*

English: It is the pursuit of accommodation that caused the Sandworm to befriend the Leopard.

Literal meaning: The sandworm lives in sandy or dusty ground while the leopard also prefers to lie in the plain, dry sand. The leopard scratches the ground, to create a dry and sandy bed for itself. The sandworm then makes its home in the dust around the leopard's sleeping spot.

Philosophical meaning: No one befriends great people in society for nothing. They do so with ulterior motives.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to insinuate about the actions and attitudes of people who are always found around prominent people.



Figure 29: *Funtum-kok*]nini repɛ dabere nti...

The main objects in the symbol are the *leopard* and the *sandworm*. The abstract head of the leopard rests on the crater made by the sandworm, oblivious of the intentions of the sandworm. The crater made by Sandworm traps several small creatures such as ticks, fleas, buds, lice and ants on which Sand fly feeds. Otherwise, these pests would bite the leopard and feed on its skin and blood. The relationship between the Sand fly and leopard, therefore, is a symbiotic one. The heart-like shape of the sandworm's home depicts the bond of friendship that has developed between the insect and the beast. The bumpy surface of the Sandworm's home depicts the irregular nature of the sand in which the leopard rests. This, too, is a warning to the Sandworm that if a Leopard sees its prey, it may, without intent step on the crater, crush it and bury it. Hanging around big people poses many hidden threats.

30. Twi: *M'ani ye akoroma-ni, nso enkyere aboa.*

English: I have the eyes of a hawk, but I do not catch prey.

Literal meaning: The hawk is noted for snatching and eating chicks so every hen or poultry farmer hates it due to its behaviour. There are people in society who have physical features that portray evil doing but in the real case may not be so. For example, a person with an ugly face and bulged eyes may be said to be a thief but may, as a matter of fact, not, be so at all.

Philosophical meaning: We must not judge people by their names or physical appearance because they can deceive us. They may look good and innocent but within be very dangerous while others too may

look strange and bad but may be very good and kind within. Therefore it is better to judge by the character and actions of people rather than their appearance.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to advice people who have misconceptions about people and also to warn against prejudice.



Figure 30: *M'ani ye akoroma-ni...*

The symbol is composed of a big bird with the eye of a hawk and a smaller bird. The emphasis is on the hawk-like eye of the bigger bird so it has been exaggerated for easy identification. The smaller bird is perching on the same tree with the big bird while the big bird is even protecting it.

31. Twi: *Se Onyankopɔn siesie biribi to akyekyedee kwan so a,]kraman tu mirika duru ho a,]siane ho.*

English: If God puts something along the path of the tortoise, the dog runs past it behind without noticing it.

Literal meaning: The tortoise is a slow moving animal that takes a relatively long time to reach its destination while the dog moves very fast. It is said that because the dog runs fast looking far ahead, it does not take notice of the things along its path. The tortoise on the other hand, due to its slowness,

sees all things clearly while moving, so if any good thing is on the way, it is the tortoise, not the dog, who takes it.

Philosophical meaning: God has some specific endowments and opportunities for every human being; therefore, no matter how fast or slow one may be, nobody can deprive one of one's endowment or opportunity.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to encourage or to honour someone who has a disability, or who has surprised society by an achievement with which people would not associate him.

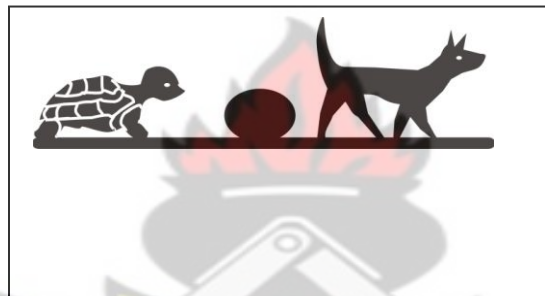


Figure 31: *Se Onyankop]n siesie biribi to akyekyedes kwan so a,...*

The main points are the tortoise, an object and the dog. The dog is so fast in moving and the head is so high in the air that it did not recognize the object that was on the path so he had gone past it while the tortoise is yet to get to it.

