

ARTISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL VALUES OF *KUSAKO KO* INITIATION

rites of Avatime in the Volta Region

By
Victor Dedume

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the PhD in Art Education 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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Victor Dedume (PG1128507)

Student Name & ID No.

Signature

Date

Certified by:

Dr. Joe Adu-Agyem

(Supervisor's Name)

Signature

Date

Dr. Patrick Osei-Poku

(Supervisor's Name)

Signature

Date

Nana Afia Opoku-Asare, Mrs.

(Head of Department's Name)

Signature

Date

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ABSTRACT

The woman is a significant figure in the development of Avatime community. People of Avatime recognize and value the role of women in society and therefore mark the transition of a female from girlhood to womanhood. The problem is that many artistic and educational values are embedded in the celebration of this transition called *kusakəka* initiation rites, yet they have not been described, discussed or documented, therefore they could be lost. Moreover, appreciable amounts of vital information embodied in *kusakəka* initiation rites are not being taught in the schools of Avatime. Sadly, the rich cultural heritage embodied in the artistic and educational values which should be preserved have not been documented to put the area in the spotlight of the world. This research adopted a qualitative approach, specifically ethnography, to collect data through observation and interviews. The main findings are that, the Avatimes mark the passage of their girls into womanhood by performing series of rituals known as *kusakəka*. Numerous artistic and educational values are evident in the rituals. Artistic values are demonstrated in the use of ritualized visual and performing arts. Educationally, the performing arts serve as symbols of identity and means of communication. Recommendations were that there should be collaboration between the pastors and the custodians of Avatime traditional area to erase the notion that there are sacrilegious beliefs and superstitions embedded in *kusakəka* rites. It is also recommended that more group ritual activities be encouraged and done once a year for school going girls and workers to participate during school holidays and weekend respectively. Control measures should be instituted to curb promiscuity in the area. Finally, it is highly recommended that this document should be incorporated in the Art Education Curriculum to put the values of *kusakəka* in the spotlight of the world.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter introduces the various important sub-topics including the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, the research questions, delimitation, limitations, definition of terms, importance of study and the organization of the rest of text.

1.2 Background to the study

Avatime recognizes the value and support of women in society and therefore marks the transition of a female from girlhood to womanhood. The woman is a significant figure in the development of Avatime community. Considerably, such recognition is not given to males. Avatime has been identified as an important tourist site which means it will be exposed to the rest of the world physically, culturally, socially and artistically through written and photo documentation.

1.2.1 A brief history of Avatime

The Avatimes are one of the Guan traditional ethnic groups found in the western part of the Volta Region near Ho. They are believed to have migrated from Axim area in the Western Region of Ghana. They settled on the mountain called Gemi, which is the second highest mountain in Ghana.

According to Brydon (1976), the Avatime people who are known in their own language as Avatimes, migrated from Ahantaland currently in the Western Region of Ghana. Dzogbefeme is the seventh settlement of the Avatime people. They were believed to be among the few Guans to settle in the Volta Region. The people of Avatime left Ahanta after a fight

broke out as a result of claims over ownership of gold around 1300 years ago. On their journey, they made a brief stopover at Labadi and were joined by the people of the present day Agotime Kpetoe (who still speak Adangbe today). They proceeded to Ada and faced serious opposition when an argument broke out between them and the people of Ada over a pregnant woman.

According to Brydon's (1976) report, the Avatimes and Adas both argued whether the pregnant woman would give birth to a male or a female. The argument resulted in killing the woman to find out what was in her womb, and so, Avatime people had to leave Ada and settled at Amedeka, near Akuse in the Tongu area. They were joined by Tongu people after leaving Akuse looking for a place to settle. The Agotime, Tongu, Gafe and Avatime later settled at Matse in the Volta Region. They separated after a misunderstanding which led to a fight. The Agotimes who left first went Southwards to Ho and settled across the Zui river while the Avatimes left and settled at Biakpa. The rest of the group left for the present day Gafe and Likpe near Hohoe in the Volta Region. The people of Avatime met settlers already in Biakpa known as *Bayawa* thus they were regarded as last or late settlers known in their language as *Kedane*. The small number of *Bayawa* was subdued by the Avatimes, hence, Avatimes permanent settlement at this hilly area. It is worth noting that the *Bayawa* can still be found today in Biakpa, Fume, Dzokpe, and Vane; however, there are none in Amedzofe and Dzogbefeme (see **Figure 1.1**).

There are two schools of thought as to how the name Avatime came about. The first school of thought as explained by Brydon says Avati who had been their leader for a long time, later died at Taviefe hence the name Avatime. The second school of thought also has it that the name came from the Ewe word *Avatiwome* implying "in the war trees" because they

were war-like. The two Avatime towns Amedzofe and Gbadzeme are those believed to originate from Benepe in Nzima.

The land currently occupied by the Avatime people was avoided by the earlier settlers of the neighbourhood; that was mainly because the place was inhabited by some wild gaint people called Bamakle and Baya. The Avatime language, locally known as Siya, can easily mean the language of the Baya. The language, as it is now, must have been a hybrid of two dialects. The Baya and Bamakle were wild and aggressive therefore, they terrorized anyone who strayed into their territory. It is even believed that the Baya migrated from somewhere and routed the earlier settlers who then moved to Akpafu area.

Brydon (1976) describes the Avatime migrated groups as crack warriors. She says when they arrived at the mountains they were so much impressed and satisfied with the well drained fertile lands, crystal clear waters from the springs, freshness of the atmosphere, the imposing views created by the topography, and the contrasting vegetation types as observed from the highlands. They were therefore determined to subdue the Baya tribe so as to take authoritative possession of the land.

Brydon adds that drinks for the ceremony were provided by the two sides. The Avatime people poisoned the drinks and allowed only selected elderly volunteers to take the drinks. Not long after the ceremony most of the Baya in the combatant age bracket died together with the few elderly martyrs of the Avatime people. The Avatime immediately went on the offensive and captured those who remained alive. The signs of habitation as envisaged by the lifestyles of the giant people still abound in the land. Additionally other interesting physical features associated with hilly and mountainous terrain are also available.

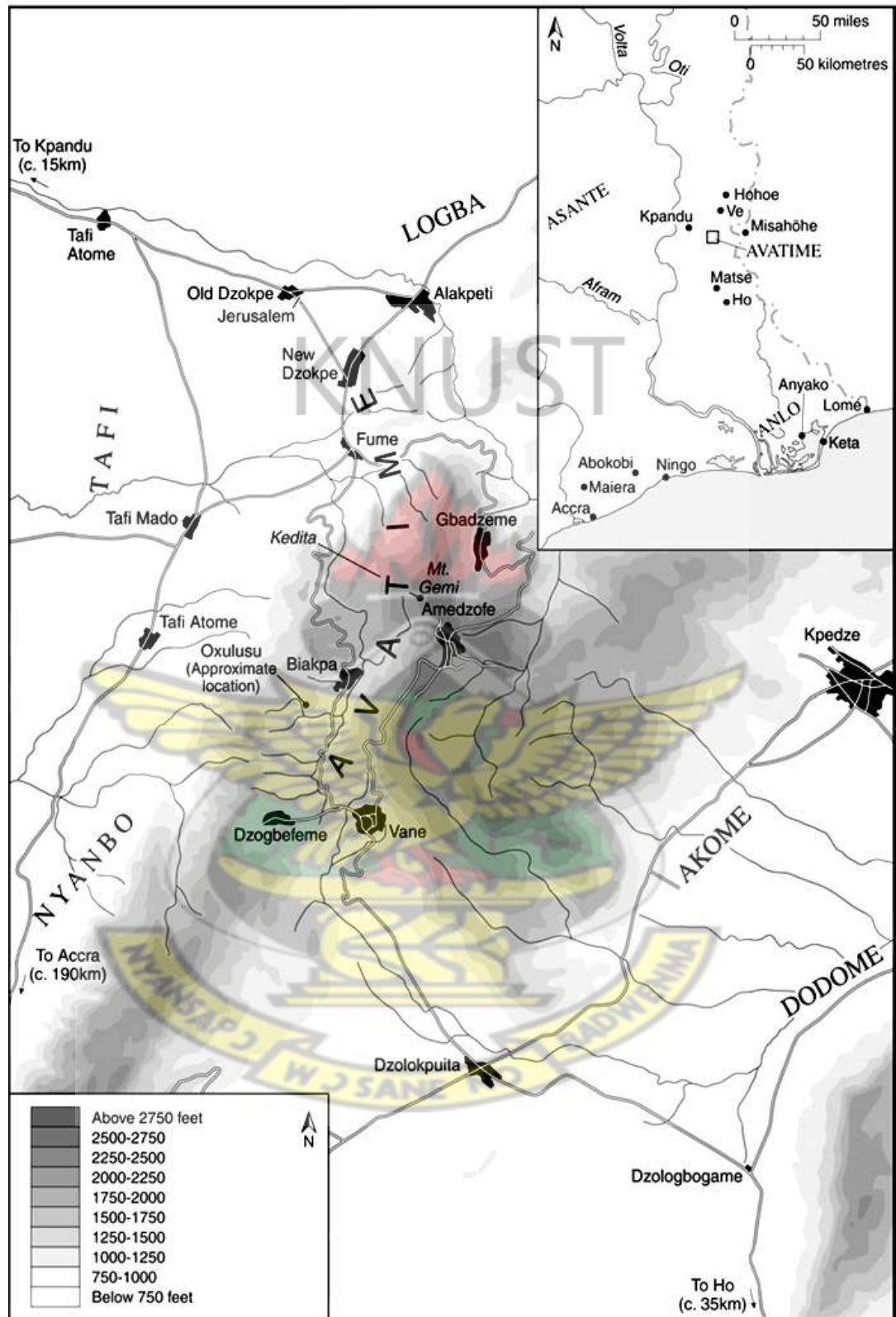


Figure 1.1 Map showing Avatime traditional area and position of the seven towns

1.2.2 Avatime Language (Phonology)

According to Maddieson, (1995), Avatime, also known as *Afatime*, *Sideme*, or *Sia*, is a Kwa language of the Avatime. The Avatime live primarily in the seven towns and villages of Amedzofe, Vane, Gbadzeme, Dzokpe, Biakpe, Dzogbefeme, and Fume. The language in Avatime is called Sia or (Siyase) and is spoken by about 24,000 native speakers as at the year 2003. The language family of the Avatime people include Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Kwa -Logba, Ka-Togo and Avatime-Nyangbo. It can be referred to as *Ke-dane-ma Sì-yà* people language. Avatime is a tonal language with three tones, vowel harmony, and has been claimed to have double articulated fricatives.

Maddieson (1995) explains further that, Avatime has nine vowels, /i ɪ e ɛ a ɔ o u/, though the vowels /ɪ ʊ/ have been overlooked in most descriptions of the language. It is not clear if the difference between /i e o u/ and /ɪ ɛ ɔ ʊ/ is one of advanced and retracted tongue root (laryngeal contraction), as in so many languages of Ghana, or of vowel height: different phonetic parameters support different analyses.

Maddieson (1995) adds that Avatime has vowel harmony. Root vowels are the relaxed /i e o u/ and contracted /ɪ ɛ a ɔ ʊ/ sets, and it is important to prefix change vowels to harmonize with the vowels of the root. For example, the human singular gender prefix is /ɔ ~ o/, and the human plural is /a ~ e/: /o-ze/ "thief", /ɔ-ka/ "father"; /be-ze/ "thieves", /ba-ka/ "fathers"; also /o-bu/ "bee" but /ɔ-bʊ/ "god".

Maddieson (1995) then concludes that vowels may be long or short but records from 1910 showed that all vowels could be nasalized, but that is disappearing, and few words with nasal vowels remained by the end of the century. It is important to note that some of the *kusakɔkɔ* terms are expressed in this language hence the use of these vowels.

Table 1.1 *Avatime consonants*

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Velar	Labio-velar
Nasal	M		N	ɲ	ŋ	ŋʷ
Plosive	p b		t d		k g	kp gb
Affricate			ts dz ~ tʃ dʒ			
Fricative	β	f v	s z		x ɣ	xʷ ɣʷ
Approximant			l ~ r	J		W

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatime_language

However, /ɸ/ is found in Ewe borrowings, as is /kʷ/, which can be seen to be distinct from /kw/ (which cannot be followed by another consonant) in the loanword /àkʷlɛ/ "boat". The language has been claimed to have doubly articulated fricatives /xɸ ɣβ/. However, as with similar claims for Swedish [ɸ], the labial articulation is not fricative, and these are actually labialized velars, /xʷ ɣʷ/. All velar fricatives are quite weak, and are closer to [h ɦ hʷ ɦʷ]. The affricates vary between [tʃ], [dʒ] and [tʃ̥], [dʒ̥], which may be a generational difference (see table 1.1.)

Schuh (1995) elaborates on the phonotactics and says syllables are V, CV, CGV, and N: Avatime allows consonant-approximant clusters, where the approximant may be /l/, /w/, /j/. There is also a syllabic nasal, which takes its own tone: /kpā̃/ "many". Any consonant but /n/, /l/ may form a cluster with /l/: /òkplōnò/ "table", /ògblāgē/ "snake", /káɣʷlitsā/ "chameleon", /sĩŋʷlèsè/ "mucous". After a coronal consonant, the /l/ is pronounced [r]. When two vowels come together, they are either separated by a glottal stop [ʔ], fuse into a single vowel, or the first vowel reduces to a semivowel. In the latter case, the four front vowels reduce to [j] and

three of the back vowels reduce to [w], but /u/ is fronted to [ɥ]. However, there are /Cw/ and /Cj/ sequences which are not derived from vowel sequences. These are /fw/, /mw/, /fj/, /vj/, /βj/, /tj/, /dj/, /sj/, /zj/, /lj/, /ŋ^wj/.

It must also be noted that Ewe is the language of the wider area and it is used in the Avatime area as the language of instruction in the first years of primary school and in church services. Therefore, most Avatimes speak Ewe as their second language.

1.2.3 The climatic conditions and occupation of Avatime people.

Owing to the altitude of the area, towns to experience very cool weather condition throughout, characterized by high humidity and fog. The cool weather accounts for the reason why the people dress in heavy clothing and also wear *kete* cloth (kente). Defina (2009) explains that the area where Avatime is spoken is tropical, but because of the hills it has a relatively cool climate. Two of the Avatime towns (Dzokpe and Fume) she says, are located at the foot of the mountain range and the other five (Gbadzeme, Biakpa, Dzogbefeme, Vane and Amedzofe) are at altitudes varying from 300 to 800 meters above sea level (see table 1.2). Avatime is bordered to the west by Nyangbo and Tafi. North of Avatime is Logba, a more distantly related language and to the south and east area Ewe speaking groups.

Table 1.2: *The various towns in Avatime and their altitudes*

Town	Altitude
Amedzofe	2224ft (677m)
Biakpa	1689ft (514m)
Gbadzeme	1604ft (488m)
Vane	1049ft (319m)
Dzogbefeme	1049ft (319m)
Fume	780ft (237m)
Dzokpe	649ft (197m)

The vegetation type is forest, a fertile land for growing many crops including cocoa, coffee, tea, apples, cassava, plantain, palm fruit, yam and brown rice. The hills and rocks make the Avatime area difficult to farm, but nevertheless farming is the main occupation of the people specifically brown rice the main crop. Brown rice specie, which is historically cultivated on the hills and plains of Avatime in the Volta Region, took the centre stage in an emerging aggressive bid to raise the economic fortunes of the area. The chiefs and people of the area have consequently instituted an annual “Rice Festival” to extol and plot the realization of a rice-led economic turnabout.

Osie Adza Tekpor the paramount chief of the area described the local brown rice in his speech during the celebration of the October, 2010 *Amu* Festival (Rice Festival) as “very nutritional used to nourish pregnant women, nursing mothers and helps in the general recovery from ailments as it nourishes the entire body with rare nutrients”.

“Rice is our meal from cradle to death, providing the needed nutrition for younger members of the family and the older fellows along the generational ladder”, he added.

Osie Adza Tekpor, says his people are all rice farmers with individual and community farms and appealed to investors to help the indigenes produce more of the special Avatime rice type for export. It may then interest one to know that the brown rice is the main ritual meal for *kusakakɔ*.

1.2.4 Women and Power in Avatime

Brydon (1976) presents a paper which considers the roles of women in Avatime as significant actors in public life, the life of communities, and particularly the roles of women who have the status and title of 'chief', however that is interpreted in the local context. She was particularly concerned with the significance of their roles over time in one part of Ghana, which is the Avatime traditional area where she has been working intermittently since 1973. The traditional roles of Queen Mothers which she terms 'women chiefs' (the terminology she said could be a focus for debate) were significant in the past and the contemporary influence of women office holders in particular is linked to their active involvement in the affairs of the community. She commented that it is not enough just to hold a title in order to be an influential woman but be active in currently relevant organizations concerned with politics or development as practiced in Avatime.

Women without formal titles may now have more influence and stay in local affairs than official office holders, even though they may be constrained to work through the channels of office holding. But it is worth considering, in addition, the possibility that the scope of women's influences, given this shift in its base, may well be able to increase in Avatime. However, she suggests a look for comparative purposes at the traditional scope of women's 'empowerment' both as women and as chiefs. This revelation about the empowerment of

women in Avatime perhaps may account for the reason why *kusakɔkɔ* rites in the area are focused more on the females rather than the males.

1.2.5 Tourism in Avatime

Francis Tawiah of Ghanaian Chronicle, a local newspaper on **Monday, 04 Jul 2011** writes that the Paramount Chief of the Avatime traditional Area, Osei Adzatekpor XII, said the traditional area abounds in natural resources that could be utilized to promote the development of the people. He noted that since he was installed Paramount Chief of the area, he had education, health and tourism as his priorities, and the people had also embraced the idea to develop the tourism potential in the area.

Osei Adzatekpor said, since then various committees had been formed to deal with the development of the area. He mentioned such committees as tourism, education, health and security, all of which were effectively working to enhance development at the various levels and commended the citizens for their hard work and dedication to the development efforts of the area. The Avatime Paramount Chief said efforts were being made to make the area a major tourism destination in the Ho Municipality, because the traditional area abounds in natural vegetation, which is beautified by mountains like Gemi, animal species, caves and waterfalls in almost all the Avatime communities (see Plates 1.1 - 1.6). Osei Adzatekpor pointed out that the area was set to host tourists, because the Avatime area had almost all the tourism sites that people travel to other regions to see, and that they should rather visit Avatime, which he said, was a few kilometres from the regional capital, Ho. It is important to showcase the tourism potentials because a lot of people who visit the area will be informed about the cultural activities, one of which is *kusakɔkɔ* rites.



Plate 1.1 *Leopard Cave at Avatime Biakpa*



Plate 1.2 *Ordido Falls at Avatime Biakpa*



Plate 1.3 *Oyeliklane at Avatime Fume*



Plate 1.4 *Ancestral Tree at Avatime Gbadzeme*



Plate 1.5 *Cross on Mountain Gemi*



Plate 1.6 *Church on a Hill in Avatime Amedzofe*

To the people of Avatime, life may be interpreted as a series of transitions from one stage to another. The most noteworthy of the transitions frequently celebrated in the area is the move from childhood to adulthood. This is the time the youth, especially the females, are

prepared for adult activities and responsibilities. The initiation rites is called *kusakəkə* literally meaning ‘giving of cloth’. *Kusa* means cloth while *kəkə* means giving.

Kusakəkə to the people of Avatime, is an initiation rite which dramatizes and effects the incorporation of the young girls into full adult life. It is only in this period that a girl is ‘born’ into full womanhood with all its responsibilities, privileges, the expectations of their mothers and secrets. The initiation rites also include the symbolism of the rebirth of the novice as an adult. *Kusakəkə* initiation is believed to transform a girl from the relatively ignorant and irresponsible state of childhood to the state of knowledgeable responsible adulthood ready for marriage.

According to Mbiti (1992) one could say then that, initiation is a ritual sanctification and preparation for marriage and only when it is over may young people get married. In this case, it is not only marriage but the full responsible adult life.

Kusakəkə puberty rite is a social activity in which the female goes through education backed by a rich cultural milieu to acquire the knowledge of social responsibilities, skills, life’s experiences, self-esteem and self-confidence in order to assume adult status. The initiation takes one month put in two sections. There is the traditional section and Christian section. The traditional section consists of the role played by the parents of the girl, elders of the family, clan members, the chief and the entire community. The second section is the role played by the church including the pastors, the choirs and the entire congregation. The girl is made to go through each process systematically which ends in a long procession amidst music and dancing.

The concept of art referred to in this dissertation focus on the visual arts and performing arts. The visual art, includes, sculptures (stools, mortar, pestle, drums, wooden tray), textiles

(kente cloth, laces, etc.) basketry (basket for carrying some foodstuffs, fan), leather work (specially made footwear), jewellery (different sizes of beads and chains), and pottery (special pots for rituals). Performing arts include music, dance, verbal arts (poetry recital, appellations), drama and many others.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Kusakɔkɔ is an initiation rite celebrated by the people of Avatime in the Volta Region of Ghana. It marks the transition of girls from childhood or adolescence to adulthood. During this period, the young girls are prepared for adult activities and responsibilities. It is believed only after this initiation that a girl is religiously and socially born into full womanhood with all the privileges, secrets, responsibilities and expectations to meet adult status.

These initiation rites are celebrated with visual and performing arts. These values are exhibited in music, dance, drama, poetry recital and the use of art works such as costumes (textiles), pots, beads, body art, sculpture, footwear and other articles made of leather, special stools, cooking utensils and baskets to mention a few.

Many artistic and educational values are embedded in the celebration of *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites, yet they have not been scholarly described, discussed or documented, therefore they could be lost. Those values are essential elements that could support art education. Moreover, appreciable amounts of vital information embodied in *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites are not being taught in the schools of Avatime. Sadly, the rich cultural heritage evident in *kusakɔkɔ* which should be preserved has not been documented to put Avatime in the spotlight of the world.

It is imperative therefore to identify, describe and discuss effectively the artistic and educational values of *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites of Avatime as a resource material for art

education. The study will give exposure of a very important cultural activity and the dynamism of indigenous cultural practices that are hidden in artifacts used during this special initiation rites.

Culture consists of the learned, shared and socially transmitted forms of adaptation of human beings to the environment which includes the habitat, other people, and their creations. Culture is the pattern of living among a given group of people. The pattern is developed by the group's shared values, beliefs and opinions on acceptable behaviour. Within the pattern, people have roles to play and work to do. The culture, directs how children are trained and how beliefs and values are maintained from generation to generation. Culture includes education, religion, science, art, folklore, and social organization. Differences in values and beliefs are expressed through language and art forms such as dress, architecture and decoration.

Art is involved in transmitting what man has learned of his adaptation to his environment. The purpose of studying art in different cultures is to give teachers a somewhat broader basis for understanding how art functions in society generally and how its functions are varied in meaning and style in any one specific society that has an identifiable cultural pattern of values and attitudes. A society is a group of people who are organized for some political or social purpose. They do not necessarily have the same culture.

Adams (1999) opines that, we study arts and their history because they teach us about our own creative expressions and those of our past. Art is a vital persistent aspect of human experience. But where does the artistic impulse originate? The data on *kusakɔkɔ* would be a very important material for Art Education. Works of art are valued not only by artists but entire cultures. The periods of history that we tend to identify as the high points of human achievement are those in which art was most highly valued and encouraged.

Artists express themselves through a visual language which has pictorial, sculptural and architectural rather than verbal elements. As a result, no amount of description can replace the direct experience of viewing art as it happens in *kusakəkə*.

The findings serving as resource material for Art Education will go a long way to be used as a study guide because in the field of art education, *kusakəkə* makes connection between the arts and beliefs of the people. This will also help to preserve the rich culture of the people of Avatime area and enrich the art education programmes sociologically, intellectually, philosophically, historically, aesthetically, physically and spiritually.

1.4 Objectives

- i. To identify and discuss *kusakəkə* initiation rites of the people of Avatime.
- ii. To discuss the value of art in *kusakəkə* initiation rites of Avatime.
- iii. To analyze the educational values of *kusakəkə* initiation rites of Avatime.
- iv. To discuss the implication of the study for Art Education.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What form does the *kusakəkə* initiation rites take?
- ii. What are the identifiable artistic values exhibited in the *kusakəkə* initiation rites?
- iii. What are the educational values in the *kusakəkə* initiation rites?
- iv. Which aspects of the study provide resources for Art Education?

1.6 Delimitation

The study is limited to the artistic and educational values of *kusakəkə*. The study covered three towns out of seven in the Avatime traditional area. These include; Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane.

1.7 Limitation

Sadly enough, the leader and oldest ‘ritual mother’ who should have given the researcher a more detailed information on *kusakəkə* died shortly after arrangements were made prior to the interview to commence.

1.8 Definition of terms

Art: Art deals with visual signs to convey ideas, moods or generalized emotional experiences. It may be called a language of visual signs. Sometimes in the interpretation of ideas or moods, however, the artist may employ visual symbols, but the meaning of such symbols embodied in the forms or images which the artist creates just as are the ideas, moods or experiences he conveys.

Artifacts: Useful objects that are created by a person e.g. art works.

Culture: It is the totality of life of a people including morality, norms, language, law, art customs (visual and performing), beliefs, philosophy and any other habits or capabilities that a human being acquires as a social being.

Performing arts: They are art forms perceived by hearing and seeing such as music, drama and dance. They are performed rather than made.

Population: Any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher.

Resource: Things that can be used to satisfy a system's demand or accomplish a goal.

Resource material: Something or information to be used for reference purposes or to solve problems. This includes tangible and intangible resources. Tangible resources are concrete, seen, can be measured and used, e.g. art works. Intangible resources are those that are not seen in concrete terms, e.g. energy, skills, knowledge, interest etc.

Sampling: The process of selecting a fractional part of data collected from responds or selecting a small proportion of a population for observation and analysis.

Values: They are things considered important, worthwhile or worth doing, things we cherish or give meaning to as in life. These include health, comfort, wealth, education, knowledge, freedom, prestige, beauty, faithfulness, religion, etc.

1.9 Importance of the study

- i. The study unearthed the values of art that are hidden in *kusakakɔ* initiation rites of the Avatime area and therefore put them in the spotlight of the world.
- ii. It helped the understanding of the *kusakakɔ* initiation rites and its cultural significance.
- iii. The study identified the role played by art in the celebration of the initiation rites. It also revealed that art is a major language system of society.
- iv. The implication of the study provided a good resource material for Art Education because both students and teachers will understand the human behaviour in art, designs in art products and factors that influence choices.
- v. It serves as a guide or reference material for other researchers because in the field, it makes connection between the arts and beliefs of the people.

1.10 Organization of the rest of the text

The first chapter introduces the various important sub-topics including the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, the research questions, delimitation, limitations, definition of terms, importance of study and the organization of the rest of text.

The second chapter presents a review of literature related to the study. The following sub-topics were discussed, concept of art as in this dissertation, artistic value, elements and principles of design, educational values, rites of passage, initiation rites in other cultures and Art Education.

Chapter three discusses the various methods that were employed to undertake the research on *kusakəkə* puberty rites in Avatime Traditional area. This research has adopted the qualitative research method, specifically ethnography. It expresses the process of data acquisition including the research design, library research, population for the study, sampling, data collection instruments, types of data, administration of instruments, data collection procedures as well as data analysis plan.

Chapter four describes the *kusakəkə* ceremony, analyzed and discussed the data collected on the research. The emerging themes from the findings in effect are discussed under the main sub-headings: *kusakəkə* initiation rites, artistic value of *kusakəkə* initiation rites, educational values in *kusakəkə* and *kusakəkə* rites as a resource for art education

Finally, chapter five summarizes all chapters including the statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions, the research methods adopted for data collections, data collection instruments, the main findings of the study, conclusion drawn and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

Chapter two presents a review of literature related to the study. The following sub-topics were discussed:

2.2 Concept of art as in this dissertation

2.3 Artistic value

2.4 Elements and principles of design

2.5 Educational values

2.6 Rites of passage

2.7 Initiation rites in other cultures

2.8 Art Education

2.2 Concept of Art as in this Dissertation

Art, according to Rader and Jessup (1996) is an impression of a stimulus of imaginative life, which is separated from actual life by the absence of responsive action. From the definition, it is clear that, art is the idea or emotion let in the mind which is executed practically for appreciation.

