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The ad hoc conference on the Nigerian constitution

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By the Israel Oriental Society
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ETHNOGRAPHIC 'FINDS' REGALIA II.

Our collector Mr. Ameyaw brings to us an instalment of new ethnographic 'finds'. The present instalment comes from Akrokeri and Bodweseango both in Adansi traditional area.

We are now embarking on a systematic collection of relics from specific places, in order to obtain data for comparative study of art forms in Ghana.

The relics documented here are not very different from some of those we have already catalogued. The difference is that each piece has a specific story to tell and those we have in this set lead into aspects of the history of the region.

It will be interesting to compare some of the umbrella and state sword symbols of this Adansi area with those of Denkyira, reported upon elsewhere in this review.

REGALIA associated with Chieftaincy:

1. Nseniefo kye - Court criers cap made of monkey skin attached to a square wooden plate. To the wooden plate is attached a wooden carving of a gongon. The whole plate and the attached gong is covered with gold leaf. Worn by the herald or Court crier as insignia of his office. This is used principally when running errands and at durbars.

Given by Bodweseanwohene Barima Yaw Ahenkora II and elders. Cat. 166.67. Age 50.

2. "Katakylie sɔ̃ nakofana mu a otie ne ya" - A type of Chief's cap made of lion's skin. Originally it was worn during warfare. Now worn on Odwira Thursdays (Odwira huro) to recollect the bravery of the ancestors. Odwira (Thursday) is a mournful occasion, and the chief discards

gold ornaments. Similar type of cap is worn by sword bearers.

Given by Bodweseangohene Barima Yaw Ahenkora II and elders. Age 50. Cat. I. 66.68.

3. Akofena - State sword coated with blood. It was used in the Ashanti wars of 1698 and 1742 respectively by Nananom Owusu Gyakari Panin and Adu Gyamfi Kumanin. Given by Bodweseangohene Barima Yaw Ahenkora II and elders. Cat. I. 66.69.
4. Akyeamepoma - Linguist staff Kɔ̃ tɔ̃kɔ̃ (a porcupine). The symbol indicates the readiness of the state to wage war on its enemies. Made by Nana Tabiri Agyei Okofó). Given by Nana Benefo Apenteng II Dompoasihene and elders. Cat. I. 66.71. C. 70 years.
5. Batakari kesee "Gyeabog" - Battle Smock to which are sewn talismans. It was used by successive chiefs of Akrokeri in various wars. It served as bullet proof coat. Made by the fourth chief, Nana Asare Bediako I, a renowned warrior in the local traditional history. Given by Akrokerihene Nana Owusu Sampah III and elders. Cat. I. 66.72.
6. Mpaboa kesee - A pair of leather Sandals with the straps decorated with gold. Its age unestimated. Collected from Akrokerihene Nana Owusu Sampah III and elders. Cat. I. 66.74.
7. Sika Abotiri - Head band or Fillets. Made of fine black velvet and richly decorated with gold ornament in the form of stars. It was worn by the chief on ceremonial occasions. The traditional meaning of the symbols is that the chief shines like the stars. Age not determined. Collected from Akrokerihene Nana Owusu Sampah II and elders. Cat. I. 66.75.

8. "Akrafokonmu" - A Gold breast plate strung to white cord. Worn as a badge of office by the Okrafo (soul-washer or bearer of the chief). The white cord as necklace symbolises sanctity and purity. The knob in the centre of the disc represents the heart of the chief. The Okrafo is the most sacred person who is entitled to all the privileges of the chief. His official dress is white calico. Usually the breast-plate is of wood covered with gold or silver leaf. This beaten gold type was made by the 27th and richest Akrokerihene, Nana Ntori Bonkyi I. Diameter $3\frac{1}{2}$ ins. Given by Akrokerihene Nana Owusu Sampah III and elders. Cat. I 66.76.
9. Kyiniye ntuatire - Umbrella top designed as knotted stem of a cane plant. Its maxim is "Nea etane me mebu me badua mu". (He who hates me should break the stem). This is a symbol to signify warning against malice and conspiracy. The same symbol may be used on linguist staffs. Carver unknown. Commissioned by Nana Kofi Ohemen of Obogu. Age 24 years. Given by Oboguhene Nana Gyasi Ampe II and elders. Cat. I. 66.88.
10. Akonimono - A necklace of human spinal bones. Intermixed with variegated beads. It is worn by executioners of Akrokerihene as part of their insignia of office. The bones are that of an executed victim of the Obonsam cult, a deity of Akrokeri. Given by Okomfohene Kwame Anowuo of Patakro with the consent of Akrokerihene and elders. Cat. I. 67.09.
11. Mpaboake see - A pair of leather sandals decorated with gold ornaments. Worn on ceremonial occasions. It was made for Bodweseangohene Owusu Gyakari II. No more used. Preserved. Collected from Bodweseangohene Barima Yaw Ahenkora II and elders. Cat. I. 67.15.