32. Twi: *Baabi a nkok]buo si no, eh] na pataku bu afiripata k].*

English: The hyena gallops towards chicken's coops.

Literal meaning: The hyena eats chicks so it frequents chicken's coops in the hope of preying on them.

Philosophical meaning: People tend to impose themselves over others who are less endowed than themselves.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used when advising people of lower endowment about the intentions of certain bossy people in society. It is also used to rebuke tyrants and despots.



Figure 32: *Baabi a nokok/buo si no...*

The hyena and the chickens in their coop are the main ideas developed from the proverb. While the chickens are scared of the hyena, screaming and running in the same direction, the hyena is also happy so he is at the prospect of breaking into the coop and preying on the chicken, and jubilating. This is seen in how his eyes have bulged out and his teeth bares ready to devour.

33. Twi: Nsusuwaa se, m'ani mmmere ntropo.

English: The small garden eggs say, 'I do not envy the big garden eggs'.

Literal meaning: Even though the small garden eggs are small, they are tastier than the big garden eggs.

Just as people like and buy the big ones for their big size, they buy the small ones for their tastiness.

Philosophical meaning: Everybody has his roles and duties in nation building. They may look important or unimportant, but all are needed to develop the nation. Let no one look down on the other and no one should envy another.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to encourage people who are contributing their lot to develop society.



Figure 33: *Nsusuwaa...*

The researcher identified the main objects in the proverb as the big garden eggs and the small garden eggs. The smaller garden eggs are placed inside the bigger garden eggs.

34. Twi: *Obi mmfa ne k]re-takra nnk]sesa]pete-takra.*

English: One does not exchange one's eagle's feathers for those of the vulture.

Literal meaning: Eagles feathers are hard to come by, expensive and more beautiful compared to those of the vulture which are abundant and despised. Therefore, it is not common for someone to exchange eagles' feathers for those of the vulture.

Philosophical meaning: One does not exchange things of high value with some things of low esteem. 'Exchange is not robbery', it is said. Nevertheless, for an exchange to be fair, one must value one's property before trading it out for another.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to counsel people who ignore their endowments and spend their time doing dishonourable things. For example, a friend is said to have counselled Mike Tyson to quit street-fighting and go into boxing. When he followed the advice, he became a celebrity. In this case, whereas the Vulture's feather represents street-fighting, the Eagle's feather describes boxing. An example in the Holy Book is as Esau is said to have exchanged his birthright for a single meal.



Figure 34: ɔk]re-takra

The main ideas available are the feathers of the eagle and that of the vulture. They are differentiated by the solid black colour of the vulture, which is not as attractive in reality, as the more variegated colour scheme of the eagle.

35. Twi: *Ani bere a, enns] gya.*

English: If the eye gets reddened, it does not catch fire.

Literal meaning: The full saying is: *Ani bere a, ennso gya, na yede nsuo adum no.* When eyes go red, they do not start a fire that may be quenched with water.

Philosophical meaning: When a person gets angry or finds himself in some unpleasant situation, naturally the eyes turn reddish. Anger, irritation, frustration and other similar emotive passions may result from stressful situations that cause the eyes to appear to be blood-shot. Yet, no matter the extent to which the eyes go red, the redness of the eye cannot start a literal fire. The proverb takes advantage of a pun resulting from the expression for the eyes going red that sounds the same as if the eyes are like fire. This kind of fire, though it cannot burn wood, can burn up the person in whom the fire is. The philosophy of this proverb is captured in the saying: 'Anger hurts its possessor more than its target'. Angry persons are, therefore, advised to look for another kind of water-patience- rather than literal water, to quench the redness in the eyes.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to advise people who tend to accuse people of their problems and to tell them to calm down no matter the situation they are in.