The nature of art has been described by Wollheim (1980) as a very elusive problem of human culture. It has been defined as a vehicle for the expression or communication of emotions and ideas, a means for exploring and appreciating formal elements for their own sake, and as *mimesis* or representation.

Wollheim (1980) further said that, art is the process or product of deliberately arranging elements of design in a way that appeals to the senses or emotions. It encompasses a diverse

range of human activities, creations, and modes of expression, including music, literature, film, sculpture, and paintings. The meaning of art is explored in a branch of philosophy known as aesthetics.

Traditionally, Wollheim (1980) said, the term *art* was used to refer to any skill or mastery. This conception changed during the Romantic period, when art came to be seen as a special faculty of the human mind to be classified with religion and science. Generally, art is made with the intention of stimulating thoughts and emotions.

Kusakəkə deals with visual signs to convey ideas, moods or generalized emotional experiences. It may be called a language of visual signs. Unlike the language of words, however, art is not meant to be informative. Information is the province of symbols and it is in the words of literature or the numbers of mathematics. Sometimes in the interpretation of ideas or moods, however, the artist may employ visual symbols, but the meaning of such symbols is embodied in the forms or images which the artist creates just as are the ideas, moods, or experiences he conveys (Ocvirk, et al, 1962). There are therefore a lot of symbols used in *kusakəkə*.

The most common usage of the word art, which rose to prominence after 1750, is understood to denote skill used to produce an aesthetic result. Britannica Online defines art as the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others. By any of these definitions of the word, artistic works have existed for almost as long as humankind: from early pre-historic art to contemporary art. The second and more recent sense of the word *art* is as an abbreviation for *creative art* or *fine art*. Fine art means that a skill is being used to express the artist's creativity, or to engage the audience's aesthetic sensibilities, or to draw the audience towards consideration of the *finer* things. Some art followers have argued that the difference between

fine art and applied art has more to do with value judgments made about the art than any clear definitional difference. However, even fine art often has goals beyond pure creativity and self-expression. The purpose of works of art may be to communicate ideas; such as politically, spiritually, or philosophically motivated art; to create a sense of beauty to explore the nature of perception; for pleasure; or to generate strong emotions. The purpose may also be seemingly nonexistent.

From the various definitions of art, and for the purpose of the subject under review, one cannot agree with these any more than to say *kusakəkə* communicates ideas, spiritually and philosophically motivated, to create a sense of beauty. We study the arts and their history because they teach us about our own creative expressions and those of our past. Studying the history of art is one way of exploring human cultures, both ancient and modern, that have not developed written documents (Adams, 1999).

From what the various scholars have expressed above it is clear that art can describe several things as a study and process of using the creative skill, a product of the creative skill, or the audience's experience with the creative skill. The creative arts are a collection of disciplines that produce *artworks*. They are characterized by activities and echo or reflect a message, mood, or symbolism for the viewer to interpret as experience. Artworks can be defined by purposeful, creative interpretations of limitless concepts or ideas in order to communicate something to another person. Artworks can be explicitly made for this purpose or interpreted based on images or objects. Art may be something that stimulates an individual's thoughts, emotions, beliefs, or ideas through the senses. It is also an expression of an idea and it can take many different forms and serve many different purposes as in *kusakəkə* celebration. What is art in Avatime? What is beautiful?

Amenowode as cited in Kemevor (2004) in his lecture notes, states that some philosophers think, art is the physical manifestation of man's inner concepts of his being and environment. They think this concept is determined by his culture and beliefs. To the African, art is referred to as culture and beliefs which are expressed in visual forms. The concept of art in the context of *kusakəkə* agrees that the art forms used are the bodily demonstration of the people's feelings in Avatime and milieu characterized by their way of life and values. The art of Avatime expresses the culture through *kusakəkə*.

Antubam (1963) also explains the significance of basic symbolic motifs of Ghanaian concept of beauty through the use of shapes such as the circle, rectangle, triangle, the crescent moon, the whorl and the oval. For example he says the oval is a symbol of female beauty which bears an element of cleansing power.

Antubam further states that, ideas of beauty reveal themselves in a people's manner and rules of doing things. These ideas of beauty he says appear in people's preferences for certain methods which to others may be strange and gave examples of the manner of sitting, speaking in public, bathing, eating and marriage.

Kusakəkə at its simplest is a form of communication. As most forms of communication have an intent or goal directed toward a motivated purpose, emotions, moods and feelings are also communicated through art. That is why Mithen (1999) makes his observations and asserts that art is a set of artefacts or images with symbolic meanings as a means of communication. Mithen's statement implies that though *kusakəkə* appears to be a form of entertainment for the people of Avatime, it also seeks to bring about a particular emotion or mood, for the purpose of relaxing or entertaining the viewers, moreover puts them right in the spotlight of the world by communicating the artistic values and educational values of their rich cultural practice. This is often the function of the art industries of pictures and video.

2.3 Artistic value

Values are broad, abstract, shared standards of what is right, desirable and worthy of respect. Values set the general tone for cultural and social life (Gelles & Levine, 1995). The people of Avatime value family loyalty, adaptability, propriety, morality, activism, norms or sanctions and symbol. All these are exhibited in the culture of the Avatimes and at every stage of celebrating them, art is richly used.

Gelles and Levine (1995) also see values as, those elements within a culture to which individuals and groups attach a high worth. They opine that within a social system there are values that influence the groups' feelings towards food, human life, behaviour patterns and attitudes toward people who belong to out-groups.

Sociologists have studied the ways in which values develop within societies and how they are inculcated by individuals in a community. Values, like attitudes and beliefs, are learned from groups in which the individual is socialized; we are not born with a set of values and do not derive them independently. Groups use norms and sanctions to assure that individuals inculcate the pervasive values with their culture or micro culture.

People have various ways of appreciating art works. Some individuals may look at the work of art to be balanced while others look out for just the beauty. The artworks used in the *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites assumed these artistic values.

Somewhat in relation to the above, the word *art* is also used to apply judgment of value, as in such expressions as "that meal was a work of art" (the cook is an artist), or "the art of deception," (the highly attained level of skill of the deceiver is praised). It is this use of the word as a measure of high quality and high value that gives the term its flavour of subjectivity. (Wollheim,1980)

According to Wollheim (1980) making judgments of value requires a basis for criticism. At the simplest level, a way to determine whether the impact of the object on the senses meets the criteria to be considered *art* is whether it is perceived to be attractive or repulsive. Though perception is always coloured by experience, and is necessarily subjective, it is commonly taken that which is not aesthetically satisfying in some fashion cannot be art. He says however that "good" art is not always or even regularly aesthetically appealing to a majority of viewers. In other words, an artist's prime motivation need not be the pursuit of the aesthetic. Also, art often depicts terrible images made for social, moral, or thought-provoking reasons. Yet at the same time, the horrific imagery demonstrates Goya's keen artistic ability in composition and execution and produces fitting social and political outrage. Thus, the debate continues as to what mode of aesthetic satisfaction, if any, is required to define 'art'.

Wollheim explains further that the assumption of new values or the rebellion against accepted notions of what is aesthetically superior need not occur concurrently with a complete abandonment of the pursuit of that which is aesthetically appealing. He says, indeed, the reverse is often true, that in the revision of what is popularly conceived of as being aesthetically appealing, allows for a re-invigoration of aesthetic sensibility, and a new appreciation for the standards of art itself. Countless schools have proposed their own ways to define quality, yet they all seem to agree in at least one point: once their aesthetic choices are accepted, the value of the work of art is determined by its capacity to transcend the limits of its chosen medium in order to strike some universal chord by the rarity of the skill of the artist or in its accurate reflection in what is termed the zeitgeist. Sometimes, value is dependent on general human experience and relativist, whereby it is not an absolute value, but depends on, and varies with, the human experience of different humans. An object may be characterized by the intentions, or lack thereof, of its creator, regardless of its apparent purpose.

Robertson and McDaniel (2005) correctly define art in this way and reiterated that it is necessary, first of all, to cease to consider it as a means to pleasure and to consider it as one of the conditions of human life. Viewing it in this way we cannot fail to observe that art is one of the means of intercourse between man and man. That is why it is necessary to study a different culture through its art works hence the study of *kusakɔkɔ* because every work of art causes the receiver to enter into a certain kind of relationship both with him who produced, or is producing the art, and with all those who, simultaneously, previously, or subsequently, receive the same artistic impression.

Speech used in transmitting the thoughts and experiences of men, serves as a means of union among them, and art acts in a similar manner. The peculiarity of this latter means of intercourse, distinguishing it from intercourse by means of words, consists in this, that whereas by words a man transmits his thoughts to another, by means of art he transmits his feelings.

Robertson and McDaniel further explained the activity of art, based on the fact that a man, receiving through his sense of hearing or sight another man's expression of feeling, is capable of experiencing the emotion which moved the man who expressed it. To take the simplest example; one man laughs, and another who hears becomes merry; or a man weeps, and another who hears feels sorrow. A man is excited or irritated, and another man seeing him comes to a similar state of mind. By his movements or by the sounds of his voice, a man expresses courage and determination or sadness and calmness, and this state of mind passes on to others.

The study shows that the people of Avatime in celebrating such important rites express a lot of excitement through the art of dancing, recitations, drama and many other entertaining moods. It is upon this capacity of people who received the expressions of feelings and

experience, that the activity of art is based. If a man infects another or others directly or immediately, by his appearance or by the sounds he gives vent to at the very time he experiences the feeling; if he causes another man to yawn when he himself cannot help yawning, or to laugh or cry when he himself is obliged to laugh or cry, or to suffer when he himself is suffering, that does not amount to art.

Art begins when one person, with the object of joining another or others to him in one and the same feeling, expresses that feeling by certain external indications. The feelings with which the artist infects others may be most various and they used words as very strong or very weak, very important or very insignificant, very bad or very good. The feelings of love for one's own country, self-devotion and submission expressed in a drama, raptures of lovers described in a novel, feelings of voluptuousness expressed in *kusakəkə* pictures, courage expressed in a triumphal march or processions through the streets of the various towns, merriment evoked by dances, humour and the feeling of admiration evoked by a beautiful work of art. If only the spectators are infected by the feelings exhibited in the celebration, it is art.

According to Robertson and McDaniel, the art was also expressed in their feeling by means of movements, lines, colours, sounds, or forms expressed in words, so to transmit that feeling as others may also experience the same feeling may be termed as the activity of art.

Art is a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to other feelings he has lived through, and that other people are infected by these feelings and also experienced them.

Therefore, something artistic may mean anything done skillfully, tasteful and aesthetically satisfying. The arts that are hidden in *kusakəkə* include things that are keenly sensitive to aesthetic value. It is so, because they can be described as decorative, picturesque,

musical, pictorial, rhythmical, poetic, dramatic, compositional, patterned, showing taste or skill and inventive, discriminating, creative, graceful, talented, accomplished, pleasing, well turned, well proportioned, well executed, well wrought, selective, sublime, judicious, having ideas, well balanced, culturally tasteful, exquisite, sensitive, fine, elegant, harmonious, grand, elevated, noble or beautiful. These artistic values are expressed through the various aspects of *kusakakɔ*.

Values can then be simply put as standards or qualities considered worthwhile and desirable. Beads, kete cloth, pots, costumes, among others are desired and used for the ceremony. They can be said to be the principles and beliefs that influence the behaviour and way of life of a particular community or the people of Avatime.

Adams (1999) believes that, works of art are valued not only by artists and patrons, but also by entire cultures. He contends that, the periods of history that we tend to identify as the high points of human achievement are those in which art was most highly valued and encouraged. Therefore artistic values which are the poetry, fiction, drama, and dance, among others are all important in the *kusakakɔ* celebration. He also asserts that, there are various ways in which art is valued and some of them are material value, intrinsic value, religious value, nationalistic value and psychological value.

2.3.1 Material value

Adams (1999) explains that works of art may be valued because they are made of precious material. He says, Gold for example, was used in Egyptian art to represent divinity and the sun. These associations recur in Christian art, which reserve gold for the background of religious icons (the word icon is derived from the Greek eikon, meaning “image”). In Avatime, some items used in *kusakakɔ* are highly valued and preserved because of their

material importance such as the two ritual cloths, the types of beads, the ritual pots the calabashes for performing libation and some jewels made from gold.

2.3.2 Intrinsic value

A work of art may contain valuable material which makes it intrinsic, but that is not the primary basis on which its quality is judged by a lot of people. Its extrinsic value depends rather largely on the general assessment of the artist who created it, and on its own aesthetic character. One cannot agree with Adams (1999) more than to add that in the *kusakəkə* initiation rites, aesthetics played a vital role in their choice of costume, footwear, jewel etc.

2.3.3 Religious value

One of the ways in which art has been valued is in terms of its significance. Adams indicated that one important way of communicating Bible stories and legends of the saints to a largely illiterate population was through sculptures, paintings, mosaics, wall-hangings, and stained-glass windows. There were two religious beliefs that *kusakəkə* was based on namely traditional religion, was being used long ago before the incorporation of Christianity; hence the use of some items for religious purpose, for example some ritual pots. It is important to note that the messages, the philosophy of *kusakəkə* are all communicated using art. It includes the significance of ritual pots, different types of beads, the stools and cloths.

2.3.4 Nationalistic value

Adams (1999) further adds that works of art have nationalistic value inasmuch as they express the pride and accomplishment of a particular culture. *Kusakəkə* has gone beyond a mere local or traditional celebration and has now attracted people from all walks of life to

witness therefore the artefacts used have assumed nationalistic status. Hence, the importance of documentation and exposure of such a rich cultural value to the whole world. Though *kusakakɔ* is limited to the cultural values of the people of Avatime, the arts used become subject for education in the nation and people travel from far and near to observe the use of art in cultural practice.

2.3.5 Psychological value

Adams, (1999) then concludes that another symbolic value of art is the psychological relief and states that one of the psychological aspects of art is its ability to attract and repel us and this is not necessarily a function of whether or not we find a particular image aesthetically pleasing. The activities and the use of art forms in *kusakakɔ* gave the people a therapeutic and emotional relief; moreover girls becoming women in the society is in itself satisfying.

2.3.6 Criteria of excellence for art

According to Thompson (1973) the Yoruba has set criteria of excellence for their art. His findings include the importance of: balance between specific details and abstract details; clarity of line and form; polished surface; emotional proportions, meaning that size relates to emotional importance; proper positioning of body parts; delicacy of detail; roundness of masses; pleasing bulges as well as pleasing angularity; erectness of form; symmetry; and finally of great importance is the depiction of ephebism, an individual in the prime of his or her life.

Warren L. d'Azevedo's poem as cited in Thompson (1973) answers the question of whether there is a Yoruba notion of the aesthetic. He says beautiful objects such as the verandah, wife, and children that are protected by their owner, speak of natural beauty just as

the leaves, the flowers and the rainbow, and last of all it reminds man to appreciate this "earthly and celestial" beauty. He adds that the poem will help gain a better understanding of Yoruba aesthetics.

Anybody who meets beauty and does not look at it will soon be poor.

The red feathers are the pride of the parrot.

The young leaves are the pride of the palm tree.

The white flowers are the pride of the leaves.

The well-swept verandah is the pride of the landlord.

The straight tree is the pride of the forest.

The fast deer is the pride of the bush.

The rainbow is the pride of heaven.

The beautiful woman is the pride of her husband.

The children are the pride of the mother.

The moon and the stars are the pride of the sun.

Ifa says: Beauty and all sorts of good fortune arrive.

(Beier and Gbadamosi 1959 as cited in Thompson, (1973) (d'Azevedo)

The identifiable artistic values exhibited in the *kusakaka* celebration as observed, relate very well to the everyday life and the environment of the people in Avatime traditional area as described in Warren L. d'Azevedo's poem as cited in Thompson (1973)

All the arts belong to the common use of every member of the society. It is obvious that, Avatime concepts and beliefs are tied with the creation of these art forms. The arts are understood, used or shared by all the people in the seven towns of Avatime. The aesthetics generally, have an ethnical basis. In all African languages, according to Thompson (1973), the

same word art, means “beautiful” and “good”. He explains that sculptures are considered to be “good” if they fulfill their function and purpose. These words are consistent with the use and meaning of African sculpture because art is intended not only to please the eye but to uphold moral values. The ethnical and religious basis of African art may explain why the human figure is the principle subject of African art. African art often appears in ritual contexts that deal with the vital moral and spiritual concerns of the human condition.

In African art aesthetics, there are clearly standards of beauty. These standards are four precise qualities that describe sculpture and indicate what is “good” or “bad”: resemblance to a human being, luminosity, self-composure, and youthfulness. First, the quality “resemblance to a human being” is one of the elements used by African artists to praise a carved figure. This element is used because African artists seldom portray particular people, actual animals, or the actual form of invisible spirits in their sculptures. Rather sculptures were intended to be likenesses of their living subject. Another quality is self-composure, a straight and upright posture and symmetrical arrangement of the part of the sculpture. This does not exclude asymmetry, but it does restrict it to fairly minor details. Finally, youthfulness is also important, the representation of the subject in the prime of life (see table 2.1).

Table 2.1 *Yoruba aesthetics and terms*

TERM	MEANING
Didon	Luminosity, or shiny smoothness of a surface, so that the whole sculpture offers a play of light and shadow.
Gigun	A straight upright posture and symmetrical arrangement of the parts of the sculpture.
Odo	Representing the subject “in the prime of life.”
Tut	Serenity, coolness, or composure.

Source: <http://.postcolonialweb.org/nigeria/yaesthetics.html>

Luminosity: The lustrously smooth surface of most African figural sculpture, often embellished with decorative scarification, indicates beautified, shiny, healthy skin. Figures with rough surfaces and deformities are intended to appear ugly and reflect moral flaws.

Self-composure: The person who is composed behaves in a measured and rational way; he or she is controlled, proud, dignified, and reserved.

Youthfulness: A youthful appearance connotes vigor, productiveness, fertility, and ability to labour. Illness and deformity are rarely depicted, because they are signs of evil.

Thompson (1973) suggests that qualities that make an object beautiful are delicacy, smooth finish, balance, a slight pattern that adds vitality to the surface, newness, related to youth and livelihood, and creativity. Some of these qualities by Thompson are useful in the celebration of *kusakəkə* initiation rites.

2.4 Elements and principles of design

According to Bates (2000), design is the organization of parts into a coherent whole. He argues that designs of accomplished artists should convey the feeling that nothing in the designs could be changed without violating the structure. All the elements of design in use should make a complete and as far as can be judged, harmonious whole. Bates adds that, in visual items, a design is the organization of materials and forms in such a way as to fulfill a specific purpose. It is the act of arranging things to create a single effect. In design the artist must consider importantly the use of elements and principles of design.

Bates implies in his statement that, elements must be put together in an activity or event such as *kusakəkə*, and when these different parts fit together and pleasing, will show good an art exhibiting a lot of skills. He also indicates that, the event will communicate ideas

and feelings indirectly to give the right information about the people whether they show emotions of happiness or sadness. Kaplan and Norton (2000) also agree with Bates and adds that a good design is the purposeful assembly of various elements into a whole that delights the eye of an observer either because it evokes pleasant to look at or because it is particularly suited to its purpose.

These statements view decoration as arrangement of various elements just as in *kusakɔkɔ* celebration and putting them together in an organized manner intended to achieve its aesthetic qualities. To be successful as Kaplan and Norton indicate, the decorator must strictly adhere to the principles of design. In this study, arrangement of the ritual cloths for presentation, beautiful look at the a procession throughout the principal street of the communities showing people forming lines in rows with the initiate and their witnesses with the family member and interest groups behind, all display the aesthetic qualities, pleasing to the eye.

That is why, Kaplan and Norton further state that, to plan an object to best suit its principles of design will make it pleasing to the sense of those who come in contact with it and to be harmonious with its surrounding. People from all over the world came to witness this ceremony. This year's rituals (2011) was the first to be organized on the Easter festivity and about twenty seven (27) initiates were allowed to go through their initiation rites, which attracts people from all walks of life to witness.

Kaplan and Norton (2000) are of the opinion that, the exercise involves planning or careful thinking of arrangement of elements in agreement with the aesthetic requirement of the observers. The statement therefore, applies to the arrangement activities or events together with the use of various art forms in *kusakɔkɔ* celebration.

Kaplan and Norton further assert that, all natural and human-made objects can be defined by lines. He says, a line is a mark made by a pen or drawing instrument or can be any

continuous mark, which causes your eye to follow along its path. For example, when one rubs his finger across the top of a dusty table, the mark that is left is called a line. The procession of *kusakakɔ* was formed in three lines and as they move their footsteps were left behind as they pass through the sandy area to create patterns, just in agreement with Bates' affirmation.

A line moves and as it does, it indicates direction by traveling in a path that leads somewhere up, down, under, around through, back, forward, left, right, into, over, diagonally or across. Straight line leads the eyes swiftly across the picture plane but the eye travels more slowly when following the path of the other line. Bold lines also indicate a feeling of power, while fine lines project a feeling of sensitivity. Lines used in varying weights and directions with definite control placed on its direction can create optical sensations.

Amenuke (1995) claims that, line in nature appears as cracks in trees, rocks, surfaces, roads, tree branches, grass, climbing stems, animal trails and paths and various examples as straight, curve, zigzag, broken, undulating, diagonal, dark, light, vertical, horizontal, parallel, thick, thin, rough, and smooth lines. He went further to reveal the symbolism of a few lines by indicating that, undulating lines represent the stream of life and sometimes used to decorate water pots which are believed to support the life-force.

Line is used to create accent. Bates (2000) relates a line to space as he states that, a line begins, takes a path, turns and meets itself, creating a shape. Line is quickly used by artists to capture their impressions. It conveys dimensionality, used as variations in value and has expressive qualities. Bates explains that all natural and human-made objects can be defined by lines. The use of lines as observed in the study cannot be overemphasized especially as different types such as straight, bold, undulating, zigzag and spirals formed the basis for the design patterns the kete cloths that were used both for rituals and worn for body decoration.

It means whenever we use a line to enclose an area, we create a shape. Shape can be

drawn with lines, painted, or cut out of paper or other two-dimensional material. Geometric shapes are regular. They can be constructed through the use of mathematical formulas. Organic, amorphous and irregular are words used to describe shapes that are not derived from mathematical formulas. The study focuses more on organic shapes found in nature because it can promote new feelings and awaken old ones by making one relates to what is known and felt about the environment. For example tall shapes are elevating while solid shapes appear to be stable but long, flat shapes express calmness and are directional, while downwards shapes activate the sense of falling. The study revealed that, depending upon how the initiates were dressed and decorated in celebration, projects the various shape descriptions as indicated in the above statement.

Ocvrik (1998) explains further the relationship between shape and principle of design. He says if an artist wishes to create order unity and increase attention span, they have to conform to certain principles, they are often forced to alter shapes from their natural appearance. It is in this respect the building blocks of art structure.

Amenuke (1995) explains the symbolic significance in the Ghanaian arts of some basic shapes including, the circle, the oval, the square, the triangle, the crescent moon and the concentric circle or whorl. He talks about the symbolism of the circle being the presence and power of God which also symbolizes purity and holiness. He explains further how it forms the basic shape of indigenous pot for storing water symbolic of 'life stream' and the all parts of the region of sex and sensory organs regarded as sacred. Certainly the people of Avatime also share the same sentiments as indicative of used of pots for storage, cooking and for other decorations, the beads were worn on the wrists and waist.

Amenuke also touched on the oval shape and says it is the symbol of female beauty and cleaning power in the society, and adds that it forms the basis of all the conceptions about the

ideal of the female human figure. Natural and man-made objects have a combination of basic geometric shapes such as spheres, cylinders, cones, cubes and pyramids. In translating the idea, it means in the imagination to an original art form, an artist selects a suitable material with which to work. The various art forms used in *kusakəkə* celebration have different shapes exhibited and include final shapes of the initiates after they have been dressed glamorously and gorgeously in their costumes. The principle also affects the pottery products, sculpture, metal, beads, and all the other art products used in the various activities.

Mass is also not left out of the aesthetic values because the three-dimensional equivalent of shape, although it may be found in art works that gives an illusion of mass, Bates (2000) refers to as volume or bulk of objects in a work of art. The aesthetic effect of mass is most readily grasped in architecture and sculpture forms used in the celebration such as the stool, the utensils used to stir the ritual porridge (*bimukə*), the mortar and pestle used for *amutoto*, the drums among others.

According to Bates (2000) colour is a sensation, which causes stimulation of the eye. It made the whole celebration very colourful and attracts the eyes of many who came to grace the occasion and is one of the most obvious points of attraction around the fête. Bates declares that, colour is the absorption and reflection of light on a surface and shows psychological effects such as emotional responses. For example when one says the *kusakəkə* celebration gave a clear, bright blue sky on a cool, crisp day and quickens an emotional response, it is suggesting cheerfulness. Again, one may say colour also conveys information in purely descriptive terms, symbolic of the meaning and significance of the various costumes and beads used for decorations in the celebration of *kusakəkə*. Bates makes a distinction here and says, scientists may define colour as an effect of physical forces on our nervous system through impact on the retina whiles to painters, however, colour is far more complex: It is a vital

element closely related to all the other design elements. It is the sensitivity, with which painters use colour can convey a personal style that gives meaning to a particular work. Ultimately it can influence the varied responses of viewers to a work of art (Bates, 2000).

Amenuke et al, (1991) propound that, in Ghanaian indigenous subculture, the beauty of colour is in its visual qualities and in its social meaning and these are not assigned to modern scientific theories but on philosophical, psychological and spiritual meanings related to life. For example, they tried to give the symbolism of some colours as Gold: royalty, continuous life, warmth and controlled fire, rule of God or king, prosperity of individual, Silver: female royalty, feminine qualities, Red: close blood relations, Blue: love, female tenderness, rule of a queen, Green: newness, fertility, growth and vitality, White: joy, happiness, puberty, virginity, faultlessness of God. However these concepts seemed foreign to the people of Avatime.

2.4.1 The use of colour In Avatime

Osei-Poku (1999) as cited in Agbo (2009) refers to the colour yellow as an intellectual, idealist and loner but then an ancient civilization. He says yellow meant glory, fortune and intellect that symbolizes sanctity, preciousness, royalty, wealth, spiritual validity and fertility. He associated yellow with the yoke of an egg, ripe fruits and mineral gold. His symbolism of the colour yellow has a bearing on the notions of colours in Avatime but the yellow is found among the colours referred to as white *nufufui* by Ewes and in Avatime language *bidɔ pititi*.

The Avatimes have departed from the normal and general notions of colours which are the yellow, blue, red, green, purples, white, black and brown. They are Guans who settle in the Volta Region so they follow the pattern of the wide array of colours used among the Ewes as asserted by Gavua (2000) as cited in Agbo (2009).

The Avatimes also believed in only three major types of colours being the basis of colour upon which other colours are formed. These basic colours simply put, may be likened to their own primary colours from which other colours are formed. The three major colours according to Agbo (2009) are black, red and white. The major colours are shown in figure 1.1. The Ewes refer to these colours as black (nuyibo), white (nufufui) and red (nudzie or nubabia). However, the Avatimes who also speak their Guan language known as Avatime language, pronounce these colours as Black (*bidɔkpikpi*), White (*bidɔ pititi*) and red (*bidɔ tsĩ tsĩ*). They do accept the concept of each colour characterized by a range of colours as expressed by Agbo indicating that, black refers to all dark colours in relation such as brown, deep blue, deep green. White also relates to light colours as gray, ash and cream. Red and its related colours are pink, maroon and violet. The three major colours are however very symbolic and significant in social activities of the people of Avatime. They are widely used during *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites.