12. "Akyeamepoma Okum Sasabonsam" - Linguist staff symbol showing a duel between a warrior and a monster. The symbol means Bodweseango is powerful. The people are supposed to have fought the invincible and subdued it. The symbol is the insignia of bravery of the people of Bodweseango. Tradition has it that the indigenous people encountered the dreadful monster "Sasabonsam" and killed it to capture the land. This defeat was in the reign of Bodweseangohene Nana Gyakari Panin and the Krontihene, Ampoti Dwaa, was the spearhead in the encounter.. It is claimed that the hat of the monster which Ampoti Dwaa captured is still in the custody of the Bodweseangohene. This staff was made for Barima Owusu Gyakari II. Age c 44 years. Carved by Agyeman of Onwi near Ejisu Ashanti. Collected from Barima Yaw Ahenkora II and elders. Cat.1.67.17.
13. Linguist staff top. A boy standing fearlessly by a lion. It is covered with gold leaf. "Kwabia nnim gyata a ose oy e odwan" (Kwabia, the ignoramus, takes a lion for a sheep). The meaning may be said to be similar to the English expression "Some one is playing with fire". This symbol is a warning to people who would like to take the chief for a ride. Made for and given by Barima Yaw Ahenkora II, Bodweseangohene. Cat.1.67.16. Age recent.
14. "Sepaw" - Executioners' knife. Made in the time of the priest Kofi Akom of the spirit Obonsam. It was used for execution in the olden days. Length 11 ins. Collected from Okonfohene Kwame Anowuo of Patakro-Akrokeri. Cat.1 67.07. Age c 100.
15. "Krɔ̀bɔ̀nkye" - Executioners' cap. It is made of leopard skin and used by executioners as a cap of office. Made for the priest of the Obonsam cult, Kofi Akom, a contemporary of Asantehene Kofi Karikari (1867-1873) and Akrokerihene Abu Oboaba. Collected from Okomfohene Kwame Anowuo of Patakro-Akrokeri. Cat.1. 67.08. Age 94 +.

16. Small Kuduo used as containers for gold dust. Made for chief Osafo Kantanka Panin. Obtained from Ahinsanhene Osafo Kantanka and elders. Cirf. 13 ins. Height 6 ins. Cat.1. 67.11.
17. Linguist staff. Symbol : Old leopard with a prey of a duiker in its mouth. "Kurotwiamansa ba akwakora sen ara a, otwe de e otumi kye no". (No matter how old a leopard may be, it is capable of catching a duiker for its prey). This means a chief who was once great is always great. He is always a force to reckon with. By this symbol the Ahinsanhene is reminding all people that he is still powerful in spite of the changes in his age or fortune. Obtained from Ahinsanhene Nana Osafo Kantanka V and elders. Cat.1. 67.12. Age : c 80 years.
18. State Ceremonial Sword. Hilt decorated with gold leaf. It is used by state couriers on errands as a badge of credence. Made for and given by Akrokerihene Nana Owusu Sampa III. Age 16 years. Carved by Kwasi Fuller of Akrokeri. Cat.1. 67.04.
19. "Kokosese" - A bunch of Ostrich feather whisk seen particularly on ceremonial occasions. Tells part of the history of migrations and trade relations. Made for the 47th Akrokerihene, Nana Adu Sampah Kuma. Given by Nana Owusu Sampah III and elders. Cat.1.67.05.
20. "Fotoa" - Leather Wallet. It is used to store valuable treasures and gold-weights, and carried by the Chief's treasurer "Sunnahene". Made for 45th Akrokerihene Abo Oboaba. Obtained from Nana Owusu Sampah III and elders. Cat.1.67.06. Age c 90 years.

21. "Nkantan" - Copper iron necklace. It is worn by chiefs at funerals of royalists. Made for Konongohene Ofebiri Amoia Koko contemporary of Asantehene Osei Yaw (1824-1838) Cat. I. 67. 01.

A.K. Quarcoo.