Figure 35: *Ani bere nns] gya*

The symbol is composed of a flame of fire blazing out of an eye.

36. Twi: *Nkwan pa na etwe adwa.*

English: Good soups draw seats together.

Literal meaning: Many people gather or go where there are good meals.

Philosophical meaning: When people have what others want, they attract other people to themselves.

For example, a woman with courteous behaviours easily draws men to herself. It can also be said that a business centre that renders quality services always attracts customers.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to praise honourable people in society and also to advice people to take whatever they do seriously and work with all their strength so as to catch the eye of people who matter.



Figure 36: Nkwan pa...

The traditional stools and the cooking pot are the central points in the discussion. There are two different stools to indicate different group of people who are drawn to the soup.

37. Twi: *Toa na epe na ahoma san ne k]n mu.*

English: It is the wish of the gourd that a rope hangs around its neck.

Literal meaning: The gourd has a round and slender neck that makes it easy for a cord to be tied around on it for easy handling. It was traditionally used by farmers and warriors as storage bottle for water and gun powder, food, sorcery etc because of its hollowness and lightness in weight. To conveniently carry the gourd, a rope or cord is tied around the neck and then hung around the waist.

Philosophical meaning: The gourd was always readily prepared and stuffed with ingredients ready for action in times of needs. It was therefore considered as the lifeline of the bearer. Improper or insufficient storage of one's gourd might land him in trouble. Every warrior, therefore, made sure that his gourd was always ready. As explained above, a rope around the neck of the gourd made it convenient and handy. A rope around one's neck, nevertheless, restricts movement and interferes with one's personal freedom. The saying therefore always goes for situations in which one's availability for service imposes unpleasant restrictions.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to tease people who present themselves for work and then complain of being overloaded.



Figure 37: *Toa na epe...*

Two symbols were generated for this proverb. The gourd and a rope are the central icons. The rope is loose around the neck of the gourd when the owner does not need it. As soon as the owner grabs the rope, it will squeeze itself around the neck of the gourd.

38. Twi: *Hwɛ kwan ma menni bi nti na atwe mmienu nam.*

English: ‘Watch over me while I, too, graze’ is the reason why two antelopes walk together.

Literal meaning: Antelopes are endangered animals which are hunted for their meat, in order to escape being killed by hunters, they move in groups so that one group keeps guard while the other group is grazing.

Philosophical meaning: This is where partners or colleagues help each other in executing jobs or overcoming obstacles in life.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to remind friends or partners of their mutual responsibilities towards each other and to avoid isolating friends, relations or colleagues at a time they need help most.



Figure 38: *Hwɛ kwan...*

Two antelopes are used in this symbol: one watching while the other feeds.

39. Twi: *Anoma kyere dua so a, [gye bo].*

English: If a bird stays too long in a tree, it receives a shot.

Literal meaning: Children and hunters shoot stones and fire gunshots at birds they find perching on trees. Birds, therefore, do not stay too long on a tree in order not avoid being shot at.

Philosophical meaning: One should avoid boring listeners or viewer by staying at a performance for too long. Besides, one must not relax for too long at a place where one is not a familiar guest.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to advise:

1. People who get carried away easily when they think people appreciate them and thereby repeat their actions to bore their audience. Some politicians, preachers and lecturers fall prey to this temptation.
- a. Against procrastination, complacency and a feeling of contentment on hostile terrain.



Figure 39: : *Anoma kyere dua so a,...*

The main ideas are the bird, a stone and a tree. The bird has kept too long resting on the tree therefore it was spotted by a hunter who has just released a stone to kill it. The bird is looking upwards, enjoying the environment and not aware that a stone flying towards its body from below.

40. Twi: *Deɛ adeɛ w] no na odi, na ɛnnɛ deɛ ɛk]m de no.*

English: It is the owner who has the right of use, not the one who desires to have it.