Figure 2.1 *The Major Colours used by the Ewes*
Source: Agbo, (2009)

Red in Avatime

Gavua (2000) reveals the symbolism and significance of the three major colours for red, white and black. He says red is regarded as a sacred colour, danger and power because it is associated with blood and added that red related costumes show bereaved families, red flags express imminent danger and that persons with red eyes are feared and avoided by many people. He also commented that, occasionally followers of indigenous religion used red for protected life and property against dangerous metaphysical forces or dangerous spirits. The Avatimes also use red to symbolize the empowerment of female in society so red related costumes used in *kusakɔkɔ* celebration signify power and boldness of females to 'act'.

Black in Avatime

Black and its related colours as used generally by the Ewes are associated with sorrow mourning, and the end of life. They use mourning costumes to express emotions and to identify ancestors and therefore it is very odd for anyone to wear dark costumes during any other occasions except for funeral celebration (Gavua, 2000). On the contrary black related colours especially green and blue are significantly used by the Avatimes in their *kusakɔkɔ* celebration with different understanding. The green symbolizes growth, fertility vitality and prosperity. They believed that as a woman, she must be fruitful, grow in good health, because a healthy woman can nurture healthy children and green is associated with their vegetation in the area due to their forest type of vegetation. The blue relates to the blue sky and to the Avatimes, it shows the love of God Almighty and his blessing, therefore, it symbolizes the blessing of God in both spiritual and material prosperity. The blue also signifies good tidings.

White in Avatime

Gavua (2000) explains that white denotes peace, joy, victory and life which express positive sentiments. The Ewes use white related costumes for joyous occasions. He says in expressing the purity and desire of the gods for peace, priests and priestesses of the indigenous religion normally wear white related items. Kaolin is also significantly used by the Ewes. Its solution is smeared on newly installed chiefs both to distinguish and link them up with ancestors spiritually. According to him, white symbolizes success hence the wearing of costumes to celebrate successful activity. In Avatime, it is used similarly in *kusakɔkɔ* to signify a successful initiation into womanhood. The Avatimes believed that a successful woman is glory to God and since they are the home makers, their philosophy is that, any man who marries a successful 'woman' (the woman who has being through *kusakɔkɔ* rites successfully) brings success to the home, for that matter, the home is 'complete'. It is therefore their wish that every man will marry a 'woman'.

The path that our eyes follow, when we look at a work of art, is known as movement. We have moving forms, colour and patterns of light. This principle directs us towards a specific point. If the artist has created a rhythmic flow, then our eyes are easily led from one place to another. Time is associated with movement. Pictures are capable of holding our attention for varying amounts of time, either briefly or for extended periods. For example, the drawing of a staircase or a tree spiraling shows a feeling of movement.

Elements, which have something in common, are repeated regularly or irregularly, sometimes creating a rhythm. When the interval between shapes that are exactly alike is repeated in uniform and regulated order, the design tends to become more formal. For example, repeated colour on different areas of a picture plane creates increases in power. Repetition holds the overall design together.

Kaplan and Norton argue that, emphasis calls attention to important areas of design and subdues everything else on the picture plane. The artist creates centers of interest, which cause eyes to return again and again. For, contrast, they see it as differences in a composition and says it breaks monotony and makes it possible to show differences and most designs require this quality. Contrast can create variety in art work. It can create movement in a composition and create emphasis in an art work. Contrast varies in works of art depending upon the degree of differences within compositions. For example, red or green for colour, geometric or organic for shape, vertical or horizontal for line and rough or smooth for texture and *kusakaka* is not left out.

Unity pertains to wholeness or oneness. Unity in art refers to ways in which the parts work together to create a harmonious or inharmonious composition and looking at the combination of all the elements if design putting them together, making the whole celebration colourful and beautiful is the major work of the principle in question.

Proportion is the size relationship in a composition or design. Things that are out of proportion are often awkward or disturbing such as an oversized sofa in a small room, or part of a figure that is small as compared to the other parts such as a big head compared with the rest of the parts of the body.

Kaplan and Norton (2000) opine that, a good design is the purposeful assembly of various elements into a whole that delights the eye of an observer either because it evokes pleasant to look at or because it is particularly suited to its purpose. There are many basic concepts that underlie the field of design. They are often categorized differently depending on philosophy or teaching methodology. The first thing we need to do is organize them, so that we have a framework for this discussion.

For the purpose of this research, the principles of design are the overarching truths of the

profession. They represent the basic assumptions of the world that guide the design practice, and affect the arrangement of objects within a composition.

Let us begin by focusing on the principles of design, the axioms of our profession. Ocvirk (1998) gives the meaning of some principles of design as: Balance is an equilibrium that results from looking at images and judging them against our ideas of physical structure (such as mass, gravity or the sides of a page). It is the arrangement of the objects in a given design as it relates to their visual weight within a composition. Balance usually comes in two forms: symmetrical and asymmetrical. This principle is used in the procession and decoration of the *kusakəkə* initiates.

Symmetrical balance occurs when the weight of a composition is evenly distributed around a central vertical or horizontal axis. Under normal circumstances it assumes identical forms on both sides of the axis. When symmetry occurs with similar, but not identical, forms it is called approximate symmetry. In addition, it is possible to build a composition equally around a central point resulting in radial symmetry. Symmetrical balance is also known as formal balance. In relation to *kusakəkə* ceremony, symmetry occurs in the area of dancing, where the dancers rhythmically go round the drummers positioned in the centre of the merry making activity.

Rhythm is the repetition or alternation of elements, often with defined intervals between them. Rhythm can create a sense of movement, and can establish pattern and texture. Ocvirk (1998) explained that there are many different kinds of rhythm, often defined by the feeling it evokes when looking at it. These are:

- Regular: A regular rhythm occurs when the intervals between the elements, and often the elements themselves, are similar in size or length. This can be seen in the *bewue* cloth used prior to the *kusakəkə* rituals.

- Flowing: A flowing rhythm gives a sense of movement, and is often more organic in nature. Normally, the *kusakakɔ* procession shows a rhythm of flow.
- Progressive: A progressive rhythm shows a sequence of forms through a progression of steps. This is also seen in the procession of feet in **Plate 2.1**.



Plate 2.1 *Regular steps suggesting rhythm*

Ocvirk argues that dominance relates to varying degrees of emphasis in design. It determines the visual weight of a composition, establishes space and perspective, and often resolves where the eye goes first when looking at a design. He explained that there are three stages of dominance, each relating to the weight of a particular object within a composition.

- Dominant: The object given the most visual weight, the element of primary emphasis that advances to the foreground in the composition.
- Sub-dominant: The element of secondary emphasis, the elements in the middle ground of the composition.
- Subordinate: The object given the least visual weight, the element of tertiary emphasis that recedes to the background of the composition.

So also in the celebration of *kusakakɔ* the initiates dominate, followed by their witnesses (see **Plate 2.2**). They are well projected in front as the focal point of the whole picture created in the procession.



Plate 2.2 *Procession suggesting dominance*

Ocvirk opines that the concept of unity describes the relationship between the individual parts and the whole of a composition. It investigates the aspects of a given design that are necessary to tie the composition together, to give it a sense of wholeness, or to break it apart and give it a sense of variety. Unity in design is a concept that stems from some of the Gestalt theories of visual perception and psychology, specifically those dealing with how the human brain organizes visual information into categories, or groups. This is seen in the assembly of the myriad of colours or orchestration of colours.

According to Ocvirk, continuance is the idea that once one begins looking in one direction, he or she will continue to do so until something more significant catches the attention. Perspective, or the use of dominant directional lines, tends to successfully direct the viewers eye in a given direction. In addition, the eye direction of any subjects in the design

itself can cause a similar effect. In the example below, the eye immediately goes down the direction of the road ending up in the upper right corner of the frame of reference. There is no other dominant object to catch and redirect the attention.

In this regard, the human figures in the *kusakakɔ* procession appear or seem to be smaller when far away and bigger when close to the viewer suggesting perspective. The colours of the fabrics appear vivid and brighter when close and pale and gray when far away from the viewer as shown in **Plate 2.3**.



Plate 2.3 *Procession suggesting perspective*

Contrast addresses the notion of dynamic tension or the degree of conflict that exists within a given design between the visual elements in the composition. This can be seen in the *bewue* cloth where yarns used are in contrast e.g. Blue-black and white (see **Plate 2.4**).



Plate 2.4 *Ewe kete cloth suggesting contrast*

Ocvirk asserts that positive and negative space refers to the juxtaposition of figure and ground in a composition. The objects in the environment represent the positive space, and the environment itself is the negative space. The dance in **Plate 2.5** suggests positive and negative space.



Plate 2.5 *Picture suggesting positive and negative space*

In a similar discourse, Kaplan and Norton (2000) also outlined the principles of design. It must be stated here that these principles are applicable to what has been discussed by Ocvirk (1998). These principles include:

- i. Balance: a sense of equilibrium achieved through implied weight, attention, by manipulating the visual elements within an artwork.
- ii. Harmony: the quality of relating the visual elements of a composition; harmony by repetition of characteristics that are the same.
- iii. Movement: eye travel directed by visual path ways in work of art.
- iv. Repetition is the use of the same visual effect a number of times in the same composition and says repetition may produce the dominance of one visual idea, a feeling of harmonious relationship, an obvious planned pattern, or a rhythmic movement.
- v. Differences achieved by opposing contrasting; changing, elaborating, or diversifying elements in a composition to add individualism and interest; the counterweight of harmony in art.
- vi. Dominance is the principle of visual organization where certain elements assumed were important than others in the same composition or design. Some features are emphasized and others are subordinated.
- vii. Unity, in this same instance means oneness, an organization of parts that fit into the order of a whole. He emphasizes the need to observe certain rules or principles of order or design.
- viii. With balance, he says as artists seek compositional balance, they work with the knowledge that, shapes have different visual weight depending on how they are used.
- ix. For direction, he says, artists can use the elements of form to generate visual forces that direct our eye as we view the work, and then the unifying and rhythmic effects provided

by the eye path are modified by the number and length of the pauses in the eye journey.

This applies to the arrangement of the clay knobs, which is the subject in review.

- x. He says, harmony ensures that all things seem to belong together. These need not always be an identical likeness but perhaps, merely enough to see their relationship.
- xi. Variety is the other side of the coin. Enough difference must exist to make for challenging viewing. He maintains that these differences are attraction that grasp and hold our attention for period thought necessary by the artist or the potter.

Our attention is constantly being maneuvered about the surface of a ceramic work by the degree of emphasis given to the various areas that surface. The movement of our eyes is directed to another, passing over, or through the “rest” or de-emphasized areas.

Clark (1973) concludes that, decoration must really be designed throughout and related to the form. By taking aspects of a drawing and applying the basic principles and contrast on line, mass, colour, movement, etc. with the shape always in mind, some form of decoration should result. The drawing should primarily be seen as a composition of formal shapes and marks within a given area. Only when we appreciate these elements and see them objectively can we begin to use them as decoration.

That is why, Davies (2004) states that aesthetic education, deals with experiences of beauty, ugliness and other aesthetic process wherever they are found. He states aesthetics, in a stricter sense, is concerned with the perception and appreciation of art and other beautiful objects rather than creation of performance. He adds that, aesthetics is the philosophical investigation of art, understood to include the visual arts, painting, sculpture, photography, film, music literature, drama and dance. Davies considers the nature of reality and existence, the use and limits of knowledge and the principles that govern and influence moral judgment of art. He also mentioned the function that the object performs as a work of art.

2.5 Educational Values

Education, according to Quist and Strik (2002) is the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge. Education, as proper usage of knowledge, is acquired and deals with passing down worthwhile or useful values within a society. Society such as Avatime traditional area values knowledge, skills, norms and laws and customs which include the use of both visual and performing arts, beliefs, philosophies and many others. These values are also involved in the celebration of *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites of the people of Avatime.

The concept of education can be interpreted differently by scholars and non scholars alike based on their interest and orientation. Looking at education from the socialist perspective, Durkheim (1992) thinks that it is the systematic socialization of the younger generation by which the latter learns religious and moral beliefs, feelings of nationality and collective opinions of all kinds.

Kneller (1971) also adds that education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its cultural heritage through schools, colleges, universities and other institution. The socialist see education, as the transmission of culture, and this view cannot be seen to be narrow because both in the school and outside the school, societies transmit their cultural heritage. Avatimes hand down all their accumulated knowledge, skills, norms, beliefs and values to their members through *kusakɔkɔ* celebration.

Agyeman (1986) asserts that education is basically the process through which the individual learns to become a complete social member of his society and thereby performs social roles in the society. He went on to say, education is a social institution through which each society influences its accumulated knowledge, art, laws, morals and ways of behavior, the acquisition of which brings the individuals to the perfection of their nature. The concept of education cannot be interpreted without looking at the philosophical view point of Peters

(1966) who maintains that education implies that something worthwhile is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable means.

According to Hist and Peters (1970) educating people suggests a family of processes whose principle of unity is the development of desirable qualities in them. Some other philosophers share their views about education. Whitehead cited in Hist and Peters (1970) opines that, education is the art of the utilization of knowledge. He sees education as guidance towards the understanding of the art of living. This means that if you have knowledge and you do not apply, it is useless to enhance living condition.

Dewey (2009) defines education as the reconstruction or re-organization of experiences which adds to the meaning of experience and increases the ability to direct the cause of subsequent experience. He also points out further that education is fundamental method of social process and reforms. To him education is the best teacher.

O'Connor (1957) also adds that, the educational system of any society is more or less elaborate mechanism designed by society to instill in individuals certain skills or attitudes that are judged to be useful and desirable in that society. He maintains that the business of education is therefore to develop the individual as a person and prepare him to function effectively in the society.

Moumouni, (1964) explains that, traditional education was a comprehensive approach to the development of the whole man for the service of his community. He says traditional education was an integrated experience combining not only physical with character training but also manual with intellectual training. Here emphasis was placed on excellence in character development since the lack of it makes a person totally useless. So, if education is the process by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values or attitudes, then, it should help people become useful members of society to develop appreciation of their cultural

heritage and live more satisfying lives. The most common way to get an education is to attend school but, much education also takes place outside the classroom which involves both learning and teaching. Sometimes people learn by teaching themselves. They also learn with the help of other people such as parents or teachers. Parents are a child's first and perhaps the most important teachers because they learn attitudes, habits and values that help shape their character and remain with them throughout life.

Kusakəkə celebration sees education as key to helping the people of Avatime to acquire the skills they need for their everyday activities and gives them specialized training they may need to prepare for a job or career such as weaving of cloth, weaving of basket, making pottery, beads making, carpentry, carving and making farming implements as well as farming itself. It is believed that, of all living things, only man has developed a means of passing on his learning values, skills and attitudes to new generations. Learning takes place through the entire life span of man. The education content in *kusakəkə* includes family loyalty, loyalty, virtue, propriety and patience, morals, gratitude, respect, religious values, motherhood, protection, manners, beauty, cleanliness, punctuality and time values, diligence, endurance and treasures as expressed in their own language (see section 4.3).

Many people think only of school work when they speak of education. More true, education, however, comes from outside the school programme than from within it. It is in ordinary family situations that the child learns his basic skills, attitudes, sharing with others, love of fellow man, and respect for law which means, it is upon these fundamentals that, future success and satisfaction often depend. Upon such things rest the rich heritage of human due to the fact that, education helps in bringing up or training, a member through instructions to strengthening of the powers of body or mind.

Here, the emphasis are placed on the training of the mind and the body because even in simple Paleolithic and Neolithic societies of hunters, food gathers and hoe cultivators, long before the invention, have been taken to teach the young, skills and knowledge necessary for the community to survive. From all the definitions of the various sociologists, philosophers, traditionalists and others, it is obvious that educational values have been derived from passing on of milieu of accumulated knowledge, skills, values, standards, morals, attitudes, and the like through societal beliefs, symbols, and experiences for the development of the whole person. There is the consideration of the cognitive, affective as well as the psychomotor development of the individual but, to the traditionalists and sociologists, education has taken a social dimension. It is seen as the transmission of culture of society to the child socialization or the development of knowledge, skills, ability or character and spirit by teaching, study or experience for which the individual becomes successful and learns to become a complete member of his society. As to how *kusakaka* educates, (see sections 4.2 and 4.3) respectively. So one may ask, what is culture?

2.5.1 The impact of culture on education

Helman (2001) defines culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Keesing as cited in Helman, says culture comprises systems of shared ideas, systems of concepts and rules and meaning that underlie and are expressed in the way that human beings live.

Then, Helman explains that culture is a series of guidelines, both explicit and implicit, that individuals inherit as members of a particular society, and that tells them, how to view the world, how to experience it emotionally, and how to behave in it in relation to other people, to

supernatural forces or gods, and to the natural environment. To him, it also provides them with a way of transmitting these guidelines to the next generation by the use of symbols, language, art and ritual. He says to some extent, culture can be seen as an inherited 'lens' through which the individual perceives and understand the world that he inhabits and learns how to live within it. Moving on he says, growing up within any society is a form of enculturation, whereby the individual slowly acquires the cultural 'lens' of that society and concludes that, without such a shared perception of the world, both the cohesion and continuity of any human group would be impossible.

Helman also mentioned the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall who has proposed that in each human group there are actually three different levels of culture. These range from the explicit manifest culture, 'tertiary level culture', visible to the outsider, such as social rituals, traditional dress, national cuisine and festive occasions, in deeper levels known only to members of the cultural group themselves. He explains that, while the tertiary level is basically the public frontage presented to the world at large, below it lies a series of implicit assumptions, beliefs and rules which constitute that group's 'grammar'.

Helman further says, deeper level includes 'secondary level culture' where these underlying rules and assumptions are known to the members of the group but rarely shared with outsiders, and 'primary level culture'. This is the deepest level of culture in which the rules are known to all, obeyed by all, but seldom if ever stated. Its rules are implicit, taken for granted, almost impossible for the average person to state as a system, and generally out of awareness.

However, in Hall's view, while the manifest tertiary level of culture is easiest to observe, change, and manipulate, it is the deeper levels thus, primary and secondary, which are the most hidden, stable and resistant to change. This in turn has major implications for the applied

social scientist, especially for those involved in aiding or educating populations from cultures different to their own. Helman (2001) gave an example that all cultures divide up their members into different social categories such as men or women, children or adults, young people or old people, kinsfolk or strangers' upper class or lower class, able or disabled, normal or abnormal, mad or bad, healthy or ill. This statement agrees with the reason why the people of Avatime decided to separate only women to hand down their knowledge, art symbols, beliefs and attitudes. In Avatime, women are the custodians and the authority of *kusakaka*.

Anthropologists including Leach, cited in Helman (2001) have pointed out that, virtually all societies have more than one culture within their borders and give example that most societies have some form of social stratification into social classes, castes or ranks. Each stratum is marked by its own distinctive cultural attributes, including use of language, manners, styles of dress, dietary and housing patterns as the rich and poor, powerful and powerless each will have their own inherited cultural perspective. To some extent, both men and women can have their own distinctive 'cultures' within the same society, and are expected to conform to different norms and different expectations. Many of these groups will undergo some degree of acculturation over time, whereby they incorporate some of the cultural attributes of the larger society, but others will not. So then, one may ask another question, what impact has culture on education.

Culture has been defined by Kluckhohn as cited in Helman (2001) as a design for living while Becker, (1986) sees it as shared understanding that people use to coordinate their activities because members of the society must share certain basic ideas about how the world works, what is important in life, how technology is to be used, and what their artefacts and their actions mean. Wuthnow also cited in Helman (2001) distinguished between the two and

says, a structure refers to the practical or instrumental aspects of social relations whereas culture refers to the symbolic or aspects of social relations.

Gelles and Levine (1995) also hinted that all cultures consist of six main elements, which are:

- i. Beliefs (shared explanation of experience)
- ii. Values (criteria of moral judgment)
- iii. Norms and sanctions (specific guidelines for behaviour)
- iv. Symbols (representations of beliefs and values)
- v. Language (a system of symbolic communication)
- vi. Technology.

Almost all the authors spoke about certain elements in their definition of both education and culture which are similar such as beliefs, norms, values, skills, knowledge, morals, symbols and other experiences as it also exist in the Avatime culture.

2.5.1.1 Beliefs

Beliefs according to Sarpong (1974) are shared ideas about how the world operates. They may be summaries and interpretations of the past, explanations of the present, or predictions for the future, and they may be based on common sense, folk wisdom, religion, or science or on some combination of these. Some beliefs apply to intangible things (for example whether the human spirit lives on after death). All cultures distinguish between ideas for which people have reasonable proof (the idea that smoking increases the risk of cancer) and ideas that cannot be tested (the idea that there is intelligent life on other planet).

Sarpong says belief in the spirits of the dead and in their influence over the living is found among all peoples, and in every conceivable religion and culture, belief in ancestors and their

reverence therefore are not peculiar to any age, religion or society.

2.5.1.2 Norms and sanctions

Gelles and Levine (1995) remind us that values are abstract ideals, norms are rules about what people should or should not do, say, or think in a given situation, for example while patriotism is a value, showing respect for the flag is a norm. To them, norms describe how people should behave and they provide guidelines for every activity. For example the major norm of the subject under study state clearly that every 'girl' will be regarded as Avatime 'woman' only after performing *kusakəkə* rites. The sanctions which follow the defilement of this norm is payment of fines, disregarding one's marriage or the performance of the rites when laying in state before burial.

2.5.1.3 Symbols

Though Gelles and Levine also see symbols as things that can express or evoke meaning. Sarpong (1974) adds that, symbols have meaning but not all the things that have a meaning are symbols. The way in which Africans think about the world they live in, is often in symbolic, rather than, scientific terms. We cannot require all meaningful words to conform to rules of strict syllogism and inductive inference. Coherent thinking can be symbolic as well as scientific, and we cannot subject symbolic or poetic language to the same kind of analysis that we apply to scientific propositions. As in simple societies one has to be interested in symbols and symbolic thinking, the first thing that is to be determined is the meaning of 'symbol'. In many of its usages it is too wide for any useful conclusions to be derived from its study.

A symbol has a meaning, but not all things that have a meaning are symbols. We distinguish between two kinds of signs representing things that have meanings and stand for

something other than themselves. First, there are signs which give information about happenings of the past, present or future. Their aim is to convey a specific message. Thus red light signifies that it is either dangerous or illegal to drive ahead. Animals make frequent use of signs but they are incapable of symbolic thinking. Signs are usually conventional, as are also languages. There is no inherent reason why the sound Mawu should be understood by the Ewe as referring to God, and not some other sound as in other languages.

According to Antubam (1963) Puruo (the circle) as a motif is often used to symbolize the presence and power of God, and sanctify in the spirit of the male aspect of society. It appears in the circular plan of most traditional temples of Ghanaian fetish gods, such as the Tano of Takyiman, Ntona of Elmina, and Lakpa of Labadi, Accra. The basic shape of the traditional pot called Ahina in Akan is a good example of its usage as a symbol of life-stream.

The broken circle or whirl as a symbol of fertility, appears surprisingly on some male. The oval as a symbol of female beauty, it bears an element of leaning power. It appears in Ghanaian conceptions of the ideal shape of the female human figure. To be traditionally beautiful, a Ghanaian human figure must, in all its major shapes, fall into an oval of an egg. It is illustrated in the head shape of the Akan Ghanaian Akuaba (doll). It also appears in the shape of the traditional Ghanaian palm-wine pot called “akotokyiwa”. The word *kusakɔkɔ* alone in Avatime symbolizes ‘women empowerment’ or *kededze* in Avatime language.

2.5.1.4 Values

Gelles and Levine (1995) say whereas beliefs describe what is, values describe what ought to be. They see values as broad, abstract, shared standards of what is right, desirable, and worthy of respect. Although values are widely shared, they are seldom adhered to at all

times by every member of a culture. Rather, values set the general tone for cultural and social life.

Values serve as the standards that guide individuals as well as groups and institutions.

Ethical values define what is right and wrong. Basic ethical values include;

Fairness - rendering to each what is their due; being just and impartial.

Respect - acknowledging the dignity of others in our thoughts and actions.

Trustworthiness – being honest and reliable.

Caring - being empathetic and attentive to the needs of others. As to how these are translated in *kusakɔkɔ* (see section 4.3).

Ethical values often do not stand alone but are associated in clusters depending on contexts. The different clusters of values have slightly different emphases and the members of the cluster buttress one another. They are mutually supportive.

Also, virtues are aspects of our character; they are dispositions to act in accord with our fundamental values. A virtuous person is a person of good character whose actions are consistent with her or his values. In the Republic, Plato identified four central virtues; temperance, prudence, courage and justice. Other virtues include: altruism, beneficence, citizenship, compassion, dependability, fairness, fortitude, generosity, gratitude, honesty, honour and loyalty.

Most ethnic groups within a society tend to think that their culture is superior to the culture of other groups. This is especially true of the most powerful and dominant groups in our society.

Schofield (1972) describes education as a process of initiation. Learning must be provided to children and adults that leads to greater options for individual choice and for thinking beyond one's own learned cultural patterns of thought while still preserving respect

for one's own cultural roots. Thus each student is given the freedom to retain or transcend his culture.

Many people see education as the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge. To them education is proper usage of knowledge acquired and it deals with passing down worthwhile or useful values within a society. The people of Avatime value knowledge, skills, norms and laws, customs which include the use of both visual and performing arts, beliefs, philosophies and many others. These values are also involved in the celebration of *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites throughout in all the activities of the people of Amedzofe.

The concept of education can be interpreted differently by scholars and non scholars alike based on their interest and orientation. Looking at education from the socialist perspective, Durkheim (1992) thinks that it is the systematic socialization of the younger generation by which the latter learns religious and moral beliefs, feelings of nationality and collective opinions of all kinds.

According to Agyeman (1986) education is basically the process through which the individual learns to become a complete social member of his society and thereby performs social roles in the society. He went on to say that education is a social institution through which each society influences its individuals by passing on to them its culture which is the totality of the society's accumulated knowledge, art, laws, morals and ways of behaviour, the acquisition of which brings the individual to the perfection of their nature. The things in *kusakɔkɔ* which educate the public are indicated in section 4.3.

A community is everybody, adults and children, social or non-social, living in certain territory where all share a mode of life, but not all are conscious of their organization or purpose.

Ottaway (1962) also says society is a kind of community or a part of communities whose members have become socially conscious of their mode of life and are united by a common set of aims and values. The education is concerned with the development of personality. The teacher makes a deliberate and conscious attempt not only to teach his pupils a certain body of knowledge but also to change their behaviour and to change it in desired direction.

The aspects of the cultural groups, which affect teaching and learning, are classified as:

- (a) Miscellaneous factors which include income, occupation, education, language habits, types of residence, spending habits.
- (b) Living habits which are clothes and dresses, eating and diet, physical habits and means of keeping healthy, attitudes to marriage and sex, techniques of bringing up children, patterns of family life.
- (c) Leisure pursuits such as reading, radio and T.V. programmes preferred, sports, entertainment favoured means of artistic expression, ways of spending holidays.
- (d) Belief and value systems including moral attitudes and standards, religious beliefs, political view, social ambitions and aims in life. The behaviour of human is very flexible and will adapt itself to the cultural environment.

Musgrave (1979) defines culture as the patterns of behaviour that a society has to pass on to its new recruits as Tylor (1871) also sees it as complex whole which included knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. From all these definitions, culture can simply be defined as the way of life of a people of a place at a given time or period. Ghanaians have abstract philosophical and spiritual values which express our ideas of justice, vice and virtue, behaviour and interpersonal relation. Justice such as do not cheat, and do just what is right has positive impact on teaching and learning because it helps students to work hard and come out

with good results though it may not be all of them.

Communal life also enhances education because the sharing spirit is taught, which encourages group work. The other side is the mystical value. The meaning of something hidden somewhere may affect learning and teaching negatively. Herbalists try to hide the process of making medicine from the society or the young ones. Some societies value their language so much that everything is done to maintain its usage everywhere. The positive side of it is, sometimes the translation helps them to understand what is taught better. The culture of dressing also has an impact on education. Today, the modern way of dressing by our ladies which has different names such as *apuskeleke* and 'am aware' also characterized the fashion trends. The relation of the literature to *kusakəkə* reveals the type of accumulated knowledge and skills handed down to the young one to preserve their culture. Certain subjects or jobs are identified with males and others with females. Women were taught to be potters and for textiles while the men, sculpture and other heavy duty work. Society values love or affection.