Literal meaning: One should not use hunger as an excuse for misappropriation.

Philosophical meaning: Positions and recognitions are given to people who rightfully qualify or deserve them, not people who try to gain by appropriate force or other foul means.

When to use the proverb: The proverb is used to counsel a person who goes to take something that does not belong to him simply because he is in need of or want it. It is also used to rebuke people who fight for positions for which they are not qualified.

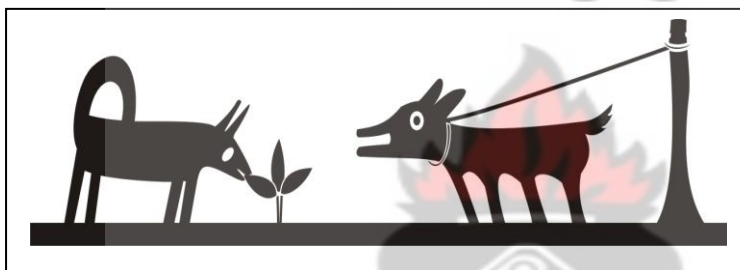


Figure 40: *Dee adee w/ no...*

There are two animals and a plant. One is eating while the other hungry one has been tethered to a tree so that it cannot reach the food.

The third objective of the research is to produce demonstrative artefacts from some of the created symbols for the craft industry. The researcher decided to use fifteen of the symbols to produce works in clay, wood carving, and textiles. Below are some of the pictures of the sample works.

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The demonstration artefacts made in textile with batik and tie-dye method.

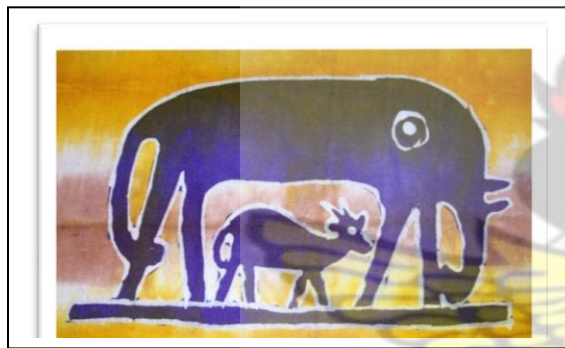


Plate 1 *Obi nnni ɔsono akyi...*



Plate 2 *Funtum-kok]nini...*



Plate 3 *]sono betutu nnua...*

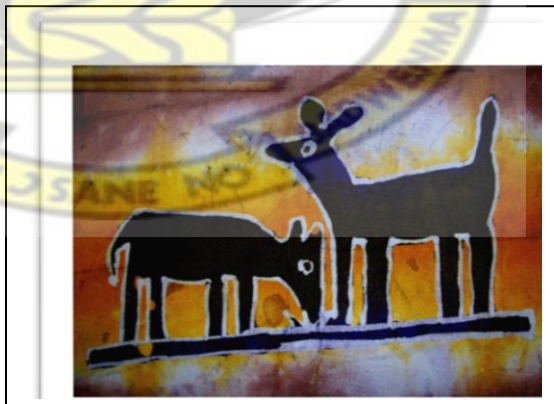


Plate 4 *Hwe kwan ma menni bi...*

This is a woven tapestry sample woven on the traditional loom

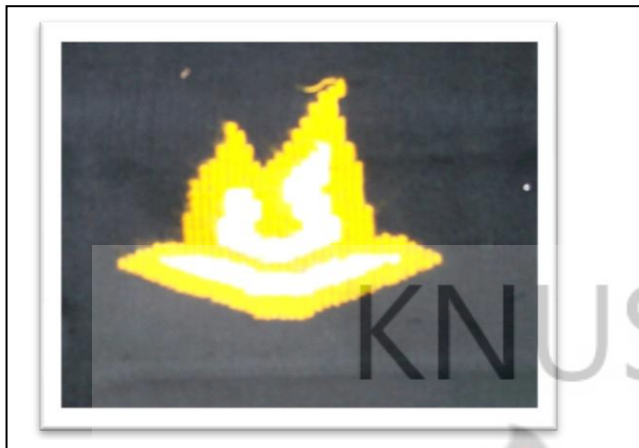


Plate 5 *Ani bere nns] gya*

The following demonstration works are also made in clay work. They are in relief method.



Plate 6: *Akok]bedeε nim adekyeε....*



Plate 7. *k[t] nnwo anoma...*



Plate 8: *M'ani ye akoroma-ni...*



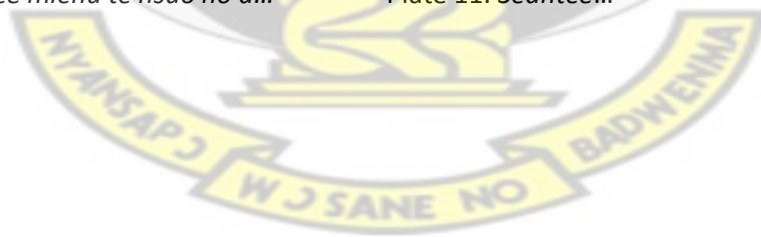
Plate 9: *Aniwa...*



Plate 10: *Mmerante mienu te nsuo ho a...*



Plate 11: *Seantee...*



The following demonstrations are also executed in woodcarving technique.



Plate 12: *Ani bere...*



Plate 13: *Ani baako...*



Plate 14: *Toa na ερε...*



Plate 15. *Animu nnye ahina...*

4.2 Discussion of General Findings

1. The research proved that local artisans and operators of cottage industries had inadequate seminars and workshops from the government and stakeholders on how to generate and create new symbols and ideas for themselves. This is because most of the artisans have not attained formal education while others with who had the privilege to formal education had no art background. This major problem has led to the over usage of the already existing symbols and rendered the artists not to be creative enough in their field. Also, there is no cordial link between the art educators and artisans for frequent update of information and general trends in art.
2. It was also noted that traditional chiefs and elders hold back important facts and information from researchers and even take monies from people who come into their domain for information, especially when the researcher is from Ghana. This has discouraged a lot of Ghanaian researchers to take up the mantle of researching into the lives of the people and to tell the story of their society and Ghana as a whole. This problem again has created a gap between the youths and the traditional rulers thereby creating a lot of recent conflicts about decisions taken by some elders.
3. The research brought to light the fact that most artisans do not have adequate knowledge in principle and elements of designs therefore cannot draw properly, and it has made them rely on the few symbols readily available to them. This is because most of these artisans had no or little formal education in art courses and drawing in particular. This has made artisans to see drawing as a difficult programme and thus shun from it completely.
4. The research showed that no priority is given to cultural studies in the schools. Students are not motivated to use the Ghanaian language and practices. This problem has led to the drastic death of Ghanaian cultural practices and values; also it has created a loophole for bad foreign practices and influences to penetrate and destroy what used to exist and were cherished.

5. An inquiry proved that there are many generated symbols by students of Integrated Rural Art and other departments as well as private individuals but they are left on the shelves of libraries so artisans and stakeholders are not aware of them while others tend to be forgotten totally. This problem seems so high because of the increased number of students admitted every year into the tertiary institutions thereby the students ratio to lectures has become so huge that supervision has become a big problem in the departments. Also the government has lost keen interest in the projects and thesis of students for national development.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1: Summary

The use of visual symbolism in the daily lives of the Akans of Ghana, in fabric designing, wood carvings, paintings, clay work and metal work is said to be a very old practice that can be traced to antiquity. These symbols were generated from proverbs and other wise sayings. The history of the lives of the people were also incorporated into these symbols for documentation and memorisation to hide secrets and facts that are open only to members of the community or society and also to transfer history and culture to the younger generation. The Akan people, therefore, placed much value in these symbols and so used them in all their activities.