Finally, the impact of culture on education, the way we dress, justice, language barriers, in communal life, division of sex roles and others is not to be overemphasized. From all the discussions, so far, it is very obvious that, culture and education have a lot of things in common because as Tylor (1871) sees culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom. Agyeman (1986) also defines education as a social institution through which each society influences its accumulated knowledge, art, laws, morals and ways of behavior, and the acquisition of these elements bring the individuals to the perfection of their nature and so the study of *kusakəkə* initiation rites focused on how the Avatimes value these elements and use them to successfully mould their women.

2.6 Rites of passage

Gennep (1977) defines rite of passage as a ritual event that marks a person's progress from one status to another and says it can show anthropologists what social hierarchies, values and beliefs are important in specific cultures. Rites of passage are often ceremonies surrounding events such as other milestones within puberty, coming of age, marriage and death.

Gennep (1969) also explains that rites of passage refers to the processes by which a creature moves from one state, level, or role to another. He adds that this process is usually psychologically, physically and spiritually intense and said many rites of passage, such as human birth, adulthood status, and death have become ritualistically celebrated and are experienced in various ways depending on the culture. Gennep also gives the 3-stage models for creating rites of passage as separation from the familiar, transition from old state to new state and reintegration into original social structure.

Sarpong (1974) noted that, every culture is ultimately the handiwork of God. He thinks, it is God who placed people where they are and, allowed them to use their ingenuity and resourcefulness to subdue their environment, adapt it and have the ability to draw what advantages they want in order to arrive at their particular cultural situation or stage.

He also reiterated that, all over Africa and for that matter the whole world, significant rituals and ceremonies are, with varying degrees of intensity and seriousness, performed at the three major turning points of a man's life. According to him, in the so called primitive societies, these rites are collectively termed "rites de passage" or "Rites of Passage" from one stage to another. The crucial turning points are generally the time a person enters the world through birth, when he comes of age and enters the world of adulthood, and when through death, he departs from this world and enters the world of his forebears. What is adulthood?

2.6.1 Adulthood

This study is focused on the transition from childhood to adulthood. According Sarpong (1974), the transition from childhood to adulthood may be considered both as a physiological phenomenon, in which case we speak of puberty, and as a sociological fact. Here he says that, the operative religious terms are ‘‘ puberty rites’’ and ‘‘ initiation ceremonies’’ while in the case of sociological adulthood, the distinction is also sometimes made between the access that one is given to sexual life, with its marital implications, and the social rights and duties one assumes as an adult in everyday life. In this regard, the difference between ‘‘nubility’’ and ‘‘initiation’’ is noteworthy.

Nubility and initiation ceremonies differ from one society to another, and, within the same society may have different emphasis for boys and girls. In initiation ceremonies, the neophyte may have to undergo such ordeals as circumcision and bodily operations which result in cicatrices on the face, stomach and other parts of the body: he may be requested to kill a bull with one stroke of the hammer; he may be compelled to fight and cut off the head of a lion or a human being’ he may be requested only to dance and feast. In many African societies, after going through his initiation ceremonies, one moves to the warrior stage and is expected to stand up and defend his people when the need arises and the need often does arise with devilish frequency, especially in pastoral societies, where people have to defend their cattle against raiders. In some societies marriage is considered to be a natural sequence to nubility or initiation rites, which therefore do not require much elaboration. In others, it is a distinct phenomenon requiring a thorough treatment in its own right.

Unlike the child, the adult is expected to behave in some well defined manner which should be in accordance with his age, status in life and condition of health. This mode of adult behaviours is particularly signified in the various initiation ceremonies of the various African

societies. Sarpong (1974) explains that, the ceremonies are not only meant to signify something real and of importance but they are also to effect what they stand for, so that when a girl initiated is given an egg to swallow shows that, her future labours may turn out to be easy, the girl and the community are telling the spirits what they want from them, the expressive or suggestive aspect of the rite. They also believe that eggs are laid and bathed with ease meant to perform is to usher the child into adulthood. After the performance of the initiation ceremonies, one has the right, and at times to perform certain acts that were formerly out of bounds to one. In some societies after a girl has been initiated she is entitled to be referred to by all who have not been initiated as 'mother'.

From the above statements, one will comfortably defined initiation as a rite of passage ceremony marking entrance or acceptance into a group or society. It could also be a formal admission to adulthood in a community or one of its formal components. In an extended sense it can also signify a transformation in which the initiate is 'reborn' into a new role. A spiritual initiation rite normally implies a shepherding process where those who are at a higher level guide the initiate through a process of greater exposure of knowledge. This may include the revelation of secrets, hence the term secret society for such organizations, usually reserved for those at the higher level of understanding.

Turner (1982) indicates that, life may be interpreted as a series of transitions from one status or condition to another. In most instances, the transition is a step forward or upward. Every person moves from fixed placental placement within the mother's womb, to his death and final containment to his grave as a dead organism punctuated by a number of critical moment of transition which all societies ritualized and publicly marked with suitable observances to impress the significance of the individual and the group on living members of the community.

When one is born, the day, the month and the year of his life time are all divided up or reckoned accordingly to their specific events which make life meaningful. Possibly the most noteworthy of transitions and one that is frequently celebrated with art works by the people of Avatime is the *kusakoko* initiation rites.

2.6.1.1 Initiation rites

Eliade (1998) thinks initiation is an event which may help teens prepare themselves to be good husbands and wives. Where modernization is occurring, initiation is not taken so seriously as before, although there are still certain areas which still perform initiations. Initiation is a rite of passage ceremony marking entrance or acceptance into a group or society. It could also be a formal admission to adulthood in a community or one of its formal components. In an extended sense it can also signify a transformation in which the initiate is 'reborn' into a new role. A person taking the initiation ceremony in traditional rites, such as those depicted in these pictures, is called an *initiate*. Eliade gave reasons for and functions of initiation as follows:

- This real valuation of ritual death finally led to conquest of the fear of real death.
- To reveal the deep meaning of existence to the new generations and to help them assume the responsibility of being truly men and hence of participating in culture.
- It reveals a world open to the transhuman, a world that, in our philosophical terminology, we should call transcendental.
- To make the initiate open to spiritual values.

2.6.1.2 Types of initiation

Eliade (1998) differentiates between types of initiations in two ways:

He says puberty rites is a collective ritual whose function is to effect the transition from childhood or adolescence to adulthood. These types of initiations represent above all the revelation of the sacred who enter into a Secret Society Mystical Vocation, the vocation of a medicine man or a shaman. The initiation is limited to the few who are destined to participate in a more intense religious experience than is accessible to the rest of the community and thinks these can be broken into two types:

- Puberty rites, by virtue of which adolescents gain access to the sacred, to knowledge, and to sexuality by which, in short, they become human beings.
- Specialized initiations, which certain individuals undergo in order to transcend their human condition and become protégés of the Supernatural Beings or even their equals. A person taking the initiation ceremony in traditional rites, such as those depicted in these pictures, is called an *initiate*.

2.6.1.3 Sex and Marriage connected in initiation

However, by far the most important effect of initiation ceremonies is that, they introduce one into sex and marriage life as indicated by Eliade (1998). He says in some Ghanaian societies, girls, and to a lesser extent, boys, who have not been initiated are not supposed to know anything by experience about sex. Boys and girls who married for the first time were said to have been taught how to perform the sex act. A girl who indulged in sexual adventure prior to her initiation was severely punished, sometimes with death, particularly if she had not reached physiological puberty. If, on the other hand, it was found out that she was biologically mature but had still to be socially declared so through the performance of the rites, then she was ritually cleansed and purified, and then punished with a fine or something less stringent than would have been meted out to her if she had been below the age of physiological puberty.

According to Eliade girl who conceived before being initiated was dealt with in like manner. All this was demanded by custom because it was implicitly thought that by her misbehaviour the girl had usurped a position which she was not entitled. Sex was for the adult. If then she wanted to explore the possibilities of sex, then she had first to inform the community. It is because of the close association between sex and marriage on one hand and the initiation ceremonies on the other that the latter is sometimes referred to as nubility rites.

Eliade states that initiation ceremonies may be performed for groups of persons when it is a group affair; the initiates are usually of similar ages, and those initiated during one set of ceremonies belong to what is termed the same age-set. In some societies there are cycles within which people are initiated, the result being that one group of initiates may contain individuals with varying ages, but the age difference is usually not wider than five years between the youngest and the oldest neophyte. Age mates may enjoy mutual rights and have common duties. For example, among some people age mates may be entitled to exchange wives, eat one another's food without permission or even knowledge, use one another's personal effects, and so forth. Initiation ceremonies, as was remarked earlier, are mostly marked by tests of endurance. Novices may be put to diverse tests by being operated in broad day light with crude instruments.

Eliade adds that there are usually men and women who are reputed to have the skill and the potency to perform these operations. They make as many as six deep cuts across the novice's forehead from one ear to the other. They may make cicatrices on the stomach, the face, the back or buttocks. Some of these marks are renewable and renewed from time to time. At times the novices tooth or teeth are forcibly extracted. The usual forms of operations, however, are circumcision (for boys) and cutting clitoris (for girls). It is essential that while these operations are being performed the neophyte show no sign of pain. One who screams

while he or she is being operated upon may be hard put to it to find a wife or husband. Such a person has shown by his shameful reaction to the operation that he is still a child, not a man or woman to marry. For the reason for these 'cruel' exercises is to find out whether indeed the individual is prepared to assume all the responsibilities of adult which are not child's play.

2.7 Initiation rites in other cultures.

The theoretical model developed by the late Victor Turner as cited in Eliade (1998) to describe initiation includes a phase of separation from the child's family and playmates, followed by a liminal state when the child is neither a child nor an adult, but is believed to live in a different world, in a different state, and ending with reintegration as an adult into village society. Among some peoples the metaphor of being eaten by a monster from the wilderness, to spend time in the belly of the beast and to be reborn or regurgitated as an adult serves as an alternative theoretical model. Scars may be applied to the abdomen and back of the child that imitate the tooth marks of the monster from the wilderness. When the new initiate is "reborn" he or she may need to be taught how to eat, dress and even speak just as an infant might be taught. The Makonde mask seen here bears the elaborate scars that Makonde men and women wore in the 19th century (see **Plate 2.6**). The main concern here is the use of an art form to promote culture. The Makonde also value education, hence just as the Avatime people, they teach their young ones how to dress, eat and speak in public.

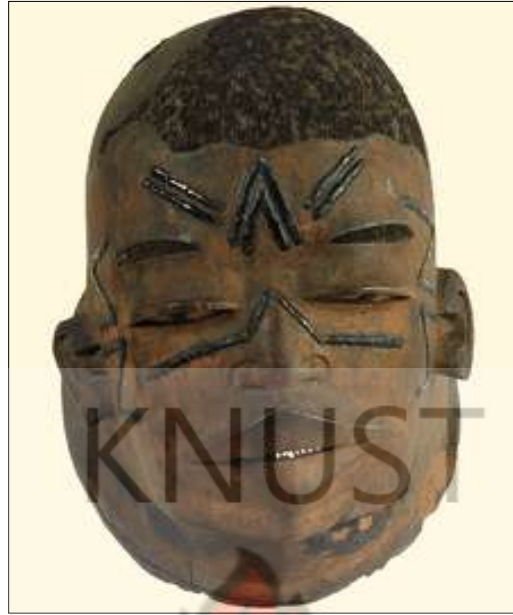


Plate 2.6 *Mask, Mapiko*
(The University of Iowa Museum of Art)

Eliade argues that among the goals of African initiation is the acquisition of knowledge, especially of secrets which separate those who have been initiated from those who have not. These secrets may include the knowledge of healing medicines, the history of the people, an understanding of the spiritual world, and that the masks intended to represent spiritual beings are actually the creations of humankind. The new initiates are warned that those who reveal these secrets will be severely punished, or even killed. The Mbole people of Zaire carve figures, such as **Plate 2.7** of an initiate who has been executed for revealing the secrets of the initiation, to illustrate the negative outcome of revealing such secrets. The shoulders of the figure are slumped and the knees are bent in the pose of someone executed by hanging, the common form of punishment among the Mbole. Though the art form serves as an instrument for punishment, the other hidden purposes will also be realized as learning to keep secrets, honesty, loyalty among others as values.



Plate 2.7 *Figure of a Hanged Man*
(The University of Iowa Museum of Art)

Eliade says throughout the world, changes in people's lives are marked by important celebrations. Whether the transition is called bar-mitzvah, confirmation, communion, graduation or initiation, all amount to very similar irreversible changes in social life. In Africa, the important changes in people's lives are also marked by celebrations, and art is a vehicle for the expression of ideas associated with these changes. Among the most critical junctures in any person's life is the process by which a child leaves behind the world of children and joins the adult world. This transition may be prolonged by training in the skills needed for survival as an adult, by education in the secrets of the spiritual realm, by understanding of self and one's relationship to the environment, and by physical tests and trials of endurance proving

that the new adult will be up to the challenges of survival in the community. The mask (**plate 2.8**) from the Suku people was worn by the teachers at the conclusion of boys' initiation.

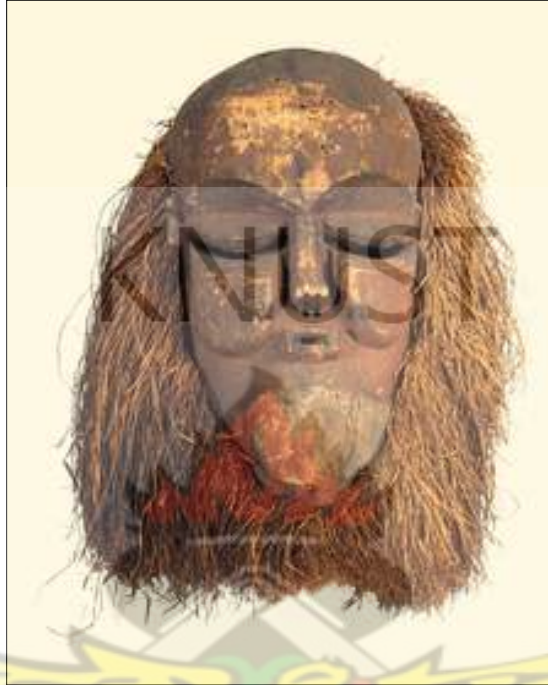


Plate 2.8 *Initiation mask, Kakungu*
(The University of Iowa Museum of Art)

According to Eliade, art is commonly used in initiation to communicate visually the ideals of the group, to illustrate the rules for the moral conduct of life that initiated adults must obey, and to represent visually the spiritual beings that play roles in the history of the people and that protect the people or group from malevolent forces. These objects may be secret, and are shown only to those who have earned the right to see them, or they may be public, visible to everyone in the community, but in the latter case their interpretation and true meanings are kept very secret. This male mask from the Lwalwa people (plate 2.9) was used in the initiation and circumcision and was intended to pacify the spirits of human victims required for entrance into the initiation society. The people of Lwalwa also value morals and so they use the art forms to communicate their ideas to the young ones as in *kusakakɔ* where a lot of art forms

such as pots, baskets, cloths, beads among others are used to educate the young girls and these are locked up in the celebration.



Plate 2.9 *Mask, Mvondo*
(The University of Iowa Museum of Art)

Eliade adds that initiation is more than just a passage or graduation from one "grade" to the next. A variety of people are initiated throughout their lives as part of the process of transformation from one state of being to another. Men and women who suffer from physical or mental affliction are initiated into a curing society based on spiritual power, when they learn the techniques of healing and acquire the supernatural power of the spirit that effects the cure. Men are initiated into kingship when they receive the sacred amulets of power and learn the secrets that validate rule, and are given the tools, weapons or other elements of regalia that identify the ruler. (Plate 2.10) From this statement, it is obvious that, some initiations are done for healing purposes hence the use of art forms.



Plate 2.10 *Bowstand for a chief*
 (The University of Iowa Museum of Art)
 Photo by Ecco Hart

Every year in the spring, Krobo girls become women. In Eastern Ghana, young girls from the Krobo ethnic group undergo a series of rituals through which they leave childhood behind. The rituals, locally called *dipo*, were originally reserved for teenage girls and indicated they were ready to take a husband. In recent years, human rights groups and parents alike have objected to the requirement for *dipo* initiates to go bare-breasted for part of the rituals (**Plate 2.11**). In *kusakɔɔ*, some practices such as making the girls naked before clothing them is symbolic of being “ripe” for marriage may also affect their human rights.



Plate 2.11 *Dipo ceremony in Manya Krobo*

A person taking the initiation ceremony in traditional rites, such as those depicted in these pictures, is called an *initiate*. **Plate 2.12** shows initiation ceremony, Korogo Village, Sepik River, Papua New Guinea, 1975, (Franz Luthi).



Plate 2.12 *Initiation ceremony at Korogo Village*

Eliade concludes that most ethnic groups within a society tend to think that their culture is superior to the culture of other groups. This is especially true of the most powerful and dominant groups in our society. Learning opportunities must be provided to children and adults that lead to greater options for individual choice and for thinking beyond one's own learned cultural patterns of thought while still preserving respect for one's own cultural roots. Thus each student is given the freedom to retain or transcend his culture.

2.8 Art Education

According to Jensen (2001) art education is the area of learning that is based upon the visual, tangible arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, and design in jewelry, pottery, weaving, fabrics. Historically art was taught in Europe with the methods of apprenticeship where individuals learned their trade the same way masons or goldsmiths. He says children,

youth, and adults learn about art in community based institutions and organizations such as museums, local arts agencies, recreation centers, places of worship, social service agencies, and prisons among many other possible venues.

Jensen, (2001) adds that visual arts education includes all the visual and performing arts delivered in a standard-based, sequential approach by a qualified instructor as part of the core curriculum. Its core is the study of inseparable artistic and aesthetic experience and learning. It may be true that art educators who are interested in including study of the art of other cultures in their curricula are faced with complex choices. However, one choice is to decide to select a particular culture of another part of the world and focus on some particular kind of art works or art forms, as produced by various ethnic groups in that culture as it is in the Avatime traditional area as a resource for Art education.

Jensen observes that there are thousands of arts education curricular models or models for arts or arts-based professional development for teachers that schools and community organizations use. This he says is an empirical activity which involves seeing, interpreting and discovering appropriate marks to reproduce observed phenomena. It can be asserted that other art activities involve imaginative interpretation while others would assert though, that issue based approaches, such as a visual culture approach will be appropriate for art education.

His prominent models include:

- A six fold model divided into "Creative-Productive, Cultural-Historical and Critical-Responsive" components in Canada
- Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) came to favour in the United States during the 1980s and 1990s, and it focused on specific skills including techniques, art criticism and art history.

- Current literature in the United States has shifted away from DBAE but many classrooms still use this model. Others have shifted to visual culture and diversity models.
- Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB) is a theory that began in the 1970s in the United States. TAB suggests that students should be the artists and so guided on their own individual artistic interests through technique lessons and critiques, while being exposed to art history as it relates to their own work.
- In the UK the art curriculum is prescribed by the government's National Curriculum except in public or fee paying schools.

It is important to realize that Art Education is not limited to formal educational institutions because some professional artists specialize in private or semi-private instruction in their own studios. One form of this teaching style is the Atelier Method as exemplified by Gustave Moreau who taught Picasso, Braque and many other artists. Another is an artist apprenticeship in which the student learns from a professional artist while assisting the artist with their work.

Art Education in schools in the Netherlands strongly improved by the founding of the Dutch Art Teachers Association in 1880 and their Magazine (in 1881). Over the year's struggles and problems, discussions about the right way and fights for equal qualification supposedly coloured the history of art education in the Netherlands as in other countries. The details however are of great interest for who will compare these developments with those in his own country.

Ghana is known for a rich tradition of graphic arts. Wood carving is perhaps the most important. The focus of the craft is on the production of stools that are carved whole from large logs to assume the form of abstract designs or animals. These motifs generally represent

proverbial sayings. The stools are not merely mundane items, but become the repositories of the souls of their owners after death and objects of family veneration. Carving is also applied to the production of staves of traditional office, drums, dolls, and game boards. Sculpting in metal is also important and bronze and iron casting techniques are used to produce gold weights and ceremonial swords. Ghanaians do not make or use masks, but there are some funerary effigies in clay. Pottery is otherwise devoted to producing simple domestic items. Textiles are well developed, especially hand woven kente, and stamped *adinkra* cloths.

Most of the traditional crafts involve artists who work according to standardized motifs to produce practical or ceremonial items. Purely aesthetic art is a modern development and there is only a small community of sculptors and painters who follow Western models of artistic production. Most performance arts occur in the context of traditional religious and political rites, which involve intricate drumming and dancing. While these are organized by trained performers, a strong emphasis on audience participation prevails.

Kaufman as cited in Kemevor (2004) says Art Education is related to the development of personality (cognitive, affective skills and psychomotor) and to those resources of creativity and to those resources of creativity and appreciation which are likely to add to the maturity and happiness of any individual to the benefit of society. Dewey (2009) also adds that Plato in one of his thesis emphasizes that art should be the basis of all education.

The youth may have been seeing art forms in the *kusakɔkɔ* days as a mere entertainment objects displayed during the occasions without actually understanding their educational implications. For us to appreciate the art, we need to understand the cultural criteria that brought it into being and sanction it as an art form.

Kemevor looks at education as a socialization process and its rationale is to transmit knowledge, values, ideas, habits, beliefs and customs of societies from one generation to

another. Unfortunately, there is a lot of essential information for art education that is hidden in artifacts used in *kusakɔkɔ*. The older generation is probably the only reliable custodians of some aspects of the Ghanaian culture. Some of the older people who have the knowledge are reluctant to pass it onto other people due to mysteries and dogmas surrounding the history, values, traditions and customs of some ethnic groups. And even then these people are dying away with their untapped skills, knowledge and ideas.

This study has the potentials to contribute to the field of multicultural art education. Learning is a continuous process which affects everybody both young and old, until all that is hidden in man is brought out. The only purpose of education is to teach a student how to live his life by developing his mind, equipping him to deal with reality. The training he needs is theoretical i.e. conceptual. He has to be taught to think to understand, to integrate, to prove. He has to be taught the essentials of knowledge discovered in the past and he has to be equipped to acquire further knowledge by his own effort. Kemevor adds that the aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think than what to think, to improve our mind so as to enable thoughts of other men. One real objective of education is to leave a man in the condition of continually asking questions. Questions are very necessary in problem solving.

The central job of school is to maximize the capacity of each student. A very critical element for national development is national creativity. There is now the awareness that the beginnings of national creativity are locked up in the newly conceived subject creative arts. The main focus of creative arts is critical creative thinking reasoning and imagination necessary for problem solving and socio-economic progress.

Education is very essential under this subject because the young girls during the process of the initiation rites are taught morals, ethics and many others. It is for the development of

skills or character of knowledge, that a body of information that exists out there that must be unearthed and brought to the fore of Art Education as a resource material for reference purposes. The desired skills and knowledge acquired by the girls may be described as educational values. The practice has been valuable to the people sometimes because that is the way accumulated knowledge is translated to the people; therefore there is the need for documentation and focus towards the preservation of *kusakakɔ* rites.

KNUST



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the various methods that were employed to undertake the research on *kusakɔkɔ* puberty rites in Avatime Traditional area. This research has adopted the qualitative method, specifically ethnography. It expresses the process of data acquisition including the research design, library research, population for the study, sampling, data collection instruments, types of data, administration of instruments, data collection procedures as well as data analysis plan.

3.2 Research Design

Qualitative research can be viewed as the collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data by observing what people do and say. It refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. Researchers believed that the researcher's ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005).

Qualitative research was used to explore and understand beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviour and interactions of the people of Avatime in the Volta Region. Qualitative research techniques such as focus groups and in-depth interviews were also used to find out more about the *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation from the chiefs, the various sub-chiefs some elders, opinion leaders, the pastors, some church elders and some initiates.

Just as there are various philosophical perspectives which can inform qualitative research, so there are various qualitative research methods. A research method is a strategy of inquiry which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design and

data collection. The various research methods influence the collection of data on this subject. Specific research methods also imply different skills, assumptions and research practices. The main research method that was used to do the study on Kusakəko initiation rites was ethnography. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) assert that, the qualitative researcher may make observations either as a relative outsider or especially in the case of ethnography, as a participant observer. Leedy and Ormrod indicate that, ethnography differs from a case study in the sense that, case study studies a person, programme, or event while ethnography studies an entire group that shares a common culture (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005).

Creswell (2003) also defines ethnographies as a situation in which the researcher studies an intact cultural group in a natural setting over a prolonged period of time by collecting, primarily, observational data. The focus is on everyday behaviours to identify norms, beliefs, social structures, and other factors (Creswell, 2003).

In Avatime, the researcher tried to understand the changes in the groups' culture over time. As a result, findings made were limited to generalization on the study after visiting all the selected communities. In the ethnography methodology, the researcher was immersed in the daily lives of the participants in order to observe their behaviour then interpreted the culture or social group and systems (Creswell, 2003).

In anthropology and sociology, it is a common practice to distinguish between primary and secondary data. Generally speaking, primary data are unpublished and are gathered by the researcher from the people or organization directly. The distinguishing feature of ethnography, however, is that the researcher spends a significant amount of time in the field. The fieldwork notes and the experience of living there become an important addition to any other data gathering techniques that may be used.

Ethnography is a form of research focusing on the sociology of meaning through close

field observation of socio-cultural phenomena. In ethnography, the researcher looks at an entire group more specifically, a group that shares a common culture in depth. Thus, the researcher studies the group in its natural setting for a length of time, often several months or years. However, the focus of investigation is on the everyday behaviour such as language, interactions and rituals of the people in the group, with intent to identify cultural norms, beliefs, social structures and other cultural patterns (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005).

3.3 Library Research

To enhance the effective collection of data, various libraries were visited and some documentary sources were consulted. It is therefore important to outline them as:

- The selected libraries at KNUST in Kumasi;
- University of Education, Winneba, North Campus library;
- African studies Library, Legon;
- Balme Library, Legon
- George Padmore African Research library, Accra
- Ho Regional Library, Ho
- The Internet facility

3.4 Population for the study

A population is any group of individuals or objects that have one or more characteristics in common. The population may involve all the individuals of a particular type or a more restricted part of that group. Best continues by explaining further that, a sample is a proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis (Best, 1981). Population in other words is a group of individuals or items that share one or more characteristics from which data can

be gathered and analyzed. It is about people, and the dwellings, locations and environments that people live in. Population can be defined in many ways, for example by age, ethnicity, and type of housing, birthplace or location. Population size can refer to the total number of people living within a defined area, or it can refer to a group of people from a defined area that has similar characteristics.

3.4.1 Population structure

The structure of a population describes the relative numbers of people with similar characteristics within a population, for example, age groups, sex, and ethnicity. The population of Avatime is homogenous.

Webster (2010) in his ARTFL Project defines homogeneous population as one where all individuals can be regarded as the same type. *Kusakoko* is a common practice among the people from Avatime and so every member of them observes it (the people also share things in common including beliefs, language, norms, symbols, arts and technology).

The structure of the population shows how the subgroups within it affect its composition and characteristics. For example, it shows the percentages making up the different age groups of the population. Population structure changes over time as people age, but also because of births, deaths and migration. Changes to social, environmental and economic conditions also influenced their population structure. For example, changes in migration reflect a number of these factors and have different effects on different age groups.

3.4.2 The target population

The target population is all the people of Avatime. Distribution of a population within the area in Avatime is an important factor in considering planning and analysis of work. For

example, though they have a common culture, they spread around the mountain Gemi while Amedzofe found itself on top. Population is measured in three ways: actual counts of people, estimates of changes in actual counts due to population growth from births, deaths and migration, and projections of changes to future numbers of inhabitants (<http://www.investorwords.com>).