In order to preserve these traditions in our contemporary era, there is the need to frequently create and introduce new and innovative symbols from proverbs, otherwise sayings and the life stories of our people into the system to augment the existing ones as well as to educate and to tell our story to the outside world. The inability of both students and artisans to exhibit their skills in generating new symbols to support the academic and handicraft industry is alarming, due to the fact that the old symbols are being over utilized and their value is falling to that of the clichés. This observation prompted the researcher to conduct a research to help solve the problem. The researcher, in order to accomplish the study, set up three objectives: To identify and document forty Akan proverbs, to produce illustrated symbols of these forty proverbs for daily application; and to produce sample artefacts with fifteen of the symbols as demonstrational pieces for the craft industry.

At the end of the period, the researcher successfully collected forty proverbs, discussed their literal, philosophical meanings and their socio-cultural values. Again the researcher created new symbols from the proverbs collected. The researcher then demonstrated how the craft industry can also use the symbols to enhance its work and create diversity and creativity in their trade. To this end, the researcher used fifteen of the symbols to produce works in tapestry strip weaving, batik dyeing, wood carving and clay work.

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5.2: Conclusions

The outcome of this project proves that it is possible to create new symbols to enhance work in our art cottages and our schools. The project also buttresses the fact that the creation of these new symbols to render support to the existing ones (as at the same time to make these proverbs common to everyday use) will create innovation in our traditional art and craft industry and will also encourage the creativity in our artisans.

Furthermore, the study will serve as a guide to students and artisans in the craft industry to express themselves and to create and use their own symbols from proverbs in order to add to the number of symbols available.

In addition, the project also provides room for Ghanaian artists, historians and students to explore this area of business to create varieties of designs and symbols that tell the story of Ghanaian in particular, and Africa in general with artistic and aesthetic precisions.

The work involved critical observation and careful exploitation of the elements and principles of design.

5.3: Recommendations

The research recommends that:

1. The government and stakeholders should organise seminars and workshops should be organized for local artisans and operators of cottage industries on how to generate and create their own symbols out of the numerous sayings in the country. These will go a long way to improve upon the creativeness of artists and craftsmen, increase the number of symbols that will be available to help their cottages. These seminars will also upgrade the educational level of the artisans and bring to light the modern trends in their occupation.
2. The traditional chiefs and elders should be encouraged to create a platform for the youth to learn the traditional practices and speech making in which proverbs forms a very significant part. In view of this, there could be an organisation of cultural contests among various groups of youths within the communities and even at the national level to educate the youth and the general public about the cultural practices of the area. Also, motivations and encouragements should be given to the youth to take up research topics in the areas concerning the traditions and cultures of the community.
3. Artisans and educational sectors should explore and exploit new avenues in terms of these created symbols in their field of work. Artists should be encouraged to integrate and use other symbols of other cultures in their works in order to create varieties and innovations. They should also detach religious meanings from these symbols and their works so that everybody will have access to and appreciate their arts.
4. Proverbs and symbols should be taken seriously in Ghanaian schools. They should not be left static but should be given room for further exploitation and adaptation. The researcher will

recommend that a slot should be created in the schools' timetable for cultural studies and practices in which proverbs will form part of these activities to right from the basic level to the tertiary level and even beyond.

5. This project report should be published and if possible the symbols should be converted into computer type font in the manner, just like the *Adinkra* symbols have been, for easy access to all and copies be made available in libraries, educational centres throughout the country and to the artisans to serve as an educational resource material. Also the department should organise outreach programmes for such works to be made public.



IMPLICATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research covered only the Asante Twi language and so further researchers can also work in other languages as well and also these symbols are subject to modification and corrections for daily application.