Maddieson (1995) claims that the 24,000 Avatime people as at 2003 live in the mountainous southeastern region of Ghana, also known as the Southern Volta region. The satellite towns are seven which includes Amedzofe, Vane, Biakpa, Gbadzeme, Dzogbefeme, Fume and Dzorkpe. People of this region were introduced to Christianity about 100 years ago, and most churches are either Presbyterian or Roman Catholic. Less than 10 percent of the population attends church regularly, although an additional number are nominal Christians. Traditional religion, which includes spirit possession, is widely practiced alongside Christianity, and believers often mix the religious practices together.

3.4.3 Accessible population

The accessible population is 570 representatives of the people selected from Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane as indicated in section 3.4.1. Data were collected in three communities of Avatime traditional area namely Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane which forms the accessible population. The homeland of the Avatime people is located in the mountainous southeastern region of Ghana, also known as the Southern Volta region. Primarily subsistence farmers, the Avatimes also barter and sell extra produce to provide for additional needs. Village government is organized around a traditional chieftaincy.

3.5 Sampling

According to Best (1981) Sampling is a deliberate rather than haphazard method of selecting subjects for observation, which enables the scientist to conclude about a population of interest from the observed characteristics of a relatively small number of cases. In other words sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) maintains that, as we have seen, qualitative researchers draw their data from many sources not only from a variety of people, but perhaps also from objects, textual materials and audiovisual and electronic records. The particular entities selected for this study comprise forms sample whiles the process of selecting them is called sampling. A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey.

3.5.1 Purposive sample

More often, qualitative researchers are intentionally non-random in their selection of data sources. Instead, their sampling is purposive. They select those individuals or objects that will yield the most information about the topic under investigation (Leedy and Ormrod 2005). Owing to the fact that *Kusakɔkɔ* is common to all the people of Avatime, purposive sample was used to access information relevant to the topic in Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane.

The sample for the research was based on the adults aged between 18 and 70 years. The researcher sampled people for the purpose of data collection including chiefs, elders in the traditional area, community or opinion leaders in the area, various musical groups, church

leaders, beneficiaries of the programme also called the initiates, teachers and some University students who are also natives of the traditional area. One hundred and ninety (190) respondents were interviewed.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), there are common tools of research that majority of researchers, regardless of the field of enquiry, use. These are the library and its resources, the computer and its software, techniques of measurement statistics, the human mind and language. They include that in any single study qualitative researchers generally use multiple forms of data obtained through observations, interviews, objects, written documents, audiovisual materials, electronic document (e.g., e-mail, websites), and anything else that can help them answer their research questions. Besides, the researcher should record any potentially useful data thoroughly, accurately, and systematically using field notes, audiotapes, sketches, photographs or any suitable means (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). Some of these data collecting instruments were used to gather data for this study.

The instrumentation used for the collection of data included participant observation and interviews (Appendix A). The instruments mentioned above helped trace the historical facts of the customary rite. They helped to assess the philosophical and symbolic meanings behind *kusakəkə* initiation and also indentified the various artefacts and how the participants value them artistically and the educational implication of the entire social activity.

3.6.1 Observation

Dewalt and Dewalt (2002) define observation as the systematic process of recording the behavioral patterns of people. The researcher relied on the cultivation of personal relationships with local informants as a way of learning about their culture, involving both observing and participating in the social life of a people of the various communities in Avatime. By living with them, the researcher was able to formulate first-hand accounts of their lives and gain novel insights. This same method of study was successful, sharing a strong sense of identity, where only by taking the observer truly got access to the lives of those being studied.

Participant observation is usually undertaken over an extended period of time, ranging from several months to many years. An extended research time period means that the researcher will be able to obtain more detailed and accurate information about the people he/she is studying. Observable details (like daily time allotment) and more hidden details (like taboo behaviour) are more easily observed and understandable over a longer period of time. A strength of observation and interaction over long periods of time is that researchers can discover discrepancies between what participants say and often believe should happen (the formal system) and what actually does happen, or between different aspects of the formal system; in contrast, a one-time survey of people's answers to a set of questions might be quite consistent, but is less likely to show.

The participant observation gave a more detailed and accurate information about the people of Avatime and also because a key advantage of observation research is that often the respondents are unaware that they are being observed, it allows their behaviour to be observed naturally.

3.6.2 Interviews

The interview method of research, typically, involves a face-to-face meeting in which a researcher (interviewer) asks an individual a series of questions. Personal interviews were used to collect in-depth and comprehensive information on the history and philosophy behind this rich cultural practice, also seek their understanding and appreciation of the artefacts used and the educational implications. The participants were asked to respond to general questions to also explore their responses to identify and define the people's perception, opinions and feelings about the topic.

3.6.3 Validation

Corroboration was used to increase the understanding of the probability that the findings will be seen as credible or worthy of consideration by others (Stainback and Stainback, 1988). Related to validation of data, researcher-participant corroboration was employed, which has also been referred to as cross-examination. There was a follow up where some respondents were cross-examined again to ascertain the facts about *kusakəkə*.

3.7 Primary and Secondary Data

Primary sources are those data which are unpublished and which the researcher gathered from the people directly. The data deal with the history and philosophy behind *kusakəkə* initiation rites. It also solicited views of respondents on the value of various art works. The researcher therefore developed rapport, trust and empathy with the subjects of the research. He looked, asked questions, took part, made recordings, made inferences from what people said, located informants and developed relationships, the interpretation was aimed at bringing the cultural activities of the Avatime traditional area in the limelight of the whole

world. Secondary data included data from library sources such as newspaper reports, internet, textbooks, pamphlets, journals, and other documentaries.

3.8 Administration of Instruments

The researcher tried to be “invisible” not to get involved in the dynamics of the situation and used all of the senses. The context of the situation was recorded in terms of place, time, participants, numbers of participants, and gender of participants among others. All the information was recorded in notebook by the use of shorthand or abbreviations.

The interview guide was used to conduct face-to-face meetings in which the researcher asked well prepared individuals series of questions. These interview questions were prepared in advance, and shared with the participant(s). Some questions arising from the interview, which were not in the schedule, were asked amidst the use of tape and video recording. After the interview, the data were transcribed (copied) and exactly what was said during the interview, replayed again and compared with already written notes to make possible corrections though it was time-consuming.

The written copies were shared with the participants to make sure that they agree with, and affirm, the contents of the interview. All these checks were done to maintain completeness, accuracy, confidentiality and avoid biases. The materials used were, note paper, writing materials, tape recorder, videotape recorder and interview guide prepared beforehand. Some group interviews were also done in the initial interview.

Typically, the ethnographer focuses on a community (not necessarily geographic, considering also work and leisure, selecting informants who are known to have an overview of the activities of the community. Such informants are asked to identify other informants representative of the community, using chain sampling to obtain a saturation of informants in

all empirical areas of investigation. In the case of *Kusakɔkɔ*, the informants were interviewed multiple times, using information from previous informants for clarification and deeper responses upon re-interview. This process was intended to reveal common cultural understandings that were related to the phenomena under study. These understandings were interpreted to be more significant than objective data and this also validates the data.

The researcher focused on three communities in the Avatime traditional area namely: Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane and selected informants who were known to have an overview on the *kusakɔkɔ* activities. Prominent among them were the ‘ritual mothers’ who were well prepared to be interviewed. It should be noted that ethnography may be approached from the point of view of art and cultural preservation, and as a descriptive rather than analytic endeavour. The comments here, however, focus on social science analytic aspects. In this focus, ethnography is a branch of cultural anthropology.

The researcher undertook participant observation and strived to avoid theoretical preconceptions instead, to induce theory from the perspectives of the members of the culture of the people of Avatime and from observation. He lived among the people of the three communities during the festive occasions such as Christmas, Easter and some special days designed for those who were ready to be initiated. These days were scheduled between July and August which were months when many people are on holidays. They chose these festive periods also because of the modern economic activities where most people migrate to the cities to work may be on break. The researcher also strived to understand the cultural connotations associated with symbols.

3.9 Data collection procedures

The initial step in the ethnography process is to gain access to a site. Secondly, the researcher established rapport with the participants and built trust. Third, the researcher started using the big net approach by intermingling with everyone in order to identify the key informants in the area (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005)

Objective 1

To identify and discuss the kusakəkə puberty initiation rites of the people of Avatime.

In view of the objective, the researcher participated and had a direct observation throughout the week to establish the truth of the existence of such puberty rites. In doing so, the aim was for the researcher to gain a closer insight into the culture's practices, motivations and emotions. It is argued that the researchers' ability to understand the experiences of the culture may be inhibited if they observe without participating.

The researcher used the written documents from the library and the internet to trace the origin of Avatime and also the origin of *kusakəkə*. In-depth interviews were conducted to collect data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly sensitive to the study while the Focus groups were also used effectively in eliciting data on the cultural norms and in generating broad overviews of issues of concern to the culture of Avatime.

The two methods generated field notes, audio (and sometimes video) recordings, and responses. The researcher listened carefully to what participants said, engaged with them according to their individual personalities and styles, and used “probes” to encourage them to elaborate on their answers. Structured interview, semi-structured interview, unstructured interview, and analysis of documents and materials were also used.

Interviews were conducted on the age groups between 18 and 70. These groups were specifically the youth and adults. In categorizing them (Table 3.1) 10 % were within the age group of (60 and above) - 15% were aged (50-59) -18% for the age group of (40-49) - 20% were with the age group of (30-39) - 50% for (20-29) - 07% were from (19 and below) they include the chiefs and elders, ritual mothers, church elders, the females who benefited from the puberty rites and other youth groups.

Table 3.1 *Age of Respondents*

AGE GROUP	PERCENTAGE (%) INTERVIEWED
60 and Above	10
50 – 59	15
40 – 49	18
30 – 39	20
20 – 29	50
19 and Below	7
TOTAL	100

In all 83% of respondents who were interviewed were females as compared with their male counterparts (17%). This is so because the initiation is for females. In all 190 respondents were interviewed. The large population of female respondents came as a result of the subject for the study being a predominant female ceremony.

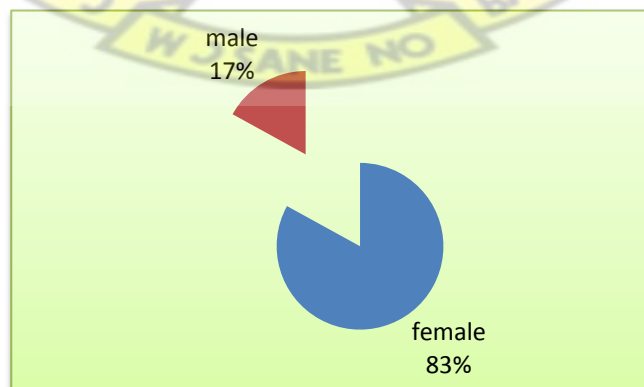


Figure 3.1 *Gender Representation*

Objective 2

To discuss the value of art in 'kusakꞑə' initiation rites of Avatime.

The data were collected from participant observations and from interviewing several key informants at Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane. The interviews were lengthy as the researcher gathered other documentation by using audiotapes and videotapes media for justification of the study, the description of the initiates and the evidence to support the claims and the findings to the research questions. The report provides evidence of the cultural activity understudy that developed over time.

The researcher visited the location of data during Christmas and Easter on two occasions to observe the ceremony and also gathered primary data. All were done by immersing himself in the totality of the activities and participated fully amidst drumming and dancing. All the artefacts used were taking record of with shorts of pictures. The researcher later followed up with one-on- one interviews to establish the functions of the art works and how they were valued. This interview was scheduled strictly for the god fathers, ritual mothers and parents of the initiates.

Data were collected on all the artefacts used in the celebration. The location of the data was Amedzofe , Biakpa and Vane from the chiefs, elders, opinion leaders, the church leaders students and participants or beneficiaries of the initiation. The researcher travelled to the location of the data to do on-the-spot observation and take photograph or video clips by himself.

Objective 3

To discuss the educational values in Kusakɔkɔ initiation rites of Avatime.

The data were to find out the educational values of this important cultural practice *kusakɔkɔ*. The sources of the data were obtained right from interviewing the sampled population and also observing the activities at Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane in the Volta Region. The researcher travelled to the location of the data and collected information and also participated in the activities.

Objective 4

To discuss the implication of the study for Art Education.

Educational implication, the philosophy behind the celebration and the age groups that benefit from it, were data collected. Also data on the functions of each of the artefacts used and the meaning of symbols were collected for discussion which will benefit Art Education.

3.10 Data Analysis plan

Data collected through observation and interviews were assembled, analyzed and the facts interpreted, conclusions drawn and recommendations made. The details are in the chapters four and five.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter describes the *kusakəkə* ceremony, which has been analyzed and discussed with the data collected on the research. The data were obtained through interviews and observation, guided by theoretical prepositions and photographs of the various activities. After the account of the ceremonies they were discussed, and significant and meaningful parts of the rituals that concerned the artistic and educational values were analyzed. The emerging themes from the findings in effect are discussed under the following main sub-headings:

- 4.2 *Kusakəkə* initiation rites
- 4.3 Artistic value of *kusakəkə* initiation rites
- 4.4 Educational value of *kusakəkə* initiation rites
- 4.5 *Kusakəkə* rites as a resource for Art Education

4.2 *Kusakəkə* Initiation Rites

This sub-heading discusses the whole ceremony of *kusakəkə*. In Avatime, females ‘coming of age’ are closely examined and celebrated. The ceremony shows further, how women are regarded primarily as members of their society and how their status is relevant as members of these groups. The present form of the ceremony is *kusakəkə* but it is linked with the old one called *ablabe*. The evident will be seen in some aspects of *ablabe* being retained in the *kusakəkə* rites.

Analysis of both the old and current forms of the ceremony demonstrated the change in the meaning of the ceremonies, taking into account different prevailing socio-economic conditions as indicated by some respondents in various communities in Avatime. Christianity has played some part in the change since the Church forbade all such practices negative to Christianity but even allowing for the influence of Christianity we are left to explain the reasons why the old form of the ceremonies should cease so abruptly, leaving behind only a few elements, having a changed relevance.

The old structure of marking the stage of a female coming of age was called *Ablabe* (pineapple symbolic of fertility). This ceremony according to most of the respondents interviewed had duration of over two months and involved considerable disruption in the life of the principals, together with considerable consumption of their produce. This eventful ceremony was performed in Amedzofe between 1915 and 1920 (Brydon, 1976).

In celebrating the “Ablabe” the philosophy was that Ablabe is a multiple fruit representing high fertility. The girl to be initiated is ripe and fertile for procreation and needs to be educated in the customs and traditions of Avatime (hence educational values). Also the education includes the use of artefacts, music, dance and drama covering the whole culture to educate the initiate thus, the philosophy of supporting the initiation rites with the whole cultural milieu of the Avatime.

It is very obvious to say, then, that since the last time that the ceremony was performed in full, it was not witnessed during the present period of this research. After series of interviews with respondents mostly women in the various communities in Avatime traditional area, specifically Amedzofe, Biakpa and Vane, it was established that the cycle of the ceremonies was referred to as *ablabe kpskps* or *bε kps ablabe*. This literally means, ‘they wear pineapple’ and this activity is only the beginning of the first part of the ceremony. It was

revealed in Biakpa's account in Avatime that; *ablabe* was sometimes used as a symbol to distinguish the girl or the initiate from other girls in the community. Literally, it is the fibre extracted from the leaves of pineapple and spun together into yarns which are used to thread the beads.

In Avatime, the social status of a girl was recognized in the past as 'woman' adult, shortly after she began to menstruate though there was no special ceremony to mark the first menstruation of a girl. Those interviewed at Vane said, usually, the girls would not tell their mothers anything about the changes they have experienced, for reasons best known to them.

Stages of *Ablabe* were marked by the people of Avatime. The first stage was to identify a girl as 'woman' while the second stage was to associate the womanhood with marriage. The ceremony was obligatory for all girls or binding on all girls who had once menstruated. These ceremonies were most times performed through marriage rituals. It was an assertion that, formerly, every proud Avatime woman was married shortly after the onset of her menstrual periods. Some respondents said, previously, in Avatime, infant betrothal was predominantly practiced where a man, on hearing of the birth of a female child could visit the parents to negotiate for the child either as a wife for himself or for his son. The parents, upon agreeing, allowed the man to put some cowries around the wrist of the girl symbolizing her engagement.

This activity was called *obi litukpo vivi* literally meaning 'asking for the girl's head' which after the ceremony, the statement was termed *be vi ye litukpo* meaning they have asked for the girl's head'. The study could not gather enough data on the arrangements for betrothal from the various communities, because it was not practiced often though a girl could be betrothed later in life. Once the girl had been betrothed to a man, the man was mandated to do all kinds of work for the girl's parents including odd jobs. It is a way of studying the character of the future son-in-law. There seemed to have been no definite rules about the gifts given to

the mother-in-law, apart from the fact that she should be given a part of the man's new farm each year, in which to plant her vegetables and cotton. If the girl or the future mother-in-law needed a new cloth it must be provided by the man. Other things the man could provide were mats, lima beans and other farm produce. It was also binding on the man to help the future father-in-law on his new farm, to clear the forest, burn the plot and uproot the tree stumps. (Brydon, 1976).

The future son-in-law was supposed to show a sign of good behavior throughout the period of the betrothal and if he defaulted in any of them, the parents of the girl had the right to disengage the betrothal on behalf of the girl. Alternatively, disengagement could also take place if the girl was approaching puberty and ready to be married objected to the marriage arrangement. The man could then demand payment for all the gifts he made and things he did during the period of the betrothal. However, if the arrangements went smoothly, then once the girl had begun to menstruate and develop breast, the man would begin to ask her mother to give her 'a cloth', that is, to perform the initiation ceremony.

The rituals then began with the man's parents sending palm wine in a gallon also known as *ventukpa* or *kadzafiwi*, to the girl's parents seemingly as a kind of confirmation of the betrothal. The palm wine for confirmation was referred to as *liwahulese kuda* literally meaning drink brought under the tree. *Kuda* means wine while, *liwahulese* also means 'under the tree'. The real interpretation of the statement was that, the palm wine was needed to perform libation for the gods or ancestors who they believed were the custodians of the earth. They prayed and asked for the intervention of the gods and the ancestors; asking for the earth and the sky to allow smooth and peaceful arrangements of good marriage.

They sent money also as an indication that the man was recognized as the future father of all children that the woman might bear. He was also entitled, after this money had been

sent, to claim adultery payments from any man who had sex with the girl. After the second pot of palm wine had been sent, no further transactions took place until the *Ablabe* ceremony for the girl had begun (Brydon, 1976).

The ceremony began when the girl's mother found the things needed for her daughter's ceremony. These were sets of new cloths of specific designs considered to be the ritual cloths signifying a 'woman', the pots and household equipment which the girl would need for her future role as wife, the foodstuffs for the ceremonies, the beads and other decorations which were all art works representing, the most essential part of the first stage of the ceremony. There were mixed reactions among the respondents from the various Avatime towns under study, about the correct or appropriate day to begin the ceremonies; however they later agreed on the Saturday. They also indicated that, Tuesdays or Fridays were not good days for the ceremonies. They were referred to as *Bekpoliwe*, thus, days for the spirits of the dead.

Important information was that, the girl was not informed about the ceremony because if she knew, she would run away due to the consequences of her change in status to become an adult, which meant marriage and parenthood. However, once the girl had been caught and the first bead is put on her in her paternal auntie or the 'father's sister's' house she could not escape.

It was agreed that, decoration of the girl was done according to a special arrangement for all the relations of the girl. Women related to the girl's mother decorated the right side of the girl whilst those related to the girl's father also took the left half. Particular types of beads were put around the ankles, just below the knee and around the wrists and elbows. Pineapple leaf fibres, beaten white, were threaded between the beads on the ankles and below the knee. Many strands of pineapple fibers decorated with small red parrot feathers were put around

each ankle and a few also just below the knee. A similar pattern of decoration with pineapple fibres was done for the wrists and elbows.

Many heavy, brilliantly coloured waist beads were also put on the girl which were so many that, the buttocks were covered. The girl also wore many beads around her neck, and the girl looked just like *dipo* puberty initiation. The only difference was that pineapple fibres were used to thread some of the beads and also some of the versions of the custom say; the first thing put on was a necklace consisting of a pendant of small snail shells and black seeds threaded on a grass fibre. This necklace, confirmed by some informants, was not removed until the ceremony was completed. Finally, a silken loin cloth locally called *ɔvlɔɔ* was given to the girl to put on. This she threaded through the waist beads so that the two ends hung down in front and behind her, covering her genitalia making the girl ready for the ceremony. This situation is not different from how a *Dipo* initiate is dressed.

A girl of similar age called *ɔwlawla* throughout the ceremony, who has not yet had the ceremony done for her and a small girl, were dressed similarly, but without the pineapple fibres and parrots' feathers and with no fixed pattern to the beads. These two girls would remain with the girl as her helpers throughout the cycle of ceremonies.

Bathing of the initiate referred to as *bewlonie*, began when the initiate and her friends together with the ritual mothers visited the main stream to bathe. The colleagues' who are called in the native language *ihale* and *ohalo* wore the various clothes that the girl's mother had bought for the girl. A special herb called *adugoe* is ground and used as pomade, to smear on them and gave to others who visited the stream. The girls sang love songs and went around the town from house to house. The small girl helper, *ɔwlawla* is presently called *dasefo* carried a plate on her head, to solicit money and gifts from people. The older girl carried an umbrella to protect the initiate. The procession ended at the *ablabe* initiate's father's house

where food is served. They spread out cloths over the thatch houses making a fine colourful display.

Snapping of beads

There was another activity called ‘snapping of beads’ where the future husband sent a friend to the girl to succeed in snapping the threads of one of the strings of beads which the girl wore. The girl resisted and tried to stop the man, but he invariably succeeded. Once he had snapped one of the threads, the rest of the beads and decorations were removed.

Avatime female initiation is a ceremony to mark girls entering the stage of womanhood, is also a public announcement of the girl's eligibility for marriage and initiation ceremonies are embedded in deep, conventional traditions. For the females, ceremonies marking their entry into the sphere of adults are also a public announcement to the community that they are ready to be married. Life of the people of Avatime revolves around the family and therefore female initiation ceremonies tend to focus heavily on the preparation of young girls to be good wives and excellent mothers or virtuous women.

The *Kusakəkə* rite falls under the broad continuum of puberty rites or initiation rites. The main traditional rites in question here are rites that are performed for a boy or girl who has reached a stage with physiological changes that he or she can be regarded as an adult capable of discharging his or her duties as a full member of society (Ganusah, 1995).

Kusakəkə marks the passage of girls into womanhood by performing a series of rituals. The literal meaning of *kusakəkə* is ‘cloth giving’ *kusa* means cloth, while *kəkə* means giving. The official modern *kusakəkə* ceremony lasts for about three days but pre-ritual

preparation requires one month. The activities for the one month *kusakəkə* celebration are as follows;

4.2.1 *Kulala* literally means informing every household for the one week celebration to create the awareness that the girl is ready for marriage.

4.2.2 *Amutoto* meaning pounding and preparation of *amu* or local rice which is the important ‘ritual meal’ for the *kusakəkə* rites.

4.2.3 *Treza* literally means bachelor night for the public to offer pieces of advice to the initiate.

4.2.4 The climax is *kusakəkə* day which stands for the ritual cloth giving day.

4.2.5 *Dasedodo* literally means thanksgiving

4.2.6 *Kusakəkə* and marriage

4.2.1 *Kulala*

Kulala literally means informing the Chief and elders, the clan chiefs, the family head and every household for *kusakəkə* celebration to create the awareness that the girl is of age to be initiated into womanhood and ready for marriage. The initial announcement of the rite is made a month prior to the celebration, and then the mother of the initiate selects a ‘ritual mother’ for her daughter who prepares the young girl for her future role as a wife and mother. The study revealed that some initiates had already become mothers before the ceremony and they go through the rituals just to satisfy the requirement.

4.2.2 *Amutoto*

Amutoto also means pounding and preparation of *amu* or local rice which is the important ‘ritual meal’ for the *kusakəkə* rites. Pounding *amu* is often done on a Thursday within the month prior to the main ceremony. This is done early in the morning on Thursday involving both young and old women some of whom have already gone through the *kusakəkə* ceremony. It is done amidst merry making, sharing of jokes, and display of old skills, storytelling and introductions of family members. There is a special way of pounding, as indicated in **Plate 4.1** blowing and roasting before milling the local rice. This time, due to the infiltration of foreign cultures, the attire or costumes of the young people pounding are adulterated. Thursday is chosen for this activity because it is a special day which the communities set aside as a taboo for going to farm or doing any ground work.



Plate 4.1 *Amutoto*

4.2.3 *Treza*

Treza literally means bachelor night for the public to offer pieces of advice to the initiate. Early in the morning on Wednesday the initiate is confined in a room having instructions as to how to go about the rituals and also receive some lessons on communal

living. She is not allowed to do any specific job rather, the *dasefo* (witness) who they previously called *ɔwlawla* does all the work including receiving visitors. In the evening, all roads lead to either the chapel or the family head's house for *Treza*. The whole community gathers to express their moral support through storytelling, giving advice, and merry making such as drinking of tea as indicated in **Plate 4.2**. The drinking of tea incorporated in *kusakɔkɔ* explains that tea is grown in the Avatime climate especially in Amedzofe where this activity is performed in the evenings so it helps the people at the function to withstand the weather condition. This function is mostly meant for the youth to socialize with the initiate especially when she is their colleague. They chant words as *ekpɔngɔ*, *ebaye*, *edzi ɔdze*, *kededze* indicating a brand new born, now a woman and Avatime woman respectively. Those done in the church invite a word of exaltation and prayers from the Pastor and also the blessing of the 'ritual cloths'. It is important to note that the initiation rite can now be done for individuals as well as groups.



Plate 4.2 *Drinking tea at treza*

4.2.4 *Kusakəkə liwole (kusakəkə day)*

Kusakəkə liwole is considered the special day marking the climax or the performance of almost all rituals. There are two celebrations observed on this important day. The *kusakəkə* rituals and marriage rituals for those who combined them and they are followed by series of activities. The activities include morning worship, preparation of the ritual meal, confinement of the initiates, and presentation of *kusakəkə* by the mother of the initiate, 'Cloth putting on' or *kusakəkə*, music, and a procession.

4.2.4.1 *ɲdisɔlime (morning worship)*

Early in the morning of *kusakəkə* day about 5.00 am, the initiates gather in the church premises for prayers towards the day's activities. They are accompanied by their helpers called *dasefo*, family members, and friends. The pastors take the opportunities to bless the ritual cloths and the beads used for the ceremony. The church activities are followed by a small procession leading the initiate to their various ritual homes for confinement.

4.2.4.2 Preparation of *bimukə* (ritual meal)

First, the soup is prepared with boiled flat brownish beans called *adovila* and palm fruit. *Alivuvu* precedes the preparation of the soup after which the *adovila* are added to get *adovilano* (beans soup) as indicated in **Plates 4.3 - 4.5**. Brown rice is literally called *Amu* and the flour which had been prepared (roasted and ground) is called *kumunə*. The ritual meal which is called *bimukə* (a meal prepared with brown rice powder) is put into 'a new pot' especially for the ceremony. Three pieces of herbs were also put into the pot with the flour.

The flour is prepared and taken inside a room in the initiates' parents' house, where it will not be seen until the time of the ceremony is due. The prepared flour called *kumuno* (**Plate 4.6a**) is then brought out by her 'Auntie' and she sprinkles some on the back of the hearth or grate, on the sides and into the pot, three times before most of the flour was put into the boiling water inside the pot to make the porridge as indicated in **Plate 4.6b - 4.7b**.

The sprinkling of *bimukɔ* symbolizes the recognition of the presence of the ancestors as indicated in **Plate 4.28**, hence the serving of food. The next activity is the eating of the *bimukɔ* by the *bavima* known as the nieces in an earthen bowl known as *kposie* before any other person(s) will be served as shown in **Plate 4.29**.