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**APPENDIX A:
INTERVIEW GUIDE**

INTERVIEW GUIDE- Manhyia Palace

1. In your experience as an elderly, how will you define proverbs (*mme*)?
2. The philosophical and historical background of proverbs
 - How are proverbs formulated
 - How are proverbs grouped?/ types of proverbs
 - Who uses proverbs in our traditional set up?
 - Where and how are proverbs used in our daily lives?
3. Are there any differences in proverbs in regard to ethnic groups
4. Do we have special proverbs that are used only by the royals?
5. The importance of proverbs to the Asante culture and to Ghanaian as a whole
6. There has been acculturation from 1700 to date in the Asante empire, have these acculturation had any effect on these proverbs in both negative and positive way? Please give examples of each
7. Taking Asante culture from the time of independence (1957) to the year 2010, in your observation, how have the youths responded to the call of cultural practices in regards to the use and understanding of proverbs? Is it positive, negative or look warm? If so please give instances and examples of such
8. Has there been any attempt among the people or researchers of the palace to visually represent these proverbs?
 - If these proverbs are represented, will help people to learn, identify and use proverbs often as well as the symbols in their various vocations?
9. Can you recite some proverbs that are associated with the royal stool and general proverbs?

INTERVIEW GUIDE- Awhia

1. In your experience as a carver, how will you define a proverb (*mme*)?
2. The philosophical and historical background of proverbs
 - How do you incorporate proverbs into your carving works?
 - Do you have special proverbs that you use in producing works for royal personality?
 - How many categories of proverbs do you have and involved in your carving?
 - In your view, whom do you think has the right to use proverbs in our traditional society?
 - Taking your occupation as an example, in what other occupations do you know that craftsmen make use of proverbial sayings?
3. Do you think a carver in Volta or Northern Ghana will have the same proverbs and interpretation as you using?
4. The importance of proverbs to the Asante culture and to Ghanaian as a whole
5. There has been acculturation from 1700 to date in the Asante empire, have these acculturation had any effect on these proverbs in both negative and positive way? Please give examples of each
6. Do you create or modify existing designs for production from proverbs?
7. Taking Asante culture from the time of independence (1957) to the year 2010, in your observation, how have the youths responded to the call of cultural practices in regards to the use and understanding of proverbs? Is it positive, negative or look warm? If so please give instances and examples of such
 - Do you have seminars and workshops on how to create new designs from proverbs for production?

- How do the customers, especially the foreigners who patronize your works react to your designs: Do they say it is one way, always in the Adinkra symbols, or the same designs are being produced around here without modifications?

If these proverbs are visually represented into symbols just like the Adinkra symbols or the stool symbols, will they help in your production and will you be ready to use them?

8. Can you give some proverbs that you will want the researcher to illustrate visually for use?

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INTERVIEW GUIDE- Bonwire and Adanwomaso

1. In your experience as an elderly weaver, what do you consider as a proverb?
2. The philosophical and historical background of proverbs pertaining to your work.
 - How do you generate proverbs for designing your cloths?
 - Do you have different types of proverbs that you use here?
 - As a weaver, where and how do you use proverbs in your daily activities?
3. Are there any differences in proverbs in regard to ethnic groups
4. Do you use special proverbial expressions in weaving cloth for the golden stool or any other royal?
5. What do you thin is the importance of proverbs to the Asante culture and to your occupation?
6. Taking Asante culture from the time of independence (1957) to the year 2010, in your observation, how has the youths responded to the call of cultural practices in regards to the use and understanding of proverbs? Is it positive, negative or look warm? If so please give instances and examples of such
7. Do you have seminars and workshops on how to create new designs from proverbs for production?
8. How do the customers, especially the foreigners who patronize your works react to your designs: Do the say it is one way, always in the Adinkra symbols, or the same designs are being produced around here without modifications?
9. If these proverbs are visually represented into symbols just like the Adinkra symbols or the stool symbols, will they help in your production and will you be ready to use them?
10. Can you give some proverbs that you will want the researcher to illustrate visually for use?