Plate 4.3 *Alivuvu (sieving of palm fruit solution)*



Plate 4.4 *Adovila (large beans)*



Plate 4.5 *Adovilano (large beans soup)*



Plate 4.6a *Kunə* (Brown rice powder)



Plate 4.6b *Bumukəgege* (Driving bimukə)



Plate 4.6c *Bumukəgege* (turning bimukə)



Plate 4.7a *Bimukə* (moulding *bimukə*) **Plate 4.7b** *Bimukə* (Brown rice ritual meal)

4.2.4.3 Confinement

Kekpere, one of the experienced ritual mothers in Amedzofe, gave her account of what was said to be formerly, isolation and spinning of cotton during confinement, as the girl and her friends went to one of the streams in the various communities, the place where water for ritual purposes was usually drawn. This part of the proceedings was not for display she says; however, they would take with them pounded herbs wrapped in leaves, carried in a calabash. The girl undressed and faced away from the stream, was ‘washed’ with each of the herbs, i.e. each herb was put into water in the calabash and sprinkled over the girl three times. This was done until the third time when each herb was used with water poured into the stream.

Kuwa kpekpeyu which was the last herb to end the section of that ritual was used for stimulation and inspiration. Her friends were later allowed to put clay marks all over the body of the girl. These marks were in sets of three colours; white/red/white after which the girl was

given a small native cloth, woven in strips, to wear. However, she was not allowed to wear anything else, not even a loin cloth.

The girl was brought back to her parent's house after the performance of rituals from the stream to spin cotton, using the spindle. The duration of time she was confined in the room depended on whether she was the eldest daughter of her parents. Being the eldest daughter lasted for two weeks while not the eldest daughter takes only one week. Now the time has been reduced to a day.

When they first came back from the stream, the girl's friends would bring with them water. This water was put into a new pot decorated with red and white clay, and the herb is locally called *kunya*. In the current study, it was observed that, after the church activities in the morning, the initiates were escorted to their various family houses to be confined. At this moment the initiate is not allowed to do any work except to be dressed. Each initiate enters a ritual room early in the morning in disguise of a woman, symbolic of childhood to be redressed by her ritual mother.

The initiate is dressed in white blouse and kente or any locally made cloth with beads around the neck to assume the status of an adult or woman. The girl wears white blouse because the day symbolizes peace, victory, and joy. An auntie of the girl who is also her 'father's sister' escorted the girl whose head was covered by a cloth to the clan eldest's house before brought back to the room. Covering the head also symbolizes her protection from catching a glimpse at mountain tops which they believed would have brought some misfortune on her.

Education for the initiate also takes place in the room where ritual mothers, elderly women and friends were allowed to advice and teach certain basic home management skills. Marriage talks were also giving to the initiate. The content of the education includes caring for

husbands, caring for children, observing taboos, norms human relations, values, beliefs, attitudes and many others as indicated in sub-topic 4.3. They also demonstrated basic sewing skills and spinning of cotton. It is well noted that various art forms were used for the education process of the initiates.

4.2.4.4 Presentation of *kusakoko* items by the mother of the initiate

The mother of the initiate is supposed to buy all the *kusakoko* items ready for the celebration before it is announced. The artefacts include the prescribed local clothes called *bewue* and *kotokoto*, the new pot, beads, cooking utensils, specially made local broom called *lidzule* among others (**Plate 4.8a and b**). The girl is brought out of the room with the head covered with cloth, surrounded with friends and family members to meet her mother. The girl sat facing her mother while her mother hands over the items after which the *kusakoko* ritual starts. (See artistic analysis in sub-topic 4.2)



Plate 4.8a *Presentation of kusakoko items (mainly cloth)*



Plate 4.8b *Presentation of kusakoko items (cooking utensils)*

4.2.4.5 Cloth putting on or *kusakoko*

‘Cloth putting on’ or *kusakoko* was the climax of the rites. In Biakpa, it was indicated that the most menopausal woman referred to as *kekusidzeba* were made to count the number of spindles prepared while the initiate was confined. A ritual mother interviewed said, throughout the period of spinning, the girl was expected to bath only in cold water from the pot. The girl begins with a thick cotton thread put around her neck which she would wear till conclusion of the ceremonies.

There were no special food prohibitions or prescriptions during this time, and the girl’s friends could come and spin with her. The spindles were provided by the future husband and once the food was prepared, relatives and neighbours gathered at the girl’s house where

the ‘paternal auntie’ brought the girl back with her head covered. A post menopausal woman is the one who qualified to put the cloth on the initiate. She did not necessarily have to be the mother or the auntie of the initiate.

The climax, the solemn and the most ritual moment, was when the girl stood naked at the entrance to the room. This moment of the ceremony was very crucial and very symbolic because the cloth that the girl wore while she was spinning was removed and the girl stood naked facing the entrance to a room of the house. She was ashamed of being naked, so she covered her pubic area with her left hand and her eyes with her right. It is considered one of the most important activities of the rituals and only a girl who had not been pregnant or conceived before this time could stand this test. However, it is difficult these days to observe this part of the activities because most of the initiate are now grown due to the need to work and look for some items to support their parents before performing the rituals.

The interview revealed that, the girl, who had conceived before may be covered with a cloth, however, this activity was also not observed during the study; rather all the initiates were covered with cloth. The main idea of the nakedness was indicated by some respondents that, as she is shy, in order not to prolong the moment of embarrassment, the *kekusidze* would take a new, small native cloth called *ogalo*, usually consisting of eight strips, and would put it around the girl’s waist three times. At the third time, the girl would run into the room naked. The *kekusidze* would pick up the cloth and take it to the girl.

If the girl had been previously pregnant before the rites, the cloth would be thrown to her inside the room. This completes the first part of the old form of cloth giving or *kusakəkə* ceremony formerly known as *Ablabe*. However, it was not witnessed during the current research. What follows is merry making as the bulk of the porridge cooked for the occasion was eaten by the relatives and well-wishers who came to witness the *kusakəkə*. The philosophy

here is that the girl being shy, shows she can no more be regarded as a ‘girl’ but a ‘woman’ hence her readiness for marriage.

4.2.4.6 *Kusakɔkɔ* and music

Early in the morning of *kusakɔkɔ* day, music starts playing with big speakers popularly known in the area as ‘spinners’. They entertain with their kind of music from morning till evening and various types of music played include gospel, pop, reggae and locals. They also perform cultural music and dance from *bɔbɔbɔ* groups and the church choir. This is what invites people all over especially the youth for merry making with dancing, eating and drinking and at the same time making donations.

4.2.4.7 Procession

It is required of all *kusakɔkɔ* initiates to join a procession amidst music and dancing throughout the streets of the towns to be introduced to the public with their status of womanhood. They are dressed as Avatime women and no more girls as it is termed *kededze*. The procession as shown in **Plates 4.9** normally starts in the afternoon about 2.00 pm which is the last event on *kusakɔkɔ* day with the formation of three rows because of Avatime belief in the trinity and odd numbers after which eating, music and dancing continue till they retire to bed.



Plates 4.9 *Procession through the streets of the town*

4.2.5 Dasedodo

Dasedodo which also means thanksgiving crowns the celebration on the third day. The activities lined up for the day are morning service, procession, *ikole* or special rituals of the custom are performed through performing of libation followed by merry making. Again the old account given by the respondents indicated that, on thanksgiving day, the *ablabe* initiate together with her colleagues, all the family members and elders went around the town thanking people for the gifts received the previous day after which the girl is confined for one or two weeks, wearing different cloths each day and doing no work.

It was currently observed that, the dawn of the third day of the celebration, all the

kusakɔkɔ initiates were dressed in their second prescribed cloth called *kotokoto* which was supposed to be held on the right arm symbolic of Avatime woman or *kededze*. This follows a procession through the principal streets announcing their womanhood together with their helpers called *dasefo* who also held the cloth used by the initiates the previous day (thus *kusakɔkɔ* day) called *bewue*. The procession amidst drumming and dancing by either *bɔbɔbɔ* groups or church choirs led the initiates to their various family heads or clan heads for *ikɔɔ* to be performed.



Plates 4.10 *Dasedodo (thanksgiving)*



Plates 4.11 *Kunikpɛkɛ/igbedodo (prayer)*

Ikɔɔ are rituals performed to assume blessings from the ancestor and the elders of the family. Some special leaves, three palm fruits and coins thrown into the water in a calabash are poured at the feet of the initiates after a recitation of poetry as indicated in the sub-topic 4.3. This attracts the attention of the public as they rush to pick the coins. The procession continues to the various homes of the initiates to greet their parents and elders with merry making.

4.2.6 *Kusakɔkɔ* and Marriage

The second part of *kusakɔkɔ* involves the marriage ceremony. The custom allows a

fresh *kusakoko* initiate to be married on the celebration day. Amalia, one of the respondents in Amedzefe gave her account of how *sidese* custom was done before modernity sets in. She said *Sidese* custom was a form of rituals performed during the second part of the ceremony following giving of cloth to the girl. This is the time when the girl is introduced to her future husband. In this custom, the girl's future husband comes into the ceremonies directly for the first time.

Sidese custom begins on the day after the cloth putting on. On that day the man and his friends would collect the twigs of a plant called *lidegune* grind them, and collect a reddish sap and put it into a pot. This sap, called *sidese* was taken to the girl's parents' house. Because the girl is now a woman, she wore two cloths; one was the native cloth called *kugosa* which she wore while spinning, and the second, worn around the breasts and upper part of the body is also called *ogalo* which had been given to her the previous day as discussed in 4.3.

The girl and her *owlawla* smeared each other's bodies with the *sidese* known as *Bε sra sidese* after which the future husband came to the girl's house. He was also dressed in a cloth which was wrapped around waist beads which looked like the *ovlolo* of the woman. The male version of the *ovlolo* is longer; however, it is crossed over the man's shoulders. In the right hand, the man carried a local gun, *otulo*, as a walking stick. He was accompanied by a small boy, similarly dressed who carried a stool on which the man sat. On arrival at the girl's house, the man sat down. The girl's *owlawla* smeared the man with *sidese* and if the girl accepts the man, she herself smeared the man's helper called *oklipo*.

The week of this custom was known as *ogle tsī tsī* meaning the red week. This according to most informants was the crucial part of attaining the status of being 'married'. If a girl was pregnant before she had the custom done for her, she was not allowed to take part;

she had to send a substitute. Also, a man marrying a second wife would not have the custom done a second time (he will send a substitute), nor would a widow repeat the custom on remarriage.

The following week, referred to as *Ogle pititi* or the ‘white week’ saw both the girl and the man going to the stream to bath. The man went first and was accompanied by his sister as he washed himself and then returned to the town. Later, the girl and her friends also went to the stream and used soap provided by the man, also washed the cloths that the girl had been wearing throughout the ceremony. Before they returned home, the girl was ritually bathed again with herbs, as earlier in the cycle.

On their return from the stream, the girl’s parents provided rice porridge and ‘white soup’ for everybody. From this day, for the next week, the girl stayed around her parents’ house, and would not do any work. She could bathe in warm water, and would wear the same two cloths that she had been wearing previously (*ogalo* and *kugosa*).

Searching for the girl (*bepɛ ɔdze*) was the next activity as one strand of beads was put on to the wrists, ankles and just below the knees of the girl, in the afternoon. That evening, the girl hid somewhere in the town. The man’s father had to send a small amount of palm wine to the girl’s father before he allowed the young people in the town to search for the girl. They searched the town until they found her. When they did, there seems to have been some kind of minor ‘ordeal’ for the couple, who had to leave the house in which the girl was found together, and were beaten by their friends on doing so. Everyone then returned to their respective houses for the day and in the evening, the girl went to the family house of the head of the man and was smeared with *sidese* by the man’s auntie. Before they finished the smearing, the girl had *kuvia* or palm oil, poured over her head so that it covered her face. As

soon as *kuvia* was poured, the girl would run away to her own parents' house to bath for the ceremony called *kanadzenia*.

Kanadzenia began when the girl and her friends went to the stream to fetch water. Each girl would carry a new water pot from the girl's mother. They would all have head pads made from elephant grass locally called *ligalɛ*, which had been collected by the girl and her *ɔwlawla*. The girl herself was not allowed to reach the stream but carried a large kind of pot called *ɔlɛlɔ* and would wait on the path near to the stream on the outskirts of the town. When her friends returned from the stream, they would fill up the girl's pot, and then *kekusidzeba* sets it on the girl's head three times before she carried it to her future husband's relatives or her affine. In the same way a second pot full of water was taken to the elders of her own clan, and a third to the priest of the rice pantheon. The other girls distributed water throughout the town. The last batch of water was taken to the couple's future home. Here all the pots were emptied and stored upside down in a room. The water was put to heat on a fire made from three big logs. The man, girl, *ɔwlawla* and *oklipo* took hold of the pot and set it on the logs three times to begin with.

Anyone could come and bath, using this water. It must be noted that this part of the celebration was also not witnessed live during the time of the study. What was observed was simple, short and happened on the day of *kusakɔkɔ*. The man and his elders or relatives were asked to provide the dowries and the necessary items for the marriage and also witness the household items that were given to the girl for her future marital life by her parents. These items include a stool, cooking utensils, a special broom, pots, earthen bowls and many others which are all art forms. It is significant of a well prepared woman by her parents for marriage.

The next ritual was referred to as making peace. *Bia bu kunio* or “they will make peace” was performed when water was put into a calabash together with three pieces of *onuveme* (*Scoparill Dulcis*), and three palm fruits (as explained in sub-topic 4.3). The man and the girl would sit facing each other as the man’s feet would be on top of the woman’s. The man, the girl and a *kekusidze* would take some of the water into their mouths and each would spit it out as they joined hands. The girl was set down on a new stool three times, by the eldest uncle of the man, and rice flour was put into her mouth three times. The meaning of this ritual signifies ‘for better for worst’. It also symbolizes the man’s authority over the woman and indicates that whatever happens to the woman will be left in the hands of the man.

Making peace was followed by inspection of the smearing of the surface of the room of *kusakoko* initiate with clay (*ligbaleme dedre*). It is just like painting or decoration of a room but this time using clay slip. *Be dre ye ligbaleme* or *dre ligbaleme* means smearing the surface of the room with clay slip to give it a fine appearance and it was part of the ceremony. Sometimes clay of different colors was used around doorways to improve the appearance and this is artistic (as indicated in sub-topic 4.2). The young people, friends of the couple, gathered the clay and put it on the house. When it was complete, the girl would smear clay on the man three times and the man for the girl. This was a signal for a liberal flinging around of clay between the girl’s and the man’s friends. Everyone then went to bathe before returning to the husband’s parents’ house to eat. The man later cut firewood and carried it to the outskirts of the town, from there, the girl, her *owlawla* and *oklipo* carried it to the new house.

Both the man and the girl would sleep together for the first time in their new house. The girl’s *oklipo* would sleep between them for the first time; however, any attempt to have sex would be termed *ogu* offence, which required an expensive purification. Meanwhile, the man

did not have the right to ask the *oklipo* to leave only the woman had that right. Women who had been married to men, who they did not like, kept the *oklipo* with them for a long period of time until either they gave in or the man became tired of waiting and divorced the new wife.

On this day, there was cooking at the new house for the first time. The man would provide a chicken for the woman to cook. Their friends came to help and the food was given to relatives and friends. However in the present celebration all the activities were made short and performed within the 3-day period of the *kusakɔkɔ*.

4.3 Artistic values in *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites

There are identifiable artistic values exhibited in the *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites. Visual and performing arts were used in the *kusakɔkɔ* celebration. Amenuke et al (1991) differentiated between visual art and performing arts. According to them visual arts are those that can be seen while the performing arts are forms perceived by our senses of hearing, seeing, and our kinesthetic senses but they are performed rather than made. These art forms are functional because they have multipurpose or specific use. They are also very symbolic and express the essential things of the life of the people of Avatime.

The philosophy of Art in Avatime

The people of Avatime like the Yoruba people as indicated in sub-topic 2.2.6 equate art to ‘beauty’ and ‘quality’ and to them, beauty relates to success. Anything done successfully, is regarded as being beautiful, because to them beauty is both internal and external. They equate success with toil in the sense that, after every hard work and toil, there is success. They express these sentiments in Ewe language as “Enya kpɔna menya wɔna o” meaning it

looks beautiful but difficult to achieve and these words are chanted throughout the *kusakoko* period. They believed that, it is difficult to study and be educated, therefore a girl who has undergone series of processes as the societal accumulated knowledge is handed down to her means success, hence it being beautiful and has quality. To the Avatimes, it is difficult for one to observe, societal norms, beliefs, taboos, relate well with people, dress well, cook well, respect the elderly, observe good hygiene, obey parents, spin cotton and all other things to qualify the girl to be accepted as a complete member of society.

Some cultural forms used include myths, music, dance, and a wide range of productions with pleasing visual imagery. Art forms were also used as teaching aids introducing what was culturally tasteful especially when the initiates were confined.

One important artistic value identified during the study was the structure of the whole celebration. Thus, the celebration has a beginning, the climax and the end or finishing which in itself, is artistic as indicated in **Figure 4.1**.

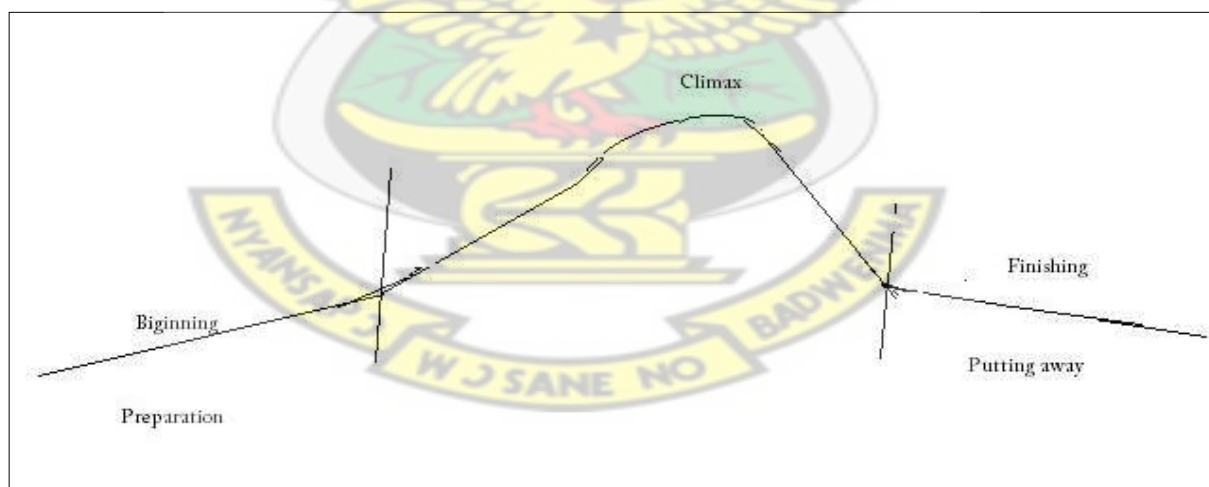


Figure 4.1 The artististic impression of *kusakoko* process

Most of the visual and performing arts in the celebration were as follows:

- 4.3.1 Textiles (costume, ritual cloths, kete, loincloth,)
- 4.3.2 Pottery (ritual pots, ritual bowls, the heaves)
- 4.3.3 Sculpture (ritual stools, special wooden paddles, wooden ladles, wooden trays, drums)
- 4.3.4 Jewellery (beads, ear rings)
- 4.3.5 Basketry (baskets, specially made ritual straw brooms)
- 4.3.6 Calabash art (ritual calashes, calabashes for measurement)
- 4.3.7 Leatherwork (special sandals *oheneba*, hand bags, belts, etc.)
- 4.3.8 Body art (hairstyle, body painting, hair gear)
- 4.3.9 Photogenic artery
- 4.3.10 Metal Art
- 4.3.11 Music (melody)
- 4.3.12 Dance (boogie)
- 4.3.13 Verbal art (poetry recitals, appellation)
- 4.3.14 Drama (excitement)

4.3.1 Textiles (costume, ritual cloths, kete, loincloth)

A textile is any kind of woven, knitted, knotted (as in macramé) or tufted cloth, or a non-woven fabric (a cloth made of fibres that have been bonded into a fabric, e.g. felt). Textile also refers to the yarns, threads and wools that can be spun, woven, tufted, tied and otherwise used to manufacture cloth. The production of textiles is an ancient art, whose speed and scale of production has been altered almost beyond recognition by mass-production and the introduction of modern manufacturing techniques. An ancient Roman weaver would have no problem recognizing a plain weave, twill, or satin.

There were many textiles used in the celebration of *kusakɔkɔ*. These include: costume, ritual cloths, kente, loincloth handkerchiefs, socks and furnishes among others. The people of Avatime choose clothes with colour and motifs that bear symbolic meanings and significance. They wear clothes and other costumes which signify the feelings of *kusakɔkɔ*.

The costumes include, set of clothes (*basawa*), dress (*awula*), outfit, attire, gear and uniforms sensitive to aesthetic value that were used throughout the celebration. The initiates used different sets of clothes for different activities. The ceremony itself is based on the principle of the use of textiles that is why it is called *kusakɔkɔ* meaning “cloth giving” as stated in the background. Costumes are clothes worn by the people to cover or protect their bodies.

The ritual cloths were hanged on the right arms very decorative indicating a successful ritual process. The names given to these symbolic cloths show their significance and meanings associated with the activities of the society expressing the general concepts, beliefs and ideas of the people of Avatime. The colours and weave patterns in the ritual kente have symbolic significance which expressed the manner in which the yarns were interwoven. Lines were used to create designs such as straight lines, bold lines, zigzag lines, curve and undulating lines.

The special ritual cloths used are two, namely, *Bewue* and *Kotokoto* including other kete products used by the people at the celebration. The loincloths are also used as a symbol of puberty where the initiate is taught how it was formerly worn during menstruation period and the time of bathing ritually at the river side. Scuff and handkerchiefs were used to fan and wipe sweat and other foreign materials thrown to the initiate as part of the enjoyment. Furnishes including curtains, bedspreads, floor carpets, table cloth and cushions were used to decorate the rooms of the initiates making them colourful. In some homes they used tarpaulin and big umbrellas to protect them from rain and sunshine.

Kete cloth is beautifully woven in strips hand-sewn together, with good combination of designs. There are intricate lines used to form designs indicating the names hence their use. The kente in question is the Ewe kente which is mostly woven by the people of Agotime kpetoe, Agbozume, a few people in Amedzofe and others in the Volta Region. The dominant colours used are yellow, red, blue, green white, brown, pink and black. For example, the bachelor night (*treza*) saw the use of a set of outfit different from the *kusakɔkɔ* day where a ritual cloth called *bewue* (**Plate 4.12**) was seen held on the right arm bearing black and white colours which introduces the main *kusakɔkɔ* cloth called *kotokoto* also bearing colours, of pink, yellow, blue, green and brown as indicated in **Plate 4.13a** and **b**. It is important to note here that, the colours of the *bewue* are described as just black and white because of the notion of colours in Avatime traditional area are in agreement with Agbo (2009) which indicates the use of only three colours by the Ewe as red, black and white. The colours which relate to black are all referred to as black, likewise red and white respectively. Black related colours found in the Bewue, especially blue relates to the sky in Avatime, symbolizing love of God and his blessings both spiritually and materially signifying good tidings to the *kusakɔkɔ* initiates. The white related colours on the other hand, symbolize victory, peace, joy and positive sentiments as reviewed in the literature signifying in *kusakɔkɔ* a successful woman ready to marry. Bewue also has straight and bold lines and in agreement with Kaplan and Norton (2000), bold lines are symbolic of feeling of power together with fine lines projecting feelings of sensitivity while straight lines also signify stability as they lead the eyes swiftly following the path. In *kusakɔkɔ*, it is indicative of women empowerment and stability in the home (see **Plate 4.14a** and **4.14c**).

The second ritual cloth called *kotokoto* as indicated below, has the combination of all the three related colours, red, black, white per the notion of Avatime colours. Red related colours found in the *kotokoto* symbolize life, because of the colour of the blood, protection against dangerous spirits or forces and also empowerment of the female in society signifying power to ‘act’. Black related colours in the *bewue* cloth also symbolize growth, fertility and vitality, prosperity, success, love, and good health. The white colour also signifies purity, peace, victory wealth, and positive sentiments suggesting a successful *kusakəko* woman. *Kotokoto* cloth bears a lot of significant lines and shapes. They have five strokes of lines conveying various information and meanings. Those with five lines relate to the five finger of the hand symbolizing success after toiling using the fingers. It also signifies individual differences because all fingers are not the same but together there is success. Some lines are also zigzag lines indicative of wisdom (*kuboteo*) while undulating lines show the stream of life (*abgetsi*) or in Avatime *ligbens ku neo*. Again in *kotokoto*, the squares refer to mutual love or *Sukli likpə* while joint hexagon appearing chain-like indicative of togetherness or unity in diversity (see **Plates 4.14b, 4.14d – 4.14f, 4.15**). In all the combination of the colours in the *kusakəko kotokoto* ritual cloth signifies unity. These ritual cloths were chosen because of the cool weather condition in the Avatime area.



Plate 4.12 *Bewue*



Plate 4.13a *A set of different designs of kotokoto*



Plate 4.13b *Different shades of kotokoto*

There is also a display of clothes by the family of the initiates as required by the custodians of Avatime, bringing people from all walks of life to come and witness. The display of clothes signifies the readiness of the family to clothe their ‘girl’ when she becomes a ‘woman’. They are clothes made of different colours symbolic of unity, including kente with very intricate lines forming the weave patterns symbolic of the ideas of the society. All the elements of design which they learned from natural objects around such as leaves, bark of trees, fruits and paths were used to weave the clothes and make them, harmoniously whole as indicated by Bates (2000).

Looking at the kete, the designs were the organization of materials and forms in such a way as to fulfill a specific purpose, arranging lines, shapes and colour to create a single effect for the significant use of *kusakəkə*. The designs of the accomplished weavers conveyed the feeling that nothing in the designs could be changed without violating their structure.

Kaplan and Norton (2000) assert that, a good design is the purposeful assembly of various elements into a whole that delights the eye of an observer either because it evokes pleasant to look at or because it is particularly suited to its purpose. This statement made by Kaplan and Norton views designs in the cloth and all the decorations as arrangement of various elements as lines, shapes, colours in *kusakəkə* ritual clothes putting them together in an organized manner intended to achieve its aesthetic qualities. Textiles also include the *kusakəkə* initiates' training skills of spinning. The ritual mothers spent a significant amount of time to teaching the initiates how to acquire the skills of spinning.

According to Bates (2000) straight line leads the eyes swiftly across the picture plane but the eye travels more slowly when following the path of the other line. Bold lines also indicate a feeling of power, while fine lines project a feeling of sensitivity. Lines used in varying weights and directions with definite control placed on its direction can create sensations. Lines were used to create accent, a line begins, takes a path, turns and meets itself, creating a shape. Lines were used quickly by the designers to capture their impressions. They convey dimensionality, used as variations in value and have expressive qualities. The lines found in the *kusakəkə* kete show the way the yarns were interwoven. They used straight lines, zigzag lines, bold lines, dotted lines and shapes as indicated in **Plates 4.14a – 4.14f**.

The philosophy of line in Avatime

The philosophy of line in Avatime according to one of the sub-chiefs called Togbe Dzema (personal communication, 2010), symbolizes civilization. He indicated that, the people believed the first human beings lived in isolated colonies, but became more civilized when they made paths for communication hence the introduction of lines.

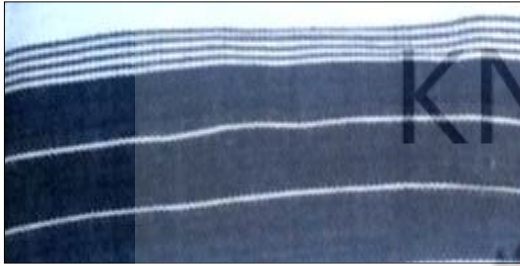


Plate 4.14a *Straight lines*



Plate 4.14b *Zigzag lines*



Plate 4.14c *Bold line*

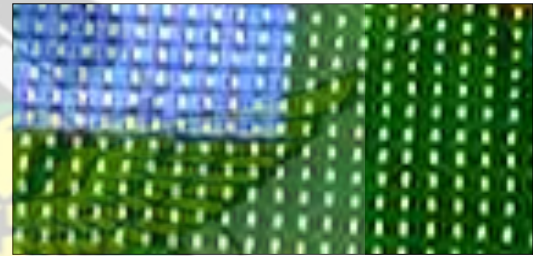


Plate 4.14d *Dotted lines*

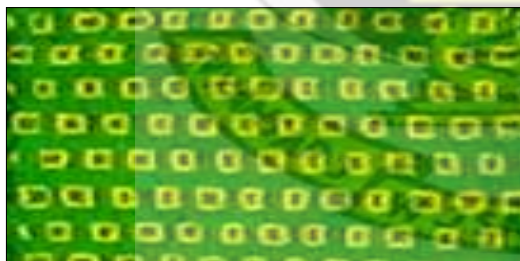


Plate 4.14e *Square shapes*



Plate 4.14f *Hexagonal shapes*

The various art forms used in *Kusakɔkɔ* celebration have different shapes exhibited and they include final shapes of the initiate after they have been dressed glamorously and gorgeously in their costumes.

The *kusakoko* festivity gave a clear, bright blue sky on a cool, crisp day and quickens an emotional response suggesting cheerfulness. Colour also conveys information in purely descriptive terms, symbolic of the meaning significance of the various costumes and beads used for decorations (Bates, 2000).

Texture on cloths shows the quality of the surface whether smooth, rough, dull or glossy (Plate 4.15). It gave an expressive quality and conveyed through the use of line, colour and shape, however, the elements were arranged out following certain rules.

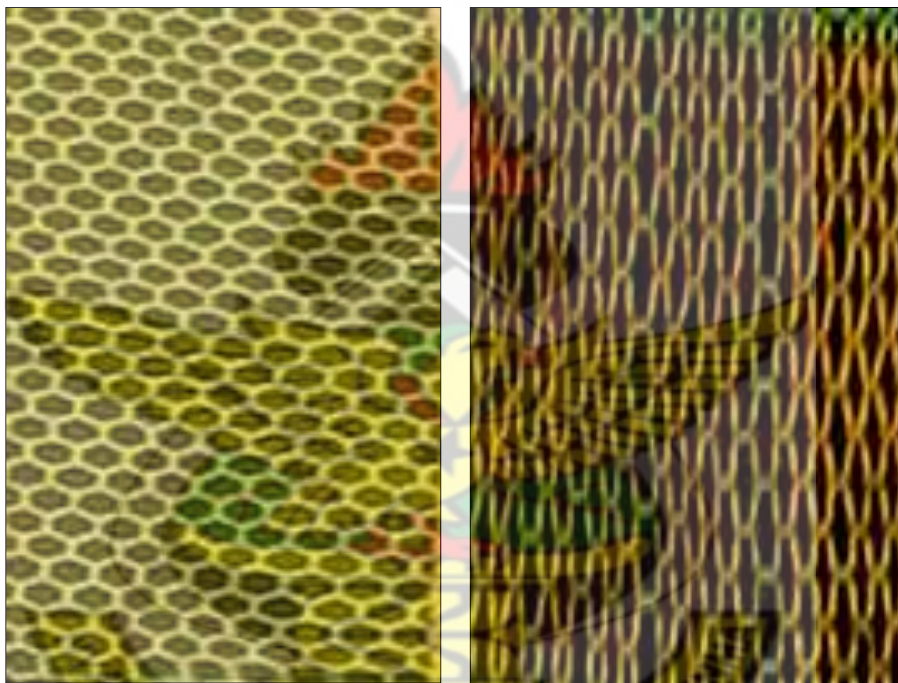


Plate 4.15 *Some kete textures*

The lines, shapes, texture and colour were all balanced as a sense of stability in the cloth designs applied to opposing visual attractions or forces and the composition contributes to its strength, and this is very important in aesthetics. For example, a shape, which is placed in the exact center of the surface, is at perfect equilibrium, like being at rest. Moving the shape off

centre can increase its importance. The designs were placed off centre also to attract more attention.

Moving lines, shapes, colour and patterns of light in the cloth created a rhythmic flow as the principle directs one towards a specific point in the designs. Rhythm means controlled movement or repetition of elements in a composition. Rhythm in aesthetics suggests so many things. Horizontal rhythms in the patterns suggest relaxed and quiet states and vertical rhythms suggest stability, formality, importance, and alertness while diagonal rhythms may be movement, excitement and agitation and all these elements and principles are found in the ritual cloths referred to as *kotokoto* and *bewue* locally.

Unity pertains to wholeness or oneness. Unity of the elements in the cloths refer to ways in which the parts work together to create a harmonious or inharmonious composition. Transition means gradual change in a composition. This is achieved through changes in hue, value, intensity, shape, line and texture. It connects parts of a composition of the elements in the kete cloths and provides movement. When the people of Avatimes come together to celebrate *kusakɔkɔ*, there is unity. Also the coming together of initiates of one town anytime in favour of *kusakɔkɔ* is unity.

Variety shows differences of lines, texture, colour and shapes in the composition of the clothes used in the *Kusakɔkɔ* and it is obvious that nature has the aesthetic values that make the individual to feel that some things are beautiful and others are not. These visual representations have elements such as lines, shape, space, texture, and colour, which are beautifully arranged. What creates aesthetics in *kusakɔkɔ* according to Avatime principles and beliefs are discussed further in section 4.3.

Colour is a sensation, which stimulates the eye. It attracts the eye and is one of the most obvious points of attraction around us. It is the absorption and reflection of light on a surface.

Colour shows psychological effects such as emotional responses to suggest cheerfulness. On the cognitive level, colour conveys information in purely descriptive terms, as when leaves change colour and in symbolic terms, as in the celebration *kete* cloth. The colour in the assembly of cloth in plate 4.16 by family members shows, cheerfulness, positive sentiments, and unity (Bates, 2000). The other textiles products include the *bewue* held in the left hands of the initiates in a procession as indicated in **Plates 4.17a and 4.17b**.



Plate 4.16 *A display of colourful clothes by family members*



Plate 4.17a *Bewue held on the arm by initiates*



Plate 4.17b *Bewue held on the arm by initiates*



Plate 4.18 *Gorgeous looking kusakoko outfit*



Plate 4.19 *Combination of Bewue and kotokoto*



Plate 4.20 *The spindle and cotton yarns*

The loincloth is normally a piece of cloth used to cover the female sexual organs. The initiate was made aware of ritual dressing using this piece of cloth in her menstrual period. It is normally red (**Plate 4.21**), red and orange in colour to symbolized blood and worn in between the beads in the front and back as indicated in **Plate 4.22**.



Plate 4.21 *The display of loincloths*



Plate 4.22 *The loincloth covering sexual organs*

4.3.2 Pottery (ritual pots, ritual bowls, the hearths)

Pottery also includes pots and bowls for cooking and for serving food during the celebration. The ritual pot is called *kefukpa*. In one of the observations, the initiate was asked to cook or paddle the ritual porridge called *bimukɔ* in the pot *kefukpamɛ* for ritual mothers to inspect (**Plate 4.23**), due to that, she was made to practice first as shown in **Plate 4.24**. It is symbolic to prepare the porridge in a clay pot because it is not supposed to be as strong as the metal pot. *Kefukpa* is also used by the initiate to keep jewels, special local sponge called *ɔsapolo* and herbs when they want to bath (**4.25 – 4.26**).



Plate 4.23 *Practising cooking in a pot*



Plate 4.24 *Cooking bimukɔ in the pot*



Plate 4.25 *Set of pots as jewel containers*



Plate 4.26 *Set of pots as bathing containers*

The people of Avatime also use the pots to fetch water from the river side and store water in a very big pot called *ozo*. Pots for the celebration are spherical, round as a circle symbolizing perfection and purity. The pots signify things that are holy and clean associated with God who they called *Aya* and they are therefore a symbol of life because they store and hold things of life such as food, water, medicine and jewels. The clay bowls are used to serve food but the ritual bowl called *kposie* is used to serve special ritual meal called *bimuko* for the nieces of the initiates' family called *bavima*, as shown in the **Plate 4.31**, ritual mothers in and also used to sprinkle the ritual meal for the ancestors called *batretrewa* in (**Plates 4.27 - 4.30**). The shapes of the meal bowls are half spherical. They also believe that these bowls signify the warmth and affection of a mother.



Plate 4.27 A set of earthen ware bowls and ladle



Plate 4.28 Food for ancestors in kposie



Plate 4.29 Kposie after feeding the ancestors



Plate 4.30 Food offered on the ground to *batrɛtɛwa* (ancestors)



Plate 4.31 *Bavima (nieces) eat in kposie*

The initiates also use the hearths (**Plate 4.32**), made locally of clay for cooking the ritual meal called *asubolo* meaning clay mould. They appreciate the use of the hearths because they believed that the clay absorbs the heat and prevents it from reaching them directly, so they do not sweat too much. They are taught to fetch firewood and set fire in the hearths while they are also kept clean by smearing on them clay slip or painting them with clay slip. It is also symbolic to paint the kitchen with the same clay slip.



Plate 4.32 *A set of hearths used for cooking*

4.3.3 Carving (ritual stools, wooden paddles, wooden ladles, wooden trays, drums)

Sculpture includes carved items such as ritual stools, special wooden paddles, wooden ladles, wooden trays, drums used in Avatime traditional area. The various parts of the carvings are clearly formed or visible with the blocking out of masses and in fine detail, Also, they are given luminosity or shiny smoothness of the surfaces especially the stools, porridge stirring sticks, soup stirring ladles and the pestles used to pound *fufu*, however the whole carvings offer a play of light, and shadow with straight upright posture and symmetrical arrangement of the parts, adding serenity, coolness, or composure. The ritual stools are symbolic of a queen and loving embrace of a mother and the warmth of the female influence in society. That is why it is called *likusigbole* and it is very significant and symbolic in Avatime because every female adult after going through *kusakɔkɔ* is supposed to enter her marital home with the stool. During the preparation of the ritual meal, these stools are also displayed significantly. The shape of the top of seat of carved stool for the initiate or Avatime woman is crescent moon shown in **Plate 4.33** which signifies the woman's contribution in the development of the traditional area. It symbolizes a woman's love, benevolence, and serenity, compassion, and agility. Those who are permitted to use the stool during the celebration are ritual mothers, old beneficiaries of *kusakɔkɔ* and the current initiates.



Plate 4.33 *The stool used by the initiates and ritual mothers*

Special sticks are also carved for the preparation of the ritual porridge called *bimukɔmɛ*. The stirring of the porridge involves two or more people going back and forth. The materials used to carve the paddles are special and edible because they are used to prepare food. However, the people believe in animism where they think plants have life in them hence life of the porridge stirring stick and food symbolizes the continuity of life. It therefore gave the people in the area skillful employment. The porridge stirring stick is locally known in the area as *ɔsilɔ* as seen in **Plate 4.34**. In stirring the porridge, it is done in an artistic way to maintain a certain rhythmic movement, making noise which produce sound or music, rhythm and drama as demonstrated in **Plate 4.35**.



Plate 4.34 A set of *isile* (stirring sticks)



Plate 4.35 Stirring the ritual meal with stirring sticks

There are also very huge ladles carved for the purpose of fetching soup (**Plate 4.36b**) with the large beans specially meant for the ritual meal. The special ritual ladle which is indicated in **Plate 4.36a** is locally called in the area *keplewia*. This time people borrow from ritual mothers in case they cannot buy, but it is symbolic of womanhood in Avatime.



Plate 4.36a *A set of kuplewi (wooden ladles) used to fetch the bimukɔ placed on a tray.*



Plate 4.36b *Huge ladle used to serve soup*

The mortars and pestles are used for pounding the ritual rice *amutoto* before milling it into powder to prepare the porridge (*bimukɔ*). The mass in these forms relates to a three-dimensional equivalent of shape as it has been reviewed by Bates as he refers to it as volume of the material used as shown in **(Plate 4.37a and b)**. The group pounding of the brown rice is rhythmic, dramatic and creates music.



Plate 4.37a *Kide* (mortar)

Plate 4.37b *Idagole* (pestles) in a mortar

There were special wooden trays called *kite* (**Plate 4.38a**) which were used to blow the rice chaff and also served as a tray on which the *bimukɔ* are arranged just after being prepared. The round shape is mostly used by the Avatimes because of their philosophy of the circle as omnipresence. They believe that in every activity and stage of life, God's presence must be acknowledged.



Plate 4.38a *Kite* (wooden tray)



Plate 4.38b *Kite* (wooden tray) with calabash

All the items mentioned above are used as household utensils except the drums (**Plate 4.39**) which were used to make music. They were drummed throughout the days of the rituals including leading the procession along the streets to introduce the initiates. The drums were carved in a way to produce different sounds. Two of them were carved in oval shape covering the top with leather while the bottom is left opened to allow the sound to come out loud. The wider the bottom is left opened the deeper the sound produced by the drum. The top and the bottom were also carved in circular shape with small pegs attached to the top which tied the cords to the leather giving a beautiful design almost like the zigzag symbolizing communication and lightening signifying that, drums talk to educate from darkness to light.



Plate 4.39 A set of evuna (drums)

4.3.4 Jewellery (beads, ear rings)

Bead are small pieces of glass, stone, or similar materials, typically rounded and perforated for threading with others as a necklace or rosary or for sewing onto fabric. Beads are small, decorative objects that are usually pierced for threading or stringing. Beads range in size from under 1 millimetre (0.039 in) to over 1 centimetre (0.39 in) in diameter. Beads can be woven together with specialized thread, strung onto thread or soft, flexible wire, or adhered to a surface (e.g. fabric, clay). The beads used in during *kusakoko* in Avatime bear different names depending upon their material sources. Some of the names are *okporoe* having brown being a black related colour dominating the threading process, *odungle* having a combination of white and spotted violet being a black related colour, *quadza* having the colour blue dominating regarded as black, *sansa* having the mixture of almost all colours and *wodze*. The

more beads an initiate puts on, the weight, and colours determine how prepared your family is for the performance of the rituals. The various colours used for the beads signify the notion of colours in Avatime as asserted by Agbo (2009). The white related coloured beads (ihua pititi) as gray, ash and cream symbolize positive sentiments, peace and joy, expressing purity and innocence and wealth. The black related coloured beads (ihua kpikpi) include green, blue, and brown symbolizing vitality, prosperity, fertility, love, royalty and growth. Red related colours on some beads (ihua tsĩ tsĩ) include pink, maroon and violet represent blood which symbolizes power and protection of life against evil spirits or forces. See **Plates 4.40 - 4.48.** for illustration.



Plate 4.40 *A set of beads*



Plate 4.41 *Okporoe*



Plate 4.42 *Duadza*



Plate 4.43 *Sansa*



Plate 4.44 *Odungle*



Plate 4.45 *Wodze*



Plate 4.46 *Simbia*



Plate 4.47 *Various types of beads*



Plate 4.48 *Some initiates wearing beads on the neck*



Plate 4.49 *Initiate wearing beads on the wrist*

4.3.5 Basketry (baskets, specially made ritual straw brooms)

Basketry is usually considered to be the oldest of all the art forms and the most fascinating aspects is that its generation has been adapted to fit in the everyday life of the people of Avatime. The versatility of basketry is a never – ceasing wonder and articles were used for storage, accessories, carriages such as baskets, specially made straw brooms, mats and trays. The baskets used for storage purposes are woven using all techniques as randing, pairing, and waling made of palm frond material. They have circle shape forming the top and base with upright or vertical stakes making the sides of the basket having close to brown colour (4.49 - 4.50b). The straw broom is a special ritual broom highly valued in Avatime and it is supposed to be found in every home in Avatime. The straw in Avatime is a very important material which they believed has life in it. It is commonly used in the area for roofing thatch houses symbolizing protection and health. Certain rituals are sometimes performed after cutting them from the mountain to pacify them before they are used since they believed there is still life in them. Straw broom also known as *lidzule* is first woven like a mat

and braided or plaited at the head leaving the other side to be used as broom to sweep (**Plate 4.51**). In *kusakoko* it symbolizes cleanliness hence every Avatime woman must possess at least one.



Plate 4.49 *kasowi* (Basket as a sieve)



Plate 4.50a *kasowi* (Basket as a container)



Plate 4.50b *Basket for storage*



Plate 4.51 *Special ritual straw brooms (lidzule)*

4.3.6 Calabash art (ritual calabashes, calabashes for measurement)

Half-spherical cut or carved gourd as ritual calabashes for performing libation and calabashes for measurement. Calabash in Avatime is known as *kepliwia* but there is a particular one meant for a special task in the preparation of the local rice during blowing and it is called *kekpoa* (**Plate 4.52**).

Calabash in Avatime symbolizes increase. The philosophy of increase is as a result of a number of seeds found in the raw gourd before it is cut into calabash and how the plant spreads on the ground before bearing fruit. Every *kusakoko* initiate is expected to possess these calabashes for their various uses in the home and they are mostly displayed and used during the preparation of the ritual meal called *bimukame* (see **Plate 4.53 – 4.56**).



Plate 4.52 *Calabash (kekpoa) for blowing chaff*



Plate 4.53 calabash (*Kepliwia*) for measurement



Plate 4.54 A calabash and wooden tray for blowing chaff



Plate 4.55 *A Calabash for shaping bimukɔ*



Plate 4.56 *A calabash used for performing libation*



Plate 4.57 *A calabash containing herbs for libation*



Plate 4.58 *A calabash containing herbs, coins, and palm fruits*



Plate 4.59 *A calabash held ready to perform a ritual*

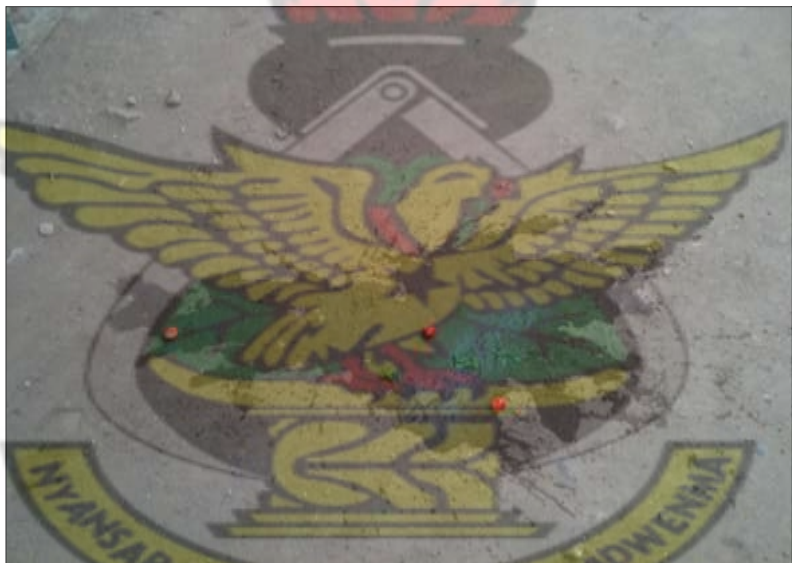


Plate 4.60 *Pattern and other items after performing libation.*

Leather work includes special footwear, bags, wallets and belts. Leather is a durable and flexible material created via the tanning of putrescible animal rawhide and skin, primarily cattle hide. It can be produced through different manufacturing processes.



Plate 4.61 *Footwear made of leather*

4.3.7 Body art (hairstyle, body painting, hair gear)

Symbols of the human body

Gavua (2000) explains the symbol of the hand and says although the human hands are a universal phenomena, the Ewes make a conscious distinction between the left and the right hands. The left is generally associated with manhood and bravery, but has derogatory meanings as well. Whoever either shakes hands or drink alcohol in public with his or her left hands is considered to be brave and spiritual. Persons who fall within this category are priests and priestesses of the indigenous religion, executioners, people who have killed in wars and those who have powerful personal gods. However, the Avatimes also believed in the same symbolism of the hand. Because the left hand is associated with males, men usually fasten cloth over their left instead of the right shoulder, whether or not they are left-hand (see **Plate 4.56**). Gavua adds that the left hand has negative connotation among the Ewes which is associated with dirt, filth and negativity, because it is the hand commonly used by most people to clean them up after defecation. It is also normal for one to greet and shake hands with a

group of people from right to left as the reverse is considered a mark of disrespect for the people.

During *kusakəkə*, libation is poured with both hands contrary to Gavua's claim that the right hand is used and the same both hands are raised during Thanksgiving Day as explained in 4.3. Both hands raised towards the sky express their appreciation to God Almighty. Hair designs include combing, braiding and plaiting which are the common methods by which people design their hair and the ways of cleaning, grooming and trimming their hair are all marks of good hygiene. Braiding "siya nyanya" or plaiting "siya gbigbi" are normal traditional practices done in the area but interestingly, almost all the initiates observed during the study went modern locally known as 'perming' their hair in different styles. Even those who plaited or braided their hairs were seen covering them with pieces of fabric.

Photography

This includes taking pictures, taking videos, snapshots, and scenic, etc. Artistic photography work was employed during the study (plate 4.62). Basically the main foundation skills in photography techniques used during *kusakəkə* celebration were composition techniques, exposure techniques and colouring techniques

Composition technique is the foundation of photography techniques that involves the art in composing the elements that form a photograph; art in combining the colors and art in capturing the moment. Composition involved, photography perspective, changing photo perspective, point of interest, lines and curves, rhythm and pattern in photography, active space, remove distraction or zoom-in the object.

Exposure is photography techniques used to capture the light by the camera to yield the correct exposure. Both foundations of photography techniques were combined to yield artistic photographs that have emotional power, feel, taste and character. Lighting includes, tricking the light, low light photography or understanding flash.

Many coloring techniques were employed such as digital colour, warm or cold colour, natural colour, colour temperature, white balance etc. Colouring also involved the use of photo colouring ,digital colour ,colour temperature ,digital white balance ,harmonious colouring contrast colouring, colour combination



Plate 4.62 *Researcher taking photographs of the ceremony*

4.3.8 Metal art

Metal art includes plates, frying pans, sauce pans, bowls, trays, spoons, cooking pots, knives, buckets, jewellery - rings, necklaces, bracelets, wristlets, bangles, belt hooks, etc. For metal casting to make jewelry, the emphasis is on delicacy and attractiveness. This form still involves a lot of detailed fine handcrafting and handmade work. Jewelry that is made out of metal casting often ends up being extremely fragile therefore the Avatimes handle them

with extreme care, as they are prone to breaking very easily. Plate 4.63 shows an initiate wearing a beautifully decorated necklace in a rectangular shape representing the Ewe symbol of love as explained by Agbo (2009). The colour gold also symbolizes royalty and prosperity.

Plate 4.64 also shows metal pots used to prepare the ritual meal.



Plate 4.63 *Initiate wearing a jewel on the neck*



Plate 4.64 *Metal pots used to prepare the ritual meal*

4.3.9 Music (melody)

Music an aspect of performing art includes sound made by drumming (**Plate 4.65**), singing, clapping of hands, ringing of bells, and playing of tape recording. Music organized for the puberty rite in *kusakoko* symbolizes, joy, happiness and success but to a few respondents, it could also mean, the beginning of the struggle for the initiates in life especially when marriage follows just after the performance of the rituals.



Plate 4.65 *Drumming in the procession*

4.3.10 Dance (boogie)

Dance another form of performing art includes, making a systematic organization of the footsteps in relation to movement of various parts of the body as indicated in **Plate 4.66**. That is shaking of body, swerving and tilting of the body, moving the arms, feet, legs, to jump, hop, and kick things all about. The art of organizing these movements into the various dances reveals the artistic values of *kusakɔkɔ*. Free-style dancing was used to express their mood of purely joyous and happy celebration. They danced to the tune of brass band music, *bɔbɔbɔ*, church choir, record players and the like. The dance formation is organized either with the drummers sitting in the middle while the dancers move around them or the drummers sit in the left as the dancers make their rhythmic move at the right side or behind the drummers.



Plate 4.66 *Dancing to the tune of drumming*

4.3.11 Verbal art (poetry recitals, appellation)

Poetry recitals were made in terms of speech making or verses (**Plate 4.67**). The words were symbolic of pleading with the ancestors of long life, prosperity, good health and successful marriage for the initiates. Among the words recited were “*ligba dzedze*” and “*ku nyime zeno gba*”. Amenuke et al. (1991) repackaged this performing art as verbal art simply put, the art of talking which involves speech making such as recitations, making pledges, and telling stories. To explain further it was observed that, recitals were made when praying and during performing of libation. Items included in the calabashes for pouring libation gave their significance as indicated in section 4.3. These items found in the libation package are three pieces of palm fruits, herbs and coins. The verbal activity is an essential part of *kusakoko* initiation rites because this was where the people believed that their life for the rest of their stay on earth depends on these verbal pronouncements.

Just as Amenuke et al. (1991) propound, the communities involved used this platform to give knowledge about the societal values or cultural values. In other words, performing arts are used as a communication medium to make commentaries, converse, as a means of counselling and cheering people up to promote communalism and unity.



Plate 4.67 Family elders reciting verses

4.3.12 Drama (excitement)

Drama involves the concerts or performances expressing puberty ceremony. They also perform songs, poems and personal feelings expressed in their joy, happiness, love, victory and unity. According to Amenuke et al. (1991), drama involves performance of concert, cantatas, comedies which take the form of music, dance, and verbal art. Amenuke et al., went ahead to categorize drama into three groups as ceremonial drama, narrative drama and dance drama. The study shows that at least, the ceremonial drama and dance drama were well represented as found in **Plate 4.68**. These groups of drama were used during cheering up and encouraging the initiate, more so, they also expressed their joy and happiness.



Plate 4.68 *Dramatizing in front of the initiate*

4.4 Educational Value of *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites

In accordance with the various subjects reviewed, *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites were characterized with numerous educational values. The successful beneficiary of the ceremony was expected to assume certain responsibilities just as Sarpong (1974) states that the adult is

expected to behave in some well-defined manner in relation with their age, status in life and condition of health. In line with Agyeman's (1986) definition of education, it is clear that, basically the individual learns to become a complete social member of his society and thereby performs social roles in the society. He states further that, education is a social institution through which each society influences its accumulated knowledge, arts, laws, morals and ways of behaviour, the acquisition of which brings the individuals to the perfection of their nature. The study reveals that, the people of Avatime value education and therefore put in place activities to transmit their accumulated knowledge.

By this definition, it implies that the people of Avatime are not far away from the general cultural principles of handing down accumulated information, skills, laws, ethics and character to make the "girl" faultless, just and ideal "woman".

The philosophy of Education in Avatime

The philosophy of Education in Avatime from the study is based on the belief that if one educates a woman he or she educates a whole family and for that matter the whole society. The Avatimes believed that it is a woman who makes a home (*ɔdza abite kepe*) meaning all their cultural heritage handed down to women will be transmitted to everybody, hence the performance on *kusakoko* for girls.

As indicated in section 2.4.1.4, (see p. 197) values are described as broad, abstract, shared standards of what is right, desirable and worthy of respect. Although values are shared they are seldom adhered to at all times by every member of the traditional area. Rather, values set a general tone for their cultural and social life. Beliefs describe what is, while value describes what ought to be.

The educational values uncovered in this study are discussed under the following sub topics:

4.4.1 Family loyalty, (*kedɔnɛ or kededze*)

4.4.2 Loyalty and Honesty

4.4.3 Virtue, (*kunɔgbā*)

4.4.4 Propriety and patience (*litɔplese*)

4.4.5 Morals (*eboegbā*)

4.4.6 Gratitude (*dasedodo*)

4.4.7 Respect (*kunɔbuo*)

4.4.8 Religious Values (*Kusɔliɔ*)

4.4.9 Motherhood (*obinee*)

4.4.10 Protection

4.4.11 Manners (*Ligbazeze gba*)

4.4.12 Beauty (*kupedi*)

4.4.13 Cleanliness, (*kudradra*)

4.4.14 Punctuality or Time values (*ɔnyɔavakugaga*)

4.4.15 Diligence, (*Kubuete*)

4.4.16 Endurance

4.4.17 Treasures (*oɔonete*)

4.4.1 Family royalty (*kedɔnɛ or kededze*)

Family royalty is at the heart of the Avatime system of value. The girls are raised to honour and obey their parents to center their lives on making their elders happy. *Kulala* which

literally means informing the Chief and elders, the clan chiefs, the family head and every household for *kusakəkə* celebration to create the awareness that the girl is of age to be initiated into womanhood and ready for marriage is an activity to teach the initiate how to be loyal. The initial announcement of the rite is made a month prior to the celebration, and then the mother of the initiate selects a ‘ritual mother’ for her daughter who prepares the young girl for her future role as a wife and mother. The study revealed that, now, some initiates had already become mothers before the ceremony but they go through the rituals to satisfy the requirement. There is a demonstration of respect for elders as age is equated with wisdom.

4.4.2 Loyalty and Honesty

Loyalty is characterized by faithfulness, devotion, allegiance, trust worthiness, constancy, reliability, fidelity, dependability. It is the support that one always gives to someone or something because of his or her feelings of duty and love toward it. Fidelity is the attitude or behaviour of some who are willing to have sex only with their husband, wife or partner. These things were taught in the room during confinement and on the day she sat with all the elders present, the ritual mothers ask questions and as they answer them, they receive cheers from the public or those gathered around. Viewers make comments in their native language such as *ebe*, *ape*, meaning she is well cooked, she is good respectively. They expect, sincerity, truthfulness, integrity, frankness, candor, openness as honesty is to be fair with complete truth.

4.4.3 Virtue (*kunəgbā*)

Virtues are aspects of our character that are dispositions to act in accord with our fundamental values. A virtuous person is a person of good character whose actions are

consistent with her or his values. A successful *kusakakɔ* graduate is supposed to be an asset, good quality, good feature, desirable quality, good value, good worth, high merit, high calibre. A good quality or habit is that which a person has, especially a moral one such as honesty or loyalty. Asset is a major benefit while adaptability is a supreme virtue meaning flexibility, malleability and compliance. It is the change of ideas with new situations. Normally, individuals who adjust their principles to the circumstances and who are quick to compromise are admired.

4.4.4 Propriety and patience (*litɔplese*)

Propriety means politeness, decorum, modesty, good manners, respectability, decency, correctness and aptness. Propriety is the behaviour that follows accepted social or moral standards. Modesty is a feeling of being shy or embarrassed about other people seeing her body. The climax, the solemn and the most ritual moment in *kusakakɔ* rites, was when the girl stood naked at the entrance to the room. This moment of the ceremony was very crucial and very symbolic because the cloth that the girl wore while she was spinning was removed and the girl stood naked facing the entrance to a room of the house. She was ashamed of being naked, so she covered her pubic area with her left hand and her eyes with her right hand. It is considered one of the most important activities of the rituals and only a girl who had not been pregnant or conceived before this time could stand this test.

The philosophy here is the basis for *kusakakɔ* rites because the Avatimes believe that once the girl feels shy of her nakedness, it is a sign of maturity hence her readiness for womanhood rites. Propriety, the ability to maintain an even temper and be polite, no matter what circumstances, is highly prized. Raising one's voice for any reason at all is considered vulgar. Open display of affection is insult to the loved one as well as to anyone who might see

them and as is the extensive use of gestures in talking. Aptness is a person who is good at learning or tendency to do something.

4.4.5 Morals (*eboegbã*)

Morals are ethical, good, right, honest, decent, proper, honourable and just. Ethics involves the principle use for deciding what is right while honourable is the moral good and deserving respect. Early in the morning on Wednesday the initiate is confined in a room having instructions as to how to go about the rituals and also receive some lessons on communal living and morals. Avatime morality, most times are embedded in religious values. The moral beliefs and principles of the Avatime people are derived from religion. Religion provides the necessary justification for moral values and beliefs, and that moral concepts, such as good, bad, right and wrong, are defined in religious prescriptions or commands. For example the statement, “He has no moral” in Avatime language is *ligba zeze ma yawla* (which means “He has no character”).

In general, the Avatime satisfactorily fulfills the duty of imparting moral knowledge to their members through moral education of various forms, including, telling morally-freighted proverbs and folktales to *kusakɔkɔ* initiates. Performing art forms such as singing, drumming or dancing are normally used to break monotony and boredom. Morals are those that have to do with the conduct of persons, usually leading to praise or blame

4.4.6 Gratitude (*dasedodo*)

There were activities in the celebration which allow the people to give thanks or a sign of thankfulness, appreciation and gratefulness. Gratitude is feeling of being grateful to some people because they have given something or done something. These values were expressed

on the last day of the celebration where in another procession the initiates, the family members, elders and all friends go through all the streets amidst singing and dancing to thank everybody for their support. As indicated in the discussion of the ceremony, there was symbolism of raising the right hand up so that from which angle one watches them from, the hands communicate “thank you for yesterday” in their native language *mlɛwaluhue looo!!!!*

4.4.7 Respect (*kunɔbuo*)

The people value respect *kunɔbuo* in Ewe *Amebubu* so for the fact that the girl has accepted to go through the ritual shows great respect for both her parents and the elders. The initiates were also taught how to bend down when greeting as a sign or symbol of respect. One cannot agree with Sarpong (1974) more when he said, old age is sacred as the old person is thought to be in closer proximity to the ancestors, hence it is in relation to the sacred that a respectful attitude should be shown towards authority, old age, the mysterious and the spirituals. Appreciation, high opinion, deference, esteem, reverence and reveres are all the expected values with regards to respect in the traditional area. Going through the rituals was apparently unpleasant and painful, and was done to remind the girl to respect her husband and not to be stubborn and tough; *tɔ abubuɔ* meaning “so she will soften.”

4.4.8 Religious Values (*Kusɔɔ*)

The Avatimes value Godlines therefore expect members to be spiritual, sacred, holy, devout, pious, and dutiful. Early in the morning of *kusakɔkɔ* day about 5.00 am as indicated in the discussion of the ceremony, the initiates gather in the church premises for prayers towards the day’s activities. They are accompanied by their helpers called *dasefo* family members and friends. It was also observed that the pastors take the opportunities to bless the

ritual cloths and the beads used for the ceremony. Here again Sarpong (1974) points out that the belief in a Supreme Being is basic to the Ghanaian's traditional way of life. Beyond the church activities, libations were also performed as a form of prayer through the ancestors to the gods. Avatimes believe in the trinity, that is, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and it is demonstrated in all aspects of the ceremony. Also the traditionalists believe in God of heaven (*aya*), God of the earth (*kesake*) and ancestors (*batretrewa*). For example three balls of porridge (*bimuko*) and stew were put into a dish and sent to the priest of the rice pantheon and also gave some to the ancestors as shown in **Plate 4.28**.

Also in the discussion of the *kusakoko* ceremony, the initiate was held to sit on the ritual stool three times. Thirdly, during the clothing of the naked initiate, the *Kekusidzeba* covered her three times (**Plate 4.69**). The church activities are followed by a small procession leading the initiate to their various ritual homes for confinement.



Plate 4.69 *Blessing of ritual cloth by a Pastor in Amedzofe*

4.4.9 Motherhood (*obinee*)

Motherhood is the state of being a mother and is likened to parenthood, maternity and motherliness. Some respondents indicated that, cooking starts at dawn of *kusakəko* with the preparation of the local rice popularly called *lefefle* and it is roasted rice flour mixed with water cooked with palm oil and meat and later cooked rice porridge. Some *kekusidzebawa* made a little porridge with stew made from green leaves *sigase* and palm oil. No pepper, or other vegetables could be put into the stew and only ‘bush meat’ should be put with it (that is meat brought from hunting expedition). The sending of the special meal to the priest was to inform him officially of the ceremony, and would help the girl to conceive or take seed when married.

The mother of the initiate is supposed to get all the *kusakəko* items ready for the celebration before it is announced. The items include the prescribed local clothes called *bewue* and *kotokoto*, the new pot, beads, cooking utensils, specially made local broom called *lidzule* among others (Plate 4.70). These items are symbolic of a mother starting a home. The girl sat facing her mother while her mother hands over the items after being taught the qualities of a good mother. In Avatime a good mother is compassionate and gentle but firm and instills discipline. She is approachable and willing to listen. She is open hearted, has a healthy perspective about issues, leave home but love to come back often. One vice a mother must avoid in Avatime is never using derogatory comments on her children but praise his/her goodness and help to groom the weak sides with words of encouragement. A good mother is always there for her children which creates a family bond. Among the parents the mother has a much larger role to play in a child's life because she gave that child the milk of life through the chord and her breast. Flexibility, love, nurturing, the ability to soothe, are among the characteristics of what makes a good mother.



Plate 4.70 *Sending items to the initiate's home in Amedzofe*

4.4.10 Protection (*isublaba*)

An auntie of the girl who is also a 'father's sister' escorted the girl whose head was covered by a cloth (**Plate 4.71**) to the clan elder's house before being brought back to the room. Covering the head also symbolizes her protection from catching a glimpse at mountain tops which they believed would have brought some misfortune on her. The prepared flour is then brought out by her 'auntie' and she sprinkles some on the back of the hearth or grate, on the sides and into the pot, three times before most of the flour was put into the boiling water inside the pot to make the porridge. The sprinkling of the rice flour symbolizes the recognition of the presence of the ancestors for protection.



Plate 4.71 *Covering of initiate's hair in Biakpa*

4.4.11 Manners (*Ligbazeze gbã*)

When the people of Avatime value manners, they expect the members to be etiquette, have *modus operandi*, good manners, good performance, satisfactory conduct and comportment. Manners are traditional accepted ways of being, that show a polite respect for other people which is the custom or accepted social behaviour of the people. During *Amutoto* which also means pounding and preparation of *amu* or local rice which is the important 'ritual meal' for the *kusakɔkɔ* rites. Pounding *amu* is often done on a Thursday within the month prior to the main ceremony. This is done early in the morning on Thursday involving both young and old women some of whom have already gone through the *kusakɔkɔ* ceremony. It is done amidst merry making, sharing of jokes, and display of old skills, storytelling and introductions of family members. There is a special way of pounding, blowing and roasting before milling the local rice.

Thursday is chosen for this activity because it is a special day which the communities set aside as a taboo for going to farm or doing any ground work as indicated in the discussion of the ceremony. The initiate at this point in time, exposed to many provocations, loose talk, and all kinds of mannerisms which becomes a test for politeness, good manners a satisfactory conduct that can measure up the standards accepted in the society. They are taught, manners of sitting, speaking in public, eating and marriage as Antubam (1963) enumerates, when he spoke about beauty in the manner of doing things.

4.4.12 Beauty (*kupedi*)

Beauty is highly valued in this traditional area due to the nature of the celebration of these rites that are related with *kusakɔ* meaning cloth giving and associated with terms such as loveliness, attractiveness, good looking, prettiness, exquisiteness, gorgeousness, splendour and magnificence. The word beautiful is something extreme, which the Avatimes call *kupedi* or in Ewe *nyakpɔ*. It is attractive, pleasant to look, done or made very well, good looking, with a lot of skills, pretty, and generous as in (section 2.2.6). The initiate is dressed in white blouse and kente or any locally made cloth with beads around the neck to assume the status of an adult or woman as shown in (Plate 4.72). However, Antubam (1963) sees beauty differently when he says, ideas of beauty reveal themselves in the manner and rules of doing things. They also appear in people's preferences for certain methods which to others may be strange and peculiar.



Plate 4.72a *Initiate gorgeously dressed in white blouse and lace*



Plate 4.72b *Initiates gorgeously dressed in different attire*



Plate 4.72c *Initiates gorgeously dressed in similar attire*

4.4.13 Cleanliness (*kudradra*)

Cleanliness is another important value the people hold very strongly. They value hygiene, sanitation, purity and spotlessness. Some ritual mothers interviewed said, throughout the period of spinning, the girl was expected to bath only in cold water from the pot with special local sponge called *asapolo*. Kekpere, one of the experienced ritual mothers in Amedzofe, when contacted, gave her account of isolation and spinning during confinement as she says the girl and her friends went to one of the streams in the various communities, at the place where water for ritual purposes was usually drawn.

4.4.14 Punctuality (*nyawukugaga*)

Punctuality is the value of promptness, time keeping, reliability, regularity therefore punctuality simply means arriving or something happening at the time agreed on. Time - the quality that you measure using a clock or an occasion, a period, availability of something occasion, instance, point in time, moment in time, moment, point, instant or era.

Avatimes value punctuality of mastery, punctuality of competence, punctuality of integrity, punctuality of value for other people, punctuality of value for oneself. Punctuality of mastery is being on time consistently showing everyone around that one is the master of his life. It demonstrates foresight the ability to predict possible hang-ups and adaptability. It shows the ability to change one's plans to accommodate those hang-ups.

Punctuality of competence is exhibited when someone shows; he or she is the master of her time or someone who will be taken seriously. It is significant of handling whatever is thrown at the person. Punctuality of integrity also shows trust, thus making an appointment, which symbolic of commitment. The only way one builds up other people's trust in them is by consistently meeting his commitments. The person who is always on time is someone others can trust to be as good as his word. Punctuality of value for people shows clearly and truly, that when one values time it is by extension, that he values other people. Punctuality of value for oneself is expressed when being on time shows he values his time and oneself. There *kusakoko* initiates therefore schooled by the ritual mothers whiles they were confined.

4.4.15 Diligence (*Kubuete*)

The celebration transmits the values of assiduousness, meticulousness, thoroughness, carefulness, attentiveness and industry. Avatimes want the attitude or behaviour of initiates to show hard work and being very careful in anything they do. The account in Biakpa noted that the number of spindles prepared during the confinement by the initiate represented a symbol of the girl's diligence, assiduousness, meticulousness, conscientiousness, attentiveness, carefulness. The meaning of the symbol is that, it is the attitude of the girl who works very hard and very careful. The initiate is taught how to prepare *akpls* in a clay pot which requires

great care. Most of the initiates do fail this particular test because clay is not as strong as the metal pot, rather a little fragile. A successful usage of the pot without any breakages shows how careful or diligent the initiate would be in a marital home.

4.4.16 Endurance

Endurance is associated with staying power, tolerance, lack of complaint, persistence, fortitude, serenity. The study reveals that the people cherish endurance which is the ability to continue doing things physically difficult or continue tasks without any unnecessary complaints. This task is normally measured from the first day of *kusakokɔ* to the end of all the activities. Formerly it was the mother of the initiates that looks for various items to be used during the performance of the ritual but now, in most cases, it is the initiate who buys her own items.

4.4.17 Treasures (*oxonete*)

The people of Avatime associate treasures with, resources, riches, reserves, materials, raw materials, assets or possession. They also see treasures as the collection of valuable things especially jewels or gold and silver, a piece of art or historical objects, treasure hunt or treasure trove. Owing to their belief in treasures, *kusakokɔ* celebration performs some rituals to assure the initiates of the success story in these forms of treasures for example, during parts of the rituals, three pieces of palm fruits, some herbs, and coins were mixed with water and poured as libation.(plate 4.73a-c). Philosophically, the coins represent riches, palm fruits symbolize long life, peace, growth, protection and anointing for spiritual and material procession. Three pieces of palm fruits also represent their belief in the Trinity of God which has been explained in sub-topic 4.3.8. The herb also signifies good health and fertility.



Plate 4.73a *Coins, palm fruits and herbs used in performing libation*



Plate 4.73b *Pattern created after performing libation*

4.5 *Kusakɔkɔ* rites as a resource for Art Education

This part of the chapter analyzed *Kusakɔkɔ* rites as a resource for Art Education. Most ethnic groups within a society tend to think that their culture is superior to the culture of other groups. This is especially true of the most powerful and dominant groups in our society.

Just as Banks (2008) advises, the people of Avatime also use a lot of art forms in the celebration of *Kusakɔkɔ* rites. However, the problem is that, these art forms are not taught in schools in their area. A considerable amount of artistic values discussed under Section 4.2 and educational values under Section 4.3 could provide the basis for Art Education.

It is not out of place that, art educators who are interested in including the study of the art of other cultures in their curricula are faced with complex choices since one choice is to decide to select a particular culture of another part of the world and focus on one particular kind of art work or art form, as produced by various ethnic groups in that culture. Kaufman cited in Kemevor (2004) suggests that those resources of creativity and appreciation which are likely to add to the maturity and happiness of any individual to the benefit of society should be included in the curriculum of art education. Furthermore, perhaps that is the reason why Plato emphasized that art should be the basis of education.

The youth may have been seeing art forms in the *kusakɔkɔ* days as mere entertainment objects displayed during the occasions without actually understanding their educational implications. For one to appreciate the art, he or she needs to understand the cultural criteria that brought it into being and sanction it as an art form.

Kemevor (2004) looks at education as a socialization process and its rationale is to transmit knowledge, values, ideas, habits, beliefs and customs of societies from one generation to another. Yet, essential information for Art Education discussed in Section 4.2 is hidden in the production and use of art forms as displayed in *kusakɔkɔ*. The older generation is

probably the only reliable custodians of some aspects of these artistic and educational values. Some of the older people who have the knowledge are reluctant to pass it onto other people due to mysteries and dogmas surrounding the history, values, traditions and customs of some ethnic groups. Even then, these people are dying away with their untapped skills, knowledge and ideas.

The study has documented essential information that has the potential to contribute positively to the teaching and learning of Art Education. The new art syllabus for basic schools which includes creative arts shows there is now the awareness that the beginnings of national creativity are locked up in the newly conceived subject. The main focus of Creative Arts is critical thinking and reasoning, which is necessary for problem solving, hence, the promotion of socio-economic progress.

The essential aspect of *kusakakɔ* is the fact that the young girls during their initiation rites were taught morals, ethics, skills, values or norms. There is development of skills or character through knowledge received that is the body of artistic and educational information that exist out in Avatime. The information about *kusakakɔ*, which was unearthed during this study is now brought to the fore of Art Education as a resource material for reference purposes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarises all chapters including the statement of the problem, the objectives, research questions, the research methods adopted, data collection instruments, the main findings of the study, conclusions drawn and formulated general recommendations.

5.1 Summary

Many artistic and educational values are embedded in the celebration of *kusakəkə* initiation rites, yet they have not been described, discussed or documented, therefore they could be lost. Those values are essential elements that could support art education.

Moreover, appreciable amounts of vital information embodied in *kusakəkə* initiation rites are not being taught in the schools of Avatime. Sadly, the rich cultural heritage evident in *kusakəkə* which should be preserved has not been documented to put Avatime in the spot light of the world.

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To identify and discuss *Kusakəkə* initiation rites of the people of Avatime.
- ii. To discuss the value of art in *Kusakəkə* initiation rites of Avatime.
- iii. To analyze the educational values of *Kusakəkə* initiation rites of Avatime.
- iv. To discuss the implication of the study for Art Education.

As regards a guide to the conduct of this research, four research questions were formulated. These include:

- i. What form does the *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites take?
- ii. What are the identifiable artistic values exhibited in the *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites?
- iii. What are the educational values in the *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites?
- iv. Which aspects of the study provide resource for Art Education?

5.1.1 Summary of the Major Findings

Data collected through observation and interviews that were assembled and analyzed can be interpreted as the following **principal major findings** of the study:

- i. *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites was first called *Ablabe* rites. The celebration of *Ablabe* which first started from Amedzofe one of the Avatime towns literally means “pineapple”
- ii. *Kusakɔkɔ* means ‘giving of cloth’ to females in Avatime. Avatime recognizes the worth and contributions of women to society therefore mark the transition of a female from girlhood to womanhood. The woman is an important figure in the development of Avatime community. Significantly, such recognition is not given to males.
- iii. *Kusakɔkɔ* rites is a way by which the people of Avatime transmit and preserve their cultural heritage. Both traditional religion and Christianity play a very important role in the celebration of *kusakɔkɔ* by way of educating the girls through rituals to prepare them to become useful members of the society.
- iv. *Kusakɔkɔ* rites are associated with marriage, so the ceremonies are most times performed before marriage rituals. The rituals of *kusakɔkɔ* may be performed alongside marriage rituals if not performed before marriage.

- v. Sanctions are imposed on the girls who did not go through the rituals to check the deviant behaviour of members. If a woman dies without performing the rituals, the rituals are performed when lying in state before burial.
- vi. There are identifiable artistic values exhibited in *kusakɔkɔ* initiation rites. The visual arts identified in the celebration were the use of the ritual *kete* cloths, loin cloth, different types of costumes, table cloths, curtains, ritual pots, ritual earthen bowls, hearths, ritual stools, special wooden porridge stirring sticks, wooden ladles, wooden trays, drums, beads, jewels, ear rings, baskets, special ritual straw brooms, ritual calabashes, calabashes for measurements, special sandals, bags, belts, hairstyles, body art and photography. The performing arts included music from *bɔbɔbɔ*, church choir, spinners and dance groups, verbal art, drama and appellation, drumming, clapping of hands and ringing of bells which were symbolic of expression of joy, happiness or excitement and success.
- vii. The educational values through the uses of art forms in *kusakɔkɔ* provide symbols of identity, means of communication and serve as objects of visual knowledge. The art forms also provide education of the people intellectually, socially, psychologically, spiritually, physically and artistically.
- viii. The artistic and educational values in *kusakɔkɔ* provide sources for teaching Aesthetics, Appreciation, Criticism, Art history, Hands-on-skills in Visual Arts for Art Education. The production of the art forms also provides some economic venture for the youth in the area.

5.2 Conclusions

The findings and observations provide information and answers for the research questions. Avatimes mark the passage of girls into womanhood by performing a series of rituals known as *Kusakɔkɔ*. The most noteworthy of the transitions frequently celebrated in the area is the move from childhood to adulthood. This is the time the youth, especially the females, are prepared for adult activities and responsibilities, hence the initiation rites is called *Kusakɔkɔ* literally meaning 'giving of cloth'. *Kusa* means cloth while *kɔkɔ* means giving. *Kusakɔkɔ* initiation has transformed girls from the relatively ignorant and irresponsible state of childhood to the state of knowledgeable responsible adulthood ready for marriage in Avatime.

There are a lot of artistic and educational values locked up in the celebration of the *Kusakɔkɔ* rites which were not documented but successfully, they have now been identified discussed and revealed that their celebration was artistic because things were done skilfully, tasteful and aesthetically satisfying. The educational values were also discussed and analysed under subtopics such as family royalty, loyalty and honesty, virtue, propriety and patience, beauty, morals, gratitude, respect, religious values, motherhood, manners, cleanliness, treasures, punctuality or time values and diligence.

The essential aspect of this study is the fact that the young girls during their initiation rites were taught morals, ethics, skills, values, or norms. The development of skills or character through knowledge received, thus a body of artistic and educational information that exist in Avatime which were unearthed during the study are now brought to the fore of Art Education as a resource material for reference purposes.

5.3 Recommendations

- i. Observation has shown that religion is believed to shape the peoples' perception and reaction to situation about *kusakɔkɔ* puberty rites and that some aspects of the rites are sacrilegious to the Christian faith. There should be collaboration between the Pastors and the ritualists to educate members about the educational benefits of *kusakɔkɔ* as individuals as well as the society.
- ii. Education and occupation are factors which are negatively affecting the smooth process of *kusakɔkɔ* rites thereby making it less attractive currently. It is therefore recommended that more group ritual activities be encouraged to be done only once a year for school going girls and workers to participate during school holidays and a weekend respectively.
- iii. Despite the fact that the initiation rites are meant to educate the young girls to become good home makers and virtuous women for marriage, the successful graduates see the process as coming of age or licence to practice sex leading to teenage pregnancy in the area. The researcher therefore recommends strict rules or control measures to prevent this menace or provide education about the cultural meaning for ritual mothers to be transmitted to the initiates.
- iv. Though the rites are aimed at promoting education and developing or empowering the girl child, most young girls in Avatime traditional area see the rituals as a gateway to marry early, hence drop out of school. They prefer to stop schooling or apprenticeship training leading to unemployment and lack of education. Chiefs and elders of Avatime should use incentives such as rewards or awards as forms of motivation during the celebration of *kusakɔkɔ* to encourage these young ones to attend school and also curb the menace.
- v. The people also value norms and sanctions, so they impose sanctions on those who refuse to go through the rituals. The rites are still performed on the corpses of those who did not

perform the rites in their life time as punishment. The researcher believes that members should be allowed to exercise their freedom of rights and decide on what they also believe in this modern times.

- vi. The initiation does not directly relate to HIV transmission just because the rites do not involve sexual interaction, may be, as other practices, but its attraction to people from all walks of life suggest some amount of sexual activities because observation shows that, most people do not know details about HIV, let alone preparing to protect themselves. It is recommended that Ghana AIDS Commission, PPAG, and NGOs take advantage of the celebration to educate people in the area. The ritual mothers should also be trained with the requisite information necessary for the education of the initiates on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted disease.
- vii. It is was observed that some people in Ghana and other parts of the world have no knowledge about *kusakɔkɔ* and rather, refer to Dipo rites anytime puberty rites or initiation rites are mentioned .It is therefore highly recommended for the educational values of art in this document to be incorporated in the General Knowledge of Art syllabus of the Senior High School to put it in the limelight of the whole world.
- viii. Finally the researcher recommends the continuation of *kusakɔkɔ* because it provides education for the people intellectually, socially, psychologically, spiritually, physically, and artistically.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Preamble-Self-Introduction

Explain the purpose of the interview and how the respondent's opinion will be used.

SECTION A

Demographic Characteristics

- Sex
- Age
- Marital status
- Educational Background
- Occupation

SECTION B

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What form does the *Kusakoko* initiation rite take?

1. Why is it necessary to mark the transition of girls to woman?
2. What was the original purpose?
3. What is the purpose today?
4. What follows an examination in details of the female coming of age in Avatime?
5. How must women be regarded primarily as members of their groups?
6. How is this status relevant in the society?
7. Is there a change of structure of the ceremony?

8. If yes, are there differences between the old celebration and the present ceremony?
9. What influenced the change of structure of the ceremony?
10. What was the main reason for the change of the structure of the ceremony?
11. What was the duration of the old ceremony?
12. What is the duration of the present ceremony?
13. What was the old ceremony called?
14. What is the aim of the present ceremony?
15. Who qualifies to partake in this ceremony?
16. What is the status of the ceremony?
17. What are the rules governing the performing of the rituals?
18. Who performs the rituals?
19. Which rituals are performed in the ceremony?
20. What sanctions or punishments are given to those who flout the rules?
21. Which particular days are these rituals performed and why are those days chosen?
22. State the beginning of the ceremony, the climax and the end.
23. Do these days have special names?
24. What is significant about these special names?
25. What are the various activities involved in the ceremony?
26. Is the ceremony mandatory?
27. What happens to those who do not take part?
28. Can a woman marry if she fails to go through *Kusakoko*

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

Are there any identifiable artistic values exhibited in the “kusakəkə” initiation rites?

1. What type of visual and performing arts are used in the ‘kusakəkə’ celebration? List them.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.
- h.
- i.
- j.
- k.
- l.

a. How are the following art works used in the *kusakəkə* celebration?

NAME OF ART FORMS	USES/VALUES

- b. What concepts are associated with the use of the various art works?

NAME OF ART FORMS	CONCEPTS OF ARTISTIC VALUES

2. What are the symbolic meanings connected with the use of these art works?

NAME OF ART FORMS	SYMBOLIC MEANING

3. What are the values of both visual and performing arts mentioned in (2) above?

NAME OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	THE SIGNIFICANCE/VALUES

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RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Are there any educational values in the “kusakəkə” initiation rites?

1. What activities are involved in the various stages of “kusakəkə” initiation rites? What concepts of education are involved?

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.

2. What important information is passed on to the initiates during these stages?

ACTIVITY	INFORMATION

3. How does it prepare the initiates as members of the society?
4. How does it affect the way of life of both the initiates and the entire society?